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[Press Room](#)

[Fact Sheet: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Cal Performances Celebrate 50 Years of Partnership](#)

[Fact Sheet: Chronological Repertory of Works Performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at Cal Performances, 1968-2018](#)

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Images of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER
IN ITS 50TH ANNUAL BERKELEY ENGAGEMENT
FEATURING THREE WEST COAST PREMIERES,
TUESDAY–SUNDAY, APRIL 10–15

Residency events include a public forum, community dance classes,
and a “Berkeley Dances *Revelations*” flash mob to “Rocka My Soul”.

Cal Performances’ 2017–18 season Berkeley *RADICAL Joining Generations* programming
strand follows the work of four generations of pioneering
African-American choreographers.

Berkeley, March 14, 2018 — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley celebrates its remarkable 50-year association with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT), when the revered company visits for its annual campus residency—this year featuring three West Coast premieres—Tuesday, April 10 through Sunday, April 15 in Zellerbach Hall. AAADT has played a central role in Cal Performances’ dance programming for half a century; Cal Performances has presented the company for 50 years, from 1968-present, and outside of their home in New York City, AAADT performs in Berkeley more consistently than in any other city. This anniversary residency also coincides with the 50th anniversary of Zellerbach Hall, which opened in May 1968.

True to form, the company continues to build bridges between its august past as a pioneering force of African-American cultural expression and its current role as a catalyst for addressing today’s most pressing social issues by both honoring classic repertoire and encouraging the vision of a new generation of choreographers. New to the West Coast and to Berkeley audiences this season are veteran Ailey dancer **Jamar Roberts**’ blues-steeped *Members Don't Get Weary* (2017), and Spanish choreographer **Gustavo Ramirez Sansano**’s kinetic *Victoria* (2017). The company also performs artistic director **Robert Battle**’s *Mass* (2004/2017 company premiere) for the first time on the West Coast, as well as his visceral work for six male dancers, *The Hunt* (2001), and an encore presentation of his high-energy *Ella* (2008), which was seen in Zellerbach Hall last season. Works by pioneering African American choreographer **Talley Beatty**, Urban Bush Women founder **Jawole Willa Jo Zollar**, and American dance icon **Twyla Tharp** round out the programs, each of which conclude with Alvin Ailey’s own classic, *Revelations* (1960).

“Cal Performances has been an important part of Ailey’s history and we are honored to have Bay Area audiences join Ailey’s dancers on an uplifting journey at Zellerbach Hall for the 50th year,” said artistic director Robert Battle. “It is so meaningful to have a ‘home’ where we are always welcome in California – the state where Alvin Ailey grew up and was transformed by dance as a young person. His pioneering mission of using dance to inspire, enlighten and unite is alive and thriving in Berkeley through performances, arts-in-education and training programs and community activities for all ages and backgrounds.”

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's annual residencies at Cal Performances over the last half century have included performances of more than 169 pieces of repertory from more than 72 choreographers, many of whom have enjoyed fruitful relationships with Cal Performances and visited with their own companies including Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane, Twyla Tharp, Alonzo King, Donald Byrd, and Camille A. Brown. Over the decades AAADT has performed numerous world and company premieres at Cal Performances, including the world premiere of *Ancestral Voices* in 1977, as well as countless American, West Coast, and Bay Area premieres, including the 1984 US premieres of *Night Shade* and *Precipice*; and the west coast premieres of *ISBA* in 1984; *Exodus*, *No Longer Silent*, and *Open Door* in 2016; *Members Don't Get Weary*, *Mass*, *Victoria* in 2018; and the Bay Area premieres of *Polish Pieces*, *Sweet Release*, and *Fathers and Sons* in 1997. Cal Performances was a co-commissioner of *Awakening* (2015), Robert Battle's first piece choreographed for the company after becoming artistic director in 2011.

“For 50 years, Cal Performances and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater have been both partners and collaborators. We welcome this magnificent company for its annual Berkeley residency, which features both stellar performances and deep engagement with the community,” said Matías Tarnopolsky, executive and artistic director of Cal Performances. “This partnership represents the very best of what arts organizations can achieve together, as we support the continued legacy of the great Alvin Ailey and his successors Judith Jamison and Robert Battle, through the captivating work of the dancers on the Zellerbach stage. This year marks a remarkable and rare anniversary, and the continuation of a truly special relationship—one we will celebrate today, and for years to come.”

