

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Beyond Fear of Flying

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, February 15th, 2023

Elevated ballet in Beverly Hills, a festival opens in Laguna Beach and one festival concludes in West LA, new choreography in the Arts District, a NY visitor moves on to Northridge, modern dance in Malibu, Fred Astaire's moves take another twirl downtown, a peek at next week, and more SoCal dance this busy week.

### *Live This Week*

#### A singular combination

Continuing its admirable commitment to showcase significant LA-based dance companies, this venue presents **Luminario Ballet**, known for its distinctive blending of quality contemporary ballet and aerial performance. Many of the dancers are alums or current members of Los Angeles Ballet during hiatus and the aerialists have credentials like Cirque du Soleil. Choreographer/artistic director Judith "Flex" Helle brings her current assembly of dancers and aerialists to the stage in *Heroes, Sheroes, and Eros*, Helles' *Hard as a Rock*, *The Last Supper*, and *Tend* from Adrian Hoffman. And bravo to the venue's management from giving more LA dance a deserving spotlight. At the Wallis, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 17-18, 7:30 pm, Fri., \$10 or pay what you can; Sat. \$25-\$79. [The Wallis](#).



Luminario Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Taking A.I.M.

Experience the “MacArthur Genius,” prize winning contemporary choreography of Kyle Abraham and his NY-based **Kyle Abraham/A.I.M.** Abraham uses composer Jlin’s electronic music contemplation of Mozart’s *Requiem* to propel the West Coast premiere of *Requiem: Fire in the Air of the Earth*. A preview clip can viewed at the Soraya website. The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Feb. 18, 8 pm, \$39-\$94. [The Soraya](#).



Kyle Abraham/A.I.M. Photo courtesy of the artists

## It's about sharing

This shared concert presents **LA Dance Project** in new choreography from Jamar Roberts and a 2022 work from Bobbi Jene Smith + Or Schraiber. Among his many accolades, Roberts won a NY *Bessie Award* and been praised as both a dancer and dancemaker. Roberts’ first work for LADP is paired with the LA premiere of *Quartet for Five* from Smith and Schraiber. LA Dance Project Studios, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Arts District; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 23-25, 8 pm, \$25-\$45. [LA Dance Project tickets](#).



LA Dance Project. Photo by Josh S. Rose

## Week six and over

In the finale for the 2023 *Dance at the Odyssey* festival, choreographer **DaEun Jung**'s *Byoulnorri* draws on Korean folk opera, the Korean alphabet system, electronic beats, and chance to deconstruct, reinterpret and transform classical Korean dance vocabulary. Festival curators Barbara Mueller-Wittman and Beth Hogan again brought six weeks of provocative performance to this year's *Dance at the Odyssey* festival. The Odyssey Theatre, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West LA; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 17-18, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 19, 2 pm, \$25. [Odyssey Theatre](#).



DaEun Jung. Photo by Michael Palma

## Shall they dance?

Dance classics from Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers and his other movie musical partners are reprised as **American Contemporary Ballet** returns with a new edition of *Astaire Dances*. An added attraction is artistic director Lincoln Jones' newest, *The Charlestons*, set to jazz music. The shows offer cocktails and refreshment options. Details at ACB Studios, Two California Plaza, 350 S. Grand Ave., 28th Flr., downtown; Fri., Feb 17 & 24, 8pm, Sat., Feb. 18 & 25, 5 & 8 pm, Sun., 19 & 26, 2 & 5 pm, \$60-\$130. [ACB Studios](#).





American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Mary Joyce

## Figaro Fandango

In Act III, when the singers finally work out the plot's antics to get to the actual *Marriage of Figaro*, choreographer Kitty McNamee unleashes the dancers for a wedding *fandango* and a flower dance. Often **LA Opera**'s go-to choreographer, including several of this season's operas, MacNamee recruited dancers Raymond Ejiofora, Katherine Highstrete, Jessica Gadzinski, and Nicholas Sipes to the stage for the six performances of *Figaro* over the next few weeks. Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135. N. Grand Ave., downtown; Thurs., Feb. 16 & 23, 7:30 p.m., Sun., Feb. 19 & 26, 2 p.m. \$39 to \$399. [LA Opera](#).



