

CULTURAL
AMBASSADOR
TO THE WORLD

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ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

AILEY II | THE AILEY SCHOOL | AILEY ARTS IN EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS | AILEY EXTENSION

The Joan Weill Center for Dance 405 West 55th St, New York NY 10019-4402 (212) 405-9000 AlvinAiley.org

Robert Battle, Artistic Director Matthew Rushing, Associate Artistic Director Bennett Rink, Executive Director
Alvin Ailey, Founder Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER NATIONAL TOUR JANUARY 28 - MAY 8 CELEBRATES A DECADE OF ROBERT BATTLE'S LEADERSHIP AND 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALVIN AILEY'S CRY

Over a Dozen Dynamic Works Featuring Premieres of Robert Battle's *For Four* and
Ailey Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts' *Holding Space*

New Productions of Robert Battle's *Unfold* and *Pas de Duke*, *Reflections in D*, and *The River* from
Alvin Ailey's Legendary Collaboration with Duke Ellington

Return of Rennie Harris' Powerful *Lazarus* Featured in Acclaimed Ailey Documentary
Now Streaming on PBS and Hulu through February 11

NEW YORK – JANUARY 27, 2022 – Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, America's beloved cultural ambassador to the world, returns to stages on a coast-to-coast [National Tour](#) starting January 28 in Philadelphia, kicking off Black History Month at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. on February 1, and traveling to cities like Atlanta, Miami, Berkeley, Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles before the finale in Newark on May 8. Marking a decade of leading the Company forward, Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#) presents Ailey's renowned artists in a diverse repertoire of premieres, new productions, and Ailey classics. Highlights include a ***Battle 10th Anniversary program***; two world premieres adapted from video to stage, [For Four](#) by Robert Battle and [Holding Space](#) by Ailey Resident Choreographer [Jamar Roberts](#); the return of hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris's acclaimed [Lazarus](#); 50 Years of [Cry](#) commemorating Ailey's beloved classic dedicated to "all Black women everywhere—especially our mothers;" and *Ailey & Ellington*, spotlighting cherished classics from the series of more than a dozen ballets that Alvin Ailey created celebrating the musical genius of the eminent American composer Duke Ellington. Alvin Ailey's American masterpiece [Revelations](#), which has inspired generations through its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring spirituals since its creation in 1960, will reach all cities on the North American tour.

"Alvin Ailey's vision opened the door for generations of artists to use dance to inspire, unite, and enlighten," stated Artistic Director Robert Battle. "Despite the twists and turns on the road we have all traveled together, we continue to find new ways to share artistry that renews our spirit of courage, hope, and joy. I am deeply humbled to have led this seminal Company for a decade, joined by incomparable dancers and choreographers on a journey of discovery that extends from the powerful works of our founder to the important voices of today—an ongoing dance dialogue that shines a light on the strength and resilience of our common humanity around the world."

Two world premieres translated from dance films take center stage this season. Robert Battle's [*For Four*](#) captures the pent-up energy of a world cooped up during the pandemic set to a Wynton Marsalis delicious jazz score written in 4/4 time; and **Ailey Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts'** [*Holding Space*](#), which examines the ways in which we can collectively accommodate one another to better traverse this new and unprecedented terrain. Both pieces were created on video during the pandemic and are now seen for the first time on-stage during in-person performances.

The Battle 10th Anniversary program marks a decade of Artistic Director Robert Battle's visionary leadership that has moved the Company forward in exciting ways into a seventh decade. The evening-length program features a new production of his sensuous, swirling duet [*Unfold*](#), evoking the tenderness and ecstasy in Gustave Charpentier's aria "Depuis Le Jour" sung by the incomparable Leontyne Price. The evening also includes [*Ella*](#), [*For Four*](#), [*In/Side*](#), [*Love Stories*](#) finale, [*Mass*](#), and [*Takademe*](#).

Hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris' acclaimed [*Lazarus*](#), a powerful ensemble work inspired by the life and legacy of Alvin Ailey, will return to stages. The acclaimed creation of Ailey's first two-act ballet is featured in the must-see **AILEY** documentary that opened **the 36th season of PBS American Masters January 11, is now being re-broadcast** ([check local listings, pbs.org/ailey](https://www.pbs.org/ailey)), and is also available to [watch online for free through February 11](#). [Visit pbs.org for more information](#) to watch on the PBS Video app, Amazon Fire TV, Roku and more—or stream it on [Hulu](#) with your subscription. Director Jamila Wignot's resonant biography is told through Ailey's own words, along with interviews of those close to him, evocative archival footage, and historic performances.

50 Years of [*Cry*](#) celebrates Alvin Ailey's beloved classic dedicated to "all Black women everywhere—especially our mothers." The 16-minute tour-de-force solo, created on his stunning muse, [*Judith Jamison*](#), was an instant sensation when it debuted on May 4, 1971, at New York City Center and went on to become an enduring work of American art. Ms. Jamison has since taught the treasured role to subsequent generations of Ailey women, such as [*Jacqueline Green*](#), who is seen performing the iconic work in the current Netflix film "[*Really Love*](#)."

Ailey & Ellington spotlights **new productions** of [*Pas de Duke*](#), [*Reflections in D*](#), and [*The River*](#)—three cherished gems from the over a dozen ballets Alvin Ailey created that celebrate the musical genius of the eminent American composer Duke Ellington and have become cherished Ailey classics. *Pas de Duke* was Alvin Ailey's modern dance translation of a classical pas de deux honoring two of the most renowned dancers in the world, Judith Jamison and Mikhail Baryshnikov. *Reflections in D* highlights the grace of the male dancer in a stunning, masterful expression of Duke Ellington's composition. Originally choreographed in 1970 for American Ballet Theatre and first performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1980, *The River* combines classical ballet, modern dance, and jazz in sections suggesting tumbling rapids and slow currents on a voyage to the great sea, mirroring the journey of human existence.

Additional Tour Activities

To help introduce young audiences to the magic of Ailey wherever they are, **starting during Black History Month a virtual school-time performance will be made available to students.** Filmed at New York City Center, the educational experience moderated by Artistic Director Robert Battle welcomes viewers behind the scenes to see the elements and hear from the people who create an Ailey experience. Special performances of classic works that Alvin Ailey created based upon his “blood memories” of growing up in rural Texas are featured with excerpts of [Blues Suite](#) and the must-see masterpiece *Revelations*.

The Ailey Organization continues its mission of using dance to educate young people through special activities, including **master classes, student performances, and innovative curriculum-based residencies for public students.** [Revelations: An Interdisciplinary Approach residency](#) utilizes Alvin Ailey's signature work, *Revelations*, as the inspirational framework for a comprehensive study of language arts, social studies, and dance. The innovative program actively engages participants in a process of reflecting, discussing, creating, performing, and assessing, while exploring the life story of Alvin Ailey and *Revelations*.

[The Ailey School](#), the official school of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater offering world-class dance training to students ages 3-25, **will conduct auditions for the 2022-2023 academic programs as well as the 2022 summer intensive** at tour cities including **Atlanta, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and Philadelphia.** The mission of The Ailey School is to make dance accessible to outstanding students through a curriculum of rigorous and diversified dance training. Nearly 80% of current Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater members received their pre-professional training from The Ailey School. For further information regarding the audition schedule, please click [here](#).

Calendar Listing Information

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, one of the world’s most beloved dance companies, embarks on a national tour January 28 – May 8, 2022. Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle, who marks a decade of leading the Company forward, Ailey’s extraordinary dancers move audiences with world premieres, new productions, repertory favorites, and classics like the American masterpiece *Revelations*, acclaimed as a must-see for all. A visionary choreographer who used his artistry to change American dance and culture, Alvin Ailey is the focus of the acclaimed new documentary film *AILEY*, [streaming on PBS](#) and *Hulu* thru February 11, which explores the man, his work and its powerful legacy which continues today in the inspiring performances of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

For additional information, visit www.alvinailey.org. Press materials and photos are available at pressroom.alvinailey.org.

2021 Tour Dates and Venues (subject to change)

January 28-30	Philadelphia, PA	Academy of Music, Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts 240 S Broad St, Philadelphia, PA US
February 1-6	Washington, DC	The Kennedy Center 2700 F Street, Washington, D.C.

