A Splendid Time Is Guaranteed for All

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP RETURNS TO SANTA BARBARA WITH A BEATLES-THEMED SHOW

By Ted Mills,
News-Press Correspondent

Mark Morris Dance Group
Sgt. Pepper at 50:
“Pepperland”
When: 8 p.m. Thursday
Where: The Granada Theatre, 1214 Santa St.
Cost: $55-$70, $19 UCSB students
Information: 893-3535,
ArtsAndLectures.UCSB.edu

New York is not just
three hours ahead of us, but about 75
percent faster than
normal. At least that’s what it’s
like talking to choreographer
Mark Morris. The man is in the
middle of a tour set to come
to The Granada Theatre on
Thursday, he’s got classes at his
own Dance Center in Brooklyn,
and he interviews like an Aaron
Sorkin walk and talk. But we’re
not walking, we’re running.

“Pepperland” is his
collaboration with composer/arranger Ethan Iverson, who has
taken six songs from the Beatles’
seminal 1967 “Sgt. Pepper’s
Lonely Hearts Club Band”
album and turned them into
classical works for Mr. Morris’
ensemble to interpret. As with
all Morris works, the music will
be performed live, this time by
a chamber ensemble of voice,
therein, soprano sax, trombone,
two keyboards and percussion.

But Mr. Morris is not precise
about The Beatles at all. Yes, he
was 11 when the album came out,
and it was his sister who bought
it, but this is not the work of a
Beatlemania.

“(The album) doesn’t have
much to do with me making up
this evening,” he says. “I haven’t
been thinking about it ever since,
that’s not it all… I don’t listen
to the Beatles for recreation.”

In fact, he hadn’t thought
about the album until the City of
Liverpool commissioned him to
do the work for their May 2017
“Sgt. Pepper at 50” fest.
He knew Liverpudlians might
have a “don’t mess with our royalty”
attitude to his work but was relieved
that it was well received. “But I do
the work I do and I hope they like
it.” They did. And UCSB Arts &
Lectures liked it enough to bring
the show to Santa Barbara.
On hiring Mr. Iverson, Mr.
Morris said he was looking for a
“very, very brilliant and radical

Solo (above) and group (below) dance dress rehearsal for ‘Pepperland’
collaboration with choreographer Mark Morris and composer Ethan
Iverson.

Glenn Miller Orchestra
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Thursday, June 21, 2018 7PM
The Marjorie Luke Theatre
721 E. Cota Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
Ticket prices: $25-$39 purchased at
http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3361825
or call 800-838-3006 Group Sales call 321-441-9135 X2

May 4, 2018 - May 10, 2018
A new jazz jam era

For years, the Goleta-raised trumpeter sensation Jeff Elliott — whose resume includes work with Les McCann, Airto and Flora Purim; the legendary Santa Barbara fusion band Eraserheads; and his own three solo albums (one to be released this month) — has been the amiable and flexible kingpin of the monthly SOHO Monday night jazz jams. His long tenure went out in a flashy retirement party last month. Enter veteran jazz vocalist Kimberly Ford, whose first Jazz Jam w/ Kimberly Ford settles into SOHO this Monday. Her recent musical life has included an acclaimed tribute project to Joni Mitchell, performed at the Lobero Theatre, in New Orleans, LA and elsewhere. But for this Monday gig, Ms. Ford is the performer/matchmaker/facilitator of a musical evening subject to change where musicians show up to jam. 7:30 p.m. Monday, SOHO, 1221 State St. Tickets are $8, 962-7776, sohosb.com.

Jazz singer Kimberly Ford, taking over the SOHO Jazz Jam role.

A new jazz Jam era

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rethinking of the music.” Mr. Iversen, who had been the Morris company’s music director for a spell, had recently left the avant-jazz band The Bad Plus and was interested. “He knew the record better than I remembered it.”

That led to months of legal wrangling to get the rights to perform “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” “With a Little Help From My Friends,” “A Day in the Life,” “When I’m Sixty-Four,” “With You Without You,” and “Penny Lane,” even with passages that render the melodies unrecognizable. While Mr. Iversen was writing, Mr. Morris got to work. Both were working right up to the airplane ride that took them to Liverpool.

Bowling for monkeys

The latest addition to the ever-expanding concert season at the Santa Barbara Bowl is the alt-post-punk band known as Arctic Monkeys, returning to the scene and the tour circuit with a new album in tow, “Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino.” The new album comes off the brink of a two-year hiatus for the popular British band, led by singer-songwriter Alex Turner, with a discography going back to 2006’s “Whatever People Say I Am, That’s What I’m Not.” The revived Monkeys play the Bowl towards the end of the season, with The Mansion as opening act. 7 p.m. Friday, October 19, Santa Barbara Bowl, 1122 N. Milpas St. Tickets are $41.50 to $64.50, 962-7411, sbbowl.com

Countrytime at the bowl

Country music, or at least the modern “Today’s Country” brand, whipped through town last week in the form of star singer Kelsea Ballerini, selling out the Arlington Theater and whipping the adoring crowd into a frenzy. Fast forward and bump upward to the Santa Barbara Bowl, and October 8 marks the date that another more entrenched country star comes to town — Keith Urban and his Graffiti U World Tour 2018. The four-time Grammy winner, one of country’s top names, will be making his Santa Barbara debut, with a show also including opener Lindsay Ell. 7 p.m. Friday, October 8, Santa Barbara Bowl, 1122 N. Milpas St. Tickets are $59.50 to $119.50, 962-7411, sbbowl.com

— Josef Woodard

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two hymn arrangements by Alice Parker, who spent years as an assistant to the towering choral music director Robert Shaw, but deserves a spotlight of her own, which she is getting in Santa Barbara, courtesy of the Quire.

On a local note, the program also logically includes the work of the eminent Emma Lou Diemer, a veteran and internationally-known composer who celebrated her 90th birthday in November, with her piece “Ring out, wild bells.”

From a less expected local source comes a vital force in the history of Santa Barbara’s choral music culture, the influential choral director-teacher-musical-advocate Phyllis Zimmerman (1934-2012), well-known and respected for her work with young singers at Santa Barbara High School and elsewhere. Quire of Voyces will pay tribute to her own compositional voice, in the form of her “I would live in your love,” from her “Four Lyrics of Sara Teasdale.” 2018 is a year of off-the-grid events for the Quire, whose coveted Christmas concert was postponed due to the Thomas Fire and rescheduled for January 28, when the tragedy and lingering aftermath of the Montecito debris flow was still fresh on the communal heart and mind. With its spring offering this weekend, the distaff-dedicated musical agenda lends another twist to the choir’s story, and it’s a warm and welcome one.

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