

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Hunter Hodkinson: “Ode To Foreskin”

Hunter Hodkinson · Monday, April 10th, 2023

Ode To Foreskin

Where pus and poems hemorrhage
is a day old baby

with ten fingers and toes
nearly perfect,

little jaundice legs sprawled
like a wishbone

snapped.

So much crying
so much confusion

as my discarded foreskin floats in a metal tray
like a tangerine peel in a rain puddle.

My dog growing up still had her dew claws.
Mom said it's because she came from a

neglectful home.

I called them her Velociraptor claws,
dangling, useless things that only

occasionally got caught on quilts
and thread blankets.

Nothing about them reminded me of neglect.

*They're supposed to be snipped when
they're babies* she tells me

and they didn't crop her ears.

What about docking cropping
and snipping
reminds us of care?

They cut the arms off a tree on my block.
Only an occasional leaf fell from those branches.

It was so obedient.

I only peed on the doctors because
it was my first second in the world...

I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

(A new series featuring works from Friday Night Open poets at [Brooklyn Poets](#))

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7 Fun Things to Do On Your Family Vacation in Pigeon Forge

Our Friends · Monday, April 10th, 2023

Families mostly love Pigeon Forge. Its stunning landscape and adrenaline-fueled activities can keep all types of travelers happy. Whether you want to spend time in your cabin's hot tub, stroll through the Smoky Mountains, or race go-karts down a twisting track, there'll never be a dull moment here.

But when traveling with your family, you must demonstrate your best vacation planning skills to keep everyone happy. Trust us; grumpy faces suck the relaxation out of a getaway. To make your trip one to remember, here are the top fun things you should do in Pigeon Forge:

1. Visit the Titanic Museum

We all have a few unanswered questions about the ill-fated ship. So satisfy your curiosity at the Titanic Museum. Will you believe it if we tell you there are more than 400 artifacts? It's a fascinating place where you can explore galleries, learn more about the history of the Titanic, and even touch an iceberg. It's an attraction that everyone in the family will enjoy. If you have toddlers aged three and above, don't worry. They are welcome too.

2. Enjoy a Dinner Show

When you put together a hearty feast and an entertaining show, you get a night of laughter and

great family fun. Pigeon Forge's [Hatfield and McCoy Feud Show](#) is just the right place for it. The feud between the two families is legendary – and you can experience it all in real life!

The show has a mix of singing, dancing, and side-splitting comedy. Also, the billycopter was added to the show to introduce some high-flying fun!

To top it all off, the food is served family style and it is all-you-can-eat. You will get to enjoy tasty dishes like fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and hot homemade bread. The show has a reputation for bringing families together – so it gets jam-packed. If you don't book your tickets in advance, you might miss out on this fantastic experience.

3. Take a Ride on the Great Smoky Mountain Wheel

How do you feel about a bit of romance in the air? Take a ride on the [Great Smoky Mountain Wheel](#). Standing 200 feet tall, this Ferris wheel offers some of the most breathtaking views of Pigeon Forge. It's the perfect way to end a day of adventure and fun.

Couples can enjoy quality time in one of the two private gondolas or ride it with family and friends. The views are breathtaking, especially at night when the city lights up.

If you're worried about the chilly temperatures, don't. The wheel is climate-controlled and extremely comfortable for everyone.

If you want to make the most of your ride, book it for sunset. You will want the time to slow down.

4. Experience Dollywood

You can't leave this quaint mountain town unless you've screamed your heart out at Dollywood, the most popular theme park in Pigeon Forge. It has everything.

Get ready for your heart to beat like never before on the Lightning Rod. It is the world's fastest wooden roller coaster, with a top speed of 73mph! If that isn't enough, buckle up and get set for more hair-raising excitement at Wild Eagle, Tennessee Tornado, and Daredevil Falls.

But Dollywood isn't all about rides; the theme park also offers some amazing eateries to pick from! From the classic and beloved Dippin' Dots to Aunt Granny's Restaurant, your taste buds will surely thank you.

If you plan your trip right, you can also enjoy one (or two) of the many [events and festivals](#) here.

5. Spend Some Time on The Island

If you're looking for a one-stop spot for entertainment, The Island in Pigeon Forge is the place. From shopping to dining and splendid attractions, this is the perfect spot for a family outing. You can stroll down its winding pathways while admiring the trees.

If you want an ethereal experience, don't miss the dazzling dancing fountain! This cutting-edge attraction features fourteen exquisitely choreographed musical sequences and 89 water jets,

creating a show that is out of this world. You can take in its grandeur anytime between 10 am and 11:30 pm. So, plan accordingly.

Take your kids for a fun-filled time at The Arcade City. They can shoot some hoops and hop over to 7D Dark Ride Adventure for zombie thrills! Afterward, you can all take part in an Escape Game that includes Hollywood-level twists and turns.

6. Hollywood Wax Museum

Bring your celebrity-studded dreams to life at the Hollywood Wax Museum. You can get up close and personal with some of your favorite actors, sports stars, music legends, and more. The props are free to use. You only have to bring your best paparazzi poses.

Take your time to explore and take pictures at the various interactive sets, from a haunted house to an outer-space mission.

There are more interactive experiences at the museum too. Make sure you check out the Castle of Chaos. It is a 5D experience like no other! You can also take your little ones to Hannah's Maze of Mirrors and let them be a part of an exciting quest.

Final Thoughts

Pigeon Forge is the perfect destination to spend your family vacation, as you will get a mix of fun, adventure, and entertainment. However, before your tickets and load your car, make sure you know the details about the weather and tourist inflow. You don't want to be surrounded by a sea of people. We also recommend making all your bookings in advance. No hassle is a "bearable hassle" on a family vacation.

Photo by Ivan Samkov: <https://www.pexels.com>

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Florence Weinberger: Two Poems

Florence Weinberger · Sunday, April 9th, 2023

Whole Grains and Hard, Harmonious Ways

My mother knew heat, she'd hold her palm above the pot
to gauge the force and virtue of the flame. In her wrist,
the heft of black pepper, the troth of flour and eggs.

She knew marrow and garlic, hard harmonious ways
 of healing, some days with sugar, some with bitter herbs.
 And lying, that, too, buying a blouse, washing it
 before wearing it so my father would think it was used
 but he was rarely fooled,
 he knew when her stew lacked character; he knew her.

Now that I no longer cook the way she taught me,
 leaving out fat, adding whole grains, foods
 she never understood, like kabocha squash and artichokes,
 I still have left what is probably in my DNA; the smallest taste
 is enough to implicate my nerves and all my senses.
 She also taught me how to serve.
 Pleasing a man is not always what it's for. While I add to the mix
 I take the measure of time.
 What's mine was my mother's first. How do I spend these final years?

*

Bishop's Lull

All things loved are pursued and never caught:
 a line I sponged from Dean Young for its frisson of rue.

Made me think of cats at first,
 then grown children who slip away, or the biggest fish

or sorrow, a kind of generic grief spill
 sifted and culled until it pinned the lover I caught and kept so long

because I could not decide if my love was immortal
 or would wither over the coming summer.

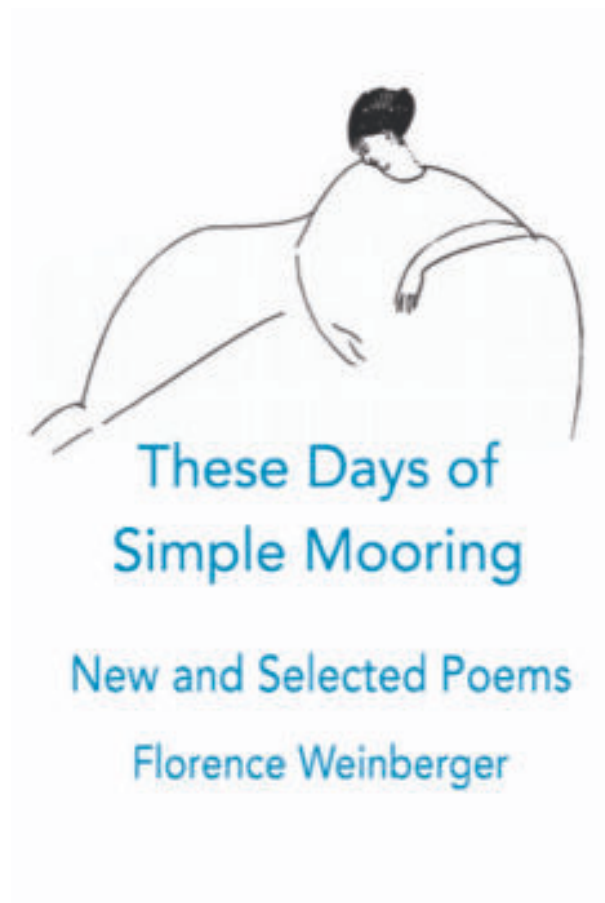
So it wasn't missing kids that gave me pause.
 It was Bishop's lull, before she unhooked the fish

the fish imperiled by the heat in her hands
 remorse coursing through her

but sometimes the catch needs a longer pause, maybe
 decades, to unravel how much was love, how much was flak.

What I would have lost, had I let him go.

