



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

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CULTURAL
AMBASSADOR
TO THE WORLD

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF INSPIRING *REVELATIONS* ON 2010 INTERNATIONAL TOUR TO UNITED KINGDOM AND ISRAEL AMERICA'S CULTURAL AMBASSADORS LED BY LEGENDARY JUDITH JAMISON IN HER FINAL YEAR AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Ailey's Linda Celeste Sims. Photo by Andrew Eccles

(New York) August 24, 2010 - Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congress as a vital American "Cultural Ambassador to the World," **will inspire, enlighten and entertain audiences throughout the United Kingdom this September and October during a tour to 8 cities**, organized by the Dance Consortium. **Under the leadership of Judith Jamison in her ultimate year as Artistic Director, the Company will honor 50 years of Ailey's beloved signature masterpiece *Revelations*.** Ms. Jamison, who has guided the Ailey organization to new heights and into a permanent home, joined by recently announced Artistic Director Designate Robert Battle, will lead the company on the tour starting with a two-week engagement at London's Sadler's Wells **September 14th – 25th**.

Performances across the United Kingdom will continue with visits to Nottingham's Royal Concert Hall, Birmingham Hippodrome, Plymouth Theatre Royal, Cardiff Wales Millennium Centre, Bradford Alhambra and Edinburgh Festival Theatre before culminating with two performances at the Newcastle Theatre Royal October 22nd – 23rd. (See attached schedule)

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will be celebrating ***Revelations at 50***, taking audiences on an emotional, spiritual and musical journey with this American classic for the inspiring finale of each program. Hailed by

Dance Magazine as “the most popular modern dance piece of all time,” since its 1960 New York City premiere, *Revelations* has been experienced by more people around the world than any other modern dance work.

In addition to *Revelations*, audiences will be moved by exciting premieres, dramatic new productions, and repertory favorites. Program A includes Tony Award-winning choreographer **George W. Faison’s Suite Otis**, a work ripe with romance and humor in a sizzling suite of dances to the timeless songs of Otis Redding; **Robert Battle’s In/Side**, a gripping solo that plays out to the vivid emotions of **Nina Simone’s** “Wild is the Wind”; and **Ronald K. Brown’s Dancing Spirit**, a tribute to Ms. Jamison set to music by **Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis, and War**. Program B features a new production of *Hymn*, **Judith Jamison’s** Emmy Award-winning homage to Alvin Ailey, and *Anointed*, an exciting world premiere by former company member **Christopher L. Huggins**. London performances will include a new production of *The Hunt*, Robert Battle’s first work staged on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater since becoming Artistic Director Designate.

The Company will travel to Tel Aviv, Israel from **October 26 – 30** for 7 performances at the Israeli Opera Tel Aviv. In addition to *Suite Otis*, *Dancing Spirit*, *In/Side*, and *Revelations* as mentioned above, performances will include **Robert Battle’s Unfold** and **Mauro Bigonzetti’s Festa Barocca**.

Acclaimed for their passion, artistry, and virtuosity, the Ailey dancers include **Renee Robinson**, the longest tenured female dancer in Ailey’s history and the last member of the company selected by Mr. Ailey himself; **Clifton Brown**, hailed as “a star among stars” by *The Sunday Times* and nominated for a Critics Circle Award during his 2005 UK visit; **Matthew Rushing**, a 18-year company mainstay acclaimed as one of America’s “greatest dancers” by *The New Yorker*; and **Linda Celeste Sims**, whose “talents,” *Newsday* claims, “know no limits.”

“I can’t wait to see audiences join my extraordinary dancers during this season’s inspiring journey through the past two decades and into the future,” says **2009 TIME 100 Honoree Judith Jamison**. “We know how to fly, we really do.” One of the most renowned figures in modern dance, Ms. Jamison is a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors, a National Medal of Arts and many of the United States’ most prestigious honors given to artists. Dedicated to asserting the prominence of the arts in our culture, her autobiography, *Dancing Spirit*, was edited by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and published by Doubleday in 1994. Ms. Jamison was acknowledged by *The New York Times* as “...the most stellar and admired artistic director of any repertory dance company in America,” and was recently awarded the 2010 North America **Montblanc De La Culture Award**.

Ms. Jamison announced in April 2010 that her mantle as Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will pass to Robert Battle, a fast-rising choreographer who has created ballets for the Ailey company and Ailey II since 1999, and who has served as an artist-in-residence with The Ailey School. Mr. Battle will be the third person to head the company since its founding by Alvin Ailey in 1958. He will serve side-by-side with Ms. Jamison as Artistic Director Designate from now until July 1, 2011, when she takes Emeritus status and he assumes full Artistic Director responsibilities.

