CITY OF TORRANCE
CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
PRESENTS

48th

Excellence in Arts

AWARDS

OCTOBER 11, 2026
TOYOTA MEETING HALL
3320 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE

The 2026 Excellence in Arts Awards

Sunday, October 11, 2026 at 2 p.m.
Toyota Meeting Hall - 3330 Civic Center Drive, Torrance CA 90503

Recipients

Dance	Sabrina Manzi
Drama & Theatre Arts	Bradley Allen Lock
Emerging Artist	Noel Takaya
Literary Arts	Peter Lefevre
Music	Andy Hill and Renee Safier
Tom Rische Arts Education	nTyme
Visual Arts & Design	Allison Zahorik
Katy Geissert	Regina Klenjoski

Torrance City Council
Sharon Kalani, Mayor

Councilmember, Linda Barnett
Councilmember, Dr. Jeremy Gerson
Councilmember, David Kartsonis

Councilmember, Bridgett Lewis
Councilmember, Betty Lieu
Councilmember,,Asam Sheikh

City Clerk
Rebecca Poirier

City Treasurer
Aurelio Mattucci

City Manager
Aram Chaparyan

Torrance Cultural Arts Commission

Randy Klinenberg, Chair
Andres Cabrera
Ed Candioty
Pascale Cardozo
Judith Gerber
Michelle Polcari
Alix Truman

PROGRAM

Tom Rische Arts Education Award

nTyme – Presented by Commissioner Truman

The Sleeping Beauty Waltz, Op. 66.....Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Glen Kamida, Music Director

Literary Arts Award

Peter Lefevre – Presented by Commissioner Klinenberg

Ten Essentials (excerpt).....Peter Lefevre, Writer

Eddy Acosta, Actor

Emerging Artist Award

Noel Takaya – Presented by Commissioner Cabrera

Sonata for Oboe and Piano in D Major, Op. 166, I. Andantino.....Camille Saint-Saëns

Noel Takaya, Oboe and Yumi Hashimoto, Piano

Dance Award

Sabrina Manzi – Presented by Commissioner Cardozo

Mix Latin.....Let's Get Loud

Sabrina Manzi and Roman Zoto

Visual Arts & Design Award

Allison Zahorik – Presented by Commissioner Candioty

Video Presentation

Drama & Theatre Arts Award

Bradley Allen Lock – Presented by Commissioner Gerber

Let it Go .....from Disney's Frozen

Marleena Barber, vocalist

Music Award

Andy Hill and Renee Safier – Presented by Commissioner Polcari

When the Ship Comes In.....Bob Dylan

Andy and Renee

Katy Geissert Award

Regina Klenjoski – Presented by Commissioner Klinenberg

Good Boy.....Amy Ostendorff

Far From Home, Opportunity..... Regina Klenjoski, Choreographer



nTyme (North Torrance Youth Musicians Ensemble) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing music education to students of all ages and skill levels. Founded in June 2007, nTyme comprises passionate parents and educators who are committed to preserving and promoting the importance of music in the community. nTyme runs on the belief that music has the power to inspire, empower, and transform young lives. Through our various instrumental music programs, we aim to help students develop their musical talents, build self-confidence, and foster a love for music that will last a lifetime.

nTyme offers a wide range of instrumental music programs for students of all ages and skill levels. From preschool music classes to advanced high school ensembles, nTyme has something for everyone. Their programs are designed to provide a comprehensive music education while also fostering a love for music and teamwork. Included in the nTyme musical education offerings are Mommy/Daddy 'n Me for toddlers and their parents to begin the musical journey, beginning and intermediate Ukulele, beginning and intermediate strings, string orchestra, beginning, intermediate and advanced Band, Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, Community Orchestra, and Jazz Band. The nTyme slogan – Setting the Tempo for Music Education – is truly inspiring and admirable.



Noel Takaya is currently working towards her Masters in Oboe Performance at the University of Southern California, where she regularly plays principal oboe and English horn with the USC Symphony, Wind Ensemble, chamber ensembles and most recently the Early Music Ensemble on the Baroque oboe.

In summers past, Noel has participated in the esteemed Hidden Valley Oboe Masterclass with Elaine Douvas, the RISE Film Scoring Orchestra led by Maestro Anthony Parnther, and LAFCI's Studio Intensive.

In 2025, Noel was selected as a winner of the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music Concerto Competition, and made her solo debut with the BCCM Orchestra in February of 2026 performing the Mozart Oboe Concerto.

A frequent performer in the greater Los Angeles area, Noel has made appearances with the West Coast Wind Symphony, Millennial Choirs and Orchestras, Opera Italia and Synesthesia Sinfonietta. She has performed at historic venues such as the Kennedy Center, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Eastwood Scoring Stage at Warner Bros. and the Streisand Scoring Stage at Sony Pictures.

Noel currently studies with Marion Kuszyk at USC and previously studied with Ted Sugata and Claire Brazeau at CSULB.



Peter Lefevre is a Southern California-based journalist and playwright. As an arts and entertainment reporter for more than 40 years, he has published articles in Opera News, Symphony magazine, Performing Arts magazine, the Los Angeles Business Journal, Men's Fitness magazine, the Orange County Register, the Daily Breeze, the Santa Monica Outlook, Voice of OC, and Culture OC, among many others. He has written program notes for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, and the Pasadena Symphony, and CD liner notes for the Urtext record label.

His reporting has been honored with first place awards from the Los Angeles Press Club and the Orange County Press Club, and at the National Arts & Entertainment Journalism awards. In 2006, he was named a National Endowment for the Arts journalism fellow at Columbia University. For many years he was editor of Beverly Hills magazine, where he wrote about film and culture, conducting interviews with Sir Ian McKellan, Kirk Douglas, Debbie Reynolds, James Coburn, Karl Malden, Sissy Spacek, Ray Bradbury, Stan Freberg, Madonna, Antonio Banderas, and Marlo Thomas, among many others.

As a playwright, two of his stage works have been turned into films: 5 Years Gone (2019), and Ten Essentials (2022). Ten Essentials was screened at more than 25 film festivals worldwide and won Best Drama at the Canadian Short Film Festival, Best Screenplay at the Short and to the Point Film Festival, and was a finalist at the New York International Film Awards. Ten Essentials was initially produced at the Los Angeles Shakespeare Theater Center through the Padua Hills Playwrighting Workshop.

Other plays include Blurt, which also received a reading at Padua Hills, Helen is Quitting, which was produced by the Sacred Fools Theater Company, and A Persistent Vegetative State, and If You Can't Say Something Nice, which both received readings at the South Coast Repertory Playwrights Workshop.

He holds a bachelor's degree in drama from UCSB, a master's degree in English literature from CSU Long Beach, a Masters of Business Administration from CSU Dominguez Hills, and conducted post-graduate work in film studies at CalArts. He will complete his doctoral work in Educational Leadership at CSU Dominguez Hills in May 2027.

He has been a resident of Torrance since 1971 and is a product of the Torrance Unified School District. He is a former board member of Shakespeare by the Sea and current member of the City of Torrance Library Commission.



Sabrina Manzi is an accomplished professional International Latin dancer, instructor, and coach whose artistic journey began in Turin, Italy, and brought her to Los Angeles 11 years ago and to Torrance 9 years ago. Over the course of her career, she has dedicated herself to the art of dance as both a performer and educator, inspiring others through movement, music, discipline, and self-expression.

As a professional competitor, Sabrina has achieved recognition on some of the most prestigious stages in the world.

Her accomplishments include Fred Astaire Professional World and National Latin Champion titles in 2017, 2019, and 2021, United States Rising Star Professional Latin Champion in 2016, and Blackpool Rising Star Latin Vice Champion in 2015. She was also an Ohio Star Ball Open Professional Latin finalist in 2018 and 2019 and Professional Latin Showdance Champion for two consecutive years, as well as a United States Dance Championships Open Professional Latin finalist in 2019 and 2021.

While competition has been an important part of her artistic career, Sabrina's greatest passion is sharing the transformative power of dance with others. Together with her husband and dance partner, Roman Zotov, she teaches her students at the Monarch Ballroom location in downtown Torrance and leads RS Dance in Los Angeles, where they teach, mentor, and coach dancers ranging from beginners to high-level competitors.

Through her teaching and mentorship, Sabrina strives to help each student discover confidence, individuality, and a deeper appreciation for the art of dance. She believes dance is more than technique or competition—it is a form of communication and expression that brings people together, creates lasting connections, and gives individuals the courage to grow.



Allison Zahorik, a lifelong resident of Torrance, has built a long and meaningful career in the arts through an unexpected and beautifully practical canvas: shoes.

After studying at El Camino College, Allison earned her degree in Art from Otis College of Art and Design. Her creative path led her to Skechers, where she began a career in footwear design and discovered the world of CMF: color, material, and finish. Through color palettes, textures, prints, materials, trims, and thoughtful details, Allison has spent her career turning everyday footwear into something creative, emotional, and beautiful.

Today, Allison serves as Senior CMF Design Director for Women's Sport at Skechers, where she helps guide the creative vision for one of the company's largest divisions. Her work blends fine art, fashion, product design, and instinct, always with the belief that curiosity feeds creativity. For Allison, one of the most rewarding parts of her career is seeing people enjoy her art in real life, worn every day on people's feet.

Her creativity extends beyond the studio. As a Torrance parent, Allison volunteered as an Adventures in Art docent in her children's elementary classrooms, helping introduce young students to the value of art and creative expression. At home, she finds inspiration in nature, color, gardening, and the quiet beauty of watching things grow.

Whether she is designing shoes, tending a garden, raising a family, or exploring a new creative idea, Allison brings an artist's eye and a curious heart to everything she does. At the end of the day, she likes to think of herself simply: just a girl making beautiful shoes, staying curious, and living a life surrounded by art.



Bradley Allen Lock is a sought-after costume designer working in theater, TV/film, dance, and event styling. He graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in Costume and Scenic design from Cal State Fullerton. Bradley is the costume shop manager, the resident designer, and adjunct faculty in design for Cerritos College Theatre Arts Department. In those capacities he maintains the costume shop and facilities, manages budgets and staff for the college's productions, designs all 4 productions each year and teaches wardrobe and crew classes as well as beginning sewing for the department. As the resident designer he consults and collaborates with each director to create unique and comprehensive looks specific to each production. Scratching the design itch while also helping fan the flames of young upcoming designers at the school is a passion for Bradley as he cultivates their understanding of the arts as a profession and enhances their confidence, helping them improve their craft.

Bradley is also adjunct faculty and the Costume Design Mentor for Cal State Long Beach. Their program is largely a student-based design program and Bradley mentors all the costume designers for all 4 productions that they produce each semester. Bradley enjoys helping each student designer and their assistants meet their deadlines, think creatively, problem solve, and communicate efficiently to costume shops, directors, and fellow student designers.

Bradley's costume design endeavors as an independent contractor led him to work with TTC in 2010, designing the costumes for their production Chicago. It was then that Bradley found a new home with TTC. Working well together, the Artistic Director Gia Jordahl, Technical Director/Production Manager and Bradley realized in concert that this was a dream connection, and he began designing TTC's entire season. Bradley is inspired by the opportunity TTC presents to give the community a taste of quality theatre that addresses every detail in each production, including the costumes. Most recently, Bradley designed the original costume plot and built the costumes for TTC's summer musical, FROZEN. Previous shows with TTC include Something Rotten, Kinky Boots, The Legend of Georgia McBride, Nunsense, Beauty and the Beast, How to Succeed..., Sister Act, Hairspray, Oklahoma, and eight seasons worth of shows at 1316. Some of his other designs include Rent, Bat Boy, Lysistrata Jones, Jekyll and Hyde, All Shook Up, Little Women, and Dead Man's Cell Phone for various organizations including Cerritos College, Cypress College, CSULB, Little Fish Theatre, Ophelia's Jump, SCR,Tuacahn Ampitheatre, and The Chance Theatre.

As a Designer, Bradley works in multiple capacities. While the bulk of his work is in theatre, he also works with individual clients for events and performances and as a stylist in TV and Film. He has made many custom looks for RuPauls Drag Race and their contestants, done commercial and music video styling, and worked with famous designers as a stitcher/builder like Michael Ngo on Ariana Grande's Sweetener tour and looks for Kelly Clarkson and J-Lo.





Since a chance meeting at the University of Denver, **Andy Hill and Renee Safier**, and their band Hard Rain, have carved out a unique niche for themselves in the Los Angeles music scene and beyond. Their 200+ performances a year are as much social gathering as musical events, attracting large, enthusiastic, and fiercely loyal fans. Andy and Renee provide a unique connection with live music for their audiences, whether in intimate settings or at large festivals.

As a songwriter, Andy Hill is inspired by folk and rock artists such as Van Morrison, Neil Young, Bruce Springsteen, and Bob Dylan. Both Andy & Renee have received numerous awards for their songwriting. Boundary-pushing use of language, sweeping vocal harmonies, unforgettable melodic content, and tightly crafted arrangements are hallmarks of their writing and producing style.

Renee Safier, showcasing her prodigious blues and jazz vocal chops, was named "Best Solo Blues Artist" at the Telluride Blues & Brews Festival, receiving a rousing response from the 12,000-plus festival crowd. She and Andy have returned to that festival for many years. Andy & Renee have also performed in New Zealand, Ireland, Italy Thailand, The Philippines, China, and across North America to approving crowds.

As well as being riveting vocalists, Andy & Renee both play guitars and keyboard, Andy additionally showcasing his harmonica skills while performing Dylan and others. Along with their band Hard Rain, they have taken their unique sound and multi-instrumental skills to venues large and small all over the world.

Their PBS Concert Special, Black Box Opens-Andy & Renee, filmed at the ATLAS Black Box Theatre at the University of Colorado, Boulder, recently won a Heartland Emmy. And in 2027, they'll be celebrating their 37th year hosting their own Bob Dylan music festival, Dylanfest at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center.

Andy and Renee have released 17 independent CD's winning them countless awards including Los Angeles Music Awards Americana Group of the Year, International Acoustic Music Awards Best Duo/Group, Qweevak.com Top-40 CDs of the Year, Crossroads Music Awards Best Folk Act Runner Up, Musician Magazine Best Unsigned Band Semifinals.

Since 1998, they have teamed up with country music legendary sideman, multi-instrumentalist, and producer/engineer Marty Rifkin, and together they recorded their next 12 CDs, including "It Takes a Lot to Laugh", a highly acclaimed collection of 14 Bob Dylan songs. When he isn't traveling the world with Bruce Springsteen or recording the soundtrack to "Man of Steel", Marty often performs and travels with Andy & Renee and Hard Rain in Southern California and beyond. For a full list of their awards and updates please visit AndyandRenee.com."





Regina Klenjoski is a choreographer, educator, and Founder and Artistic Director of Regina Klenjoski Dance Company (RKDC), established in Southern California in 1999. For more than 25 years, Klenjoski and RKDC have been part of the cultural life of Torrance, creating and presenting professional contemporary dance while building accessible opportunities for young people to experience, study, create, and perform dance.

Klenjoski has created 60 original works and 10 dance films for RKDC. Her choreography has received Lester Horton Dance Awards and multiple grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and has been presented across the United States and internationally. Torrance has remained a constant home for her artistic work, with RKDC presenting more than 20 premieres at the James R. Armstrong Theatre, including the evening-length work The Golden Apple in 2023.

Through performances, community events, and free student tickets, she has worked to make professional contemporary dance accessible throughout the community. In the 2000s, Klenjoski produced eight SoLA Dance Festivals, bringing professional dance artists and companies to the South Bay and connecting them with local high school programs through master classes and educational opportunities.

That same commitment is at the heart of Dancing with RKDC, the community-based education program Klenjoski developed through RKDC's longstanding partnership with the City of Torrance. Over 28 years, the program has introduced thousands of children to dance, creating pathways from first classes to deeper artistic experiences.

Today, Dancing with RKDC serves more than 600 young people annually, from age two to young adult, through nearly 35 weekly classes in various dance styles. Students deepen their artistic voices through choreography and performance groups, while hundreds perform in biannual showcases at the James R. Armstrong Theatre.

Accessibility remains central, with full and partial scholarships and the DWRKDC Jason Scaccia Dance Scholarship, which each year provides two Torrance youth with a full year of dance training and performance opportunities. The program is intentionally noncompetitive and community-centered, encouraging a lasting relationship with the arts. Klenjoski, along with RKDC Education Director Brianna Barron, who has led the program's day-to-day work for the past 10 years, and the dedicated faculty, has helped Dancing with RKDC grow, evolve, and serve new generations of dancers. Rooted in the belief that dance enriches community life, Klenjoski has connected artistry, education, and engagement in Torrance for more than a quarter century.