

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## When What's New is New Again

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, October 30th, 2024

Led Zeppelin and Wu Tang-influenced dance in Hollywood and downtown; elegant craftsman mansion goes site specific in Pasadena; triptych of new work fest downtown; museum garden under surveillance in Culver City; ballet on skid row; Stephen Sondheim with three choreographers in Little Tokyo; contemporary dance in Santa Monica, Atwater Village, and Venice; opera choreographer moves into the director's chair downtown; more SoCal dance this busy week (to November 7), and a peek at next week (to November 14).

### *Live This Week*

#### Doing it in threes

This year's three-week **New Original Works (NOW) Fest** opens with three performances over three nights. Choreographer **Bernard Brown** turns his attention to the Black Gay bar as a haven, taking his title from the disco-era ballad *Sissies: Something Perfect Between Ourselves*. The cast of seven are backed by live DJ Defacto X. In the second performance, **Meena Murugesan's** *Dravidian Futurities: Chapter II*, draws on movement, visual art, and music to ponder a sunken land mass underneath the convergence of the Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea that once linked South India with Africa. The third part of the triptych gathers Eliza Bagg, Rohan Chandler and George Miller to essay Alban Berg's *7 Early Songs*. Next week it's Tijuana Dance Company, Ajani Brannum and Sophia Cleary. Week 3 brings Bret Easterling and Kensaku Shinohara. Full festival info at the website. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Nov. 7-9, 14-16, & 21-23, 8:30 pm, \$25, \$20 students. [REDCAT](#).



Bernard Brown. Photo by Steve Rosa

## Off the street

The dancers of **Hollywood Ballet** continue their efforts to bring ballet to non-traditional venues with another show *For Skid Row*. On the classic side, co-artistic director Petra Conti dances *Dying Swan*, while Emily Van Citters and Chris Flores essay *Diane and Acteon*. In a contemporary mode, a new work by Natalie Palmgren features Lena Harris and a new work by Lisa Ritter showcases Katherine Thomas. The afternoon performance is free with reservation. Midnight Mission, 601 San Pedro St., downtown; Thurs., Oct. 31, 2:30 pm, free with reservation at [Hollywood Ballet](#).



Hollywood Ballet's Petra Conti. Photo by Reid Hutchinson

## Watching in the garden

The garden of this museum becomes the stage as **Heidi Duckler Dance** explores the role of surveillance in societal control. Choreographed by HDD artistic director Heidi Duckler, the site-specific event, *What Remains Un/Seen*, references themes in the museum's current exhibition *Counter/Surveillance*. A self-guided gallery tour at 4 pm precedes the first show. A second tour at 7 pm follows the second show. The performers include dancers Alejandro Perez, Sasha Rivero, Joseph Stevens, and Kayla Gabrielle. Singer Dwight Tribble and his LA-based band Cosmic Vibrations provide the music, and Efren Delgadillo Jr. designed the scene in the garden. Wende Museum, 10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Sat., Nov. 2, 5 & 7 pm, self-guided tour at 4 or 7 pm. free w/reservation (\$20 donation suggested) at [Heidi Duckler](#).



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Airborne

More than ten Led Zeppelin songs provide the title for *LedZAerial Symphony* as **Luminario Ballet** brings its signature blend of aerial and ballet to this performance and fundraiser featuring 11 dancers and aerialists, plus a 12-member orchestra. The Avalon Hollywood, 1735 N. Vine St., Hollywood; Sun., Nov. 3, show 8 pm, \$40-\$125, pre-show gala 5:30 pm, \$400-\$600. [Eventbrite](#).



Luminario Ballet. Photo by Ted Soqui

## Digital/analog

The solo **Vanessa Hernández Cruz** premiered at last year's REDCAT NOW Festival, *Exhale Static, Inhale Fumes*, opens this two-part show considering the search for community in a hyper-digital age. The second work, another premiere, *Rain Glass Vortex*, involves the



choreographer/dancer on stage with a live-streamed quartet of Queer, BIPOC, disabled artists. The four dancers are Em Waters, Ande Diedjomahor, India Harville, and Lu Chen. Highways Performance Space, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Nov. 1-2, 7:30 pm, \$25, \$20 students. [Highways](#).



