

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

The Power of Learning Games in Early Childhood Development: Shaping Young Minds Through Play

Our Friends · Thursday, November 28th, 2024

Ranging from colorful building blocks to complex educational apps, learning games have appeared as an important component of early development. They redefine how children gain necessary skills and knowledge. Hence, these **kids educational games** foster an environment in which learning is considered natural and nice; it turns education into an adventure rather than a straight pathway.

Early infancy is a critical period in which children are most open-minded to absorb knowledge and regular practice. Modern schools are incorporating game-based learning platforms with apps, which enable a tailored learning experience. They also preserve components that engage young minds. Schools have discovered that when children engage in controlled gameplay activities, they retain materials more effectively and show the broader passion for lifelong learning.

Cognitive Development: Enhancing Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

These games are effective instruments for fostering critical thinking and problem-solving. Various game providers or digital platforms have made their way into classrooms, assisting students in grasping fundamentals. Traditional activities such as board games or logic-centric options continue to take place, with institutions making use of them alongside digital versions. For example, many elementary schools currently use “centers” in which children engage in manipulating physical objects and tablet-based exercises.

Emotional and Social Growth Through Interactive Games

The social aspect of educational games cannot be overstated. Many learning games, both digital and traditional, help youngsters develop critical interpersonal skills. Not a single institution makes use of platforms like Kahoot! for group learning exercises; it promotes healthy competition and focuses on team collaboration. These **learning games for children** can teach children how to collaborate, handle success and failure graciously—peers will grasp how to communicate with each other in the classroom. Initially, teachers emphasize that collaborative games help a child acquire emotional intelligence.

Choosing the Right Learning Games for Toddlers and Preschoolers

Deciding on effective learning options necessitates careful consideration of a particular child's

stage in development and authentic requirements. The most productive learning games foster amusement and educational value, with clear goals, proper difficulty, and positive rewarding. Schools are increasingly working with digital technology to create tailored game-based learning solutions that correspond with their curriculum objectives and retain engagement. Through integration of mobile learning games into conventional education it'll result in a way more dynamic and effective foundation for early learning.

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The Top 5 Reasons Heating Oil Is the Best Choice for Your Home

Our Friends · Thursday, November 28th, 2024

Winter brings not only frosty mornings but also the challenge of keeping your home consistently warm. So, as this season approaches, how will you ensure your home stays warm and cozy?

Well, for many homeowners, selecting the right heating system is a critical decision that impacts energy efficiency as well as cost. While various heating options exist—such as natural gas, electric heat, and propane—heating oil stands out as a reliable and effective choice.

Curious to know why? Hence, in this article, the top five reasons why heating oil may be the best option for your home are listed. Stick to it to know!

1. Exceptional Heat Output

Heating oil is renowned for its high energy efficiency and heat output, making it one of the most effective heating solutions available. Its energy content, measured in British Thermal Units (BTUs), is significantly higher than that of many other fuel types.

This means a smaller volume of the oil can produce more heat compared to alternatives. As a result, homes can warm up quickly and maintain consistent temperatures even during the coldest winter days. This is particularly important for regions prone to extreme weather conditions, where heat is not just a luxury but a necessity.

Furthermore, homeowners can enjoy the convenience of **home heating oil** delivery services. Nowadays, many online suppliers offer instant price quotes, discounts, and even advanced tank monitoring systems to ensure timely refills. Also, they provide options to schedule pre-deliveries. This way, the liquid fuel proves to be not only powerful and efficient but also incredibly user-friendly.

2. Reliability in Any Weather

Heating oil systems are known for their dependability, even in the harshest winter conditions. For example, natural gas particularly relies on pipelines that can be disrupted by storms or other emergencies.

Unlike that, with the help of reliable online suppliers, the liquid fuel is delivered directly to your home and stored on-site in a secure tank. This means you have full control over your fuel supply and are not dependent on external infrastructure for heat when needed.

In extreme weather, when power outages are common, having a liquid fuel system ensures that your home remains warm. All in all, this is a practical choice for homeowners who prioritize uninterrupted heat during emergencies.

3. Cost-Effectiveness and Predictable Pricing

Heating oil has become increasingly cost-effective due to technological advances and market trends. Modern oil furnaces and boilers are highly efficient, requiring less fuel to produce the same amount of heat. Additionally, homeowners can shop around for liquid fuel suppliers. That allows them to take advantage of competitive pricing, discounts, or budget-friendly payment plans.

Unlike some energy sources with volatile pricing, liquid fuel suppliers often offer options like pre-purchase plans, **price caps**, and fixed-rate contracts. These tools help homeowners manage heating costs and avoid unexpected expenses during peak demand seasons. Therefore, with this fuel, you can enjoy both cost savings and peace of mind.

4. Long-lasting and Durable Heating Systems

Heating oil systems are built to last, offering homeowners a reliable source of warmth for a long time. Modern oil-fired furnaces and boilers are designed with advanced technology that minimizes wear and tear, ensuring durability and longevity. With proper maintenance, liquid fuel systems often outlast other types of heating equipment. That feature provides excellent value for your investment.

Unlike **natural gas**, heating oil is non-explosive, and leaks are rare. Any potential issues, such as tank corrosion, are typically easy to detect and address before they become major problems. This combination of durability and safety makes liquid fuel systems a trusted choice for many households.

5. Safety Above All

One of the most significant advantages of liquid fuel is its safety. Unlike natural gas, heating oil is not explosive and does not produce carbon monoxide in its liquid state. Additionally, it requires a very high ignition temperature to burn, reducing the risk of accidental fires.

Its storage in above-ground or underground tanks also adds an extra layer of security. The reason is that leaks or spills are rare and detectable quickly, allowing timely remediation. For families, particularly those with children, the peace of mind that comes with liquid fuel's inherent safety is invaluable.

