Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Networks of Mutuality

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, October 20th, 2021

Live dance on an Arts District rooftop, folkloric for *Día de los Muertos* at Grand Park, illuminated umbrellas at the Music Center, the 19th amendment celebrated in Culver City, last week for a Disney Hall festival, plus museum dance in Leimert Park and Westwood, new dance films, dance classes, and more SoCal dance this week with a peek at what's coming.

Live This Week

Up on a rooftop

After the pandemic lockdown, **Jacob Jonas The Company** was one of the first to explore outdoor performance in a parking lot with the audience in their cars and the dancers surreally illuminated by cars' headlights. Jonas' efforts then turned to producing a series of short films drawn from around the world, rolled out on a weekly basis. That *Films.Dance* spawned a second round running weekly into December (see below). The company now pivots back to its own dancing with three outdoor performances with live music under the banner *ACTIVATE LA*. The series opened between two Century City high rise office buildings and moves this week to a downtown arts district rooftop performing *Juxtapose,* with music by LA-based composer Anibal Sandoval. In mid-November, the finale shifts west to a Santa Monica garden nestled amid tech hub office buildings for *At Work* with music by another LA-based composer Steve Hackman. Jonas provided all the choreography. Supported by the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, the series is another example of that theater's laudable support for LA-based dance companies. At Row DTLA, 777 S. Alameda St., downtown; Fri., Oct. 22-24, 7:30 pm., $35. Details on tickets, meal options, & Covid protocols at ROW. Also at The Water Garden, 1620 26th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Nov. 12-13, 7:30 p.m., $100-$280 (tickets sold for 2, 4 or 9) Details on tickets, lawn or chair seating, picnicking, alcohol, and Covid protocols at Water Garden



Jacob Jonas The Company. Photo by Jacob Jonas

Three-way dance

The 18th annual **REDCAT New Original Works (NOW) Festival** concludes three weekends of innovative dance and other performing arts. The three artists in this final Week 3 found their starting points in melodramatic soap operas, hate crime victims, and Black social dance. Choreographer Jobel Medina translates soap operas into physical theater while Jasmine Orpilla focuses on hate crime survivors, and choreographer Amy O'Neal employs house and hip hop culture to explore social concepts of gender. Online viewing is an option for all Saturday shows. At REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W.2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Oct. 21-23, 8:30 pm, $20, $16 students.1 Online stream – Sat., Oct. 23, 8:30 p.m., $15, $12 students. Details on the artists, scheduled works, tickets, & Covid protocols at REDCAT



REDCAT NOW Festival. Photo by Julie Khansavagh

When tech dances

When the science geeks at MIT developed color-shifting LED-lit umbrellas, then turned them over to **Pilobolus** and its crew of gymnastic modern dancemakers, the eventual result was *UP! The Umbrella Project.* The synergistic science/dance effort is a carefully choreographed event with participants armed with those umbrellas creating colorful patterns that light up the night. **Pilobolus** and the umbrellas arrive for six performances, two per night on each of three evenings. And the company is recruiting audience members to be participants in the choreography. Each show is limited to 100 participants with the colors, patterns, and shapes projected on screens in the venue's plaza. Be part of the spectacle or just come watch. Requirements to participate and Covid protocols are on the website. At the Music Center, Jerry Moss Plaza,135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Oct. 21-23, 8 & 9:30 pm, $5. Music Center.



Pilobolus. Photo courtesy of the artists

Before he repents

Originally, Richard Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* did not have a ballet. One was added for the opera's Paris premiere, because a ballet was expected, perhaps required, by Paris, usually somewhere in the second act. Verdi added a ballet in the first act, a bacchanalian excursion after which the hero starts on a road to repentance. Among its several new elements for its current production, LA Opera recruited in-demand Canadian choreographer Aszure Barton to create a new ballet for that scene. The result is on view live, with two shows also offered livestream. Details, tickets and Covid-19 protocols at LA Opera, At the Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sun., Oct. 24 & 31, 2 p.m., Wed., Oct. 27 & Nov. 3, 7:30 pm, Sat., Nov 6, 7:30 pm, $23-$292. LA Opera Livestream on Sun., Oct. 24, 2 pm & Wed., Oct. 27, 7:30 pm, $30. LA Opera Tickets.