Vanessa Hernández Cruz. Photo by Angel Origgi

## Time travel

Venture back from the 1950's to 1999 as the dancers and storytellers of **Lineage Dance** unveil a site-specific performance series at the historic Pasadena edifice known as the Gamble House. In *A Matter of Time*, the audience follows the dancers through the house, as each room tells a tale of that era's important cultural, political and historical events. The Gamble House, 4 Westmoreland Pl., Pasadena; Fri.-Sun., Nov. 1-3, 7 pm, \$75, \$45 students & seniors. [Lineage PAC](#).



Lineage Dance Company. Photo by Steven Hwan

## Enter through the alley

Opening its third season, *Work in Progress LA* spotlights **Marissa Brown** and **Daria Kaufman**. Organized by choreographers Kate Wallich, Stephanie Zaletel and Belize Wilhelm, this artist-run collective partners with this venue to “stir up deep dance discourse” in the LA dance community. The changing line up for the monthly Monday events run through next April, each providing a peek and preview of what some of LA’s cutting-edge choreographers are up to. G-Son Studios, 3218 Glendale Blvd., Atwater Village (enter through the alley); Mon., Nov. 4, 7:30 pm, \$15. [WIP LA](#).



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Marissa Brown. Photo courtesy of the artist

## 50 years behind the masks

For five decades, the Swiss phenomenon **Mummenschanz** has enchanted and mesmerized audiences with its distinctive combination of movement, puppetry, and comedy. Simply titled *50 Years*, this show promises a curated compilation of the troupe's best. The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Nov. 2, 3 pm, \$43-\$95. [The Soraya](#).



Mummenschanz. Photo by Marco Hartmann

## Opera dances

Known for her contemporary troupe *Hysterica*, dance films among other projects, Kitty McNamee



also has been a frequent choreographer for **LA Opera**, including the 2005 and 2011 productions of Gounod's *Romeo & Juliet*. This time McNamee is directing that opera and has set chorus and leads dancing as well as singing. Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Nov. 2 & 23, 7:30 pm, Sun., Nov. 10 & 17, 2 pm, Thurs. Nov. 14 & Wed., Nov. 20, 7:30 pm, \$33.50-\$400. [LA Opera](#).



LA Opera's "Romeo and Juliet." Photo by Robert Millard

## Back to the overture

When **East West Players** chose Stephen Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures* for the 50th anniversary of the show's Broadway premiere, it also back former artistic director Tim Dang who directed the show when EWP moved to its current mid-sized theater in Little Tokyo. Dang not only brings a background in dance, he brought in three additional choreographers — Broadway dancer/choreographer Yuka Takara, Kabuki consultant Kirk Kanesaka (aka Ganky? Nakamura), and fight director Amanda Noriko Newman. The show continues EWP's long history presenting Sondheim in a theater sized to allow audiences to see the full show and still hear every precious lyric. David Henry Hwang Theater in the Union Center for the Arts, 120 Judge John Aiso St., Little Tokyo; opens Thurs., Nov. 7, 8 pm, then Thurs., Fri. & Mon, 8 pm, Sat. 2 & 8 pm, Sun. 5 pm, thru Dec. 1. \$15-\$74. [East West Players](#).



East West Players' "Pacific Overtures." Photo by Teolindo

## Ballet through mud

Choreographer Yusha-Marie Sorzano and her **Sorzano Dance Works** join Wu-Tang Clan mastermind **RZA** in a one-night only concert performance of his album *A Ballet Through Mud*. Conducted by Oliver Zeffman and performed by USC Thornton School of Music students and alumni, the concert blends hip hop and classical music with dance. Los Angeles Theatre, 615 S. Broadway, downtown; Mon., Nov. 4, 6:30 pm, free w/reservation at [Tickets](#).



