SUMMER 2024

USC KAUFMAN’S BOSTON DEBUT

July 28
Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre

Featuring performances by BFA Dance Majors in choreography by Kyle Abraham, Hope Boykin, Nina Flagg, and Jackie Kopcsak.

Pictured: USC Kaufman BFA Students in "Medulla Problems" by Kyle Abraham | Photo by Rose Eichenbaum
A NOTE FROM **DEAN JULIA M. RITTER**

Friends,

On behalf of everyone at the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance, welcome to our Boston debut. We are thrilled to connect with Boston-based alums and new members of the Trojan family who will be starting as students in the fall.

The past days have marked an important moment in the school’s history. Earlier this week, we had the great honor of performing for the first time at the prestigious Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival. Now, we have the equal honor of presenting our talented BFA students at the Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre, a venue that has quickly earned a reputation as an innovative hub for creative expression.

The program you’re about to see features four works that have been created exclusively for and on our BFA students—one by our Claude and Alfred Mann Professor in Dance Kyle Abraham (his second choreographic collaboration for USC Kaufman), another by USC Kaufman Artist-in-Residence Hope Boykin, with one each from renowned faculty members Nina Flagg, and Jackie Kopcsak. Each piece speaks to the versatility of our artists and their professionalism.

USC Kaufman celebrates its 10th anniversary later this academic year. This performance is somewhat of an unofficial kickoff, yet another milestone in a decade of dance that has seen our school achieve remarkable progress in higher education and the professional ranks over the last ten years.

I invite you to sit back and enjoy this amazingly talented group of artists. They are the future of dance and the leaders of tomorrow. Today, they dance for you.

Cheers to the artists, and Dance On!

Sincerely,

Julia M. Ritter, PhD

*Dean*

*USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance*
ABOUT USC KAUFMAN

Founded in 2012 by a transformational gift from visionary founder Glorya Kaufman, the University of Southern California created its sixth art school and, at that time, its first new school in nearly 40 years. The USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance admitted its first class in 2015 and immediately expanded USC’s unique signature as a world-class research institution with a deep commitment to the arts.

The exciting opportunity to create a new school brought the chance to rethink the professional degree for the 21st century and the role of a dance school within the greater national ecology. To fulfill this monumental intention, USC Kaufman envisioned a new model of dance education, called “The New Movement”—a hybrid and collaborative approach expressed in studio practice, music, choreography, performance, new media, and scholarship, where artistic preeminence is combined with thoughtful industry access.

By encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative work, USC Kaufman seeks to transform dance. It embraces the artistic rigor of conservatory dance instruction with the unparalleled academic opportunity offered by one of the world’s leading universities.

The program encourages students to think across boundaries and take advantage of the diverse cultures both on campus and within the Los Angeles arts community. Students approach the study of dance with a global perspective, reinforced through collaboration with national and international artists.

In addition to supporting the choreographic research of a stellar faculty, the school continues to forge relationships with some of the dance world’s most innovative creators. USC Kaufman dancers have had the privilege of dancing the iconic repertory of Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, and Crystal Pite, as well as working with recent Artists-in-Residence Tessandra Chavez, Peter Chu, Tyce Diorio, Justin Peck, Max Pham, Dani Rowe, Caili Quan, Toyin Sogunro, Spenser Theberge, Doug Varone, and Yin Yue, among others.

Graduates of the BFA program have secured contracts with Broadway productions, cruise ships, and dance companies including Ballet Austin, Ballet BC, Ballet Hispanico, Ballets Jazz Montréal, BalletX, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Gibney Company, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Joffrey Ballet, LA Dance Project, Oregon Ballet Theatre, RUBBERBAND, Staatsballett Berlin, and Sydney Dance Company, among others. Alumni have also performed at the Academy Awards, Super Bowl, in movies and commercials, at Coachella and other music festivals, and on tour with artists like Kali Uchis, Olivia Rodrigo, and Jennifer Lopez. They have also gone on to pursue careers in choreography, arts administration, marketing, and business.
STUDENT PROFILES

Click the page or scan the QR code to learn more about USC Kaufman’s current BFA students.
Medulla Problems
Choreography: Kyle Abraham, in collaboration with the USC Kaufman Class of 2024
Premiere: April 25, 2024, Bing Theatre, Los Angeles, CA
Music: Björk
Costume Design: Kathryn Poppen
Faculty Répétiteur: James Ady

Cast: Sam Amey, Aimee Brotten, Valerie Chen, Wyatt Florin, Brenan Gonzalez,
Shea Hancock, Diego Lopez, Lindsay Lykins, Ambar Matos Ortiz, Jonacy Montero,
William Okajima, Hope Patterson, Amanda Peet, Leeann Ross, Malachi Ashley Stevens,
Onye Stevenson, Jada Vaughan, Summer Vu, Louie Williams. Understudy: Janae Holster

L/Anding (excerpt)
Exploring the duality of what was, and what is.
Choreography: Nina Flagg
Solo Choreography: In collaboration with the Soloists
World Premiere: April 25, 2024, Bing Theatre, Los Angeles, CA
Music Mixed/Composed by: Nina Flagg
Music: The Roots: A Peace of Light (feat. Amber Coffman, Angel Deradoorian & Haley Dekle) Sampha: Suspended/Can’t Go Back; RajahWild: Motion (Acapella Vocals);
Solange: Cranes In The Sky; Literatura: Dream (Enoo Napa Remix);
Eddy Amador: House Music (Acapella Vocals)
Costume Design: Kathryn Poppen
Faculty Répétiteur: Shannon J. Grayson

Cast: Sam Amey, Aimee Brotten, Janae Holster, Diego Lopez, Ambar Matos Ortiz,
Jonacy Cruz Montero, Leeann Ross, “Slaterrose” Ramon Joelle Rosales, Jada Vaughan
Sweet Nothings
Choreography: Jackie Kopcsak
World Premiere: 2024, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival
Music: Der Nussbaum by Robert Schumann, performed by Bryn Terfel and Malcolm Martineau
Costume Design: Kathryn Poppen

Cast: Valerie Chen, Hope Patterson, Amanda Peet, Louie Williams

... Loving Well.
Choreography: Hope Boykin
World Premiere: 2023, The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Los Angeles, CA
Music: Stevie Wonder
Costume Design: Kathryn Poppen
Choreographer Assistant: Martina Viadana
Faculty Répétiteur: Shannon J. Grayson

Cast: Wyatt Florin, Brenan Gonzalez, Shea Hancock, Janae Holster, Lindsay Lykins, Ambar Matos Ortiz, Jonacy Cruz Montero, Malachi Ashley Stevens, Onye Stevenson, Jada Vaughan, Summer Vu

Visiting artists to USC Kaufman are supported in part through generous funding from The Choi Family Artists-in-Residence Fund.

The USC Kaufman 2024 Summer Tour is made possible by the following: The Lau Family, Tour Lead Benefactors; The Noble Family Collaborative Arts Fund.

Additional support provided by: The Rod & Elsie Nakamoto Travel Fund; The Robert N. Braun, MD, & Joan Friedman, PhD, Travel Fund.

Special thanks to: Shelly Nemirovsky, Hank and Gerry Alpert and the USC Kaufman Board of Councilors.

Casting and programming subject to change.
Meet the Artists

**Kyle Abraham**

**USC Kaufman Claude and Alfred Mann Endowed Professor in Dance**

Choreographer: Medulla Problems

(Artistic Director, A.I.M by Kyle Abraham) and his choreography have been featured in Document Journal, Vanity Fair, Ebony, Kinfolk, O Magazine, Vogue, and Vogue UK, amongst other publications. Abraham is the proud recipient of a 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. He serves as the Claude and Alfred Mann Endowed Professor in Dance at The University of Southern California (USC) Glorya 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 inaugural 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.