(Previously published in *SALT*)



These Days of Simple Mooring by Florence Weinberger

Purchase *These Days of Simple Mooring* by Florence Weinberger

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Sweeney, Cinderella: Sondheim/Lloyd Webber Rematch

David Sheward · Friday, April 7th, 2023

At the 1988 Tony Awards, the big battle was between shows composed by the two respective behemoths of the American and British musical theater: Stephen Sondheim's twist on fairy tales *Into the Woods* and Andrew Lloyd Webber's take on a horror classic *Phantom of the Opera*. Despite winning Best Book for James Lapine and Best Score for Sondheim, *Woods* lost the Best Musical prize to Lloyd Webber's more popular *Phantom* which is finally closing soon after a 35-year run. In an act of theatrical symmetry, Sondheim and Lloyd Webber are rematched with shows opening within days of each other. Only this time, Sondheim is the purveyor of ghoulish thrills with a revival of one of his greatest works, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* while Lloyd Webber is peddling updated folk tales with *Bad Cinderella*. This new *Sweeney* is probably the most perfect production of a Sondheim musical (well, maybe excluding the exquisite *Into the Woods* revival seen earlier this season) while *Bad Cinderella* is too aptly named.



Annaleigh Ashford and Josh Groban in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman

This *Sweeney* is truly frightening and funny while *Bad Cinderella* wants to be a campy hoot, but isn't even mildly amusing. Derived from a Victorian penny dreadful and stage melodrama about a murderous barber and a cannibalistic cook, *Sweeney* contains Sondheim's arguably finest score with rich, varied music and incredibly intricate lyrics.



Josh Groban, Annaleigh Ashford and the company of *Sweeney Todd*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman.

The 1979 production was the apex of the legendary songwriter's collaboration with super-director Harold Prince (who also staged *Phantom*). It was a gargantuan production, recreating the entire Industrial Revolution on the vast Gershwin Theater stage (then known as the Uris). This is the

fourth Broadway *Sweeney*, in addition to numerous operatic and concert versions as well as an Off-Broadway immersive production with the entire small theater transformed into Mrs. Lovett's Pie Shop. While Thomas Kail's direction does not imitate Prince's, it does offer the same intense power and size. The staging is as fluid and seamless as the excellent job Kail did for *Hamilton*. Steven Hoggett's imaginative, frenetic choreography keeps the action moving in between the brilliant main scenes enacted by a dynamite ensemble including the most individualist chorus of any Broadway show now playing. Natasha Katz's noir-ish lighting makes Mimi Lein's spooky, drainage ditch of a set into a nightmare of murder and suspense.



Josh Groban and Annaleigh Ashford in *Sweeney Todd*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman

In the title role, Josh Groban, making only his second Broadway appearance after an admirable debut in *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*, is much more than a pop heartthrob providing Broadway box-office bait. Bearded and looking like a bedraggled, menacing Abraham Lincoln, Groban captures Sweeney's devastated sorrow, creating a more relatable cutthroat than Len Cariou or Michael Cerveris who emphasized the character's maniacal blood-lust. Annaleigh Ashford is as funny as Angela Lansbury and as seductive as Patti LuPone, but in a different way. She wisely underplays the demonic practicality of Mrs. Lovett, surprisingly earning huge laughs for an amoral murderess's justification for popping more than pussycats into pies. She finds a small gesture, indicative of character, and subtly adds layers to book-writer Hugh Wheeler's heavily ironic dialogue (which is exactly the opposite of *Bad Cinderella* where everybody overplays every line). Watch as Ashford attempts an elegant genuflection when introduced to the vile Judge Turpin (fantastically evil Jamie Jackson). She curtsies terribly low on a staircase, but does not wish to rise and make herself higher than the socially elevated Turpin. So she slinks down the steps, nearly ending in a servile muddle at the bottom. That's only one of Ashford's many hilarious moments.



Jamie Jackson and John Rapson in *Sweeney Todd*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman

The supporting players are just as vivid. As mentioned above, Jamie Jackson is a hissable Turpin. Maria Bilbao conveys the neurotic fear of Johanna, Sweeney's long-lost daughter and the adoptive offspring and potential bride of Turpin (eeeww!). From her slight tics and twitches, it's believable this girl was raised by a predator. Gates Matarazzo of *Stranger Things* fame, is a tender, gullible, quick-witted Tobias. Ruthie Ann Miles has the perfect desperation and the crudeness for the Beggar Woman and John Rapson is a properly pompous Beadle Bamford. Jordan Fisher has a lovely voice for Anthony, the sailor who rescues Johanna, and Nicholas Christopher is a farcical Pirelli, a street mountebank challenging Sweeney's dominance as a barber. A terrifyingly terrific cast for a horrifyingly great *Sweeney Todd*.



Linedy Genao and the company of *Bad Cinderella*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman.

Unfortunately, *Bad Cinderella* is as disappointing as *Sweeney* is exciting. Originally billed as plain old *Cinderella* during its London run (which was interrupted by the COVID pandemic), this lowbrow parody of the beloved story purports to criticize a looks-based kingdom, but winds up being just as shallow as the society it critiques. The premise and the grade-school humor is thunderingly announced in the opening number, “Buns and Roses/Beauty Is Our Duty” (get it?) as the chorus struts about praising their loveliness. The women are teen goddesses out of *Legally Blonde*, while the men are shirtless hunks with bulging pecs (They are even referred to as The Hunks).



Linedy Genao and Jordan Dobson in *Bad Cinderella*.

Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman.

Appearance is the highest currency in this burg and Cinderella is an outcast because she rejects these superficial values. But Linedy Genao is as much of a knockout as any of her castmates, even when dressed in punk fashion by Gabriela Tylesova whose imaginative, Disney-esque designs for the costumes and sets are the show's strongest elements. In addition, the prince of this tale, Sebastian, is supposed to be a plain milksop (this prince's older brother, a super-hunk, is missing after departing to slay a dragon.) Sebastian is a match for the allegedly dowdy Cinderella, but Jordan Dobson is as fetching as Genao. So the idea of an average pair triumphing over their brainless, gorgeous community is crushed by the casting.

As previously noted, Laurence Connor has directed everyone to play book writers Emerald Fennell and Alexis Scheer's lame jokes and David Zippel's simplistic lyrics way over the top from the opening. The actors have nowhere to go but further up as the evening progresses, belaboring the single joke of the show (everybody in the kingdom is a loud, good-looking jerk except the two leads). The sophomoric level of the script is something of a surprise since Fennell wrote the smart and sharp screenplay for the feminist revenge comedy *Promising Young Woman*. (Fennell is credited with Original Story and Book, while Scheer is listed as doing the "Book Adaptation.") As for Lloyd Webber's music, his signature swelling ballads are there (with Zippel supplying generic lyrics) reprised ad nauseum, as well as some bouncy fun tunes, which are also repeated throughout the evening.



Morgan Higgins and Sami Gayle in *Bad Cinderella*. Credit: Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman

Genao and Dobson display great pipes and have a sparkling chemistry. They make this tedious exercise bearable. Carolee Carmello and Grace McLean are wasted in what could have been hilarious Grand Diva roles as the Wicked Stepmother and the even more Wicked Queen. But their one-note roles wear thin after a scene or two. Ironically, the only character that really changes or grows is one of the Wicked Stepsisters, Marie. After being rejected at the ball, Marie sympathizes with Cinderella and advises her to battle for Sebastian. Morgan Higgins takes advantage of this development and creates a fully-rounded though still comically exaggerated creation. If only the rest of the show had followed suit, the audience could have had a happy ending.

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street: Opened March 26 for an open run. Lunt-Fontanne Theater, 205 W. 46th St., NYC. Running time: two hours and 45 mins. including intermission. [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

Bad Cinderella: Opened March 23 for an open run. Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St., NYC. Running time: two hours and 25 mins. [telecharge.com](https://www.telecharge.com).

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As the Crows Fly

Ann Haskins · Thursday, April 6th, 2023

A decade tapped in Costa Mesa, an activist's death considered downtown, classical South Asian dance deconstructed in Santa Monica, traditional Bharatanatyam in University Park; flamenco in Santa Clarita, a peek at next week, and more SoCal dance this week (April 7 to 13)

Live This Week

Avian mixed messaging

Seeking to deconstruct classical South Asian Bharatanatyam dance, **Ashwini Ramaswamy** draws on modern and traditional African dance as well as contemporary modern dance known as Gaga. The choreographer and a trio of dancers bring the result, *Let the Crows Come*, evoking the metaphor of crows as messengers to the living and guides after death. BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., April 7-8, 7:30 pm, \$40-\$70. [BroadStage](https://www.broadstage.org).

