Northrop Concerts and Lectures at the University of Minnesota Announces 2011-12 Northrop Dance Season

NORTHRP MOVES to Downtown Minneapolis

Minneapolis, MN (April 27, 2011) – Northrop Concerts and Lectures at the University of Minnesota announces it 2011-12 Northrop Dance Season, featuring six of the world’s best ballet and modern dance companies, a trademark of the Northrop experience. The upcoming season reflects the rich tradition of Northrop with premier presentations of seminal artists, provocative productions, inspired choreography, and sensational dancers.

During the construction period (Feb 2011-Sept 2013) of the revitalization of Northrop Auditorium, Northrop will move its world-class dance programming to downtown Minneapolis in the highly visible Historic Theatre District on Hennepin Avenue. The first full NORTHRP MOVES season represents the best companies from the United States, China, France, Canada, and the UK. Featuring stunning, important works from choreographers like Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Alvin Ailey, and Jorma Elo, the season also introduces Minnesota audiences to new mavericks like Angelin Preljocaj, Jin Xing, Christopher Wheeldon, and Robert Battle.

For more information on the Northrop Revitalization, visit http://northrop.umn.edu/about/northrop-revitalization

Highlights of the 2011-12 Northrop Dance Season include:

- The **MN debut of Sir Kenneth MacMillan’s epic masterwork, Song of the Earth** set to music by Mahler performed by Scottish Ballet, Scotland’s leading classical ballet company.
- Two yet-to-be-named **Jorma Elo works** – both to be premiered this summer by the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland and by Houston Ballet. Scottish Ballet and Houston Ballet will highlight this important choreographer’s latest contributions to contemporary ballet.
- The return of **Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the U.S. premiere of Wonderland** by acclaimed Canadian choreographer Shawn Hounsell. Based
on *Alice in Wonderland*, this avant-garde take on a classic story will be the anchor of exciting downtown events called “Wonderland Weekend.”

- Back by popular demand, **Houston Ballet** and artistic director Stanton Welch return to Minnesota, premiering the **MN debut of Rush** by Christopher Wheeldon, **Houston Ballet’s commission of a new Jorma Elo work**, and **Welch’s Indigo** in two different evenings of classical and contemporary repertoire.

- **The MN debut of Ballet Preljocaj**, based in France and under the direction of Angelin Preljocaj, and their imaginative and inspired **production of Snow White (Blanche Neige)** featuring a who’s who of French design, including costumes by famed French designer Jean Paul Gaultier.

- From the most important theater in China, **Northrop debuts the Jin Xing Dance Theatre Shanghai**, and China’s leading and most provocative **choreographer, Jin Xing**. Celebrated in China, Jin Xing’s personal and haunting *Shanghai Tango*, represents a collection of her choreographic oeuvre in one evening. Though not actually a tango, the pieces evoke the energy and diversity of contemporary Shanghai.

- The season ends with one of the most popular dance companies of all time – the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**, celebrating the first inaugural tour of the company’s **new artistic director, Robert Battle**, and featuring the timeless masterpiece of *Revelations* on both evening’s repertoire.

**TICKETS:**
Northrop Dance Series Packages on Sale Now at Northrop.umn.edu or 612-625-6600.

There are four easy options for subscribing to a Northrop Dance series: **Portfolio, Classic, Innovators, and Journeys.**

**Portfolio:** Take the complete tour of all the Northrop Dance productions featuring celebrated masterworks, exceptional companies, and acclaimed choreographers. This is the “must-see” series of the Twin Cities 11-12 season. $184 - $346

**Classic:** See two major MN debuts, a U.S. premiere, and a favorite return of leading ballet from the United States, Scotland, France, and Canada. Classic features the glorious Scottish Ballet, Scotland’s classical ballet dance company; the famed Ballet Preljocaj from Paris; Canada’s beloved Royal Winnipeg Ballet with the U.S. premiere of their latest, *Wonderland*; and the beloved Houston Ballet, one of America’s largest ballet companies. $124 - $234

**Innovators:** The world of dance is full of innovation, and you can see leading dance makers’ latest offerings in this exciting series featuring new works by Jorma Elo, Jin Xing, Angelin Preljocaj, and Robert Battle. $120 - $224

**Journeys:** This series is for the dance first-timer to experience select classic ballet and modern dance including Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Jin Xing Dance Theatre Shanghai, Houston Ballet, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. $124 - $234
Prices include tax and facility/processing fees.

