

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Mikhail Baryshnikov Channels Nijinsky

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, November 16th, 2016

This week's dance events include new choreography in Long Beach, flamenco in East Hollywood, dance about dancers in Santa Monica, L.A. Contemporary Dance Company extends in Atwater Village, a Hip Hop Nutcracker in Beverly Hills, and Mikhail Baryshnikov goes mad in Westwood.

### 1. A dance about dancers

The fusion of the physical and the emotional that fuels a dancer is the starting point for choreographer Micaela Taylor and the **TL Collective**'s new work *Molecular Fuel*. The dancers are Orlando Agawin, Amir Rappaport and Taylor. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Nov. 18-19, 8:30 p.m.; \$20, \$15 students & seniors. 310-315-1459, <http://highwaysperformance.org>.



### 4. An even half dozen

Six dances with as many different choreographers, dance styles, themes and music comprise *CSULB Dance in Concert*. The faculty choreographers include Rebecca Bryant, Lorin Johnson, Rebecca Lemme, Sophie Monat, and guest artists Summer Brown and Laurel Jenkins. California State University Long Beach, Martha B. Knoebel Dance Theater, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach; Wed.-Fri., Nov. 16-18, 8 p.m., Sat., Nov. 19, 2 & 8 p.m.; \$20, \$16 seniors & students. 562-985-7000, <http://csulb.edu/dance>.



CSULB Dance in Concert Photo by Gregory R.R. Crosby

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### 3. Some things last forever

L.A. has lots of flamenco shows, most tied to paella-centric restaurants. **Forever Flamenco** is a stand alone and possibly L.A.'s longest running flamenco show. Nurtured by the Fountain Theater with a rotating series of artistic directors, the most monthly series has the alchemy of top notch dancers, musicians and singers presented in an intimate 40 seat theater. This edition features **Fanny Ara and Company** with dancers Mele Martinez, singer Jeus Montoya; guitarist Andres Vadin; percussionist Diego Alvarez "El Negro"; and the local debut of pianist Gonzalo Grau (*Farruquitos Flashmob*). Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., East Hollywood; Sun., Nov. 20, 8 p.m., \$40-\$50, \$30 students & seniors. 323-663-1525, <http://fountaintheatre.com>.



Forever Flamenco's Fanny Ara Photo courtesy of Forever Flamenco

### 2. The force is with them

With the exception of NY choreographer Gregory Dolbashian, **L.A. Contemporary Dance Company** stays true its name in its fall repertoire concert. Under the banner *Force Majeure* LACDC unveils new works from locally-based choreographers Christian Denice, Micaela Taylor, and LACDC's current artistic director Genevieve Carson. One of the city's most respected companies, LACDC made its mark presenting a range of choreographers, not just the artistic director's work. After ten years, the founding artistic director stepped aside and this atypical venue selection, known for its plays not dance, may reflect some of Carson's vision for the company as well as a chance to view her choreography. After last week's successful opening, the show extends for three more performances this weekend. Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., Atwater Village; Sat., Nov. 19, 5 & 8:30 p.m.; Sun., Nov. 20, 6 p.m., \$25, \$20 students. <http://forcemajeurelacdc.brownpapertickets.com>.



L.A. Contemporary Dance Company Photo by Ruben Contreras

### 1. Did dancing drive him crazy?

In *Letter to a Man*, one of the greatest dancers of our time takes on one of the greatest dancers of all time as **Mikhail Baryshnikov** portrays Vaslav Nijinsky, who dazzled the ballet world starring in Sergei Diaghilev's Ballet Russes, and created choreography that ushered in modern ballet before he ended in an asylum. Directed by Robert Wilson with text drawn from Nijinsky's diaries, Baryshnikov's solo turn explores Nijinsky's sexuality, his relationship with Diaghilev, and the period of his mental deterioration as he transitioned from ballet star to that asylum, probably with schizophrenia, as captured in those diaries written in a fevered six week period. UCLA Royce Hall, 340 Royce Dr., Westwood; Fri.-Sat., Nov. 18-19, 8 p.m., \$99-\$129. 310-825-2101, <http://cap.ucla.edu>.

#### *Other dance of note:*

With a story spanning Britain to Bangladesh, *Chotto Desh* is the latest from Britain's cross cultural choreographer Akram Khan and his eponymous **Akram Khan Company**. Valley Performing Arts Center, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sun., Nov. 20, 2 p.m., \$38-\$58. 818-677-3000, <http://valleyperformingartscenter.org>.



Akram Khan Company in Chotto Desh Photo courtesy of Akram Khan Company

Something of an acrobatic sequel to *The Little Prince*, *Flight* has soared since its debut last year in Long Beach with turns at two Fringe Festivals and a stint off Broadway before returning for these shows. University Theater, Cal State Long Beach, East Campus Dr. off E. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Long Beach. Fri., Nov. 18, 8 p.m., Sat., Nov. 19, 2 & 8 p.m., \$25, \$20 seniors & students. 562-985-5526, <http://calrep.org>, <http://FlightThePlay.com>.

**Milka Djordjevich** and **Jmy Kidd** share an evening with each showing almost finished works in progress. Pieter, 420 W. Avenue 33, Lincoln Heights; *Turf* on Sat., Nov. 19, 8:30 p.m.; free with non-monetary contribution to the boutique or bar. <http://www.pieterpasd.com/events>.

Rather than buy a sports team or a presidency like an American billionaire, Russian businessman Vladimir Kekhman took over the Mikhailovsky Theater and used money to attract top talent to the **Mikhailovsky Ballet** in an effort to rival Russia's Bolshoi and the Mariinsky Ballets. The company's *Flames of Paris* was well received here a couple of years ago and this time brings *Le Corsaire*, a 3-act romp with pirates, slave girls, slave-buying pashas and some of the most performed pas de deux and large ensemble dances in the ballet repertoire. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Fri., Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Nov. 19, 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Nov. 20, 1 p.m., \$49-\$149. 714-556-1787, <http://scfta.org>.



### Mihailovsky Ballet's Le Corsaire Photo by Sergei Tiagin

Faculty and student choreographers are showcased as **Synapse Dance Theatre** takes the stage with dances ranging from modern to post modern, jazz to hip hop, contemporary ballet to fusion. The Broad Stage, 1310 11<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Sat., Nov. 19, 4 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m., \$18 in advance, \$20 at door. <http://smc.edu/eventsinfo>.

To call a tango program *Desire* may be redundant for the dance of passion, but that's the program title for **Estampas Porteñas Tango Company**. Pepperdine University, Smothers Theatre, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu; Tues., Nov. 22, 8 p.m., \$25-\$50, 310-506-4522. <http://arts.pepperdine.edu/>



With styles ranging from contemporary, hip hop, tap, ballet and jazz, **L.A. Unbound** takes the stage. El Portal Theatre, 11206 Weddington St, North Hollywood; Sun., Nov. 20, 4 & 7 p.m., \$23-\$28. 818-508-0281, <http://elportaltheatre.com>.



The touring production **Hip Hop Nutcracker** breezes into town. The show received mixed reviews when it opened in New York in 2014. The critics thought much of the cartoonish plot revisions sort of worked, the dancing quality ranged from really good to not so, and not helped by problematic choreography. With a flurry of Nutcrackers on the horizon, this may be a draw for folk who would shudder at the thought of pointe shoes and tutus. Saban Theatre, 8440 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Fri., Nov. 17-18, 8 p.m., \$41-\$83. 888-645-5006, <http://ticketmaster.com>.

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