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AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

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**ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S AILEY ASCENDING 60th ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION INCLUDES A LANDMARK SEASON AT NEW YORK CITY CENTER
NOVEMBER 28 – DECEMBER 30**

Five-Week Holiday Engagement Features World Premieres of Ronald K. Brown's *The Call* and Rennie Harris' *Lazarus*, Company Premiere of Wayne McGregor's *Kairos*, New Production of Robert Battle's *Juba*, and *Timeless Ailey* Program of Rarely Seen Works by Alvin Ailey

Multimedia Work *Becoming Ailey* Brings Presence of Legendary Founder Back to the Stage

Tickets starting at \$29 are on sale now!

November 6, 2018 (NEW YORK CITY) — Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, New York City Center's Principal Dance Company, returns to the theater's stage from November 28 – December 30, 2018 for a milestone season. During the Company's ***Ailey Ascending 60th Anniversary*** celebration, Artistic Director Robert Battle leads Ailey's 32 extraordinary dancers during this five-week holiday engagement that will elevate a legacy of excellence in artistry with premieres by some of today's most revered and prolific choreographers, including world premieres by **Rennie Harris** and **Ronald K. Brown**; a company premiere by **Wayne McGregor**; a new production of by **Robert Battle**; the return of a recent premiere by **Jessica Lang**, and special performances of rarely seen works by **Alvin Ailey** himself.

The New York City Center season launches on **Wednesday, November 28th** with a **[60th Anniversary Opening Night Gala](#)** benefit performance, followed by a party at the New York Hilton Grand Ballroom. Honorary Chairs for the gala are iconic screen stars **Angela Bassett** and **Cicely Tyson**. The one-night-only performance features special excerpts and premieres, including a piece d'occasion by Robert Battle set to Nina Simone's *Black is the Color*, and an uplifting *Revelations* finale performed with live musicians and special guest singers **Ledisi** (12-time Grammy-nominated R&B artist), **Norm Lewis** (Tony-nominated baritone known for Broadway's *Porgy and Bess* and NBC's live broadcast of *Jesus Christ Superstar*), and **Brandie Sutton** (critically-acclaimed Metropolitan Opera soprano). The evening honors **Prudential Financial** for its generous support and longstanding commitment to Ailey, especially its educational and community programs. The special program will feature the premiere of ***Becoming Ailey***, a **multimedia piece** celebrating the continual gift of Alvin Ailey's presence in our hearts, minds, and stages. Created in collaboration with the award-winning artists Bob Bonniol and Caryl Glabb of MODE Studios, Inc., it will bring the voice and presence of Alvin Ailey back to the stage at the start of each performance (except Tuesday, December 11th) during the New York City Center season.

On **Friday, November 30th**, Ailey unveils its first ever two-act ballet with the world premiere of Rennie Harris' ***Lazarus***. Inspired by the life and legacy of Mr. Ailey and addressing the racial inequities our nation has faced, in 1958 when the company was founded and today, *Lazarus* is an ensemble work featuring a soundtrack that melds Nina Simone, Terrence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka, Odetta, original music by Darrin Ross, and the voice of Alvin Ailey. Harris is also currently serving as Ailey's first **Artist-in-Residence**, leading a wide range of activities across the organization: including The Ailey School, Ailey II, Arts-in-Education, Ailey Extension, and the New Directions Choreography Lab.

Tuesday, December 4th welcomes the world premiere of ***The Call***, Ronald K. Brown's seventh work for Ailey. Brown describes the work, which seamlessly blends modern and West African dance idioms, as "a love letter to Mr. Ailey." The music includes Johann Sebastian Bach (performed by Chris Thile, Edgar Meyere & Yo-Yo Ma), Mary Lou Williams, and Asase Yaa. Prior to the work's premiere, Brown will receive the **2018 Dance Magazine Award** on December 3rd.

On **Friday, December 7th**, **Wayne McGregor's** work takes the Ailey stage once again with [Kairos](#), his second Company premiere (following 2013's *Chroma*). The title has dual meanings – one being the most opportune time to act, the other weather – and is set to Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, re-imagined by experimental composer Max Richter. Framed by Idris Khan's dramatic set design, *Kairos* features McGregor's angular yet sinuous movement on a cast of 10.

The season also welcomes the return of **Jessica Lang's** luminous 2018 premiere [EN](#). Lang's 100th ballet and her Ailey choreographic debut, *EN* is a celebratory ensemble work set to original music by composer Jakub Ciupinski, with costumes by Bradon McDonald.