**Special Note:** Donors and renewing, continuous subscribers receive the highest priority for seating. Seating is also done by the date the order is received. To ensure the best seating when Northrop re-opens in fall 2013, patrons will want to plan to annually renew their season tickets and make a contribution to Friends of Northrop Dance.

**Subscribers benefit by saving 15%:** (17% for seniors, students, U of M students/staff/faculty) Receive priority seating, free first ticket exchange, and 15% off all additional single tickets (order before they go on sale to the general public).

**Single tickets on sale to the general public beginning August 15, 2011 at ticketmaster.com.** To save on paying ticket processing fees, patrons may purchase single tickets in person at the Hennepin Theatre Trust Box Office at the State Theatre at State Theatre Box Office, 805 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, or by phone at 612.339.7007.

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**THE 2011-12 NORTHROP DANCE SEASON**

**Minnesota Debut**

**Scottish Ballet**

**Ashley Page, artistic director**

Saturday, October 22, 8:00 pm

- The Scottish Ballet opens the 2011-12 Northrop Dance season and the launch of Northrop Moves.
- The official classical ballet company of Scotland, and one of the great ballet companies in Europe, this will be the company’s Minnesota debut featuring the masterwork of Sir Kenneth MacMillan, *Song of the Earth* (1965)—one of the best reviewed productions in the UK.
- The program will also feature the first of two new, major Jorma Elo creations. The second will be featured on the Houston Ballet program. Both will be premiered summer 2011.

**PROGRAM:**

**Song of the Earth** (1965)

Choreography: Sir Kenneth MacMillan

Music: Gustav Mahler/ *Das Lied von der Erde* ("The Song of the Earth") (1908-09)

Knighted in 1983, Scottish-born Sir Kenneth MacMillan created his masterwork, *Song of the Earth*, for Stuttgart Ballet in 1965 at the invitation of Artistic Director
John Cranko. Set to a live performance of Mahler’s song cycle Das Lied von der Erde, the lyrics to which were freely translated from a collection of eighth century Chinese poems offering bittersweet reflections on human emotion, Song of the Earth explores man’s struggle to accept mortality, with the Messenger of Death stalking the action throughout, and the hope and renewal that comes with death.

Mahler conceived the work in 1908. This followed closely on the publication of Hans Bethge’s volume of ancient Chinese poetry rendered into German, Die Chinesische Flöte (The Chinese Flute), based on several intermediate works. Mahler was very taken by the vision of earthly beauty and transience expressed in these verses and chose seven (two of them used in the finale) to set to music. Mahler himself wrote: “I think it is probably the most personal composition I have created thus far. Bruno Walter called it “the most personal utterance among Mahler’s creations, and perhaps in all music.” This is the only work from Mahler’s late period that used Chinese motifs in his compositions.

Although a talented dancer, MacMillan is best known for his choreography, and particularly for his work with the Royal Ballet. He also worked with the American Ballet Theatre (1956-7) and the Deutsche Opera, Berlin (1966-69). He succeeded Frederick Ashton as Director of the Royal Ballet in 1970 and resigned after seven years, frustrated at balancing the conflicting demands of creating ballets with administration. He continued as Principal Choreographer to the Royal Ballet until his death in 1992.

**New Work (2011)**
Choreography: Jorma Elo
Music: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Steve Reich

As resident choreographer at Boston Ballet, Finnish-born Jorma Elo has become an increasingly sought-after talent across the U.S. and Europe, and has also created works for companies including San Francisco Ballet, New York City Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, Houston Ballet, and Finnish National Ballet. This exciting new work, created for Scottish Ballet, features costumes by Yukimo Takeshima and lighting design by Jordan Tuinman.

