

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Song of the Anchorite **(2025 World Premiere)**

Choreography: Jamar Roberts

Music: Composed by Maurice Ravel, performed by Avishai Cohen, Yonathan Avishai, Barak Mori, and Ziv Ravitz

Costume Design: Jon Taylor and Jamar Roberts

Lighting Design: Yi-Chung Chen

Scenic Design: Joseph Anthony Gaito

Alvin -

To you, I offer my eternal debt of gratitude for leaving behind a legacy of truth, power, beauty, and spirit. Because of you, we are seen. - Jamar Roberts

Renowned Ailey choreographer Jamar Roberts gives a fresh take on the 1961 solo *Hermit Songs*, Alvin Ailey's reaction to a set of medieval religious texts and the haunting song cycle by Samuel Barber that they inspired. The result, [*Song of the Anchorite*](#), is a powerful meditation on passion and devotion—both earthly and spiritual—danced to jazz trumpeter Avishai Cohen's interpretation of a Ravel adagio.



Jamar Roberts.
Photo by Dario Calmese.

Jamar Roberts:

Jamar Roberts, from Miami, FL, was the Resident Choreographer of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater from 2019-2022. Roberts has made seven works on the Company: *Members Don't Get Weary* (2016), *Ode* (2019), *A Jam Session for Troubling Times* (2020), *Holding Space* (2021), *In a Sentimental Mood* (2022), *Al-Andalus Blues* (2024), and this season's *Song of the Anchorite*. He also set *Gemeos* on Ailey II. Roberts is a graduate of the New World School of the Arts and The Ailey School and has danced for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, and Complexions. Roberts won the 2016 Bessie Award for Outstanding Performer and has performed as a guest artist with the Royal Ballet in London. Commissions

include DanceAspen, Miami City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, ABT Studio Company, Martha Graham Dance Company, LA Dance Project, Vail Dance Festival, Fall for Dance, The Juilliard School, BalletX, MoveNYC, New York City Ballet, and Works and Process at the Guggenheim where he created the films *Cooped* and *A Chronicle of a Pivot at a Point in Time*. The March on Washington Film Festival invited Roberts to create a tribute to John Lewis, and he has also made a film for the LA Opera entitled *The First Bluebird in the Morning*. Roberts was a Director's Fellow at NYU's Center for Ballet and currently serves as an Arnhold Creative Associate at large and distinguished visiting faculty at The Juilliard School.



Avishai Cohen.
Photo by Daniela Feijoo

Avishai Cohen

The first moments of "Ashes to Gold" – the dramatic five-part suite which opens Avishai Cohen's new album – feature the unfamiliar sound of the great Tel Aviv trumpeter playing flute, establishing a dreamlike, almost pastoral ambience soon to be torn apart. What follows is some of the most intense and concentrated music Cohen and his band of friends have recorded to date, mirroring the deep tensions of a troubled era. Ashes to Gold: the title imagery is drawn from the old Japanese art of kintsugi, the ceramic repair work "where you take the old and the broken and try and put the pieces back together, to make something golden and beautiful from the fragments," says Avishai Cohen. "In a way I think that's where we dwell. Our reality. And although this music can't help but reflect the times, it also – in my wishful imagination - has some hope to it. At least, it is not only dark."

***Song of the Anchorite* Music Credit Information**

"Adagio assai (from Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major)" performed by Avishai Cohen, composed by Maurice Ravel from the album *Ashes to Gold*