

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## An Abbess Unmuzzled

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, March 20th, 2019

A one-night-only fest in Long Beach, penultimate week of a festival finale in Santa Monica, contemporary Cuban dance in Beverly Hills, feting a formidable abbess in University Park, dealing with diabetes in Echo Park, and more So Cal dance this week.

### 5. Dancing in translation

New York-based **Ballet Hispánico** led by Eduardo Vilario continues to raise its local profile adding this performance to its residency relationship with Cal State University L.A.'s Luckman Theater. Focusing on Latin-themed dance, the vibrant ensemble performs Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Línea Recta* which translates roughly as "straight line" and draws on flamenco moves, Michelle Manzanales' *Con Brazos Abiertos* which translates as "with open arms", and Tania Pérez-Salas' *3. Catorce Dieciséis* which considers the circularity of life with a title that is a rounding off of pi. Vanessa Van Worker hosts a pre-show talk at 6:45 p.m. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica. Fri.-Sat., March 22-23, 7:30 p.m. \$49-\$99. (310) 434-3200, <http://thebroadstage.org>.



Ballet Hispánico. Photo by Paula Lobo.

### 4. The long good-bye...week three

Over the past seven years, more than 75 emerging choreographers and dance companies have been presented in Highways' recurring series New Shoes. The series is concluding, going out with a four-week bang as **Best of New Shoes**. Curated by Highways Artistic Director Patrick Kennelly, each week showcases four choreographers who are alumni of the series. This penultimate week three (March 22-23) presents Heidi Brewer, Keith Johnson, Darrian O'Reilly, and Rebecca Pappas. The finale week (March 29-30) belongs to Yanina Orellana, Jordan Saenz, Carissa Songhorian, and Lara Wilson. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., thru Sat., Mar. 30, 8:30 p.m., \$25, \$20 students & seniors. <https://highwaysperformance.org>.



Highways Performance Space's "Best New Shoes." Photo courtesy of the artist.

### 3. Waltzes and torrents from Cuba

Cuba may be better known for its ballet dancers, but the high-energy Cuban contemporary company **Malpaso Dance Company** under director Osnel Delgado has attracted top international choreographers and arrives for performances at the second of two local venues. This week's

program includes *Waltz* by Canadian choreographer Aszure Barton and *Face the Torrent* by Sonya Tayeh. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Bram Goldsmith Theater, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Sat., Mar. 28-30, 7:30 p.m., \$35-\$105. <http://thewallis.org>.



Malpaso Dance Company. Photo by Bill Hebert.

## 2. Dancing across the LA/OC border

The South Coast Dance Alliance and Nannette Brodie assembled a dozen choreographers from L.A. and Orange Counties for this year's *So-Cal Dance Invitational*. The line up includes Stephanie Maxim, Erica Villalpando, Christine Baltes, Hyoin Jun, Kindra Windish, Michelle Shear, Patrick Donald, Deborah Brockus, Chelsea Johnson, Evan Rosenblatt, and Brodie. The twelfth choreographer presented is a work by Lester Horton (1906-1953) who embraced California as the base for his admired company and modern dance technique. Martha B. Knoebel Dance Theater, Cal State University Long Beach, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Mar. 23, 8 p.m., \$25, \$20 students & veterans. <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4097528>.



SoCal Dance Invitational. Photo by Steve Shea.

## 1. Science between prayers

Mid-Lent, mid-women's history month, and amid ongoing debilitating accusations of priests abusing children and nuns, **Heidi Duckler Dance Theater** considers a formidable female who was way ahead of her time in the Catholic church. Site specific HDDT sets up shop in a cathedral to consider Hildegard von Bingen, a German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, visionary, polymath and considered to be the founder of scientific natural history. At a time when women rarely had a voice, von Bingen's work spanned the theological, artistic, and scientific fields. How and why she was able to avoid the pervasive muzzling of women is considered in *The Hour of Hildegard*. Duckler promises this as an introduction to an extended exploration of the abbess' work and times. St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, 514 W Adams Blvd, Adams District; Sat., Mar. 23, 5 p.m., \$10-\$50. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hour-of-hildegard-tickets-55998036635>.

### *Other dance of note:*

In *Blood Sugar*, dancer/choreographer **Diana Wyenn** employs movement, live feed video and text that includes personal narrative and Shakespeare to consider her journey to discover the self-care required of those confronting diabetes. A post-performance discussion includes Wyenn and a diabetes educator. Bootleg Theater, 2220 Beverly Blvd., Echo Park; Wed.-Fri., Mar. 27-29, 7:30 p.m., \$25. <https://www.dianawyenn.com/blood-sugar>.



Diana Wyenn's "Blood Sugar." Photo courtesy of the artist.

Marking 26 years of solo performances of dance and theater, the **Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival (LAWTF)** opens a weekend of mostly theater, but several dance performances. The festivities include an opening gala and awards ceremony on Friday featuring dancers **Juli Kim** and **Vannia Ibarguen**. After the gala, the following two days offer a marathon of dance and solo

theater events. Complete details and participants at <http://www.lawtf.org>. Theatre 68, 5112 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; Fri., Mar. 22, 7 p.m., \$52, Sat., Mar. 23, 3 & 8 p.m., Sun., Mar. 24, 3 & 7 p.m., \$25. [http://www.lawtf.org/2019\\_fest\\_line-up.html](http://www.lawtf.org/2019_fest_line-up.html).



