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[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Images of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).
A video trailer for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 65th anniversary is available on [Vimeo](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY
WELCOMES THE ANNUAL RESIDENCY OF
ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER
APRIL 2–7, 2024,
FEATURING
CAL PERFORMANCES' 2024 GALA
THURSDAY, APRIL 4 AT 5:30PM**

BAY AREA PREMIERES

**ANNUAL WEEKLONG RESIDENCY INCLUDES NEW DANCES BY
AMY HALL GARNER AND ELIZABETH ROXAS-DOBRISH
AND NEW PRODUCTIONS OF WORKS BY
ALONZO KING AND HANS VAN MANEN**

GALA CELEBRATION

**HONORING ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'S
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BENNETT RINK AND
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MATTHEW RUSHING
WITH HONORARY CHAIR THE HONORABLE WILLIE L. BROWN AND
A MENU DESIGNED BY AWARD-WINNING CHEF TANYA HOLLAND**

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

**THURSDAY, APRIL 4 PERFORMANCE OF ALVIN AILEY'S *REVELATIONS*
FEATURES LIVE MUSIC UNDER THE MUSICAL DIRECTION OF DAMIEN
SNEED**

SCHOOLTIME AND AILEYCAMP PROGRAMS

CONNECT K-12 STUDENTS WITH ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

LIVE AUDIO DESCRIPTION

**ON OPENING NIGHT, TUESDAY, APRIL 2, CAL PERFORMANCES TO PROVIDE
SPECIAL ACCESS FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PATRONS**

Berkeley, December 20, 2023—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** back to Berkeley for its annual campus residency, this year featuring five programs over seven performances from Tuesday, April 2 through Sunday, April 7 at Zellerbach Hall. The centerpiece of this year's residency is **Cal Performances' 2024 Gala** on Thursday, April 4, with all proceeds benefiting Cal Performances' artistic initiatives and education programs. As part of the week-long engagement, Cal Performances also presents the Ailey company in a **SchoolTime** performance for K-12 students and provides an opportunity for alumni of **Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp** to connect with Ailey company members. On opening night, Tuesday, April 2, Cal Performances offers live audio description and a pre-performance haptic tour for blind and visually impaired audience members.

In its 56th year of engagement with Cal Performances, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater brings five separate programs that collectively showcase the diverse repertoire of the company, spanning the late 1960s to the present year. Programming includes recent creations by two choreographers being spotlighted by the company for the first time. A duet by former Ailey dancer **Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish** entitled *Me, Myself and You*, set to the music of Duke Ellington and **Amy Hall Garner's** *CENTURY*, a celebration of life inspired by her grandfather's hundredth birthday, both receive their Bay Area premieres during this year's residency. Ailey dancers also perform new productions of **Alonzo King's** *Following the Subtle Current Upstream* (2000) and **Hans Van Manen's** *Solo* (1997) along with works that have defined the company over time—including one program entirely dedicated to choreography of **Alvin Ailey**. The "Ailey Classics" program features excerpts of six ballets by the company's namesake founder, two of his solo pieces, and concludes with a presentation of his iconic *Revelations*. The Thursday, April 4 gala evening performance of *Revelations* is

distinguished by live music performed by guest vocalists, and a choir and band under the musical direction of pianist, vocalist, and composer, **Damien Sneed**.

Cal Performances' 2024 Gala

Cal Performances' gala celebration on Thursday, April 4 honors Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Executive Director **Bennett Rink** and Associate Artistic Director **Matthew Rushing**. The honorary chair is **The Honorable Willie L. Brown**, well-known as a two-term Mayor of San Francisco (1996 to 2004) and Speaker of the California State Assembly, and widely recognized as one of the more influential African American politicians in recent history. Bennett Rink has held leadership positions with the Ailey company since 1994, and served as executive director since 2013. Matthew Rushing, a choreographer and dancer, joined the company in 1992, became Rehearsal Director in 2010, and was named Associate Artistic Director in January 2020. During his time with the company, he has choreographed four ballets: *Acceptance In Surrender* (2005), a collaboration with Hope Boykin and Abdur-Rahim Jackson; *Uptown* (2009), harkening the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance; *ODETTA* (2014), a celebration of "the queen of American folk music"; and *Testament* (2020), a tribute to Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* created in collaboration with Clifton Brown and Yusha-Marie Sorzano.

