

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Virtuosic Tasks and Overindulging Ends a Festival

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, February 6th, 2019

A quartet tackles dire times in Santa Monica, Fred & Ginger recreated in a high rise, presidential gestures under consideration in Mid-City, a site-specific choreographer heads inside downtown, the return of Matthew Bourne and more SoCal dance this week.

5. Making in L.A.

Choreographer **Jay Carlon**'s work has had a site specific focus and previously was seen at SoCal beaches, parking lots, and private residences. This time he moves indoors with *FLEX*, the inaugural product of L.A. Dance Project's *Making LA* residency program. Growing up as the youngest child in a large Filipino Catholic family may explain how Carlon gravitated to competitive wrestling, and the choreographer draws upon both experiences in his new 60-minute work. The action moves from the personal to larger concerns with colonization, obedience, resistance, and solidarity. Ten dancers are joined by baritone/actor David Castillo and a score by Grammy Award-winning composer Alex Wand. LA Dance Project Studios: 2245, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Thurs.-Sun., Feb. 7-10, 8 p.m. \$30. <https://www.artful.ly/store/events/16826>.



Jay Carlon's "Flex". Photo courtesy of L.A. Dance Project.

4. Dire Dances

Comfy couches and this venue's signature fireplace greet the audience along with a quartet of performances in this edition of **Fireside at the Miles**. Curated by choreographer **Suchi Branfman**, each offering in **Field Notes: Dances in Dire Times** shines a light on realities not commonly on view. Branfman's contribution focuses on one mother's 14-year Sisyphean effort to consider the many who regularly travel by bus endless hours and miles to visit husbands and sons incarcerated in remote prisons. In a series of small dances fueled by sugar and desire **Bernard Brown/bbmoves** offers observations on queerness, borders, and lasting effects of colonialism. The flux that is the Mexican American identity is the subject of *Ni Fu, Ni Fa* from the four artists who comprise **Primera Generacon Dance Collective**. Segueing from her recent work about her immigrant grandmother's battle with Alzheimer's disease, **Rosanna Tavarez**'s new work-in-progress considers her mother, who immigrated from the Dominican Republic and the tragic events on the day immigration officers raided the factory where her mother worked. Miles Memorial Playhours, Christine Reed Park, 1130 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica; Sat., Feb. 9, 8 p.m., \$10, \$5 senior and student. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/suchi-branfman-special-guests-fireside-at-the-miles-tickets->

53110780775?aff=ebdssbdestsearch.



Bernard Brown/bbmoves in “Field Notes Dances in Dire Times”. Photo courtesy of the artist.

3. Cinderella goes underground

While he may never seize public attention as ferociously as his transformation of *Swan Lake* with its male swans in feathered knickers, **Matthew Bourne’s Cinderella** displays the master’s uncanny ability to transform ballet into a theatrical experience that can run for weeks while most ballet’s barely extend a full weekend. Bourne retained the Prokofiev ballet score and the basic architecture of the fairy tale but as is his wont, set the action in WWII London during the blitz, reconsidered the fairy godmother as a male who is equally an angel of death, and moved the pivotal meeting from a palace ballroom to a kind of underground nightclub that actually existed despite the German bombings. Reviews from London suggest Bourne has tinkered with the choreography and other details since the original was seen here in the 1990s. Music Center Ahmanson Theatre, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Tues.-Fri., 8 p.m., Sat., 2 & 8 p.m., Sun., 1 & 6:30 p.m., thru Sun., March 10, \$30-\$175. <https://www.centertheatre.org/tickets/ahmanson-theatre/2018-19/new-adventures-matt-hew-bourne-cinderella>.



Matthew Bourne’s “Cinderella.” Photo by Johan Persson.

2. Presidential gesturing

To start the new year, two international guests join L.A.-based **Clairobscur Dance** in this shared dance concert. The Polish contemporary troupe **Zawirowania Dance Theatre** offers Karolina Krocak’s exploration of what excites us in *Runway* while an alum of Israel’s Batsheva Dance Company, dancer/choreographer **Ido Tadmor**, performs a new solo work. Clairobscur Dance’s artistic director Laurie Sefton reprises her *Supremacy Ride* considering gestures of the current U.S. president and other world leaders drawing on Gorecki’s music *Quasi Una Fantasia*. Mimoda Dance Studio/Theater at Paper or Plastik Café, 5774 Pico Blvd., Mid-City; Sun., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m., \$20. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/clairobscur-dance-with-special-guests-zawirowania-dance-theatre-and-ido-tadmor-tickets-54956123244#tickets>.



