

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Waking From Hibernation

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, June 2nd, 2021

Itinerant dance pauses to celebrate, South Asian dance by the books, contemporary dance in the parking lot, ballet in the plaza, SoCal women dancemakers unveil their dance films, new lessons from a prior plague, plus recent online encores, where to take online dance classes, and more SoCal dance, live and online, this week.

### *This Week*

#### Well, almost

Tucked among the foothills above Glendale, the Brand Library and Art Center provided a scenic setting for its free summer dance series for nearly 60 years, until the pandemic closed and cancelled so much. The Brand's reopening includes a renewed live dance series, well, almost live. The dance will be live but the audience will continue to view remotely, for now. Opening the series, Malathi Iyengar brings her **Rangoli Dance Company** in a program of Bharatanatyam, the percussively expressive dance associated with Southern India. The ensemble performs *Chandrachooda, adorned by the Moon*. The series includes a the performance viewable starting Saturday, plus a Sunday online workshop and chance to chat with the artists. Later in June, the new series offers two more dance companies. Performance on Sat., June 5, 5 p.m., free (viewable afterwards on the Brand's YouTube Channel). Workshop on Sun., June 6, 11 a.m. free. Details and registration for this performance and the rest of the dance series at [Brand Library](#).



Rangoli Dance Company. Photo by Malathi Iyengar.

## Celebrating 40 years and making it through the last one

For four decades, **Benita Bike's DanceArt** has been a Johnny Appleseed for dance. Most of the year, choreographer Bike and her dancers travel throughout SoCal to non-traditional venues like libraries and parks germinating new dance audiences with programs that demystify dance and how dance is created. That is the troupe's performance motif for most of the year. Traditionally, once a year the troupe settles into a proper theater and presents a straightforward dance concert to celebrate another year well done. As live performance feels its way forward, Bike and her troupe celebrate their 40th anniversary with a return to a theater for a hybrid live and streamed performance. The live audience will be advance purchase tickets only, have distanced seating with masks required. The current dancer roster includes Clare Kiklowicz, Mikensie Johnson, Trudy Niess, Srah Gertler and Liza Barskaya. Live performance at Madrid Theater, Sat., June 5, 8 p.m., \$25. Online performance access June 10–13, \$25. [DanceArt](#).



Benita Bike's DanceArt. Photo courtesy of the artist.

### Limited live/unlimited live-stream

Fresh from its live and live-streamed Orange County performances, **American Ballet Theatre** sends six dancers for classical and contemporary pas deux in the second installment of the Music Center's Dance at Dusk series. On the classical end, Devon Teuscher and Cory Stearns dance the *Romeo and Juliet pas de deux* and Christine Shevchenko and Joo Won Ahn tackle the *Don Quixote pas de deux*. In a more contemporary mode, Katherine Williams and Blaine Hoven essay the duet from *A Time There Was* choreographed by ABT's Gemma Bond plus more to be announced. The music will be recorded. All the live performances with socially distanced pods are sold out, but the Sunday show will be a free live-stream with reservations at the link. Music Center Plaza, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed.-Sun., June 2–6, 7:30 p.m., sold out. Livestream, Sun., June 6, 7:30 p.m., free. [Music Center](#).



American Ballet Theater. Photo by Todd Rosenberg Photography.

## Take it to the parking lot!

As the pandemic settled in last summer, the parking lot of **LA Dance Project**'s arts district studio offered dance performances for audiences, first vehicle-contained and later on socially-distanced, as well as online. Now there is an official outdoor stage ready to host five weeks of *Dances in the Open* with a new work from former New York City Ballet principal dancer and current LADP company member Janie Taylor along with the reprise of *Solo at Dusk* choreographed by Bobbi Jene Smith with Or Schraiber that was part of the earlier parking lot presentations. Two family friendly shows on Sun., June 13 & 20 at 6:30 p.m. offer \$10 children's tickets. LA Dance Project studios, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Arts District; Wed.-Sat., thru June 25, 8 p.m., Sun., June 6, 8 p.m., \$50 & \$175, \$25 & \$100 students w/i.d. Sun., June 13 & 20, 6:30 p.m., \$10 children. More info and seating detail at [OvationTix](#).



LA Dance Project. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## A dancer's dozen

Deborah Brockus and Kelly Hargraves combined their considerable talents for *SHIFT/west resident—Women Choreographers Online*. Brockus is the powerhouse producer of the Los Angeles Dance Festival and her choreography is showcased by her BrockusRED as well as Brockus Project Dance. While Hargraves' credentials include choreography, she is perhaps best known for her work in dance film, as a filmmaker and as the prime force behind the Dance Camera West, one of the premiere dance film festivals. With the shift to online performance and dance films, the two secured a California Arts Council grant to fund twelve women choreographers in a five-month residency. The 12, all based in Los Angeles, include Malia Baker, Letxia Cordova, Brittany Delany, Helen Duros, Toni Fuller, Kelsey Guy, Hanna Millar, DaEun Jung, Alyssa Junious, Corina Kinnear, Charlotte K. Smith, and Rourou Ye. After their selection in January, the twelve were mentored first by Brockus, then in February Hargraves assumed the mentor role. Over

the next three months, the choreographers created, filmed and edited works for this week's online showing. Fri., June 4, 6 p.m. to Thurs., June 10, 11:59 p.m., \$15 per household. [Brockus](#).



