

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Hymn

(1993, 2026 New Production)

Choreographed and Directed: Judith Jamison

Text Conceived, Written and Recorded: Anna Deavere Smith

Restaged: Matthew Rushing, Clifton Brown, and Kanji Segawa

Music: Robert Ruggieri

Original Costumes: Toyce Anderson

Costumes Redesigned: Jon Taylor

Set: Timothy Hunter, Daniel Bonitsky and Donald J. Oberpriller

Lighting: Timothy Hunter

Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison's stunning, Emmy Award-winning 1993 tribute to Alvin Ailey uses explosive, full company dances and quiet solos to illuminate Mr. Ailey's humanity and the dancers' unique qualities. A unique collaboration between two highly acclaimed talents from the worlds of dance and theater, *Hymn* features personal recollections from the dancers collected and arranged by the multi-talented actor and playwright Anna Deavere Smith, along with a driving percussive score by Robert Ruggieri, to create a landmark work that's as intimately moving as it is awe-inspiring. In 1999, *A Hymn* for Alvin Ailey became a television special as part of PBS' "Great Performances: Dance in America" and received an Emmy award for Ms. Jamison's choreography.

"...Judith Jamison's "Hymn," an eloquent evocation of Ailey that is on its way to being another classic."

Jennifer Dunning, *The New York Times*, December 14, 1996

"The work, "Hymn," **became instantly a kind of touchstone for the company...**"

Mary Ellen Hunt, *Dance Magazine*, March 11, 2004

"Hymn...**emerges as the most thrilling piece of dance theatre I have seen all year...** Beautifully performed, with power, reverence and love, '**Hymn**' is **absolutely astonishing work.**"

Clive Barnes, *New York Post*, December 20, 1993



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Judith Jamison's *Hymn*. Photo by Andrew Eccles.

Anna Deavere Smith is a playwright and actress credited with having created a new form of theater. President Obama awarded Smith the National Endowment for the Humanities Medal. She is the recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship, several Obie Awards, a Drama Desk Award, and the George Polk Career Award in Journalism and the Dean's Medal from Stanford University School of Medicine. She was a runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize and has been nominated for two Tony Awards. Her plays, focusing on contemporary issues from multiple points of view, are composed of excerpts from hundreds of interviews. Plays and films based on them include *Fires in the Mirror*, *Twilight: Los Angeles*, *Let Me Down Easy*, and *Notes from the Field*. Her work as an actress on television includes *Inventing Anna*, *The West Wing*, *Nurse Jackie*, and *Black-ish*. Mainstream movies include *Philadelphia*, *The American President*, and *Rachel Getting Married*. Smith is a professor at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. She holds several honorary doctorate degrees including from Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Spelman, the Juilliard School, and Oxford.

The creation of *Hymn* was made possible, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and by grants from The Rockefeller Foundation and Diego Della Valle.

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Hymn Music Credit Information

Music track produced by Rick Kerr.