Elo, who was named resident choreographer of Boston Ballet in 2005, was singled out as a “talent to follow” by Anna Kisselgoff in her 2004 Year in Review for The New York Times.

**Scottish Ballet**
Scottish Ballet is Scotland’s national dance company. Founded by Peter Darrell and Elizabeth West as Western Theatre Ballet in Bristol in 1957, the company moved to Glasgow in 1969 and was renamed Scottish Theatre Ballet, changing to Scottish Ballet in 1974.
The company performs across Scotland, the UK, and abroad, with strong classical technique at the root of all of its work. Its broad repertoire includes both classical and fiercely contemporary works, including seminal pieces from the 20th century modern ballet canon, signature pieces by living choreographers, new commissions for revered contemporary choreographers, and full-length story ballets re-imagined with fresh relevance for a contemporary audience, creating a unique artistic identity.

U.S. Premiere

**Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet**

*Wonderland*
André Lewis, artistic director
Choreographed by Shawn Hounsell
Saturday, November 12, 8:00 pm, 2011
Sunday, November 13, 3:00 pm, 2011

- The Royal Winnipeg Ballet is one of Canada’s most popular companies founded by the Queen of England, and Northrop has presented this company since the 1950s.
- In 2009 the Royal Winnipeg Ballet presented the world premiere of *Moulin Rouge-The Ballet* to a sold out audience at Northrop, making their return a highly anticipated event.
- This will be the U.S. premiere of *Wonderland*, a large, gorgeous production created by Canada’s most popular choreographer based on Lewis Carroll’s classic tale *Alice in Wonderland*.
- We are currently working on a downtown *Wonderland Weekend* with a variety of retailers and organizations to host Alice-themed events for children and families.

**PROGRAM:**
*Wonderland* is a dynamic contemporary re-interpretation of Lewis Carroll’s beloved characters, events, and themes that is sure to surprise and delight. The Queen of Hearts, The White Rabbit, and the Mad Hatter are all on hand, displaying generous doses of wit, camp, and humor. The surreal and dark elements that lurk at the original story’s fringes are bravely realized in explosive passages of breathtaking dance and innovative multimedia. Shawn Hounsell, acclaimed choreographer and RWB alumnus, has transformed *Wonderland* into a multi-sensory experience, with edgy and athletic movement, an inventive electro-acoustic soundscape, and unexpected visual treats. Themes are suitable for age 6 and older.

**Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet**
Versatility, technical excellence, and a captivating style are the trademarks of Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet, qualities that have garnered both critical and
audience acclaim. These qualities keep the RWB in demand as it presents more than 100 performances every season.

Founded in 1939 by Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet holds the double distinction of being Canada’s premier ballet company and the longest continuously operating ballet company in North America. In 1953, the company received its royal title, the first granted under the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. In 1958, Arnold Spohr was appointed artistic director. Under his direction the Royal Winnipeg Ballet grew and developed to take its place among the world’s internationally renowned companies.

In 1988, Spohr turned his position over to Henny Jurriens. Tragically, Jurriens and his wife lost their lives in an automobile accident on April 9, 1989. Former American Ballet Theatre Principal Dancer John Meehan was artistic director from 1990 to 1993 and former Joffrey Ballet and Twyla Tharp dancer William Whitener served as artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from 1993 to 1995.

On March 7, 1996, André Lewis was named artistic director of Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet. A native of Hull, Quebec, Lewis joined the RWB School’s Professional Division in 1975, entered the company’s corps de ballet in 1979 and was promoted to soloist in 1982. He was asked to join the artistic staff in 1984 and was appointed associate artistic director in 1990. During his tenure as artistic director, Lewis has worked to revitalize the company’s repertoire, especially with the commissioning of new full-length ballets such as Dracula, Nutcracker, and The Magic Flute.

**Shawn Hounsell, Choreographer**

As one of Canada’s leading choreographers and born in Birch Hills, Saskatchewan, artist Shawn Hounsell danced professionally with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal between 1989 and 2003. Noted for his versatility and theatricality, he danced soloist and principal roles in works by world-renowned choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Nacho Duato, Rudi van Dantzig, Anthony Tudor, and José Limón.

