

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Coming to Grips With Live

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, September 22nd, 2021

Street dance from India pops up all over town, flamenco fests in Silverlake and Los Alamitos, a contemporary debut in Orange, ballet is back in Monrovia, post modern choreography exhibited in Leimert Park, new dance films released, online encores, dance classes, and more SoCal dance this week.

Medieval street dance

A five-day traveling celebration of Kathak, the classical dance from northern India takes to the streets in *ReSound-Kathak in the Streets*. Dating back to medieval times, the percussive footwork and swift pirouettes of the **Leela Dance Collective** will be on view at locations from Santa Monica to downtown to Pasadena and Woodland Hills. Organized by Rina Mehta, the event has dancers Sonali Toppur, Ahana Mukherjee, Carrie McCune, and Ria DasGupta performing choreography by revered Kathak teacher Pandit Chitresh Das. Some performances will also include the Leela Youth Dance Company. The performances are free with reservations and the workshops at nearby studios are \$10. At Grand Park, 200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Fri., Sept. 24, 12:30 pm. Also at The Village, 6600 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Woodland Hills, Fri., Sept. 24, 4:30 & 6:30 pm. Also at Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice Beach; Sat., Sept. 25, 11:30 am. Also at 3rd Street Promenade, 1351 3rd St., Santa Monica; Sat., Sept. 25, 1:30 & 2:30 pm. Also at Memorial Park, 85 E. Holly St., Pasadena, Sat., Sept., 25, 5:30 pm. Also at Oak Park Amphitheatre, 5600 Hollytree Dr., Oak Park (part of Kathak Karnival); Sun., Sept. 26, 11:30 am. Also at Town Plaza, 9500 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Sun., Sept., 26, 5:30 p.m. Links to previews, free reservations, location details, workshop tickets, and Covid-19 protocols at [Leela Dance Collective](#).



Leela Dance Collective. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Contemporary considerations

Concluding a week-long residency, **Micaela Taylor** and her **TL Collective** perform three original works destined for an upcoming tour. Named one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch," this live concert marks the choreographer and her company's debut at this venue as well as the theater's reopening for live performance. Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, One University Dr., Orange; Fri. Sept. 24, 7:30 pm, \$20-\$53. For a link to a conversation with Taylor, tickets, and Covid-19 protocols at [Music Center](#).



Micaela Taylor. Photo by Yi-Chun Wu

How to binge flamenco

After a 15-month pandemic-enforced hiatus, the rotating roster of artists that are part of **Forever Flamenco** returned earlier this summer to a new outdoor stage, launching **Flamenco Under the Stars**. The dancers, musicians, and singers have been making up for lost time with a new format replacing the former mostly monthly, mostly Sunday programming with multiple weekend shows, each show with a different line up. This weekend, the announced series concludes its summer run with three shows offering a veritable round-up of Fountain Theatre favorites. On Friday, director/dancer Fanny Ara is joined by dancers Timo Nuñez and Reyes Barrios, with guitarist Gabriel Osuna, pianist Mateo Amper, percussionist Gerardo Morales, and singer Antonio de Jerez. On Saturday, director/dancer Alexandra Rozo is joined by dancers Vanessa Albalos and Manuel Gutierrez, guitarist Alex Jordan, percussionist Morales, and singer Jose Cortes. On Sunday, dancer Lakshmi Basile leads the ensemble that includes dancer Gutierrez, singer Oscar Valero, and guitarists Jose Tanaka and Kambiz Pakan. At the Fountain Theater, 5060 Fountain Ave., East Hollywood; Fri. -Sun., Sept. 24-26, 8 p.m., \$45-\$65, \$40 seniors & students. Tickets and details on

Covid-19 protocols at [Fountain Theater](#).



Lakshmi Basile “La Chimi.” Photo by Bruce Bisenz.

