Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Spreading 50 Over Four Weeks

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, October 14th, 2020

Drive-in dance resumes, tap dance goes solo, a folkloric encore, festival week 3 gets its share of 50 choreographers, street dance gets a YouTube channel, encore streaming, dance classes, and more SoCal dance this week.

New This Week

They're back and free!

The always anticipated **LA Dance Festival** was among local spring dance events cancelled by the Covid–19 shutdown in March. Over the summer, the festival streamed virtual performances hosted by the Luckman Fine Arts Complex and also streamed performances as part of Korea's Seoul International Dance Festival. That cancelled **LA Dance Festival** is back, big time and free, as organizer Deborah Brockus and the Luckman enter the third week of this month-long marathon with 50 choreographers divided among four different weekends, each populated with top-notch SoCal dance companies, and each program streaming for three days that weekend. The line-up for week three includes Charlotte Katherine & Co., Nannette Brodie Dance Theater, Kybele Dance, Poets in Motion, MarieElena Martingano & Camryn Eakes, John Castagna, Louise Reichlin & Dancers/Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers, the Dance Narrative Project, Lula Washington Dance Theatre, and South Korean artists Lee Jihee and Kim Jubin from LADF's sister festival the Seoul International Dance Festival in TANK. Sample the wide spectrum of SoCal dance plus visitors from South Korea from Fri., Oct. 16, 6 p.m to Sun., Oct. 18, midnight. Complete festival line-up plus other workshops and festival events at LA Dance Festival and Luckman. Watch the fest for free with tickets at Ticketmaster. Meanwhile the Korean fest continues to stream at https://ingdance.kr/22.

John Castagna. Photo by Victor Vu.

Taking it to the table

Amid growing concerns about food insufficiencies for those unemployed or furloughed by the pandemic, **Invertigo Dance Theatre** combines streamed live performance with its Fall Soiree and the first look at artistic director Laura Karlin's new work, *The Kitchen Table Project* considering how food gets on the table and often is taken for granted until it isn't there. In the benefit event's streamed performance, company members Cody Brunelle-Potter, Hyosun Choi, Jessica Dunn, Corina Kinnear, and Chelsea Roquero are joined by Jeanie McNamara, who dances in the Invertigo Dancing Through Parkinson's (DTP) classes. That ensemble offers segments from *The Kitchen*

Table Project with dancers performing remotely from their own kitchen tables. Described as a series of short stories, one dancer considers the vulnerability of a person sitting at a table after being unhoused, another dancers conjures up an unruly child, a third explores how time changes her relationship with her table, and another pays respects to ghosts sitting around tables in recollection of Chuseok, the Korean fall festival holiday honoring ancestors. Tickets, full details including other events, awards, and special delivered gift boxes for generous contributors at Invertigo. Sat. Oct. 17, 6 p.m. $75-$500.

Invertigo Dance Theatre. Photo by Sarvey Tahmasebi Rector.

Two to choose from…again

Live, drive-in performances suspended last month due to air quality from the wildfires resume as LA Dance Project presents *Drive-In Dances*. Additional performances of the two alternating shows have been added to make up for the cancellations. *Solo at Dusk* features dancers **Bobbi Jene Smith** and **Or Schraiber**. The two were paired in the film *Bobbi Jene*. That program alternates with *The Betweens* with **Jermaine Spivey** and **Spenser Theberge**. Spivey was guest faculty at the USC Kaufman School of Dance and known for his work with Crystal Pite where Theberge also was connected in addition to working with Spivey. Location information and Covid–19 safety protocols to be provided late. $100-$150 per car (top price includes a one-year LADP digital membership). Info, dates, and tickets at LA Dance Project.

Jermaine Spivey. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Taking it solo

Tap dancer **Lynn Jassem** joins five theater artists in *Soaring Solo Community*. Hosted by director Jessica Lynn Johnson, during the livestreamed show the half dozen solo performers will safely rotate on and off the stage of the Whitefire Theatre. Part of the proceeds will benefit efforts to save the venue. More info and tickets at Whitefire Theatre. Tues., Oct. 20, 7 p.m., $15.99.

Lynn Jassem. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Locking it up

Early on, the street dance troupe **Versa-Style Dance Company** seemed to take naturally to online streaming including a tribute to Don Campbellock, the creator of the Locking dance style,and its youth organization Versa-Style Next Generation unveil *Finding Creativity and Fun in Our Personal Space*. The troupe went to the beach for its contribution to the line up at the Music Center's gallery of videos from SoCal dance companies. Always more than just about the dancing, the troupe mentors its younger members to add college and a career to their dance moves. In the absence of live gatherings, the website now hosts informative and useful videos on a range of life-skills subjects. This week the ensemble announced the launch of its YouTube channel, adding to its social media presence. Videos and info at the Versa-Style website.