**Hope Boykin**

**USC Kaufman Artist-in-Residence**

Choreographer: ... Loving Well.

Hope Boykin is a choreographer, educator, and former member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Performing professionally for over two decades, Boykin has garnered many awards and honors, including a much-acclaimed New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie). She attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. before moving to New York City to study at The Ailey School. Boykin worked as assistant to choreographers Milton Myers and the late Talley Beatty and was an original member of Complexions Contemporary Ballet. She danced for many years with Philadanco, The Philadelphia Dance Company. Boykin joined The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2000, where she performed her duties as a dancer as well as her work as an educator, mentor, speaker, and choreographer until 2020. Recently, Boykin was selected as a 2019-2020 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Fellow and is also working in theater where she has choreographed for the Atlantic Theater’s Homecoming Queen, Public Theater’s Public Studio The Loophole and New York City Center’s Encores Off-Center Promenade. In 2019, Boykin joined the faculty of the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance as an Artist in Residence for the 2019-2020 academic year.
USC KAUFMAN’S BOSTON DEBUT
Meet the Artists

Nina Flagg
USC Kaufman Lecturer
Choreographer: L/Anding

As an LA native, Nina’s classical Ballet and Modern Dance training began with her mother Karen McDonald and expanded to Jazz, West African, and Tap. After graduating from LACHSA and UCLA (B.A. in Sociology & Communications), Nina deepened her Hip-Hop/Street Dance training as a principal dancer with Philadelphia-based company Rennie Harris Puremovement. Over the past two decades, Nina’s practice has evolved as a multi-lingual embodied conversation, explored through the lens of Hip-Hop consciousness. The plurality of her training has lent itself to a diverse career in concert and commercial dance, as well as academia. Nina has been on faculty at CalArts, UCLA, Connecticut College, and LMU. She has worked with such artists as Prince, Tina Turner, Bette Midler, Beyoncé, Chris Brown, and J Balvin. Her choreography has been featured on The Grammy’s, TV Land Awards, NBC/Peacock, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Her television appearances include The Oscars, Today Show, Good Morning America, and Netflix. In 2021, she appeared in the documentary film AILEY, released in theaters nationwide. Nina is currently enjoying her second year on faculty at the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance, teaching courses in Hip-Hop and Dancehall studies. As a BIPOC artist and educator, Nina remains passionate about creating curricular strategies for equitable, multi-generational engagement in dance education and live performance. (ninaflagg.com.)

Jackie Kopcsak
Assistant Dean of Programming and Special Projects
Choreographer: Sweet Nothings

Jackie Kopcsak (Assistant Dean of Programming & Special Projects/Associate Professor of Dance) joined the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance as a founding faculty member in 2014 and was appointed Assistant Dean in 2020. She has directed USC Kaufman dancers in debut performances at the Joyce Theater (NYC), Stadttheater Fürth (Germany), and now Jacob’s Pillow this Summer 2024. Jackie holds an M.F.A. in Dance (University of California, Irvine) and a B.A. in History from the University of Washington in Seattle, where she also trained and performed with Pacific Northwest Ballet. As a director/choreographer, curator, and producer, Jackie has enjoyed collaborating within the worlds of art, music, and theatre. Favorite choreographic commissions include works for American Youth Symphony, Angeles Chorale, Colburn School of Performing Arts, LA Art Show, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, MUSE/IQUE Symphony, Music & More SummerFest (Croatia), NBC Sports, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena Civic Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet School, Pacific Symphony, Trinity Laban Conservatory (London), University of California (Irvine), University of Southern California (Los Angeles), and the University of Washington (Seattle).
USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance invites you to our

10th Anniversary Gala
Saturday, May 3, 2025

Join us as we celebrate a decade of dance at USC.

