

MAGAZINE
DANCE
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**I WAS
MEANT
FOR
THIS**

TEN TOP
DANCERS ON
THEIR FAVORITE
ROLES



Jamar Roberts in Tharp's *Golden Section*;

Jamar Roberts

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Interviewed by Elaine Stuart

My favorite role is actually a small part—a five-minute solo—in *Night Creature*, choreographed by Alvin Ailey. There's a girl soloist and a corps, and two guys who have a flirtatious, courting dance with the soloist. It's jazz-based movement, with a little Horton and Graham technique. Most of all I love that the role is fun—and also low-stress. The Duke Ellington music is big and brassy and loud but sensual. My favorite part is when I first come out onstage, my first interaction with the girl. We do a flirty little dance and give each other googly eyes back and forth. Alicia Graf is my favorite person to dance it with. I'm supposed to be sexy in the role, but I don't think of myself as sexy. One day our associate artistic director Masazumi Chaya showed me a video of Alvin Ailey doing the part. It was like he was embodying the music, as if his body was playing the instruments. Before, I was more reserved, but when I saw how natural and wild he was, I took that on.