
Making A Name For Herself

Upcoming Dancer Kate Hutter Discusses Co-founding the Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Company

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Since she first started dancing in kindergarten, Kate Hutter just couldn't stop making those dance moves. Since then, Hutter has spent her entire life following the line of dance and will be celebrating the culmination of her devotion in the producing of the upcoming Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Company's (LACDC) upcoming fall season.

"I'm jumping out of my skin," said Hutter, who is now artistic director at LACDC. "I'm very excited and I can't wait to create work but also to share it and bring it to the public."

Hutter, whose late grandmother, Bernice Hutter, served an unprecedented four terms on the Beverly Hills Board of Education from 1961 to 1977. Bernice still holds the current record for the largest service of any Beverly Hills elected official.

Hutter, 23, remembers her grandmother playing a large supporting role in her dance career growing up.

"Throughout my childhood I would always come through Beverly Hills to visit [my grandparents] and spend summers to dance in Los Angeles," Hutter said. "I knew she was always a supporter throughout my youth and would always attend my performances in [Carson City], Nevada. She was always delighted that I was taking a stronger role in participating and choreographing."

The LACDC offers Los Angeles a resident source of professional concert dance, performing a variety of LA-influenced dance styles including modern, ballet and jazz works. The fall series, which will be featuring four concerts, will begin in October of this year and will be following the company's first premiere last July, which sold out and featured six of Hutter's choreographed works.

"We were very excited to see the community become involved and start supporting a dance company which was in its first year," Hutter said. "It was all my choreography, which is not going to be the nature of our usual shows just because I'm excited to give other choreographers the opportunity to create work."

One hundred dancers showed up for the open audition in Los Angeles for the premiere in 2004. From those 100 dancers, LACDC chose eight. The concert was then held at the Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica. This year, LACDC's performances will take place at Diablo, near downtown LA.

"It was definitely the first time for my name to be at the top of the bill with Michelle [Mierz]," Hutter said. "[Since then] we've just been growing and developing and reaching out to new people and new audiences."

LACDC was co-founded in 2004 by Hutter and her colleague, Mierz, who is now executive director at the company. The idea first developed in an art management class at USC, where the two were attending at the time. The company then gained nonprofit status in 2005.

Hutter attended a performing arts boarding school in Massachusetts—a long ways from where she grew up in Carson City. Since her graduation at USC for theatrical design in 2004, she has been in the process of receiving her masters in choreography at SUNY Purchase in New York and will be graduating May 18.

"I get very involved in the work and I don't notice the stress building until I lay down at night and I can't sleep," Hutter said about the workload. "But it's really invigorating to be in LA and see all the potential there for the work I am doing and [have] the company setting and to see the talent."

Although Hutter is living in New York at the moment, she prefers working in Los Angeles.

"I chose LA above and beyond right now as a creator because I feel like there's more room to grow whereas in New York there's so many amazing things going on but there are so many people trying to do it at once. Also, there's so much tradition to stand up against," said Hutter, who prefers a hybrid of modern and contemporary dance style. "In LA, it's freedom. That's why I'm completely drawn to it."

Kate also recognizes that her grandmother is a great influence in her life.

"I definitely know that she's always taken on an idea of public service as well as leadership throughout her lifetime," Hutter remembered. "It really leaves an impression and lets you know that you're capable of things that might seem larger than you think to take on. The idea of public service is to give back to the community and watch them help you and support you as well—I think that has completely come through in more ways than just dance throughout my life. Taking on this venture, it certainly feels like I'm walking in her footsteps."

Hutter's ultimate goal is to develop and define her voice as a choreographer, whether that be through commercial or more traditional dance.

"I would like to dispel of any of those stigmas that the more people you reach, the more you're diluting your message or selling it out. I feel that if I made a music video and if it's in my artistic vision and it could reach many people, I would be happy to work in that way," Hutter said. "Starting with [LACDC], maybe we're selling smaller houses right now, but it doesn't stop me from thinking that what we're doing cannot reach a great deal of people."