

CULTURAL
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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

AILEY ARTISTRY REACHES ACROSS AMERICA TO BRING DANCE TO THE PEOPLE IN PERSON, ONLINE, AND THROUGH A NATIONAL TELEVISION NETWORK BROADCAST

***AILEY* Documentary to Open 36th Season of *American Masters* on PBS January 11**

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater National Tour January 28 - May 8
Celebrates a Decade of Robert Battle's Leadership and the 50th Anniversary of Alvin Ailey's *Cry***

**Ailey II Returns to U.S. Stages February 4 - April 12
Including Performances in New York City at Ailey Citigroup Theater March 23 - April 3**

**Ailey All Access Returns in February with New Series of Free Digital Broadcasts and
Virtual Performance for School Students During Black History Month**

NEW YORK – JANUARY 5, 2022 — From January 11 through May 8, audiences across the country will have the opportunity to experience the extraordinary artistry of Ailey with a cornucopia of performances and programs, including two national tours—by [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) and [Ailey II](#)—as well as the nationwide broadcast of the acclaimed documentary film *AILEY*, an immersive portrait of the dance pioneer, and the continuation of [Ailey All Access](#), the organization's digital programming for all audiences.

"Alvin Ailey's vision opened the door for generations of artists to use dance to inspire, unite and enlighten," stated Artistic Director Robert Battle. "Despite the twists and turns on the road we have all traveled together, we continue to find new ways to share artistry that renews our spirit of courage, hope, and joy. I am deeply humbled to have led this seminal Company for a decade, joined by incomparable dancers and choreographers on a journey of discovery that extends from the powerful works of our founder to the important voices of today – an ongoing dance dialogue that shines a light on the strength and resilience of our common humanity around the world."

AILEY, director Jamila Wignot's resonant documentary about legendary choreographer Alvin Ailey (1931-1989), will open the 36th season of PBS *American Masters* with a **nationwide broadcast premiere on Tuesday, January 11 at 9 pm** ([check local listings](#), pbs.org/ailey and the [PBS Video app](#)). *American Masters: Ailey* is a portrait of the trailblazing artist who founded Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1958 during the Civil Rights Movement. The film traces the full contours of this brilliant and enigmatic man whose search for the truth in movement resulted in enduring choreography that centers on the Black American experience with inimitable grace and power. Told through the choreographer's own words and featuring evocative archival footage and interviews with those close to him, Wignot's weaves together a biography that connects Ailey's past to our present with an intimate glimpse into the Ailey studios today, following innovative hip-hop choreographer Rennie Harris as he conceives a new dance, [Lazarus](#), inspired by Ailey's life.

Wignot said, "Ailey's dances – celebrations of African American beauty and history – did more than move bodies; they opened minds. His dances were revolutionary social statements that staked a claim as powerful in his own time as in ours: Black life is central to the American story and deserves a central place in American art and on the world stage."

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, America’s beloved cultural ambassador to the world, returns to stages from coast to coast on a [National Tour](#) to more than 20 cities—including Washington D.C., Atlanta, Miami, Berkeley, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Newark—January 28 through May 8. Marking a decade of leading the Company forward, Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#) will present Ailey’s renowned artists in a diverse repertory of premieres, new productions, and Ailey classics. Highlights of tour programs include a ***Battle 10th Anniversary program***; two world premieres adapted from video to stage, [For Four](#) by Robert Battle and [Holding Space](#) by Ailey Resident Choreographer [Jamar Roberts](#); the return of hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris’s acclaimed ***Lazarus***; ***50 Years of Cry*** celebrating Ailey’s beloved classic dedicated to “all Black women everywhere – especially our mothers”; and ***Ailey & Ellington***, spotlighting cherished classics from the series of more than a dozen ballets that Alvin Ailey created celebrating the musical genius of the eminent American composer Duke Ellington. Alvin Ailey’s American masterpiece [Revelations](#) will reach all cities on the North American tour. Since its creation in 1960, *Revelations* has inspired generations through its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring spirituals. Full tour details will be announced later this month.

To help introduce young audiences to the magic of Ailey wherever they are, **during Black History Month a virtual school-time performance will be made available to students in tour cities.** Filmed at New York City Center, the educational experience moderated by Artistic Director Robert Battle will welcome viewers behind the scenes to see the elements and hear from the people who create an Ailey experience. Special performances of classic works that Alvin Ailey created based upon his “blood memories” of growing up in rural Texas are featured with excerpts of [Blues Suite](#) and the must-see masterpiece *Revelations*.

Ailey II, merging the spirit and energy of the country’s best early-career dance talent with the passion and creative vision of outstanding emerging and established choreographers, will return to stages across the country this winter. Ailey II Artistic Director [Francesca Harper](#), internationally renowned performer, choreographer, director, and multi-disciplinary artist, will nurture new creative voices and propel the Company forward during her [inaugural season](#). Trained at [The Ailey School](#) (and the daughter of the late Denise Jefferson, who directed The Ailey School from 1984 to 2010), Ms. Harper brings fresh perspectives to Mr. Ailey’s legacy. Program highlights from the national tour and New York City engagement March 23 – April 3, are works by Robert Battle, William Forsythe, Francesca Harper, Yannick Lebrun and Andrea Miller. Further details will be announced later this month.

“It is a privilege to return to the home that shaped me as an artist to accept the honor of leading Ailey II into its next era,” said Artistic Director Francesca Harper. “Ailey II’s mission lies in generating space for human narratives expressed through the strength, grace, and versatility of the next generation of gifted young dancers. As exemplified in this year’s diverse repertory, I am looking forward to bringing in new choreographic voices and programming works that further an ongoing cultural dialogue and contribute to social transformation.”

Since the pandemic’s onset, Ailey has reached out to inspire people worldwide with [Ailey All Access](#), a series of digital offerings that brought dance to nearly 46 million people in 121 countries—including free streaming of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater repertory, original short films created by the Ailey dancers, [Ailey Extension](#) dance and fitness classes for all levels, and more. In February, Ailey All Access will return with regularly scheduled series of streaming of performances and offerings. For more information about Ailey’s performances, programs and classes, visit: www.alvinailey.org. Audiences for tour performances should check with venues for Covid-19 protocols.

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

***American Masters: Ailey* press materials can be found [here](#).**

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 55th Street at 9th Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

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