
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Diversificationing

Ann Haskins · Thursday, April 16th, 2026

Dance diaspora gathers in Lincoln Heights; Argentine tango slinks into Irvine; Japanese cherry blossom dancing in Glendale; storybook ballet mystery solved in San Gabriel; choreographing musicians in Elysian Park; contemporary dance proliferates in Hollywood, Santa Monica, Frogtown, Palm Springs, and Downtown LA, more SoCal dance this week, plus a peek at next week.

Live This Week (thru April 23)

Gather round

This year's three-day **LA Dance Festival 2026** brings a chance to sample a range of SoCal dance in one place. The sterling line up of performances is the tip of the festival that includes workshops and classes, plus the inevitable reunions, socializing, and networking bound to occur when the far-flung SoCal dance diaspora gathers together. **Day 1** opens the performance component with Sean Greene, Maura Townsend (Maura Townsend Dance Project), Deborah Brockus BrockusRED, Jordan Harris & Scout Coneja (Place of Glances), Charlotte Katherine Smith (Charlotte Katherine & Co.), and Savanna Scott. **Day 2** features work from choreographers Ken Morris, Natalya Janay Shoaf, Vanessa Hernández Cruz, Corina Kinnear (Parl?), Santiago Rivera, Nancy Dobbs Owen, Eliezer Rabelo, and Deborah Brockus (BrockusRED). **Day 3** closes the fest with dances from Benita Bike (Benita Bike's DanceArt), Louise Reichlin Desio (LA Choreographers & Dancers), Deborah Brockus (BrockusRED), Zoe Carter, Chakra Sokhomsan, and Ariana Chavez (Ariana Chavez & Company). At Brockus Project Studios, 618 B Moulton Ave., (free street parking), Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., April 17-18, 8 pm, sun., April 19, 6 pm, \$20, \$50 festival pass. Zelle 562-412-7429 or Venmo @brockusProjectStudios or cash at door (Note your DATE when buying , tickets will be held at the door).



BrockusRED at LA Dance Festival. Photo by Denise Leitner

Perspectives on forever

The performance has become a highly anticipated annual event as choreographer Donna Sternberg unveils the alchemy that can result from pairing scientists with choreographers and members of **Donna Sternberg & Dancers to capture and articulate in dance particular scientific concepts.** This year the subject is PFAS (forever chemicals). The scientists are Laura Rabinow, Rachel Rogers, and Devavani Chatterjea. The choreographers are Nandini Kannan, Dustin Payne, and Sternberg. Two chances to see what this year's edition of *Awe and Wonder* has to show. At L'espace Diavolo, 616 Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Sat., April 18, 8 pm & Sun., April 19, 3 pm, \$39.19, \$33.85 students. [Donna Sternberg & Dancers.](#)



Donna Sternberg & Dancers. Photo courtesy of the artists

Premiere trios

Having expanded from its Orange County base to a larger Southern California profile, **Backhausdance** brings a quartet of works reflecting where it is as it celebrates its 23rd anniversary. Choreography includes world premieres from alum Zachary Ryan Schlegal who is now with Shen Wei, and Megan Doheny with Ilya Nikurovoh who are known as “Out Run the Bear,” the return of *Everywhere but Here* from Tommie-Waheed Evans, and a new work from founder/artistic director Jennifer Backhaus and long-time collaborator Amanda Kay White. At LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown Arts District; Sat., April 18, 8 pm, [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo courtesy of the artists

Doing things right

Choreographer/artistic director David Parsons chose music by Milton Nascimento, Giancarlo De Trizio, and Yusuf/Cat Stevens for the three works he choreographed on his **Parsons Dance** for this 40th anniversary tour. The company also brings dances from Courtney “Balenciaga” Washington, Robert Battle, and Robert Battle. Expect exceptional dancers showcased in polished performances, reasons why the company has gained praise for four decades. At the Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sat. April 18, 7:30 pm, Sun., April 19, 2 pm, \$52-\$99. [Parsons Dance](#).



