

For Immediate Release: March 6, 2023

[Press Room](#)



Images of the 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
TUESDAY–SUNDAY, APRIL 11–16
AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

**2023 RESIDENCY FEATURES BAY AREA PREMIERES
OF NEW DANCES BY KYLE ABRAHAM AND JAMAR ROBERTS**

**OTHER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE THE BAY AREA PREMIERE OF
A NEW PRODUCTION OF
AILEY'S 1986 TRIBUTE TO NELSON MANDELA
AND WEST COAST COMPANY PREMIERES OF WORKS BY
TWYLA THARP AND PAUL TAYLOR**

Berkeley, CA, March 6, 2023 — Continuing a tradition that dates to the late 1960s, Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** in its annual campus residency, featuring three programs over seven performances from Tuesday, April 11 through Sunday, April 16 at Zellerbach Hall. Led by Artistic Director **Robert Battle**, the company showcases the passionate spirit and extraordinary technique of the Ailey dancers in a diverse selection of new works, repertory favorites, and Ailey classics. This season's visit features Bay Area

premieres of two new dances: *Are You in Your Feelings?*, choreographed by **Kyle Abraham** to a soul, hip-hop, and R&B music mixtape, and *In a Sentimental Mood*, an intimate duet by **Jamar Roberts**. The programs also feature the West Coast premieres of new company productions of the legendary **Twyla Tharp**'s *Roy's Joys* and **Paul Taylor**'s *DUET*, and the Bay Area premiere of *Survivors*, Alvin Ailey's 1986 tribute to Nelson Mandela. As is custom, Alvin Ailey's American masterpiece *Revelations* closes the majority of the performances over the course of the residency.

Program A, performed on Tuesday, April 11 at 7:30pm and Friday, April 14 at 8pm, opens with the West Coast premiere of the Ailey company's new production of Twyla Tharp's 1997 work *Roy's Joys*, which blends vernacular dance with ballet and modern technique and is performed to a soundtrack of 1940s and '50s jazz by Roy Eldridge. It is followed by Robert Battle's 2007 *Unfold*, a sensuous duet to Gustave Charpentier's aria "Depuis Le Jour" from *Louise*, sung by Leontyne Price. The program also features Robert Battle's exuberant *For Four* (2021), performed by four dancers moving to an energetic jazz score written in 4/4 time by Wynton Marsalis. Capturing the pent-up energy of a world cooped up during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Battle expresses the drive to perform and the electricity present when dancers come together to create. Closing the program is 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 on Wednesday, April 12 at 7:30pm and Saturday, April 15 at 8pm, opens with the Bay Area premiere of Jamar Roberts' duet *In a Sentimental Mood*, an exploration of love and desire set to music by Duke Ellington and other jazz classics, given an avant-garde twist by composer Rafiq Bhatia. It is followed by the Ailey company's West Coast premiere of its new production of Paul Taylor's concise and elegant *DUET* from 1964, set to the music of Haydn. The program also includes the Bay Area premiere of Alvin Ailey and Mary Barnett's *Survivors*, a portrait of people transformed by injustice that Ailey created in 1986 as a tribute to Nelson and Winnie Mandela. *Survivors* is danced to music by jazz drummer and activist Max Roach, with vocals by Abbey Lincoln that set a triumphant, emotional tone. The program concludes with the Bay Area

premiere of Kyle Abraham’s newest work, *Are You in Your Feelings?*—a celebration of Black culture, Black music, and youthful spirit. Scored to a “mixtape” by a cornucopia of musical artists like Shirley Brown, Drake, The Flamingos, Lauryn Hill, Kendrick Lamar, Maxwell, and Summer Walker, it explores the connections between music, communication, and personal memory.

Program C is performed on Thursday, April 13 at 7:30pm; Saturday, April 15 at 2pm; and Sunday, April 16 at 3pm, and offers three Alvin Ailey gems along with Robert Battle’s *For Four*. *Night Creature* is Alvin Ailey’s beloved 1974 work set to a score by Duke Ellington and combines modern dance, classical ballet, and jazz movement. The title is inspired by the words of the composer: Ellington said, “Night creatures, unlike stars, do not come OUT at night—they come ON, each thinking that, before the night is out, he or she will be the star.” Ailey’s powerful *Cry* from 1971 was choreographed as a birthday present for his mother on his muse, the legendary Judith Jamison. This tour-de-force 16-minute solo—dedicated to “all Black women everywhere—especially our mothers”—has become an enduring work of American art. Composed in three parts, the first section is set to Alice Coltrane’s “Something about John Coltrane”; the second, to Laura Nyro’s “Been on a Train”; and the last, featuring the Voices of East Harlem singing “Right On, Be Free.” *Revelations* concludes the program.

