



CULTURAL  
AMBASSADOR  
TO THE WORLD

# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

THE JOAN WEILL CENTER FOR DANCE 405 WEST 55TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10019-4402 PH 212.405.9000 FX 212.405.9001 WWW.ALVINAILEY.ORG

Alvin Ailey, Founder Robert Battle, Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director  
Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita Bennett Rink, Executive Director

THE AILEY SCHOOL 50 YEARS

**Press Contacts:**

Lauren Morrow: [lmorrow@alvinailey.org](mailto:lmorrow@alvinailey.org) / 212-405-9079

Tracy Severe: [tsevere@alvinailey.org](mailto:tsevere@alvinailey.org) / 212-405-9032

## THE AILEY SPIRIT GALA BENEFIT AT LINCOLN CENTER ON THURSDAY, JUNE 13<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATES 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE AILEY SCHOOL WITH ONE-NIGHT-ONLY PERFORMANCE & PARTY

### Honorary Chair is Award-Winning Actress Lorraine Toussaint, the Proud Parent of an Ailey School Student

Benefit for Ailey's Educational Programs Features Premiere Tribute to The School's Impact Choreographed by Ailey II Artistic Director Troy Powell with Talented Students from The Ailey School and AileyCamp Alongside the Rising Stars of Ailey II and the World-Renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Soirée on the Promenade Follows with Spinning by DJ M.O.S.

#### The Ailey School's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Continues Throughout the Year

(NEW YORK, NY) May 16, 2019 – The centerpiece of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Lincoln Center engagement is The Ailey Spirit Gala on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. The event launches the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of The Ailey School, which has served as a springboard for many notable artists, including more than 70% of the dancers in the Company. The evening's Honorary Chair is award-winning actress Lorraine Toussaint, who currently stars in NBC's "The Village," Netflix's "She-Ra and the Princesses of Power," AMC's "Into the Badlands," and the recently released supernatural thriller "Fast Color." She will also star in the upcoming films "Scary Stories To Tell In The Dark" and "The Glorias," where she will portray the iconic feminist and civil right activist Flo Kennedy opposite Julianne Moore. Toussaint is the parent of a student at The Ailey School.

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation will be honored for its longtime commitment to the Ailey organization, especially its transformative support of The Ailey School to launch lasting initiatives like the Ailey Athletic Boys scholarship program that introduces young male students into the world of dance. The Foundation's President and CEO Ed Henry will accept the honor during an onstage presentation by Ailey Artistic Director Robert Battle.

The Ailey Spirit Gala raises funds to support scholarships to The Ailey School and Ailey's Arts In Education & Community Programs, including AileyCamp – an innovative, full-scholarship summer day camp that uses dance as a means to help inner-city youth stretch their minds, bodies, and spirits. Gala Co-Chairs are Michele & Timothy Barakett, Tia Breakley-China & Robert China, Stephen Meringoff, Almaz & Marc S. Strachan and Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach; and Vice Chairs are Joy Altimare, Jaishri & Vikas Kapoor, and Leslie & Tom Maheras.

Guests will see the impact of their giving firsthand in the one-night-only performance that brings together former AileyCampers from New York and Newark, talented students from The Ailey School, rising stars of Ailey II, and the incomparable members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in a tribute to The School's impact choreographed by Ailey II Artistic Director Troy Powell. The piece d'Occasion follows the story of a young boy from an Arts In Education program to the Company, which parallels the inspiring journeys of Powell – who was discovered by Mr. Ailey at an outreach activity at age 9 and awarded a scholarship to The Ailey School, before dancing with both companies and later leading the junior company – and Ailey dancer Solomon Dumas – who was introduced to dance at AileyCamp Chicago and has participated in all parts of the organization. Following an uplifting Revelations finale, a festive soirée takes place on the promenade with dancing to the spinning of DJ M.O.S. For tickets, visit [alvinailey.org/ailey-spirit-gala](http://alvinailey.org/ailey-spirit-gala) or call 212-405-9624.

