

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Reconfigured Connections

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025

A praised ballet is encored in Beverly Hills, a contemporary dance fest resumes in West LA dance and design explored in University Park, a ballet fest in Carson, cinematic dance in East Hollywood, family-friendly dance in Sylmar, plus a peek at next week.

### *Live This Week*

#### A gathering of toe shoes

Co-produced by Kenneth Walker Dance Project and the venue's theater and dance department, **Balletfest** returns with a line up of mostly contemporary ballet artists largely drawn from metro LA. Announced performers include Emma Andres, Jose Costas/Contempo Ballet, Zoe Marinello-Kohn with CalliOpus Contemporary, Vannia Ibarguen, Juan Toledo, Alison Mobley, Jetonie (Jet) Dagdag, Ryan Jolicouer-Nye, Dani Rowe and host Kenneth Walker. Out of town visitors include performers from Oregon Ballet Theatre, Oklahoma city Ballet, and Deanna Stanton with dancers from Ballet Arkansas. Cal State Dominguez Hills, University Theater, 1000 E. Victoria St., Carson; Sat., Jan. 25, 7:30 pm, \$33. [Kenneth Walker Dance Project](#).



Kenneth Walker Dance Project. Photo by Scott Edwards

## Resumption

Curated by co-founder Barbara Mueller-Wittman, the five week *Dance at the Odyssey* festival is a proven showcase for new work presenting new ideas. After a pause last week, the festival resumes with **Ellen Smith Ahern** who partnered with local artists to transform a cardboard construct into a quilted landscape for *Shell*. A conversation with the artist follows this work in progress. Odyssey Theatre, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West LA; Sat., Jan. 25, 8 pm, Sun., Jan. 26, 2 pm, \$25. [Odyssey Theatre](#).



Ellen Smith Ahern. Photo courtesy of the the Dance Department of Middlebury College

## Making room

Since 2016, the USC Roski School of Art and Design has presented a biennial celebration of performance art. For its 5th edition, **Live Arts Live [5.0]: Bodies Making Space** devotes attention to movement artists exploring where dance, visual art, performance modes, and space, intersecting with identity, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ancestry. A number of local movers populate panels and workshops preceding the performance component at 5:30 pm. The 1 pm panel includes Jay Carlon, Sebastian Hernandez, and taisha paggett. At 3:30 pm, panelists are devynn emory, Brendan Fernandes, and Meena Murugesan. Amelia Jones and Alison D'Amato lead a 4:45 pm discussion before the day concludes with performances with Javier Stell-Fresquez and J. Andrea Porras/yAyA. USC Roski Graduate Building, 1262 Palmetto Street, LA Arts District; Fri., Jan 24, 1-7 pm, free w/reservation at [Visions and Voices USC](#).



taisha paggett. Photo by Justin Sullivan

## Encore

Those who missed last year's highly-praised premiere of artistic director Melissa Barak's *Memoryhouse* for **Los Angeles Ballet**, have another chance as the company reprises the work. The title and much of the ballet's structure is drawn from British-German composer Max Richter's 2002 album. Barak kept the album's 18 tracks in order, retaining the electronic voices, sounds, and touches that are part of the original recording. Media material describes the work as an abstract consideration of World War II and particularly, the holocaust. At a time when the lies that fueled Nazi Germany are being shamelessly voiced again in multiple contexts, such considerations remain sadly needed. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd.; Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Fri., Jan. 30-31, 7:30 pm, Sat., Feb. 1, 2 & 7:30 pm, \$64-\$119. [The Wallis](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Cheryl Mann

## Putting the A in STEAM

Opening the new year, **Benita Bike's DanceArt** offers free tickets to their portion of a day at this family-friendly STEM-based museum. Discovery Cube, 11800 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 25-26, 1 pm, limited free tickets at [benita@danceart.org](mailto:benita@danceart.org).



