



Smithsonian

Anacostia Community Museum

*Body and soul: the Alvin Ailey American
Dance Theater exhibition records*

Carrie Gehrler

2011

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Exhibition files	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Anacostia Community Museum Archives
Title:	<i>Body & Soul: the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater</i> exhibition records
Date:	1993-03 - 1993-06
Identifier:	ACMA.03-018
Creator:	Smithsonian Institution. Anacostia Community Museum
Extent:	1.42 Linear feet (2 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	An exhibition on the history of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The show was organized by the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and exhibited at the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum from March 1993 to June 1993. These records document the planning, organizing, execution, and promotion of the exhibition. Materials include correspondence, exhibit scripts, administrative records, brochures, and floor plans.

Administrative Information

Other Finding Aids

Box list in accession file.

Preferred Citation

Body and soul: the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater exhibition records, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

Use of the materials requires an appointment. Please contact the archivist to make an appointment: ACMarchives@si.edu.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

African American artists
African American dance
African American dancers
African Americans
Museum exhibits

Types of Materials:

Brochures
Correspondence
Exhibit scripts
Exhibition records -- 1990-2004
Photographic prints

Names:

Ailey, Alvin (1931-1989)
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble
Jamison, Judith (1943-2024)

Container Listing

Exhibition files

Box 1	Exhibition flyer
Box 1	Exhibition script

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Alvin Ailey Exhibition: Education Program led by Robert Hall, 1993 April 13
1 Video recording (VHS)

021530

Creator: Anacostia Museum
Speaker: Hall, Robert L., 1950-
Technical: 021530
Language: English.
Notes:

Robert Hall leads school children in an educational talk about Alvin Ailey's work and personal life. Using a flannel board as an interactive tool, Hall discusses some of Ailey's biographical information, including his birthplace in Rogers, TX in 1939, and his single mother whom he followed to California when he was a child. Hall goes on to discuss some of Ailey's interests outside of dance, including running track, playing tuba, and writing stories. Additionally, Hall describes Ailey's early interest in dance after meeting Carme de Lavallade.

Hall discusses Ailey's place in the history of dance and ballet, citing his common topics which relate to African American history and segregation. Hall presents Ailey's *Cry*, featuring Judith Jamison, a dedication to his mother and all Black women, especially mothers.

Hall leads the children through a tour of the exhibition *Body & Soul: The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*, where the students see portraits of Ailey's dance studio members, Ailey's teacher Lester Horton, and Ailey's romantic partner and muse, de Lavallade. The exhibit features a dress worn by Katherine Dunham, whom Ailey saw dance when he was fourteen years old, and who wore the dress in a dance choreographed by Ailey.

Hall discusses *Blues Suite*, dedicated to the people Ailey witnessed during his time in Texas, shows costumes used in the ballet and playing audio for the students. Hall similarly discusses Ailey's *Revelations*, which was inspired by Black churches and was usually the last dance performed at an Ailey recital, and shows costumes, an umbrella, and a fan which were used in the ballet. Hall briefly recounts *Cry* for the students, and describes *Opus McShann*, inspired

by bandleader and composer Jay McShann, and *Night Creatures*, which was named after a composition by Duke Ellington.

Education program. Related to the exhibition *Body & Soul: The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*. Dated 19930413.

Alvin Ailey Exhibition: Education Program led by Robert Hall, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Celebrating the 35th anniversary of the famed dance theater, *Body & Soul: The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater* presented the history of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The exhibition was organized by the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, and on display at the Anacostia Museum from March 28, 1993 - June 13, 1993.

ACMA AV002118

Names: Ailey, Alvin (1931-1989)
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
Anacostia Community Museum
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans
Dancers
African American dancers
Choreography
Dance
African American dance
Education -- Museums
Museum exhibits
African American educators

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)
Washington (D.C.)
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings