

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Broken Hearts on Pointe

Ann Haskins · Thursday, July 24th, 2025

Contemporary pop-up in a repurposed soundstage in Echo Park; a tragic, romantic ballet in Costa Mesa; tap fest finale in Koreatown; al fresco Reggaeton downtown; new ballet choreography in Irvine; errant Henson puppets improv; more SoCal dance this week, and a peek at next week.

Live This Week

Her heart will go on

Continuing to assert its presence with SoCal as a second home, **American Ballet Theatre** brings the romantic classic *Giselle*. The performances showcase a quintet of notable dancers ranging from seasoned pairs like Hee Seo with Cory Stearns (Thurs.), Christine Shevchenko with Calvin Royal III (Fri.) and Devon Teuscher with Joo Won Ahn (Sat. eve), to rising stars like Chloe Misseldine with Aran Bell (Sat. mat.) and Skylar Brandt with the masterful Herman Cornejo (Sun.). Segerstrom Center for the Performing Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.- Fri., July 24-25, 7:30 pm, Sat., July 26, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., July 27, 1 pm, \$55.37 to \$190.97. [American Ballet Theatre](#).



Christine Shevchenko and Calvin Royal III (Albrecht) in American Ballet Theatre's "Giselle." Photo

by Amos Adams.

Add dancers and more on Glen

While professional companies are on summer hiatus, **National Choreographers Initiative (NCI)** founder/director Molly Lynch annually recruits 16 dancers with strong ballet and contemporary backgrounds, then teams them with four choreographers in an intense three week creative process to develop and explore new choreography. While many works developed during NCI become part of the repertoire, the initial performance comes with the caveat that these are not finished works. This year's choreographers are Natasha Adorlee, Morgan Sicklick, Makino Hayashi, and the accomplished veteran dancemaker Glenn Edgerton. This year's dancers are Brooke Gilliam, Amelia Grubb, Elizabeth Kanning, Alyssa Manguiat, Darcy McLoughlin, Gabriel Mengden, Rachele Perla, Emily Speed, Nic Bierwagen, Julian Goodwin-Ferris, Logan Hillman, Isaac Jones, Sean Sessions, Hunter Solomon, Spencer Wetherington, and Nathan Young. Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Sat., July 26, 8 pm, \$28-\$80. [Irvine Barclay](#).



National Choreographers Initiative. Photo by Dave Friedman

Pop up dance

In its latest, self-declared “disruptive pop-up,” **Jacob Jonas/The Company** continues to pursue unconventional venues, this time a repurposed film soundstage. Under the banner *ANT*, the company presents two premieres, one by Jonas with a score by Patrick Watson, the other by guest choreographer Peter Walker, a principal dancer with New York City Ballet, who sets his moves to the music of Eighth Blackbird. Soundstage Los Angeles, 2821 Council St., Los Angeles, 90026; Thurs.-Friday, July 24-25, 8 pm, \$57.75. [Jacob Jonas-ANT](#).



Jacob Jonas/The Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

The pros tap it out

Presented by Debbie Allen and the Chloe and Maud Foundation, **Hollywood Tap Fest All Star Concert** features members of the festival faculty, including Joseph Wiggan, along with some of advanced festival participants. The website has a full line up of faculty, classes and other events. Debbie Allen Dance Academy, 1850 S. Manhattan Place, Koreatown; Sat., July 26, 7:30 pm, \$45 wo/fees. [Tap Fest All Star Concert](#).



Joseph Wiggan. Photo courtesy of the artist

Vivaldi revisited

Concluding the **Backhausdance** summer intensive, company dancers are joined by some of the students in *Deconstructed: The Four Seasons*, a contemporary take on possibly Vivaldi's best known music. Chapman University, Waltmar Theater, 315 E. Palm Ave., Orange; Fri., July 26, 6 pm, \$45, \$35 students. [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Shawna Sarnowski

Following a few clues

There's scant information about the program to be danced this week by **Ballet Project OC** beyond its subtitle: *A tribute to American Dance*. Neither the company's website nor the theater have more beyond the description: "with all things Americana." Following clues to the company facebook page, reveals two scheduled works, "a post WWII Themed Piece *Count me In* and a Western-themed Ballet *High Noon Saloon*." Nothing identifying choreographers or music, but another clue that there "also will be new works;" another clue that the announced two works are not new. A return to the website's repertoire listing reveals the choreographers for two announced works are artistic director Ally Hellman and company dancer Anthony Cannarella. Info on the new works remains a mystery. The Scherr Forum, Bank of America Performing Arts Center, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat., July 26, 7 pm, \$37-\$77. [Ballet Project OC](#).