This event kicks off **The Ailey School's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration**, which will include a number of highlights and special activities led by Co-Directors [Tracy Inman](#) and [Melanie Person](#). Upcoming performances showcasing the students' talents and passionate energy include the [Junior Division Spring Concerts](#) from Friday, May 17 – Sunday, May 19 at Hostos Community College Theater featuring Horton, ballet, jazz, tap and West African techniques, as well as pieces from [Ailey Athletic Boys](#) – a scholarship-based program offering a creative and athletic experience for boys ages 7-10. The following week, the [Professional Division Spring Concerts](#) on **Wednesday, May 22 and Thursday, May 23** at **Ailey Citigroup Theater** will feature performances of dynamic works by emerging and established choreographers, including Darshan Bhuller, former New Directions Choreography Lab participants Brice Mousset and Amy Hall Garner, as well as Ailey/Fordham BFA alumna, and former Ailey II and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater member Yusha-Marie Sorzano. Tickets for the Professional Division concert are on sale online until Monday, May 20 at noon, and thereafter all other remaining tickets will be sold one hour prior to each performance for \$25/adults and \$15/students. For tickets, visit <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pr/999240>.

In addition to former Ailey School alumni remaining close to home and setting new works on students, others have forged **successful careers around the globe in education, concert and commercial dance, Broadway, film, and television**. The Ailey School's Co-Director **Tracy Inman** studied at the School on scholarship, was a member of Ailey II and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and is currently a consultant and choreographer for the TV show **Pose on FX**. Other alumni working on exciting projects include Ailey/Fordham BFA graduate **Marija Abney**, who recently appeared in the Academy Award-winning film **Black Panther**, and former Ailey II dancer and Ailey/Fordham University BFA graduate **Ephraim Sykes** who has received a **2019 Tony nomination** for his role in the new musical **Ain't Too Proud**.

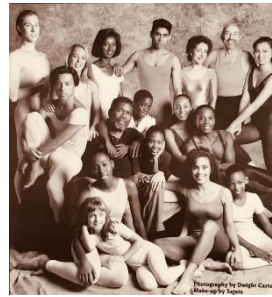
Bringing to life Mr. Ailey's belief that "dance came from the people and should always be delivered back to the people," The Ailey School provides aspiring dancers and emerging teachers the opportunity to study dance at the largest building dedicated to dance in the cultural center of the world – **The Joan Weill Center for Dance** in New York City. The **2019 Summer Intensive** will present a rare opportunity for advanced students to learn from living legend and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Artistic Director Emerita [Judith Jamison](#), who will break down Mr. Ailey's signature repertory and lead a discussion about his legacy and impact. From July 8 – July 19, teachers from around the world are invited to participate in the [Horton Pedagogy Workshop](#) to increase their knowledge of the unique American modern dance technique created by late choreographer Lester Horton. Led by master teacher and scholar of the Horton vocabulary, [Ana Marie Forsythe](#), the workshop will feature lectures and demonstrations related to the technique, which is most visible today in Mr. Ailey's work, including [Cry](#), [Memoria](#), [Night Creature](#), and [Revelations](#), and is the core training technique for students at The Ailey School. Alongside Ana Marie Forsythe, faculty at The Ailey School have direct lineage to the modern masters of the world, such as Penny Frank (Graham), Carolyn Adams (Taylor), and former Ailey dancers Renee Robinson, Guillermo Asca, and Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish.

The Ailey School's momentous 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will continue through Ailey's New York City Center fall/winter season with **New Directions Choreography Lab** (NDCL), a creative residence for emerging and established choreographers created by Ailey Artistic Director Robert Battle, and the **Ailey Students Ailey Professionals** (ASAP) mentoring program, which builds a mentor/mentee relationship with members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater over the course of three months. In addition, there will be an alumni panel discussion and series of master classes with Ms. Jamison and former Ailey School students from various industries, such as Broadway, commercial dance, and more.

A master class series, panel discussions featuring alumni, and other special activities for the fall semester to be announced.

For 50 years, The Ailey School has been enriching and inspiring generations, honoring the vision of Alvin Ailey by providing superior professional dance training and artistic leadership to the next generation of performing artists.

For more information on Ailey's Lincoln Center engagement from June 12-16, including the world premiere of *Ounce of Faith* by Darrell Grand Moultrie, returning favorites, and An Evening Honoring Carmen de Lavallade, click [here](#). Tickets start at \$29, 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).



