TO OUR VISIONARY LEADERS

Business Partners.

Their deep affiliation ensures the success and longevity of the programs, The School, the Archives, and more.

PILLOWNOTES

by Maura Keefe

The PillowNotes are series of essays commissioned from scholars at our School-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.

There's no accounting for happiness, or the way it turns up like a prodigal
who comes back to the dust at your feet
having squandered a fortune far away
—Jane Kenyon

For the first eighty or so years of modern dance history, if you wanted to be a choreographer, you founded a dance company in your own name, trained a group of dancers in your aesthetic, and began to make dances. There was little doubt of the relationship between the choreographer and the company in the United States, choreographers such as Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and Mark Morris helped shape generations of both dancers and dance audiences. And then modern dance, or in Europe, contemporary dance, began to embrace the notion of guest choreographers, long established in ballet companies. This was the career path for Dutch-born choreographer Didy Veldman, a highly regarded figure in European contemporary dance.

Veldman had the best possible training to become a choreographer: as a dancer, she worked with master artists such as Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, and Christopher Bruce. She explained in an interview with Dance Europe that she had established a company when she was 25, but she couldn’t juggle all of the responsibilities of directing, choreographing, and marketing. Opportunities to make work for other companies allowed her artistic development without management responsibilities. She has since created dances that are clever, ambitious, full-bodied, and darkly humorous, as exemplified in those performed at Jacob’s Pillow by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal and Cascade Lake Contemporary Dance.

In a 1996 interview with Dance Europe, she wanted to deepen relationships with dancers. “I’m at that stage where I want to develop my own work in a different way; you don’t always get a lot of time in repertoire companies to create work and you don’t always get the opportunities you’d like,” Veldman said. “It’s difficult working with new dancers—I’ve been so original and push boundaries with them because there’s almost no audience for contemporary dance—as Veldman defines it: “Human, move, you, maneuver”—makes its U.S. debut at Jacob’s Pillow with The Happiness Project (2016).

In 2016, in the midst of a successful career as a freelance choreographer, Veldman decided to launch Umanoove/Didy Veldman. As she said in an interview with Dance Europe, she wanted to deepen relationships with dancers. “I’m at that stage where I want to develop my own work in a different way; you don’t always get a lot of time in repertoire companies to create work and you don’t always get the opportunities you’d like,” Veldman said. “It’s difficult working with new dancers—I’ve been so original and push boundaries with them because there’s almost no audience for contemporary dance—as Veldman defines it: “Human, move, you, maneuver”—makes its U.S. debut at Jacob’s Pillow with The Happiness Project (2016).

Veldman began her exploration in Umanoove’s first production with two probing questions: what kind of dancers did she want to work with? And what would a collaboration with composer and violinist Alexander Balansco grow into? Romanian-born Balansco, who plays live during the performance, has a well-established list of collaborators that includes musicians Dan Bass, and Gary Bryar, and choreographers Merce Tanka and Pina Bausch. Another kind of research question emerged: Why do we all chase after happiness? Veldman, who brilliantly manages large casts of dancers for companies like Rambert Dance, wanted to work on a smaller scale, with just four dancers. With the intimate cast of dancers, Balansco, and designer Kimie Nakano, Veldman dove into the potentially overwhelmingly simple and incredibly complex quest for happiness.

An analysis of earlier works by Veldman reveals that she is intrigued by the porous borders between the emotional landscape of dance and life and the abstraction of highly physical, virtuosic, and abstract dance. In Veldman’s hands, it is possible to test the human-ness that contains the capacity for happiness or sadness. Veldman’s choreography is also always fed by music. As she puts it herself, “I was always moving to music.” Stravinsky and Shostakovich inspire her, as do other music ranging from Nina Simone to Offenbach.

In a 1996 New York Times review of Rambert Dance Company, critic Anna Kisselgoff remarked, “Oidy Veldman is riveting as the woman who does not break, no matter how much she is yanked around in the acrobatic choreography.” Kisselgoff continued, “Veldman is both metaphoric and prescient—Veldman is riveting, and her career path from dancer, to choreographer, to artistic director is an investigation of happiness indeed.

