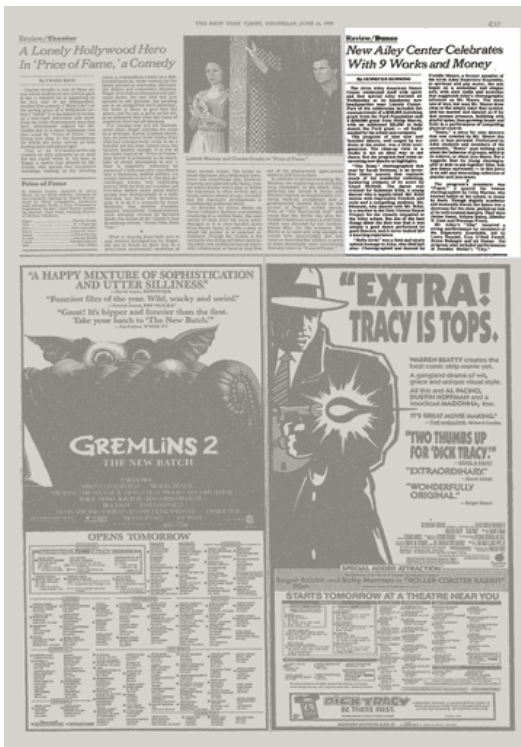


# Review/Dance; New Ailey Center Celebrates With 9 Works and Money

By Jennifer Dunning

June 14, 1990



See the article in its original context from June 14, 1990, Section C, Page 17 Buy Reprints

[VIEW ON TIMESHACHINE](#)

TimesMachine is an exclusive benefit for home delivery and digital subscribers.

## About the Archive

This is a digitized version of an article from The Times's print archive, before the start of online publication in 1996. To preserve these articles as they originally appeared, The Times does not alter, edit or update them.

Occasionally the digitization process introduces transcription errors or other problems; we are continuing to work to improve these archived versions.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Center celebrated itself with spirit and that special Ailey warmth on Wednesday at its handsome new headquarters near Lincoln Center. Part of the celebration included the announcement of a \$300,000 matching grant from the Ford

Foundation and a \$500,000 grant from Philip Morris, with an additional \$25,000 to help match the Ford grant - all badly needed by the school and company.

The program of nine new and familiar dances, well staged by students at the center, was a little over-generous. The close-up view in a studio is not an ideal way to see dance. But the program had some interesting new dances as highlights.

"The Road," choreographed this year by Sarah Swenson, is an inventive dance journey that captures much of the wonderful rollicking, hunkering wildness of its score by Lloyd McNeill. The dance was created for Suleiman Rifai, a young dancer who is legally blind. Mr. Rifai moves with impressive freedom and style and a compelling modesty. Ms. Swenson, who danced with Mr. Rifai, is a teacher in the New Visions Dance Project for the visually impaired at the Ailey school. But one of the best things about the duet was that it was simply a good dance performed by good dancers, and it never looked like a learning experience.

"Hello Alvin" was a fond and nicely upbeat homage to Ailey, who died last year. Choreographed and danced by Freddie Moore, a former member of the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, to spiritual and pop music, the solo began on a somewhat sad elegiac note, with slow walks and stretches that suggested Ailey's choreographic influence on Mr. Moore. The mood was of loss, but soon Mr. Moore drew close to the empty chair that symbolized his mentor and danced as if for that unseen presence, bubbling with playful spins, then growing looser and freer in a performance of compelling physical control.

"Roots," a piece for nine dancers that was created by Mr. Moore this year, is less personal. Performed by Ailey students and members of the ensemble, "Roots" says nothing new about the behavior of groups, which is its subject, or about jazz dance. But it suggests that its young choreographer is able to put together lithe, lush jazz dance movement - in this piece to an odd and interesting collection of popular and jazz music.

The program's premiere was "Fugue," a quartet for women choreographed by Celia Marino, who teaches ballet at the school, to music by Bach. Though slightly academic and musically literal, the dance was a showcase for the clear, pulled-up look of its well-trained dancers. They were Janine Jones, Juliana Bates, Jennifer W. Cook and Penelope Freeh.

Mr. Ailey's "Isba" received a strong performance by members of the Repertory Ensemble, led by Laura Rossini, Troy O'Neil Powell, Bryna Bidinger and Ali Dixon. The program also included performances of Jennifer Muller's "City."