February 10-13	Atlanta, GA	Fox Theatre 660 Peachtree Street Northeast, Atlanta, GA
February 15-16	Charleston, SC	Charleston Gaillard Center 95 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC
February 18-19	Houston, TX	Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts 615 Louisiana Street, Houston, TX
February 22-23	Orlando, FL	Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts 445 S. Magnolia Avenue, Orlando, FL
February 25-26	Miami, FL	Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts 1300 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL
March 1	Madison, WI	Overture Center for the Arts 201 State Street, Madison, WI
March 2-6	Chicago, IL	Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 East Ida B. Wells Drive, Chicago, IL
March 26-27	Seattle, WA	The Paramount Theatre 911 Pine Street, Seattle, WA
March 29- April 3	Berkeley, CA	Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley 101 Zellerbach Hall, Berkeley, CA
April 6-10	Los Angeles, CA	Dorothy Chandler Pavillion at the LA Music Center 135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA
April 13-14	Santa Barbara, CA	The Granada Theatre, University of Santa Barbara 1214 State St, Santa Barbara, CA
April 20	Milwaukee, WI	Marcus Performing Arts Center 929 N Water St, Milwaukee, WI
April 22-24	Cleveland, OH	Playhouse Square KeyBank State Theatre 1519 Euclid Ave, Cleveland, OH
April 26	Amherst, MA	Fine Arts Center Concert Hall, University of Massachusetts 151 Presidents Dr, Amherst, MA
April 28-May 1	Boston, MA	The Boch Center Wang Theatre 270 Tremont St, Boston, MA
May 3-4	Chapel Hill, NC	Memorial Hall, University of North Carolina 114 E Cameron Ave, Chapel Hill, NC
May 6-8	Newark, NJ	Prudential Hall, New Jersey Performing Arts Center 1 Center St, Newark, NJ

WORLD PREMIERES

[For Four](#) (2021 World Premiere)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music: Wynton Marsalis

Take four amazing Ailey dancers and add in Wynton Marsalis' delicious jazz score—written in 4/4 time—and you'll understand why Robert Battle cheekily titled this exuberant short work *For Four*. Capturing the pent-up energy of a world cooped up during the pandemic, Battle expresses the drive to perform and the electricity of dancers coming together to create.

[Holding Space](#) (2021 World Premiere)

Choreography by Jamar Roberts

Music: Tim Hecker

Against a backdrop of civil unrest and our relentless threat upon the natural world, *Holding Space* examines the ways in which we are taking care. It asks: in what ways can we collectively accommodate one another to better traverse this new and unprecedented terrain? The work itself functions as a container, a sacred space created to give shape to, and hold, the complex emotions of this moment. At its core, it is about healing and the quest for sustainable pathways towards wholeness.

NEW PRODUCTIONS

[Pas de Duke](#) (1976 / New Production 2021)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey

Music: Duke Ellington

Pas de Duke was Alvin Ailey's modern dance translation of a classical pas de deux honoring two of the most renowned dancers in the world, Judith Jamison and Mikhail Baryshnikov and celebrating the musical genius of the late Duke Ellington (1899-1974). It was originally presented as part of the festival "Ailey Celebrates Ellington" at Lincoln Center's New York State Theater in 1976, commemorating the nation's bicentennial with America's two great art forms—modern dance and jazz music. Ailey choreographed five sections capturing the sassy sophistication of "The Duke's" jazz music: the introduction to "Such Sweet Thunder" (1957); the pas de deux to "Sonnet for Caesar" (1975); the male solo to "Sonnet for Hank Cinq" (1957); the female solo to "Unclothed Woman" (1948); and the finale to "Old Man's Blues" (1930), which captured the exuberance of the star dancers' qualities and techniques as the male and female soloists mirror each other toe-to-toe and line-for-line in this playful, good-natured competition. Robert Battle comments: "Created especially for Judith Jamison and Mikhail Baryshnikov—reigning stars at the time from parallel worlds of dance—*Pas de Duke* springs from Alvin Ailey's interest in many things when it came to dance and music, as well as his appreciation and ability to showcase great dancers. He took the ballet pas de deux formula and had a play with it, still using some of the balletic motifs but adding in elements of jazz and other forms of contemporary dance."