Jordan Powell (BFA ’22) | Photo by Whitney Browne
USC Kaufman Board of Councilors

**Life Member**
Glorya Kaufman

**Co-Chairs**
Robert N. Braun, MD  
Bryn DeBeikes

**Members**
Charlene Achki Repko  
Celeste M. Alleyne  
Ramona L. Cappello  
Jennifer Cheng  
Debbie Felix  
Ann Gianopulos  
Joan E. Herman  
Finola Hughes  
Tatiana Blackington James  
Ellie Kitta  
Anita Mann Kohl  
Gale Luce  
Kenny Ortega  
Renae Williams Niles  
Julia Strickland  
Bradley Tabach-Bank  
Jeff Thacker  
Joe Tremaine  
Sue Tsao

**Emeritus**
Nigel Lythgoe

**Program Support**
Artistic Collaboration Fund (Anonymous)  
Cheng Family Collaborative Projects Fund  
The Choi Family Artist in Residence Endowed Fund  
Claude and Alfred Mann Professorship in Dance  
Françoise and Anne Aubert-Santelli  
Global Experience Fund

**Founder’s Circle**
Charlene Achki Repko  
Celeste M. Alleyne  
The Bishton Family Foundation  
Robert N. Braun, MD and Joan A. Friedman, PhD  
Bugaj Family Foundation  
The Cheng Family Foundation  
Bryn K. and Richard A. DeBeikes, Jr.  
Michael and Debbie Felix  
Joan E. Herman and Richard Rasiej  
Glorya Kaufman  
Anita Mann Kohl and Allen D. Kohl  
Jim and Gale Luce  
Nigel Lythgoe  
Rod and Elsie Nakamoto  
Christine Marie Ofiesh  
Robin Rae Robinson  
The Simms/Mann Family Foundation  
Sue Tsao

**Naming Gifts**
Ramona L. Cappello  
Michael and Debbie Felix  
Joan E. Herman and Richard Rasiej  
Renae Williams Niles and Gregory Niles  
Christine Marie Ofiesh  
The Wilkerson Family

**Institutional Donors**
American Dance Movement  
Bruder Spielwaren  
Bruder Toys America  
Korean Cultural Center of Los Angeles  
LA84 Foundation  
The Korean Foundation for International Exchange  
USC Arts in Action  
USC Good Neighbors Campaign
Dean’s Circle

Premier ($25,000+)
Elfriede and Heinz Bruder
Beate and Mark Caso
Katherine and James Lau
Los Angeles Philanthropic Committee for the Arts, in memory of Audre Slater
Noble Family Collaborative Arts Fund

Principal ($10,000 – $24,999)
Celeste M. Alleyne
Charlene Achki Repko
Robert N. Braun, M.D. and Joan A. Friedman, Ph.D
Ramona L. Cappello
Dee Dee Dorskind and Bradley Tabach-Bank
Michael and Debbie Felix
Joan E. Herman and Richard Rasiej
Tatiana and Todd James
Anita Mann Kohl and Allen D. Kohl
Renae Williams Niles and Gregory Niles
Jim and Gale Luce
Neu Foundation of California
Julia Strickland and Timothy Wahl
Sue Tsao

Soloist ($5,000 – $9,999)
Linda and Mark Florin
Goldman Family Fund
Ellie Kitta and Ron R. Goldie
In memory of Vanoye Aikens and Katherine Dunham

Demi-Soloist ($2,500 – $4,999)
Anonymous
Piper and Chauncey Billups
Irene Maharam Boyd and Dr. Stuart D. Boyd
Claire and Ryan McKenzie
Kenny Ortega
Yoo Sun Reiss

Corps de Ballet ($1,000 – $2,499)
Minoo Fatemeh Behboody
Lisa Y. Chun
Lisa Field
Susan Friedman
McCain Family Foundation
Rod and Elsie Nakamoto
Robyn Paret
Donald E. Polk and J. Paul Longanbach
Joye and Mike Qualls
Robin Rae Robinson
Lauren and Brett Rossman
Robert A. Schulman
Katherine and Dr. John D. Shelburne
Kip Stratte-McClure
Keisha and Rhudel Stevens

