

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Dancing Across L.A.

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, December 2nd, 2020

A ten-day encore in two, drive-in dance moves to film, a collective consideration of what is valuable, what choreographers can teach, plus encore streaming, where to submit dance videos, where to take online dance classes, and more SoCal dance this week.

### *This Week*

#### An encore “Re-Quest”

In early October, **Heidi Duckler Dance** celebrated its 35th anniversary with *Quest*, ten days of site specific performances at ten different LA locales with the audiences timed for Covid-compliant drive by or walk up viewing. Anyone who missed out or would like an encore has that opportunity with *Re-Quest*, two days of screenings divided into the initial five days and the concluding five days of performances. Choreographer Heidi Duckler and her band of dancers, musicians, singers, actors and other artists, acknowledged masters of the site-specific event, outdid themselves as they moved from a Hollywood synagogue to Koreatown, a Mt. Washington museum, a Willowbrook medical center, the downtown fashion district, and more. Days 1–5: Sat., Dec. 5, 6 p.m. Days 6–10: Sun., Dec. 6, 6 p.m. \$5-\$120. Info and tickets at [Heidi Duckler Dance](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo by Kelly Stuart.

#### Return of the Glitterati

The band of artists that call themselves the Gold Collective return with the 2020 edition ***Gold Series No. 3 Performance Series***, this time as a virtual gathering and live stream performance. **Madison Clark, Sarah Leddy, Carol McDowell, Daniel Miramontes, alexx shilling and Taso Papadakis** offer new works and welcome guest artists Laurel Jenkins, Keith Johnson, d.v. wickremesinghe, and Justin Morris with Steve Rosa. The annual event offers five experimental reflections on what is considered valuable, considerations that promise a different trajectory in a year of viral pandemic and political pandemonium. The evening includes a conversation with the artists. Fri., Dec. 4, 7 p.m. & Sat., Dec. 5, 5 p.m., suggested donations \$5-\$20. [Core to Coeur](#)



The Gold Series. Photo by Chelsea Roquero.

#### One more time

The drive-in dance performances have ended but LA Dance Project offers a filmed encore of *Solo*

*at Dusk* with **Bobbi Jene Smith** and **Or Schraiber**. The pay-per-view streams for 24 hours with a higher priced option that includes the stream plus interviews and classes with the performers that do not expire. Performance: Sat., Dec. 12, 5 p.m. to Sun. Dec. 13, 5 p.m., \$19.99 & \$24.99. Info and tickets at [LA Dance Project](#).



Bobbi Jene Smith. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## When those who teach also do

Promising to imagine new forms through new technologies, CalArts faculty choreographers and student performers shift their annual *CalArts Winter Dance Concert: Repertory/Trajectory* from the stage to the internet. The online performance includes **Spenser Theberge**'s *FIT* performed live on Zoom with a nod to William Forsythe's *Kammer/Kammer*. **Yusha-Marie Sorzano** combines pre-taped film and live Zoom performance in *THREAT* while **Holly Farmer** joins 15 dancers in *Bricolage* that builds on archived notes of *Collage*, a Merce Cunningham work once believed lost. In another live Zoom performance, choreographer **Sam Wentz** draws on early works by Trisha Brown in the proximity dance, a collaboration with faculty colleagues Lilia Deering and Justin Scheid. In *As Yet Untitled* (vignettes), choreographer **Rosanna Gamson** took inspiration from early court dances and self-submissions of video generated by e-mail prompts. Fri., Dec. 4, 8:30 p.m. & Sat., Dec.5, 4 p.m., \$15, \$12 students. Info & tickets: [REDCAT](#).



Cal Arts Winter Dance Concert. Photo by Jacob Jonas.

## Flamenco at the beach

Under the banner *Dance Like No One's Watching*, the **Laguna Dance Festival** brings an evening of flamenco dance online as part of a virtual fundraiser. The event features flamenco dancer **Irene Rodríguez** and includes her performing a world premiere commissioned by the festival and filmed on location in Laguna Beach. Donations of \$100 or more get additional benefits. Fri., Dec. 4, 6 p.m. Info & tickets at [Laguna Dance Festival](#).



Irene Rodriguez. Photo by Alfredo Cannatello.

