

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Mansion Dancing

Ann Haskins · Thursday, September 17th, 2026

A Leonard Cohen songbook ballet in Irvine; Jay Gatsby dances through a Beverly Hills mansion; contemporary ballet triptych in Santa Monica; pre-tour street dance heats up Sierra Madre; dissected dance and drums returns at MOCA in Little Tokyo; and Aztec dance articulates a Greek tragedy in Malibu; more SoCal this week, a peek at next week, plus a bit of SoCal dance news.

### *Live Performance This Week (ending September 24)*

#### K-shaped economy

Built in 1928 by a scandal-plagued oil magnate, Beverly Hills' elegant Greystone Mansion provides a luxe setting for *Gatsby Redux*, Janet Roston's site specific consideration of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Roston and her **Mixed eMotion Theatrix** guide audiences through the mansion and park-like grounds with music, text, and dancing that conjures up Gatsby's world of the 1920's jazz- age, its contrasts of privilege and poverty, and the novel's tragic romantic entanglements. This group has periodically performed its polished production at this site, and Beverly Hills should be encouraged to make this dance-drenched version an annual event. While not West Egg, Greystone is redolent of the place, times and troubles distractedly set in motion by Gatsby, Daisy, and Tom. At Greystone Mansion, 905 Loma Vista, Beverly Hills; Wed.-Fri., Sept. 16-18, 6 pm, \$35. [Great Gatsby](#).



Mixed eMotion Theatrix in "The Great Gatsby." Photo by Erin Herzog

#### Three to the pointe

Coming off their successful debut at the Hollywood Bowl earlier this month, the dancers of **Los Angeles Ballet** close September and open their 2026 season with *American Icons*, showcasing a triptych of works by Jerome Robbins, Paul Taylor, and LAB artistic director Melissa Barak. Taylor's light-hearted *Dilly Dilly* draws on the Burl Ives songbook. Robbins' murderous *The Cage* is considered his dark revision of *Giselle*, as if she offered revenge not forgiveness to the lover who betrayed her. Barak reprises *Wavelength* which debuted in January to very positive reviews. At the BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., Sept. 24-26, 7:30 pm, Sun., Sept. 27, 2 pm,

\$64.50-\$115 (+ fees). [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet in Wavelength. Photo by Cheryl Mann Productions

### Dance dissected songs

A collaboration involving **Anita Pace**, **Mike Kelley**, and **Stephen Prina**, the multi-disciplinary event, *Beat of the Traps*, began 34 years ago. In 1992, choreographer/director Pace approached artist/musician/composer Prina who approved adaptation or dissection (to use the artists' description of the process) of his songs for drums, two dancers, and a singer. The result was performed that year in LA, but not again until 2025, when it was reconstructed as part of a Prina retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Now, the ten part, 80 minute combo dance performance, percussion recital, and a monologue returns to LA with Pace's choreography danced by Jon Baldwin and Freeda Electra, and Prina singing and on guitar. At Wonmi's Warehouse Program, Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, 152 N. Central Ave., Little Tokyo; Fri-Sat., Sept. 18-19, 7:30 pm, Sun., Sept. 20, 4:30 pm, \$12. [Beat of the Traps](#).



Beat of the Traps. Photo courtesy of the artists

### Hallelujah!

With a program bound to have fans of Leonard Cohen's songbook joining contemporary ballet lovers, **Ballet Jazz Montréal** arrives on tour with *Dance Me: Music by Leonard Cohen*. Two SoCal venues host this excellent Canadian company's return with its proven program devoted to music by the evocative Canadian music maker. Fortunately, neither dance nor music are among items caught up in tariffs. At the Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs., Sept. 24, 8 pm, \$44-\$145. [Ballets Jazz Montreal](#). Also at McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Sat., Sept. 26, 8 pm, \$60-\$135. [Ballets Jazz Montreal](#).



Ballets Jazz de Montréal. Photo courtesy of the artists

### Before the tour

At the end of the month, LA's preeminent **Versa-Style Street Dance Company** heads out of town, touring its show *Rooted Rhythms* to the *Rochester Fringe Festival* in New York and to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. Before they leave, SoCal can catch Versa-Style dancers onstage this weekend at the Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Fri., Sept. 18, 8 pm, \$12-\$35. [Versa-Style Street Dance Company](#).