L.A. Women's Theatre Festival (LAWTF)'s Vannia Ibarguen. Photo by Prin Rodriguez.

The interplay of the architecture contained in R.M. Schindler's famous concrete "Slab-Tilt" *Schindler House* in West Hollywood and artist Alison Knowles' 1960's intermedia piece *The Play House* is grist for *Shelter or Playground-The House of Dust at the Schindler House*, a series of performative investigations that involve new and recreated performances from around the world. Last month the four month exhibit launched with a day of performances from an international roster of choreographers including locally-based **Milka Djordjevich**. Djordjevich's work is the only one getting a repeat showing, twice a month until June. Details on the Schindler House, Knowles' poem *The House of Dust* that inspired *The Playhouse*, the Fluxus avant garde movement in the late 1950s & 60s of which Knowles was part, and the extended endeavor running through June 2 that incorporates Djordjevich's performances at <https://makcenter.org>. Schindler House, 835 N. Kings Rd., West Hollywood; Sat., Mar. 23, Apr. 6 & 20, May 4 & 18, June 1, 3 p.m., free. <https://makcenter.org>.



Milka Djordjevich. Photo courtesy of the artist.

The respected training company **Festival Ballet Theatre** led by Salwa Rizkalla hosts Ballet West principal dancers Beckanne Sisk and Chase O'Connell in the lead roles of this full-length staging of the ballet *Sleeping Beauty* set to Tchaikovsky's score. Irvine Barclay Theatre, 4242 Campus Drive, Irvine. Sat., Mar. 23, 7 p.m., Sun., March 24, 2 p.m. \$42-\$55. (949) 854-4646. <https://www.festivalballet.org>.



Festival Ballet's "Sleeping Beauty". Photo by Dave Friedman.

Celebrate the dance, music and exchange of colors that characterize the Hindu holiday of Holi with **Red Baraat's** 8<sup>th</sup> annual *Festival of Colors*. The Soraya, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Thurs., Mar. 28, 8 p.m., \$31-\$41. <https://www.thesoraya.org/tickets/performances>.

Closing in on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Philadelphia Dance Company, better known as **PHILADANCO** continues as a bastion for African American dance. The admired troupe arrives for a performance. Free, but reservations required. USC Bovard Auditorium, 3551 Trousdale Parkway, University Park; Thurs., Mar. 21, 7:30 p.m., free with [reservation](#).



PHILADANCO. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Promising to distill millennia of Chinese culture in a swirl of colorful costumes and in sync dancing, the touring production **Shen Yun 2019** stops off at nine local venues over the next two months. Terrace Theater, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. Sat., Mar. 23, 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Mar. 24, 1 p.m. \$80-\$180. (800) 880-0188. Also at The Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Mar. 30, 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Mar. 31, 1 p.m., \$80-\$165. Also at Fred Kavli Theatre, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Tues., Apr. 2, 7:30

p.m., Wed., Apr. 3, 2 & 7:30 p.m. \$80-\$165. Also at Pomona College, Bridges Auditorium, 450 N. College Way, Claremont; Fri., Apr. 5, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Apr. 6, 2 & 7:30 p.m., \$80-\$150. Also at Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., Fri. & Sat., Apr. 10, 12 & 13, 7:30 p.m., Thurs. & Sat., Apr. 11 & 13, 2 p.m., Sun., Apr. 14, 1 p.m., \$80-\$220. Also at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Tues.-Sun., Apr. 16-28, (dates & times at website), \$80-\$200. Also at The Soroya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Tue.-Wed. Apr. 30-May 1, \$80-\$165. Also at Dolby Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., May 3, 7:30 p.m., Sat., May 4, 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., May 5, 1 p.m., \$80-\$200. Also at McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Thu. & Sat., May 9 & 11, 7:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat., May 10-11, 2 p.m., \$80-\$165. <https://www.shenyun.com/la>.



Shen Yun 2019. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A harbinger of 2019 centennial activities celebrating the life and legend of the late modern dance choreographer **Merce Cunningham**, *Clouds and Screens*, includes two large works by Andy Warhol and Charles Atlas, both artists associated with Cunningham's company. The installation also includes two early videos of Cunningham's work with performances and more to come during the exhibition's run. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Hancock Park; Thurs.-Tues., thru Mar. 31, \$25, \$21 students & seniors (museum admission). [http://www.lacma.org/event/memprev\\_merce2](http://www.lacma.org/event/memprev_merce2).



Merce Cunningham. Photo by Jack Michell courtesy of Getty Images.

**Note to readers:** In keeping with the growing activity surrounding the **Cunningham Centennial**, LA Dance Chronicle is providing a place for individuals who worked with Merce Cunningham, saw his work or otherwise just want to say something about Merce Cunningham to participate in the Centennial remembrance. L.A. Dance Chronicle founder Jeff Slayton danced with Cunningham's company and championed the idea of a place individuals could post a remembrance or comment about Merce Cunningham, his dance works or his legacy. The **Cunningham Centennial Page** now is live at the website (<http://LADanceChronicle.com>). Comments will be collected and passed on to the Cunningham Trust.

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