[Reflections in D](#) (1962 / New Production 2021)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey

Music: Duke Ellington

Alvin Ailey originally created this strong yet serene solo in 1962. The ballet is a stunning, masterful expression of Duke Ellington's composition, highlighting the power and grace of the male dancer.

[The River](#) (1970 / New Production 2021)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey

Original Score: Duke Ellington

Alvin Ailey's acclaimed collaboration with the musical genius Duke Ellington, it was choreographed and composed in 1970 for American Ballet Theatre and first performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1980. One of 14 dances Ailey created to Ellington's music, *The River* was Ellington's first symphonic score written specifically for dance. Combining classical ballet, modern dance and jazz, the suite suggests tumbling rapids and slow currents on its voyage to the great sea, mirroring the journey of life. With Ailey's mixture of light and fun yet dark and romantic choreography balanced with Ellington's score, the work is an abstract celebration of birth, life, and rebirth. Robert Battle comments: "Originally created for American Ballet Theatre, *The River* is from Alvin Ailey's unforgettable collaboration with the great American composer Duke Ellington. It shows his range as a choreographer, and certainly the versatility of the dancers. Mr. Ailey always seemed to have a passport through all the different genres of dance while still retaining his essence."

[Unfold](#) (2007/ New Production 2021)

Choreography: Robert Battle

Music: Gustave Charpentier, Recorded by Leontyne Price

Artistic Director Robert Battle's sensuous, swirling duet evokes the tenderness and ecstasy in Gustave Charpentier's aria "Depuis Le Jour" sung by the incomparable Leontyne Price. With its fluid grace, this gem exemplifies the choreographer's skill for nuanced gesture and vivid imagery.

RETURNING FAVORITES

[BUSK](#) (2009 / 2019 Company Premiere)

Choreography by Aszure Barton

Music: Marcus Vinicius da Cruz de M. Morales, August Soderman, Ljova, Camille Saint-Saëns, Moondog, Daniel Belanger

Internationally renowned choreographer Aszure Barton invites us to enjoy the fragility, tenderness, and resilience that exist within the human experience. Set to a spirited score, *BUSK* has been described as watching the physical unfurling of the human psyche. Under Barton's direction, every facet of the dancers' bodies and minds are engaged, and the complex layering of movement reveals the inherent wisdom of the body. The dancers must tap into the collective—a hive mind—in order to execute Barton's layered and intricate choreographic structures that then give way to the nuance of each individual. The audience is invited into the work and the performers—as they are—are celebrated as enough.

[Cry](#) (1971)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, Voices of East Harlem

In 1971, Alvin Ailey choreographed the ballet *Cry* as a birthday present for his mother on his stunning muse, the legendary Judith Jamison, who has taught the treasured role to subsequent generations of Ailey women. This physically and emotionally demanding tour-de-force 16-minute solo—dedicated to "all black women everywhere—especially our mothers"—went on to become an enduring work of American art. Made up of three parts—the first is set to Alice Coltrane's "Something about John Coltrane," the second to Laura Nyro's "Been on a Train," and the last has the Voices of East Harlem singing "Right On, Be Free."

[Lazarus](#) (2018)

Choreography by Rennie Harris

Music: Darrin Ross, Nina Simon, Terence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka, Odetta

Inspired by the life and legacy of Mr. Ailey, hip hop choreographer Rennie Harris—the organization's inaugural Artist-in-Residence—connects past and present in a powerful ensemble work that addresses the racial inequities America faced when Mr. Ailey founded this company in 1958 and still faces today. The Company's first two-act ballet, *Lazarus* is set to a soundtrack produced by Darrin Ross, with his original music, and featuring Nina Simone, Terence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka, Odetta, spoken text written and adapted by Rennie Harris that is performed by Wadud Ahmad, Rennie Harris, as well as the voice of Alvin Ailey.

