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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.

Pilgrims, puritans, and patriots. Revolutionaries, Red Sox, and writers. The Boston Tea Party, the Boston Marathon, the Boston Massacre. The city of Boston holds a singular place in the popular imagination of people well beyond the city limits, and well beyond New England. A place known for its fierce sense of freedom, its radical intellectualism, and its nourishment of the arts in all forms. Rating on hundreds of years of tradition and culture, Boston Ballet, like the city itself, has long been at the forefront of new dancemaking while also reaching across the roots from which that creative energy grows.

Innate New Englander E. Virginia Williams started Boston Ballet with a goal of bringing a Yankee determination to the 1950s. Her family had been living in New England for generations—her grandfather owned a fleet of whaling ships—and frowned upon the notion of her having a performing career. However, they approved of her studying dance with the best teachers in Boston, and eventually also sent her to New York to study. While in New York, Williams studied with master choreographer George Balanchine, beginning a long professional relationship between them. Her small company, originally based in the suburbs of Malvern, began to be a place where Balanchine stopped in for new talent for New York City Ballet. In 1965, Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein were instrumental in aiding the company’s receipt of a major Ford Foundation grant, making it possible for Williams and the company to make its first appearance in the professional New England Civic Ballet. Noted as a teacher and choreographer, Williams had an image for the company that persists today.

Right from the beginning its tenure as a professional ballet company, Boston Ballet dancers were pushed in extraordinary ways. Not only did they dance 19th century classical works, they also danced neo-classical masterpieces from Balanchine, and new works commissioned from the world’s leading choreographers, including Mark Morris, Alvin Ailey, and Twyla Tharp. Williams’ role in the company was still forming, and from the beginning there was also a strong connection with Jacob’s Pillow. In 1962, Ted Shawn first presented the company here in its infancy, and several partnerships follow over the years, including a two-week engagement during Shawn’s last season. Williams remained the sole director until she invited (Violetta Verdi to join her as associate artistic director in 1980. After Verdi, the talented and colorful Bruce Marks was appointed to lead the Boston Ballet out of debt and into a new position of significance in the dance world. In an interview at Jacob’s Pillow in 2000, Marks spoke with characteristic drama about his first sight of the company: “The company was in a crumbling garage in the South End. Half the people in town said ‘Ballet? I don’t see ballet in Boston. I go to New York.’” Marks seized the challenge of both retiring the debt and getting Boston audiences to appreciate the treasure it had right there in town.

Finnish-born Mikko Nissinen has been the artistic director since 2003, an artistic director for the 21st century. An acclaimed dancer, he performed both classical and contemporary roles in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and San Francisco. In an interview with The PillowNotes series comprises essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence, Williams described his vision for the company that persists today.

As of May 23, 2019 major support for Jacob’s Pillow has been generously provided by: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; The Barr Foundation; The Berenson Foundation; The Los Angeles Police Foundation; Olga Bolotov Foundation; The Cummings Foundation; The Fall River Foundation; The Ford Foundation; The Florence Foster Jenkins Foundation; The Trustees of The Henry Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens; The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Massachusetts Cultural Council; The National Endowment for the Arts; Onata Foundation; The Prospector Hill Foundation; The Student Fund; The Thompson Family Foundation; The Wilmot Foundation; Wexman Family Foundation; and Jacob’s Pillow Business Partners.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

This performance at Jacob’s Pillow has been made possible by a generous gift from a group of donors that includes Boston Ballet Overseer Jim Aisner and his wife, Virginia. 

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Presented by the Provost’s Office.

BOSTON BALLET'S ENGAGEMENT AT JACOB’S PILLOW IS SUPPORTED, IN PART, BY A LEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTION FROM SAVIAH T. POPE.
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- INTERMISSION -

**Alumna of the Intern Program at Jacob’s Pillow**

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- The Boston Foundation
- Klarman Family Foundation
- Massachusetts Cultural Council
- National Endowment for the Arts

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You can help the Pillow present outstanding dance artists from around the world, provide training and support to the talented dancers of The School at Jacob’s Pillow, maintain our landmark site, and create free community programs that engage people of all ages and backgrounds with dance.

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Help make dance creation, presentation, education, and preservation at Jacob’s Pillow possible.