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's residency is part of Cal Performances' 2017–18 Berkeley RADICAL *Joining Generations* programming strand, which spotlights the work of four generations of trailblazing African-American choreographers whose creative output explicitly and intentionally addresses issues of history, race, and personal identity. Considered together, the four engagements presented in *Joining Generations*—Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's annual residency, featuring Ailey's iconic *Revelations*; Donald Byrd's Spectrum Dance Theater in *A Rap on Race*; Reggie Wilson's *Moses(es)*; and Camille A. Brown's *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*—together help define an important cultural movement in the last half century. Through the works presented here, each of these choreographers, born between 1931 and 1979, offers a unique perspective on the African-American experience, on race in America, and on issues of social justice. Ailey, Byrd, Wilson, and Brown have

intentionally positioned their work in relationship to black vernacular dance and music, and they draw on this collective cultural knowledge as a shared point of reference and ideological compass.

Program A (Tuesday, April 10 at 8pm and Saturday, April 14 at 2pm) features the West Coast premiere of *Members Don't Get Weary* (2017) by veteran Ailey company member Jamar Roberts, who is known for his strong, commanding presence as a dancer. Set to two recordings by John Coltrane (“Dear Lord” and “Olé”), Roberts’ first choreographic work for the company revels in the emotional urgency and transcendence of the blues. Talley Beatty’s sizzling *Stack-Up* (1982), is a portrait of urban life in late 20th century Los Angeles, with a backdrop adapted from a painting by Romare Bearden, and danced to a selection of music by the likes of Earth, Wind & Fire and Grover Washington, Jr.. True to tradition, the program closes with Ailey’s 1960 masterpiece celebrating the African American experience, *Revelations*.

Program B (Wednesday and Thursday, April 11–12 at 8pm, and Sunday, April 15 at 3pm) includes three works by company artistic director Robert Battle. His stirring 2004 *Mass*, inspired by the movements of choirs in church pews, received its AAADT West Coast premiere, set to a percussion score by John Mackey. *Ella*, first created as a lighthearted solo in 2008, was re-invented as a duet in honor of Ella Fitzgerald’s centennial in 2017, and is set to Fitzgerald’s recording of the jazz standard “Airmail Special”. Battle’s hugely popular *The Hunt* (2001) features a driving percussion score by Les Tambours du Bronx, with a cast of six male dancers exploring movement inspired by martial arts, ancient gladiator rites, and modern-day sports. Jawole Willa Zollar’s powerful *Shelter*, first performed by AAADT in 1992, returns to the company’s repertoire this season with an all-female cast. *Shelter* is a passionate statement about the physical and emotional deprivation of homeless people, set to a score that incorporates drumming by Junior “Gabu” Wedderburn and poetry by Hattie Gossett and Laurie Carlos. Ailey’s *Revelations* concludes the program.

Program C (Friday and Saturday, April 13–14 at 8pm) features the West Coast premiere of Gustavo Ramirez Sansano’s *Victoria* (2017), which pairs the Spanish choreographer’s audacious, athletic movement style with the propulsive drive of *Rewriting Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony* by award-winning composer Michael Gordon. Twyla Tharp’s exuberant, fast-paced *The Golden Section*, featuring a new-wave score by David Byrne of Talking Heads, is performed by the company for the first time since 2007. Battle’s *Ella* is repeated in this program, and Ailey’s *Revelations* closes the performance.

Residency Activities

Extensive residency activities are planned on the UC Berkeley campus and in the community as part of the company's visit. A *Joining Generations* public forum with senior Ailey company members and Brandi Wilkins Catanese, UC Berkeley associate professor in the departments of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies and African American Studies, is planned on Thursday, April 12 at 3pm in the Geballe Room, Stephens Hall, and is free and open to the public. For the third year, company dancers will host a series of "Berkeley Dances *Revelations*" community dance workshops, during which the public is invited to learn choreography from Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. The free 30-minute workshops are planned in the Hearst Gymnasium on Friday, April 13, at 10am, 10:45am, and 11:30am; registration is required at calperformances.org. Following the workshops on April 13, everyone is invited to Lower Sproul Plaza on the UC Berkeley campus for a "Berkeley Dances *Revelations*" flash mob, beginning at 12:30pm, which is also free and open to the public. Members of AAADT will lead this community performance of the "Rocka My Soul" section from *Revelations*. Cal Performances will provide straw hand fans to attendees, while supplies last.

