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ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

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Alvin Ailey, Founder Robert Battle, Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director
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ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER ANNOUNCES SPECIAL EVENTS TO INTRODUCE NEW YORK CITY CENTER ENGAGEMENT DECEMBER 4, 2019 – JANUARY 5, 2020

THE AILEY SCHOOL TO PERFORM IN THE 2019 MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE® PREVIEWING DECEMBER 10TH PROGRAM CELEBRATING THE AILEY SCHOOL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

In Conversation with Chaya on October 24th Prior to Tribute Performance on
December 22nd During Final Season as Associate Artistic Director After Five Decades at Ailey

Five-Week Holiday Season Features Timely World Premieres by Ailey's First Resident
Choreographer Jamar Roberts with *Ode – a Meditation on Life's Beauty in a Time of Gun Violence –*
and Acclaimed Choreographer Donald Byrd with *Greenwood – Examining the 1921 Tulsa Riots*

Tickets starting at \$29 go on sale September 9th!

NEW YORK – September 5, 2019 — [The Ailey School](#), now celebrating its 50th anniversary, was selected to perform in the 2019 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®. Over 100 students from all programs of The Ailey School will answer the call of "Let's Have a Parade™," the iconic phrase that has signaled the start of every Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade since 1924. Led by The Ailey School Co-Director Tracy Inman, the dancers from age seven to 25 will perform a dance inspired by the "Rocka My Soul" finale of Alvin Ailey's American masterpiece *Revelations*.

"The Ailey School is thrilled to share a celebratory performance spotlighting wonderful young talent during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, a holiday tradition we all cherish," said The Ailey School Co-Director Tracy Inman. "It continues Alvin Ailey's mission of bringing dance to the people and marks in a most special way the School's five decades of developing generations of performing artists that inspire us all."

"Each year, the Macy's Parade creative team looks for performance groups across the country with the talent to captivate more than 3.5 million live spectators and more than 50 million television viewers," said Sara Flores, Associate Producer of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. "The Ailey School is a premiere incubator of dance talent and we are thrilled to welcome them to the Parade line up this year as they celebrate 50 years of excellence."

For more than ninety years, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has given thanks to what Macy's values most – its loyal fans. More than 5,000 Macy's colleagues and dedicated volunteers work tirelessly to create a spectacular event that entertains the cheerful crowds and provides joy to millions at home watching on Thanksgiving Day. Stretching down a more than two-mile-long route in New York City, the spectacle is alive with gleaming color, music and smiles.

[The Ailey School's 50th Anniversary](#) will also be celebrated on **December 10th** at a special performance at **New York City Center** during [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's holiday season from December 4, 2019 – January 5, 2020](#). Founded in 1969, the School has helped serve as a springboard for many notable artists, including season

choreographers as well as more than 70% of the Company members. In addition to the world premiere of *Ode*, the evening will also feature students from The Ailey School alongside the Ailey dancers in Alvin Ailey's [Memoria](#) and [Revelations](#).

Another special event preceding the season is [In Conversation with Chaya – Ailey's Keeper of the Flame](#) on **Thursday, October 24th at 7pm** in the Ailey studios. Hosted by Renee Robinson, the conversation with [Associate Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya](#), in advance of his final season with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will look back at a history-making journey through the world of dance and the Ailey organization spanning five decades. Having joined the Company in 1972 as a dancer, Mr. Chaya performed under Alvin Ailey's direction for 15 years, subsequently assumed responsibility for rehearsing the Company—a role for which Mr. Ailey had cultivated him—and for more than 28 years has been a creative associate and friend to Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison and Artistic Director Robert Battle, maintaining the repertory and guiding generations of Ailey dancers. To join in the conversation, visit www.aileyextension.com.

A shining light at the Ailey organization, with a passion and commitment to sharing the vision of founder Alvin Ailey, Mr. Chaya will also be celebrated with a **tribute performance at New York City Center on Sunday, December 22nd**. The special program will feature over a dozen excerpts that highlight his extensive career of nearly five decades, a one-night-only piece d'occasion created by Matthew Rushing, and appearances and performances by former company members.

Throughout Ailey's annual five-week engagement, which has become a joyous holiday tradition, Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#) leads Ailey's 32 extraordinary dancers in presenting over two dozen diverse works by some of the world's preeminent choreographers, including world premieres that shine a spotlight on social issues by **Donald Byrd** and Ailey dancer and newly announced **Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts**.

Celebrated choreographer **Donald Byrd** will use the 1921 Tulsa riots as a source of inspiration for [Greenwood](#), an enlightening ensemble work with music by Israeli violist and composer Emmanuel Witzthum. A TONY nominee (*The Color Purple*), Bessie Award-winner (*The Minstrel Show*) and **2019 Doris Duke Artist Award** recipient, Byrd's long association with the Company, his adeptness at creating compelling characters, and his reputation as "an unabashed eclectic" (*The New York Times*) promise an original and powerful work.

