



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

AILEY II | THE AILEY SCHOOL | AILEY ARTS IN EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS | AILEY EXTENSION
The Joan Weill Center for Dance 405 West 55th St, New York NY 10019-4402 (212) 405-9000 AlvinAiley.org

Robert Battle, Artistic Director Matthew Rushing, Associate Artistic Director Bennett Rink, Executive Director
Alvin Ailey, Founder Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita

AILEY ALL ACCESS FREE ONLINE INITIATIVE BRINGING DANCE TO THE PEOPLE EXTENDED THROUGH JUNE AS ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER LINCOLN CENTER ENGAGEMENT IS PREVENTED BY GLOBAL HEALTH PANDEMIC

AILEY SPIRIT GALA TO CELEBRATE VIRTUALLY ALONG WITH CONTINUED STREAMING OF WEEKLY PERFORMANCES, CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, CONVERSATIONS AND ORIGINAL SHORT FILMS BY AILEY DANCERS

Still, We Dance Campaign Supports Organization Moving Forward While Providing Free Online Programming and Preparing for Upcoming Season Celebrating 60 Years of *Revelations* Starting in December at New York City Center and on 2021 United States Tour



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Jamar Roberts' *Ode*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; Alvin Ailey. Photo by Normand Maxon; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Paul Kolnik. [Ctrl + click for high-res images.](#)

New York - April 21, 2020 - The Ailey organization regrets to announce that health concerns related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will prevent Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's presentation of a June engagement at Lincoln Center, where the Company has performed for audiences each spring since 2013.

In order to share the Ailey spirit with people wherever they are during this unprecedented time, the organization will extend [Ailey All Access](#) programming through June. This free online initiative features streaming of a weekly series of performances of full length works from the repertory, Ailey Extension dance and fitness classes, and original short films created by the Ailey dancers, and other especially created content. And, for the first time ever, the popular Ailey Spirit Gala will celebrate virtually with the Ailey family on Thursday, June 11th.

"Alvin Ailey made 'a way out of no way,' overcoming obstacles at the cusp of the Civil Rights Movement to found a company celebrating his heritage that became a vital American "Cultural Ambassador to the World," stated **Artistic Director Robert Battle**. "His groundbreaking example has guided the Company to open doors and rise above hurdles in order to inspire, unite and enlighten. Especially now, we are compelled to strengthen our connections and reach out in new ways to shine a light that guides our steps forward together."

Ailey's artistry being displayed **every Thursday 7pm ET** continues with **Alvin Ailey's [Night Creature](#) on Thursday, April 23** – a perfect fusion of Ailey's buoyant choreography and Duke Ellington's sparkling music - and Ailey's first Resident Choreographer **Jamar Roberts' [Ode](#) on Thursday, April 30** – a meditation on the beauty and delicacy of life in a time of growing gun violence. Today's announcement includes the exciting news that the streaming premiere of a **2015 film of an Ailey at Lincoln Center performance will air the week of May 18th, in conjunction with the new Lincoln Center at Home portal** enabling families and communities to keep the performing arts front and center. In addition to witnessing the soul-stirring [Revelations](#), described by The New York Times as "one of the great works of the human spirit," this electrifying program features Wayne McGregor's sumptuous *Chroma*, set to a score by Joby Talbot with orchestrations of songs by The White Stripes; Ronald K. Brown's *Grace*, a powerful meeting of modern and West African dance with a soundtrack by Duke Ellington, Roy Davis, and Fela Kuti; and Robert Battle's humorous, high-flying *Takademe*.

Ailey dancers are inviting viewers up-close to discuss what inspires them through an ongoing **conversation series on Wednesdays and Saturdays 1pm ET**. The Instagram live series will feature Hope Boykin speaking with **Sarah Daley-Perdomo** on **Wednesday, April 22** and a one-on-one with Solomon Dumas and Jessica Amber Pinkett on **Saturday, April 25**.

