

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Cubans Confront Changing Winds

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, November 29th, 2017

A crowded solo in Lincoln Heights, curative dance in Arcadia, Cuban dancers with visas, a youthful *Firebird* and sci-fi 3-D dance all downtown, plus the annual onset of *Nutcrackers*.

5. PTSD-ance

Anyone who knows dance knows movement deserves more credit as a kind of medicine. **Diavolo** executive director Jennifer Cheng applied that knowledge to the Veterans Project, a five month workshop with war vets that produced a work premiered at Diavolo's recent day-long 25th anniversary celebration. Named after the workshop, *The Veterans Project* exudes themes of inner strength, resilience, renewal and the meaning of home. Here, the new work gets its own solo show, free to U.S. vets. Arcadia Performing Arts Center, 188 Campus Dr., Arcadia; Thurs., Nov. 30, 7 p.m., \$10-\$30. <http://www.arcadiapaf.org/tickets/leasedevents>.



Diavolo Architecture in Motion's *The Veterans Project*. Photo by George Simian.

4. A crowd for *HiSolo #5*

Co-curated by alexx shilling and devika wickremesinghe, the provocatively titled *HiSolo #5* features three minute solos by Levi Gonzales, Jen Hong, Rhia Jade, Rosalynde LeBlanc, Jessica Kondrath, Meg Madorin, Samantha Mohr, Kristianne Salcines, Nickels Sunshine and Micaela G. Taylor. Pieter Space, 420 Avenue 33, Lincoln Heights; Sat., Dec. 2, 8:30 p.m., non-monetary donation. <https://pieterpasd.com>.

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3. *Nutcracker* trio



American Ballet Theater's *Nutcracker*. Photo by Gene Schiavone.

Three early arrivals of *The Nutcracker* take the stage in Costa Mesa, Redondo Beach and downtown. Celebrated Russian choreographer Alexei Ratmansky interprets the classic for **American Ballet Theatre's** splendid dancers. Announced casting for leads at <http://scfta.org>. **Miami City Ballet** arrives with a new production of George Balanchine's *Nutcracker*. Telecast of the original Balanchine version in the mid-1950s launched the ballet's spread into a national

seasonal epidemic. In addition to the live orchestra, young dancers from local studios and the Los Angeles Children's Chorus participate. Fans of Debbie Allen have a chance to see her perform in **Hot Chocolate Nutcracker**, her version of the holiday classic. Carlos Imperato, Tisha Campbell-Martin, Tichina Arnold, Kristopher Nobles, Mathew Johnson and DADA also star, backed by dancers from the Debbie Allen Dance Academy. ABT at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 7-8 & Wed.-Fri., Dec. 13-15, 7 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 9 & 16, 2 & 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 10 & 17, 12:30 & 5:30 p.m.; \$39-\$269. 714-556-2787, <http://scfta.org>. Miami City Ballet at the Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Thurs., Dec. 7, 6:30 p.m.; Fri., Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 9, 2 & 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 10, noon & 4 p.m.; \$34-\$125. <http://musiccenter.org/nutcracker>. *Debbie Allen's Hot Chocolate Nutcracker* at Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Redondo Beach; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 7-8, 7:30 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 9, 1 & 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 10, 2 p.m.; \$50-\$110. <http://HotChocolateNutcracker.com>.



Miami City Ballet's "Nutcracker". Photo by Iziliaev.

2. Sci-fi dance

Combining live dance with 3-D video, *Tesseract* has a science fiction edge from filmmaker **Charles Atlas** and choreographers **Rashaun Mitchell** and **Silas Riener**. The two part work opens with a stereoscopic 3-D video shot with dancers in six different locations. The filmed dance is followed by live dance with the dancers' movements amplified by equally live video mixing. This intricate mix of live performance and film was developed over several years at New York's EMPAC (Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center), but the creative trio first met years before while working with legendary choreographer Merce Cunningham. Along with their other extensive credits, Mitchell and Reiner were dancers in Cunningham's company and Atlas was Cunningham's highly lauded, long-time filmmaker-in-residence. This notable event marks Atlas' first dance film in a decade. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Sun., Dec. 3, 3 p.m., \$20-\$25, \$16-\$20 students. 213-237-2800, <http://redcat.org>.



"Tesseract" Photo courtesy of REDCAT.

