

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

The Ukraines Are Coming! The Ukraines Are Coming!

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, May 16th, 2018

A U.S./Cuba artists collaboration ends in Northeast L.A., site specific dance set against a Glendale hillside, two classical ballets from Ukraine's national company in an historic downtown movie palace, an L.A. troupe opens in its new Arts District home, and more SoCal dance this week.

5. A sleeping princess

Pacific Festival Ballet welcomes Los Angeles Ballet principal dancer Tigran Sargsyan and LAB soloist Laura Chachich as guest artists in *Sleeping Beauty*. A cast of 80 dancers from this training company perform with PFB's Talia Lebowitz as the sleeping princess. Kavli Theatre, Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, 2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks; Sat., May 19, 2 & 7 p.m., \$34. <http://www.ticketmaster.com>, 800-745-3000.



Pacific Festival Ballet guest artist Tigran Sargsyan. Photo by Reed Hutchinson.

4. Preview and critique

In advance of shows focused on choreography by George Balanchine, **American Contemporary Ballet's** *Dancing School* series offers a Balanchine variation with the dancers critiqued by company artistic director Lincoln Jones. ACB Studios, The Bloc, 700 S. Flower St., 32nd floor, downtown; Sun., May 20, 4 p.m., \$40-\$80. <http://acbdances.com>, <https://tickets.vendini.com>.



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Will Davidson.

3. Site-specific dance in a hillside setting

This long-running series presents mostly contemporary dance troupes in a library gallery backed by an idyllic view of the mountains. Now curated by Jamie Nichols who has strong credentials finding rising choreographers and companies deserving attention, this season's series closes with **Kevin Williamson + Company** creating a new site specific work honoring heroic women for this venue nestled in the hills above Glendale. Brand Library and Art Center, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale; Sat., May 19, 4 p.m., free. www.brandlibrary.org.



Kevin Williamson + Company. Photo by Rafael Hernandez.

2. Opening up the new studio

LA Dance Project's local performances regrettably have been few and far between. Benjamin Millepied and LADP have taken some chiding for being largely absent from L.A. despite benefiting from the caché of L.A. in its name during its many tours. That seems to be changing with increasing local shows including two performances in the past year as part of a residency at Beverly Hills' Wallis Annenberg Theater. A watershed moment may be the opening of its own studio, offices and performance space that hosts two weekends of *Live from 2245* a title which should also help audiences recall the arts district address. Program A pairs Noe Soulier's *Second Quartet* with the L.A. premiere of Millepied's *Bach Studies (Part I)*. Program B includes *Martha Graham Duets* drawn from Martha Graham's larger works and Millepied's *the Other Side* and his *Hearts & Arrows*. Program schedule is on the website. <http://www.LADanceProject.org>. L.A. Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Fri.-Sat., May 25-27, Thurs.-Sat., May 30-June 2, 8 p.m., \$25, \$20 students. <https://www.artful.ly/la-dance-project>.



LA Dance Project's "Graham Duets". Photo by James Welling.

1. Launching a U.S. tour

This 150-year old **National Ballet of Ukraine** opens its 11-city U.S. debut tour with performances of *Sleeping Beauty* (Friday) and *Don Quixote* (Saturday), both technically demanding full length ballets. Based in Kiev, the company is a bastion of Russian classical ballet boasting more than 150 dancers and a history of producing international stars like Alina Cojocaru who was seen here with Britain's Royal Ballet and Vladimir Malakhov, Maxim Beloserkovsky and Irana Dvorovento who performed in L.A. with American Ballet Theater. The company frequently tours Europe, but never made it to the U.S.—until now. Selection of the Orpheum Theater, one of downtown's magnificent old time movie palaces, is in keeping with the grand opera house the company is used to at home. Orpheum Theatre, 842 S. Broadway, downtown; Fri., May 18, 8 p.m., Sat., May 19, 7 p.m., \$38-\$153. https://www1.ticketmaster.com/the-national-ballet-of-ukraine-presents-los-angeles-california-05-18-2018/event/0900544FC74E79B4?artistid=844886&majorcatid=10002&minorcatid=12&m_link=browse_msg-0_0900544FC74E79B4.



National Ballet of Ukraine's "Don Quixote". Photo courtesy of NBU.

Other dance of note:

Under the direction of Jae Lee and Mark Tomasic, Santa Monica College's **Synapse Dance** takes the stage with a program of mostly contemporary dance. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Fri., May 18, 7:30 p.m., Sat., May 19, 4 & 7:30 p.m., \$20 in advance, \$22 at door. <http://www.smc.edu/dance>.



Synapse Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

The future of U.S./Cuban relations looked brighter than at any time in half a century when CalArts' **Acercamiento/The Approach** originally launched three years ago. In the darkening shadows of a new presidential administration's retrenchment on Cuba, the once highly optimistic interdisciplinary collaborative endeavor of U.S. and Cuban artists winds down on a somber note

in *Acercamiento/The Approach: Cuban and American Artists Come Together for a Last Hurrah*. Overseen by Evelyn Serrano, Cuban and American artists gather for performances and exhibitions that include an interactive and site-specific choose-your-own-ending performance by Fiona Dornberger, Serrano's *RUEDA* for three women plus multiple art and performance installations. Boathouse Gallery, Plaza de la Raza, 3540 N. Misson Rd., Northeast L.A., May 18, 6:30 p.m. free.

More than 100 take the stage in **LA Unbound 2018** with 23 dances covering a spectrum of genres including contemporary, tap, hip hop, and ballet. Details at <https://www.launbound.com>. El Portal Theatre, 11206 Weddington St., North Hollywood; Sat., May 19, 4 & 8 p.m., \$15-\$19. <https://ci.ovationtix.com/371/production/991028?performanceId=10277211>.



LA Unbound 2018. Photo by Colette Miller

Local dancers and musicians perform in the third annual **Dragon Boat Festival**. Cal Lutheran University, Samuelson Chapel, 165 Chapel Lane, Thousand Oaks; Sat., May 19, 7 p.m., free. https://www.callutheran.edu/calendar/event.html?event_id=4176#event.

This al fresco performance of *Global Water Dances* by **Vannia Ibarguen Dance Arts** is free and part of the Long Beach Water Department's *Lawn to Garden Festival*. Info on the festival and free garden tour at <http://lblawntogarden.com>. Long Beach Water Department, 1800 E. Wardlow Rd., Long Beach; Sat., May 19, 1 p.m., free. <http://lblawntogarden.com>.

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