Gala festivities begin at 5:30pm with a celebratory cocktail reception at UC Berkeley's Alumni House, just a few steps away from Zellerbach Hall. Cocktail hour is followed by the 7pm performance by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at Zellerbach Hall for which gala attendees receive priority seating. The performance is capped by a very special performance of Alvin Ailey's iconic *Revelations* accompanied by live music under the direction of Damien Sneed. Following the performance, the Ailey company dancers are invited to join gala attendees in Pauley Ballroom for an elegant dinner with a menu designed by award-winning chef **Tanya Holland**. The executive chef and founder of the internationally renowned and beloved Brown Sugar Kitchen restaurant, Holland is also a three time cookbook author and a *Top Chef* competitor with numerous other television credits. Design of the event is led by the seasoned San Francisco Bay Area event planners at **McCalls Catering & Events** and **Got Light**. All proceeds from Cal Performances' 2024 Gala support Cal Performances' mission to produce and present performances of the highest artistic quality, enhanced by programs that explore compelling intersections of education and the performing arts.

Support for the gala is led by Grand Benefactors the **Weill Family Foundation**, headed by **Joan and Sandy Weill**, who generously sponsor both Cal Performances and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Their long history with Ailey is marked by the naming of the company's first permanent home, the Joan Weill Center for Dance. Joan Weill was Chairman of Ailey's Board of Trustees for 14 years and now serves as Chairman Emerita. Cal Performances' 2024 Gala chairs are Cal Performances Board of Trustees members **Janice Brathwaite, Helen Meyer, and Sara E. Wilson.**

Education and Community Engagement

In addition to the public performances by the company, this year Cal Performances is offering Bay Area families a unique "Spring Break" opportunity through which family groups of 10 or more are invited to join local school groups in attending Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's SchoolTime matinee performance, designed for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. This performance, which is part of a larger series of SchoolTime performances open to local school and homeschool groups, takes place on Friday, April 5, 11am–12pm in Zellerbach Hall. To register and purchase tickets, a representative member of each group must fill out the order form at calperformances.org/learn/k-12.

A few months following the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's residency, Cal Performances produces its 22nd year of [Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp](#). The tuition-free, six-week summer program uses dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, self-discipline, creative expression, and critical thinking skills originally conceived by Alvin Ailey. One of 10 AileyCamps nationwide, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is the only one situated on a college campus and has always been locally produced and fully funded by Cal Performances. Since its launch, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of around 1,200 young people in the Bay Area. Every spring when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual engagement at Cal Performances, recent Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp alums are invited to reunite by taking a free master class with an Ailey dancer and attending one of the Ailey company performances. A video about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be viewed [here](#).

Through a partnership with [Gravity Access Services](#), Cal Performances offers blind and visually impaired audience members the opportunity to listen to a live audio description of select performances throughout the season, including on opening night of the Ailey engagement, Tuesday,

April 2. Blind and visually impaired audience members may also participate in a pre-performance haptic access tour with the Ailey company that evening allowing them to experience—through touch and their own movement—the space, performers, costumes and objects in addition to key movement elements in the performance. Reservations for a live audio description headset and participation in the haptic tour may be reserved by contacting the [Cal Performances Ticket Office](#). Additional information about future events for which live audio description is offered and other services Cal Performances provides for patrons with disabilities can be found at calperformances.org/accessibility.

