

A ballerina in a light pink tutu is captured in a graceful dance pose, with her right arm raised and her left arm extended forward. She is wearing a light pink tutu with gold embroidery. The background is a solid, muted grey color.

Abigail Simon

Ballerina and Private Ballet Coach.

An Interview by: Todd Selleck



Photo Credit: Bloch Dance USA

Abigail has danced with the world-renowned Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and has also danced on Broadway. Abigail's years of training and performance have earned her many leading roles and have given her a unique distinction as one of the most admired Ballerina's internationally. She transforms the stage by taking us on a journey with a finely tuned, expressive and artistic skill that paints a story for our senses.

Abigail's influence and presence is strong while performing, and subtle enough to not override the elements of what a ballet is, and the true beauty of a ballerina. Abigail is extremely committed to her craft and is also a mentor to the next generation of dancers.

Over the past 15 years Abigail has been coaching and motivating the future dancers to become the absolute best that they can be.

<https://www.privateballetcoaching.com>

Abigail also works with and cultivates talent in the entertainment industry through her production and Management company: Simon & Thompson Entertainment.

<https://www.simonandthompsonentertainment.com>

Being a ballerina isn't for the faint of heart. You must be committed to it 150%. There isn't any room for a lack of self-confidence because as graceful and poised as ballerina's are, the competition is fierce, and staying focused is crucial. I'm thankful to have Abigail grace my stage with her presence in doing this interview.



Photo Credits: Abigail Simon

TS: When we talked on the phone, I mentioned that dancers who pursue Ballet remain committed to it for a lifetime. There's something about it that sticks to their soul. It's not something that is transient. It starts when they are young and stays with them throughout their lifetime. What is it that drew you to become a ballerina?

AS: If you want to get to a high level like Joffrey, American Ballet Theatre or Broadway, you have to be obsessed with your craft. Parents ask me all the time, what does it take to get into the School of American Ballet? What does my child have to do to make it as a ballerina?

Occasionally I get kids that come in, because they like to dance but not quite sure if they want it as a career. They do a step once and they think it's okay after the first try and they want to move on.

This doesn't work in Ballet.

I was obsessed with my technique and wanted to work on routines & individual moves over and over again. And then there's the dedication to training your body, musicality, and coordination. But most important, the hunger, the drive, & passion.





Photo Credit: Mark Hauser

TS: What are the elements to being “in the game” and competing with other dancers to achieve success? Let's face it, being a ballerina isn't just being a dancer, you're also an athlete and people might miss that fact because they see something beautiful and graceful on stage and might not realize the years of training that took place before the first step is taken and those bright, hot theatrical lights come on.

AS: Being a ballerina is in your blood, but it's also the burning desire to become the best. No one needed to tell me to get out of bed to go to ballet class and practice one move a million times .

I loved the repetition, and if I failed I would always try to figure out a way to move forward. Also, you can have talent but the people that are hiring want to use dancers that they can trust and are easy to work with.



TS: Again, when we spoke, I mentioned the ferocity and very competitive nature of becoming a professional dancer. What can you tell someone (or have told) who says: I want to dance with the Joffrey, I want to be a principal dancer? (What does it take, physically, mentally, and time wise?)

AS: Someone is always going to be working harder than you. My teachers used to say, work 100%. I now tell my students that they have to work 150%. Because, the minute you're lackadaisical and you don't bring your best to the table, someone else will. You form these habits from day one.

I started intensely working at 10 years old because my goal was to become a great ballerina. I built myself a routine starting at 6am. I did yoga, Pilates, meditation and worked with private coaches to make sure that I wasn't behind. I was obsessed. The word obsessed becomes a big part of this article. :)

Photos: Ricky Wang Photography





TS: When we talked on the phone, I mentioned that dancers who pursue Ballet remain committed to it for a lifetime. There's something about it that sticks to their soul. It's not something that is transient. It starts when they are young and stays with them throughout their lifetime. What is it (for you) that drew you to become a ballerina?

AS: It takes a lot of training, rehearsing and total commitment to develop the perfect coordination to become a Ballerina. I was desperate to be a ballerina the minute I saw it. I loved everything about it. The smells, the sounds, the beauty, the athleticism, the artistry, the music.

Also, my parents were in the performing arts. My mother a Juilliard, trained Opera, singer and my father a film & theatre actor/director who has also run his own acting studio in NYC for 50 years. They exposed me to all art forms, including ballet.

The minute they showed me Ballet I just couldn't take my eyes off of it.

Some great advice for parents is instead of trying to force what you would like your child to be, look & watch for what they become obsessed with. It's why I love coaching, because I get to work with students that have a similar obsession and I help them reach their fullest potential

TS: What's been the best advice you have ever been given, and would pass on to aspiring dancers?

AS: The best advice I've ever been given is to try to stay focused on a goal and work towards that goal. If you get too distracted you won't reach your fullest potential. People will try to tell you it's important to have a balanced life or that you shouldn't put all your eggs in one basket.

Did I burn out in the end? Yes, I did.

Do some athletes that go to the Olympics burn out? Yes, they do.

But I made it to two top companies and I was on Broadway. I got to live my dream! And, when I look back, I have no regrets.

Have a goal and have people behind you that support your goal because it's going to fly by. And when it's time to have a family you'll love to devote yourself to them because you did that for yourself 150%.

Abigail's Social Media: IG:

<https://instagram.com/abigailsimonofficial?igshid=ZWQyN2ExYTkwZQ==>

Photo Credit: Gina Uhlmann