## The time is "NOW"

The third and final streamed installment of REDCAT's *New Original Works (NOW) 2020* series offers a trio of new works by **DaEun Jung**, **Genna Moroni**, and **Samantha Mohr** with **Maria Garcia**. In *Byoul Part 1: 246 at 40* Jung draws on classical Korean dance, Merce Cunningham's "chance operation" and the Korean alphabet. Female relationships are the starting point for Moroni and her dancers in *More*. Choreographer/performer Samantha Mohr takes on no less than the Trojan horse in Maria Garcia's *Laocoön with Cabiria* at 9. Thurs.-Sat., Dec. 10-12, 8:30 p.m., \$15. Info at [REDCAT](#). Tickets at [Ovation](#).



Gennia Moroni. Photo by Silvia Grav.

## Locking it up

Early on, the street dance troupe **Versa-Style Dance Company** seemed to take naturally to online

streaming of performances and classes. The company and its youth organization Versa-Style Next Generation off two days of virtual performances as part of a fundraiser. The company its performance videos, videos on a range of life-skills subjects, the YouTube channel, and this week's benefit events at the website. Dec. 4 & 5, Info and tickets at the [Versa-Style website](#).



Versa-Style Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Debbie, plus Nigel

The latest virtual benefit *The Wallis Delivers: Dreambuilders* boasts hosts Nigel Lythgoe and Debbie Allen. The event includes dance from **Debbie Allen Dance Academy Dancers** moving through different parts of the venue, plus dancers from **Generation DCD Studio**. Thurs., Dec. 3, 6:30 p.m., Donations of \$100 or more receive donor benefits. Information and tix at [The Wallis](#).



Powerhouse Generation DCD. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Online Encores

### Post-Thanksgiving dancing

Starting this coming Monday, dance created by professional and student choreographers is featured in an online performance by Santa Monica College's Synapse Contemporary Dance Theater. Free at [SMC](#).



Synapse Contemporary Dance Theater. Photo courtesy of the artists.

### Debbie does documentary

Over the years, Debbie Allen's *Hot Chocolate Nutcracker* became a popular staple of the holiday parade of *Nutcracker* ballets. While the live stage production can't go forward this year, *Dance Dreams: The Hot Chocolate Nutcracker*, a documentary following Allen and the students rehearsing the show premieres this week. starting Sat., Nov. 27, on [Netflix](#).



Dance Dreams: The Hot Chocolate Nutcracker. Photo courtesy of Netflix.

### The past comes present

Among the subtle and not so subtle changes of new management by the LA Phil, what used to be the Ford Theater is now The Ford and while the theatre itself remains closed, four digital series were announced through the end of the year. A quartet of festivals includes mostly music, but last week added a festival dubbed *Movement / Matters* focused on Black street and club dance. Co-curator Tyree Boyd-Pates leads the survey of dance from TV's *Soul Train* to the present as a source of connection, care, power and potential. Lula Washington is among the notables participating in this decade by decade exploration. Other Ford efforts showcasing dance include the Saturday morning family classes and videos of past concert performances that reflect how the beloved al fresco venue functioned as an informal summer dance festival. Those past performances reflect the energy and diversity in SoCal dance including contemporary from Lula Washington Dance Theatre, street dance from Versa-Style Dance, Brazilian from Viver Brasil, plus traditional and contemporary folkloric dance from Grandeza Mexicano Folk Ballet Company, Pacifico Dance

Company, the LA Phil's exploration of Tovaangar Today with dancer Ba'ac Garcia, and contemporary South Asian, Bollywood and Bhangra dance from Achinta S. McDaniel and her Blue13. All free. Complete calendar and information at [The Ford](#).



Lula Washington Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## An international dozen

A dozen dancers working remotely from three continents developed a series of short videos presented by **Nancy Evans Dance Theatre** under the banner *The Channels*. The initial three ready to be viewed are *Parallel* by Jenn Logan and Marcos Novais, *Connections* by Karina Francis Jones and Ricard Campos Freire, and *Behind the Mirror* by Jen Hunter and Irupé Sarmiento. [Nancy Evans Dance Theatre](#)



Nancy Evans Dance Theatre. Photo by Shana Skelton.

## House dancing

Pasadena's iconic Gamble House was the site for a collaboration with dancers from **Lineage** for this year's ArtNight. The performance, appropriately called *Lineage x Gable House*, streams for free for a limited period. [Lineage](#).



