

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Orthographic Disruptions

Ann Haskins · Thursday, December 4th, 2025

“Humanness” provocatively considered in Mid-City; four modern dance perspectives in Pasadena; site specific museum meanderings in Westwood; a dance take on an LA artist in Beverly Hills; spotlight on faculty dancemakers in University Park and downtown LA; dance invitational in Lake Terrace; more SoCal dance this week, a peek at next week, plus the [Nutcrackers!](#)

### *Live This Week*

#### **No place like home**

A leader among the increasing number of LA-based companies commanding national attention, **BODYTRAFFIC** serves up a holiday gift of four showcase dances. Having assembled an enviable team of dancers, artistic director Tina Finkelman-Berkett has attracted high caliber choreographers and selected a tantalizing sampler for this show. David Middendorp’s choreography incorporates animation and projections for *Flyland*, while Cayetano Soto’s *Schachmatt (Checkmate!)* finds playground potential in a giant chessboard. Jordyn Santiago’s dynamic debut choreography features the company’s female dancers, along with the return of *Coalescence*, Juel D. Lane’s vibrant tribute to LA painter Ernie Barnes, amplified by projections of Barnes’ artwork. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Sat., Dec. 11-13, 7:30 pm, \$42-\$108.90. [BODYTRAFFIC](#).



BODYTRAFFIC. Photo by Guzman Rosado

### Four who share

A quartet of modern dance companies that flourish in the shadow of the San Gabriel Mountains, reunite to share the stage as *Foothills Dancemakers*. For this fourth edition, **Benita Bike's DanceArt** contributes Bike's *From Where I Sit* and an excerpt from *Benches*. **Nancy Evans Dance Theatre** presents Sophia Bernardo's *Charlatan* along with *Parallel Universe* co-choreographed by Cheryl Banks-Smith and company director Nancy Evans Doede. **Lineage Dance** unveils director Hilary Thomas' latest addition to *Healing Blue*, plus excerpts from recent musical theater productions. Host company **Pennington Dance Group** offers director/choreographer John Pennington's *Goodman Dances* and an excerpt from *Ungoverned Spaces*. A Room to Create (ARC), 1158 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena: Sat., Dec. 6, 8 pm, Sun., Dec. 7, 7 pm, \$30. [Foothills Dancemakers](#).



Pennington Dance Group. Photo by Denise Leitner

### Being human

Ever-thoughtful choreographer/dancer **d. Sabela grimes** teams with Meena Murugesan for *Parable of Portals*, an event that takes inspiration from Octavia E. Butler's interrelated notions of humanness as well as Lauryn Olamina's *Earthseed* doctrine. Video previews capture an energized, extraordinarily garbed quartet of dancers, clearly committed to Grimes' explorations. Nate Holden Performing Arts Center, 4718 W. Washington Blvd., Mid-City; Thurs., Dec. 11, 8 pm, \$25.14 – \$46.08. [d. Sabela grimes](#).



d. Sabela grimes. Photo by Cherylynn Tsushima

### Made where?

As part of the biennial *Made in LA*, choreographer **Will Rawls** stages monthly site-specific performances titled *Unmade*. The work promises to take visitors in, around, and outside the museum's galleries. The dancers include Gurmukhi Bevli, Maya Billig, Ajani Brannum, Jeremy De'jon Guyton, Tiara Jackson, and Kensaku Shinohara. UCLA Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Sat., Dec. 6, Sat., Jan. 17, 2026, Sat., Feb. 7 & 28, 2026, noon to 4 pm, free. [Hammer Museum](#).



Will Rawls. Photo by Sarah M Golonka

### All electric

The December installment of the mostly monthly *High Voltage* is shared by dancer/choreographer **Ariana Chavez**, the experimental sound project H/OURS, and the improvised harmonies of ROSHANE. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., Dec. 5, 8 pm, \$15. [Electric Lodge](#).

### R.S.V.P.

The winter edition of **Spectrum Dance Invitational** work from Smita Alves' Bhakti Bhav Dance, Jose Costas' Contempo Ballet, Dr. Dimple Kaur, Christina Munoz, Robert Salas, Moorpark College, Ashley Sanchez-Jones, Vini Sundaram, Veda Thakkar, Paula Vreulink, The Southern California Dance Theatre, and host Jazz Spectrum Dance Company. Spectrum Dance Center, 22661 Lambert St., Suite 204, Lake Forest; Fri., Dec. 5, 8 pm, \$40. [Spectrum Dance Invitational](#).



