The Moscow Times
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18-Year-Old From Detroit Set to Become Bolshoi's First African-American Graduate

By The Moscow Times

August 22, 2013



Precious Adams, an 18-year-old from the Detroit suburb of Canton, Michigan, may become the first African-American to complete the Bolshoi Ballet Academy.

After two years of training at the academy in Moscow, the young ballerina is entering her last year, paving the way for her to become the third woman from the U.S. to graduate from one of the oldest and most prestigious schools of ballet in the world, the Detroit Press reported Friday.

Her road to become a professional ballerina began after Sergey Rayevsky, director of the Academy of Classical Russian Ballet in Wixom, Michigan and Adam's instructor since she was five years old, noticed the girl's intense drive for dance and suggested her parents send her for more in-depth training.

Adam's parents, who dubbed the girl's passion for ballet "unstoppable," sent her to Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto, the Princess Grace Academy of Classical Dance in Monaco and a Bolshoi Ballet summer program in New York City that she attended on a U.S. State Department scholarship.

The ballerina, who was accepted to the academy after the summer program and is due to graduate Bolshoi next spring, is currently home in Michigan and performed Saturday in a "Stars of Russian Ballet" gala performance at the Detroit Opera House.

About 20 Americans now live and study at the academy. Last year, Joy Womack and Mario Labrador were the first Americans to graduate when they finished their studies and went on to top Russian ballet companies.

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