

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series



Enriching lives, sparking imaginations, and inspiring a love of learning through the arts!

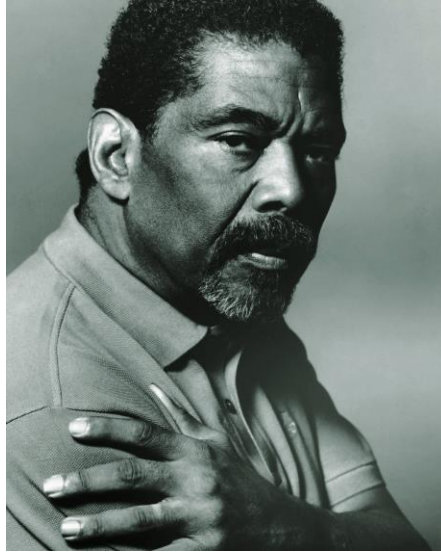
**Ailey II:
The Next Generation of Dance
October 4, 2024
The Schaefer Center for the
Performing Arts**

Appalachian
STATE UNIVERSITY



Study Guide

ALL ABOUT AILEY



Alvin Ailey. Photo by Eric N. Hong

Alvin Ailey, Founder

Alvin Ailey was born on January 5, 1931, in Rogers, Texas. His experiences of life in the rural South would later inspire some of his most memorable works. He was introduced to dance in Los Angeles by performances of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the Katherine Dunham Dance Company, and his formal dance training began with an introduction to Lester Horton's classes by his friend Carmen de Lavallade. Horton, the founder of one of the first racially integrated dance companies in the United States, became a mentor for Mr. Ailey as he embarked on his professional career. After Horton's death in 1953, Mr. Ailey became director of the Lester Horton Dance Theater and began to choreograph his own works. In the 1950s and 60s, Mr. Ailey performed in four Broadway shows, including *House of Flowers* and *Jamaica*. In 1958 he founded Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater to carry out his vision of a company dedicated to enriching the American modern dance heritage and preserving the uniqueness of the African American cultural experience. He established the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center (now The Ailey School) in 1969 and formed the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble (now Ailey II) in 1974. Mr. Ailey was a pioneer of programs promoting arts in education, particularly those benefiting underserved communities. Throughout his lifetime he was awarded numerous distinctions, including the Kennedy Center Honor in 1988 in recognition of his extraordinary contribution to American culture. In 2014 he posthumously received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor, in recognition of his contributions and commitment to civil rights and dance in America. When Mr. Ailey died on December 1, 1989, *The New York Times* said of him, "you didn't need to have known [him] personally to have been touched by his humanity, enthusiasm, and exuberance and his courageous stand for multi-racial brotherhood."

AILEY II

Francesca Harper, Artistic Director

Sylvia Waters, Artistic Director Emerita

Alvin Ailey, Founder

Company Members

Carley Brooks, Meredith Brown, Jennifer M. Gerken, Alfred L. Jordan II,
Xavier Logan, Kiri Moore, Corinth Moulterie, Xhosa Scott,
Kayla Mei-Wan Thomas, Darion Turner, Eric J. Vidana, Jordyn White

Shay Bland, Rehearsal Director

Apprentices

Kamani Abu, Naia Neal, Adanna Smalls, Kaleb K. Smith

Bennett Rink, Executive Director

Ailey II gratefully acknowledges the generous support provided by
The Gloria Kaufman Dance Foundation.

AILEY II COMPANY STORY



Ailey II with Artistic Director Francesca Harper and Rehearsal Director Shay Bland. Photo by Nir Arieli.

Ailey II—the next generation of dance—is AILEY’s second company.

Founded in 1974 as the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, Ailey II has advanced Alvin Ailey’s vision by giving early-career dancers the vital experience of transitioning from training as a student to becoming a professional dancer. Ailey II dancers bring their technical mastery and emotional depth to works by the most daring established and emerging choreographers. Just as Mr. Ailey envisioned, the company continues to expand the audience for dance through global touring and community-based performances.

Sylvia Waters, the company’s first artistic director, was personally chosen by Mr. Ailey and led the company for 38 seasons. In September 2021, Francesca Harper became artistic director. Ms. Harper—a former student at The Ailey School who has choreographed for both AILEY companies—guides Ailey II with her unique perspective, paying homage to Mr. Ailey’s legacy while taking the company in bold, new directions.

