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Press Room



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 ANNUAL CAMPUS RESIDENCY
WITH FIVE BAY AREA PREMIERES, MARCH 14–19, 2017**

**Residency events include community dance classes, a Berkeley Dances *Revelations* flash mob,
and two SchoolTime matinee performances**

Berkeley, February 2, 2017 — Cal Performances welcomes back the revered [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) for its annual campus residency, featuring five new works in their Bay Area premieres, in three programs from Tuesday, March 14 through Sunday, March 19 in Zellerbach Hall. The Ailey company continues to commission inspiring, socially engaged, and culturally relevant new dances from the best and brightest choreographers working today, and this tour's world premieres are by turns joyful and celebratory, sober and reflective. Several new works address issues of social justice, racial equality, or prison reform; all are steeped in the music of the African American experience, from gospel and spirituals, to jazz by Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington, and Ella Fitzgerald, to contemporary hip-hop and house music. Works new to the Bay Area include

Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep* (2016); Johan Inger's *Walking Mad* (2016); the complete version of Kyle Abraham's epic and critically-acclaimed *Untitled America* (2016); and company dancer, Hope Boykin's *r-Evolution, Dream* (2016). Company Artistic Director, **Robert Battle**, has reinvented his lighthearted solo *Ella* (2008), as a duet; also a Bay Area premiere, and the company performs a new production of Billy Wilson's 1992 tribute to Dizzy Gillespie, *The Winter in Lisbon*. Classic Ailey works, including *Revelations* (1960) and the signature solo, *Cry* (1971), round out the program, and Rennie Harris' powerful *Exodus* (2015) returns to the Zellerbach stage in a repeat performance from last season.

Program A, performed Tuesday, March 14 and Friday, March 17 at 8pm, and Sunday, March 19 at 3pm, features the Bay Area premiere of Mauro Bigonzetti's *Deep* (2016), an elegant melding of European, American, and African cultures with music by Yoruban world music stars Ibeyi. John Inger's *Walking Mad* (2016), also a Bay Area premiere, is a contemporary take on Ravel's *Bolero* that explores the extremes of human emotion. Company Artistic Director Robert Battle brings a new version of his high-energy solo *Ella* (2008), which is set to a live recording by Ella Fitzgerald singing the jazz standard *Airmail Special*, re-invented as a duo in honor of the singer's centennial in 2017. True to tradition, the program closes with Ailey's 1960 masterpiece celebrating the African American experience, *Revelations*.

Program B, performed Wednesday, March 15 and Saturday, March 18 at 8pm, features the much-anticipated Bay Area premiere of MacArthur Fellow, Kyle Abraham's *Untitled America* (2016), a rumination on the impact of the US prison system on African-American families. The large ensemble work is set to a soundscape of soul, ambient, percussive, and electronic music mixed with spoken word narration by former prisoners. Acclaimed hip-hop choreographer Rennie Harris's work *Exodus* (2015) returns to Cal Performances, and has been compared to Ailey's *Revelations*, in its sensitive use of movement and music as a call to civic action. The explosive score is original house music, arranged and composed by Raphael Xavier, an alumnus of Harris' hip-hop dance company. The program also includes two Ailey classics: the exuberant *Night Creature* (1974), with music by Duke Ellington, and the signature solo, *Cry* (1971), a 16-minute solo dedicated to "all black women everywhere— especially our mothers," which was first danced by Judith Jamison. The solo is made up of three parts—the first 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."

Program C, performed Thursday, March 16 at 8pm and Saturday, March 18 at 2pm, begins with a new production of Billy Wilson's joyful tribute to the spirit and music of jazz trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, *The Winter in Lisbon* (1992), on the occasion of Gillespie's centennial in 2017. Veteran company member Hope Boykin's *r-Evolution, Dream* (2016) has its Bay Area premiere, with original music by Ali Jackson of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, and historic and original writings recorded by Tony Award winner Leslie Odom, Jr. (from *Hamilton*). Boykin was inspired to create the work after hearing **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speeches and sermons** at the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta during a company tour stop. Ailey's *Revelations* (1960) 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. For the second year, company dancers will host a series of Berkeley Dances *Revelations* workshops, during which the public is invited to learn choreography from Alvin Ailey's iconic work, *Revelations*. The free 30-minute workshops are planned in the Hearst Gymnasium on Friday, March 17, at 10am, 10:45am, and 11:30am; registration is required at calperformances.org. Following the workshops, everyone is invited to Lower Sproul Plaza on the UC Berkeley campus for a Berkeley Dances *Revelations* Flash Mob on Friday, March 17 beginning at 12:30pm. Members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will lead this community performance *Wade in the Water* from Ailey's *Revelations*, which is free and open to the public. A video about last season's first-time-ever Berkeley Dances *Revelations* can be viewed [here](#).