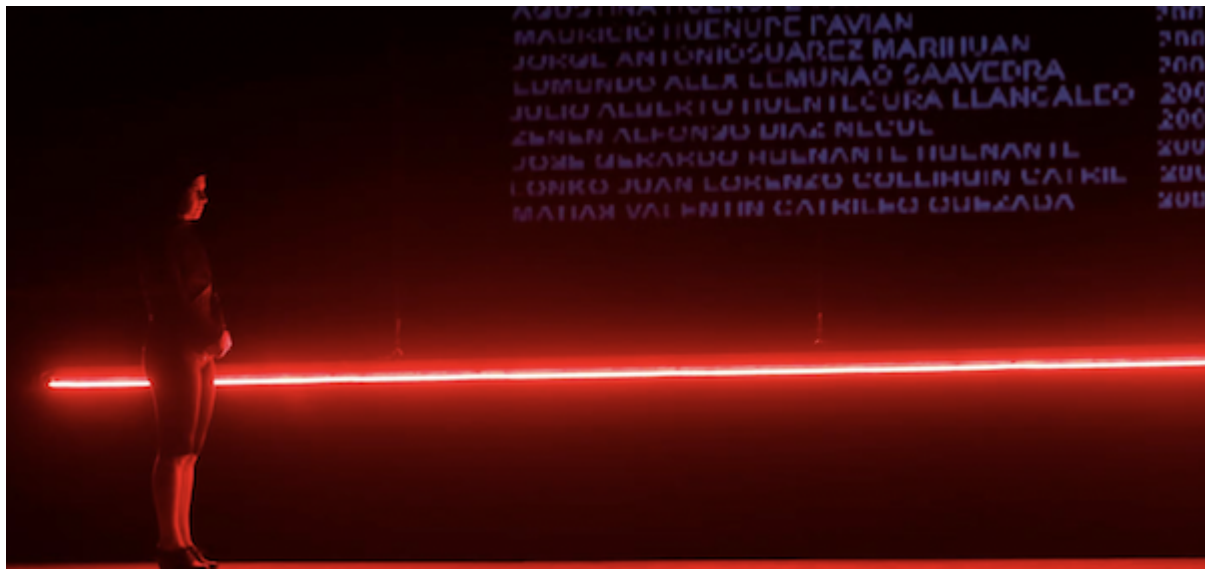


Ashwin Ramaswamy's "Let the Crows Come." Photo by Jake Armour

Blending bodies and voices

Drawing on events following the death of an indigenous activist/farmer at the hands of Chilean police, *Amor a la muerte (Love to Death)*, **Lemi Ponifasio**'s new work combines the artistry of Chilean contemporary flamenco dancer **Natalia Lemi Ponifasio** and Mapuche artist/singer/composer Elisa Avendaño Curaqueo. The work is presented without subtitles in Spanish and Mapudungun (the language spoken by the Mapuche people of south-central Chile).

REDCAT at Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Fri.-Sat., April 7-8, 8:30 pm, Sun., April 9, 3 pm, \$30, \$25 students. [REDCAT](#).



Lemi Ponifasio. Photo courtesy of the artist

Marking the decade

In a short ten years, Michelle Dorrance picked up a MacArthur Genius Award and built a tap dance company hailed as the future of the art form. The choreographer and her **Dorrance Dance** stop off on their 10th anniversary tour. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Sat., April 8, 7:30 pm, \$29-\$109. [SCFTA](#).



Dorrance Dance. Photo by Hayim Heron

Fast Feet

Mijal Natal and **Irit Spector** contribute choreography as flamenco dance and music from Spain's Andalusia region take the stage in *Un Pozo Chico*. The Main, 24266 Main St., Santa Clarita; Fri., April 7, 8 pm, \$25-\$35. [The Main](#).



Irit Specktor. Photo by Ephrat Spector

If it's Sunday, is it Belgium?

Two Brussels-based companies, **Chaliwaté Company** & **Focus Company** arrive on their first US tour, bringing *Dimanche*, a collaborative effort focused on neglected need for climate change. BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., April 13-15, 7:30 pm, Sat.-Sun., April 15-16, 2 pm., \$40-\$60. [BroadStage](#).



Chaliwaté Company & Focus Company. Photo courtesy of the artists

A way to start the day

Set in a beautiful, circular chamber concert venue, **Leela Dance** brings classical South Asian dance to this concert with music ensemble Salastina. This concert initiates a planned, ongoing collaboration of the two organizations. There also is a livestreamed option. Doheny Mansion, Pompeian Room, 10 Chester Pl., University Park; Sat., April 8, 11 am, \$20, \$10 students, \$10 livestream. [Salastina](#).



Leela Dance Collective. Photo courtesy of the artists

All electric

Timed to coincide with *First Friday* events on nearby Abott Kinney Boulevard, **High Voltage** offers an eclectic, ever-changing line-up of performers, often with dance. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., April 7, 8 pm, \$10. [Electric Lodge](#).

A Peek at Next Week

Los Angeles Dance Festival 2023 at Brockus Project Studios, 618 B Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Sat.-Sun., April 15-16, 8 pm, Fri.-Sun., April 21-23, 8 pm, and Fri.-Sat., April 28-29, 8 pm, Sun., April 30, 6:30 pm, \$15. [Los Angeles Dance Festival](#).

The Realm Company at Stomping Ground, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Sat., April 15, 6 pm, \$50-\$200 [Red Riot Entertainment](#).

Backhausdance at L.A. Dance Project Studios, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Arts District; Sat. April 15, 8 pm, \$30, \$20 students [Backhausdance](#).



Backhausdance. Photo by Shawna Sarnowski

Riverdance 25th Anniversary Tour at McCallum Theatre, 7300 Fred Waring Dr. Pam Desert; Fri., April 14, 8 pm, Sat., April 15, 2 & 8 pm, Sun., April 16, 2 & 7:30 pm, \$55-\$125. [McCallum Theatre](#). Also at Dolby Theatre, Hollywood & Highland, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood. Wed.-Fri., April 19-21, 8 pm, Sat. April 22, 2 & 8pm, Sun., April 23, 1 & 6 pm, \$39-\$149. [Dolby Theatre](#).

Hillel Kogan & Mourad Bouayad – *We Love Arabs* at Théâtre Raymond Kabbaz, 10361 W. Pico Blvd., West LA; Thurs., April 20, 8 pm, \$30-\$40. [Théâtre Raymond Kabbaz](#).

Of Note

SoCal dance out of town — Orange County contemporary troupe **Akomi Dance** performs in New York City this week, invited to be part of the *New Wave Dance Festival*. [Akomi Dance](#).

More SoCal dance on tour — Contemporary troupe **Invertigo Dance** performs *Formulae and Fairytales* at North Carolina's Wilson Center, roughly three years after the originally scheduled 2020 tour was cancelled by the onset of Covid.

Get the application ready — LA-based **Blue13** dance company invites proposals for a two-week residency program to increase the visibility of Asian American Pacific Islander-identifying choreographers to create new work. Deadline is **April 25** for the residency in June that concludes with performances. Info and application at [Blue13](#).

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Carmen On Film

Elisa Leonelli · Monday, April 3rd, 2023

Carmen, the celebrated French opera by [George Bizet](#), that premiered at Paris Opéra-Comique on March 3, 1875, and was based on a [1845 novella](#) by [Prosper Mérimée](#), inspired several motion pictures, starting from the silent era until the present.



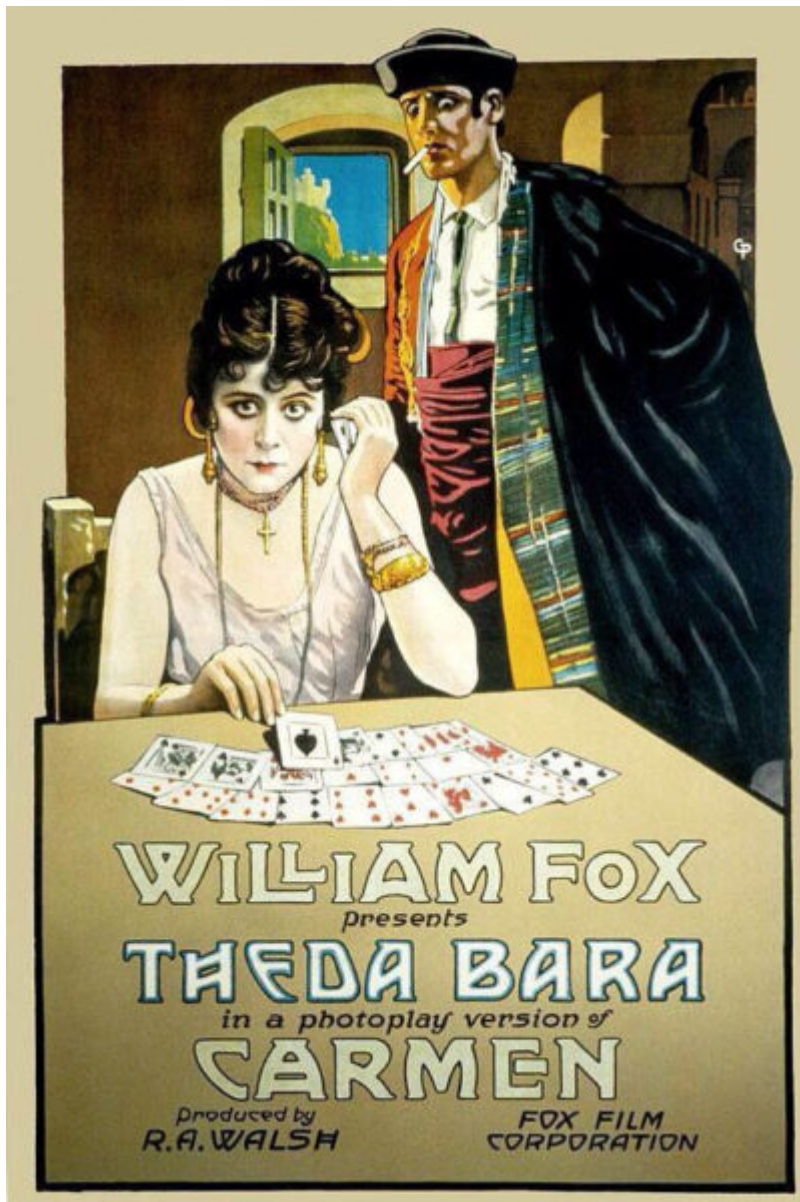
Julia Migenes as Carmen-1984

Carmen is a fiery gypsy dancer working at a cigarette factory in Seville, Spain, who, after being arrested for attacking a co-worker with a knife, seduces Don José, the soldier in charge of keeping her in jail. He helps her escape, becomes her lover, ignores his sweet fiancé Micaëla, and deserts from the army. When Carmen gets tired of him and takes a new lover, bullfighter Escamillo, Don José kills her.