And even more flamenco

Come for just one day or settle in for the full two days of flamenco performances, classes, art shows, shopping, and paella that highlight **Flamenco Feria 2021**. At St. Isadore Historical Plaza, 10961 Reagan St., Los Alamitos; Sat., Sept., 25, 4-10 pm, Sun., Sept., 26, 11 am-6pm. Two days \$45, one day \$24-\$35, children \$8-\$20. [Ticketleap](#).



U.S. Olympic Gymnasts in “Gold Over America” tour. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Sometimes that glitter is gold

U.S. Olympic gymnasts Simone Biles, Jade Carey, Jordan Chiles, Grace McCallum, and MyKayla Skinner vault into town with Laurie Hernandez, Katelyn Ohashi, Morgan Hurd, and Chellsie Memmel. The gymnasts stop off on their *Gold Over America* tour. Staples Center, Sat., Sept. 25, 7:30 pm, \$50.50-\$76.50. [Staples Center](#).



Photo by Blondell Cummings.

Post-modern rituals

Continuing its acquisition and exhibition of the work of post modern choreographers, the Getty Research Institute unveiled the first-ever retrospective of the work of choreographer and video artist **Blondell Cummings: Dance as Moving Pictures**. Known for translating everyday activities into dance movements, Cummings' work often focused on food, family, major life events, and daily life rituals, especially Black life. Initiated as part of the GRI's African American Art History Initiative, the exhibit includes videos, interviews, and photographs. On view at Art+Practice, 3401 W. 43rd Pl., Leimert Park; Wed.-Sat., noon-6 pm, to Feb. 19, 2022, free. Research guide at [Getty](#), Exhibition at [Art+Practice](#).

