



PRESENTS **MARTHA GRAHAM
DANCE COMPANY**
Ted Shawn Theatre
August 14-17, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Janet Eilber

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LaRue Allen

SENIOR ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE Denise Vale

COMPANY Lloyd Knight
Ben Schultz
Xin Ying
Lloyd Mayor
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker
Lorenzo Pagano*
Charlotte Landreau
Anne O'Donnell*
Leslie Andrea Williams
Anne Souder
Laurel Dalley Smith
So Young An
Marzia Memoli
Jacob Larsen
Alyssa Cebulski
Alessio Crognale
Aoi Sato

*Alumni of The School at Jacob's Pillow

Martha Graham Dance Company's engagement at Jacob's Pillow is supported, in part, by a leadership contribution from Fred Moses.

PROGRAM

Appalachian Spring (1944)

Springtime in the wilderness is celebrated by a man and woman building a house with joy and love and prayer; by a revivalist and his followers in their shouts of exaltation; by a pioneering woman with her dreams of the Promised Land.

CHOREOGRAPHY &
COSTUMES Martha Graham

MUSIC Aaron Copland*

SET DESIGN Isamu Noguchi

LIGHTING DESIGN Jean Rosenthal
Adapted by Beverly Emmons

DANCERS *The Bride* Charlotte Landreau (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Anne O'Donnell (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

The Husbandman Jacob Larsen (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Lloyd Mayor (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

The Preacher Lorenzo Pagano (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Lloyd Knight (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

The Pioneering Woman Leslie Andrea Williams (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

The Followers So Young An, Laurel Dalley Smith, Marzia Memoli, Anne Souder

*Commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
The original title chosen by Aaron Copland was Ballet for Martha which was changed by Martha Graham to Appalachian Spring.*

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If you have any suggestions, comments, or incidents to report, please direct them to Deputy Director A.J. Pietrantone at apietrantone@jacobspillow.org.

HOUSE RULES:

While in our theaters, please refrain from behavior that could disturb other patrons and performers during the performance. Thank you for observing these House Rules so that everyone can have an enjoyable experience. Silence cell phones • Photography & recording are prohibited • Other than water, food & beverages are prohibited • Keep your ticket with you at all times • Let a staff member know if you need help

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

Deo (2019)

CHOREOGRAPHY Maxine Doyle & Bobbi Jene Smith

MUSIC Lesley Flanigan

COSTUME DESIGN Karen Young

LIGHTING DESIGN Yi-Chung Chen

DANCERS So Young An
Laurel Dalley Smith
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker
Marzia Memoli
Anne O'Donnell
Anne Souder
Leslie Andrea Williams
Xin Ying

Deo is presented with support from the Beau Gage and Glenn Ousterhout Fund for New Work and was commissioned by Christopher Jones and Deb McAlister on behalf of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and by the O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation.

Co-commissioned for the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, Inc. by University Musical Society, Ann Arbor, MI. Additional production support provided by the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts.

- INTERMISSION -

Lamentation Variations (2007)

Conceived by Janet Eilber

CHOREOGRAPHY Liz Gerring, Michelle Dorrance, and Aszure Barton

MUSIC Michael J. Schumacher, Michelle Dorrance and Jaco Pastorius, George Crumb*

COSTUME DESIGN (Gerring) Reid & Harriet
(Dorrance) Barbara Erin Delo
(Barton) Jennifer O'Donnell

LIGHTING DESIGN (Gerring) Amith Chandashaker
(Dorrance) Nicholas Houfek
(Barton) Beverly Emmons

DANCERS *Gerring Variation* Xing Ying with So Young An, Alessio Crognale,
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)

Lloyd Knight with So Young An, Alessio Crognale,
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

Dorrance Variation The Company

Barton Variation Laurel Dalley Smith, Anne O'Donnell (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Anne Souder, Xing Ying (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

The Lamentation Variations was commissioned by the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, Inc. with support from Francis Mason.

Dorrance and Gerring Variations were commissioned for the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, Inc. by Carolina Performing Arts.

