

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

So Many Swans A'Flutter

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, December 4th, 2019

Cold War exploits in Culver City, folklorico holiday festivities in Orange, Cerritos and Northridge, swans return to downtown, Nutcrackers explode all over, and more SoCal dance this week.

5. Flamenco that keeps on going

Led by master guitarist Antonio Triana, this edition of **Forever Flamenco** dubbed *Noche de Triana* boasts a quartet of dancers including Lakshmi “La Chimi” Basile, Misuda Cohen, Timo Nuñez and Bianca Rodriguez. Guitarist Gabriel Osuna and singer Antonio de Jerez join Triana making the music. Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., Silverlake; Sun., Dec. 8, 8 p.m., \$40-\$50, \$30 seniors and students. <http://www.fountaintheatre.com>.



Forever Flamenco. Photo by Bruce Bisenz.

4. Something old, lots that is new

CalArts' dance department's **2019 Winter Dance Concert** offers contemporary choreography from several nationally and internationally renowned choreographers including Wayne McGregor, Danielle Agami, Salia Sanou and Yvonne Rainer. Performances this weekend include CalArts' REDCAT downtown, plus a shorter family version at LA Dance Project. REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 6-7, 8:30 p.m., \$22, \$18 students. <https://www.redcat.org/event/calarts-winter-dance-repertoire-right-now>. Also at LA Dance Project, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m. <http://ladanceproject.org/>.



CalArts Winter Dance Concert 2019. Photo courtesy of the artists.

3. Looking behind the curtain

Continuing this museum's involvement with dance inspired by life behind the Iron Curtain during the decades between the end of World War II and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the dancers, musicians and performers of **Heidi Duckler Dance** take over the museum garden with *What Remains*. Taking the title from a short story by East German author Christa Wolf about being under surveillance by the Stasi police and also drawing on the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, Heidi Duckler's choreography is backed by music by Sarah Belle Reid, Justin Scheid and an opera for seven voices by Leaha Maria Villareal. The dancers include Tess Hewlett, Roberto Lambaren

and Himerria Wortham. Wende Museum, 10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 12-13, 7 p.m., \$50, \$35 seniors & students. <https://hddwhatremains.eventbrite.com>.



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo by Keanu Narciso.

2. More from behind the curtain

If artists in general had a tough time in the Soviet Union, women artists often confronted even more extreme pressures. How they responded is the subject of *Iron Women*, a new dance work from **Donna Sternberg & Dancers** offered in conjunction with the Wende Museum exhibition *The Medea Insurrection: Radical Women Artists Behind the Iron Curtain*. During the Soviet era, some women artists designated their art as being about historical figures like Medea and Cassandra, camouflaging more subversive artistic commentary on women confronting communism and the oppressive social order. Ironically, the dance performance and the exhibition are housed in what was once a National Guard Armory and now a museum and research facility dedicated to Cold War-era European and Soviet Union artifacts and history archives. Wende Museum, 10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Sun., Dec. 8, 3 p.m., free. <https://dsdancers.com/>.



Donna Sternberg & Dancers. Photo by Scott Belding.

1. A winner comes home

The original show opened in Britain in 1997 where it was seen by then Center Theater Group artistic director Gordon Davidson who booked it into the Music Center's Ahmanson Theatre. Thus L.A. became the American launch of **Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*** before it went on to become a Broadway and international phenomenon. Along the way, Matthew Bourne showed how danced theater could be a game changer for both arts. Bourne kept the Tchaikovsky score but turned the classical ballet from a tale of some once upon a time kingdom into a recognizable contemporary British monarchy, replaced the female corps with male dancers in feathered knickers, and transformed the lead swan into a male who comforts and seduces the neglected prince then goes on to entice and seduce the queen herself. And now Bourne is back, its show's 20-year old audacity still ringing curiously true. As the British crown reels once more from revelations about a current prince's involvement with a notorious sexual predator, the return of the ballet continues to resonate. Ahmanson Theater, Music Center, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Tues.-Fri., 8 p.m., Sat., 2:30 p.m. & 8 p.m., Sun., 1:30 p.m. & 7 p.m., thru Jan. 5, \$35-\$145. <https://www.centertheatregroup.org/>.



Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*. Photo courtesy of the artists.

More dance of note:

Returning to this unconventional setting, **Benita Bike's DanceArt** invites audiences to explore modern dance and its creation. This time, Bike and her dancers draw on music by Juan del Enzina, Gaspar Sanz and Joaquin Rodrigo in *Entre lazadas* and offers *Plugged* a quintet considering the desensitizing effect of machines. Lake View Terrace Library, 12002 Osborne St., Lake View Terrace; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 p.m., free. <https://danceart.org>.



Benita Bike's DanceArt. Photo by Elazar Harel.

The dancers of **Ballet Folklórico De Los Ángeles** joins the musicians of Mariachi Garibaldi de Jaime Cuéllar in *Nochebuena*, a celebration of Mexican-American holiday traditions as well as traditions rooted in different regions of Mexico. After opening in Orange, the show travels to Northridge for two more performances. Musco Center for the Arts, Chapman University, 415 N. Glassell, Orange; Wed., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m., \$25-\$58. <https://muscocenter.org>. Also at The Soroya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Dec. 14, 3 p.m. & 8 p.m., \$34-\$86. <https://www.thesoroya.org>.



Ballet Folklórico De Los Ángeles. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Known for his leadership of the International Dance Festival in Palm Springs, **Michael Nickerson-Rossi** puts on his other hat as a choreographer, presenting five dance works including his latest, a solo named *Heartbeat*. Coachella Valley Repertory Theater, 68510 E. Palm Canyon Drive, Cathedral City; Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m., \$40. <https://cvrep.org/events/masterpiece>.



Nickerson Rossi Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

A mix of hip hop and contemporary dance from choreographer Kitty McNamee and kuchipudi dance from Bhavana Reddy come into play as Marta Gardolinska conducts the LA Phil in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Part of the **Toyota Symphonies for Youth** series, the performance includes dancers Angelica DeWitt, Wilson Mayo, Justin Porter, Russel Ridgeway, Sasha Rivero, Derek Schiesel and Reddy. Disney Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Dec. 7 & 14, 11 a.m., \$25-\$29. <https://www.laphil.com>.



DanzArts Sabor México Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Dancers from **DanzArts Sabor México Dance Company** get musical help from Sol de México de José Hernández and Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles in *Merry-achi Christmas*. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Dr., Cerritos; Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Dec. 7, 7 p.m., \$35-\$86. <http://www.cerritoscenter.com>.



High Voltage's Sarah Leddy. Photo by Taso Papadakis.

A short stroll from the crowds and food trucks of Abbot Kinney Blvd.'s monthly First Friday, **High Voltage** offers experimental dance and performance. The final event of 2019 brims with dance from Carmela Hermann Dietrich, Alexx Shilling and Sarah Leddy plus Ecce Echo, A! Persona, Sara Kirby, Rok Wilk and Reg E Gaines. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., Dec. 6, 9 p.m., \$10. <https://www.eventbrite.com>.

And where to find a *Nutcracker* this week:

Set in 1912, the **Los Angeles Ballet's** *Nutcracker* is an L.A. original, choreographed by company co-artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary, with set design by L.A. artist Catherine Kanner. Now in its 14th season, L.A.'s own professional classical ballet company

continues to demonstrate how well it understands this city. This year the company performs in Cerritos, Glendale, Westwood, Redondo Beach, and Hollywood (with a live orchestra), bringing ballet to the audience rather than expecting folks to overcome hours of gridlocked traffic. The superb company dancers have proven themselves a home team to root for. In full disclosure, your scribe volunteered to watch the goings on from a chimney. Info and tickets at <https://www.LosAngelesBallet.org>. Alex Theater, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sat., Dec. 7, 6 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m., \$34-\$109, 10% discount for children, students, seniors & military. Also at UCLA Royce Hall, Westwood; Fri., Dec. 13, 8 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Dec. 14-15, noon & 5 p.m., \$34-\$109, 10% discount for children, students, seniors & military. Also at Dolby Theatre, Hollywood & Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Dec. 20, 8 p.m., Sat., Dec. 21, 5 p.m., Sun., Dec. 22, noon, Tues., Dec. 24, 3 p.m., \$45-\$131. Also at Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Sat., Dec. 28, noon & 5 p.m., Sun., Dec. 29, noon, \$34-\$109, 10% discount for children, students, seniors & military. 310-998-7782, <https://www.LosAngelesBallet.org>.



Los Angeles Ballet's "Nutcracker". Photo by Reed Hutchinson.

As part of its ongoing residency at this venue, **Aspen Santa Fe Ballet** brings its *Nutcracker*. With barely a dozen dancers, this visitor gets some local help with more than 70 children from Los Angeles Youth Ballet and students from USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance augmenting the company dancers. The Soraya, Cal State University Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Sat., Dec. 7, 3 p.m. & 8 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 3 p.m., \$49-\$109. 818-677-3000, <https://www.thesoraya.org/>.



Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's "Nutcracker." Photo by Sharen Bradford.

Choreographer Laurence Blake and artistic director Victoria Koenig created **Inland Pacific Ballet's** version of the *Nutcracker* that has become an Inland Empire tradition. IPB's professional dancers are joined by students from IPB's respected ballet academy. Three Friday performances on Dec. 6, 13, and 20 are devoted to its popular *Nutty Nutcracker*. Lewis Family Playhouse, 12505 Cultural Center Dr., Rancho Cucamonga; Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. (Nutty Nut), Sat., Dec. 7, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Dec 8, 2 p.m. Also at Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside; Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. (Nutty Nut), Sat., Dec. 14, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Dec. 15, 2 p.m. Also at Bridges Auditorium, 450 N. College Way, Claremont; Fri., Dec. 20, 7:30 p.m. (Nutty Nut), Sat., Dec. 21, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Dec. 22, 2 p.m., \$29-\$69, discounts for seniors & children 12 & under. 951-779-9800, <http://www.IPBallet.org>.



Inland Pacific Ballet's "Nutcracker." Photo by E.Y. Yanagi.

Fans of Debbie Allen have a chance to see her perform in **Hot Chocolate Nutcracker**, her version of the holiday classic. Carlos Imperato, Raven Symoné, Tichina Arnold, Mathew Johnson and DADA also star, backed by dancers from the Debbie Allen Dance Academy. Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Redondo Beach; Thurs.-Fri., Dec. 6-7, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Dec. 8, 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 9, 2 p.m., \$40-\$110. <http://www.HotChocolateNutcracker.com>.



Debbie Allen's "Hot Chocolate Ballet." Photo courtesy of the artists.

Two years ago, **American Contemporary Ballet** debuted *The Nutcracker Suite*, a one hour, immersive experience. ACB returns at a new venue with even more shows. Metropolis Los Angeles, 877 S. Francisco St., Upper Level, downtown; Fri., Dec. 6, 13, & 20, 8 p.m., Sat., Dec. 7, 14 & 21, 2 p.m. & 5 p.m., Sun. Dec. 8, 15, & 22, 2 p.m. & 5 p.m., Thurs., Dec. 5, 12, & 19, 8 p.m., Mon., Dec. 23, 8 p.m., Tues., Dec 24, 1 p.m. \$55-\$137. <https://www.acbdances.com>.

Westside Ballet – Yvonne Mounsey and Rosemary Valaire, the late founders of this admired training company created a Victorian Christmas card version of the *Nutcracker*. Professional guests share the stage with student dancers and the Santa Monica College Symphony provides live music. The Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Fri., Dec. 6, 7 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m., \$45. <https://westsideballet.tix.com>.



Westside Ballet's "Nutcracker." Photo by Todd Lechtick.