Conclusion

Having a heating system is an important decision that affects your comfort, budget, and environmental impact. Heating oil stands out as a versatile and powerful option that meets the needs of modern homeowners.

If you're considering upgrading your heating system or switching fuels, the liquid fuel deserves sheer consideration. However, there is a dire need to connect with trustworthy suppliers. This will ensure the timely delivery of this essential commodity!

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And....the Nuts Have It!

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, November 27th, 2024

Get ready for enchanted Nutcracker princes, Sugar Plum fairies, waltzing flowers, fierce rodents, and twirling snowflakes. From professional companies to local dance studios, the *Nutcracker* ballet season begins this week through December. With productions from Santa Barbara to San Diego, Long Beach to the Inland Empire, and almost everywhere in between, this holiday tradition can be enjoyed without straying far from home.

Even folk who think they don't like ballet find it hard not to be beguiled by the exquisitely familiar Tchaikovsky score and the nostalgic holiday celebration that is the setting for a magical journey. The professional options include Los Angeles Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Long Beach Ballet, Inland Pacific Ballet, and State Street Ballet. Inventive riffs on the tradition include a tap dance *Nutcracker Suite* from Michelle Dorrance and her Dorrance Dance, Debbie Allen's *Chocolate Nutcracker*, LA Unbound's multi-dance genre version, and American Contemporary Ballet's suite adaptation. A number of SoCal training companies showcase pre-professional dancers, many with professional guest artists. This year, New York City Ballet principals Tiler Peck and Roman Mejia are announced guest artists with at least three local companies. And never discount the charm of a local ballet school's budding ballerinas and danseurs.

With Thanksgiving as late as possible and Christmas mid-week, the Nutcracker season is shorter than usual. A few companies and studios have reduced the number of performances. Some theaters even have doubled up, with one company offering a matinee and another company's *Nutcracker* in the evening.

The following round up starts with some of notable professional endeavors and then a regional sorting. Check the individual websites for discounted tickets for students, children, seniors and/or military. Some tickets appear higher than last year, but often that resulted from fees being included

in the announced ticket price, not a surprise at check out.

Apologies for any omissions. Let us know, so next year's round up is even more extensive.



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Cheryl Mann

Rumors suggest a new version may be coming from current artistic director Melissa Barak in the next few years, but for now the **Los Angeles Ballet's** *Nutcracker* created in 2006 by LAB's founding artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary to remains the L.A. original that has drawn praise and happy audiences. Set in 1912 Los Angeles. LAB continues to bring ballet to the audience with performances at theaters in Pasadena, Westwood, and Hollywood (with a live orchestra). Info and tickets at [Los Angeles Ballet](#). Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 pm, Sat, Dec. 7, 6 pm, Sun, Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 pm, Sat., Dec. 14, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at the Dolby Theatre (with the Los Angeles Ballet Orchestra), Hollywood & Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 19-20, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 & 7:30 pm, Tues., Thurs.& Sat., Dec. 24, 26 & 28, 2 pm, Fri., Dec. 27, 7:30 pm, \$58-\$161. [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



American Ballet Theatre. Photo by Marty Sohl

Under artistic director Susan Jaffe, **American Ballet Theatre** is enjoying its stature as the official ballet company of this venue, further establishing SoCal as its second home outside of New York. ABT returns with two weeks of celebrated choreographer Alexei Ratmansky's interpretation of the *Nutcracker* with the music played by the Pacific Symphony. Casting usually is posted at the website before the series begins but had not been announced as of press time. This year top ticket price includes a tote bag with chocolates, an ornament along with a prime seat. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 12-13 & 19-20, 7 pm, Sat. Dec. 14 & 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 12:30 & 5:30 pm, Wed., Dec. 18, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 11:30 [SCFTA](#).



Inland Pacific Ballet. Photo by E.Y. Yanagi

With performances at two venues, **Inland Pacific Ballet** brings its *Nutcracker* to the Inland Empire. IPB's professional dancers are joined by 62 students mostly from IPB's respected ballet academy. Guest artists include Mira Nadon and Peter Walker from New York City Ballet in Claremont while Lori Hernández partnered by ABT's Peter Walker at both venues. Bridges Auditorium, 450 N. College Way, Claremont; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8 & 21-22, 2 pm, \$39-\$101. Also at Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 14-15, 2 pm. \$41-\$136. [Inland Pacific Ballet](#).



Long Beach Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Now celebrating 42 years, artistic director David Wilcox' version of the *Nutcracker* for **Long Beach Ballet** has delighted audiences with sets designed by Disney scenic designers and acquired an array of special effects that include a live horse, performers who fly and perform magic. The production boasts a full symphony orchestra, with two harps, as Tchaikovsky intended in his score. Professional guest artists fill the leads joined by students from the affiliated ballet school for a total of 250 dancers during the run. Terrace Theatre, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach; Sat., Dec. 14 & 21, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 15 & 22, 2 pm, Fri. Dec. 20, 7:30 pm, \$38-\$145. [Long Beach Ballet Nutcracker](#).



State Street Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Celebrating its 30th season, Santa Barbara's **State Street Ballet** brings its *Nutcracker*

choreographed by Rodney Gustafson and accompanied by the Opera San Luis Obispo Grand Orchestra. The company's professional dancers are joined by students from the associated ballet school. Granada Theater, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Dec. 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 pm, \$35-\$125, \$24 children 12 & under. [Granada Theater](#).



Dorrance Dance in "Nutcracker Suite." Photo by Christopher Duggan

Bringing a tap dance version, **Dorrance Dance** employs the Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn arrangement of the familiar Tchaikovsky tunes in *The Nutcracker Suite*. The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Thurs., Dec. 12, 8 pm, \$48-\$118. [The Soraya](#).



