

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Situational Inspiration

Ann Haskins · Thursday, July 30th, 2026

Europeans in pointe shoes pirouette in Costa Mesa and Downtown LA; Chinese dance meets Street dance in Laguna Beach; adventurous contemporary in Lincoln Heights, Frogtown, and Downtown LA Arts District; puppets go rogue in Hollywood; dance film pop-up in Downtown LA Arts District; plus more SoCal dance this week, and a peek at next week.

Live Performance This Week (ending August 6)

Hugo who?

Whether on a fashion runway, magazine photoshoot, or his main job as an Étoile (principal dancer) onstage at the Paris Opera Ballet, Hugo Marchand draws attention. While his fame extends beyond ballet in France, Marchand starts to raise his ballet profile here with **Ballet Now**, an assemblage of European ballet dancers performing under the banner *Superstars of Paris*. The dancers arrive after performing in New York with reviews mostly rapturous with a few quibbling at particular items on the mixed bill being more “past”, than “now.” Still, the dancers represent the cream of this generation. Also, the dance card here lists mostly different works from New York—gala staples like *The Dying Swan* and Roland Petit’s *Carmen Pas de Deux*, as well as 20th century ballets like George Balanchine’s *Sonatine* (1975), Hans van Manen’s *Trois Gnossiennes* (1982), and the lip-lock kiss pas de deux from Angelin Preljocaj’s *Le Parc* (1994). A full list of likely repertoire is at the website along with video clips of splendid dancers LA seldom sees live. The Music Center, Disney Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Fri., July 31, 7:30 pm, Sat., Aug. 1, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Aug. 1-2, 2 pm, \$36-\$163. [Ballet Now: Superstars of Paris](#).



Hugo Marchand and Hanna O’Neil of “Superstars of Paris.” Photo by Steve Pisano

International reach

This year’s *MovementFest LA* present its *Performance Lab Showcase* pairing LA-based **Jobel Medina** with the duo **Rebecca Laufer** (American) and **Mats Van Rossum** (Netherlands) who work in Europe. The event reflects the process and results from the programs’ three week residency. Info on this and other upcoming events/performances at the website. At LA Dance

Project Studios, 3325 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown LA Arts District; Fri.-Sun., July 31 – August 2, 8 pm, \$40-\$75. [Performance Lab](#).



Jobel Medina. Photo by Sal Ceja Garcia

Making connections

Choreographers/dancers **Marissa Mahoney** and **Rachel Turner** unite for *Implied Lines*. The dancemakers' movements evokes connections and storylines in two evenings of dance. At Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., July 31-Aug. 1, 8 pm, \$25, \$20 students/seniors.



Marissa Mahoney & Rachel Turner. Photo by Sofia Lareau

Festival launch #1

SoCal's **Versa Style Street Dance Company** takes street dance to the sand, opening this summer's *Laguna Dance Festival*. Full details on this and other festival performances, workshops, conversations, and more at the website. At Main Beach Cobblestone, Laguna Canyon Rd & Beach St., Laguna Beach; Thurs., Aug. 6, 5 pm, free. [Versa Style Street Dance Company](#).



Versa-Style Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

Festival launch #2

The first day of the *Laguna Dance Festival* continues as **Pan America Chinese Dance Alliance** brings its artistry inside the Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach; Thurs., Aug. 6, 7 pm, free. [Pan America Chinese Dance Alliance](#).



MashUp Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

Working on it

Presented by **MashUP Contemporary Dance**, the quarterly showcase, *Choreography Open Mic Night*, returns. The uncurated evening operates on a first-come-first-served basis, usually with ten choreographers offering work in progress or new work with a chance to mingle with the artists after the performances. This edition's participating dancemakers at the website. At the Pickle Factory, 2828 Gilroy St., Frogtown; Sat., Aug. 1, 8 pm, \$15. [Choreography Open Mic Night](#).

When puppets improv

The son of Muppets creator Jim Henson, takes his dad's puppet concepts into a cast of rebelliouspuppets, crosses them with *The Groundlings*-style improv, adds a large dose of

uncensored *Avenue Q* sensibility, then puts the brew into the hands of masterful Henson Company puppeteers. The result is **Brian Henson Presents – Puppet Up!** Each distinctive show includes improv driven by audience suggestions along with recreated classic Henson sketches, some not seen in decades. Recommended for age 16 and older (actually those under age 16 are not admitted because of where the improv may veer). At the Montalbán Theatre, 1615 Vine St., Hollywood; Fri., July 31 & Aug. 7, 8 pm, Sat., Aug. 1 & 8, 3 & 7 pm, Sun., Aug. 2 & 9, 5 pm, \$71.70-\$87.10. [Puppet Up!](#).



Brian Henson Presents – Puppet Up! Uncensored. Photo courtesy of Center Theatre Group

Trading camera for stage

Commercial choreographers are usually in service to others and having their moves be sliced and diced by editors for music videos, advertisements, television, and film. **Choreographer's Carnival** allows uninterrupted stage time for choreographers to show their creative side, and maybe audition for their next commercial gig. At the Vermont Hollywood, 1020 N. Vermont Ave., East Hollywood; Thurs.- Sun., July 30-Aug. 2, 9:30 pm, \$31.86-\$43.87 (includes fees). [Choreographer's Carnival](#).

Getting together

Dance as seen by SoCal filmmakers, curated by the savvy eyes at **LA POP UPS**, **Dance Camera West**, and **MVMT Fest LA**, are presented in this one night only event. The screening includes a 'talk back' session with the filmmakers. At LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown LA Arts District; Wed., July 29, 8 pm, \$22.50 – \$38.50. [LA Pops Up](#).



The Great Clown Bank Show. Photo by John Dlugolecki

Send in the last clowns

Created and directed by Hank Jacobs, who also acts as the “ringmaster,” **The Great Clown Bank Show** is described as a “burlesque on income inequality in 15 circus acts.” Promising a blend of dance and circus, including a clown pas de deux, the show will include a weekly guest circus act. At the Open Fist Theater Company @ the Atwater Village Theater, 3269 Casitas Ave., Atwater Village; Fri., 9 pm, Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 7 pm, thru Sat., Aug. 1, \$35.25, \$31.25 seniors, \$22.25 students. [The Great Clown Bank Show](#).



Mexodus. Photo by Thomas Mundell

Southbound escape

Choreographer **Tony Thomas** provides the moves as the award-winning hip-hop musical *Mexodus* unearths the story of a southbound Underground Railroad that led 4,000 to 10,000 enslaved people to seek freedom in Mexico. The two-person show began at Berkeley Repertory Theater which also

nurtured *Ain't Too Proud*, the hit Motown musical about The Temptations. *Mexodus* moved east after highly successful runs, including off-Broadway where it picked up impressive attention. Thomas is the choreography part of the artistic team led by creators/performers Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson and director David Mendizábal. At the Pasadena Playhouse, 39 S. El Molino Ave., Pasadena; Thurs.-Fri., 8 pm, Sat., 2 & 8 pm, Sun. 2 pm, thru Sun., Aug. 2, \$40-\$127. [Mexodus](#).

A two-fer

This annual gala for the respected training company, **Festival Ballet Theatre**, has a professional performance preceded by a performance by promising pre-professionals. The professionals announced for the 17th annual *Gala of the Stars* include Constantine Allen (Dutch National Ballet), Braylong Browner, Alessandro Frola (Vienna State Opera), Nikolas Gaifullin (Louisville Ballet), Peter Hull (Stuttgart Ballet), Maria Khoreva (Mariinsky Ballet), Paloma Livellara (Vienna State Opera), Kloe Walker (New York City Ballet), Madison Young (Vienna State Opera), and Andres Zuniga (New York City Ballet). The earlier performance features ten pre-professional protégés. At Segerstrom Concert Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs., Aug. 6, *Inspired Young Proteges*-6 pm, *Gala of the Stars*-7 pm, \$101.50-\$169.50. [Festival Ballet Theatre](#).



Festival Ballet. Photo by Dave Friedman

Sign of summer

Watch or join in as the Friday night summer series **Dance DTLA** celebrates *cumbia* this week. Instruction precedes the open dancing. All free. A complete list of upcoming dance genres at the website. At the Music Center, Jerry Moss Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Fri., July 31, also Aug. 7 (Afro Beats) & 14 (Bollywood), 7-11 pm, free. [Dance DTLA](#).



Dance DTLA. Photo courtesy of the Music Center

Another sign of summer

Part public performance, part participatory dance party, and free! The outdoor **Tuesday Night Dance** series hosts the first of two Tuesdays devoted to *hip hop* dance. See the website for dance styles coming up on Tuesdays thru Aug. 25. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Argyros Plaza, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Tues., Aug. 4, 6:30 pm. free. [Tuesday Night Dance](#).

A Peek at Next Week (August 7-13)

BrockusRED — *Every Scrap of Grace* at BPStudios, Brewery Arts District, 618 B Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., Aug. 7-8, 7:30 pm, Sun., Aug. 9, 6:30 pm, \$20. Zelle: 562-412-7429; Venmo: @Brockusprojectstudios.

LA Dance Project — *Performance Lab Culmination Show* at LA Dance Project Studios, 3325 E.

Washington Blvd., Downtown LA Arts District; Fri.-Sat. Aug. 7-8, Sun., Aug. 9, 5 pm, \$40-\$75. [LA Dance Project – Performance Lab Culmination Show](#).

Rennie Harris Puremovement American Street Dance Theater — *Nuttin' But a Word* at Laguna Dance Festival, Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach; Fri.-Sat., Aug. 7-8, 7 pm, \$78, \$25 (+fees) [Rennie Harris](#).

Jodie Gates/Peter Chu — *Voices Unbound* at Laguna Dance Festival, Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach; Sun., Aug. 9, 7 pm, \$78, \$25 student (+fees). [Jodie Gates/Peter Chu](#).

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — *Angels on Crenshaw* at Lula Washington Dance Theatre Studios, 3773 Crenshaw Blvd., Crenshaw; Sun., Aug. 9, 2-5 pm, \$33.85-\$108.55. [LWDT-Angels on Crenshaw](#).



Lula Washington Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists

Siudy Garrido Flamenco Company at Lobero Theatre, 33 E. Canon Perdido St., Santa Barbara; Fri., Aug. 7, 7:30 pm, \$52-\$152. [Siudy Garrido Flamenco](#).

Tablao Zano Flamenco at the New Vic, 33 W. Victoria St., Santa Barbara; Sun., Aug. 9, 7:30 pm, \$49-\$65, \$30 student. [Tablao Zano Flamenco](#).

Bob Baker Marionette Theater at The Ford, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Aug. 9, 11:30 am, \$13 (+\$2 fee). [Bob Baker Marionette Theater](#).

Dance DTLA — *Afro Beats* at the Music Center, Jerry Moss Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown LA; Fri., Aug. 7 & 14 (Bollywood), 7-11pm, free. [Dance DTLA](#).

Tuesday Night Dance — *hip hop* at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Argyros Plaza, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Tues., Aug 11, 6:30 pm. free. [Tuesday Night Dance](#).

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