© 2019 Maura Keefe and Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival

Dance writer Maura Keefe has led audience programs at various venues around the country and is the Associate Director of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was named the Dorothy G. Menden Professor of Dance in 2018.
**CHOREOGRAPHY**
Didy Veldman

**MUSIC COMPOSITION & PERFORMANCE**
Alexander Balanescu

**COSTUME & SET DESIGN**
Kimie Nakano

**LIGHTING DESIGN**
Ben Ormerod

**PERFORMERS**
Eryck Brahmania
Estela Merlos
Madeleine Jonsson
Mathieu Geffré

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Jacques d’Amboise**

**Elizabeth Conley**

**Ronald K. Brown**

**Jerome Robbins**

**COMPANY**

**Jacques d’Amboise**

**Elizabeth Conley**

**Ronald K. Brown**

**Jerome Robbins**

**COMPANY**

**Jacques d’Amboise**

**Elizabeth Conley**

**Ronald K. Brown**

**Jerome Robbins**

**COMPANY**

**Jacques d’Amboise**

**Elizabeth Conley**

**Ronald K. Brown**

**Jerome Robbins**

**COMPANY**

**Jacques d’Amboise**

**Elizabeth Conley**

**Ronald K. Brown**

**Jerome Robbins**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**

**COMPANY**

**Didy Veldman**

**Alexander Balanescu**

**Kimie Nakano**

**Ben Ormerod**

**Eryck Brahmania**

**Estela Merlos**

**Madeleine Jonsson**

**Mathieu Geffré**

**Jennifer Tipton**
"I have been curious for many years why we chase after happiness like it is some sort of object we can buy, hold onto, or even re-create."

—Didy Veldman

### COMPANY

**COMPANY**

**DIDY VELDMAN (Artistic Director, Choreographer)** is an established choreographer with vast international experience. She danced with Scapino Ballet, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, and Rambert Dance Company. Veldman has previously worked with Veldman on Three Dancers (Rambert), see blue through, Tender Hooks (Ballet Gulbenkian), Les Noces (Geneva), and Askounis (Gothenburg). Ormerod has worked extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company, The National Theatre, The Abbey Theatre, English Touring Theatre, and Propeller. His opera and dance credits include productions for Scottish Opera, ENO, Longborough, Buxton, Academia Santa Cecilia Rome, National Dance Company Wales, Ballet Boys, and Walker Dance Park Music. Recent work includes: The Librettist, Mrs. Henderson Presents (Vaudeville Theatre); Donéola (Abbey Theatre); and This Restless House (Glasgow Citizens). Ormerod is also lighting designer for the Calico Museum of Textiles, Wales; Birminghamad, directed Atoh Fugado’s Vedic Dimots (Gate, London), and adapted four films from Kieslowski’s Dekalog for £15.

**ANTHONY ARBLASTER (Technical Manager, Lighting Designer)** is a professional lighting designer, lighting director, and designer. He has worked with numerous companies including the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, and the Abbey Theatre. He has worked extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, and Propeller. His opera and dance credits include productions for Scottish Opera, ENO, Longborough, Buxton, Academia Santa Cecilia Rome, National Dance Company Wales, Ballet Boys, and Walker Dance Park Music. Recent work includes: The Librettist, Mrs. Henderson Presents (Vaudeville Theatre); Donéola (Abbey Theatre); and This Restless House (Glasgow Citizens). Ormerod is also lighting designer for the Calico Museum of Textiles, Wales; Birminghamad, directed Atoh Fugado’s Vedic Dimots (Gate, London), and adapted four films from Kieslowski’s Dekalog for £15.

**KIMIE NAKANO (Costume Designer)** has designed costumes for the production of The Happiness Project (2016). She has collaborated with Didy Veldman, Alexander Balanescu, and many others. In 2019, she will collaborate with Gabriel Prokofiev and most recently launched his new artistic project/company, Rendez-vous Dance, based in the United Kingdom.