Debbie Allen's Hot Chocolate Nutcracker Photo courtesy of the company

Taking a distinctively Debbie Allen approach to the classic, her 90-minute **Hot Chocolate Nutcracker**, is filled with new music, magic, contemporary dance, and even aerial artists. Professional actors/dancers are backed by students from the Debbie Allen Dance Academy. Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Thurs.-Sat., Dec. 5-7, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8, 2 pm, \$86.39-\$149.99. [Eventbrite](#).



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Anastasia Petukhova

Another chamber version, *The Nutcracker Suite* is **American Contemporary Ballet**'s one hour, immersive experience. The story is set inside a snow globe and there is a Sugar Plum Fairy. The music is live. The choreography is by ACB artistic director Lincoln Jones. American Contemporary Ballet Studios, Bank of America Plaza, 333 S. Hope St., Suite C-150, downtown; opens Sat., Nov. 30, 2 & 5 pm, then Thurs. Dec. 5, 5 pm, Thurs.-Fri., 8 pm, Sat.-Sun., 2 & 5 pm, thru Sun. Dec. 22, then Mon., Dec. 23, 8 pm, Tues., Dec. 24, 1 pm, \$75-\$135. [American Contemporary Ballet](#).

For two decades, this company performing under the name Moscow Ballet toured its *Great Russian Nutcracker*. Perhaps in a too obvious effort to distance itself from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this company that once touted its Russian background, now calls its production *Nutcracker!* and performs as **Talmi Entertainment** at two SoCal venues. The cast of 40 includes veteran professionals along with international ballet competition winners. Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 13, 4 & 8 pm, \$35-\$141. Also at The Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles; Fri., Dec. 20, 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 5 pm. \$33-\$253. [Tickets](#).



World Ballet Series. Photo courtesy of the artists

Another touring company with its *Nutcracker* at two SoCal venues, shed its original name, Russian Ballet Theater in early 2022 in support of Ukraine and is now named **World Ballet Series**. La Mirada Theatre, 14900 La Mirada Blvd., La Mirada; Sun., Dec. 22, 2 & 6 pm, \$30.80-\$97.90. [La Mirada Theatre](#). Also at the Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Mon., Dec. 23, 6 pm, Tues., Dec. 24, 2 pm, \$50-\$167. [Ticketmaster](#).

Here's where to find the Nutcracker throughout Southern California:

Metro Los Angeles

Los Angeles Ballet — UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 pm, Sat., Dec. 14, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 pm, Sat, Dec. 7, 6 pm, Sun, Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at the Dolby Theatre (with the Los Angeles Ballet Orchestra), Hollywood &

Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 19-20, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 & 7:30 pm, Tues., Thurs. & Sat., Dec. 24, 26 & 28, 2 pm, Fri., Dec. 27, 7:30 pm, \$58-\$161. [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Cheryl Mann

American Contemporary Ballet with live music — American Contemporary Ballet Studios, Bank of America Plaza, 333 S. Hope St., Suite C-150, downtown; opens Sat., Nov. 30, 2 & 5 pm, then Thurs. Dec. 5, 5 pm, Thurs.-Fri., 8 pm, Sat.-Sun., 2 & 5 pm, thru Sun. Dec. 22, then Mon., Dec. 23, 8 pm, Tues., Dec. 24, 1 pm, \$75-\$135. [American Contemporary Ballet](#).

Talmi Entertainment — The Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles; Fri., Dec. 20, 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 5 pm. \$40-\$280.50. Also at Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 13, 4 & 8 pm, \$35-\$141. [Tickets](#).

Westside Ballet — Fifty years ago, Yvonne Mounsey and Rosemary Valaire, the late founders of this admired training company, created a Victorian Christmas card version in this *Nutcracker*. For some performances, professional guests including New York City Ballet's Tiler Peck and Roman Mejia share the stage with student dancers. The Santa Monica College Symphony provides live music. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sat.-Sun., Nov. 30-Dec. 1, & Dec. 7-8, 1 & 5 pm, Fri., Dec. 6, 7 pm, \$66.50. [Westside Ballet](#).



Westside Ballet. Photo by Todd Lechtick

Marat Daukayev Ballet Theatre and School — A former star of Russia's Kirov (now Mariinsky) Ballet, Marat Daukayev choreographed, directs and stars as the mysterious Uncle Drosselmeyer with students from his ballet academy. Luckman Fine Arts Complex, 5151 State University Dr., East L.A.; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 11:30 & 4:30 pm, \$55-\$100. [Marat Daukayev Ballet Theatre & School](#).

Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley

Los Angeles Ballet — Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 pm, Sat, Dec. 7, 6 pm, Sun, Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 pm, Sat., Dec. 14, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2 pm, \$44-\$137. Also at the Dolby Theatre (with the Los Angeles Ballet Orchestra), Hollywood & Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 19-20, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 & 7:30 pm, Tues., Thurs. & Sat., Dec. 24, 26 & 28, 2 pm, Fri., Dec. 27, 7:30 pm, \$58-\$161. [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Reed Hutchinson

Talmi Entertainment — Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Fri., Dec. 13, 4 & 8 pm, \$35-\$141. Also at Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena: Fri., Dec. 13, 4 & 8 pm, \$35-\$154. Also at The Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles; Fri., Dec. 20, 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 5 pm. \$40-\$280.50. [Tickets](#).

Pasadena Dance Theatre — Last year, this well-regarded training company presented a new version of *Nutcracker* choreographed by Jessamyn Vedro for the PDT students. This year, new co-artistic directors Jean Michelle Sayeg and Eric Shah, will oversee their first *Nutcracker* for this company with guest artists are Matisse Love and Aaron Smythe. San Gabriel Mission Playhouse, 320 Mission Dr., San Gabriel; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 20-21 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 pm, 1 pm, \$25-\$105. [Tickets](#).



