

Adrienne Arsht Center

FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County
presents**

**AILEY II, THE NEXT GENERATION OF DANCE
LED BY FRANCESCA HARPER IN HER SECOND SEASON AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Featuring Miami dancer, Andrew Bryant, in his inaugural season

**Saturday, February 25 at 8 p.m.
Tickets: \$30, \$45, \$55, \$65*
Knight Concert Hall**

MIAMI – January 31, 2023 – The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami Dade County ([@arshtcenter](#)) is proud to present **AILEY II** ([@aileyii](#)), the next generation of dance, for one night only at the Knight Concert Hall on February 25 at 8 p.m. **AILEY II** is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's finest early-career dance talent with the passion and creative vision of today's most outstanding emerging choreographers. The critically acclaimed ensemble will inspire audiences with performances of Andrea Miller's [Psūkhe](#), William Forsythe's [Enemy in the Figure](#) and Francesca Harper's [Freedom Series](#).

Tickets to **AILEY II** are \$30, \$45, \$55 and \$65, and may be purchased now at [arshtcenter.org](#) or at the Adrienne Arsht Center box office by calling (305) 949-6722.

AILEY II, the celebrated second company to [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) continues to expand the bridge from the studio to the stage for talented young performers from [The Ailey School](#) under the wings of Artistic Director [Francesca Harper](#), who took her first dance steps at the school where her mother was director from 1984-2010.

This season, eight new dancers, including Miami native, [Andrew Bryant](#), along with [Spencer Everett](#), [Jaryd Farcon](#), [Maya Finman-Palmer](#), [Patrick Gamble](#), [Kali Marie Oliver](#), [Tamia Strickland](#) and [Maggy van den Heuvel](#), who all trained at The Ailey School—join the five returning members [Nicholas Begun](#), [Meagan King](#), [Travon M. Williams](#), [Amar Smalls](#) and [Rachel Yoo](#).

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 with Ailey II.

"I am excited for audiences far and near to experience the power and grace of these 12 superbly gifted dancers in remarkable works by a variety of powerful choreographic voices," said Artistic Director Francesca Harper. "It's an honor to lead Ailey II into its next era, keeping Alvin Ailey's legacy of artistry and generosity moving forward while nurturing the next generation of performing artists on a journey of discovery."

Andrea Miller, artistic director of Gallim Dance, is known for visceral, imaginative work and her Ailey II debut, *Psūkhe* (pronounced 'pSEE-hee') is no exception. This energetic full company work features unexpected partnering and complex solos set to the electronic music of Nicolas Jaar. The title is an Ancient Greek word meaning 'life's breath, spirit, and soul' and is the origin for the English word 'psyche.'

Enemy in the Figure (excerpt) is the propulsive central section of William Forsythe's eponymous work. Originally created in Germany (1989) for his ensemble, Ballet Frankfurt, the full work has been performed in major venues across the globe. Thom Willem's percussive electronic score was an inspiration for the work's choreographic invention and the radical use of light and shadow in the original stage design. This excerpt puts the formidable dance skills of the Ailey II dancers on fine display, giving their craft and vitality an invigorating framework.

Francesca Harper's *Freedom Series* travels through a landscape of memories creating a series of vignettes that embody and imagine a hybrid world where memory strives to influence the future. Depicted through this futuristic lens, and developed in collaboration with the Ailey II dancers, Harper's work examines identity and community. With costumes by designer Elias Gurrola and a score featuring a blend of acoustic and electronic sounds, *Freedom Series'* unexpected twists and turns bridge tender moments to its intrinsic ferocity.



Image of Ailey II's Andrew Bryant – Photo by Nir Arieli



Image of Ailey II in William Forsythe's *Enemy in the Figure* – Photo by Erin Baiano



Image of Ailey II's Travon M. Williams in William Forsythe's *Enemy in the Figure* – Photo by Erin Baiano



Image of Ailey II in Francasca Harper's *Freedom Series* – Photo by Erin Baiano

To download high-resolutions versions of the above photos, click [here](#).

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*All programs, artists, ticket prices, availability, dates and times are subject to change without notice. Visit arshtcenter.org for up-to-date information.

The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is made possible by the public support of the Miami-Dade County Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Tourist Development Council and the City of Miami Omni Community Redevelopment Agency, as well as the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. The Adrienne Arsht Center also receives generous support from individuals, corporations and local, state and national foundations.

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About Us

Set in the heart of downtown Miami, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is committed to welcoming and connecting ALL people to the arts, to the Arsht Center and to each other. Our stages are alive year-round with artists from around the world, innovative programming from our resident companies and local arts partners, free community events that reflect Miami's unique identity and arts education experiences for thousands of Miami children each year.

Since opening in 2006, the Arsht Center, a 501C3 non-profit organization, has been recognized as a catalyst for billions of dollars in new development in the downtown area, a leader in programming that mirrors South Florida's diversity, a host venue for historic events and Miami's hub for arts education.

Each year, we serve more than 60,000 young learners and offer more than 100 culturally diverse and inclusive education programs — many enhanced by the Arsht Center's relationship with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, local teaching artists and Miami-based arts organizations.

The Arsht Center is also a home stage for three resident companies — Florida Grand Opera, Miami City Ballet and New World Symphony — and a launch pad for local artists to make their mark on the international stage. Our 300+ events each year include the Center's Signature Series of classical, jazz, Broadway, local theater and much more. We present a robust series of touring Broadway musicals direct from New York, the largest jazz series in South Florida, a major annual Flamenco Festival and an award-winning Miami-based theater program. In addition, our Family Fest, Free Gospel Sundays,

CommuniTEA LGBTQ+ celebration and Heritage Fest are among dozens of free events that bring together people from all corners of our community. For more information, visit arshtcenter.org.

About Ailey II

Ailey II—Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's second company—is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best early-career dance talent with the passion and creative vision of today's most outstanding and emerging choreographers. Founded in 1974 as a bridge between The Ailey School and the professional dance world, Ailey II embodies Alvin Ailey's pioneering mission to establish an extended cultural community that provides dance performances, training, and community programs for all people. Ailey II flourished into one of the most popular dance companies in the country under the leadership of Sylvia Waters from 1974-2012, combining a rigorous touring schedule with extensive community outreach programs. With Artistic Director Francesca Harper at the helm, Ailey II continues to thrive as she brings a fresh dimension to this beloved company. For more information, visit www.alviniley.org/ailey-ii.