

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

A Tranche of Dance

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, May 8th, 2024

Ballet double bill opens in Pasadena; site specific Sendak in Brentwood; Leonard Cohen ballets in Beverly Hills; contemporary choreography triptych concludes in the Arts District; street dance styles move downtown; *A Chorus Line* revisited in Glendale; postponed dance tour resumes in Inglewood; South Asian dance in Agoura Hills; more So Cal dance this week, and a peek at next week.

Live This Week

A season finale opens

Closing out the first season programmed by artistic director Melissa Barak, **Los Angeles Ballet** gives a nod to George Balanchine's luminous *Serenade* set to Tchaikovsky along with *Firebird* set to the Stravinsky score by choreographer Yuri Possokhov. This *Firebird* premiered at Oregon Ballet Theater while Possokhov was resident choreographer at San Francisco Ballet where the ballet also established itself as a popular part of SFB's repertoire. Now LAB brings it to three SoCal venues. Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Sat., May 11, 2 & 7:30 pm. Also at Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Redondo Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Sat., May 25, 2 & 7:30 pm. Also at UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Sat., June 1, 2 & 7:30 pm, \$76 to \$137. [Los Angeles Ballet](#)



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Reed Hutchinson

End of love dances

Never underestimate how a popular songwriter can draw audiences to a dance concert. For **Ballets Jazz de Montréal**, the artistic director Louis Robitaille recruited three in-demand choreographers to set roughly 16 songs by Canadian balladeer Leonard Cohen for *Dance Me*. The results from the trio of dancemakers—Andonis Foniadakis, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Ihsan Rustem—are on view at three SoCal venues over the next week. Be warned, some venues are almost sold out. Wallis Annenberg Theater, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Fri., May 10, 7:30 pm, Sat., May 11, 2 & 7:30 p.m., \$49-\$79. [The Wallis](#). Also at San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., San Diego; Wed., May 15, 7:30 pm, \$20-\$105. [San Diego Theatres](#). Also at the Irvine Barclay, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Fri., May 17, 8 pm, \$30-\$120. [Irvine Barclay](#).



Ballets Jazz de Montréal. Photo courtesy of the artists

Where the wild things dance

The opening event of the exhibit *Wild Things are Happening: The Art of Maurice Sendak* includes a site specific performance by Zoe Rappaport, director/choreographer of **Storytelling Through Movement** (STM). The opening of the exhibit showcasing 150 artifacts from Sendak's career starts at 6:30 pm with the main performances starting at 8 pm. Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Brentwood; Fri., May 10, 6:30 pm, main performance 8 pm, \$10, \$7 seniors, students. [Skirball Cultural Center](#).



Zoe Rappaport. Photo courtesy of the artist

A shifting three

Two different programs, each with a work by Janie Taylor and two from artistic director Benjamin Millepied are part of **LA Dance Project's** *Spring Dances*. Both programs include *Me, You, We, They*, Millepied's newest set to music by his frequent collaborator Nico Muhly. Both programs also include the premiere of Taylor's *Sleepwalker's Encyclopedia* with a set designed by artist Ben Styer. Millepied's *Moving Parts* completes Program A, alternating with *Triade* in Program B. LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Arts District; Program A- Sat., May 11, 8 pm, Sun., May 12, 1 pm. Program B- Sat., May 11, 4 pm, Sun., May 12, 5 pm, \$45, \$30 students & seniors. [LA Dance Project](#).



Los Angeles Dance Project. Photo courtesy of the artists

Something for a certain kind of Mom

For an entertaining, halcyon alternative to crowded restaurants on Mother's Day, consider **MOMentum Place**. Taking over a stage that hosts summer Shakespeare under the oak trees, this mostly annual event offers an array of dancers, acrobats, aerialists, and other entertainers curated by Lexi Pearl. Bring a picnic or opt for the spring-themed brunch (additional \$40 charge). With Topanga Canyon Blvd. blocked from Pacific Coast Highway, westsiders may avoid freeways taking PCH to Las Flores to Saddlepeak Road then connect with Topanga Blvd. Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum, 1419 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga Canyon; Sun., May 12, 2 pm, \$40,\$15 students, \$10 children (optional noon brunch \$40). [Theatricum Botanicum](#)