Under Ms. Harper’s direction, Ailey II is forging a new path for modern dance—one that’s inclusive, experimental, and transformative.

[AILEY.org/ailey-ii](https://www.ailey.org/ailey-ii)

BIOGRAPHIES

FRANCESCA HARPER, Artistic Director

Francesca Harper began her professional dance career with Dance Theatre of Harlem. She was also a member of Ballet Frankfurt from 1991-1999 under the direction of William Forsythe, and she has performed on Broadway in productions including *Fosse*, *All Shook Up*, *The Color Purple*, *Sweet Charity*, and *Sophisticated Ladies*, and was nominated for Best Actress in a Musical by Broadway.com for her role as Billie Holiday in *Lady Day* at Emerson's Bar and Grill. Ms. Harper created her first play, *50 minutes with Harriet and Phillis*, produced by Anna Deavere Smith, with her aunt, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Margo Jefferson, and Paul Miller, a.k.a DJ Spooky. In 2014, she debuted her critically acclaimed one-woman show, *The Look of Feeling*, as a writer, actor, dancer, and vocalist. She is also the writer, producer, composer, and narrator of the documentary film *To Lillian* (2021). Ms. Harper has choreographed works for companies including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, Dance Theater of Harlem, Hubbard Street II, and Tanz Graz, as well as The Francesca Harper Project, which she had founded in 2005. Her television and film credits include appearances on *Boardwalk Empire*, *Late Night with David Letterman*, and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. She served as ballet consultant for the motion picture *Black Swan* and was featured in *Zinnias – The Life of Clementine Hunter*, directed by Robert Wilson. In 2013, Ms. Harper received a Living History Award during Black History Month from Long Island University and the Innovation and Technology Award for her choreography for Fashion Week with designer Louis Vuitton. She also served as co-director and choreographer for the musical *Rose's War* and as movement director for Tommy Hilfiger and Zendaya for their fashion show at the Apollo Theater in 2019. Ms. Harper was the creator and directorial consultant for 16 world premiere virtual films. Her latest works include a new creation for Wendy Whelan, Associate Artistic Director of New York City Ballet, and poet Marc Bamuthi Joseph. Currently, Ms. Harper is engaged as Executive Producer with Sony Pictures on a series in development, and recently she received her Masters of Fine Arts degree from Goddard College.

SYLVIA WATERS, Artistic Director Emerita

Sylvia Waters was personally selected by Alvin Ailey in 1974 as Artistic Director of Ailey II and led the company for 38 years. She attended The Juilliard School, where she worked with Donald McKayle's company, and with a young Hava Kohav –who later became an actress and Academy Award nominee— performing very often to widely populated audiences of the entire New York Dance community at the YMHA. After receiving her B.S. from Juilliard, she moved to Paris, where she appeared regularly on television. She toured in the European company of *Black Nativity* and worked with Michel Descombey, then director of the Paris Opera Ballet, as well as Milko Šparembleck. She also performed in Donald McKayle's European production of *Black New World* and worked with Maurice Béjart's company performing in Brussels and at the Summer Olympics in Mexico City. In 1968, Ms. Waters joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and toured with the Company until assuming leadership of Ailey II. She has received honorary doctorates from the State University of New York at Oswego and The Juilliard School, and she has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. Ms. Waters is a recipient of the Legacy Award as part of the 20th Annual IABD Festival, Syracuse University's Women of Distinction Award, a *Dance Magazine* Award, and a "Bessie" Award.

SHAY BLAND, Rehearsal Director

Shay Bland is from Englewood, NJ. She began her formal dance training at The Ailey School in 2007 where she was a scholarship student in the Junior Division. She is a graduate of the Professional Performing Arts School (PPAS), and has danced with several companies including Ailey II, Elisa Monte Dance, Nimbus Dance Theater, Von Howard Project, Francesca Harper Project, Ray Mercer Collective, Kachal Dance, and The Metropolitan Opera Ballet. Ms. Bland has worked on projects on and off-Broadway including *The Visitor* (off-Broadway) as associate choreographer, and as assistant choreographer for the 13-time nominated Broadway show *Hell's Kitchen*. She was also lead choreographer for Nebraska High School Theater Academy (NHSTA) in conjunction with Omaha Performing Arts. As an educator, Ms. Bland serves as a faculty member at Pace University, The Ailey School, Manhattan Youth Ballet, and Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts (EMIA).