Following these world and Company premieres, two weeks of special programs kick off on **Tuesday, December 11** with a commemoration of City Center's opening performance in 1943, as part of the theater's 75th Anniversary celebration. The Principal Dance Company of New York City Center, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has been bringing audiences there to their feet since 1971, when it became this historic theater's first resident modern dance company. The program will include Paul Taylor's *Piazzolla Caldera*, Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section*, and Alvin Ailey's masterpiece, *Revelations*.

The special programs continue on **Wednesday, December 12th** with the premiere of *Timeless Ailey*, a thrilling evening featuring two acts of rarely seen excerpts from works by the Company's founder – including *Streams*, *Pas de Duke*, *The Lark Ascending*, *For "Bird" – With Love*, and many more. The program culminates with a performance of Ailey's *Revelations*, and repeats on December 15, 22 (mat and eve), and 30 (mat).

On **Friday December 14th**, the *Three Visionaries* program welcomes works by each the Company's artistic directors – Alvin Ailey, Judith Jamison, and Robert Battle. Excerpts of two works by Artistic Director Emerita [Judith Jamison](#) return to the stage – *Divining* (1984), her first choreographic effort and a popular and critical success, and *Forgotten Time* (1989), a quietly uplifting work in which 12 dancers journey through ancient rituals of love and tribal rites of passage. The program also includes two works by Robert Battle – the ensemble work *Mass* and the thrilling duet *Ella* – as well as Alvin Ailey's tour-de-force solo *Cry* and *Revelations* (repeats Dec 23 mat, 26 mat).

The *All Battle* program premieres the following **Friday, December 21st**, with a new production of Robert Battle's first work for the Company, *Juba* (2003). The quartet explores ritual and folk traditions in modern society against an original score by frequent collaborator John Mackey. The program also includes *Ella*, *No Longer Silent*, *In/Side*, and *Mass* (repeats Dec 23 eve, 27).

Other special programs in the season include *All Ailey*, featuring a selection of Mr. Ailey's classics in their entirety (December 13, 15 eve, 16 mat and eve), and *All New*, comprising season premieres (Dec 18, 19, 20, 29 eve).

The [Young New York](#) program, supported by The Wallace Foundation as part of a multi-year audience development project, also returns this season. The initiative engages people between the ages of 21 – 30 through a series of special events and ticket offers, introducing new audiences to modern dance and the Company's inspiring legacy. **Young New York Night (Thursday, November 29th)** features **\$29 tickets for every seat in the house**, and the program includes Ailey dancer Jamar Roberts *Members Don't Get Weary*, Jessica Lang's *EN*, and *Revelations*. Click [here](#) for program details, and to sign up (all participants must be between ages 21 – 30).

The season also includes **Family Matinee Series** performances presented each **Saturday at 2pm**, with a Q&A session featuring Ailey's revered dancers following the finale of Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*; **live music** performances of *Revelations* on November 30 and December 1 (mat and eve); and **Ticket to Dance**, a program that invites audience members to try their first Ailey Extension class FREE with a performance ticket stub. The **City Center** engagement culminates on **Sunday, December 30** at 7:30pm with a rousing **Season Finale** featuring excerpts of season favorites. The 60th Anniversary celebration continues when the Company brings the magic of Ailey to more than 20 cities during the 2019 North American tour from February 1 through May 12, 2019. Stops include **Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Miami, Berkeley, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans** and **Newark**.

When **Alvin Ailey** and a small group of African American modern dancers first took the stage at the 92nd Street Y in 1958, the engagement was for one night only—but it turned out to be the start of a new era in the performing arts. Mr. Ailey became one of the groundbreaking greats in African American history, while the work of his Company grew beyond the limits of the stage to encompass education at all levels, community outreach and cultural diplomacy. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater now embodies six decades of achievement, celebrating the human spirit with performances that unite and inspire all.

Tickets starting at \$29 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. All Young New York Night tickets are \$29 - ticket buyers must be between ages 21-30; this group can also buy one ticket get one 50% off for any following season performance using code BOGOYNY. Discount tickets are available for Ailey Super Fans who purchase tickets for more than one performance, for students with an appropriate ID, and for groups of 10 or more (discounts do not apply to \$29 tickets). For group sales, call 212-405-9082 or e-mail groupsales@alvinailey.org. Click through for further information about Ailey's [New York City Center season](#) and [60th Anniversary Celebration](#).

Lead support for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 60th Anniversary is provided by Emily and Len Blavatnik.

Major support for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 60th Anniversary is provided by Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, and Pamela D. Zilly & John H. Schaefer.

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 60th Anniversary Season in New York.

American Express is the Official Card of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and a major supporter of the creation of *Lazarus*.

Opening Night Gala Benefit Sponsors: Emily & Len Blavatnik, BNY Mellon, Debra L. Lee,

The Meringoff Family Foundation, Prudential Financial, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach, The Weill Family Foundation.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo, North America during the 60th Anniversary Season.