A Community Dance Class with members of the company is also planned in the Bancroft Studio on Sunday, March 19 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 required at calperformances.org. Finally, two SchoolTime performances are planned for K-12 schoolchildren on Wednesday and Thursday, March 15 and 16 at 11am in Zellerbach Hall. Pre-registration is required at calperformances.org.

Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances

This summer is the 16th year of [Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances](#). AileyCamp is a nationally acclaimed summer day camp that uses dance as a vehicle for developing self-worth among

sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students (ages 11–14). The mission of AileyCamp is not to train the students to be professional dancers, but to challenge the participants to develop self-esteem, discipline, and a capacity for critical thinking. Conceived by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and run locally by Cal Performances, AileyCamp combines professional level dance training with personal development activities. The first AileyCamp was founded in 1989 by Alvin Ailey and the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey; there are now nine camps throughout the country.

Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances opened its doors in June 2002 and offers Bay Area children an opportunity to learn and perform on a full scholarship. Over the course of the past decade, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances has served nearly 1,000 Bay Area young people. The program is produced by Cal Performances and directed by AileyCamp director and teaching artist **David McCauley**. A video about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances can be viewed [here](#).

About Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Founded in 1958 by its namesake, [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) has performed throughout the world for millions of dance fans, and every year since 1968 at Cal Performances. Dancer, choreographer, and activist Alvin Ailey led the company for its first 30 years, creating dozens of works that often drew on African American music, history, and culture. Former Ailey dancer Judith Jamison led the company from 1989 to 2011, introducing works by leading choreographers as well as adding her own creations to its repertory. Robert Battle, the company's current artistic director, has continued Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's tradition of impassioned, meaningful dance grounded in the African American experience since his appointment in 2011.

About Cal Performances

Cal Performances is the performing arts presenter and producer of the University of California, Berkeley, fulfilling its mission by presenting, producing, and commissioning renowned and emerging artists in music, dance, and theater. Cal Performances reaches more than 150,000 people annually through concerts and campus and community events, including talks, symposia, lecture demonstrations, and academic courses based on Cal Performances' season. Under the leadership of Matías Tarnopolsky, the organization launched Berkeley RADICAL (Research and Development Initiative in Creativity Arts and Learning) to cultivate the artistic literacy of future audiences and connect some of the most innovative artists in the world with the intellectual capital of UC Berkeley.

The 2016/17 season is the second season for Berkeley RADICAL, and embraces three strands of artistic exploration: Inclusion, Innovation, and Immersion. More information on Berkeley RADICAL can be found at calperformances.org/berkeley-radical.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater* on Tuesday–Friday, March 14–17 at 8pm; Saturday, March 18 at 2pm & 8pm; and Sunday, March 19 at 3pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$36–\$150 and are 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–Friday, March 14–17 at 8pm
Saturday, March 18 at 2pm & 8pm
Sunday, March 19 at 3pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Program:

Tuesday, March 14, 8pm; Friday, March 17, 8pm; Sunday, March 19, 3pm

Mauro Bigonzetti/*Deep* (2016, Bay Area Premiere) (music: Ibeyi)

Johan Inger/*Walking Mad* (2016, Ailey Bay Area Premiere) (music: Ravel, Arvo Pärt)

Robert Battle/*Ella* (2008, Bay Area Premiere) (music: Ella Fitzgerald)

Alvin Ailey/*Revelations* (1960) (music: Traditional Spirituals)

Wednesday, March 15, 8pm; Saturday, March 18, 8pm

Alvin Ailey/*Night Creature* (1974) (music: Duke Ellington)

Alvin Ailey/*Cry* (1971) (music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, The Voices of East Harlem)

Kyle Abraham/*Untitled America* (2016, Bay Area Premiere) (music: Laura Mvula, Joe Andrews, Tom Halstead, Carsten Nicolai Edition, Kris Bowers)

Rennie Harris/*Exodus* (2015) (music: Raphael Xavier)

Thursday, March 16, 8pm; Saturday, March 18, 2pm

Billy Wilson/*The Winter in Lisbon* (1992, new production) (music: Dizzy Gillespie and Charles Fishman)

Hope Boykin/*r-Evolution, Dream* (2016, Bay Area Premiere) (music: Ali Jackson)
Alvin Ailey/*Revelations* (1960) (music: Traditional Spirituals)

Tickets: \$36–\$150 and subject to change.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Residency Activities

Berkeley Dances *Revelations* workshops **Hearst Gymnasium**
Friday, March 17, 10am; 10:45am; & 11:30am
Learn choreography of Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*.

Tickets: Free and open to the public. Registration opens January 2017.

Berkeley Dances *Revelations* Flash Mob **Lower Sproul Plaza**
Friday, March 17, 12:30pm
A community celebration of Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, led by dancers of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Tickets: Free and open to the public.

Community Dance Class **Bancroft Studio**
with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
Sunday, March 19, 11am

Tickets: \$5 per person. Pre-registration required (opens in January).