Tannhäuser. Photo by Cory Weaver

Post-modern rituals

Continuing its acquisition and exhibition of the work of post modern choreographers, the Getty Research Institute unveiled the first-ever retrospective of the work of choreographer and video artist **Blondell Cummings: Dance as Moving Pictures.** Known for translating everyday activities into dance movements, Cummings' work often focused on food, family, major life events, and daily life rituals, especially Black life. Initiated as part of the GRI's African American Art History Initiative, the exhibit includes videos, interviews, and photographs. On view at Art+Practice, 3401 W. 43rd Pl., Leimert Park; Wed.-Sat., noon-6 pm, to Feb. 19, 2022, free. Research guide at Getty Research Institute, Exhibition at Art+Practice.



Photo by Blondell Cummings.

Museum moves

Performance and dance are the metier of several artists in both of the Hammer Museum's big fall exhibits opening this week. Presented jointly with the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA), *Witch Hunt* surveys 16 artists focused on feminist, queer, and decolonial approaches to consider current and historical events. Among the artists who are movers look for Okwui Okpokwasili, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, and Beverly Semmes. The second opening, *No Humans Involved*, includes the performance duo Las Nietas de Nono. The exhibit's title draws on ideas of cultural theorist Sylvia Wynter whose panegyric writings advocated non-Western knowledge and spiritual practices. Exhibit info, tickets and Covid protocols at the website. UCLA Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Tues.-Sun., 11 am – 6 pm to Jan. 22, 2022, free no reservation required. Hammer Museum.



Hammer Museum's "No Humans Involved." Photo courtesy of the artists

It's how they voted

The all-female identifying dance troupe **MashUp Contemporary Dance Company** annually explores National Women's Equality Day with thoughtful and often provocative programming commemorating the passage of the U.S. constitution's 19th amendment. This year, the ensemble tackles the hot-button issue of racial tensions within the feminist movement, commissioning three LA-based BIWOC choreographers to each create a portion of a film. The dance company and the three choreographer/filmmakers–Victoria Brown, Marissa Osato, and Carissa Songhorian–unveil the cinematic result at this outdoor premiere. The evening includes a panel Q&A with the trio of choreographers/filmmakers.At DOTS Space, OUTDOOR Meeting Rooms & Events, 3951 Higuera St., Culver City; Sat., Oct. 23, 8 pm, $25. Eventbrite.



MashUp Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Going to the birds

Machines meet acrobatics as a depression era factory is transformed in **Cirque Mechanics**' *Birdhouse Factory*. At Smothers Theatre, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu; Wed., Oct. 27, 7:30 pm, $22.50-$50. Peppterdine.



Cirque Mechanics. Photo courtesy of the artist

Deadly dance

Among the performances and activities scheduled for *Día de los Muertos,* look for the Aztec dance troupe **Danza Divina de Los Angeles** with guest artist Lazaro Arvizu. AtGrand Park, 200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Oct. 23, 7 pm, free. Grand Park.



Danza Divina de Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of the artists

A Peek at Next Week:

- **Danza Floricanto/USA** *Fiesta del Día de los Muertos-Day of the Dead Celebration* at Casa Del Mexicano, Floricanto Center for the Performing Arts, 2900 Calle Pedro Infante, East LA; Sat., Nov. 6, 8 pm, Sun., Nov. 7, 6 pm, $20 at door, $15 pre-sale; $10 seniors & $5 children under 10 at door only. Tickets and Covid-19 protocols at Danza Floricanto.
- **Live Arts Exchange** – 2021 LAX Festival at Warehouse space dubbed "Frankie," 300 Mission Rd., Arts District; Thurs.,-Sat., Nov. 4-6, 8 pm, Sun., Nov. 7, 6 pm, Tues.-Sat., Nov. 9-13, 8 pm, Sun., Nov. 14, 7:30 pm; $8-$20. Info, tickets and Covid-19 protocols at Los Angeles Performance Practice.
- **homeLA** *Embodying Empathy* at the Box parking lot, 822 E. 3rd St., Arts District; Thurs., Nov. 4, 6-9 pm, free. Info and Covid-19 protocols at homeLA.
- **TL Collective** at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 29-30, 7:30 pm, $29-$79. Info, tickets & Covid019 protocols at The Wallis.
- **Laurie Sefton Creates and Transversal Theater Company** at Experimental Media Building (xMPL), 101 Mesa Arts Building, Irvine; Fri., Oct. 29, 7 pm, Sat.-Sun., Oct. 30-31, 2 & 7 p.m., $10. Info, Covid protocols and tickets at Eventbrite.
- **Fiesta La Ballona** hosts multiple dance troupes at Veterans Memorial Park, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City; Sat.-Sun., Oct. 30-31, free, Complete line up of troupes, times & Covid-19 protocols at Fiesta La Ballona.
- **Brazilian Nites**' *Samba Halloween* at Rancho Cordillera Del Norte, 9015 Wilbur Ave., Northridge; Fri., Oct. 29, 5 pm, $35-$70. Info, tickets and Covid protocols at Eventbrite.
- **Inland Pacific Ballet Academy**– *Seussical Jr.* Livestream and limited in person at Studio Theater 7, 9061 Central Ave., Montclair; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 29-30, 7 pm, Sun., Oct. 31 & Nov. 7, 2 pm, Thurs. & Sat., Nov. 4 & 6, 7 pm, $25, $15 children under 12; digital livestream $35 per device. Program info & Covid protocols and tickets at Inland Pacific Ballet Academy.

The Fall Galas Begin

Invertigo Dance Theater Fall Soirée, online, Thurs., Oct. 21, 7:30 pm, reservations and donation levels at Invertigo Dance Theater.



Invertigo Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Heidi Duckler Dance *Gather Together* at Wilfandel Club, 3425 W. Adams Blvd., West Adams; Sat., Oct. 23, 5 pm-9 pm, $250. Bidding for Good.



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo by Mae Koo.

Dance films in theaters and online

Broken, more beautiful in repair

As a practical technique, the Japanese mending method *kintsugi* involves reattaching pieces of broken pottery or porcelain then visibly coating the fracture with gold, often creating a gold veining effect on the repaired exterior. The “golden repair” as *kintsugi* is often translated, is also an artistic philosophy which the Japan America Cultural and Community Center commissioned five artists to explore in videos. JACCC has now posted the results of **The Kintsugi Spirit** online including choreographer Jennifer Leung Johnson’s film capturing dancers Katy Dahl and Marina Hutchinson artistically finding the beauty in the broken and how to fill the spaces between. Free, online at JACCC.



The Kintsugi Spirit. Photo courtesy of JACCC

A myth resonates

Drawing a contemporary perspective on ancient Persian mythology, *The Scarlet Stone (Moher-ye Sorkh)* combines traditional and contemporary Persian dance, music and animation to find parallels between the myth and the 1979 Iranian Revolution along with its aftermath. The 80-minute film in Persian with English subtitles concludes its month-long run. Fri.-Sun., thru Oct. 31, online at Tirgan.



The Scarlet Stone. Photo by James Carmody

Back for more

When theaters shuttered with the pandemic, dance and its audiences went online and began expanding the possibilities of dance on film. LA choreographer **Jacob Jonas and his Jacob Jonas/The Company** gathered artists from around the world to produce 15 original short dance films under the banner *Films.Dance*. In January 2021 the films started rolling out over four months, one each Monday, all free. The project earned boasting rights as many of those films went on to win awards at other film festivals. Now comes *Films.Dance Round Two,* again with dance, dancers, and filmmakers from around the world. The original films, a preview, and e-mail sign up for free weekly film delivery at Films.Dance.



“Films.Dance Round 2.” Photo courtesy of the artists

In case you missed it the first time

Continuing its roll out of encore videos from past performances, **Viver Brasil** adds *Aguas* set in a Grand Park fountain to the examples of the rich repertoire reflecting efforts to preserve Brasil’s African culture in dance and music. Free at Viver Brasil. The ensemble also is part of KCET’s *Southland Sessions* streaming at KCET.



Viver Brasil. 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.

Online Dance Classes

Not quite ready for class in person?

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.

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