

FOR IMAGES AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nicole Tomasofsky, Public Relations Coordinator

413.243.9919 x132

ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org**AT THE LAUNCH OF ITS 85TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON
JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE UNVEILS PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: VISION '22**

June 19, 2017 – Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge recently unveiled **Vision '22**, a strategic approach for the Pillow's development over the next five years, through 2022. Vision '22 is a blueprint for enabling the Pillow to become a year-round center for dance creation and to more robustly serve artists and audiences alike. Jacob's Pillow is America's first and longest-running dance festival; as it celebrates its 85th anniversary this summer, the organization sets its sights on important future milestones.

"These new initiatives will enable Jacob's Pillow to achieve our dreams of supporting the best dance artists of our time while powerfully connecting to audiences of all kinds," said Tatge. "Vision '22 will help us strengthen our artistic core, boost our civic leadership and community involvement, and renew essential campus facilities. As a result, more outstanding artists will have time and support to make new work in this special place. In addition, more Berkshire community schoolchildren and residents will experience the power of dance, and our local, national, and international audiences will enjoy the benefits of a new studio and an upgraded Ted Shawn Theatre. New Vision '22 initiatives will also bring dance professionals, dance educators, and dance advocates to the Pillow to help them propel this essential art form's future. This is a time of great promise for this historic institution that means so much to so many."

Strengthening the Artistic Core

Vision '22 will launch the Pillow's year-round campus for dance research and development, the Pillow Lab. The Pillow Lab will be a robust and multi-layered program providing customized residencies for 10-15 diverse choreographers each year allowing time for research and development as well as the opportunity to incorporate technical elements into their work. Ten residencies were piloted in 2016-2017, including cross-genre collaborations between choreographer Ronald K. Brown and composer Arturo O'Farrill, and between choreographer John Heginbotham and author/illustrator Maira Kalman. Most recently, New York City Ballet principal dancer Sara Mearns joined the international duo Honji Wang and Sébastain Ramirez for a two-week residency culminating in a work-in-progress showing at the Pillow's 85th Anniversary Season Opening Gala on June 17.

In addition, beginning in 2018, Jacob's Pillow will add a new summer program for emerging choreographers at The School, and will host year-round convenings, workshops, and conferences for professionals in the dance field. Programs include a new College Partnership Program to connect dance faculty and students to the Pillow Lab and the Archives, a retreat for choreographers based in New England, a Global Dance Presenters Forum, and more.

Boosting Civic Leadership & Community Engagement

Vision '22 launches the Pillow's expanded commitment to its Berkshire-area neighbors, and new collaborations with the City of Pittsfield and the Town of Becket. In Pittsfield, the Pillow will sponsor a summer-long series of Pillow Pop-Up performances and events in conjunction with the City's monthly Third Thursday celebration. Starting June 24, 2017, the Pittsfield-Pillow Express will offer a free Saturday bus service connecting Jacob's Pillow and three Pittsfield neighborhoods. This free bus service is open to all and is specifically aimed at helping families and people without independent transportation gain access the Pillow's many free and low-cost events and programs.

In addition, Vision '22 will expand community engagement residencies, including an upcoming residency by Camille A. Brown & Dancers in Pittsfield June 26-30. The residency will engage members of the Pittsfield African-American community, especially young women of color, through a series of social dance workshops and events for youth, teens, and adults led by award-winning dance artists Francine E. Ott, Maria Monge, and Camille A. Brown. Additional new initiatives this season include programs designed to engage local veterans, tied to works performed at Festival 2017 that have been inspired by veterans' experiences.

Vision '22 will also enable the Pillow to provide discounted tickets to Festival performances to students enrolled in Berkshire County dance schools, studios, and programs, through the Dancing Berkshires Fund. Hundreds of young people study dance in Berkshire County but rarely have the opportunity to experience a live performance at the Pillow campus. The Dancing Berkshires Fund enables local dance students to visit the Pillow, observe classes, and attend a professional dance performance.

As part of Vision '22, the Pillow will expand its work with Berkshire area schools, bringing its Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion® (JPCiM) program to Morningside Community School next year, with a plan to serve all eight Pittsfield elementary schools over the next five years. JPCiM is a nationally-recognized arts-integrated curriculum program designed to foster new ways of learning, strengthen social interactions and creative thinking, and advance learning for students in a range of academic subjects such as social studies, biology, math, and Spanish. The program links choreography, kinesthetic intelligence, and critical and imaginative thinking to academic learning. This summer, JPCiM will be incorporated into the STEAM Team, a pilot program for rising third grade students that also involves IS183, Flying Deer Nature Center, Berkshire Community College, and the Pittsfield Public Schools.

The Pillow also has plans for enhanced partnerships with MASS MoCA, the Berkshire International Film Festival, the Clark Art Institute, Cultural Pittsfield, the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Greenagers, Berkshire Community College, the Lift Ev'ry Voice Festival, and Tanglewood Music Center, among other cultural partners.

Renewing Campus Facilities

Vision '22 makes expanded year-round programs and initiatives possible through new spaces for training, rehearsal, events, and performances, as well as new multi-use housing for artists, staff, and interns.

The \$5.5 million Perles Family Studio will serve as a new home for The School at Jacob's Pillow; the name recognizes a lead gift from the Perles Family Foundation and Jacob's Pillow Trustee Claudia Perles. The building is designed by award-winning Flansburgh Architects of Boston, and constructed by Allegrone Companies of Pittsfield, MA. The project has also received a \$225,000 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, one of the largest gifts distributed this year.

The new 7,373-square-foot studio will feature a 3,500-square-foot dance floor — nearly double the size of the main rehearsal space currently used by The School at Jacob's Pillow, the Sommers Studio. The building will be fully climate controlled, eliminating the current temperature and humidity challenges faced by dancers and artist faculty during the summer season. The space will accommodate room for spectators to view classes and rehearsals without interrupting dancers and faculty, and up to 200 seats for Inside/Out performances in the instances of rain and inclement weather.

Throughout the fall, winter, and spring seasons, the new studio will expand the space available for year-round residencies as well as convenings, events, and workshops. Jacob's Pillow will celebrate the grand opening of the space with a ribbon cutting and Festival Finale event on Saturday, August 26, 2017.

Additional facilities improvements include updates and improvements for the Ted Shawn Theatre, including structural renovations and enhanced ventilation that will not affect the historic look of the building. The Ted Shawn Theatre was built in 1942 and was the first theater built specifically for dance in the U.S. In addition, a new kitchen for the Pillow's onsite restaurant, Haven at the Pillow, will enhance visitors' dining experiences, and new housing will accommodate seasonal staff and interns during the Festival and residency artists in the fall, spring, and winter months.

Inspired by the ideas outlined in Vision '22, a number of funders have stepped up to help realize the plan including the Barr Foundation and the Mertz-Gilmore Foundation. In addition, a gift from Pillow Trustee Ann Hicks and her husband, Weston, will endow the Choreography Workshop at The School at Jacob's Pillow.

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.

###