Pasadena Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists

LA Unbound Boasts an array of dance styles in its *Nutcracker Unbound*. Glendale Community College, Mainstay Theatre, 1601 E. Mountain St., Glendale; Sat., Dec. 21, 2 & 5 pm. \$27.05-\$38.05. [Tickets](#).

World Ballet Series at La Mirada Theatre, 14900 La Mirada Blvd., La Mirada; Sun., Dec. 22, 2 & 6 pm, \$30.80-\$97.90. [La Mirada Theatre](#). Also at the Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Mon., Dec. 23, 6 pm, Tues., Dec. 24, 2 pm, \$50-\$129. [Ticketmaster](#).

Degas Dance Studio — Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sun., Dec. 8, 4 pm \$27-\$62. [Tickets](#).

Red Chair Children's Production Company — Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sat., Dec. 14, 1 & 6 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2 & 5 pm, \$11-\$70. [Ticketmaster](#).

Shakti School of Bharata Natyam and choreographer Fiji Prakash postponed their South Asian-infused *Naatucracker-The Dancing Nut* until December 1, 2005. So check back next year. [Shakti School of Bharata Natyam](#).

South Bay & Long Beach

Long Beach Ballet with orchestra — Terrace Theatre, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach; Sat., Dec. 14 & 21, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 15 & 22, 2 pm, Fri. Dec. 20, 7:30 pm, \$38-\$145. [Long Beach Nutcracker](#).



Long Beach Ballet. Photo by Katie Ging

Debbie Allen's Hot Chocolate Nutcracker — Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Redondo Beach; Thurs.-Sat., Dec. 5-7, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8, 2 pm, \$86.39-\$149.99. [Eventbrite](#).

Ballet California (formerly South Bay Ballet) — The respected ballet academy brings its charming version to Marsee Auditorium. El Camino College Center for the Performing Arts, 16007 Crenshaw Blvd, Torrance; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21 & 22, 2 pm, \$36. [Ballet California](#).

Palos Verdes Ballet — Norris Theatre, 27570 Norris Center Dr., Rolling Hills Estates; Sat., Dec. 21, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 1 & 5 pm, \$45. [Tickets](#).

Classical Ballet Theatre — *Nutcracker Highlights* at Norris Theatre, 27570 Norris Center Dr., Rolling Hills Estates; Sun., Dec. 8, 1 & 5 pm, \$34, \$28 children. [Norris Theatre](#).

San Pedro City Ballet — The studio where American Ballet Theatre's Misty Copeland trained showcases its current students. Alexander Fleming Middle School, 25425 Walnut Street Lomita; Sat., Dec. 7, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$49.87. Also at Torrance Civic Center, 3330 Civic Center Dr., Torrance; Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 pm, Sat., Dec. 14, 2 & 7:30 pm, \$45. [San Pedro City Ballet](#).



San Pedro City Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Launch Dance Center — Centinela Valley Center for the Arts at Lawndale High School, 14901 S. Inglewood Blvd., Lawndale; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 14-15, 2 pm, \$23-\$28 in advance. [Tickets](#).

Southern California Dance Theater — Lakewood High School, 4400 Briarcrest Ave., Lakewood; Sat., Dec. 21, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 pm, \$30. [Southern California Dance theater](#).

Dance! To Your Hearts Delight, Inc. Downey Civic Theater, 8435 Firestone Blvd., Downey; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 & 6:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$30-\$53. [Downey Civic Theater](#).

San Fernando Valley

Pacific Festival Ballet Company – The students of this resident ballet company of the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza are joined by New York City Ballet principal dancers Tiler Peck and Roman Mejia. Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Fred Kavli Theater, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 & 7 pm, \$41-\$68. [B of A PAC](#).



Pacific Festival Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Dorrance Dance — *The Nutcracker Suite* at The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Thurs., Dec. 12, 8 pm, \$48-\$118. [The Soraya](#).

California Dance Ensemble — Smothers Theater, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu; Fri., Dec. 20, 3:30 & 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 6 pm, ticket info not available yet \$25-\$40. [California Dance Ensemble](#).

Santa Clarita Ballet — College of the Canyons, 26455 Rockwell Canyon Rd., Santa Clarita; Sat., Dec. 14, 1 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 1 pm, \$40-\$48. [Santa Clarita Ballet](#).

Moorpark Civic Ballet — Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Fred Kavli Theater, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Thurs., Dec. 12, 6:30 pm, \$75. [Moorpark Civic Ballet](#).

Antelope Valley Ballet — Lancaster Performing Arts Center, 750 W. Lancaster Blvd., Lancaster; Sat., Dec. 14, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2 pm, \$20-\$38. [Lancaster Performing Arts Center](#).

Ballet Elite — Performing Arts Education Center, 2855 W. Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas; Sat., Dec. 21, 3 & 7 pm, \$27-\$30. [Tickets](#).

Orange County

American Ballet Theatre with the Pacific Symphony — Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 12-13 & 19-20, 7 pm, Sat. Dec. 14 & 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 12:30 & 5:30 pm, Wed., Dec. 18, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 11:30 am & 4:30 pm, \$32.77-\$282.50. [SCFTA](#).



American Ballet Theatre. Photo by Doug Gifford.

Festival Ballet Theatre — Professional guest artists join more than 100 students from the highly respected Southland Ballet Academy in this *Nutcracker* from artistic director Salwa Rizkalla. Announced guest stars include New York City Ballet's Tiler Peck and Roman Meija (12/14-15), and Joffrey Ballet's Jeraldine Mendoza and Dylan Gutierrez (12/21-22). Irvine Barclay Theater, 4242 Campus Drive, Irvine; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 1 pm, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 14-15, 1 & 6 pm, Fri., Dec. 20, 6 pm, Sat.-Mon., Dec. 21-23, 1 & 6 pm, Tues. Dec. 24, 11 am, \$40-\$70. Festival Ballet Theatre. The Barclay.