Cincinnati Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

## A homecoming

It's something of a homecoming for *Laguna Dance Festival* founder Jodie Gates who returns as artistic director of **Cincinnati Ballet** which shares this year's festival with another female-led company **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago**. The festival always recruits top companies that seldom tour to SoCal, offering a welcome look at top flight dancers from across the country. Thursday offers a free 6 pm rehearsal. On Friday, Cinnatinati Ballet offers classic repertoire plus contemporary works from Alejandro Cerrudo, William Forsythe, and Andrea Schermoly. Saturday offers a concert with both companies and on Sunday, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago brings contemporary choreography from Amy Hall Garner, Kyle Abraham, Spencert Theberge, Ohad Naharin, and Aszure Barton. Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach; Thurs., Feb. 23, 6 pm, free, Fri-Sat. Feb. 24-25, 7:30 pm, Sun., Feb. 26, 5 pm, \$60, \$30 students. Complete program line up plus workshops etc. at [Laguna Dance Festival](#).



Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Photo courtesy of the artists

## At the beach

For more than four decades, **Benita Bike's DanceArt** has made its mark presenting modern dance in untraditional settings with the goal of demystifying the process of creating dance. This week Bike and her all-female troupe are in Malibu, presenting two works and offering the audience the chance to chat with the artists about what they have seen. Malibu Library, 23519 Civic Center Way, Malibu; Wed., Feb. 22, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Malibub Library](#).



Benita Bike's DanceArt. Photo by Dean Walraff

## Dancing “*Crypto*”

Legendary modern dance choreographer (and currently UCI Distinguished Professor) Lar Lubovitch contributes *Cryptoglyph* set to Meredith Monk's *Double Fiesta* for this year's *Dance Visions 2023*. The concert features graduate and undergraduate dancers from **UCI Dance**. The choreography includes hip hop and jazz in Ariyan Johnson's *Inglewood to Irvine: A Dance Ministry Experience* and Cyrian Reed's *SOUL INTELLIGENCE – A Tribute to the Late Great Pharaoh Sanders*, classical ballet in Ton Wang's staging of *Paquita*, and contemporary ballet in Vitor Luiz' *Luna e'motions*. Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs.-Fri., Feb. 23-24, 8 pm, Sat., Feb. 25 2 & 8 pm, \$26, \$22 seniors, \$13 students. [The Barclay](#).





UCI Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Stepping around

The percussive dance styles developed by African American fraternities and sororities blend with traditional African dance and contemporary dance in **Step Afrika!** Since its founding in 1994, the troupe has toured its distinctive dance styles to more than 60 countries. The current show is presented this weekend at three SoCal venues. UC Santa Barbara, Campbell Hall, Isla Vista; Thur., Feb. 16, 7 pm, \$30-\$45. [UCSB Events](#). Also at Lancaster Performing Arts Center, 750 Lancaster Blvd., Lancaster; Fri., Feb. 17, 8 pm, \$44-\$49. [LPAC](#). Also at Luckman Fine Arts Complex, Cal State University Los Angeles, 5151 State University Dr., East LA; Sat., Feb. 18, 8 pm, \$25-\$50. [Ticketmaster!](#)





Step Afrika! Photo courtesy of the artists

## Those bendiest of people

When a handful of dancer/gymnasts created started an innovative dance troupe 50 years ago, who knew **Pilobolus** would not only expand the definition of what was modern dance, it one day would be taking a victory lap, a national tour celebrating 50 years and multiple generations of dancers succeeding that original troupe. The current golden anniversary tour stops off at one more local venue. Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, 415 N. Glassell St., Orange; Thurs., Feb. 23, 7:30 pm, \$25-\$58. [Musco Center](#).



