



# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

AILEY II | THE AILEY SCHOOL | AILEY ARTS IN EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS | AILEY EXTENSION  
The Joan Weill Center for Dance 405 West 55th St, New York NY 10019-4402 (212) 405-9000 AlvinAiley.org

Robert Battle, Artistic Director Matthew Rushing, Associate Artistic Director Bennett Rink, Executive Director  
Alvin Ailey, Founder Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita

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## ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER INVITES VIEWERS TO ENJOY FAMILY PROGRAMS DURING *AILEY FORWARD* – FIRST-EVER VIRTUAL SEASON CELEBRATING SIX DECADES OF *REVELATIONS*

### Free Presentations Feature Reimagining of Classic Works by Alvin Ailey with Interactive Workshops and Conversations with Renowned Artists

**New York – December 4, 2020** – [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) invites families around the world to gather for special family programming during [Ailey Forward – the Company's first-ever virtual holiday season](#). Led by [Artistic Director Robert Battle](#), Ailey's extraordinary dancers will elevate a legacy of artistic innovation and excellence while celebrating six decades of Alvin Ailey's timeless [Revelations](#). Nine presentations through the holidays, each available free online for a week, carry on the tradition of uplifting audiences and making dance accessible to all with engaging family-friendly programs and interactive experiences to uplift and unite across generations.

**Family Program: *Ailey & Ellington*** starting **December 5 at 2pm ET** will feature three treasures by Alvin Ailey to celebrate the musical genius of esteemed American composer **Duke Ellington**, including veteran company member [Vernard Gilmore](#) in the wistful solo [Reflections in D](#) and an excerpt of [Pas de Duke with Ailey stars Jacqueline Green and Yannick Lebrun](#) on the top of the landmark [Woolworth building](#) as a breathtaking love letter to New York City. Adult students at Ailey Extension will step into parts of [Night Creature](#), accompanied by reminiscences from their teacher [Sarita Allen](#), an acclaimed original cast member and current Ailey Extension instructor.

Families can get moving as well as enjoy a performance of Alvin Ailey's must-see American masterpiece during an interactive **Family Program: *Revelations* on December 19 at 2pm ET**. This program invites households to come together in learning excerpts of "Wade in the Water" and "Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham" from Ailey's most beloved work, *Revelations*. Alvin Ailey once said that, "The most unique thing in the world is you. If you can take these steps and show us yourself through it, that will be an extraordinary experience." Influenced by his words, there will also be an activity inspired by the word "unique" in the interactive workshop taught by Arts in Education Community Programs Master Teacher [Nasha Thomas](#) and former Ailey company member Michael Thomas.

Families are encouraged to keep moving to classic Ailey style and choreography with a series of livestreamed 90-minute Saturday workshops led by former Company Members through [Ailey Extension](#). As part of the global celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Revelations*, families can join 300 Ailey fans from around the world in learning excerpts of Ailey's timeless American masterpiece during a free [Revelations Around the World](#) Workshop on **December 5 at 3pm ET**. This monumental experience led by Director of Ailey Extension and former Ailey dancer [Lisa Johnson-Willingham](#), will be recorded for inclusion in a program later in the season. Following the *Ailey & Ellington* family program, viewers can learn *Night Creature* choreography during the [Night Creature Workshop](#) with [Sarita Allen](#) on **December 12 at 2pm ET**. After

witnessing a heartfelt tribute program celebrating Ailey's longest tenured dancers, viewers can take part in a [Masterclass with Glenn Allen Sims and Linda Celeste Sims](#) on **December 19 at 2pm ET**. The talented husband-and-wife duo will guide fans through 90 minutes of Ailey movement style, followed by a 30-minute Q&A.

Young people looking to develop basic dance skills or improve their technique in a non-competitive environment surrounded by their peers are welcome to drop into Ailey Extension's [Kids & Teens Online](#) program. These weekly classes allow children as young as five years old to dive into dance with in-demand instructors, including departing Ailey dancer [Linda Celeste Sims](#). Kids ages 5-12 and teens ages 13 and up can learn the fundamentals of ballet, hip-hop, and/or Horton as they develop coordination and individuality with their movements. For further information on Ailey Extension workshops and the Kids & Teens Online program please visit [alvinailey.org/extension](http://alvinailey.org/extension).

Currently, *Ailey Forward's* ["Revelations Reimagined" Opening Night Benefit](#) is inspiring [viewers around the world](#) through December 9<sup>th</sup> with a series of pièce d'occasion performances by Ailey's brilliant dance artists re-imagined for this moment of COVID and the necessity of social distancing. Introduced by **Artistic Director Robert Battle** and **Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison**, historic film footage brought Alvin Ailey and the Company from six decades ago to the virtual stage for a dance dialogue alongside current company members in newly created footage of Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece filmed at [Wave Hill Public Garden & Cultural Center](#), a spectacular jewel overlooking the Hudson River. Special guest appearances included **Sterling K. Brown, Jasmine Guy, Jillian Hervey of Lion Babe, Nigel Lythgoe, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Phylicia Rashad, Shonda Rhimes, Lynn Whitfield, Vanessa Williams, Oprah Winfrey, and Jeffrey Wright**.

During the virtual holiday season extending through New Year's Eve, Ailey's talented artists will unveil premieres by **Ailey Resident Choreographer Jamar Roberts**, celebrating the centennial of jazz revolutionary **Charlie "Bird" Parker**, and the *Revelations*-inspired world premiere [Testament](#) created by [Matthew Rushing](#), in his first season as Associate Artistic Director, in collaboration with company member [Clifton Brown](#) and former company member **Yusha-Marie Sorzano**. For more information, visit [alvinailey.org/virtualseason](http://alvinailey.org/virtualseason).

**FAMILY PROGRAM PERFORMANCES – Schedule and Programming**  
**Ailey's 2020 Holiday Virtual Season Program Dates and Times**

Sat., Dec. 5 @ 2:00pm ET – Dec. 12: Family Program: *Ailey & Ellington* / *BattleTalk* with Wynton Marsalis  
Sat., Dec. 19 @ 2:00pm ET – Dec. 26: Family Program: *Revelations*

**Ailey Opening Night Virtual Benefit Honoree: Dove**

**Ailey Opening Night Virtual Benefit Sponsors: BNY Mellon, Diageo and EHE Health.**

**Bank of America is the *Revelations* at 60 Sponsor during Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 2020 virtual season.**

**The 2020 virtual 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.**



(L to R) Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater with Artistic Director Robert Battle, Associate Artistic Director Matthew Rushing, and Rehearsal Director Ronni Favors. Photo by Andre Eccles; Ailey's Jacqueline Green and Yannick Lebrun at the top of The Woolworth Building. Photo by Mikey Pozarik; Ailey's Jacqueline Green and Yannick Lebrun performing Alvin Ailey's *Pas De Duke* at The Woolworth Building. Photo Courtesy of Ailey.

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(L to R) Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Nicole Tintle at Wave Hill Public Garden & Cultural Center in Bronx, NY.

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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, 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 six continents, 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 the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, 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 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 55<sup>th</sup> Street at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).

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