Repertoire

Program A, performed Tuesday, April 2 at 7:30pm and Saturday, April 6 at 8pm, opens with *Dancing Spirit*, a work created in 2009 by frequent Ailey choreographer **Ronald K. Brown** as a tribute to the “elegance, vision, dignity, and generosity” of Judith Jamison, the company’s former star dancer and executive director. Set to music by Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis, and War, *Dancing Spirit* evokes dance movements from Cuba, Brazil, and the United States to reflect on the life and career of the company’s legendary leader. *Dancing Spirit* is followed on the program by the Bay Area premiere of Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish’s 2023 duet, *Me, Myself and You*, set to **Brandie Sutton**’s recording of Duke Ellington’s “In A Sentimental Mood” as arranged by Damien Sneed. Roxas-Dobrish, who was a leading dancer at Ailey from 1984–1997 and the company’s first ever Filipina dancer, choreographed the work to center on one woman’s reminiscence of love and passion, and the decision she must make to let go and forge ahead. This duet is followed by the Bay Area premiere of a new production of *Solo* (1997), Hans van Manen’s challenging work for three male dancers that introduces a dynamic display of movement and musicality, set to music by Johann Sebastian Bach. The program closes with Alvin Ailey’s timeless *Revelations*, danced to traditional Black spirituals and hymns such as “I Been ’Buked,” “Wade in the Water,” and “Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham.” Since its creation in 1960, *Revelations* has been seen by more people around the world than any other modern dance work. Springing from Ailey’s childhood memories of growing up in the South and attending church services in Texas, the work pays homage to the rich cultural heritage of African Americans and explores the emotional spectrum of the human condition.

Program B, performed Wednesday, April 3 at 7:30pm, opens with a new production of Alonzo King's *Following the Subtle Current Upstream* (2000). As a choreographer, King is interested in the affinities between Western and Eastern classical forms, elemental materials, the natural world, and the human spirit. Danced to an eclectic score by Zakir Hussain, Miguel Frascón, and Miriam Makeba, the choreography which is abstract yet steeped in meaning mirrors life's boisterous waves to remind us that "everything in nature seeks to return to its source." After an intermission, Ailey dancers perform the Bay Area premiere of Amy Hall Garner's *CENTURY*, set to music by jazz artists including Count Basie, Ray Charles, Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, the Rebirth Brass Band, Cyrus Chestnut, and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Conceived as a celebration of life, resilience, and joy, *CENTURY* is a deeply personal work inspired by the choreographer's grandfather on the eve of his 100th birthday. A New York resident and graduate of the Juilliard School, Hall Garner has cultivated a robust career across a variety of dance styles. She's received commissions from the New York City Ballet and the Paul Taylor Dance Company, choreographed for the theatrical productions of *The Color Purple* and *Dreamgirls*, and coached and choreographed for Grammy Award winner, Beyoncé. The Wednesday evening program concludes with a work that received its Bay Area premiere at Cal Performances last season: **Kyle Abraham's** *Are You in Your Feelings?* (2022). A celebration of Black culture, Black music, and youthful spirit, the work is scored to a "mixtape" by a cornucopia of artists including the Flamingos, James Sullivan, Lauryn Hill, Erykah Badu, Drake, Shirley Brown, Maxwell, Summer Walker, Kendrick Lamar, and Jhené Aiko as a means of exploring the connections between music, communication, and personal memory.

Program C, performed Thursday, April 4 at 7pm, opens with Alonzo King's *Following the Subtle Current Upstream*, followed by Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrich's *Me, Myself and You*. (More on these works is included above.) The Thursday evening performance concludes with Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, freshly presented to Bay Area audiences for this special performance with the added dimension of live music performed by the **Revelations Choir and Band**, comprised of local Bay Area artists. Under the musical direction of pianist, vocalist, and composer Damien Sneed—whom Cal Performances audiences know from his performances leading *We Shall Overcome, A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* in 2020 and *Joy to the World: A Christmas Musical Journey* in 2021—the band and choir are joined by featured vocalists **Chenee Campbell, Nia Drummond, Sean Holland II, and Martin Lowe**. With expertise spanning classical, gospel, jazz, and contemporary music, Sneed has established a long and fruitful history as a music director for artists including the Clark Sisters,

Richard Smallwood, Donnie McClurkin, Hezekiah Walker, Marvin Sapp, Karen Clark Sheard, Dorinda Clark-Cole, and Kim Burrell. Program C precedes Cal Performances' gala dinner (More on the gala is included above), though a gala ticket is not required to attend the Thursday evening performance.

