

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Selective Amplification

Ann Haskins · Thursday, October 15th, 2026

A deer joke introduces new contemporary dance in Westwood; two dancers microscoped in Downtown LA; ballet to Chopin, in the air, in twos, to live music, from China, and with teeth in Costa Mesa, Hollywood, DowntownLA, San Diego, Irvine, and Agoura Hills; site specific dance in Arcadia trees and a downtown library; more SoCal dance this week, plus a peek at what is coming next week.

Live Performance This Week (ending October 22)

Touching me, touching you

Some choreographers present with less frequency, but are anticipated when they do because they muse, create, edit, and present only when polished. Choreographer **Victoria Marks** is one of those. This time, she riffs on the opening line of a familiar joke with her title, *A Deer Walks into a Dance*. That joke deconstruction previews the humor and intelligence at work as Marks and a quartet of dancers explore finding connection in a world of forces fostering disconnection. Rian Alcid, Maya Billig, Karen Chuang and Aaron Mason are the quartet leading the expedition. At UCLA, The Nimoy, 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 16-17, 8 pm, \$38.08-\$48.67. [Victoria Marks](#).



Victoria Marks' "A Deer Walks Into a Dance." Photo courtesy of the artists.

Not about that Greek

Some dancers, Ulysse Zangs for one, is propelled by music. Others, like Marion Barbeau, are propelled by acting. Both were trained at the Paris Opera Ballet, and now each draws on their personal fuel in **Ulysse Marion**, solos created for them by choreographer **Dimitri Chamblas** after long conversations delving into what shaped their distinctive interdisciplinary dance. The desert comes into play as the theater's desert-like bareness becomes a metaphor for dance in its most basic essence. At REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., Downtown LA; Tues.-Wed., Oct. 20-21, 8 pm, \$27, \$22 students (+2 fee). [Dimitri Chamblas](#).



Dimitri Chamblas' "Ulysse Marion." Photo courtesy of the artist.

Texas soul sounds

Instigated by superstar pianist Lang Lang who performed live onstage with choreography by **Houston Ballet**'s Stanton Welch, *Sons de L'âme (Sounds of the Soul)* premiered in Paris in 2013 to rapturous ovations. The ballet, set to two hours of Frédéric Chopin's solo piano music, was next given a full performance this past April in Houston. This time with George Li at the piano. Now the ballet receives its third full performance as **Houston Ballet** opens this venue's 2026-2027 dance season, again with Li onstage at the piano. At Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.-Fri., Oct. 15-16, 7:30 pm, Sat., Oct 17, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 18, 1 pm, \$44-\$169. [Houston Ballet](#).



Houston Ballet. Photo by Sebastien Mathe.

Ballet with a bite

With several of LA's most in-demand freelance ballet dancers in the leads, **West Coast Ballet** returns with its version of *Dracula*. Eduard Sargsyan reprises the role of the vampire, with Leah McCall and Madeline McMillan as his targeted victims Lucy and Mina. At Agoura Hills Performings Arts Education Center, 28545 W. Driver Ave., Agoura Hills ; Sat., Oct. 17, 1 & 7 pm, Sun., Oct. 18, 5 pm, \$35-\$75.55. [West Coast Ballet Dracula](#).



West Coast Ballet's "Dracula." Photo courtesy of the artists

Then they flew away, together

Unlike the dual suicides in *Romeo and Juliet*, in the Chinese story, *The Butterfly Lovers*, similarly star-crossed youngsters transform into butterflies. Their story, captured in a full-length ballet choreographed by **Shanghai Ballet**'s artistic director Xin Lili, is the calling card on this visit, the company's first since 2021. At the Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Fri., Oct. 16, 8 pm, \$54-\$205. [Shanghai Ballet](#).



Shanghai Ballet's "Butterfly Lovers." Photo courtesy of the artists.

Jazz hands en l'air

Known for its distinct blending of ballet and aerial, **Luminario Ballet** adds a third genre for *Le Ballet Jazz Noir* as guest choreographer Jackie Sleight (LA Jazz Company and LA Dance Magic) contributes *El Gato* and *We Got By*. Also scheduled, company co-director Damien Diaz' *Night Hawk*, inspired by the Edward Hopper painting, and founder/co-director Judith FLEX Helle's *CHICA*. A gala precedes the show. At the Avalon Hollywood, 1735 Vine St., Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 18, 8 pm, \$40-\$125. (gala at 5:30 pm + show, \$450-\$650). [Luminario Ballet](#).



Luminario Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists.

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. 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, \$65-\$140. [American Contemporary Ballet](#)



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Caleb Thal.

A triptych of tunes

Under the banner *Compositions: An Evening of Katie Jenkins*, **Pointworks** and its artistic director Sophie Williams assembled a program set to music by the company's resident composer. Participating choreographers include Jacquelyn Long, Laine Habony, and Hélène Simoneau, with Jenkins' music performed live. At the Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Ave., San Diego; Sun., Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, \$27.70-\$79.90. [Pointworks](#).



Pointworks. Photo by Hannah Cox.

Walkabout dance

Producer Deborah Brockus presents *EXPERIENCE Showcase*, three nights of dance, with the third incorporating a fundraiser. With performances sited at four locations, the audience sits, watches, then moves to the next site. Participating artists include Gretchin Ackerman, Anisa Johnson, Bruna Gill (IDES), Charlotte Katherine, Butoh by Corin Wiggins (Fri.& Sat.), and host company BrockusRED. The Sunday fundraiser features a shortened show with BrockusRED, a party, and a silent auction. At BP Studios, 618B Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 16-17, 8 pm, Sun., Oct. 18, 6:30 pm, \$25 cash at door, Zelle 562-412-7429 (note date), Venmo @brockusprojectstudios (note date). [EXPERIENCE Showcase](#)



BrockusRED. Photo by Denise Leitner.

Last visit

Despite visa issues that delayed travel from Britain and cancellation of at least one East Coast tour stop, choreographer Akram Khan and his **Akram Khan Company** made it to SoCal, although this Santa Barbara show was postponed from October 6 to October 20. Ironically, the visa issues arose shortly after Khan announced that this will be the last tour for his 25-year old company. Celebrated for his distinctive, mesmerizing blend of South Asian Bharatanatyam dance and contemporary movement, Khan's final calling card is *Thikra, a Night of Remembering*, a ritualized nighttime gathering of women. Part of Khan's power is the world his designers and composers create for his dancers to inhabit. *Thikra* has an original score by Aditya Prakash, scenography and costumes by Saudi artist Manal AlDowayan, sound by Gareth Fry, lighting by Zeynep Kepekli, and dramaturgy by Blue Pieta. At the Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Tues., Oct. 20, 7:30 pm, \$20-\$100. [UCSB](#).



Akram Khan Company. Photo by Camilla Greenwell.

When three are not a trio

Three choreographers, **Vanessa Hernández Cruz**, **Sarai Hicks**, and **Marissa Mahoney**, offer encore performances presented by the Los Angeles Women's Theater Festival. Cruz brings *Metal*, *Plastic*, *Skin*. Hicks performs *For You*. Mahoney dances *SMILE*. At the Wende Museum Community Center, 10858 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Fri., Oct. 16, 7 pm, free w/reservation. [Tickets](#).



Marissa Mahoney. Photo by Sofia Lareau.

Into the trees

Tour the grounds and explore the historic Queen Anne Cottage and Coach Barn as the contemporary Bollywood-infused **Blue 13 Dance Company** brings the site-specific *Pouring Salt Over Ink* to the LA Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia; Sat., Oct. 17, 5:30 pm, \$30-\$35. [Blue 13](#).



Blue 13 Dance Company. Photo by DAK.

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 Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sun., Oct. 18, 4 pm. \$20-\$75. [Circa](#). Also at 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.

Making things last

Marking the closing of the exhibit *Healing with Gold: The Art of Kintsugi on Ceramics & Beyond*, exhibit curator Meher McArthur introduces **Ichinosuke Umekawa** for a short performance of *nihon buy?*, *Japanese Classical Dance*. At George J. Doizaki Gallery, Japan American Cultural and Community Center Lobby, 244 S. San Pedro St., Little Tokyo; Sun., Oct. 18, 2 pm, free with reservation at [Classical Japanese Dance](#).

Going to the root

Choreographer Holly Johnston and her company Ledges and Bones were a longtime presence in LA and San Francisco before she decamped for Colorado where she helms Responsive Body. Johnston is back, sort of, collaborating with LA-based **CONTRA-TIEMPO** and its founding Artistic Director Ana Maria Alvarez for *Roots of Loving*, being premiered at the Epstein Family Theater, 9480 Innovation Lane, La Jolla; Fri., Oct. 16, 7:30 pm, \$30-\$55. [CONTRA-TIEMPO](#).



