

Greener Grass

March 25, 2011



Belfast's City Hall. Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis

Our tour concluded with wonderful performances in Truro, Belfast, and Salford, each city broadening my view of the UK's landscapes, fashion, and people. Truro was interesting, almost like a maze with all of the curving streets and alleyway shops. Belfast was an adventure, especially because we stayed near a lot of historical sights. I also felt a strange connection walking about the city after my mother reminded me of our Irish ancestry.

In Truro, we had a chance to visit a lot of sights and even took a trip into Manchester. While at dinner there one night, we met and bonded with a family sitting at a table nearby as our voices struggled to keep up with Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell. It turned out they were big fans of Ailey and were excited to come and see us perform at the Lowry.

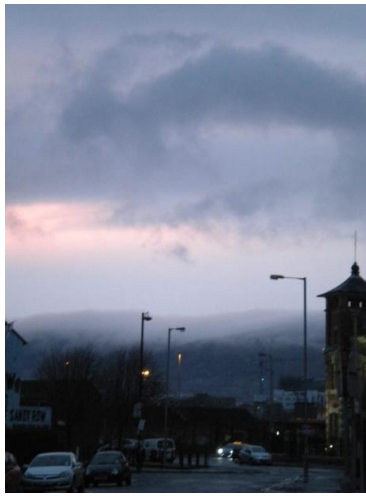
That universality is what I'll take away from this tour. Not only did I experience some of the most wonderful performances of my life and see miles and miles of the "greener grass" that I've always heard so much about, but I also got to meet and perform for so many people who live in a completely different part of the world and yet share the same human experience. Which brings me to *Revelations*.

Our closing piece every night couldn't have been a better choice based on the audience's reaction. Whether black or white, young or old, Christian or Buddhist, American or European, or anything outside and in between, *Revelations* speaks to everyone and so elegantly portrays a vast range of that human experience. I think Mr. Ailey must have known that every human being knows what it's like to feel like a "Pilgrim of Sorrow" and recalls a time of his or her own awakening experience like we see in "Take Me to the Water." And as proven by roaring audiences throughout the world, we all can testify to the sheer joy of "Move, Members, Move!" To have seen this piece as a child and now to perform it myself is beyond a blessing.

A huge thanks to the UK for having us and for enlightening me in so many ways. I'm certain I'll be back again soon, so until then, much love and "cheers."



Belfast's Grand Opera House. Photo by Fana Tesdagiorgis



Sunset in Belfast, with mountains in the distance.
Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis



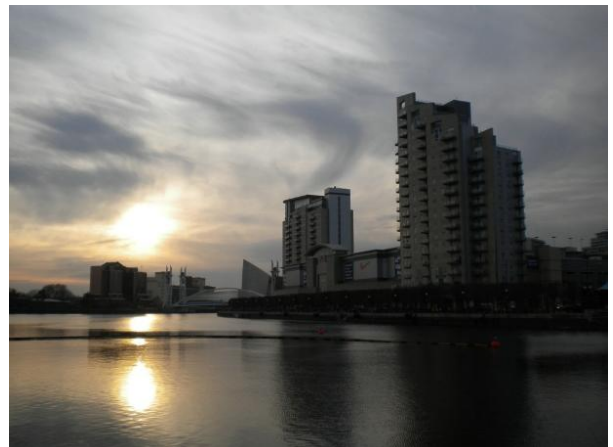
The theater Truro Hall for Cornwall. Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis



A cute museum café in a small alleyway market.
Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis



The Lowry theater in Salford. Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis



Sun setting over our last UK stop, Salford. Photo by Fana Tesfagiorgis