AILEY II WHO'S WHO

CARLEY BROOKS (Chicago, IL) received her training at TDA Prep under the direction of Preston Miller and Jacqueline Green. Her studies include summer dance intensives with Jacob's Pillow, Nederlands Dans Theater, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. Ms. Brooks is currently a senior in the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program. She has performed works by Alvin Ailey, Jiří Kylián, Ronald K. Brown, Hope Boykin, Marco Goecke, Jennifer Archibald, and Christopher L. Huggins. Her performance highlights include Geoffrey Holder's *Douglas* with Dance Theatre of Harlem and Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's New York City Center season in 2023. This is Ms. Brooks' first season with Ailey II.

MEREDITH BROWN (Asheville, NC) began her dance training at a local studio in her hometown. She studied at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and she is a recent graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, where she performed in Alvin Ailey's *Festa Barroca* and *Memoria* during AILEY's 2022 and 2023 New York City Center seasons. Ms. Brown also danced in Hope Boykin's *Chasing the Spirit* at Jazz at Lincoln Center. She worked with Madison Hicks' "The Moving Forward Collective," and she is an alumnus of the Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program, where she worked with Sidra Bell, Rena Butler, and Antoine Vereecken. This is Ms. Brown's first season with Ailey II.

JENNIFER M. GERKEN (Houston, TX) began her dance training at age six. In 2016, she was accepted into Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. In 2019, Ms. Gerken received the Mary Martha Lappe Dance Scholarship, and performed in an excerpt of *Appalachian Spring* by Martha Graham in the roles of the Bride and Follower. She was a student in the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program where she graduated in 2023. Ms. Gerken has performed works by William Forsythe, Mark Caserta, Ethan Colangelo, José Limón, and Paul Taylor. This is her first season with Ailey II.

ALFRED L. JORDAN II (Memphis, TN) began his dance training at the age of 12 at a local studio in his hometown. He later studied at The Ailey School as a scholarship student where he performed in Alvin Ailey's *Bird Live* during AILEY's 2021 New York City Center gala. Mr. Jordan has worked with choreographers including Amy Hall Garner, Francesca Harper, Stephanie Batten Bland, Judine Somerville, and William Forsythe. This is his second season with Ailey II.

XAVIER LOGAN (Atlanta, GA) trained at Dancemakers of Atlanta. He is currently a senior at The Juilliard School, and has worked with choreographers including Sidra Bell, Sharon Eyal, Jamar Roberts, Bobbi Jene Smith, and Or Schraiber. He also performed works by Camille A. Brown and Johannes Wieland. Mr. Logan has been featured on television in *The Vampire Diaries*, *Dance Moms*, and *So You Think You Can Dance*. In 2023, his work *Welcome To The J(U)* premiered as the first ever hip-hop dance to appear on Juilliard's mainstage, and he was named one of *Teen Vogue* & GLAAD's "20 Under 20" rising stars. This is Mr. Logan's first season with Ailey II.

KIRI MOORE (Culpeper, VA) began her dance training in Virginia at the Orange School of Performing Arts, and continued to study in Philadelphia, PA at The Rock School for Dance Education. She is a graduate of The Ailey School Certificate Program where she performed in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's 2021 and 2022 New York City Center season. Ms. Moore has also performed works by Amy Hall Garner, William Forsythe, Francesca Harper, Andrea Miller, Bradley Shelver, and Robert Battle. This is her second season with Ailey II.

CORINTH MOULTERIE (Brooklyn, NY) graduated from Brooklyn High School of the Arts, where he began his formal dance training, while also studying at Harlem School of the Arts. He has trained at MOVE|NYC's Young Professionals Program, Juilliard Summer Dance Intensive, Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts, and at The Ailey School as a Scholarship student. Mr. Moulterie has worked with choreographers, including Jeroboam Bozeman, Francesca Harper, Earl Mosley, Jermaine Spivy, Spenser Theberge and Leyland Simmons, and performed in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's 2022 New York City Center Season. This is his second season with Ailey II.

