

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PHOTOS CONTACT:**

Nicole Tomasofsky, Public Relations & Communications Manager

413.243.9919 x132

[ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org](mailto:ntomasofsky@jacobspillow.org)

## JACOB'S PILLOW ANNOUNCES 2019-2020 PILLOW LAB ARTIST RESIDENCIES

September 25, 2019 (Becket, MA)—Jacob's Pillow announces this season's artist residencies offered at the Pillow Lab, its year-round incubator of new work. The annual season of customizable residencies supports U.S.-based and international dance artists during crucial development, research, and technical stages of choreography-driven projects. The 2019-2020 recipients include Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Brian Brooks, Milka Djordjevich, Alice Gosti, Kinetic Light, Stephanie McKee-Anderson, Aakash Odedra, RUBBERBAND, Didy Veldman, and Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre.

"The Pillow Lab has become a vibrant and robust opportunity for artists to gain resources they need to develop their work. We're just beginning to see what a strong investment in the development of new work can mean in the creative lifespan of an artist, to our Festival and to the field at large," says Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge.

Artists and their collaborators receive unrestricted use of the Pillow's state-of-the-art facilities, which include the 7,000 square-foot Perles Family Studio, as well as the Doris Duke Theatre, a convertible black-box theater space with full production capabilities. Artists also receive free housing, a stipend, professionally filmed video documentation, access to the Pillow's extensive Archives, and funding for an "outside eye," an editor or dramaturg to provide important feedback. Artists benefit from the retreat-like atmosphere and generative landscape that the Pillow's remote location provides.

In its third year of serving artists, the Pillow Lab reimagined a residency program that has existed in various forms since the Pillow's inception in the early 1930s. Built from a field-wide scan which included interviews with a diverse group of 36 U.S.-based choreographers and examined existing choreographic residency programs at peer institutions, the Pillow Lab fits into the overall national and international dance ecology with a distinctive mission, vision, set of values, and approach.

Choreographers selected for a residency through the Pillow Lab are chosen by Tatge working with her curatorial team. Most residencies culminate with an informal work-in-progress showing as part of the In Process Series. Showings are limited to an intimate, invited audience of Jacob's Pillow Members and faculty and students from the College Partnership Program, and provide valuable feedback through a structured feedback session.

Previous Pillow Lab residency recipients include Ephrat Asherie, Bryan Arias, Ronald K. Brown, Jean Butler, Zoe Scofield, Bebe Miller, and Liz Lerman. Notably, four works developed at the Pillow Lab were performed as part of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2019 including David Roussève/REALITY's tribute to Billy Strayhorn, *Halfway to Dawn*; the world premiere of Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group's *POWER*; Caleb Teicher & Company's *More Forever* in collaboration with composer Cornad Tao; and the collaboration between Sara Mearns and Wang Ramirez, *No. 1*.

### **2019-2020 Pillow Lab Residency Season**

*Artist information and descriptions follow. The work created during the residency is at varying stages of development and may or may not be performed at the Festival.*

### **A.I.M by Kyle Abraham**

Founded by Jacob's Pillow Dance Award Winner and MacArthur "Genius" Kyle Abraham, A.I.M returns to Jacob's Pillow for a technical residency for Abraham's *An Untitled Love*. This evening-length work explores the concept of 'Black Love' through the lens of GRAMMY Award-winning R&B legend D'Angelo's 2014 album *Black Messiah* and a creative process that celebrates love and unity in the black community with multi-generational conversations.

Aligning with the company's mission, Abraham's work focuses on the African-American communal experience, and its intersection with the personal or individual experience. For *An Untitled Love*, Abraham addresses a specific aspect of black culture in the United States—'Black Love'—exploring its many and various definitions within the community and individually, through movement joined with music.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion in *Dearest Home*:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/kyle-abraham-abraham-in-motion/dearest-home/>

### **Aszure Barton**

Choreographer Aszure Barton is an innovator of form with an impressive career that includes choreographing for the Bavarian State Ballet, the English National Ballet, and the National Ballet of Canada, as well as facilitating the evolution of highly specialized dance companies into the present. In 2002, she founded her own company, Aszure Barton & Artists, with whom she has developed a comprehensive choreographic language.