Benita Bike DanceArt. Photo by Dean Walruff

## Deciphering dance

The program title is *The Nature of Dance*, but the subject spans how dance is created and how it references other arts, particularly visual arts. Host **Jodie Gates** is the founder/artistic director of the Laguna Beach Dance Festival and brings credentials as a dancer and choreographer, skills she'll put on display creating original movement drawn from the work of artist Fred Tomaselli in



collaboration with a dancer and a musician. A fitting prelude to this year's Laguna Beach Dance Festival. Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach; Sun., Jan 26, 4 pm, \$30, \$10 students. [Laguna Beach Dance Festival](#).



The Martha Graham Dance Company. Photo by Melissa Sherwood

## Such a milestone

Marking the centenary of modern dance legend Martha Graham, her eponymous **Martha Graham Dance Company** makes its second SoCal stop with a performance that includes her iconic *Appalachian Spring* with music by Aaron Copeland. San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., San Diego; Sat., Jan. 25, 7:30 pm, \$70.50-\$115.50. [La Jolla Music Society](#).



Dance Camera West 2025. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Cinematic dancing

Sample experimental dance films from Denmark, India, Iran, United Kingdom, Sweden and France as **Dance Camera West 2025** opens the five day festival with *International Shorts Program A* (Wed., Jan 29). The evening includes a world premiere, *Dance Map (Dense)*, narrated by LA Dance Project's Benjamin Millepied. The one-hour documentary follows four Parisians throughout Paris and its suburbs as they interact with *La Ville Dansée*, a free day-long dance festival. *International Shorts Program B* follows (Thurs., Jan 30) with dance films from Canada, China, the Russian Federation, France, Hong Kong, and the U.S. LA's multicultural dance scene is celebrated in *LA Pops Up* capturing from established and emerging LA artists in dance styles from hip-hop to bharatanatyam, jazz to contemporary. The festival announced special 'pay what you can' and other steps in the wake of the wildfire devastation. Details and the rest of the festival schedule at the website. Barnsdall Park, 4800 Hollywood Blvd., East Hollywood (venue for most events); Wed.-Sun., Jan. 29-Feb. 2, times, ticket price, and film specifics at website "schedule." One event at The Philosophical Research Society, 3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Feliz; Sat., Feb. 1, 7 pm, 20. [Dance Camera West](#).

### *A Peek at Next Week (January 31 – February 6)*

**Doug Varone and Dancers** at Chapman University, Musco Center for the Arts, 415 N. Glassell, Orange; Sat., Feb. 1, 7:30 pm, \$21.25 \$58. [Musco Center](#).

**Max Martin & Mandolin Burns** and **NICK + JAMES with Tara Jane O'Neil** — *Work in Progress/LA* at G-Son Studios, 3218 Glendale Blvd., Atwater Village, 3218 Glendale Blvd. (enter through the alley), Atwater Village; Mon., Feb. 3, 7:30 pm, \$15. [WIP LA](#).

**Faye Driscoll** — *Weathering* at REDCAT, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 6-8, 8:30 pm, \$27, \$22 student. [REDCAT](#).



Re:born Dance Interactive. Photo by Taso Papadakis

**Re:born Dance Interactive** — *Home* at the Odyssey Theatre, 2955 S. Sepulveda Blvd., WLA; Fri.-Sat., Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 2, 2 pm, \$25. [Odyssey Theatre](#).

**Laguna Dance Festival 20th Anniversary** at Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 6-8, 7:30 pm, Sun., Feb. 9, 2 pm, \$75, \$25 student. [Laguna Dance Festival](#).

**East Wind Foundation** — *Lion Dance* at Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 West Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Feb. 1, 11 am, \$12. [Sierra Madre Playhouse](#).

**Kaufman Converge** at USC, Gloria Kaufman International Dance Center, 849 W. 34th St., University Park; Tues., Feb. 4, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Visions and Voices USC](#).

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