

MARCH 9, 2022

The Music Center Welcomes the Return of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for Company Residency Including Five Days of Performances Plus Student and Senior Dance Learning Experiences

Alvin Ailey Celebrates 50th anniversary of *Cry*, a 16-minute Tour-de-Force Solo, and a Decade of Leadership by Artistic Director Robert Battle

Performances Feature Breathtaking Premieres, Returning Favorites and Ailey Classics, including *Revelations*, April 6 - 10, 2022

LOS ANGELES (March 9, 2022) - The Music Center welcomes America's beloved cultural ambassador to the world, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, back to Los Angeles for five days of dance and learning that celebrate the decade-long leadership of its visionary Artistic Director Robert Battle as part of the 19th season of *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center*. Ailey's renowned artists will perform a diverse repertoire of premieres, new productions and Ailey classics after a two-year absence from The Music Center, its Southern California home. Highlights include a *Battle 10th Anniversary* program; an *All Ailey* program featuring Blues Suite, Alvin Ailey's original masterpiece based upon his "blood memories" of growing up in rural Texas, Cry, his beloved classic dedicated to "all Black women everywhere--especially our mothers" and a new production of Battle's Reflections in D from Ailey's legendary collaboration with Duke Ellington; and the return of hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris's acclaimed Lazarus. Each performance will culminate in Alvin Ailey's American masterpiece Revelations, which has inspired generations through its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring spirituals since its creation in 1960. The company will also work with students and senior citizens to explore the choreography and history of *Revelations* through in-person residencies.

"Since Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's first appearance with *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center* in 2004, the company's performances in Los Angeles have been the most anticipated of every dance season," said Rachel S. Moore, president and CEO of The Music Center. "This year feels especially meaningful since it's the company's first post-pandemic appearance at The Music Center, and it marks a decade of Artistic Director Robert Battle's leadership. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is truly a national treasure, and it is an honor to celebrate this milestone with performances that will uplift and connect audiences at a time we need it most."

"Alvin Ailey's vision opened the door for generations of artists to use dance to inspire, unite and enlighten," stated Artistic Director Robert Battle. "Despite the twists and turns on the road we have all traveled together, we continue to find new ways to share artistry that renews our spirit of courage, hope and joy. I am thrilled we are returning to The Music Center and deeply humbled to have led this seminal Company for a decade, joined by incomparable dancers and choreographers on a journey of discovery that extends from the powerful works of our founder to the important voices of today--an ongoing dance dialogue that shines a light on the strength and resilience of our common humanity around the world."

The *Battle 10th Anniversary* program marks a decade of Artistic Director Robert Battle's visionary leadership that has moved the Company forward in exciting ways into a seventh decade. The evening-length program features Los Angeles-based choreographer Aszure Barton's BUSK, which invites audiences to enjoy the fragility, tenderness and resilience that exist within the human experience. Set to a spirited score, *BUSK* has been described as watching the physical unfurling of the human psyche. Under Barton's direction, every facet of the dancers' bodies and minds are engaged, and the complex layering of movement reveals the inherent wisdom of the body. The dancers must tap into the collective--a hive mind--to execute Barton's layered and intricate choreographic structures, which then give way to the nuance of each individual. The evening also includes Ella and the finale of Love Stories. *Ella* is a high-energy comical dance that uses a live concert recording of Ella Fitzgerald, performing the song "Airmail Special," and matches the iconic singer's virtuosic scatting with lightning-fast, articulated movement in an irresistible tour-de-force that leaves audiences (and the dancers) breathless. *Love Stories* was a collaboration among Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison, choreographer Rennie Harris and Artistic Director Robert Battle. Inspired by the African concept of "Sankofa," which teaches that "we don't know where we're going unless we know where we have been," this extraordinary ballet celebrates the traditions of African American dance and the rich heritage of Alvin Ailey.

Hip-hop innovator Rennie Harris' acclaimed **Lazarus**, a powerful ensemble work inspired by the life and legacy of Alvin Ailey, also returns. The acclaimed creation of Ailey's first two-act ballet is featured in the must-see *AILEY* documentary, which had an advance screening by The Music Center on Jerry Moss Plaza in August 2021, opened the 36th season of PBS *American Masters* January 11, 2022 and is now streaming on Hulu. Noted by The New Yorker as "...an exhilarating celebration of life, dance and the body in motion," *Lazarus* received its West Coast premiere with *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center* in 2019.

Cry, Alvin Ailey's beloved classic, is a 16-minute tour-de-force created on his stunning muse, Ailey Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison. Comprised of three parts, *Cry* features choreography set to Alice Coltrane's "Something about John Coltrane," Laura Nyro's "Been on a Train" and the Voices of East Harlem singing "Right On, Be Free." It was an instant sensation when it debuted on May 4, 1971, at New York City Center and went on to become an enduring work of American art.

In addition, The Music Center and Ailey Arts in Education & Community Programs will work with four LAUSD middle schools in the weeks leading up to the Company's performances to delve into and learn the choreography of *Revelations*. The students will have the opportunity to experience *Revelations* live during a special performance for students at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Ailey teaching artists will also provide dance learning sessions for older adults at an in-person session with the Pasadena Senior Center.

