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Mig Gordon,  
Press person  
(212) 245-4771

Alvin Ailey  
Ellington

Joe Perpich



*Sheila*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 29, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: PETER SORUM  
FROM: SUSAN PORTER  
SUBJECT: Action Memo

Mrs. Ford has accepted the following out-of-town invitation:

EVENT: Opening night of Alvin Ailey Dance Company and the  
Duke Ellington Orchestra

DATE: Tuesday, August 10, 1976

TIME: 8:00 p.m.

PLACE: New York State Theater at Lincoln Center  
New York, New York

CONTACTS: Mr. Edward Lander  
O: 212-832-1740  
H: 212-866-6241

Press Contact:

Meg Gordean  
212-245-4771

COMMENTS: Mrs. Ford will participate in the opening evening of a  
six-day celebration of the music of Duke Ellington.  
On this evening, Alvin Ailey will launch his long-planned  
contribution to the Bicentennial with some sixteen  
ballets choreographed to Duke's compositions. The  
Duke Ellington Orchestra will join the Alvin Ailey  
City Center Dance Theater for this engagement with  
guest performances by American Ballet Theatre and the  
Alvin Ailey Repertory Workshop.

The invitation was originally extended to Mrs. Ford by  
Ruth Ellington, Duke Ellington's sister, on behalf of  
the Dance Theater Foundation and is to be a major event  
in the Bicentennial celebration.



As you know, Mrs. Ford dropped by a special Duke Ellington concert held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine when she was in New York on April 29th. Mrs. Ford will overnight and return to Washington Wednesday morning, August 11th.

Thank you.

c: BF Staff  
Red Cavaney  
William Nicholson  
Jerry Jones  
Terry O'Donnell  
David Gergen  
Warren Hendriks  
Sarah Massengale  
Milt Mitler  
Rex Scouten  
Staircase



Below  
Missed type  
c: Alvin Ailey  
& morning  
#1

**The Alvin Ailey**

**City Center**

**Dance Theater**

**229 East 59th Street**

**New York, New York 10022**

**(212) 832-1740**

Contact:

- Mr. Edward Anderson,

(212) 832-1740, Sch. #

(212) 866-6241, Home

- Mr. Gordon, Three eyes

(212) 245-4771

June 29, 1976

Ms. Susan Porter  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

8:00 PM. (11:00)

Dear Ms. Porter:

As a member of the Board of Trustees of Dance Theater Foundation, Inc., I would like to extend an invitation to Mrs. Betty Ford to join us on the opening evening, Tuesday, August 10, of a six-day celebration of the music of my late brother, Edward "Duke" Ellington. On this evening, Alvin Ailey will launch his long-planned contribution to the Bicentennial at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center with some sixteen ballets choreographed to Duke's compositions. The Duke Ellington Orchestra will join the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater for this engagement with guest performances by American Ballet Theatre and the Alvin Ailey Repertory Workshop.

The opening night program includes the Ailey Company and the Ellington Orchestra in performances of "Night Creature", choreographed by Mr. Ailey, and "Caravan", last season's popular addition to the Company repertoire, choreographed by Louis Falco, and, Judith Jamison will perform Mr. Ailey's "pas de 'DUKE'" with guest artist, Mikhail Baryshnikov.

We were delighted that Mrs. Ford joined us recently at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine to open Duke's Birthday Celebration and regret that her busy schedule did not allow her to remain with us for the entirety of that thrilling evening. Now I would like to invite Mrs. Ford to join us for this opening evening of a major event in our Nation's Bicentennial Celebration.

Very truly yours



Ruth Ellington

(212) 249-7500



WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
Schedule	Proposed Schedule for Mrs. Ford's Trip to New York City 4 pages.	8/5/1976	B

File Location:

Sheila Weidenfeld Files, Box 27, Folder: 8/10/1976 - New York City - Duke Ellington Celebration SD 1/18/2017

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For immediate release  
Wednesday, Aug. 4, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

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Mrs. Ford will open a six-day celebration of the music of Duke Ellington by the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theatre in New York Tuesday, August 10. The opening, which will launch Alvin Ailey's tribute to the Bicentennial, will be at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center at 8 p. m.

The opening night program includes the Ailey Company and the Ellington Orchestra, with a special guest performance planned by Mikhail Baryshnikov. Mr. Baryshnikov will perform Alvin Ailey's "pas de 'DUKE'" with Judith Jamison. Among performances by the Ailey Company and the Ellington Orchestra will be "Night Creature" and "Caravan." The Alvin Ailey Repertory Workshop will also perform.

