

# WHITNEY

Whitney Museum  
of American Art  
Press Office

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# MEDIA ALERT

## SPECIAL KYLE ABRAHAM DANCE PERFORMANCE ADDED TO EDGES OF AILEY SCHEDULE



*Tickets are available for purchase on [whitney.org](https://whitney.org). Space is limited, and performance tickets include same-day admission to the Museum.*

**New York, NY, December 17, 2024** — The Whitney Museum of American Art announces the addition of a newly commissioned dance performance by choreographer Kyle Abraham to its suite of performances accompanying the landmark exhibition [Edges of Ailey](#).

Presented in the Museum's theater on January 3–5, 2025, [If We Were a Love Song](#) is a series of poetic vignettes created by Kyle Abraham in collaboration with A.I.M and set to some of Nina Simone's most intimate songs. The atmosphere of this work melds the intricate qualities of Abraham's movements and musicality with Simone's iconic silky voice. Comprised primarily of solos and duets, with versions created for both stage and screen, the work unfolds like a series of living portraits, deepening our reflections on community, love, and one's self.

This special performance is part of a robust program of over 90 live dance performances, classes, and engaging talks offered in conjunction with *Edges of Ailey*, the first large-scale museum exhibition to celebrate the life, dances, influences, adjacencies, and enduring legacy of visionary artist and choreographer Alvin Ailey (b. 1931, Rogers, TX; d. 1989, New York, NY).

This series of programs accompanies the exhibition's in-gallery component, which includes works by more than 80 artists and never-before-seen archival materials. The performance series is inspired, motivated, and organized to reflect Ailey's commitment to building a platform for Black modern dancers and choreographers, and gives visitors the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the full scope of Ailey's world and legacy in an intimate setting.

### **A.I.M by Kyle Abraham: *If We Were a Love Song***

Dates:

January 3, 4 pm and 7 pm

January 4, 1 pm and 4 pm

January 5, 1 pm

Location: Floor 3, Theater

Event Link: <https://whitney.org/events/aim-kyle-abraham>

### **Collaborators**

Choreography: Kyle Abraham in collaboration with A.I.M

Music: Nina Simone

Costume Design: Kyle Abraham, Karen Young

Lighting Design: Dan Scully

Company: Donovan Reed, Amari Frazier, Mykiah Goree, Alysia Johnson, Olivia Wang, Faith Joy Mondesire, Katurah Stephen, Jamaal Bowman, Gianna Theodore, William Okajima, Morgan Olschewske

**Kyle Abraham** (he/him) is Founder and Artistic Director of A.I.M by Kyle Abraham. He has premiered his work to international audiences and acclaim since 2006. Abraham has been profiled in *Document Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, *Ebony*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Kinfolk*, *O Magazine*, *Paper*, *Surface*, *Vogue*, and *W Magazine*, among many other publications. He is the recipient of the 2024 National Dance Critics Award for Choreography (*Are You in Your Feelings* / Alvin Ailey Dance Theater), Dance Magazine Award (2022), Princess Grace Statue Award (2018), Doris Duke Award (2016), and MacArthur Fellowship (2013). In addition to performing and developing new works for his company, Abraham has been commissioned by a wide variety of dance companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The National Ballet of Cuba, New York City Ballet, Paul Taylor American Modern Dance, and The Royal Ballet. Along with Abraham's latest world premiere of *Cassette Vol. 1* in Hamburg, Germany, Abraham recently premiered *Dear Lord, Make Me Beautiful* at the Park Avenue Armory in New York City.

Abraham has led and curated several performance series, including Danspace Project's fiftieth anniversary season in 2024 and Lincoln Center's Summer for the City (2022 and 2023), among others. In 2020, Abraham was the first-ever guest editor for *Dance Magazine*.

He serves as the Claude and Alfred Mann Endowed Professor in Dance at The University of Southern California (USC) Gloria Kaufman School of Dance (2021–). Abraham sits on the advisory board for *Dance Magazine* and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Black Genius Brain Trust, and the inaugural

cohort of the Dorchester Industries Experimental Design Lab, a partnership between the Prada Group, Theaster Gates Studio, Dorchester Industries, and Rebuild Foundation.

### **About A.I.M**

Contemporary dance company A.I.M by Kyle Abraham, considered “one of the most consistently excellent troupes working today” (*The New York Times*), provides multifaceted performances, educational programming, and community-based workshops across the globe. Led by acclaimed choreographer and Artistic Director Kyle Abraham’s innovative vision, the work is galvanized by Black culture and history, features a rich tapestry of Black and queer stories, and is grounded in a conglomeration of unique perspectives described by Abraham as a “post-modern gumbo” of movement exploration.

A.I.M is one of the most active touring dance companies in the United States, with an audience base as diverse as A.I.M’s movement vocabulary, drawing inspiration from a multitude of sources and dance styles. Since A.I.M’s founding in 2006, Abraham has created over thirty original works for and with the company. To expand its repertoire and offer a breadth of dance work to audiences, A.I.M commissions new works and performs existing works by outside choreographers, such as Trisha Brown, Bebe Miller, Andrea Miller, Doug Varone, Paul Singh, and A.I.M alums Rena Butler, Maleek Washington, and Keerati Jinakunwiphat.

Abraham’s unique vision and illumination of poignant and relevant issues set him apart from his generation of choreographers as a leading creative force in dance. A.I.M extends this vision and amplifies surrounding artistic voices to share movement and community-based work with audiences around the world.

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## **PRESS CONTACT**

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site at [whitney.org/press](https://whitney.org/press) or contact:

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## **ABOUT THE WHITNEY**

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney’s mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

### **Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment**

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning “island of many hills.” The Museum’s current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan (“tobacco field”). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region’s original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum’s Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum’s website](#).

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## **VISITOR INFORMATION**

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors twenty-five years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

### **Image credit:**

A.I.M by Kyle Abraham, *If We Were a Love Song*, Catherine Kirk. Photo by Steven Pisano

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