

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Moves No One Wanted to Learn

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020

A week ago the world was already struggling to find equilibrium as folk emerged from the Covid-19 shutdown facing the new choreography of social distancing and facemasks. Then things took another dark pivot with the videotaped murder of George Floyd. What has followed presented protesters raising their arms, chanting “I can’t breathe,” more police violence and burning of buildings and cars. Then there is the bully with a Bible, providing additional moves, some performances improvised in the moment, others tightly stage managed, played out in real time, captured by forests of cell phones and news cameras. Already, these elements are starting to surface as artists’ online performances grapple with moves no one wanted but have to be learned once again.

PERFORMANCES

Talking about incarceration

With what is described “interactive jail bed installation,” **SoLA Contemporary** opens a three-day, full art gallery exhibition *#Jailbeddrop*. The pop-up performance art is an expanded version of a 2017 project. This iteration includes daily performances by dancer/choreographer Brianna Mims with spoken word by Bindhu Swaminathan. With the strictest portion of the Covid-19 lockdown subsiding, audiences may be primed for the workshops, classes and discussion this effort hopes to cultivate. Strict in-person measures will be supplemented by a dedicated website. SoLA Contemporary, 3718 W. Slauson, Ave., Windsor Hills; Thur.-Sat., June 4–6, 11 a.m.–4 p.m., free. <https://www.solacontemporary.org/gallery-view/jailbeddrop/>



BlakTina’s Sadie Yarrington. Photo courtesy of the artist.

From a Black and LatinX view

Note: After deadline, the organizers advised that *Dancing on the Edge* will be postponed to Sat., June 20, 6 p.m. with same link.

Instead of its usual run at the Bootleg Theater, the **BlakTinx Dance Festival** goes viral. Under the banner *Dancing on the Edge*, this year’s line up of Black and Latinx choreographers providing short videos include Nancy Rivera Gomez, Shantel Ureña, Anthony Aceves, Bernard Brown, Joshua Estrada-Romero, Keilah Lomotey, Michelle Funderburk, Primera Generación, Vannia Ibarguen, Marina Magalhães, Regina Ferguson, Rubi Morales, Amber Morales, Alan Perez,

Dorcas Román, Yarrow Perea, Andrea Ordaz, Eluza Santos, Briseyda Zárate, and Sadie Yarrington. With many of the works created in recent weeks, expect the streets reflected onstage. The event is free with reservation and will stream only once, though at some point in the future look for it on the BlakTinx website. Sat., June 6, 6–8 p.m. Pacific Time. Reservations at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bootleg-theater-presents-blaktinx-dance-festival-dancing-on-the-edge-tickets-106805466024>. More info at <https://www.blaktinafestival.com/>.



Heidi Duckler Dance. Photo courtesy of the artists.

What was intended as participation in an international dance festival took a serious turn when choreographer Heidi Duckler and her site specific **Heidi Duckler Dance** arrived in Chile amid protests, some violent, in response to surging prices and endemic inequality. The performances did go forward and afterwards, so did Duckler and her crew, traveling with Chilean filmmaker Felipe Díaz Galarce and dEUSEXmACHINA Films to three cities to hear stories from local residents. In the resulting film, *ESCAPE*, HDD dancers Tess Hewlett, Ryan Walker Page, and Himerria Wortham explore correlations between the Chilean and American experiences. Thurs., June 11 5 p.m. PDT. Info at <https://heididuckler.org/>. Reservation at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/escape-screening-tickets-106245230344>.

This week's **Music Center Offstage** live stream is *Dance Crew L.A.: Celebration 2020* with LA County middle school students from Barack Obama Global Prep Academy, Lindbergh STEM Academy and Belvedere Middle School. Noted L.A. hip hop dancers Elizabeth “EastLos” Rodriguez, Danté Rose, Tiffany “Jimini” Bong guided the student-developed works. Sat., June 6, 11 a.m., <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>.



Versa Style Dance Company. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Paying tribute to Don Campbellock, the creator of the Locking dance style, the street dance troupe **Versa Style Dance Company** and its youth organization **Versa-Style Next Generation** unveil *Finding Creativity and Fun in Our Personal Space*. The streamed performance gets help from musician Cody “CoFlo” Ferreira's *Playground Samba*. Fri., June 5, 4 p.m. PDT. Facebook: @versastylela, YouTube: @versastylela. Info at <http://versastyledance.org/events/>.

The dancers of **The Leigh Purtilt Ballet Company** premiered *Hotel at the End of the Universe* last summer. The company streams the performance on YouTube. Sat., June 6, noon, 5 & 8 p.m.

SoCal Encore Streaming

After the Covid-19 shutdown caused cancellation of its live performance, the **Orange County Dance Festival** was among the first to shift to streaming. Throughout April and May, a recorded version of the work each company or artist was scheduled to perform was streamed for three days in show order. Bonus features included company photos, artistic statements, and links to websites and social media platforms. Now the OCDF website has collected those individual streamed events on its website. Choose from AkomiDance, Contempo Ballet, 7th Street Dance Company, ISSA Dance Company, Animus Dance Co., Jazz Spectrum Dance Company, Emergent Dance Company, Pacific Ballet Dance Theatre, Louise Reichlin & Dancers, The Hubbard Collective, Kairos Dance Co., and Fuse Dance Company. <https://www.akomidance.com/ocdf-online-2020.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=7f1b5666-e>

470-4918-8e87-96a02e86086b.

A concentrated taste of choreographer Rosanna Gamson's consideration of a legendary storyteller is performed on-line in *Layla Means Night*. Drawn from her company **Rosanna Gamson/World Wide's** performance, the work is inspired by *The Persian Tale of Shahrzad* or *Scheherazade* who entranced her husband and kept herself alive telling stories for 1001 nights. <https://vimeo.com/407374713>.

Ballet and non-classical dance were two of the categories as the Music Center *Spotlight* final performance went viral last week. The performances continue to stream with this year's high school-age dancers Jacob Jovanni Alvarado from San Diego and Ashley Lew from San Juan Capistrano in ballet plus Maya Alvarez-Coyne from Santa Ana and Bergundi Loyd from Riverside in non-classical dance. The event is free, but donations to support this scholarship program are invited by texting TMCSPOTLIGHT to 44-321 or at the website <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>. <https://www.musiccenter.org/spotlightfinale>.

Earlier this spring, the Music Center's annual **Children's Festival** was cancelled, but its live-streamed return last week with a celebration of tap dance headlined by **Dorrance Dance** led by tap's "it girl" Michelle Dorrance is still on view for a limited time. Also on view for a limited time, the family-friendly performance by Cuba's contemporary **Malpaso Dance Company**. <https://www.musiccenter.org/tmc-offstage/>

Other Platforms to Find Video Dance and Dance Classes

Companies are streaming past performances to compensate for cancelled spring seasons, and dance videos have gained more prominence whether a thread of solo dancers tag teaming a movement sequence, dancing on the roof, the backyard or their kitchen. The popular long-running video competition *Dare to Dance in Public* curated by Sarah Elgart has been joined by her new challenge, *Six Foot Distance Dances* (details on how to submit at <https://www.culturalweekly.com/dare-dance-public-film-festival-six-foot-distance-dances/>).

Over the next few months, the **Palm Springs International Dance Festival** is accepting submissions for an October performance under the title *MERDE! A Dance Makers Moment*. Seven submissions will be selected for presentation on October 23 with by the voting audience and an expert panel. The winner of the voting will be presented as part of the Festival's gala in March 2021. Details on submission at <https://www.nickersonrossdance.com/>.

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** <https://www.ladancechronicle.com/>, 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.

Cancelled or Postponed:

Barak Ballet Memoryhouse – The Broad Stage, Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., June 11–13th. Cancelled. <https://barakballet.org/>.



Barak Ballet. Photo by Dave Friedman.

Dohee Lee *MU/?: 9 Goddesses* – REDCAT, downtown; Fri.-Sat., June 5-6. Postponed, no new date. <https://www.redcat.org/>.



Dohee Lee. Photo by Scott Tsuchitani.

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