Baryshnikov is a permanent guest artist with the American Ballet Theatre.

# # # #



Suggested Remarks, Ellington-Ailey Opening Night

In this very special year, we honor those original and daring dreamers who created and won our first Revolution. This marriage of the music of Duke Ellington and the dance of the Alvin Ailey Company celebrates what America cherishes most---those who reach for the stars.

In music, in dance, in all of life---it is the Revolutionaries who chart new territory for us to explore. I know we are in for a marvelous journey tonight.



For immediate release  
Wednesday, Aug. 4, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

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Baryshnikov is a permanent guest artist with the American Ballet Theatre.

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MRS. FORD'S REMARKS  
ELLINGTON-AILEY OPENING NIGHT  
July 10, 1976  
New York City, New York

IN THIS VERY SPECIAL YEAR,  
WE HONOR THOSE ORIGINAL AND DARING DREAMERS  
WHO CREATED AND WON  
OUR FIRST REVOLUTION.



THIS MARRIAGE

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AND THE DANCE OF THE ALVIN AILEY COMPANY

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IN MUSIC,

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IN ALL OF LIFE-----

IT IS THE REVOLUTIONARIES

WHO CHART NEW TERRITORY

FOR US TO EXPLORE.

I KNOW WE ARE IN

FOR A MARVELOUS JOURNEY TONIGHT.

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# ALVIN AILEY



# ALVIN AILEY CITY CE



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236 West 45th

The New York Times/Larry Morris

Betty Ford dancing with Judith Jamison of the Alvin Ailey dance group backstage at the New York State Theater last night. At right is Ruth Ellington, sister of the late Duke Ellington.

# Betty Ford Tells Ailey's Dancers She Still Practices

By ANNA KISSELGOFF  
Looking resplendent in a Chinese-style pink gown,

she went backstage first to greet the dancers. She caused a stir when she made her entrance to the stage area

Mr. Ailey expressed hope that "the fantastic blossom of the spirit" that he had felt in Duke Ellington's mu-

year we honor those original dreamers who were our first revolutionaries. And this marriage of the music of

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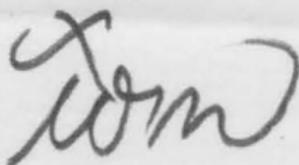
MATINEE TO

Dear Patty,

Not only has the lady got a dynamite mind, she's got dynamite legs, too.

Good luck in Kansas City. (And if the going gets really rough, run Betty!)

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

---

Tom Kerrigan

# Backstage With Betty

# Sen Ros



Post Photo by Nury Hernandez

Betty Ford does a few steps with superstar dancer Judith Jamison backstage before the Alvin Ailey troupe's opening night tribute to Duke Ellington. The First Lady, who once studied dancing with Martha Graham, drew enthusiastic applause from the dancers, who crowded around to shake her hand. Earlier, Mrs. Ford had told the audience of 3000 at th Lincoln Center State Theater that she was proud to "celebrate the marriage of Ellington music and Ailey dancing." See Frances Herridge: Page 14.

WASHINGTON  
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Daily News  
8/11/76  
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# **Belle's Binge Cost Millions; Cleanup Starts**

Story on Page 3

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## ***First Lady and Prima Ballerina***

Mrs. Betty Ford, who studied dance under Martha Graham, does a step with superstar ballerina Judith Jamison of the Alvin Ailey troupe backstage at the State Theater, Lincoln Center, last night. Assembled press and dignitaries and young members of the troupe joined in uproarious applause for the First Lady who was on hand to open the company's salute to Duke Ellington.

**Story on page 4**

8/11/76  
7k. pg.

# WHITE HOUSE HOOFER



—Associated Press

First Lady Betty Ford, attending an opening night tribute to the late Duke Ellington last night, joins lead dancer Judith Jamison in a routine as other members of the Alvin Ailey Dancers provide the tempo on stage at Lincoln Center in New York. Mrs. Ford, a former student and performer with dancer Martha Graham, said that while "I have to limit my activities these days . . . I still practice when nobody's looking."