Parsons Dance. Photo by Lois Greenfield

Elysian fielding

Choreographer Dimitri Chamblas donned director and choreographer duties, moving musicians instead of dancers around a park for a rare performance of John Luther Adam's *Crossing Open Ground*. Christopher Rountree was announced to conduct musicians from the LA Phil, Liquid Music, and USC Thornton School of Music in the Adams' work composed for musicians who move during the piece to alter where the music comes from and how it is heard. As of press time, the ticket website announced both scheduled performances have been cancelled. No reason posted. At Elysian Park, 835 Academy Rd., Elysian Park; Sat.-Sun., April 18-19, 6 pm, \$20. [Crossing Open Ground](#).



Elysian Park in Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of the park

Dancing with AI

The possibilities when movement meets Artificial Intelligence are explored by **Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener** in *Open Machine*. Shifting from live speech to speech-to-text, the choreographers are aided by electronic musician Mas Ysa, lighting designer Davison Scandrett, vocal artist Charmaine Lee, and a machine. At REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., Downtown LA; Fri., April 17, 8 pm, Sat., April 18, 2 & 8 pm, \$27. [Rashun Mitchell + Silas Riener](#).



Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener. Photo courtesy of the artists

Playing around

Choreographer Andrew Pearson and his collaborators at **Bodies in Play** return with *Dance Is Pleasure*. Participating in the performance, as they did in the work's creation, are Celine Sauquillo Davis, Totu, Mare, William Miller Jr, MUDA, Divo Ordman, Sam Perna, and Pearson. At the Renberg Theater, LA LGBT Center, 1125 N. McCadden Pl., Hollywood; Fri., April 17, 7:30 pm, \$35-\$72. [Bodies in Play](#).



Bodies in Play. Photo courtesy of the artists

Who dunnit?

A classic Nancy Drew mystery involving a small town, the reading of a will, and the intrepid heroine's curiosity becomes dance as **New Classics Ballet Theatre** presents *The Secret of the Clock*. At Liya Art Center, 216 W. Las Tunas Canyon, San Gabriel; Fri., April 17, 7:30 pm, Sat., April 18, 2 & 7:30 pm, as of press time sold out except \$8 standing room Sat. nite) [New Classics Ballet](#).



New Classics Ballet Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists

About justice

A performance concludes a week-long residency with workshops and conversations facilitated by **Dancing Through Prison Walls**. Under the banner *Dancing Abolition, Community, Care, Justice*, choreographers/dancers Bernard Brown and Terry Sakamoto, Jr. embody dances written inside Puerto Rico's Boyamon Prison. Translation of the Spanish text will be provided. Full line-up of the week and weekend events at [DTPW-Freedom Time](#). Performance at The Hearth, 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica; Sun., April 19, 2 – 5 pm, free w/reservation at [Dancing Through Prison Walls](#).



Dancing Through Prison Walls. Photo by [Ciro Hurtado](#)

Embracing the broken

If it's broke, flaunt it, might be the ethos of *kinsugi*, the Japanese art of regluing a broken object and topping the glue with golden dust, leaving an eye-grabbing gold line marking the repair and honoring what has been broken. That ethos is explored in **Innerstice** as movement and music meld in a performance by movers Mia Snape, Jalen Scriven, Kyson Kai, and Ellery Donlon, with composer/pianist Takumi Kakimoto and cellist Danny O'Connell. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Sat., April 18, 8 pm, \$25, \$20 students/seniors. [Innerstice](#).



Diavolo/Architecture in Motion. Photo by George Simian

Mesmerizing

From flashy appearances in the Emmy and the Grammy awards, and *America's Got Talent*, to years of world wide tours, the jaw-dropping, split second choreography of artistic director Jacques Heim and his LA-based **Diavolo/Architecture in Motion** has earned popular and informed acclimation. The company is home, reprising *Escape* that finds the dancers and gymnasts in a visceral exploration of individuals trying to break free. The tv appearances may have spread the word, but can't begin to capture the interplay of the movers and crescendo of powerful movement in a live Diavolo performance. This chance for the live experience of **Diavolo** should not be missed. At L'Espace Diavolo, 616 Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 6 pm, thru Sun., June 14, \$39. [Diavolo-Veterans Project](#).