1. Cubans dancing with visa?

Havana-based **Malpaso Dance Company** is a rare dance event in the Getty's extensive *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA* and part of the Music Center's island-focused weekend events dubbed *Cuba: Antes, Ahora/Then, Now*. Cuba is known for its brilliant ballet dancers, this contemporary company made its name blending that fabled ballet technique with modern dance and moves from Cuba's streets and clubs. Leading up to the Saturday dance performance are Thursday's artist conversations, Friday's *Afro-Cuban Dance and Percussion Workshop* and the late night *Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours*, and Saturday's reprises the *Afro-Cuban Dance and Percussion Workshop*, plus a *Rumba Dance Party + Jam Session*. Special activities geared to high school students include a master class with choreographer Sonya Tayeh. The dancers appear to have avoided the visa problems encountered by some of the Cuban musician groups since the recent antagonistic White House moves toward Cuba. Complete listing of events at <https://www.musiccenter.org/cuba>. Music Center Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave.,

downtown; Sat., Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m., \$28-\$87. <https://www.musiccenter.org/cuba>.



Malpaso Dance Company. Photo by Judy Ondrey.

Other dance of note:

Choreographer Kitty McNamee also directs this dance update of Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird* as part of the **Toyota Symphony for Youth** (that includes "youth" of all ages). Disney Hall, 111 S. Grand. Ave., downtown; Sat., Dec. 2 & 9, 11 a.m., \$22-\$26. <https://www.laphil.com>.

Micaela Taylor + the TL Collective perform *New Side* as part of *Raw Artists LA*. Exchange LA, 618 S. Spring St., downtown; Wed., Dec. 6, 7 p.m., \$22. <http://www.rawartists.org/micaelataylortheTLcollective>.



Micaela Taylor. Photo by Yi-Chun Wu.

The holiday show *Merry-Achi Christmas* includes dancers along with the mariachi musicians. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 12700 Center Coart Dr., Cerritos; Sat., Dec. 2, 8 p.m. \$35-\$86. <http://www.cerritoscenter.com>.

Ariana Daub, Lindsey Lollie, Sarah Prinz, Amir Rappaport, Jordan Saenz, Stephanie Zaletel, the dancers who make up the contemporary dance troupe **Szalt**, are joined by musicians Louis Lopez, Jonathan Snipes and Steven Van Betten for this performance gala benefiting the troupe's 2018 season. Details at <https://www.szaltdances.org>. MorYork Gallery, 4959 York Blvd., North Highland Park; Sat., Dec. 2, 4 p.m., \$25 (performance only). <https://szaltdance.brownpapertickets.com>.



Szalt. Photo by Joseph Lambert.

Yvonne Mounsey and Rosemary Valaire, the late founders of **Westside Ballet** created a Victorian Christmas card version, performed with the Santa Monica Symphony. Alum Joy Womack now with Kremlin Ballet Theater guests. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 2-3, 1 & 5 p.m.; \$45. <http://www.WestsideBallet.com/nutcracker>.

Ballet Conservatory West – Smothers Theater, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu; Sat. Dec 2, 7 p.m.; \$20-\$30. <https://pepperdinearts.ticketforce.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=227>.

Red Chair Children's Production Company – Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sun., Dec. 3, 2 & 6 p.m.; \$25-\$45. <http://www.AlexTheatre.org>.

Dance Peninsula Ballet – Norris Theatre, 27570 Norris Center Dr., Rolling Hills Estates; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 1-2, 7 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 2-3, 2 p.m.; \$35, \$25 under 18. 310-377-6663 <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=81332>.

Dance Creations – Agoura Hills Performing Arts Education Center, 28545 W. Driver Ave., Agoura Hills; Fri., Dec. 1, 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 3, 2 p.m.; \$18-24. <http://PerformingArts.lvusd.org>.

Ballet Etudes – Huntington Beach Historic Theater, 1905 Main St., Huntington Beach; Sat., Dec. 2, 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 3, 1 p.m., Sat., Dec. 9, 2 & 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 10, 2 p.m.; \$25-\$35. 714-902-9423, <https://www.tututix.com/client/balletetudes>.

Ventura County Ballet – Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 2-3, 2 p.m.; Also at Ventura College, 4700 Loma Vista, Ventura; Fri., Dec. 8, 7 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 9, 2 & 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 10, 2 p.m.; \$30-\$45, \$10-\$45 children under 13, \$20-\$45 seniors. <http://venturacountyballet.com/>.

Scripps Ballet Theatre – David & Dorothey Garfield Theater, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 2 & 3, 9 & 10, 2 p.m.; \$20-\$35. <https://tickets.lfjcc.org>.

Inland Empire Contemporary Ballet – Grand Terrace Performing Arts Theatre, 21810 Main St., Grand Terrace; Sat., Dec. 2, 2:30 & 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 3, 4:30 p.m., \$15-\$25. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-nutcracker-ballet-tickets-27644357016>.

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