



ARTIST
SERIES

Ailey II

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Macky Auditorium

Francesca Harper, Artistic Director
Sylvia Waters, Artistic Director Emerita

Company Members

Nicholas Begun, Meagan King, Elijah Lancaster, Jamaris Mitchell,
Shanice Chelsea Reyes, Hannah Alissa Richardson, Jeffrey Robert Robinson III,
Amar Smalls, Christopher Taylor, Brena Thomas, Travon M. Williams, Rachel Yoo

Lakey Evans-Peña, Rehearsal Director

Robert Battle, Artistic Advisor
Bennett Rink, Executive Director

Program

PSŪKHE (2019)

-INTERMISSION-

SEARCHLIGHT (2021)

-PAUSE-

TAKADEME (1999)

-PAUSE-

ENEMY IN THE FIGURE (1989)

-INTERMISSION-

FREEDOM SERIES (2021)

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

Ailey II is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City
Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and
the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office
of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, as well as by
American Express.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment of any
kind during performances is strictly prohibited.

Programming and casting subject to change.

Tonight's show is generously sponsored by:



PLEASE NOTE

- Masks are required in public indoor spaces on the CU Boulder campus, regardless of vaccination status.
- Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the house manager.
- Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere. CU Boulder is a smoke-free campus.

Program notes

PSŪKHE (2019)

Choreography by Andrea Miller

Music by Nicolas Jaar*

Original costumes by Alejandra Burquette

Costume design by Elias Gurrola

Lighting design by Burke Brown

Associate lighting design by Abby May

The Company

Andrea Miller has established herself as a groundbreaking artist and choreographer relentless in her study of the deeper meanings of movement within the human experience. A sought-after creator and collaborator in art, film, theatre and fashion, in 2017-18 Miller became the first choreographer to be named Artist-in-Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is also a Guggenheim Fellow, Princess Grace Fellow, Jerwood Fellow, and in 2018 she was featured in Forbes as a female entrepreneur and leader in the dance world. Miller is the founder and artistic director of internationally renowned dance company, Gallim, based in Brooklyn where the company provides opportunities for movement study, creativity and performance.

* “Killing Time” and “No” from the album *Siren*, published by Other People LLC

SEARCHLIGHT (2021)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music by various artists*

Costume design by EPPERSON

Lighting design by Burke Wilmore

The Company

*“It’s Gonna Rain, Part II (1965)” Steve Reich by arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, publisher and copyright owner

Nacht Und Träume, D.827 performed by Renée Fleming & Christoph Eschenbach

TAKADEME (1999)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Music by Sheila Chandra

Original costuming by Missoni

Costumes redesign by Jon Taylor

Lighting design by Burke Wilmore

Meagan King

ENEMY IN THE FIGURE (1989)

Choreography, stage, original light, and costume design by William Forsythe

Music by Thom Willems

Lighting design remounted by Abby May

Nicholas Begun, Elijah Lancaster, Jamaris Mitchell, Shanice Chelsea Reyes, Jeffrey Robert Robinson III, Amar Smalls, Christopher Taylor, Brena Thomas, Rachel Yoo

William Forsythe (1949) has been active in the field of choreography for over 50 years. His three decades of work with his ensembles Ballet Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company in Frankfurt, Germany, exerted significant influence upon generations of artists in a wide array of creative practices.

FREEDOM SERIES (2021)

Choreography by Francesca Harper

Music by Various Artists

Costume design by Elias Gurrola

Lighting design by Abby May

The Company

* “Doomed” by Moses Sumney, published by Kobalt Songs Music Publishing and Domino Publishing Company of America Inc

“(No One Knows Me) Like the Piano” by Sampha, published by Beggars Tunes

“Little Fly” by Esperanza Spalding, published by Kobalt Songs Music Publishing

“Roaming Rogue” by Jasmine Hearn and Slowdanger (Anna Thompson and Taylor Knight)

“Fury” by Slowdanger (Anna Thompson and Taylor Knight)

“Dawn Chorus” by Thom Yorke, published by Warner Chappell Music Ltd and Kobalt Songs Music Publishing

Double Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor by Johann Sebastian Bach

“Without (Seven Remix)” by Sampha, published by Beggars Tunes

“Welcome” by Jon Hopkins, published by Domino Publishing Company of America Inc and Just Another Management Co

Personnel

Ailey II is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best young dance talent with the passion and creative vision of today's most outstanding emerging choreographers.

Founded in 1974 as the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, the company embodies his pioneering mission to establish an extended cultural community that provides dance performances, training and community programs for all people. Sylvia Waters was selected by Mr. Ailey to be its founding artistic director, serving in that role for the company's first 38 seasons and helping Ailey II to flourish into one of the most popular modern dance companies, combining a rigorous touring schedule with extensive community outreach programs.

