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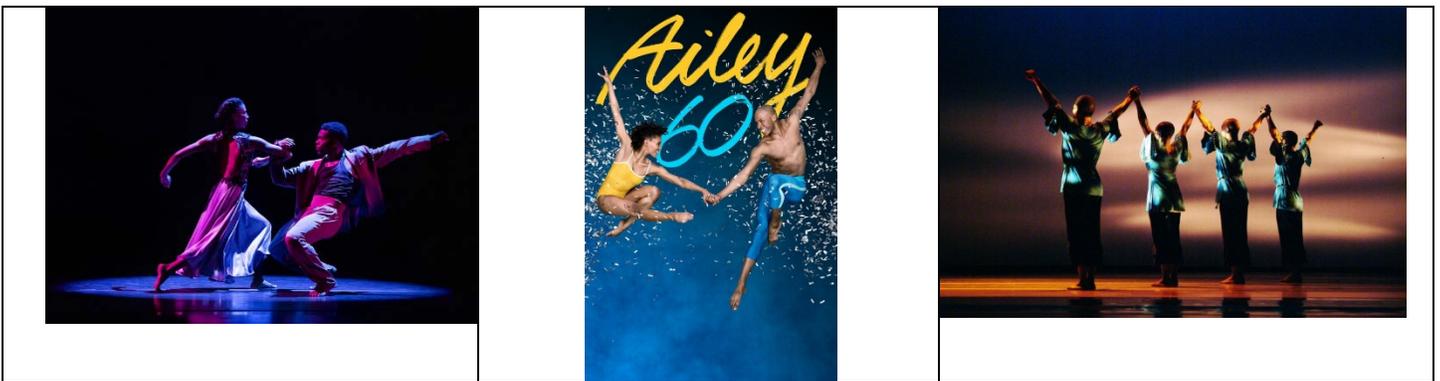
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**ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER COMES TO MESA ARTS CENTER MARCH 29 & 30
AS PART OF 60th ANNIVERSARY TOUR VISITING 21-CITIES COAST-TO-COAST**

**Mesa Engagement Features World Premiere of Ronald K. Brown's *The Call*, New Production of
Robert Battle's *Juba*, and Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* – a must-see American Masterpiece**

**Ailey's Renowned Dancers Perform to Music of Jazz Legends
John Coltrane, Ella Fitzgerald, Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington**



L to R: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Jacqueline Green and Solomon Dumas in Ronald K. Brown's *The Call*. Photo by Paul Kolnik; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Samantha Figgins and Jeroboam Bozeman. Photo by Andrew Eccles; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Robert Battle's *Juba*. Photo by Nan Melville.

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(Mesa, AZ) - The world-renowned **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** will continue its ***Ailey Ascending 60th Anniversary celebration*** during a 21-city North American tour which includes two performances at Mesa Arts Center, March 29 and 30, 2019. Led by **Artistic Director Robert Battle**, Ailey's remarkable dancers will perform a diverse repertory of premieres, new productions and returning classics. Each evenings' programming is different, however both feature Alvin Ailey's American timeless masterpiece *Revelations*. Tickets are available at the Mesa Arts Center box office, at mesaartscenter.com and by calling 480-644-6500.

The Mesa engagement begins on Friday, March 29 at 8pm with the celebrated Company performing Talley Beatty's sizzling ***Stack-Up***; Robert Battle's high-energy duet ***Ella***, danced to Ella Fitzgerald's virtuosic scatting in the song "Airmail Special"; and longtime Ailey star Jamar Roberts' ***Member's Don't Get Weary***, staged to powerful music of jazz legend John Coltrane and hailed for being "as emotional as it was virtuosic" (*The New York Times*). Roberts calls the work "a response to the current social landscape in America" that "takes an abstract look into the notion of one 'having the blues,'" and aims to inspire audiences to transcend their own personal blues.

