Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

International Dancers Flaunting BalletNOW

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, July 26th, 2017

New choreography in Irvine and downtown, Italian ballet in Costa Mesa, international ballet stars downtown, tap dance in Hollywood, a venue closes in Lincoln Park, National Dance Day live downtown and virtual, and more SoCal dance.

5. Trending tap dance

The sextet of tappers known as **Syncopated Ladies** take the stage with music ranging from salsa to funk. Chloé Arnold, Maud Arnold, Orialis Ashley, Anissa Lee, Assata Madison and Melissa Tannus blend footwork and storytelling backed by a live band. Some younger tappers also perform while the fierce ladies catch their breath. Ford Theatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Fri., July 28, 8 p.m., $30, $15. http://fordtheatres.org, https://secure.ticketsage.net/websales.aspx?u=fordtheatres&pid=320194.

Syncopated Ladies. Photo courtesy of the artists.

4. How to say ballet in Italian

The last time **Teatro alla Scala Ballet Company** visited, it brought a new version of *Giselle* conceived and starring then ballet superstar Sylvie Guillam. This visit, the Italian troupe brings *Giselle* with some current guesting superstars including American Ballet Theatre's Misty Copeland and LaScala alum Roberto Bolle (Fri.). Bolle also partners Marianela Núñez from Britain's Royal Ballet (Sat. eve, and Sun. mat.). LaScala's own stars are represented by Nicoletta Manni and Claudio Coviello (Sat. mat.). Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Fri., July 28, 7:30 p.m., Sat. July 29, 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., July 30, 1 p.m., $29-$159. 714-556-2787, http://scfta.org.

Teatro alla Scala Ballet Company. Photo courtesy of the company.

3. A *Groundhog Day* dance company

It sounds a bit like the film *Groundhog Day*, but each summer Molly Lynch assembles a contemporary ballet company that lasts only three weeks. Taking advantage of top notch dancers on summer hiatus, Lynch recruits 16 dancers and matches them with four choreographers with a single performance at the end of the three weeks. The result of this short incubation is invariably

interesting, rarely a final product, but an impressive 75% of the work developed during this brief **National Choreographers Initiative** has gone into repertoire of professional ballet companies. Locally, Barak Ballet has presented three or four works originally developed at NCI. This year's quartet of dancemakers are Christopher Stuart, Penny Saunders, Robert Mills and Suzanne Haag. Info at http://nchoreographers.org. Irvine Barclay Theatre, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Sat., July 29, 8 p.m., $20-$65. http://thebarclay.org.

National Choreographers Initiative (NCI). Photo by Dave Friedman.

2. Where the future is NOW

A known incubator for cutting edge dance and other performing arts, **REDCAT's New Original Works (NOW) Festival** extends over three weekends with three different programs, each offering a first look at three or four artists or groups. The 2017 Festival's opening weekend includes Jessica Emmanuel's movement driven consideration of senseless black deaths symbolized by crime scene chalk outlines. Bessie award winning Stacy Dawson Stearns employs video as her five member movement theater explores Marcel Duchamp territory. Nancy Keystone and her Critical Mass Performance Group conclude the evening exploring sanity and madness in the current political landscape. On week two, the program opens with Nickels Sunshine's Take Me With You paying homage to Vaslav Nijinsky and Martha Graham with help from Jmy James Kidd, Barry Brannum, Alexx Shilling, Bernard Brown and Maya Gingery. Also performing under the banner Tales Between Our Legs (TBOL), Megan Fowler-Hurst, MacKenzey Franklin and Sarri Sanchez draw from dance theatre and sitcoms, while New York émigré Vivian Bang offers a Korean-American perspective on the L.A. riots of 1992. REDCAT, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., July 27-29 (week one), Aug. 3-5 (week two), 8:30 p.m., $20, $16 students, $40 festival pass for all three programs. 213-237-2800, http://redcat.org.

REDCAT New Original Works (NOW)'s Stacy Dawson Stearns. Photo courtesy of the artist.

