

Constantine Allen

Stuttgart Ballet is renowned for its leading men, but even by the German company's standards, Constantine Allen is an overachiever. Tall and lean, with a floaty technique and elegance, the Hawaiian native transitions seamlessly from Albrecht to John Neumeier's dark *Othello* to cutting-edge choreography in the company's workshops. Since joining the corps in 2012, he has rocketed up the ranks to become Stuttgart's youngest principal, and looks set to take the repertoire by storm.

At 6' 2", Allen has had to work hard to keep his long limbs under control during jumps.

Company: Stuttgart Ballet

Age: 21

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii

Training: Pacific Ballet Academy, School of Ballet Hawaii, Kirov Academy of Ballet, John Cranko Schule

Accolades: Youth America Grand Prix bronze medal, junior division; Tanzolymp Grand Prix

Training with a legend: At Stuttgart's John Cranko Schule, Allen was part of the last class taught by legendary Russian teacher Pyotr Pestov, whose alumni include Vladimir Malakhov, Alexei Ratmansky and Evan McKie. Allen relished the intensity of his classes: "I still hear him when I dance."

Breakout moment: Tackling the title role in Neumeier's *Othello* last year. "I was told I was very young to play it, but I've experienced jealousy, like most people, and I tried to be a warrior," Allen explains. Stuttgart artistic director Reid Anderson was so impressed that he promoted him straight from demi-soloist to principal afterwards, saying: "He had no fear."

Choreographers' muse: Allen has already originated a number of roles in works by Demis Volpi and others. "It's nice to feel trusted in the creation process, and choreography is something I'm very curious about myself."

What Anderson is saying: "Sometimes dancers are either partners or actors, but he can do it all. I seldom see something like that. He's captured the imagination of the audience in Stuttgart."

Dancing in Europe: Allen always envisioned joining an American company as a child, but found the pace and repertoire in Europe suit him better. "I'm a lyrical, classical dancer, and I feel freer here."

On the horizon: Allen is expected to make his debut as Lensky in Cranko's *Onegin* in June. "Any time you learn a Cranko role here, it's very special. My dream role is *Onegin*, but all in good time!" ■

"His technique is so natural that it doesn't look like he ever learned it."

—REID ANDERSON

BY LAURA CAPPELLE