

Press Contacts:

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

Nicole Tintle: ntintle@alvinailey.org / 212-405-9084

**ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S 21ST ANNUAL WASHINGTON, D.C.
OPENING NIGHT GALA TO BENEFIT AILEY'S AREA PROGRAMS ON
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 AT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

Performance Features the DC Premiere of Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts' *Ode* and Culminates in Alvin Ailey's American Masterpiece *Revelations* Followed by Dinner and Dancing on the Terrace Level to Support Ailey's DC Programs



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Jacqueline Green in Alvin Ailey's Revelations. Photo by Paul Kolnik; Chris Womack, Artistic Director Robert Battle, Gala Co-Chairs Lyndon K. Boozer, DeDe Lea, Yelberton Watkins, and Sela Thompson Collins, 2019 Washington DC Gala. Photo © Tony Powell; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Jamar Roberts' Ode. Photo by Paul Kolnik

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(Washington, D.C.) January 21, 2020 – On Tuesday, February 4, 2020, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's [21st Washington, D.C. Opening Night Gala Benefit](#) will launch the renowned Company's week-long [engagement at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts](#) and a 21-city United States tour. Following the 7pm opening program on the Opera House Stage – featuring Jamar Roberts' profound *Ode* and Alvin Ailey's acclaimed *Revelations* – **Artistic Director Robert Battle will join prominent figures in the worlds of entertainment, business, philanthropy, and politics for dinner and dancing on the Terrace Level of the Kennedy Center.**

The evening's performance includes an excerpt of **Darrell Grand Moultrie's [Ounce of Faith](#)**, **Judith Jamison's [A Case of You](#)**, and the DC premiere of **Ailey dancer and first-ever Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts' *Ode***. Described as "powerful and poetic" by *The New York Times*, Roberts' *Ode* offers a meditation on the beauty and fragility of life in a time of growing gun violence. The program culminates with a special performance of **Alvin Ailey's** masterpiece, **[Revelations](#)**, acclaimed as an uplifting must-see for all. Six local students ages 9-12 from the DMV area will dance alongside the Company in the 'Processional' section. Over thirty students participated in a "Revelations" workshop led by **[DC native and former Ailey Company member Renee Robinson](#)**. The six students who will perform are from City Dance, Inc, The Dance Institute of Washington, Jones-Haywood, and Maryland Youth Ballet.

Proceeds from the annual benefit will support Ailey's Washington, D.C. programs, including the creation of new works, Arts in Education activities, and scholarships for talented young dance students in the Washington area to attend The Ailey School in New York City. Incredibly, a quarter of Ailey's 32 renowned dancers have roots in the DMV area, including: Ghrai DeVore-Stokes, Samantha Figgins, Jacqueline Green, Michael Jackson, Jr., Corrin Rachelle Mitchell, Jessica Amber Pinkett, Courtney Celeste Spears, Jermaine Terry, and Miranda Quinn.

The evening's **Co-Chairs** are **Lyndon K. Boozer, Sela Thompson Collins, DeDe Lea, and Yelberton R. Watkins**. **Gala Vice Chairs** are **Joyce Brayboy, Lawrence Duncan III, Anthony A. Lewis, Tanya Leah Lombard, Vanessa Reed, Kim Sheftall Humphries, Nicole Venable and Katharine Weymouth**. The **Corporate Chair** is **Southern Company President & CEO, Thomas A. Fanning**.

For further information on tickets for the black-tie benefit performance and party, contact Ariel Metzger via e-mail: ariel@metzgerevents.com; or phone (888) 926-3836, or visit: www.alvinailey.org/dcgala. For more information on Ailey's performances and programs, visit: www.alvinailey.org.

The Company marks its annual Kennedy Center engagement from February 4-9, 2020 with seven performances and three other programs featuring premieres, new productions, and returning favorites: Donald Byrd's *Greenwood*, Aszure Barton's *BUSK*, Camille A. Brown's *City of Rain*, Judith Jamison's *Divining* and Lar Lubovitch's *Fandango*. All performances end with Alvin Ailey's American masterpiece, *Revelations*. For more information on Ailey's performances at the Kennedy Center, click here. For more information on the Company's North American Tour and the organizations training and education programs, visit www.alvinailey.org.

In addition to conducting a variety of dance workshops at local schools, the Company will offer a school time performance for students on February 6 at 11am and a free *Revelations Celebration Workshop* on February 8 at 5:30pm, led by former company member and D.C. native Renee Robinson on the Millennium Stage.

For additional photos and press materials, visit pressroom.alvinailey.org.

- [Electronic Press Kit](#)
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Southern Company is the proud sponsor of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit.

Bank of America is Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's National Tour Sponsor.

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

The company premiere of *City of Rain* is made possible with support from American Express.

Generous support for the creation of *Ounce of Faith* is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

The 2020 National Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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, 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.