Education

In addition to the public performances by the company, two special performances moderated by one of the dancers for area K–12 schoolchildren as part of the Cal Performances SchoolTime series, on Thursday and Friday, April 13-14 at 11am. Pre-registration and ticket purchase is required by filling out the order form at calperformances.org/learn/k-12.

This summer marks the 21st year Cal Performances has produced [Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp](https://calperformances.org/learn/k-12), a tuition-free, six-week summer program that uses dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, self-discipline, creative expression, and critical thinking skills. The camp, one of ten AileyCamps nationwide, was originally conceived by Alvin Ailey and is locally produced and fully funded by Cal Performances. Since its launch, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of around 1200 young people in the Bay Area. Every spring when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual engagement at Cal Performances, camp alums reunite to take a master class with an

Ailey dancer and to see the Ailey company perform. A video about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be viewed [here](#).

#

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Tuesday, April 11, 7:30pm

Wednesday, April 12, 7:30pm

Thursday, April 13, 7:30pm

Friday, April 14, 8pm

Saturday, April 15, 2pm

Saturday, April 15, 8pm

Sunday, April 16, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street,
UC Berkeley campus

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Robert Battle, *artistic director*

Matthew Rushing, *associate artistic director*

PROGRAM A (Tue, Apr 11, 7:30pm & Fri, Apr 14, 8pm)

TWYLA THARP *Roy's Joys* (1997/2022; Company West Coast Premiere; music: Roy Eldridge)

ROBERT BATTLE *Unfold* (2007; music: Gustave Charpentier, "Depuis Le Jour" from *Louise*; sung by Leontyne Price)

ROBERT BATTLE *For Four* (2021; music: Wynton Marsalis)

ALVIN AILEY *Revelations* (1960; music: traditional spirituals)

PROGRAM B (Wed, Apr 12, 7:30pm & Sat, Apr 15, 8pm)

JAMAR ROBERTS *In a Sentimental Mood* (2022; Bay Area Premiere; music: Duke Ellington and Rafiq Bhatia)

PAUL TAYLOR *DUET* (1964/2022; Company West Coast Premiere; music: Franz Josef Haydn)

ALVIN AILEY and MARY BARNETT *Survivors* (1986/New Production 2022; Bay Area Premiere; music: Max Roach ("Survivors" and "Triptych," strings orchestrated by Peter Phillips)

KYLE ABRAHAM *Are You in Your Feelings?* (2022; Bay Area Premiere; music: mixtape of soul, hip-hop, and R&B)

PROGRAM C (Thu, Apr 13, 7:30pm; Sat, Apr 15, 2pm; Sun, Apr 16, 3pm)

ALVIN AILEY *Night Creature* (1975; music: Duke Ellington)
ROBERT BATTLE *For Four* (2021; music: Wynton Marsalis)
ALVIN AILEY *Cry* (1971; music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, and Chuck Griffin)
ALVIN AILEY *Revelations* (1960; music: traditional spirituals)

Continuing a tradition that dates to the late 1960s, the Ailey dancers return for the company's annual campus residency. **Robert Battle**, who recently celebrated 10 years as artistic director, has doubled down during his tenure on the ensembles' values: artistic excellence, innovation, and profound cultural relevance. This season's visit features Bay Area premieres of new dances by **Kyle Abraham** and **Jamar Roberts**; two company West Coast premieres of works by dance legends **Twyla Tharp** and **Paul Taylor**; and the Bay Area premiere of a new production of Alvin Ailey's *Survivors*, as well as additional Ailey classics and works by Robert Battle.

Tickets: \$42–\$150 (prices subject to change)

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 as part of Cal Performances' new 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.

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, 1–5 pm.

COVID-19: Masking is required inside Zellerbach Hall auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances' COVID-19 safety policies is available at calperformances.org/safety.

###

PRESS CONTACT:

Louisa Spier

Cal Performances

Media Relations Manager

(510) 643-6714

lspier@calperformances.org