Ailey dancer **Jamar Roberts' Ode** offers a meditation on the beauty and fragility of life in a time of growing gun violence and will include Roberts' own costume designs for the six cast members. Like his critically-acclaimed [Members Don't Get Weary \(2017\)](#), this work is set to a jazz score – Don Pullen's "Suite (Sweet) Malcolm (Part 1 Memories and Gunshots)" and is the first in a series of three works as he steps into the new role of **Resident Choreographer**. A member of the Company since 2002, Roberts has become renowned for his powerful performances on world stages, including at The White House and as a guest star with London's Royal Ballet, receiving the prestigious New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" award for Outstanding Performer.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congress as "a vital American cultural ambassador to the world," is currently uplifting audiences in Europe on their [2019 International Tour](#) from **August 28 – September 22** visiting **Copenhagen, Denmark** (August 28 – September 1); **London, England** (September 4 – 14); and **Rotterdam, Netherlands** (September 19 – 22). **Bank of America** is the lead sponsor of the Company's 2019 International Tour. Following the New York City Center engagement, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will dance from coast-to-coast on a 21-city National Tour from February – May 2020.

In 1958, Alvin Ailey and a small group of dancers took the stage in New York and forever changed American dance and culture. One of the country's groundbreaking greats, his Company inspires all in a universal celebration of the human spirit using the African-American cultural experience and the modern dance tradition. More than 60 years after its founding, Ailey continues to move forward under the leadership of Robert Battle, revealing time and again why Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is one of the world's most beloved dance companies.

Tickets starting at \$29 are on sale Monday, September 9 at the New York City Center Box Office, through CityTix® at (212) 581-1212, or 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). For group sales, call 212-405-9082 or email groupsales@alvinailey.org. For further information about Ailey's New York City Center season please visit www.alvinailey.org.

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York Winter Season.

American Express is the Official Card of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and a major supporter of the company premiere of *City of Rain*.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo, North America.

The creation of *Ode* is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.

Generous support for the creation of *Ounce of Faith* 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.

Bank of America is the sponsor of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 2020 North American Tour.

The 2020 North American Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Wells Fargo is the sponsor of Ailey Young New York.

The 2019 Winter 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.

For more general information, visit www.alvinailey.org. Press materials and photos are available at pressroom.alvinailey.org.



(L to R); Students from The Ailey School Professional Division. Photo by Nir Arieli; Masazumi Chaya. Photo by Jack Mitchell. (©) Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. and Smithsonian Institution; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's Revelations with live music. Photo by Christopher Duggan; Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts and Artistic Director Robert Battle. Photo by Andrew Eccles. Please credit photos. **Ctrl+Click the photos for hi-res download.**

New York City Center 2019 Season Highlights:

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will take the stage at New York City Center from December 4, 2019 – January 5, 2020 in a five-week season that has become a joyous holiday tradition. Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle, Ailey's acclaimed dancers will perform an expansive repertory of more than two dozen works, including the world premieres by Jamar Roberts – the Company's newly announced Resident Choreographer – and Donald Byrd. The season also includes company premieres of Aszure Barton's *BUSK* and Camille A. Brown's *City of Rain*, and new productions of Judith Jamison's *Divining* and Lar Lubovitch's *Fandango*. The season begins on **December 4th** with an **Opening Night Gala Benefit honoring Elaine Wynn and the Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation**, which includes a performance at New York City Center and party at the New York Hilton Midtown Grand Ballroom to raise funds to support the creation of new works and Ailey's extensive educational and training programs for young people. Other highlights include special live music performances of *Revelations*; evenings celebrating The Ailey School's 50th Anniversary and Masazumi Chaya; All Ailey, Three Visionaries, Ailey Classics, and All New programs; Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day performances; the Family Matinee Series with a post-performance Q&A with dancers; and a Special Season Finale.

ABOUT THE MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

With more than 50 million viewers across the country and more than 3.5 million spectators that line up along the streets of New York City each year, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is a national icon that has grown into a world-famous holiday event. For more than 90 years, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has marked the official start of the holiday season. Growing in size and scale, the Parade proudly marches down a more than 2-mile route in New York City with more than 8,000 participants in tow including Macy's colleagues, their families, celebrities, athletes, clowns and dance groups spreading holiday cheer. The Parade also features America's best marching bands, fabulous floats and Macy's signature giant helium character balloons. For more information on the Macy's Parade, please visit www.macys.com/parade.

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 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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