Pilobolus. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Snowbound

Based on a Russian folk tale about a young man trying to free his friend imprisoned by the *Snow Queen*, **Redondo Beach Ballet** presents its ballet based on the story. Kelly Vittetoe dances as the Snow Queen with Anthony Cannarella and Jasmine Ejan as the two friends. Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Sat., Feb. 18, 6 pm Sun., Feb. 19 3 pm \$40-\$50, \$30 students. [Redondo Ballet Company](#).



Redondo Beach Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Post-Modern History, Live

Several of the notable figures who emerged from the Post Modern dance era centered at New York City's Judson Church in the 1960's left and came to SoCal. Rudy Perez and Simone Forti are among those NY transfers who became forces on the LA dance scene and now have *éminence grise* status here. Forti's oeuvre and the materials that fueled them are the focus of **Simone Forti**, the first museum exhibit to survey what she produced. The three-month exhibit includes live performances of *Dance Constructions*, one of her landmark works from 1961. Sarah Swenson, a known LA choreographer and long-time associate of Forti, acted as Performance Coordinator for this project and Forti's *Dance Constructions* presented throughout the exhibition, were staged by Carmela Hermann Dietrich. Hermann Dietrich and Forti have a relationship dating back to 1989 that includes improvised duets, the most recent of which, in 2017, was at Highways Performance Space. The exhibit also includes Forti's sculptures, videos, drawings, and notebooks. *Dance Constructions* at MOCA Grand Avenue (Museum of Contemporary Art), 250 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Exhibit runs to Sun., April 2. Performances of *Dance Constructions* performed Thurs., 3:30, 4:45, 6:00, & 7:15 pm, Sat. & Sun., 12:30, 1:45, 3:00, & 4:15 pm, throughout the exhibit run, free with timed museum admission. [MOCA](#).



Simone Forti. Photo courtesy of the artist

### ***A Peek at Next Week***

**Backhausdance** at Martha B. Knoebel Dance Theater, Cal State University Long Beach, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Feb. 25, 8 pm, \$45-\$65, \$25 students. [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Shawna Sarnowski

**Ben Vereen** at Catalina Jazz Club, 6725 W. Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 24-25, 8:30 pm. \$40. [Ticketweb](#).

**Voices: Black Artists Showcase** at Stomping Ground LA, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Sat., Feb. 25, 8 pm. [Stomping Ground LA](#).

**Ballet Preljocaj – Swan Lake**. At Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Feb. 25, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 26, 3 pm, \$20-\$131. [UCSB Events](#).





Ballet Preljocaj. Photo courtesy of the artists

**CalArts Dance** – *Coded: Art Enters the Computer Age, 1952–1982*. LA County Museum of Art, BCam Level 2, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., mid-Wilshire; Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 pm, \$25. [Event Info](#).

**Shen Yun 2023** at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Tues. & Fri. Feb. 28 & March 3, 7:30 pm, Wed., March 1, 2 pm, Sat., March 4, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., March 5, 1 pm, \$90-\$200. [SCFTA](#).

### ***New SoCal Dance Notes***

**On tour out of town** LA-based street dance troupe **Versa Style Dance Company** goes East Coast this week with performances in at Jacob's Pillow and NYC' Joyce Theater and the Cooper Union.

**Start planning for N.O.W.** – The deadline isn't until April 14, still time for emerging and mid-career choreographers, dance companies, and performance artists to submit a proposal to be part of REDCAT's **20th Annual New Original Works (NOW) Festival**. Festival is in August 2023, time to apply is N.O.W. Details and application at [REDCAT](#).

This entry was posted on Wednesday, February 15th, 2023 at 8:19 pm and is filed under [Theatre](#), [Dance](#), [Performing](#), [Visual Art](#)

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