**ERYCK BRAHMANIA (Performer)** was born in Evesham, U.K., and trained at the Royal Ballet School. His dance career has seen him work for numerous companies including Rambert Dance Company, Michael Clark Dance Company, Umanosove, Protein Dance, Company Chamone, Alexandra Whiteley Dance, New Movement Collective, Museumind, and Hong Kong Ballet. He has performed works by Christopher Bruce, Itzik Galili, Richard Alston, Menos Cunningham, Siobhan Davies, Gary Stewart, Mark Baldwin, Andre Gingras, Darshan Singh Buller, Karie Armitage, Paul Taylor, Doug Varone, and many others. Brahmania has also worked on movement development for numerous West End musicals including Charlie & The Chocolate Factory. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown (London), and Nowhere to be Found. In addition to dancing, Brahmania teaches yaga and Vedic thought, and trained under renowned teacher Claire Missingham. He teaches at numerous studios across London.

**MATTHEW GIFFORD (Performer)** graduated from the Paris Conservatoire in 2006. Gifford danced in France, Holland, and the United Kingdom as part of companies such as Dansingroep Amsterdam, National Dance Company Wales, and Northern Dances. He has had the opportunity to collaborate with numerous leading choreographers including Itzik Galili, Didy Veldman, Theo Clinkerd, Stephen Shropshire, Alexander Elkan, and Angela Preljocaj, among others. An award-winning choreographer, he has presented his work in Wales, England, Ireland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, and New York. He recently launched his new artistic project/company, Rendez-vous Dance, based in the United Kingdom.

**MADELEINE JONSSON (Performer)** trained in ballet and contemporary at a pre-professional program in Gothenburg, Sweden before she started her Bachelor's degree at the Royal Danish Ballet School, where she graduated in 2016. Alongside her training, she has been working in collaboration with international visual artists and in 2017. She has worked with Dan Hurst, Lea Anderson, Juri Nishi, Heidi Viertler, and began her collaboration with Didy Veldman in 2017.

**ESTELA MERLOS (Performer)** was born in Barcelona, and is now an independent dance artist based in London. She collaborates with Didy Veldman, amongst others. In 2018, as a member of DanceEast, she was named a winner of the Critics’ Circle National Dance Awards. Merlos also collaborated with Didy Veldman at Escola de Dansa Madó and DanceEast. In 2017, following joining Rambert (2008) she danced for companies Cannes Jeune Ballet (2004) and IT Dansa (2006), performing works by acclaimed choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Christopher Bruce, Carolyn Carlson, Nacho Duato, and Itzik Galili. Since 2014 she has collaborated with Didy Veldman, Shobana Jeyasingh, Marcos Morau, Patricia Okenwa, Mary-Kate Davies, Emma Rice, and Andrew Hack知, amongst others. She is currently studying to become a Feldenkrais Practitioner at Instituto Feldenkrais Barcelona. More info at estelamerlos.com

**JACOB’S PILLOW**

### COMPANY

**COMPANY**

**Our mission:** To preserve and sustain dance and performative arts and culture through the creation, presentation, and support of the highest quality performances, artists, and communities.

**DiDi Yeldman (Artistic Director, Choreographer)** is an established choreographer with vast international experience. She danced with Scapino Ballet, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, and Rambert Dance Company. Veldman left Rambert in 2000 to concentrate on her choreographic career, and has created over 40 works for 25 international companies. She is a graduate of the Lausanne Canadiens de Montreux, Cedar Lake, Cullberg Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, and many others. In 2019, she will collaborate with Gabriel Prokofiev on a work for Birmingham Royal Ballet. She teaches at The Royal Ballet School, The Prix de Lausanne, Lausanne, Rambert School, and Chichester University.