Jazz Spectrum Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

### New contributions

New works across the dance spectrum from faculty and guest choreographers highlight **CalArts Winter Dance**. Contributors include James “Cricket” Colter, Alejandro Perez, Micaela Taylor, and sam wentz. Students of the Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance perform. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., Downtown LA; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 5-6, 8 pm, \$20, \$16 students. [CalArts Winter Dance](#).



CalArts Dance Concert. Photo courtesy of the artists

### Five making new work

Choreographers who also are faculty at **USC Kaufman School of Dance** present new works danced by Kaufman students in *Fall 2025 BFA Showcase*. Slated are works by Hope Boykin, Tyce

Diorio, d. Sabela grimes, JA Collective (Jordan Johnson and Aidan Carberry), and Jackie Kopcsak. USC Bing Theater, 3400 Watt Way, University Park; Thurs., Dec. 4, 7:30 pm, Fri., Dec. 5, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sat., Dec. 6, 2 pm, free w/reservation .



USC Kaufman Dance. Photo by Hannah Doerr

### In sight, on site

For four days, **Heidi Duckler Dance** converged dancers, designers, artists and other creative thinkers to create original, site-inspired works under the banner *MAP LIVE!*. The culminating result is on view in this singular event that includes a conversation with leaders in the process including Alejandro Perez (movement), Jeff Morrical (movement), and Joanna Lynn-Jacobs (voice). Bendix Building, 106 Maple Dr., 11th Floor, Downtown Arts District; Wed., Dec. 3, 7 pm, \$15. [Heidi Duckler Dance](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists

### ***This week's Nutcrackers***

Wherever you are, there is a *Nutcracker* ballet near you: Westside Ballet, California Contemporary Ballet, Marat Daukayev Ballet Theatre and School, San Pedro City Ballet, Festival Ballet Theatre, Ventura County Ballet, Classical Ballet Theatre, American Contemporary Ballet, World Ballet, Red Chair Children's Production Company, Launch Dance Center, Ballet Etudes, Moorpark Civic Ballet, Protégé Performing Arts, Dance Academy Del Mar, San Elijo Ballet & West Coast Dance Complex, Inland Empire Contemporary Ballet, Lake Arrowhead Classical Ballet Company. [Link to Nutcrackers 2025.](#)

### ***A Peek at Next Week (December 12 to 18)***

**Deborah Rosen and Dancers** at ARC Performance Space, 1158 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena: Fri.-Sat., Dec. 12-13, 8 pm, Sun., Dec. 14, 3 pm, \$35. \$20 students. [Deborah Rosen and Dancers.](#)

**A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham** at Carpenter Performing Arts Center, Cal State University Long Beach, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Dec. 13, 8 pm, \$38.75-\$68.75. [A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham.](#)



A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham. Photo by Alexander Diaz

**Rosanna Gamson/World Wide** — *Our Fragile Eternity* at Pieter Performance Space, 2701 N. Broadway, Downtown LA; Sun., Dec. 13, 3 pm, donation. [Rosanna Gamson World Wide](#).

**Jacob Jonas/The Company** — *EYE* at Charlie Chaplin Stage, Jim Henson Lot, 1416 La Brea Ave., Hollywood; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 12-13, 58.75-\$75.75. [Jacob Jonas/The Company](#).

**The Realm Company** — *Krampus* at Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Sat., Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 7 pm, Sun., Dec. 14, 21 & 28, 3 pm, \$58.90-\$106.17. [The Realm Company-Krampus](#).



The Realm Company. Photo by Hannah Cox

**Ballet Folklórico del Rio Grande** — *Campana Sobre Campana* at Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, 415 Glassell, Orange; Sun., Dec. 14, 2 & 7 pm, \$33-\$78. [Musco Center](#).

**The Wonderful Winter of Oz** at Scherr Forum Theatre, Bank of America Performing Arts Center, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Fri., Dec. 12, 19, 26, 7 pm, Sat.-Sun. Dec. 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, noon & 4 pm, Wed.-Thurs., Dec. 17-18, Tues. & Fri., Dec. 23 & 26, 7 pm, \$48-\$115. [Wonderful Winter of Oz](#).

**And more *Nutcrackers*!** [Link to Nutcrackers 2025](#).



Inland Pacific Ballet's "Nutcracker". Photo by E.Y. Yanagi

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