

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

A Swirl of the Season

Ann Haskins · Thursday, December 14th, 2023

Luncheon dance in El Sereno, a folklorico team in Northridge and Orange, seasonal cirque in Hollywood, lots of *Nutcrackers*, more SoCal dance this week, and a peek at next week.

Live This Week

A great team for a great night

Southern California's Mexican heritage and traditions are celebrated in the popular holiday event *Nochebuena* at two SoCal venues. Once again, **Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles** teams with Mariachi Garibaldi de Jaime Cuéllar for seasonal dance, song and mariachi music. Chapman University, Musco Center for the Arts, 415 N. Glassell, Orange; Wed.-Thurs., Dec. 20-21, 7:30 pm, \$25-\$78. [Musco Center](#). Also at the Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Nordhoff; Sat., Dec. 16, 3 & 8 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 3 pm, \$69-\$119. [The Soraya](#).



Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles. Photo by Luis Luqu

Bring your own lunch

Sponsored by the venue and LA Contemporary Dance Company, *The Unseen Hours...a salon series* offers an informal noontime glimpse at a changing line up of choreographers workshopping new dances. This salon brings **Jillian Meyers**, whose multi-media credits include assistant choreographer on the film *La La Land*. The lunchtime event offers a preview of Meyer's current work *Seaweed Sisters*, her choreographic process, and a chance to learn more in a post performance Q&A. The series is free for members, with limited tickets and livestream options at the website. The Stomping Ground, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Dec. 15, 12:15 pm, free w/membership; limited tickets and livestream options at [LA Contemporary Dance Company](#).



Jillian Meyers. Photo courtesy of the artist

Santa's acrobats

The folks who brought us *Vampire Circus* return with another holiday-themed tale, again with acrobats, clowns, and other cirque performers, and this time with the bearded fellow himself in *Santa's Circus*. The family-friendly show includes a chance for kids to give Mrs. Claus a letter to be hand-delivered to Santa. The Montalbán Theatre, 1615 Vine St., Hollywood; Fri., Dec. 15, 7:30 pm, Sat., 16, 2, 5 & 8 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 2 & 5 pm, Thurs., Dec. 21, 7 pm, Fri., 22, 2 & 5 pm, Sat., Dec. 23, 2, 5 & 8 pm, \$39-\$119. [FeverUP](#).



Santa's Circus. Photo courtesy of the artist

(and the last two weeks of this year's *Nutcrackers*!)

Notable "Nuts"

For 40 years, artistic director David Wilcox' version for his **Long Beach Ballet** has delighted audiences with sets from Disney scenic designers and an array of special effects including performers who fly and perform magic. Professional guest dancers fill the leads joined by students from the affiliated ballet school. This year's guests include Megan Wilcox from Dresden Ballet and *So You Think You Can Dance* winners Melissa Sandwig and Ade Obayomi. The production not only has a live orchestra, it boasts two harps as Tchaikovsky intended in his original score. Terrace Theatre, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach; Sat., Dec. 16 & 23, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 2 pm, Fri. Dec. 22, 7:30 pm, \$35-\$125. [Long Beach Nutcracker](#).



Long Beach Ballet. Photo by Katie Ging

With new artistic leadership, **State Street Ballet** arrives with Megan Philip recently elevated to artistic director and founder Rodney Gustafson shifting from artistic to executive director. Choreographed by Gustafson, this *Nutcracker* has live music by Opera San Luis Obispo Grand Orchestra. The company's professional dancers are joined by students from the associated ballet school. Granada Theater, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Dec. 16, 3 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 3 pm, \$26-\$121. [Granada Theater](#).



State Street Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Making the most of its second home

Enjoying its stature as the official ballet company of this venue, **American Ballet Theatre** continues performances of celebrated choreographer Alexei Ratmansky's interpretation of the *Nutcracker*. Casting for the leads are at the website. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Wed.-Fri., Dec. 13-15, 7 pm, Sat. Dec. 16, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 12:30 & 5:30 pm, \$29-179. [SCFTA](#).



American Ballet Theatre. Photo by Doug Gifford

Tried and true

Set in 1912 LA, the **Los Angeles Ballet's** *Nutcracker* has drawn praise and happy audiences since its debut in 2006. This week LAB moves to the South Bay before its final week in Hollywood, continuing to bring professional ballet to audiences throughout SoCal. Info and tickets at [Los Angeles Ballet](#). Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Redondo Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Fri., Dec. 15, 8 pm, Sat., Dec. 16, noon & 5 pm, Sun., Dec. 17, 2 pm, \$38-131. Also at the Dolby Theatre (with the Los Angeles Ballet Orchestra), Hollywood & Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Thurs. Dec. 21, 7:30 pm, Fri.-Sat, Dec. 22-23, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 24 & Tues., Dec. 26, 2 pm \$45-\$138. [The Nutcracker](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Cheryl Mann

*And more noteworthy “Nuts”, include **Inland Pacific Ballet**, Rancho Cucamonga; **American Contemporary Ballet**; **Festival Ballet Theatre**, Irvine; **Pasadena Dance Theatre**, Glendale; **Shakti School of Bharata Natyam**, Glendale; **Pacific Festival Ballet**, Thousand Oaks; **Details on these and the rest of the season at <https://culturaldaily.com/nutcracker-season-is-here/>.***

A Peek at Next Week

L.A. County Holiday Celebration at the Music Center Dorothy Chandler Pavilion 135 N. Grand Ave Sun., Dec. 24, 3 pm, free. [Music Center](#).



Hollywood Ballet principal dancers Petra Conti and Tigran Sarksyian. Photo by Reed Hutchinson

Hollywood Ballet – *Hollywood Holidays* at the Orpheum Theatre, 842 S. Broadway, downtown; Thurs., Dec. 28, 7:30 pm, \$47-\$105. [Hollywood Ballet](#).

Maria Torres Dance Theatre Company with Joe McCarthy's New York Afro Bop Alliance Big Band Dancers – *Pan American Nutcracker Suite* at Samueli Theater, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Wed.-Fri., Dec. 22, 8 pm, \$89-\$99. [SCFTA](#).

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