Festival Ballet. Photo by Dave Friedman

Anaheim Ballet with Symphony Irvine – City National Grove, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim; Fri., Nov. 29, 7 pm, Sat., Nov. 30, 2 & 7 pm, \$50-\$95. [Anaheim Ballet](#), [Ticketmaster](#).

Ballet Repertory Theatre — Golden West College Mainstage Theater, 15751 Gothard St., Huntington Beach; Sat., Dec. 7, 14 & 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 8 & 15, 12:30, Fri., Dec. 13 & 20, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 & 5 pm, Mon., Dec. 23, 2 & 7 pm, Tues., Dec. 24, 12:30 pm, \$30, 25 children/seniors. [Tickets](#).

Coast City Ballet – Huntington Beach Historic Theater, 1905 Main St., Huntington Beach; Sat, Dec. 21, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 pm, \$30. [Coast City Ballet](#).

Nouveau Chamber Ballet – Fullerton College Campus Theatre, 321 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 2 pm, \$25-\$35. [Nouveau Chamber Ballet](#).

Ballet Etudes — Cal State University Long Beach, University Theater, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach; Sat., Dec. 7, 6 pm, \$32.50-\$37-50. [Tickets](#).

Laguna Ballet — San Juan Hills High School, 29211 Stallion Ridge, San Juan Capistrano; Sat., Dec. 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 1 & 6 pm, \$37.21. [Laguna Ballet](#).

Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties

State Street Ballet with Opera San Luis Obispo Grand Orchestra— Granada Theater, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Dec. 21, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 pm, \$35-\$125, \$24 children 12 & under. [Tickets](#).



State Street Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

Santa Barbara Festival Ballet — Arlington Theater, 1317 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Dec. 14, 2:30 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 15, 2:30 pm, \$50.29. [Tickets](#).

Ventura County Ballet with the Opera San Luis Obispo Grand Orchestra—The Canyon at Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 2 pm, \$28.52-\$65.87. [Ventura County Ballet](#).

Moorpark Civic Ballet — Bank of America, Performing Arts Center, Fred Kavli Theater, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Thurs., Dec. 12, 6:30 pm, \$91-\$116. [Tickets](#).

San Diego County

City Ballet of San Diego with City Ballet Orchestra — California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; Fri., Dec. 20, 7:30 pm, Sat. & Mon., Dec. 21 & 23, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 2 pm, \$42-\$142.80. [City Ballet of San Diego](#).



City Ballet of San Diego. Photo courtesy of the artists

San Diego Ballet — The Magnolia, 210 E. Main St., El Cajon; Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 5 pm, \$39-\$153. [San Diego Ballet](#).

Golden State Ballet — Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., San Diego; Fri., Dec. 13 & 20, 7:30, Sat., Dec. 14 & 21, 2:30 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Dec. 22, 1 & 5 pm, \$47-\$147. [San Deigo Theatres](#).

West Coast Dance & San Elijo Dance & Music Academy — California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; Sun., Dec. 14-15, 2 pm, \$48-\$84. [California Center for the Arts](#).

Performing Arts Workshop — California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8, 2 pm, \$36, \$24 children. [California Center for the Arts](#).

San Diego Academy of Ballet & Ballet Theatre with orchestra — California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; Sat., Dec. 21, 1 & 6 pm, \$90-\$102. [California Center for the Arts](#).

San Bernardino/Riverside Counties

Inland Pacific Ballet — >Bridges Auditorium, 450 N. College Way, Claremont; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8 & 21-22, 2 pm, \$39-\$101. Also at Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 14-15, 2 pm. \$41-\$136. [Inland Pacific Ballet](#).



Inland Pacific Ballet. Photo by E.Y. Yanagi

Riverside Ballet Arts — *David Allan's Nutcracker* — New York City Ballet dancers Emma Von Enck and Daniel Applebaum guest in this version. MV Performing Arts Center, 23300 Cottonwood Ave, Moreno Valley; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 21-22, 1 & 7 pm, \$38-\$58. [Tickets](#).

Inland Empire Contemporary Dance — Yucaipa Performing Arts Center, 12062 California St., Yucaipa; Fri., Dec. 6, 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 7, 2 & 6 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 4 pm, \$24-\$340. [Yucaipa PAC](#).

Lake Arrowhead Classical Ballet Company — San Manuel Performing Arts Theater, Aquinas High School, 2772 Sterling Ave., San Bernardino; Fri., Dec. 6, 7 pm, Sat., Dec. 7, 2:30 & 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 8, 2:30 pm, \$25. [Tickets](#).

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Understanding Layer 3 solutions in the Ethereum network: Are they a game-changer for scalability?

Our Friends · Wednesday, November 27th, 2024

Ethereum is a cornerstone of the blockchain landscape, powering smart contracts and diverse DApps and attracting investors and developers alike. However, despite its immense popularity and the opportunities that the **ethereum price usd** presents, Ethereum faces significant challenges in terms of scalability, namely network bottlenecks and significant transaction fees. Even if the transaction cost has been reduced considerably after the completion of Dencun, the most recent upgrade of Ethereum, other issues still need to be addressed.

However, Layer 3 solutions, the most recent innovation, aims to boost Ethereum's scalability and operational efficiency. In this blog, we will delve into Layer 3 technology, exploring its tremendous potential to solve existing changes within the Ethereum ecosystem and the implications it can have for the future of blockchain applications.

Exploring Layer 3s and the problems they aim to solve

Before discussing Layer 3 solutions, we should first examine the Layer 1 and Layer 2 solutions in the Ethereum Network. Layer 1 is the fundamental layer, namely the Ethereum blockchain itself, which handles the network's operations and security. However, as evidenced throughout the time, Layer 1 faces scalability issues, which lead to slow processing times and massive transaction fees during peak times.