In September 2021, Francesca Harper was selected to become artistic director of Ailey II by Robert Battle, artistic director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Bennett Rink, executive director of Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation. Ms. Harper—who trained at The Ailey School and who has choreographed for both Ailey companies—brings fresh perspectives to Mr. Ailey's legacy, while nurturing new creative voices and propelling the company forward.

Dance Magazine calls Ailey II “second to none,” and The New York Times declares, “There’s nothing like an evening spent with Ailey II, the younger version of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.”

FRANCESCA HARPER (Artistic Director) began her professional dance career with Dance Theater of Harlem. She was a member of William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt from 1991-1999 where she became a principal dancer in 1994. 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*. 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). 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, 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. 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, Harper is engaged as executive producer with Sony Pictures on a series in development and is pursuing an MFA in performance creation at Goddard College.

SYLVIA WATERS (Artistic Director Emerita) was personally selected by Alvin Ailey in 1974 as artistic director of Ailey II and led the company for 38 years. A graduate of The Juilliard School, Waters earned a BS in dance prior to moving to Paris, where she appeared regularly on television. She has also performed in Brussels and at the Summer Olympics in Mexico City. In 1968, Waters joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and toured with the company until assuming leadership of Ailey II. In 1997, she received an honorary doctorate from the State University of New York at Oswego, and she has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. 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. Currently, Waters leads The Ailey Legacy Residency, a lecture, technique and repertory program for college-level students that looks definitively into the history and creative heritage of Alvin Ailey.

LAKEY EVANS-PEÑA (Rehearsal Director) is a performer, educator, movement director, community advocate and artistic mentor. Presently she serves as the rehearsal director for Ailey II, the Ailey/Fordham Student Dancers, and as a master teacher of the Horton technique. Her teaching, rehearsing and coaching practice is centered in cultural relevance, artistic empowerment and performance practice. Evans-Peña received her BFA from the University of the Arts and her MFA from Montclair State University. She was a scholarship recipient at The Ailey School and subsequently joined Ailey II where she performed principal roles in works by Alvin Ailey, Ronald K. Brown and Eleo Pomare. She was a lead in Donald Byrd’s national tour of *The Harlem Nutcracker* and additionally performed Byrd’s choreography for the New York City Opera’s production of *Carmina Burana*. In 2009, she founded the Williamsburg Movement & Arts Center in Brooklyn, NY. As its artistic and executive director, she developed school and community partnerships which enabled over three thousand students a year to explore dance through daytime residencies and afterschool programming. Evans-Peña has taught extensively throughout the United States and has served as a visiting professor at Marymount Manhattan College, Montclair State University, AMDA and as artist-in-residence at Hollins University.

NICHOLAS BEGUN (Brooklyn, NY) began his formal dance training at Ballet Tech in New York City. He attended Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and received his degree from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in 2021. In 2018, Begun appeared in artist Nick Cave’s Park Avenue Armory installation *The Let Go*, with movement directed by Francesca Harper. He was also featured in the Holland Dance Festival in 2020. Begun has performed for two seasons in the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*. This is his first season with Ailey II.

MEAGAN KING (Brooklyn, NY) graduated magna cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, receiving the Glorja Kaufman Scholarship. She

has been featured in Dance Spirit magazine, the *TODAY Show* and at the Holland Dance Festival. King was a student at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. She was the 2019 and 2020 BLOCH Ailey Young Artist. She is also an alumna of the 2018 Contemporary Program at Jacob’s Pillow. King has choreographed for the *Color Me Beautiful* production in Virginia and LaGuardia High School’s 2021 senior graduation dance concert. This is her first season with Ailey II.

ELIJAH LANCASTER (Bentonville, AR) was born in Port Au Prince, Haiti. He began his formal dance training at age seven at Aspire Dance in Arkansas. He later studied at The Ailey School where he graduated from the Certificate Program. Lancaster performed with the Francesca Harper Project, XY Dance Project, Pony Box Dance, and the Black Iris Project. He has also performed in Alvin Ailey’s *Memoria* during Ailey’s New York City Center season, and worked with choreographers including Travis Wall, Amy Hall Garner, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Andrea Miller and Robert Battle. This is his second season with Ailey II.

JAMARIS MITCHELL (Syracuse, NY) began her dance training in her hometown at the age of five at the Center of Ballet and Dance Arts. She attended summer intensives at Hubbard Street Dance, as well as at The Ailey School where she also trained as a scholarship student. Mitchell has performed works by Matthew Rushing, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Ray Mercer, and has appeared in Alvin Ailey’s *Memoria* during Ailey’s 2016 New York City Center season. She was featured in the 2017 Vogue Collections video and appeared in the FX series *POSE*. This is Mitchell’s second season with Ailey II.