**Pastorius (Dorrance): "Portrait of Tracy" arranged by Michelle Dorrance; Schumacher (Gerring): "Zoltan's Ghost" commissioned by Liz Gerring Dance Company; Crumb (Barton): "Apparition" (IX. The Night in Silence Under Many a Star).*

Chronicle (1936)

CHOREOGRAPHY &
COSTUMES Martha Graham

MUSIC Wallingford Riegger*

LIGHTING DESIGN Jean Rosenthal
Lighting for reconstruction (“Steps in the Street”) by David Finley
Lighting for reconstruction (“Spectre–1914”, “Prelude to Action”) by Steven L. Shelley

DANCERS I. Spectre–1914

Drums—Red Shroud—Lament
Xin Ying (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Leslie Andrea Williams (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)

II. Steps in the Street

Devastation—Homelessness—Exile
Anne Souder (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Marzia Memoli (8/15 mat, 8/16, 8/17 eve)
So Young An, Alyssa Cebulski, Laurel Dalley Smith,
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker, Charlotte Landreau,
Marzia Memoli, Anne O’Donnell, Aoi Sato,
Anne Souder, Leslie Andrea Williams, Xin Ying

III. Prelude to Action

Unity—Pledge to the Future
Xin Ying, Anne Souder (8/14, 8/15 eve, 8/17 mat)
Leslie Andrea Williams, Marzia Memoli (8/15 mat,
8/16, 8/17 eve)
So Young An, Alyssa Cebulski, Laurel Dalley Smith,
Natasha M. Diamond-Walker, Charlotte Landreau,
Marzia Memoli, Anne O’Donnell, Aoi Sato,
Anne Souder, Leslie Andrea Williams, Xin Ying

“Spectre–1914” researched and reconstructed in 1994 by Terese Capucilli and Carol Fried, from film clips and Barbara Morgan photographs. “Steps in the Street” reconstructed in 1989 by Yuriko and Martha Graham, from the Julien Bryan film. “Prelude to Action” reconstructed in 1994 by Sophie Maslow, assisted by Terese Capucilli, Carol Fried, and Diane Gray, from film clips and Barbara Morgan photographs.

**Finale from “New Dance, Opus 18b” (for “Steps in the Street”), orchestrated by Justin Dello Joio, used by arrangement with Associated Music Publishers, Inc., publisher and copyright owner. Additional*

COMPANY

ABOUT MARTHA GRAHAM

Martha Graham has had a deep and lasting impact on American art and culture. She single-handedly defined contemporary dance as a uniquely American art form, which the nation has in turn shared with the world. Crossing artistic boundaries, she collaborated with and commissioned work from the leading visual artists, musicians, and designers of her day, including sculptor Isamu Noguchi and composers Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, and Gian Carlo Menotti.

Graham’s groundbreaking style grew from her experimentation with the elemental movements of contraction and release. By focusing on the basic activities of the human form, she enlivened the body with raw, electric emotion. The sharp, angular, and direct movements of her technique were a dramatic departure from the predominant style of the time.

Graham influenced generations of choreographers that included Merce

Cunningham, Paul Taylor, and Twyla Tharp, altering the scope of dance. Classical ballet dancers Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, and Mikhail Baryshnikov sought her out to broaden their artistry. Artists of all genres were eager to study and work with Graham—she taught actors including Bette Davis, Kirk Douglas, Madonna, Liza Minnelli, Gregory Peck, Tony Randall, Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson, and Joanne Woodward to utilize their bodies as expressive instruments.

During her long and illustrious career, Graham created 181 dance compositions. During the Bicentennial she was granted the United States' highest civilian honor, The Medal of Freedom. In 1998, *TIME Magazine* named her the "Dancer of the Century." The first dancer to perform at the White House and to act as a cultural ambassador abroad, she captured the spirit of a nation. "No artist is ahead of his time," she said. "He is his time. It is just that the others are behind the time."

ABOUT MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY

The Martha Graham Dance Company has been a world leader in the evolving art form of modern dance since its founding in 1926. Today, under the direction of Artistic Director Janet Eilber, the Company is embracing a new programming vision that showcases masterpieces by Graham alongside newly commissioned works by contemporary artists. With programs that offer a rich thematic narrative, the Company creates new platforms for contemporary dance and multiple points of access for audiences.

Since its inception, the Company has received international acclaim from audiences in over 50 countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The Company has performed at such illustrious venues as the Metropolitan Opera, Carnegie Hall, the Paris Opera House, and Covent Garden, as well as at the base of the Great Pyramids of Egypt and in the ancient Herod Atticus Theatre on the Acropolis in Athens. In addition, the Company has also produced several award-winning films broadcast on PBS and around the world.

