

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Dancing on the Expo Line

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, May 31st, 2017

Three companies go al fresco this week in Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Mountains, Rosanna Gamson grads strut their stuff Mid-City, family friendly dance in Culver City, and taiko drumming and dance in Hollywood.

5. Family friendly dance

Benita Bike's DanceArt brings an entertaining, family friendly modern dance program to the Culver City Senior Center, 4095 Overland Ave., Culver City; Sun., June 4, 1:30 p.m., free. <http://danceart.org>.



Benita Bike's DanceArt. Photo courtesy of BBDA.

4. All in the family

SuarezDanceTheater's latest, *Family Dinner*, began with three hosted potlucks with games and improvisation that led to consideration of parallels between the Bible's Book of Ruth and contemporary issues of immigration, politics and family. The resulting work promises the Christine Suarez's distinctive blend of dance, music and spoken word and also reunites Bernard Brown, Kai Hazelwood and Nguyen Nguyen, the three dancers who dazzled in Suarez' highly praised *Mother Father*. Suarez "tours" to multiple venues rather than presenting all the shows in one place. These performances are followed by a potluck with audience members encouraged to bring a dish to share. All three shows are free, but with limited seating, reservations encouraged by e-mail to familydinnerpotluck@gmail.com. Info at <http://suarezdance.org>. Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave., (parking at Pico Blvd. at 23rd St.), Santa Monica; Sun., June 4, 5:30 p.m., Also at Christine Reed Park, 1133 7th St., Santa Monica; Sat., June 10, noon. Also in private home (address provided with reservation), Sun., June 11, 5:30 p.m., free reservations encouraged by e-mail to familydinnerpotluck@gmail.com. <http://suarezdance.org>.



SuarezDanceTheatre. Photo courtesy of SDT.

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3. Previews of coming attractions

Graduation ceremonies this year include *HomeGrown @ MiModa*, the finale for eight dancemakers after an intense six week study with L.A.-based choreographer and CalArts professor Rosanna

Gamson. Sponsored by the Dance Resource Center, each choreographer worked with Gamson to expand their dancemaking skills and develop original body-based work. This year's graduating class: Carolyn Ellis, Mallory Fabian, Shenandoah Harris, Belle Jessen, Adam Kerbel, Juli Kim, Alex Matthews and Annalee Traylor, range from known veterans on the L.A. dance scene to emerging choreographers. Based on last year's event, the works are high quality, varied and tweak curiosity about how the snippet may evolve. Guided by Gamson, the post performance conversation with the dancemakers provides insight into their starting point, how their work developed, and where it may go. Info at <http://danceresourcecenter.org>. MiModa Studio, 5774 W Pico Blvd, Mid-City; Sat., June 3, 7 p.m., \$10. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-tickets-34780621776>, <http://mimodastudio.com/events.php>.



Heidi Duckler Dance Theater. Photo by Kim West.

2. Sunset dancing

With a checkered history that began as a prohibition-era party ranch once known as Lake Enchanto to a 1950s recreational playground boasting miniatures including Mt. Vesuvius, Egyptian pyramids and an Amazon jungle to the 1960s with its owner jailed for murder conspiracy followed by a stint with squatters that included Charles Manson and his followers, what is now known as Peter Strauss Ranch hosts a site specific event that includes **Heidi Duckler Dance Theater**. The performance inaugurates visual artist Kim West's installation that includes a 115 foot mural. Dubbed *Lake Enchanto*, the al fresco debut of the installation has HDDT performing at sundown with a score by Davy Sumner performed live. Info at <http://heididuckler.org>. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, 30000 Mulholland Hwy., Agoura Hills; Sat., June 3, 7:30 p.m., \$10-\$5,000. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/heidi-duckler-dance-theatre-presents-lake-enchanto-tickets-33518534840#tickets>.



Donna Sternberg & Dancers. Photo courtesy of DS&D

1. Dancing on the Expo Line

If the jammed traffic headed to the beach isn't sufficient incentive, *Transit Dances* offers not one, but three good reasons to try L.A.'s light rail Expo line. Organized by **Donna Sternberg & Dancers**, the site specific event offers three companies (modern dance from DS&D, South Asian dance from **Arpana Dance Company** and contemporary jazz dance from **JazzAntiqua Dance Ensemble**) with the audience viewing site specific danceworks at a transit stop before reboarding and moving to the next transit stop for another performance (three stops in all). The event ends a short walking distance to the beach, an extra bonus. Details at <http://dsdancers.com>. Expo Line, 26th St./Bergamot Metro stop, Santa Monica; Sun., June 4, noon & 1 p.m. \$10 advance purchase. <http://transitdances.bpt.me>.

Other dance of note:

Contemporary dances including modern, jazz, and hip hop are offered by from the Santa Monica College dance department's **Synapse Dance Theater**. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sat. June 3, 4 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., June 4, 7:30 p.m., \$20 advance purchase, \$22 at door. 310-434-3467, <http://smc.edu/dance>.



Adam Kerbel. Photo courtesy of the artist.

In *Ascent*, choreographer **Adam Kerbel** employs Taiko drumming in a dance theater exploration of masculinity. Part of the Hollywood Fringe Festival. Studio/Stage, 520 Western Ave., Hollywood; Thurs., June 1, 8 p.m., free; then Wed., June 14, 7:30 p.m., Thurs., June 15, 8:30 p.m., Wed., June 21, 11:30 p.m., Fri., June 23, 6 p.m., \$15. <http://www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/4483>.

Founded in 1980s to serve at-risk youth with afterschool programs that included dance, evolved into St. Joseph Ballet (the program's founder was a nun) and garnered praise for the young dancers' abilities and drew noted choreographers to develop new work on the company. The name change to **The Wooden Floor** came in 2009 as the company continued to expand. The young dance talent is on display in this annual concert Connected Spaces. Irvine Barclay Theatre, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs.-Fri., June 1-2, 8 p.m., Sat., June 3, 2:30 & 8 p.m., \$10-\$50. 949-854-4646, <http://thebarclay.org>.

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