Ballet Project OC. Photo courtesy of the artists

Pros and pre-pros

Since 1995, the **Southern California Choreography Festival** has invited dancemakers to submit new choreography for this summer showcase. This year's participants in the young, pre-professional portion includes Bhakti Bhav Dance, Carlsbad Performing Arts Academy Ensemble, Dance Dimensions Company, Regina Klenjoski Dance Company (Pre-Pro), Spectrum Dance Center (Pre-Pro), Stagelight Dance Company, Strong Pre-Professional Company, and host Southern California Dance Academy. The professional portion includes JacoTayl Dance!, Mt. SAC Repertory Dance Company, Jose Costas Contempo Ballet, Andrea Rodriguez, DagDag Dance, Emilio Castellón, Ashley Sanchez-Jones, Sofia Saenz, Wildling Dance Theater, Kimberly Abao, Olivares Dance Company, Summer Lee, and the host company. Lakewood High School, 4400 Briercrest Avenue, Lakewood; Sat., July 26, 5:30-9 pm, \$27.50 in advance, \$30 at door. [SoCal Choreography Festival](#).



Brian Henson Presents – Puppet Up! Uncensored. Photo courtesy of Center Theatre Group

When Puppet Improv

The son of Muppets creator Jim Henson, takes his dad's puppet concepts into a cast of *MISKREANT* puppets, crosses them with *The Groundlings*-style improv, adds a large dose of uncensored *Avenue Q* sensibility, then puts the brew into the hands of masterful Henson Company puppeteers. The result is **Brian Henson Presents — Puppet Up! Uncensored**. Each distinctive show includes improv driven by audience suggestions along with recreated classic Henson sketches, some not seen in decades. Recommended for age 16 and older (actually those under age 16 are not admitted). Center Theatre Group at the Kirk Douglas Theatre, 9820 Washington Blvd., Culver City; Wed-Fri., 8 pm, Sat., 4 & 8 pm, Sun., 3 & 7 pm thru Sun., July 27. \$40.25-\$176. [CTG](#).

Getting to the Top

The *World Finals* dominate the fourth day of the **World of Dance Summit**. Info at the website on the range of dance categories, how to attend the finals, and attending the preliminary events starting Thursday. LA Convention Center, 1201 S. Figueroa St., Downtown; Sun., July 20, 1 to 10 pm. \$48.50 w/fees. [World of Dance Summit](#).



Dance DTLA. Photo courtesy of the Music Center

Summer Dancing

Part performance, part participatory event, the free, al fresco summer series **Dance DTLA** continues its weekly summer season with *Reggaeton* with **Dennis Guzman**. A beginner/refresher lesson at 7 pm is followed by a chance to dance or just watch and enjoy until 11 pm. If this week is not your style, disco concludes the summer series next week. The Music Center, Jerry Moss Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown; Fri., July 25, 7 pm, free. [Music Center](#).

A Peek at Next Week: (Aug. 1-7)

Festival Ballet — *16th Annual Gala of the Stars* at Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs., Aug. 7, 6 pm, \$80-\$95, [Irvine Barclay](#). **Gala dinner \$175**

Mastery of Korean Performing Arts — *80th Anniversary of Korean Liberation* at Zipper Concert Hall, Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., July 30, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Mastery of Korean Performing Arts](#).

Westside Ballet Adult Showcase at Moss Theater, New Roads School, 3131 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica; Sat., Aug 2, 2 & 5 pm, \$39.19 (w/fees). .

Dance DTLA — *Disco* at the Music Center, Jerry Moss Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown; Fri., Aug. 1, 7 pm, free. [Music Center](#).

High Voltage Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., Aug. 1, 8 pm, \$15 pre-sale, \$20 at door. [Electric Lodge](#).

Max 10 at the Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Mon., May 5, 8 pm, \$15. [Eventbrite](#).

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