On Saturday, March 30 at 8pm, the program features [Night Creature](#), a bubbly champagne cocktail of a dance that perfectly fuses Alvin Ailey's buoyant choreography and Duke Ellington's sparkling music; the tour-de-force solo [Cry](#), choreographed by Alvin Ailey as a birthday present for his mother and dedicated to "all black women everywhere – especially our mothers;" and a new production of Artistic Director Robert Battle's [Juba](#), his electrifying first work for the Company that explores ritual and folk traditions in modern society against an original score by frequent collaborator John Mackey. Another highlight is the Arizona debut of the world premiere [The Call](#), **Ronald K. Brown's** seventh work for Ailey to music by Johann Sebastian Bach (performed by Chris Thile, Edgar Meyere & Yo-Yo Ma), Mary Lou Williams Trio, and Asase Yaa. Brown, a 2018 Dance Magazine Award recipient, describes the work, which seamlessly blends modern and West African dance idioms, as "a love letter to Mr. Ailey."

Both performances will culminate with **Alvin Ailey's** jubilant signature work [Revelations](#), lauded as a must-see for all. Since its creation in 1960, *Revelations* has been seen by more audiences around the world than any other modern dance work, inspiring generations through its powerful storytelling and soul-stirring spirituals. 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 African-American cultural heritage and explores the emotional spectrum of the human condition.

In 1958, Alvin Ailey and a small group of dancers took the stage in New York and forever changed American dance and culture. One of the country's groundbreaking greats, his Company inspires all in a universal celebration of the human spirit using the African-American cultural experience and the modern dance tradition. 60 years after its founding, Ailey continues to move forward under the leadership of Robert Battle, revealing time and again why Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is one of the world's most beloved dance companies. Visit www.alvinailey.org for tickets and further information on Ailey's milestone season.

Press:

For additional photos and press materials please visit pressroom.alvinailey.org

[Images](#)

[Sizzle Reel for Broadcast](#)

Calendar Listing Information

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, beloved as one of the world's most popular dance companies, will perform two evenings at Mesa Arts Center, March 29 and March 30, at 8 p.m. The performances are part of a 21-city North American tour from February 1 – May 12, 2019. Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle during the Company's 60th Anniversary celebration, Ailey's extraordinary dancers will perform an expansive repertory of more than two dozen works, including the world premiere of Ronald K. Brown's *The Call*; a new production of Robert Battle's *Juba*; and works by Alvin Ailey, including rarely-seen gems and his masterpiece, *Revelations*. For more information, visit www.alvinailey.org.

Mesa, AZ Mesa Arts Center *[Programming subject to change]*

Fri 3/29 @ 8:00pm Stack-Up / Members Don't Get Weary / Ella, Revelations

Sat 3/30 @ 8:00pm Night Creature, Cry / The Call, Juba / Revelations

WORLD PREMIERES

[The Call](#) (World Premiere)

Choreography by Ronald K. Brown Music: Johan Sebastian Bach, Mary Lou Williams Trio, Asase Yaa Ent. Group

Ronald K. Brown's joyous mix of modern and West African dance idioms – seen previously in *Grace* (1999), *Open Door* (2015), *Four Corners* (2013), and other works – fits the Ailey dancers perfectly, and his themes of spiritual awakening and redemption never fail to inspire. *The Call*, which is Brown's seventh work for the Company and a love letter to Mr. Ailey, promises to once again rouse audiences with Brown's infectious call for harmony and hope.

NEW PRODUCTIONS

[Juba](#) (2003 / New Production 2018)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music: John Mackey

Juba, Artistic Director Robert Battle's first work for the Company, explores where ritual and folk traditions exist in today's society, as four dancers engage in a modern day "Rite of Spring" with an abstract twist. An original score by John Mackey for string quartet and percussion drives the mood of this edgy, ritualistic work, called "electrifying" by *The New York Times*.

REPERTORY FAVORITES

[Ella](#) (2008)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music: Ella Fitzgerald

Originally created as a solo, this high-energy comical dance was reinvented as a duet by the Ailey company for its December 2016 Opening Night Gala benefit, "An Evening of Ailey and Jazz" – in anticipation of the legendary singer Ella Fitzgerald's centennial in April 2017. Using a live concert recording of Fitzgerald performing the song "Airmail Special," *Ella* matches the iconic singer's virtuosic scatting with lightning-fast, articulated movement in an irresistible tour-de-force that leaves audiences (and the dancers) breathless.

