

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

L.A. Dance Stepping Out at a National Dance Conference

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, June 6th, 2018

A quartet of L.A.'s finest share the stage in East L.A., a week of dance on the Santa Monica beach, a revered local legend in Hollywood, contemporary dance downtown, and more SoCal dance this busy week.

5. What is she up to?

The ever straightforward **Carmela Hermann Dietrich** takes the floor with *Stuff I'm doing*. Pieter, 430 W. Avenue 33, Lincoln Heights; Sat., June 9, 8:30 p.m. free with contribution to free bar or boutique. <https://pieterpasd.com>.



American Contemporary Ballet's Victoria Hulland. Photo by Ryan Ward.

4. A bit of Mr. B

Offering your own choreography in a program dubbed *Spectacular Balanchine!* and otherwise devoted to the genius of choreographer George Balanchine is audacious, but **American Contemporary Ballet** artistic director Lincoln Jones has never lacked for audacity. Billed as a tribute to Balanchine's neo-classical style, Jones' new work joins excerpts from Balanchine's *Who Cares*, *Stars & Stripes*, *Union Jack* and *Western Symphony*. ACB Studios, 700 S. Flower St., Suite 3200, downtown; Thurs.-Sat., June 7-9 & 14-16, Sun., June 10 & 17, 4 p.m., \$40-\$500. <http://acbdances.com>.



2nd Annual Samba Congress dancers. Photo courtesy of the artists.

3. A world of samba

Starting next Thursday, 30 experts on Brazilian dance, music, culture and history gather here for the **2nd International Samba Congress**. The four days of classes, workshops, and lectures, kicks off with an *Open Gala Pioneer of Samba Night*. The event includes an award being presented to singer Dionne Warwick. Info on the events at www.internationalSambaCongress.com. Downtown Dance & Movement, 1144 S. Hope St., downtown; Thurs., June 14, 7 p.m., \$150. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/international-samba-congress-2018-tickets-40795161426#individual>. Details and prices for other performances during the conference at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/international-samba-congress-2018-tickets-40795161426#individual>.



Company CONLON. Photo by Andrew Mandinach.

2. Dancing in the sand

For the past week, nine choreographers have been conducting *Beach Dances: Repetitions* on Santa Monica beach exploring the practice and creation of contemporary dance in the daily life of picnickers, cyclists, volleyball players and sunbathers. The choreographers include Mecca Vazie Andrews, Suchi Branfman, Rebecca Bruno, Jay Carlon, Sarah Elgart, Jeremy Hahn, Pieter Open Studio, No)one. Art House, and Alexx Shilling. Centered on an open air platform, the daily workshops and rehearsals continue through the weekend with casual rehearsals and work-in-progress presentations, all free with reservations. A full line-up of when and what each choreographer is offering is at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beach-dances-2018-repetitions-tickets-45835761998>.

The week concludes with **Company CARLON**'s site specific performances ??? (Four Triangles) featuring dancers Samuel Wentz, Shauna Davis, Kim Thomson & Raymond Ejiofor. Annenberg Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Highway, Santa Monica; Sat.-Sun., June 9-10, 6:30 p.m., free with reservation. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beach-dances-2018-repetitions-tickets-45835761998>.

1. A new L.A. dance platform

This week L.A. hosts the **2018 Dance/USA** annual conference bringing national and international dance companies, presenters, and educators to town. With funding from both L.A. City and L.A. County plus collaboration from various venues, a bumper crop of performances have bloomed in conjunction with the conference. It's something of an informal festival featuring some of L.A.'s finest and prompting a slightly different format for this week's blog. Here are the tempting performances sponsored under **DCA LA Dance Platform**.

Opening with a dance party

Part performance, part participatory party, the **L.A. Dance Party/USA** promises dance activations from d. Sabela grimes and Mecca Vazie Andrews, Christine Marie's interactive 3-D shadow-dance generator, and DJ Muñeka of Rail Up plus DJs Arshia Haq and David Gomez of Discostan. Grand Performances, California Plaza, 300 & 350 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., June 6, 9 p.m., free. <http://www.grandperformances.org/dance-usa>.



L.A. Dance Party's d. Sabela grimes. Photo by Steve Gunther.

Opening up a new studio

Having settled into its new studio, offices and performance space, **LA Dance Project**'s extension of its *Live from 2245* performance series allowed the concluding shows to be included in the DCA LA Dance Platform performances. Benjamin Millepied and LADP alternate Program A pairing Noe Soulier's *Second Quartet* with the L.A. premiere Millepied's *Bach Studies (Part I)* and Program B with *Martha Graham Duets* drawn from Martha Graham's larger works and

Millepied's *Hearts & Arrows* and *the Other Side*. Program schedule on the website <http://www.ladanceproject.org>. L.A. Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., June 6-9, 8 p.m., \$25, \$20 students. 213-622-5995, <https://www.artful.ly/la-dance-project>.



L.A. Dance Project's "Martha Duets". Photo by James Welling.

Reconsidering the female body

In her 2017 *ANTHEM*, choreographer **Milka Djordjevich** questions what she describes as contemporary dance's predisposition towards "neutrality and the de-sexualization of the female body". The choreographer weaves a quartet of female dancers with real and imagined vernacular dance that promises "theatricality, virtuosity and sass". Ghebaly Gallery, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Thurs. & Sat., June 7 & 9, 10 p.m., Sun., June 10, 2 & 7 p.m., \$20. <https://performancepractice.la>.



Lula Washington Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of LWDT.

Honoring Lula & Erwin

She's been a significant presence on the local dance scene for almost four decades and received an array of national recognitions for both her choreography and her work developing young dancers, especially young African American dancers. Now Lula Washington and her eponymous **Lula Washington Dance Theatre** are being honored locally in perhaps the best way possible. Paying homage to Washington and her husband Erwin for their contributions, the Ford Theatre recruited three major African American choreographers to set or reprise work on Washington's company for this celebratory performance that also marks the unofficial opening of the summer dance season at this al fresco venue. MacArthur "genius" fellow Kyle Abraham provides his 2013 *Hallowed*, a trio set to church recordings by Bertha Guber and Cleo Kennedy. Hip hop guru Rennie Harris contributes a revised version of his 2010 *Reign*, originally created for LWDT's 30th anniversary season. Known for his distinctive blending of multi-media, dance and theater, David Rousseve's 2016 *Enough?* employs video text and music from the 1960's as a backdrop for the dancing. Works by Washington and her daughter Tamica Washington also take the stage. Ford Theatres, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Fri., June 8, 8:30 p.m., \$25-\$55. <http://www.fordtheatres.org>.



CONTRA-TIEMPO Urban Latin Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Ending with a bang

Possibly the best example of the diversity and vibrancy of local dance is the quartet closing the Dance Platform. **Syncopated Ladies**, **Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Company**, **Versa-Style Dance Company**, and **CONTRA-TIEMPO | Urban Latin Dance Theater** can each hold the stage on their own, but this is a distinctive opportunity for L.A.'s brand of rhythm tap, Latin dance, hip hop and contemporary dance to be seen side by side in this special performance. Luckman Fine Arts Complex, Cal State L.A., 5151 State University Dr., East L.A.; Sat., June 9, 8 p.m., \$20. 323-343-6600, <http://www.ticketmaster.com>.



L.A. Contemporary Dance Company. Photo by Taso Papadakis.

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