

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

The Spillway Season

Ann Haskins · Thursday, September 24th, 2026

End of summer dance fest in San Pedro; Leonard Cohen songbook ballet in Irvine and Palm Desert; contemporary ballet triptych in Santa Monica; flamenco dancers from Spain; Philippine gong dance in Sierra Madre; contemporary dance in Santa Monica; celebrated South Asian dancers in Redondo Beach; Aztec dance, Chinese opera dance, and contemporary dance articulate theater in Malibu, Downtown LA, and East Hollywood; more SoCal dance this week, plus a peek at next week.

Live Performance This Week (ending October 1)

Three to the pointe

Coming off their successful debut at the Hollywood Bowl earlier this month, the dancers of **Los Angeles Ballet** close September and open their 2026-2027 season with *American Icons*, showcasing a triptych of works by Jerome Robbins, Paul Taylor, and LAB artistic director Melissa Barak. Taylor's light-hearted *Dilly Dilly* draws on the Burl Ives songbook. Robbins' murderous *The Cage* is considered his dark revision of *Giselle*, as if she offered revenge not forgiveness to the lover who betrayed her. Barak reprises *Wavelength* which debuted in January to very positive reviews. At the BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., Sept. 24-26, 7:30 pm, Sun., Sept. 27, 2 pm, \$64.50-\$115 (+ fees). [Los Angeles Ballet](#).



Los Angeles Ballet in "Wavelength." Photo by Cheryl Mann Productions.

Hallelujah!

With a program bound to have fans of Leonard Cohen's songbook joining contemporary ballet lovers, **Ballet Jazz Montréal** arrives on tour with *Dance Me: Music by Leonard Cohen*. Two SoCal venues host this excellent Canadian company's return with its proven program devoted to music by the evocative Canadian music maker. Fortunately, neither dance nor music are among items caught up in the current tariff kerfuffle. At the Irvine Barclay Theatre, UC Irvine, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine; Thurs., Sept. 24, 8 pm, \$44-\$145. [Ballets Jazz Montreal](#). Also at McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Sat., Sept. 26, 8 pm, \$60-\$135. [Ballets Jazz Montreal](#).



Ballets Jazz de Montréal. Photo courtesy of the artists.

India four

There will be solos, ensemble work, and live music at *A Festival of Bharata Natyam*, yet the real draw is the presence of **Rama Vaidyanathan, Ramaa Bharadvaj, Vidhya Subramanian, and Rasika Kumar**, four celebrated artists together on the same stage for the first time. The event offers a rare chance to view the range of this South Asian dance tradition as embodied by four celebrated dancers. As of press time, it is close to sold out. No info at website yet on wait list/standby options. At Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Redondo Beach; Sun., Sept. 27, 2 pm, \$50-\$100. [Festival of Bharata Natyam](#).



Dance India. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Gong dancing

Founded by artists, scholars, and dancers, **Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble (PKE)** began as an effort to preserve and perform Southern Philippine dance built around the sound of the *kulintang*, an instrument with a row of tuned and knobbed gongs. The SoCal group has grown into a knowledgeable and entertaining performance group that brings its music and dance to this family-friendly event. At the Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Sept. 26, 11 am, \$20. [Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble](#)



Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble. Photo by R.Profet

Brand of resistance

A trio of dance artists with roots in California, **Zaquia Luisa Salinas, Sergio Barrientos, & Guillermo Castro**, bring *A Call to Prayer*, blending dance and ritual with electronic sound. At Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Sept. 25-26, 8 pm, \$25. [Call to Prayer](#).



Zaquia Luisa Salinas. Photo courtesy of the artist.

From Spain, with love

Flamenco artists from Spain bring *The Love Flamenco World Tour* to town for one show. Dancers **Fuensanta Blanco, Vero La India**, and **Ricardo “El Tete” Fernández** join acclaimed musicians and singers at the Alex Theater, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Fri., Sept. 25, 7 pm, \$43-\$145. [Love Flamenco](#).

Fall fest

Originally known as the Tri-Arts Festival, the **San Pedro Festival of the Arts**, celebrates 20 years this year. Under the direction of choreographer Louise Reichlin, the fall festival again presents a family-friendly, *al fresco* sampling of SoCal dance and music. Announced performers include CYBERYOGA, Dhoon Dance, The Mcculla Movement, Jose Costas Contempo Ballet, Emilio

Castellón and Dancers, DCX, Little Women Ballet Company, San Diego Circus Center (in collaboration with choreographer Robert Gilliam, Rhythm Foundation of Dance & Performing Arts, Southern California Dance Theatre, Sahlala Dancers, Mosaique Dance Company, Jazz Spectrum Dance Company, Spectrum Dance Center, Sacred Heart Dance Project, Gilmztm, Pasion Flamenca LA and Guests, Encore Dance Company/The Academy of Dance, Brockus Red, Louise Reichlin & Dancers, and Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers. The website has more detail. At Peck Park, upper lawn next to Community Center, 560 N. Western Ave., San Pedro; Sat., Sept. 26, 1 to 4:30 pm, free. [San Pedro Festival of the Arts](#).