XHOSA SCOTT (Durham, NC) was raised in Virginia where he began dancing with The School of Richmond Ballet's outreach program, Minds in Motion. He continued training at Baltimore School for the Arts, and attended summer intensives including the Bolshoi Ballet Academy, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and The Juilliard School. After graduating high school under the School of American Ballet, Mr. Scott attended The University of Virginia where he majored in Art History with a minor in Anthropology. While at The Ailey School in the Scholarship Program, he performed works by choreographers including Ronald K Brown, Amy Hall Garner, Ray Mercer, and Darrell Grand Moultrie. This is Mr. Scott's first season with Ailey II.

KAYLA MEI-WAN THOMAS (Cleveland, OH) began her dance training in Las Vegas, NV at Nevada Ballet Theatre, and continued to study in Cleveland, OH at Cleveland School of the Arts. She graduated summa cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in 2022 with a double major in Digital Technologies and Emerging Media. In 2020, she was the recipient of the Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Thomas has performed works by Alvin Ailey, William Forsythe, Francesca Harper, Andrea Miller, Robert Battle, Hope Boykin, and Helen Simoneau. This is her second season with Ailey II.

DARION TURNER (Clayton County, GA) began his dance training at AileyCamp Atlanta and attended Martha Ellen Stilwell School of the Arts. He studied as a scholarship student at Atlanta Ballet, Eagles Landing Dance Center, and in The Ailey School's Summer Intensive. Mr. Turner is a graduate from the Certificate Program at The Ailey School and worked with choreographers Darrell Grand Moultrie, Christopher L. Huggins Anthony Burrell, Amy Hall Garner, Ronald K. Brown, Norbert De La Cruz, and Brandi Lewis. He also performed works by Robert Battle, Geoffrey Holder, and danced in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's 2022 New York City Center season. This is his first season with Ailey II.

ERIC VIDAÑA (Las Vegas, NV) is a graduate of the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts. He received his early dance training from The Nevada Ballet Theatre and continued studying at West Las Vegas Arts Center and Contemporary West Dance Theatre's Conservatory, under the direction of Bernard Gaddis and Avree Walker. Mr. Vidaña furthered his dance education as a Scholarship student at The Ailey School. He has performed works by choreographers including Alvin Ailey, Hope Boykin, Donald Byrd, Michelle Manzanales, Tommie Waheed Evan's, Milton Myers, Jeneane Huggins, Don Bellamy, Rennie Harris, Ronald K. Brown, and Christopher L. Huggins. This is his first season with Ailey II.

JORDYN WHITE (West Palm Beach, FL) graduated from Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts high school. She began her dance training at Raskin Dance Studio in Florida and attended summer intensives at Joffrey Ballet School, Modas Dance, and The Ailey School. Ms. White performed works by choreographers George Balanchine, Darrell G. Moultrie, Christopher L. Huggins, and Ronald K. Brown, and danced in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's 2022 New York City Center season. She is a recent graduate of The Ailey School's Certificate Program, and the University of Florida with a BA in Psychology. This is Ms. White's first season with Ailey II.



Ailey II in Francesca Harper's *Luminous*. Photo by Nir Arieli.

APPRENTICES

KAMANI ABU (New Castle, DE) began his dance training at the age of 16 at a local studio in his hometown. He also trained in the summer intensive at BalletX. He is currently a senior in the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, and has worked with choreographers including Jennifer Archibald, Tracy Inman, Darshan Bhuller, Gregory Dawson, and Maleek Washington. In 2023, Mr. Abu performed in Geoffrey Holder's *Douglas* with Dance Theatre of Harlem and in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's New York City Center season. This is his first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

NAIA NEAL (Aptos, CA) began her dance training at the age of seven at Dancenter, a local dance school in her hometown. She is currently a senior in the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, where she received the 2023 Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Neal has performed works by choreographers Christopher L. Huggins, Hope Boykin, Johnathan Lee, Adam Barruch, Alison Cook Beatty, Darshan Singh Bhuller, and Ephrat Asherie. She also danced in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* during AILEY's 2023 New York City Center season and at BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) in 2024. This is Ms. Neal's first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

ADANNA SMALLS (Brooklyn, NY) began her dance training at the Abrons Arts Center/ Henry Street Settlement in New York City. In 2021, she graduated as an Ailey dance major from the Professional Performing Arts School, and she is a recent graduate of the Certificate Program at The Ailey School. Ms. Smalls has worked with choreographers and artists such as Clifton Brown, Norbert De La Cruz III, Ronald K. Brown, Aubrey Lynch, and NaTalia Johnson. She also performed in Alvin Ailey's *Bird Live* in 2021 and *Memoria* in 2022 during AILEY's New York City Center seasons. This is Ms. Smalls' first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