Versa-Style Dance. Photo by George Simian.

When things are “Pacifico”

Among the subtle and not so subtle changes of new management by the LA Phil, what used to be the Ford Theater is now The Ford and while the theatre itself remains closed, four digital series were announced through the end of the year. A quartet of festivals includes mostly music, but one in November is focused on dance. The Saturday morning family classes include lots of dance and the past performances being streamed reflect how the beloved al fresco venue served as an informal summer dance festival. Those past performances covering the spectrum of SoCal dance are on display at the website. All events are free. This week, traditional and contemporary folkloric dance from a 2017 Ford Theater performance by **Pacifico Dance Company** is reprised starting Thurs., Oct. 22, free. Complete calendar and information at The Ford.

Pacifico Dance Company. Photo by Gennia Cui.

Contemporary ballet

It’s hard to find out anything about **Ballet Project OC** and its upcoming performance. The only dancer on the website is Ally Helman, whose biography identifies her as an apprentice with New York City Ballet. The announcement of the performance indicates it is a live performance from the Brea Curtis Theater. The group had a prior live performance there in August that also was presented online at BalletProject.tv but that website does not identify anyone in charge or on staff although the photos on the home page appear to be Ally Helman. The program announcement for this weekend indicated dancers were from major professional companies including Los Angele Ballet, Nevada Ballet Theater and New York City Ballet. Inquiries regarding the identity of the dancers, the choreography being presented, and whether this is a repeat of the August concert or something new went unanswered as of publication time. Could be interesting, but hard to tell with so little information. $17.95, Sat., Oct. 17, 3 & 7 p.m. Ballet Project OC.

Ballet Project OC. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Online Encores

Alone with a chandelier

The site specific performance ensemble **Heidi Duckler Dance** has been actively exploring the possibilities in combining live and virtual performance. Earlier this summer, *Ebb & Flow: Chinatown 2020* allowed audiences to stroll about installations with dance projected into some of the constructs. Other ongoing streamed projects include a five-minute video drawn from the live performance of *The Chandelier* based on a work by Brazilian author Clarice Lispector about a woman experiencing isolation and trying to connect. Choreographed by Duckler, the performers include Himerria Wortham, Rafael Quintas, Myles Lavallee, Nicole Flores, Maureen Asic, Magdalena Edwards, Jessica Emmanuel, Jaeme Velez, David Guerra, and Paula Rebelo. Vimeo. Video of the full zoomed performance.

Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

They dance LA

In the absence of touring companies inside its theaters, the Music Center is giving a little love and

attention to LA's dance companies showcasing filmed performances from six SoCal companies. After the films premiere on Instagram, the films are available for viewing at Music Center. This week's streaming duo (Tues., Sept. 29) are Albertossy Espinoza's **LA Fusion Dance Theater** and Pat Taylor's **Jazz Antiqua Dance & Music Ensemble**. Espinoza draws on his Ecuadorian heritage in a Flamenco fusion duet filmed on the streets of East LA. Taylor brings jazz trumpeter Terence Blanchard's *Avgo* to life with solos filmed in parks, alleys, and a pedestrian bridge and other sites spread around LA. Earlier streams from **Versa-Style Dance Company** sent its street dancers to the beach, folkloric troupe **Pacifico Dance Company**'s had nine dancers, each at a different location representing different areas of Mexico, the tap group **Syncopated Ladies** took an existing routine to the great outdoors, and five members of Malathi Iyengar's **Rangoli Dance Company** premiered a new work for a quintet of dancers celebrating a South asian goddess of dawn and hope. All can viewed at Music Center.

Versa-Style Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A digital Ford

Among the subtle and not so subtle changes of new management by the LA Phil, what used to be the Ford Theater is now The Ford and while the theatre itself remains closed, four digital series were announced through the end of the year. A quartet of festivals includes mostly music, but one in November is focused on dance. The Saturday morning family dance classes includes lots of dance and the streaming of past performances reflects how well the theater served as an informal summer dance festival. Up this week, a prior Ford show by **Lula Washington Dance Theater** on Thurs., Sept. 24. Facebook. All events are free. Complete calendar and information at the Ford.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A show of force

In what may prove a timely, if unnerving coincidence, military veterans are featured in a streamed film from Diavolo's Veterans Project exploring what it means to be a true warrior on the front lines. In *This is Me – Letters from the Front Lines*, military vets and first responders explore what it means to be on the front line. Since artistic director Jacques Heim and **Diavolo Architecture in Motion** launched their **Veterans Project** in 2016, more than 500 SoCal veterans have participated in the company's gymnastic approach to movement to restore physical, mental and emotional strengths. Along the way, the project developed stunning performance works, one of which was part of Diavolo's day-long 25th anniversary celebration at the Soroya which hosted this event as part of the theater's *Fridays at 4* series. Info at https://www.thesoraya.org/.

Diavolo Veterans Project. Photo by George Simian.

Silver screen shifting

After discovering their admiration for the others work was mutual, **LA Contemporary Dance Company** and Vitamin String Quartet's planned collaboration for a live performance was put on hold by the pandemic shutdown. The effort took a different turn to film, two films so far with the first now streaming. That initial release, *The Box*, managed to adhere to CDC guidelines while putting two dancers (Jamila Glass and Angel Tyson) and four musicians (Elizabeth Baba, Amanda

Lo, Filip Pogády, Caleigh Drane) in the historic Heritage Square Museum. The roughly three-minute film streams on YouTube. Now a second collaboration has been added with *Blinding Light* with dancers Christian Beasley, Hyosun Choi, Jamila Glass, Nicole Hagen, Tess Hewlett, Malachi Middleton, JM Rodriguez, Ryan Ruiz, and Angel Tyson. An earlier LACDC collaboration, this time with filmmaker Nathan Kim continues to stream. The seven-minute film *BLINK*, was choreographed by artistic director Genevieve Carson in collaboration with the LACDC dancers. An official selection in the Hollyshorts Film Festival 2019, Cucalorus Festival 2019, and the San Francisco Dance Film Festival 2019, BLINK features dancer Hyosun Choi with Christian Beasley, Kate Coleman, Tess Hewlett, Ryan Ruiz, Drea Sobke, and Tiffany Sweat. The two films and information on other LACDC virtual programming on their website.

LA Contemporary Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Feel like screaming?

Originally developed as a stage piece by choreographer Sophia and the dancers of **Iris Company**, the creators in 2018 presciently reworked *Screaming Shapes!* into a film. After a year on the festival circuit including SoCal's Dance Camera West, the company has released the work online. The performers include Bryanna Brock, Hyosun Choi, Cat Cogliandro, Casey Gonzalez, Kristen Holleyman, Amanda MacLeod, Joan H. Padeo, Shane Raiford, and Jamal Wade. Iris Company.

Iris Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

The Moms have it

The same week that memorialized the late civil rights leader congressman John Lewis was the week Emmett Till would have been 79 years old had he not been lynched at age 14 because of his skin. In 2010, Kevin Spicer curated *The Emmett Till Project* at Highways Performance Space. Choreographer Pat Taylor's contribution *A Kindred Woe* receives a timely encore. The work focuses on how mothers whose children have been murdered "take on the mantle" in the fight against racism and justice. The **JazzAntiqua Dance and Music Ensemble** performers include Terrice Banks Tillmon, Keisha Clark-Booth, Rayne Duronslet, Kacy Keys and Shari Washington Rhone. https://vimeo.com/441671503.

JazzAntiqua Dance & Music Ensemble. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Busy screens

Adding to its trove of streaming options, **Viver Brasil** adds a weekly spotlight on past performances. The Afro-Brazilian dance and live music ensemble offer journeys to Salvador, Bahia to explore royal orixá dances, high-flying capoeira, and samba from a Bahian Carnaval. Current and past spotlight events now available. Viver Brasil also was among the SoCal artists selected for KCET's *Southland Sessions*, reworking its popular family show *Celebrating Samba* for the small screen with company members performing from their homes. But through the power of Afro-Brazilian dance and live music they promise a cultural journey to Salvador, Bahia to explore royal orixá dances, high-flying capoeira, and samba from a Bahian Carnaval. Streaming at KCET.

Viver Brasil. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Is it a question?

Filmed during the initial Covid–19 shutdown, Emily Mast and Yehuda Duenyas' project *HOW ARE WE*, collected 15 solos, each 90-seconds including from LA choreographers. The possibilities of a plant, the bed sheets, or the corner of a room are among the starting points. Armed with a tennis racket, Carlon contributed *Anesthetized*, admitting that he wanted a socially acceptable reason to scream or grunt like Serena Williams or John McEnroe without looking like nut. Other contributors include Shannon Hafez, Jessica Emmanuel, Stacy Dawson Stearns, Jenny Marytai Liu, Constance Hockaday & Faye Driscoll, Barnett Cohen, Hana Van Der Kolk, Darrian O'Reilly, David Arian Freeland Jr., Heyward Bracey, Mireya Lucio, Dorothy Dubrule, Terrence Luke Johnson, and Mast & Duenyas. Info at How Are We. Stream on Vimeo.

Carlon. Photo courtesy of the artists.

More in the lunchbox

In June, **Dohee Lee'**s scheduled REDCAT performance was cancelled. The venue hopes one day to reschedule a live performance. In the meanwhile, the Korean artist whose skills span dance, drumming, singing and musical composition joins the line-up of prior dance performances from artists including Austyn Rich, Genna Moroni, Tzong-Han Wu, and Rosanna Gamson/World Wide. Info at https://www.redcat.org/. Instagram Channel.

Dohee Lee. Photo by Pak Han.

Moving Offstage

The *Music Center Offstage* continues to stream new and encore video clips and performances from Swing 2020, Cuba's Malpaso Dance Company, Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch, Jung Im Lee Korean Dance Academy, Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts, Infinite Flow, and Spotlight classical and non-classical dance finalists Jacob Jovanni Alvarado, Ashley Lew, Maya Alvarez-Coyne and Bergundi Loyd. https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/.

Ballet Hispanico. Photo by Paula Lobo.

When one was not enough

Instead of its usual annual live performances from Black and Latinx choreographers at the Bootleg Theater, the BlakTinx Dance Festival returned with a viral format in late June. For those who missed that live stream of Dancing on the Edge, the show now continues on-line in four parts with works from Nancy Rivera Gomez, Shantel Ureña, Anthony Aceves, Bernard Brown, Joshua Estrada-Romero, Keilah Lomotey, Michelle Funderburk, Primera Generación, Vannia Ibargüen, Marina Magalhães, Regina Ferguson, Rubi Morales, Amber Morales, Alan Perez, Dorcas Román, Yarrow Perea, Andrea Ordaz, Eluza Santos, Briseyda Zárate, and Sadie Yarrington. With many of the works recently created, the pandemic and the streets were subjects and five pieces from earlier festivals that focused on Black Lives Matter were last minute additions. More info at https://www.blaktinafestival.com/. View all four programs on YouTube.

BlakTinx. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Knock twice & tell them Jacob sent you

Reminiscent of what one did to enter a speakeasy in the 1920s or a Cold War spy meet-up, a select, paying audience was given the address of a Santa Monica airport parking lot with strict instructions on arriving in their cars, remaining in the cars wearing face masks, and turning on their headlights when cued. In perhaps the first “drive in” dance event, Jacob Jonas and his eponymous **Jacob Jonas The Company** performed *Parked* with those vehicles encircling the “stage,” their headlights illuminating the socially spaced dancers performing to live music by Anibal Sandoval. The one-night only event was filmed by Ivan Cash and Daniel Addelson. With the five minute final cut covering interviews with the choreographer and dancers, the actual performance footage is brief, but if the cars flashing their headlights at bows was a kind of applause, the experiment garnered a vehicular standing ovation from the audience. Hopefully, the performance itself will have a separate streaming life. Info at http://jacobjonas.com/. Film on Vimeo.

Jacob Jonas The Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Mask breathing

The scheduled premiere of choreographer Melissa Barak’s first full length contemporary ballet *Memoryhouse* for her **Barak Ballet** was cancelled when Santa Monica’s Broad Stage closed with the statewide coronavirus shutdown. On what would have been the closing night, **Barak Ballet** instead went online with the premiere of *Breathe In,* a short ballet filmed at the grounds at the Holocaust Museum in what formerly was known as Pan Pacific Park in the Fairfax district. The film features Peter Chursin with Andrew Brader, Lucia Connolly, Jessica Gadzinski, Chasen Greenwood, Stephanie Kim, and with choreography by Barak. Also, there’s an opportunity to sign up for the company’s new YouTube channel. Info and streaming at https://barakballet.org/ and Facebook.

Barak Ballet. Photo by Djeneba Aduayom.

Platforms to Submit Video Dance

Dare dancing

With cautions about staying safe while filming, organizers **Sarah Elgart** and Cultural Weekly announced round 4 of *Dare to Dance in Public* with the theme of *Pandemania*, meaning a hyper energized state. Info on the judges, prior winners, plus rules and regulations for submission at: www.dare2danceinpublicfilmfestival.com. The group’s other film endeavor *Six Foot Dances* is still accepting one-minute films. Current submissions on Instagram and Cultural Weekly.

Where to Find Online Dance Classes

Pandemic depression? Get thee to a dance class!

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram and other on-line platforms, many classes free, low cost or suggesting a donation. One central, constantly updated source on dance classes and in-depth reporting on SoCal dance, LA Dance Chronicle lists on-line dance classes including any cost and contact info. Grab a chair or clear off a corner of the room and use this time to dance.

https://www.ladancechronicle.com.

Dance classes listed on LA Dance Chronicle.

VOTE!

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