

# ATLANTA BALLET

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **The Campaign for Atlanta Ballet** *Choreographing Our Future*

(Atlanta, Georgia) – Atlanta Ballet announced today that it is kicking off a capital campaign to raise \$14.8 million, the largest fundraising effort in the organization’s 79 year history. As of the public announcement, \$10 million has been secured towards the campaign, representing more than 67 percent of the goal. The Campaign for Atlanta Ballet now moves into the public phase engaging the community to aid in securing a new home and a solid future for Atlanta Ballet.

The largest donation for the campaign has come from the Michael C. and Thalia N. Carlos Foundation with a \$3 million gift to name Atlanta Ballet’s new headquarters. Chris and Merry Carlos have been long time Atlanta Ballet supporters, and Merry sits on the Board of Trustees. The building will be named in the memory of Chris’ father and Atlanta philanthropist Michael C. Carlos. The new building, which the organization plans to move to in summer 2010, is to be named the “Michael C. Carlos Dance Centre.” Atlanta Ballet and the Carlos family are honored to make this announcement on what would have been his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

“We are proud to be able to carry on my father’s commitment to the arts and his home community,” said Chris Carlos. “Contributing to an organization that represents both grace and strength is the perfect tribute to his name.”

The campaign is being chaired by arts patron and former Atlanta Ballet dancer, Lynda Courts and Holder Construction CEO, Thomas M. Holder.

In the spring of 2008, Atlanta Ballet engaged Coxe Curry & Associates to conduct a feasibility study to assess the current market for purchasing and building our new home and strengthening the organization's financial position. The overwhelming response was supportive and encouraged immediate action.

"We are taking our cues from the donor community and focusing on what really matters for our Ballet and for the community," says Courts. "We will continue to set our artistic sights high as a part of a vibrant cultural community, while striving to work smarter to ensure our stable financial future, particularly in these challenging economic times."

The \$14.8 million campaign for Atlanta Ballet will support the following priorities:

- Purchasing property for the new headquarters,
- Renovation of that property,
- Product and audience development, expanded marketing, and
- long-term sustainability of the organization.

"It is imperative that Atlanta Ballet create a model that assures our long-term financial stability and sustainability. We must continue to present and market exceptional art, as well as provide deep and meaningful arts education opportunities in the community. At the same time, we need to build a solid financial base through the execution of sound long-term business strategies and a comprehensive business plan including the creation of the Atlanta Ballet Endowment," said Barry Hughson Executive Director of Atlanta Ballet. "Thanks to a generous \$1 million challenge grant from local business woman, philanthropist and long-time Atlanta Ballet patron Audrey B. Morgan, we expect to raise an additional \$3 million which, combined with existing endowment assets, will bring Atlanta Ballet's endowment total to \$5.6 million.

Atlanta Ballet's new headquarters is located at 1695 Marietta Boulevard. The building will integrate LEED-design strategies for adaptive re-use of an existing structure, with the goal of Silver LEED Certification.

"Approximately \$500,000 of the renovation budget has been dedicated to environmental initiatives," says Holder. "This investment will allow the organization to realize a significant reduction in long-term operating expenses."

Other key leadership donors include the Kendeda Fund, the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Patti E. Wallace and Holder Construction Company. Atlanta Ballet's Board of Trustees has committed 100 percent participation, with a goal to raise a minimum combined contribution of \$5 million.

The announcement was made at the Atlanta Women's Club, which holds significance to Atlanta Ballet's history as the site of many fundraising "teas" and performances in its formative years under the guidance and leadership of American dance pioneer and Atlanta Ballet Founder, Dorothy Alexander

"It was here in this very hall that Dorothy Alexander built the foundation for Atlanta Ballet," said Hughson. "It is here that we commit to preserving her legacy and building a vibrant future."

Founded in 1929, Atlanta Ballet is the longest continuously operating ballet company in the United States. Atlanta Ballet's eclectic repertoire spans ballet history, highlighted by beloved classics and inventive originals.

Among Atlanta Ballet's proud and unique 79-year history are its three Artistic Directors, Miss Dorothy Alexander, whose vision brought dance to the South; Robert Barnett, who turned Atlanta Ballet into a professional company; and currently, and for the past 14 years John McFall. Under McFall's leadership Atlanta Ballet continues its commitment to share and educate audiences on the empowering joy of dance.

Atlanta Ballet opened the Centre for Dance Education in 1996 and is dedicated to nurturing young dancers while providing an outlet for adults to express their creativity. With diverse class offerings and student population, the Centre serves over 150,000 people in metro Atlanta each year. Atlanta Ballet's roots remain firmly grounded in the Atlanta community and continue to play a vital role in the city's cultural growth and revitalization.

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