

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Terpsichorean Trifecta

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, September 17th, 2025

A Robbins/Sondheim/Bernstein jewel dances into downtown; trio of LA cutting-edge dance troupes at USC; Butoh goes seasonal in Venice Beach; late summer dance festival in San Pedro; legacy modern dance in Irvine; contemporary dance in Santa Monica, Glendale, downtown, and in a cornfield; plus more SoCal dance this week, and a peek at next week.

Live This Week

Dance gangs

The singular Broadway magic of Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, and Jerome Robbins captured in the musical *West Side Story*, launches the **LA Opera** season. This new production sets a more than 30 dancers soaring to an opera orchestra of a size that even Broadway theaters cannot match. Robbins' drew on his New York City Ballet as well as his Broadway jazz chops creating dances that mesh with Bernstein's melodies and Sondheim's lyrics in a close-knit weave 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 street retelling of *Romeo and Juliet*. Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Sept. 20, 6 pm, Sun., Sept. 21 & 28, 2 pm, Thurs., Sept. 25, 7:30 pm, Sat., Sept. 28 & Oct. 4, 7:30 pm, \$32.50-\$350. [LA Opera](#).



LA Opera's West Side Story. Photo by Todd Rosenberg

Triple whammy

For 20 years USC's **Visions and Voices** has presented visiting and L.A.-based dance troupes. This year also marks the ten-year anniversary of the USC Kaufman School of Dance. Both milestones are marked with a triple bill of LA-based dance companies, all with ties to USC. **JA Collective**, aka Jordan Johnson and Aidan Carberry, are alums of the 2019 inaugural class at USC Kaufman Dance and have drawn national attention for what one reviewer described as how they "take the finite combination of four limbs each and weave it into thousands of beautiful, complicated connections." LA's preeminent street dance company **Versa-Style Dance Company**, a frequent USC visitor, is also on the program organized by [Ana María Alvarez](#), artistic director of **CONTRA-TIEMPO Activist Dance Theater**, the third company dancing. Each company alone is worth a visit. All three together is quite an anniversary gift. USC Bovard Auditorium, 3551 Trousdale Parkway, University Park; Thurs., Sept. 18, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [USC Decades of Dance](#).



Contra Tiempo. Photo courtesy of the artists

Seasonal shifts

Oguri, Roxanne Steinberg, Mao, and Andres Corchero are the dancers responding to nine prepared images, titles, or concepts. Alex Cline, Jia Ma, and Aaron Shaw provide live music in *Sky*, this improvisational episode, the latest *Flower of the Season* from **Bodyweather Laboratory**. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri.-Sat., Sept. 19-20, 8 pm, Sun., Sept. 21, 3 pm, \$20. [Body Weather Laboratory](#).



Oguri. Photo courtesy of the artist

Two to share

Choreographer/dancers **Megan Paradowski** and **Rosalyn LeBlanc** share the stage as LA Dance Project presents *2025 LAUNCH:LA*. The series showcases LA-based artists, emphasizing emphasis on experimentation, collaboration, and the creation of bold new work. A Q&A follows the Sat. show. LA Dance Project Studios, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown Arts District; Fri-Sat., Sept. 19-20, 8 pm, Sun., Sept. 21, 2 & 6 pm, \$25, \$20 students/senior. [LAUNCH:LA](#).



Limón Dance Company. Photo by Drew Leon.

Legendary legacies

Founded by modern dance legends José Limón and Doris Humphrey, the legacy dance company **Limón Dance Company** brings a program showcasing dances that made them legends. Limón's *Orfeo* retells the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, his *Moor's Pavane* captures the Shakespeare tragedy in a succinct pas de quatre, and his *A Suite of A Choreographic Offering* pays tribute to Humphrey, while Humphrey is represented by her early masterpiece *Two Ecstatic Themes*. Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs., Sept. 25, 8 pm, \$34-\$140. [Irvine Barclay](#).

