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**JACOB'S PILLOW PRESENTS INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED
CHOREOGRAPHER AND MEDIA ARTIST JONAH BOKAER
IN THE U.S. PREMIERES OF *RECESS* AND *WHY PATTERNS***

July 24, 2011 – (Becket, MA) Jonah Bokaer, “contemporary dance’s renaissance man” (Roslyn Sulcas, *The New York Times*) brings a surprising, innovative program of two U.S. premieres combining dance, architecture, and visual art to Jacob’s Pillow August 3-7. A gifted performer, choreographer, and media artist, Bokaer and his dancers perform the site-specific *RECESS*, designed by acclaimed visual artist Daniel Arsham, and *Why Patterns*, in which 10,000 Ping-Pong balls cascade from above, causing dramatically different configurations and reactions in every performance.

“Check your expectations at the door,” comments Ella Baff, Executive and Artistic Director of Jacob’s Pillow. “Jonah’s performances are different than other dance performances. Along with beautiful and interesting movement, there are clever and surprising visual elements that expand our ideas about what dance is. I think of Jonah as an inventor: he has a big imagination that defies categories. At his performances, I always feel that he’s invited the audience over to his laboratory to think and play.”

Both of Bokaer’s works are collaborations, *RECESS* with Arsham and *Why Patterns* with architectural design firm Snarkitecture, established by Arsham and Alex Mustonen. Rather than design buildings, Snarkitecture investigates structure and materials within a space and how they might be manipulated in order to serve new and imaginative goals. The firm intentionally searches for established architecture sites with a possibility for confusion or misuse, aiming to reconfigure spaces to make them work against their intended purpose.

The U.S. premiere of *RECESS* explores Bokaer's collaborations with Arsham and the origins behind their ongoing works. Made specifically for the Pillow, Arsham proposes a single white sheet of photographic set paper, which Bokaer transforms 30 times, often creating magical illusions from the simplest of materials. *RECESS* explores concepts of architecture, time, expansion, rational vs. natural form, and is staged site-specifically for the Doris Duke Theater. No two performances of this work are the same. Raphaël de Gubernatis of *Le Neouvel Observateur* states of Bokaer, "His language is highly personal. Interspersed with images of virtuosity, sequences of video images...it is also very well controlled, beautiful, surprising, and seducing. Jonah Bokaer reproduces movements onstage with a diabolical virtuosity."

The recently revised U.S. premiere of *Why Patterns* is inspired by composer Morton Feldman's 1978 piece, also titled "Why Patterns." Feldman stated, "There is not one organizational procedure more advantageous than another, perhaps because no one pattern ever takes precedence over the other." Bokaer, in turn, comments "With these words in mind, I believe that thirty years later it still remains a radical, architectural, and poetic gesture to question the nature of compositional patterns - either imposed, designed, or random. In collaboration with Snarkitecture and the dancers, I have choreographed games that change every night, and cannot be predicted. As I watch the piece, I still wonder why these patterns emerge, and how."

In the work, a single Ping-Pong ball initiates a compelling relationship of movement and ideas. Four dancers, dressed in newly designed costumes by former Marc Jacobs Designer Richard Chai, perform surprising and spontaneous choreographic games that change in every performance. At one point, 10,000 balls drop from the ceiling, filling the stage and creating unpredictable patterns of their own. New for this premiere, commissioned music by electronic composer Alexis Georgopoulos is merged with Feldman's original, tonal composition. Bokaer also recently received support from the National Endowment for the Arts for the reconstruction of *Why Patterns*, specifically for his Jacob's Pillow engagement.

Jennifer Dunning of *The New York Times* comments, "Some artists cannot resist the challenge of innovation. Jonah Bokaer is one, and he does not limit his reach to performing and choreography." An alumnus of The School at Jacob's Pillow, Bokaer trained in dance at Cornell University and North Carolina School of the Arts, and joined Merce Cunningham Dance Company at the age of 18, the youngest dancer to ever join the company. In addition to his work with Merce Cunningham, Bokaer has worked with acclaimed artists such as David Gordon, Deborah Hay, John Jasperse, Tino

Sehgal, and many others. He is a frequent choreographer with avant-garde stage director and playwright Robert Wilson, best known for his collaboration with Philip Glass on *Einstein on the Beach*.

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A Co-Founder of CPR - Center for Performance Research and Chez Bushwick, Inc. in Brooklyn, New York, Bokaer is dedicated to the advancement of interdisciplinary art and performance with a strong focus on new choreography. His work has been presented widely throughout the U.S. and abroad, including Dance Theater Workshop, Danspace Project, Dixon Place, La Mama Experimental Theatre Company, the ISB (Bangkok), Naxos Bobine, Studio Théâtre de Vitry, La Générale (Paris), Les Substances (Lyon), La Compagnie (Marseille), La Ferme Du Buisson (Marne-la-Vallée), De Singel (Belgium), International Tanzmesse NRW (Germany), PSi (Copenhagen), Kunsthalle St. Gallen (Switzerland), among others. Recent engagements include Les Hivernales Festival in Avignon (France), Arnolfini Theatre, Bristol (United Kingdom), and a new commission from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York).