Layer 2s are built on top of Layer 1, and their purpose is to address the scalability issues previously mentioned while ensuring network security. They are based on mechanisms such as rollups, sidechains, state channels, and plasma. After processing transactions of the primary Ethereum chain, they record them on Layer 1, lowering costs and boosting transaction throughput.

In the journey towards scalability, Layer 3 technologies are a revolutionary step, representing advanced frameworks built atop Layer 2s, with the aim of pushing the boundaries of functionality, scalability, and interoperability further. This layer offers specialized solutions that include privacy features, cross-chain interoperability that facilitates asset transfer across Layer 1 and Layer 2 networks, as well as complex smart contract operations that lack efficiency on Layer 2.

While the introduction of Layer 3 solutions has led to debates among industry experts regarding their necessity and impact on the security and economic model of Ethereum, this technology cannot be ignored because it showcases the continuous efforts to solve specific challenges by

providing:

- **Complex dApp support:** Thanks to the infrastructure of Layer 3 solutions, developers can build more complex, feature-rich dApps, including advanced smart contracts that need more computational resources than Layer 1 and Layer 2 can offer. These advancements result in more versatile and user-friendly applications.
- **Improved scalability and interoperability:** Layer 3 technologies have the potential to substantially improve scalability, enabling an increased volume of transactions and supporting various applications at the same time. This is a superior level of scalability that makes a big difference in the network, ensuring that it can accommodate the evolving demand for blockchain services. Furthermore, Layer 3s also connect various blockchain networks seamlessly – in other words, dApps built on Layer 3 solutions can interact with different blockchains such as Solana and Ethereum, enabling the seamless transfer of transactions and data across various platforms.
- **Customization:** Layer 3 platforms provide unprecedented customization options, allowing developers to tailor their applications based on their unique needs, like building a set of governance rules for dApps or implementing privacy-focused transactions.
- **Ease of implementation and accessibility:** Layer 3 technologies are designed to prioritize seamless deployment and ease of use. For instance, Arbitrum Orbit enables almost anyone to launch a Layer 3 solution without formal approval, which isn't the case when it comes to launching Layer 2 solutions.
- **Cost efficiency:** Layer 3 networks can decrease network congestion substantially, thus lowering gas fees and enhancing blockchain's accessibility to a wider audience. However, it's worth noting that recording transactions off-chain poses some security challenges—for instance, it can be difficult to spot malicious activity in real time because the transaction details' visibility decreases until they are recorded on-chain.

What's the potential for the adoption of Layer 3 solutions?

There's no doubt that Layer 3s are a notable advancement in the **blockchain** landscape, but they are still in the experimental stage, and therefore, it's too early for them to experience widespread adoption. The L3 space is growing with the development of many projects, the optimization of gas fees, and smart contract improvement, but as it begins to prosper, it faces a series of challenges. One of the major barriers to its success is the lack of a unified infrastructure – Layer 3 technologies cannot function optimally without a cohesive framework, and such lack of standardization can negatively impact their ability to achieve their full potential, making it hard for developers to build applications on the platforms.

Furthermore, all the hurdles, such as technical complexities, governance issues, and the looming risk of cyber threats, require efficient solutions that can ensure the resilience of Layer 3 platforms. Recently, Vitalik Buterin, the co-founder of Ethereum, mentioned that L3 technologies aren't really meant to boost transaction capacity massively. As Buterin said, Layer 3s can indeed decrease certain costs, but their goal isn't to boost scalability – instead, their real value lies in offering customized solutions in order to meet various applications' requirements.

While the existing challenges cannot be overlooked, it's worth noting that the Ethereum community is committed to progress and inclusivity, which play a massive role in effectively overcoming all the hurdles and ultimately contributing to the development of a more robust Ethereum network.

Takeaway

Scaling the Ethereum network is, without a doubt, essential for its widespread adoption and enhanced capacity. The development of Layer 3 solutions is indeed an exciting innovation in the crypto sector, improving what Layer 1 and Layer 2 brought together into the ecosystem. But despite this, it's important to remember that it's still a technology in its early stages of development, and no one can predict to what extent it will impact the Ethereum network. What is clear is that it does shape how blockchain will be used in the future, bringing changes to it that will provide a seamless experience and bring the Ethereum network closer to living up to its fullest potential.

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What Classic Casino Games Can You Play Online?

Our Friends · Wednesday, November 27th, 2024

To put it simply, all of them! Since online casino platforms launched around the turn of the millennium, classic casino games have been adapted into the digital format, from Blackjack and Baccarat to Roulette and Craps.

If you're interested in how these classic casinos look online – with new variations like [Mega Fire Blaze Roulette](#) – then read on as we lay out the details of what classic casino games you can play online.

1. Blackjack

There's no doubt that Blackjack remains one of the most popular classic card games. It features a combination of random chance and player decision-making that has helped it to continue standing out over time.

Players aim to get a hand value that's closer to 21 than the dealer's hand, without overshooting. At the start of the game, players are dealt two cards from the deck and then must decide what actions they want to take on their turn.

Actions include hitting (taking an extra card), standing (ending their turn with their current hand value), doubling down (doubling their wager for just one extra card) or splitting (dividing their hand into two if their two original cards were the same value).

2. Roulette

Roulette is a game that's been around for centuries and is closely associated with historical land-based casinos like the Monte Carlo Casino. The game centres around a spinning wheel and players wager on which of its pockets a ball will stop in.

There are a few major variations of Roulette – European, American and French – which all have online versions based on them. Each of these is slightly different, with American Roulette wheels featuring an extra double zero pocket that increases the house edge.

Wagers are split between the categories of inside and outside bets, covering individual numbers, groups of numbers or more general traits like the colour of the pocket or whether the number will be odd or even.

