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Ailey II's Troy Powell talks about upcoming Ja performances

By Daviot Kelly



Troy Powell
For those who have feasted on the offerings of the Wolmer's Prep Season of [Dance](#) for years, prepare for a serving of something a little different.

In the last weekend of September, the final two performances on Sunday the 28th, will feature renowned dance company Ailey II. Artistic director of Ailey II, Troy Powell, said they will be sending a team of 19 people, including 12 dancers. When asked why they were partnering with Wolmer's, Powell said Ailey has always been about celebration.

"And being that the Wolmer's school is celebrating 285 years, we felt that it was special and we felt that it was our privilege to help them celebrate such an historical event," Powell said, adding that the dancers are very excited to be performing in Jamaica.

"When I went to Jamaica (for the launch in June), I had such a great time, meeting everyone and everyone being excited about us coming," he said.

"When I came back to New York, I explained to the dancers the mood and told them that everyone was just excited and happy that Ailey is coming and they, in return, are very excited to come." Powell said the company just had five performances in three cities in Italy. That will be followed by a two-week rehearsal period before heading to perform in Baltimore, Maryland. After that, it's Jamaica here they come.

"We're on a very busy schedule as usual, but we're gonna at least make an effort to give the dancers a day off or a day and a half off just to see the Caribbean," he said. Some dance aficionados have never seen Ailey II perform. Powell said it would be a "life-changing experience".

Young but mature

"These dancers are very young, they're very energetic, and every time they go out on stage, they really reveal themselves as young, mature artists," he said, admitting that as a 'second company' (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater being the older entity), some persons may regard them as 'immature'. Still, Ailey II, founded in 1974, nearly 20 years after the first company, has made a name for itself.

"But we are a very young company and a company that has gained a popularity unmatched by any other second company in the world, and it's own identity, where you would look at it and not even think it's a second company," he said. Powell, who was a dancer himself, is very open to the idea of Ailey II coming back for a more extended stay. He said "four days and two performances just wasn't enough".

"We have a lot to share, to not only audiences in Jamaica, but audiences all over the world," he said. "We have a large range of rap, we have a lot of outreach that we do. So we hope that we can come back and continue to celebrate Mr Ailey's legacy for a long time."

To purchase tickets for the two performances, visit: www.trainingcampja.com. Tickets are also available at Training Camp, Upper Manor Park Plaza.