



## Alvin Ailey Dance Theater to pay tribute to artistic director Jamison for 65th Anniversary

By: Kemberly Richardson

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NEW YORK CITY (WABC) -- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is getting ready to celebrate its 65th anniversary season at the New York City Center on November 29. Opening night will include a special tribute to trailblazer and iconic Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison. The highly acclaimed former dancer sat down with Kemberly Richardson in a rare interview. The now 80-year-old, who is retired, is still very much involved with the dance company.

In 1958, Alvin Ailey started his dance company. In 1965, Jamison, then in her 20's, didn't know it, but her life was about to change. "I didn't know what I was doing here, I had no idea. I just knew I was in New York and that this man saw me fail an audition and I ended up with an invite three days later, asking if I wanted to join the company," Jamison said.

After Ailey's death in 1989, Jamison stepped into the role of artistic director, where she remained until she retired in 2011. Jamison said, that even with all of her success, while she appreciates the accolades, she still isn't comfortable with all of the attention. "I still got to go down the hallway and do my laundry. This legend, still hard to get a taxi, this legend. I'm just the regular person that has this God-given talent that brought me over," Jamison said.

Over the years, Jamison has performed some of Ailey's most prized works including "Revelations." She and others at Ailey, to this day, follow what was Ailey's mantra: to educate, entertain, and uplift. "At the end of a performance when people go crazy and are applauding or stunned, that's when I got ya, I know that this has happened to you, we've shared an experience," Jamison said.

Watch 5pm segment here: <https://abc7ny.com/alvin-ailey-dance-theater-judith-jamison-artistic-director/14087955/>  
(2:57)