

AILEY II

Francesca Harper, Artistic Director

Sylvia Waters, Artistic Director Emerita

Company Members

Nicholas Begun, Spencer Everett, Jaryd Farcon,
Maya Finman-Palmer, Patrick Gamble, Meagan King,
Kali Marie Oliver, Tamia Strickland, Christopher Taylor,
Maggy van den Heuvel, Travon M. Williams, Rachel Yoo

Lakey Evans-Peña, Rehearsal Director

Apprentices

Andrew Bryant, Alfred L. Jordan II,
Kiri Moore, Kayla Mei-Wan Thomas

Robert Battle, Artistic Advisor

Bennett Rink, Executive Director

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

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

Programming and casting subject to change

Company Story

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 stepped into the role of Artistic Director of Ailey II. 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.

FRANCESCA HARPER, Artistic Director

Francesca Harper 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. Ms. 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). Ms. 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, Ms. 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. Ms. 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, Ms. Harper is engaged as Executive Producer with Sony Pictures on a series in development and pursuing an MFA in performance creation at Goddard College.

SYLVIA WATERS, Artistic Director Emerita

Sylvia Waters 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, Ms. Waters earned a B.S. in Dance prior to moving to Paris, where she appeared regularly on television. She toured in the European company of *Black Nativity* and worked with Michel Descombey, then director of the Paris Opera Ballet, as well as Milko Šparemblek. She also performed in Donald McKayle's European production of *Black New World* and worked with

Maurice Béjart's company performing in Brussels and at the Summer Olympics in Mexico City. In 1968, Ms. Waters joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and toured with the Company until assuming leadership of Ailey II. She has received honorary doctorates from the State University of New York at Oswego and The Juilliard School, and she has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. Ms. 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.

LAKEY EVANS-PEÑA, Rehearsal Director

Lakey Evans-Peña 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. Ms. 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 the 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. Ms. Evans-Peña has taught extensively throughout the U.S. and served as a visiting professor at Marymount Manhattan College, Montclair State University, AMDA, and as artist in residence at Hollins University.

AILEY II WHO'S WHO

NICHOLAS BEGUN (Brooklyn, NY) started 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. Mr. Begun has performed for three seasons in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. This is his second season with Ailey II.

SPENCER EVERETT (Stratford, ON, Canada) graduated from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in 2022 with an honorable mention in dance and departmental honors in visual arts. He began his dance training in a variety of techniques at a local studio in his hometown. Mr. Everett also trained at The School of Toronto Dance Theatre as a scholarship student. He has worked with choreographers Omar Roman de Jesus, Helen Simoneau, Yusha Marie-Sorzano, Jamar Roberts, and Yoshito Sakuraba, and performed in Alvin Ailey's Memoria during Ailey's 2019 and 2021 New York City Center seasons. This is his first season with Ailey II.

JARYD FARCON (Fords, NJ) received his degree from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program and is a graduate of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. Mr. Farcon is a National YoungArts Foundation winner in dance and worked with Mikhail Baryshnikov and Julie Taymor. He appeared on Dancing With The Stars, So You Think You Can Dance, and in recording music group BTS's "Permission to Dance" United Nations General Assembly music video. He trained in summer programs at Jacob's Pillow, Orsolina 28, Alonzo King Lines Ballet, and Ballet Hispánico. This is his first season with Ailey II.

MAYA FINMAN-PALMER (Madison, WI) graduated from The Ailey School where she trained in the Certificate Program. She attended summer intensives at Ballet Hispánico, Jennifer Archibald's ArchCore40, Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, Kanopy Dance Academy, Hubbard

Street Dance Chicago, and The Ailey School.

Ms. Finman-Palmer performed as a soloist in Prelude & Fugue, choreographed by Lisa Thurrell, and in Next@Graham. She also danced in Memoria during Ailey's 2021 New York City Center season. Ms. Finman-Palmer has performed works by choreographers Patrick Coker, Amy Hall Garner, Martha Graham, Bradley Shelver, and Alvin Ailey. This is her first season with Ailey II.

