

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Grace

(1999; New Production 2024)

Choreography: Ronald K. Brown
Assistant to the Choreographer: Arcell Cabuag
Music: Various Artists
Costumes: Omotayo Wunmi Olaiya
Lighting Design: Tsubasa Kamei

(Created for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1999)

Marking its 25th anniversary, Ronald K. Brown's spellbinding [Grace](#) is a fervent tour-de-force depicting individuals on a journey to the promised land. This spiritually charged work was created for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1999, set to Duke Ellington's classic "Come Sunday," Roy Davis' hit "Gabriel," and the powerful rhythms of Fela Kuti's Afropop beats. Infused with Brown's signature blend of modern dance and West African idioms, the piece follows 12 dancers on a moving journey illustrating Brown's idea of individuals going through everyday life without acknowledging the 'grace' surrounding us all. Through *Grace*, Brown seeks to continue "lifting one's spirit and stirring one's soul."



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in
Ronald K. Brown's *Grace*.
Photo by Danica Paulos.

"Grace, the luminous masterpiece that Ronald K. Brown made for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in 1999, ranks as one of the greatest and most enduringly spirit-lifting dance works of the past twenty-five years. The Ailey company revived it beautifully..."

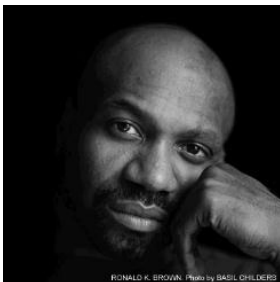
The New Yorker, Brian Seibert – January 13, 2025

"The company opened its season with the return of a truly remarkable work, Ronald K. Brown's *Grace* (1999). The striking Richardson was in this too, along with a commanding Coral Dolphin as the mother god figure. Jamison recognized Brown's talent; she commissioned *Grace* and gave her dancers — and subsequent generations, too — the priceless gift of his choreography."

The New York Times, Gia Kourlas – December 8, 2024

"Brown's rapturous dance is meant to stir the soul. The costumes help tell the story: In Omotayo Wunmi Olaiya's vivid, sculptural designs, the angels wear white and the earthly people red. By the end, they are all in white — they have found grace — and the journey to get there is transfixing, pulsating and galvanizing."

The New York Times, Gia Kourlas – December 2, 2024



Ronald K. Brown. Photo by
Basil Childers.

Ronald K. Brown

Brooklyn-born Ronald K. Brown has created and presented dances since 1985, with his NY-based company Evidence, at venues in the U.S., France, Brazil, England, and Cote d'Ivoire. Brown's choreography has been performed by Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Philadanco, Ailey II, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, among others. Brown has worked with and learned from Jennifer Muller/The Works, Mary Anthony Dance Theater/Phoenix, Bessie Schonberg, Ann Carlson and Judith Jamison. He is the recipient of numerous awards including a New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie), National Endowment for the Arts Choreographers Fellowship, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, the American Dance Festival Humphrey/Weidman/Limon Award, Black Theater Alliance Award, and fellowships from the Edward and Sally van Lier fund.

In addition, Brown was named Def Dance Jam Workshop Mentor of the Year in 2000. In 2003, he received an AUDELCO (Black Theatre Award) for his choreography Crowns: Portraits of Black Women in Church Hats, originally produced by the McCarter Theater and presented off-Broadway in 2003. In fall 2006, Brown received The United State Artists Rose Fellowship. He was one of only four choreographers of 50 artists to receive the inaugural award. Most recently in 2012, Brown received a Fred and Adele Astaire Award for his outstanding choreography in "The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess".

This new production of *Grace* is supported by Maury & Joseph Bohan.

The original production of *Grace* was made possible by Elizabeth Marsteller Gordon and
Natasha Leibel Levine, M.D. & Harlan B. Levine, M.D.

The creation of this work was made possible, in part, by AT&T, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and
The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

Grace Music Credit Information

Song: **Come Sunday**

Composer: Duke Ellington

Performed by: Jimmy McPhail

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Song: **Gabriel**

Performed by: Peven Everett and Roy Davis Jr.

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Song: **Bless-It**

Composer: Paul Johnson

Recorded at Underground Therapy Music Studios Chicago, IL.

Song: **Rock Shock**

Written and produced by Roy Davis, Jr. Published by Roy Davis, Jr. Music ASCAP. Recorded at Underground Therapy Music Studios, Chicago, IL.

Song: **Shakara**

Composer: Fela (Anikulapo) Kuti

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Song: **Come Sunday**

Composer: Duke Ellington

Performed by: Jennifer Holiday

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