**Alexander Balanescu**

Composer, Live Musician was born in Romania and is a prolific composer as well as one of the most exciting and visionary violinists of our time. As leader of the Balanescu Quartet, he was a key figure in the new music scene in the U.K. and revolutionizing its repertoire and its relationship with the audience. Throughout his career, Balanescu has drawn inspiration from his collaborations with choreographers Pina Bausch and Meryl Tankard, and with theatre directors Matthew Dunster (for Royal Shakespeare Company) and Pipilo Delbono. He refuses to acknowledge divisions between different musical fields, working with such diverse artists as Michael Nyman, Gavin Bryars, David Byrne, Kraftwerk, Pet Shop Boys, Goldfrapp, Depeche Mode, and Grace Jones.

**Kimie Nakano**

Costume Designer was born in Essex, U.K., and trained at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. Since graduating, Nakano has previously worked with Veldman on Three Dancers (Rambert), see blue through, Tender Hooks (Ballet Gulbenkian), Les Noces (Geneva), and Askounis (Gothenburg). Ormerod has worked extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company, The National Theatre, The Abbey Theatre, English Touring Theatre, and Propeller. His opera and dance credits include productions for Scottish Opera, ENO, Longborough, Buxton, Academia Santa Cecilia Rome, National Dance Company Wales, Ballet Boys, and Walker Dance Park Music. Recent work includes: The Librettist, Mrs. Henderson Presents (Vaudeville Theatre); Donéola (Abbey Theatre); and This Restless House (Glasgow Citizens). Ormerod is also lighting designer for the Calico Museum of Textiles, Wales; Birminghamad, directed Atoh Fugado’s Vedic Dimots (Gate, London), and adapted four films from Kieslowski’s Dekalog for £15.

**Antony Arblaster**

Technical Manager, Lighting Designer was born in Romania and is a prolific composer as well as one of the most exciting and visionary violinists of our time. As leader of the Balanescu Quartet, he was a key figure in the new music scene in the U.K. and revolutionizing its repertoire and its relationship with the audience. Throughout his career, Balanescu has drawn inspiration from his collaborations with choreographers Pina Bausch and Meryl Tankard, and with theatre directors Matthew Dunster (for Royal Shakespeare Company) and Pipilo Delbono. He refuses to acknowledge divisions between different musical fields, working with such diverse artists as Michael Nyman, Gavin Bryars, David Byrne, Kraftwerk, Pet Shop Boys, Goldfrapp, Depeche Mode, and Grace Jones.
For the first eighty or so years of modern dance history, if you wanted to be a choreographer, you founded a dance company in your own name, trained a group of dancers in your aesthetic, and began to make dances. There was little doubt of the relationship between the choreographer and the company in the United States, choreographers such as Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and Mark Morris helped shape generations of both dancers and dance audiences. And then modern dance, or in Europe, contemporary dance, began to embrace the notion of guest choreographers, long established in ballet companies. This was the career path for Dutch-born choreographer Didy Veldman, a highly regarded figure in European contemporary dance.

Veldman had the best possible training to become a choreographer: as a dancer, she worked with master artists such as Jiri Kylian, Mats Ek, and Christopher Bruce. She explained in an interview with Dance Europe that she had established a company when she was 25, but she couldn’t juggle all of the responsibilities of directing, dancing, and choreographing. Opportunities to make work for other companies allowed her artistic development without management responsibilities. She has since created dances that are clever, ambitious, full-bodied, and darkly humorous, as exemplified in those performed at Jacob’s Pillow by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal and Cedar Lake Contemporary Dance.

While in residence creating a work for the School at Jacob’s Pillow in 2010, Veldman recorded an interview for our Pillow Archives. She explained that no matter who the dancers are—whether professional dancers or students—Veldman works to identify distinctions within the ensemble. She said, “I love individuals, I love personality. When I can find that in people and they’re willing to share that with me, I get inspired and want to use that. More the differences, the better.”

In 2016, in the midst of a successful career as a freelance choreographer, Veldman decided to launch Umanoove/Didy Veldman. As she said in an interview with Dance Europe, she wanted to develop deep relationships with dancers. “I am at that stage where I want to develop my own work in a different way: you don’t always get a lot of time in repertoire companies to create work and you don’t always get the opportunities you’d like,” Veldman said. “It’s difficult working with new dancers, because you have a lot of work to do in one rehearsal with them because there’s almost no time to make the work.”

