Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Navigating Through Illusion

Ann Haskins · Thursday, July 15th, 2021

Bay area visitors meet NY guests al fresco downtown, site specific dance in Santa Ana, and a flamenco fest in a Santa Barbara park, all live! Plus an online hip hop fest, a ballet collective's new contemporary works, and dance inspired by veterans' letters, Covid vaccines, the samba, a prior pandemic, plus more SoCal dance this week.

LINES dancing

The fourth and final offering in the Music Center's al fresco *Dance at Dusk* series hosts San Francisco-based **Alonzo King LINES Ballet** for its first visit in eight years. The choreographer always finds an extraordinary group of dancers who understand King's distinctive approach that moves through movement, not just striking a pose. For this visit, guest artists Tiler Peck and Roman Mejia from New York City Ballet offer a duet and a solo for Peck, both created by the choreographer. As of press time, tickets for socially distanced pods (each seats four) are still available. The Sunday show is live-streamed for free with reservations at the website. Music Center Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; thru Sun., June 18, 7:30 p.m., $150 & $225 (for pod for four). Livestream – Sun., June 18, 7:30 p.m., free. Tickets and livestream reservation at Music Center.

Alonzo King LINES guest artist Tiler Peck

Grove grooving

Santa Barbara's enjoyable *Fiesta in the Grove* offers an evening of live dance from **Zermeño Dance Academy** with music, drinks and dining. Announced artists include Yiyi Orozco, Diego Alvarez Muñoz, Jose Tanaka and director Daniela Zermeño. Godric Grove, Elings Park, 1298 Las Positas Rd., Santa Barbara; Sun., July 18, 4 p.m., $40-$60. Eventbrite

Zermen?o Dance Academy. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Getting back on the floor

After a year of dancing remotely, the students of **The Wooden Floor** recently returned for in-person rehearsals with choreographer Stephan Koplowitz who created a new site specific work for the dancers. The result premieres at the organization's *38th Annual Concert* performances. The Wooden Floor Main Street Location, 1810 N. Main St., Santa Ana; Thurs., July 15, 7 p.m., Fri.-Sat., July 16-17 & 23-24, 6 & 8:30 p.m., $20, $10 students & children under 13. The Wooden Floor

The Wooden Floor. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Rooftop to film

Following up an impressive spring performance filmed on a downtown rooftop, the young contemporary ballet collective **LA Grooves** returns with a two-part film. The new endeavor features choreography from company creative directors Madeline McMillin, Leah McCall, and Hannah Keene. Under the banner *Heat Waves,* the nine-member ensemble reflects on the illusion and reality of the past year in a pandemic. The dancers, almost all current members or alumna of Los Angeles Ballet, have shown their chops for contemporary ballet, not just toe shoes and tutus. Sun., July 18, 5 p.m., $15. LA Grooves.

LA Grooves. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Ladies' choice

One of the strengths of L.A.'s hip hop ensemble **Versa Style** is how its female dancers can match move-to-move in what is sometimes regarded as a male dominated dance genre. Although *Ladies of Hip Hop Festival 2021* originates in New York, Saturday's two hour *LOHH Digital Showcase* includes several VS ladies in the national and international line up. Festival thru Sun., July 18. Showcase, Sat., July 17, noon, $9.99. Info, events, and tickets online at Facebook Live.

Versa Style Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Addressing the jab

Among the innovative Covid-19 vaccination efforts, Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital Campus (MLK) teamed with site specific dance company **Heidi Duckler Dance** to create a short, public service announcement film *Ages Take Action*. The film includes a score produced by the Young Producers Group comprised of LAUSD students enrolled in music production classes. The video continues HDD's ongoing partnership with MLK and its Watts/Willowbrook neighborhood. The video will be part of community outreach efforts by hospital personnel and other health professionals to disseminate information about the vaccination effort and address the disproportionate pandemic toll on BIPOC communities. Viewable online at Vimeo.

Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Vets' letters from the front

One of the most powerful dance videos to emerge during the initial months of the pandemic came from **Diavolo Architecture in Motion**'s **Veterans Project** with the stories and insights of military veterans who had become front line medical workers during the pandemic. The veterans went toe to toe in bravura movement with some of Diavolo's astonishing athletes and signature structures. The Veterans Project most recent video is an equally mesmerizing endeavor, the product of an eight day workshop with writings by the veterans interpreted by dancers from around the world. The final product of *S.O.S. Veterans Project 2021* premiered appropriately on July 4 and streams until August 4 on Diavolo's YouTube page at YouTube.