Program D, performed Friday, April 5 at 8pm and Saturday, April 6 at 2pm, is an "Ailey Classics" collection highlighting choreography by the company's legendary founder. The performances feature excerpts of some of Alvin Ailey's most popular ballets created between 1969 and 1988, including: *Memoria* (1979), a deeply personal work created to honor the joyful life of his deceased friend, Joyce Trisler, set to the music jazz pianist Keith Jarrett; *Night Creature* (1974), an energetic and playful take on the people and animals that "come out and come on" at night, danced to Duke Ellington's own "Night Creature;" *Pas de Duke* (1976), a modern dance translation of a classical *pas de deux* set to the music of Duke Ellington and originally created to showcase the stylistic strengths of Judith Jamison and Mikhail Baryshnikov; *Masekela Langage* (1969), a work that draws parallels between South African Apartheid and the racially motivated violence of 1960s Chicago, set to the music of trumpeter and composer Hugh Masekela; *Opus McShann* (1988), a choreographic interpretation of jazz master Jay McShann's varied musical stylings, set to the music of McShann and Walter Brown; and *For 'Bird' – With Love* (1984), a tribute to the swing-based style of jazz legend Charlie "Bird" Parker, set to music by Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, and Jerome Kern. The program also includes two iconic solos: *A Song for You* (1972), which explores love and longing through a lyrical male solo, set to the music of Donny Hathaway and *Reflections in D* (1963), a serene meditation to a Duke Ellington song by the same name staged for a female dancer. Program D concludes with Ailey's most recognized and celebrated work, *Revelations*.

Program E, performed Sunday, April 7 at 3pm, is an eclectic program combining Alonzo King's *Following the Subtle Current Upstream*, Amy Hall Garner's *CENTURY*, and Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. (More on these works is included above.)

Bank of America is Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Tour Sponsor.
The 2024 National Tour is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS:

Tuesday, April 2, 7:30pm
Wednesday, April 3, 7:30pm
Thursday, April 4, 7pm
Friday, April 5, 8pm
Saturday, April 6, 2pm
Saturday, April 6, 8pm
Sunday, April 7, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

PROGRAM A

Tues, Apr 2, 7:30pm; Sat, Apr 6, 8pm

RONALD K. BROWN

Dancing Spirit (2009; music: Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis, Radiohead, War)

ELIZABETH ROXAS-DOBRISH

Me, Myself and You (2023; Bay Area Premiere; music: Duke Ellington, arr. by Damien Sneed, performed by Brandie Sutton)

HANS VAN MANEN

Solo (1997; Bay Area Premiere of a new production (2023); music: Johan Sebastian Bach)

ALVIN AILEY

Revelations (1960; music: traditional spirituals)

PROGRAM B

Wed, Apr 3, 7:30pm

ALONZO KING

Following the Subtle Current Upstream (2000; Bay Area Premiere of a new production (2023); music: Zakir Hussain, Miguel Frasconi, and Miriam Makeba)

AMY HALL GARNER

CENTURY (2023; Bay Area Premiere; music: various artists, including Count Basie, Ray Charles, Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, Rebirth Brass Band, Cyrus Chestnut, and The Dirty Dozen Brass Band)

KYLE ABRAHAM

Are You in Your Feelings? (2022; music: music: various artists, including the Flamingos, James Sullivan, Lauryn Hill, Erykah Badu, Drake, Shirley Brown, Maxwell, Summer Walker, Kendrick Lamar, and Jhené Aiko)

PROGRAM C	<u>Thu, Apr 4, 7pm</u>
ALONZO KING	<i>Following the Subtle Current Upstream</i> (2000; Bay Area Premiere of a new production (2023); music: Zakir Hussain, Miguel Frasconi, and Miriam Makeba)
ELIZABETH ROXAS-DOBRISH	<i>Me, Myself and You</i> (2023; Bay Area Premiere; music: Duke Ellington, arr. Damien Sneed, performed by Brandie Sutton)
ALVIN AILEY	<i>Revelations</i> (1960; music: traditional spirituals; score performed live by vocalists Chenee Campbell, Nia Drummond, Sean Holland II, and Marvin Lowe; The Revelations Choir and Band, comprised of Bay Area musicians; conducted by Damien Sneed)
PROGRAM D	<u>Fri, Apr 5, 8pm; Sat, Apr 6, 2pm</u>
ALVIN AILEY	<i>Ailey Classics</i> (featuring <i>Reflections in D</i> and excerpts from <i>Memoria</i> , <i>Night Creature</i> , <i>Pas de Duke</i> , <i>Masekela Langage</i> , <i>Opus McShann</i> , <i>Love Songs</i> , and <i>For 'Bird' – With Love</i>)
ALVIN AILEY	<i>Revelations</i> (1960; music: traditional spirituals)
PROGRAM E	<u>Sun, Apr 7, 3pm</u>
ALONZO KING	<i>Following the Subtle Current Upstream</i> (2000; Bay Area Premiere of a new production (2023); music: Zakir Hussain, Miguel Frasconi, and Miriam Makeba)
AMY HALL GARNER	<i>CENTURY</i> (2023; Bay Area Premiere; music: various artists, including Count Basie, Ray Charles, Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, Rebirth Brass Band, Cyrus Chestnut, and The Dirty Dozen Brass Band)
ALVIN AILEY	<i>Revelations</i> (1960; music: traditional spirituals)

