

358 George Carter Road, Becket, MA 01223 • p: 413.243.9919 • f: 413.243.7477 • info@jacobspillow.org • jacobspillow.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PHOTOS CONTACT:

Mariclare Hulbert
Director of Marketing and Communication
413.243.9919 x130
mhulbert@jacobspillow.org

-or-

Antonia Heffelfinger
Press/Editorial Intern
413.243.9919 x134
aheffelfinger@jacobspillow.org

**JACOB'S PILLOW PRESENTS WITTY, INTELLIGENT CHOREOGRAPHERS
JODI MELNICK AND DAVID NEUMANN
IN AN EXCLUSIVE, WORLD PREMIERE ENGAGEMENT**

August 6, 2011 – (Becket, MA) Two highly respected contemporary artists and choreographers, Jodi Melnick and David Neumann, come together for the first time in an exclusive mixed bill engagement at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, August 10-14 in the Doris Duke Theatre. In her Pillow debut performance, two-time Bessie Award-winner Jodi Melnick presents *Fanfare*, a sophisticated dance of rhythm and gesture set against a kaleidoscope of light and sculpture designed by visual artist Burt Barr. Neumann and his company, Advanced Beginner Group, also take the stage with signature wry humor and creativity in *Hit the Deck* and *Tough the Tough*. This exclusive program also includes the world premiere duet, *July*, commissioned by Jacob's Pillow, and choreographed and performed by these two original artists.

"I am truly excited about this engagement. I want people to discover Jodi and David, two of the smartest, most respected artists in the dance world," comments Ella Baff, Executive and Artistic Director of Jacob's Pillow. "This is the first time they've worked together, and I asked them to create a program especially for Pillow. Audiences will see how funny, subtle, intelligent and original, they are. And, there's live music and a world premiere. These are the kinds of things that happen only at the Pillow."

Fanfare, a duet for Melnick and Dennis O'Connor, originally premiered in 2009 and marks Melnick's Jacob's Pillow debut. Methodic, sweeping movements combined with evocative gestural phrasing and quick pivots set a compelling atmosphere. Claudia La Rocco of *The New York Times* remarks, "In Ms. Melnick's finely wrought creations, the smallest adjustments can mean a great deal. Subtle

weight shifts, almost recognizable gestures and deft joint rotations hint at seismic internal happenings.” Visual artist Burt Barr’s lighting, video, and a sculpture made of oscillating fans silhouetted by spotlights are all integral parts of Melnick’s work, highlighting her purposeful movement. “Trying to convey Melnick’s brilliance is like trying to grasp a silver trout in a running stream. She is indeed a force of nature,” says Deborah Jowitt for *The Village Voice*.

David Neumann and his company, Advanced Beginner Group, perform *Hit the Deck* and *Tough the Tough*. *Hit the Deck* explores the collision of chance operations, dance, and music. An unpredictable series of musical and theatrical events, the work is set to the music of Igor Stravinsky with live piano and vocal accompaniment by pianist Carol Wong and tenor Timothy Fallon. Claudia La Rocco of *The New York Times* comments, “By now the line on Mr. Neumann is well established: He is the smart joker of dance. What’s not said as often is how deeply felt and deeply moving his work can be.”

Neumann, an “engaging, committed, humorous, and wildly kinetic performer” (Nancy Alfaro, *Dance Magazine*), segues into his solo *Tough the Tough*, previously performed at Jacob’s Pillow’s 2011 Seasoning Opening Gala. Defined by comical antics and interaction with recorded “voice”, the work is intellectually ambitious, dynamic, and funny. Dressed in a casual grey suit and sneakers, Neumann seems to embody the everyday man. Throughout the work, he follows the directions of an omniscient narrator, encountering stumbling blocks in the form of folding chairs and his own feet. Set to fast, electronic-like music and surrounded by flashing lights, Neumann’s “way of framing human movement—glorious or mundane, graceful or clunky—reveals its beauty and fascination.” (Tom Strini, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*).

The evening culminates with the world premiere of *July*, a duet commissioned by the Pillow and choreographed by Melnick and Neumann. As the first collaborative work between these two choreographers, they exchange movement approaches and fall into a union wrought with images of decay, joy, and the intricate, unspoken language of two people. With original music designed by Melnick and Neumann and lighting by Joe Levasseur, the pair will perform the work in this self-choreographed piece.

A former member of the Twyla Tharp Dance Company, **Jodi Melnick** is a New York City based choreographer, dancer, and teacher at Barnard College. As an Assistant Director, Melnick worked with the Trisha Brown Dance Company. As a performer she has worked with choreographers such as Vicky Shick, Susan Rethorst, Sara Rudner, and Donna Uchizono; she also recently collaborated with John Jasperse and Becky Hilton in the original work *Becky, Jodi, and John*. Melnick’s own work

has been commissioned by the Rex Levitates Dance Company based in Dublin, Ireland and performed in venues such as the Irish Museum of Modern Art, for the Dublin Dance Festival, and for Maiden Voyage Productions in Belfast, Ireland. In addition, her work has been performed in Russia, Japan, and across the U.S.

David Neumann is the Artistic Director of Advanced Beginner Group and as a performer has been featured in the works of Susan Marshall, Jane Comfort, Sally Silvers, Irene Hultman, Cathy Weiss, Big Dance Theater, and Willi Ninja. He is also a former member of Doug Varone and Dancers, the Doug Elkins Dance Company, and performed *Beckett Shorts* with Mikhail Baryshnikov at the New York Theatre Workshop. Known for his sophisticated use of humor within a multi-disciplinary approach to dance-making, he choreographed the creature movement on the movie *I Am Legend* with Will Smith. Neumann previously performed at the Pillow in 2000 with Big Dance Theater, with his own company as part of the Inside/Out performance series in 2003, and at the 2011 Season Opening Gala.

The artists will lead a free Master Class on Sunday, August 14 for intermediate and advanced dances ages 16 and older. Pre-registration is required; for more information, call 413.243.9919.

Please see below for a full listing of ticketed and free events for the week of August 10-14.

Performance and Ticket Information

Doris Duke Theatre

Wednesday, August 10 through Saturday, August 13 at 8:15pm

Saturday, August 13 and Sunday, August 14 at 2:15pm

- **Free Pre-Show Talks** with Jacob's Pillow Scholars-in-Residence are offered on the Doris Duke Theatre porch 30 minutes before every performance.
- **Tickets \$22-36.** Now on sale online at jacobsillow.org, via phone at 413.243.0745, or in person at the Jacob's Pillow Box Office.
- **Under 35 Fridays:** As part of the Pillow's younger audiences initiative, \$19 Under 35 tickets (for individuals 35 and younger) are available for the Friday evening performance of Jodi Melnick and David Neumann. Limit two (2) per person, must be under 35 to purchase, and must show valid I.D. when tickets are picked up. Under 35 ticket holders will also receive a Blue Q bonus bag.
- **Box Office hours:** Monday through Thursday 10am-6pm, Wednesday through Saturday 10am-8pm, and Sunday 12pm-5:30pm.

Pillow Members receive exclusive benefits. To become a Member call 413.243.9919 x125. Jacob's Pillow is located at 358 George Carter Road in Becket, MA, 01223 (10 minutes east on Route 20 from Mass Pike Exit 2). The Jacob's Pillow campus and theaters are handicapped-accessible.

Free Events at the Pillow August 10 – August 14

Free Inside/Out Performance - WalkingTalking/Catherine Miller

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Wednesday, August 10, 6:15pm

Inspired by a t-shirt that read, "Romeo and Juliet wouldn't have lasted," Miller's *Juliet Looks to the West* depicts the negotiations within a relationship through jumps, leaps, and the company's signature physicality.

Free PillowTalk Discussion - *Masterworks of Trisha Brown*

Thursday, August 11, 5pm

Art historian Douglas Crimp wrote a major article on Trisha Brown for *Artforum* earlier this year in a fitting tribute to her company's 40th anniversary. Crimp will discuss the role of visual art in Brown's work, using film clips to illustrate the mastery in her dances.

Free Inside/Out Performance - Loni Landon—projects

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Thursday, August 11, 6:15pm

On the Fence uses Loni Landon's highly physical contemporary movement to focus on the experience and consequences of indecision. Landon also presents a new work set to the soothing electronic music of Alva Noto and Ryuichi Sakamoto.

Free Inside/Out Performance - Flamenco Dance Project

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Friday, August 12, 6:15pm

Artistic Director Sabrina Avilés presents the many moods and rhythms of flamenco with her company of exceptional dancers and musicians, in a program that ranges from the laid-back *Guajiras* to the lively *Caracoles*.

Free PillowTalk Discussion - *Online Dancing*

Saturday, August 13, 4pm

The Huffington Post's Debra Levine and Jennifer Edwards lead a discussion on how dance is being looked at and talked about online, 24 hours a day. The new Virtual Pillow efforts will be explored alongside other initiatives now providing more free access to dance than ever before.

Free Inside/Out Performance - The School at Jacob's Pillow: Jazz/Musical Theatre Dance

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Saturday, August 13, 6:15pm

Following their second week of study at The School, dancers present new works created by Program Director Chet Walker and guest choreographer Brad Musgrove, whose Broadway credits include *The Producers*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *42nd Street*.

The 2011 Gallery Exhibits

All exhibits are free and open to the public June 21 - August 28.

Annie Leibovitz: DANCE

Blake's Barn

Open Tuesdays-Sundays, noon through final curtain

One of the world's most widely known portrait photographers, Annie Leibovitz has long been interested in capturing the human body, photographing dancers such as Suzanne Farrell, Darci Kistler, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Paul Taylor, Merce Cunningham, and David Parsons. Leibovitz has

worked with Mark Morris and his company on numerous occasions, and has conceived this exhibition especially for the Pillow to salute the 30th anniversary of the Mark Morris Dance Group.

If You Couldn't See Trisha Brown

Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby

Open Wednesdays-Sundays, 60 minutes pre-performance A remarkable 1994 Trisha Brown solo, *If You Couldn't See Me*, was so titled because she performed it with her back to the audience. This exhibition attempts a similar sleight-of-hand, featuring highlights from her past work as well as some of Brown's own drawings, with the artist's presence concentrated behind the scenes. Emphasizing a wide-ranging creative output, these materials are presented in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Trisha Brown Dance Company and a Pillow relationship that spans more than three decades.

Modern Classics by Barbara Morgan

Doris Duke Theatre Lobby

Open Wednesdays-Sundays, 60 minutes pre-performance

An inspiration to Annie Leibovitz and generations of photographers and dancers, Barbara Morgan created unforgettable images of Martha Graham and other pioneering modern dancers from the generation that followed Pillow founder Ted Shawn. Morgan's family has donated a collection of her original prints from the 1930s and 40s to the Dance Program of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and a selection of these iconic images are gathered to celebrate *The Dance Claimed Me*, an important new biography of a Morgan subject, Pearl Primus.

Precious Medals

Blake's Barn

Open Tuesdays-Sundays, noon through final curtain

When President Barack Obama presented the National Medal of Arts to Jacob's Pillow at the White House this year, the Pillow became the first dance presenting organization ever to receive this distinction. The medal itself and the signed presidential proclamation are on display here along with some of the other awards received by the Pillow and its founder, Ted Shawn, including the Capezio Award, the Commonwealth Award, Shawn's medal from the King of Denmark, and other treasures.

Anniversary Highlights: The First Forty

Bakalar Studio

Open to the public whenever classes or rehearsals are not in session

Photos from past Pillow seasons traditionally line these walls each summer, and the upcoming 80th anniversary in 2012 offers a special opportunity to look back comprehensively in two forty-year companion exhibits. This first installment includes images from the Pillow's inception in 1933 through 1972, the year of founder Ted Shawn's death. Foreshadowing next season's anniversary, these images recall high points from the Festival's formative eras.

Other Activities at Jacob's Pillow

The Archives

Blake's Barn

Open Tuesdays-Sundays, noon through final curtain

This informal library and reading room allows impromptu visitors to view videos, browse through books, access the Pillow's computer catalog, or peruse permanent collections of Pillow programs and photographs. *Pillow Interactive*, the popular touch-screen kiosk, provides instant access to rare film clips ranging from the present day back to the 1930s, and a preview of the Dance Heritage Coalition's new Secure Media Network features videos from other archives throughout the country.

Free Guided Tours

Welcome Center

Fridays and Saturdays at 5:30pm

During the Festival, free guided tours of the 163-acre campus leave from the Welcome Center and offer visitors a casual, informative look at the extensive history that occurred on the Jacob's Pillow grounds. Everyone is invited to see what makes Jacob's Pillow a National Historic Landmark. Plus, patrons can pick up a self-guided tour map anytime to explore the grounds on their own.

Classes and Observations

Patrons are also welcome to visit The School at Jacob's Pillow and observe renowned artist faculty working with emerging professional dancers, either on a drop-in basis or pre-arranged for groups larger than four. Dance and Pilates classes are offered to the public Mondays through Fridays at 8am and are open to all experience levels (class fee required). Master classes with artists of the Doris Duke Theatre are offered every Sunday at 10am for intermediate to advanced dancers (class fee required). Master classes are also open for public observation, without charge. For Community Class information call 413.243.9919.

Relax

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the historic Tea Garden, where Ted Shawn's Men Dancers welcomed the first Pillow audiences in the 1930s. They can also picnic on the grounds or stroll through several ecological zones on the Wetlands Trail, created as part of the Pillow's responsible stewardship of its rural environment.

Dining

Jacob's Pillow offers many dining options including the Pillow Café, a full-service open air restaurant on the Great Lawn; the Pillow Pub offering casual fare, ready-to-go picnics, and a full bar; the Coffee & Ice Cream Bars, and catering services for groups and events.

The Pillow Store

Visitors can shop onsite for logo items, clothes, gifts, books, and music; all proceeds benefit Jacob's Pillow.

Dance Opportunities

Morning Classes offered in Pilates, Ballet, Modern, Arab-American Fusion, and Tai Chi. Mondays through Fridays at 8am. All experience levels, 16 and older, fees apply. Ruth St. Denis Studio. Visit jacobsillow.org or call the Education Hotline at 413.243.9919.

Weekly Master Classes are led by Festival artists on Sundays from 10-11:30am for intermediate and advanced dancers, \$15 fee applies. (\$10/class for dance teachers with appropriate I.D.) Pre-registration required. The public may observe for free. For Community Class information call 413.243.9919.

Families Dance Together at the Pillow, an intergenerational class led by Pillow artist-educator Jeff Bliss, is offered for children ages 5-18 and family members of all ages on Thursdays 5-6pm, July 14, 21, and 28, as well as August 4, 11, and 18. Children must be accompanied by an adult. This program is a Jacob's Pillow/Becket Arts Center collaboration. Fee information and registration at the Becket Arts Center of the Hilltowns: 413.623.6635.

Jacob's Pillow, celebrating its 79th anniversary in 2011, is a National Historic Landmark and home to America's longest running international dance festival. The **Festival** includes more than 50 national and international dance companies and 300 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, exhibits, and events. **The School at Jacob's Pillow**, one of the most prestigious professional dance training centers in the U.S., encompasses the diverse disciplines of Ballet, Cultural Traditions, Contemporary, and Jazz/Musical Theatre Dance, as well as an Intern Program in various departments of arts administration and production. The Pillow's extensive **Archives**, open year-round to the public, chronicle more than 80 years of dance in photographs, programs, books, costumes, audiotapes, and video. Year-round **Community Programs** enrich the lives of children and adults through public classes, residencies in area schools, and more than 200 free public events. Through *Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion*®, a nationally-recognized program, artist-educators work with Berkshire County teachers and students grades K-12, transforming existing curricula such as biology, literature, and history into kinesthetic and creative learning experiences. Choreography commissions; **Creative Development Residencies**, in which dance companies are invited to live and work at the Pillow and enjoy unlimited studio time; and the annual \$25,000 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award all support visionary choreographers. **Virtual Pillow** is aimed at expanding global audiences for dance and offers the opportunity to experience dance and Jacob's Pillow from anywhere in the world via online interactive exhibits, global video networks, and mobile social media. As part of the Virtual Pillow initiative, **Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive**, an online video collection of dance highlights from 1937 through 2010, is a new resource with a curated selection of videos by artists who have performed at Jacob's Pillow over the past seven decades. On March 2, 2011, President Obama honored Jacob's Pillow with a National Medal of Arts, the highest arts award given by the United States Government. Jacob's Pillow is the first dance presenting organization to receive this prestigious award.

As of **July 2**, 2011, support for Jacob's Pillow has been provided by:

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