PATRICK GAMBLE (Queens, NY) began his dance training at the age of five in The Ailey School's Junior Division. He recently graduated from the Ailey/Fordham BFA program with a double major in Art History, through the generosity of the Glorya Kaufman Scholarship. Mr. Gamble also trained at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Jacob's Pillow, Move NYC's Sweat, Orsolina 28, and Springboard Danse Montreal. He performed works by Robert Battle, Ohad Naharin, William Forsythe, Rena Butler, and Francesca Harper, and has appeared on the television shows Saturday Night Live, Gossip Girl, and HBO's Random Acts of Flyness. This is Mr. Gambles first season with Ailey II.

MEAGAN KING (Brooklyn, NY) graduated magna cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, receiving the Glorya Kaufman Scholarship. She has been featured in Dance Spirit magazine, the TODAY Show and at the Holland Dance Festival. Ms. 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. Ms. King has choreographed for the Color Me Beautiful production in Virginia and LaGuardia High School's 2021 Senior Graduation Dance Concert. This is her second season with Ailey II.

KALI MARIE OLIVER (Akron, Ohio) graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program. She began her formal dance training with her mother and attended summer intensives at Chautauqua Institution, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and The Ailey School. Ms. Oliver has

performed works by Alvin Ailey, Karole Armitage, William Forsythe, Andrea Miller, William Isaac, and Maurya Kerr. She also performed in Mr. Ailey's Memoria during the 2018, 2019, and 2021 Ailey New York City Center seasons and represented The Ailey School in the 2019 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. This is Ms. Oliver's first season with Ailey II.

TAMIA STRICKLAND (Silver Springs, MD) began her dance training at the age of six. She is currently a student in the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, where she received the 2021 Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Strickland performed in the 2020 Ailey Virtual Season, and in Ailey's 2021 Opening Night Gala at New York City Center. She has worked with choreographers, including Hope Boykin, Clifton Brown, Freddie Moore, Matthew Rushing, Janice Rosario, Chuck Wilt, and Sarah O'Gleby. This is her first 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. Mr. Taylor has performed at the Apollo Theater, Lincoln Center, and in Ailey's New York City Center galas. He also performed as a guest artist with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. This is his second season with Ailey II.

MAGGY VAN DEN HEUVEL (Houten, Utrecht, Netherlands) graduated in 2018 from Lucia Marthas Institute for Performing Arts in Amsterdam. She trained as a scholarship student at The Ailey School where she received the Joan Weill Spirit Award. Ms. van den Heuvel has performed works by Anthony Burrell, Yusha-Marie Sorzano, Ray Mercer, Norbert De La Cruz, and Kirven J. Boyd. She has appeared on The Today Show, Good Morning America, Extra TV, and was a lead dancer in Teyana Taylor's music video Lose Each Other featuring Elton John. She is also a recipient of a Young Talent Award by Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds.

This is Ms. van den Heuvel's first 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. Mr. Williams is also a graduate of The Ailey School Certificate Program. He has performed works by Darrell Grand Moultrie, Amy Hall, Pierre Lockett, Kevin Iega, Yusha-Marie Sorzano, and Omar Roman de Jesus. Most recently, Mr. Williams appeared on the HBO Max series, *Legendary*. This is his second 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. Ms. 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. Ms. Yoo has performed works by Alvin Ailey, Robert Battle, William Forsythe, Andrea Miller, Norbert De La Cruz III, Gabrielle Lamb, and Chuck Wilt, and has danced with Barkin/Selissen Project and McKoy Dance Project. This is her second season with Ailey II.

APPRENTICES

ANDREW BRYANT (Miami, FL) began his formal dance training at the Young Contemporary Dance Theatre in his hometown, under the direction of Traci Young Byron. He received his BFA from Towson University where he studied under renowned artists Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, Vincent Thomas, and Runqiao Du. After graduating, Mr. Bryant trained at The Ailey School as a scholarship student, where he performed works by Alvin Ailey, Bradley Shelver, and Rebecca Margolick. This is his first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

ALFRED L. JORDAN II (Memphis, TN) began his dance training at the age of 12 at a local studio in his hometown. He later studied at The Ailey School where he trained as a scholarship student. In 2021, Mr. Jordan performed in Alvin Ailey's Bird Live during Ailey's New York City Center gala, and in 2022, he danced in Robert Battle's Awakening at Ailey's Spirit Gala at Lincoln Center. He has worked with choreographers including Amy Hall Garner, Bradley Shelver, Stephanie Batten Bland, and Judine Somerville. This is Mr. Jordan's first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

