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**PORTLAND-BASED NW DANCE PROJECT MAKES ITS DEBUT
AT JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL, JUNE 28-JULY 2**

May 31, 2017 – (Becket, MA) Known for its “cutting-edge contemporary work” (Jason Vondersmith, *The Portland Tribune*), NW Dance Project makes its Jacob's Pillow debut, June 28-July 2 in the Doris Duke Theatre. Based in Portland, Oregon and led by former Royal Winnipeg Ballet principal dancer Sarah Slipper, the company is composed of a cast of classically-trained, versatile contemporary dancers. The program includes works by a range of accomplished choreographers and rising talents: *Post-Traumatic-Monster* by Felix Landerer, choreographer in residence for Scapino Ballet in the Netherlands; *At Some Hour You Return* by former Nederlands Dans Theater dancer Jiří Pokorný; *Le Fil Rouge* by 2011 Sadler's Wells Global Dance Contest winner and NW Dance Project resident choreographer Ihsan Rustem; and *MemoryHouse* by Artistic Director Sarah Slipper.

“NW Dance Project is a prolific company investing in the work of U.S. and international choreographers,” comments Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge. “The caliber of their dancers is exceptional and the breadth of choreography that our audience will experience in a single evening is truly remarkable. It's also important to me that Jacob's Pillow celebrates the exceptional dance scene in the Pacific Northwest by bringing a company that is so gifted and entrepreneurial in their approach to advancing the form.”

Post-Traumatic-Monster, by German choreographer Felix Landerer, deals with the dark side of relationships. This duet is full of sharp, compact choreography, with a score by composer Christof Littman. Landerer has recently choreographed for Luzerner Theater in Switzerland, Norrdans in Sweden, and Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, where he was appointed choreographer-in-residence in 2013.

The 2014 work *At Some Hour You Return* is choreographed by former Nederlands Dans Theatre and Kidd Pivot dancer Jiří Pokorný. Kaitie Todd of *Williamette Week* commented, “The six dancers often move together in a billowing, bobbing mass before suddenly breaking off into brief solos or duos—an aggressive, backwards crab walk here, a beautifully controlled, almost anti-gravity-looking lift there.” Pokorný was born in Prague, Czech Republic and studied at the Prague National Dance Conservatory before joining Nederlands Dans Theater 2 and then NDT 1; he joined Crystal Pite's Kidd Pivot in 2010.

MemoryHouse is a passionate, dramatic duet by Sarah Slipper, danced to music by British composer and musician Max Richter and Yann Tiersen, known for his work on film scores including *Amélie*. The movements in the final minutes of *MemoryHouse* are decided by the dancers onstage. The female dancer's eyes are shut and she is vulnerable to her partner; as the duet comes to a close, she chooses one of multiple possible endings suggested by the choreographer.

Le Fil Rouge closes the program with a humorous, contemporary romp choreographed by NW Dance Project resident choreographer Ihsan Rustem, with a soundtrack of songs by Yma Sumac, Doris Day, Edith Piaf, La Lupe, and others. Bob Hicks of *Oregon ArtsWatch* wrote, “*Le Fil Rouge*, or ‘The Red Thread,’ is an evocation of the smart pop music and fizzy Hollywood dance styles of the 1950s and '60s, a light and ebullient tip of the contemporary hat to the mating game in its many woozy variations: Like Twyla Tharp and a few others before him, Rustem's not afraid to mine the energy and inventiveness and nostalgic attractions of popular culture.” Rustem, born in London, began his professional career with Matthew Bourne's *Adventures in Motion Pictures*; and went on to perform in Germany with Ballet Theater Munich; Introdans in the Netherlands; and in Switzerland as a founding member of both the Stadt Theater Bern Ballett and the Tanz Luzerner Theater.

About NW Dance Project

NW Dance Project was founded in Portland in 2004 by dancer, mentor, and choreographer Sarah Slipper. NW Dance Project is dedicated to the creation and performance of innovative, new contemporary dance works from established and emerging dance makers. The company has fostered the creation and Portland premiere of over 190 original contemporary dance works to date. The company's dedication to providing dancers and dancemakers the resources and creative room needed to realize new works led *Dance International Magazine* to proclaim that they are "changing the way dance is created" and that NW Dance Project has become "a laboratory, factory and repository for risk-taking new works from the next generation of choreographers from Europe and North America."

Sarah Slipper was born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia, and received her professional training at the Royal Ballet School in London, England and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School. In 1980, she made her professional debut with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as a corps de ballet member, and became one of the company's leading ballerinas. After Slipper left the stage, she studied theatre at the University of Winnipeg and in Oxford, England. She has served as ballet mistress of Alberta Ballet and Oregon Ballet Theatre.

An award-winning independent choreographer, Slipper has created work for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Nashville Ballet, Washington Ballet, Ballet Jorgen, Louisville Ballet, Fugate/Bahiri BalletNY, Alberta Ballet, and NW Dance Project, among others. She was awarded the Grand Prize for Choreography at the International Choreographic Competition Saint Sauveur 2000 for her ballet *Shattered Night*, which was created on the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. She has created over 40 ballets to date and is currently working on several new creations.

Performance & Ticket Details

NW Dance Project at Jacob's Pillow

Doris Duke Theatre, June 28-July 2

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8:15pm

Saturday & Sunday at 2:15pm

\$45, \$35, \$25

A limited number of \$20 Under 35 tickets are available; adults ages 18-35 are eligible. One ticket per person; each guest must show valid I.D. when picking up tickets at Will Call.

Tickets are on sale now; online at jacobspillow.org, via phone at 413.243.0745, and at the Jacob's Pillow Box Office at 358 George Carter Road, Becket, MA, 01223.

ALSO THIS WEEK

***TIRELESS: A Tap Dance Experience* Curated by Michelle Dorrance**

Ted Shawn Theatre, June 28-July 2

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8pm

Saturday & Sunday at 2pm

Curated and introduced by Jacob's Pillow Dance Award recipient, MacArthur 'Genius' Fellow, and "tireless ambassador of tap" Michelle Dorrance (Gia Kourlas, *The New York Times*), *TIRELESS* exhibits the endless talent, depth, and perseverance of the international tap community. This Pillow-exclusive engagement includes tap dancer and bassist couple Reona and Takashi Seo of Japan in *AUN*; Chicago-based choreographer and performer Jumaane Taylor's ensemble work *Supreme Love*; Joe Orrach of San Francisco in his solo performance entitled *In My Corner*; and the premiere of *Harmony: Tap in Motion* by tap dancing siblings Joseph and Josette Wiggan of Los Angeles. Tickets start at \$39.

STREET WEEK on Inside/Out

leading up to All Styles Dance Battle on Sunday, July 2

Inside/Out Performance Series: Passion Fruit

Wednesday, June 28 at 6:15pm

Free Event

Kicking off a week of hip-hop and street dance presentations, this all-female hip-hop crew performs *Dance Within Your Dance*, created by choreographer and director Tatiana Desardouin. This invigorating work illustrates how dancers influence each other's style within the hip-hop and house community, combining themes of connection and transformation with individual groove. Originally from Geneva, Switzerland and now based on the east coast of the U.S., Desardouin's first influences were Afro-Haitian dance and dancehall, and she now specializes in hip-hop and house dance. She was a member of Geneva's very first hip-hop dance company and originally founded Passion Fruit in Geneva before moving to the U.S. In addition to her own company, Desardouin dances with Rennie Harris Puremovement.

Class with Inside/Out Artist: Flex with Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray

Thursday, June 29, 4pm

Ruth St. Denis Studio

A pioneer of flex dance, Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray teaches this energetic class. Open to all experience levels, ages 12+; \$10 per person. Pre-registration is required at jacobspillow.org.

Inside/Out Performance Series: D.R.E.A.M (Dance Rules Everything Around Me)

Thursday, June 29 at 6:15pm

Free Event

After wowing the Berkshire County community last season with *FLEXN*, Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray returns with a new program for the Inside/Out Performance Series. Gray is a pioneer of the flex style, an electrifying street dance characterized by pausing, gliding, hat tricks, 'bone breaking', animation, and contortion that evolved from the Jamaican bruk-up dance style made popular in Brooklyn reggae clubs. He will teach a community class earlier in the day and present a new collection of dances and dancers for Inside/Out. Janine Parker of *The Boston Globe* comments, "Flexing is rooted in storytelling, and practitioners are encouraged to be both emotionally expressive and physically unique."

PillowTalk: Tap Today

Friday, June 30 at 5pm

Blake's Barn

Free Event

Enhancing this week's tap dance performances in the Ted Shawn Theatre and the School's Tap Program directed by tap stars Michelle Dorrance and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, these artists survey the current scene and preview a new tap-focused aspect of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive website.

Inside/Out Performance Series: 860 Movement

Friday, June 30 at 6:15pm

Free Event

This presentation is a celebration of youth and the next generation of hip-hop dancers from the surrounding region. 860 Movement is an all-styles street dance collective, under the direction of Jolet Creary, an alumna of The School at Jacob's Pillow; the troupe implements original street dance in collaboration with contemporary styles of hip-hop. Their Inside/Out program features dancers from Studio 860 in Hartford, CT, a studio specializing in a hip-hop, break dance, and b-boy styles, and will display the raw, intense energy of these genres.

PillowTalk: Radical Bodies

Saturday, July 1 at 4pm

Blake's Barn

Free Event

Radical Bodies, a new book and New York Public Library exhibition survey the work of pioneers Anna Halprin, Simone Forti, and Yvonne Rainer; with authors and PillowTalk speakers Ninotchka Bennahum, Wendy Perron, and Bruce Robertson.

Inside/Out Performance Series: The School at Jacob's Pillow Tap Program

Saturday, July 1 at 6:15pm

Free Event

Dancers of the Tap Program have journeyed from around the world to study with Tap Program Directors Michelle Dorrance and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards. Following their first week in The School at Jacob's Pillow, they perform traditional tap vocabulary, cutting edge styles, improvisation, and a capella compositions as soloists and ensemble performers. Program faculty also include Joseph Wiggan, Jumaane Taylor, Sam Weber, and Festival artists from *TIRELESS*. Dancers attend all Festival events, including weekly career-building interactions with Festival Ted Shawn Theatre and Doris Duke Theatre performers.

Sunday Master Class with Festival Artist: NW Dance Project

Sunday, July 2, 10am

Doris Duke Theatre

Artists of NW Dance Project will teach a 90-minute master class open to all intermediate and advanced dancers ages 16 and over. Pre-registration is required at jacobspillow.org. Quiet observation is welcome; \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

Sunday Master Class with Festival Artist: Tap with Sam Weber

Sunday, July 2, 12pm

Ben and Estelle Sommers Studio

Tap artist Sam Weber will teach a 90-minute master class open to all intermediate and advanced dancers ages 12 and over. Pre-registration is required at jacobspillow.org. Quiet observation is welcome; \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

All Styles Dance Battle

Doris Duke Theatre

Sunday, July 2 at 8pm

Beloved performer, choreographer, Jacob's Pillow Dance Award winner, and Tap Program director Michelle Dorrance hosts an All Styles Dance Battle with exciting Festival artists, the talented participants of the Tap Program of The School at Jacob's Pillow, and New England-based street artists in the Doris Duke Theatre. Tickets start at \$25; \$5 for Youth 17 and younger.

FESTIVAL 2017 EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES – ONGOING

The following exhibits and offerings are free and open to the public June 21 through August 27, 2017.

JACOB'S PILLOW JUMPS

Blake's Barn

Open Wednesday-Saturday noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm) and Sunday-Tuesday noon to 5pm

Free Offering

Celebrating 85 Jacob's Pillow seasons, this exclusive new collection of original images connects today's artists with the pioneering dancers of yesteryear. From John Lindquist's iconic photos of the Men Dancers to Christopher Duggan's current season image of Camille A. Brown—with scores of others in between—these dancers truly soar.

INSIDE THE DANCER'S ART

Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby

Open Wednesday-Sunday, noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm)

Free Offering

In her thirty-year career of photographing and interviewing veteran and emerging dancers, Rose Eichenbaum has elicited eloquent, poetic, and insightful descriptions of the inner world of the dancer's life and art. This exhibit encompasses highlights from her new book for Wesleyan University Press, *Inside the Dancer's Art*, including many Jacob's Pillow images.

MAIRA KALMAN'S PRINCIPLES OF UNCERTAINTY

Doris Duke Theatre Lobby

Open Wednesday-Sunday, noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm)

Free Offering

In tandem with her Dance Heginbotham collaboration, *The Principles of Uncertainty*, premiering at the Pillow August 23-27, one-of-a-kind artist and author Maira Kalman shares some favorite images in this exhibition,

created especially for Jacob's Pillow. Both whimsical and brilliant, Kalman's work explores the intersections of dance, life, and art in unexpected ways.

JACOB'S PILLOW ARCHIVES/NORTON OWEN READING ROOM

Blake's Barn

Open daily, Wednesday-Saturday noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm) and Sunday-Tuesday noon to 5pm

Free Offering

This newly-expanded 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 from the Pillow's Archives. The Norton Owen Reading Room also features recent donations and more archival treasures from the Stephan Driscoll Collection. Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive, available on a popular touch-screen kiosk in the Reading Room, provides instant access to rare film clips ranging from the present day back to the 1930s.

ONLINE EXHIBIT: JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE INTERACTIVE

danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org

This ever-expanding website allows new dance lovers and aficionados to enjoy highlights from the past 84 seasons of Pillow performances, anytime and anywhere. Discover video excerpts from artists including Savion Glover, Martha Graham Dance Company, Carmen de Lavallade, Trisha Brown, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Michelle Dorrance, and Pillow founder Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers, among countless others. A recent expansion features a series of multimedia essays from renowned dance scholars on three distinct themes: Tap, Women in Dance, and Dance of the African Diaspora. This newly-launched editorial platform features more than 30 essays on topics richly archived and relevant to conversations surrounding today's dance field. Each essay includes archival materials of various media, including video interviews with artists, scans of original printed programs, photographs, and rare performance excerpts, resulting in an expert-led tour through the extensive Archives.

FESTIVAL 2017 COMMUNITY CLASSES – ONGOING

Morning Classes

Ruth St. Denis Studio

June 5-August 25, Monday-Friday at 8am

Open to all experience levels, Jacob's Pillow Morning Classes take place each weekday morning in the historic Ruth St. Denis Studio on the Jacob's Pillow grounds. The class schedule includes Pilates with Pilates Certified instructor Sean P. Gallagher on Mondays; African Dance with Marilyn Sylla and live drumming by Jamemurrell Stanley on Tuesdays; Ballet with Ian Spencer Bell and Sharon MacDonald on Wednesdays; Zumba with Ilana Siegal on Thursdays; and Modern with varied Guest Artists including Paul Dennis, Ryoko Kudo, and Adam H. Weinert on Fridays. Other guest artists to be announced. All participants must be age 16 and over; \$10 per class or \$55 for a 6-class card. Participants younger than 18 will require a parent/guardian signature on a liability waiver.

Families Dance Together

Bakalar Studio

July 7-August 18, Fridays at 5pm

Led by Pillow Artist-Educator Jeff Bliss, this intergenerational class is a unique opportunity for children and adults to experience the joy of creating simple dances together. Families Dance Together is for children ages 5-18, accompanied by an adult. Participants under 18 years require a parent/guardian signature on liability waiver. Classes are \$5 per adult and \$1 per child. *Families Dance Together is a Jacob's Pillow/Becket Arts Center collaboration. Call 413.623.6635 to pre-register.*

TALKS, TOURS, OBSERVATION – ONGOING

Pre-Show Talks

30 minutes prior to every performance

Free Offering

Pillow Scholars offer helpful insight prior to every performance; located in Blake's Barn for Ted Shawn Theatre shows and on the Doris Duke Theatre porch for Duke shows.

Post-Show Talks

Thursday and Friday, immediately following the performance

Free Offering

Pillow Scholars moderate entertaining and informative discussions with dancers, directors, and choreographers; offered Fridays for Ted Shawn Theatre performances and Thursdays for Doris Duke Theatre performances.

Observe Dancers of The School

Monday-Saturday, check jacobspillow.org or onsite signage for specific times

Sommers Studio

Free Offering

Festival visitors are welcome to observe dancers of The School at Jacob's Pillow in classes and rehearsals.

Guided Tours

Thursday and Saturday at 5:30pm

Free Offering

Visitors can learn about the history and legends of Jacob's Pillow, a National Historic Landmark, on guided tours of the grounds. Self-guided tour maps are also available in the Welcome Center.

Jacob's Pillow Year Round

Beyond its summer festival, Jacob's Pillow is an active year-round organization. Through **Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion®**, a nationally-recognized program, Artist Educators work with Berkshire County teachers and students grades K-12 to transform curricula such as biology, literature, and history into kinesthetic and creative learning experiences. 2016-2017 Curriculum in Motion® residencies are taking place at Conte Community School, Becket Washington Elementary, and Monument Mountain Regional High School. **Creative Development Residencies** take place at the Pillow throughout the year. Dance artists are invited to live and work at Jacob's Pillow for one to three-week residencies and during that time they are given a stipend, housing, and unlimited access to rehearsal space, the Archives, and staff support. During the 2016-2017 season, Netta Yerushalmy, Ephrat Asherie & Ehud Asherie, Marsha Parrilla, Ronald K. Brown & Arturo O'Farrill, David Dorfman, denny/Donovan projects, Camille A. Brown, Joanna Kotze, and John Heginbotham & Maira Kalman are all participating in Pillow Creative Development Residencies. The annual \$25,000 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award supports visionary dance artists and choreographers with a residency, performance at the Season Opening Gala, among other engagements. **Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive** (<http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/>) is the Pillow's online platform for videos and digital dance resources and remains active every day of the year, encompassing a wide range of Festival artists and video content from the 1930s to 2016 with new content added each month. The Jacob's Pillow **Intern Program** is also active year-round, offering hands-on work experience to college students and recent graduates seeking a deeper education within arts administration and production. At the same time, **The School at Jacob's Pillow** is hosting international auditions and workshops and planning its national audition tour, which will kick off in January in Miami. The School at Jacob's Pillow is a leading center for professional advancement; each year thousands of dancers audition and apply and only 100 are selected to participate in one of four programs in Ballet, Contemporary, Tap, and Musical Theatre Dance. The international students of The School are immersed in Festival life as they take class, attend seminars, and learn classic and new dance work from today's greatest choreographers, mentors, directors, musicians, and Broadway performers.

ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW: Jacob's Pillow, celebrating its 85th Festival in 2017, is a National Historic Landmark, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, and home to America's longest-running international dance festival. Each Festival includes more than 50 national and international dance companies and 350 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, 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 Musical Theatre Dance, as well as an Intern Program in various disciplines of arts administration, design, video, and production. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public, chronicle more than a century of dance in photographs, programs, books, costumes, audiotapes, and videos. Notable artists who have created or premiered dances at the Pillow include choreographers Antony Tudor, Agnes de Mille, Alvin Ailey, Donald McKayle, Kevin McKenzie, Twyla Tharp, Ralph Lemon, Susan Marshall, Trisha Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Wally Cardona, Andrea Miller, and Trey McIntyre; performed by artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Carmen de Lavallade, Mark Morris, Dame Margot Fonteyn, Edward Villella, Rasta

Thomas, and hundreds of others. On March 2, 2011, President Barack Obama honored Jacob's Pillow with a National Medal of Arts, the highest arts award given by the United States Government, making the Pillow the first dance presenting organization to receive this prestigious award. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

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