



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

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CULTURAL
AMBASSADOR
OF THE
WORLD

Robert Battle, Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director Bennett Rink, Executive Director
Alvin Ailey, Founder Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S "MODERN AMERICAN SONGBOOK" OPENING NIGHT GALA BENEFIT PERFORMANCE AND PARTY HONORS BOARD PRESIDENT DEBRA L. LEE – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH AT 7PM

Honorary Chairs are Music and Film Stars Queen Latifah and Janelle Monáe

One-Night-Only Performance Features Excerpts of Works Set to Music by Soul Icons Including
Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, and Earth, Wind & Fire, and Closes with a
Live Music Performance of Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*

Celebration Launches Ailey's New York City Center Holiday Season, November 29 – December 31

(New York) November 9, 2017 – On Wednesday, November 29th at 7pm, [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's](http://www.alvinailey.org) five-week holiday season kicks off with a star-studded gala benefit, including a performance at New York City Center and party at the New York Hilton Midtown Grand Ballroom. The Gala honors Ailey Board President **Debra L. Lee** (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of BET Networks) for her commitment to the advancement of arts and culture and her dedication to the organization, which has helped steer Ailey to success since she joined the Board in 2002. Honorary Chairs for the evening are music and film stars **Queen Latifah** and **Janelle Monáe**. Queen Latifah is an actress, singer, songwriter and producer and has earned numerous awards including a Grammy, an Emmy, and a Golden Globe. Singer-songwriter Janelle Monáe, a six-time Grammy nominee, rose to silver screen fame last year in the Academy Award nominated film *Hidden Figures* and Best Picture winner *Moonlight*.

The one-night-only program features excerpts of dynamic works set to music by soul icons: George Faison's *Suite Otis* (Otis Redding), *Love Stories* by Judith Jamison, Robert Battle, and Rennie Harris (Stevie Wonder), Camille Brown's *The Groove to Nobody's Business* (Ray Charles), and David Parson's *Shining Star* (Earth, Wind & Fire). The performance culminates with Alvin Ailey's masterpiece, [Revelations](#), performed with live musicians and singers. Prominent figures in the worlds of entertainment, business, philanthropy and politics will join Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#) and dancers for dinner and dancing to live music in the New York Hilton Midtown's Grand Ballroom following the performance.

The Gala benefits the creation of new works, scholarships to The Ailey School, and Ailey's educational programs for young people. **Deedra & Bob Bakish, Emily & Len Blavatnik, Paulette & Howard Bradnock, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach, and Joan & Sandy Weill** will serve as **Co-Chairs for the Gala**. Call 212-405-9031 for tickets.

Ailey's holiday season of new works and returning favorites also features special programs such as an evening Celebrating the Men of Ailey; All Ailey, All Jazz, and All New programs; a Christmas Eve performance; and culminates with a New Year's Eve Season Finale. Click [here](#) for more information. Tickets for season performances start at \$29, and are on sale at the New York City Center Box Office, through CityTix® at (212) 581-1212, or online at www.alvinailey.org or www.nycitycenter.org.



(L to R); AAADT with live onstage music in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, photo by Christopher Duggan; Photo by Paul Kolnik; Ailey Artistic Director Robert Battle and Board President Debra L. Lee at the 2016 Gala. Photo by Christopher Duggan. AAADT's Linda Celeste Sims and Glenn Allen Sims in David Parsons's *Shining Star*.

(CTRL+ CLICK ON PHOTOS FOR HI-RES DOWNLOAD) – Please credit photos.

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York Winter Season.

American Express is the Official Card of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo, North America during the New York Winter Season.

Opening Night Gala Benefit Sponsors: Emily & Len Blavatnik, BNY Mellon, Debra L. Lee/BET Networks, Viacom, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach, Joan & Sandy Weill and The Weill Family Foundation.

***Love Stories* was created through the Ailey New Works Fund, supported by Altria Group, Inc.; the Ailey New Choreography Initiative, sponsored by AT&T; and with major support provided by Ford Foundation. Additional funding was provided by The Harkness Foundation for Dance.**

The 2017 season is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

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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, recent 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 6 continents – as well as millions more through television broadcasts, film screenings, and online platforms - 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 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County in Miami, 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 United States and 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.