

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Dancing Through Los Angeles with Dance Camera West!

Sarah Elgart · Thursday, April 30th, 2015

Thankfully, in this day and age, we need neither film festivals nor archival libraries to see great works of dance on film. We can dial up great dance anytime on our computers and smart phones. *This very column lives because of that access!* And yet, there is SO much to be said for viewing films of any kind in community. Especially dance films accompanied by live dance in performance, and especially in such a sprawling de-centralized city as Los Angeles where most of us spend way too much time in cars and traffic, only experiencing other people and the city itself through a pane of glass while whizzing by.



A still from “PAS”, Directed by Frederique Cournoyer Lessard and
Choreographed by Stephanie Thellen

This week we have an opportunity to experience great dance films, engage in community, and physically explore different parts of LA all at once. Spanning from Beverly Hills, to Downtown LA, to Hollywood, Westwood, and Santa Monica, this week marks the opening of **Dance Camera West’s 14th Annual Dance Media Festival**, one of this city’s most singular film festivals and dance events.

Dance Camera West (DCW), an organization that I served proudly and helped shape in various capacities for over six years, continues to distinguish itself as one of the premiere dance media festivals in the United States and beyond. Known for its array of international dance shorts, features, and documentaries, all of which explore the often phenomenal intersections of dance and the camera in a multitude of styles and capacities, **DCW** was founded in 2002 by Lynette Kessler and Kelly Hargraves. In recent years **DCW** has grown from being an annual festival spanning a few days to include year round events, as well as frequent live dance productions, inviting communities to experience its cultural offerings in a lineup of LA locales — both blue chip institutions such as The Music Center, The Getty, LACMA, and — this year — MOCA, as well as historic art house venues that (also this year) include The Egyptian, The Palace, and The Aero Theaters.



“AM/FM” by director Morgan Wise, choreographer Robert Moses

Over the years **DCW** has established itself as “a new and vital ingredient in LA’s evolving cultural landscape.” In one sitting viewers have experienced the work of a myriad of both emerging and internationally recognized choreographers such as Jiri Kylian, Edouard Lock, Yvonne Rainer, DV8

Physical Theater and many, many others. And if the trailer is any indication, this year's shorts festival boasts some gorgeous films, including a couple featured this past year in *ScreenDance Diaries* (The Lombard Twins' "Escualo" & "Me:Story of a Performance").

When asked about this year's festival highlights which include a panel on dance and animation, the annual dance-along, live performances by LA's own, on fire, Jacob Jonas The Company and more, **DCW's** Executive Director Tonia Barber says: *"Alongside the International dance films Dance Camera West is known for, we are also focusing on the vigor and longevity of dance in Los Angeles by screening in its historical vaudeville theaters as well as presenting a live performance celebrating choreographers and dancers who have made an impact on dance in Los Angeles throughout out the past few decades."*

And as Los Angeles begins to distinguish itself as a source of and destination for both internationally recognized live dance and dance media, this is particularly apropos.

See you at ***Dance Camera West!***

<https://vimeo.com/123515637>

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