Consumer Cost: \$1 Billion a Year



UP-128

(BETTY)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- BETTY FORD WILL OPEN A SIX-DAY CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON BY THE ALVIN AILEY CITY CENTER DANCE THEATRE IN NEW YORK THURSDAY, THE WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCED WEDNESDAY. THE LAUNCHING OF ALVIN AILEY'S TRIBUTE TO THE BICENTENNIAL, WILL BE HELD IN THE THE NEW YORK STATE THEATRE AT LINCOLN CENTER AT 8 P.M. ON OPENING NIGHT, THE PROGRAM WILL INCLUDE THE AILEY COMPANY AND THE DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA WITH A SPECIAL GUEST PERFORMANCE BY MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV OF THE AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE.

UPI 08-04 06:47 PED

-2-

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UPI 08-05 09:50 AED



8/11/76

# Betty Comes to Town



News photo by Keith Torrie  
 First lady Betty Ford arrives at LaGuardia's Marine Air Terminal yesterday in company of Secret Service detail. Mrs. Ford planned to attend last night's salute to Duke Ellington by the Alvin Alley dancers. She is scheduled to return to Washington today.

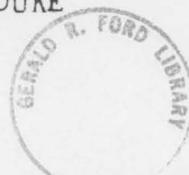
AUG. 23.

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NEW YORK (UPI) -- FORMER DANCE STUDENT BETTY FORD ADMITS SHE STILL PRACTICES "WHEN NOBODY'S LOOKING" AND PROVED HER FORM BY DOING A FEW BASIC BALLET STEPS BACKSTAGE AT LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE ALVIN AILEY DANCE TROUPE.

"I STILL DO IT ... IN A BIG BATHROOM WITH LOTS OF LIGHTS AND MIRRORS," SHE SAID LAST NIGHT. THE FIRST LADY WAS AT THE NEW YORK STATE THEATER FOR THE PREMIER OF A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE DUKE ELLINGTON.

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News photo by Tom Monaster

Betty Ford enjoys get-together with members of the Alvin Ailey dance troupe at Lincoln Center.

# Coach Betty Sends Ailey Ballet Out There Dancing on a Cloud

*Daily News 8/11/76 pg 2*  
By RICHARD EDMONDS

Betty Ford took the spotlight with the flashy Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater last night when she confided backstage at Lincoln Center to superstar ballerina Judith Jamison: "I still practice my ballet exercises in a large bathroom with a lot of mirrors when nobody is looking."

The first lady was trading dance stories with the Ailey troupe in an impromptu pep talk

uproarious applause from assembled press and dignitaries.

The first lady was rushed by

the dancers, Mrs. Ford, who once worked with nonprofit companies like Ailey's remarked: "Isn't it enough satisfaction to

## PEOPLE

ally and physically to Leigh," said Hayley, "and that is what is most important."

■  
The last time **Liz Taylor** sang on-screen was in a 1948 musical called *A Date with Judy*. But game as ever, she turned up at a London recording studio last week and began warbling for her movie role in Composer **Stephen Sondheim's** musical *A Little Night Music*. Unfortunately, Liz's first rehearsal with Leading Man **Robert Stephens** was less harmonious. The actor was fired from the cast and told that Taylor had cited poor "chemistry" between the two as the reason. "Bad chemistry?" retorted Stephens. "We're actors, not pharmacists." Taylor, meanwhile, sang a different song about Stephens' dismissal. "The unit

as a witness, the Congressman has elected to retire when his term expires next January. Said he: "I don't want to give that woman another chance to make an appearance."

■  
A day in bed, plus some hot packs and massage for her ailing back, was enough to put First Lady **Betty Ford** back on her feet and on her way to New York last week. The occasion: the start of a two-week tribute to Composer **Duke Ellington** by the **Alvin Ailey** modern dance company. Ford, who once studied with **Martha Graham**, may have lost a few moves over the years, but obviously none

UPI



22 N.Y. Times  
c 8/10/76 pg.

THE

## Betty Ford Among Notables To Speak at Ailey Festival

By ANNA KISSELGOFF

Betty Ford, Coretta Scott King and Mrs. Maynard Jackson, wife of the Mayor of Atlanta, will be among the special guests who will introduce the performances of the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater's tribute to the late Duke Ellington all this week at Lincoln Center.

Mr. Ailey, who conceived the whole festival four years ago



lip, tomorrow; Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee on Thursday; Ellen Holly and Al Freeman Jr. with Mrs. King on Friday; Labelle, the singing group, on Saturday matinee. Nick Ashford and Valerie Simpson may appear on Sunday matinee, and there is a possibility that Mrs. King will join Ruth Ellington at the close of the all-Ellington festival Sunday night. The company will perform some of the works to the Ellington music along with

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