Though Martha Graham herself is the best-known alumna of her company, the Company has provided a training ground for some of modern dance's most celebrated performers and choreographers. Former members of the Company include Merce Cunningham, Erick Hawkins, Paul Taylor, John Butler, and Glen Tetley. Among celebrities who have joined

the Company in performance are Mikhail Baryshnikov, Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Maya Plisetskaya, Tiler Peck, Misty Copeland, Herman Cornejo, and Aurélie Dupont.

In recent years, the Company has challenged expectations and experimented with a wide range of offerings beyond its mainstage performances. It has created a series of intimate in-studio events, forged unusual creative partnerships with the likes of SITI Company, Performa, the New Museum, Barney's, and Siracusa's Greek Theater Festival (to name a few); created substantial digital offerings with Google Arts and Culture, YouTube, and Cennarium; and created a model for reaching new audiences through social media. The astonishing list of artists who have created works for the Graham dancers in the last decade reads like a catalog of must-see choreographers: Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Lucinda Childs, Marie Chouinard, Michelle Dorrance, Nacho Duato, Mats Ek, Andonis Foniadakis, Liz Gerring, Larry Keigwin, Michael Kliën, Pontus Lidberg, Lil Buck, Lar Lubovitch, Josie Moseley, Richard Move, Bulareyaung Pagarlava, Annie-B Parson, Yvonne Rainer, Sonya Tayeh, Doug Varone, Luca Vegetti, Gwen Welliver, and Robert Wilson.

The current company dancers hail from around the world and, while grounded in their Graham core training, can also slip into the style of contemporary choreographers like a second skin, bringing technical brilliance and artistic nuance to all they do—from brand new works to Graham classics and those from early pioneers such as Isadora Duncan, Jane Dudley, Anna Sokolow, and Mary Wigman. "Some of the most skilled and powerful dancers you can ever hope to see," according to *The Washington Post* last year. "One of the great companies of the world," says *The New York Times*, while *The Los Angeles Times* notes, "They seem able to do anything, and to make it look easy as well as poetic."

JANET EILBER (Artistic Director) has been the Company's Artistic

Director since 2005. Her direction has focused on creating new forms of audience access to Martha Graham's masterworks. These initiatives include contextual programming, educational and community partnerships, use of new media, commissions from today's top choreographers, and creative events such as the *Lamentation Variations*. Earlier in her career, as a principal dancer with the Company, Ms. Eilber worked closely with Martha Graham. She danced many of Graham's greatest roles, had roles created for her by Graham, and was directed by Graham in most of the major roles of the repertory. She soloed at the White House, was partnered by Rudolf Nureyev, starred in three segments of *Dance in America*, and has since taught, lectured, and directed Graham ballets internationally. Apart from her work with Graham, Ms. Eilber has performed in films, on television, and on Broadway directed by such greats as Agnes de Mille and Bob Fosse, and has received four Lester Horton Awards for her reconstruction and performance of seminal American modern dance. She has served as Director of Arts Education for the Dana Foundation, guiding the Foundation's support for Teaching Artist training and contributing regularly to its arts education publications. Ms. Eilber is a Trustee Emeritus of the Interlochen Center for the Arts. She is married to screenwriter/director John Warren, with whom she has two daughters, Madeline and Eva.

DENISE VALE (Senior Artistic Associate) joined the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1985, attaining the rank of principal dancer. Roles performed include *The Pioneering Woman* in *Appalachian Spring*, *Woman in White* in *Diversion of Angels*, Chorus Leader in *Night Journey*, Chorus in *Cave of the Heart*, the Attendant in *Hérodiade*, Leader in the 1980s reconstruction of "Steps in the Street", and *Night Chant*, a ballet created for Ms. Vale by Martha Graham in 1989. Graham solos

performed include *Lamentation*, *Frontier*, *Satyrical Festival Song*, and *Serenata Morisca*.

LLOYD KNIGHT (Dancer) joined the Company in 2005 and performs lead roles in *Appalachian Spring*, *Embattled Garden*, *Errand into the Maze*, *The Rite of Spring*, and others. Born in England and raised in Miami, he trained at Miami Conservatory of Ballet and graduated from New World School of the Arts, under the direction of Daniel Lewis. There he worked with choreographers Donald McKayle, Robert Battle, and Michael Uthoff. He received scholarships to The Ailey School and Dance Theatre of Harlem. *Dance Magazine* named him one of the “Top 25 Dancers to Watch” in 2010. Knight partnered Wendy Whelan in *Moon* and Misty Copeland in *At Summer’s Full*.