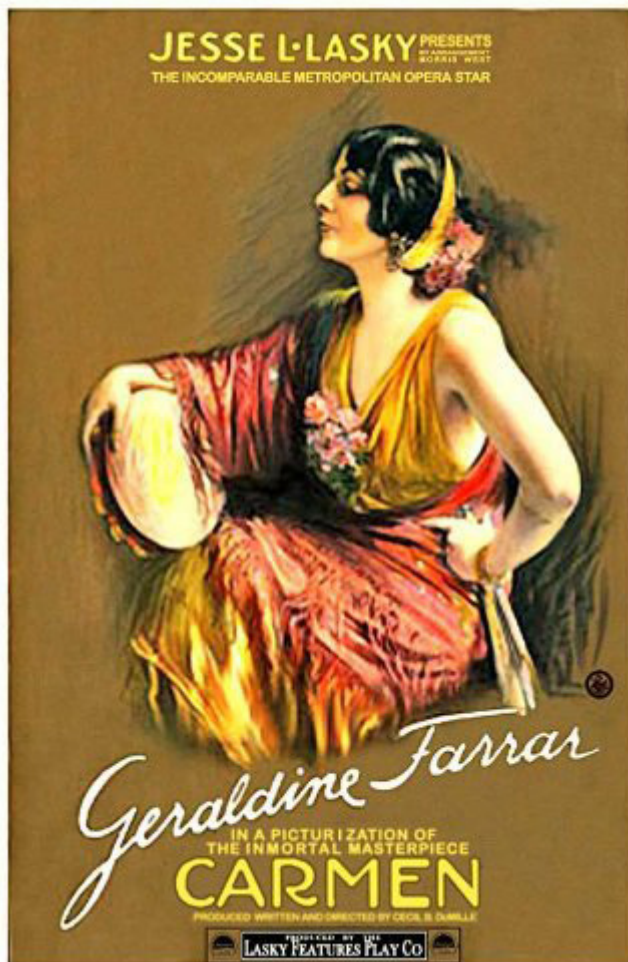
The most famous arias are the Habanera “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle,” [watch it here](#) sung by Latvian mezzo-soprano [Elīna Garanča](#) as Carmen in 2010, the [Toreador Song](#) “Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre,” performed in 2017 by Italian bass [Roberto Tagliavini](#) as Escamillo, the [duet](#) “Parle-moi de ma mère,” listen to it with Italian soprano [Mirella Freni](#) as Micaëla and Italian tenor [Franco Corelli](#) as Don José.

Garanča last performed Carmen in summer 2022, in a production originally directed by Franco Zeffirelli at Arena di Verona, Italy. Watch trailer [here](#).

Among the several silent film versions of *Carmen*, we mention these.



Carmen (1915) by Raoul Walsh with Theda Bara, a lost film. Bara was nicknamed “The Vamp” for her roles as a sexy femme fatale.



Carmen (1915) by Cecil D. DeMille with American lyric soprano Geraldine Farrar.

This movie, like the other silents mentioned here, was based on the novella by Mérimée, which was in the public domain, not the opera libretto, which was under copyright.



A Burlesque on Carmen (1915) by Charlie Chaplin is a parody with Chaplin as Don José and Edna

Purviance as Carmen. You may [watch here](#) the 1916 re-edited version.



Carmen (1918), German silent by Ernst Lubitsch with Polish actress [Pola Negri](#), released in the US as *Gypsy Blood* (1921). Negri acted on stage, moved to Germany in 1917 at the age of 20, starred in silents directed by Lubitsch, both were signed by Paramount in 1922 and made movies in Hollywood.



The Loves of Carmen (1927) by Raoul Walsh with Dolores del Río. Born in Durango Mexico, del Río became a major star of American and Mexican movies.

Of the many sound films that told the story of Carmen, we highlight these.



Carmen (1945) by French director Christian-Jaque with Viviane Romance and Jean Marais. Romance made movies in France and Italy, but rejected offers from Hollywood.

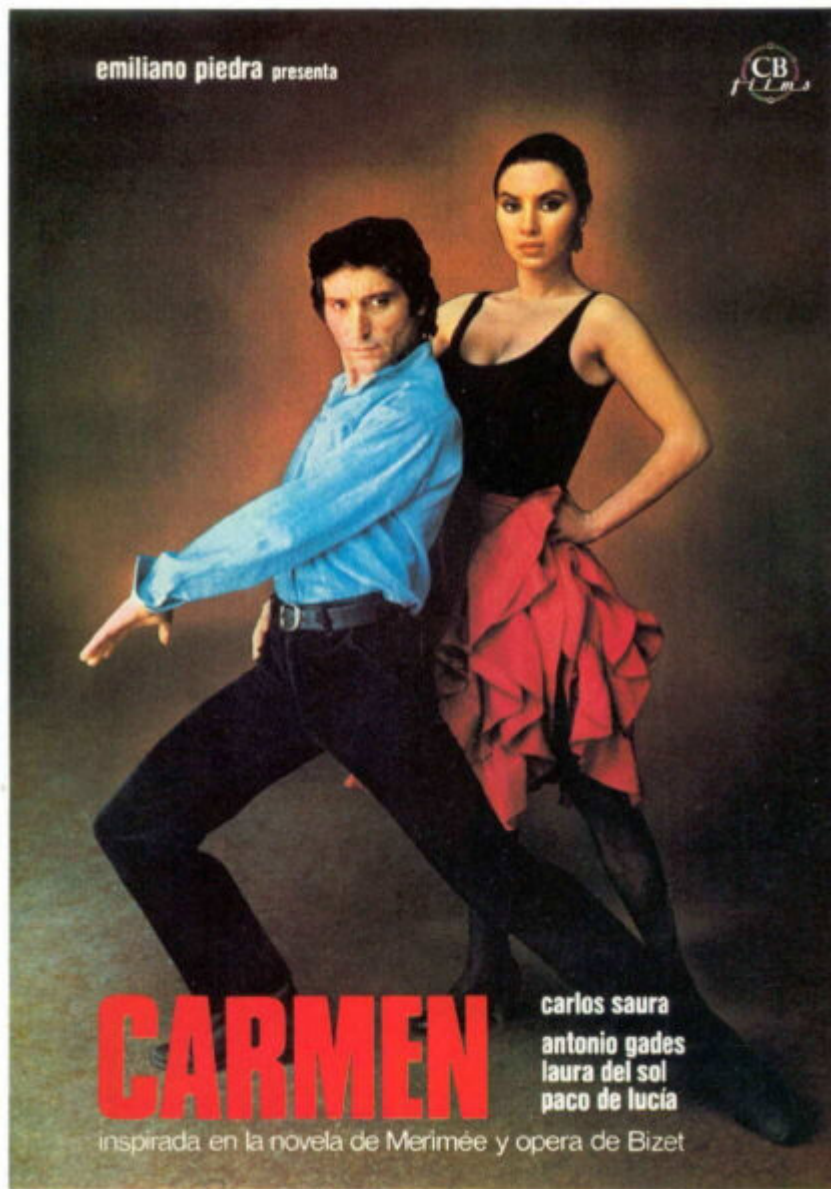


The Loves of Carmen (1948) by King Vidor with Rita Hayworth and Glenn Ford. Hayworth's father Eduardo Cansino was of Romani (gitano, gypsy) descent from Seville, Spain.

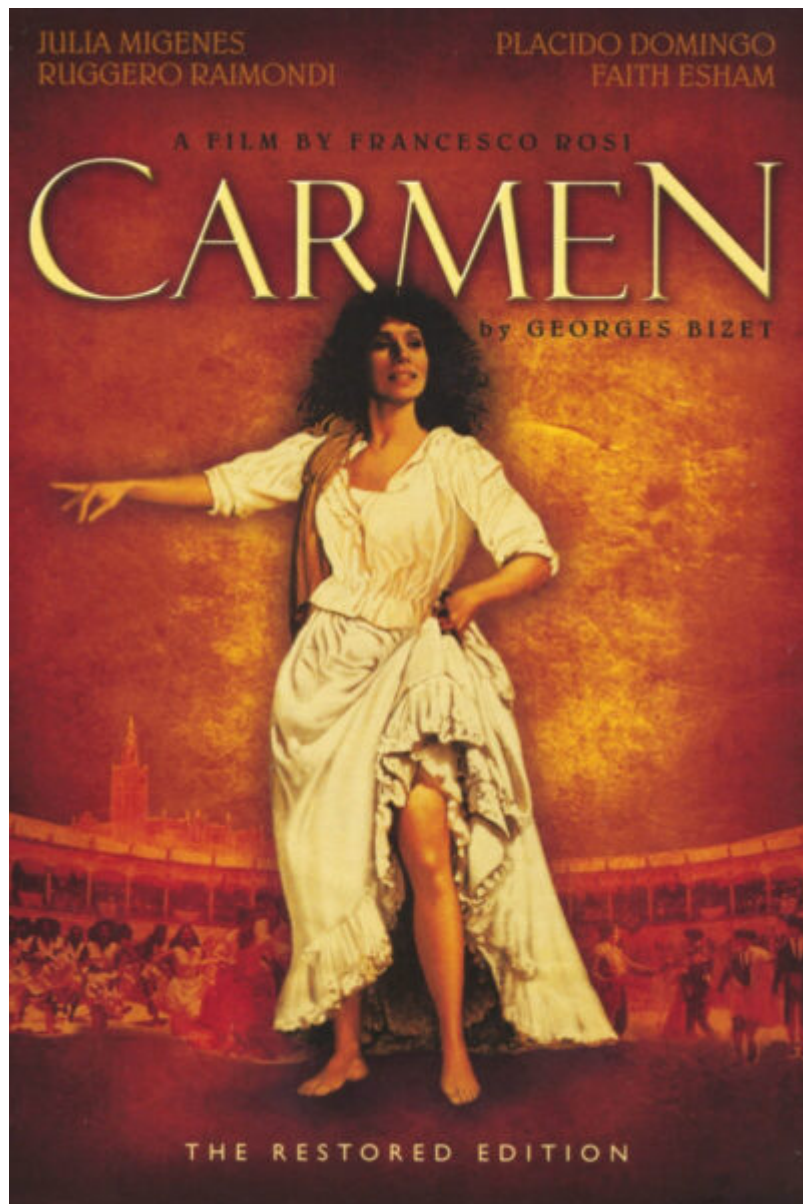


Carmen Jones (1954) directed by Otto Preminger from the 1943 stage musical with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein set to the music of Bizet's opera. It featured an all Black cast headed by Dorothy Dandridge and Harry Belafonte.

