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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER
IN A 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JUDITH JAMISON

**THREE BAY AREA PREMIERES BY MATTHEW RUSHING, RONALD K. BROWN AND
JAMISON WILL BE OFFERED**

**SchoolTime: One-hour Performances for Bay Area Students Will be Given Thursday &
Friday, March 11 & 12 at 11:00 a.m.**

BERKELEY, January 25, 2010—The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT), a dance company that is “surely unbeatable in the dance world” (*The Washington Post*), makes its annual sojourn to Cal Performances on **Tuesday–Sunday, March 9–14** with dance celebrating **Judith Jamison** on her 20th year as Artistic Director. The three distinct programs include three Bay Area premieres: *Uptown*, a vibrant tour through the Harlem Renaissance choreographed by 18-year AAADT veteran **Matthew Rushing** and featuring music by Fats Waller, Count Basie and Eubie Blake, among others; *Dancing Spirit*, choreographed as a tribute to Jamison by **Ronald K. Brown** using music by Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis and others; and *Among Us (Private Spaces: Public Places)*, a collection of interpersonal vignettes choreographed by Jamison to original compositions by eclectic jazz musician Eric Lewis. Every program presented in Berkeley will also include **Alvin Ailey’s** timeless *Revelations*. The AAADT has thrilled tens of millions of people on six continents since its founding in 1958, has been recognized by Congress as “a vital American cultural ambassador” and serves as an enduring vehicle for the expression of the African-American experience.

The company will give two *SchoolTime* performances for Bay Area students on Thursday and Friday, March 11 and 12 at 11:00 a.m. at Zellerbach Hall. Tickets are sold in advance only.

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PROGRAMS

Program A, Tuesday, March 9 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, March 13 at 2:00 p.m., and Sunday, March 14 at 3:00 p.m., opens with the Bay Area premiere of *Uptown* (2009) by AAADT veteran Matthew Rushing, “one of this country’s greatest dancers” (*The New Yorker*). *Uptown* presents key figures and events of the Harlem Renaissance in nine scenes—Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Josephine Baker and others come alive to the music of Fats Waller, Count Basie and Eubie Blake. This is Rushing’s debut as a solo choreographer. The second Bay Area premiere, *Dancing Spirit* (2009), borrows its title from Judith Jamison’s autobiography. The work is choreographed by Ronald K. Brown, the dynamic founder of Evidence, A Dance Company, and pays tribute to Jamison’s vision, dignity and generosity using movement from Cuba, Brazil and the United States with music by Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis and War. *The New York Times* called it “a complex and elegant dance.” The program closes with Alvin Ailey’s signature modern dance masterpiece, *Revelations* (1960); set to African-American religious music, the work is perhaps Ailey’s greatest dance, and surely his most beloved.

Program B, Wednesday, March 10 and Friday, March 12 at 8:00 p.m., will open with an AAADT classic, *Suite Otis* (1971), a sassy battle of the sexes. Set to music by Otis Redding and choreographed by George Faison, *Suite Otis* offers “a generous, direct communication with the audience that is one of the company’s great strengths and goes a long way toward explaining its immense popularity” (*The New York Times*). It will be followed by the third Bay Area premiere *Among Us (Private Spaces: Public Places)* (2009), a new dance choreographed by Judith Jamison to original jazz compositions by musical iconoclast Eric Lewis. Inspired by Jamison’s own drawings—she always keeps art materials close at hand—*Among Us* depicts the joys and complications of human relationships through a collection of vignettes. Alvin Ailey’s own *Revelations* (see Program A) completes the evening’s program.

Program C, Thursday, March 11 and Saturday, March 13 at 8:00 p.m., showcases the stylistic range and diversity of AAADT’s dancers. The program opens with *Love Stories* (2004), choreographed by Judith Jamison with Robert Battle and Rennie Harris to three songs by Stevie Wonder “interspersed in a dreamy sound collage (by Darrin Ross) that includes quotes from Ailey himself, street noise, and a section that pulsates with the rhythms of house music and hip-

hop” (*San Francisco Chronicle*). It is followed by *Hymn* (1993), choreographed by Jamison as a memorial tribute to Alvin Ailey using music by Robert Ruggieri and a libretto by writer and performer Anna Deveare Smith. The work has been described as “an eloquent evocation of Ailey” (*The New York Times*) and became an Emmy Award–winning 1999 television special in PBS’s *Great Performances: Dance in America* series. Alvin Ailey’s classic *Revelations* (see Program A) rounds out the program.

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater began in March 1958 at the 92nd Street Y in New York. **Alvin Ailey**, then a 27-year-old from Rogers, Texas, led a group of young African-American modern dancers in a performance that forever changed American dance. Since that auspicious first performance, the Ailey Company has gone on to perform for some 21 million people in 48 states and 71 countries on six continents, including two historic residencies in South Africa.

