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from the executive editor

I have it on good authority that 2011 is Kansas City's year to be "glowy."

Geri Higgins, CEO of Portfolio Kitchen & Home, coined the word to describe her company's new flagship store opening this summer in the historic Pershing Building downtown. With glittering chandeliers, gorgeous displays and an outdoor terrace overlooking Union Station and Liberty Memorial, it's clear her new word is perfect.

Higgins' store will be one more jewel in the tiara of the area reaching from downtown and the Crossroads Arts District to Crown Center. The brightest sparkle, of course, is coming from the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, whose own grand opening celebration takes place September 16 and 17 with a free Community Day on Sunday, September 18.

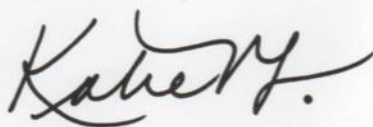
Also starting in September, an unprecedented collection of guest artists will join the Kansas City Symphony for its first season in the Center's Helzberg Hall, where Music Director Michael Stern will introduce three world premieres inspired by the city's fountains.

Then there's the Kansas City Ballet, which will perform "Tom Sawyer: A Ballet in Three Acts" at the Kauffman on October 14. Tony-award winning composer Maury Yeston collaborated with Kansas City's Artistic Director William Whitener on this world premiere. All this just after the Ballet moves into its new home: The Todd Bolender Center for Dance and Creativity is scheduled to open in August in the historic Power House building on the west edge of the Union Station campus.

And on October 1, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City will open its 54th season with Puccini's "Turandot," featuring a set design commissioned especially for the Kauffman Center. The company's March 2012 debut of John Adam's "Nixon in China," meanwhile, promises special effects that will set a new standard for regional opera companies.

Whether at Copaken Stage downtown or the Spencer Theatre on the University of Missouri-Kansas City campus, the Kansas City Rep continues to play a huge role in our arts scene, as well. Artistic Director Eric Rosen marks his third season by bringing us a diverse array of thought-provoking one-man shows, as well as the eye-popping "Cabaret," March 18-April 10.

"Glowy"? Yes, it's a good word.



Katie Van Luchene
913-894-6923 | kvanluchene@antheppublishing.com

P.S. New restaurants and nightspots are popping up in the downtown area, as well, and we've given our food critic the month off just to catch up. G.E. Fellrath will have lots for us to chew on when his column returns in the April issue.

top 10 to-do's

1 All Dolled Up The Harry S. Truman Library's "Dolls for Democracy" exhibit runs through March 6 and features 25 handcrafted likenesses of world figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Albert Einstein.

2 "No Way to Treat a Lady" March 4-April 17 at the American Heartland Theatre (2450 Grand Blvd.). Visit ahtkc.com for tickets.



3 Breakfast with Seuss The March 4 Green Eggs and Ham Benefit Breakfast for Reach Out and Read Kansas City (reachoutandreadkc.com) features Bryan Busby and Christa Dubill reading a Dr. Seuss classic. \$60. 7:30 a.m. Kansas City Marriott Downtown (200 W. 12th St.).

4 Hit the Slopes Snow Creek in Weston, Missouri, is open through March 13. Visit skinsnowcreek.com for hours and rates.



5 Velcomment! I joined the KC Repertory Theatre's Eric Rosen and Feng owner Beth Zollars at the kick-off party for "Cabaret," which runs March 18-April 10. Zollars is co-chair (along with Jenny Erdman) for the Rep's "Cocktails and Cabaret" Fearless Fete Gala on April 8 (details at kcrep.org).



6 An Evening with Vince Gill March 24, 8 p.m. at Johnson County Community College's Yardley Hall. Tickets start at \$50. Visit jccc.edu/cohenseries.

7 Art In-Depth The March 17 "Art Tasting with Julián" at the Nelson-Atkins features a discussion of the "South and Southeast Asian Art" exhibit. Tickets are free but required. 6 p.m. Atkins Auditorium (4525 Oak St.).



8 Kansas City Muscle Walk benefiting the Muscular Dystrophy Association, March 26 at The Great Mall of the Great Plains. Register at joinmda.org/2011kcmusclewalk.

9 Ready, set, skate! The KC Roller Warriors "Plan B" team (krollerwarriors.com) will take on the Capital City Crushers in Topeka on March 5.



10 Top Chefs Kansas City's finest chefs will battle for top honors at the CCVI Food Fight fundraiser on March 28. Tickets range from \$40 to \$70 with proceeds benefiting the Children's Center for the Visually Impaired. 6:30 p.m. National World War One Museum at Liberty Memorial (100 W. 26th St.). For details, email sbelger@ccvi.org.