

A woman with long dark dreadlocks is captured in a dynamic pose, wearing a shimmering gold dress. She is looking upwards and to the right, with her arms raised and hands open. The background is a solid, vibrant gold color, creating a monochromatic and elegant aesthetic.

# ALVIN AILEY DANCE FOUNDATION

ROBERT BATTLE  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MATTHEW RUSHING  
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Final Report of Activities  
& Accomplishments

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Jacquelin Harris. Photo by Dario Calmese



# DANCING FORWARD CAMPAIGN

Ailey continued to make progress with initiatives outlined in its Strategic Plan.

- The inaugural Ailey Moves NYC! was a free, 10-day dance celebration, from July 23 to August 1, 2022. The outdoor festival for all ages featured performances by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II, dance classes and workshops led by Ailey Arts In Education and Ailey Extension teachers and musicians, student meet-and-greets with The Ailey School, and a screening of the *AILEY* documentary. The locations spanned the five boroughs, including Harlem's Marcus Garvey Park and Jackie Robinson Park, Times Square, Bryant Park, and Little Island in Manhattan; Far Rockaway Beach in Queens; Coney Island in Brooklyn; Gil Scott-Heron Amphitheater in the Bronx; and Snug Harbor Cultural Center in Staten Island.
- FY23 marked the third year of the Choreographic Legacy Project, which formally documents and digitizes select works by Alvin Ailey for the sake of historic preservation, scholarly research, and restaging purposes. *Survivors* (1986) is the third of five ballets that have been identified for this initiative led by former Associate Artistic Director and current Ailey Conservator Masazumi Chaya alongside Ailey's archivist Dominique Singer, with assistance from Ailey II Artistic Director Emerita Sylvia Waters.
- Sylvia Waters continued working on *Portrait of Ailey*. This seven-part docuseries tells the story of Alvin Ailey's life using his own words from archival audio interviews as well as footage from rehearsals, performances, and more. An accompanying curriculum is being developed for educational purposes.
- Media projects and strategic partnerships are a growing priority for the Ailey organization. Ailey Extension collaborated with Noggin by Nick Jr. to create and launch *Dance Squad with Ailey* in May. The series of six on-demand video dance classes led by an Ailey instructor, for children ages 2-7, encourages the development of gross motor skills and creative expression through dance. Featured dance styles are based on classes offered at The Ailey School and Ailey Extension, including hip hop, ballet, Horton, Latin Fusion, jazz, and West African.
- On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs partnered with Atlanta area dancers to perform a *Revelations* inspired dance during halftime at the Atlanta Hawks basketball game.
- In January, the Ailey X UNC video launched online and inside the Dean E. Smith center during a Tar Heels basketball game at the University of North Carolina. The video was the result of a collaboration between Carolina Performing Arts, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and the University of North Carolina Men's Basketball team. It features Ailey dancer Michael Jackson Jr. and basketball player Caleb Love, highlighting the melding of worlds between athletes and artists.
- WNET's ALL ARTS released an eight-part docuseries around the New Directions Choreography Lab, Ailey's creative incubator for early-career choreographers. The docuseries, titled *Alvin Ailey New Directions* premiered on May 2 on the All Arts website. Viewers are given a peek into the creative processes of Maria Bauman and Quilan Arnold, from the Fall 2022 Lab, as well as a window into their personal and professional lives outside of Ailey. Throughout the series, the choreographers share their personal experiences alongside interviews with their program advisors.
- Dancers from Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater served as concept models for the "Under the Sea" choreography in Disney's live action version of *The Little Mermaid* which premiered in theaters on May 26 and is now streaming on Disney+.



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* at Coney Island. Photo by Rob DeMartin

# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

167,000

AUDIENCE  
MEMBERS

1

WORLD  
PREMIERE

1

COMPANY  
PREMIERE

2

NEW  
PRODUCTIONS

20

OUTREACH  
ACTIVITIES  
REACHING  
25,000

## August 9 – 13 BAAND Together Dance Festival

The Company participated in Lincoln Center's second BAAND Together Dance Festival, that joined together Ballet Hispánico, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, New York City Ballet, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. The festival featured a special performance of *One for All*, a made-for-the-occasion piece by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa that featured dancers from all five organizations. Approximately 10,000 audience members attended free of charge.



