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ART+CULTURE

holiday arts preview

Pipers piping, lords a-leaping

Music, ballet, theater and more to light up the season

by Emily Dodi

Holiday entertainment means something different to everyone. Some crave a classic Naturocker ballad while others seek out a raucous choral performance. Then there are those who want something unexpected to kick the yuletide up a notch. No matter what you're looking for, Ventura County has it.

Beginning with *The Naturocker*, there are several area productions that are sure to delight the whole family. Accompanied by the Ventura College Symphony Orchestra, the Ventura County Ballet (www.vcballet.com) takes the stage for its 20th annual production of the holiday staple *Donard Performing Arts Center* Dec. 14, and Ventura College Performing Arts Center Dec. 16. The Ventura College Symphony Orchestra will also perform *The Naturocker Suite* at the Ventura College Library Resource Center on Nov. 28 (www.vccsymphony.org).

The Moorpark Civic Ballet (www.moorparkballet.com) brings its *Naturocker* to the Aquatic Performing Arts Center on Dec. 22, while Rockwood Youth Ballet (www.rockwoodballet.com) will be at the Grand Performing Arts and Convention Center Dec. 16, performing with the Rockwood Community Orchestra and singers from the award-winning Carpe Diem Chorus.

Not to be outdone, the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza (www.thousandoaksarts.com) will feature two different productions. As in every year, the Conejo Civic Ballet Company will feature all-new choreography to give "the audience a fresh look at a timeless classic" (Dec. 9). TOCAP's resident ballet company Pacific Festival Ballet's original production features New York City Ballet principal dancers Tyler Peck and Garza Garcia, and the Kallim Dance Dance Troupe (Dec. 15-16).

Beyond *The Naturocker*, TOCAP offers several other holiday shows and events. In *A Magical Orpheus Christmas* on Nov. 24, master illusionists and circus artists perform dazzling routines to favorite holiday music. Next up is *A Gift of Magic*, presented by the 70-member Village Wives Chorus (villagewives.org), who will perform and lead a carol service, Handel's *Messiah* and Giovanni

is Irish Christmas in America at the Ojai Valley Women's Club (www.ojaiwomensclub.com). The band Tilda, vocalists Stormy Begley and Sissy Singer, Michael Farrell headline the concert that features Irish music, song and dance in "an engaging performance, rich in history, humor and boundless energy" (Dec. 20).

TOCAP rounds out its extensive holiday lineup in perfect harmony with Bravo Wilson Presents the Christmas *Alfama Live!* on Dec. 21. Wilson, joined by Al Jardine and Harold Chaglin, will perform the Beach Boys holiday album in its entirety along with other holiday favorites.

Musical royalty rules in Grand with Broadway's Princess Party: Holiday Edition (BroadwayWorld.com) performance. Broadway's original princesses—Tony-nominee Susan Egan (Belle) and Laura Osnes (Cinderella), and Grammy nominee Courtney Bovee (Jasmine)—are joined by special guest "prince" Adam J. Levy in the holiday version of the hit concert. *Gravity Live Comedy Club* (Dec. 7).

There's a real happening in Ojai, too, with Cinderella, a holiday pantomime at the Ojai Art Center Theater Nov. 30-Dec. 16 (www.ojaiart.org). This version of the classic tale is filled with



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Center Dec. 7-16 (oiajartcenter.com) for its yearly celebration of holiday songs and stories, starting cast members from the theater's entire season.
Do the Halls Holiday Blues at NAMBA on Dec. 16 (www.namba.com).