An award-winning choreographer, Hounsell has created and staged pieces for numerous Canadian companies including the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Les Grands Ballet Canadiens de Montreal, Les Ballet Jazz de Montreal, Le Jeune Ballet du Quebec, and Festival Dance Company. In addition his works have been performed by American companies such as Ballet Pacifica and in Europe by the Ballet of the National Theatre of Prague.
Minnesota Debut

Jin Xing Dance Theatre Shanghai

Shanghai Tango

Jin Xing, artistic director

Saturday, February 18, 8:00 pm, 2012

- Jin Xing Dance Theatre Shanghai is one of China’s premier modern dance companies based at the Oriental Arts Theater in Shanghai, the Lincoln Center of China.
- This Minnesota debut features a major work entitled *Shanghai Tango*, one of Jin Xing’s most popular works. This presentation marks the first of three seasons featuring Chinese companies to be presented by Northrop Dance.
- Jin Xing is a modern celebrity in Shanghai, creating unforgettable theatrical environments on stage with mass appeal.

PROGRAM:

*Shanghai Tango*

Shanghai choreographer and superstar Jin Xing and her dance theatre will take her latest dance performance *Shanghai Tango* on her first major tour of the U.S. in 2011-12. *Shanghai Tango* is a series of ten short works with music by several European and Chinese composers. The production was invited to perform in France to celebrate the Sino-French Culture Year in January 2004 and the ensuing performances were held in France, Belgium, Germany, and other European countries. The production embraces 10 pieces of work choreographed by Jin Xing. They are *Steps, Dance02, Red Wine, Four Happiness, Shanghai Tango, Half Dream, Island, Black and Red, No Way Out, and Senses of Colors*.

"Some of them are newly-made, some of them are my favorite creations from several years ago. However, I hope all these pieces will depict the current mentality of Shanghai people," said Jin Xing.

**Jin Xing**

Jin Xing (Chinese: 金星; pinyin: Jīn Xīng; born August 13, 1967 in Shenyang, Liaoning) is a ballerina, modern dancer, choreographer, and actress from the People’s Republic of China, and owner of the contemporary dance company Jin Xing Dance Theatre Shanghai. Although usually credited as Jing Xing, the proper pinyin spelling is Jin Xing. She is one of the first few transgender women officially recognized by the Chinese government.

Born as a male to ethnic Korean parents, Xing studied in a local Korean elementary school. Her father worked in the police department. She was praised as highly intelligent, and had won abacus contests many times. She expressed high enthusiasm in dance performance. At the age of 9 she joined the People’s Liberation Army to receive dance and military training; she became a member of the military’s
dance troupe, and eventually attained the rank of colonel. She experienced strong transsexual desires early in life. She said she would stay outside during rain, and wish that a lightning strike would turn her body female. Later she won the national dance contest with a piece of Central Asian ethnic dance.

1987, Xing went to New York to study modern dance for four years, and then traveled and performed in Europe, and taught dance in Rome from 1991 to 1993, followed by a world tour, and returned to China at the age of 26. She underwent sex reassignment surgery in 1996. Her left leg was paralyzed for a while after the surgery. After the recovery she went to Shanghai to choreograph and train students. At the age of 33 she adopted a son. She now lives with her three adopted children and her German husband in Shanghai.

Back by Popular Demand

**Houston Ballet**

**Stanton Welch, artistic director**

Friday, March 23, 8:00 pm, 2012
Saturday, March 24, 8:00 pm, 2012

**Two mixed evenings of classical and contemporary ballet repertoire featuring Christopher Wheeldon, Stanton Welch, and Jorma Elo, plus one additional piece of repertoire - tba.**

- One of America’s great ballet companies and one of the heirs to the Balanchine and Ballet Russe legacy. As a popular favorite with Northrop audiences, they were last seen in the Twin Cities in 2006 as presented by Northrop Dance.