Left to right: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; Honorary Chair Lorraine Toussaint. Photo by Maarten de Boer courtesy of NBCUniversal; Alvin Ailey in 1989 with students from The Ailey School. Photo Courtesy of Ailey Archives. Students from The Ailey School Professional Division. Photo by Nir Arieli.  
 Ctrl + Click for hi-res download. Please credit photos.

**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 sponsor of Ailey Young New York.**

**Target is the sponsor of The Ailey Spirit Gala at Lincoln Center.**

**The 2019 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.**

**Complete Lincoln Center Programming – Subject to Change**

**Bold Visions: *Ounce of Faith / The Call, Shelter / Revelations***

Wednesday, 6/12 at 7:30pm | Saturday, 6/15 at 2pm (Family Matinee followed by free post-performance Q&A w/dancers)

**The Ailey Spirit Gala: Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Ailey School**

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

Thursday, 6/13 at 7:00pm

**Trailblazers: *Lazarus / Revelations***

Friday, 6/14 at 8:00pm | Saturday, June 15 at 8:00pm

**Timeless Ailey: Special program of Ailey excerpts / *Revelations***

Sunday, 6/16 at 3:00pm

**An Evening Honoring Carmen de Lavallade: Excerpts from *Blues Suite* and *Portrait of Billie*, *The Call / Ounce of Faith / Revelations***

Sunday, 6/16 at 7:30pm

**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 12 – 16, 2019.** Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle, Ailey's acclaimed dancers will perform a diverse repertory featuring a world premiere by Darrell Grand Moultrie, *Ounce of Faith*, his Company choreographic debut. The **Bold Visions** program includes *Ounce of Faith*, Ronald K. Brown's recent premiere *The Call* and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar's *Shelter*, a gripping portrait of homelessness. The **Trailblazers** program features hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris' powerful two-act ballet *Lazarus*, inspired by the life and legacy of the Company's founder. **Timeless Ailey** brings excerpts from rarely seen works by Ms. Ailey back to the stage. The engagement culminates with a special program celebrating living legend **Carmen de Lavallade**. Each program closes with an uplifting finale of *Revelations*, Alvin Ailey's must-see masterpiece. **The Ailey Spirit Gala** benefit performance on **Thursday, June 13** will celebrate the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Ailey School**. **Performance tickets starting at \$29** can be purchased at the David H. Koch Box Office, by phone at 212-496-0600, or online at [alvinailey.org/LC](http://alvinailey.org/LC). \$17 student tickets *may* be available on the day of the performance at the box office with a valid student ID (one per student – subject to availability). On Saturday, June 15, bring the whole family to enjoy the matinee and stay afterward for a free Q&A with the Ailey dancers in the theater. Ailey Young New York offers 50% off Sunday evening tickets \$55 and over for those between ages 21-35. Additional discounts for groups of 10 or more are 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).

**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](#)

**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).

**ABOUT THE AILEY SCHOOL**

Guided by the belief that dance instruction should be made available to everyone, Alvin Ailey founded The Ailey School in 1969. In 1982, The Ailey School and its programs received accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Dance and flourished for almost three decades under the direction of Denise Jefferson until her passing in 2010. Since then, Co-Directors Tracy Inman and Melanie Person have led the prestigious faculty of over 75 dance professionals. The Ailey School offers one of the most extensive dance education programs in the world for ages 3-25, attracting students from over 93 countries, training approximately 3,500 and offering over 300 fellowships annually. In 2017, The Ailey School expanded with the opening of the Elaine Wynn and Family Education Wing. With this addition, the building now encompasses 87,000 square feet with 16 rehearsal studios, two classrooms, a 275-seat theater, physical therapy facilities, a library, a costume shop, administrative offices, and more – making the School's home, The Joan Weill Center for Dance, the largest building dedicated to dance in New York City, the world capital of dance. Graduates from The Ailey School have pursued successful performing arts careers in major dance companies and theater productions including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, Ballett Frankfurt, Ballet Hispanico, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Martha Graham Dance Company, *Hamilton*, *Ain't Too Proud*, *The Lion King*, *The King and I*, *The Color Purple*, *Movin' Out*, and The Radio City Rockettes. Other graduates are producers, teachers, choreographers, administrators and life-long supporters of dance. More than 70% of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater members are alumni of the school, with more than a third attending the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, the finest in dance and liberal arts education. For more information, visit [www.theaileyschool.edu/](http://www.theaileyschool.edu/).

###