[Shelter](#) (1988 / Company Premiere 1992 / New Production 2017)

Choreography by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

Music: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn

Originally performed by the Ailey company in 1992, Zollar's *Shelter* is a gripping portrait of homelessness and displacement. Set to an inventive score which incorporates drumming by Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn and poetry by Hattie Gossett and Laurie Carlos, *Shelter* delivers the compelling message that the poverty of individuals will inevitably lead to the destitution of all humanity.

SIGNATURE MASTERPIECE

[Revelations](#) (1960)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Traditional Spirituals

More than just a popular dance work, *Revelations* has become a cultural treasure, beloved by generations of fans and acclaimed as a must-see for all. Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece is a tribute to his heritage. Using African American spirituals, the work fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul. Seeing *Revelations* for the first time or the hundredth can be a transcendent experience. Audiences cheer, sing along, and dance in their seats from the opening notes of the plaintive "I Been 'Buked" to the rousing "Wade in the Water" and the triumphant finale, "Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham."

***All Programming – Subject to Change**

Season Repertory

In addition to the premieres, new productions, and special programs, the season repertory includes:

Blues Suite – Alvin Ailey (1958)

Music: Traditional, Brother John Sellers

Ella – Robert Battle (2016)

Music: Ella Fitzgerald

In/Side – Robert Battle (2008)

Music: Nina Simone

Love Stories finale – Robert Battle (2004)

Music: Stevie Wonder

Mass – Robert Battle (2017)

Music: John Mackey

Takademe – Robert Battle (2012)

Music: Sheila Chandra

Bank of America is Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's National Tour Sponsor.

The 2022 National Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The creation of *Holding Space* is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.

Holding Space is supported by commissioning funds from Cal Performances at the University of California, Berkeley.

Leadership support for the world premiere of *Holding Space* and *For Four* is provided by Pamela D. Zilly & John H. Schaefer.

The world premiere of *Holding Space* is made possible with major support from Peter S. Croncota, Michele & Timothy Barakett, Crawford Parker, M.D., and Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach.

Holding Space is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The world premiere of *For Four* is made possible with major support from Melinda & Paul Pressler, Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn & Nicolas S. Rohatyn, The Ellen Jewett & Richard L. Kauffman New Works Endowment Fund, Elaine & Lawrence J. Rothenberg, Denise Littlefield Sobel, and the Red Moose Charitable Fund.

For Four is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Support for the *Pas de Duke* was provided by The Ellen Jewett & Richard L. Kauffman New Works Endowment Fund, and Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach.

The original Ailey production of *Pas de Duke* was made possible, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts, and by a grant from the Ford Foundation.

Generous support for the original production of *Pas de Duke* was also received from Laren and Jesse Brill.

Generous support for this production of *The River* was provided by Celestine & Howard Campbell.

Support for the original production of *Unfold* was received from Elma Linz Kanefield.

Leadership support for this production of *Unfold* is provided by The Pamela D. Zilly & John H. Schaefer Endowment Fund.

This production of *Unfold* was made possible with generous support from Judith McDonough Kaminski & Joseph Kaminski.

ABOUT ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congressional resolution as a vital American "Cultural Ambassador to the World," grew from a now-fabled March 1958 performance in New York that changed forever the perception of American dance. Founded by Alvin Ailey, posthumous recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom —the nation's highest civilian honor—and guided by Judith Jamison beginning in 1989, the Company is now led by Robert Battle, whom Judith Jamison chose to succeed her on July 1, 2011. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 25 million people in 71 countries on six continents, promoting the uniqueness of the African American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. In addition to being the Principal Dance Company of New York City Center, where its performances have become a year-end tradition, the Ailey company performs annually at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, The Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley, CA, and at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark (where it is the Principal Resident Affiliate), and appears frequently in other major theaters throughout the world during extensive yearly tours. The Ailey organization also includes Ailey II (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School (1969), one of the most extensive dance training programs in the world; Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs, which brings dance into the classrooms, communities and lives of people of all ages; and The Ailey Extension (2005), a program offering dance and fitness classes to the general public, which began with the opening of Ailey's permanent home—the largest building dedicated to dance in New York City, the dance capital of the world—named The Joan Weill Center for Dance, at 55th Street at 9th Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.