1. Ballet yesterday, today and tomorrow

Under the banner **BalletNOW**, New York City Ballet principal Tiler Peck curated this assemblage of dancers from Britain's Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Paris Opera Ballet, the tap ensemble Dorrance Dance, television's *So You Think You Can Dance* and the wonderfully indescribable Bill Irwin. The program has short excerpts from 20th century masters like George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins along with contemporary ballets from Christopher Wheeldon, Justin Peck, Ulysses Dove, tapper Michelle Dorrance and the Bill Irwin whose duet with Tiler Peck was a hit at the Vail Dance Festival. Major national and international dance companies are on hiatus during the summer, allowing for high grade pick up troupes like this and the recent Misty Copeland-led ballet excerpts at the Hollywood Bowl. Program and casting info at http://musiccenter.org. Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Fri.-Sat., July 28-29, 7:30 p.m., Sun., July 30, 2 p.m., $38-$138, 213-972-0711, http://musiccenter.org.

Other dance of note:

National Dance Day has largely gone viral, but L.A. and Washington D.C. remain the hubs for the live components of the annual Dizzy Feet Foundation event. Co-founded by *So You Think You Can*

Dance's Nigel Lythgoe and Adam Shankman, NDD continues to offer on-line choreography and the invitation to upload video of one's own performance to YouTube. The video for this year's dance routine is at http://youtu.be/2j3fyLMQVTc. Here in L.A. the live action includes free workshops and performances including a chance to dance in the Grand Park fountain. Complete info on the L.A. events is at http://dizzyfeetfoundation.org/national-dance-day. Grand Park, Grand Ave. between Temple and 1st St., downtown. Sat., July 29, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. https://www.musiccenter.org/ndd.

National Dance Day Photo courtesy of the Music Center

The folks connected with **No)One Art House** mark the closing of this massive former factory cum performance venue with *After*, a 50 minute dance theatre work. Poetry is promised to close the evening and the venue. The 14th Factory, 440 N. Avenue 19, Lincoln Heights; Sat., July 29, 8:30 p.m.,
$25. https://www.seetickets.us/event/Noone-Art-House-and-The-14th-Factory-present-AFTER/350207.

Yankuititl Aztec Dance. Photo courtesy of the company.

The Aztec dance group **Yankuititl** (New Fire) marks its 27th anniversary with *Toltecayotl Aztec Dance Celebration* in the Park. The event promises more than 100 dancers in traditional regalia and decorated feather headdresses dancing in unison. Villa Park, 363 E. Villa, Pasadena; Sat., July 29, 6:30 p.m., free.

It's hip hop time as **Versa-Style Dance Company** performs in the family friendly *Big World Fun* series. Pre-show activities start at 9 a.m. with art activities. Advance reservations are advised. Ford Theatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sat., July 29, 10 a.m., $5 adults, free children 12 and younger. http://fordtheatres.org.

Versa-Style Dance Company Photo courtesy of the company

Come to watch or join in as Céilí Rua and the **CnaG Gaelic League of LA** reveal the mysteries of Celtic dance in this edition the *JAM* series. Ford Theatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Mon., July 31, 7 p.m., free. http://fordtheatres.org.

The youth ensemble connected with **Lula Washington Dance Theatre** perform as part of the Los Angeles Public Library's L.A. Made series. Palms Library, 2920 Overland Ave., Palms; Sat., July 29, 3 p.m., free. https://www.lapl.org/branches/palms-rancho-park.

With a theme of "physical interpretation of music", the series *Paint the Music with Your Body* makes it debut. Participants improvise to music selected by the organizers, the audience votes, and the top vote-getter wins a cut of the donated admissions. Participation is open but e-mail info@jazzo.co to confirm a performance spot. Mimoda Studio, 5772 W. Pico Blvd., Mid-City; Mon., July 24, 7 p.m., $10 suggested donation. info@jazz.com.

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