**PROGRAM:**

*New Work*  (2011)

**Choreography by Jorma Elo**

**Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

**Violin Concerto No. 4, Denise Tarrant, Violin**

**First and Second movement cadenzas courtesy of Julia Fischer**

Elo, who has created pieces for American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, and New York City Ballet, among others, is currently the resident choreographer at Boston Ballet. He trained at the Finnish National Ballet School and The Kirov Ballet School. From 1978-1984 he danced with Finnish National Ballet, with Cullberg Ballet from 1984-1990, and in 1990 he joined Netherlands Dance Theatre. Elo worked with renowned choreographers such as Hans van Manen, Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin, Jiří Kylián, and William Forsythe. In 2005 he was awarded the choreographic prize at the Helsinki International Ballet Competition.
**Indigo (1999)**  
**Choreography and costumes by Stanton Welch**  
Music by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)  
Lighting by Christina R. Giannelli

Set to music by Antonio Vivaldi, *Indigo* is a spectacular showcase for the strength, speed, and attack of Houston Ballet’s dancers. The critically acclaimed *Indigo* was originally choreographed by Stanton Welch in 1999. The ballet examines the vagaries of romantic relationships as four couples come together, fall in love, fight, and exchange partners. Reviewing the work at its premiere, Molly Glentzer of the *Houston Chronicle* wrote, “In the sleek and stunning *Indigo*, Welch put eight dancers through a warp-speed deconstruction of classical ballet movements, matched to virtually every beat of two cello concertos by Antonio Vivaldi... *Indigo* fairly crackled with sensuous energy.” (March 6, 1999). Houston Ballet has performed *Indigo* extensively, including on the company’s Russia tour to the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow in 2003.

**Rush (2003)**  
**Choreography by Christopher Wheeldon**  
Music by Bohuslav Martinu (1890-1959), *Sinfonietta La Jolla* for chamber orchestra and piano

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “one of the most vividly satisfying constructions by him or any other ballet choreographer in this decade,” Christopher Wheeldon’s *Rush* is anchored around a dazzling *pas de deux* and features two principals, four soloists, and a corps de ballet of 10 dancers. The work is set to Bohuslav Martinu’s *Sinfonietta La Jolla* for chamber orchestra and piano. Writing in *Dance View Times*, critic Rita Felciano described *Rush*’s choreography:

“The choreography plays with off-kilter balances and segments the upper body and the arms. There is a robust quality to the dancers, in part emphasized by the strong colors in both costumes (Jon Morrell) and lighting design (Mark Stanley). The choreography has a windswept, pushing ahead quality to it.” (March 1, 2004)

Born in Somerset, England, Wheeldon began his ballet training when he was eight years old, and later trained at The Royal Ballet School. In 1991 he joined The Royal Ballet and also won the gold medal at the Prix de Lausanne competition. In 1993, Wheeldon was invited to become a member of New York City Ballet, where he rose to the rank of soloist in 1998. He began choreographing for New York City Ballet with Slavonic Dances for the 1997 Diamond Project. After creating *Mercurial Manoeuvers* (2000), he retired from dancing to concentrate on his choreographic work. In July 2001 he was named New York City Ballet’s first resident choreographer. For New York City Ballet, Wheeldon has choreographed several works, including *Polyphonia* (2001) *Variations Sérieuses* (2001), *Morphoses* (2002), *Liturgy* (2003), and *After the Rain* (2005). He has also created ballets for such companies as The Royal Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, and Boston...
Ballet. From 2006 – 2010, Wheeldon formed and directed his own dance company, Morphoses, with the troupe giving performances in London, New York, and across the United States.

Houston Ballet
In 1955, the founding members of Houston Ballet Foundation had a vision for dance in Houston: to create a resident ballet company and to start a school which would train its dancers. Houston Ballet Academy was established that same year under the leadership of Tatiana Semenova, a former dancer with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. In 1969, the professional company was founded, under the direction of Nina Popova, a former dancer with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and American Ballet Theatre.

