



usc Trojan

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FAMILY

TAKING THE LEAD

GLORYA KAUFMAN ESTABLISHES
A NEW SCHOOL OF DANCE AT USC

president's page

BY C. L. MAX NIKIAS

Among major research universities, USC claims a number of special distinctions, but there is one I take particular pride in sharing: our singular strength in the arts. No other university pairs a world-class cinema school with a world-class engineering school, or a top-notch music school with a top-notch medical school.

No other university offers conservatory-level instruction, along with opportunities to pursue cutting-edge research with professors. For students who seek a balanced education — one that blends the sciences and engineering with the arts and humanities — USC is truly in a league of its own.

The university is now home to its sixth art school: the USC Glorja Kaufman School of Dance. Ms. Kaufman's gift — the single largest individual gift in the history of dance in the United States — will fund the initial construction of the school's primary facility, which will be named the Glorja Kaufman International Dance Center. It will also create an endowment to support the school's programs and faculty, as well as student recruitment

and scholarships. The school will offer classes in a broad range of dance performance, including classical ballet, and modern, jazz and world dance.

The Kaufman School of Dance — scheduled to open in fall 2015 — completes USC's dynamic portfolio of visual and performing arts programs, as it assumes its place alongside our School of Architecture, School of Cinematic Arts, School of Dramatic Arts, Roski School of Fine Arts and Thornton School of Music. USC currently has more than 3,600 undergraduates majoring in the arts, with nearly 1,300 students pursuing graduate degrees in the arts. Further, more than 1,000 students carry a minor in the arts.

USC has more top students in the arts and humanities than the world's leading universities and conservatories. The university offers impressively diverse academic arts programs, including an outstanding department of art history, housed in our Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sci-

ences. Taken together, this speaks to the exceptional vibrancy of the arts at USC.

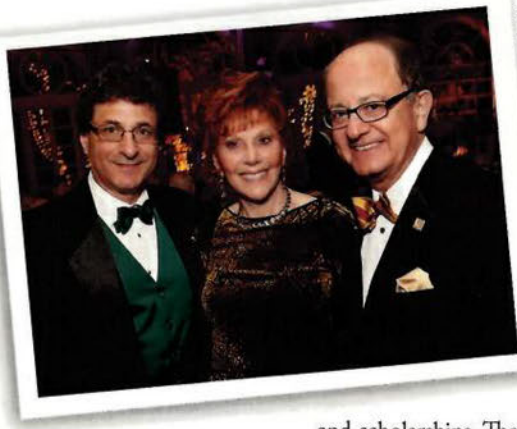
I want to add that this vibrancy extends well beyond formal instruction. Visions and Voices, for example, enlivens our campuses throughout the year. Its events, which range from discussions with venerated writers to screenings of thought-provoking films, complement classroom instruction, enhancing our students' education, regardless of their majors. These events always include a reflective component, while encouraging students to develop a deep, life-long appreciation for the arts.

The 100-plus events of Visions and Voices stand alongside scores more that are organized by other units at the university, including the USC Fisher Museum of Art, the USC Libraries and USC Spectrum. The President's Distinguished Artist and Lecture Series also brings illustrious visitors to our campuses throughout the year.

In addition to these events, USC is home to KUSC, the largest classical public radio station in the nation. KUSC offers classical music and arts programming to listeners throughout southern and northern California, as well as worldwide through its live stream on the Web.

USC also recently launched an International Artist Fellowship Program, which brings emerging artists from other countries to our campuses, allowing them to pursue graduate studies and focus on producing new work. At the same time, they interact with our community, allowing for productive exchanges and collaborations with our students and faculty. These international artists have shown particular promise, and stand at the dawn of what will surely be highly creative careers.

As USC continues to build on its already-stellar foundation in the arts, the creation of the Kaufman School of Dance represents a significant step forward, as well as a landmark moment in the university's history. Our ambition is to make the USC Glorja Kaufman School of Dance the most elite on the West Coast and in the Pacific Rim. ●



USC Kaufman's inaugural Dean Robert Cutietta with philanthropist Glorja Kaufman and President C. L. Max Nikias



TAKING THE LEAD

GLORYA KAUFMAN'S
TRANSFORMATIVE
NAMING GIFT CREATES
A NEW SCHOOL OF
DANCE AT USC.

BY CRISTY LYTAL



WHEN PHILANTHROPIST GLORYA KAUFMAN WAS A LITTLE GIRL, SHE USED TO STAND ON HER FATHER'S FEET AS HE LED HER THROUGH VARIOUS DANCE STEPS. IT WAS AN EXERCISE IN IMPROVISATION, ONE THAT HAS LASTED FOR MANY YEARS.

"I don't do, 'One two, one two three,'" says the Los Angeles philanthropist, with a grin. "But if I'm with a good partner, I can dance to just about anything. And that's because I grew up with it."

