

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Visceral Imagery

Ann Haskins · Thursday, October 16th, 2025

Tattoos, fashion, and dance intertwine in LA Arts District; revered choreographer goes solo in Westwood; three days of choreography in Lincoln Heights; Brazilian dance in Sierra Madre; contemporary ballet in Irvine, Santa Barbara, Palm Desert, Orange, and Downtown LA; tap in Brea; French dancers join in at University Park; flamenco in the Hollywood Hills; a dancing food truck in Culver City; more SoCal dance this busy week, plus a peek at next week.

Live This Week

Learned and still learning

A revered force as a dancer, choreographer, and teacher, David Roussève and his company **David Roussève/REALITY** embody fearlessness. In his latest, *Becoming Daddy AF*, Roussève faces off with aging and confronts universal and personal issues absorbed into his body—the shattering joy of unconditional love, tumultuous wrestlings with HIV, the despairing loss of a husband of 26 years, and other truths drawn drawn from 35 years of dancemaking and 65 years of living. Roussève's stature inside and outside of the LA dance world is suggested by in the long list of national institutions co-commissioning this work including CAP UCLA, National Center for Choreography—Akron, MASS MoCA, Kelly Strayhorn Theater, National Performance Network, and the James A. Doolittle Endowment. UCLA Nimoy Theatre, 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 17-18, 8 pm, \$38.08-\$48.67. [David Rousseve](#).



David Roussève. Photo by George Lugg

Tit for Tats

Tattoos, fashion, and the human body have been on choreographer Laurie Sefton's mind for three years. Now, the dancers of **Laurie Sefton Creates** share where that thinking has led in *How We Wear Our Art*. Sefton developed the new work in collaboration with tattoo artist Reiley Johnson, fashion designer Sophie Isabella Popham, sculptor/set designer Bryan Curt Kostors, and composer Andy Bright to bring the work to life. Dancers are Carmen Callahan, Ishaun Jackson-Moaney, Jolyn Lambey, Rose Lindblom, Harry Louis (10/18), Zachary Medina (10/17), Kyle Schrader (10/18), Jane Zogbi, and understudy Kira Bartholomew. Also, there's a post show talk with the artists. LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Downtown Arts District; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 17-18, 8 pm, \$45. [Laurie Sefton Creates](#).



Zachary Medina of Laurie Sefton Creates. Photo by Tatiana Wills

And they make dances

Three nights of performances, a choreography competition, and a party fill the weekend as **Brockus Project** celebrates its 15th Anniversary with *Past-Present-Future*. The festivities also celebrate the multiple contributions of choreographer/producer/educator and all around instigator of good trouble, Deborah Brockus. Opening night showcases work by choreographers who got their start in residencies at Brockus Project Studios including Alondra Perez, Charlotte k Smith, Tashara Gavin-Moorehead, Gretchin Ackerman, Eliezer Rabelo. Jill Gregory, Maryam Malmir,

Sean Greene, also Brockus' second company. Saturday's main event spotlights **BrockusRED & Friends** (Deborah Brockus (BrockusRED), Ken Morris, Maura Townsend Dance, Charlotte K. Smith, Sean Greene) followed by a celebration party. Sunday afternoon boasts a choreography competition with the audience voting the winners from among Mia Moraru, Aysha Cunningham, Margaux Gex, Emilio Castellon, Marissa Mahoney, Beth Huelsenbeck, Anisa Johnson, Jordan Diamond, Jesse Ocampo (PaperCrane Project), Hannah Joo, Elaina Greenawalt, Emily & Tanz Tanz Revolution. 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](#).



BrockusRED. Photo by Denise Leitner.

All that glitters

After last month's world premiere at Australia's *Brisbane Dance Festival*, SoCal gets the U.S. premiere of **LA Dance Project's** *Gems Trilogy*. Choreographer Benjamin Millepied combined three earlier ballets—*Reflections* (2013, with music by David Lang), *Hearts & Arrows* (2014, with music by Philip Glass), and *On the Other Side* (2016, more music by Philip Glass), reworking aspects of each, particularly the last one. The endeavor pays homage to George Balanchine's ballet *Jewels* which was inspired and underwritten by high-end jeweler Van Cleef and Arpels, also a major sponsor of LADP. New York sees *Gems* next spring, but LA sees it first. The 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 — Gems](#).