Thank you!
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LEONID YAKOBSON (Choreographer) is a revolutionary Russian dancer and choreographer, born in St. Petersburg in 1930 until the early 1970s, during which time he helped pioneer modernism in Soviet ballet. Based in St. Petersburg, his creative roots can be traced to the 1920s period of artistic experimentation when courtly classical ballet was charged with developing new dance vocabularies. He excelled at the ballet miniature, a brief dance that often used grotesque, athletic, or pantomimic movements to address social, dramatic, or erotic subjects with narrative clarity and concision. He favored original and often contemporary musical scores, believing each composer's style called forth a unique choreographic response. Examples include his full-length ballet Spartacus (1956/1962), in which characters were psychologically shaped and

Pas de Quatre

CHOREOGRAPHY  Leonid Yakobson
MUSIC  Vincenzo Bellini, selections from the opera Norma
LIGHTING DESIGN  Brandon Stirling Baker
STAGING  Vera Solvyeva and Nikolay Levitsky
DANCERS  Aug 21 at 8pm, Aug 22 at 2pm & 8pm, Aug 23 at 8pm, Aug 24 at 8pm
     Ji Young Chae   Ekaterina Chubinide
     Ashley Ellis   Viktoria Kapitonova
Aug 24 at 2pm, Aug 25 at 8pm
     Dawn Atkins   Lia Cirio
     Nina Mattashvili   Lauren Herfindahl
WORLD PREMIERE: June 7, 2011, Yakobson's Choreographic Miniatures, Leningrad, Soviet Union
BOSTON BALEET PREMIERE: October 10, 2015, Boston Opera House, Boston, Massachusetts

Radin

CHOREOGRAPHY  Leonid Yakobson
MUSIC  “Deux arabesques, L. 66,” “Clair de lune,” Claude Debussy
     “Beau soir,” Epilogue from Wozzeck, Aldan Berg
LIGHTING DESIGN  Brandon Stirling Baker
STAGING  Vera Solvyeva and Nikolay Levitsky
THE ETERNAL SPRING
     Abigail Merlis   Isaac Akiba
THE KISS
     María Álvarez   Alec Roberts
THE ETERNAL IDOL
     Emily Entingh
     Michael Ryan
     Patrick Yocum
MINOA AND NYMPH
     Chioko Oga
     Lasha Khoshashvili
     Aug 24 at 2pm, Aug 25 at 2pm
     Matthew Slattery
BOSTON BALLETT PREMIERE: May 16, 2019, Citizens Bank Opera House, Boston, Massachusetts
**Playlist (EP) (excerpts)**

**CHOREOGRAPHY** William Forsythe

**MUSIC** “Surely Shorty,” Peven Everett; “Location,” Khalid; “Vegas,” Abra; “Impossible,” Lion Babe/Jax Jones

**COSTUME DESIGN** William Forsythe

**LIGHTING DESIGN** Tanja Ruehl

**ADAPTED FOR JACOB'S PILLOW BY** Brandon Strirling Baker

**SOUND DESIGN** Niels Lanz

**ASSISTANT TO THE CHOREOGRAPHER** Ander Zabala

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**SURELY SHORTY**

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**COMPANY**

**ABOUT BOSTON BALLET**

Since 1963, Boston Ballet’s internationally acclaimed performances of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballets, combined with a dedication to world-class dance education and community initiatives, have made the institution a leader in its field, with a 56-year history of promoting excellence and access to dance.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Executive Director Meredith (Max) Hodges, the Company, made up of 69 dancers and 11 nationalities, performs a diverse and acclaimed repertoire ranging from full-length classical ballets, to masterworks by George Balanchine, and new works and world premieres by today’s finest contemporary choreographers. Boston Ballet’s second company, Boston Ballet II, is comprised of dancers who gain experience by performing with the Company and independently, presenting special programs to audiences throughout the Northeast.