At the current time, The Music Center requires all members of the public who attend performances and events inside The Music Center's four theatres to show proof of full vaccination for COVID-19 with a booster as eligible or provide a negative COVID-19 test. An antigen test must be taken within 24 hours prior to the start of the event, and a PCR test must be taken within 48 hours prior to the start time; this includes children over two years of age. At-home COVID tests will not be accepted for entry. This policy applies to performances and events presented by TMC Arts and any organizations that present in The Music Center's theatres with the exception of The Music Center's resident companies, which have their own vaccination policies. As directed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, all current visitors to The Music Center's indoor venues must wear a face covering, whether fully vaccinated or not. Respiration masks (N95, KN95 and KF94) or well-fitting medical/surgical masks are recommended. These policies could change and will be adapted to current conditions.

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health directives, The Music Center worked behind-the-scenes during the pandemic to prepare for the return of live performances in its venues, both indoors and outdoors, by implementing new measures and procedures. The Music Center became the first performing arts organization in the nation to earn the UL Verified Healthy Buildings Mark for Indoor Air and Water Quality. The Music Center underwent an extensive assessment process to earn the verification, demonstrating that each of its four venues, Grand Park's administrative office and The Music Center Annex, has excellent quality for indoor air and water. Additionally, The Music Center has enhanced all cleaning procedures, installed hand sanitizer dispensers in all public spaces and created a contact-free experience in its public restrooms as well as instituted electronic ticketing and a digital program book, among other measures. More information about The Music Center's Commitment to Safety is available at [**musiccenter.org/safety**](https://musiccenter.org/safety).

Tickets for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performances at The Music Center start at \$34 and are available online at [**musiccenter.org/ailey**](https://musiccenter.org/ailey); at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Box Office, 135 N. Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90012; or by calling (213) 972-0711. For groups of 10 or more, call (213) 972-8555 or email [**mcgroupsales@musiccenter.org**](mailto:mcgroupsales@musiccenter.org).

The 19th season of *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center* is generously supported by Glorya Kaufman Foundation, Center Dance Arts, Dorothy B. Chandler Program Fund and Elisabeth Katte Harris.

Bank of America is Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's national tour sponsor.

Programs and artists subject to change. [Photos available here**](#).*

Situated on the ancestral and sacred land of the Tongva and many other indigenous groups who call these grounds home, The Music Center acknowledges and honors with gratitude the land itself and the First People who have been its steward throughout the generations.

FEATURED REPERTORY BY DATE

Robert Battle 10th Anniversary Celebration

April 6 & April 9 at 2:00 p.m.

- *Busk*
- *Ella*
- *Love Stories* (Finale)
- *Revelations*

All Ailey

April 7 & April 9 at 7:30 p.m.

- *Blues Suite*
- *Reflections in D*
- *Cry*
- *Revelations*

Lazarus

April 8 at 7:30 p.m. & April 10 at 2:00 p.m.

- *Lazarus* (Act 1)
- *Lazarus* (Act 2)
- *Revelations*

REPERTOIRE DETAILS

New Productions

Blues Suite (1958)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey

Music: Traditional

"Blood memories" of rural, Depression-era southern Texas, come to life in *Blues Suite*, Alvin Ailey's hugely popular ballet that launched Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at its first performance in 1958. With the rumble of a train and the toll of distant bells, a cast of vividly drawn characters from the barrelhouses and fields of Alvin Ailey's Southern childhood are summoned to dance and revel through one long, sultry night. Ailey's first masterpiece poignantly evokes the sorrow, humor and humanity of the blues--those heartfelt songs that he called "hymns to the secular regions of the soul."

Reflections in D (1962/New Production 2021)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey

Music: Duke Ellington

Alvin Ailey originally created this strong yet serene solo in 1962. The ballet is a stunning, masterful expression of Duke Ellington's composition, highlighting the power and grace of the male dancer.

Returning Favorites

BUSK (2009 / 2019 Company Premiere)

Choreography by Aszure Barton

Music: Marcus Vinicius da Cruz de M. Morales, August Soderman, Ljova, Camille Saint-Saëns, Moondog, Daniel Belanger

Internationally renowned choreographer Aszure Barton invites us to enjoy the fragility, tenderness and resilience that exist within the human experience. Set to a spirited score, *BUSK* has been described as watching the physical unfurling of the human psyche. Under Barton's direction, every facet of the dancers' bodies and minds are engaged and the complex layering of movement reveals the inherent wisdom of the body. The dancers must tap into the collective--a hive mind--to execute Barton's layered and intricate choreographic structures that then give way to the nuance of each individual. The audience is invited into the work and the performers--as they are--are celebrated as enough.

Cry (1971)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, Voices of East Harlem

In 1971, Alvin Ailey choreographed the ballet *Cry* as a birthday present for his mother on his muse, the legendary Judith Jamison. This physically and emotionally demanding tour-de-force 16-minute solo--dedicated to "all black women everywhere--especially our mothers" went on to become an enduring work of American art. Made up of three parts--the first is set to Alice Coltrane's "Something about John Coltrane," the second to Laura Nyro's "Been on a Train," and the last has the Voices of East Harlem singing "Right On, Be Free."