KALEB K. SMITH (Dallas, TX) began his dance training at Dallas Black Dance Theatre Academy. He also studied at Dance Theatre of Harlem's summer intensive as a scholarship student. In 2022, Mr. Smith graduated from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, and he is currently a student in the Certificate Program at The Ailey School. Mr. Smith has performed works by choreographers including Loris Anthony Beckles, Zach Ingram, Brandy Lewis, Ray Mercer, and Alvin Ailey. This is his first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

* * * * *



Ailey II in Houston Thomas's *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Photo by Nir Arieli.

ALVIN AILEY DANCE FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman

Daria L. Wallach

President

Anthony S. Kendall

Vice-Chairmen

Sela Thompson Collins, Jaishri Kapoor, Stephen J. Meringoff, Arthur J. Mirante II

Joy Allen-Altmare, Jolen V. Anderson, Eleanor S. Applewhaite, Laura D. Corb, Suzan Kereere, Anthony A. Lewis, Jack Pitts, Muhammad Qubbaj, Lata N. Reddy, Bennett Rink, Oti Roberts, Danielle M. Robinson, PhD, Cara Sabin, Joan H. Weill, Julia C. Wellborn, Edna Kane Williams, DeJuan V. Wilson, Jean-Rene Zetrenne, Pamela D. Zilly

Chairmen Emeriti

Philip Laskawy, Stanley Plesent, Esq.,* Joan H. Weill

President Emeriti

Debra L. Lee, Henry McGee

**In Memoriam*

ALVIN AILEY DANCE FOUNDATION

Recipient of a National Medal of Arts

Bennett Rink, Executive Director

Pamela Robinson, Chief Financial Officer

Ines Aslan, Chief External Affairs Officer

AILEY II PRODUCTION CREDITS

Francesca Harper Artistic Director
Sylvia Waters Artistic Director Emerita
Shay Bland Rehearsal Director

Eric D. Wright..... General Manager
Isabelle Mezin..... Director of Company Business Affairs
Sumaya Jackson Company Manager
Joshua Gustafson Production Stage Manager
Harrison Hoffert..... Lighting and Sound Supervisor
Heather Craig Wardrobe Supervisor

Jennifer Fyall..... Associate Director of Marketing
Tracy Severe Associate Director of Public Relations

TOURING CONTACT: OPUS 3 ARTISTS: 212-584-7500 / www.opus3artists.com

AILEY.org/Ailey-II

Follow us on Instagram – @AileyII

Like us on Facebook – www.facebook.com/AileyII

THE REPERTORY

Ailey Highlights is a collection of excerpts from three beloved classics choreographed by **Alvin Ailey** between 1958 and 1972. This work of highlights features excerpts from Mr. Ailey's first masterpiece *Blues Suite*, the lyrical and romantic *The Lark Ascending*, and his standout ballet *Streams*.

Divining (excerpt) is a solo from **Judith Jamison's** first major work as a choreographer for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, created in 1984 at the request of her mentor, Alvin Ailey. At its premiere, *The New York Times* gave special praise to Jamison's "invention of movement shapes and movement quality that give the piece a fascinating originality." Set to a score of North African, Central African, and Latin rhythms, *Divining* builds on African dance idioms to create a striking, pulsating modern dance work. In her autobiography *Dancing Spirit*, Jamison noted that "*Divining* is mysterious, its title suggesting a search or quest."

Down the Rabbit Hole is a continuation of choreographer **Houston Thomas's** *Follow the White Rabbit* and expands on the themes of its former of examining the relationship between humans and technology. Inspired by *The Matrix* film series, *Down the Rabbit Hole* explores how technology weaves into the fabric of daily life, transforming how we as humans interact and function. Set to a score by Johannes Goldbach, Thomas begs the question, in this high-powered piece: Technological change - are we powering it or is it powering us?

John 4:20 is an expansion of a duet choreography duo **Baye & Asa** originally created in 2018 that explored their shared history and divergent identities. Through personal dynamics, the duo addresses the larger political landscape of their upbringing. In their fusion dance style that incorporates hip hop, African, and contemporary modern, this new iteration of *John 4:20*, featuring a cast of six, depicts various relationships and groups of people struggling through similar dynamics and uncovering the reality of cruelty that is around us and the necessity for empathy.