Boston Ballet is committed to maintaining a repertoire that combines timeless classics such as Marius Petipa’s The Sleeping Beauty, Frederick Ashton’s Cinderella, August Bournonville’s La Sylphide, Mikko Nissinen’s Swan Lake, and John Cranko’s Romeo & Juliet, with the imaginative visions of today’s most innovative choreographers including Resident Choreographer Jorma Elo, as well as William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Mark Morris, David Dawson, Christopher Wheeldon, and Helen Pickett. Boston Ballet’s award-winning The Nutcracker, choreographed by Nissinen, is a tradition in New England. Over 40 performances employ the talents of the entire company and more than 240 Boston Ballet School students perform in the production every year. In 2009, The New York Times hailed Boston Ballet’s repertoire as "one of the most eclectic in the country," and in 2010 as having dancers that are "striking by national and international standards." In 2016, Boston Ballet announced a long-term partnership with internationally-renowned choreographer William Forsythe and presented Forsythe’s full-length Artifact in February of 2017 and the world premiere of Playlist (EP) in 2019.

The Company performs its full season at the historic, 2,500-seat Citizens Bank Opera House and resides in a state-of-the-art facility in Boston’s South End designed by architect Graham Gund. Boston Ballet also has national and international touring engagements, including 2019 Paris, France; 2014 Lincoln Center; 2014 Kennedy Center; 2013 London, England; 2012 Helsinki, Finland; 2010 and 2007 Spain; 2010 Ottawa, Canada; and 2008 Seoul, Korea, as well as performances at the Guggenheim Museum’s Works & Process series, the Fall for Dance Festival at New York City Center, Orange County Performing Arts Center, Spoleto Festival USA, and The Kennedy Center’s “Ballet Across America” series in 2008 and 2013.

Boston Ballet’s achievements, coupled with the generous and prestigious support of local and national funding sources, have brought Boston Ballet to the forefront of the international dance scene.

For more information, please visit bostonballet.org.

**MIKKO NISSINEN** (Artistic Director) was appointed Artistic Director of Boston Ballet and Boston Ballet School in 2001. Born in Helsinki, Finland, Nissinen trained at The Finnish National Ballet School in 2001. Born in Helsinki, Finland, trained at The Finnish National Ballet School and the Kirov Ballet School in St. Petersburg, Russia. He danced professionally with The Finnish National Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, Basel Ballet, and San Francisco Ballet, where he was a principal dancer for ten years. Nissinen’s vast repertoire ranged from classical to contemporary works. As a guest artist, he danced with various companies and partners and for numerous international galas.

Nissinen directed Alberta Ballet, in Calgary, Canada, from 1998–2001, also serving as Alberta Ballet’s Executive Director from 1999–2000. As Artistic Director of Boston Ballet, Nissinen has defined the Company’s image, cultivating a compelling and dynamic collection of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary repertoire. Firmly committed to developing the art form and the future of dance, Nissinen actively promotes progressive new work and creations. The Company also performs Nissinen’s production of Swan Lake and the award winning The Nutcracker.

In 2008, Nissinen served as Executive Director of Boston Ballet for a year and a half, during which time he provided full organizational leadership, initiated a major redesign of the organization’s image, branding and website, and facilitated the Company’s move to its permanent performance home, the Citizens Bank Opera House. Under his direction, Boston Ballet resumed touring after a 16-year hiatus, traveling to Paris, London, New York City, Spain, Korea, Canada, Finland, and Washington D.C. In 2005, Nissinen appointed Jorma Elo as Resident Choreographer and in 2016 Nissinen established a long-term Company partnership with choreographer William Forsythe. In addition, Nissinen leads Boston Ballet School, the largest dance school in North America.

Nissinen’s broad knowledge of dance, its history, and arts organization business leadership make him a popular presenter at conferences and universities worldwide. He was a fellow at Stanford’s Graduate School of Business and he is a member of the New York Choreographic Institute’s Artistic Committee. He is the recipient of the Finlandia Foundation’s 2008 Arts and Letters Award, Boston’s 2009 Ambassador for the Arts Award, and the 2007 United Nations Association of Greater Boston Leadership Award. In 1999, Nissinen was appointed a Knight, First Class of the Order of the Lion of Finland. Nissinen is a dual Finnish and American citizen.
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“Surely Shorty,” Peven Everett; “Location,” Khalid; “Vegas,” Abra; “Impossible,” Lion Babe/Jax Jones

Location: Desean Taber
Vegas: Viktornia Kapitonova
Maria Alvarez: Dawn Atkins
Emily Entingh: Haley Schwan

Impossible
“Impossible,” Lion Babe/Jax Jones

World Premiere: March 7, 2019, Boston Ballet, Boston Opera House, Boston, Massachusetts

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Choreographic Objects, as he calls these works, have been presented in numerous museums and exhibitions, including the Whitney Biennial (New York, 1997), the Louvre Museum (2006), the Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, 2009), Tate Modern (London, 2009), MoMA (New York 2010) and the Venice Biennale (2005, 2009, 2012, 2014), the Biennale of Sydney (2016), and the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (2018).
Jacob’s Pillow is committed to providing an inclusive environment that cultivates the celebration of the art of dance and its positive impact on communities.

