

CONTACT:
Christina Kellogg 510.643.6714
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu
Joe Yang 510.642.9121
scyang@calperfs.berkeley.edu

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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S
50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
INCLUDING WEST COAST PREMIERES OF HOPE BOYKIN'S
***GO IN GRACE* FEATURING SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK LIVE ONSTAGE**
AND MAURO BIGONZETTI'S *FESTA BAROCCA*

PLUS

AN ANNIVERSARY HIGHLIGHTS PROGRAM AND *REVELATIONS*
TUESDAY–SUNDAY, MARCH 3–8 AT ZELLERBACH HALL

***Go In Grace*: A Conversation with the Artists will be Held Wednesday, March 4**
at 12:00 p.m. at Zellerbach Hall

SchoolTime: One-hour Performances for Bay Area Students Will be Given
Thursday & Friday, March 5 & 6 at 11:00 a.m.

BERKELEY, January 22, 2009—“Pulling out all the dramatic stops” (*The New York Times*), **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** (AAADT) celebrates five decades of inspiring artistry with three distinct programs **Tuesday–Sunday, March 3–8** at Zellerbach Hall. The engagement opens with two live onstage performances by Grammy Award-winning **Sweet Honey In The Rock** in the West Coast premiere of *Go In Grace* by AAADT company member **Hope Boykin** on **Tuesday & Wednesday, March 3 & 4**. The *a cappella* ensemble, celebrating its 35 anniversary, will perform its original composition commissioned by the Ailey organization for this landmark season. The other two programs include the premiere of *Festa Barocca* by Italian choreographer **Mauro Bigonzetti** and a new **Anniversary Highlights** program comprising excerpts from over a dozen ballets, from beloved works to rare gems not seen in almost 30 years. Each program also includes **Alvin Ailey's** masterpiece *Revelations*. Founded by Alvin Ailey and led by **Judith Jamison**, the company is distinguished for its technical skill, boundless energy and artistic sensibility celebrating the African-American cultural experience. More than 20 million people around the world have experienced AAADT. “Ailey’s phenomenal popularity is unmatched by any dance company” (*The New York Times*).

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Hope Boykin, the choreographer and a dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Carol Maillard, a composer and musician with Sweet Honey In The Rock, will discuss the new work *Go In Grace* Wednesday, March 4, 12:00-1:00 pm, Zellerbach Hall. This talk is free and open to the public.

A variety of University events, including a master class open to the public, is being planned. Further information will be posted at www.calperformances.org.

AAADT will give two *SchoolTime* performances for Bay Area students on Thursday and Friday, March 5 and 6 at 11:00 a.m. at Zellerbach Hall. Tickets are sold in advance only.

PROGRAMS

Program A, Tuesday, March 3 at 8:00 p.m.; and Wednesday, March 4 at 8:00 p.m., will open with the eagerly anticipated collaboration between AAADT and Sweet Honey In The Rock. Performing live onstage with the Ailey dancers, the longtime Bay Area favorite ensemble will match their soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms in a composition they composed for AAADT's anniversary celebration. *Go In Grace*, choreographed by Hope Boykin, weaves a tale of community, family and growth that illustrates the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." Second up is Tony-Award winning choreographer and former AAADT company member George Faison's *Suite Otis* (1971), the story of young lovers out on the town in a suite of dances to the timeless songs of Otis Redding, including "Satisfaction," "Try a Little Tenderness" and "I've Been Loving You Too Long." The concert will conclude with *Revelations* (1960), Ailey's greatest and most beloved work. The autobiographically-inspired ballet is set to a mix of gospel, spiritual and African-American religious music.

Program B running Thursday, March 5 at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 7 at 2:00 p.m. is a retrospective of Alvin Ailey's choreographic career presented in a new **Anniversary Highlights** program that includes excerpts from *Blues Suite*, *Streams*, *Choral Dances*, *Mary Lou's Mass*, *The Lark Ascending*, *Hidden Rites*, *Night Creature*, *Cry*, *Phases*, *Landscape*, *For*

“*Bird*”—*With Love*, *Caverna Magica* and *Opus McShann*. The program will conclude with *Revelations* in its entirety (see program A).

Program C on Friday, March 6 at 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, March 7 at 8:00 p.m.; and Sunday, March 8 at 3:00 p.m. opens with the West Coast premiere of Mauro Bigonzetti’s *Festa Barocca*. This is Bigonzetti’s first work for an American modern dance group. “I discovered choreography when I met Alvin,” said Bigonzetti. *Festa Barocca* is danced to music by Handel with countertenor Andreas Scholl singing “Dove Sei, Amato Bene?” from *Rodelinda*. The full-length sarongs were designed by Marc Happel, director of costumes at New York City Ballet. *Solo* (1997), with music by J. S. Bach and choreography by Hans van Manen, follows. The piece is a tour de force challenge choreographed for three male dancers and “epitomizes dance at its essence” (*San Francisco Examiner*). *Revelations* completes the program (see program A).

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, arguably the most popular dance company in the world, has performed in 48 American states and 71 foreign countries, including two historic visits to South Africa. AAADT grew from a legendary performance in March 1958 at the 92nd Street Y in New York. Led by Alvin Ailey and a group of young, black modern dancers, the performance signaled a substantial shift in the evolution and perception of American dance. Ailey, born in Rogers, Texas, in 1931, was inspired as a youngster by his participation in the Baptist Young People’s Union, later incorporating the gospel music in his dances. It was on a junior high school class trip that he first saw the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; the experience changed his life. He studied and was mentored by Lester Horton, who founded the United States’ first racially integrated dance company—a company Ailey ran after Horton’s death. AAADT is an international ambassador of American culture, embodying the unique essence of African-American artistic expression while enriching modern dance heritage. The company first performed on the Berkeley campus in 1968 and is presented by Cal Performances in more performances each year than by any other venue outside of New York.