Festival Ballet Theatre – More than 100 students from Southland Ballet Academy perform in this training company's "*Nutcracker*." Announced professional guest stars include Beckanne Sisk with Chase O'Connell (Ballet West) on Dec 13-15, Maria Kochetkova and Vitor Luis (both formerly with San Francisco Ballet) on Dec. 20-22, Jeraldine Mendoza and Dylan Gutierrez (Joffrey Ballet) on Dec. 23 & 24. The company also hosts a related "*Nutcracker Tea*," details at <https://www.festivalballet.org/>. Irvine Barclay Theater, 4242 Campus Drive, Irvine; Sat., Dec. 7, 7 p.m., Sat., Dec. 14 & 21, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 1 p.m., Sun., Dec. 15 & 22, 1 p.m. & 6 p.m., Fri., Dec. 13 & 20, 7 p.m., Mon., Dec. 23, 6 p.m., Tues., Dec. 24, 11 a.m., \$45-\$90. 949-854-4646. <http://www.theBarclay.org>.

Marat Daukayev Ballet Theatre and School – One-time star of Russia's Kirov (now Mariinsky) Ballet, Marat Daukayev choreographed, directs and stars as the mysterious Uncle Drosselmeyer with students from his ballet academy. The last two shows welcome guest artists Maria Kochetkova and Vitor Luiz, formerly with San Francisco Ballet. Luckman Fine Arts Complex, 5151 State University Dr., East L.A.; Sat., Dec. 7 & 14, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 11:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m., Sun., Dec. 15, 2 p.m., \$42-\$67. <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4438528>.



Marat Daukayev's "Nutcracker." Photo courtesy of the artists.

Pacific Dance Academy – Centinela Valley Center for the Arts, 14901 S. Inglewood Blvd., Lawndale; Fri., Dec. 6, 6 p.m., Sat., Dec. 7, 2 p.m. & 6 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m., \$18-\$23 in advance, \$20-\$25 at door. (818) 346-4447, <http://PacificDanceCenter.com>, <https://tickets.shovation.com/ordertickets.asp?p=1846&src=eventperformances>.

Elite Dance Studio riffs on *The Nutcracker* with some ballet, some hip hop, plus jazz and contemporary dance. Warner Grand Theater, 478 W. 6th St., San Pedro; Sat., Dec. 7, 1 p.m., \$12-\$20. <https://wgt.tix.com/Event.aspx?EventCode=1161255>.

Sunrise Ballet – Servite Theater, 1952 La Palma Ave., Anaheim; Sat., Dec. 7, noon & 4 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, noon, \$20. <http://SunriseBallet.dance>.

Ballet Repertory Theatre – Golden West College Mainstage Theater, 15751 Gothard St.,

Huntington Beach; Sat., Dec. 7, 2 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 1 p.m., Fri., Dec. 13 & 20, 7 p.m., Sat., Dec. 14 & 21, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 15 & 22, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m., Mon., Dec. 23, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Tues., Dec. 24, 1 p.m., \$20-\$25, \$16 seniors & under 12 years. 714-895-8150 x1, <http://www.gwctheater.com>.



Ventura County Ballet. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Ventura County Ballet – Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard; Sat.-Sun., Dec. 7-8, 2 p.m., \$9.50-\$45. Also at Ventura College, 4700 Loma Vista, Ventura; Fri., Dec. 13, 7 p.m., Sat., Dec. 14, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 15, 2 p.m., \$40. <http://venturacountyballet.com/>.

GC Dance Company – California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; Sun., Dec. 8, 6:30 p.m., \$40. <http://artcenter.org/event/the-nutcracker-6/>.

City Ballet – Spreckels Theater, 121 Broadway, San Diego; Fri., Dec. 6, 13 & 20, 7:30 p.m., Sat., Dec. 7, 14, & 21, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 15 & 22, 2 p.m., \$27-\$92. 858-272-8663, <https://www.cityballet.org>.

Inland Empire Contemporary Ballet – Yucaipa Performing Arts Center, 12062 California St., Yucaipa; Sat., Dec. 7, 2:30 p.m. & 7 p.m., Sun., Dec. 8, 4 p.m., \$25-\$30, \$20-\$25 seniors & children. <https://www.purplepass.com/#mm=allevents/yucaipa>.

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