Working on it

The quarterly showcase, *Choreography Open Mic Night*, returns with choreographers Melissa Valenzuela, Alexanda O'Neal, Mara Hancock, Amanda Keller, Tetiana Skylarova, Lyss Salvador, Leslie Burn, Aston Titus, Isaac Knutson, and Katie Colvalt. Presented by **MashUP Contemporary Dance**, ten choreographers selected on a first-come/first serve basis offer work in progress or new work with a chance to mingle with the artists after the performances. At the Pickle Factory, 2926 Gilroy St., Frogtown; Sat., April 18, 8 pm, \$15. [Choreography Open Mic Night](#).



MashUp Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

Argentine influencers

Led by *Forever Tango* alums Miriam Larici and Leonardo Barrionuevo, **Majestic Tango** brings eight dancers and six musicians with the moves and sounds of Buenos Aires. Dancers include Noelia Guerrero with Martin Cardoso, Guillermina Quiroga with Mariano Logiudice, and Giovanna Dan & Guillermo De Fazio. At Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine, Sat., April 18, 8 pm, \$34-\$120. [Get Seats!](#)



Majestic Tango. Photo courtesy of the artists

Extending a platform

Three works selected from the informal showcase series *The Dance Platform* receive fully staged performances as **Nickerson-Rossi Dance** presents *The Dance Platform Gala*. At the Palm Springs Art Museum, 101 N. Museum Dr., Palm Springs; Sat., April 18, 2 pm, \$25. [Nickerson-Rossi](#)

Dance.



Nickerson Rossi Dance. Photo courtesy of the artist.

‘Tis the season

Enjoy the blossoming cherry trees and entertainment including Japanese dance, music, and song at the *Cherry Blossom Festival*. At Shoseian ‘Whispering Pine’ Teahouse, Brand Park, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale; Sun., April 19, 10 am – 3 pm, free (tea service \$25 with reservation, call 310-849-5432). [Cherry Blossom Festival](#).

A Peek at Next Week (April 24-30)

BlakTinx Dance Festival #14 – UNMUTED: Power to the People in Motion at Crenshaw Yoga & Dance, 5426 Crenshaw Blvd., Crenshaw; Sun., April 26, 6:30 pm, \$25. [BlakTinx Dance Festival](#).

Benita Bike’s DanceArt Company – Celebrating 45 Years of Dance at Lineage Performing Arts Center, 920 E. Mountain St., Pasadena; Sat., April 25, 8 pm, Sun., April 26, 3 pm, \$25-\$45. [Benita Bike’s DanceArt](#).

Inland Pacific Ballet – *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at Lewis Family Playhouse, Victoria Gardens Cultural Center, 12505 Cultural Center Dr., Rancho Cucamonga; Sat., April 25, 4 pm, Sun., April 26, 2 pm, \$43-\$85. [Inland Pacific Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Los Angeles Ballet – *Giselle* at the Music Center, Ahmanson Theatre, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Thurs.-Sat., April 30-May 2, 7:30 pm, Sun., May 3, 2 pm, \$50.60-\$157.55. [Los Angeles Ballet – Giselle](#).

USC Kaufman School of Dance – *BFA Showcase* at USC Bing Theatre, 3400 Watt Way, University Park; Thurs., April 30, 7:30 pm, Fri., May 1, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sat., May 2, 2 pm, free with reservation at [BFA Showcase](#).

Boroka Nagy – *A Tale of Two Tables: Un/Covered* at United Methodist Church of Santa Ana, Fri., April 25, 6 pm, \$25-\$100. [Re:born Dance](#).

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