

**FOR IMAGES AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Nicole Tomasofsky, Public Relations Coordinator

413.243.9919 x132

[ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org](mailto:ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org)**JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF DOUG VARONE & DANCERS WITH A RETROSPECTIVE PROGRAM IN THE TED SHAWN THEATRE, AUGUST 2–6**

July 14, 2017—(Becket, MA) As Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival rings in 85 seasons, Doug Varone & Dancers celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a company with a program in the Ted Shawn Theatre, August 2–6. Doug Varone & Dancers embodies “sheer kinetic force and profound emotional insight” (*The Washington Post*). As Artistic Director and Founder of the company, Doug Varone has been an inspiration to the contemporary dance field for decades. Varone opens this program with an ode to his life's work titled *Nocturne(s)*, a partnership of self-performed solos from the past and the present, including a world premiere on Varone himself. This reflective dance is followed by Varone's iconic group piece *Boats Leaving* and his newest work, *ReComposed*. The company's Jacob's Pillow program is full of both fresh ideas and historic moments. Their week at the 2017 Festival gracefully compacts the decades of inspiration and growth Doug Varone & Dancers has both experienced and given back to the dance community.

“We are delighted to be celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this important American contemporary dance company at the Pillow! Varone's work has extended beyond dance into opera and theatre worlds, and he has influenced the work of countless choreographers over the past three decades. We will have the chance to see Doug Varone himself present a new *Nocturne* to go alongside one that he performed at the Pillow in 2001, and we will experience his newest work, *ReComposed*, with a visual and movement palate that simply explodes onstage,” says Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge.

In this retrospective, Varone will present his 1987 solo *Nocturne in D Flat Major, Opus 27, #2*, performed to Frédéric Chopin's music. Varone says this “seminal work explored the blur between pedestrian movement and pure dance, and set in motion a vocabulary and style that I've been mining ever since.” His choreographic trajectory is showcased in the premiere of his new solo *Nocturne in D Flat Major, Opus 27, #1*, also danced to Chopin's composition. At Jacob's Pillow this summer, Varone will revisit his history as well as welcome a new creative chapter in the form of a world-premier solo. Speaking on this project, Varone explains, “Thirty years ago...I created a solo for myself...Now in 2017, I've created another...solo as a companion to the original. Together side-by-side, they form bookends framing a career.”

Eight dancers will take the stage next for Varone's New York Dance and Performance (“Bessie”) Award Winning *Boats Leaving* (2006). In this piece, danced to classical and religious music composer Arvo Pärt's “Te Deum,” dancers use their emotive bodies to create a somber community onstage. As *The New Yorker* writer Andrew Boynton notes, “*Boats Leaving* limned a community under siege.” Abstract in their motions yet narrative in their intention to each other, “none of Doug Varone's dancers said anything aloud. Yet there are so many conversations going on in the movement...surely there were voices. Varone moves the whole conversation into new emotionally treacherous waters” (Linda Belans, *The News & Observer*). *Boats Leaving* showcases Varone's quintessential choreographic approach. He leads the audience on an individual and emotional experience through contemporary and virtuosic movement, fueled by the dancers and the music.

Closing the program is the company's most recent work, *ReComposed*, which premiered in 2015 and is inspired by visual artist Joan Mitchell's pastel drawings. In a *New York Times* Review, Brian Siebert described “bodies tangle and untangle at high speed...if their paths left marks in the air, the result might indeed resemble one of the Mitchell pastels” (Brian Seibert, *The New York Times*). Their physicality is supported by striking

lighting, music, and costuming; this merging of inspiration and product questions the labeling of “performance art” versus “visual art.” Lighting designer Robert Wierzel “gives the back wall and stage floor the appearance—and, remarkably, the seeming texture—of a blank sheet of white paper” (Brian Seibert, *The New York Times*). Reid Bartelme and Harriet Jung dress the dancers in black bodysuits with varying bright colored stripes, covered in a white mesh that sheds away as the piece progresses. Seibert additionally notes that musician Michael Gordon’s “Dystopia” grasps at qualities of Mitchell’s drawings through “an orchestra swooping and sliding with a sense of barely controlled chaos.” Emblematic of the company, Varone’s dancers illuminate the visual and aural aspects of *Recomposed* with a surprising and comforting exploration of connections. Playing with their own impulses, each other, and the music allows one to “see that individuals were following the various rhythms of the score, and this held the piece together like the color palette in Mitchell’s painting” (Marcia B. Siegel, *The Arts Fuse*).