SHANICE CHELSEA REYES (Kissimmee, FL) graduated from the Osceola County School for the Arts (OCSA). While attending OCSA, she also trained at Raskin Dance Studio. Reyes is a graduate of The Ailey School’s Certificate Program. During her time at The Ailey School, she appeared in the 2017 and 2019 Ailey Spirit Gala at Lincoln Center, Robert Battle’s *Moonlight*, Ronald K. Brown’s *Four Corners*, Alvin Ailey’s *Flight Time* restaged by Renee Robinson, and Alvin Ailey’s *Memoria* restaged by Ronni Favors during Ailey’s 2018 and 2019 New York City Center seasons. This is Reyes’ first season with Ailey II.

HANNAH ALISSA RICHARDSON (Toronto, ON., Canada) graduated with honors from The Ailey School Certificate Program. She has traveled coast to coast participating in workshops and competitions taking home top overall awards and scholarships. Richardson has performed works by choreographers including Ray Mercer, Bradley Shelver, Kirven Douthit-Boyd, Earl Mosley, William Forsythe and Robert Battle. She has been a featured dancer in festivals such as Bard Summerscape and the Holland Dance Festival. Some of her film and television credits include Orion Pictures' *Every Day* and Disney Channel's *Backstage*. Richardson is also a guest artist for Ronald K. Brown's Evidence, A Dance Company. This is her first season with Ailey II.

JEFFREY ROBERT ROBINSON III (Minneapolis, MN) began his dance training at Main Street School Performing Arts in his hometown at age 16 and received a BFA in dance from the University of Minnesota. He continued his training at The Ailey School as a scholarship student and has performed works by Bill T. Jones, Arnie Zane, Stephen Petronio, Donald Byrd, Ray Mercer and Alvin Ailey. This is Robinson's second season with Ailey II.

AMAR SMALLS (Brooklyn, NY) began his dance training at The Abrons Arts Center Henry Street Settlement in New York City. In 2017, he graduated from Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. Smalls was a Scholarship and Independent Study student at The Ailey School. He also trained at Harlem School of the Arts and Steps on Broadway. He has worked with choreographers including Ray Mercer, Daniel Catanach, Aubrey Lynch, Christopher Huggins and Darrell Grand Moultrie. At age 16, Smalls started Brokeland, an art collective where artists create music, film and paintings. This is his second season with Ailey II.

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR (Newark, NJ) is a graduate of Arts High School. He began his dance training at age 11 in The Ailey School Junior Division. He also attended AileyCamp Newark's summer program, and later studied as a scholarship student in The Ailey School Professional Division. Taylor has performed at the Apollo Theater, Lincoln Center, and in Ailey's New York City Center galas. This is his first season with Ailey II.

BRENA THOMAS (Chicago, IL) began dancing at the Sammy Dyer Dance Theatre in 2005 and started her formal training at Chicago High School for the Arts under the direction of Lisa Johnson Willingham. After graduating from "Chi-Arts," she received a scholarship to attend Alonzo King Lines Ballet and Ballet Austin. Thomas also trained as a scholarship student at Dance Theatre of Harlem and The Ailey School. She has performed works by Gregory Dawson, Aubrey Lynch, Ray Mercer, Brice Mousset, Leyland Simmons and Bradley Shelver, and she was a guest artist for South Chicago Dance Theatre. Thomas also appeared in the FX hit series *POSE*. This is her second season with Ailey II.

TRAVON M. WILLIAMS (Chicago, IL) began his formal dance training in the Joffrey Community Engagement program under Pierre Lockett. He graduated from Chicago High School for the Arts and received scholarships to attend the Chicago MultiCultural Dance Center, Debbie Allen School of Dance, Ballet Chicago, Ballet Austin and Deeply Rooted. Williams is also a graduate of The Ailey School Certificate Program. He has performed works by Darrell Grand Moultrie, Amy Hall, Pierre Lockett, Kevin Iga, Yusha-Marie Sorzano and Omar Roman de Jesus. Most recently, Williams appeared on the HBO Max series *Legendary*. This is his first season with Ailey II.

RACHEL YOO (Bridgewater, NJ) is a graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program. She began her classical dance training at the New Jersey School of Ballet. Yoo attended Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School, where she studied dance under the direction of Sheila Sullivan. She trained at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Parsons Dance and Peridance Blueprint. She has performed works by Alvin Ailey, Robert Battle, William Forsythe, Norbert De La Cruz III, Gabrielle Lamb and Chuck Wilt, and has danced with Barkin/Selissen Project and McKoy Dance Project. This is Yoo's first season with Ailey II.

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**ARTIST
SERIES**

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

Feb. 21, 2022

Macky Auditorium

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