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[ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org](mailto:ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org)**PILOBOLUS DANCE THEATER PREMIERES A NEW SITE-SPECIFIC WORK  
TO KICK OFF JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL 2017**

June 6, 2017 – (Becket, MA) Celebrating the power of Jacob's Pillow's natural setting, internationally acclaimed dance company Pilobolus Dance Theater will premiere a new work commissioned specifically for the Pillow's iconic outdoor Inside/Out performance space, set against the Berkshire hills. The program featuring the world premiere and *On the Nature of Things* will kick off the Festival's 2017 free Inside/Out performance series with an extended three-day run, June 21-23.

Founded in 1971 with their Pillow debut just three years later, Pilobolus is known for its unique dance creations which break movement and visual boundaries, and reveal the graphic capabilities of the human body in surprising ways. In a rare multiple-day Inside/Out engagement, they will perform Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evening of the Festival's opening week. This free performance will be presented on the open-air Henry J. Leir Stage.

"One of the most distinctive features of Jacob's Pillow is our magnificent site" said Pamela Tatge, Director. "There is simply no other dance festival in the world that exists in such dialogue with its natural surroundings, and as a result, we need to do everything we can to steward this great landscape. In the coming years, we will be commissioning artists to create works that draw attention to the environment that nurtures the quintessential experience that is Jacob's Pillow. It is our honor to offer the first such commission to Pilobolus, a company whose home base is less than an hour away from us"

"Pilobolus has always made our work in a rural environment, often looking to nature as a guiding reference for our imagination. That connection makes this commission a fitting way to commemorate the history of Pilobolus at the Pillow on the occasion of its 85th Anniversary," commented Pilobolus Executive Producer Itamar Kubovy.

The company has spent time at Jacob's Pillow to create and rehearse the work and will be in residence prior to performances. A Pilobolus performance is a completely unique experience. Andrew Boynton of *The New Yorker* explains, "At various points in a performance of Pilobolus Dance Theatre, you forget what you're looking at; the dancers move so skillfully, so symbiotically, that they cease to resemble people at all. Plants, animals, all manner of objects and suggestions of objects arise and then dissolve, and at the end of an evening you feel as though you've glimpsed many worlds."

This new work will deal with cycles of nature. A series of vignettes will illuminate different tensions or transitions that are natural processes, from stillness to motion, from light to dark, from frozen to liquid, from stark in the winter to full and lush in summer.

"A lot of the times you get commissioned by an organization, you go and perform there once, and it just feels like there wasn't really a relationship. Here, we're really engaging not just in the context of the Pillow, but with the Pillow physically—the stage, the environment... using this place as our inspiration," commented Kubovy.

Performed by three dancers balanced on a two-foot wide column rising above the stage, *On the Nature of Things* (2014) explores the power of bodies to tell a story about the birth of desire and its intertwined connection to shame. Set to vocal music inspired by the classical baroque and composed by Michelle DiBucci

and Ed Bilous, this trio is both graceful and riveting. Sarah Kaufman of *The Washington Post* comments, “They seemed buoyant, almost helium-filled, as they climbed atop one another with uncanny ease, in slow motion, always reaching up, almost soaring then melting downward as another rose up atop someone’s shoulders or back, propelled from below in ways cleverly hidden from us.”

Members of the company will teach a dance class for the public on Thursday, June 22 and participate in a PillowTalk on Saturday, June 24; details below.

### **Jacob’s Pillow Connections**

Pilobolus has performed at the Festival in 1974, 1978, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1991, and was co-presented by the Pillow at MASS MoCA in 2005. The company has also developed work at the Pillow, including one of its latest works *Shadowland*, through Creative Development Residencies. Founding member Robby Barnett was artistic director of Jacob’s Pillow’s Men Dancers, a project developed to celebrate the centennial of Pillow founder Ted Shawn in 1991, which toured internationally through 1994.

### **About Pilobolus Dance Theater**

Pilobolus began at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire in 1971. Moses Pendleton, an English literature major and cross-country skier; Jonathan Wolken, a philosophy science major and fencer; and Steve Johnson, a pre-med student and pole vaulter were enrolled in a dance composition class taught by Alison Becker Chase. In that class, they created their first dance, which they titled “Pilobolus” —and a legacy of movement and magic was born.

*Pilobolus crystallinus* is a phototropic (light loving) fungus. Commonly known as “Hat Thrower,” its spores accelerate 0–45 mph in the first millimeter of their flight and adhere to wherever they land. The father of Jonathan Wolken was studying pilobolus in his biology lab when the group first formed. The name was apt, and stuck. The group then went on to create dozens of dance works with its founding members Robby Barnett, Alison Chase, Martha Clarke, Lee Harris, Moses Pendleton, Michael Tracy, and Jonathan Wolken. In the more than four decades since, Pilobolus has performed on Broadway, at the Oscars, and the Olympic games, and has appeared on television, in movies, in advertisements, and in schools and businesses and created over 120 dance works. The company continues to propel the seeds of expression via human movement to every corner of the world, growing and changing each year while reaching new audiences and exploring new visual and musical planes.

### **Related Videos on Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive**

*Ocellus*, 1985: <https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/pilobolus/ocellus/>

*Carmina Burana, Side II*, 1985: <https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/pilobolus/carmina-burana-side-2-2/>

### **Performance Details**

#### **Pilobolus at Jacob’s Pillow**

**Henry J. Leir Stage at the Inside/Out Performance Space, June 21-23**

**Wednesday, Thursday, Friday at 6:15-7pm**

**FREE**

Inside/Out performances are free and open to the public and appropriate for all ages. Seating is first come, first served. In the event of rain or inclement weather, the performance will move indoors with limited seating and will only include *On the Nature of Things*.

### **ALSO THIS WEEK**

#### **Miami City Ballet**

**June 21-25, Ted Shawn Theatre**

**Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8pm**

## **Saturday & Sunday at 2pm**

Described as “bold, light, immediate, intensely musical” (Alastair Macaulay, *The New York Times*), Miami City Ballet opens the 85th Anniversary Season in its first Festival appearance since 1998. Works on the program exhibit the company’s wide range and prowess, including master choreographer George Balanchine’s exuberant and technically precise *Allegro Brillante* set to Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky’s energetic “Third Piano Concerto No. 3.” The program also includes Tony Award-winning choreographer Christopher Wheeldon’s elegant *Polyphonia*, danced to György Ligeti’s complex and eerily melodious score and Peter Martins’s contrasting *Barber Violin Concerto*, a work for two couples: one classical ballet and the other modern dance. Tickets start at \$45.

Related video on Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive: Miami City Ballet in *Square Dance* in 1989:

<http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/miami-city-ballet/square-dance/>

## **Jonah Bokaer Choreography**

**June 21-25, Doris Duke Theatre**

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

**Saturday & Sunday at 2:15pm**

Hailed as “a visionary investigator who has redefined visual art and dance” (*Vogue Italia*), choreographer, artist, and alumnus of The School at Jacob’s Pillow Jonah Bokaer brings his sleek, elegant aesthetic to the Doris Duke Theatre. His largest production to date *Rules Of The Game* (2016) is set to an original score by GRAMMY Award-winning artist Pharrell Williams for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, co-composed by David Campbell, with set design by visual artist and frequent collaborator Daniel Arsham. The program will also include Bokaer’s solo *Study for Occupant* (2012), and the trio work *OCCUPANT* (2013). Tickets start at \$25.

Related video on Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive: Jonah Bokaer in 2011 in *Why Patterns*:

<http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/jonah-bokaer/why-patterns/>

## **Class with Inside/Out Artist: Artists of Pilobolus**

**Thursday, June 22, 3:30pm**

**Ruth St. Denis Studio**

The artists of legendary company Pilobolus explore new ways of moving in this class. Open to all experience levels, ages 12+; \$15 per person. Pre-registration is required at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org).

## **PillowTalk: Liz Lerman: Dance For Our Time**

**Friday, June 23 at 5pm**

**Blake’s Barn**

**Free Event**

2017 Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award winner and trailblazing choreographer Liz Lerman considers dance to be a vehicle for insight and understanding, and she shares her vision in this intimate conversation.

## **PillowTalk: Pilobolus: Then & Now**

**Saturday, June 24 at 4pm**

**Blake’s Barn**

**Free Event**

Internationally acclaimed Pilobolus made its Jacob’s Pillow debut in 1974 and has a deep Pillow history. The company returns this season with a new work commissioned especially for Inside/Out, which will be presented for three performances June 21-23. This talk explores the commission and other notable ventures.

## **Sunday Master Class with Festival Artist: Jonah Bokaer Choreography**

**Sunday, June 25, 10am**

**Doris Duke Theatre**

Artists of Jonah Bokaer Choreography 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](http://jacobspillow.org). Quiet observation is welcome; \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

## **Inside/Out Performance Series: The School at Jacob's Pillow Ballet Program**

**Saturday, June 24 at 6:15pm**

### **Free Event**

Dancers of The School's Ballet Program are pre-professionals, apprentices, trainees, and early career professionals with leading ballet companies from around the world. They perform solos, pas de deux, and ensemble variations from classical ballets as well as a new work created on them for the 85th Anniversary Gala by choreographer Bruce Wells. Directed by acclaimed dancer, choreographer, and mentor Anna-Marie Holmes, the dancers have been coached by Arlene Minkhorst, Director of Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and Sharon Story, Ballet Mistress and Dean of the Centre for Dance Education at Atlanta Ballet, with class accompaniment by pianist John Sauer and Program Music Director Ramona Pansegrau. Dancers attend all Festival events, including weekly career-building interactions with Festival Ted Shawn Theatre and Doris Duke Theatre performers.

## **FESTIVAL 2017 EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES – ONGOING**

The following exhibits and offerings are free and open to the public June 19 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](http://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](http://www.jacobspillow.org).

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