Umanoove—as Veldman defines it—“human, move, you, maneuver”—makes its U.S. debut at Jacob’s Pillow with The Happiness Project (2015).

Veldman began her exploration in Umanoove’s first production with two probing questions: what kinds of dancers did she want to work with? And what would a collaboration with composer and violinist Alexander Balanescu grow into? Romanian-born Balanescu, who plays live during the performance, has a well-established list of collaborators that includes musicians Dan Bejar and Gavin Bryars, and choreographers Merral Tarkand and Pina Bausch. Another kind of research question emerged: Why do we all chase after happiness? Veldman, who brilliantly manages large casts of dancers for companies like Rambert Dance, wanted to work on a smaller scale, with just four dancers. With the intimate cast of dancers, Balanescu, and designer Kimeo Nakane, Veldman dove into the potentially overwhelmingly simple and incredibly complex quest for happiness.

An analysis of earlier works by Veldman reveals that she is intrigued by the porous borders between the emotional landscape of dance and the abstraction of highly physical, virtuosic, and abstract dance. In Veldman’s hands, it is possible to test the human-nest that contains the capacity for happiness or sadness. Veldman’s choreography is also always by music as she puts it itself, “I was always moving to music.” Stravinsky and Shostakovich inspire her, as do contemporary composers such as Elena Kats-Chernin, as well as other music ranging from Nina Simone to Offenbach.

Pillownotes by Maura Keefe

The PillowNotes series comprises essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.
**CHOREOGRAPHY**

Didy Veldman

**MUSIC COMPOSITION & PERFORMANCE**

Alexander Balanescu

**COSTUME & SET DESIGN**

Kimee Nakano

**LIGHTING DESIGN**

Ben Ormerod

**PERFORMERS**

Eryck Brahmania, Estela Melros, Madeleine Jonsson, Mathieu Geffré

**Funding Credit**

umanoove-didy-veldman.org | @umanoove

**PERFORMERS**

While in our theaters, please refrain from behavior that could disturb other patrons and performers during the performance. We ask that you:

- silence your cell phone;
- do not photograph or video record performances;
- keep your ticket with you at all times;
- observe that food and beverages are not allowed, with the exception of water; and please let a staff member know if you need help.

Thank you for choosing those House Rules so that everyone can have an enjoyable experience.

We are all good here. Enjoy the show!

**COMPANY**

**DIDY VELDMAN (Artistic Director, Choreographer)** is an established choreographer with vast international experience. She danced with Scapino Ballet, Ballet of Flanders, English National Ballet, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, Cedar Lake, Cullberg Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, and many others. In 2019, she will have created over 40 works for 25 companies including Rambert Dance Company. Veldman has worked with such diverse artists as Mathieu Geffré, Christopher Bruce, Itzik Galili, Yabin Wang, José Agudo, and Aditi Mangaldas. She has designed sets and costumes for opera, theater, and film; and Tristan and Isolde for Longborough Festival Opera, Theatre de Sartouville, Beckett at Theatre National Populaire, and the feature film Amobeth.

**BEN ORMEROD (Lighting Designer)** has previously worked with Veldman on Three Dancers (Rambert), Blue through, Tender Hooks (Ballet Gulbenkian), Les Noces (Geneva), and Askungen (Gothenburg). Ormerod has worked extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company, The National Theatre, The Abbey Theatre, English Touring Theatre, and Propeller. His opera and dance credits include productions with Scottish Opera, ENO, Longborough, Buxton, Academia Santa Cecilia Rome, National Dance Company Wales, Candoco, and Walker Dance Park Music. Recent work includes: The Libretto, Mrs. Henderson Presents, (Gate, London) and Donegal (Abbey Theatre); and This Restless House (Edinburgh Citizens). Ormerod is also lighting designer for the Galco Museum of Textiles, Mezzanine, directed by Athos Fuguet and Védic Dinetos (Gate, London), and adapted four films from Kieslowski’s Dekalog for £15.

