In tumultuous times like these, dance is powerful and antidotal. After a year of touring and other celebratory initiatives, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is closing out its 60th anniversary season at home in New York with a slate of programming that celebrates its past, present and future. For the first time ever, the company is also running an “All Battle” program, which features work choreographed by Robert Battle, its current artistic director and the third in history.

“Dance is for everybody — Alvin Ailey believed that firmly,” Battle says. “The wonderful thing about dance is that we have the luxury of ambiguity. If I were to talk about dance sort of excels because it’s an act of resilience in and of itself. Dance comes from the people, that’s what Alvin Ailey said. It’s a metaphor for this company; to keep a certain sense of continuity, beyond the steps. So I think that dance is that time and the feelings that I had, that was nervous they’d be bored,” he adds. “Tonight I overheard it.”

The piece is based on its namesake percussive folk dance form brought over from Africa. “It’s a metaphor for this company to use your body as a way to deliver a message, your body is the instrument,” Battle says. “I don’t get to be in the studio as often because my job demands a lot of different things, so when I’m watching them I take me back to that time and the feelings that I had, and the intensity and the freedom. There was so much emotion, so when I’m watching I’m sort of reconnecting to all of that, and remembering the dancers that it was originally created on. So you’re going through a blend of what was on the dance floor memory lane in a very sensory way,” he continues. “I think it’s important to go back so that you don’t get complacent.”

Keeping the spirit, voice and mission of its founder paramount as the company continues to grow and move forward. “It started from one vision of the company when he knew he was dying, and she made sure that he remembered how this company expressed the Civil Rights Movement, that the company expressed the culture and tradition of African-Americans in this country — that was a statement in and of itself, at a time when there was discord. Not unlike now, but certainly very important at a time when you didn’t see the opportunities for dancers of color on the concert dance stage in an meaningful way.”

The key word for the company’s 60th season is “transcending,” and it has managed not only survive but thrive. The company moved into its permanent home, the Joan Weill Center for Dance, in 2005, which boasts light-filled studios and rehearsal spaces for its main company, junior company, and dance school for professional, pre-professional and adult students. In 2018, the center expanded, adding an extra 10,000 square feet. The company also continues to prioritize outreach programs, including the AileyCamp, a summer day camp for youth in underserved communities nationwide. “Judith Jamison — Alvin Ailey said it best, ‘Dance comes from the people, and should always be delivered back to the people.’”

Through Dec. 30, the company will stage new works by Rennie Harris, Ronald K. Brown and Wayne McGregor. The season will close out the year with its founder’s most recognizable work, “Revelations,” on site to honor resilience.

And perhaps the act of seeing this performance in the theater is an act of resilience in and of itself. “It fosters community, you’re having a shared experience!” Battle says. “These connections are very important, especially in times like these. There’s something in that, that is the way glue that holds us together. Because there’s something that is being reaffirmed in these moments, there’s something that you that opens up when you have that experience. I can’t define it, but I have.”

The modern dance company is celebrating its 60th anniversary season and is more timely than ever, says artistic director Robert Battle.