

LA STAGE

EMPOWERING ARTISTS AND ENGAGING AUDIENCES SINCE 1975



Ford Dance Series

[Julio Martinez](#) | June 21, 2010

Ford Amphitheatre 2010 | Summer Dance Series runs June 18 through Oct. 10.
Tickets: \$12-\$30. [Ford Amphitheatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood](#) (off the 101 Hollywood Freeway across from the Hollywood Bowl and south of Universal Studios). Call 323.461.3673; complete schedule online at [FordTheatres.org](#).

The Ford Amphitheatre 2010 Summer Dance Series may be just one aspect of the LA County facility's five month-plus celebration of the area's vast cultural landscape but it certainly is offering a vast range of terpsichorean fare. "This is our most eclectic and diverse dance series at the Ford to date," affirms Linda Chiavaroli, Director of Communications, LA County Arts Commission/Ford Amphitheatre.

"Nineteen events are scheduled, offering aerial ballet, modern, flamenco, tango, martial arts, circus, hip hop and dances of Brazil, Hawaii, Israel, Korea, Mexico, the Philippines and Tahiti. There is certainly something for everyone," she says.

The Summer Dance Series officially opened on Friday, June 18 with *Made In LA*, featuring the LA Contemporary Dance Company and BODYTRAFFIC, highlighting the dance theatre creativity of three LA-based companies, underscored by the music of Arnold Schoenberg and the a cappella vocal styling of Sonos.



Invertigo

Though her company won't be performing at the Ford until Thursday, Sept. 16, Laura Karlin, Artistic Director of Invertigo Dance Theatre, is in a process of constant preparation for the three-company collaborative, *Fracture*, produced by Jones Welsh, Producing Artistic Director of Making Faces Productions.

“My company is very much based on athletic dance, combined with whimsy and theatricality,” says Karlin. “There is always something there for the audience to grab onto and become a part of. We have a core group of four to eight dancers and three musicians who work with us consistently. Once the *Fracture* theme was established, we set about to create a brand new work. I actually went through about 15 different ideas before I settled on the one we are working on now.”

“Making Faces Productions is focused on collaboration,” says Welsh. “What I did was gather the companies that were interested in doing this concept, including Method Contemporary Dance and IN/EX Dance Project and Ensemble. I think we are all interested and engaged in what each company is doing for their own individual piece within *Fracture* but the interesting part is going to be when we put them all together and work out the transitions collaboratively.

“That's where the real interaction and the real juice between the actual artists will come in as we collectively work out new material for the opening of the show, the transitions between dance companies and also an ending piece, incorporating the *Fracture Theme*,

composed by members of the instrumental ensemble, String Theory. The evening will even have a pre-show, featuring Leonix Movement Theatre.”



Keshet Chaim Dancers. Photo by Sara Cozolino

Jerusalem Soul is the aptly titled dance evening being produced by The Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble (Ké-Shet Ha-Yēēm), closing out the Ford Summer Dance series on Saturday, Oct. 9 at 8:30 pm. “We were established in 1983,” says former dancer, now company Executive Director, Genie Benson. “For the Ford, we are developing three new pieces, two of which will be accompanied by live musicians and singers and one that will be accompanied by a soundtrack.”

Aside from a five-member instrumental ensemble, the performances will incorporate the voices of the Agape Choir, supporting 30 dancers onstage. The show’s concept avows an inter-faith, inter-cultural performance, sharing the company’s culture with the community at large, building bridges of communication.

“When Keshet Chaim was founded, under the direction of Eytan Avisar, its dance roots were based on Israeli Folk,” says Benson. “Since 2006, the company has transitioned to more modern work, choreographed by young Israeli choreographer Kobi Rozenfeld. Though it is still grounded in folk, the work now incorporates diverse, contemporary movement including lyrical jazz.

“Our dancers come from many disciplines, including ballet, jazz, contemporary and folk. We teach them our language. Well-trained dancers are always a plus, no matter what their disciplines. I must say dancers who have been steeped in a folk tradition bring a different kind of energy to the work.”

Flamenco artist Maria Bermudez bristles when it is suggested, since she works and teaches most of the year in Spain, she is not really a Los Angeles-based artist. “I was born, raised and trained in Los Angeles,” she dramatically affirms. “I’m as much an Angeleno as the Hollywood Freeway.” Produced by the LA-based Fountain Theatre, Bermudez’ dance concert, *Sonidos Gitanos with the Chicana Gypsy Project*, will be presented at the Ford on Friday, July 23 and Saturday July 24.

Bermudez sees no contradictions in the show's incorporation of Spanish Gypsy Flamenco, Classic African American Blues/Jazz and the Mexican *Ranchero*. "We are bringing Gypsy Flamenco, in its most authentic and powerful form, direct from its source in Jerez de la Frontera, Spain, back to the Ford and Los Angeles. In the process we will demonstrate the common root in human experience of Flamenco, blues and Ranchero music. And that root is the 'The Cry.' This is the gut plea of all 'marginalized' people and it is inherent in all three of these musical art forms."

The complete Ford Summer Dance Series Schedule is as follows:

Made in LA (Fri. June 18 at 8:30 pm) - *LA Contemporary Dance Company with Sonos and BODYTRAFFIC* *** *Kultura Philippine Folk Arts* (Fri. July 2 and Sat. July 3 at 8:30 pm) *Dance, Rhythm, Harmony: Mabuhay!* *** *Fountain Theatre* (Fri. July 23 & Sat. July 24 at 8:30 pm) *Maria Bermudez Flamenco - Sonidos Gitanos with The Chicana Gypsy Project* *** *Born Dance Company* (Fri. July 30 at 8:30 pm) *New Breath: Korean Dance Fusion* *** *Viver Brasil* (Sat. July 31 at 8:30 pm) *Alaafia/Harmony* *** *Luminario Ballet of Los Angeles* (Fri. Aug. 6 at 8:30 pm) *Taking Flight* *** *Catch Me Bird* (Fri. Aug. 13 at 8:30 pm) *Iron* *** *PAE Live!* in association with *TDRZ Productions, Inc.* (Sun. Aug. 15 at 7:00 pm) *AlohaFest! Songs and Dances from Paradise* *** *Culture Shock Los Angeles Dance Troupe* (Fri. Aug. 20 at 8:30 pm) *The Soul Survivors: Seeking Refuge* *** *Fiesta Argentina 2010* (Sat. Aug. 21 at 8:00 pm) *Tango, Cancion de Buenos Aires* *** *Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet* (Sat. Aug. 28 at 7:30 pm) *Revolution: Land and Liberty* *** *Mantra Siam Performing Arts* (Sun. Aug. 29 at 8:00 pm) *Sattrawut: The Art of Weaponry* *** *DreamDance Contemporary Arts* (Fri. Sept. 3 at 8:30 pm) *Falling Petals* *** *Ballet Folklorico Ollin, Inc.* (Sat. Sept. 4 at 7:30 pm) *Third Annual Noche Veracruzana* *** *Troupe Vertigo* Fri. (Sept. 10 at 8:30 pm) *Swinging on Air* *** *Method Contemporary Dance, Invertigo Dance Theatre, IN/EX Dance Project with original music by String Theory* (Thu. Sept. 16 at 8:30 pm) *Fracture* *** *J.U.i.C.E.* (Sat. Oct. 2 at 8:00 pm) *Third Annual J.U.i.C.E. Hip Hop Dance Festival* *** *PAE Live!* in association with *TDRZ Productions, Inc.* (Fri. Oct. 8 at 8:00 pm) *AlohaFest! Rhythm of the Islands* *** *Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble* (Sat. Oct. 9 at 8:30 pm) *Jerusalem Soul*.

Article by Julio Martinez