Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

A Convergence of African-American Dance

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, January 24th, 2018

Andrew Pearson goes solo in Echo Park, tackling sexual/gender identity in Pasadena, a Fred Astaire tribute downtown, Odyssey Theater's Dance Festival week two in W.L.A., The Who's Who of African-American dance companies in Torrance, plus more SoCal dance.

5. Dancing the story

In *Stories of Identity*, choreographer Hilary Thomas and Lineage Dance continue their thoughtful exploration of identity issues, this time employing dance, story-telling and original music from Priscilla and the Stache, this time considering sexuality and gender as told by John Rowden, Angie Vaughn, Heather Clark, Danielle Munoz, Austin Roy and Harry Vaughn. Lineage dancers Jonathan Kim, Molly Mattei, Ericalynn Priolo, Julia Schaeffer, Teya Wolvington, Meghann Zenor and Thomas take over when words aren't enough. Lineage Performing Arts Center, 89 S. Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 27-28, 7:30 p.m., $20 in advance, $25 at door, $15 students & seniors in advance, $20 students & seniors at door. http://LineagePAC.org.

Lineage Dance. Photo by Michelle Kolb.

4. Channeling Fred

The sophisticated grace of Fred Astaire inspired *Astaire Dances* as American Contemporary Ballet recreates several memorable moments from Fred Astaire's films. Several dances were presented in ACB's third season and are reprised here with some new additions. ACB Studios, 700 S. Flower St., Suite 3200, downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 1-3 & 8-10, 8 p.m., Sun., Feb. 4 & 11, 4 p.m., Tues.-Wed., Feb. 13-14, 8 p.m., $40-$105. http://acbdances.com.

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3. Solo show moves east

Like many choreographers, **Andrew Pearson** started making dances in the living room when he was a child. A long-standing member of the respected L.A. Contemporary Dance Company, Pearson's three part solo series *this is a blank page. a story, in motion* draws on that innocent beginning, filtering it through years of training and practicing his dancemaking craft. This show

was very well received when it debuted last August at Highways. This eastward move provides an extended look at Pearson as a choreographer as well as an admired dancer. Bootleg Theater, 2220 Beverly Blvd., Echo Park; Tues.-Wed., Jan. 30-31, 7:30 p.m., $15-$20. http://bootlegtheater.org.

Andrew Pearson. Photo courtesy of the artist.

2. When a theater brings on the dance

L.A. boasts a number of dance festivals, most with lots of troupes offering brief samples from their repertoire. Several years ago, the Odyssey Theater launched a festival that is more of a planned meal than a smorgasbord, giving an entire weekend (sometimes two) to a few noteworthy local troupes. **Dance at the Odyssey 2018** opened last week with **Micaela Taylor + TL Collective** in *Rosewood,* capturing the troupe's blending of hip hop with contemporary dance. This weekend, the stage belongs to **L.A. Contemporary Dance Company**, known for work by its artistic directors as well as its ability to attract other L.A. choreographers ready to create on LACDC's splendid dancers. LACDC brings a triptych program with contributions from current director Genevieve Carson, Capezio award-winning dancemaker Nathan Makolandra, and Stephanie Zaletel who heads her own local all-female troupe Szalt. The final weekend belongs to choreographer **Corina Kinnear** who closes the festival with her provocatively titled *Naked.* Long known as one of L.A.'s most respected theater companies, the Odyssey producers Barbara Mueller-Wittmann and Beth Hogan admirably have extended their reach to showcase L.A. dance. Complete festival details at http://odysseytheatre.com. Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West L.A.; L.A. Contemporary Dance Company Fri.-Sat., Jan. 26-27 & Feb. 2-3, 8 p.m., Sun., Feb. 4, 2 p.m., $15-$25. Corina Kinnear Thurs.-Fri., Feb. 8-9, 8 p.m., $15-$25. http://odysseytheatre.com.

L.A. Contemporary Dance Company. Photo by Gema Galiana.

1. First the conference, then the dance

In the wake of the outcry over the latest racist rants from the White House, ten top companies arrive here for the 30th annual meeting of the **International Association of Blacks in Dance**. Unlike most conferences, when the daytime sessions end, these participants take the stage to perform. The scheduled performers read like the who's who of Black/African-American dance companies including Dance Theatre of Harlem, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Kyle Abraham, Philadanco plus the L.A. host company Lula Washington Dance Theater. A series of late night showings during the conference at the Sheraton Gateway LAX which is hosting the conference, culminate in three concerts with ten IABD founding companies on Sat. Jan. 27 and other member companies on Fri., Jan. 26 (and youth troupes on Thurs., Jan. 25). This is L.A.'s 4th time hosting the annual conference and each time, it's proven an unparalleled opportunity for dance fans to enjoy well known troupes and discover high powered dance companies that seldom tour here. For complete details http://www.lulawashington.org. Marsee Auditorium, El Camino College, 16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance; Thurs.-Sat., Jan. 25-27, 7:30 p.m., $15-$35. http://elcaminotickets.universitytickets.com/user_pages/event.asp?id=556&cid=45

Lula Washington Dance Theater. Photo by Richard Termine.

Other dance of note:

The long-running, mostly monthly **Forever Flamenco** returns with *Paisaje (Landscapes),* with dancers Timo Nunez and Fanny Ara, guitarist Gabriel Osuna, pianist Matthew Amper, vocalist Antonio De Jerez and guitarist/percussionist Gerardo Morales. Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., E.Hollywood; Sun., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., $30-$50. http://fountaintheatre.com.

Forever Flamenco's Fanny Ara. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Originally based in Taiwan, ***The Golden Dragon Acrobats*** *bring the Chinese tradition of colorful gymnastics and contortions to town. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 12700 Center Court Dr., Cerritos; Sun., Jan 28, 3 p.m. $45-$65. http://cerritoscenter.com.*

This entry was posted on Wednesday, January 24th, 2018 at 5:01 pm and is filed under Dance
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