

Alvin ailey essay examples

[Art & Culture](#), [Dance](#)



Introduction

Alvin Ailey proved he was gifted in more than one way. Raised by a young single mother, life was far from easy for him. He rose from poverty to become a figure that greatly influenced the 20th century modern dance. Alvin Ailey's rise from poverty all the way to the top and finally succumbing to AIDs is an interesting story. He certainly had his weaknesses, but Alvin Ailey is an individual who will forever remain in the hearts of dance lovers (Ailey & Bailey 1995).

Discussion

Alvin was born in 1931 in Texas. Being born to a teenage mother (17 years old) then having his father desert them at just 6 months was far from refreshing. He was young when the Great Depression was at its worst. Racial segregation was also the order of the day. His fear of the whites was heightened when a group of white men raped his mother. Alvin had to contend with all issues in a bid to change his life (Gitenstein, 2006). His ability to quickly grasp content led him to studying languages and also different dance moves (and music).

His style was one that perfectly blended with his athletic body. His desire to learn and perfect his art is what set him apart. He constantly sought after mentors who essentially it was not until 1958 that he finally opened his own dance company. By then, he was greatly experienced as he had learned a lot from various stars. In the 1960s, he decided to take his business to the road-literary. This was a major success as a U. S. state department sponsored the tour (Gitenstein, 2006). This gave him a chance to interact with his fans and

learn how much they appreciated (his) dances.

His life is seen by many as not only one of struggle, but also hope. He had to rise from the very bottom, overcoming his fears to achieve a quality life. He knew that he had the power to be different; the power to change the world. He achieved all this by working hard and going beyond common belief. It also took much patience as he took it upon himself to learn as much as he could from individuals who had already made it big (Gitenstein, 2006).

During his final career years, he received recognition from the Kennedy centre; for his contribution to arts. Despite being a year before his demise, Ailey was given an honour that made him get recognized by many more people the world over. The companies he founded and the ballets he created serve as a reminder of a man who overcame all odds to achieve what no one ever imagined. This was regardless of the fact that he had reportedly died of AIDs (Ailey & Bailey 1995).

Conclusion

Alvin is a man who overcame endless hurdles to become a star. He had to cope with many issues that arose either because of his race or because of poverty. The Great Depression also, only worsened the situation. He chose to sit at the feet of those who had already accomplished; all in a bid to improve his skills and even learn new ones. These skills would later enable him successfully open a company (AAADT) and also run it. He also opened a couple of businesses. Some ballets in play, today, are also part of his contribution. His legacy lives on despite his untimely death.

References

Ailey, A., & Bailey, A. P. (1995). *Revelations: the autobiography of Alvin Ailey*.

Secaucus, N. J.: Carol Pub. Group.

Gitenstein, J. (2006). *Alvin Ailey*. New York: Rosen Central.