



Doctor of Arts, honoris causa

Citation

Francia Russell and Kent Stowell, as dancers, ballet masters, choreographers, and creators of one of the most celebrated ballet companies and schools in the world, you have enriched the art of dance as few before you. You have been devoted guardians and teachers of the works of the 20th century's greatest choreographer, George Balanchine. The Pacific Northwest Ballet company, which you nurtured from infancy and directed for 28 years, is one of the great artistic treasures of international renown in our region.

Francia, your early dance training led to an invitation to join the New York City Ballet, where you rose from corps member to the rank of soloist. You were appointed ballet master of the company by Balanchine himself and sent by him to stage his works throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. You were the first to do so in the People's Republic of China, for the Shanghai Ballet, and later you staged for the Kirov Ballet the historic first authorized performance of Balanchine's work in his birthplace.

Kent, you also danced as a soloist with the New York City Ballet and went on to become ballet master and co-artistic director with Francia of the Frankfurt Ballet. As a choreographer you have created works that have thrilled and delighted audiences here and abroad for nearly four decades. Your contributions to the Pacific Northwest Ballet repertoire include Swan Lake, Cinderella, Carmina Burana, Silver Lining and what has come to be a national treasure and endearing Northwest favorite, your brilliant collaboration with Maurice Sendak, Nutcracker.

Kent and Francia, your vision and dedication have taken Pacific Northwest Ballet from modest beginnings in spare facilities to an institution that trains and cares for dancers as no other in the world. Your legacy is not only a ballet company of international acclaim, but the promise, through the Pacific Northwest Ballet's school and outreach programs, that the art of dance will continue to capture hearts and inspire imaginations for generations to come.

For the wonderful ballet company that you brought to life, for being compassionate and innovative teachers, and for your unwavering commitment to preserving the highest level of artistry in dance, the University of Washington is proud to confer upon each of you the degree of Doctor of Arts, honoris causa.

HERB SIMON
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

MARK A. EMMERT
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

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