

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Tensegrity

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, October 8th, 2025

Etta James and Peggy Lee songs back contemporary dance in Thousand Oaks; international dance meets LA in Inglewood and University Park; contemporary ballet in Irvine, Palm Desert, and Downtown LA; Irish dance in Irvine; contemporary dance in Pasadena, Lincoln Heights, Fullerton, Santa Ana, and downtown; classical Japanese dance in Hollywood; tap in Brea; more SoCal dance this busy week, plus a peek at next week.

Live This Week

Last chance for dance gangs

The combined Broadway magic of Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, and Jerome Robbins captured in *West Side Story* launches the **LA Opera** season with a production that sets a dance company worth of movers soaring to an opera orchestra of a size that most theaters can only envy. Robbins' drew on his New York City Ballet as well as his Broadway jazz chops creating dances that fit with Bernstein's melodies and Sondheim's lyrics in a close knit seldom matched before or since. Production choreographer Joshua Bergasse has set Robbins original choreography, as sharp as the finger snap that ignites this iconic, still contemporary retelling of *Romeo and Juliet*. Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., Oct. 8, 7:30 pm, Sat., Oct. 11, 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 12, 2 pm, \$32.50-\$350. [West Side Story](#).



West Side Story. Photo by Todd Rosenberg

Classical fusion

Japan's **Ichinosuke Umekawa** brings the rarely seen classical dance *buyo* that draws from both the refined, masked theater tradition of *noh* and also the dynamic storytelling, bold make up and costumes of *kabuki*. Umekawa trained under Living National Treasure Tamasabur? Band?. The program opens with an introduction to Japanese classical dance followed by the performance. Japan House, Ovation Hollywood, 6801 Hollywood Blvd. (Hollywood & Highland), Hollywood; Sat., Oct. 11, 2 pm, \$10. [Ichinosuke Umekawa](#).

Commuter dance

With its savvy practice of touring to various SoCal theaters, **BODYTRAFFIC** has attracted a strong audience following throughout metro LA. Artistic director Tina F. Burkett has assembled a band of dancers equally artistic and athletic. The troupe has built a national reputation that draws prominent choreographers to create a wide-ranging repertoire. The company opens its season with choreographer Trey McIntyre's sure-fire *Blue Until June* set to Etta James' songs (yes, including "At Last"), Matthew Neenan's *A Million Voices* set to Peggy Lee songs, and *Snap!* choreographed by LA-based Micaela Taylor. Check the website for the full season's venues. Bank of America Performing Arts Center, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Fri., Oct. 10, 8 pm, \$42-\$77. [BODYTRAFFIC](#).



Jordyn Santiago and Anaya Gonzalez of BODYTRAFFIC. Photo by Trey McIntyre

Irish wit

After its debut Off-Broadway last season, **A Taste of Ireland** stops off on a national tour at two local venues. The show surveys Ireland's chaotic history in dance and music. Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs., Oct. 9, 7:30 pm, \$59-\$89. [The Irvine Barclay](#). Also at The Alex Theater, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sat., Oct. 11, 7 pm, \$79-\$89. [The Alex](#).

Audience choice

Choreographer Seda Aybay and the dancers of the contemporary **Kybele Dance Theater** offer the audience the option to observe or participate in *simyaci* which roughly translates as "alchemist." Muckenthaler Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Dr., Fullerton; Thurs., Oct. 9, 7:30 pm, \$35. [Kybele Dance Theater](#).



Kybele Dance Theater. Photo by Yoshi Taniyama

Franco/LA collaborations

Despite the event's unwieldy title, *City of Angels/City of Light: A Transatlantic Dance Performance and Q&A*, is one of several events coming out of a landmark collaboration between **USC Kaufman Dance** and the prestigious **Paris Conservatory**. This program previews work from >**Leïla Ka** and **Bintou Dembélé**, two young French choreographers known for drawing on both street and contemporary dance styles. Each dancemaker will present some of their work performed by undergraduate students from USC Kaufman and students from the Paris Conservatory. A post-performance discussion will be facilitated by Muriel Maffre who wears hats as USC Kaufman faculty as well the Paris Conservatory's Director of Dance. USC Gloria Kaufman International Dance Center, Large Performance Space, 849 34th St., University Park; Thurs.-Fri., Oct. 16-17, 7:30 pm, free w/reservation at [USC City of Angels/City of Light](#).



USC Kaufman Dance. Photo by Hannah Doerr

Playing around again

The dancers of **Andrew Pearson/bodies in play** reunite for *BIP/WIP*, currently described as a 'work in progress.' at Pieter Performance Space, 2701 N. Broadway, Downtown; Sat., Oct. 11, 7:30 pm, free w/reservation at [Bodies in Play reservations](#).



