

FOR IMAGES AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nicole Tomasofsky, Public Relations and Publications Coordinator

413.243.9919 x132

ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org**JACOB'S PILLOW ANNOUNCES FESTIVAL 2017 SUCCESS
WITH RECORD-BREAKING 111,000 EXPERIENCES**

September 20, 2017 – (Becket, MA) Jacob's Pillow Dance celebrates the impact of its visionary 85th Anniversary Festival and the achievement of important milestones marked by Director Pamela Tatge's first programmed season. The 2017 Festival season boasted over 500 free and ticketed performances, events, classes, Pillow Pop-Up performances, and new initiatives, culminating in over **111,000 festival experiences**, the highest number ever accounted for.

"We are incredibly proud of our 85th Anniversary Season. It was a thrill to showcase new artists who made their Pillow debuts alongside remarkable performances by companies for whom the Pillow has been an artistic home. After defining our vision for the future, including bold, new institutional goals, and experimenting with programming shifts, we are pleased to see a tremendous increase in engagement in particular with local Berkshire residents as well as an increase in attendance at free programming both on and off site. Our goal is to bring our communities together and create life-long supporters of dance. We are excited to celebrate the close of our 85th festival and set our sights on our new fall, winter, and spring programming" says Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge.

Amidst the announcement of Vision '22, a strategic five-year plan for the future, Jacob's Pillow focused on new programming with 10 international companies, 5 world premieres, 11 female-led companies, as well as Pillow commissions, site-specific work, and artist-as-curator opportunities. With over 500 performances, events, talks, classes, and programs on- and off-site, Jacob's Pillow was responsible for 111,318 unique festival experiences.

Jacob's Pillow presented a record-breaking **197 dance performances** from May through August 2017, an increase of 37 presentations over the previous year with 132 ticketed performances and 65 free performances. Notably, Jacob's Pillow saw a **39% increase of Under 35 Ticket buyers** after expanding the discount program from Friday evenings to every ticketed performance. Ticketed performances took place in both the historic Ted Shawn Theatre and Doris Duke Theatre, as well as around the grounds of the Pillow's 220 acres. Free performances were seen on the outdoor Henry J. Leir "Inside/Out" stage (which saw a 10% increase in attendance) and through Pillow Pop-Ups at locations including the Clark Art Institute and Pittsfield's Third Thursday street festival, among others.

Highlights of note are a site-specific commission by Pilobolus Dance Theater for the Inside/Out Performance Series; an All Styles Dance Battle hosted by tap artist and choreographer Michelle Dorrance; Eiko Otake's *A Body at the Pillow*, supported by an accompanying performance at the Berkshire Athenaeum and a photography exhibit in downtown Pittsfield; sold-out performances of *MAS QUE FLAMENCO* by the Cuba-based Compañía Irene Rodríguez; and the highly-anticipated world premiere collaboration between John Heghinbotham and Maira Kalman, *The Principles of Uncertainty*.

In its second year of operation, the Pillow's Community Engagement Department implemented several new and expanded programs designed to "take dance off the mountain" to directly engage with communities throughout Berkshire County. This season, community engagement programs accounted for **160 classes**,

workshops, and special events. Through these initiatives, approximately **6,300 participants engaged** with dance in a new way, nearly doubling last year's 98 offerings that engaged around 3,000 participants.

Highlights of these initiatives include growth in attendance and number of community classes offered; a new partnership with Great Barrington-based Greenagers to restore the on-campus Wetlands Trail; multiple "Day at the Pillow" visits with Berkshire-based non-profit Soldier On; several local dance schools that ventured to the Pillow for the first time with discounted tickets as part of the Dancing Berkshires Fund; numerous off-site events including a co-presentation of *Trisha Brown: In Plain Site* at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA; a Pittsfield community residency led by Camille A. Brown; and incorporation of Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion® (JPCiM) into the STEAM Team, a pilot program for rising third grade students in partnership with IS183, Flying Deer Nature Center, Berkshire Community College, and the Pittsfield Public Schools.

"Berkshire County has tremendous resources to offer its full and part-time residents and the Pillow is thrilled to be able to collaborate with our cultural, environmental science, and elementary school educator colleagues to create exciting new programming like STEAM Team," says Andrea Sholler, Managing Director of Jacob's Pillow.

VISION '22 MILESTONES

At the 85th Anniversary Gala, Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge unveiled Vision '22, a strategic five year plan for the future of Jacob's Pillow. Three main strategic goals include strengthening the artistic core, boosting civic leadership and community engagement, and renewing campus facilities. The 2017 Festival Season marked implementation of several new projects and initiatives within each goal, with a process-driven approach.

Milestones achieved include the start of the Pillow Lab residency program, an initial step towards becoming a year-round center for dance research and artistic development; the opening of the state-of-the-art \$5.5 million Perles Family Studio, the first major on-site construction project since 1992; and the launch of the Pittsfield-Pillow Express, a free bus service which provides a means for individuals without independent transportation to engage with Jacob's Pillow's multifaceted programming.

ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW: Jacob's Pillow is a National Historic Landmark, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, and home to America's longest-running international dance festival. While celebrating its 85th Festival in 2017, the Pillow announced its transition to becoming a year-round center for dance through a five-year strategic plan titled Vision '22. 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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