



# 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

---

## \$20 MILLION GIFT FROM MACKENZIE SCOTT TO ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER TO FUND THE COMPANY'S TRANSFORMATIVE "DANCING FORWARD" INITIATIVES

**NEW YORK, NY — June 22, 2021 —** [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) today gratefully acknowledged an exceptional gift of \$20 million from MacKenzie Scott—one of 286 donations the philanthropist and author made last week to non-profit organizations across the United States—and announced that the company will use the funds to support its “Dancing Forward” initiatives.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2019, “Dancing Forward” helps advance the work of Ailey and the field through long-range, strategic measures undertaken across the entire Ailey organization. Among the many components of “Dancing Forward” are programs to expand the repertory by commissioning new work, bring Mr. Ailey’s dances to current and future audiences in new productions, provide training for Ailey Arts in Education teaching artists, and offer scholarships to [The Ailey School](#).

[Robert Battle](#), Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, said, “From the day Mr. Ailey founded this company, it has been dedicated to celebrating dance and culture and changing lives. This monumental gift from MacKenzie Scott is going to help us do just that, through programs for everyone from kids exploring dance in AileyCamp to brilliant choreographers creating new work for the Company.”

[Bennett Rink](#), Executive Director of Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, said, “Like all performing arts institutions, Ailey was hit hard during the pandemic. It’s a brilliant stroke for MacKenzie Scott to make capacity-building gifts that will help so many of us rebuild, whether the communities we serve are local or, in the case of Ailey, circle the globe. We’re deeply grateful to her and to all the donors who are supporting us as Ailey continues moving ahead on all fronts.”

The acknowledgment of MacKenzie Scott’s gift comes on the eve of the [Ailey Spring Gala](#), which will be conducted as a virtual broadcast celebrating Hope, Promise and the Future. The broadcast will begin on June 24 at 7:30pm EDT and remain viewable without charge on the [Spring Gala website](#) for 48 hours as a culmination of the [Ailey All Access](#) free online performance series, which over the past year has brought dance to nearly 15 million people in 121 countries.

Special appearances at the Ailey Spring Gala include guest of honor Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III, Congressman James E. Clyburn and former First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama, along with performances by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and gifted young dancers from The Ailey School. The free broadcast is made possible, in part, through the support of Southern Company.

Over the summer, the organization's [AileyCamps](#) will be operating both virtually and in-person across the country, helping young people ages 11-14 learn to dance and explore their creativity. The Ailey School is presently operating on a limited-capacity basis.

In fall 2021, the Ailey organization's home, the Joan Weill Center for Dance, will continue its reopening, welcoming more students to The Ailey School—and this winter, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will make its long-awaited return to New York City Center for the company's December season before embarking on the annual national tour. Additional details will be announced soon.

### **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](http://www.alvinailey.org).

###