

Dance

**I Almost Danced With Alvin Ailey!
Alvin Ailey Is Now Interactive!**

December 26, 2012

By Michael Musto

Last Saturday, I saw a stunning Alvin Ailey evening of pieces like "Streams," "The Evolution of a Secured Feminine," and "Urban Folk Dance."

The night ended with "Minus 16," a jagged, exciting ensemble piece, performed in business suits and hats, with choreography by Ohad Naharin.

At one point, the dancers--all dressed in menswear, even the ladies--marched into the audience, looking for their prey.



"This is the lowest," I murmured to my friend, as they selected 13 people to join them onstage for some improvisational dancing.

I was concerned that, after a night of pure joy, the Aileys were feeding into the current need for everyone to be a star, and for events to become interactive reality shows to have any kind of resonance for the buyer. But it turned out brilliantly.

First of all, I was thrilled I wasn't chosen. (They only picked women.) I wasn't in the mood to clomp around embarrassingly for a crowd of uptown aesthetes.

Secondly, the routines that were done turned out to be funny, exciting, and unexpected, and the selected audience members went along with them with brio, whether they were being twirled around, danced around, or cha-cha-cha'd with.

By the end, one solitary woman was left up there, slow dancing with a male lead, and it was surreally beautiful--and then the entire cast dropped down to the ground and laid immobile on their backs, as she stood there, not sure what to do.

She eventually scampered off the stage and then the cast rose to bravos.

Hamminess has rarely been channeled into something this artistically pleasing.