

Dance review: Ailey 2

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By Kelly Apter

**AILEY 2
KING'S THEATRE, GLASGOW *******

ALVIN Ailey American Dance Theater tours more than any other dance company in the world. Why? Because its intoxicating blend of technically strong dancers and intelligent yet accessible choreography is hard to resist. So it stands to reason that the junior wing, Ailey 2, comes equipped with the same bag of tricks.

Performing in the UK for the first time, this talented young company was set up in 1974 as a bridge between the Ailey School and a professional career. From there it has grown into a bona fide touring company filled with dancers who, scarily, have yet to reach their full potential.

The night opened with Troy Powell's *The External Knot*, and if there were times at the start when it felt like the dancers' emotional maturity had yet to catch up with their technique, then all was forgotten by the feisty closing section, when sparks were virtually flying off the stage.

A remarkable solo from Jessica Lang's *Splendid Isolation II* followed. Wearing a long white dress that covered half the stage, Fana Tesfagiorgis stayed rooted to the spot, letting her upper body do most of the work in this brief but beautiful piece.

If the solo was about grace and femininity, Robert Battle's *The Hunt* took us in a whole other direction. Six men filled the space with powerful rhythmic movement, backed by a cacophony of drums.

In true Ailey style, the night ended with the remarkable *Revelations*, and if it didn't quite scale the heights reached by the main company, it was pretty darn close.