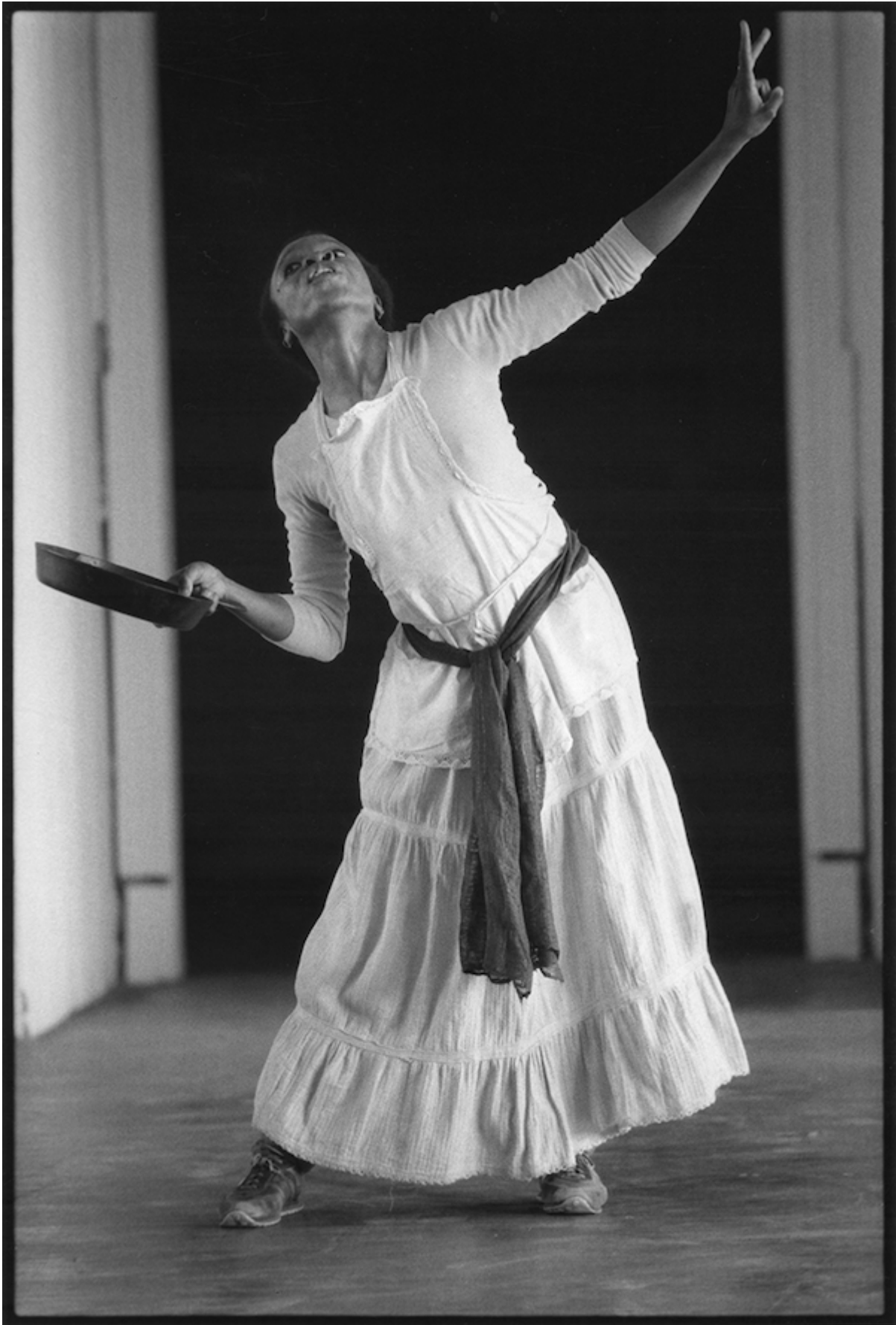


Photo by Blondell Cummings

Opener for a three part season

A fall fundraiser launches the 27th season of **Inland Pacific Ballet**. The performance is the first

installment in a season titled *Trilogy Series*. This event introduces IPB's new studio company, IPB II. and the IPB ballet academy's apprentices and trainees, a total of 27 dancers with a live chamber ensemble providing some of the music. Viewable via digital livestream or limited in person seating. Live at Inland Pacific Ballet studios, 9061 Central Ave., Montclair; Fri.-Sat., Sept. 24-25 7 pm, Sun., Sept. 26, 2 pm, In person-\$120 (Fri. only), \$75 (Sat. & Sun). Digital livestream \$35 per device per performance. Details, Covid-19 protocols and tickets at [Inland Pacific Ballet](#).



Giving at the beach

The contemporary company **Nannette Brodie Dance Theatre** is one of the hosts for the 3rd annual fundraiser *Long Beach Gives*, this year arriving as a virtual event. Over its 24-hours, this fundraiser accepts donations that support NBDT's education program in local schools as well as helping more than 200 dance, music, and other Long Beach-based arts organizations. NBDT performs online the day of the event, but among the day's incentives are video and tickets to NBDT and other performing arts events. Thurs. Sept. 23. Details on how to watch and give at [Long Beach Gives](#)



Nannette Brodie Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists

A hometown thank you

High-profile SoCal dance figure Debbie Allen is joined on video by *So You Think You Can Dance* creator Nigel Lythgoe for *The Wallis Delivers: Al Fresco Night*. The gala honors the theater's hometown, the city of Beverly Hills, and the city's support for this venue's education, outreach and artistic programs. The Wallis' artistic programming has been a leader in showcasing just how good SoCal dance companies are when presented in, and with support from, a state-of-the-art theater. The evening doesn't include any dance performance per se, but likely will include some dancing as Paris Hilton performs DJ duties. The live dance performances come later in the season and on the stage. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Arts, Promenade Terrace, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Fri., Sept. 24, 6 pm, \$2,500. Tickets and Covid-19 protocols at [The Wallis](#).