From 1976-2003, Englishman Ben Stevenson, O.B.E., a former dancer with Britain’s Royal Ballet and English National Ballet, served as artistic director of Houston Ballet. He established a core of permanent choreographers whose works have greatly enriched the company’s repertory. In 1989, Sir Kenneth MacMillan joined the company as artistic associate and Christopher Bruce was named resident choreographer. MacMillan worked with the company from 1989 until his death in 1992, setting five of his pieces on Houston Ballet dancers. Bruce, who currently holds the title of associate choreographer, has set ten works on the company, including four pieces created especially for Houston Ballet.

In July 2003, the acclaimed Australian choreographer Stanton Welch assumed the leadership of Houston Ballet as artistic director. Welch, who has created ballets for many of the world’s leading companies, has choreographed thirteen works especially for Houston Ballet. The Financial Times of London has praised his leadership of Houston Ballet, citing "a strong, invigorated company whose male contingent is particularly impressive, a well-drilled corps and an enviable selection of soloists and principals."

The Houston Ballet Foundation has seen the fulfillment of its goals: an internationally acclaimed ballet company which is now America’s fourth largest and an academy which supplies over 40 percent of the company’s dancers. The New York Times has hailed Houston Ballet as "one of the nation’s best ballet companies." The company is comprised of 54 dancers, including artists who have won medals at major international ballet competitions.

Minnesota Debut

Ballet Preljocaj

Snow White (Blanche Neige)

Angelin Preljocaj, artistic director
Friday, April 13, 8:00 pm, 2012
Saturday, April 14, 8:00 pm, 2012
Ballet Preljocaj is one of the most important companies in Europe, based in France and founded by Angelin Preljocaj whose choreographic work is commissioned by legends such as the New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, and La Scala.

This significant, artistic retelling of Snow White features celebrated artists and designers, including the symphonies of Gustav Mahler, sets by Thierry Leproust, and costumes by Jean Paul Gautier.

To transform these spectacular performances into a transcendent cultural experience, a weeklong celebration of French food, wine, fashion, and art is being planned downtown, including: couture exhibits, wine and food tastings, networking receptions, and runway shows.

Choreographer and artistic director of the Ballet Preljocaj, Angelin Preljocaj has been living and working in Aix-en-Provence since 1996. In 2008, one of France’s leading choreographers, Angelin Preljocaj presented his first full-length story ballet Snow White (Blanche Neige). Le Journal du Dimanche called the work “a great popular ballet such as we have not seen since Béjart.”

Preljocaj states, “I’d really want to tell a story, to digress for a magical and enchanted. To avoid falling into ruts without doubt my own. And also because, like everyone else, I love stories. I am loyal to the Brothers Grimm, a few personal variations, based on my analysis of the symbols of the story. Bettelheim described as the scene of an inverted Oedipus complex. The stepmother is arguably the central character. It’s also that I examine through her narcissistic desire not to abandon the seduction and her role as a woman, even to sacrifice her stepdaughter. The understanding of symbols belongs to adults as to children, she talks to everyone and that is why I love stories.”

The Preljocaj company, created in 1984, became the National Choreographic Center of Champigny-sur-Marne and Val-de-Marne in 1989. In 1996, the ballet took up residency at the Cité du Livre in Aix-en-Provence and officially became Ballet Preljocaj. Since founding his company, now composed of 26 dancers, Angelin Preljocaj has created 45 choreographic works ranging from solos to larger formations. The company performs primarily on tour, in France and abroad. In addition to commissions from companies like New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, La Scala, and the Staatsoper in Berlin, among others, Preljocaj’s works have been staged by numerous repertory companies around the world. In October 2006, Ballet Preljocaj moved into its new home designed by the architect Rudy Ricciotti, the Pavillon Noir—the first production center built solely to provide an environment in which artists can carry out the entire process of creation, from the studio to the stage.
Featuring *Revelations*

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**

**Robert Battle, artistic director**

Tuesday, May 1, 7:30 pm, 2012

Wednesday, May 2, 7:30 pm, 2012

- Presented by Northrop Dance since the 1970s, **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, one of the most beloved companies in the world**—and in Minnesota—will close Northrop’s first season downtown.

