

AILEY II'S NEW YORK SEASON AT THE AILEY CITIGROUP THEATER

Two Programs, 14 Performances, and 12 of the Country's Most Talented Young Dancers

MARCH 30 – APRIL 10, 2016

February 18, 2016 (New York, NY) - Ailey II's "indefatigable, virtuosic, and relentlessly sexy" dancers (*Los Angeles Times*) return to the Ailey Citigroup Theater with two programs of premieres and returning audience favorites. The upcoming New York season comes on the heels of the company's 26-city tour. During a 14-performance engagement held over two weeks, their "off-the-charts energy" (*The New Yorker*) will be amplified in diverse repertory by emerging and established choreographers, including **Jean Emile**, **Jamar Roberts**, **Ray Mercer**, **Kyle "JustSole" Clark**, **Dwight Rhoden**, **Manuel Vignoulle**, and **Jennifer Archibald**.

Ailey II is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best young dance talent with the passion and creative vision of today's most outstanding emerging choreographers. Founded in 1974, the company embodies Mr. Ailey's pioneering mission of establishing an extended cultural community that provides dance performances, training, and community programs for all people. Ailey II flourished into one of the most popular dance companies in the country under the direction of Sylvia Waters during its first 38 years. With current Artistic Director Troy Powell at the helm, Ailey II continues to thrive as he brings a fresh dimension to this beloved company. Ailey II's annual touring schedule now stretches to Europe and beyond, and the company performs in dozens of cities each year. The company's 12 dynamic young dancers come from all over the country, including local talent [Samantha Barriento \(Queens, NY\)](#) and 2015 Princess Grace Fellowship awardee [Courtney Celeste Spears \(Baltimore, MD\)](#).

"The company is very much looking forward to returning to New York after our robust 26-city tour," says Ailey II Artistic Director Troy Powell. "This season's programming offers something for everyone, and we're proud to be welcoming old, new, and future fans to join us at our home theater."

The *All New* program will include four world premieres: *In & Out*, *Gêmeos*, *Something Tangible*, and *I Am The Road*. Choreographer and Ailey School alumnus **Jean Emile's** [In & Out](#) is a poignant work for eight dancers that gives an unflinchingly honest view of the ups and downs of contemporary life. Drawing on a mix of dance techniques, Emile brings a fresh approach, which is amplified by a varied score that includes music by Alva Noto, Alberto Iglesias, and Jun Miyake.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater dancer **Jamar Roberts** makes his Ailey II choreographic debut with his work [Gêmeos](#) (Portuguese for twins). Loosely based on the relationship of Roberts and his brother growing up as children – one a dancer, the other an athlete – Roberts illustrates the dynamic between contrasting personalities and how they evolve from hostility to harmony. Using music with heavy percussion, brassy horns, groovy bass guitar, and the commanding singing style of Afrobeat star Fela Kuti, Roberts perfectly captures the energy of youth in *Gêmeos*.

Inspired by everyday emotions that awaken and bring color to the human spirit, choreographer **Ray Mercer** leads the ensemble cast into a series of vignettes that reflect sensations of love, passion, fear, and self-doubt in [Something Tangible](#). The work features a wide range of musical styles that include artists Max Richter, Ólafur Arnalds, Geoff Bennett, and an original score by Bongji Duma.

In [I Am The Road](#), a pulsating ensemble work, hip-hop choreographer **Kyle "JustSole" Clark** treats audiences to a generous glimpse into his life as a dancer. Capturing the struggles and triumphs of a young ambitious artist finding his place in the world, Clark presents his personal journal in dance form. House dance music by Vikter Duplaix, Jeff Samuel, Nuyorican Soul, and Markus Enochson illuminate Clark's depictions of taking risks, falling in love, and remaining true to one's self.

The *Returning Favorites* program includes highlights from the 2014-2015 season: *Hissy Fits*, *Breakthrough*, and *Wings*. In *Hissy Fits*, Dwight Rhoden's 2006 contemporary ballet, the former Ailey star turned in-demand choreographer and Artistic Director of Complexions, goes beyond mere virtuosic movement to depict the sometimes tumultuous and ambivalent nature of human relationships. J.S. Bach's piano music provides a powerful backdrop to the high-voltage interplay of five couples, each of whom feels the ripple effect of a series of "hissy fits," or uncontrollable emotional impulses, that reverberate in this work.

Manuel Vignouille's athletic full-company work, *Breakthrough*, is set to haunting music by Swedish composer Mikael Karlsson, and is about people trying to break through the heavy weight of conventional behavior and morals in a world where feelings and emotions are prohibited for the sake of an illusory peace. Manuel Vignouille's diverse international background, first as a dancer and now as a choreographer, informs his creative approach — drawing on both the introspective, conceptual world of European modernism and the more outwardly expressive culture of American dance. Rising choreographer

Jennifer Archibald explores the intriguing possibility of angels moving among us on earth in her work, *Wings* - an unabashedly emotional portrayal of interactions between angels and humans. Set to an ambient score by veteran dance composer Michael Wall, Archibald's movement is ferocious yet vulnerable, showcasing both the dancers' athletic prowess and raw honesty.

Come see why *Dance* magazine hails this beloved company as "second to none." Tickets are on sale now. Order online at <http://www.alvinailey.org/aileyinyc>, by phone through OvationTix (866) 811-4111, or purchase in person at The Joan Weill Center for Dance, 405 W 55th Street. The Box Office is open Feb 16 – Mar 26, 1pm – 7pm; Mar 28 – Apr 10, Mon-Thurs 1pm – 7pm, Fri & Sat 1pm – 8pm. Tickets for groups of 10 or more people can be purchased through Group Sales at (212) 405-9082, groupsales@alvinailey.org. Online ticket sales close two hours before curtain for that day's performance. On performance days, the box office is open through curtain time for current performance ticket buyers.

The public can visit www.alvinailey.org for more information. Press should visit pressroom.alvinailey.org for additional information and downloadable materials. Both programs are approximately two hours, including two intermissions.

All New Program: *In & Out*; *Gêmeos*, *Something Tangible*, *I Am The Road*

March 30 at 7:30pm
April 1 at 8:00pm
April 2 at 8:00pm
April 3 at 3:00pm
April 7 at 7:30pm
April 9 at 3:00pm
April 10 at 3:00pm
April 10 at 7:30pm

Returning Favorites Program: *Hissy Fits*, *Breakthrough*, *Wings*

March 31 at 7:30pm
April 2 at 3pm
April 3 at 7:30pm
April 6 at 7:30pm
April 8 at 8:00pm
April 9 at 8:00pm



Ailey II in Kyle "JustSole" Clark's *I Am The Road*, Ray Mercer's *Something Tangible* and Jamar Roberts' *Gêmeos*. All photos by Eduardo Patino.
##

Ailey II is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.