Dance films in theaters and online:

A bit of Mr. B

After last week's opening in New York City, *In Balanchine's Classroom* gets its theatrical release here in LA. The film focuses mostly on Balanchine's technique with commentary from several New York City Ballet alumni including Jacques D'Amboise, Merrill Ashley, Edward Villella and some glaring absences including Suzanne Farrell. Director Connie Hochman's bio notes she spent time as a student at the New York City Ballet's affiliated School of American Ballet and makes her point of view clear from the beginning. Hochman starts off a bit rocky historically, positing that ballet did not exist in the U.S. until Balanchine arrived in the 1933. That statement might be debatable, but not the dubious decision to cut immediately from that summary statement to a clip of ballet from 1913, in Russia, as if that early Russian declamatory ballet style was ballet in

America pre-Balanchine. Those quibbles aside, the film has a wealth of insight into how Balanchine taught and how he molded his dancers that defined his ballets. At the Laemmle Royal Theater, 11523 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A.; Fri., Sept. 24, tickets, showtimes and other venues at [Laemmle Theaters](#).



George Balanchine teaching class circa 1964. Photo by Martha Swope.

Two birds on their toes

With a plot based on A.K. Small's novel *Bright Burning Stars*, the new feature film *Birds of Paradise* now is in release on Amazon Prime. Sara Adina Smith gets double credit as director and for the screenplay that follows an American ballet student befriending and competing with a French ballet student for a single coveted spot in the Opéra National de Paris. The background of Diana Silvers and Kristine Froseth, the two actresses playing the aspiring competitors, are as models and actresses. While they trained seriously in preparation for the film, dance doubles Natasha Watson and Noémi Verb?czi, respectively, did the serious dancing and receive credit along with the other dancers in the film. Celia Rowilson-Hall is the choreographer with assists from Ida Saki and Jason Kittleberger. After the *Black Swan* kerfuffle over Natalie Portman given credit for dancing actually done by American Ballet Theater's Sarah Lane, such questions and credit issues follow any film with stars who seem to lack the depth of dance proficiency presented on screen. Amazon Prime video, starting Fri., Sept. 24. [Amazon Prime](#).



Noemi Verbovci, a dance double in “Birds of Paradise.” Photo by Andrea Paolini Merlo

Mommy dear

Dancing Queerly offers an online screening of *Dear Mom: A Movement Film Premiere*. The 90-minute film is described as exploring “bi+/queer families of origin by Good Trouble Makers.” Online Sat., Sept. 25, 4 p.m., free with registration. More info and registration for the film at on the film [Eventbrite](#).



“Dear Mom: A Movement Film Premiere.” Photo courtesy of the artists.

They’re back with more

When theaters shuttered with the pandemic, dance and its audiences went online and began expanding the possibilities of dance on film. LA choreographer **Jacob Jonas and his Jacob Jonas/The Company** gathered artists from around the world to produce 15 original short dance films under the banner *Films.Dance*. In January 2021 the films started rolling out over four months, one each Monday, all free. The project earned boasting rights as many of those films went on to win awards at other film festivals. This week begins *Films.Dance Round Two*, again with dance, dancers, and filmmakers from around the world. The original films, a preview, and e-mail sign up for free weekly film delivery at [Films.Dance](https://films.dance).



“Films.Dance Round 2.” Photo courtesy of the artists.

In case you missed it the first time

Continuing its roll out of encore videos from past performance, **Viver Brasil** adds *Ramunha* to the examples of the rich repertoire reflecting efforts to preserve Brasil’s African culture in dance and

music. Free at [Viver Brasil](#). The ensemble also is part of KCET's *Southland Sessions* streaming at [KCET](#).



Viver Brasil. Photo courtesy of the artists.

L.A. dance gets a little love

The third season of the Music Center's digital series *For the Love of L.A.* keeps adding new videos filled with curated dance, music, and visual arts. The season includes South Asian-American dance with **Shalini Bathina** and 17-year old **Shreya Patel**, Japanese influenced dance in a film directed and performed by **Kyoko Takenaka**, contemporary dance set in Leimert Park from **Brianna Mims**, an excursion between beach and backyard from **Maya Alvarez-Coyne**, Albertosy Espinoza's **LA Fusion Dance Theater**, and more. Online free, at [Music Center](#).



Brianna Mims. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Get thee to a dance class!

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram, other on-line platforms, and increasingly in person. 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.

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