



Dance! Dance! Dance! World famous dance company shares moves during community class in Santa Barbara

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More than 100 people, ranging from four to more than 80 years old, get to learn and practice with members of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

We're in the middle of a dance class in downtown Santa Barbara. But it is much more than a class. It's an experience. More than 100 people are learning some dance moves from members of one of the world's most iconic modern dance companies.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is doing two performances in Santa Barbara this week, including one on Wednesday night. But, members of the company also held a community dance class for all comers at Santa Barbara's historic Carrillo Ballroom.

And, when we say all comers, we mean all comers. The age range is four to more than 80 years old.

"It's an incredible thing to witness, to see these world-class dancers perform with members of the community," said Jenna Hamilton-Rolle, who is UCSB Arts and Lectures Director of Education and Community Engagement. "It just feels like once in a lifetime."

UCSB Arts and Lectures sponsors the concerts at the Granada Theater and some community events, like this class.

"It was really fun, really fun," said Nancy Saway. The 73-year-old is having a great time. "I wanted to see how they do what they do, and I love it."

She said she learned a few steps—"a lot of new moves. I'm not sure I can recreate it, but I love it."

Kyle Alves is a UCSB student who found the experience inspiring. "Oh, Alvin Ailey...it was a spiritual experience. They opened the sky, and they clapped together. It's like I was at church. It's beautiful, it's beautiful."

Judy Stowe said everyone should try this, and she was a little unhappy to see me on the sidelines watching.

"It's unbelievable," said Stowe. "You should have joined. It's so stimulating, the music, the dancers. I loved it. It was wonderful."

On the other side of the age spectrum was Paloma Tummel, who is four years old. Tummel wasn't shy on the dance floor but was very uncomfortable with microphones. Her dad, Jeremy, said she loved the class and dancing in general.



"It was incredible just to see the smile on her face, and to know that she loves this," said Tummel.

On Wednesday morning, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performed a special show for hundreds of community schoolchildren.

Wednesday night, they did the second of two public performance at Santa Barbara's Granada Theater. The program featured the dance company's beloved masterpiece, *Revelations*.