After decades of passionate support of the art through the dance foundation that bears her name, Kaufman is taking a bold new step: A transformative gift that will create the USC Kaufman School of Dance, the first new school to be endowed at the university since 1975. The addition of the Kaufman School to the university's five existing arts schools (music, dramatic arts, cinematic arts, fine arts and architecture) completes a world-class portfolio of arts education at USC. With nearly 6,000 students enrolled in the arts, the university is a major destination for aspiring artists pursuing careers in the performing and visual arts professions.

Funds from the gift will be used for student and faculty recruitment and scholarships, as well as academic programs. In addition, Kaufman's landmark gift also will support construction of a state-of-the-art instructional building, the Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center. Graduates of the Kaufman School will be awarded a new bachelor of fine arts degree in dance.

"Glorya Kaufman's extraordinarily generous gift cements her legacy as an arts benefactor. Her vision for dance education is bold and far-reaching, and she brings fresh momentum to USC's stellar arts schools," says President C. L. Max Nikias. "The USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance will certainly distinguish USC among elite research universities. More and more, USC is becoming the place to pursue an arts education, a place in which any student can perform innovative research in a lab, or create imaginative art in a studio."

“IT WAS A BIG DECISION. EVERY DANCE COMPANY IN THE UNITED STATES HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER, AND THAT’S WONDERFUL. BUT [COMPANIES] CAN CHANGE. EDUCATION IS PERMANENT.”

GLORYA KAUFMAN

Groundbreaking for the school’s instructional building will take place in spring 2014, and the school will welcome its first freshman class of dance majors in fall 2015.

Rob Cutietta, dean of the USC Thornton School of Music, will lead this historic journey by taking on an additional role as the first dean of USC Kaufman. An expert in music education, he first met Kaufman in November 2011 at a USC performance featuring Alonzo King LINES Ballet Company.

“By the end of the night, we were already talking about what we could accomplish by creating a new kind of dance school,” Cutietta says. “One of the things that’s so exciting is that we get to build it from scratch, and ask: ‘What does it mean to be a dancer in the 21st century?’”

USC Kaufman will teach students everything from ballet to contemporary and international styles, as well as build a firm foundation in the commercial aspects of the profession. Its students will be able to double-major or minor in disciplines across the university, with access to a broad range of subjects in the sciences, the professional schools and the humanities. Currently enrolled dance minors will continue their courses of dance study in the Kaufman School.

“I want them to graduate as extraordinary dancers and also understand the business side of their profession,” Kaufman says. “They need to know how to take care of themselves in the world. So it’s an all-around education.”

BORN AND RAISED IN DETROIT, THE DAUGHTER of a printer and a seamstress, Kaufman traces her philanthropy to her upbringing. “[My parents] always kept *pushke* boxes of coins to donate to the poor. We were taught the tradition of *tzedakah* — performing acts of righteousness.”

Kaufman remembers dancing ever “since I was a little child, before I could walk.” There was always music in the house. By the time

she was a teenager, she would occasionally win a bottle of wine in a dance contest at a local club, whether it was for the mambo, rumba, cha-cha-cha, or her favorite dance — the Argentine tango.

“I wouldn’t go out with anyone unless he could dance,” Kaufman says. “They had what they called black and tan clubs, and there was a lot of jazz music. Everybody that could dance would get up, but one by one the people who couldn’t keep up would sit down. Then they’d watch us, because we knew what we were doing!”

In the early 1950s, she met homebuilder Donald Bruce Kaufman, the young entrepreneur behind the ABCO Home Building Company, who won her heart even though he didn’t like to dance. They married in 1954 and had four children. She worked as a bookkeeper for a medical clinic and sold her car and some of her jewelry to help her husband buy land lots. In 1957, he co-founded Kaufman & Broad, now known as KB Home, a Fortune 500 home building company.

By the 1970s, Glorya Kaufman began to explore a new artistic interest — painting — and today her impressionistic oils speak to her talent and sense of whimsy. “This one is called *Effervescent*,” she says, pointing to an abstract canvas of shimmering spheres. “When I was painting it, I imagined a child blowing bubbles.”

Gardening was another source of pride and joy. Purple morning glories wind up tree trunks, and native scrub oaks rise above roses and fruit trees in her backyard. “It’s something to smile at,” she says, picking a ripe fig as Troy, one of her two Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs, stands by her heel.

In 1983, tragedy struck. Her husband and son-in-law died in a plane crash. She views this terrible moment as a turning point.

“You know, life is difficult,” she says quietly. “I decided I wanted to do something to make people happy.”



She found comfort in refocusing her energies on supporting the arts, especially dance — and its performers. Her past gifts have established a dance studio at Juilliard and created a popular dance performance series at the Los Angeles Country Music Center.

During a dance performance, she notes, “I look around and I see everybody is smiling. They’re so into the moment. Everybody in that audience has problems, and for an hour and a half, it’s like therapy. They can’t think of [their problems] because of the music and the beauty. Dance is beautiful. It just brings happiness. It captivates the imagination.”

