



CULTURAL
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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
Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita Bennett Rink, Executive Director

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AILEY'S OPENING NIGHT GALA BENEFIT PERFORMANCE & PARTY HONORING BNY MELLON WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 2nd at 7PM

Celebrated Motion Picture Actor Chadwick Boseman Announced as Honorary Chair

(New York) November 18, 2015 – On December 2nd, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will kick off a five-week holiday season with a star-studded gala benefit including a performance at New York City Center and party at the New York Hilton Midtown Grand Ballroom. Celebrated motion picture star **Chadwick Boseman** will serve as the evening's honorary chair. Mr. Boseman is best known for portraying the legendary Jackie Robinson in *42* and James Brown in *Get on Up*. He is set to blaze trails playing Marvel superhero Black Panther in the films *Captain America: Civil War*, scheduled for release in 2016, and *Black Panther*, scheduled for 2018.

This year's gala will **honor BNY Mellon** for its major support of The Ailey Organization since 2007 and **Agnes & Gerald Hassell** will accept on the institution's behalf. Early confirmed celebrity guests include **Tituss Burgess, Savion Glover, Lance Gross, Tamron Hall, Judith Jamison, Janet Mock, Joe Morton, Naturi Naughton, Arturo O'Farrill, Phylicia Rashad, Kelly Rowland** and **Tika Sumpter**.

The evening begins with the World Premiere of *Open Door* by Ronald K. Brown. In his sixth work for the Company, Brown adds new flavor to his signature style, setting this work to recordings by Arturo O'Farrill & the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra. Next on the program will be *Caught*, David Parsons' signature gravity-defying work in which a male soloist flies through the air in a breathtaking display of athletic stamina. Alvin Ailey's beloved *Revelations* will rock the crowd in a rousing finale to live music with singers that include the incomparable Ella Mitchell. Prominent figures in the worlds of entertainment, business, philanthropy and politics will join Artistic Director **Robert Battle** and dancers for a dinner-dance in the New York Hilton Midtown's Grand Ballroom following the gala performance.

The event's Co-Chairs are **Simin Allison, Kathryn & Kenneth Chenault, Debra L. Lee, Doris & Gilbert Meister, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach** and **Joan & Sandy Weill**. Call 212-405-9031 for tickets to the benefit which supports the creation of new works and Ailey's extensive educational programs, including scholarships for the performing artists of the future.

Tickets for the full season running [December 2nd through January 3rd](#), starting at \$25, are now on sale. Visit www.alvinailey.org, www.citycenter.org, call CityTix (212-581-1212), or the New York City Center box office.



(L to R); Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Photo by Andrew Eccles; AAADT with Artistic Director Robert Battle, Associate Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, and Rehearsal Director and Guest Artist Matthew Rushing. Photo by Andrew Eccles; AAADT's Rachael McLaren. Photo by Andrew Eccles.; AAADT's Glenn Allen and Linda Celeste Sims in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Nan Melville. (CTRL+ CLICK ON PHOTOS FOR HI-RES DOWNLOAD) – Please credit photos.

Wells Fargo is the sponsor of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York Winter Season.

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Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo during the New York Winter Season.

Opening Night Gala Benefit Sponsors: Simin Allison, American Express, BET Networks, BNY Mellon, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach, Joan & Sandy Weill and The Weill Family Foundation

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The 2015-2016 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.

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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.