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BLACK VOICES

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GAME CHANGERS: Innovators Changing The Way We Live

The Age of Obama has been called "the End of Black Firsts" and the end of race. Although neither of those things are true, the discussion about what it means to be black in America has opened up to accommodate more and more voices. We're listening to what some of the most influential of those voices have to say, from political mavericks to tastemakers who are radically remixing the culture.

Robert Battle



Few figures in American dance loom as large as Judith Jamison, the revered artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. When Jamison stepped down from that role last year after two decades, Robert Battle was tapped to replace her. "I remember being that 12-year-old boy from Miami who was bused from my school to see Alvin Ailey for the first time and being in awe," the 38-year-old Battle told Crain's shortly before he took over Ailey's reins in July. "Now I have the opportunity to make sure the company stays aloft so that some other young person can have that transformative experience."