We are dedicated to fostering a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for everyone on our beautiful campus. You, as patrons and visitors of Jacob’s Pillow, are expected to contribute to our mutually respectful and welcoming community.

We are so glad you are here. Enjoy the show!

- INTERMISSION -

The traditional language of classical ballet—poise of form and expression—was abhorred, and Exerzor XXX (1972), a dance that verged on pure abstraction. In 1969 he founded Choo-Szeri with Maya Plisetskaya, the first Soviet ballet company with a repertoire of original ballets by a single choreographer. Isolated from developments in the West, Yeklebok’s dancers angered Soviet authorities who frequently censored or banned his creations. His ballets offered Soviet audiences a glimpse of a modernist aesthetic through works that embraced sensuality, the individual voice and collaborations with innovative artists in other media. He died in Moscow in 1975, just as his company returned from a well-received trip to Germany, its first outside of the USSR.

Source: Janice Ross, Like a Bomb Going Off: Leonid Yeklebok and Ballet as Resistance in Soviet Russia (Yale Press 2015)

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**Priority Parking Passes**

**Invitations to Member-Exclusive Events**

**Discounts in The Pillow Store**

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Thank you!
BOSTON BALLET
Ted Shawn Theatre
August 21-29, 2019

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**
Mikko Nissinen

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
Deirdre Reynolds

**ASSISTANT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**
Russell Kaiser

**MUSIC DIRECTOR**
Mischa Santora

**BALLETT MASTERS**
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Larissa Ponomarenko
Anthony Randazzo

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Junmeong Zhao

**SOLOISTS**
Isaac Akiba*
Chad strain
Tigran Mkrtchyan
Pavel Palka
Lawrence Rines
Kirián Starke
Addie Tapp

**SECOND SOLOISTS**
María Álvarez
Dawn Atkins
Emily Entingh
Lauren Herfindahl*
Drew Nelson
Chisako Oga
Matthew Staley

**ARTISTS**
Ekaterina Chubinidze
Tovon Clark
Daniel Cooper
Georgia Dalton
Matthew Slattery
Chisako Oga
Drew Nelson
Lauren Herfindahl*
Emily Entingh
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*Alumni of The School at Jacob's Pillow

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**Ex officio**

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Massachusetts Cultural Council

National Endowment for the Arts

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**Alumna of the Intern Program at Jacob’s Pillow**

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Mikko Nissinen, Artistic Director*

Charles S. Carignan, MD, Secretary

Alison A. Quirk, Vice-Chair

Jack R. Meyer, Chair

Paul S. Henderson, Andrea W. Hoff, Lara Hurley, Tito Jackson, Robert Nagle, John Osbon*, Eleanor Y. Pao

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Ming Min Hui, Treasurer*
Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was named the Dorothy G. Madden Professor. She moved to Boston in 1960 and found that the city’s artistic community was vibrant and welcoming. "The sense of community here is something that can’t be replicated in other places," she said. "It’s like being part of a family."

One of the major reasons Nissinen was drawn to Boston was the city’s rich history and culture. "I love Boston’s history and its vibrant cultural scene," he said. "It’s a city that values the arts and has a strong sense of community." Nissinen has spent the majority of his career in Europe, but he has always had a deep connection to Boston and his adoptive city. He has been associated with the city for over 40 years and has made it his home. "I love Boston," he said. "It’s a city that values the arts and has a strong sense of community." Nissinen has been instrumental in bringing ballet to Boston, and he is grateful for the support he has received from the city. "I am grateful for the support I have received from the city of Boston," he said. "I have been able to bring ballet to Boston and make it a part of the city’s cultural landscape."