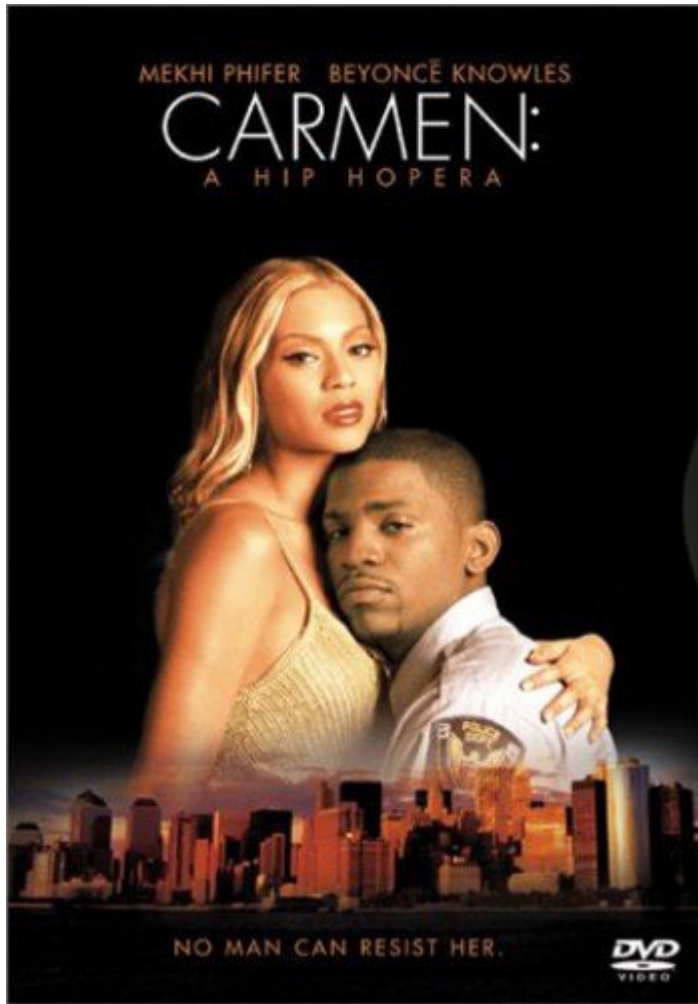
Carmen (1967), directed by Austrian conductor Herbert von Karajan, is not really a movie, but a filmed stage performance. I mention it here because, like Luciano Pavarotti, Mirella Freni was born and lived in my hometown of Modena, Italy, where she made her opera debut as Micaëla in *Carmen* in 1955.



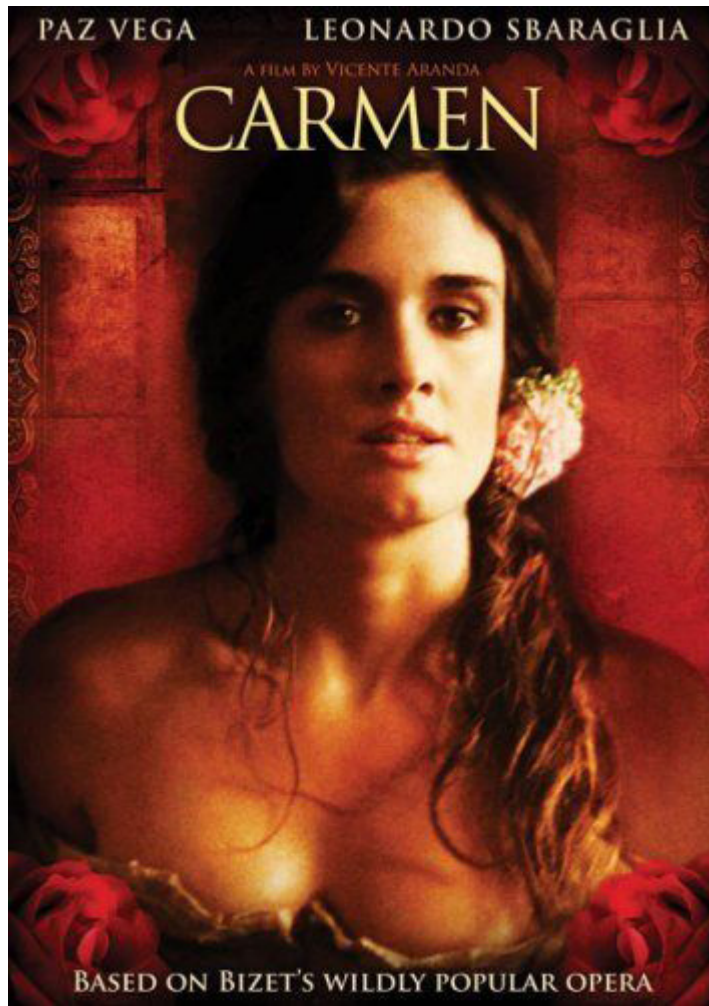
Carmen (1983) by Spanish director Carlos Saura, where the lovers re-enact their tragic story through flamenco dancing.



Carmen (1984) by Italian director Francesco Rosi with [Julia Migenes](#), [Plácido Domingo](#), [Ruggero Raimondi](#). Migenes was born in New York City, Domingo in Madrid, Spain, Raimondi in Bologna, Italy. You may watch [trailer here](#), the full movie [at this link](#) (in French with Spanish subtitles).



Carmen: A Hip Hopera (2001), a MTV movie directed by Robert Townsend featuring an original hip-hop/R&B score, with [Beyoncé Knowles](#) and [Mekhi Phifer](#).



Carmen (2003) by Spanish director Vicente Aranda with Paz Vega, born in Seville, Andalusia, Spain, and Leonardo Sbaraglia, born in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Carmen (2023) directed by French dancer-choreographer Benjamin Millepied with original score by Nicholas Britnell, starring [Melissa Barrera](#), born in Monterrey, Mexico, and [Paul Mescal](#), born in Ireland.

Please click on words underlined in pale orange for more info.

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Why Pulav Is Much More Than Vegetarian Biryani

Pitamber Kaushik · Sunday, April 2nd, 2023

“There’s nothing such as ‘Veg Biryani’; it’s Pulao,” is a hackneyed piece of ridicule commonly directed at vegetarians in India who wish to savour the subcontinent’s beloved and famed rice dish. ‘Pulao’ or ‘Pulav’ in India refers to a rice dish made with a host of vegetables and aromatic spices and condiments, typically cooked in ghee or oil and served at special occasions. However, neither Pulao nor Biryani are exclusive to India or likely to have originated in their distinctly-recognisable forms in the subcontinent.

The dish is known by various names in different regions and communities, most of them some

variation of vowels or aspirated pronunciation of ‘Pulav’, practically a spectrum of every such combination conceivable – pilao, palau, polov, pilaf, polo, polu, palaw, fulav, fulab, and so on. The exact origins of such dishes are as smudged as their definition and there is perhaps some causation as the heart of this correlation. The continuum of richly-spiced meat-and-rice dishes that these names refer to is fairly generic and one can expect various cultures to have independently come up with some sort of fragrant, richly-flavoured slow-cooked rice dish for feasts and special occasions. The various names of the dish ultimately trace their origin to the Persian word ‘Pilaw’. From Persia and later via Turkey, the dish spread to Central Asia, Western Asia, and even Eastern Europe and North Africa. Interestingly, the Valencian dish Paella, perhaps Spain’s most iconic and recognisable food item, is hypothesised to have originated from Pilaf-like dishes cooked among the Moors of Spain as a result of diffusion of Arabic culinary practices into the region. Over time, the dish gave rise to derivatives in Europe, East Africa, and via Spain, even parts of Latin America. Today, dishes originating from the Pilaf can be found all the way from Mongolia, the Xinjiang province of China, and Russia to Uganda and Zanzibar in the South and Crete & Cyprus in the East.

Although the ultimate origin of the Persian etymon ‘Pilaw’ itself likely came from India, being ultimately Sanskritic or even Dravidian (wherefrom it entered Sanskrit) in origin and referring to a general rice dish, the dish even with its most fundamental recognisable distinctions likely originated in Persia, as indicated by its first documented recipe being described by the 10th-century Persian scholar and polymath Ibn Sina (known in the West as Avicenna) consistent with its geocultural diffusion patterns over the course of history.