Corps de Ballet (Cont’d)
Alyce Williamson
Diane Wittenberg
Deborah and Edward Wolf
Gillian Wynn
Eleni and Chris Yokas

Friends of Kaufman ($125 – $999)
Leslie Meltzer Aronzon
Sue and Ted Benn
Mona Berland and Luis Centenara
Kimberly Cartron and Mark Shelburne
Nilda and Leslie Gumbs
Debra Hinze Harr
Jane Helen Jelenko
Brianna Hill Johnson
Kimberly and Gareth Kai
Susan R. Klein
Carol and Guy Kroesche
Maria Kupillas
Heather and Robert La France
Michael Lamb
Beth Marshall
Jill Perkinson Masuda
Leslie and Thomas McConnell
Julie McDonald
Elizabeth and Leslie Michelson
Cara and Brad Mills
Patricia and Glenn Osaki
Mark and Anna Peet
Yoo Sun Reiss
Jane and Robert Shepardson
Mist Thorkelsdottir and Robert Cutietta
Tonya and Duke Vu
Julie and Doug Vu
Principal Benefactor
Glorya Kaufman

Staff
Julia M. Ritter, PhD Dean, USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance
Alison D’Amato Assistant Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs
Jackie Kopcsak Assistant Dean of Programming and Special Projects
Patrick Leder-Morrow Assistant Dean and Chief Development Officer
Daveon Swan Assistant Dean of Admissions and Student Services
Eva Blauuw Senior Assistant to the Dean
Matt de la Peña Head of Communications
Kyle de Tarnowsky Music Director
Christine Dennis Senior Faculty Affairs and Programs Coordinator
Callen Gosselin Dance Production Manager
Bert Henert Costume Technician
Natasha Liu Associate Director, Individual Giving
Jess Mahon Assistant Manager, Operations and Facilities
Dane Martens Head of Dance Operations and Technology
Sophia Moritz Curriculum Coordinator
Aline Ocon Senior Business and Payroll Department Administrator
Kathryn Poppen Costume Supervisor
Karen Rios Head of Human Resources
Elliott Scher Admission and Student Services Officer
Maxwell Transue Dance Accompanist
Christopher Yokas Senior Business Officer

Faculty
Kyle Abraham, MFA Holley Farmer, MFA Bruce McCormick, MFA, CSCS
James Ady Gillian Finley Achinta S. McDaniel
Kelly Alvarez, MFA Nina Flagg Jennifer McQuiston Lott, MFA
Margo Apostolos, PhD Thomas Ford, MFA Amy O’Neal
Molly Bogunovic Jesus “Jay” Fuentes Jason Rodgers
Tiffany Bong Shannon J. Grayson Danté Rose
Patrick Corbin, MFA d. Sabela grimes, MFA Dawn Stoppiello, MFA
Alison D’Amato, PhD Ebony Haswell-Frazier Betsy Struxness
Kyle de Tarnowsky Marisa Hentis, PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS Pat Taylor, MFA
E. Moncell Durden Grasan Kingsberry Josette Wiggan
Bret Easterling Saleemah E. Knight, MFA
Fiona Lummis Eddy Jackie Kopcsak, MFA
Each year USC parents, alumni, donors and friends make a lasting impact on the future of dance with a gift to the USC Kaufman Scholarship Fund, ensuring that a USC Kaufman education is accessible and affordable to our extraordinary scholar artists. Learn more at kaufman.usc/support.

To make an immediate impact, text KAUFMAN from your mobile phone to 41444.

Your gift has a lasting impact on the future of dance and dance leadership.

Pictured: USC Kaufman BFA students in "Balkan Beat Box" by Tyce Diorio

Photo by Rose Eichenbaum