Founded by Alvin Ailey in 1958, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater’s inspiring performances, seen in over 70 countries on 6 continents, honor and enrich the African-American cultural experience and the American modern dance tradition, uniting people of all backgrounds in a celebration of the human spirit through the universal language of dance.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to New York City Center from December 1, 2010 – January 2, 2011 with a series of 9 premieres and new productions, along with a variety of repertory favorites and special programs.

Tickets for New York performances start at \$25 and go on sale September 7th. For further information, visit www.alvinailey.org

Visit pressroom.alvinailey.org for photos and press materials.

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Tour Program & Schedule

London Programs:

- **Program A** – Suite Otis, The Hunt / Dancing Spirit, In/Side / Revelations
- **Program B** – Hymn / Anointed / Revelations

Sep. 14-25 London, England – Sadler’s Wells 020 7863 8198/ www.sadlerswells.com

Tue Sep 14	7:30pm Program A	Tue Sep 21	7:30pm Program B
Wed Sep 15	7:30pm Program B	Wed Sep 22	7:30pm Program A
Thu Sep 16	7:30pm Program A	Thu Sep 23	1:30pm Mini Matinee 7:30pm Program B
Fri Sep 17	7:30pm Program B	Fri Sep 24	7:30pm Program A
Sat Sep 18	2:30pm Program A 7:30pm Program B	Sat Sep 25	2:30pm Program B 7:30pm Program A
Sun Sep 19	4:00pm Program A		

UK City Programs:

- **Program A** - Suite Otis, In/Side / Dancing Spirit / Revelations
- **Program B** – Hymn / Anointed / Revelations

Oct. 1-2 Nottingham, England – Nottingham Royal Centre 0115 989 5555/ www.royalcentre-nottingham.co.uk

Fri Oct 1	7:30pm Program A
Sat Oct 2	7:30pm Program A

Oct. 5-6 Birmingham, England – Birmingham Hippodrome 0844 338 5000 /www.birminghamhippodrome.com

Tue Oct 5	7:30pm Program B
Wed Oct 6	7:30pm Program B

Oct. 8-9 Plymouth, England – Plymouth Theatre Royal 01752 668282 / www.theatreroyal.com

Fri Oct 8	7:30pm Program B
Sat Oct 9	7:30pm Program B

Oct. 12-13 Cardiff, Wales – Cardiff Wales Millennium Centre 029 2063 6464/ wmc.org.uk

Tue Oct 12	7:30pm Program A
Wed Oct 13	7:30pm Program A

Oct. 15-16 Bradford, England – Bradford Alhambra 01274 432000 / www.bradford-theatres.co.uk

Fri Oct 15	7:30pm Program B
Sat Oct 16	7:30pm Program B

Oct. 19-20 Edinburgh, Scotland – Edinburgh Festival Theatre 0131 529 6000 / www.eft.co.uk

Tue Oct 19	7:30pm Program B
Wed Oct 20	7:30pm Program B

Oct. 22-23 Newcastle, England – Newcastle Theatre Royal 08448 11 21 21 / www.theatreroyal.co.uk

Fri Oct 22	7:30pm Program A
Sat Oct 23	7:30pm Program A

Tel Aviv Programs:

- **Program A** - Dancing Spirit / Suite Otis, Unfold / Revelations
- **Program B** – Festa Barocca / In/Side, Revelations

Oct. 26-30 Israeli Opera Tel Aviv – Yafo

Tue Oct 26	8:00pm Program A
Wed Oct 27	8:00pm Program B
Thurs Oct 28	8:00pm Program A
Fri Oct 29	1:00pm Program A
Fri Oct 29	9:00pm Program B
Sat Oct 30	4:00pm Program B
Sat Oct 30	9:00pm Program A

Repertory Highlights include:

Revelations (1960)

Choreographer: Alvin Ailey

Music: Traditional

Celebrating Revelations at 50! - Alvin Ailey said that one of America's richest treasures was the cultural heritage of the African-American—"sometimes sorrowful, sometimes jubilant, but always hopeful". **This enduring classic is a tribute to that heritage and to Ailey's genius.** Using African-American religious music – spirituals, song-sermons, gospel songs and holy blues – this suite fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul.

"*Revelations* is a phenomenon. Accessible, moving, exhilarating and profound, it speaks to everyone. There is nothing else like it in the world of dance," – *The Washington Times*

Suite Otis (1971)

Choreographer: George W. Faison

Music: Otis Redding

The timeless music of pioneering soul singer Otis Redding sets the stage for former Ailey company member and Tony Award-winning choreographer **George W. Faison's** playful battle of the sexes. The yearning sensuality of soul-stirring songs such as "Satisfaction," "Try a Little Tenderness," "I've Been Loving You Too Long" and other favorites burst through this wildly popular six-part suite of dances ripe with romance and humor.