Program:

Continuing a 56-year relationship with Cal Performances, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to the Berkeley campus for the company's annual residency with a selection of recent works and Ailey classics. Steeped in the sounds of jazz, blues, and hip-hop, the Ailey repertory celebrates the Black American experience, offering music and movement as expressions of pure joy and as opportunities for reflection and resistance. Past favorites and new works come alive through the commitment and artistry of the company's athletic, expressive dancers, who inhabit choreography by creators including Kyle Abraham, Alonzo King, Ronald K. Brown, Amy Hall Garner, Elizabeth

Roxas-Dobrish, and Hans Van Manen with the same conviction as they reinvent classic Alvin Ailey works like *Revelations*. The performance on Thursday, April 4 features live musical accompaniment to *Revelations* under the musical direction of Damien Sneed.

Tickets:

\$45–\$158 (prices subject to change). Tickets are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5pm. (The in-person ticket office and phones are closed December 18 through January 2 during UC Berkeley’s winter break, but tickets may be purchased online during this time.)

UC Berkeley students can access exclusive discounts, including half-price tickets in all sections of the theater, and \$10 tickets for a limited number of prime seats on opening night, Tuesday, April 2, as part of Cal Performances’ Golden Bear Circle program. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students. For information about other discounts, visit calperformances.org/discounts.

Live Audio Description: Live audio description and a haptic tour for blind and visually impaired audience members are available for the opening night, Tuesday, April 2, performance. Headsets and space on the tour may be reserved by contacting the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or tickets@calperformances.org. Additional information about services available for patrons with disabilities can be found at calperformances.org/accessibility.

Thursday, April 4, 5:30 pm

UC Berkeley campus

Gala Celebration

**Cal Performances' 2024 Gala
with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**

Program:

5:30pm Cocktail Reception, UC Berkeley Alumni House

7pm Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Performance, Zellerbach Hall

9pm Gala Dinner, Pauley Ballroom, UC Berkeley Student Union

Cal Performances hosts a gala evening with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, with all proceeds supporting Cal Performances’ artistic initiatives and education programs. The evening honors Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater’s Executive Director Bennett Rink and Associate Artistic Director Matthew Rushing. The honorary chair is the Honorable Willie L. Brown. Gala attendees enjoy a pre-performance cocktail reception; priority seating for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performance, which includes live musical accompaniment to Alvin Ailey’s iconic *Revelations*; and an elegant dinner with Ailey dancers and a menu designed by award-winning chef Tanya Holland.

Tickets: Gala tickets start at \$500 and are available on Cal Performances' 2024 [Gala event detail page](#). Further information about the gala is available by contacting Cal Performances' Special Events staff at cpevents@calperformances.org or (510) 642-8653.

Friday, April 5, 11am-12pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus

SchoolTime Performance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Program:

Cal Performances invites local school groups and Bay Area family groups of 10 or more to attend Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's SchoolTime matinee performance. The one-hour performance is designed for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Three weeks ahead of the performance, Cal Performances posts an engagement guide online that provides information, activities, and resources to make personal and meaningful connections to the performance. This performance, which is part of a larger series of SchoolTime performances, is open to local school and homeschool groups.

Tickets: \$10 in advance. To register and purchase tickets, a representative member of each group must fill out the order form at calperformances.org/learn/k-12.

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