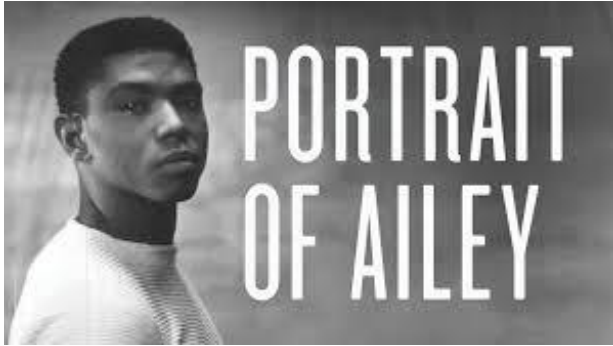




PORTRAIT OF AILEY

Available to watch for free on ailey.org

The story of the life, work, and legacy of dancer and choreographer [Alvin Ailey](#), founder of the world-renowned [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#), is explored in [the eight-part documentary series *Portrait of Ailey*](#) available for free on the AILEY website.

Created by [Sylvia Waters](#), artistic director emerita of [Ailey II](#), with AILEY archivist Dominique Singer, in partnership with PBS affiliate WNET and PBS Learning, the series explores Mr. Ailey's life through archival footage and never-before-heard interviews with him and his closest collaborators. The collection creates a narrative of Mr. Ailey and his pioneering legacy that had a profound impact on dance and American culture.

[Portrait of Ailey's](#) chapters ([Texas Roots](#); [California](#); [The Choreographer](#); [Worldwide Expansion](#); [The Total Dancer](#); [The Repertory](#); [Legacy](#); [Epilogue](#)) focus on Mr. Ailey's childhood growing up in Texas, his earliest days as a dancer with the Lester Horton Dance Company, his meteoric rise as a world-famous choreographer, and his philosophies on training and nurturing hundreds of dancers. Each episode is accompanied by a study guide and educational materials that introduce a new generation to Mr. Ailey as a performer, choreographer, celebrity, teacher, social activist, dance ambassador, arts advocate, and supporter of new choreographic voices and visions.

Along with contemporary footage, *Portrait of Ailey* features rare, historic film and still images as well as Mr. Ailey's own poetic words. "When Mr. Ailey was alive, he often walked the hallways, dropped in on classes or into the student lounge with videos for viewing, and connected with everyone along the way," said series creator Sylvia Waters. "I wanted audiences and students today to feel something like that connection, so they will forever be inspired by his determination to 'bring dance back to the people'."

Portrait of Ailey is also a unique learning tool for dance educators as well as social studies and history teachers in grades 9–12. On [PBS LearningMedia](#), educators can share videos with students online, use the "Build a Lesson" tool to craft curriculum-based lessons inspired by the films' themes, and download handouts and discussion questions to engage your class in Mr. Ailey's historic creative legacy.

To read a blog post on connecting dancer Alvin Ailey's life story with classrooms, [please visit this link on THIRTEEN, America's flagship PBS station in New York.](#)

[Click here to download *Portrait of Ailey* B-Roll](#)

[Click here to download *Portrait of Ailey* Epilogue B-Roll, with Sylvia Waters](#)

The creation of *Portrait of Ailey* is generously supported by Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc.'s donors and funders to ensure that the importance and impact of Alvin Ailey is taught to the next generation.