In addition, Bokaer has received numerous awards in 2011, including the Prix Nouveau Talent Chorégraphie (SACD, France); the Jerome Robbins Special Fellowship in Dance (Bogliasco Foundation, Italy); Crain's New York Business "40 Under 40" (New York); and was the youngest recipient of the Rockefeller NYC Cultural Innovation Award in 2009.

Related Event:

Towards the end of Merce Cunningham's life, a ground-breaking online video series was launched to capture Cunningham's company class and other aspects of studio life. On Thursday, August 4 at 5pm, Bokaer, a former Cunningham dancer, will join producer/writer Nancy Dalva for a free PillowTalk titled *Mondays with Merce*. They will share highlights from the online programming produced so far and insights about the post-Cunningham era.

Performance and Ticket Information

Doris Duke Theatre

Wednesday, August 3 through Saturday, August 6 at 8:15pm

Saturday, August 6 and Sunday, August 7 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 jacobspillow.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 Jonah

Bokaer. 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 3 – August 7

Free Inside/Out Performance - Kawamura the 3rd

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Wednesday, August 3, 6:15pm

Depicting the sudden arrival and slow disappearance of a memory, *cloudburst* is composed of stillness contrasted by nimble movement. *Pandora* and *specimen* use classical and contemporary music to investigate physical contact and curiosity.

Free PillowTalk Discussion - Mondays with Merce

Thursday, August 4, 5pm

Towards the end of Merce Cunningham's life, a ground-breaking online video series was launched to capture Cunningham's company class and other aspects of studio life. Producer/writer Nancy Dalva shares some highlights from the programming produced so far and shares her insights about the post-Cunningham era, along with former Cunningham dancer Jonah Bokaer.

Free Inside/Out Performance - Rainwater Dances

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Thursday, August 4, 6:15pm

In *Spaces We Inhabit*, dancers navigate around and use chairs as props to call attention to their interactions. *This Is What I Think Of Your Love* invokes both everyday and ballroom movements to create a dream-like state.

Free Community Events - "Weekend OUT"

Friday, August 5 – Sunday, August 7

During the second annual "Weekend OUT," Jacob's Pillow welcomes LGBT individuals, families, and friends with a full schedule of free and ticketed events, including a special behind-the-scenes tour spotlighting Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers on Sunday, August 7 at noon.

Free Inside/Out Performance - Jennifer Archibald—Arch Dance Company

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Friday, August 5, 6:15pm

Inspired by writer Maya Angelou, Jennifer Archibald weaves together classical, funk, street, and lyrical movement in *The Uncomfortable Truth*, a look at women's relationships with their mothers. Featuring music by Trentemøller, M.I.A., and Booka Shade.

Free PillowTalk Film Screening - Claude Bessy: Traces of a Life

Saturday, August 6, 4pm

The star of a 1963 Paris Opera Ballet group at the Pillow was Claude Bessy, a glamorous figure who was famously paired onscreen with Gene Kelly. Later the director of the Paris Opera Ballet School, Bessy's life has been chronicled by dancer/filmmaker Fabrice Herrault in this documentary.

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

Marcia & Seymour Simon Performance Space

Saturday, August 6, 6:15pm

Dancers of The School present works created by Program Director Chet Walker and Patricia Wilcox, a Broadway performer and choreographer for musical theatre, opera, and television.

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 jacobspillow.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: **Foundations:** Arch W. Shaw Foundation; Asian Cultural Council; The Barrington Foundation; Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation through the Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence and The Central Berkshire Fund; Bessie Pappas Charitable Foundation; Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; Frances Alexander Family Fund; Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation; Harkness Foundation for Dance; Jerome Robbins Foundation; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Korean Cultural Service, New York; The Kresge Foundation; *Leading for the Future Initiative*, a program of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; The Leir Charitable Foundations, In Memory of Henry J. Leir; The Marshall Frankel Foundation; Mertz Gilmore Foundation; The National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts (NDP is supported by lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, with additional funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Community Connections Fund of the MetLife Foundation, and the Boeing Company Charitable Trust); Neal Rantoul Foundation; The O'Neill Foundation; Princeton University; The Prospect Hill Foundation; Québec Delegation to New England; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; The Shubert Foundation, Inc.; Spingold Foundation, Inc.; The Thompson Family Foundation; and The T. Backer Fund. **Government:** The Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency; the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, a Program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, administered through a collaborative arrangement between MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Cultural Council; Mass Humanities, State-based Affiliate of the National Endowment of the

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