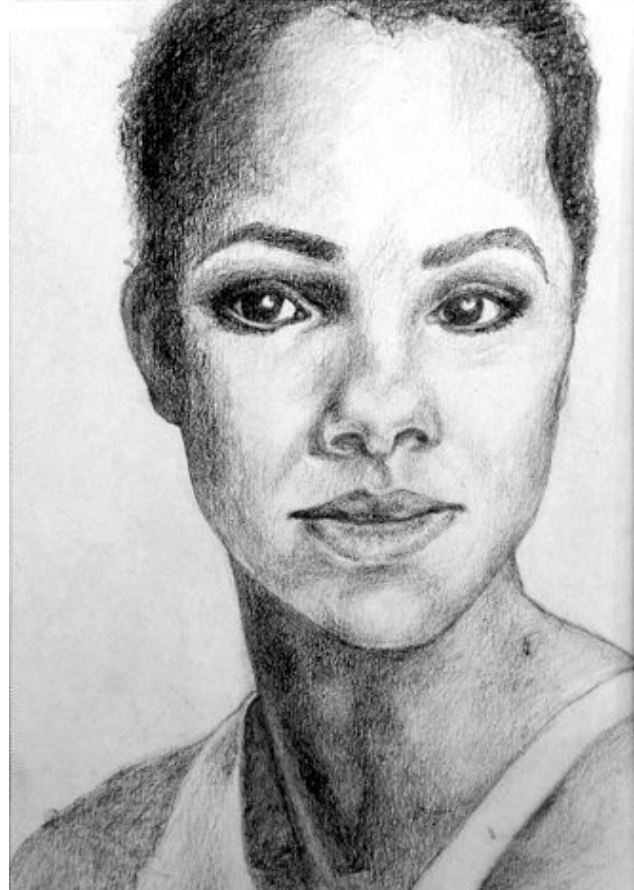


Misty Copeland

Born: September 10, 1982,
Kansas City, MO
[age 35 years]

Misty Copeland is the first African American Prima Ballerina at American Ballet Theater, one of the three top ballet companies in the US. She started her ballet career at age 13, quite late to begin. She was one of six kids raised by a single Mom. They struggled to get by. Misty discovered ballet at the Boys and Girls Club. Many people were introduced to her by the *Under Armour* TV commercial where she dances



with power and grace in a stark industrial setting, while her voice-over reads a rejection letter listing the body features that will prevent her from ever joining the “white world” of ballet. In spite of traditional exclusivity and negativity she persisted, and in July 2015 was chosen as Prima Ballerina at ABT. She also overcame her deep shyness and fear of public speaking to better connect with the next generation of young aspiring ballerinas. Misty also wrote her memoir *Life in Motion* and a second book *Ballerina Body*, and created a documentary *A Ballerina’s Tale*.