Diavolo Veterans Project. Photo by George Simian.

Going “Insan”

Presented as a webinar, **Kybele Dance Theater** offers an online live performance of *insan,* a word that may mean “human” or “to forget.” Choreographed by artistic director Seda Aybay, the live performance blends with film, helped by cinematographer Carl Owens. Performers include Rachel Walton, Morgan Goodfellow, Karlo Ramirez, Nick Albuja, and Aybay. Thurs., July 15, 7 p.m.,$10 registration fee. Kybele Dance Theater.

Kybele Dance Theater. Photo courtesy of the artists.

L.A. dance gets a little love

The third season of the Music Center's digital series *For the Love of L.A.* keeps adding new videos filled with curated dance, music, and visual arts. The season includes South Asian-American dance with **Shalini Bathina** and 17-year old **Shreya Patel**, Japanese influenced dance in a film directed and performed by **Kyoko Takenaka**, contemporary dance set in Leimert Park from **Brianna Mims**, an excursion between beach and backyard from **Maya Alvarez-Coyne,** Albertossy Espinoza's **LA Fusion Dance Theater**, and more. Online free, at Music Center.

Brianna Mims. Photo courtesy of the artist.

She does like a good book

Choreographer **Rosanna Gamson** has drawn some of her most compelling work from literature ranging from *Scheherazade* in *Tales of the Arabian Nights* to the Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*, and lectures by theoretical physicist Richard Feynman. Other than Albert Camus' *The Plague*, what could be more appropriate pandemic source material than Boccaccio's *Decameron* with tales from ten strangers sheltering from the bubonic plague? Just as

the tales of the ten travelers unfold one at a time, Gamson's *The Decameron Project* rolls out ten films, each made by a different artist. All ten episodes are now live and viewable for free on RGWW and on Instagram.

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

Adding to the trove

For its 20th anniversary show in 2017, Vera Passos created *Para Onde O Samba Me Leva* in memory of the ensemble's beloved Zelita Moreira da Cruz Silva. The work is the latest addition to **Viver Brasil**'s weekly online rebroadcast of a past performance. The company's rich repertoire reflects the company's efforts to preserve Brasil's African culture in dance and music. Free at Viver Brasil. The troupe also is part of KCET's *Southland Sessions* streaming at KCET.

Viver Brasil. Photo by Arthur-Seabra.

Dances with cars

Over three Saturdays, **Suárez Dance Theater** rolled out three short films under the banner *Mapping Our Stories.* Inspired by the histories of Black, Native and LatinX people, each film is set in a Santa Monica public space with often overlooked cultural significance (the city provided funding). Choreographer/performer **Bernard Brown** of bbmoves takes the audience from the landmark Phillips Chapel CME Church (the 1909 church was the first serving the African American Community) to the site of “Inkwell Beach” where Blacks and Browns were restricted in segregated California beaches. Acknowledging her Chumash and Tongva Nations heritage, poet/songwriter **Jessa Calderon**’s film starts overlooking the ocean from Tongva Park. The history of the Westside Classics Car Club in Santa Monica is the focus of the film from **Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC)** and its members Alfonso Cervera, Rosa Rodriguez-

Frazier, Irvin Manuel Gonzalez, and Patricia “Patty” Huerta. Each film has resources for further exploration and continue to screen for free at Bernard Brown/bbmoves’s “…at leisure…,” Jessa Calderon’s “Before the Noise,” Primera Generación Dance Colletive’s “low riting”

Suárez Dance Theater. Photo courtesy of Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC).

Oh, the places we have been

With support from three theaters, The Wallis and The Soraya in SoCal and The Harris in Chicago, **Jacob Jonas The Company** worked with more than 150 artists all over the globe to produce short dance films for the series, *Films.Dance*. Just as vaccination and pandemic restrictions start to allow travel, the 15-week dance film world tour that began in January concluded earlier this month with Emma Rosenzweig-Bock in a film co-directed by Jonas and Ireland-based Kevin McGloughlin. It joins the other 14 short films still viewable at Films.Dance.

Films.Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Online Dance Classes

Pandemic exhaustion? Post-pandemic fitness promises to keep? Get thee to a dance class!

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram, other on-line platforms, and increasingly in person. 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 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. LA Dance Chronicle.

Dance classes.

This entry was posted on Thursday, July 15th, 2021 at 5:22 am and is filed under Music, Dance
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.