Uyghur Polu | Image by Mizu basyo at Japanese Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0

There are as many origin theories to the dish as grains of rice in a typical serving of it. The multiplicity of narratives is numerous to the point of constituting a continuum – a loose family of dishes united solely by the shared characteristic of separateness of rice-grains. The evolution of the spectrum of preparations loosely labeled such is inextricably tangled in the warps and wefts of

civilisational history, going back and forth, more times than one could keep track of, to the point where no community is anymore strongly convicted to lay claim to the general origin of the family of dishes. It all boils down to a Ship of Theseus line-of-argumentation and the issue of diffused definition.

The cultivation of rice as a crop spread from South Asia to Central and Western Asia. Narratives recounting the origin of the dish claim to go as far as Alexander's time, claiming that it was he who first brought pulav-like dishes from regions in what is modern-day Afghanistan to West Asia and Central Asia. The Abbasid Caliphate facilitated the exchange and subsequent evolution of not one but multiple varieties of pulav. While it is certain that the spread of Islam was instrumental to the proliferation of the pulav, certainties end there – we are not even sure of the direction of the flow, or if the flow at all was directional. It is safe to assume that at an indefinite point in history, a particularly famed pot-cooked specially-spiced motley loose-grained (non-clumped) rice, meat, and vegetable preparation from what is roughly modern-day Afghanistan and Uzbekistan was introduced to Persia and subsequently to the rest of the Middle East. It is likely that the dish went back and forth as it evolved with waves of conquerors and migrants. For instance, while the dish in its most basic form originated in or around Bactria, roughly the region between the Hindu Kush mountain range and the Amu river (largely corresponding to contemporary Afghanistan and Uzbekistan), and spread from there to West Asia, its evolved version with distinctive Turkish, Persian, and Arabic influences travelled back eastwards to its area of origin, spilling over into the Indian subcontinent in recurrent waves, washing over existing versions to create successive ones, each assailing, dynasty, and crusader serving as a stroke of spatula in the subcontinent's simmering pot. Influences likely volleyed back and forth multiple times through waves of migration, trade, and conquest. The dish thus proliferated, evolved in different quasi-isolated geocultural niches, and repeatedly converged, diverged and reconverged across the length of Eurasia, not very different from the evolution of species in the natural world. The dish was thus stirred, turned around, and simmered to its modern state.



Oshi Palov from Central Asia | Image by I, Ibrahimjon, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Akin to the grains of the dish, the accounts of pilaf's evolution, although numerous, are segregated and averse to adhesion. In many Arab nations, for instance, the same dish that is called Qabuli Palaw elsewhere is known as 'Bukharan rice'. In India and Bangladesh, a popular variant of the pulav is made with a meat broth known as 'Yakhni', having its origins in Persia and Turkey. In Armenia, even the bedrock supporting the sprawling, dangling edifice of the spectrum of dishes known by these related names, is done away with. Armenian pilafs (yes, there are multiple varieties of the same) are often made with cracked wheat (bulgur), orzo (a rice-shaped variety of pasta), and vermicelli (thin noodles or strand-shaped pasta). Pilaf is often filled in cabbage rolls. In Azerbaijan and parts of neighbouring nations, one can find one of the more luxurious variants of the preparation – Shah Pilaf (King Pilaf), known as a dish cherished by lords and chieftains and a staple at major feasts. Shah Pilaf consists of meat, nuts, and dry-fruit laden pilaf stuffed and cooked in a crust of traditional breads. In the Caribbean, various varieties of 'pelau' are made, involving ingredients as corn, pumpkin, coconut, crab, cured pig tails, prawn, fish, and ketchup, among various other local ingredients. In Pakistan alone, at least ten distinct kinds of meats are used in Pilafs, ranging from chicken to camel. Even in the Indian subcontinent, there are prominent varieties of Pulav that are made from rice other than the famed Basmati. In Central Asia, cooking pilaf is particularly rich, being slow-simmered in copious amounts of liquid fat. Condiments and garnish often include varieties of nuts and dry fruit. Pilaf-making has traditionally been a family or community act, often done in giant cauldrons on open-fire, at items at a scale to feed hundreds of people with one preparation. In certain cuisines, particularly in prevalent European preparations, the rice grains of the pilaf need not be loose and separate, either. The preparation methods vary across and even within nations, with there being hardly any agreement on choices as elementary as whether and when should the various components of the dish be cooked together.



Persian-style Pilaf | Image by [Tamorlan](#), CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Given its prominent and pervasive exceptions, if Pilaf is neither essentially loose rice nor essentially rice with meat, what is it? What consistent traits characterise it and what saliences set it apart from similar preparations? Pilaf, thus it seems, is conclusively an idea – an idea of a grand eclectic meal with assorted ingredients for a rich, celebratory dining experience with friends and family – a lavish feast for occasions, a mark of prosperity, plentifulness, and unity within and across communities. It is a celebration of the diversity, fecundity, and bountifulness of one's land, and at times the well-connectedness of it by means of trade routes. Given the expanse, scope, and vibrance of the dish we label Pulav, it is as foolhardy to try to limit it in the confines of semantics, geography, polity, and culture as it is to try to faithfully represent the word 'bird' by means of a single picture. To try to put down Pulav to a single definition is akin to trying to depict water by a glass, as vain as trying to render an idea by an object. Any attempt at reduction to particulars is an act of vandalism of heritage – a living, breathing, evolving, proliferating one.

At this point, one could delve into an equally-lengthy and almost as extensive exploration of the definition of biryani and before proceeding into a winding series of arguments over similarities and differences vis-a-vis pulav. Almost any trait that can be cited as being definitive and distinctive of one can be found in at least one prominent version of the other. When debating questions of cultural origin, identity, and staked claims, we often fail to question the validity of the question itself – whether the partisan motion stands on firm assumptions and thus whether such divisive questioning makes any sense? The biryani has enough semantic flexibility to accommodate a vegetarian version as the pulav has geocultural precedent to contain any varieties of meat. It is still interesting to peruse the etymology of Biryani – going by one hypothesis, the name of the dish traces itself to the Persian word for 'roasting', which in turn derives from an Indo-European root that is also shared by words like 'Bhun' and 'Bhunj' in Hindi and related languages as well as by the English word 'fry' and its counterparts in a number of other European languages. No knitwork of etymological or philological tours-de-force can serve as a cloche that contains the fragrance of either dish from spreading across the length and breadth of the ever-shrinking world, inspiring

local adaptations and fusions. In a time of polarisation, where we strive to force dichotomies as pulav versus biryani, it does well to see the dish as a magnanimous syncretiser, an idea expressed differently in different lands, held together by history – the cherished shared ideal of unity within distinction – capturing the very essence of the dish.

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Hueso Restaurant in Guadalajara

Hoyt Hilsman · Sunday, April 2nd, 2023

A recent visit to the glorious city of Guadalajara reminded me again of its magnificent restaurant scene, which in many ways outshines much of what we see in American upscale restaurants. One of the outstanding examples is Hueso, for its food and for its innovative and striking design. Hueso (“bone” in Spanish) is designed with bone fragments from floor to ceiling in striking white and grey hues. “It’s called Bone because it’s a strong word, with vibes and linked to flavor,” said Poncho Cadena, the chef and founder.



Communal table @ Hueso

With diners seated at long tables to encourage conversation — something of a novelty in Mexico — the scene is lively and friendly, which adds to the conviviality of the experience. It also makes it easy and fun to sample and share dishes with your neighbor, making it a combination of fine dining and a family festivity.

The menu is intriguing, focusing on the rich Mexican tradition of seafood, meat and local produce, prepared with a variety of seasonings drawn principally from the state of Jalisco, but also incorporating tastes from elsewhere in Mexican and indigenous cooking. Among the outstanding dishes my wife and I sampled were grilled octopus in a mole sauce and a lovely risotto with local mushrooms.



Grilled octopus in mole sauce @ Hueso

Particularly unusual and delicious was an avocado with its skin removed, filled with a crème, covered with an edible vegetable skin and served hot. A salad of tomatillos dressed with rice vinegar and a potato appetizer were excellent starters, and the meal was rounded out by a desert of strawberries with slightly tart cream. Servers were well-informed and attentive, explaining menu items easily in both English and Spanish.

Well worth the visit!