Embarking on a captivating journey through time, **Francesca Harper** pays homage to five decades of Ailey II and the artists who have paved the way for future generations in her work **Luminous**. Weaving in iconic moments, the work chronicles significant periods where the company influenced the cultural landscape. These stories and memories echo the commitment to breaking boundaries, pushing artistic limits, advocating for social change, and highlighting the power of community. Underscored by original composition and vocals by Nona Hendryx, *Luminous* effortlessly delivers Harper's tribute and the celebration of 50 years of the enduring Ailey II legacy.

Choreographer **Alia Kache** creates a cinematic experience brought to the stage in her work **Mystery at Sky Square**. Based on the mischievous Akan folkloric character, Anansi the Spider, *Mystery at Sky Square* begins where love and revenge take center stage in this film noir-style dance theater work. Complete with 1940s-inspired costumes, narration to an original screenplay by Ryan Blackwell, foreboding atmosphere and music by Omari Tau, Kache blends all the right fixings of a classic who-done-it for the stage.

Streams is an abstract exploration of bodies in space, danced to a percussion score by Miloslav Kabelac. This standout work was **Alvin Ailey's** first full-length dance without a plot. The movement in *Streams* is a highly structured yet fluid compilation of solos, duets, and group passages, built chiefly on diagonal lines, all reflecting the meditative mood of the score. Each section of the work is inspired by a body of water, from gentle brook to turbulent ocean, representing the changing emotional tides within us.

Revelations

Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* is loved by generations of fans all over the world. Mr. Ailey said that one of America's richest treasures was the African-American cultural heritage – "sometimes sorrowful, sometimes jubilant, but always hopeful." This iconic work is inspired by his "blood memories" from his childhood in rural Texas and going to the Baptist Church with his mother. *Revelations* fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul. The music is African-American spirituals, song-sermons, gospel songs, and holy blues.

Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, premiered in New York City on January 31, 1960, and is the most wide-seen modern dance work in the world. The three sections of the half hour work depict the suffering of slavery ("Pilgrim of Sorrow"), baptismal joy ("Take Me to the Water"), and a choral church celebration ("Move, Members, Move").

"Pilgrim of Sorrow" – suffering of slavery

The opening section of *Revelations* is about trying to get up out of the ground, and the music from this section is a medley of spirituals reflecting oppression and expressing protest. The first section, "Pilgrim of Sorrow" begins in total stillness and transitions into movement of arms reaching, as people reach upward to rise. "I took all of the songs dealing with black people's sorrow and put them in this section; at the time there were about five or six songs. It was about trying to get up out of the ground. The costumes and the set would be colored brown, an earth color, for coming out of the earth, for going into the earth." – Alvin Ailey

"Take Me to the Water" – baptismal joy

The next section of the dance, "Take Me to the Water" is partially set to the spiritual "Wade in the Water", which conveys a ceremonial baptism, focusing on purity. The joyful ceremony is followed by the solo "I Wanna Be Ready" which portrays a devout man's preparation for death. "The second part was something that was very close to me – the baptismal, the purification rite. Its colors would be white and pale blue. The middle section was to be 'Wade in the Water.' Songs such as 'Honor, Honor' had all of these extraordinary words. I was moved by what spirituals say as words, as metaphors. So, I found these short songs for the middle section." – Alvin Ailey

"Move, Members, Move" – church celebration

The final section celebrates the liberating power of the gospel music, and it celebrates the church and its people. "Then there would be the section surrounding the gospel church, the holy rollers and all the church happiness. Its colors would be earth tones, yellow and black. There were quite a few songs for the last section, 'Move Members, Move.' The whole ballet was a giant suite of spirituals. I poured in just about everything, every beautiful spiritual I had ever heard." – Alvin Ailey



Ailey II in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Nir Arieli.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

There are five fundamental elements in creating a dance. They are the foundation of the work that you see on stage. This process is a collaborative effort. The descriptions below should give you some insight into what is involved in the creation of a dance.