## About The Company

Doug Varone & Dancers is a New York City-based company that presents work internationally, influencing new generations of dance makers and performers for three decades. Varone has been commissioned by companies such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Martha Graham Dance Company, and Batsheva Dance Company, and has staged dances on students in more than 75 college and university programs. Within its lengthy and prestigious career, Doug Varone & Dancers has devoted itself to the humanity and virtuosity of dance, believing that this mindset has allowed for the company’s longevity. Varone notes “each creative process is a tremendously collaborative event with the dancers, embracing all of our imaginations, instincts, and artistry.” The company is well-respected in the contemporary dance field, receiving 11 New York Dance and Performance (“Bessie”) Awards and touring to more than 125 cities and 45 states across the U.S., Europe, Asia, Canada, and South America.

## Pillow Connections

The company has performed at Jacob’s Pillow in 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2009. As a professional dancer, Doug Varone first performed at the Festival in 1981 for choreographer Lar Lubovitch. Varone’s own work was presented for the first time at Jacob’s Pillow by Dayton Contemporary Dance Company in 1991.

After Doug Varone & Dancers performs at the Festival this summer, current company dancers Xan Burley and Alex Springer will stay on as Jacob’s Pillow Research Fellows, and will create a site-specific work which will premiere on August 16 on the Inside/Out stage.

## Related Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive Resources

Doug Varone & Dancers performing *The Bench Quartet* at Jacob’s Pillow in 2003:  
<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/doug-varone/the-bench-quartet/>

Doug Varone & Dancers performing *Castles* at Jacob’s Pillow in 2009:  
<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/doug-varone-and-dancers/castles/>

## Performance & Ticket Details

**Doug Varone & Dancers**  
**Ted Shawn Theatre, August 2–6**  
**Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8pm**  
**Saturday & Sunday at 2pm**  
**\$69, \$49, \$39**

A limited number of \$35 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. Other discounts are available. Tickets are on sale now; online at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org), and via phone 413.243.0745, and at the Jacob’s Pillow Box Office at 358 George Carter Road, Becket, MA, 0122

## **ALSO THIS WEEK**

### **Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion**

**Doris Duke Theatre, August 2–6**

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

**Thursday, Saturday, Sunday at 2:15pm**

**\$45, \$35, \$25**

MacArthur 'Genius' Fellow and Jacob's Pillow Dance Award winner Kyle Abraham is "a remarkable talent" (*San Francisco Chronicle*). Abraham returns to the Pillow with his newest work *Dearest Home*, a lush collection of solos and duets that embody love and longing, born from dialogues with a diverse set of subcultures. *Dearest Home* is an interactive dance performance that explores cultural views and exchanges about love and the absence of love.

### **Inside/Out Performance Series: Amy Seiwert's Imagery**

**Wednesday, August 2 at 6:15pm**

**Free Event**

Amy Seiwert's Imagery, a contemporary ballet company based in San Francisco, will show excerpts of *Wandering*, Seiwert's first evening-length contemporary ballet set to "Winterreise," a piano and voice cycle by Franz Schubert to 24 poems by Wilhelm Müller. The dramatic monologue reflects the story of a wanderer who feels lost from himself and lost from the world. *Wandering* was created during a residency provided by The Joyce Theater Foundation, New York City, with major support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Amy Seiwert enjoyed a nineteen-year performing career dancing with the Smuin, LA Chamber, and Sacramento Ballets. As a dancer with Smuin Ballet she became involved with the "Protégé Program" where her choreography was mentored by the late Michael Smuin, and became Choreographer in Residence there upon her retirement from dancing in 2008.

