

RESOLUTION NUMBER 17
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

WHEREAS, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater grew from a now-fabled performance in March 1958 at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. Led by Alvin Ailey and a group of young African-American modern dancers, that performance changed forever the perception of American dance; and

WHEREAS, the Ailey company has gone on to perform for an estimated 25 million people at theaters in 48 states and 71 countries on six continents -- as well as millions more through television broadcasts; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, a U.S. Congressional resolution designated the Company as “a vital American cultural ambassador to the world” that celebrates the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance heritage; and

WHEREAS, when Mr. Ailey began creating dances, he drew upon his "blood memories" of Texas, the blues, spirituals, and gospel as inspiration, which resulted in the creation of his most popular and critically acclaimed work, Revelations. Although he created 79 ballets over his lifetime, Mr. Ailey maintained that his company was not exclusively a repository for his own work; and

WHEREAS, today, the Company continues Mr. Ailey's mission by presenting important works of the past and commissioning new ones. In all, more than 235 works by over 90 choreographers have been part of the Ailey company's repertory. Before his untimely death in 1989, Alvin Ailey named Judith Jamison as his successor, and over the next 21 years, she brought the Company to unprecedented success. Ms. Jamison, in turn, personally selected Robert Battle to succeed her in 2011, and *The New York Times* declared he “has injected the company with new life”; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Battle has a long-standing association with the Ailey organization. A frequent choreographer and artist-in-residence at Ailey since 1999, he has set many of his works on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II, and at The Ailey School; and

WHEREAS, the Company's current repertory includes his ballets In/Side and Strange Humors. In addition to expanding the Ailey repertory with works by artists as diverse as Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Ronald K. Brown, Garth Fagan, Bill T. Jones, Jiří Kylián, Wayne McGregor, Ohad Naharin, and Paul Taylor.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and we further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honorees at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 25th day of April, 2014 by:

Honorable Marlene Davis, Alderwoman 19th Ward

Adopted this the 25th day of April, 2014 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen