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# The 2016 Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival is here!

By Jeff Slayton - January 10, 2016

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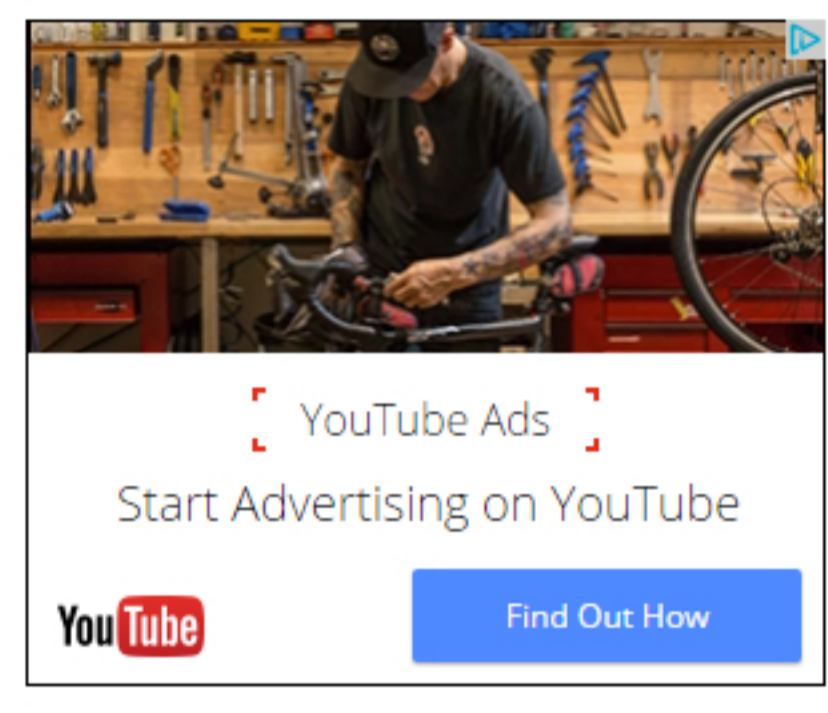
Concept: Rubans Rouges Dance - Design: Jay Kenneth - Photo: Paul Antico

The 2016 *Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival* takes place on January 23rd at the Diavolo Performance Space in LA, and represents a powerful anniversary for its founder and producer Noelle Rose Andressen. This is the 4th year of the festival, which in itself is a great accomplishment, but more significantly, the same week of the festival marks ten years for Andressen as a survivor of breast cancer. Noelle Rose Andressen is a professional dancer, choreographer, dance educator, special events producer/presenter, show curator, actress (SAG-AFTRA), musician, composer and human rights advocate. In 2009 she "merged dance and her Emmy nominated film-making to form professional, multi-media company: Rubans Rouges Dance. In French, Rubans Rouges means Red Ribbons, and the company received its title from her breakthrough piece *Shattered Innocence (Red Ribbons)*." According to her website, Andressen's choreography focuses on "exploring the human condition through narrative story lines".

Andressen credits mentor Jamie Nichols for connecting her with the Glendale Arts and for guiding her through the process of creating and producing a dance festival. For ten years Jamie Nichols has produced the highly successful *Celebrate Dance* at the Alex Theatre in Glendale, CA; a festival that has helped launch several emerging Los Angeles dance companies. Andressen's vision is similar for her *Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival*. It includes experienced professional choreographers, emerging artists who seek a venue to showcase their choreography as well as all those artists in-between. This is one of the strengths and unique qualities of the *Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival*. It is clear that Andressen is dedicated to giving these artists a venue, to strengthening the art of Dance in Los Angeles and to helping unite the Los Angeles dance community. She noted that sometimes once younger and less experienced artists see and work alongside more seasoned ones, a mentorship will develop. This is one of the outcomes of the festival that helps make all the hard work worth while.



Louise Reichlin & Dancers in Implosion Photo: Benita Elliot



During our conversation I asked if there was a central theme to the festival considering that there are 19 companies being presented in two separate performances; with only four of those companies appearing

how the artists came up with some "amazing imagery" at a photo shoot. I could hear the excitement in her voice as she described the experience of collaborating with her colleagues that day.

The companies performing on the *Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival* include (in no particular order) Rubans Rouges Dance, AXIOM Dance Collective, DANZENYOGA, DeDa Dance Theatre, Delineation Dance Company, Elle Vie Dance Company, Hart Pulse Dance Company, LA FUSION Dance Academy, Larosa Projects, MeCo, Brockus RED, Deborah Rosen & Dancers, LA Choreographers, Leanne Lacovetta Dance, MULCompany: PTERO, TPLEX Dance, Nancy Evans Dance Theatre, No Strings Attached, Reborn Dance Interactive and MULTIPLEX Dance.



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The *Awakenings & Beginnings Dance Festival* offers two separate programs, one at 2 pm and another at 7:30 pm at the Diavolo Space, 601 Moulton Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90031. Seating is limited and the festival generally sells out, so you would be wise to make reservations now. To learn more about the festival, Noelle Rose Andressen and her company Rubans Rouges Dance, please visit their website at <http://www.rubansrougesdance.com>. To purchase tickets to the concerts click here: [glendalearts.org/event/awakenings-beginnings-dance-festival-2016](http://glendalearts.org/event/awakenings-beginnings-dance-festival-2016).

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**Jeff Slayton**  
<http://www.jeffslayton.org>  
Jeff Slayton has had a long and influential career as a dancer, choreographer, and educator. Born in Virginia in 1945, Slayton began dancing as a child in order to correct his condition of hip dysplasia. He enjoyed a performance career in New York dancing for Merce Cunningham, Viola Farber and others. In 1978 he moved to Long Beach, CA, where began teaching at California State University, Long Beach as a part time faculty member. He became a full time faculty member in 1986 and continued to teach at CSULB until 1999. Jeff Slayton was one of the faculty members that helped design the Dance Center at CSULB as well as develop and implement the BFA, MFA and MA degree programs. While in Long Beach, he formed his own company, Jeff Slayton & Dancers, that operated from 1978 to 1983. He continues to stage works in the Southern California area. He is also the author of two books, "The Prickly Rose: A Biography of Viola Farber" and "Dancing Toward Sanity". For more information on Jeff Slayton please go to [www.jeffslayton.org](http://www.jeffslayton.org).

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