Versa-Style Street Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

### Getting to the root of it

Returning to the scene where its last show sold out performances, **The Roots and Wings Project** this time takes the venue immersive and site-specific with its newest, *Realm of the River*. Street dancer **Boogie Frantick** provides the moves for the theatrical endeavor. At Rosenthal Theater, Inner-City Arts, 720 Kohler St., Downtown LA Fashion District; Fri.-Sat, Sept. 18-19 & 25-26, 8 pm, Sun., Sept. 20 & 27, 2 pm, \$25. [Realm of the River](#).



Latino Theater Company's "Antigone." Photo by Craig Schwartz Photography.

### Emperors will be emperors

Exploring parallels between classical Greece and pre-Hispanic Mexico, LA's **Latino Theater Company** reimagines and adapts Sophocles' *Antigone*, using dance to bring onstage the battles and other important actions that usually are offstage and only described. Set in the Getty Villa's replica Greek amphitheater, *Antigone: The Language of Kings* employs subtitles as the actors move among English, Spanish, and the Aztec language Nahuatl to tell the timeless tale of someone caught between a new emperor's decree to leave a vanquished rival unburied and Antigone's family and religious duty to observe burial rituals despite the penalty of her own death. And complicating matters, the emperor is Antigone's uncle and the unburied body is her brother. The annual fall amphitheater events have a history of adventurous presentations of classical theater that capture the past and resound with today. Getty Villa Amphitheater, [17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu](#); opens Sept. 10, 8 pm, then Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm, to Sat., Oct. 3. \$30-\$45. [Antigone: In the Language of Kings](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Jack Hartin

### Here's to ten!

Part performance, part reunion high point, and definitely celebratory, the *10th Anniversary Jubilee!* honors the Musco Center's accomplishments since it opened ten years ago and gives a nod to its future. Among the accomplishments and honorees are the dance groups, **Backhausdance** and **Intuitiv Artship (Tara Ghassemieh and Vitor Luiz)**. The honorees, alumni, and current students perform. At Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, 425 N. Glassell, Orange; Sat., Sept. 19, 7:30 pm, \$25-\$48. [Musco Center](#).

## A Peek at Next Week (September 25-October 1)

**Backhausdance** — *Hive in the Garden (Gala and Season opener)* at Sherman Library & Garden, 2647 East Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar; Sat., Sept. 26, 6 pm, \$54 and up. [Backhausdance Season Opening](#).

**Rama Vaidyanathan, Ramaa Bharadvaj, Vidhya Subramanian, and Rasika Kumar** — *A Festival of Bharata Natyam* at Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Redondo Beach; Sun., Sept. 27, 2 pm, \$50-\$100. [Festival of Bharata Natyam](#).

**San Pedro Festival of the Arts** at Peck Park, upper lawn next to Community Center, 560 N.

Western Ave., San Pedro; Sat., Sept. 26, 1 to 4:30 pm, free. [San Pedro Festival of the Arts](#).



San Pedro Festival of the Arts. Photo courtesy of the artists.

**Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble (PKE)** — *Southern Philippine Dance* at Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Sept. 26, 11 am, \$20. [Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble](#).

**The Love Flamenco World Tour** at the Alex Theater, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Fri., Sept. 25, 7 pm, \$43-\$145. [Love Flamenco](#).

**Shag With a Twist** at the Grand Annex Music Hall, 434 W. 6th St., San Pedro; Sat., Sept. 26, & Oct. 3, 8 pm, \$55-\$65.87. [Shag with a Twist](#).

### ***SoCal Dance News of Note***

**Free** — Santa Monica College Dance Department offers three free events in its fall **Masters of Dance Series**: orthopedic clinical specialist and former professional dancer Annette Karim on Sept. 24, contemporary ballet choreographer Josie Walsh on Oct. 7, and belly dancer Ariel Kasha on Nov. 18. Details at [Santa Monica College Masters of Dance Series](#).

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