3. Poker

Thanks to the Poker boom of the early 2000s, this card game is still a popular choice on online casino platforms. This particular casino game is set apart by the fact that it involves the element of bluffing, where hands that are not the highest value can still potentially land a payout.

Poker has plenty of different variants that switch up elements of the gameplay and rules, including Texas Hold'em, Omaha and seven-card stud. It's important to understand the differences between varieties of Poker before joining a game, as they vary in a lot of ways.

4. Baccarat

This card game is less well-known than its cousins but is still a casino classic. Baccarat has a straightforward concept, with players wagering on whether one of two hands (the 'player' and 'banker') will have the higher total or if they will tie.

5. Craps

Dice games have also made their way online, with Craps having both fully-digital adaptations and live dealer varieties. Players wager on the outcome of either a single roll or a series of rolls, depending on the format.

Classic casino games – including table games – are now a staple of online casino platforms just as much as land-based casino venues.

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How Do You Clean a Vape Pen Mouthpiece?

Our Friends · Wednesday, November 27th, 2024

If you want to use a vape pen, keeping your device clean is going to become a regular part of your maintenance routine – and in particular, you'll need to have a strategy for cleaning the mouthpiece.

Why is knowing how to clean a vape pen mouthpiece so important? For one thing, oil can condense on the interior of the mouthpiece as you vape, hampering the airflow and eventually causing the cartridge to clog. Also, cleaning the mouthpiece of your vape pen is good for hygiene. Vape pens are great for sharing, but that doesn't mean you want to share your friends' germs. Even if you're the only person who uses your device, though, a vape pen spends a lot of time in your mouth and **is certain to collect some bacteria** along the way.

So, when it's time to clean your vape pen's mouthpiece, how do you do it? As you're about to learn, the answer depends partly on what you're trying to accomplish and partly on the construction of your device. In this guide, we'll tell you everything you need to know. Stick around to the end, because we'll also include some bonus tips for cleaning the rest of your vape pen. Let's dive in.

Rubbing Alcohol Is the Most Important Tool for Cleaning a Vape Pen Mouthpiece

Regardless of what strategy you ultimately end up using for cleaning your vape pen's mouthpiece, the first thing you need to know is that rubbing alcohol will always be the most important tool in your arsenal. That's because vape oil is alcohol soluble, so it'll always rid your mouthpiece of condensed vape oil with little effort on your part. As an added bonus, it's also a powerful disinfectant – so you really don't need to bother with any other detergent or cleaner.

Are you concerned about using rubbing alcohol to clean something that goes in your mouth? There's no need to worry because you'll rinse or wipe the alcohol away before using the mouthpiece again. If you'd rather, though, you can also use Everclear or another **high-proof alcohol** that's safe to drink. It might be a little slower than rubbing alcohol, but it'll still get the job done.

Do you want to share your vape pen with your friends? Alcohol wipes are great for disinfecting your vape on the go and are very versatile tools to add to your vaping arsenal.

How to Clean Your Vape Pen's Mouthpiece

High-quality vape pens and vape carts from companies like **rokinvapes.com** have mouthpieces made from a wide variety of materials including metal, plastic and wood. In addition, vape cartridges come in both refillable and disposable styles. A disposable vape cartridge will often have a non-removable mouthpiece, so your strategy for cleaning it will need to be a little different. Here's what you need to know.

Cleaning a Removable Vape Pen Mouthpiece

Follow these steps to clean a vape pen mouthpiece that's removable.

- Pour a little alcohol into a bowl and place the mouthpiece inside. Make sure that the mouthpiece is completely submerged and swish it around for a few seconds to provide agitation. Within about an hour, the alcohol will dissolve all of the residue.
- Remove the mouthpiece from the bowl and rinse it in fresh water.
- Dry the mouthpiece with a paper towel or allow it to air dry.

Cleaning a Non-Removable Vape Pen Mouthpiece

Follow these steps to clean a vape pen mouthpiece that's not removable.

- Run an alcohol wipe around the outside of the mouthpiece.
- Follow with a damp paper towel to clear away any residual alcohol.
- Follow with a dry paper towel to remove the water.

Clearing a Clog from a Vape Pen Mouthpiece

Are you trying to clean your vape pen's mouthpiece because it has a clog that's blocking airflow? Here's how to do it.

- Dip a cotton swab in rubbing alcohol and run it down the center of the mouthpiece.
- Follow with a water-dipped cotton swab to remove any residual alcohol.
- Follow with a dry cotton swab to remove the water.

Don't want to bother with the wet cleaning method? In some cases, it may be possible to dislodge a clog in your vape pen's mouthpiece with a toothpick. It might take a bit of extra work, though, because vape oil can be very thick and sticky.

What Are Some Potential Concerns When You Clean a Vape Pen Mouthpiece?

Aside from the fact that you obviously don't want to ingest it, there are two other potential concerns that you need to know about before you use rubbing alcohol to clean your vape pen's mouthpiece. These have to do with the materials that are sometimes used in vaping products.

- Strong alcohol can dissolve certain types of rubber if it's left in contact with the rubber long enough, and the sealing gasket at the bottom of a vape pen mouthpiece may be made from rubber. You'll want to remove the mouthpiece from the alcohol as soon as the residue is dissolved.
- Some vape pen mouthpieces are made from wood, and alcohol can potentially strip the oil or wax coating on the wood's surface. If you're trying to clean a wood mouthpiece, you may want to skip the soak and just use a cleaning wipe instead.

Tips for Cleaning the Rest of Your Vape Pen

Now that you've cleaned your vape pen's mouthpiece, why stop there? We'll end this guide with some tips that can help you get the rest of your vape pen as clean as the mouthpiece.

