

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Is this the year that wasn't?

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, June 10th, 2020

This week should have welcomed a flamenco festival, a full-length *Sleeping Beauty* from Los Angeles Ballet, and a new full-length contemporary ballet from Barak Ballet. If there is a bright spot in the decimation of live performance, increasingly events aren't being cancelled or vaguely postponed, but announced for specific dates...in 2021. Meanwhile local dance continues to innovate on-line, joining the ranks of national and international companies streaming performances. For live performance, this may be the year that wasn't. Yet dance is resilient, exploring new virtual stages to perform work in a world wracked by the ongoing pandemic and resurgent political issues surrounding race and inequality. Here is what will be missed and some of the new efforts, ongoing on-line events, plus platforms to submit dance videos or find up-dated info on virtual dance lessons.

THIS WEEK'S PERFORMANCES – On-line, Cancelled or Postponed

Barak Ballet *Memoryhouse* – The Broad Stage, Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., June 11-13th. <https://barakballet.org/>. Performance cancelled; company digitally on Instagram @barakballet.



Barak Ballet. Photo by Dave Friedman.

Los Angeles Ballet *Sleeping Beauty* at Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, Redondo Beach; Sat., June 13. Also at UCLA Royce Hall, Westwood; Fri.-Sat., June 20-21. Also at The Alex, Glendale; Sat., June 27. <https://losangelesballet.org/>. **Postponed to June 2021.**



Los Angeles Ballet's "Sleeping Beauty." Photo by Reed Hutchinson.

Festival "Cumbre Flamenca," The Broad Stage, Santa Monica. Sun., June 14. **Postponed to June 19 & 20, 2021.** <https://www.itsmyseat.com/events/789030.html>.

NEW STREAMING

What was intended as participation in an international dance festival took a serious turn when choreographer Heidi Duckler and her site specific **Heidi Duckler Dance** arrived in Chile amid protests, some violent, in response to surging prices and endemic inequality. The performances did go forward and afterwards, so did Duckler and her crew, traveling with Chilean filmmaker Felipe Díaz Galarce and dEUSEXmACHINA Films to three cities to hear stories from local residents. In

the resulting film, *ESCAPE*, HDD dancers Tess Hewlett, Ryan Walker Page, and Himerria Wortham explore correlations between the Chilean and American experiences. Thurs., June 11, 5 p.m. PDT. Info at <https://heididuckler.org/>. Reservation at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/escape-screening-tickets-106245230344>.



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

ENCORE STREAMING

Paying tribute to Don Campbellock, the creator of the Locking dance style, the street dance troupe **Versa Style** and its youth organization **Versa-Style Next Generation** unveil *Finding Creativity and Fun in Our Personal Space*. The streamed performance gets help from musician Cody “CoFlo” Ferreira’s *Playground Samba*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEgDC1UboGA>, Facebook: @versastylela, YouTube: @versastylela. Info at <http://versastyledance.org/events/>.



Versa Style Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

After the Covid-19 lockdown caused cancellation, the **Orange County Dance Festival** was among the first to shift to streaming. Throughout April and May, a recorded version of the work each company or artist was scheduled to perform was streamed for three days in show order. Bonuses included company photos, artistic statements, and links to websites and social media platforms. Now the OCDF website has collected the individual events from AkomiDance, Contempo Ballet, 7th Street Dance Company, ISSA Dance Company, Animus Dance Co., Jazz Spectrum Dance Company, Emergent Dance Company, Pacific Ballet Dance Theatre, Louise Reichlin & Dancers, The Hubbard Collective, Kairos Dance Co., and Fuse Dance Company. <https://www.akomidance.com/ocdf-online-2020.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=7f1b5666-e470-4918-8e87-96a02e86086b>.



Orange County Dance Festival’s Akomi Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A concentrated taste of choreographer Rosanna Gamson’s consideration of a legendary storyteller is performed on-line in *Layla Means Night*. Drawn from her company **Rosanna Gamson/World Wide’s** performance, the work is inspired by *The Persian tale of Shahrzad* or Scheherazade who entranced her husband and kept herself alive telling stories for 1001 nights. <https://vimeo.com/407374713>.



Rosanna Gamson/World Wide. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Ballet and non-classical dance were two of the categories as the Music Center *Spotlight* final performance showcasing SoCal high school performers went viral last week. The performances continue to stream with this year’s high school-age ballet dancers Jacob Giovanni Alvarado from San Diego and Ashley Lew from San Juan Capistrano plus Maya Alvarez-Coyne from Santa Ana and Bergundi Loyd from Riverside in non-classical dance. The event is free, but donations to support this scholarship program are invited by texting TMCSPOTLIGHT to 44-321 or at the website <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>. <https://www.musiccenter.org/spotlightfinale>.



Dorrance Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Earlier this spring, the Music Center's annual *Children's Festival* was cancelled, but its live-streamed return last week with a celebration of tap dance headlined by **Dorrance Dance** led by tap's "it girl" Michelle Dorrance is still on view for a limited time. Also on view for a limited time, the family-friendly performance by Cuba's contemporary **Malpaso Dance Company**. <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>

Other Platforms to Find Video Dance and Dance Classes

Companies are streaming past performances to compensate for cancelled spring seasons, and dance videos have gained more prominence whether a thread of solo dancers tag teaming a movement sequence, dancing on the roof, the backyard or their kitchen. The popular long-running video competition *Dare to Dance in Public* curated by Sarah Elgart has been joined by her new challenge, *Six Foot Distance Dances* (details on how to submit at <https://www.culturalweekly.com/dare-dance-public-film-festival-six-foot-distance-dances/>).

Over the next few months, the **Palm Springs International Dance Festival** is accepting submissions for an October performance under the title *MERDE! A Dance Makers Moment*. Seven submissions will be selected for presentation on October 23 with by the voting audience and an expert panel. The winner of the voting will be presented as part of the Festival's gala in March 2021. Details on submission at <https://www.nickersonrossdance.com>.

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram and other on-line platforms, many classes free, low cost or suggesting a donation. One central, constantly updated source on dance classes and in-depth reporting on SoCal dance, **LA Dance Chronicle** <https://www.ladancechronicle.com/>, lists on-line dance classes including any cost and contact info. Grab a chair or clear off a corner of the room and use this time to dance.

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