

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Four Ways to Dance in India

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, April 12th, 2017

This week's SoCal dance events include library sponsored hip hop in Sun Valley, modern dance in Sylmar, aerial/ballet in West Adams, space inspired dance in Pasadena, and a tour of India's dance in Little Tokyo.

5. Dancing in Outer Space

Astronauts' stories of the life-changing experience of viewing earth from space fuels the audio-visual event *Bella Gaia—A Poetic Vision of Earth From Space*. The dancers of the Bella Gaia Ensemble and director/composer Kenji Williams draw on NASA satellite imagery, time-lapse nature photography, and cultural heritage film. CalTech Beckman Auditorium, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Pasadena; Sat., April 15, 8 p.m., \$35-\$45, \$10 youth. 626-395-4652, <http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/TicketPurchase?pid=8270068>.



Alrina Eyebeam in Bella Gaia. Photo by Anna Galuza.

4. Dancing at the local library

There'll be dancing at branch libraries throughout town as the L.A. Public Library and *L.A. Made* bring dancers and other performers to local library branches. This week, hip hop troupe **Culture Shock L.A.** visits Sun Valley Branch Library, 7935 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley; Wed., April 19, 5:30 p.m., free. Complete event listings at <http://www.lapl.org/whats-on/calendar>.



Culture Shock L.A. Photo courtesy of CSLA.

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3. Dancing at the local college

The evocative *Old Postcards from Europe* and a brand new work using organ music are the calling cards as the five dancers of Benita Bike's DanceArt offer a free program of modern dance. L.A. Mission College, 13356 Eldridge Ave., Sylmar; Thurs., April 20, 4:30 p.m., free. <http://danceart.org>.



Benita Bike DanceArt. Photo courtesy of BBDA.

2. Easter as a rave

Just in time for Easter, Judith “FLEX” Helle and her **Luminario Ballet** employ their signature blend of ballet and aerial in *The Last Supper*, using music by Nirvana, Radiohead and the Talking Heads to consider the possibilities if Jesus, Judas and Mary went to the 2017 Coachella music festival. Faisdodo, 5253 W. Adams Blvd., West Adams; Fri.-Sat., April 14-15, 8:30 p.m., Sun., April 16, 3 p.m., \$25-\$40. https://luminarioballet.secure.force.com/ticket/#details_a0O150000MhBQkEAN



Kelly Vittetoe in Luminario Ballet’s *The Last Supper*. Photo courtesy of Luminario Ballet.

1. A dance tour of India

India is an enormous subcontinent with a wide range of dance styles reflecting its varied cultures. While L.A. hosts many performances, but usually only one or two of India’s many styles of dance are shown. **Dance India! Four Visions** offers an unparalleled opportunity to experience the variety of dance from across India with excellent local troupes and guests from India. The scheduled performances range from Odissi from Eastern India, now performed by males but originally limited to female temple dancers; Kathak from Northern India that evolved from elaborate court performances for the maharajas; Mohiniyattam from Kerala Southern India known for its undulating moves that have been adapted to music from *Swan Lake* and *Carmen*; and Bharata Natyam another style from Southern India rooted in philosophy and fable. At 6 p.m., a free bonus performance in the plaza awaits early arrivals. Aratani Theatre, Japan America Cultural Center, 244 S. San Pedro St., Little Tokyo; Sat., April 15, 7 p.m., \$15-\$35. <http://www.festivalofsacredmusic.org/dance-india/>



Vijayalakshmi of Dance India! Four Visions. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Other Dance of Note:

Among the array of Earth Day activities at Grand Park, **Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre** employs the giant fish sculpture that centered HDDT’s highly praised *Fish Eyes* in kid-centric workshops that explore how to develop site specific dance that expands awareness of Earth Day issues like water conservation, climate change and protecting the environment. The sculpture will be on display from April 16-22 before and after the day of the workshops. Details on all the Earth Day festivities at <http://grandparkla.org/earth-day-la>. Grand Park Performance Lawn, 200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., April 19, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., free. <http://grandparkla.org/earth-day-la>.



Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre’s *Fish Eyes*. Photo courtesy of HDDT.

Last chance to see actress/dancer **Christina Carlisi** evoke the spirit of the late modern dance legend Martha Graham in *MARTHA* by Ellen Melaver. Whitefire Theater, 13500 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks; Sun., 7:30 p.m. thru April 16, \$25. <http://brownpapertickets.com/event/2816838>.

While **Pantsula 4 Lyf** is not live performance, this celebration of popular dance in South Africa offers photographer Chris Saunders’ intriguing photos and videos capturing pantsula’s adaptation

of hip hop and American fashion. Featuring crews of young men and women in Johannesburg, pantsula performers favor American-name brands like Converse All-Star shoes and Dickies brand work pants. UCLA Fowler Museum, 308 Charles E Young Dr. N, Westwood; Wed., noon – 8 p.m., Thurs.-Sun., noon – 5 p.m. thru Sun., May 7, free. <http://fowler.ucla.edu>.

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