[Members Don't Get Weary](#) (World Premiere)

Choreography by Jamar Roberts

Music: John Coltrane

Longtime Ailey dancer and recent "Bessie" Award winner Jamar Roberts makes his choreographic debut on the Company in this 2018 world premiere inspired by the blues. Roberts says, "As a response to the current social landscape in America, *Members Don't Get Weary* takes an abstract look into the notion of one 'having the blues.'" Set to the powerful music of the legendary American jazz saxophonist and composer John Coltrane, the work aims to inspire the audience, allowing them to momentarily transcend their own personal blues.

[Stack-Up](#) (1982 / New Production 2017)

Choreography by Talley Beatty Music: Earth, Wind & Fire, Grover Washington, Jr., Fearless Four, Alphonze Mouzon

Set to the background of a throbbing 1970s beat (Earth, Wind and Fire, Grover Washington Jr., Fearless Four, and Alphonze Mouzon) and a graffiti landscape, patrons in a crowded disco dance with attitude, sass, and fierce despair in this classic work by Talley Beatty. Inspired by Los Angeles' urban landscape and the lives of its disparate inhabitants, *Stack-Up* depicts the emotional "traffic" in a community that is stacked on top of each other. Tough, brutal yet poignant, the stage sizzles with street life, break dancing, and physical pyrotechnics as an aloof drug pusher and two displaced lovers are destined for collision. The work returns to the stage for Beatty's 2018 centennial.

AILEY CLASSICS

[Cry](#) (1971)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro, Voices of East Harlem

In 1971, Alvin Ailey choreographed the ballet *Cry*, as a birthday present for his mother Mrs. Lula Cooper, and created the dance on his stunning muse, Judith Jamison. It was an instant sensation and went on to become an enduring work of American art. This physically and emotionally demanding 16-minute solo is dedicated to "all black women everywhere – especially our mothers." The solo is made up of three parts – the first set to Alice Coltrane's "Something

about John Coltrane,” the second to Laura Nyro’s “Been on a Train” and the last has the Voices of East Harlem singing “Right On, Be Free.” Ms. Jamison, who has since taught the treasured role to subsequent generations of Ailey women, wrote of the work in her autobiography *Dancing Spirit*: “In my interpretation, she represented those women before her who came from the hardships of slavery, through the pain of losing loved ones, through overcoming extraordinary depressions and tribulations. Coming out of a world of pain and trouble, she has found her way—and triumphed.”

Night Creature (1975)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Duke Ellington

A bubbly champagne cocktail of a dance that perfectly fuses Alvin Ailey’s buoyant choreography and Duke Ellington’s sparkling music in a definitive homage to The Duke’s jazz that remains one of Mr. Ailey’s most popular works. 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.” The large ensemble work is full of stars - strutting, leaping and slinking using modern dance, classical ballet and jazz.

ALVIN AILEY’S MASTERPIECE

Revelations (1960)

Choreography by Alvin Ailey

Music: Traditional Spirituals

More than just a popular dance work, *Revelations* has become a cultural treasure, beloved by generations of fans. An American classic acclaimed as a must-see for all, Alvin Ailey’s signature masterpiece is a tribute to his heritage and genius. Using African-American spirituals, the work fervently explores the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul. Seeing *Revelations* for the first time or the hundredth can be a transcendent experience, with audiences cheering, singing along and dancing in their seats from the opening notes of the plaintive “I Been ’Buked” to the rousing “Wade in the Water” and the triumphant finale, “Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham.”

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 Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County in Miami, 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 The 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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About Mesa Arts Center

The Mesa Arts Center, owned and operated by the City of Mesa, is a unique, architecturally stunning facility located in the heart of downtown Mesa. Arizona's largest arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons, and students come to Mesa Arts Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment and performances, world-class visual art exhibitions, and outstanding arts education classes. The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.