## November 30 – December 24 Winter Season at New York City Center

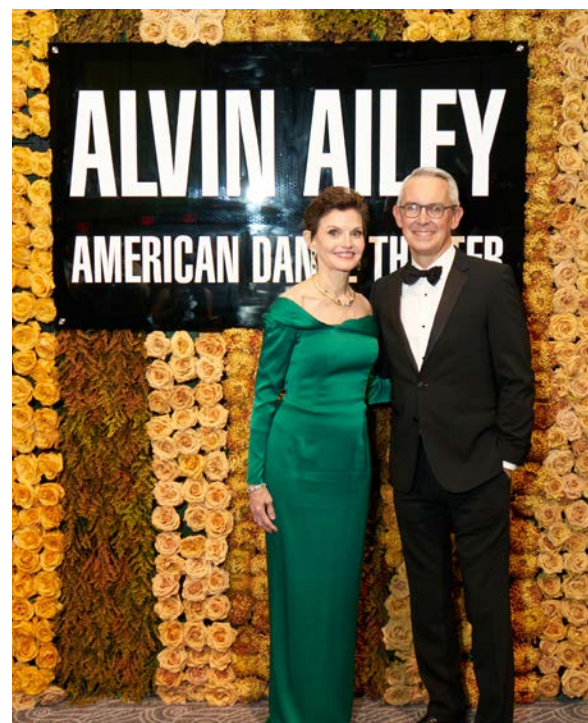
The Winter Season kicked off on November 30 with the Opening Night Gala, honoring Ailey champion Denise Sobel and raising over \$2.7 million. The four-week engagement at New York City Center hosted over 36,000 audience members.

"It was phenomenal, the dancers, everybody, the performances. It was electrifying. This was one of the bucket list moments of my life, so if you are in New York City, please go celebrate and see the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Phenomenal. Phenomenal."

— Honorary Chair *Tamron Hall* on the *Tamron Hall Show*

"Kyle Abraham knows how to make a playlist. His third work for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater...unfurls to an R&B, soul and hip hop compilation of thoroughly danceable songs about love and relationships...I can imagine happily returning to see it again and again. The dance commands attention right away."

— *The New York Times*



Top: Ailey American Dance Theater's Constance Stamatou in Alvin Ailey's *Cry*. Photo by Erin Baiano.  
Bottom: Gala Honoree Denise Littlefield Sobel and Bennett Rink at the 2022 Opening Night Gala. Photo by Pete Monsanto.



## February 2 – May 14 North American Tour

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's North American Tour reached over 110,000 individuals in 22 cities. The Company's annual engagement in Washington, D.C. included a special Gala Benefit performance sponsored by Southern Company on February 8 at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, raising over \$1 million. Company-led outreach efforts in select tour cities resumed, reaching 24,000 individuals.

*Washington Life Magazine* previewed the 23rd Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit with a Dancing Through the Decades retrospective featuring twodecades of highlights from this stand-out event.



Khalia Campbell. Photo by Dario Calmese

## June 6 – 11 Spring Season at Brooklyn Academy of Music

The Ailey company returned to the Brooklyn Academy of Music for the first time since 2010 for its one-week Spring Season with over 11,000 audience members. Prior to the start of the season, the Ailey Spirit Gala was hosted at Jazz at Lincoln Center on May 24 and sponsored by Diageo.



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, 2023 Ailey Spirit Gala. Photo by Christopher Duggan.



# NEW WORKS

## World Premiere of Kyle Abraham's *Are You in Your Feelings?*

It is a celebration of Black culture, Black music, and the youthful spirit that perseveres in us all. Scored to a "mixtape" of soul, hip hop, and R&B, it highlights the bridge between music, communication, and personal memory.

"Alone and collectively, these are songs that narrate the ups and downs of getting together and breaking up; of making a commitment to oneself or being unbothered by love...the silken and turbulent whorls of Abraham's choreography reflect those emotional states or, at times, posit parallel stories of their own."

— *The New York Times*



Members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Kyle Abraham's *Are You in Your Feelings?*. Photo by Paul Kolnik.

The season also featured new productions of Alvin Ailey's *Survivors* (1986) and Ronald K. Brown's *Dancing Spirit* (2009), along with the Company premiere of Twyla Tharp's *Roy's Joys* (1997).

Members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Ronald K. Brown's *Dancing Spirit*. Photo by Paul Kolnik.



"[Ronald K. Brown's] complex movement patterns are distinguished by an elegant diasporic blend of traditional West African dance's full-bodied articulations and modern dance's spiraling turns, fluid arabesques, and gently defined lines. The combination gives *Dancing Spirit* an air of solemnity and reverence for the human spirit. The audience was so moved that when the piece ended, they leapt to their feet, filling the theater with thunderous applause."

— *Amsterdam News*



# AILEY II THE NEXT GENERATION OF DANCE

17,000

AUDIENCE  
MEMBERS

1

WORLD  
PREMIERE

1

NEW  
PRODUCTION

85

OUTREACH  
ACTIVITIES FOR  
10,000 STUDENTS

## October 7 – February 25 National Tour

The second company resumed its outreach activities in partnership with New York City Center during the winter season, reaching students from New York City Public Schools. Outreach efforts continued throughout Ailey II's tour to 19 cities.

## March 22 – April 3 New York City Season

Ailey II returned to the Ailey Citigroup Theater in the spring. The season featured the World Premiere of Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish's *mediAcation* and a New Production of Alvin Ailey's *The Lark Ascending* (excerpt).



Top: Ailey II's Kali Marie Oliver and Andrew Bryant in Alvin Ailey's *The Lark Ascending*. Photo by Nir Arieli. Bottom: Ailey II's Rachel Yoo and Spencer Everett in Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish's *mediAcation*. Photo by Danica Paulos.