Lineage Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## More Taylor

Choreographer **Micaela Taylor** pairs with TL Collective dancer **Matt Luck** in *Love Struck*, streaming on FLTPK, the online streaming service from choreographer Trey McIntyre. Subscription is a monthly pledge of \$1 to \$9 to support this and other films. Access to the service's website varies with the level of pledged support. Fri., Nov. 20. [Patreon](#)



Micaela Taylor. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## They're ba-a-a-ck! (but not for long)

In mid-September, the annual **San Pedro Festival of the Arts** reinvented itself from an outdoor fest with several stages hosting an array of professional, community and student dance groups. With Covid-19 making even al fresco gatherings risky, organizer Louise Reichlin moved the 14-year old festival online. The festival's two different programs get an online encore. Participants include AkomiDance, San Pedro City Ballet, Alan L Perez, Cathartic Dance, Jose Costas Contempo Ballet, Pranamyia Suri, Re:borN Dance Interactive, WestMet Classical Training, Tonia Shimin, Degas Dance Studio, Brittany Woo and UC Irvine students, Barkin/Selissen Project, Emergent Dance Company, MixedeMotion Theatrix, and host company Louise Reichlin & Dancers/La Choreographers & Dancers. thru Sun., Dec. 6, free. Detailed program schedule at [Vimeo](#).



San Pedro Festival of the Arts. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Unexpected curriculum addition

The challenges of creating dance while observing social distancing and other Covid–19 safety protocols is a new curriculum addition for dance departments as well as dance companies. Under the direction of assistant professor Becca Lemme, Cal State University Long Beach dance students observed strict protocols in creating two different programs of dances for last week’s live-streamed *Fall Dance Festival*. The pre-recorded performances draw on scores created in collaboration with different composers. Concert director Kaelie Osorio moderates two post-performance zoom Q&A session with each program’s artists. A complete list of choreographers scheduled for each evening at [CSULB](#). The performances continue online on [YouTube](#).



CSULB Fall Dance Concert. Photo by Gregory RR Crosby.

## Alone with others watching

The site specific performance ensemble **Heidi Duckler Dance** just wrapped up ten days of *The Quest*, each day taking audiences to ten sites throughout metro LA metro for live performances to celebrate HDD’s 35th anniversary. *Quest* has concluded, but the company and Heidi Duckler’s choreography can still be seen online in two different site specific performances. Just in time for the pandemic sequestering, Duckler based *The Chandelier* on a work by Brazilian author Clarice Lispector about a woman experiencing isolation and trying to connect. Performers include Himerria Wortham, Rafael Quintas, Myles Lavallee, Nicole Flores, Maureen Asic, Magdalena Edwards, Jessica Emmanuel, Jaeme Velez, David Guerra, and Paula Rebelo. Free online at [Vimeo](#). For *What Remains*, a tale of life behind the iron curtain, Duckler took inspiration from the travails of *Orpheus and Eurydice* as well as from East German author Christa Wolf’s short story about being under surveillance by the Stasi police. Staged in the garden of a museum dedicated to the cold war, the work was presented in conjunction with the museum’s exhibit *The Medea Insurrection: Radical Women Artists Behind the Iron Curtain*. The online screening includes a discussion with the museum’s chief curator Joes Segal. [Wende Museum](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Dancing around LA

In the absence of touring companies inside its theaters, the Music Center is giving a little love and attention to LA’s dance companies, showcasing filmed performances from six SoCal companies. **Versa-Style Dance Company** sent its street dancers to the beach, folkloric troupe **Pacifico Dance Company**’s had nine dancers at different locations representing different areas of Mexico, the tap group **Syncopated Ladies** took an existing routine to a rooftop, five members of Malathi Iyengar’s **Rangoli Dance Company** premiered a work celebrating a South Asian goddess, Albertossy Espinoza’s **LA Fusion Dance Theater** offered a Flamenco fusion duet, and Pat Taylor’s **Jazz Antiqua Dance & Music Ensemble** sent its dancers in parks, alleys, an empty business street, and other sites spread around LA. for their solos. After their premiere on [Instagram](#), all six films now are available for viewing at [Music Center](#).



Versa-Style Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## A show of force

In what may prove a timely, if unnerving coincidence, military veterans are featured in a streamed film from Diavolo's Veterans Project exploring what it means to be a true warrior on the front lines. In *This is Me – Letters from the Front Lines*, military vets and first responders explore what it means to be on the front line. Since artistic director Jacques Heim and **Diavolo Architecture in Motion** launched their **Veterans Project** in 2016, more than 500 SoCal veterans have participated in the company's gymnastic approach to movement to restore physical, mental and emotional strengths. Along the way, the project developed stunning performance works, one of which was part of Diavolo's day-long 25th anniversary celebration at the Soroya which hosted this event as part of the theater's *Fridays at 4* series. Info at <https://www.thesoroya.org/>.



