



# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CULTURAL  
AMBASSADOR  
TO 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 ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ROBERT BATTLE ANNOUNCES PROGRAMMING FOR LINCOLN CENTER ENGAGEMENT JUNE 14 – 18

Seven Performances on the David H. Koch Theater Stage Feature a Company Premiere by  
Robert Battle and Three Exciting Programs with Works by Seven Choreographers

**MUSICAL INSPIRATIONS:** Company Premiere of Robert Battle's *Mass* with Original Score Performed Live, and  
Birth Centennial Celebrations of Jazz Legends Dizzy Gillespie and Ella Fitzgerald in  
Billy Wilson's *The Winter in Lisbon* and Battle's *Ella*

**GLOBAL VOICES:** Dynamic Works by European Choreographers – Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep*, Set to Music by  
Ibeyi, and Johan Inger's *Walking Mad*

**BOLD VISIONS:** Recent World Premieres Shine a Spotlight on Society – Hope Boykin's *r-Evolution, Dream.*,  
Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America*, Examining the Impact of  
Incarceration on African-Americans

One-Night-Only Ailey Spirit Gala Benefit on Thursday, June 15

*Tickets starting at \$25 go on sale Monday, April 3!*

New York – March 30, 2017 – Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, beloved as one of the world's most popular dance companies, will return to Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts for a seven-performance engagement at the David H. Koch Theater June 14 – 18, 2017. Today, Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#) announced repertory for the season, which features the work of seven choreographers and recent premieres on three exciting programs, along with the Company debut of Battle's 2004 work *Mass*, set to an original score by John Mackey performed with live music. Alvin Ailey's must-see masterpiece *Revelations* is the uplifting finale of each performance.

The 2017 Lincoln Center engagement opens on **Wednesday, June 14** with the **Musical Inspirations** program, featuring the Ailey debut of Robert Battle's *Mass*, an ensemble work set to a score by his frequent collaborator John Mackey. Performed with six percussionists onstage, *Mass* showcases Battle's signature ritualistic choreography. The program also includes works that pay tribute to jazz legends during their centennials – Battle's 2016 Company premiere *Ella*, set to Ella Fitzgerald's virtuosic scatting in "Air Mail Special"; and the 2016 new production of Billy Wilson's [The Winter in Lisbon](#), a rhythmic and colorful celebration of the great Dizzy Gillespie. Musical Inspirations repeats on the Family Matinee Saturday, June 17 at 2pm, followed by a free Q&A with the Ailey dancers.

On **Thursday, June 15 at 7pm**, **The Ailey Spirit Gala** benefit honoring Board Vice Chairman **Stephen Meringoff** will raise vital funds to support scholarships for talented students of The Ailey School and Ailey's extensive Arts In Education & Community Programs. Along with the world-renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the one-night-only benefit performance will include the rising stars of **Ailey II**, gifted young dancers from **The Ailey School**, and blossoming students from **AileyCamp**. A soirée on the promenade follows. Tickets are available online at [alvinailey.org/ailey-spirit-gala](http://alvinailey.org/ailey-spirit-gala) or by calling 212-405-9031.

In the **Global Voices** program on **Friday, June 16**, the versatile Ailey dancers will perform dynamic works by two of Europe's most in-demand choreographers: Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep*, set to the soulful music of rising global stars Ibeyi; and Johan Inger's 2016 Company premiere *Walking Mad*, a daring, humorous and poignant take on Maurice Ravel's *Boléro* that imaginatively employs a movable wall. Global Voices repeats on Sunday, June 18 at 7:30pm.