LA Dance Project. Photo by Josh Rose

Encore!

When **Viver Brasil Dance Company** brought its Afro-Brazilian *Rezas e Folhas* to this venue last year, audience response was so strong, this return performance was booked. Known for its high energy, effusive performances, and blending experimental choreography with traditional dance, the company had audiences dancing out of the theatre last time, and likely once again. Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, \$12-\$35. [Viver Brasil](#).



Viver Brasil Dance Company. Photo by Tim Agler

Thank you for your service

Continuing its impressive work with military veterans, **Diavolo** offers performances of *Escape*. Vets and dancer/gymnasts move inside, outside, over and through the often outsized architectural structures that are signature parts of Jacques Heim's choreography. This time up close and personal in the intimate studio setting. 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

Those tragic teens

The Santa Barbara Symphony and **State Street Ballet** open their seasons with a joint concert. The symphony takes the stage for Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* and Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*, then moves to the pit to play Prokofiev's score and the dancers take over for ballet *Romeo & Juliet Suite* with choreography by Nilas Martins and Megan Philipp. Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara; Sat., Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, Sun., Oct. 19, 3 pm, \$45-\$198. [State Street Ballet](#).



State Street Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists

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 dance maker 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

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](#).



Re:born Dance Interactive. 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 LA; Fri.-Sat., 8 pm, to Sat., Nov. 1, \$65-\$140. [ACB](#).



American Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Anastasia Petukhova

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](#).

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., Irvine; Thurs., Oct. 16, 8 pm, \$41.25 -\$90. [Ballet Project OC](#).



Ballet Project OC. Photo courtesy of the artists

Here or to go?

Not sure what else can be ordered, but at one food cart at the Culver City Art Walk, the menu includes dance as the site specific band of dancers, musicians, singers, and other performers of **Heidi Duckler Dance** bring their distinctive skills to the world of the food cart in *¡Ordena!*. 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](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo by Mae Koo

Flamenco fun

The family-friendly event *Olé Los Angeles* brings artistic director María “La Chacha” Bermúdez, with the dancers and musicians of **Flamenco Santa Barbara** for a morning of traditional flamenco dance. Come for pre-show arts, crafts, and other activities starting at 10 am, before the performance. The Ford, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 19, 11:30 am, \$13. [The Ford](#).



Maria Bermudez. Photo by Miguel Angel Gonzalez

Marking 30

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 music by U2. 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. [Musco Center](#). 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. [Dorothy Chandler Pavilion](#).



Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Photo by Bill Herbert

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 24-30)

Philippine Ballet Theater — *Sarimanok* at UCLA Royce Hall, 10745 Dickson Ct., Westwood; Sat., Oct. 25, 7 pm, \$75-\$200. [UCLA](#).

Luminario Ballet — *Siempre Amor-Always Love* at Avalon Hollywood; 1735 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 26, 8 pm, \$40-\$125 (show only), \$450-\$650 (gala at 5:30 pm) [Eventbrite](#).

West Coast Ballet — *Dracula* at El Segundo Performing Arts Center, 640 Main St., El Segundo; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 24-25, 8 pm, \$20-\$55 [West Coast Ballet](#).

Ragamala Dance Company — *Ananta, The Eternal* at the Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Sat., Oct. 25, 7:30 pm, \$45-\$70. [Ragamala Dance Company](#).

Ana Maria Alvarez & Contra-Tiempo — *Direct Address* at the Ford Theatre, 2850 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Fri., Oct. 24, 8 pm, \$29-\$44. [The Ford](#)

Grand Ave Arts along Grand Ave., 1st St. thru 6th St., Downtown; Sat., Oct. 25, 11 am – 4 pm, free. [Grand Ave Arts](#).

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