September dance fest

The end of summer welcomes an exuberant outpouring of local dance at the free, *al fresco* **San Pedro Festival of the Arts**. Directed and curated by choreographer Louise Reichlin, this year's fest brings 18 dance companies (complete list at the website). In addition to the performances, audiences can join the interactive *2 Moves*, where dance troupes teach two steps from their dance. Reminder: hats, sunblock, and comfortable shoes advised. Peck Park (upper lawn next to the Community Center), 560 N. Western Ave., San Pedro; Sat., Sept. 20, 1-4:15 pm, free. [San Pedro Festival of the Arts](#).



San Pedro Festival of the Arts. Photo courtesy of the artists

Immersive trouble

Born in what was then Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, **Nora Chipaumrie** grew up in colonial Africa. She confronts colonial legacies in *Dambudzo*, which translates as “trouble.” The immersive work blends dance, sound, and visual art to conjure up the type of informal bar inside private residences where politics was discussed and community action planned. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd. St., Downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Sept. 25-27, 8 pm, \$27, \$22 students. [REDCAT](#).



Nora Chipaumrie. Photo courtesy of Festival d'Automne

A dust up

Subtitled “a play by Oscar Falcon,” *Dust Dance* from **TWIG Group** experiments with stamina, grief, violence and love. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Fri.-Sat., Sept. 19-20, 8 pm, \$25. [Highways](#).



011668. Photo by Benjamin Anderson

What's forever?

A cornfield provides the setting for interdisciplinary artist **011668** who draws on Butoh dance, tokusatsu and film noir. The event is part of *LACE Forever*. Cornfield at Metabolic Studio, 1745 N. Spring St., Chinatown; Thurs., Sept. 25, 8:30 pm, \$55-\$108.55, \$28.52 students (w/fees). [Eventbrite](#).

New edition

With a significant list of commercial credits and a weekly class, Hannah Gallagher has gathered about 100 dancers, ranging from professional to aspirational, for her **HMG The Company**. After a successful show last year, the dancers return with *Continuum* at The Alex Theater, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Fri., Sept. 19, 7 pm, \$29-\$79. [The Alex Theater](#).

A Peek at Next Week — Sept. 26 to Oct. 2 (Yikes! October already?)

Yolanda Arroyo, Susana Elena & Albertossy Espinoza with Paco Arroyo — *Ecos De España* at West Hollywood Library, 625 N. San Vicente Blvd., West Hollywood; Sat., Sept. 27, 4 pm, free. [WeHo](#).

Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival — *10th Anniversary* at LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown Arts District; Sat., Sept. 27, 7:30 pm, Sun., Sept. 28, 5:30 pm, \$25, \$20 students, \$40 festival pass for both days. [Tickets](#).

LA Opera — *West Side Story* (simulcast) at two locations on Sat., Sept. 27, free w/reservations strongly advised. At Santa Monica Pier, 200 Santa Monica Pier, Santa Monica; [LA Opera at The Beach](#); also at Alta Loma Park, 3330 N. Lincoln Ave., Altadena, [LA Opera at The Park](#).

Backhausdance — Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, 117 N. Sycamore, Santa Ana; Sat., Sept. 27, 2 pm, free. [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo courtesy of the artists

Dream Screen at Stomping Ground LA, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Fri., Sept 26, 7-9 pm, \$28.25. [Tickets](#).

Folklorico Revolución — *Tributo a Los Grandes: José José, Juan Gabriel & Vicente Fernández* at the Ford Theatre, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Sept. 28, 7:30 pm, \$44-\$67. [Folklorico Revolucion](#).



SF Ballet's "Frankenstein" with
Max Cauthorn and Wei Wang. Photo by Erik Tomasson

San Francisco Ballet and the **Pacific Symphony** — *Frankenstein* at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Thurs.-Fri., Oct. 2-3, 7:30 pm, Sat., Oct. 4, 2 & 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 5, 1 pm, \$59-\$179. [SCFTA](#).

Soledad Barrio Noche Flamenca — *Searching for Goya* at Smothers Theater, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu; Thurs., Oct. 2, 7:30 pm, \$30.50-\$58. [Pepperdine University](#). Also at Carpenter Performing Arts Center, Cal State University Long Beach, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Oct. 4, 8 pm, \$38.75-\$78.75. [Tickets](#).

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