

JODIE GATES BIOGRAPHY

Jodie Gates has established a significant career in the dance field. For thirty-five years she has contributed to the profession as a visionary leader, artistic director, educator, curator, stager, choreographer and principal dancer. She is a former principal ballerina with the Joffrey Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet and Complexions Contemporary Ballet.

She is the Founding Director of the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, and Founder and Artistic Director of the Laguna Dance Festival. She is also an artistic collaborator with choreographer William Forsythe, and stages ballets internationally for Forsythe Productions. In June 2021, she was awarded the distinguished Fellowship from The Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU. Her Fellowship acknowledges her most recent work as the lead initiator for the *Artistic Directors Coalition for Ballet in America*, a group of artistic leaders who are addressing systemic racism and inequities within the culture of ballet.

Ms. Gates received The Psychology of Leadership Certificate from Cornell University SC Johnson College of Business, and studied with the Higher Education Leadership Program for Women (HERS Institute) at Bryn Mawr College.

Ms. Gates is a well-known principal ballerina and was a principal guest artist with prominent companies internationally. During her long career at Joffrey Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet she performed title roles in the classical full-length ballets, danced principal roles in neo-classical works by George Balanchine, and she worked with new and master choreographers as well as historic reconstructions and revivals. Her guest appearances include galas at The Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, the Benois de la Danse in Moscow, dancing Odette/Odile with Fernando Bujones in Swan Lake at the Ballet de Monterrey, Mexico, to appearing in well-known festivals such as Spoleto in Italy, The Edinburgh Festival, the Nijinsky Festival in Hamburg, Germany, and The Melbourne Festival in Australia.

Ms. Gates' performing career began under the mentorship of the visionary director Robert Joffrey. She originated many roles and worked with a host of renowned choreographers, including Alonzo King, Agnes de Mille, Paul Taylor, William Forsythe, Martha Clarke and Mark Morris. She has been featured in several publications since 1984, including articles in dance magazines, dance reviews and has appeared in numerous television programs and festivals. She was featured at the 1993 presidential inauguration, and previously had the honor to perform at The Kennedy Center for presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. Her performing career ranged from classical full-length productions such as Juliet in *Romeo & Juliet*, Giselle, Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*, Swanhilda in *Coppelia* and Cinderella, to principal roles in the neo-classical repertoire by George Balanchine, contemporary pieces by Alvin Ailey, Sir Frederick Ashton and many more. She collaborated in an improvised production with jazz musician Ornette Coleman and tap dancer Savion Glover at the Cologne Music Festival and with musical artist Prince in the Joffrey Ballet's production, *Billboards*. She has danced at the Bolshoi in Moscow, Bockenheimer Depot in Frankfurt, Germany, Châtelet Theatre and Theatre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Sadler's Wells in London, The Kennedy Center, New York's City Center and Lincoln Center, the War Memorial Opera among other established venues nationally.

Since 2005, Ms. Gates' artistic vision for the Laguna Dance Festival has fostered artistic collaborations and choreographic commissions, while also providing youth scholarships and opportunities for pre-professional and professional dancers. The non-profit organization presents internationally acclaimed dance artists and the nation's top contemporary dance companies. The organization's mission is To

present world-class dance performance, increase public appreciation for the art, and provide quality dance education.

As a recognized female ballet choreographer, Ms. Gates has created more than 60 original dance works. She has been commissioned by dozens of dance companies, television ad campaigns and academic institutions, and her work has been performed at the Kennedy Center, New York's City Center Theater, Staatsballett Berlin, The Joyce Theater, Princeton University, the Helsinki International Ballet Competition, the Vail International Dance Festival and many other venues. She has been commissioned by Ballet West, Kansas City Ballet, Colorado Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, BalletX, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Tulsa Ballet and several more. Her ballets have been called "visually compelling, powerful, beautiful" by the Philadelphia Inquirer and "richly textured and profound" by the Orange County Register.

She regularly stages dance works for Forsythe Productions, all ballets originally created by the prominent choreographer William Forsythe. She continues to coach professionals and stage productions for companies such as Paris Opera Ballet, Scottish Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Prague National Theatre Ballet, Zurich Opera Ballet, Teatro alla Scala, Ballet West, Houston Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theater and Pennsylvania Ballet.

Her teaching credentials include invitations to teach professional companies such as New York City Ballet and Dance Theatre of Harlem, and performing arts schools and academic institutions. While guest teaching for companies and contributing to higher education, she has had the opportunity to create partnerships, build a robust professional network, design and implement an artistic vision and produce forward-thinking curricula. Formerly she was a tenured Professor of Dance at the University of California, Irvine, where she worked closely with Donald McKayle, and honed her skills as an educator and mentor. She is an active pre-professional teacher and mentor, and a judge for Youth America Grand Prix and Universal Ballet. Ms. Gates' most recent accomplishment as the Founding Director of the University of Southern California's Gloria Kaufman School of Dance was a monumental success. She was given the unprecedented responsibility for implementing the artistic vision, creating a robust dance curriculum, and hire faculty and staff from the ground up. The result, The New Movement, is a new hybrid model for dance – expressed in studio practice, music, choreography, performance, new media and scholarship – this model exploring performance and choreography immerses students in a dance conservatory environment while engaging with rigorous academic studies at USC.

Ms. Gates' honors include the 2021/22 Fellowship from The Center for Ballet and the Arts in NYC; recognition for Arts Leadership by the American Association of University Women; Altria/ABT fellowship from American Ballet Theatre; honoree from Arts Orange County and a recipient of the esteemed Jerome Robbins New Essential Works program.