

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

In/Side

(2008 / Ailey Company Premiere – 2009)

Choreography: Robert Battle

Music: Nina Simone

Lighting: Burke Wilmore

The vivid emotions of Nina Simone's "Wild is the Wind" play out in **Robert Battle's** gripping solo *In/Side*. The bold, unrestrained style that has become his signature is evinced in this visceral cry of pure physicality. The piece, originally commissioned by Dance New Amsterdam, was created as part of its annual series "In the Company of Men," a celebration of the spirit of male dancers in New York in light of the AIDS epidemic. The ballet was incorporated into the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater repertory in 2009.

"Mr. Battle is a skilled choreographer, and *In/Side* is a **worthy addition to the Ailey repertoire...people leaped to their feet.**"

The New York Times

"...intense and impactful...**mesmerizing** and **the audience roared its approval**"

The Miami Herald

"...the sort of **tour de force** that gets a **young choreographer and dancer noticed by the world.**"

The San Francisco Chronicle

"...another **spellbinding solo**...to Nina Simone's haunting "Wild is the Wind" ... swirling, twisting movements conveyed the irresistible passions the song's sultry lyrics suggest."

Las Vegas Review-Journal



AAADT's Samuel Lee Roberts in Robert Battle's *In/Side*.



Artistic Director Robert Battle. Photo by Andrew Eccles.

Robert Battle

Robert Battle became artistic director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in July 2011 after being personally selected by Judith Jamison, making him only the third person to head the Company since it was founded in 1958. Mr. Battle has a long-standing association with the Ailey organization.

A frequent choreographer and artist-in-residence at Ailey since 1999, he has set many of his works on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II, and at The Ailey School. The Company's current repertory includes his ballets *Ella*, *The Hunt*, *In/Side*, *No Longer Silent*, and *Mass* – a 2017 Company premiere. In addition to expanding the Ailey repertory with works by artists as diverse as Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Ronald K. Brown, Christopher Wheeldon, Rennie Harris, Hofesh Schechter, Jiří Kylián, Wayne McGregor, Robert Moses, Ohad Naharin, and Paul Taylor, Mr. Battle has also instituted the New Directions Choreography Lab to help develop the next generation of choreographers.

Mr. Battle's journey to the top of the modern dance world began in the Liberty City neighborhood of Miami, Florida. He showed artistic talent early and studied dance at a high school arts magnet program before moving on to Miami's New World School of the Arts, under the direction of Daniel Lewis and Gerri Houlihan, and finally to the dance program at The Juilliard School, under the direction of Benjamin Harkavy, where he met his mentor, Carolyn Adams. He danced

with the Parsons Dance Company from 1994 to 2001, and also set his choreography on that company starting in 1998. Mr. Battle then founded his own Battleworks Dance Company, which made its debut in 2002 in Düsseldorf, Germany, as the U.S. representative to the World Dance Alliance's Global Assembly. Battleworks subsequently performed extensively at venues including The Joyce Theater, Dance Theater Workshop, American Dance Festival, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

Mr. Battle was honored as one of the "Masters of African-American Choreography" by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2005, and he received the prestigious Statue Award from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA in 2007. In 2014, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of the Arts and visited the White House to accept from President Obama, on behalf of Alvin Ailey, the National Medal of Freedom – the nation's highest civilian honor. Mr. Battle was named a 2015 Visiting Fellow for The Art of Change, an initiative by the Ford Foundation. In October 2015, Simon & Schuster published *MY STORY, MY DANCE: Robert Battle's Journey to Alvin Ailey*, an inspiring children's book based on Mr. Battle's life. He is a sought-after keynote speaker and has addressed a number of high-profile organizations, including the United Nations Leaders Programme and the UNICEF Senior Leadership Development Programme.

In/Side
Music Credit Information

Song: Wild Is The Wind
Lyrics by: Ned Washington
Music by: Dimitri Tiomkin
Performed by: Nina Simone

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