The Company premiere of *Kairos* is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.

***Lazarus* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.**

Commissioning support for *Lazarus* provided by the Auditorium Theatre (Chicago).

***Lazarus* is supported by commissioning funds from Cal Performances at the University of California, Berkeley.**

Additional commissioning support for *Lazarus* provided by The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Generous support for the creation of *EN* is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

The 2019 North American Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The 60th Anniversary 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 in Rennie Harris' *Lazarus*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; AAADT in Jessica Lang's *EN*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; AAADT in Robert Battle's *Juba*. Photo by Nan Melville.
(Ctrl+Click for hi-res download)

WORLD PREMIERES

Lazarus (World Premiere)

Choreography by Rennie Harris
Odetta

Music: Darrin Ross, Nina Simon, Terence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka,

Acclaimed hip-hop choreographer Rennie (Lorenzo) Harris returns to Ailey this season with the Company's first two-act work, *Lazarus*. Inspired by the life and legacy of Mr. Ailey, Harris connects past and present in a powerful work that addresses the racial inequities America faced when Mr. Ailey founded this company in 1958 and still faces today. Harris' previous contributions to the Ailey repertory include *Exodus* (2015), *Home* (2011), and *Love Stories* (2004), an acclaimed collaboration with Judith Jamison and Robert Battle.

The Call (World Premiere)

Choreography by Ronald K. Brown
Group

Music: Johan Sebastian Bach, Mary Lou Williams, Asase Yaa Entertainment

Ronald K. Brown's joyous mix of modern and West African dance idioms – seen previously in *Grace* (1999), *Open Door* (2015), *Four Corners* (2013), and other works – fits the Ailey dancers perfectly, and his themes of spiritual awakening and redemption never fail to inspire. *The Call*, which is Brown's seventh work for the Company, promises to once again rouse audiences with Brown's infectious call for harmony and hope.

EN (2018-19 Season World Premiere)

Choreography by Jessica Lang
Ciupinski

Music: Jakub

Jessica Lang, a 2014 New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award and 2017 Arison Award recipient, makes her choreographic debut on the Ailey company with the world premiere *EN*, her 100th ballet. *EN* – whose multiple meanings in Japanese signify circle, destiny, fate and karma – is a celebratory ensemble work set to original music by composer Jakub Ciupinski, with costumes by Bradon McDonald. According to Lang, the work "reflects on the universal experience of coming full circle and, as time passes, we recognize the people we meet along life's journey who play a part in the fate and destiny of our lives." Artistic Director of Jessica Lang Dance since 2011, Lang has created original works for major companies around the world like American Ballet Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Joffrey Ballet and National Ballet of Japan. Lang's choreography has demonstrated a breathtaking range of influences, including interests in visual art, theatrical lyricism, the geometry of the human body, and the nuances of bodily gesture.

COMPANY PREMIERE

Kairos (2014 / Company Premiere 2018)

Choreography by Wayne McGregor

Music: Max Richter

Kairos, choreographer Wayne McGregor's second Ailey Company premiere, fills the stage with sinuous, angular movement and synchronicity. Drawn from the ancient Greek language, the word "Kairos" has dual meanings, the first being the most opportune time to take action and the second being weather. The ballet is framed by Idris Khan's dramatic set design and played out to Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, re-imagined by experimental composer Max Richter. Ailey is the first American company to perform *Kairos*, which originally premiered in 2014 as part of the STEPS contemporary dance festival in Switzerland.

NEW PRODUCTIONS

Juba (2003 / New Production 2018)

Juba, Artistic Director Robert Battle's first work for the Company, explores where ritual and folk traditions exist in today's society, as four dancers engage in a modern day "Rite of Spring" with an abstract twist. An original score by John Mackey for string quartet and percussion drives the mood of this edgy, ritualistic work, called "electrifying" by *The New York Times*.

Timeless Ailey

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Various Artists

This special program brings new vitality to over a dozen treasures from Mr. Ailey's wonderfully rich body of work, including highlights of seldom-seen gems *Choral Dances*, *Mary Lou's Mass*, and *The Lark Ascending* as well as perennial favorites like *Memoria*, *Night Creature*, and *Cry*. Act I excerpts: *Blues Suite* (1958), *Streams* (1970), *Pas de Duke* (1976), *Mary Lou's Mass* (1971), *The Lark Ascending* (1972), *Hidden Rites* (1973), *Night Creature* (1974), and *Cry* (1971). Act II excerpts: *Phases* (1980), *Opus McShann* (1988), *For Bird – With Love* (1984), *Love Songs* (1984), *Memoria* (1979).