Contra Tiempo. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Anniversary open house

To mark its 10th anniversary, USC's **Kaufman International Dance Center** opens its doors for a day of performances, workshops, and immersive experiences for visitors moving through different stations in the Center. At USC, Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center, 849 34th St., University Park; Sat., Oct. 17, 4-8 pm, free with reservation. [Kaufman Center Dance](#).



USC Kaufman Dance. Photo by Diego Lopez.

Devil dancing

Corky Dominguez provides the choreography for the premiere of Josefina Lopez' **Erotica Diabolica**. With music by Carlos Melgar, the cast includes Alejandro Bravo, Casara Clark, Evelyn Menchaca, Gaby Ortiz, Enrique Quintero, and Alejandro Valtierra. At Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri, Oct. 16, 8 pm, Sat., Oct. 17, 3 & 8 pm, Sun., Oct. 18, 7 pm, \$25.63 (includes fee). [Erotica Diabolica](#).

Gala in the books

For its annual gala and *41st Anniversary Celebration*, the site-specific dance company **Heidi Duckler Dance** takes over a law library. The site follows the ensemble's focus the past year on libraries and other civic buildings. In addition to the usual gala elements, dancers and other performers will lead guests throughout the buildings and books. At the Los Angeles Law Library, 301 W. 1st St., Downtown LA; Sat., Oct. 17, 5 pm \$300+. [Heidi Duckler Dance](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

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.

Dance film fest

For this year's **LA Dance Film Festival**, the event is structured more like visiting an art show than a series of screenings. There will be curated films screening throughout the day, but also installation and performance art, along with a moderated panel. Schedule at the website. At SV Studios, 3424 N. San Fernando Rd., Ste. 3, Atwater; Sat., Oct. 17, 2-7 pm, \$40. [LA Dance Film Festival](#).

A Peek at Next Week (Oct. 23-29)

Sa Dance Company — *Rise (an Indian American Dance Experience)* 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](#).

The Grand Kyiv Ballet — *Swan Lake* at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, 4401 8th St., Hancock Park; Sat., Oct. 24, 7 pm, \$49-\$79. [Grand Kyiv Ballet](#).

MashUp Contemporary Dance Company — Open Mic Night at the Pickle Factory, 2828 Gilroy St., Frogtown; Sat., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$15. [MashUp Open Mic](#).

Raegan Truax — *in the same place : A 46-Hour Durational Performance* 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](#).

Kabuki in Motion — *The Lion Returns* at Rothenberg Hall, Huntington Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino; Sat., Oct. 24, 4:30 pm, \$10. [Kabuki in Motion](#)

DrumatiX at The Ford Theatre, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 25, 11:30 am, \$13. [DrumatiX](#).



Kenneth Walker Dance Project. Photo by Scott Edwards

Kenneth Walker Dance Project — *The Stories We Tell* at Alvas Showroom, 1417 W. 8th St., San Pedro; Sat., Oct. 25, 2 & 5:30 pm, \$30. [Kenneth Walker](#).

Aymeric Hinaux and François Chaignaud (CCN de Caen en Normandie) — *Mirlitons* at UCLA, The Nimoy, 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 23-24, 8 pm. Posted as sold out as of presstime. [Aymeric Hinaux & Francois Chaignaud](#).

Dorrance Dance at Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Fred Kavli Theatre, 2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$54.40-\$81.05. [Dorrance Dance](#).

Hung Dance — *Birdy* at USC Bovard Auditorium, 3551 Trousdale Prkwy., University Park; Thurs., Oct. 29, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Hung Dance](#).

Jazz Spectrum Dance Company — *The Full Spectrum 2026: Many Shades of Jazz* at Spectrum Studio Theatre, 22661 Lambert St., Suite 204, Lake Forrest; Sun., Oct. 25, 7 pm, \$50 live, \$25

livestream. [Jazz Spectrum Dance Company](#).

News of Note

The SoCal tap troupe **Rhapsody in Taps**, led by Linda Sohl-Ellison, presents the final screenings capturing the troupe's *First 35 Years! Video Anthology*. At Martha B. Knoebel Dance Theatre, Cal State University Long Beach on Tues., Oct. 13 & 27, 6 pm. [Rhapsody in Taps](#).

Brand Library Dance Series Application Deadline has been extended to October 22 for groups to apply for the 2027 performances on Saturdays in May 2027. Details at [Brand Library](#).

This entry was posted on Thursday, October 15th, 2026 at 6:53 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.