As a youth Ailey saw the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo on a school trip, and the experience changed his life. Ailey studied dance with Lester Horton, founder of the first racially integrated dance company in the United States. After Horton’s death, Ailey ran Horton’s company for a time before starting his own company and beginning an intense period of prolific creativity. Ailey created 79 ballets in his lifetime, often drawing upon his “blood memories” of Texas, the blues, spirituals and gospel music. But in spite of his groundbreaking oeuvre, Ailey insisted that his Company was not simply a repository for his own work. Today, AAADT includes important dance works from the past and newly commissioned pieces in its repertoire; more than 200 works by more than 70 choreographers have been performed in 51 years. The AAADT umbrella now includes two dance companies, a school, a BFA in Dance program with Fordham University, extension and community education classes, and 10 AileyCamps—six-week summer day camps for underserved youth—including one in Berkeley produced by Cal Performances. Ailey died in 1989, bequeathing his artistic legacy to AAADT’s present Artistic Director, Judith Jamison. The company’s website is www.alvinailey.org.

JUDITH JAMISON

This season marks **Judith Jamison**'s 20th year as Artistic Director of AAADT, and in recognition of that milestone Jamison is shepherding the Company on a five-week, 20-city United States tour. A Philadelphia native, Jamison studied dance with Marion Cujet, was discovered by Agnes de Mille, and made her New York debut with American Ballet Theatre in 1964. A year later she joined the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which became her artistic home for the next 15 years. Recognizing her extraordinary talent—the *Wall Street Journal* has called her “the most stellar of modern dance’s female performers”—Ailey created many enduring roles for Jamison, including the *tour de force* solo *Cry*. She left the company in 1980, danced as a guest artist around the world for several years, and in 1988 formed her own dance company, The Jamison Project. In that same year, her creative process was documented in a nationally televised PBS special, *Judith Jamison: The Dancemaker*.

Three weeks after Alvin Ailey’s death on December 1, 1989, Jamison became Artistic Director of AAADT. Jamison had been selected by Ailey to lead the company. In the 20 years since, she has led the Company through spectacular artistic and physical growth, while choreographing many memorable dances including *HERE...NOW* (2002), commissioned for the Cultural Olympiad in Salt Lake City; *Double Exposure* (2000), created for the Lincoln Center Festival; *Echo: Far From Home* (1998); and *Hymn* (1993), her stirring tribute to Alvin Ailey that was made into an Emmy Award–winning PBS special. Jamison’s choreography is marked by “her particular brand of majestic sinuousness” (*Vogue*) and her artistic values and vision “account for the remarkable accessibility that makes this imposing, dignified woman a figure much loved around the world” (*Dance Magazine*).

Jamison’s autobiography, *Dancing Spirit*, was edited by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and published by Doubleday in 1993. She has received countless awards and accolades, including a Kennedy Center Honor for lifetime contributions to American culture in 1999, a National Medal of Arts in 2001, the Paul Robeson award from the Actors’ Equity Association in 2004, a Bessie Award in 2007, a BET Honor in 2009 and a spot on the 2009 *TIME* 100: The World’s Most Influential People list. Most recently, she became a Commander in the Order of Arts and Letters by the French government. Jamison has announced her intention to retire in 2011.

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TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Zellerbach Hall** from **Tuesday, March 9 – Sunday, March 14** are priced at **\$36.00, \$48.00** and **\$62.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced three hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available three hours prior to a performance at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, or check Cal Performances' Facebook page.

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Cal Performances 2009/10 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Tuesday–Friday, March 9–12 at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 13 at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 14 at 3:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Program:

Program A: Tues. Mar. 9 at 8:00 p.m.; Sat. Mar. 13 at 2:00 p.m.; Sun. Mar. 14 at 3:00 p.m.

Uptown (2009): music by Fats Waller, Count Basie, Eubie Blake and others; choreography by Matthew Rushing (Bay Area premiere)

Dancing Spirit (2009): music by Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis and War; choreography by Ronald K. Brown (Bay Area premiere)

Revelations (1960): traditional spirituals; choreography by Alvin Ailey

Program B: Weds. & Fri. Mar. 10 & 12 at 8:00 p.m.

Suite Otis (1971): music by Otis Redding; choreography by George Faison

Among Us (Private Spaces: Public Places) (2009): music by Eric Lewis; choreography by Judith Jamison (Bay Area premiere)

Revelations (1960): traditional spirituals; choreography by Alvin Ailey

Program C: Thurs. & Sat. Mar. 11 & 13 at 8:00 p.m.

Love Stories (2004): music by Stevie Wonder; choreography by Judith Jamison with Robert Battle and Rennie Harris

Hymn (1993): music by Robert Ruggieri; libretto by Anna Deveare Smith; choreography by Judith Jamison

Revelations (1960): traditional spirituals; choreography by Alvin Ailey

Tickets: \$36.00, \$48.00 and \$62.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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Thursday & Friday, March 11 & 12 at 11:00 a.m.
SCHOOLTIME PERFORMANCE

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Judith Jamison, Artistic Director

Program: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performs excerpts from the beloved masterpiece, *Revelations*, and one other piece to be announced.

Tickets: \$4.00 per student or adult chaperone, available in advance only through Cal Performances at (510) 642-1082. *SchoolTime* performances are open to students in kindergarten through grade 12 in Bay Area public and private schools. Supplemental study guides for the classroom are provided. For more information about the *SchoolTime* program, contact the *SchoolTime* coordinator at Cal Performances by email at eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu or by phone at (510) 642-0212.

– Cal Performances –