**ANTHONY ARBLASTER (Technical Manager, Live Musician)** was born in Romania and is a prolific composer as well as one of the most exciting and visionary violinists of our time. As leader of the Balanescu Quartet, he was invited by the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art to co-found and direct the School of Contemporary Music, and worked in Australia and the U.K. with numerous West End musicals including Charlie & The Chocolate Factory. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Groundhog Day, and Frozen. In addition to dancing, Brahmania teaches yoga and Vedic thought, and trained under renowned teacher Claire Missingham. He teaches at numerous studios across London.

**MATTHEW GEFFRE (Performer)** graduated from the Paris Conservatoire in 2006. Geffre danced in France, Holland, and the United Kingdom as part of companies such as Dansgroep Amsterdam, Dutch National Ballet, and Northern Dance. He has had the opportunity to collaborate with numerous leading choreographers including Itzik Galili, Didy Veldman, Theo Clinkard, Stephen Mear, and Europe’s Artistic Director. He trained at Escola de Dansa Madri and Lumitz, where he joined the company. Upon joining Rambert (2008) she danced for companies Cannes Jeune Ballet (2004) and IT Dansa (2006), performing works by acclaimed choreographers such as Gill Kyson, Christopher Bruce, Carolyn Carlson, Nacho Duato, and Itzik Galili. Since 2014 she has collaborated with Didy Veldman, Shobana Jegatheesan, Marcos Morau, Patricia Clews, the Movement Collective, and Avatara Ayuso. Her own choreography was awarded the Prix Danse in Paris and the U.K., and she was appointed Swindon Dance Associate Artist in 2017. Merlos is currently studying to become a Feldenkrais Practitioner at Instituto Feldenkeras Barcelona. More info at estelamerlos.com

**COMPANY**

**DUST, ITMOi, Vertical Road, Torabika, Grosio, Kissos, and The Nasholm Effect,** and for edged-by-life in progress, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui’s Fall, and The Royal Ballet. Others include the English National Ballet, Sadler’s Wells, and with Jordan Saturday’s Brechemies, A Lady of Little Sense (UK West); and Punishment without Revenge, Don Gil of the Green Mountains, and The Bellicone in the Next Room (Bath, UK West); and Tristan and Isolde, Ariadne auf Naxos, Der Ring der Nibelungen (Longborough Festival, UK); and A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Trinity Laban, London).

**ERYCK BRAHMANIA (Performer)** was born in Essex, U.K., and trained at The Royal Ballet School. His dance career has seen him work for numerous companies including Rambert Dance Company, Michael Clark Dance Company, Umanoove, Protein Dance, Company Chamone, Alexander Whiteley Dance, New Movement Collective, Muscumetion, and Hong Kong Ballet. He has performed works by Christopher Bruce, Itzik Galili, Richard Alston, Menos Cunningham, Siddhan Davies, Gary Stewart, Mark Baldwin, Andrew Girgas, Darshan Singh Buller, Karole Armitage, Paul Taylor, Doug Varone, and many others. Brahmania has also worked on movement development for numerous West End musicals including Charlie & The Chocolate Factory. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Groundhog Day, and Frozen. In addition to dancing, Brahmania teaches yoga and Vedic thought, and trained under renowned teacher Claire Missingham. He teaches at numerous studios across London.

**MADELEINE JONSSON (Performer)** was born in Stockholm, Sweden and has previously worked with Veldman on Hestning (West End/Toronto), The Libertine (in the Next Room (Bath, UK West); Punishment without Revenge, Don Gil of the Green Brechemies, A Lady of Little Sense (UK West); and Puss in Boots (Edinburgh Fringe). Arblaster’s associate credits for opera include Der Fliegende Holänder; Tristan and Isolde; Ariadne auf Naxos, Der Ring der Nibelungen (Longborough Festival, UK); and A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Trinity Laban, London).

