

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Putting a Fine Pointe on It

Ann Haskins · Thursday, October 22nd, 2026

International stars bring legendary ballets to Downtown LA, South Asian dance meets contemporary in Long Beach; Japanese kabuki in San Marino, Rancho Palos Verdes, and Little Tokyo; tap dance in the Hollywood Hills and Thousand Oaks, contemporary ballet in San Pedro and Downtown LA; swan feathers in Northridge and Hancock Park; dance film fest in Downtown LA Arts District; more SoCal dance this week, plus a peek at what is coming next week.

Live Performance This Week (ending October 29)

Mixing it up

Perhaps best known as the Broadway choreographer of *West Side Story*, *Gypsy*, *the King and I*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*, among others, Jerome Robbins also had a long and illustrious oeuvre for ballet, particularly New York City Ballet where he shared the Ballet Master title with George Balanchine. Robbins' ballets are the focus of three mixed-bill programs that comprise **Ballet Festival: Jerome Robbins**. Curated by NYCB's mega-talented Tiler Peck, the fest offers a mix and match menu of Robbins' celebrated ballets danced by a stellar line up of stars LA seldom gets to see. Who wouldn't jump at the chance to dance such delicious works as Robbins' *Dances at a Gathering*, *In the Night*, *Other Dances*, *A Suite of Dances*, *Four Bagatelles*, and *Concertino*. All with live music. Each dance is included in two programs, with no two shows the same. Choosing a program based on the dancers doesn't make it any easier to pick one. There's the chance to see New York City Ballet's rising star Mira Nadon who trained locally with Inland Pacific Ballet, Jessica Colado who wowed audiences as part of the Houston Ballet's powerful performances just last week, San Francisco Ballet stars Sasha de Sola and Harrison James, as well as less familiar stars from the Paris Opera Ballet, Boston Ballet, and New York City Ballet, including Roman Mejia and Peck. Detailed program listing and casting at the website, if that helps in choosing. At the Music Center Ahmanson Theater, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 23-24, 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 25, 2 pm, \$39-\$132. [Jerome Robbins Ballet Festival](#).



Ballet Festival: Jerome Robbins. Photo by Steven Pisano.

Dreams and expectations

Known for blending South Asian classical dance with contemporary movement, **Sa Dance Company** uses a fusion of those genres in *Rise (an Indian American Dance Experience)*, paying tribute to generations of women and the familial roles they play. At the Carpenter Performing Arts Center, Cal State University Long Beach, 6200 E. Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$45-\$65. [Sa Dance Company](#).



Sa Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Once upon a time

In the hands of choreographer Kenneth Walker and the dancers of his **Kenneth Walker Dance Project**, dances range from romance to light-hearted whimsy to more serious explorations of ballet's possibilities. This time, Walker and his dancers promise a full spectrum in *The Stories We Tell*. At Alvas Showroom, 1417 W. 8th St., San Pedro; Sat., Oct. 25, 2 & 5:30 pm, \$30. [Kenneth Walker](#).



Kenneth Walker Dance Project. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Another kind of lion dance

Known in Japan as Nakamura Ganky?, SoCal-born Kirk Kanesaka (now Dr. Kirk Kanesaka) was a rare American accepted and trained in Japan in *Nihon buy?* or Kabuki. Forty years ago, his Kabuki master Sakata T?j?r? IV (also known as Nakamura Senjaku II) performed *Shunk? Kagamijishi*

(The Mirror Lion), a celebrated “transformation” dance, as part of a fundraiser for what is now the Aratani Theater in LA’s Little Tokyo. This time, Kanesaka takes his master’s role in *Shunk? Kagamijishi* to tell the tale of a young woman commanded to dance at Edo Castle, and, as the dance progresses is transformed into the supernatural lion spirit, culminating in a demanding mane-tossing sequence. Kanesaka is joined by artists from Japan for a Kabuki program that includes the tale of a playful married couple (*Dango Uri*); a celebration of pine, bamboo, and plum (*Sh?chikubai*); and a contemporary composition for traditional Japanese instruments (*Tori no Y? ni*). At Rothenberg Hall, Huntington Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino; Sat., Oct. 24, 4:30 pm, \$10. [Kabuki in Motion](#).



Nakamura Ganky?, (Kirk Kanesaka). Photo courtesy of the artist.

Four by twos

A quartet of *Pas de Deux* with two alternating casts marks the latest from **American Contemporary Ballet**. Balanchine’s *Rubies Pas de Deux*, *Sonatine* and *Episodes Finale* join a new work by artistic director Lincoln Jones. Details, including casts for each show, are at the website. At Bank of America Plaza, CO-150, 333 S. Hope St., Downtown LA; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 23-24, 30-31, \$65-\$140. [American Contemporary Ballet](#).



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Caleb Thal.

Sounding on

Led by Noa Barankin, **DrumatiX** combines tap dance, body percussion and live drumming into its own, distinctive performance art. The ensemble brings *Rhythm, Redefined!*, an expanded version of its well received show earlier this year at La Jolla's WOW Festival. At the Ford Theatre, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 25, 11:30 am, \$13. [DrumatiX](#).



DrumatiX. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Fun with tap dance

One of the leading lights of today's tap dance, Michelle Dorrance arrives with her **Dorrance Dance**. The show, *Swing Suite/SOUNDspace/REDUX*, features Elizabeth Burke and Luke Hickey. At Thousand Oaks Arts, Fred Kavli Theatre, 2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$54.40-\$81.05. [Dorrance Dance](#).



Michelle Dorrance. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Feathered cirque

Riffing on *Swan Lake* and brimming with acrobatics, high-flying and otherwise, the delightful cirque troupe **Circa** circles SoCal with *Duck Pond*. At the McCallum Theatre, 7300 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Sat., Oct. 24, 2 & 6 pm, \$10-\$89. [Circa](#). Also at the Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sun., Nov. 1, 3 pm, \$46-\$94 (+ fees). [Circa](#).



Circa in "Duck Pond." Photo by Pia Johnson.

Benefit fusion

Flamenco dance and music from **Mikaera Kai** along with traditional Japanese dance from **Matsutoyo Kai** are two of the performers in *Blooming Concert*, a fundraiser for Kumamoto Earthquake victims. Norris Theater, 27570 Norris Center Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes; Sun., Oct. 25, 3:30 pm, \$35, \$25 seniors. [Blooming Concert](#).

Taking flight

Named after the Chinese character that means 'to soar,' Taiwanese contemporary company **Hung Dance** makes its LA debut. The calling card is *BIRDY* by choreographer/artistic director LAI Hung-chung, blending Tai Chi and contemporary dance and set to electronic and Chinese classical music. At USC Bovard Auditorium, 3551 Trousdale Prkwy., University Park; Thurs., Oct. 29, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Hung Dance](#).



Hung Dance. Photo by Ren-Haur Liue.

And all that jazz

Under the banner *The Full Spectrum 2026: Many Shades of Jazz*, artistic director/choreographer Janell Burgess brings the dancers of **Jazz Spectrum Dance Company** together with guest choreographers and guest company Todas Dance Company led by Ashley Sanchez-Jones. In addition to new dance from Ismael Murillo and guest choreographer Nannette Brodie, the program includes re-imagined works by Burgess and original dances of JSDC founder Christine Baltes. At Spectrum Studio Theatre, 22661 Lambert St., Suite 204, Lake Forrest; Sun., Oct. 25, 7 pm, \$50 live, \$25 livestream. [Jazz Spectrum Dance Company](#).



Jazz Spectrum Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A lit swan

A touring company that dates back to 2014, **The Grand Kyiv Ballet** has expanded since the Russian invasion of Ukraine with a dancer roster that draws beyond Ukraine. Based in Washington state, the company tours for roughly seven months, this time bringing a *Swan Lake* lit with LED lights. The announced leads are Viktor Tomashek who previously danced in Odessa and Japanese dancer Chihiro Tamai who trained in Canada. Chicago reviewers who saw this new production and these leads earlier this month were not very impressed. At the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, 4401 8th St., Hancock Park; Sat., Oct. 24, 7 pm, \$49-\$79. [Grand Kyiv Ballet](#).



The Grand Kyiv Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Necessaries

An audience is a necessity for a choreographer to gauge whether and how what they have created is perceived. Having the chance to get that reading is exactly what *Open Mic Night* sets out to do. Presented by **MashUp Contemporary Dance Company**, choreographers sign up to present brief excerpts of new or in progress dances with a chance for a post show chat with the audience and

other artists. It may be informal, but the roughly quarterly program provides valuable feedback to see what is coming in dance. At the Pickle Factory, 2828 Gilroy St., Frogtown; Sat., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$15. [MashUp Open Mic](#).



MashUp Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Dedication dance

Classical Japanese dance is part of the special Buddhist ceremony *Daihannya Tendoku Goma Service & Dedication Dance*. The traditional “tendoku ritual of the 600 volumes of the Daihannya Hannya Haramita-ky? (Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra)” does not involve reading every word of all 600 volumes. Instead the sutra volumes are carefully opened and recited in a manner that invokes the merit and teachings of the sutra. The ceremony and the dedication dance are performed to pray for the removal of misfortune, the cultivation of wisdom and merit, the well-being of all people, and world peace. The ceremony and dance are open to the public who approach the dance as part of a larger ritual. At Koyasan Buddhist Temple, 342 E. 1st Street, Los Angeles, Little Tokyo; Sun., Oct. 25, 1:30 pm, free. [Koyasan Buddhist Temple](#).

Dance for all

Now in its 11th year, **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival (D2D)** returns for two nights, each with a combination of short international dance films plus newly commissioned, site-specific live dance performances created by Jasmine Albuquerque and Ryan Spencer. This year’s films come from Sierra Leone, Iran, China, and Europe. Led by Sarah Elgart, D2D continues to expand its mission to democratize live dance and dance on film. At LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown LA Arts District; Sat., Oct. 24, 7 pm, Sun., Oct. 25, 6 pm, \$30, \$25 student. [Dare to Dance in Public](#).



Dare to Dance in Public. Photo by Iker Karerra.

At long last with herself

Part art installation, part performance, **Raegan Truax** offers *in the same place: A 46-Hour Durational Performance*. Truax draws from her own body and the queer heritage housed at the venue during the extended event. At One Archives, USC Libraries, 3550 Trousdale Prkwy. University Park Fri., Oct. 23, 1 pm to Sun., Oct. 25, 1 pm, free w/reservation at [in the same place](#)

On the Rails

Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang drew on the 1867 Chinese Railway Workers strike as the backdrop for *The Dance and the Railroad* where dance-infused Chinese opera becomes a bond for two striking railroad workers building the transcontinental railroad. The western portion was built by a labor force, at least 80% of which were Chinese immigrants. They faced harsher duties, longer hours, made less than half the pay of white workers, and in 1867, went on strike over working conditions after an explosion killed one white and five Chinese workers. The play requires actors who also can meet the dance demands of classical Chinese opera. Presenters Artists at Play & Latino Theater Company found those actors/dancers in **Tony Jin** and **Scott Keiji Takeda**, who appeared together this summer in East West Players' Hwang's updated *Flower Drum Song* where Chinese opera dance also played a central role. The duo now reapply those Chinese opera and dance skills in this new revival of another Hwang work. At LA Theater Center, 514 S. Spring St., Downtown LA; Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 2 pm, thru Nov. 1, \$48 (+fee). [The Dance and the Railroad](#).



Dance and the Railroad. Photo by Michael Palma.

Too late

If you are just now reading about **Aymeric Hinaux and François Chaignaud (CCN de Caen en Normandie)**, and *Mirlitons*, their blend of beatbox, percussion, vocals and dance, sadly, it is too late. The show is sold out. However, there still is a waitlist link at the website. At UCLA, The Nimoy, 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 23-24, 8 pm, sold out, wait list at [Aymeric Hinaux & Francois Chaignaud](#).

A Peek at Next Week (Oct. 30-Nov. 5)

Laguna Dance — *Ghosts & Grooves* at Rivian South Coast Theater, 162 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach; Fri., Oct. 30, 6 pm, \$75, \$25 students, free for under 5 years. [Laguna Dance](#).

State Street Ballet — *Dracula, a dark shadow* at the Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Fri., Oct. 30, 7:30 pm, Sat., Oct. 31, 2 pm, \$25-\$145. [Dracula, a dark shadow](#).



Max 10. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Max 10 at the Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Mon., Nov. 2, 7:30 pm, \$10. [Max 10](#).

Jason Fowler with Jani Taylor – *See the Music, Hear the Dance* at the Trudi Zipper Dance Institute, Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Sun., Nov. 1, \$35. [Jason Fowler with Jani Taylor](#).

Derek Hough — *Dance for the Holidays* at the Fred Kavli Theatre, Bank of America Performing Arts Center, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Tues., Nov. 3, 7:30 pm, \$231.30-\$597.10. [Fred Kavli Theatre](#). Also at Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Dr., Cerritos; Sat., Nov. 14, 8 pm, \$117-\$588. [Cerritos Center](#).

This entry was posted on Thursday, October 22nd, 2026 at 5:27 am and is filed under [Theatre](#), [Music](#), [Dance](#), [Performing](#)

You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.