Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Sweet Deceptions

Ann Haskins · Monday, July 5th, 2021

Live dance reconsiders *Hansel and Gretel* downtown and struts on a Culver City staircase, online anniversary celebrations, notes from a prior pandemic, the best of a dance film fest, spotlighting locavore dance, online encores, where to take online and live dance classes, plus more SoCal dance this week.

Live This Week

Hunger games

One reward in whatever seemingly disparate elements choreographer Rosanna Gamson turns her attention to is how what finally emerges is artistically interwoven in often revelatory ways. From grim histories of famine underlying the sweet-toothed Grimm fairy tale *Hansel and Gretel* to starvation in deadly Revolutionary War prisons, Gamson and her ensemble **Rosanna Gamson/WorldWide** have been developing and showing pieces of *Sugar Houses* for several years. This live performance of *Sugar Houses* with six dancers/singers/actors attacks this dark subject with a gothic horror story approach it merits. Sunday offers a live-streamed performance. REDCAT, Thurs.-Fri., July 8–9, 8:30 p.m. Sat., July 10, 3 & 8:30 p.m. $25, $20 students. OvationTix. Livestreamed on Sun., July 11, 4 p.m., $15, $12 students. REDCAT

Rosanna Gamson/WorldWide. Photo by Rebecca Green.

Stepping out

Those site specific masters from **Heidi Duckler Dance** step up, down, around and over the Culver Steps in *Honest Purpose*. Two days of multiple live performances inaugurate this new public space with live music from a four-piece band led by Dwight Trible. Choreographer Duckler and her troupe have a history with dance theater explorations in this city including the historic Helm's Bakery, a hillside park, and even a technicolor parking lot which explains why the ensemble was the logical choice to introduce a new site likely to become a Culver City destination. Shows run less than an hour, leaving time to explore the site and surrounding area. The Culver Steps, 9300 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Thurs.-Fri., July 8–9, 8 & 9 p.m., $40, $20 students, seniors & Culver City residents. Eventbrite

Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Online This Week

Adding to the trove

For its 2016 Hollywood Bowl commission, **Viver Brasil**'s associate artistic director Vera Passos created *Bloco Afro Motumbaxé.* The work was reprised for the company's 20th anniversary performance at the Ford Theater and is the newest addition to **Viver Brasil**'s weekly online rebroadcast of a past performance. The company's rich repertoire reflects the company's efforts to preserve Brasil's African culture in dance and music. Free at Viver Brasil. The troupe also is part of KCET's *Southland Sessions* streaming at KCET.

Viver Brasil. Photo courtesy of the artists.

L.A. dance gets a little love

The third season of the Music Center's digital series *For the Love of L.A.* keeps adding new videos filled with curated dance, music, and visual arts. The season includes South Asian-American dance with **Shalini Bathina** and 17-year old **Shreya Patel**, Japanese influenced dance in a film directed and performed by Kyoko Takenaka, contemporary dance set in Leimert Park from Brianna Mims, an excursion between beach and backyard from Maya Alvarez-Coyne, Albertossy Espinoza's LA Fusion Dance Theater, and more. Online free, at Music Center.

Brianna Mims. Photo courtesy of the artist.

She does like a good book

Choreographer **Rosanna Gamson** has drawn some of her most compelling work from literature ranging from *Scheherazade* in *Tales of the Arabian Nights* to the Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*, and lectures by theoretical physicist Richard Feynman. Other than Albert Camus' *The Plague*, what could be more appropriate pandemic source material than Boccaccio's *Decameron* with tales from ten strangers sheltering from the bubonic plague? Just as

the tales of the ten travelers unfold one at a time, Gamson's *The Decameron Project* rolls out ten films, each made by a different artist. All ten episodes are now live and viewable for free on RGWW and on Instagram.

Rosanna Gamson/WorldWide. Photo courtesy of the artists.

The last dare

Last chance to view the best from the **Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival: Round 4.** Films stream on demand under the banner *Pandemania!* and hosted by Zebulon LA. The dance films, selected by a panel that includes Cultural Daily's own Sarah Elgart, are divided into programs A and B, viewable together or individually from thru Thurs., July 1, $14.76 at https://link.dice.fm/lsdWN0zIDg

Dare to Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Recent Online Encores

Pulitzer dances

Dance continues to be part of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's digital series *CLOSE QUARTERS*. Choreographer Rebecca Steinberg along with dancers Layne Paradis Willis and Joe Davis collaborated with stage director George Miller in two scheduled works, Ellen Reid's *Lumee's Aria* from the Pulitzer-winning opera *p r i s m* and Benjamin Britten's musical setting of Rimbaud poems, Illuminations. The program also includes the premiere of Peter S. Shin's *Hyo*. Free (donations are welcome) at the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's YouTube channel.

Joe Davis. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Dances with cars

Over three Saturdays, **Suárez Dance Theater** rolled out three short films under the banner *Mapping Our Stories.* Inspired by the histories of Black, Native and LatinX people, each film is set in a Santa Monica public space with often overlooked cultural significance (the city provided funding). Choreographer/performer **Bernard Brown** of bbmoves takes the audience from the landmark Phillips Chapel CME Church (the 1909 church was the first serving the African American Community) to the site of "Inkwell Beach" where Blacks and Browns were restricted in segregated California beaches. Acknowledging her Chumash and Tongva Nations heritage, poet/songwriter **Jessa Calderon**'s film starts overlooking the ocean from Tongva Park. The history of the Westside Classics Car Club in Santa Monica is the focus of the film from **Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC)** and its members Alfonso Cervera, Rosa Rodriguez-Frazier, Irvin Manuel Gonzalez, and Patricia "Patty" Huerta. Each film has resources for further exploration and continue to screen for free at Bernard Brown/bbmoves's "…at leisure…," Jessa Calderon's "Before the Noise," Primera Generación Dance Colletive's "low riting"

Suárez Dance Theater. Photo courtesy of Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC).

Oh, the places we have been

With support from three theaters, The Wallis and The Soraya in SoCal and The Harris in Chicago, **Jacob Jonas The Company** worked with more than 150 artists all over the globe to produce short dance films for the series, *Films.Dance*. Just as vaccination and pandemic restrictions start to allow travel, the 15-week dance film world tour that began in January concluded earlier this month with Emma Rosenzweig-Bock in a film co-directed by Jonas and Ireland-based Kevin McGloughlin. It joins the other 14 short films still viewable at Films.Dance.

Films.Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Online Dance Classes

Pandemic exhaustion? Post-pandemic fitness promise? 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. LA Dance Chronicle.

Dance classes.

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