

**Detroit
Opera**

**ALVIN AILEY
AMERICAN DANCE THEATER**

"Watching Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater can change your life. If that sounds like a slogan, it's truth in advertising." – *The New York Times*

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 2023 North American Tour Stops in Detroit March 17-19

Ailey's Extraordinary Dancers Inspire Audiences with Exciting New Works by Kyle Abraham, Artistic Director Robert Battle and Twyla Tharp along with Alvin Ailey's Must-See Masterpiece *Revelations*

Ailey II to conduct Detroit workshops and school visits February 28-March 5



Please credit photo: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*. Photo by Paul Kolnik

DETROIT, February 22, 2023—[Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#), beloved as one of the world's most popular dance companies, will return to the [Detroit Opera House March 17-19, 2023](#) during a 22-city North American tour. Led by Artistic Director [Robert Battle](#), the passionate spirit and extraordinary technique of Ailey's dancers will be showcased in a diverse repertory of new works and Ailey classics.

Performances of Alvin Ailey's must-see American masterpiece [Revelations](#) will inspire Detroit attendees at all performances. Since its creation in 1960, *Revelations* has been seen

by more people around the world than any other modern dance work, moving audiences with its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring music, evoking timeless themes of determination, hope, and transcendence. Springing from Ailey's childhood memories of growing up in the south and attending services at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Texas, *Revelations* pays homage to the rich cultural heritage of the African American and explores the emotional spectrum of the human condition.

"Detroit audiences eagerly await the return of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater under the leadership of the company's Artistic Director, Robert Battle," says Detroit Opera President & CEO Wayne S. Brown. "The upcoming residency marks the fourteenth occasion since the 1997-98 season that our organization has presented this outstanding company. Join us!"

On Friday, March 17 at 7:30 p.m., Detroit audiences will have the unique opportunity to experience **acclaimed choreographer Kyle Abraham's [Are You in Your Feelings?](#)**, 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 featuring music from beloved artists including Jhené Aiko, Drake, Lauryn Hill, Kendrick Lamar, Jazmine Sullivan, and Summer Walker, the critically applauded work explores the connections among music, communication, and personal memory. That same night, **Twyla Tharp's [Roy's Joys](#)** (1997), embodying the spontaneity of a 1940s and 50s jazz soundtrack by Roy Eldridge, will also take the stage. Mixing vernacular dance with ballet and modern technique, *Roy's Joys* exudes an easy, carefree energy that shows Tharp at her rollicking best.

"The amazing Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to the Opera House after a three-year absence," says Jon Teeuwissen, Detroit Opera's Artistic Advisor for Dance. "The program of mixed repertoire will include two new works and conclude with the ever popular and always enduring *Revelations*. A cultural treasure beloved by generations of fans, *Revelations* 'fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul.'"

Performances on Saturday, March 18 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 19 at 2:30 p.m. feature a new production of **[Survivors](#)** (1986), **Alvin Ailey's** impassioned tribute to the profound courage and terrible anguish of Nelson and Winnie Mandela, which will be seen this season for the first time since 1988. A soundtrack of Max Roach's richly varied drumming and Abbey Lincoln's powerful vocals sets the emotional tone for a work that presents a portrait of people transformed by injustice and uplifts those who resist oppression in any form. The program also includes two works by Artistic Director **Robert Battle: [For Four](#)**, with four amazing dancers moving to a delicious Wynton Marsalis jazz score written in 4/4 time; and the sensuous, swirling duet **[Unfold](#)**, evoking the tenderness and ecstasy in Gustave Charpentier's aria "Depuis le jour" sung by the incomparable Leontyne Price.

Tickets for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Detroit March 17–19 are available online at www.detroitopera.org and start at \$29. Orders for groups may be placed by emailing groupsales@detroitopera.org.

Additional Tour Activities

In addition to delivering stellar performances, the Ailey Organization continues its mission of using dance to engage the public – including young people – through **master classes**, **student performances**, and innovative **curriculum-based residencies** for public school students.