AAADT’s 18-month 50th Anniversary celebration includes international and United States performances in 50 cities along with special commemorative merchandise, including

Hallmark Ailey greeting cards; *Ailey/Celebration* Calendar and *Ailey Ascending*, a photographic art book, by Andrew Eccles; the Ailey Movado Museum Time Piece; *A Young Ailey Dancer*, a children's book by Valerie Gladstone and Jose Ivey; and an Ailey Barbie doll.

JUDITH JAMISON

Judith Jamison, Artistic Director of AAADT since 1989, was a dancer with the company from 1965 to 1980. An extraordinary talent who began dancing at the age of seven, Jamison studied with several acclaimed teachers, including Marion Cuyjet, Antony Tudor, John Hines, Delores Browne and Madame Swoboda. She was discovered by Agnes de Mille and made her New York debut with American Ballet Theatre in de Mille's *The Four Marys*, then toured with Alvin Ailey for 15 years. Inspired by her commanding stage presence, Ailey created some of his most enduring roles for her, most notably the solo *Cry*. She has partnered with many of the world's finest dancers, including James Truitte, Dudley Williams, Kevin Haigen and Mikhail Baryshnikov. She also starred in the Broadway hit musical *Sophisticated Ladies* and went on to appear as a guest artist with many of the world's leading ballet and modern dance companies.

In 1997, Judith Jamison led AAADT on its first visit to South Africa, performing, teaching and collaborating with other artists and students in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Soweto. One of the first artistic ambassadors to enter the country after the lifting of apartheid's cultural ban, the company's impact was immediate and deep, and they returned again in late 1998. Jamison has also been a guiding force in helping to establish the Ailey/Fordham University BFA program, a collaboration with the Ailey School that offers students the opportunity to receive superb dance training and an excellent liberal arts education (the first class graduated in 2002). In 1999, Jamison was the recipient of the prestigious Kennedy Center Award, and in 2002 President Bush presented her with the National Medal of the Arts, the nation's highest artistic honor. Most recently Jamison received the Paul Robeson Award from the Actors' Equity Association in recognition for her outstanding contribution to the performing arts. Jamison will retire as Artistic Director in 2011.

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

Founded in 1973 by **Bernice Johnson Reagon**, **Sweet Honey In The Rock** is celebrating its 35th season and has weathered the test of time thanks to its unwavering commitment to the struggle for justice, stunning vocal prowess, soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms. Rooted in a deeply held commitment to create music out of the rich textures of African American legacies and traditions, Sweet Honey In The Rock captures the complex sounds of blues, spirituals, traditional gospel hymns, rap, reggae, African chants, hip hop, ancient lullabies and jazz improvisation. Steeped in the sacred music of the black church, the clarion calls of the civil rights movement and songs of the struggle for justice everywhere, “great Black music is what we sing—a *cappella* style with a political ring,” says member **Nitanju Bolade Casel**. Other members are **Ysaye M. Barnwell**, **Carol Maillard**, **Bolade Casel**, **Aisha Kahlil** and **Louise Robinson** and American Signage Language interpreter **Shirley Childress Saxton**.

Over the past three and an half decades, Sweet Honey In The Rock has recorded 23 albums in addition to various projects, special appearances and collaborations in film, books and music. The group won a Grammy Award in 1989 for work on the Smithsonian Folkways/Columbia recording, *Vision Shared: A Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly*; the 2007 CD *Experience...101* was nominated for a Grammy.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** in Zellerbach Hall from **Tuesday, March 3 – Sunday, March 8** 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 two 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 \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available at 510.642.9988, press 2 for the Rush Ticket hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Tuesday–Friday, March 3–6 at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 7 at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 8 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
with **Sweet Honey In The Rock (March 3 & 4)**

Program:

Program A: Tues. & Wed., Mar. 3 & 4 at 8:00 p.m.

Go In Grace (2008): music by Sweet Honey In The Rock; choreography by Hope Boykin (company West Coast premiere)

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

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

Program B: Thurs., Mar. 5 at 8:00 p.m. & Sat., Mar. 7 at 2:00 p.m.

Anniversary Highlights: excerpts from *Blues Suite, Streams, Choral Dances, Mary Lou's Mass, The Lark Ascending, Hidden Rites, Night Creature, Cry, Phases, Landscape, For "Bird"*—*With Love, Caverna Magica* and *Opus McShann*.

Revelations (1960): traditional spirituals

All choreography by Alvin Ailey.

Program C: Fri., Mar. 6 at 8:00 p.m. Sat., Mar. 7 at 8:00 p.m. & Sun., Mar. 8 at 3:00 p.m.

Festa Barocca (2008): music by Georg Friedrich Handel; choreography by Mauro Bigonzetti

Solo (1997): music by J. S. Bach; choreography by Hans van Manen

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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Wednesday, March 4 from 1:00–2:00 p.m.
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENT

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

Hope Boykin, the choreographer and a dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Carol Maillard, a composer and musician with Sweet Honey In The Rock, will discuss the new work *Go In Grace*. This talk is free and open to the public.

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Thursday & Friday, March 5 & 6 at 11:00 a.m.
SCHOOLTIME PERFORMANCE

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

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Program: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will perform 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-