RZA and dancers. Photo by Danny Hastings

## All electric

For the November edition of **High Voltage**, this mostly monthly event offers an eclectic blend of *World Music & Dance*. Timed to coincide with the First Friday on nearby Abbot Kinney Blvd., guests can check out the food truck and open galleries before heading to the show. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., Nov. 1, 8 pm, \$10 pre-sale, \$15 at door. [High Voltage](#).





Max 10. Photo courtesy of the artists

### It's a 10

The mostly monthly program **Max 10** gives ten performers ten minutes each onstage. Hosted by venue director Joel Shapiro and curated by the staff, dance is a mainstay in the lineup of performances. A post-show reception gives a chance to chat with the artists. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Mon., Nov. 4, 7:30 pm, \$10. [Electric Lodge](#).

### Back on the Beach

The granddaddy of all the cirques, **Cirque du Soleil**, returns with its signature tent and the show *Kooza*, brimming with acrobats and clowns. The two month run offers lots of time to catch the show, maybe more than once? Under the Big Top at Santa Monica Pier, 1550 Pacific Coast Hwy., Santa Monica; thru Sun., Jan. 5, \$58-\$344. Details on the many dates and times at the website. [Kooza](#).





Cirque du Soleil. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Last blood

The immersive rock musical **Blood/Love: A Vampire Popera** winds up its run at the aptly named Crimson, a Hollywood pop up gothic nightclub. The vampire-meets-rock-star event injects a devilish romance into the spooky season. The Crimson, 6356 Hollywood Blvd., First Floor, Hollywood; thru Sat, Nov. 2, 7 & 9:30 pm, \$59-\$119. [Blood/Love](#).



Blood/Love. Photo by Graham Washatka

## Teasing

The title says it all: *The Empire Strips Back: A Burlesque Parody*. The show returns after its 2022 run at this venue. The Montalbán Theatre, 1615 Vine St., Hollywood; Opens Thurs, Oct. 11, 7:30 pm, then Thurs., 7:30 pm, Fri., 7 pm, Sat., 7 & 9:30 pm, Sun., 4 pm, thru Dec. 1. \$44-\$109. [The Empire Strips Back](#).

### ***A Peek at Next Week (November 8-14)***

**A Day of Simone Forti** at Highways Performance Space, 1651 18<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Monica; Sun., Nov. 10, 3 pm, \$25, \$20 seniors/students. [Highways Performance](#).

**MashUp Contemporary Dance Company** — *Choreography Open Mic Night* at The Pickle Factory, 2828 Gilroy St., Frogtown; Sat., Nov. 9, 7 p.m., \$15. [MashUp Contemporary Dance Company](#).

**Volta** — *Ocean Ions* at Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach; Sat., Nov. 9, 4 p.m., free w/reservation at [info@voltacollective.com](mailto:info@voltacollective.com).

**Sergio Bernal Dance Company** at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Sat., Nov. 9, 7:30 pm, \$44.07-\$134.47. [SCFTA](#).



Backhausdance. Photo courtesy of the artists

**Backhausdance** at Old Town Temecula Community Theater, 42051 Main St., Temecula; Sat., Nov. 9, 8 pm, \$25. [Tickets](#).

**The Hip Hop Nutcracker** at Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Dr., Cerritos; Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. \$40-\$90. [Cerritos](#).

**New Original Works (NOW) Fest** — *Ajani Brannum, Sophia Cleary, Tijuana Dance Company* at REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs., Nov. 14-16, 8:30 pm, \$25, \$20 students. [REDCAT](#).

## Dance News of Note

Those looking forward to the annual **World Ballet Day** scheduled for November 1 with its world-wide livestream peek at ballet company classes and rehearsals sadly will have to wait until next year. San Francisco Ballet, Britain's Royal Ballet, and the Australian Ballet who organize and finesse the logistics of the 24-hour, world-wide event each fall, announced recently that this year's event will be postponed until next year. Limited info on the reasons at [World Ballet Day](#).

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