**ERICK BRAHMANIA (Performer)** was born in Essex, U.K., and trained at the Royal Ballet School. His dance career has seen him work for numerous companies including Rambert Dance Company, Michael Clark Dance Company, Umanoove, Protein Dance, Company Chamone, Alexandre Whiteley Dance, New Movement Collective, Muscumetion, and Hong Kong Ballet. He has performed works by Christopher Bruce, Itzik Galili, Richard Alston, Menos Cunningham, Siddhan Davies, Gary Stewart, Mark Baldwin, Andrew Girgas, Darshan Singh Buller, Karole Armitage, Paul Taylor, Doug Varone, and many others. Brahmania has also worked on movement development for numerous West End musicals including Charlie & The Chocolate Factory. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Groundhog Day, and Frozen. In addition to dancing, Brahmania teaches yoga and Vedic thought, and trained under renowned teacher Claire Missingham. He teaches at numerous studios across London.

**MADELEINE JONSSON (Performer)** trained at the Paris Conservatoire (2006) and with choreographers including Itzik Galili, Didy Veldman, Theo Clinkard, Stephen Mear, and Europe’s Artistic Director. She trained at Escola de Dansa Madri and Lumitz, where she joined the company. Upon joining Rambert (2008) she danced for companies Cannes Jeune Ballet (2004) and IT Dansa (2006), performing works by acclaimed choreographers such as Gill Kyson, Christopher Bruce, Carolyn Carlson, Nacho Duato, and Itzik Galili. Since 2014 she has collaborated with Didy Veldman, Shobana Jegatheesan, Marcos Morau, Patricia Clews, the Movement Collective, and Avatara Ayuso. Her own choreography was awarded the Prix Danse in Paris and the U.K., and she was appointed Swindon Dance Associate Artist in 2017. Merlos is currently studying to become a Feldenkrais Practitioner at Instituto Feldenkeras Barcelona. More info at estelamerlos.com

**COMPANY**

**DUST, ITMOi, Vertical Road, Torabika, Grosio, Kissos, and The Nasholm Effect,** and for edged-by-life in progress, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui’s Fall, and The Royal Ballet. Others include the English National Ballet, Sadler’s Wells, and with Jordan Saturday’s Brechemies, A Lady of Little Sense (UK West); and Punishment without Revenge, Don Gil of the Green Mountains, and The Bellicone in the Next Room (Bath, UK West); and Tristan and Isolde, Ariadne auf Naxos, Der Ring der Nibelungen (Longborough Festival, UK); and A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Trinity Laban, London).

**ERYCK BRAHMANIA (Performer)** was born in Essex, U.K., and trained at the Royal Ballet School. His dance career has seen him work for numerous companies including Rambert Dance Company, Michael Clark Dance Company, Umanoove, Protein Dance, Company Chamone, Alexandre Whiteley Dance, New Movement Collective, Muscumetion, and Hong Kong Ballet. He has performed works by Christopher Bruce, Itzik Galili, Richard Alston, Menos Cunningham, Siddhan Davies, Gary Stewart, Mark Baldwin, Andrew Girgas, Darshan Singh Buller, Karole Armitage, Paul Taylor, Doug Varone, and many others. Brahmania has also worked on movement development for numerous West End musicals including Charlie & The Chocolate Factory. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Groundhog Day, and Frozen. In addition to dancing, Brahmania teaches yoga and Vedic thought, and trained under renowned teacher Claire Missingham. He teaches at numerous studios across London.

**MADELEINE JONSSON (Performer)** trained at the Paris Conservatoire (2006) and with choreographers including Itzik Galili, Didy Veldman, Theo Clinkard, Stephen Mear, and Europe’s Artistic Director. She trained at Escola de Dansa Madri and Lumitz, where she joined the company. Upon joining Rambert (2008) she danced for companies Cannes Jeune Ballet (2004) and IT Dansa (2006), performing works by acclaimed choreographers such as Gill Kyson, Christopher Bruce, Carolyn Carlson, Nacho Duato, and Itzik Galili. Since 2014 she has collaborated with Didy Veldman, Shobana Jegatheesan, Marcos Morau, Patricia Clews, the Movement Collective, and Avatara Ayuso. Her own choreography was awarded the Prix Danse in Paris and the U.K., and she was appointed Swindon Dance Associate Artist in 2017. Merlos is currently studying to become a Feldenkrais Practitioner at Instituto Feldenkeras Barcelona. More info at estelamerlos.com
As of May 23, 2019 major support for Jacob’s Pillow has been generously provided by the following INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT.

Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was named the Dorothy G. Graham Dance writer Maura Keefe has led audience programs at various venues around the country and is the Associate Director of the PillowNotes series comprised essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.

PillowNotes by Maura Keefe The PillowNotes series comprises essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.

For the first eighty or so years of modern dance history, if you wanted to be a choreographer, you founded a dance company in your own name, trained a group of dancers in your aesthetic, and began to make dances. There was little doubt of the relationship between the choreographer and the company in the United States, choreographers such as Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and Mark Morris helped shape generations of both dancers and dance audiences. And then modern dance, or in Europe, contemporary dance, began to embrace the notion of guest choreographers, long established in ballet companies.

This was the career path for Dutch-born choreographer Didi Veldman, a highly regarded figure in European contemporary dance.

Veldman had the best possible training to become a choreographer: as a dancer, she worked with master artists such as Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, and Christopher Bruce. She explained in an interview with Dance Europe that she had established a company when she was 21, but she couldn’t juggle all of the responsibilities of directing, choreographing, and choreographing opportunities for other companies, although it’s on film. Veldman has a kind of an ensemble that ‘is in itself a dance, which always fed by music. As she puts it herself, “I was always moving to music.” Stravinsky and Shostakovich inspire her, as do the landscape of dance theater and the abstraction of highly physical, virtuosic, and abstract dancing. In Veldman’s hands, it is riveting as the woman who does not break, no matter how much she is yanked around in the acrobatic choreography.”

In a 1996 interview with Dance Europe, Veldman dove into the potentially overwhelmingly simple and incredibly complex quest for happiness.

Veldman began her exploration in Umanoove’s first production with two probing questions: what kinds of dancers did she want to work with? And what would a collaboration with composer and violinist Alexander Balanescu grow into? Romanian born Balanescu, who plays live during the performance, has a well-established list of collaborators that includes musicians David Byrne and Gavin Bryars, and choreographers Meryl Tankard and Pina Bausch. Another kind of research question emerged: Why do we all chase after happiness? Veldman, who brilliantly manages large casts of dancers for companies like Rambert Dance, wanted to work on a smaller scale, with just four dancers. With the intimate cast of dancers, Balanescu, and designer Kimie Nakano, Veldman dove into the potentially overwhelmingly simple and incredibly complex quest for happiness.

An analysis of earlier works by Veldman reveals that she is intrigued by the porous borders between the emotional landscape of dance theater and the abstraction of highly physical, virtuosic, and abstract dancing. In Veldman’s hands, it is possible to test the human-narrates that contains the capacity for happiness or sadness. Veldman’s choreography is also always fed by music. As she puts it herself, “I was always moving to music.” Stravinsky and Shostakovich inspire her, as do the landscape of dance theater and the abstraction of highly physical, virtuosic, and abstract dancing. In Veldman’s hands, it is riveting as the woman who does not break, no matter how much she is yanked around in the acrobatic choreography.”

In a 1996 New York Times review of Rambert Dance Company, dance critic Anna Kisselgoff remarked, “Didi Veldman is riveting as the woman who does not break, no matter how much she is yanked around in the acrobatic choreography.”

Kisselgoff’s description metaphorical and poetic—Veldman is riveting, and her career path from dancer, to choreographer, to artistic director is an investigation of happiness indeed. © 2019 Maura Keefe and Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival Dance writer Maura Keefe has led audience programs at various venues around the country and is the Associate Director of. Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was directed the Dorothy G. Mellen Professor of Dance in 2018.