BEN SCHULTZ (Dancer) joined the Company in 2009 and dances lead roles including King Hades in *Clytemnestra* and Jason in *Cave of the Heart*. He premiered Martha Graham’s work in Russia, performing *Errand into the Maze* with prima ballerina Diana Vishneva at the Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg. Earlier dance credits include the Tony Award® winning *Blast!*, the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, and Hannah Kahn Contemporary Dance. Mr. Schultz has served as faculty and resident choreographer for the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities. Schultz starred in the world premiere of *AXE*, a work created by Mats Ek for the Company.

XIN YING (Dancer) joined the Company in 2011 and performs lead roles in *Cave of the Heart*, *Chronicle*, *Diversion of Angels*, *Clytemnestra*, *Woodland*, and *I used to love you*, among others. In 2008 she received the China Dance Lotus Award. She was the director of the Dance Department at Sichuan College of Arts & Culture and a guest teacher at The Graham School, the Beijing Dance Academy, and Nanjing University of Arts. She

was awarded a full scholarship to The Graham School, and was a member of Graham 2.

LLOYD MAYOR (Dancer) joined the Company in 2012 and performs lead roles in *Appalachian Spring*, *Diversion of Angels*, *Embattled Garden*, Andonis Foniadakis’s *Echo*, and Richard Move’s *The Show (Achilles Heels)*, first danced by Mikhail Baryshnikov. In 2014, Mayor was honored with the Clive Barnes Dance Award and is now a board member of the Foundation. For the Company’s 90th anniversary in April 2016, Mayor danced an excerpt of *Appalachian Spring* with former Étoile and Artistic Director of the Paris Opera Ballet, Aurélie Dupont.

NATASHA M. DIAMOND-WALKER (Dancer) is from Los Angeles, California, and joined the Company in 2011. Her favorite Graham roles to perform are The Chorus in *Cave of the Heart*, Lilith from *Embattled Garden*, and The Pioneering Woman in *Appalachian Spring*. While with the Company, Diamond-Walker has worked closely in originating roles with Annie-B Parson, Maxine Doyle, Bobbi Jene Smith, Pam Tanowitz, Lil Buck, and Nacho Duato. She can also be seen cameo-ing in myriad TV/Film projects. Diamond-Walker holds a B.F.A. from Fordham University.

LORENZO PAGANO (Dancer) joined the Company in 2012 and dances lead roles in Graham’s *Appalachian Spring*, *Embattled Garden*, *Night Journey*, and *Diversion of Angels* and in contemporary works by Andonis Foniadakis, Lucinda Childs, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Nacho Duato, Pontus Lidberg, and Lar Lubovitch. A native of Torino, Italy, he moved to the U.S. and trained as a scholarship student at The School at Jacob’s Pillow and The Martha Graham School. In 2016 Pagano received the Italian International Dance Award for “Male Rising Star”.

CHARLOTTE LANDREAU (Dancer) is a native of France, and joined the Company in 2013. She dances lead roles in Graham’s *Appalachian Spring* (The Bride), *Errand into the Maze*, *The Rite of Spring* (The Chosen One),

and *Maple Leaf Rag*. She trained as a rhythmic gymnast and studied ballet, circus, acting, and modern dance at the Maurice Béjart School (Switzerland). In 2012 she received a scholarship to study at the Martha Graham School. Landreau danced with Graham 2 and was honored with the Pearl Lang Award.

ANNE O’DONNELL (Dancer) joined the Company in 2014 and performs lead roles in Graham’s *Appalachian Spring*, *Dark Meadow Suite*, *El Penitente*, *Diversion of Angels*, and new works by Maxine Doyle and Bobbi Jene Smith, Pam Tanowitz, Annie-B Parson, Mats Ek, Lar Lubovitch, and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. She danced with Ailey II and Buglisi Dance Theatre and attended The School at Jacob’s Pillow’s Contemporary Program, Glimmerglass Opera Festival, and Springboard Danse Montréal. She appeared on the cover of *Dance Spirit’s* February 2016 Issue “Young and Modern”.

LESLIE ANDREA WILLIAMS (Dancer) was born in Newport News, VA, and grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. Williams joined the Company just two months after graduating from The Juilliard School in May 2015. Since then, she has performed numerous featured roles in iconic Graham ballets such as *Chronicle*, *Appalachian Spring*, *Diversion of Angels*, and *Embattled Garden*. She was recently featured in *Dance Magazine* as a dancer “On The Rise.”

