

# My Extracurricular Activity

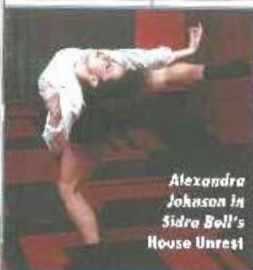
SURE, DANCE IS FUN, BUT THESE PERFORMERS HAVE OTHER SKILLS THEY'RE PUTTING TO GOOD USE.

By Rachel Zar



Sarah Braverman and Ion Sprig

Sarah practicing Italian with fellow company dancer Elena D'Amarlo



Alexandra Johnson in Sidra Bell's House Unrest

## Alexandra Johnson

Sidra Bell Dance New York

HOBBY: Reupholstering furniture

"My mother has always been into sewing and she's worked in interior design, so I latched on to her interests. Now, I own a lot of furniture that I've reupholstered. People don't realize that reupholstering isn't hard if you're willing to take time to do it—and it saves money!"



## Sarah Braverman Parsons Dance

HOBBY: Learning Italian

"I decided to take up Italian because two of the dancers I work with speak the language and we spend a lot of time together. Plus, Italy just happens to be on Parsons' tour schedule! At the end of a long day it feels good to have something spark my interest that's outside of the dance world. Keeping your mind open makes your dancing more informed."

## Jermaine Terry

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

HOBBY: Costume design

"I discovered costume design in college. I had choreographed my senior piece and my roommate suggested I buy slips and add to them for costumes. So that's what I did. I started to do it professionally later

by accident. In rehearsal one day, I was wearing a pair of jazz pants I had made. The choreographer liked them and asked if I would make the costumes for his piece. People have been asking me to make wings for them ever since."

(Inset, l to r) AADT's Akon Noni Parker and Demetria Hopkins in Jermaine Terry creations at Ailey's 2011 Opening Night Gala



## Shelby Elsbree

Royal Danish Ballet

HOBBIES: Blogging, cooking and photography

"A little over a year ago, my sister

encouraged me to do something with my free time besides working out. I invested in a camera and took a picture of a chocolate cake baked by my sister. It was the most beautiful picture ever. I love food and cooking, so I combined these skills with dance and started a blog, *Texas & Tea* was born [texasandtea.wordpress.com]."

Shelby Elsbree in Christopher Wheeldon's *Sleeping Beauty*; (above right) Shelby's homemade orange blossom honey vanilla ice cream



## Sona Kharatian

The Washington Ballet

HOBBY: Knitting

"During *Nutcracker* season, I'll knit scarves and socks to give as Christmas presents. If someone has me as their Secret Santa, they know they'll get something knitted."

Sona Kharatian in *The Great Gatsby*



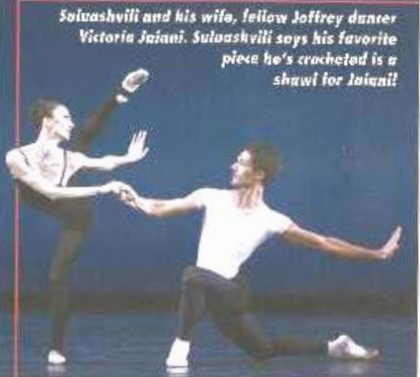
## Temur Suluashvili

Joffrey Ballet

HOBBY: Crocheting

"One day I decided to pick up crocheting needles and see what happened. I thought it could be a fun challenge. With crocheting you can do a little at a time—a few minutes here, a few minutes there, and before you know it you have a scarf or legwarmers!

When you're dancing all day, it's nice to have something calming to do when you get home. It lets your mind and your body rest, and you create something beautiful in the process."



Suluashvili and his wife, fellow Joffrey dancer Victoria Jazani. Suluashvili says his favorite piece he's crocheted is a shawl for Jazani!

[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT] LOS GREG VITTEL; COURTESY SARAH BRAVERMAN; BRIANNE B. AND HERBIE WIGDON; FLORENCE CAIRNISE; J. EDUARDO PATINO; JESSICA BATHURST; DAVID SAGE; JAMES L. LEBBEY