Skinless avocado filled with cream @ Hueso

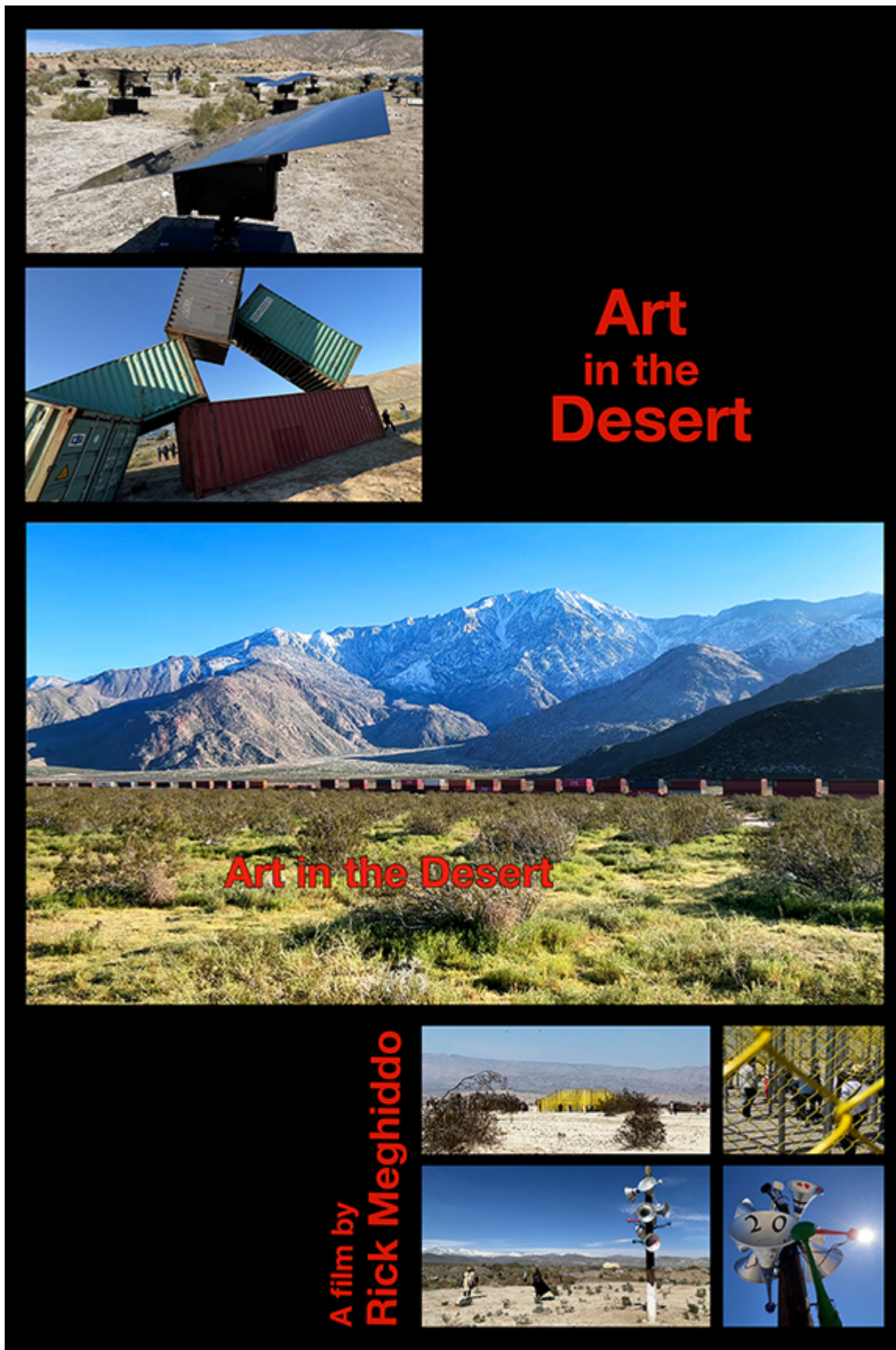
Photos by Nancy Kay Turner

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Desert X Howl

Rick Meghiddo · Friday, March 31st, 2023

The relevance of the 2023 Desert X Biennale goes beyond the exhibition of site-specific artworks by emerging artists; their input is spread across an arc of over twenty miles. This action raises our territorial consciousness of art relating to the environment.



Land Art artists such as Robert Smithson, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, and Arakawa & Gins, have related to the natural and the built environment with large-scale interventions. In Desert X an entire area is a stage for individual artists, each approaching the surrounding environment differently.

Susan Davis founded Desert X six years ago and is its director. This fourth edition was co-curated by **Neville Wakefield** and **Diana Campbell**, who presented twelve artists from Europe, North America, and South Asia. No one imposed a theme on them.



No. 1225 Chain-link, by Rana Begum



Liquid a Place, by Torkwase Dyson



Searching for the Sky while Mantaining Equilibrium, by Mario Garcia Torres



Sleeping Figure, by Matt Johnson



Immersion, by Gerald Clarke



Hylozoic/Desires, by Himali Singh Soin and David Soin Tappeser



The Smallest Sea with the Largest Heart, by Lauren Bon



Amar a Dios en Tierra de Indios, by Paloma Contreras Lomas



Pioneer, by Tschabalala Self



Chimera, by Hector Zamora



Billboards, photos of late Tyre D. Nichols killed by Memphis' police.



Tiny House, by Marina Tabassum

Rana Begum's (No.1225 Chain-link) is a London-based artist from Bangladesh. She created a chain link maze-like series of concentric rings inspired by the surrounding mountains. This work is engaging; it is a metaphor for chain links' positive and negative uses. The yellow color emphasizes the positive.

Torkwase Dyson (liquid a Place) created a monumental sculpture that is a poetic meditation connecting the memory of water in the body and the memory of the water in the desert. Her abstract work contrasts built and natural scale.

Mario Garcia Torres (Searching for the Sky while maintaining Equilibrium) gets his inspiration from bulls' movements and rodeo riders trying to maintain balance. The setting of these mechanical sculptures brings art-related technology to the desert.

Matt Johnson's odalisque-inspired (Sleeping Beauty) assembling of shipping containers framed by a railway and a freeway represents a criticism of movement-globalization of goods. Its architectural scale produces a strong statement.

Gerald Clark transforms a traditional Cahuilla basket {Immersion) into a giant game board, using didactical cards of his creation. According to the game rules, somebody can only reach the center by answering correctly questions relating to the traditions and histories of the Cahuilla Indians.

Himali Singh Soin and David Soin Tappeser (Hylozoic/Desires – Namak Nazar) is a sound sculpture in the form of a salt-encrusted telephone pole equipped with loudspeakers, resembling a flowering cactus. The speakers broadcast the voice of Himali Singh Soin's poetic declamation.

Lauren Bon, the creator of the Metabolic Studios in Los Angeles, is an artist who works with architecture, performance, photography, sound, and farming, to create urban, public, and land art projects to galvanize social and political transformation. Here she creates an object (The Smallest Sea with the Largest Heart) that represents a Blue Whale's heart.

Paloma Contreras Lomas (Amar a Dios en Tierra de Indios, Es Oficio Maternal) addresses topics such as patriarchy, violence, class segregation, colonial guilt and middle-class identity with a humor. An absurd array of tangled limbs of two mysterious characters wearing long hats sprawl out of the car and onto the site's pristine, manicured grounds.

Tschabalala Self (Pioneer) sculpture focuses on the foremothers, the largely unidentified Native and African American women whose bodies and labor allowed for American expansionism and growth. It visually represents their birthright and place within the American landscape.

Héctor Zamora's (Chimera) is a performative action in collaboration with street vendors who are omnipresent in the Coachella Valley but often invisible in the landscape. The artist's work provides opportunities to use materials differently, in this case transforming street vendors into walking sculptures made of balloons.

Tyre D. Nichols died in January of 2023 after police beat him following a traffic stop in Memphis. The billboards is a tribute to his aspiring photography. This makes a strong statement in direct contrast with the commercial use of billboards and the impact of a freeway on the desert.

Marina Tabassum's Khudi Bari (Khudi Bari, Bengali for "Tiny House") is a Bangladeshi architect who created a prefabricated house that is easy to assemble and disassemble, ideal for building in areas that are likely to be flooded.

Desert X is an excellent example of the input of many artists, where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Looking at its geographic scale stimulates our imagination for future invention.

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Who Bears the Risk in a Fixed Annuity?

Our Friends · Friday, March 31st, 2023

From 401ks to money markets and stocks, there are many investment options to help you prepare for the future. In each of them, there is some risk, sometimes severe enough that you can *lose* all your money. While many retirement funds are content to let you bear all the risk in your investment, others ensure your money through a secondary agency such as the FDIC. In contrast, others protect you by taking on any risks themselves as assurance that no matter what happens with the market and economy, your money is guaranteed.

Annuities are another retirement option, and these contracts come in various forms. While most annuity options involve some degree of risk if to a lesser degree than most other choices, a fixed annuity is slightly different. In this case, the **issuing company takes responsibility for any fixed annuity risks**, giving you the peace of mind that you will receive the established amount no matter what.

What is an Annuity?

An annuity is an excellent way to conserve money for future use, primarily as a retirement fund option. The process involves arranging with a provider to either invest a lump sum of money or begin a series of payments in return for dedicated monthly checks at some point down the line.

Once the insurance company gets your money, they will use it for their own investments in an attempt to make a profit. According to which type of annuity you choose, you stand to gain or lose depending on how successful they are. The general rule of thumb is that the greater you stand to gain, the more you can also lose – keep this in mind when choosing more volatile plan options.

You have a lot of freedom *when* you wish to begin receiving your monthly checks. The “accumulation phase” is when the agency collects funds from you, which can stretch on for decades as you continue to make payments. However, it doesn’t have to. You can begin payouts *immediately* if you choose to deposit a lump sum, for example, if you are near retirement age and have collected savings that you would like dispensed every month for the rest of your life.

Once you choose to begin receiving payments, the annuity enters the “distribution phase.” During this period, you will receive principal amounts as well as any earnings you may have gained through insurance company investments if your plan includes this type of disbursement.

How Do Fixed Annuities Work?

Fixed annuities work similarly, but this alternative takes the risk out of the game. This is if you want a safe option to enjoy monthly checks in your later years. When you begin the preliminary stages of a fixed annuity contract, you and the agency will have a discussion that covers interest, fees, and any other variables that play a role in the process. Then you select how much you want your monthly checks to be when it enters the distribution phase.

