



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*

USC Kaufman
Gloria Kaufman School of Dance

 **USC** University of
Southern California

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 Glorja 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 Glorja 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 Hispánico, 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.



Valerie Chen (BFA '24) | Photo by Rose Eichenbaum

USC KAUFMAN'S **BOSTON DEBUT**

July 28, 2024

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 Brothen, Valerie Chen, Wyatt Florin, Brennan 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 Brothen, Janae Holster, Diego Lopez, Ambar Matos Ortiz, Jonacy Cruz Montero, Leeann Ross, "Slaterose" Ramon Joelle Rosales, Jada Vaughan

USC KAUFMAN'S **BOSTON DEBUT**

July 28, 2024

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.

USC KAUFMAN'S **BOSTON DEBUT**

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) 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 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.



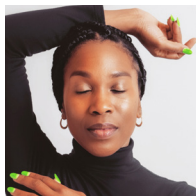
Hope Boykin

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 Gloria 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 Gloria 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 Gloria 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 Kaufman
Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

10

SAVE
THE
DATE

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

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

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