Ailey II, Ailey’s second company of emerging young dancers, combines a rigorous touring schedule with extensive community outreach programs. Led by Francesca Harper – a dancer, choreographer, director, professor and “Ailey baby” who trained at The Ailey School, where her mother, Denise Jefferson, worked as director for 26 years – the troupe will offer workshops and school visits with Detroit public school students during the week of February 28. *NOTE: Media are welcome to attend with advance notice.*

- February 28 & March 1 - Ailey II – Morning Dance Workshops (9:30-10:30 a.m.) at various Elementary, Middle and High Schools; Afternoon Dance Workshops (1:15-3:20 p.m.) at Detroit School of the Arts (DSA), 123 Selden St., Detroit.
- March 2 – Ailey II – Performance. (11:30 a.m.) – DSA, roughly 400 students from all over the district will be in the audience.
- March 3 – Ailey II – Full-Day Workshops with Culminating “Informance” with DSA students.
- March 4 – Ailey II – Full-Day Dance Master Class – Living Arts, 8701 Vernor Hwy., Detroit.

Ailey Extension exemplifies Alvin Ailey’s belief that dance is for everybody by offering a wide variety of “real classes for real people” of all ages and experience levels. On **Saturday, March 4, and Sunday, March 5**, all local dance lovers are invited to get a taste of what it’s like to take in-person classes with top New York City instructors, including former Ailey dancers, when the **Ailey Experience Tour** brings its open-level workshops to the Detroit Opera House. Beginner and experienced dancers ages 9–12 and 13–adult can get moving and grooving with Ailey during technique classes and learn the rich history of Ailey’s signature style while learning his classic choreography. Students participating both days will be eligible to win a scholarship to Ailey Experience NYC held August 7–11, 2023.

On **Saturday, March 18, from 11am–12:30pm** Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater presents a **Modern Technique Master Class** for intermediate and advanced level dancers ages 12 and up at the Detroit Opera House, Margo V. Cohen Dance Center. Audiences can join for free with the purchase of an Ailey performance ticket; all others can sign up for \$25.

For more information on Ailey’s upcoming performances, visit www.alvinailey.org. For additional press materials, including bios, b-roll, and photos, members of the media may visit pressroom.alvinailey.org.

Calendar Listing Information

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, one of the world’s most beloved dance companies, will be on stage at the Detroit Opera House March 17-19, 2023. Now in its seventh decade, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater continues to move forward under the leadership of Artistic Director Robert Battle. Ailey’s extraordinary dancers will move audiences with world premieres, new productions, repertory favorites, and classics like the American masterpiece *Revelations*, acclaimed as a must-see for all. For more information, visit www.detroitopera.org or www.alvinailey.org.

Sponsor Credits

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Ailey II in Detroit is made possible by the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation.

About Detroit Opera

Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre), one of the nation's most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, aspires to influence the future of opera and dance with a goal of invigorating audiences through new and re-imagined productions, relevant to current times. It is creating an ambitious standard for American opera and dance that emphasizes community, accessibility, artistic risk-taking, and collaboration. Founded in 1971 by the late Dr. David DiChiera, Detroit Opera is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown; Yuval Sharon, Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director; Associate Artistic Director Christine Goerke; Music Director Roberto Kalb; and Board Chairman Ethan Davidson. For more information, visit www.detroitopera.org. Follow the company on Facebook and Instagram (@DetroitOpera), LinkedIn (Detroit Opera), as well as Twitter (@DetOperaHouse).

About Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congressional resolution as a vital American “Cultural Ambassador to the World,” grew from a now-fabled March 1958 performance in New York that changed forever the perception of American dance. Founded by Alvin Ailey, recent posthumous recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the nation’s highest civilian honor—and guided by Judith Jamison beginning in 1989, the Company is now led by Robert Battle, whom Judith Jamison chose to succeed her on July 1, 2011. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 25 million people in 71 countries on 6 continents—as well as millions more through television broadcasts, film screenings, and online platforms—promoting the uniqueness of the African American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. In addition to being the Principal Dance Company of New York City Center, where its performances have become a year-end tradition, the Ailey company performs annually at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC; the Auditorium Theatre in

Chicago; The Fox Theatre in Atlanta; Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley, CA, and at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark where it is the Principal Resident Affiliate, and appears frequently in other major theaters throughout the United States and the world during extensive yearly tours. The Ailey organization also includes Ailey II (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School (1969), one of the most extensive dance training programs in the world; Ailey Arts in Education & Community Programs, which brings dance into the classrooms, communities, and lives of people of all ages; and Ailey Extension (2005), a program offering dance and fitness classes to the general public, which began with the opening of Ailey's permanent home—the largest building dedicated to dance in New York City, the dance capital of the world—named The Joan Weill Center for Dance, at 55th Street at 9th Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

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