The amount you choose determines what your monthly payments will be during the accumulation phase, taking into account any preliminary lump-sum deposits you wish to make upfront if any. At this point, you begin funding your annuity every month, knowing that when the time comes for retirement, you know exactly what you will be receiving each month without worrying about

variances due to investment and inflation variables.

Additional Benefits

However, having an assured monthly payout without risk is not the only benefit of a fixed annuity. Most fixed annuities offer competitive interest rates, meaning your money grows over time at a reasonable rate. Plus, during the accumulation phase, your funds grow at a tax-deferred rate, meaning that you only have to pay taxes on your money once you accept your first disbursement check!

Furthermore, many people fear that they may risk outliving their retirement plan, but fixed annuities will provide for you throughout the rest of your life. They can even continue to support your spouse if they survive you. Some plans even allow you to assign a beneficiary for any equity remaining in your account extending beyond your life so that you can look out for your loved ones.

Helpful Things to Know When Investing in Fixed Annuities

As with many other investment options, if you withdraw funds prematurely from a retirement fixed annuity before the age of 59 1/2, you may face a 10% fee. Obviously, this is a greater risk for those who are younger and trying to build for retirement at an early age, especially in their 20s and 30s. Life can throw curve balls sometimes that require unexpected funds. To avoid this necessity, you may wish to prepare a nest egg for emergencies before or after preparing your annuity.

You should also be aware that the safety of a fixed-annuity results in less potential for gain than most of the other annuity options or alternatives, such as the stock market. Most people choose fixed rates *because* they want a safe option, and selections that allow for broad gains can also veer in the other direction. With a fixed annuity, you know exactly what you are getting without worrying about it.

While inflation will not affect your fixed annuity rates in the slightest, it *can* play a factor when you enter the disbursement phase. The contracted amount is what you will get, but if inflation has wreaked havoc on the economy during the accumulation period, you may find that your buying power is less than you expected due to rising prices.

However, with this knowledge, you can prepare for these eventualities if you are worried about them. Some more flexible fixed annuity options will allow you to deposit additional funds to your account later. If not, other options are available, such as depositing money in backup investment options.

Whatever you decide regarding supplemental funds, you can rest easy knowing your contracted monthly amount is safe. That is what you can expect to receive; you will have money for support during your Golden Years and perhaps even beyond.

Photo by [Alexander Grey](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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Seeing RED

Ann Haskins · Thursday, March 30th, 2023

A U.S. premiere in Costa Mesa mulls the risks of chocolate, edgy ballet paints Pasadena red, a flamenco fest in Redondo Beach, a last look at a post-modern legend downtown, launching choreographers in the Arts District, a world premiere in Hollywood to feed seniors, more SoCal dance this week (March 31 to April 6), and a peek at next week.

Live This Week

Did someone say chocolate?

Like Water for Chocolate, Laura Esquivel's revered book about thwarted lovers, magical realism, and emotion-charged cooking enthralled readers. The 1992 film version ignited more fans, including celebrated British choreographer Christopher Wheeldon whose full-length ballet version **American Ballet Theatre** premieres here this week. Developed as a co-production by ABT and Britain's Royal Ballet where Wheeldon is Artistic Associate, the world premiere was in London but SoCal gets the U.S. premiere with a live orchestra (New York doesn't see it until June, further solidifying ABT's SoCal presence). While the ballet plot departs from the book, the central, thwarted love story of Tita and Pedro remains the pulse of the ballet as does Tita's otherworldly gift of imbuing her emotions into others through her cooking. In interviews, Wheeldon explained the rough translation of the title refers to something "boiling over" which is one way to describe the finale of the ballet. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Wed.-Sat., March 29-Sat., April 1, 7:30 pm, Sat. & Sun., April 1-2, 2 pm., \$29-\$250. [SCFTA](#).



American Ballet Theatre. Photo by Fabricio Ferri

Last chance

Several of the notable figures who emerged from the post modern dance era centered at New York City's Judson Church in the 1960's left and came to SoCal. Rudy Perez and Simone Forti are among those NY transfers who became forces on the LA dance scene and now have *éminence grise* status here. Forti's oeuvre and the materials that fueled them are the focus of **Simone Forti**, the first museum exhibit to survey what she produced. The three-month exhibit includes live performances of *Dance Constructions*, one of her landmark works from 1961. Sarah Swenson, a known LA choreographer and long-time associate of Forti, acted as Performance Coordinator for this project and Forti's *Dance Constructions* presented throughout the exhibition, were staged by Carmela Hermann Dietrich. Hermann Dietrich and Forti have a relationship dating back to 1989 that includes improvised duets, the most recent of which, in 2017, was at Highways Performance Space. The exhibit also includes Forti's sculptures, videos, drawings, and notebooks. *Dance Constructions* at MOCA Grand Avenue (Museum of Contemporary Art), 250 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Exhibit runs to Sun., April 2. Performances of *Dance Constructions* performed Thurs., 3:30, 4:45, 6:00, & 7:15 pm, Sat. & Sun., 12:30, 1:45, 3:00, & 4:15 pm, throughout the exhibit run, free with timed museum admission. [MOCA](#).



Simone Forti's "Hangers." Photo courtesy of the artist

Souls and stomachs

In *Abbale*, **Bodies in Play** artistic director/choreographer Andrew Pearson brings a trio of true tales of fatherly relationships crossing different eras and cultures. Responding to ongoing food insecurity among LGBTQ seniors, the event also is a "food raiser" with attendees invited/encouraged to bring canned, dried, and other items. Full list of appropriate food donations is at the website. After these performances, the show moves on to San Francisco for a run. The Broadwater Main Stage, 1076 Lillian Way, Hollywood; March 30-31, April 1, 8 pm, \$20-\$40 [Flipcause](#).



Bodies in Play. Photo courtesy of the artists

Ready for their close-up

Concluding their three-week residency, the artists in LA Dance Project's *2023 Launch: LA* program are ready to show their interdisciplinary work. Selected for their capacity to blend movement, collaboration, and visual art, **Megan Doheny** and **Luca Renzi + Mike Tyus** share the stage. LA Dance Project studios, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., Arts District; Fri.-Sat., March 31-April 1, 8 pm, Sun., April 2, 2 & 6 pm, \$20, \$15 students. [LA Dance Projects Tickets](#).



Megan Doheny. Photo courtesy of the artist

Hear those feet

This year's *LA International Flamenco Festival* offers two days of performances with live music. Dancer **Pastora Galván** takes the stage on Saturday and **Nino de los Reyes** and **Lakshmi Basile** "**La Chimi**" on Sunday. Because of visa issues, flamenco star Antonio Canales had to cancel his scheduled appearance. Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach' Sat.-Sun., April 1-2, 8 pm, \$45-\$165. [Kalakoa Entertainment](#).



Lakshmi Basile "La Chimi." Photo by Bruce Bisenz

Scarlet shadings

Transforming a warehouse into a performance space appropriately infused with red light, edgy ballet choreographer Josie Walsh and her **BalletRED** dancers perform *Frequency Vol. 1 Shades of Red* backed by musician Paul Rivera amid installations from artist Nicole Reineman. Athletic Garage, 121 Waverly Dr., Pasadena; Fri.-Sat., March 31-April 1, 7:30 pm, Sun., April 2, 5:30 pm, \$65. [BalletRED Tickets](#).



BalletRED. Photo courtesy of the artist

A quick ten

The mostly monthly program **Max 10** gives ten performers ten minutes each onstage. Hosted by venue director Joel Shapiro and curated by the staff, the line up of performances often includes dance. A post-show reception gives a chance to chat with the artists. Electric Lodge, Scott Kelman Theater, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Mon., April 3, 7:30 pm, \$10. [Electric Lodge](#).



Max 10. Photo courtesy of the artists

Send in the clowns

Emerging from pandemic-induced financial chaos, **Cirque du Soleil** returns with *Corteo*. The clown-themed show promises the extravagant, often breath-taking mix of acrobats, gymnasts, and yes, clowns, that made this cirque, the one by which all others are measured. Microsoft Theater, 777 Chick Hearn Ct., downtown; opens Fri., March 24, 7:30 pm to Sun., April 30, 1 & 5 pm, (see website for full list of performances and times), \$45-\$115. [Microsoft Theater](#).

A Peek at Next Week

Lemi Ponifasio's *Amor a la muerte (Love to Death)* at REDCAT, Disney Hall, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Fri.-Sat., April 7-8, 8:30 pm, Sun., April 9, 3 pm, \$30, \$25 students. [REDCAT](#).

High Voltage at Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Fri., April 7, 8 pm, \$10. [Electric Lodge](#).

Ashwini Ramaswamy's *Let the Crows Come* at BroadStage, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., April 7-8, 7:30 pm, \$40-\$70. [BroadStage](#).



Dorrance Dance. Photo by Hayim Heron

Dorrance Dance at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Sat., April 8, 7:30 pm, \$29-\$109. [SCFTA](#).

Leela Dance at the Doheny Mansion, Pompeian Room, 10 Chester Pl., University Park; Sat., April 8, 11 a.m. \$20, \$10 students, \$10 livestream. [Salastina](#).

Dance Notes

A costume clear out

After 18 years, **LA Contemporary Dance Company** is having a clear-out, a one-day sale of costumes accumulated over LACDC's two decades of performances. Items will range in price from \$1 – \$20. Credit card or cash only. Bags will not be available on site so shoppers are advised to bring reusable bags. Sale at Stomping Ground, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Fri. March 31, 3 pm to 7 pm, RSVP requested at info@lacontemporarydance.org.

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