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

Railroad dancing

Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang drew on the 1867 Chinese Railway Workers strike as the backdrop for *The Dance and the Railroad* where dance-infused Chinese opera becomes a bond for two striking railroad workers building the transcontinental railroad. The western portion was built by a labor force, at least 80% of which were Chinese immigrants. They faced harsher duties, longer hours, made less than half the pay of white workers, and in 1867, went on strike over working conditions after an explosion killed one white and five Chinese workers. The play requires actors who also can meet the dance demands of classical Chinese opera. Presenters Artists at Play & Latino Theater Company found those actors/dancers in **Tony Jin** and **Scott Keiji Takeda**, who appeared together this summer in East West Players' Hwang's updated *Flower Drum Song* where Chinese opera dance also played a central role. The duo now reapply those Chinese opera and dance skills in a this new revival of another Hwang work. At LA Theater Center, 514 S. Spring St., Downtown LA; Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 2 pm, thru Nov. 1, \$48 (+fee). [The Dance and the Railroad](#).



Sawyer Shines, Sarah Ann Sulewski. Corina Vela in rehearsal for Roots & Wings Project. Photo by Brianna Rose Photography.

Getting to the root of it

The Roots and Wings Project returns with its newest, *Realm of the River*. Street dancer **Boogie Frantick** provides the moves for the theatrical endeavor. At Rosenthal Theater, Inner-City Arts, 720 Kohler St., Downtown LA Fashion District; Fri.-Sat, Sept. 25-26, 8 pm, Sun., Sept. 27, 2 pm, \$25. [Realm of the River](#).



Antigone: In the Language of Kings. Photo by Craig Schwartz Photography.

Emperors will be emperors

Exploring parallels between classical Greece and pre-Hispanic Mexico, LA's **Latino Theater Company** reimagines and adapts Sophocles' *Antigone*, using dance to bring onstage the battles and other important actions that usually are offstage and only described. Set in the Getty Villa's replica Greek amphitheater, *Antigone: The Language of Kings* employs subtitles as the actors move among English, Spanish, and the Aztec language Nahuatl to tell the timeless tale of someone caught between a new emperor's decree to leave a vanquished rival unburied and Antigone's family and

religious duty to observe burial rituals despite the penalty of her own death. And complicating matters, the emperor is Antigone's uncle and the unburied body is her brother. The annual fall amphitheater events have a history of adventurous presentations of classical theater that capture the past and resound with today. Getty Villa Amphitheater, [17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Malibu](#); Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm, thru Sat., Oct. 3. \$30-\$45. [Antigone: In the Language of Kings](#).

Shag on over

Dancers who know their stuff are a big part of the musical **Shag with a Twist**. Led by Shag (Josh Agle), a Tupperware party in the 1960s becomes the scene of the murder, a mystery that must be solved amid the pupu platters and bouffant hair styles. Guests are encouraged to come in their best 'mod' fashion and enjoy the fun. At the Grand Annex Music Hall, 434 W. 6th St., San Pedro; Sat., Sept. 26, & Oct. 3, 8 pm, \$55-\$65.87. [Shag with a Twist](#).



Shag With a Twist. Photo by J. Hill Photo.

Club dancing

Choreographed by Jeremy Lucas (who also directs and co-wrote), **Club 27** is an original, dance-drenched, rock musical. The production boasts music arranged and conducted by James Lent. At Jaxx Theatre, 5432 Santa Monica Blvd., East Hollywood; Thurs.- Sat., 8 pm, Sun., 7 pm, thru Fri., Oct. 30, \$29-\$75. [Club 27](#).

Moving sculptures

This month's edition of the city's *Art Walk* finds the dance sculptures at one gallery augmented by live dancers from **Laguna Dance**. At Dawson Cole Fine Art Gallery, 326 Glenneyre St., Laguna Beach; Thurs., Oct. 1, 6:30 pm, free. [Laguna Dance-Art Walk](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Kira Bartoli.

Season opener

Set among the flora and fauna, **Backhausdance** performs *Hive in the Garden* at this season opening event and fundraising gala. At Sherman Library & Garden, 2647 East Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar; Sat., Sept. 26, 6 pm, \$54 and up. [Backhausdance Season Opening](#)

A Peek at Next Week (October 2 to 8)

Ronald K Brown/Evidence at the Wallis, Bram Goldsmith Theater, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Sat., Oct. 8-10, 7:30 pm, \$35.20-\$101.70 (includes fees). [Ronald K Brown/Evidence](#).

Little Women Ballet at Heritage Square Museum, 3800 Homer St., South Pasadena; Fri.-Sun., Oct. 2-4, 6:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., Oct. 3-4, 3 pm, \$68. [Little Women Ballet](#).

Akram Khan Company — *Thikra, a Night of Remembering* at the Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Tues., Oct. 6, 7:30 pm, \$20-\$100. <https://artsandlectures.ucsb.edu/>. Also at UCLA, Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Sat., Oct. 10, 8 pm, \$45.08-\$72.02. [Akram](#)

[Khan Company](#).

Laurie Sefton Creates — *Seeing Red* at LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown LA Arts District; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 2-3, 8 pm, Sun., Oct. 4, 5 pm, \$45-\$75. [Laurie Sefton Creates](#).



Laurie Sefton Creates. Photo by Denise Leitner.

Benita Bike's DanceArt at LA Mission College, AMP Theatre, 13356 Eldridge Ave., Sylmar; Tues., Oct. 6, 4 pm, free. [Benita Bike's DanceArt](#).

Cantilever Collective — *Night Shift* at Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 2-3, 8 pm, \$30. [Cantilever Collective](#).

Max 10 at the Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Mon., Oct. 5, 7:30 pm, \$10. [Max 10](#).

Pacifico Dance Company at McCallum Theatre, 7300 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert; Fri., Oct. 2, 7 pm, \$15-\$25. [Pacifico Dance Company](#).

Ballet of Lights — *Sleeping Beauty* at the BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sun., Sept. 13, Sun., Oct. 4, 4 & 6 pm, \$43-\$69. [Ballet of Lights](#).

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