Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Dancin' on Lenny's Waterfront

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, January 31st, 2018

Dancers join dogs herding sheep in Pacific Palisades, Miguel Gutierrez puts his choreography to rest in Glassell Park, Fred Astaire tributes in Pasadena and downtown; Keigwin + Company dance to Leonard Bernstein in Northridge, Okwui Okpokwasili considers Nigerian women downtown, the Odyssey Dance Festival continues in West L.A., plus more So Cal dance this week.

5. He wishes he could quit this dance

Quoting William Faulkner's adage to kill all your darlings, **Miguel Gutierrez** sets out to lay to rest his most celebrated choreography. Gutierrez has performed *DEEP AEROBICS* all over the world, but won't perform it here. Well, not exactly. Dubbed *K-D-A-VER*, Gutierrez describes the performance as a one time only, participatory event to put *DEEP AEROBICS* to permanent rest. Whether the choreographic cadaver will rest in peace or become a zombie dance apocalypse, is part of the evening's mystery. L.A. Live Arts, 4210 Panamint St., Glassell Park; Sat., Feb. 3, 8 p.m., $20. https://performancepractice.la.

Miguel Gutierrez. Photo by Ian Douglas.

4. Fred Astaire served up two ways

The sophisticated grace of Fred Astaire inspired *Astaire Dances* as **American Contemporary Ballet** recreates several memorable moments from Astaire's films. Several dances were presented in ACB's third season and are reprised here with some new additions. Not too far away, Pasadena's **Norton Simon Museum** screens actual Fred Astaire films with *Top Hat* (1935) this weekend and *Swing Time* (1936) next weekend, part of a four film fest (weeks 3 and 4 are Gene Kelly in *American in Paris* (1951) and *Singin' in the Rain* (1952)). *Astaire Dances*: 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. *Fred Astaire films*: Norton Simon Museum, 411 W. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; Fri., Feb. 2 (Top Hat) & Feb. 9 (Swing Time), 5:30 p.m., free with museum admission $15, $12 seniors, free 18 & under. 626-449-6840, http://nortonsimon.org.

American Contemporary Ballet. Photo courtesy of ACB.

[alert type=alert-white]Please consider making a tax-deductible donation now so we can keep

publishing strong creative voices.[/alert]

3. An African consideration

Following her triumphant 2014 L.A. debut in *Bronx Gothic*, **Okwui Okpokwasili** returns with *Poor People's TV Room*. This L.A. premiere considers the Nigerian women's resistance movement and perceived collective amnesia on their struggle. A performer able to rivet an audience with her use of movement, song, video and text, Okpokwasili arrives aided by dancer/performers Thuli Dumakude, Katrina Reid and Nehemoyia Young. REDCAT, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 8-10, 8:30 p.m., Sun., Feb. 11, 7 p.m., $30-$35, $26-$28 students. 213-237-2800, http://redcat.org.

OkwuiOkpokwasil. Photo courtesy of the artist.

2. Odyssey Dance fest, week three

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 with Micaela Taylor + TL Collective 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., 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. Dancin' to Lenny

Amid the orchestral celebrations of what would have been Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday, **Keigwin + Company** arrive to *Celebrate Bernstein*, focusing on the conductor/composer's impact on dance. The quartet of danceworks are set to two iconic scores, *On the Town* and *On the Waterfront*, and to two less familiar, but equally engaging, *Piano Trio* and *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*. The first two danceworks were premiered in 2012 at Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center to enthusiastic reviews, but the latter two receive their world premiere here. Choreography Keigwin and his dancers are known for blending classical technique with contemporary dance elements spiced with show biz strut, a lot like Bernstein and his music. Younes & Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Feb. 3, 8 p.m., $33-$73 818-677-3000, http://valleyperformingartscenter.org.

Other dance of note:

The site-specific dance theater company **Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre** returns to a scenic overlook that has hosted the troupe for performances and a fundraising benefit. This time HDDT's performance of its *Fish Eyes* (with Alex Ward's stunning steel fish structure) joins an array of other performances and display booths from local artists. All free. Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, 6300 Hetzler Rd., Culver City; Sat., Feb. 3, noon-7 p.m., free, reservations needed. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ebb-flow-culver-city-tickets-41291777819.

Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of HDDT.

The Russian touring troupe **Moscow Festival Ballet** arrives with *Carmen* along with *Romeo and Juliet.* Cerritos Center for the Arts, 12700 Center Court Dr., Cerritos; Sat., Feb. 3, 8 p.m., $55-$75. http://www.cerritoscenter.com.

Blending contemporary movement with sheepherding trials (remember finale in the original *Babe the Pig* film?), conceptual artist **Ann Carlson**'s *Doggie Hamlet* puts two women, two men, one boy, three herding dogs and a flock of sheep in a fenced field at a state park. Site-specific, wear comfortable shoes. Will Rogers State Historic Park, 1501 Will Rogers State Park Road, Pacific Palisades; Sat.-Sun., Feb. 3-4, 4 p.m., $59. http://capucla.edu, http://ticketmaster.com.

The **Peking Acrobats** arrive with their demonstrations of extraordinary balance, cycling and precision tumbling. Luckman Fine Arts Complex, 5151 State University Dr., E.L.A.; Sat., Feb. 3, 8 p.m., $30-$50, 323-343-6600; https://www1.ticketmaster.com/peking-acrobats-los-angeles-california-02-03-2018/event/0B00531ADD413B98#efeat4212.

Two decades ago, a little known troupe with the hard to pronounce name **Cirque Elouize** (pronounced cerk el-waaz) dazzled audiences in their local debut. More than 4,000 performances later and an established international reputation, the ensemble returns to dazzle again with *Saloon*. Irvine Barclay Theater, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs.-Fri., Feb. 8-9, 8 p.m., $28-$100. http://thebarclay.org.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, January 31st, 2018 at 3:43 pm and is filed under Dance
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.