A community dance class with members of the company is also planned in Bancroft Studio on Sunday, April 15 at 11am. The class, open to participants of all ages and abilities, includes technique and choreographic phrases from the current repertory. Admission is \$5 per person, and pre-registration is required at calperformances.org.

Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances

This summer marks the 17th year of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances. AileyCamp is a nationally acclaimed summer program that uses dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, creative expression and critical thinking skills among sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students ages 11–14. Conceived by AAADT and run locally by Cal Performances, AileyCamp combines professional-level dance training with personal development activities. Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances opened its doors in 2001, and since then has offered nearly 1,000 Bay Area children an opportunity to learn and perform on a full scholarship. The program is produced by Cal Performances and overseen by AileyCamp director and teaching artist David McCauley.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater* on Tuesday–Friday, April 10–13 at 8pm; Saturday, April 14 at 2pm and 8pm; and Sunday, April 15 at 3pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$36–\$135

(prices subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/discounts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Tuesday, April 10, 8pm

Wednesday, April 11, 8pm

Thursday, April 12, 8pm

Friday, April 13, 8pm

Saturday, April 14, 2pm and 8pm

Sunday, April 15, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Dance Residency

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Robert Battle, artistic director

Masazumi Chaya, associate artistic director

Program:

Program A (Tuesday, April 10, 8pm; Saturday, April 14, at 2pm)

Talley Beatty/*Stack-Up* (1982) (music: various contemporary)

Jamar Roberts/*Members Don't Get Weary* (2017, West Coast Premiere) (music: John Coltrane)

Alvin Ailey/*Revelations* (1960) (music: traditional spirituals)

Program B (Wednesday, April 11, 8pm; Thursday, April 12, 8pm; Sunday, April 15, 3pm)

Robert Battle/*Mass* (2004, Company West Coast Premiere) (music: John Mackey)

Robert Battle/*Ella* (2008) (music: Ella Fitzgerald)

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar/*Shelter* (1988) (music: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn)

Robert Battle/*The Hunt* (2001) (music: Les Tambours du Bronx)

Alvin Ailey/*Revelations* (1960) (music: traditional spirituals)

Program C (Friday, April 13, 8pm; Saturday, April 14, 8pm)

Gustavo Ramirez Sansano/*Victoria* (2017, West Coast Premiere) (music: Michael Gordon)

Twyla Tharp/*The Golden Section* (1983) (music: David Byrne)

Battle/*Ella* (2008) (music: Ella Fitzgerald)

Alvin Ailey/*Revelations* (1960) (music: traditional spirituals)

Berkeley RADICAL: These performances are part of Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL *Joining Generations* strand, which explores the work of four generations of African-American choreographers who have expanded the boundaries of contemporary dance. Each speaks

profoundly, deliberately, and uniquely to issues of personal identity. More information at calperformances.org/berkeley-radical-joining-generations.

Tickets: \$36–\$135 (prices subject to change)

Berkeley RADICAL Residency Activities

Public Forum

Thursday, April 12, 3pm

Geballe Room, Stephens Hall

A *Joining Generations* discussion with senior Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater company members and Brandi Wilkins Catanese, associate professor in the departments of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies and African American Studies; and the Dance Studies Working Group at UC Berkeley. Free and open to the public.

Workshop: “Berkeley Dances *Revelations*”

Friday, April 13, 10am; 10:45am; and 11:30am

Hearst Gymnasium

Learn choreography from the “Rocka My Soul” section of Alvin Ailey’s *Revelations*. Free and open to the public; capacity is limited. Registration open now at calperformances.org/learn/calendar/2017-18/

“Berkeley Dances *Revelations*” Flash Mob

Friday, April 13, 12:30pm

Lower Sproul Plaza

Learn choreography to the “Rocka My Soul” section of Alvin Ailey’s *Revelations* in this community celebration led by dancers of AAADT. Cal Performances will provide free straw hand fans to all participating dancers, while supplies last. Video of this choreography is available [here](#). Free and open to the public.

Community Dance Class with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Sunday, April 15, 11am

Bancroft Studio

Participation is \$5 per person. Pre-registration is required at calperformances.org/learn/calendar/2017-18/. Capacity is limited.