

Visions and Voices and the USC Libraries have collaborated to create a series of resource guides that allow you to build on your experiences at many Visions and Voices events. Explore the resources listed below and continue your journey of inquiry and discovery!

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

USC LIBRARIES RESOURCE GUIDE



One of the most popular dance companies on the international touring circuit, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is known around the globe for its vibrant artistry and repertoire. Founded in 1958 by choreographer and dancer Alvin Ailey, the company is one of the most acclaimed international ambassadors of American culture, promoting the African American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of American modern dance.

MELINDA HAYES of the **USC LIBRARIES** has selected the following resources to help you learn more about modern dance and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. More resources are available through the online version of this guide at libguides.usc.edu/alvinailey.

About Alvin Ailey and the Company

Though born in Rogers, Texas, in 1931, Alvin Ailey spent much of his early life in Los Angeles after his family moved there in 1942. His formative years in dance occurred under the tutelage of modern dance choreographer Lester Horton at the Horton school and company, where many modern dancers and choreographers such as Bella Lewitzky got their start. Ailey formed his own dance company in 1958 after arriving in New York. His choreography is vibrant and dynamic, drawing from his broad training in modern dance, ballet, jazz and African dance techniques. Following his death in 1989, the company has continued under Judith Jamison, a longtime friend and dancer with the company. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater continues to present the works of its founder in addition to creating new works.

At this performance, the audience will experience an all-Alvin Ailey choreography program: *Memoria*, *Three Black Kings*, *Cry* (a signature piece for current Artistic Director Judith Jamison) and Ailey's signature work, *Revelations*.

More information about the company can be found on at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater website at www.alvinailey.org.

About Modern Dance

Modern dance began as a fluid and natural response to the strictures of ballet. It became an American tradition through Isadora Duncan (1877–1927), whose simple and basic movement entered into the vocabulary of dance. Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn established the foundation of the modern dance tradition through their Denishawn school, which began in 1915. Many American modern dancers and choreographers today trace their antecedents to this tradition. Dance relies on the transfer of knowledge through physical instruction passed down from one dancer and/or choreographer to the next. Alvin Ailey could trace his technique to the Denishawn school through his teacher and mentor Lester Horton.

Recommended Books

Ailey Ascending: A Portrait in Motion

By Andrew Eccles

Doheny Memorial Library: GV1786.A42A35 2008 (oversize)

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, this dazzling book includes both original black and white and full-color photographs by Andrew Eccles.

Ailey Spirit: The Journey of an American Dance Company

By Robert Tracy

Doheny Memorial Library: GV1786.A42T73 2004

A breathtaking collection of photographs from the best dance photographers, along with behind-the-scenes and candid shots, illustrate every aspect of the company's history.

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Dancing Revelations: Alvin Ailey's Embodiment of African American Culture

By Thomas DeFrantz

Doheny Memorial Library: GV1785.A38D44 2004

DeFrantz examines the most celebrated Ailey dances, including *Revelations*, drawing on video recordings of Ailey's dances, published interviews, oral histories and his own interviews with former Ailey company dancers.

Academic Databases

Search for information about modern dance and Alvin Ailey using the Dance and Music databases below. To expand your research, try the interdisciplinary databases, which include all of the major U.S. newspapers as well as a wide variety of journals and periodicals.

All of the following resources can be accessed through the E-Resources tab on the USC Libraries homepage at www.usc.edu/libraries.

DANCE & MUSIC DATABASES

Dance in Video

Contains 250 dance productions and documentaries by the most influential performers and companies of the 20th century.

Oxford Music Online

Oxford Music Online, home of the Grove Music Online is an integrated music resource on the web, including dance.

International Index to Music Periodicals

Scholarly and popular articles in music. Abstracts included for all citations. Full-text available for more recent articles. 1996–present.

RILM: Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale

Abstracts of international articles, books, festschriften, dissertations and conference proceedings in over 200 languages.

Music Index Online

Index of nearly 900 domestic and international journals in music. Full-text for some articles available through JSTOR. 1973–present.

INTERDISCIPLINARY DATABASES

IIPA: International Index to the Performing Arts

Scholarly and popular articles in the performing arts. Abstracts for articles from 1998; full-text for more recent articles.

Expanded Academic ASAP

Abstracts or citations for articles from more than 3,500 scholarly, trade and general-interest publications, as well as citations for *The New York Times*. Many articles are available in full-text.

LexisNexis Academic

Database of full text online news, business, financial, legal, medical, biographical, government and domestic and international newspaper resources.

ProQuest Research Library

ProQuest Research Library is a multidisciplinary index. It covers dozens of subject areas and indexes thousands of scholarly and general titles and provides full-text for a significant number of the articles included. It is an excellent starting place for research for a paper, particularly if one isn't sure where to begin their research.

Sound Recordings

Music for the dances the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performs include works by Keith Jarrett for *Memoria*, works by Duke and Mercer Ellington for *Three Black Kings*, music by Alice Coltrane, Laura Nyro and Chuck Griffin for *Cry* and traditional spirituals for *Revelations*.

Search the Homer catalog on the USC Libraries homepage at www.usc.edu/libraries for CDs and LPs of these composers' music at USC. CDs are located in the Music Library and circulate for three days. LPs are located at Grand Avenue Library and can be paged through Homer.

Video

Videos of Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* and *Cry* are available on the online version of this guide at libguides.usc.edu/alvinailey. Find more video from the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater through the theater's Vimeo channel at vimeo.com/channels/ailey.