The Dance

The person who creates the dance, the sequence of steps and style of execution is the choreographer. The choreographer has ideas, concepts, images or emotions that he/she wants to convey to the audience. The choreographer makes all the artistic decisions regarding what the work will consist of. Some choreographers create works that may include solos, duets, trios, quintets, or the entire company of dancers. For example, *Cry*, choreographed by Alvin Ailey, is a solo performed by a female; *Hymn*, choreographed by Judith Jamison uses the entire company. The choreographer consults the Artistic Director in casting the dancers into roles for each dance. The choreographer works with the dancers in rehearsal to teach the dance and to perfect the execution of the steps. Rehearsals range from two to eight weeks, so the dancers have to be very versatile, and must be able to adapt to many different techniques of dance.

The Music

Many choreographers commission a new piece of music from a composer. Sometimes, the choreographer selects an existing piece of music that inspires them or represents the images or concepts of the dance. Choreographers that have worked with Ailey II have used existing music as well as commissioned works. For *Revelations*, Mr. Ailey used traditional spirituals.

The Costumes

A costume designer creates the designs for the costumes. The designer works very closely with the choreographer to ensure that the choreographer's vision is reflected in the costumes. They choose the fabric, colors and the best method of construction that will allow the dancers to move easily. Once the designs are completed and the dancers are measured by the wardrobe staff, the measurements and designs are sent to a costume construction company for assembly.

The Set

The set designer creates the designs for props and sets. Props and sets are used in a variety of ways in the dance. Most sets create the decor for the dance. Props are items that the dancers use in the dance. The props and sets should reflect the choreographer's vision and complement the choreography. Props can range from the umbrella, stools and fans in *Revelations* to the LED lighted globes in *Freedom Series*.

The Lighting

The lighting designer creates the design using lights, color and special effects. Most dances use many lights at once to create the mood on stage. This designer also works very closely with the choreographer and all the other designers to create an atmosphere that enhances the dance. The lighting designer has to ensure that his/her ideas will coincide with the choreographer's vision. Once the idea is developed, it has to be put into a written format: the lighting plot. This plot informs the lighting technicians where the lights should be hung and how they are wired.



Ailey II's Kiri Moore and Alfred L. Jordan II in Alia Kache's *Mystery* at Sky Square. Photo by Nir Arieli.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DANCE TERMS

Modern dance

-a means of expression that is different from ballet; uses the body with a wider range of motion, the legs turned parallel or turned in; feet can be flexed and the back rounded; head is not always held erect; there are many different modern dance techniques.

Horton

-created by Lester Horton; a modern dance technique that explores how many different ways the body can move. He named these movements "studies." Some of the studies are for balance, some are to fortify (strengthen) and some are to work on the swinging action of the body. In the Horton technique, the dancer tries to use as much space as possible: turning, bending and jumping sideways, backward and even upside down. The shapes created are clear and linear. The quality of the movement is lyrical and includes varied dynamics. The Horton technique gives a feeling of strength and energy.

Graham-based Modern

-created by Martha Graham; a dance technique that is based on the principle of contraction and release, movement which is similar to the act of breathing, creating a current of energy through the body; back appears rounded in a contraction and the chest is lifted in a release; movement itself is dramatic and expressive.

Dunham

-a technique created by Katherine Dunham; the Dunham technique is a blend of the Caribbean, West African and Afro-American folk patterns of movement and rhythms. The technique has been devised to encompass the movements of the indigenous folk patterns of these cultures. The original dance patterns have been preserved. But the dances have been slightly altered in order to be more acceptable, choreographically speaking, to the modern dance concert and theater. The technique also employs the mediums of ballet, modern dance forms, jazz and basic folk patterns.

Ballet

-a dance form which started in the royal courts of Europe; the body is held mostly upright and the legs are turned out from the hip; uses five basic positions of the feet; uses French as its language.

Jazz

- an American style of movement that grew out of American jazz music; uses the hips more freely than ballet or modern dance; there are many different kinds of jazz styles.

Tap

-a type of dance characterized by the rapid tapping of the toes, and heel on the floor; generally done in shoes fitted with cleats or metal plates to emphasize the beats.

Solo

-any performance by one person.

Duet

-any performance by two people.

Ensemble

-the united performance of an entire group.

Leotard

-a skintight, one-piece garment worn by dancers.

Repertoire

-the list of works that a company is prepared to perform.

Glossary - continued

Work

-a word that dancers use to refer to a dance. Other words that are used in this manner are: "piece," "ballet," or "dance."

