

NEVER STOP REACHING FOR YOUR BEST

KANJI SEGAWA

Article by: **Dance Mogul**



SEGAWA PERFORMING TAKADEME, CHOREOGRAPHY BY ROBERT BATTLE PHOTO BY: TODD ROSENBERG

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Dance Mogul: Give us a brief background of your dance history.

Kanji Segawa: I trained in modern dance with my mother, Erika Akoh, in Japan, and came to the U.S. in 1997 to study at the Ailey school. I was a member of Ailey II where I met Mr. Robert Battle, then joined his former company, Battleworks. I also worked extensively with choreographer Mark Morris. Currently I'm a member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, where I've been since 2011.

Dance Mogul: Tell us about your relationship with Mrs. Mack and your thoughts on her career.

Kanji Segawa: I first worked with Alicia a few years ago when she danced for my wife, a choreographer, Jessica Lang. Then the same year I joined Ailey company and that's when Alicia rejoined the company as well. Ever since then I've been fortunate to be her close friend and colleague in the company. Since we are close in our ages and are the same generation, we have the same sense of maturity in the perspective in general, and I feel very close to her because of that reason. Alicia is a beautiful person and artist inside out. She is the perfect example of what the professional dancer should be, not only for her amazing techniques and artistry, but also for her work ethic, genuineness, openness and willingness to share who she is with the other dancers. She is the inspiration for everyone!

Dance Mogul: What advice do you have for the next generation of dancers that would like to be professional?

Kanji Segawa: (1) Work with what you have, the body and artistry you were born with. It's not about wanting to be others, it is about creating who you are as an artist. (2) Stay open minded: Stay alert always in what's happening inside and outside of your field. (3) Keeping the good connection and networking is very important! To stand out from the thousands of other talented dancers, it would be an advantage if you know people. People want to hire you based on your talent, but also most importantly, based on who you are as a person. They want to work with talented, but also good people.

Dance Mogul: What would you like your legacy to be?

Kanji Segawa: (1) I would like to be an inspiration and good example for young dancers who might be thinking that they are not physically talented enough, nor "perfect" enough to be a dancer. Yes, you have to face the challenge and continue

working on your own weakness, but at the same time, "passion" is the most important thing in the end. Because that "passion" can make you work harder, wanting more to be a better dancer. And I would like to show them that through my dancing. (2) Originally coming from Japan, I know how hard it is to make it in NYC. I would like to share all my experiences and knowledge as much as possible with those who come from the other countries with the dream of being a professional dancer in the U.S. I would love to be a great role model for them, especially for the young Japanese and other Asian dancers.

Dance Mogul: Is there anyone you would like to thank for helping you on your journey?

Kanji Segawa: First, I would like to thank my mother, Erika Akoh, and my mentor, Mr. Kan Horiuchi in Japan for my first dance education and for guiding me to study internationally beyond Japan. I thank Mr. Robert Battle and Mr. Mark Morris for giving me tremendous influence and opportunities in my career in the U.S. And lastly my wife, Jessica Lang, for her love and endless belief in me over the years.



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SEGAWA PERFORMING SOLO BACH, CHOREOGRAPHY BY: JESSICA LANG PHOTO BY: TAKAO KOMARU