ANNE SOUDER (Dancer) joined the Company in 2015 and performs lead roles in Graham’s *Dark Meadow Suite*, “Steps in the Street”, and *Deep Song*, and works by Marie Chouinard and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Souder began her training in Maryville, Tennessee and continued to earn her degree in the Ailey/Fordham B.F.A. program, graduating with a double major in Dance and Theology. There she performed works by Alvin Ailey, Ronald K. Brown, Dwight Rhoden, and more. Upon graduation, she joined Graham 2 and was awarded a Dizzy Feet Foundation scholarship.

LAUREL DALLEY SMITH (Dancer) is from England, and joined the Company in 2015. She performs lead roles in Graham's *Errand into the Maze*, *Maple Leaf Rag*, and *Diversion of Angels*, and roles in contemporary works by Marie Chouinard, Pontus Lidberg, and Annie-B Parson. Ms. Dalley Smith graduated from Central School of Ballet with 1st class Honours. Before joining Graham she performed with the U.K. tour of *West Side Story*, Joss Arnott Dance, and Yorke Dance Project, creating roles in Robert Cohan's 2014 *Lingua Franca* and *Lacrymosa*.

SO YOUNG AN (Dancer) joined the Company in 2016. An received a B.F.A. from Dong-Ah University in Korea. She is the recipient of the 1995 International Arts Award and the Grand Prize at the Korea National Ballet Grand Prix in 2001. She has danced with Korea National Ballet Company and Buglisi Dance Theatre and has also performed works by Yuri Grigorovich, Jean Christophe Maillot, Mats Ek, Patricia Ruanne, and Samantha Dunster.

MARZIA MEMOLI (Dancer) is from Palermo, Italy, joined the Company in 2016, and performs lead roles in Graham's *El Penitente*, "Steps in the Street", and works by Pontus Lidberg, Bobbi Jene Smith, Maxine Doyle, and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. In 2018 *Dance Spirit* said she "may be the...Company's newest dancer, but her classical lines and easy grace are already turning heads". She graduated from the Academy of Teatro Carcano in Milan and the Béjart school, where she performed with the Béjart Ballet Lausanne.

JACOB LARSEN (Dancer) joined the Company in 2016. Larsen received his B.F.A. from Marymount Manhattan College where he performed works by Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Azure Barton, Loni Landon, and Ray Mercer. At Springboard Danse Montréal 2015 he performed works by Alexander Ekman and Banning Boulding. Larsen trained at the Graham School and was a member of Graham 2.

ALYSSA CEBULSKI (Dancer) was born and raised in Michigan, where she trained at Valentina's School of Ballet. She graduated from Marymount Manhattan College in 2016 with a

B.F.A. in Ballet under the direction of Katie Langan. She has performed works by Dwight Rhoden, Kate Skarpetowska, Azure Barton, and Darrell Grand Moultrie, among others. She was a member of Graham 2.

ALESSIO CROGNALE (Dancer) is from Abruzzo, Italy, and joined the Company in 2017. He began his training in his hometown and then pursued his major in Ballet at the Academy of Teatro Carcano in Milan. Mr. Crognale trained at the Graham School where he graduated in 2016 and was a member of Graham 2. He danced with Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company in 2016 and 2017.

AOI SATO (Dancer) started ballet training at Liscombe International Ballet School in Japan. She received a scholarship at the Alvin Ailey School and performed *Memoria* with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT) for the City Center Season and at Lincoln Center for director of AAADT Robert Battle's work. She has performed works by Martha Graham, Virginie Mécène, Tracy Inman, Nai-Ni Chen, and more. Sato was a member of Graham 2 and was honored with Pearl Lang Award for Excellence in Performance.

Major support for the Martha Graham Dance Company is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council, New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, and the New York State Legislature.

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PILLOWNOTES

by Norton Owen

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

The iconic status of great artists sometimes makes it difficult to envision them as anything but full-blown geniuses. And yet their biographies—and simple logic—tell us that Picasso did indeed have a childhood and even Stravinsky was once an inexperienced young pianist. And so it is that Martha Graham, arguably the 20th century's most influential modern dancer and choreographer, was once a gawky adolescent and later a promising student at Denishawn, the Los Angeles-based school and company run by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn.