The **Bold Visions** program on **Saturday, June 17 at 8pm** features recent world premieres that shine a spotlight on society and the African-American experience – a founding tenet of the Company. Ailey dancer Hope Boykin's *r-Evolution, Dream*. was inspired by the speeches and sermons of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that she encountered during a visit to the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta during the Company's annual U.S. tour. The large ensemble work melds creative storytelling with new music by Ali Jackson (Jazz at Lincoln Center) and historical and original writings narrated by Tony Award winner Leslie Odom, Jr. (*Hamilton*). MacArthur "Genius" Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America* focuses on the impact of the prison system on African-American families. Developed over three seasons, the haunting production features interviews by those affected by incarceration and Abraham's signature avant-garde aesthetic. Bold Visions repeats on Sunday, June 18 at 3pm.

Following the Lincoln Center engagement, the Company will embark on an **International Tour** from **July 4 – September 10** with performances in **Paris, Basel, Copenhagen**, and five cities across **Germany**. The Paris engagement will mark the first dance performance at **La Seine Musicale**, a new venue on an island in the Seine, set to open next month. Programming for Ailey's 2017 International Tour will be announced soon.

**Tickets for the Lincoln Center engagement starting at \$25 can be purchased starting on Monday, April 3** at the David H. Koch Box Office, by phone at 212-496-0600, and online at [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org). For further information about discounts for groups, students, and Ailey's tour performances, please visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org). **The program schedule is detailed below.**

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is currently on a 19-city coast-to-coast national tour that ends in the tri-state area on Mother's Day weekend **May 12 – 14 at the beautiful Prudential Hall of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center** in Newark, where Ailey is the Principal Resident Affiliate. For schedule and tickets, visit [www.njpac.org](http://www.njpac.org).

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo.**

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

**Wells Fargo is the Opening Night Sponsor of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York Spring Season.**

**The World Premiere of *Untitled America* is made possible by Denise R. Sobel and Tikkun Olam Foundation, Inc.**

**The creation of *Untitled America* is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.**

**Generous support for *Untitled America* is also provided, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.**

**The creation of *r-Evolution, Dream* is supported by commissioning funds from The Music Center.**

**Bank of America is the Tour Sponsor of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.**

**The 2017 North American Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.**

**The 2017 spring 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.**



(L to R) AAADT's Danica Paulos, Solomon Dumas, and Company in Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; AAADT in Billy Wilson's *Winter in Lisbon*. Photo by Teresa Wood taken at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; AAADT's Linda Celeste Sims. Photo by Andrew Eccles. AAADT's Chalvar Monteiro, Ghrai DeVore, Jamar Roberts in Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; **CTRL+ CLICK ON PHOTOS FOR HI-RES DOWNLOAD** - Please Credit Photos

## CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**, beloved as one of the world's most popular dance companies, **will present a seven-performance engagement at Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater June 14 – 18, 2017**. Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle, Ailey's acclaimed dancers will perform a diverse repertory by seven choreographers featuring recent premieres and the Company debut of Battle's ensemble work *Mass*. In addition to *Mass*, performed to live music, the **Musical Inspirations** program celebrates jazz legends during their centennials with Billy Wilson's *The Winter in Lisbon*, a tribute to Dizzy Gillespie, and Robert Battle's *Ella*, set to Ella Fitzgerald's "Airmail Special." **Global Voices** includes dynamic pieces by European choreographers Mauro Bigonzetti (*Deep*, with music by Ibeyi) and Johan Inger (*Walking Mad*, a daring take on Ravel's Bolero). **Bold Visions** shines a spotlight on society with Hope Boykins' *r-Evolution*, *Dream.*, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America*, examining the impact of incarceration on African-American families. Each program closes with the always uplifting finale of *Revelations*. **The Ailey Spirit Gala** benefit performance on **Thursday, June 15**, features the world-renowned Ailey dancers, and appearances by the rising stars of Ailey II, gifted dancers from The Ailey School, and talented students from AileyCamp, followed by a soirée on the promenade. **Performance tickets starting at \$25 go on sale on Monday, April 3** and can be purchased at the David H. Koch Box Office, by phone at 212-496-0600, or online at [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org). Student tickets *may* be available on the day of the performance for \$15 at the box office with a valid student ID (one per student – subject to availability). On Saturday, June 17, bring the whole family to enjoy the matinee and stay afterward for a free Q&A with the Ailey dancers in the theater. Additional discounts for groups of 10 or more are now available by phone 212-405-9082 or e-mail [groupsales@alvinailey.org](mailto:groupsales@alvinailey.org). For further information about Ailey's performances, please visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**  
**June 14 – 18, 2017 at Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater**  
**20 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY (Columbus Avenue at 63<sup>rd</sup> Street)**  
**(212) 496-0600 / [www.davidhkotheater.com](http://www.davidhkotheater.com)**

