

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to Montreal with its mythical *Revelations* and 3 other works IN AN EXPLOSIVE COCKTAIL OF SENSUALITY, EMOTION AND POWER

Montreal, April 5, 2011 – After three sold-out performances in 2007, the flamboyant **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** and its thirty-odd dancers are once again appearing as guests of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal. In addition to its signature piece *Revelations*, acclaimed throughout the world since its creation in 1960, three new works will be featured. Among them is *The Hunt* by choreographer Robert Battle, who will become the Artistic Director of the New York troupe in the summer of 2011. The best of Afro-American culture in a playful mix of styles on **April 19, 20 and 21, 2012** at the **Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier of Place des Arts**.

THE PROGRAM

Revelations – A classic among classics, this work from 1960 is the keystone of the Afro-American dance repertoire. Based on Alvin Ailey's childhood memories of rural Texas in the 1930s, the work dramatizes the suffering of the Blacks in the cotton fields, as well as their religious practices, in a fabulous mix of gospel, blues and ragtime.

Anointed – Created in 2010 with music by Moby and an original composition by Sean Clements, *Anointed* is choreographer Christopher L. Higgins' first contribution to the repertoire of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Through solos, duets and group sequences, the company's ex-dancer pays tribute to choreographer Judith Jamison, the current Artistic Director, on the eve of her retirement.

The Hunt – In an exploration of the hunter-predator instincts latent in all men, Robert Battle's *The Hunt* unleashes the virile forces of six dancers against the pulsating rhythms of Les Tambours du Bronx. Leaps and spins abound in this demanding, athletic work, whose powerful rituals evoke the sports world of today and the gladiators of antiquity.

In/Side* and *Cry – The company will also present *In/Side*, a captivating solo choreographed by Robert Rattle, set to the vibrant vocals of Nina Simone (singing *Wild is the Wind*), and *Cry*, a rich and exuberant work in three parts that Alvin Ailey created for his muse Judith Jamison, and dedicated to his mother as a birthday present, and to all black women.

Alvin Ailey (1931-1989)

Born in a small town in Texas, Alvin Ailey studied under Lester Horton before beginning his career as a dancer and forming his own troupe, the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre in 1958, at the age of 27. For his first choreography he drew upon his "blood memories" of Texas, raising Afro-American culture to the place it deserved in the world of art, fusing its traditions with the heritage of modern American dance. In all, he created 79 ballets, several of which were restaged by the world's major companies, while at the same time commissioning works from a wide range of guest artists. Today, the company's repertoire encompasses over 200 works from 70 different choreographers. The diversity of its productions, the universality of its themes and the flamboyance of its sets and costumes have ensured the company's perennial success and constant demand. Shortly before his death, Alvin Ailey chose dancer-choreographer Judith Jamison to succeed him at the helm of the company and school that he had founded in 1969.

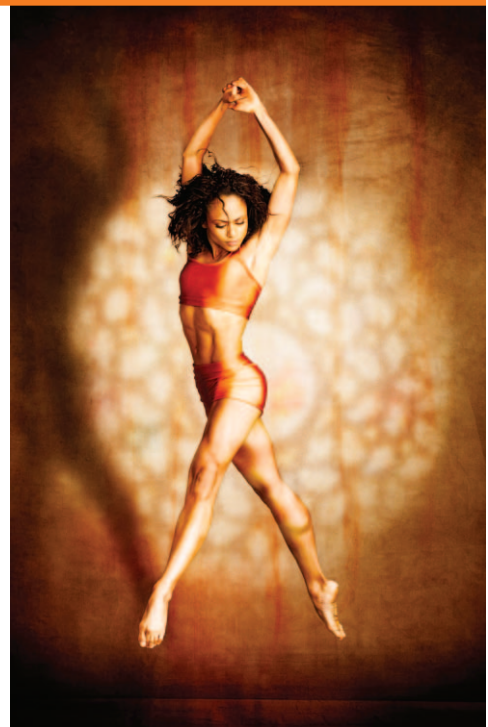


Photo : Andrew Eccles - Dancer : Linda Celeste Sims



Judith Jamison

Born in Philadelphia, Judith Jamison studied modern and classical dance from the age of six. Her professional career began in 1964 with the American Ballet Theater in New York. A dancer of exceptional talent, she joined the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater a year later, and for fifteen years served as the muse of Alvin Ailey, her archetypical style perfectly suited to the choreographer. In 1980, in response to invitations from various companies from around the world, she left Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, taking on the lead role in the hit Broadway musical *Sophisticated Ladies*, making her first steps as a choreographer and founding her own company, The Jamison Project, in 1988. The following year she became Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, a position she will leave in July 2011 after 22 years of perpetuating the work and vision of Alvin Ailey. An eminently respected choreographer, she has created works for numerous companies. *Reminiscin'*, presented in Montreal in 2007 and *Hymn*, a vibrant tribute to Alvin Ailey, are among her many works. Judith Jamison has received numerous awards and honorary titles, including the National Medal of Arts in 2001, the highest honour conferred to an individual artist on behalf of the American people.

Robert Battle

In July 2011, Robert Battle will succeed Judith Jamison as Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre, becoming only the third person to head the company since its founding. In the late 1980s, Battle studied at Miami's New World School of the Arts, as well as The Julliard School, where he met his mentor, Carolyn Adams. He then joined the Parsons Dance Company, where he danced from 1994 to 2001 and choreographed for the company beginning in 1998. In 2002, he founded the Battleworks Dance Company, which performed at numerous prestigious theatres and festivals. He has also created works for such companies as Hubbard Street Repertory Ensemble, River North Chicago Dance Company, Koresh Dance Company, Introdans and Ballet Memphis. A much sought-after teacher around the world, he has been regularly invited to serve as choreographer or artist-in-residence at the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre, Ailey II, and the Ailey School. Since 1999, he has created seven works for the company, including *The Hunt*, *In/Side* and *Love Stories*, in collaboration with Judith Jamison and Rennie Harris. Among other distinctions, Robert Battle was honoured in 2005 as one of the "Masters of African-American Choreography" by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

***Revelations* by Alvin Ailey
and other choreographic works**
Music by various composers

April 19 and 20 at 8 p.m. and April 21, 2012 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts

Pre-show talks

Pre-show talks will be held at Piano nobile prior to each performance.

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Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal would like to thank **Cinémas Guzzo**, season sponsor. The company is also grateful to the **Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec**, the **Canada Council for the Arts** and the **Conseil des arts de Montréal** for their financial support.

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