

INSIDE *Arts* **E**



A Symphony of Space

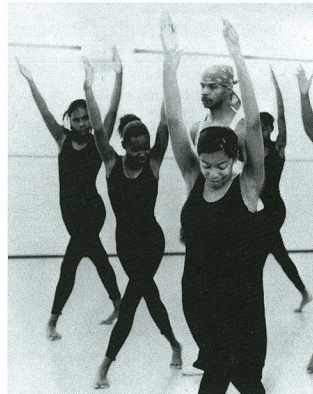
Merce Cunningham On His Life and Work

Web Ready? Not Yet!

on the cover *A young dancer in
Cal Performances' AileyCamp*

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FEATURES



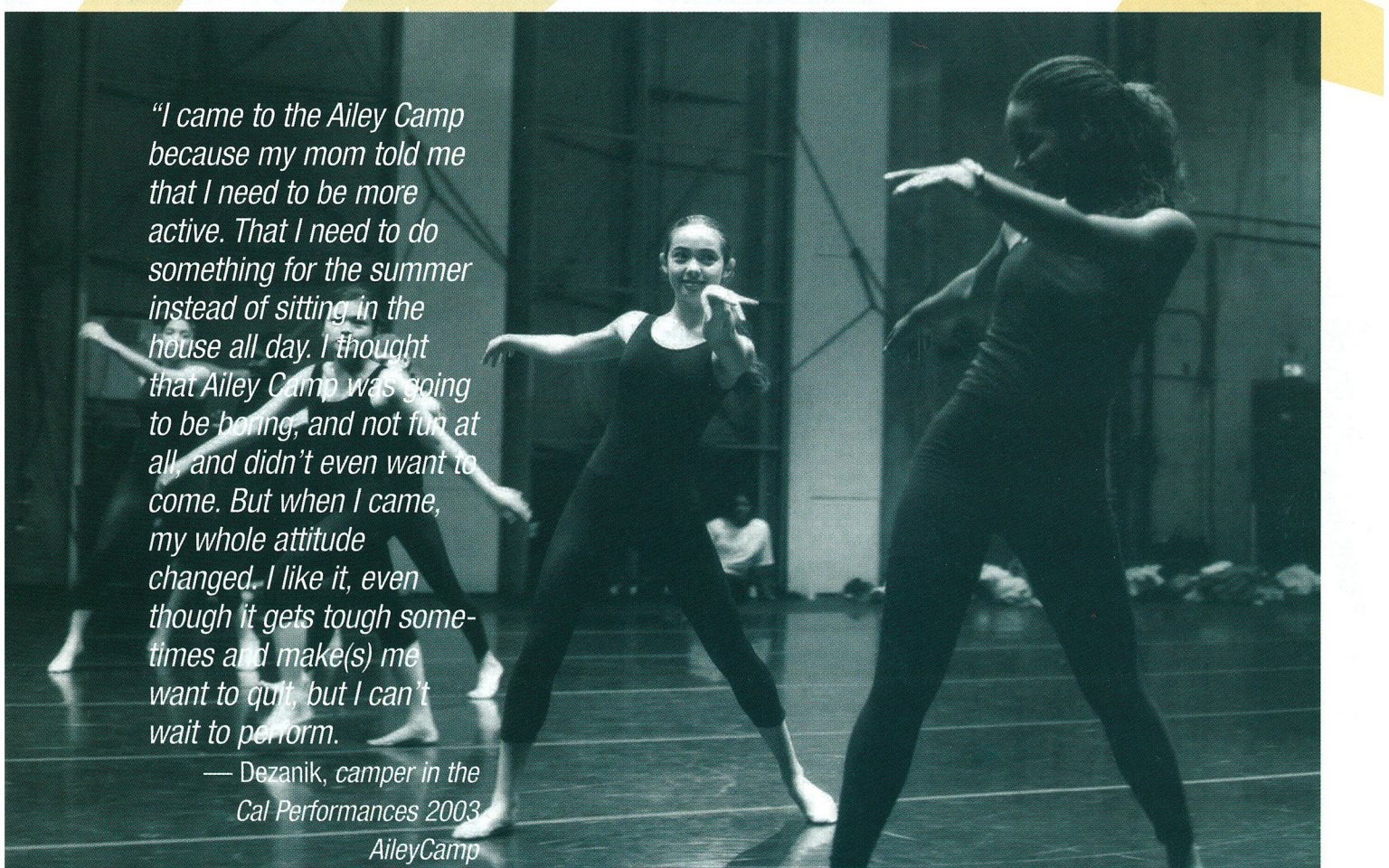
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**THE ART OF DANCE,
THE ART OF LIFE**

At CalPerformances, AileyCamp helps young people
creative new ideas about art—and themselves.

the art of dance, the art of lifie

At Cal Performances, AileyCamp helps young people new create ideas about art — and about themselves



"I came to the Ailey Camp because my mom told me that I need to be more active. That I need to do something for the summer instead of sitting in the house all day. I thought that Ailey Camp was going to be boring, and not fun at all, and didn't even want to come. But when I came, my whole attitude changed. I like it, even though it gets tough sometimes and make(s) me want to quit, but I can't wait to perform.

— Dezanik, camper in the
Cal Performances 2003
AileyCamp

Dezanik may have been surprised at how much she liked this summer's AileyCamp at UC-Berkeley. But anyone who had experienced the program last year in Berkeley—or at any of the other AileyCamp sites around the country—could have predicted her positive reaction.

The program, conceived and directed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, has been winning fans around the country since it was founded in 1989. Camps have operated successfully in New York, Kansas City, Boston, Chicago and Bridgeport, as well as Berkeley, using dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, self-discipline, creative expression and critical thinking skills for children who are in the tender and perilous years of middle school.

The AileyCamp curriculum includes daily technique classes in bal-



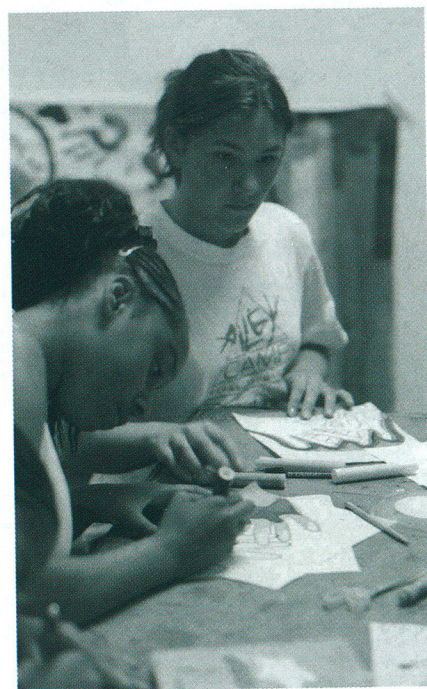
let, Horton-based modern dance, jazz and West African dance. There are classes in performance technique and creative communication to deepen the students' awareness of their potential for self-expression. And personal development classes provide counseling in nutrition, conflict resolution, drug abuse prevention, decision-making and goal-setting.

AileyCamp targets students with academic, social and domestic challenges—criteria that often determine a child's risk of dropping out of school—but the program also welcomes students who have little opportunity to develop their artistic interests. An important aspect of the program's success lies in providing positive adult and peer role models for underserved youths. At the end of camp, students leave with valuable life skills and a sense of accomplishment before they enter the challenging high school years.

The Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances is the first West Coast site of the program, and the first on a uni-

versity campus. The program is held in Zellerbach Hall and adjacent buildings on the UC Berkeley campus, providing a positive experience in a university setting.

"AileyCamp has taken a prominent place in Cal Performances' Education and Community Programs by provid-



ing a multi-discipline dance-immersion experience for young people, conducted by a company of the highest artistic integrity," says Stephanie Scott, who is Cal Performances' public relations associate.

The Berkely/Oakland AileyCamp

at Cal Performances received major financial start-up support for its inaugural season last year from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the California Arts Council Challenge Program, Wells Fargo and Vivendi Universal. The Hewlett Foundation

committed to a three-year sponsorship of the program, and the Zellerbach Family Fund added its support for the 2003 season. The program also received backing in 2003 from the Robert J. and Helen H. Glaser Family Foundation, Erika and Austin Hills,

Some things I like about Ailey Camp is that they help me express my poems and my feelings about dancing. They also talk to us about some things that some people can't (talk) to their parents about.

Richelle

**Dear Alvin Ailey,
I love your camp so much. You did very well. I hope you rest in peace. Cause everyone miss(es) you. Well I just want to say We love you
And your camp too!
Love, Camper Anthonia**

We get to practice modern, jazz, ballet and African. We also get to learn dances for our performance coming up, which I am very excited about. We have great teachers here, all of them are (professionals). We have great food, they supply us with breakfast and dinner and here we are all encouraged to do (our) best and most of all be (our) own self.

Malaika

**I am from Six Flags Marine World
Great America
The Beach Boardwalk in Santa Cruz
Oakland Zoo**

What I like about Ailey Camp is that we just don't get dance classes, we get classes that are a little bit more different. They're like fantastic classes because one of them teach(es) us about our past and the other one about ourself and the last one is about connecting yourself throu(gh) things like art.

Lizabeth

When I first discovered (Ailey) Camp I thought it would be a good learning experience. On my first day, the classes were great. The teachers are very helpful and understanding. I made a lot of nice friends. The things that we learned about (were) self-esteem and how you carry your self, and we learn new things from other people.

Victoria

**I am from my mom, Princess Parker
My dad, Jeffrey Parker**

**I am from funny people
Who laugh and joke
and say silly things**

**I am from chicken
Steaks
Rice
Mashed Potatoes**

I thought Ailey camp was going to be more dancing and less sitting, and drawing, and talking. But it turns out that the non-dancing classes aren't as bad as I thought. Now that I'm here I realize that it is more strict than I thought, but it helps me focus on what I want to improve. I like doing all types of dances because they all feed off of each other. It's fun seeing how some move in ballet helped me make a step in African stronger.

Sara

**I am from bikes
Plastic cups
Scooters
Balls
Cats**

I'm here because I love to dance and I want (to) meet new people and have new dance experience. I thought it would be boring and we would dance all day. My experience here has been great. I give it 10 out of 10 stars.

Christian

**Where I'm From
I am from a gold metal lamp
Where black people are funny
I am from twin beds where my brother and I sleep
Basketballs that I shoot in hoops**

**I am from Barbie Doll legs on the roof
Bikes, scooters, skates, helmets
Green grass and cement
"Do your homework."
"Come in the house."
"Don't be a follower, be a leader."**

Karl's Fund for Kids at the East Bay Community Foundation, and Mrs. Miriam H. Lar Rieu.

The Audience Development Committee of Cal Performances' Board of Trustees and the Alameda/Contra Costa Chapter of Links, Inc. serve as community leaders and volunteers for recruitment, interviews and other general support.

Because of its backers, AileyCamp is able to provide all campers with full tuition scholarships, breakfast and lunch, camp uniforms and dance clothing. Many of them also get transportation to and from their neighborhoods.

Students are recruited at presentations in their schools, then individual applicants are interviewed by AileyCamp staffers and volunteer community leaders. Once selected, they commit to five weeks of intensive

work in dance and self-discipline, with a big public performance at the end.

Last year, there were 75 participants; this year, 68.

One of this year's campers, in an unsigned testimonial, said that she was recruited by a friend who attended last year's camp.

"When I was there, I was amazed at how many different kinds of dance they were taught," she wrote. "I was brought up around the art of dance so I've been a dancer since I can remember. When I heard about the camp I thought it would be a good experience for me because I would meet new people, and learn different kinds of dance.

"...This is a place where you can talk to you elders, about stuff that you feel uncomfortable talking about to other people. Alvin Ailey Dance Camp is a wonderful place for people who want to have fun!" ■