AN OPEN SPACE

The Wooden Floor.

Sounds like the moniker of an interior design company, but it’s the new name of Saint Joseph Ballet, the Santa Ana-based organization that uses dance to teach thousands of young people self-awareness, confidence and discipline. The name is meant as a metaphor for the dance floor beneath their feet that supports their journey towards a brighter future.

Dance is indeed integral, even critical, to the company’s mission. So is An Open Space, the company’s 27th annual concert held June 3-5 at the Irvine Barclay Theatre.

The concert pairs three choreographers — Mark Haim, Nami Yamamoto and Melanie Rios Glaser — with more than 100 underserved youths, resulting in an evening of original, inventive and idiosyncratic works.

The goal is to shatter stereotypes about who can inspire, create and perform.

The young dancers are indeed inspiring. They combine the naivety of youth with the wisdom of lives lived with challenges. The result is a touching tribute to The Wooden Floor and to the dancers’ determination to succeed both on and off the stage.

The program features Yamamoto’s Flying with My Shooting Stars, which includes Puppet Artist Matt Acheson and his enigmatic puppet Tony to collaborate in the dance; a revival of Haim’s Los Angelitos in which dancers write their names with their heads as they communicate in another language; and Glaser’s True or False, I Was Born in the Nederlands, which focuses on the nuances in the lives of teens and how pop culture has influenced their talk, their walk and their song.

GET THEATRICAL

THE WOODEN FLOOR :: Tickets are $10 to $50. Plus, check out the dancers from The Wooden Floor in action on YouTube.
949.854.4646 :: thebarclay.org
:: youtube.com/user/thewoodenfloor

THE TWO AND ONLY :: Tickets to Jay Johnson: The Two and Only! are $35 to $65. Plus, see video clips from Jay Johnson’s show.
949.497.2787 :: lagunaplayhouse.com
:: thetwoandonly.com

PACIFIC SYMPHONY :: Call or go online for tickets. Plus, see Andre Watts perform in concert with John Williams and the Boston Pops on YouTube.
714.755.5788 :: pacificsymphony.org
:: youtube.com/watch?v=WvlAtKeMEQ