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SUNDAY ROUTINE
HOPE BOYKIN

Getting Momentarily De-Danced

Hope Boykin, who recently completed her 15th anniversary with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, has been called a “force of nature” on stage. Matthew Rushing, the company’s rehearsal director and a choreographer, created a lead role for her in his dance “Odetta,” a tribute to the singer and civil rights activist. Ms. Boykin, 43, who lives in Harlem, teaches, choreographs and continues to coach rising dancers. On Sundays, when she isn’t dancing (Ailey is currently performing at City Center through Jan. 3), Ms. Boykin lowers the volume, making church the main event. Though it is rare for dancers to perform into their 40s, Ms. Boykin said, “We’re not dancing late, we’re dancing just right.” **ROBIN POGREBIN**

SCREENING FOR IDEAS Usually I wake up pretty early — around 6. Even if I try to sleep late, it doesn’t really work. I’m an NBC watcher — “Open House,” after the news, which shows houses for sale in New York. It gives me ideas. I live in an apartment. The building is awesome, my neighbors are awesome and I love my neighborhood. I really do. Not just putting on.

MUSINGS IN THE GALLEY I make breakfast — bacon and eggs or a green juice. I’ve fallen in love with this Chemex coffee maker. It sounds so shallow but it’s so pretty. I have a galley kitchen, so I can sit at the bar, writing or revising something I’ve written. I’ve been working on my thoughts. I’ve started to realize I have a voice in that way. I have journals stacked up in my apartment.

DANCE MINISTRY I meet Matthew Rushing on our corner — we live across Lenox Avenue from one another — and head to church in the Bronx by train or taxi. We’re part of our dance ministry. We share our gifts with our church family there. We get to remind them that we’re people. Sometimes young people look at you as a superhero of dance. They look at you with those eyes that are huge.

#SundayRoutine readers can follow Hope Boykin on Twitter @HBDance.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHURCH It is a nonnegotiable event, a centering. Without being able to refuel and recharge myself, I’m no good to anyone, I am not creating the things that happen to me. Church puts my life in order, just like practice. Matthew said once, “The stronger our faith and heart muscle is, the more we’re able to take on.”

EAT, WRITE, CHAT After returning to Manhattan, I will meet a student or chat with someone I might be mentoring, or I will write, usually at Le Pain Quotidien. My favorite one is across from Lincoln Center. I order a child-sized oatmeal and coffee. And they have this huge community table. People will bring their kids. You’re not overhearing them, but you’re not secluding yourself at a table for one.

WALK AND SHOP I will usually stroll through the park, 110th Street and Central Park North, to the gardens, catch the No. 2 train, do some food shopping — which actually I need to do on Sunday — head home. Then I’ll walk around in my neighborhood. There’s an awesome coffee shop, Lenox Coffee, my go-to for a mocha or cappuccino. I love a Sunday late lunch-early dinner at Barawine in Harlem, or to Red Rooster for live music, or Corner Social if friends have come to Harlem to visit.

HOMESPUN BODY TREATMENTS I throw a half a bag of Epsom salts into my bath. I put on an Agatha Christie audiobook, and get de-danced for a moment. This bath helps get rid of soreness, aches and such. As soon as I hop out of the bath I sink my feet into a bucket of ice water. Over 20 years of dancing professionally can do a number on the body; and I love, love, love beautiful high heels, so the ice bath helps that indulgence as well.

KITCHEN CONCOCTIONS For dinner I’ll make a turkey chili in my slow cooker, grill some salmon or bake some chicken. I always have a salad and maybe some fruit, all accompanied by some sparkling water. I cook for the week.

SOOTHING ENGLISH ACCENTS I put on Netflix and watch some Agatha Christie or some British drama and it puts me to sleep. Being an older dancer, you have to be more rested than the young ones.