



CULTURAL
AMBASSADOR
TO THE WORLD

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Relations Contacts:

Christopher Zunner: czunner@alvinailey.org / 212-405-9028

Tracy Severe: tsevere@alvinailey.org / 212-405-9032

THE JOAN WEILL CENTER FOR DANCE 405 WEST 55TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10019-4402 PH 212.405.9000 FX 212.405.9001 WWW.ALVINAILEY.ORG

Alvin Ailey, Founder Robert Battle, Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director

Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita Bennett Rink, Executive Director

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S OPENING NIGHT GALA BENEFIT PERFORMANCE AND PARTY HONORS PHILANTHROPIST ELAINE WYNN & THE ELAINE P. WYNN & FAMILY FOUNDATION WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 AT 7PM

Actress and Singer Renée Elise Goldsberry to be Honorary Chair

One-Night-Only Program Will Include Two Merce Cunningham Centennial Solos and Special Performance to Memorialize Opera Great Jessye Norman

Celebration Launches Ailey's Holiday Season at New York City Center, December 4 – January 5

NEW YORK – UPDATED December 2, 2019 — [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](http://alvinailey.org) will launch a five-week holiday season on December 4 with a star-studded gala benefit performance at New York City Center and party at the New York Hilton Midtown Grand Ballroom. The special evening **celebrates philanthropist Elaine Wynn and the Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation**. Wynn's generous contributions have supported the creation of new works as well as the Elaine Wynn & Family Education Wing, which in 2017 added three floors – featuring four dance studios and two classrooms – to The Joan Weill Center for Dance, New York's largest building dedicated to dance. Actress and singer **Renée Elise Goldsberry** will serve as the evening's Honorary Chair. Goldsberry, a Tony and Grammy Award winner, is best known for originating the role of Angelica Schuyler in the Broadway musical *Hamilton*, and can currently be seen starring in the new critically acclaimed film, *Waves*.

The one-night only performance at 7pm will feature two Merce Cunningham Centennial Solos that were part of this year's 100th anniversary celebration of his birth – marking the first time this landmark choreographer's work will be seen on the Ailey stage – as well as a special excerpt of Artistic Director [Robert Battle](http://alvinailey.org)'s *Channels* to honor and memorialize opera great Jessye Norman, set to her recorded performance of a Johannes Brahms lied – a 19th-century German art song. Following the inspiring finale of [Revelations](http://alvinailey.org), performed with live music, prominent figures in the worlds of entertainment, business, philanthropy and politics will join Robert Battle and Ailey's extraordinary dancers for a dinner-dance in the Hilton New York Grand Ballroom.

The event's co-chairs are **Emily & Len Blavatnik, Paulette Mullings Bradnock & Howard Bradnock, Mellody Hobson & George Lucas, Daria L. & Eric J. Wallach** and **Joan & Sandy Weill**. Proceeds from the annual benefit will support the creation of new works, scholarships to The Ailey School, and Ailey's educational programs for children. Call 212-405-9031 or visit alvinailey.org/support/opening-night-gala-benefit for tickets.

Ailey's holiday season features special programs such as an evening celebrating [The Ailey School's 50th Anniversary](http://alvinailey.org) (December 10); a [tribute performance for Associate Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya](http://alvinailey.org), which will highlight his extensive career of nearly five decades as he concludes his final season with the Company (December 22); and world premieres [Greenwood](http://alvinailey.org) (December 6), a powerful work by Donald Byrd that draws on the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and [Ode](http://alvinailey.org)

(December 10), offering a meditation on the beauty and fragility of life in a time of growing gun violence by Ailey dancer and Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts.

Tickets for the full season running December 4 through January 5, starting at \$29, are on sale now at the New York City Center Box Office, through CityTix® at (212) 581-1212, or at www.alvinailey.org or www.nycitycenter.org.

PRESS: For photos, videos, materials, visit pressroom.alvinailey.org or [click here](#) for full details on the 2019 New York City Center season.



(L to R); AAADT's Solomon Dumas. Photo by Andrew Eccles; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater with live onstage music in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, photo by Christopher Duggan; AAADT's Jacqueline Green. Photo by Andrew Eccles. **(CTRL+ CLICK ON PHOTOS FOR HI-RES DOWNLOAD) – Please credit photos.**

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York Winter Season.

American Express is the Official Card of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges the support of Diageo, North America.

Opening Night Gala Sponsors: BNY Mellon, Diageo and EHE Health.

The world premiere of *Ode* is supported by commissioning funds from New York City Center.

The 2019 Winter 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.

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 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.