

FOR IMAGES AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org**JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL PRESENTS
AAKASH ODEDRA IN *RISING*, JULY 19-23**

June 30, 2017 – (Becket, MA) Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival presents Aakash Odedra in *Rising*, an eclectic evening-length interpretation of four distinct solos, in the Doris Duke Theatre, July 19-23. Odedra brings a unique synthesis of the classical Indian dance styles of Kathak and Bharatanatyam with contemporary dance in his Jacob's Pillow debut. The evening consists of four short works created on Odedra by world-renowned choreographers Akram Khan, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Russell Maliphant, and Odedra himself. Described as "simply breathtaking" (*The Globe and Mail*), Odedra captivates audiences in *Rising*, described as "exceptionally agile" and "effortlessly multilingual" (Siobhan Burke, *The New York Times*).

"One body realizes the work of four of the world's most important choreographers. There are very few dancers who can do this as seamlessly as Aakash Odedra. His movement integrates with lighting in surprising and stunning ways -- it's a tour de force not to be missed. The movement combined with astonishing lighting makes this a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge.

Aakash Odedra is a British contemporary dancer trained in the classical Indian styles of Kathak and Bharatanatyam. Kathak, which originated in Northern India, and Bharatanatyam which originated in Southern India, were traditionally linked to religious themes. *Rising* is the result of over a year and a half of collaboration, using Odedra's technical background as the catalyst to explore different processes and aesthetics in the creation of solo choreographic work. With a unique and unprecedented pairing of world-renowned contemporary choreographers on the same program, *Rising* is praised as "the dance equivalent of a red-carpet event" (*The Guardian*).

The evening begins with *Nritta*, with choreography and musical arrangement by Odedra himself. Meaning "pure dance", *nritta* is an aspect of Kathak dance that is divided into masculine and feminine elements. Odedra displays the merging of both sides to symbolize a perfect balance and oneness through meditative cyclic movement. With controlled and fast footwork, Odedra pounds intricate rhythms to traditional Indian music with his feet as he moves in perpetual motion across the stage.

The work *In The Shadow of Man*, choreographed by Odedra's mentor and praised Bangladeshi Kathak dancer Akram Khan with music by Jocelyn Pook, unleashes the inherent animalistic side of human existence as it is embedded in the Indian dance tradition. Akram Khan, Artistic Director of Akram Khan Company, is an award-winning choreographer and has been Associate Artist at Curve Leicester, Sadler's Wells Theatre, and the Royal Festival Hall.

The third piece is *CUT* choreographed by Russell Maliphant, former Royal Ballet School student, considered one of "Britain's leading modern dance creators" (*Daily Express*). This piece draws directly on Odedra's Kathak and Bharatanatyam technique. Odedra moves in swooping circular motions, countered by unique lighting design by Michael Hulls that explores how light cuts and shapes the movement's flow and form.

The final solo is *Constellation*, choreographed by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, sought-after Belgian contemporary choreographer; the piece draws its inspiration from the patterns of light and sound within the solar system's constellations. Odedra effortlessly moves through a field of floating lightbulbs breathtakingly designed by Willy Cessa with a whooshing soundtrack from Olga Wojciechowska. Cherkaoui was the 2014 winner of the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production for his work *Babel (Words)*.

Rising was first performed as the successful debut production for Aakash Odedra Company in 2011. This engagement marks Aakash Odedra's Jacob's Pillow debut.

About Aakash Odedra

Aakash Odedra is a British contemporary dancer, born in Birmingham and trained in classical Indian dance styles Kathak and Bharatanatyam. His early development in the United Kingdom was supported by Sampad, an organization dedicated to South Asian Arts in the U.K. and Akademi, the official home of South Asian dance in the U.K. In 2009, Odedra performed a solo choreographed by Kumudini Lakhia titled *Maati Re* at the Svapngata Festival at Sadler's Wells, curated by Akram Khan. Khan followed this with a period of mentorship, allowing Odedra to develop contemporary movement. He took part in the European Network of Performing Arts' 2010 ChoreoLab in Serbia through Dance Umbrella. Also in 2010, he and Sanjukta Sinha performed a duet choreographed by Kumudini Lakhia titled *Tatha*. Odedra incorporates his classical Indian training in a unique synthesis with contemporary dance, both in his choreography and his creations with other choreographers.

Odedra formed Aakash Odedra Company in 2011 as a vehicle for commissioning solos and for developing his own choreographic work. As choreographer, Odedra was commissioned to create a piece for *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot* (Apollo Theater, New York) and the opera *God's Little Soldier* (Theater Freiburg), The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and the closing of the London Cultural Olympiad. In 2017, he recently choreographed the posthumous opera *Sukanya* by late composer Ravi Shankar. In coming months Odedra will be choreographing for the play *Pink Sari Revolution* produced by Curve Theatre, Leicester and in 2018 will see the premiere of *#JeSuis* (The Arts Center, NYU Abu Dhabi), the debut ensemble production under the auspices of Aakash Odedra Company. Odedra has received numerous awards and bursaries, including a Danza&Danza award (Italy), a Dora performance award (Canada), Audience Award Dance Week 2013 (Croatia), and a Sky Academy Arts Scholarship. In May 2014 Aakash Odedra Company presented *Murmur* at International Dance Festival Birmingham.

Pillow Connections

Russell Maliphant's *Critical Mass* was performed by Lyon Opera Ballet in 2002. He also choreographed *Broken Fall*, which was performed with Ballet Boyz at Jacob's Pillow in 2008.

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui premiered *Orbo Novo* with Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet in 2009. Related video on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive: <https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/cedar-lake-contemporary-ballet/orbo-novo/>

Akram Khan Company performed at Jacob's Pillow in 2003.

Related video on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/akram-khan-dance-company/kaash-if/>

Performance & Ticket Details

Aakash Odedra in *RISING* at Jacob's Pillow

Doris Duke Theatre, July 19-July 23

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

Delicious Movement Workshop with Eiko Otake

Tuesday, July 18, 6pm

Bakalar Studio

Festival Artist Eiko Otake hosts a Delicious Movement Workshop designed for all people who love to move or want to love to move with delicious feelings. The exercises employ images, body articulation, floor work, and largely slow movement. \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

Compagnie Marie Chouinard

June 19-23, Ted Shawn Theatre

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8:00pm

Sunday at 2:00pm

LIVE MUSIC

Marie Chouinard of Montréal, Canada is a “hurricane of unbridled imaginativeness” (*The New York Times*). Her world-renowned company makes its Jacob’s Pillow debut with original and daring works honoring two French artists: the dynamic *24 Preludes by Chopin* set to 24 contrasting piano works by Frédéric Chopin, dubbed one of Chouinard’s “most refreshingly inventive works” (*The National Post*); and *Henri Michaux: Mouvements*, inspired by the artist’s book of poems and ink drawings, bridging visual and performance arts. Tickets start at \$39.

Eiko Otakes’s *A Body at the Pillow*

Jacob’s Pillow Grounds

Saturday, July 22 at 12pm, 2pm, 5pm

In an exclusive one-day-only engagement, Japanese-born artist Eiko Otake will perform *A Body at the Pillow*, a site-specific solo performance on the historic grounds of Jacob’s Pillow. The work is the newest installment of Eiko’s *A Body in Places* series, which includes performances in train stations, warehouses, and libraries, as well as the irradiated Fukushima, Japan. Praised for her “unassailable intensity,” Eiko is able to “radiate both frailty and abandon” in her performances (*The New York Times*).

Inside/Out Performance Series: James Whiteside Presents

Wednesday, July 19, 6:15pm

Free Event

In the premiere of his new production company “James Whiteside Presents,” Whiteside, a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, brings *5 Dances*, a collection of works in varied styles that he has created over the years. He will perform with American Ballet Theatre soloist Cassandra Trenary, with narration by actor/show maker Jack Ferver. Pillow audiences may remember Whiteside and Trenary from their performances as part of Daniil Simkin’s *INTENSIO* in 2015. This program consists of *Zero Hour*, set to Vivaldi’s classic “Winter” and originally co-choreographed by Whiteside and Melissa Hough; *On the Water*, a pas de deux to Schubert’s “Auf Dem Wasser zu Singen”; and *You Rascal You*, a solo to Louis Armstrong’s song of the same name and a murder mystery of a jazz dance; among other works

Class with Inside/Out Artist: Lindy Hop with Caleb Teicher

Thursday, July 20, 4pm

Ruth St. Denis Studio

Caleb Teicher, tap dance artist, teaches this lindy hop class for all experience levels. Open to all experience levels, ages 12+; \$15 per person. Pre-registration is required at jacobspillow.org.

Inside/Out Performance Series: Caleb Teicher & Company

Thursday, July 20 at 6:15pm

Free Event

Caleb Teicher & Company reinvents traditional American dance forms for contemporary contexts. The company’s Inside/Out performance features *Meet Ella*, a male swing dance duet set to classic live recordings

of Ella Fitzgerald. A 2011 Bessie Award Winner for Outstanding Individual Performance, one of *Dance Magazine's* 2012 "25 to Watch," and winner of "Best Emerging Choreographer" for *Dance Magazine's* 2016 Readers' Choice Awards, Teicher draws from his experience in concert dance, musical theater, and social dance. He has garnered acclaim for his work as a versatile performer, most notably as a member of Dorrance Dance and The Chase Brock Experience. Founded in 2012, his company explores a wide range of styles including tap dance, lindy hop, and vernacular jazz, creating works that celebrate a uniquely American physicality. Teicher is an alumnus of The School at Jacob's Pillow and the National Young Arts Foundation.

PillowTalk: *A Body In Places*

Friday, July 21 at 5pm

Blake's Barn

Free Event

Japanese performance artist Eiko has been pursuing this ambitious solo project throughout the world since 2014, sharing her experiences here with photographer William Johnston.

Inside/Out Performance Series: Samuel Samways

Friday, July 21 at 6:15pm

Free Event

In February 2017, online participants voted among six dance companies to select the first-ever audience curated Inside/Out performance. Winner Samuel Samways is a Brazilian dancer and choreographer who has developed a unique contemporary social dance style, based on extreme connection between dancers and fusing techniques of Brazilian and Latin social dances, ballroom, contact improvisation, and contemporary dance. He has danced in numerous festivals and theaters in Brazil and abroad, such as Plataforma Rio 2012, Festival O Boticário na Dança, Festival Internacional De Dança do Recife, Holland Dance Fest, and the Joyce Theater. Samways has danced and choreographed for various companies, including Mimulus dance company, and is currently a resident and dance researcher at the Brazilian art institution Cefart.

PillowTalk: *Artist Driven Archives*

Saturday, July 22 at 4pm

Blake's Barn

Free Event

Jacob's Pillow Associate Archivist Patsy Gay is breaking new ground with David Gordon's archives while Alexis Moh is documenting Eiko; both join Norton Owen to explore new archival approaches.

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

Saturday, July 22 at 6:15pm

Free Event

Dancers of the Contemporary Program present a work-in-progress created on them during their first week of study at The School at Jacob's Pillow. Guest choreographer Marguerite Donlon, critically acclaimed worldwide for her innovative works, is artistic director of the international dance festival n.o.w. dance saar and the youth project "iMove." Under the direction of master teacher and choreographer Milton Myers, program dancers also study with ballet mentor Charla Genn, School alumna Aya Kaneko, former Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and NDT dancer Mario Alberto Zambrano, and longtime Music Director John Levis. 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: Aakash Odedra

Sunday, July 2, 10am

Doris Duke Theatre

Aakash Odedra leads a contemporary dance class. Beginning with a light warm up, he will focus on rhythm and breathing, building a steady pulse to then guide participants into learning movement from his repertory and building phrase work. The class will be intense and physical, but always fun. Class concludes with a cool down and opportunity for discussion. \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

Delicious Movement Workshop with Eiko Otake

Sunday, July 23, 4pm

Sommers Studio

Festival Artist Eiko Otake hosts two Delicious Movement Workshops designed for all people who love to move or want to love to move with delicious feelings. The exercises employ images, body articulation, floor work, and largely slow movement. \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card.

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

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

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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