Bodies in Play. Photo courtesy of the artists

Peace work

This work-in-progress showing is a first look at **Reborn Arts'** *Burdens of War*, an immersive part of choreographer Boroka Nagy's *Dance for Peace* headed to New Zealand in November. The Academy of Dance, 2431 N. Tustin Ave., Suite Q, Santa Ana; Thurs., Oct. 16, 6:30 pm, free w/reservation at [Reborn Dance](#).



ReBorn Arts. Photo by Taso Papadakis

Death and live music

Opening its fall season, **American Contemporary Ballet** offers choreographer Lincoln Jones' *Death and the Maiden* and *Burlesque: Variation IX*. As always, the dances are accompanied by live music. ACB Studios, Bank of America Plaza, Co-150, 333 S. Hope St., Downtown; Opens Fri., Oct. 10, then Fri.-Sat., 8 pm, to Sat., Nov. 1, \$65-\$140. [ACB](#).



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Anastasia Petukhova

Starry, starry night

Under artistic director/choreographer Ally Helman, **Ballet Project OC** returns with *Starbound*, a program featuring choreography by Mate Szentes and Helman. The chamber company has attracted top notch ballet dancers including a number of alumni and current members of LA Ballet. This performance includes Leah McCall, Madeline McMillin, Mark David Bloodgood, Skylar Campbell, Skylar Burson, Emily and Ally Helman. New dancers are Sarah Hurty, Nick Sedano, Juliana Godlewski, and Jackie Oakley. Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Thurs., Oct. 16, 8 pm, \$41.25 - \$90. [Ballet Project OC](#).



Ballet Project OC. Photo courtesy of the artists

Coming together

Continuing its three year residency with **Pasadena Dance Theatre**, the program *Convergence* opens the dance season for **Nancy Evans Dance Theatre**. Pasadena Dance Theatre, 1985 Locust St., Pasadena; Sat., Oct. 11, 5:30 pm, \$65 (includes pre-show reception) [NEDT & Pasadena Dance Theatre](#).



Nancy Evans Dance Theatre. Photo courtesy of the artists

Foothill dance

Enjoy some dance and stroll the galleries at *Artnight Pasadena*. **Pennington Dance Group** and **Benita Bike DanceArt** are among the dance groups offering performances at ARC Pasadena, 1158 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; Fri., Oct. 10, 6-10 pm, free. [ARC Pasadena](#).



Pennington Dance Group. Photo by Denise Leitner

Busy dancers

After performing at *Artnight Pasadena*, **Benita Bike DanceArt** offers their free program demystifying modern dance. Los Angeles Mission College, AMP Theatre, 13356 Eldridge Ave., Sylmar; Tues., Oct. 14, 4 pm, free. [Benita Bike's DanceArt](#).



Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble. Photo by Adon Olam

Worldly dance

Explore the world of Jewish dance and music as **Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble** joins the Jewish Symphony and singer/songwriter Liel Kolet in *East Meets West-A World of Jewish Music*. Wilshire Ebell Theatre, 4401 W. 8th St., Hancock Park; Sun., Oct. 12, 4 pm, free, waitlist at [Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble](#).

Thank you for your service

Continuing its impressive work with military veterans, **Diavolo** offers performances of *Escape*. Proceeds will support ongoing military and educational programs. L'Espace Diavolo Studios, 616 Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 6 pm, thru Sun., Nov. 23, 6 pm, \$51.74-\$93.14. [Diavolo – Escape](#).



Diavolo Veterans Project. Photo by George Simian

Tap and art

Expanded from her well received UCLA MFA *Upstart* performance, **Kyreeana Breelin Alexander** combines tap and visual art in *We Cool*. Brea Curtis Theatre, 1 Civic Center Circle, Brea; Thurs.-Fri., Oct. 16-17, 7:30 pm, free with reservation (donation welcomed) at [We Cool](#).

Marking 30 years

New York-based **Complexions Contemporary Ballet** brings artistic director Dwight Rhoden's choreography and athletic dancers led by Desmond Richardson to three local venues. The announced program includes *Retro Suite*, a collection of works by Rhoden created over the company's three decades, plus his 2023 *For Crying Out Loud*, set to U2's music. McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Thurs., Oct. 16, 7 pm, \$72.99-\$132.99. [Complexions-McCallum](#). Also at Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, 415 N. Glassell, Orange; Sat., Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, \$48-\$68. [Complexions-Musco](#). Also at the Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., Downtown; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 24-25, 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 26, 2 pm, \$55-\$163. [Complexions-Dorothy Chandler Pavilion](#).



Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Rachel Neville

Curated dance

Among the performances *Celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day*, look for old style and contemporary jingle dance curated by **Candido Cornejo**, including Maxine Orozco-Begay, Teresa Littlebird, Erica Razo, Kiara Flores, Dylan Goodwill, Lucy Garza, Sonya Flores, Amethyst Vasquez, and Auria Rose Begay. Getty Center, 1200 Getty Center Dr., Brentwood; Sat., Oct. 11, 11:30 am & 2 pm, free. [Celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day](#).

In residence

Following two days of workshops and films, the *Demand to Be Heard* festival concludes with

performances from resident artists **Brian Golden**, **Illeana Vasquez** **Giselle Boustani-Fontenele**, and **Annette Torres**. Wisteria Theater, 7061 Vineland Ave., North Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 12, 6 pm, \$25. [Demand to Be Heard Artists Showcase](#).

Guitar dancing

Known for his prowess on the guitar, **Benise** is also known as a consummate showman, with dancers playing a central role as he plays music ranging from Spanish flamenco to salsa, samba to the waltz. A frequent SoCal visitor, this tour's banner is *25 Years of Passion* at two SoCal venues. Lobero Theatre, 33 E. Canon Perdido St., Santa Barbara; Fri., Oct. 10, 7:30 pm, \$46.50-\$102.50. [Lobero Theatre](#). Also at Fred Kavli Theatre, Bank of America Performing Arts Center, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat., Oct. 11, 7:30 pm, \$33-\$113. [Ticketmaster](#).



Benise. Photo courtesy of the artists

All-styles

The finale after 160 preliminary events across 50 countries, **Red Bull Dance Your Style World Final** promises pure improvisation in an all-styles battle format with the audience deciding who advances. Intuit Dome, 3930 W. Century Blvd., Inglewood; Sat., Oct. 11, 7:30 pm, \$27-\$80. [Red Bull Dance Your Style Finals](#).

Death dance

With dance and music that ranges from traditional to punk, hip-hop, beat music, cumbia, and rock, **Las Cafeteras** brings *Hasta La Muerta*. Across two acts, the LA group follows the journey of La Catrina (patron saint of the dead). The Ford Theatre, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sat., Oct. 11, 8 pm, tickets no longer available as of press time. [Las Cafeteras](#).



Las Cafeteras. Photo courtesy of the artists

How little?

Choreographer turned playwright **Rudi Goblen**'s *Little Boy/Little Man* includes moves from choreographer **Christopher Scott**. Geffen Playhouse, 10886 Le Conte Ave., Westwood; Wed.-Thurs., 7:30 pm, Fri., 8 pm, Sat., 3 & 8 pm, Sun., 2 pm, thru Sun., Nov. 2, \$45-\$139. [Little Boy/Little Man](#).

A Peek at Next Week (October 17-23)

Laurie Sefton Creates — *How We Wear Our Art* at LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown Arts District; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 17-18, 8 pm, \$45. [Laurie Sefton Creates](#).

State Street Ballet — *Romeo & Juliet Suite* with Santa Barbara Symphony at Granada Theatre, Sat., Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 19, 3 pm, \$45-\$198. [State Street Ballet](#).

David Roussève — *Becoming Daddy* at UCLA Nimoy Theatre, Fri.-Sat., Oct. 17-18, 8 pm, \$38.08-\$48.67. [David Rousseve](#).



David Roussève. Photo by Rachel Keane

Brockus Project — *Past-Present-Future, a 15th Anniversary Celebration* at Brockus Project Studios, 618B Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri., Oct. 17, 8:30 pm, Sat., Oct. 18, 6 pm, Sun., Oct. 19, 7 pm, \$20. [Brockus Project](#).

Olé Los Angeles at The Ford, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 19, 11:30 am, [Ole Los Angeles](#).

LA Dance Project — *Gems Trilogy* at Wallis Center for the Performing Arts, 390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Sat., Oct. 23-25. 7:30 pm, \$42.90-\$108.90. [LA Dance Project](#).



LA Dance Project. Photo by Josh Rose

Heidi Duckler Dance — *¡Ordena!* at the Food Cart, Culver City Art Walk, Washington Blvd between Helms Ave. & McManus Ave., Culver City; Sat., Oct. 18, 11 am-3 pm, free. [Heidi Duckler](#).

Viver Brasil — *Rezas e Folhas* at Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 17-18, 7:30 pm, \$12-\$35. [Viver Brasil](#).

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