

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

The Hunt (2011)

Choreography by Robert Battle
Assistant to the Choreographer Erika Pujikic
Music by Les Tambours du Bronx
Costumes by Mia McSwain
Lighting by Burke Wilmore

Robert Battle's *The Hunt* premiered on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2010 as Mr. Battle's first ballet set on the Company since it was announced that he would be the third Artistic Director in Ailey's history.

Set to a wildly percussive soundtrack by Les Tamours du Bronx, this ballet for six men examines the relationship between modern sports and the rituals of the gladiators. Costumed in long black skirts with under layers of red, the dancers throw themselves into a pre-hunt ritual, clawing at their gaping mouths as they stomp and pound with thunderous power revealing the robust side of human nature and the thrill of the hunt. In 2008, *The Boston Globe* proclaimed "The evening's most thrilling dance was *The Hunt*...A manic intensity...evoked the brutality of the hunters, the fear of the prey, and the exhaustion of the chase."



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Robert Battle's *The Hunt*. Photo by Paul Kolnik

Inspiration for the piece was derived from Mr. Battle's background in martial arts. Replicating the intensity, skirted costumes and combative stances of the art form, the dancers take you inside a spirited ritual preparation for the hunt that tests their physical bounds and limits. Battle explains that the aggressive nature of the piece makes it uniquely different from all other works in the Company's repertory. He notes that *The Hunt* shows the versatility of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, while celebrating the masculine and powerful sides of the Company's male dancers.



Robert Battle.
Photo by Andrew Eccles

"an aural universe of pounding, elemental percussive rhythms and cries...**fine choice for the virtuosic, athletic energies of the Ailey men** as well as an **appropriate acknowledgment of his [Robert Battle's] new presence**. Most impressive...is the **brutal physicality of the dancing** and the way these men both **find its nuances and give their all**."

The New York Times, Roslyn Sulcas- Dec. 2, 2010

"...**showcased the athleticism of some of the company's most accomplished male dancers**, including the wonderful Matthew Rushing."

Associated Press, Jocelyn Novek- Dec. 3, 2010

"The six Ailey men of *The Hunt* by Robert Battle: So **ferocious in their pounding of the earth** that it was **amazing they were still standing at the end of it**."
Dance Magazine, Wendy Perron-Dec. 29, 2010 (**Best of 2010 List for Company Premieres & Ensembles**)

"Battle... **understands how to make an applause machine**. The men are shirtless, and this **nonstop showpiece lets them flaunt both technique and their bodies**."
New York Post, Leigh Witchel- Dec. 30, 2010

The Hunt

Music Credit Information – listed in order as you hear them in ballet

Song: **Jungle Jazz**

Written by: **L. Blomme**

Performed by: **Les Tambours du Bronx**, from the recording: *Silence*

Song: **Les Boulets Se Rebiffent**

Written by: **A. Dipace, J.Y. Lefloch, Y. Nisgand, B. Pingon, and J.M. Tramoy**

Performed by: **Les Tambours du Bronx**, from the recording: *Silence*

Song: **Black Bull**

Written by: **L. Le Mapihan**

Performed by: **Les Tambours du Bronx**, from the recording: *Silence*