



DANCE. NEWS-PRESS

DANCE SCENE BUZZ: SUNDAY'S HIVE PRODUCES SWEET DANCE HONEY

OCTOBER 31, 2014 TEDMILLS LEAVE A COMMENT



"Please, Please" with Curtis J. (vocalist), Jeremiah Tatum, Melvin Clark and Kenya Williams
H. Wang photo

Despite the amount of dance that passes through Santa Barbara, and the amount of schools and instructors in our town, there still is a dearth of opportunities for modern choreographers to have their works performed. Companies come and go, and find that locations and funding are a problem. According to Stephen Kelly, part of the collective called Hive, spearheaded by Maria Rendina Frantz of Motion Theatre Dance Company, the cost of rehearsal space in Santa Barbara is even higher now than New York City. The answer to that dilemma: form a collective, and focus on delivering a wide-ranging evening of dance, while turning a profit. They believe it can be done, and if the advance tickets to this Sunday's show "Buzz" are any indication, they may be right. And dance fans will benefit.

"We're hoping this will provide a model that is not just sustainable here, but elsewhere in the country," Mr. Kelly says. He and his wife, choreographer Misa Kelly, have broadened the scope of their own organization ArtBark to encompass the East Coast and Eastern Europe, and Hive is another offshoot of their collective ideal.

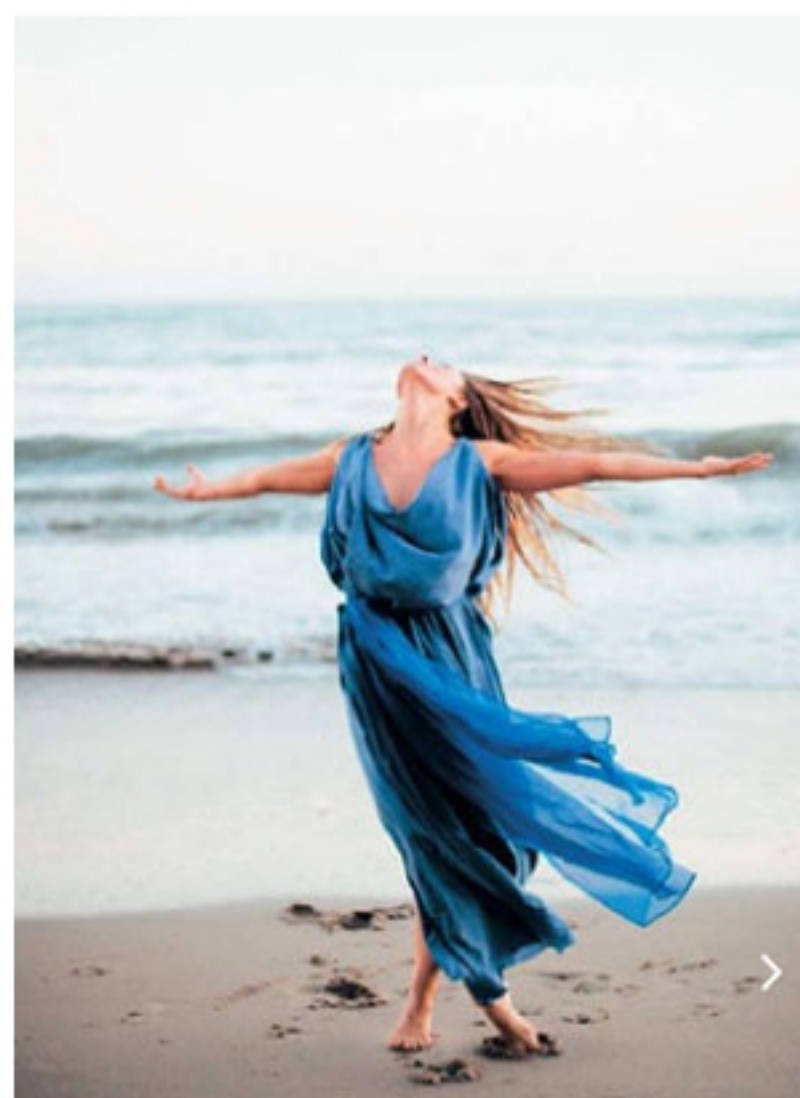
The evening features works from companies from Santa Barbara to south of Los Angeles. The roster includes KIN Dance Company, Rubans Rouges Dance and Watson Dance of Los Angeles; Motion Theatre Dance Co., Mindy Nelson, the trio of Kaita Mrazek, Lamara Heartwell and Timothy Tillman; movement and theater company DramaDogs, the duo of Melissa Lowenstein Block and Sarah Block, Weslie Ching and Selah Dance Collective of Santa Barbara; and Jessica Kondrath/The Movement from Long Beach.



SELAH Dance Collective
Daniel Wade

"Once we put out the call to the companies, the ones that responded more immediately we took to be the most committed," Mr. Kelly says. "And we had a whole process to determine that level of commitment. We developed a whole checklist."

Misa Kelly's solo piece "Manatee: Ode to My Beloved" grew out of an improv piece she created 20 years ago, inspired by a dream she had. In her program notes, Ms. Kelly states: "I don't dance like I did 18 years ago, but I knew, if I had one dance left to make, I would return to this improvisation and carve out a new solo."



Motion Theatre Dance Company
Lerina Winter, Winter Creative Company photo

Rubans Rouges' piece, "Let This Be My Last Battleground/Rosewood" is choreographed by Noelle Andressen and performed by her along with Jessica Mayorga and Amani Minter. The piece is based on Ms. Andressen's own experience with cancer.

Meanwhile Jessica Kondrath's piece "I Still Haven't Learned How to Dream Wide Awake" is inspired by daydreaming and features an original score by Brian Wood. All in all there are a dozen pieces to enjoy.

While the evening features mostly modern and contemporary dance, "Buzz" concludes with a "jukebox musical review" from L.A.'s KIN Dance Company, called "Dance Around Brown Town," featuring 14 dancers and a soundtrack of James Brown songs. It's a way to send us out with a reminder that while dance can encompass all human emotion, sometimes you just have to wig out and do your thing.

"The more people see the beauty and power of dance, the more they'll want to see it," Mr. Kelly says when asked how dance is faring in our town. "Santa Barbara has the potential to be a center of dance, even though it seems hard to maintain a lot of these things. Dianne Vapnek had Summerdance for a while but has moved on. However, I look at something like the Music Academy of the West and how they're growing in terms of music and scholarships. That would be great to see something like that happen with dance in Santa Barbara."

"Buzz"

When: 7 p.m. Sunday

Where: Center Stage Theater, Paseo Nuevo

Cost: \$20 general; \$15 children, seniors and students

Information: (805) 963-0408, www.centerstagetheater.org



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