Momentum Place. Photo courtesy of the artist

When dancers talk

Described as a “counter-tribute,” Andrew Pearson and a clutch of dancers employed a similar process that led to the musical *A Chorus Line*, drawing on dancers’ real life experiences. The resulting show by Pearson’s **Bodies in Play**, *Our Dancer’s Project*, premiered downtown in April and moves to the San Gabriel foothills for this encore. These dancers’ process involved critical and mindful consideration of bodies in the performing arts, an ongoing hot topic for dance and dancers. The writers/dancers include Cristina Flores, Darby Epperson, Celine Kiner, Tiffany Sweat, Daurin Tavares, Rachel Whiting, and Sadie Yarrington. Pearson also has writing credit and directs. Brand Library & Art Center, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale; Sat., May 11, 5 pm, free. [Brand Library](#)



Bodies in Play. Photo courtesy of the artists

Back on tour

Postponed from the originally scheduled tour dates due to his wife’s illness, she is better and *Dancing With the Stars*’ **Derek Hough** is ready to resume *Symphony of Dance*. With his most recent Emmy nomination, Hough surpassed Debbie Allen for most Emmy nominations for television choreography. Audiences who know him from tv now can see what he can do on the concert stage. YouTube Theater, 1011 Stadium Dr., Inglewood; Fri., May 10, 8 pm, \$20-\$149. Also at Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside; Fri., May 17, 7pm, \$49-\$125. Also at the Rady Shell, Jacobs Park, 222 Marina Park Way, San Diego; Sun., May 19, 7:30 pm, \$42-\$62. [Derek Hough](#).



Derek Hough. Photo courtesy of the artist

Museum peek

In a few weeks, **Backhausdance** will offer this year's new work developed in the environs of the museum and its lush gardens. In the meantime, with museum admission on Tuesday mornings, visitors can watch open rehearsals of *Glow/Brillo* and see how the new work is progressing. Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana; Tuesdays thru June 4, 10am to 1pm, included in museum admission. [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Kira Bartoli

Busy dancers

Choreographer Jennifer Backhaus and the dancers of **Backhausdance** take a break from their garden rehearsals for a free event in conjunction with this college's dance department. Santa Ana College, Phillips Hall Theater, 1530 W. 17th St., Santa Ana; Sat., May 11, 8 pm, free. [Dance Connect Santa Ana — Backhausdance](#).



Leela Dance Collective. Photo by Margo Moritz

For the month

After a series of free pop-up performances at sites across the Westside last week, **Leela Dance Collective** offers India's Kathak dance in a ticketed concert as part of Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage (AAPI) Month. The concert also has a livestream option. Agoura Hills Performing Arts & Education Ctr., 28545 W. Driver Ave., Agoura Hills; Sat., May 11, 4:30 & 7:30 pm, \$25 [The PAECs](#); livestream \$10 [Imagine India](#).



State Street Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

New on pointe

This concert from **State Street Ballet** showcases new contemporary choreography from emerging choreographers under the banner *New Voices*. Lobero Theatre, 33 E. Canon Perdido St., Santa Barbara; Fri.-Sat., May 10-11, 7:30 pm, \$38-\$58, \$26 children. [Lobero Theatre](#).



CalArts Dance Concert. Photo courtesy of the artists

Take off

For **CalArts Spring Dance** performance *LAUNCH*, the graduating class performs works by choreographers Alejandro Cerrudo, Micaela Taylor, and Mike Tyus & Luca Renzi. Cheryl Mann Del Cuore restaged a solo and a duet by Cerrudo. A commission by Tyus and Renzi has been remounted, and Taylor provides the premiere of her newest. Additionally, three new works by graduating students promise a preview of things to come in SoCal dance. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Wed.-Thurs., May 7-8, 8:30 pm, \$20. [REDCAT tickets](#).