"*George Faison's 'Suite Otis'...is a classic with an unquenchably youthful spirit.*" – *The New York Times*

In/Side (2008)

Choreographer: Robert Battle

Music: Nina Simone

The vivid emotions of **Nina Simone's** "Wild is the Wind" play out in **Robert Battle's** gripping solo, a visceral cry of pure physicality using Battle's bold, unrestrained signature style.

"*Mr. Battle is a skilled choreographer, and In/Side is a worthy addition to the Ailey repertoire....people leaped to their feet.*" – *The New York Times*

Dancing Spirit (2009)

Choreographer: Ronald K. Brown

Music: Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis, Radiohead, War

Ronald K. Brown pays tribute to Judith Jamison's profound influence with a new work that echoes the title of Jamison's autobiography. Set to music by Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis and War, Brown's evocative choreography uses movement from Cuba, Brazil and the United States to conjure dancing spirits who embody Jamison's elegance, vision, dignity and generosity.

"*A resplendent dance that conjured the spirits of the past by bringing them into the present.*" – *Time Out New York*

Hymn (1993)

Choreographed and Directed by: Judith Jamison

Text Conceived, Written and Performed by: Anna Deavere Smith

Music: Robert Ruggieri

Hymn is a unique collaboration between two extraordinary talents from the world of dance and theater – Judith Jamison and Anna Deavere Smith. Ms. Jamison's tribute to Alvin Ailey is a choreographic tapestry featuring the entire Company,

while Ms. Smith as actress/raconteur has gathered personal vignettes of the dancers and interspersed them throughout the work, creating a picture-biography of Mr. Ailey's loving legacy.

"Hymn...emerges as the most thrilling piece of dance theatre I have seen all year...Beautifully performed, with power, reverence and love, 'Hymn' is absolutely astonishing work." – *New York Post*

Anointed (World Premiere)

Choreographer: Christopher L. Huggins

Music: Moby and Sean Clements

A former dancer with the Ailey company, Christopher L. Huggins has worked as a choreographer for the past eighteen years throughout the U.S., Europe, and Japan. He was the 2002 recipient of the Ira Aldridge Award for best choreography for his work *Enemy Behind the Gates* for Philadanco. His choreographic work with Ailey includes *When Dawn Comes...* (2008) for Ailey II; *Echoes of Alvin* (2008) for The Ailey School and students from the School performed his *Pyrokinesis* at the Apollo. In 2007 *National Public Radio* named him "(a) choreographer to watch."

The Hunt (Company Premiere)

Choreographer: Robert Battle

Music: Les Tambours du Bronx

Artistic Director Designate **Robert Battle's** athletic work for six men reveals the predatory side of human nature and the primitive thrill of the hunt. A thundering percussion soundtrack by **Les Tambours du Bronx** drives the explosive movement that runs the gamut from modern sports to the rituals of the gladiators. This is Mr. Battle's sixth ballet for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

"A blockbuster percussive ritual for men." – *The New York Times*

Unfold (2005)

Choreographer: Robert Battle

Music: Gustave Charpentier, sung by Leontyne Price

Inspired by and set to Leontyne Price's intensely romantic recording of Gustave Charpentier's aria, this powerful duet captures the intensity of one's first love. Over the past decade, Robert **Battle's** choreography has been seen in a number of works in the repertory of both Ailey II and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

"A highly original duet, mixing classic romanticism and odd, startling twists." – *Chicago Tribune*

Festa Barocca (2009)

Choreographer: Mauro Bigonzetti

Music: George Frideric Handel

Acclaimed Italian choreographer **Mauro Bigonzetti** brings his highly dramatic style, complex partnering and seamless integration of classical and modern styles to the Ailey repertory **in his first ballet choreographed for an American modern dance company**. Bigonzetti explains, **"I discovered choreography when I met Alvin"** as a young dancer with Aterballetto performing classic Ailey works. **Bigonzetti was so inspired by the Ailey dancers' emotional intensity and technical prowess, he cast the entire company in this ballet** - a rare and special occurrence.

"So fresh...it's a winner." – *Dance Magazine*

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. Today, led by **Judith Jamison**, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 23 million people in 48 states and in 71 countries on 6 continents, including two historic residencies in South Africa, promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. is the umbrella organization that includes **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; Ailey II** (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; **The Ailey School** (1969), one of the most extensive and respected 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 that began with the opening of Ailey's permanent home – the nation's largest building dedicated to dance - named **The Joan Weill Center for Dance**, located at 55th Street at 9th Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

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To access the Ailey photo gallery, visit: www.alvinailey.org



Judith Jamison with Ailey company members, in costume, at the Company's home, The Joan Weill Center for Dance.
Photo: Paul Kolnik