KIRI MOORE (Culpeper, VA) began her dance training in Virginia at the Orange School of Performing Arts, and continued to study in Philadelphia, PA at The Rock School for Dance Education. She is a graduate of The Ailey School Certificate Program where she performed in Alvin Ailey's Memoria during Ailey's 2021 New York City Center season. Ms. Moore has also worked with choreographers Amy Hall Garner, Bradley Shelver, Patrick Coker, Hollie Wright, and Judine Somerville. This is her first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

KAYLA MEI-WAN THOMAS (Cleveland, OH) graduated summa cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in 2022 with a double major in Digital Technologies and Emerging Media. In 2020, she was the recipient of the Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Thomas has performed works by Robert Battle, Hope Boykin, and Helen Simoneau, and has danced with the Nai Ni Chen Dance Company. This is her first season as an apprentice with Ailey II.

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AILEY II PRODUCTION CREDITS

Francesca Harper	Artistic Director
Sylvia Waters	Artistic Director Emerita
Lakey Evans-Peña	Rehearsal Director
Eric D. Wright	General Manager
Isabelle Mezin	Director of Company Business Affairs
Sumaya Jackson	Company Manager
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Ethan Saiewitz	Lighting and Sound Supervisor
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www.AlvinAiley.org

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Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 7:30pm
Lynchburg, VA

THE HUNT

(2001)

Choreography by Robert Battle

Restaged by Elisa Clark

Music by Les Tambours du Bronx

Costume design by Mia McSwain

Lighting design by Burke Wilmore

Meagan King, Kali Marie Oliver,
Kayla Mei-Wan Thomas*, Rachel Yoo

*Ailey II apprentice

-Pause-

PSŪKHE

(2019)

Choreography by Andrea Miller

Music by Nicolas Jaar*

Original costumes by Alejandra Burguette

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, theater, 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.

The creation of Psūkhe is supported by Marcia Head.

-INTERMISSION-

mediAcation (2022)

Choreography by Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish
Rehearsal assistant: Jamaris Mitchell
Music by Various Artists*
Costume design by Elias Gurrola
Lighting design by Amanda K. Ringger

First Duet:

Kayla Mei-Wan Thomas*, Spencer Everett

Second Duet:

Maggy van den Heuvel, Patrick Gamble

Third Duet:

Tamia Strickland, Christopher Taylor

Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrish started dancing at the age of five and became the youngest member of Ballet Philippines. She came to the United States as a teenager and studied at The Ailey School and then danced with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Joyce Trisler, and other companies before joining Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1984. She was the first Filipina principal dancer with the company. The New York Times described her as “a cool, still, lyrical center of the Ailey Storm”. She was featured in a 1997 issue of Dance Magazine’s cover article and named by Avenue magazine as one of the 500 most influential Asian-Americans. After leaving Ailey in 1997, Roxas-Dobrish continued to appear as a guest for the Ailey company through the years, and she is a faculty member at The Ailey School. She has also taught at Harvard University, Sarah Lawrence College, and other institutions. She received the Ma-Yi Theater Company Award honoring her contributions to the Arts. She has choreographed for regional theaters, as well as for Off Broadway shows in New York, and she has been commissioned to create works internationally and in the United States. She has created dances on film for the 2020 Soho International Film Festival and premiered a dance film for the Philippines’ Fifth Wall Fest in 2021. Roxas-Dobrish is married to Robert Z. Dobrish, a prominent matrimonial attorney in Manhattan.

* “Middle of the World” by Nicholas Britell, published by Universal Music Publishing

“Horse Run” by Jed Kurzel, published by Back Lot Music

“Salfraedingur” by Johann Johansson, published by Universal Music Publishing

“Una Patada en los Huevos” by Alberto Iglesias, published by G. Schirmer, Inc.

“Eclipse” by Helen Jane Long, published by TuneCore

“Man O To” by Be Svendsen Nu, published by Universal Music Publishing

*Ailey II apprentice

-INTERMISSION-

ENEMY IN THE FIGURE

(Excerpt)

(1989)

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

Staged with Thomas McManus

Music by Thom Willems

Lighting design recreated by Ethan Saiewitz

Lighting consultant: Francesca Harper

The Company

William Forsythe 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.

The creation of Enemy in the Figure is supported by Robert Press.