- **Based in New York, this powerhouse** modern dance company has been thrilling audiences for 53 years with their virtuosic movement, athletic dancers and breathtaking interpretation of the African American cultural experience.

- Their return to Minnesota marks the first tour with the company’s **new artistic director Robert Battle**.

- **A major component of Alvin Ailey's visit will be “The Revelations Project,”** a community-based initiative that uses Ailey curriculum to teach the work and movement classes to schools, families, and churches.

Alvin Ailey, Jr. (January 5, 1931 – December 1, 1989) was an American choreographer and activist who founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in New York. Ailey is credited with popularizing modern dance and revolutionizing African American participation in 20th century concert dance. His company gained the nickname "Cultural Ambassador to the World" because of its extensive international touring. Ailey's choreographic masterpiece *Revelations* is believed to be the best-known and most often seen modern dance performance.

**Featuring *Revelations***

*Revelations* is the signature choreographic work of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. It was first produced by Alvin Ailey Dance Theater in New York City, New York on January 31, 1960. *Revelations* tells the story of African-American faith and tenacity from slavery to freedom through a suite of dances set to spirituals and blues music.

Ailey intended for the dance to be the second part of a larger, evening-length survey of African American music which had been begun in 1958 with his work *Blues Suite*, though this was never fully realized. At its premiere, the piece had 15 sections, a live vocal chorus including two onstage soloists, and ran over an hour in duration. Sections were removed as the work evolved, and an extensive tour sponsored by the U.S. Department in 1962 forced Ailey to commit the music for *Revelations* to recording. The dance then solidified into the three-part format seen today. The original score included parts for guitar, percussion and voice. The piece was expanded to include parts for keyboards, drums and electric bass.
Ailey did not dance in the world premiere, but as early company personnel shifted, he performed some of its group sections as solos. *Revelations* is divided into three sections: “Pilgrim of Sorrow,” “Take Me To The Water,” and “Move, Members, Move!”

**Robert Battle, artistic director designate**

In July 2011, Robert Battle will succeed Judith Jamison as artistic director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, becoming only the third person to head the company since its founding by Ailey in 1958. In announcing her selection, Jamison said that “choosing Robert Battle is the giant leap I want to take to ensure that this company stays vibrant in the future.” Battle has already had a long association with the Ailey organization, as a choreographer and an artist-in-residence. Since 1999, he has set eleven of his works on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II, and at The Ailey School—including three works being performed by the Ailey company this season: *The Hunt, In/Side*, and *Love Stories* (a collaboration with Jamison and Rennie Harris).

Battle’s journey to the top of the modern dance world began in the Liberty City neighborhood of Miami, Florida. He showed artistic talent early and studied dance at a high school arts magnet program before moving on to Miami’s New World School of the Arts, under the direction of Daniel Lewis and Gerri Houlihan, and finally to the dance program at The Juilliard School, under the direction of Benjamin Harkarvy, where he met his mentor Carolyn Adams. Upon his graduation from Juilliard, Battle joined the Parsons Dance Company and danced with them from 1994 to 2001, and he also set his own choreography on that company starting in 1998. Battle then founded his own Battleworks Dance Company, which made its premiere in 2002 in Düsseldorf, Germany as the U.S. representative to the World Dance Alliance’s Global Assembly. Battleworks subsequently performed extensively at venues including the Joyce Theater, Dance Theater Workshop, American Dance Festival, and Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival. He has also created new works and restaged his ballets for such companies as Hubbard Street Repertory Ensemble, River North Chicago Dance Company, Koresh Dance Company, Introdans, PARADIGM, and Ballet Memphis. He has regularly conducted residencies at universities throughout the United States and gives master classes around the globe. Battle was honored as one of the “Masters of African American Choreography” by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2005, and he received the prestigious Statue Award from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA in 2007. This past July, he was a guest speaker at the United Nations Leaders Programme in Turin, Italy.

Artists and programs subject to change.