

LEAPS & BOUNDS



Her propulsive leaps across the stage could symbolize Constance Stamatiou's fast-rising career. A member of the acclaimed Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater since 2007, the 25-year-old has danced principal roles in such signature Ailey works as *Revelations*. The company's 2010 U.S. tour launches in February. —MICHAEL KAMINER

Q How common is a vegetarian lifestyle in the dance world?

A I would say it's pretty common. When I was a student at the Ailey School, I knew many vegetarians and vegans. When I started eating vegetarian, I personally saw an instant difference in rehearsals and in my performances. I felt so much lighter and more energetic. Eating meat made me tired and sleepy. I would struggle just to get through the day.

Q You must expend an incredible amount of energy during a performance. How do you fuel up?

A I keep almonds and other nuts in the theater case I travel with, to get an extra boost before I go onstage. And I never miss a meal: I always eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and I snack in between. I eat lots of tofu, seitan, soy, and plenty of vegetables.

Q You recently returned from Greece, where you have family. How was it sticking to your eating regimen there?

A Much of my family in Greece is vegetarian as well. They cook vegetarian dishes, and make a lot of vegetable juices. In Greece you can always get hummus, pita, and dolmades.

PHOTO BY ANDREW ECCLES, COURTESY ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER