

AILEY

Arts In Education & Community Programs

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AILEY'S ACCLAIMED *REVELATIONS* RESIDENCY PROGRAM TO INSPIRE LOCAL STUDENTS IN ADVANCE OF ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S PERFORMANCES AT THE ARSHT CENTER, FEBRUARY 18-21, LED BY MIAMI NATIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ROBERT BATTLE

WEEK-LONG WORKSHOPS, FEBRUARY 8-12, AT LENORA B. SMITH ELEMENTARY AND HOLMES ELEMENTARY IN LIBERTY CITY WHERE BATTLE GREW UP, WITH NASHA THOMAS-SCHMITT, MASTER TEACHER AND FORMER AILEY STAR DANCER

NEW YORK (February 1, 2016) – The internationally renowned Ailey organization is proud to share its mission of using dance to educate, inspire and enlighten people of all ages through the implementation of ***Revelations: An Interdisciplinary Approach***. This innovative curriculum-based initiative for public school students utilizes Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece *Revelations* as the inspirational framework for an in-depth study of language arts, social studies and dance. The acclaimed residency program will serve Miami students from **February 8-12 at Lenora B. Smith Elementary and Holmes Elementary, in the Liberty City neighborhood where Ailey Artistic Director Robert Battle grew up, just prior to Ailey's performances at the Arsht Center February 18-21.**

"As I return to my hometown this season, I am reminded of the personal awakening that I experienced as a Liberty City middle-school student when I first saw Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* in Miami Beach on a class trip," said Artistic Director Robert Battle. "It was this life-changing experience that motivated me to pursue my dreams, and I'm thrilled that Ailey's residencies in the schools will help to inspire the young people of Miami to ensure that they can have that same transformative experience."

Created in 1999, ***Revelations: An Interdisciplinary Approach*** engages students' analytic and creative thinking skills while exploring the life story of Alvin Ailey and *Revelations*; Mr. Ailey's beloved 1960 masterpiece. Led by master teacher and former Ailey Company member Nasha Thomas-Schmitt, along with Ailey teaching artists and local teachers, students connect this story to their academic studies, life experiences, community, and the broader world around them using customized lesson plans.

"I'm so proud of the role Ailey plays in providing unique educational programs that use dance to captivate young people's hearts and minds in meaningful ways that can be a game-changer in their lives," said **Nasha Thomas-Schmitt, master teacher and former Ailey star dancer**. "The *Revelations* Residency guides students to explore new methods of discovery and learning, as well as cultivates self-esteem and creativity and points them in the direction of how to shape their own life story."

In addition to the *Revelations* Residencies, there are a variety of educational offerings that are being provided for Miami area students in conjunction with the Company's **engagement at the Ziff Ballet Opera House, February 18-21**, co-presented by the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County as part of the Knight Masterworks Dance Series, with leadership support from John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and presenting support from Funding Arts Network.

Ailey and the Arsht Center will present a **free school-time performance on Friday, February 19th at 11am for public school students**, including those participating in the *Revelations* Residency program and many others from the Liberty City neighborhood where Robert Battle was raised. Moderated by one of the dancers, this educational performance, which includes Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, gives students a taste of all the elements that compose an Ailey experience.

The **Saturday, February 20th Family Matinee** performance will be attended by students from **AileyCamp Miami** – Ailey’s nationally-acclaimed summer program, hosted by the Arsht Center since 2009, which uses dance as a vehicle for helping middle school students ages 11-14 reach their full potential. This program will feature *Awakening*, Robert Battle’s first world premiere since taking Ailey’s helm, Ronald K. Brown’s new Cuban-inspired creation, *Open Door*, and Alvin Ailey’s uplifting *Revelations*. The Family Matinee will be followed by **free post-performance Q & A in the theater with Artistic Director Robert Battle and Ailey dancer Jamar Roberts, a fellow Miamian**. Click [here](#) for the full scope of community engagement activities, arts in education offerings and training opportunities for young people including, master classes led by Jamar Roberts at the Arsht Center and Robert Battle at Northwestern Senior High School and for students from New World School of the Arts, his local alma maters.

Robert Battle’s life growing up in Miami inspired the recently released Simon & Schuster children’s book [My Story, My Dance: Robert Battle’s Journey to Alvin Ailey](#). This heart-warming picture book is a unique story of a young boy who, despite physical and other challenges, has a life filled with music, church, and movement – first martial arts, and then, after seeing Alvin Ailey’s *Revelations*, dance. Husband-and-wife team **James Ransome** and **Lesla Cline-Ransome** created the vibrant illustrations and wrote the inspiring narrative. Available for purchase at Ailey performances and at www.AileyShop.com, the book for ages 5 – 10 is a success story that is inspiring to all.

Ailey Arts in Education & Community Programs are committed to bringing dance into classrooms, communities, and lives of people of all ages. Programs include special student performances; lecture-demonstrations; technique classes; and AileyCamp, a full scholarship summer camp for underserved inner-city youth, now in 10 cities nationwide. In fall 2010, First Lady Michelle Obama hosted “The White House Dance Series: A Tribute to Judith Jamison” that featured a *Revelations* Residency involving students from across the country led by Nasha Thomas-Schmitt, Ailey’s Arts In Education spokesperson, master teacher and former Company member. The curriculum has been profiled on CNN and has earned enthusiastic responses from participants in New York City, Atlanta, Detroit, Chicago, Washington, D.C, and London.

For further details on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Ailey organization’s performances and Ailey Arts In Education activities, visit www.alvinailey.org.

PRESS

Open house for press will be on Thursday, February 11, 2016 at 2 PM at Lenore B. Smith Elementary School for a special student presentation of the program led by Nasha Thomas-Schmitt. For information contact Press Representative: Mari Beth Bittan, 786-281-1045/ maribeth@mbprforthearts.com

For photos, video and press materials:

- [Ailey Arts In Education Revelations Residency](#)
- Miami engagement, February 18-21, [press release](#)
- [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#)

The 2016 North American Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Commission support for Awakening is provided by the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County with lead support from Ira and Carole Hall.

Major support for the creation of Awakening is provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation.

Awakening is supported by commissioning funds from Cal Performances at the University of California, Berkeley.

The creation of Open Door is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.

Major support for Ailey’s Arts In Education & Community Programs is provided by Southern Company.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater’s engagement at the Adrienne Arsht Center is part of the Knight Masterworks Dance Series.

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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.