# THE AILEY SCHOOL WORLD CLASS DANCE TRAINING

This year, The Ailey School returned to full in-person operations for the first time since the start of the pandemic, welcoming back the First Steps and Bounding Boys programs for students ages 3-6, as well as Levels I and II in the Junior Division. The Professional Division was already back to complete operations, for a total enrollment of over 900 students in FY23.

Remaining committed to providing financial support for its most deserving students, The Ailey School provided **257 financial aid awards totaling over \$1.2 Million**. Students of color received 89% of the financial awards. Providing critical financial support to students has proven to be a consistent method of attracting and retaining a diverse student body, especially male students.

## Other Highlights from the Ailey School

- The **New Directions Choreography Lab** officially resumed this year with residencies offered to Quilan Arnold, Maria Bauman, Nattie Trogdon + Hollis Barlett, and Annie Rigney.
- The **Ailey Students Ailey Professionals (ASAP) Mentoring Program** also continued to provide mentorship and guidance to advanced students by pairing them with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater dancers.



Top: The Ailey School First Steps class.  
Photo by Rosalie O'Connor.  
Bottom: Ailey/Fordham BFA Program  
students in *Surging* by Janice Rosario.  
Photo by Danica Paulos.



Top: Children's Aid AileyCamp New York percussion class. Photo by Rob DeMartin.

Bottom: Teaching Artists Jessica St. Vil and Lorena Jaramillo leading AileyDance for Active Aging in Newark, New Jersey.

Photo by Nicole Tintle.

# ARTS IN EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

AileyCamp 2022 renewed a fully in-person activation with the guiding theme of “Faith” at nine camps, reaching over 500 campers and AileyCamp Too! also returned in-person for campers in Newark and New York City.

The nine cities with AileyCamps included:

Baltimore, MD

Berkeley, CA

Chicago, IL

Kansas City, KS

Kansas City, MO

Miami, FL

New York, NY

Newark, NJ

Seattle, WA.

The annual weekend leadership retreats for older AileyCamp alumni also resumed for the first time since the pandemic.

AileyDance Kids operated in 75 New York City schools, eight Newark schools, and seven additional schools in the New York-area, reaching 9,700 children. Students learned various dance techniques such as modern, West African, hip hop, jazz, ballet, Afro-Fusion, and musical theater, as well as the special ballet-based curricula *Revelations: An Interdisciplinary Approach* and *Night Creature: An Imaginative Journey Through Dance*. Residencies spanned eight weeks to the entire school year and catered to students' specific interests and abilities.

AileyDance for Active Aging continued with 27 residencies, reaching over 400 participants in New York City and launching in Newark. The program provides activities in older adult centers and residence homes. The emphasis is on the importance of strength training and mobility through movement, while also giving older adults an outlet for artistic expression.





# AILEY EXTENSION

**Ailey Extension** offered a roster of five virtual classes per week, 38 in-person classes, and 20 hybrid classes, with 39,607 registrations in FY23.

The **Kids & Teens** program continued on Sundays, with three in-person classes for children ages 12-17, three for ages 8-11, two for ages 5-7, and one for 2-3 year olds, reaching 4,175 participants.

A total of 63 in-person and virtual workshops were held with 2,335 participants.

**The Ailey Experience** tour also returned, with weekend workshops reaching 1,327 registrants in Charlotte, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Detroit, Washington D.C., Chicago, and Dallas.

The Extension also participated in **Times Square Live**, a summer dance Series that offered free, outdoor classes in Times Square on five Fridays, May 5-June 2.







## HONORS AND OTHER NEWS AT AILEY

Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs  
Drumming Processional at Little Island,  
Ailey Moves NYC! 2022.  
Photo by Rob DeMartin

- In celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, members of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performed an excerpt of Alvin Ailey's masterpiece *Revelations*, on *LIVE! With Kelly & Ryan*.
- New York Mayor Eric Adams and NYC Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Laurie Combo celebrated the Ailey Moves NYC! festival with a special photography installation inside City Hall that kicked off a new initiative to exhibit artworks in city buildings.
- During Black History Month, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced the new I LOVE NEW YORK Black Travel Initiative campaign from the Ailey Studios. The new tourism campaign promotes New York State as a destination for Black travelers and highlights the state's Black history, culture, food, arts, and events.
- Ana Marie Forsythe received Dance Teacher's 2023 Awardee of Distinction in recognition of her ongoing work of continuing Lester Horton's legacy by preserving the Horton technique for over five decades.
- Ailey Extension instructor Katherine Jimenez joined Sherri Shepherd on *SHERRI* to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month with a Mambo workout.



# THANK YOU

The Ailey organization is deeply grateful to the many individuals, government agencies, and corporate and foundation partners whose dedication helped bring the incomparable spirit of Ailey to communities in New York, across the country, and around the world. We are delighted to share highlights of Ailey's achievements during our 2022–2023 season.

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Executive Director

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Artistic Director, Ailey II

Tracy Inman  
Director, The Ailey School

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Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's  
Michael Jackson, Jr. Photo by Dario Calmese