

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## A New Take on Swan Lake (and not by Matthew Bourne)

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, November 6th, 2019

Canadians rework *Cinderella* in West L.A., an Irishman reworks *Swan Lake* in Westwood, new choreography in Glassell Park, Santa Monica and downtown, dance behind bars in Claremont, and more SoCal dance this week.

### 5. When walls a prison make

Choreographer **Suchi Branfman** continues her explorations of the prison industry and the human stories that emerged from her five year residency at the medium security state prison in Norco. An earlier edition of *Dancing Through Prison Walls* prompted one reviewer to describe the evening as “a clear example of how art and art activism can bring about change to give hope to the voiceless.” The dancers contributing to the story-telling include Lukaza Branfman-Verissimo, Ernst Fenelon Jr., Amy Oden, Anna Paz, Tom Tsai, Angee Fenelon, Jeremiah Fenelon and Branfman. Scripps College, Garrison Theatre, 231 East 10<sup>th</sup> St. Claremont; Fri., Nov. 8, 8 p.m., free with reservation at <http://www.scrippscollege.edu/events/calendar/dancing-through-prison-walls>.



Suchi Branfman’s “Dancing Through Prison Walls.” Photo courtesy of the artists.

### 4. Dancing a tale to tell

Promising to swirl the tale of Cinderella with refashioned opera music by Rossini and Prokofiev, choreographer Hélène Blackburn and her Canadian troupe **Cas Public** bring *Not Quite Midnight*. Founded in 1989 as a contemporary troupe, since 2001, Blackburn has focused on reconsidering classic tales for youthful audiences. One reviewer had high praise for the performance, finding the performance suited for a young audience “in the sense that a Dali or Picasso painting might be to a young mind — wondrous, but needing some explanation to fully grasp.” Press material suggests ages nine and up. Theater Raymond Kabbaz, 10361 W. Pico Blvd., West L.A., Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m., \$25, \$15 for students. <https://www.theatreraymondkabbaz.com/>.



Cas Public’s “Cinderella”. Photo courtesy of the artists.

### 3. Keeping it in the family

The grandson of fabled Spanish flamenco dancer El Farruco is officially named Juan Manuel Fernandez Montoya, but is better known as **Farruquito** and recognized as deserving heir to the

family legacy. Absent for more than a decade due to personal issues, at his 2016 return, the dancer stunned the New York Times critic who wrote “I’ve never seen any flamenco dancer with such dynamic variety. The most casual flourish of a heel is also part of a long complex phrase; the slightest turn of a wrist becomes part of a complex linear meeting of arcs that work from head to toe.” The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Nov. 9, 8 p.m., \$43-\$52. <https://www.thesoraya.org>.



Farruquito. Photo by Matthew Bledsoe.

## 2. They’re back! And wrapping up!

After a several week hiatus, the **LA Dance Project** resumes and wraps up the roughly six week festival, *LA Dances*. The third segment, Program C, includes two works from LADP director Benjamin Millepied, reprise of the highly praised revival of Bella Lewitzky’s *Kinaesonata* which was part of Program B, plus offerings from dancemakers Tino Sehgal and Madeline Hollander. LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Thurs.-Sun., Nov. 14-17 & 21-24, 8 p.m., \$45. <http://ladanceproject.org/18-19-season>.



LA Dance Project’s “LA Dances.” Photo by Josh Rose.

### 1. “Me Too” times four

It’s called *Swan Lake* and while created for England’s Sadler Wells Ballet, choreographer **Michael Keegan-Dolan** brings his own company **Tea? Da?sa** for this revision of the classical ballet. Moving the action to Ireland, the choreographer went with music recalling the Irish melodies in the film *Titanic* rather than the Tchaikovsky ballet score and the official title is in Gaelic: *Loch na hEala* with *Swan Lake* in parenthesis. No pointe shoes or tutus are in sight on the 14 dancers, four of whom are barefoot but do sport long feathered wings over their arms. And there is a narrator as this *Swan Lake* finds story similarities in an Irish legend of a sorcerer who turned four women into swans to prevent them exposing him after he rapes one of them. UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Sat., Nov. 9, 8 p.m., \$28-\$59. <https://cap.ucla.edu/>.



Tea? Da?sa in “Loch na hEala (Swan Lake)”. Photo by Colm Hogan.

*Other dance of note:*

Two SoCal venues host a lecture-demonstration of traditional Maori and Pacific Islander dance by the New Zealand dance troupe **Black Grace** which also promises samples of its modern and hip-hop repertoire. Congregational Church, 340 St. Ann’s Dr., Laguna Beach; Sun., Nov. 10, 6 p.m., free, but limited seating with tickets at <http://lagunadancefestival.org>. Also at Bovard Auditorium, USC, 3551 Trousdale Pkwy., University Park; Mon., Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m., free with reservation, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/black-grace-registration-75062452817>.



Black Grace. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Intended as an incubator for new choreography and performance, **Hi, Solo #9** brings nine choreographers whose ranks include the always-compelling Simone Forti along with Alana Frey,

Autumn Randolph, Chris Emile, Christopher Argodale, Emily Lucid, Sebastian Hernandez, Tamsin Carlson, and Cheng-Chieh Yu in collaboration with Sarah Jacobs and Darrian O'Reilly. The series is curated by Alexsa Durrans and Miles Brenninkmeijer. Pieter, 420 W. Avenue 30, Glassell Park; Sat., Nov. 9, 8:30 & 10 p.m., free with non-monetary donation to free bar or free boutique. <https://pieter.pasd.com>.



Hi Solo #9's Simone Forti. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Led by Keali'i Ceballos, **H?lau Hula Keali'i o N?lani** joins Grammy-award winning Daniel Ho Trio in a celebration of Hawaiian dance and music in *Hawaiian 'Ohana*. After the performance, the theater plaza hosts crafts and other activities related to Hawaii. The Broad Stage, 1310 11<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Sat., Nov. 9, 11 a.m., \$5. <https://thebroadstage.org>.



H?lau Hula Keali'i o N?lani. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Halloween is over, but *Fiesta Día de Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead Celebration) lingers on including this one from Gema Sandoval and her **Danza Floricanto**. Now in its 18<sup>th</sup> year, the ensemble knows how to provide entertaining transport through the rituals and celebration that are both serious and fun. ARC Pasadena, 1158 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; Sat., Nov. 9, 8 p.m., \$20 in advance, \$25 at door. <http://www.danzafloricantousa.org/store.php>.



Danza Floricanto/USA. Photo by Rebecca Borgen Ballestreros.

Under the banner *Until It Becomes Dancing*, this shared concert presents choreographer **Emily Barasch**'s exploration of hysteria in *Hysterical Realness* paired with four intertwined solos that choreographer **Levi Gonzalez** created for each of four performers. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Fri., Nov. 8, 8:30 p.m., \$20, \$15 students & seniors. <https://www.highwaysperformance.org>.



Levi Gonzalez. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Assembled by guest curators Sebastian Hernandez and Marsian De Lellis, this edition of **Studio: Fall 2019**, the quarterly showcase of dance, performance and other arts includes choreography from Ironstone & Jordi, Genna Moroni, and Davia Spain, plus Suzanne Kite, Kayla Tange, and Kristina Wong. REDCAT, 631 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., downtown; Sun.-Mon., Nov. 10-11, 8:30 p.m., \$16, \$13 students. <https://www.redcat.org>.



Studio: Fall 2019's Kayla Tange. Photo by Argent Lloyd.

While dance and choreography continue to be neglected by the Oscars and other awards shows, the **World Choreography Awards** strive to fill that gap with awards for media choreography. The award presentations are punctuated by eight live performances. Saban Theatre, 8440 Wilshire Blvd. Beverly Hills; Mon., Nov. 11, 8 p.m., \$30-\$85. <https://wheremusicmeetsthesoul.com/saban-beverly-hills/events>.



World Choreography Awards. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Known for distilling long, complex stories into entertaining performances using only his hands and face, **Andrew Dawson** draws on his background as a dancers and actor in two different works each only 30 minutes long. In *Space Panorama*, Dawson recounts the Apollo 11 moon landing, followed by *Spirit of the Ring*, his distillation of Wagner's 16-hour *Ring Cycle*. UCLA Royce Hall Rehearsal Room, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Thurs-Sat., Nov. 14-16, 8 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Nov. 15-16, 3 p.m., \$28-\$49. <https://cap.ucla.edu/calendar/details/dawson19205>.



Andrew Dawson. Photo by Nitin Vadukul.

Known as a singer and actress with Oscar, Tony, Grammy and Emmy awards, first and foremost **Rita Moreno** is a dancer. This time the singing is emphasized as Moreno draws from the American songbook, Broadway shows, her current Spanish album, plus more, undoubtedly showcasing some of the moves that made her and her dancing award-winners. The Broad Stage, 1310 11<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Sat., Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m., \$89-\$109. <https://thebroadstage.org/>.



Rita Morena. Photo by Austin Hargrave.

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