2017-2018 SEASON PREMIERES & NEW PRODUCTIONS

Members Don't Get Weary (2017 World Premiere)

Choreography by Jamar Roberts

Music: John Coltrane

Longtime Ailey dancer and recent "Bessie" Award winner Jamar Roberts makes his choreographic debut on the Company in this world premiere inspired by the blues. Roberts says, "As a response to the current social landscape in America, *Members Don't Get Weary* takes an abstract look into the notion of one 'having the blues.'" Set to the powerful music of the legendary American jazz saxophonist and composer John Coltrane, the work aims to inspire the audience, allowing them to momentarily transcend their own personal blues.

Shelter (1988 / Company Premiere 1992 / New Production 2017)

Choreography by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

Music: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn

Originally performed by the Ailey company in 1992, Zollar's *Shelter* is a gripping portrait of homelessness. Set to an inventive score which incorporates drumming by Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn and poetry by Hattie Gossett and Laurie Carlos, *Shelter* delivers the compelling message that the poverty of individuals will inevitably lead to the destitution of all humanity.

Stack-Up (1982 / New Production 2017)

Choreography by Talley Beatty **Music: Earth, Wind and Fire, Grover Washington, Jr., Fearless Four, Alphonze Mouzon**

Set to the background of a throbbing 1970s beat (Earth, Wind and Fire, Grover Washington Jr., Fearless Four, and Alphonze Mouzon) and a graffiti landscape, patrons in a crowded disco dance with attitude, sass, and fierce despair in this classic work by Talley Beatty, which was re-staged in conjunction with the 2018 centennial of his birth. Inspired by Los Angeles' urban landscape and the lives of its disparate inhabitants, *Stack-Up* depicts the emotional "traffic" in a community that is stacked on top of each other. Tough, brutal yet poignant, the stage sizzles with street life, break dancing, and physical pyrotechnics as an aloof drug pusher and two displaced lovers are destined for collision.

The Golden Section (1983 / Company Premiere 2006 / New Production 2017)

Choreography by Twyla Tharp

Music: David Byrne

The Golden Section by Tony Award-winning choreographer Twyla Tharp is a sizzling work set to a propulsive score by David Byrne. The work shatters the limits of human physicality with breathtaking leaps, finely-honed partnering, and explosive joy.

Season Repertory

In addition to the premieres, new productions, and special programs, the season repertory includes:

<i>Cry</i> – Judith Jamison (1971) Music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, Voices of East Harlem	<i>Mass</i> – Robert Battle (2017) Music: John Mackey
<i>Divining</i> (excerpt) – Judith Jamison Music: Monti Ellison & Kimati Dinizulu	<i>Memoria</i> – Alvin Ailey (1979) Music: Keith Jarrett
<i>Ella</i> – Robert Battle (2016) Music: Ella Fitzgerald	<i>Night Creature</i> – Alvin Ailey (1974) Music: Duke Ellington
<i>Forgotten Time</i> (excerpt) – Judith Jamison Music: Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares	<i>No Longer Silent</i> – Robert Battle (2007) Music: Erwin Schulhoff
<i>In/Side</i> – Robert Battle (2008) Music: Nina Simone	<i>Piazzolla Caldera</i> – Paul Taylor (2015) Music: Astor Piazzolla, Jerzy Peterburshsky
<i>Love Songs</i> – Alvin Ailey (1972) Music: Donny Hathaway & Nina Simone	<i>Revelations</i> – Alvin Ailey 1960 Music: Traditional Spirituals
<i>Masekela Langage</i> – Alvin Ailey (1969) Music: Hugh Masekela	

CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, beloved as one of the world’s most popular dance companies, returns to the **New York City Center** stage **November 28 – December 30, 2018** for a season that has become a joyous holiday tradition. Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle during the Company’s **60th Anniversary celebration**, Ailey’s extraordinary dancers will perform an expansive repertory of more than two dozen works, including the world premieres of **Rennie Harris’ *Lazarus*** and **Ronald K. Brown’s *The Call***; the Company premiere of **Wayne McGregor’s *Kairos***; new productions of ballets by **Robert Battle** and **Judith Jamison**; and **Alvin Ailey’s** timeless masterpiece, *Revelations*. **Tickets starting at \$29** can be purchased at the New York City Center Box Office, through CityTix® at (212) 581-1212 or online at www.alvinailey.org or www.nycitycenter.org. Discount tickets are available for Ailey Super Fans who purchase tickets for more than one performance, for students with an appropriate ID, and for groups of 10 or more (discounts do not apply to \$29 tickets). The Saturday Family Matinee series includes a post-performance Q&A with the Ailey dancers and an increased availability of \$29 tickets, but buy early for the best seat selection. For group sales, call 212-405-9082 or e-mail groupsales@alvinailey.org. For further information, visit www.alvinailey.org

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.

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