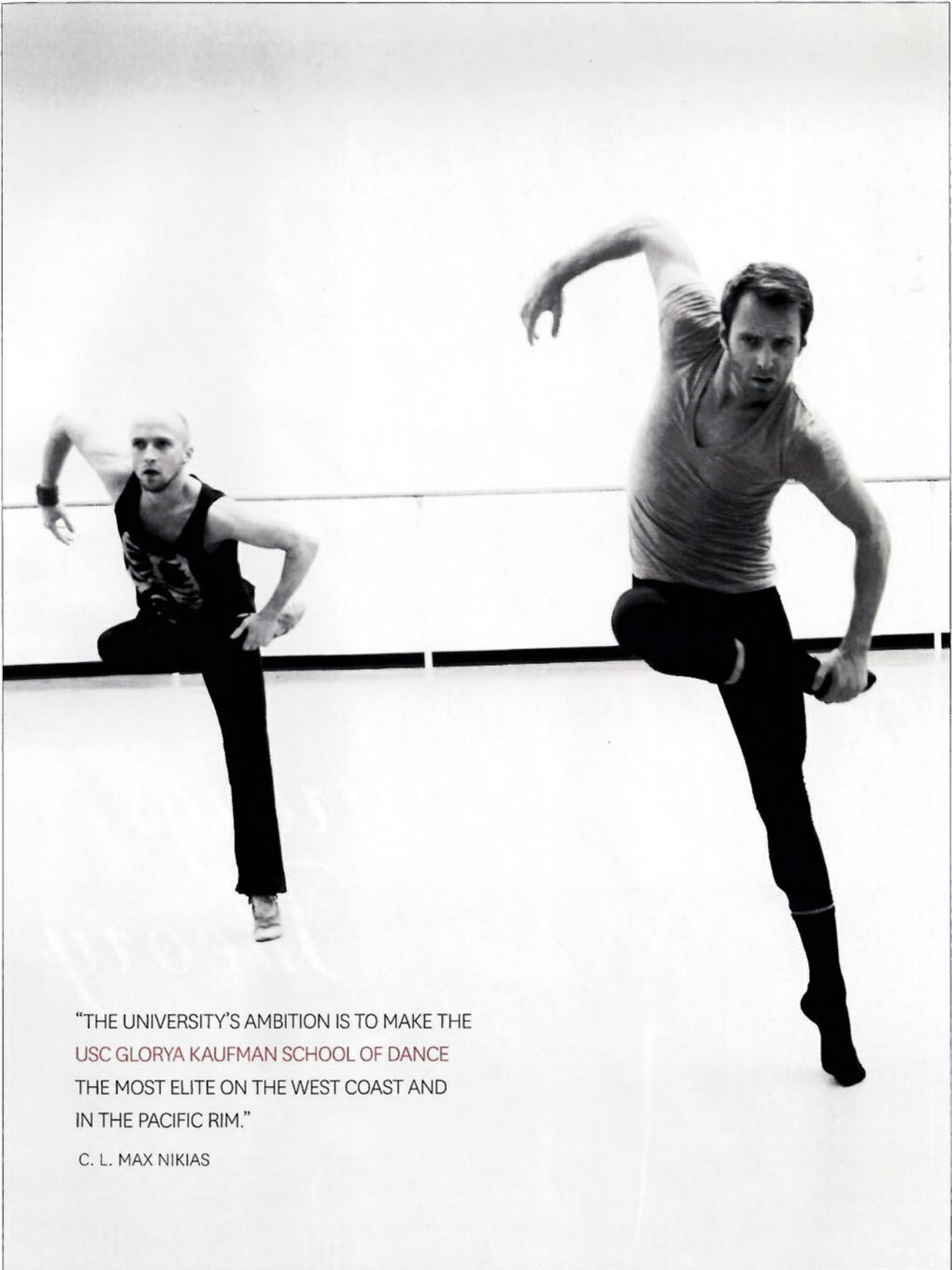
It is her own imagination for what a dance school at USC could become that led her to make her transformative gift. By creating USC Kaufman, she hopes to change not only the lives of generations of students, but also the future of dance in Los Angeles and around the world.

“Glorya Kaufman’s generosity will have a profound impact on the art of dance — not only at USC, but also across the globe,” Nikias says. “The university’s ambition is to make the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance the most elite on the West Coast and in the Pacific Rim.”

For Kaufman, it was important to invest in the future through dance education. “It was a big decision,” she says. “Every dance company in the United States has something to offer, and that’s wonderful. But [companies] can change. Education is permanent.”

In the end, it is something very simple that motivated Kaufman to make such an extraordinary commitment to USC and the students who will enroll in the school that bears her name in perpetuity. “What I want for them,” she says with a smile, “is to feel joy — pure and simple — as they dance.” ●

Sign up to learn more about the USC Kaufman School of Dance at kaufman.usc.edu



DANCE PHOTOS BY BILL HEBERT, KAUFMAN PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GLORYA KAUFMAN DANCE FOUNDATION

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