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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Aligning Intentions

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, April 28th, 2021

A busy week with dance breaking chains, considering the LatinX, revisiting Santa Monica history, new contemporary ballet, a 15 week dance film series ends and a new ten week series begins, plus online encores, where to take online dance classes, and more SoCal dance this week.

### *This Week*

#### Oh, the places we have been

With support from three theaters, The Wallis and The Soraya in SoCal and The Harris in Chicago, **Jacob Jonas The Company** worked with more than 150 artists all over the globe to produce short dance films for the series, *Films.Dance*. Just as vaccination and pandemic restrictions start to allow travel, the 15-week dance film world tour that began in January concludes this Monday. For the finale that debuts Mon., May 3, 9 a.m., Jacob Jonas The Company's Emma Rosenzweig-Bock dances in a film co-directed by Jonas and Ireland-based Kevin McGloughlin. It joins the other 14 short films still viewable at [Films.Dance](#).



Films.Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## She does like a good book

Choreographer **Rosanna Gamson** has drawn some of her most compelling work from literature ranging from *Scheherazade* in *Tales of the Arabian Nights* to the Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*, and lectures by theoretical physicist Richard Feynman. Other than Albert Camus' *The Plague*, what could be more appropriate pandemic source material than Boccaccio's *Decameron* with tales from ten strangers sheltering from the bubonic plague? Just as the tales of the ten travelers unfold one at a time, Gamson's *The Decameron Project* rolls out ten films, each made by a different artist. The first five episodes from **Jinglin Liao**, **Kevin Zambrano**, **Dion Pratt**, **Gretchen Ackerman**, and **Clementine Gamson-Levyare** now viewable for free on [Instagram](#).



Rosanna Gamson /WorldWide “The Decameron Project.” Photo courtesy of the artists.

### Dances with cars

Over three Saturdays, **Suárez Dance Theater** rolls out three short films under the banner *Mapping Our Stories*. Inspired by the histories of Black, Native and LatinX people, each film is set in a Santa Monica public space with often overlooked cultural significance (the city provided funding). Choreographer/performer **Bernard Brown** of bbmoves takes the audience from the landmark Phillips Chapel CME Church (the 1909 church was the first serving the African American Community) to the site of “Inkwell Beach” where Blacks and Browns were restricted in segregated California beaches. Acknowledging her Chumash and Tongva Nations heritage, poet/songwriter **Jessa Calderon**’s film starts overlooking the ocean from Tongva Park. The history of the Westside Classics Car Club in Santa Monica is the focus of the film from **Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC)** and its members Alfonso Cervera, Rosa Rodriguez-Frazier, Irvin Manuel Gonzalez, and Patricia “Patty” Huerta. Each film will have resources for further exploration. Last solo film is Fri., Apr. 30, free on [YouTube](#). All three screen on Fri., May 7, 6 p.m. along with a filmmakers discussion. Free with registration at [Eventbrite](#).



Suárez Dance Theater . Photo courtesy of the artists.

### NOW and again

Masked in an alley, garbed in white hazmat suits, or swiping at a piñata, the Riverside-based quartet of movers **Primera Generación Dance Collective** reprise *Nepantla*. Premiered last year at CalArt's REDCAT NOW Festival, the troupe worked with videographer Leo Rival in their latest consideration of the Mexican American experience. Access until Sun., May 2, at 11:59 p.m. PDT, \$10. [Eventbrite](#).



Primera Generación Dance Collective. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Unchained

Choreographer James MaKween brings another edition of his *Reflect* series, this time the theme is *Reflect: On Breaking Chains*. Contributors include Queala Clancy, Mychal Vandell, Santiago Rivera, Tashara Gavin-Moorehead, Jazz Spectrum Dance Company, Joseph Lister, and MahKween. The web link opens 30 minutes before the show. Sat., May 1, 4:30 p.m. PDT, 7:30 EDT, \$8. Pay and receive secure password by [email](#).



James MahKween. Photo courtesy of the artist.

### **Is it a sickness?**

For **Luminario Ballet**'s new short dance film *L'Invalide*, artistic director Judith Flex Helle undertakes choreographer and director duties. Dancers Shannon Beach, Sadie Black, Jasmine Perry, Alexander Stabler, and Miguel Reyes Santiago create what sounds like a fever dream ballet. Online Mon., May 3, free at [Luminario Ballet](#).



Luminario Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Taking a turn

Originally composed for university modern dance classes, composer David Karagianis' album *Pulse* takes a turn into the ballet world with **LA Dance Moves**. Set on a quartet of ballet dancers by company artistic director Nancy Paradis and retitled *PULSE! In Two Movements*, the new, ten minute work debuts online with bonus features. Sat.-Sun., May 1-2, \$10. [Ballet Project TV](#).



LA Dance Moves. Photo courtesy of the artists.

### Crediting the composer

A streamed performance premiering a trio of contemporary ballets from **Kenneth J Walker Dance Project** continues its two week run. All three works boast music by frequent collaborator DJ Quetzal Star and choreography by Walker. The trio of works—*Focus on the Middle Distance*, *Echo of a Remembered Place* and *Soft Ambient Pulse*—are viewable online thru Tues., May 7, \$16. [Ballet Project TV](#).