Clairobscur Dance “Supremacy Dance”. Photo by Denise Leitner.

1. Festival finale

After more than forty years as one of L.A.’s most vibrant live theaters, three years ago the Odyssey Theatre launched its own dance festival. **Dance at the Odyssey 2019** has offered a splendid curated sampling of contemporary dance from L.A.-based artists. Virtuoso tasks, tangled dancers, a solo considering indulgence, and a larger ensemble work from **Kevin Williamson + Company** are the calling card for the sixth week and the festival’s final shows. Dancers include Barry Brannum, Mallory Fabian, Sebastian Hernandez, and Carol McDowell with 11 BFA students from Cal State University Long Beach where Williamson is on the faculty. Odyssey Theatre Ensemble,

2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., W.L.A.; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 8-9, 8 p.m., Sun., Feb. 10, 2 p.m., \$25. 310-477-2055, www.OdysseyTheatre.com.



Kevin Williamson + Dancers. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Other dance of note:

Reprising its recreation of five Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers' dance numbers, **American Contemporary Ballet** offers *Astaire Dances 2: Fred & Ginger*. This edition adds pas de deux from George Balanchine's *Who Cares?* The performances include a show on Valentines' Day. AMC Studios, 860 S. Los Angeles St., Suite 1100, downtown; Fri., Feb. 8 & 15, 8 p.m., Sat., Feb. 9 & 16, 4 p.m., Sun., Feb. 10, 4 p.m., Thurs., Feb. 14, 8 p.m., Sun., Feb. 17, 1 & 4 p.m., \$45-\$90. <https://www.acbdances.com>.



American Contemporary Ballet's "Astaire Dances2: Fred & Ginger". Photo by Victor Demarchelier.

In addition to the usual DJ, glitter bar, singers, and Instagram opportunities, *Quinceañera Reimagined*, the latest edition of **Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours** includes favorite quince dances created and performed with a contemporary touch by award-winning choreographer Leslie Ferreira. Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Feb. 9, 11:30 p.m.-3 a.m., \$20 in advance, \$30 at door. <https://www.musiccenter.org/sleepless>.



"Sleepless: The Music Center After Dark." Photo courtesy of the Music Center.

A hit at the 2017 Edinburgh Festival, *MOUTHPIECE* captures a woman's struggles as she goes through the day following her mother's death. Combining movement, *a capella* harmonies and text to explore universal themes through a specific woman's loss and search for herself, the work was developed by Amy Nostbakken and Norah Sadava, the co-founders of Toronto-based **Quote Unquote Collective** in association with Toronto's Why Not Theatre. In keeping with the informality of the Scotland festival, the work is presented in a rehearsal room. UCLA Royce Hall, Rehearsal Room, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Fri-Sat., Feb. 8-9, 8 p.m., \$49. 310-825-2101, <http://cap.ucla.edu>.



Quote Unquote Collective's "Mouthpiece". Photo by Joel Clifton.

A harbinger of 2019 centennial activities celebrating the life and legend of the late modern dance choreographer **Merce Cunningham**, *Clouds and Screens*, includes two large works by Andy Warhol and Charles Atlas, both artists associated with Cunningham's company. The installation also includes two early videos of Cunningham's work with performances and more to come during the exhibition's run. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Hancock Park; Thurs.-Tues., thru March 31, \$25, \$21 students & seniors (museum admission). http://www.lacma.org/event/memprev_merce2.



Merce Cunningham. Photo by Jack Mitchell courtesy of Getty Images.

Note to readers: In keeping with the growing activity surrounding the **Cunningham Centennial**, LA Dance Chronicle is providing a place for individuals who worked with Merce Cunningham, saw his work or otherwise just want to say something about Merce Cunningham to participate in the Centennial remembrance. L.A. Dance Chronicle founder Jeff Slayton danced with Cunningham's company and championed the idea of a place individuals could post a remembrance or comment about Merce Cunningham, his dance works or his legacy. The **Cunningham Centennial Page** now is live at the website (<http://LADanceChronicle.com>). Comments will be collected and passed on to the Cunningham Trust.

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