SHIFT/west resident—Women Choreographers Online. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## She does like a good book

Choreographer **Rosanna Gamson** has drawn some of her most compelling work from literature ranging from *Scheherazade* in *Tales of the Arabian Nights* to the Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*, and lectures by theoretical physicist Richard Feynman. Other than Albert Camus' *The Plague*, what could be more appropriate pandemic source material than Boccaccio's *Decameron* with tales from ten strangers sheltering from the bubonic plague? Just as the tales of the ten travelers unfold one at a time, Gamson's *The Decameron Project* rolls out ten films, each made by a different artist. The episodes for the first five weeks are from **Jinglin Liao, Kevin Zambrano, Dion Pratt, Gretchen Ackerman, and Clementine Gamson-Levyare**, viewable for free on [Instagram](#).



Rosanna Gamson/WorldWide. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Recent Online Encores

### Pulitzer dances

Dance continues to be part of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's digital series *CLOSE QUARTERS*. Choreographer Rebecca Steinberg along with dancers Layne Paradis Willis and Joe Davis collaborated with stage director George Miller in two scheduled works, Ellen Reid's *Lumee's Aria* from the Pulitzer-winning opera *p r i s m* and Benjamin Britten's musical setting of Rimbaud poems, *Illuminations*. The program also includes the premiere of Peter S. Shin's *Hyo*. Free (donations are welcome) at the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's [website](#), [YouTube page](#), [Facebook page](#).



Joe Davis. Photo courtesy of the artist.

### A scientific match-up



Matchmaking scientists with choreographers is a hallmark of choreographer Donna Sternberg's recurring series *Awe and Wonder*. In his new edition, **Donna Sternberg & Dancers** focuses on climate change. The choreographers' varied styles include tap (Gisele Silva), street dance (Leigh Foaad), classical Indian Bharata Natyam (Ramya Harishankar), and contemporary (Sternberg), paired with the science fields of rocketry (Anita Sengupta), climatology (Christine O'Connell), nursing (Sharon Cobb), and immunology (Devavani Chatterjea). The online performances include conversations with the dancemakers and scientists about what they learned about each other in the creative process. Anyone who missed the early May performances can still view the quartet of work online for \$10. Info at [Donna Sternberg & Dancers](#)



Donna Sternberg & Dancers. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Dances with cars

Over three Saturdays, **Suárez Dance Theater** rolled out three short films under the banner *Mapping Our Stories*. Inspired by the histories of Black, Native and LatinX people, each film is set in a Santa Monica public space with often overlooked cultural significance (the city provided funding). Choreographer/performer **Bernard Brown** of *bbmoves* takes the audience from the landmark Phillips Chapel CME Church (the 1909 church was the first serving the African American Community) to the site of "Inkwell Beach" where Blacks and Browns were restricted in segregated California beaches. Acknowledging her Chumash and Tongva Nations heritage, poet/songwriter **Jessa Calderon**'s film starts overlooking the ocean from Tongva Park. The history of the Westside Classics Car Club in Santa Monica is the focus of the film from **Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC)** and its members Alfonso Cervera, Rosa Rodriguez-Frazier, Irvin Manuel Gonzalez, and Patricia "Patty" Huerta. Each film has resources for further exploration and continue to screen for free at [Bernard Brown/bbmoves's "...at leisure..."](#), [Jessa Calderon's "Before the Noise,"](#) [Primera Generación Dance Collective's "low riting"](#)



Suárez Dance Theater. Photo courtesy of Primera Generación Dance Collective (PGDC).

## Oh, the places we have been

With support from three theaters, The Wallis and The Soraya in SoCal and The Harris in Chicago, **Jacob Jonas The Company** worked with more than 150 artists all over the globe to produce short dance films for the series, *Films.Dance*. Just as vaccination and pandemic restrictions start to allow travel, the 15-week dance film world tour that began in January concluded earlier this month with Emma Rosenzweig-Bock in a film co-directed by Jonas and Ireland-based Kevin McGloughlin. It joins the other 14 short films still viewable at [Films.Dance](#).



Films.Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## Adding to the trove

A prior Ford Theater performance featuring choreography by Shelby Williams-Gonzalez is the latest addition to **Viver Brasil**'s weekly online rebroadcast of a past concerts. The company's rich repertoire reflects the company's efforts to preserve Brasil's African culture in dance and music. Free at [Viver Brasil](#). The troupe also is part of KCET's *Southland Sessions* streaming at [KCET](#).



Viver Brasil. Photo courtesy of the artists.

## ***Online Dance Classes***

### **Pandemic exhaustion? Get thee to a dance class!**

On-line dance classes continue on zoom, instagram and other on-line platforms, many classes free, low cost or suggesting a donation. One central, constantly updated source on dance classes and in-depth reporting on SoCal dance, [LA Dance Chronicle](#) lists on-line dance classes including any cost and contact info. Grab a chair or clear off a corner of the room and use this time to dance. [LA Dance Chronicle](#).



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