

Gary native honored to perform with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

By: Eloise Marie Valadez

March 4, 2018



Renaldo Maurice has been showcasing his talents with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for eight seasons.

Maurice, a Gary native, will perform with the full cast when the company brings its annual Chicago engagement March 7 to 11 to The Auditorium Theatre.

"We're on a 21-city tour," Maurice said, by phone, during a performance stop Thursday in Norfolk, Virginia.

The dancer, who formerly studied dance at South Shore Dance Alliance in Gary, began his work with the esteemed Ailey company as a member of the junior troupe Ailey II.

In addition to the company performances, Maurice often teaches master classes during the troupe's engagements in various cities. On March 10, he'll preside over a special master class at The Auditorium Theatre. He's previously taught an occasional master class at South Shore Dance Alliance.

Maurice will be in the Chicago area on Monday, a few days earlier than the Auditorium performances, and he said he plans to visit Gary that day.

"I'll be visiting Mr. Brewer (of South Shore Dance Alliance) and the students," he said, adding there's no specific class or anything scheduled for that particular visit right now.

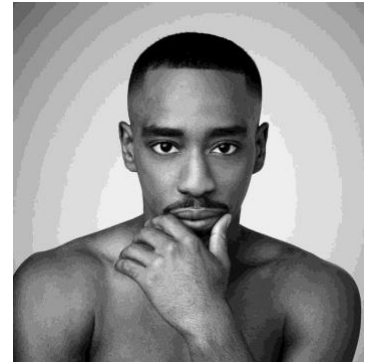
Maurice still has family members, including his grandmother and uncle, who live in the Region.

The dancer always looks forward to Ailey's annual Chicago performances.

"I'll have the opportunity to do a lot of dancing in Chicago," Maurice said, He's scheduled to perform in many of the pieces on the company's program this season.

Among works featured are Chicago choreographer Talley Beatty's "Stack-Up." "It's inspired by a Los Angeles urban landscape and is very jazzy and old school," Maurice said. "Stack-Up features music by Earth, Wind and Fire.

Other pieces on the program include the Chicago premiere of company member Jamar Roberts' "Members Don't Get Weary," Gustavo Ramirez Sansano's "Victoria," Twyla Tharp's "The Golden Section," and the acclaimed "Revelations," which ends every Ailey performance.



Maurice said it's been a rewarding experience dancing in the Ailey company.

"Most of all, out of everything, I've learned about growth. It's helped me to grow as a human being and as a dancer," he said. "And dance has showed me a different way to love." In today's world, Maurice said, it's important to be able to share the art of dance with others.

"Dance can affect someone in a good way without having a conversation with them...I know I have a responsibility as a dancer and as an entertainer to continue to give back to the world."



Maurice said during any of the master classes he teaches, there's usually time for a Q & A with students. "We talk a lot about discipline, determination and dedication during the Q & A," he said.

FYI: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will perform March 7 to 11 at The Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Parkway, Chicago. Call (312) 341-2300 or visit AuditoriumTheatre.org. Also call for more information on the March 10 master class with Maurice at The Auditorium Theatre.