

## Athletes of God

*Uriah Boyd*

When I'm dancing I feel at home. The scent of stale sweat and rosin filling my nostrils is what makes me feel relaxed and I am not the least bit ashamed to say so. I live for sweaty hugs and the feeling of not knowing whether my face is drenched in perspiration or tears. I love the smell of Tiger Balm. The sound of leather ballet slippers on old, tired marley floors, and the bars that hug the walls- holding them up after years of being strong. I love dancers; the way we challenge the very laws of physics every time our feet lift off the floor. I love mid-calf cotton blend socks, oversized t-shirts that hang wearily off the shoulder, and open-back leotards.

I am forever amazed by the many ways we can manipulate the human bodies that we all possess. I love the language of dance; how so much can be communicated without the use of a single word. I love the callused heels and bruised toenails- constant reminders that my body is an instrument of divine arts. I love the mountains and valleys of defined muscles; quadriceps tensed, toes pointed, and poised to strike the air. I am carving my shape into the memory of the studio.

I can say more with my body than I could ever hope to express verbally. Words are restricting and have rules. Dance is free. When I dance, I don't need to think in words, just pictures and sensations. Dance is a passion that I feel and breathe. It's more than a verb. It's a confidante, a home, a sanctuary.