Kenneth J Walker Dance Project. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Double bill

Choreographer Louise Reichlin and her dancers have two very different works streaming for free this week. The family-friendly *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*, Reichlin's popular take on a Frank Baum *Oz* book that did not involve Dorothy and Toto, returns for a two week run starting Wed., April 28 through Wed., May 12 on [Vimeo](#). The currently streaming *Urban and Tribal Dances* gets an extension to Fri., April 30 also on [Vimeo](#).





“The Patchwork Girl of Oz.” Photo courtesy of the artists.

## It works again

After the well-received live-streamed winter concert, the **CalArts Spring Dance Concert** returns with more live-streamed dance from choreographers experimenting with the technological possibilities of dance today. Participating dancemakers include Olivier Tarpaga, Rosie Herrera, Peter Chu, Reshaun Mitchell + Silas Riener. Thurs.-Fri., April 29-30, 8 p.m., \$15. [REDCAT](#).



CalArts Spring Dance Concert. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Ending with Friday

The nomadic dance organization Home/LA devotes its monthly *Last Friday* for April to dancer and activist **Bernard Brown**. Info at [Home/LA](#). Friday, April 30 on [Instagram](#).



Bernard Brown. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## Retelling a tale

A visually stunning 2006 Viver Brasil performance of *Mo Ife/Love Stories* takes the spotlight as this week's reprised video. Based on Orixá stories told by Ebomi Cici Viver Brasil's co-artistic director Linda Yudin recruited Cici and choreographers Linda Luiz Badaró and Rosangela Silvestre. The weekly online broadcast of a past performance joins the ensemble's online classes, workshops, and conversations. Free at [Viver Brasil](#). The troupe also is part of KCET's *Southland Sessions* streaming at [KCET](#).



Viver Brasil. Photo by Susan Goines.

## A “Grand” duo

Two dance companies share the virtual stage as part of this week's Grand Paark's *Our L.A. Voices*. The **Chinese Dance Company of Southern California (CDCSC)** tells classic Chinese stories through dance, while the quartet who comprise **Primera Generación Dance** focus on the Mexican American and LatinX experience. Thurs., Apr. 29, 6 p.m. PDT, free at [Grand Park](#).



Primera Generación Dance. Photo by Bobby Gordon.

## Dinner and live dance returns

Flamenco dinner shows return as the Costa Mesa branch of **Cafe Sevilla** once again offers live dance shows each Saturday. No announcement about when the shows will also return to the cafe locations in Long Beach and San Diego. ongoing Sat., 6:30 p.m., \$89.50 (plus tip, tax & surcharge). [Cafe Sevilla](#).



Cafe Sevilla. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## A gala goes outside

Gathering supporters in an outdoor setting with safety protocols. **Backhausdance** offers live dance and live music in *SPRINGforward*. Artistic director Jennifer Backhaus pairs with founding company member Amanda Kay White with music from Block x Block comprised of six members of the Pacific Symphony. Muckenthaler Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton; Sat.

May 1, 8 p.m., tickets are for two seats \$90-\$500. [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Celebrating 15

An impressive line up of dance luminaries are among the presenters celebrating 15 years of performances by **Los Angeles Ballet** at the company's virtual gala. Excerpts from those performances will punctuate appearances by Paula Abdul, Siedah Garrett, Nigel Lythgoe, Neal McDonough, Kenny Ortega, Jane Seymour and Adam Shankman along with announcements about live LAB performances returning this year. Sat., May 1, 7 p.m., ticket price includes catered dinner from Crustacean Restaurant and starts at \$600. [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Reed Hutchinson.

## Recent Online Encores

### A trio for us

Under the banner *We Made This for Us: 2021 Virtual MFA Thesis Concert*, **Tashara Gavin Moorehead**, **Issa Hourani**, and **Sarah Stanley** unveil new choreography in this shared concert. Gavin-Moorehead explores the African American celebration of Kwanzaa. Hourani tackles intimacy and identity in male homosexual relationships. Stanley confronts the relationship of the audience with the performer, and had a headstart when her interactive work launched earlier in the week. Concert director Rebecca Lemme oversees the live artist zoom talk after the performance. The concert will stream post-performance for a limited time. Fri., April 23, 6 p.m. PDT. Info at [CSULB Dance](#). Free with donations encouraged at [Give To CSULB](#).



CSULB's "We Made This For Us." Photo courtesy of the artist.

### Summoning

The year of the pandemic has brought several highly polished filmed dance ventures and a recent change of leadership for **LA Contemporary Dance Company**. *Summons*, the first work from the new artistic director Jamila Glass premiered last week with dancers Hyosun Choi, Kate Coleman, Shauna Davis, Nicole Hagen, Kenzie McClure, Drea Sobke, Carissa Songhorian, Tiffany Sweat, Gigi Todisco, and Angel Tyson. The dance film continues to screen for a modest charge of \$5, joining prior films plus info on the new artistic director, classes, and other activities at [their website](#).



LA Contemporary Dance Company. Photo by taso Papadakis.

### ***Online Dance Classes***

#### **Pandemic exhaustion? Get thee to a dance class!**

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram and other on-line platforms, many classes free, low cost or suggesting a donation. One central, constantly updated source on dance classes and in-depth reporting on SoCal dance, [LA Dance Chronicle](#) lists on-line dance classes including any cost and contact info. Grab a chair or clear off a corner of the room and use this time to dance. [LA Dance Chronicle](#).



Dance classes at LA Dance Chronicle.

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