Of course, even in her childhood—or at least in her recollection of it—the seeds of Graham's artistry were evident. Her father was an alienist (an arcane term for a doctor handling mental disorders), and young Martha was influenced by his keen observation skills. She once learned a lesson she never forgot when she told her father a falsehood which he detected in her body language. "Movement never lies," is the dictum she carried forward from that day, and this philosophy can still be discerned in Graham dances such as the classic *Lamentation*, in which emotion is expressed purely through movement. The innovations of *Lamentation* are explored on this program by three of the *Lamentation Variations*, expressed through the vastly different styles of Aszure Barton, Michelle Dorrance, and Liz Gerring.

Graham's quest to express big ideas through a new dance vocabulary must certainly have been one of the reasons that she chose to leave Denishawn after having apprenticed, taught, and performed there over a period of seven formative years. She felt trapped by the trifles in which she was obliged to appear, even as Shawn sought to utilize her forceful stage presence in more serious works such as *Xochitl*, in which she played the title role of a spirited Aztec princess who marries an Emperor, portrayed by Shawn.

As distant as these works may be from Graham's own later work, she once wrote to Shawn, "The artist in me was born in Denishawn," and she also referred to her apprenticeship in more general terms. "It is a mistake to believe that modern dancing is something unrelated to anything that has gone before," she wrote in 1937. "It is only by knowing the rules that it becomes possible to break and change them."

Martha Graham continued breaking rules for the rest of her life, especially the ones suggesting that dance should be merely a pretty pastime. "Like the modern painters and architects, we have stripped our medium of decorative unessentials," she once wrote. "Just as fancy trimmings are no longer seen on buildings, so dancing is no longer padded. It is not 'pretty' but it is much more real." Her first New York concert in 1926 featured such derivative works as *The Three Gopi Maidens*, which would have looked perfectly at home on a Denishawn program. But a mere three years later, she was presenting shockingly stark new dances such as *Heretic* and, soon after, the breakthrough *Primitive Mysteries*. Some critics, such as John Martin in *The New York Times*, championed her cause, while others ridiculed her. Even Fanny Brice took a stab at her in a *Ziegfeld Follies of 1936* number called "Modernistic Moe."

Graham persevered in spite of, or perhaps because of the struggle. In time, she conquered the same audiences who were initially puzzled and angered by her work. Some of her dances have entered the standard repertoire, such as the current Pillow program's *Appalachian Spring* (1944) with its commissioned score by Aaron Copland, and *Diversion of Angels* (1949), which has been performed by American Ballet Theatre and the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Other works, such as the full-evening *Clytemnestra* (1958), are rarely performed but may still be appreciated today as towering achievements in telling stories through movement. Revolutionary though she was, Graham's ultimate goal was communication, and she always endeavored to connect with her audiences on a gut level. Even when viewers didn't fully comprehend her dances, their power could be felt in a visceral sense.

Thankfully, Graham's choreographic legacy is now unencumbered after years of uncertainty triggered by Graham herself. The choreographer Antony Tudor once asked her if she wished to be remembered more as a dancer or as a choreographer. When she answered, "A dancer," Tudor replied, "I pity you." Perhaps this ambivalence caused her to avoid safeguarding her works even as she continued to create them until her death in 1991. Much of the legal haggling which played out quite publicly for many years could have been averted if she had properly copyrighted her dances. But instead, she left behind a tangle of opposing forces, insuring that she would continue to stimulate dramatic conflict offstage as well as on, long after her death.

Although Graham revered her Denishawn roots and expressed admiration for the Pillow's archival resources when she first brought her company here in 1984, Agnes de Mille, author of the fascinating but idiosyncratic *Martha: The Life and Times of Martha Graham*, wrote of how Graham had made things difficult for biographers by destroying personal documents and letters. "Martha always wanted to leave behind a legend, not a biography," de Mille wrote.

While Graham herself remains legendary, the company has moved beyond the drama under the direction of former company member Janet Eilber since 2005. Institutional stability has been a primary focus, and both the company and school are now housed in the iconic Greenwich Village studio space where Graham's onetime disciple Merce Cunningham headquartered his own operations for decades. The classic Graham works are freshly reimagined and contextualized (as in the current EVE Project which honors the progress of women over the past century), with new dances regularly added into the mix, such as the company's newest work, *Deo*, by Gaga-trained Bobbi Jene Smith and theatrical choreographer Maxine Doyle. All of these initiatives ensure that the Graham legacy will continue to live on as something much more than mere legend.

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For further reading:

Blood Memory by Martha Graham (Doubleday, 1991)

Goddess: Martha Graham's Dancers Remember by Robert Tracy (Limelight Editions, 1997)