- **Cleaning the body of your vape pen:** You can clean the main body of your vape pen with a soft cloth. Since your vape pen has a lithium-ion battery and other electronic components, you should never clean it with anything wet.
- **Cleaning the threading:** You can dissolve oil from your vape pen's threading using a cotton

swab dipped in rubbing alcohol. Make sure that the threading is completely dry before using your vape pen.

- **Cleaning removable components such as bubblers and wax coils:** You can soak these components in alcohol as described above. Before using the components, rinse them with clean water and make sure that they're completely dry.

Cleaning the charging port: You can remove dust and lint from the charging port with a toothpick.

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4 Simple Strategies to Grow Your Business Online

Our Friends · Tuesday, November 26th, 2024

As a business owner, you must be well-organized and responsible. Pay attention to every little detail and develop some effective strategies to increase your business' productivity. You can also grow your business online. It is a cost-effective way to attract many potential customers.

Online marketing plays an important role in your business growth. It reduces the operating costs of sales representatives, clerks, shops, and others. Here are some easy tips on how you can efficiently grow your business online.

1. Google Review Links

Google review links are used to collect the customers' reviews. It is a direct URL that takes the customers to your business profile where they can share their feedback and suggestions. You can also respond to the reviews. It is an efficient way to get your customers' loyalty.

You can easily **[generate a Google review link](#)** for your business in just a few simple steps. Share it with your customers to know about their likes and dislikes. It improves the customers' experience and boosts your business growth.

Positive reviews will also attract more potential customers. They can easily trust your business by reading the good feedback of other customers. Hence, if you are running a business or just started a new one, you must use the Google review links to grow your business.

2. Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization improves the visibility of your business's website. It is an efficient way of bringing organic traffic to your site. You can attract more customers by optimizing the

website's technical configuration, link popularity, and content relevance.

You should hire a professional with great expertise in search engine optimization. It is a good investment that serves you in the long run. It increases sales and boosts your business growth. Search engine optimization also provides you with improved user experience and satisfaction.

3. Email Marketing

Email marketing is an effective marketing strategy to promote your products and services. It allows you to easily connect with your customers and build healthy relationships for [your business](#). Email marketing allows you to efficiently engage with customers without any problem.

You can use emails to notify your customers about any important business information such as new arrivals, exclusive discounts, and other services. You can also drive the conversation and convince them to purchase different products from you.

Many automation and email marketing software are available for your help. They create a smooth experience for the customers and ensure that your emails are delivered at the right time. Email marketing software also provides you with the option of personalization.

4. Social Media

Nowadays, almost everyone is using social media. You can attract many potential customers for your business with efficient social media marketing. It is a less expensive and an efficient technique to boost your business' sales.

Hence, you must consider social media marketing for your business. It provides you with real-time customer feedback. You know about the likes and dislikes of your clients and easily focus on the necessary business improvements.

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Elsa Han & Navya Chitlur: “spark (to be incinerated again)”

Elsa Han · Monday, November 25th, 2024

spark (to be incinerated again)

by Elsa Han & Navya Chitlur

11/8/24

my threadbare body lays in the dirt of the fallen;

i am draining the brown of my skin into the pacific ocean
 & my palms reach for the safety once birthed in a hospital
 before a woman became a stairwell anchored to the sand
 & before we were told that to live was to bleed.

mourning is the aftermath of the loss of our bodies
 tombstones and undead hands clasped in prayer
 the youth kindle their voices to scream over burning bricks
 they raised the glass ceiling only so our ashes can't touch it.

a penny of lead weighs a quarter pound. forced on my tongue,
 it is enough for heavy poison to seep in and leak out until the world
 is made from deadly silence and a mother's bloodline is a curse.
 hope is an illusion with battered wings:
 she falls and cannot rise again.

paper crane wishes line my closet like skeletons
 our screams are whispers & we are burning witches again
 but if we are dark magic then i will tie myself to the stake
 & will remain there, starved to the bone, until we are free

motherhood is the dust of leaves under black boots.
 i am watching this criminal on a screen teach me
 how to carve a toy out of the body of a girl
 & wishing i could curl my tongue into words i spill from knuckles
 before the land left only man, white, and escape in death

i will breathe between decaying bodies at state borders
 tumbleweed rot rolls down windpipes and empty lungs
 smoke coats skyscrapers until red eyes cannot find stars
 sunny afternoons are no safer than midnight streets.

i am born from the salt of the pacific cradling my open wounds.
 her apologies spill over in brilliant sunset, and she tells me
 to fight and to be safe and to live, and it takes everything
 to not fall kneeling in glass-speckled sand and beg for something
 to grasp onto, so i don't have to tell the little ones i'm sorry.

i'm sorry we have scattered our words to the winds

(i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry)

i'm sorry they turned scarce enough to die unheard

(i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry)

i'm sorry my best piece of advice is to not become a number

(i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry)

i'm sorry your mind and heart and body is not allowed to be

(i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry)

i'm sorry the definition of a union became the illusion of one

(i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry)

i'm sorry lessons are taught but not learned

until they are delivered to death's doorstep;

i'm sorry that when He arrives, scythe in one hand and the other outstretched,

it will be with his own apology because you have gotten there first
 because you were not supposed to find him first
 because you have been failed and broken and slaughtered,
 deceived by the hand that was sworn to protect
 on the ground that promised growth & freedom
 until fire twisted in your veins
 and you swallowed the last drops of humanity
 but we will scream into mics until the wires on our tongues break free—

(beat.)

we will sail across the grass in this seesaw territory
 but we are daughters of broken promises

we have been taught to never fail
 we will tear the white flag to shreds before giving in
 and we will let our bodies smolder to ash
 so we can reignite the sun

(This is a collaborative poem by Elsa Han and Navya Chitlur, and part of our yearlong series called [Heart Beets](#) that features the work of a group of teen writers, giving us a glimpse into their journey through the school year.)

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