Choreographer

-a person who composes dance works.

Second-home city

-a location where a company tours every year and there is an organized support group there to assist the company.

Repertory company

-a dance company that performs many types of works by many different choreographers.



Ailey II. Photo by Nir Arieli.

PRODUCTION / THEATRICAL TERMS

<i>balcony</i>	-an upper level seating platform in a theater.
<i>beams</i>	-position for lighting equipment in auditorium in front of the proscenium.
<i>booking representatives</i>	-paid agents that arrange bookings with presenters for the Company.
<i>borders</i>	-drapery that is hung horizontally across the top of the stage.
<i>call board</i>	-bulletin board used backstage to share important information to all staff involved with the production.
<i>commission</i>	-the request and purchase of a new art work for a specific group.
<i>contract</i>	-a legally binding agreement between two parties.
<i>cues</i>	-a verbal or technical signal used to inform a performer or technician to begin an action.
<i>cyclorama</i>	-stage backdrop, sometimes U-shaped; neutral or light color; used for sky effects.
<i>front of house</i>	-all areas in the theater outside of the performance auditorium i.e. lobby, box-office, etc.
<i>house</i>	-the auditorium in a theater with seating for viewing a performance.
<i>house lights</i>	-the overhead lights in the house.
<i>legs</i>	-set of draperies on the side of stage used to mask the backstage area from the audience.
<i>lighting board</i>	-a mechanism that can adjust and control the lighting.
<i>lighting plot</i>	-a technical grid which denotes the arrangements of a lighting design.
<i>load-in</i>	-the process of bringing into the theater and setting up all equipment and materials for a performance.
<i>load-out</i>	-the process of removing from the theater all equipment and materials.
<i>mezzanine</i>	-a low section between two main stories in a building.
<i>presenter</i>	-a group or theater that sponsors the performance financially and provides the space for performance or activity.
<i>print advertisements</i>	-promotional materials that are included in magazines, newspapers and journals.
<i>proscenium</i>	-the arch that separates the stage from the auditorium.

Production / Theatrical Terms – Continued

royalties	-an agreed portion of the income from a work paid to its composer, choreographer, etc. each time the work is performed for the public.
road boxes	-boxes specifically designed to carry technical equipment.
scrims	-finely woven netting with a rectangular weave through which light may or may not be seen, depending on how it is lit. Sometimes it is hung as a backdrop or as a curtain between the audience and performers.
sign-in sheet	-the sheet on the call board used by the dancers and crew to sign-in to keep account for all the staff on tour.
site visit	-a review of a performance space prior to performance to acquire technical information on the space.
special	-a light focused for an effect exclusive to one work.
strike	-the breakdown of all equipment and materials that were assembled for the performance in preparation for load-out.
tour	-a long journey including performances in a number of places in sequence.
wings	-the unseen space on the left or right side of the stage produced by hanging draperies (legs) at the sides of the stage to mask off-stage area.



Ailey II in Alvin Ailey's *Streams*. Photo by Nir Arieli.

Cover (l-r): Ailey II's A. Jordan II, K. Thomas, C. Moulterrie, and K. Moore. Photo by Nir Arieli.

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series

Enriching lives, sparking imaginations, and inspiring a love of learning through the arts!

Arts education and outreach programming at Appalachian is committed to connecting university arts resources to a diverse audience of community arts patrons, teachers and learners in the campus community, and in the public, private and home school network across our region. In doing so, the series strives to broaden and deepen arts experiences for audiences of all ages, while ensuring access to the arts for young audiences, building future audiences for the arts, and inspiring a love of learning through the arts.

Every season, affordable music, dance, film, and theatre events are offered to students and their teachers from K-12 classrooms across the region. Students experience everything from high-energy acrobatics and Appalachian music to international dance and literary classics brought to life through theatrical productions. In recent seasons, thousands of students across our region have attended APPlause! Series events.

This academic year, the APPlause! Series offers compelling programming to connect to K-12 classrooms, thanks in large part to generous donors who believe in supplying educators with arts programming that will spark creativity and inspire a love of learning.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

The APPlause! 2024-25 season has been generously supported by individual support from

SUE AND STEVE CHASE.

Sustaining support for the series is provided by the

CHRISTINE PETTI OPPORTUNITY FUND.

