

# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

*Caught* (1982)

(New Production – 2014; Ailey Company Premiere – 2004)

*Choreography:* David Parsons

*Staging:* Elizabeth Koeppen

*Music:* Robert Fripp

*Lighting Design:* Howell Binkley

*Lighting Concept:* David Parsons

**David Parsons'** signature solo *Caught* is a breathtaking fusion of art and technology demanding split-second timing and athletic stamina. The concept behind *Caught* is amazingly simple but wonderfully unexpected, with the dancer executing a continual series of over 100 leaps synchronized to the flashes of a strobe light to a soundtrack by English guitarist **Robert Fripp**. The effect is a stunning suspension of weight in which the dancer appears to fly through the air, devouring space before magically returning to rest at center stage.



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's  
Kirven Douthit-Boyd in David Parsons' *Caught*.  
Photo by Christopher Duggan

Parsons says that the idea for *Caught* came from working with photographers and looking at the ways that light is used in photography to capture images. By controlling the light to illuminate only the desired shapes and poses, he created a series of snapshots. Strung together, these isolated images build into a dance that seems to take place almost entirely in mid-air. At the root of the piece is humankind's fascination with flight, something that Parsons believes is universal. "Everybody on the planet has dreamt of flying," he says. "And it's an incredible thing to stumble upon as an artist...to realize when you ask that question, you can't find anybody who hasn't dreamt of flying." Personally speaking, Parsons relates the dream of flight to the feeling of freedom that he is constantly trying to capture in his choreography.

"Radiant with a circus-like thrill, *Caught* wows an audience. The dancer is caught mid-air in Peter Pan-like poses that **embody the magic essence of dance itself, the quixotic desire to defy gravity and yet exude grace and joy at the same time...**"

*Chicago Tribune.*

"*Caught* is **one of the great pieces of recent times.**"

*The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

"**The audience, thrilled, alternately gasps and cheers as he walks, floats and dances on air.** He doesn't land until the dance ends...a modern dance sensation so buoyantly accessible that men who don't like dance much recommended the piece to other men who like dance even less."

*The Washington Post*

## David Parsons

Born near Chicago and raised in Kansas City, Mr. Parsons received an MFA from Jacksonville University under the Howard Gilman fellowship and an honorary Doctorate from the University of Kansas City. From 1978-1987, Mr. Parsons was a leading dancer with the Paul Taylor Dance Company, where Mr. Taylor created many roles for him in works such as *Arden Court*, *Last Look*, and *Roses*. He founded Parsons Dance in 1985 with lighting designer Howell Binkley. Since then, he has created more than 70 works, both for the company and through commissions from Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, the American Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, New York City Ballet, Paul Taylor Dance Company, and the Spoleto Festival, among others. He is a recipient of the 2000 Dance Magazine Award, the 2001 American Choreography Award and the 2011 Dance Masters of America Award.



**Robert Fripp**

Robert Fripp is an English guitarist, composer and record producer best known for being a guitarist for, and the only constant member of, progressive rock band King Crimson. His work, spanning four decades, encompasses a variety of musical styles. Fripp was ranked 42nd on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the "100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time" (2003) and ranked #47 on Gibson.com's Top 50 Guitarists of All Time (2010).

"1984" by Robert Fripp – Published by Careers-BMG Music Publishing, Inc. (BMI) 1991 EG Records Ltd.