Diavolo Veterans Project. Photo by George Simian.

## Mask breathing

The scheduled premiere of choreographer Melissa Barak's first full length contemporary ballet *Memoryhouse* for her **Barak Ballet** was cancelled when Santa Monica's Broad Stage closed with the statewide coronavirus shutdown. On what would have been the closing night, **Barak Ballet** instead went online with the premiere of *Breathe In*, a short ballet filmed at the grounds at the Holocaust Museum in what formerly was known as Pan Pacific Park in the Fairfax district. The film features Peter Chursin with Andrew Brader, Lucia Connolly, Jessica Gadzinski, Chasen Greenwood, Stephanie Kim, and with choreography by Barak. Also, there's an opportunity to sign up for the company's new YouTube channel. Info and streaming at <https://barakballet.org/> and [Facebook](#).



Barak Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## The Moms have it

The same week that memorialized the late civil rights leader congressman John Lewis was the week Emmett Till would have been 79 years old had he not been lynched at age 14 because of his skin. In 2010, Kevin Spicer curated *The Emmett Till Project* at Highways Performance Space. Choreographer Pat Taylor's contribution *A Kindred Woe* receives a timely encore. The work focuses on how mothers whose children have been murdered "take on the mantle" in the fight against racism and justice. The **JazzAntiqua Dance and Music Ensemble** performers include Terrice Banks Tillmon, Keisha Clark-Booth, Rayne Duronslet, Kacy Keys and Shari Washington Rhone. <https://vimeo.com/441671503>.



JazzAntiqua Dance & Music Ensemble. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Silver screen shifting

After discovering their admiration for the others work was mutual, **LA Contemporary Dance Company** and Vitamin String Quartet's planned collaboration for a live performance was put on hold by the pandemic shutdown. The effort took a different turn to film, two films so far with the first now streaming. That initial release, *The Box*, managed to adhere to CDC guidelines while putting two dancers (Jamila Glass and Angel Tyson) and four musicians (Elizabeth Baba, Amanda Lo, Filip Pogády, Caleigh Drane) in the historic Heritage Square Museum. The roughly three-

minute film streams on YouTube. Now a second collaboration has been added with *Blinding Light* with dancers Christian Beasley, Hyosun Choi, Jamila Glass, Nicole Hagen, Tess Hewlett, Malachi Middleton, JM Rodriguez, Ryan Ruiz, and Angel Tyson. An earlier LACDC collaboration, this time with filmmaker Nathan Kim continues to stream. The seven-minute film *BLINK*, was choreographed by artistic director Genevieve Carson in collaboration with the LACDC dancers. An official selection in the Hollyshorts Film Festival 2019, Cucalorus Festival 2019, and the San Francisco Dance Film Festival 2019, *BLINK* features dancer Hyosun Choi with Christian Beasley, Kate Coleman, Tess Hewlett, Ryan Ruiz, Drea Sobke, and Tiffany Sweat. The two films and information on other LACDC virtual programming on [their website](#).



LA Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Feel like screaming?

Originally developed as a stage piece by choreographer Sophia and the dancers of **Iris Company**, the creators in 2018 presciently reworked *Screaming Shapes!* into a film. After a year on the festival circuit including SoCal's Dance Camera West, the company has released the work online. The performers include Bryanna Brock, Hyosun Choi, Cat Cogliandro, Casey Gonzalez, Kristen Holleyman, Amanda MacLeod, Joan H. Padeo, Shane Raiford, and Jamal Wade. [Iris Company](#).



Iris Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Multi-screens

Adding to its trove of streaming options, **Viver Brasil** adds a weekly spotlight on past performances. The Afro-Brazilian dance and live music ensemble offer journeys to Salvador, Bahia to explore royal orixá dances, high-flying capoeira, and samba from a Bahian Carnival. Current and past spotlight events [now available](#). Viver Brasil also was among the SoCal artists selected for KCET's *Southland Sessions*, reworking its popular family show *Celebrating Samba* for the small screen with company members performing from their homes. But through the power of Afro-Brazilian dance and live music they promise a cultural journey to Salvador, Bahia to explore royal orixá dances, high-flying capoeira, and samba from a Bahian Carnival. Streaming at [KCET](#).



Viver Brasil. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Is it a question?