### **Inside/Out Performance Series: METdance**

**Thursday, August 3 at 6:15pm**

**Free Event**

Appearing on the Inside/Out stage for a third time, METdance from Houston, TX, present works by some of the most active and accomplished choreographers of this generation, in a program that highlights the company's signature effervescent energy and passion for diversity. The program features *New Second Line*, inspired by the events of Hurricane Katrina and choreographed by Guggenheim Fellow, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Award winner Camille A. Brown; *The Clean-Cut American Stage Show*, a fusion of vintage Americana and contemporary design by founder and director of Dark Circles Contemporary Dance Joshua L. Peugh; and *Snow Playground*, a crystal-clear look at the organized flurry of a winter snowfall by celebrated performer and choreographer Katarzyna Skarpetowska.

### **Weekend OUT at the Pillow**

**August 4–6**

Our annual LGBTQ celebration weekend includes free events, a special tour honoring Pillow founder Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers, and a Saturday night dance party with DJ BFG hosted by Tyler Ashley, The Dauphine of Bushwick.

### **PillowTalk: Exquisite Corps**

**Friday, August 4 at 5pm**

**Blake's Barn**

**Free Event**

Filmmaker Mitchell Rose employed 42 prominent choreographers to create a visual "chain love letter" to dance, which he'll screen and discuss with members of his illustrious cast. Fri, Aug 4, 5pm.

### **Inside/Out Performance Series: Inlet Dance Theatre**

**Friday, August 4 at 6:15pm**

**Free Event**

From Cleveland, Ohio, Inlet Dance Theatre is a contemporary dance company founded in 2001 by choreographer and Executive/Artistic Director Bill Wade. Their Inside/Out program includes *This Could Hurt*, inspired by Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers and the book *Wild At Heart* by John Eldredge, centered around a group of men having an adventure full of risk; *Doppelganger*, a transfixing duet that plays with balance, dependency, and weight sharing; and excerpts from *Easter Island Memoirs*, the result of a residency on Easter Island, a remote volcanic island in Polynesia.

**PillowTalk: *Perspectives on Men in Dance***

**Saturday, August 5 at 4pm**

**Blake's Barn**

**Free Event**

In conjunction with the Pillow's annual Weekend OUT celebration, Dancers from Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion and Doug Varone & Dancers discuss shifting dynamics of gay men in dance from their own perspectives.

**Inside/Out Performance Series: The School at Jacob's Pillow Musical Theatre Program**

**Saturday, August 5 at 6:15pm**

**Free Event**

Performers of the Musical Theatre Dance Program share excerpts of song and dance numbers they are preparing for *A Jazz Happening*, a benefit for The School at Jacob's Pillow to be held in the Ted Shawn Theatre on August 20. Under the direction of Broadway choreographer/director Chet Walker, award-winning Broadway choreographers, directors, composers, and musicians collaborate to create original numbers on the performers, with the same fast pace and rigor required to audition for and mount Broadway productions.

**Sunday Master Class With Festival Artist: Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion**

**Sunday, August 6 at 10am–11:30am**

**Doris Duke Theatre**

**\$15/class or \$80/6-Class Card**

**(\$10 per class for dance teachers with appropriate I.D.)**

Open to intermediate/advanced dancers ages 16+.

Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion dancer Jeremy "Jae" Neal leads a class that emphasizes the four specific core values of Abraham.In.Motion: exploration, musicality, abandonment, and intuition. The opening warm-up sequence will focus on the fluidity of the spine, articulation, and core body strengthening and will build to challenging, creative, and invigorating phrase work. Participants will experience a personalized postmodern movement vocabulary full of intricate gestures and fearless floor work. Please wear comfortable clothes to move in, socks or bare feet are fine.

**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](http://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, dendy/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).