



Local News 

## Meet the new leader of Alvin Ailey

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Eyewitness News

NEW YORK (WABC) -- A rare passing of the baton has taken place at the Alvin Ailey Dance Company. "Alvin gave me a great gift and so I'm taking this wonderful magical gift and passing along the gift so it stays lofted," Judith Jamison said. There to accept & choreographer Robert Battle.

"This whole notion of being a creative person is a leap of faith and this is the same thing. It's just a bigger leap, but I'm counting on a great soft landing," Battle said.



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The legendary dance troupe was created back by Ailey in 1958.

Only Ailey and Jamison have held the title of artistic director. Now it's Battle's turn.

"You can't put him in box, and you know how much Alvin hated that. He didn't want cookie cutter dancers. Neither did I, nor do I want you to come to the theater and go, 'Oh, that's Ailey, Jamison said.

We were there as Ailey school students rehearsed one of Battle's pieces.

For more than a decade, this 37-year old has created ballets for the company and is now keenly aware of the magnitude of this new endeavor.

"A man named Alvin Ailey gave us this and I intend to guard it with my life," he said.

"He brings a kind of maverick freshness that is needed at this time for us to take that great leap of faith that I always like to talk about and think I've been doing for 20 years, except I don't know if I can leap another 50 years so I'm going," Jamison said.

It is a new, yet familiar page in this story.

"You will be sitting forward in your seats and you will be on the Ailey rollercoaster ride into the future," Battle said.

To hear from from Alvin Ailey's new artistic director: [CLICK HERE](#).

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