Filmed during the initial Covid-19 shutdown, Emily Mast and Yehuda Duenyas' project *HOW ARE WE*, collected 15 solos, each 90-seconds including from LA choreographers. The possibilities of a plant, the bed sheets, or the corner of a room are among the starting points. Armed with a tennis racket, Carlon contributed *Anesthetized*, admitting that he wanted a socially acceptable reason to scream or grunt like Serena Williams or John McEnroe without looking like nut. Other contributors include Shannon Hafez, Jessica Emmanuel, Stacy Dawson Stearns, Jenny Marytai Liu, Constance Hockaday & Faye Driscoll, Barnett Cohen, Hana Van Der Kolk, Darrian O'Reilly, David Arian Freeland Jr., Heyward Bracey, Mireya Lucio, Dorothy Dubrule, Terrence Luke Johnson, and Mast & Duenyas. Info at [How Are We](#). Stream on [Vimeo](#).



Carlton. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## More in the lunchbox

In June, **Dohee Lee**'s scheduled REDCAT performance was cancelled. The venue hopes one day to reschedule a live performance. In the meanwhile, the Korean artist whose skills span dance, drumming, singing and musical composition joins the line-up of prior dance performances from artists including **Austyn Rich**, **Genna Moroni**, **Tzong-Han Wu**, and **Rosanna Gamson/World Wide**. Info at <https://www.redcat.org/>. [Instagram Channel](#).



Dohee Lee. Photo by Pak Han.

## Moving Offstage

The *Music Center Offstage* continues to stream new and encore video clips and performances from Swing 2020, Cuba's Malpasó Dance Company, Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch, Jung Im Lee Korean Dance Academy, Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts, Infinite Flow, and Spotlight classical and non-classical dance finalists Jacob Jovanni Alvarado, Ashley Lew, Maya Alvarez-Coyne and Bergundi Loyd. <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>.



Ballet Hispanico. Photo by Paula Lobo.

## When one was not enough

Instead of its usual annual live performances from Black and Latinx choreographers at the Bootleg Theater, the BlakTinx Dance Festival returned with a viral format in late June. For those who missed that live stream of *Dancing on the Edge*, the show now continues on-line in four parts with works from Nancy Rivera Gomez, Shantel Ureña, Anthony Aceves, Bernard Brown, Joshua Estrada-Romero, Keilah Lomotey, Michelle Funderburk, Primera Generación, Vannia Ibargüen, Marina Magalhães, Regina Ferguson, Rubi Morales, Amber Morales, Alan Perez, Dorcas Román, Yarrow Perea, Andrea Ordaz, Eluza Santos, Briseyda Zárate, and Sadie Yarrington. With many of the works recently created, the pandemic and the streets were subjects and five pieces from earlier festivals that focused on Black Lives Matter were last minute additions. More info at <https://www.blaktinafestival.com/>. View all four programs on [YouTube](#).



BlakTinx. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Knock twice & tell them Jacob sent you

Reminiscent of what one did to enter a speakeasy in the 1920s or a Cold War spy meet-up, a select, paying audience was given the address of a Santa Monica airport parking lot with strict instructions on arriving in their cars, remaining in the cars wearing face masks, and turning on their headlights when cued. In perhaps the first "drive in" dance event, Jacob Jonas and his eponymous **Jacob Jonas The Company** performed *Parked* with those vehicles encircling the "stage," their headlights illuminating the socially spaced dancers performing to live music by Anibal Sandoval. The one-night only event was filmed by Ivan Cash and Daniel Addelson. With the five minute final cut covering interviews with the choreographer and dancers, the actual performance footage is brief, but if the cars flashing their headlights at bows was a kind of applause, the experiment



garnered a vehicular standing ovation from the audience. Hopefully, the performance itself will have a separate streaming life. Info at <http://jacobjonas.com/>. Film on [Vimeo](#).



Jacob Jonas The Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Platforms to Submit Video Dance

### Dare Dancing

With cautions about staying safe while filming, organizers Sarah Elgart and Cultural Weekly announced round 4 of *Dare to Dance in Public* with the theme of *Pandemania*, meaning a hyper energized state. Info on the judges, prior winners, plus rules and regulations for submission at [Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival](#). The group's other film endeavor Six Foot Dances is still accepting one-minute films. Current submissions on [Dare to Dance in Public](#).



Dare to Dance. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## Online Dance Classes

### Pandemic exhaustion? Get thee to a dance class!

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram and other on-line platforms, 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. <https://www.ladancechronicle.com>.



Dance classes listed on LA Dance Chronicle.

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