Pick your style

It's street dance just off the street with the **Red Bull Dance Your Style Qualifier** for the western U.S. in this al fresco setting. Winners from this LA qualifier will advance to the USA national finals in Atlanta on May 18. Grand Performances, California Plaza, 300 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., May 11, 3 pm, free. \$10. [Eventbrite](#).

A Peek at Next Week (05-17 to 23)

Heidi Duckler Dance in *Herald in, Examine Throughout* at Broadway Street between 11th and 12th Streets, downtown; Sat., May 18, 7 pm, \$80. [Heidi Duckler Dance](#).

Rangoli Dance Company at Brand Library & Art Center, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale; Sat., May 18, 5 pm, free. [Brand Library](#).

G.U.M. Collective — *calling from the void* at Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sun., May 17-19, 8:30 pm, \$30-\$50. [Highways Performance](#).



Genna Moroni. Photo by Silvia Grav

Jessie Lee Thorne — *Anarcha* at Stomping Ground, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Sat., May 18, 8 pm, \$15. [ANARCHA by MashUp Contemporary Dance Company](#).

Versa-Style Next Generation's Annual Culmination Showcase at Mihran K Studios, 5437 Satsuma Ave., North Hollywood; Sat., May 25, 3 pm, \$5 suggested donation. [Versa-Style Dance](#).

World Ballet — *Swan Lake* at Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., San Diego; Fri., May 17, 7 pm, Sat., May 18, 6 pm, \$55-\$145. Also at Terrace Theater, Long Beach Convention Center, 300 E. Ocean Ave., Long Beach; Sun., May 19, 2 pm, \$50-\$125. [World Ballet](#).

Louise Reichlin & Dancers at Culver City Senior Center, 4095 Overland Ave., Culver City; Sat., May 18, 1:30 pm, free. [Los Angeles Choreographers and Dancers](#).



Louise Reichline & Dancers. Photo courtesy of the artist

Benita Bike's DanceArt at La Crescenta Library, 2809 Foothill Blvd., Glendale; Sat., May 18, 2

pm, free. [Benita Bike's DanceArt](#).

Westside Ballet — *Masters of Movement* at The BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Fri., May 17, 7 pm & Sat., May 18, 1 & 6:30 pm, \$45, Sat., May 18, 6:30 pm, \$195 includes 5pm reception and 8 pm dinner/gala. [Westside Ballet tickets](#).

Empara — *Well Done, An Immersive Dining Experience* at Melody Wine Bar, 751 Virgil Ave., East Hollywood; Mon., May 20, 7 pm, \$124 (includes 3-course dinner, show & gratuity). [Well Done](#).

News of Note

In conjunction with publication of *The Swans of Harlem: Five Black Ballerinas, Fifty Years of Sisterhood, and their Reclamation of a Groundbreaking History*, the author Karen Valby will be joined by **Lydia Abarca Mitchell**, **Sheila Rohan**, **Marcia Lynn Sells**, and **Karlya Shelton-Benjamin** to talk about the ballerinas in the book and how their careers and accomplishments have been overlooked or ignored by most ballet histories. Glorya Kaufman Performing Arts Center at Vista Del Mar, 3200 Motor Ave., Cheviot Hills; Wed., May 15, 8 pm, \$20-\$48 for admission with signed book option. [Live Talks Los Angeles](#).

An online conversation with **Edwaard Liang**, the first Asian American to lead a major American ballet company, and **Bonnie Oda Homsey**, Los Angeles Arts Foundation founding director, is presented as part of Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month (AAPI). Liang has moved from New York City Ballet to Broadway, from choreography to artistic director of Ohio's Ballet Met and now incoming artistic director of Washington Ballet. Reservations at [Eventbrite](#).

The **BODYTRAFFIC** performance, *In Pursuit of Joy*, originally announced for May 16, is now scheduled for Wed., May 29. at Avalon Hollywood, 1735 N. Vine St., Hollywood; Thurs., May 29, 7:30 pm, \$50. [BODYTRAFFIC](#).

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