Ella

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music: Ella Fitzgerald

Originally created as a solo, the high-energy comical *Ella* was reinvented as a duet by the Ailey company for its December 2016 opening night gala benefit, "An Evening of Ailey and Jazz"--in anticipation of the legendary singer Ella Fitzgerald's centennial in April 2017. Using a live concert recording of Fitzgerald performing the song "Airmail Special," *Ella* matches the iconic singer's virtuosic scatting with lightning-fast, articulated movement in an irresistible tour-de-force that leaves audiences (and the dancers) breathless.

Lazarus (2018)

Choreography by Rennie Harris

Music: Darrin Ross, Nina Simon, Terence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka, Odetta

Inspired by the life and legacy of Alvin Ailey, hip hop choreographer Rennie Harris--the organization's inaugural artist-in-residence--connects past and present in a powerful ensemble work that addresses the racial inequities America faced when Ailey founded this company in 1958 and still faces today. The Company's first two-act ballet, *Lazarus* is set to a soundtrack produced by Darrin Ross, with his original music, and featuring Nina Simone, Terrence Trent D'Arby, Michael Kiwanuka, Odetta, spoken text written and adapted by Rennie Harris that is performed by Wadud Ahmad, Rennie Harris as well as the voice of Alvin Ailey.

Love Stories (Finale)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music: Stevie Wonder & Clarence Paul-Henry Cosby

Love Stories was a collaboration among Ailey Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison, choreographer Rennie Harris and Ailey Artistic Director Robert Battle. Inspired by the African concept of "Sankofa", which teaches that "we don't know where we're going unless we know where we have been", this ballet celebrates the traditions of African American dance and the rich heritage of Alvin Ailey. In the ballet's joyful finale, Battle portrays a luminous future built on the

lessons and legacy of the past. *The New York Times* called it “astoundingly well danced... a breakthrough in creative choreography” and *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* proclaimed, “It’s a party!”

Signature Masterpiece

Revelations (1960)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Traditional Spirituals

More than just a popular dance work, *Revelations* has become a cultural treasure, beloved by generations of fans and acclaimed as a must-see for all. Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece is a tribute to his heritage. Using African American spirituals, the work fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul. Seeing *Revelations* for the first time or the hundredth can be a transcendent experience. Audiences cheer, sing along and dance in their seats from the opening notes of the plaintive “I Been ‘Buked” to the rousing “Wade in the Water” and the triumphant finale, “Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham.”

About Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center

Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, a TMC Arts program, is one of the leading presenters of dance on the West Coast. The celebrated series offers significant works by prestigious ballet and contemporary dance artists from around the world. Now entering its 19th year, Dance at The Music Center is a powerful force, supporting new works and artists-in-residence projects by today's most influential companies and choreographers. Performances take place throughout The Music Center, including the historic Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the distinctive Ahmanson Theater and the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall, on the Jerry Moss Plaza and in locations around the Los Angeles area.

About The Music Center

The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural lives of every resident in Los Angeles County. The \$70 million non-profit performing arts organization has two divisions: TMC Arts and TMC Ops. TMC Arts, The Music Center's programming engine, provides year-round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, on Jerry Moss Plaza, outside at Grand Park--a 12-acre adjacent green space--in schools and other locations all over Los Angeles County and on a digital platform called The Music Center Offstage. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, free and low-cost public concerts and events, as well as live and digital K-12 arts education programs, workshops, performances, interactive experiences and special events. TMC Ops manages the theatres, the Plaza and Grand Park, which comprise \$2 billion in county assets, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies--Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil. For more information, visit musiccenter.org. Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @MusicCenterLA.

ABOUT ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

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. Founded by Alvin Ailey, posthumous recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom -- the nation's highest civilian honor--and guided by Judith Jamison beginning in 1989, the Company is now led by Robert Battle, whom Judith Jamison chose to succeed her on July 1, 2011. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 25 million people in 71 countries on six continents, promoting the uniqueness of the African American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. In addition to being the Principal Dance Company of New York City Center, where its performances have become a year-end tradition, the Ailey company performs annually at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, The Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley, CA, and at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark (where it is the Principal Resident Affiliate), and appears frequently in other major theaters throughout the world during extensive yearly tours. The Ailey organization also includes Ailey II (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School (1969), one of the most extensive 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, which began with the opening of Ailey's permanent home--the largest building dedicated to dance in New York City, the dance capital of the world--named The Joan Weill Center for Dance, at 55th Street at 9th Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

Calendar Listings

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Where:

The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

When:

Robert Battle 10th Anniversary Program*

Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.

All Ailey Program*

Thursday, April 7, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Lazarus Program*

Friday, April 8, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 10, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.

*Each performance will culminate in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Program subject to change.

Box Office:

The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tickets start at \$34.

Online:

<https://www.musiccenter.org/ailey>

Phone:

(213) 972-0711

For 10 tickets or more, call (213) 972-8555 or email mcgroupsales@musiccenter.org

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