### Programming – Subject to Change

**Musical Inspirations:** *The Winter in Lisbon* / *Mass* / *Ella*, *Revelations*

Wednesday, 6/14 at 7:30pm, Saturday, 6/17 at 2:00pm\*

**The Ailey Spirit Gala:** Performances by AileyCamp, The Ailey School, Ailey II & Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, incl. *Revelations*

Thursday, 6/15 at 7:00pm

**Global Voices:** *Deep* / *Walking Mad* / *Revelations*

Friday, 6/16 at 8:00pm, Sunday, 6/18 at 7:30pm

**Bold Visions** *r-Evolution*, *Dream.* / *Untitled America* / *Revelations*

Saturday, 6/17 at 8:00pm, Sunday, 6/18 at 3:00pm

\*Family Matinee - followed by a post-performance Q&A session with the dancers

### **PRESS:**

For additional press materials please visit the links below or [pressroom.alvinailey.org](http://pressroom.alvinailey.org)

[Photo/Video Document](#)

[Sizzle Reel For Broadcast](#)

[Electronic Press Kit](#)

## **The 2017 Lincoln Center Engagement Highlights**

Artistic Director Robert Battle and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will present a seven-performance engagement at Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater from June 14 – 18, 2017, featuring eight works on three different programs. Ailey's acclaimed dancers will perform a diverse repertory by seven choreographers including recent premieres and the Company debut of Robert Battle's *Mass*. In addition to *Mass*, performed with live music, the Musical Inspirations program celebrates jazz legend during their centennials in Billy Wilson's *The Winter in Lisbon*, a tribute to Dizzy Gillespie, and Robert Battle's *Ella*, set Ella Fitzgerald's "Airmail Special." The Global Voices program includes pieces by European choreographers Mauro Bigonzetti (*Deep*, set to music by Ibeyi) and Johan Inger (*Walking Mad*, a daring take on Ravel's Bolero). The Bold Visions program shines a spotlight on society with Hope Boykins' *r-Evolution, Dream.*, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America*, about the impact of incarceration on African-American families. Each program closes with an uplifting *Revelations* finale. The season includes The Ailey Spirit Gala benefit performance on Thursday, June 15, and a Family Matinee followed by a free dancer Q&A on Saturday, June 17.

### **COMPANY PREMIERE**

***Mass*** (2004 / 2017 Company Premiere)

**Choreography by Robert Battle**

**Music: John Mackey**

*Mass* features a score by John Mackey, who has collaborated on multiple occasions with Robert Battle – including his 2015 world premiere *Awakening* – performed live onstage by six percussionists. Commissioned for The Juilliard School in 2004, the movement in this work showcases Mr. Battle's signature ritualistic choreography.

### **2016-17 SEASON PREMIERES & NEW PRODUCTIONS**

***Deep*** (2016 World Premiere)

**Choreography by Mauro Bigonzetti**

**Music: Ibeyi**

Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep* is set to the soulful music of Ibeyi, twin sisters who sing in English and Yoruba ("Ibeyi" is the Yoruba word for twins). Bigonzetti's first work for the Company was 2008's *Festa Barocca*. He is known for his seamless integration of classical and modern techniques, and has been praised for his fresh and inventive sensibility.

***Untitled America*** (2016 World Premiere)

**Choreography by Kyle Abraham**

**Music: Laura Mvula, Raime, Traditional**

In this haunting work, MacArthur "Genius" Kyle Abraham shines a light on the impact of the prison system on African-American families. Developed over three seasons, the work features interviews by those impacted by incarceration. Laura Mvula's touching "Father, Father," the traditional spiritual "No More My Lord," contemporary music by Raime, and other musical compositions underscore Abraham's distinct movement style and signature avant-garde aesthetic. Wendy Perron of *Dance Magazine* praised the first installment of *Untitled America* by saying, "This is something our culture should be looking at...Kudos to Ailey—and Abraham—for keeping the revelations relevant."

***r-Evolution, Dream.*** (2016 World Premiere)

**Choreography by Hope Boykin**

**Music: Ali Jackson**

Veteran Company member Hope Boykin was inspired by the sermons and speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to create *r-Evolution, Dream.* after immersing herself in this historical material after a visit to the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, during Ailey's U.S. tour. Convinced of the timely relevance of the messages, she staged the large ensemble work that melds creative storytelling, new music composed by Ali Jackson (Jazz at Lincoln Center), and historic and original writings narrated by Tony Award winner Leslie Odom, Jr. (*Hamilton*).

***Ella*** (2008 / 2016 Company Premiere)

**Choreography by Robert Battle**

**Music: Ella Fitzgerald**

Originally created as a solo, this high-energy comical dance was reinvented as a duet by the Ailey company for its December 2016 Opening Night Gala benefit, "An Evening of Ailey and Jazz" – in anticipation of the legendary singer Ella Fitzgerald's centennial in April 2017. Using a live concert recording of Fitzgerald performing the song "Airmail Special," *Ella* matches the iconic singer's virtuosic scatting with lightning-fast, articulated movement in an irresistible tour-de-force that leaves audiences (and the dancers) breathless.



[Walking Mad](#) (2001 / 2016 Company Premiere)

**Choreography by Johan Inger**

**Music: Maurice Ravel, Arvo Pärt**

Revered Swedish choreographer Johan Inger's *Walking Mad* is his first work for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Set to the driving sounds of Ravel's much-loved *Boléro* as well as music by minimalist master Arvo Pärt, the rousing 28-minute work for 9 dancers grips audiences throughout, bringing waves of emotion – first laughter, then tears. Full of wit and laced with an unsettling edge of madness, the piece employs a long, movable wall that can also be viewed as a symbol of the barriers people construct in their relationships. According to the choreographer, "The famous *Boléro* from Ravel, with its sexual, almost kitschy history, was the trigger point to make my own version. I quickly decided that it was going to be about relationships in different forms and circumstances. I came up with the idea of a wall that could transform the space during this minimalistic music and create small pockets of space and situations. *Walking Mad* is a journey in which we encounter our fears, our longings and the lightness of being."

[The Winter in Lisbon](#) (1992 / New Production 2016)

**Choreography by Billy Wilson**

**Music: Dizzy Gillespie**

*The Winter in Lisbon* is a sizzling, sensuous ballet celebrating four decades of Dizzy Gillespie's brilliant music. Choreographed in 1992 by Billy Wilson, the work pays tribute to Mr. Gillespie, the consummate jazz musician, creating an atmosphere in which the dancers challenge, tease and romance against a backdrop of rhythm and color. Wilson's exuberant, playful ballet was conceived in celebration of Gillespie's birthday after Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison was approached by the musician's management to create a dance for his music. Confident in Wilson's ability to blend his eclectic ballet and modern dance training with the boisterous sound of Gillespie's music, Jamison commissioned him to bring the project to life. "It's a celebration of life," explains Ailey's Associate Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, who restaged the work. "It's fun, it's full of energy, it's about life going on."

**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***

**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, 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 55<sup>th</sup> Street at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).

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