In addition, Ailey company member Renaldo Maurice [introduced **Dancer Diaries**](#), a new series of short films created by the dancers highlighting their individual artistry and reflections with the world. The series, which allows the dancers to open their hearts to us through words and choreography, launched on Monday, April 20 with a [video](#) of **Renaldo Maurice** edited by Danica Paulos. As Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison expressed, "Learn the craft of knowing how to open your heart and to turn on your creativity. There is a light inside of you." The series will be shared on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube and will continue for the duration of Ailey All Access.

Former Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Company members Sarita Allen and Michael Thomas are joining Ailey Extension's growing lineup of free livestreamed classes. Starting April 22, students can explore a wide range of movement styles during **Beginner Contemporary with Michael Thomas on Wednesdays at 7:30pm**. Early risers are invited to strengthen their core and tone muscles during **Pilates Evolution with Sarita Allen on Saturdays at 9am**. The expanding list of class options also gives dancers an additional opportunity to practice ballet during **Beginner Ballet with Anna Lederfeind on Mondays at 6pm**. To view the most up to date schedule of Ailey's free virtual classes - which include Horton, hip hop, vogue, samba, West African and more styles taught by Ailey Extension's elite instructors - students can search MindBody or visit aileyextension.com/class-schedule.

Ailey All Access was launched on March 30th, the 62nd anniversary of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's first performance, with a streaming of *Revelations* and its timeless message of hope. The program was initiated after Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 21-city United States Tour was suspended in March, as it neared the halfway point, and arrangements began to re-schedule the late summer 2020 International Tour. Also, [Ailey II's](#) spring season along with the classes and educational programs of [Ailey Extension](#), [The Ailey School](#), and [Ailey Arts In Education](#) were halted. The first two weeks of Ailey All Access special video content collectively reached about 5.7 million unique viewers across 64 countries with over 2.3 million views to date on our YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram channels. These posts have received about 178,000 likes, been shared about 64,000 times, and received about 24,000 comments.

As soon as possible, the Ailey organization will return to offering a full schedule of training and educational programs and performances that inspire people in a universal celebration of the human spirit using the African-American cultural experience and the modern dance tradition. Future plans include **a celebration of sixty years of Alvin Ailey's must-see American masterpiece *Revelations* during Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's upcoming season launching on December 2nd** with a five-week holiday season at New York City Center, followed by a 2021 United States tour.

Ailey's [Still, We Dance](#) campaign contributes to moving the organization forward during this uncertain time, while making it possible for Ailey to offer a variety of programming through Ailey All Access and prepare for the upcoming 2020-21 season paying tribute to six decades of *Revelations*. For those considering a gift, the new COVID-19 Relief Bill's incentives for charitable donations include a new, one year (2020) above-the-line deduction for cash contributions up to \$300 for all taxpayers (not just those itemize deductions) and the limit on deductions for contributions is suspended in 2020 for individual taxpayers who itemize their deductions.

"For six decades, *Revelations* has spoken to the common humanity in us all and been a beacon as the Ailey organization has brought people together through dance," stated **Executive Director Bennett Rink**. "While sweeping cancelations have resulted in significant financial losses, we continue doing everything we can to serve our community while sustaining our dedicated dancers, instructors, and staff. We are grateful to all those who are helping to support and carry on Alvin Ailey's pioneering legacy, so that it can continue to uplift us all."

Since its creation in 1960, *Revelations* has inspired generations through its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring spirituals. Springing from Ailey's childhood memories of growing up in the south and attending services at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Texas, *Revelations* pays homage to the rich cultural heritage of the African-American and explores the emotional spectrum of the human condition. *Revelations* has been performed as part of Opening Ceremonies of the 1968 Olympics, for six sitting presidents at various events, at the inaugurations of Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and at The White House Dance Series: A Tribute to Judith Jamison, presented by then First Lady Michelle Obama. Acknowledging its lasting significance after five decades in 2010, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution recognizing the artistic and cultural contributions of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the 50th Anniversary of the first performance of *Revelations*.

To enjoy a variety of digital content, visit [Ailey All Access](#) for links to experience online programming. Follow Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Ailey Extension on Facebook and Instagram, Ailey II on Facebook, and The Ailey School on Instagram. Check www.alvinailey.org for schedule updates.

Bank of America is Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's National Tour Sponsor.

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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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