Barton's time at the Pillow Lab will be dedicated to exploring the substantial technical and visual elements of *WHERE THERE'S FORM (#WTF)*. This new work, created in collaboration with distinguished experimental German pianist and composer Hauschka, explores an intensive dialogue between dance and music. Barton and Hauschka work to collaboratively reveal passionate, smart bodies, and sounds, which demonstrate humanity's capacity for coexistence.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

ASzURe & Artists in *Lascilo Perdere (A journey of letting go)*:

[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aszure-artists/lascilo-perdere-a-journey-of-letting-go/](https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aszure-artists/lascilo-perdere-a-journey-of-letting-go/)

### **Brian Brooks**

Brian Brooks is an award-winning choreographer and a Mellon Creative Research Fellow at the University of Washington's Meany Center for the Performing Arts. Brooks has created works for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Miami City Ballet, and his own New York-based company, Brian Brooks Moving Company.

In his most recent project, Brooks investigates dancing in the intimate spaces between our bodies on stage and the virtual space created through immersive technologies. During his residency at the Pillow Lab, Brooks will further develop his motion capture project that began as part of his Fellowship. Using motion capture sensors to gather layered movement data, Brooks is building a movement analysis application that can be used by choreographers and dancers to support creative inquiry. This helps fuel his choreographic process as both a reflective and generative tool.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Brian Brooks Moving Company in *Motor*:

[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/brian-brooks-moving-company/motor/](https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/brian-brooks-moving-company/motor/)

### **Milka Djordjevich**

Los Angeles-based choreographer Milka Djordjevich draws from a variety of compositional strategies to create work that questions preconceived notions of what dance should or should not be. Her work has been shown at venues including the Kitchen, the Chocolate Factory Theater, and the Whitney Museum, among others.

In the developing work *CORPS*, Djordjevich examines labor and the feminine body through the lens of regimented movement, revealing similarities across traditional, militaristic, ritual, athletic, and folk movement forms. The work is a continuation of Djordjevich's ongoing questioning of contemporary dance's preoccupation with neutrality, anonymity, and the de-sexualization of the female body. *CORPS* aims to unravel the history of patriarchal militaristic conditioning of regimented movement and reclaim its manipulation, control, and suppression of female bodies. The evening-length dance is developed with an esteemed professional group of six dancers: Laurel Atwell, Dorothy Dubrule, Allie Hankins, Tiara Jackson, Daeun Jung and devika wickremesinghe; as well as composer Chris Peck, lighting designer Madeline Best, and scenic designer Shannon Scrofano.

### **Alice Gosti**

Italian-American Immigrant choreographer Alice Gosti creates and curates hybrid performance between Seattle and Europe. Gosti's work has been commissioned and presented nationally by On the Boards, Velocity Dance Center, ODC Theater (SF), and Performance Works Northwest (PDX), among others, and internationally in Italy, including Associazione Culturale Dance Gallery and CAOS in Terni.

Gosti develops *Where is home*, a new interdisciplinary dance project, at the Pillow Lab. The multi-year dance project engages community and explores immigration. It will include performances, workshops, community meals, and interviews, documenting the diverse and vast immigrant experience. While in residence at the Pillow Lab, Gosti will develop several components of the ongoing project, including a gathering inviting local immigrants from Berkshire County to share an intimate meal and providing an opportunity to build community around the immigrant experience across age, social strata, and origin. This will act as the first steps towards putting together a large-scale performance created, performed, and designed entirely by immigrants from all corners of the U.S.

### **Kinetic Light**

Under the direction and artistic leadership of Alice Sheppard, Kinetic Light is a project-based ensemble of three disabled artists committed to intersectional disability aesthetics and culture and accessibility as central parts of the art and creative process. Members include Sheppard (artistic director, choreographer, dancer), Laurel Lawson (technology lead, dancer, choreographic collaborator), and Michael Maag (lighting, video, and projection designer). Working in the disciplines of art, technology, design, and dance, Kinetic Light creates, performs, and teaches at the nexus of access, disability, dance, and race. In the ensemble's work, intersectional disability is an aesthetic, a culture, and an essential element of their artistry.

Kinetic Light returns to the Pillow to further develop their newest work *WIRED*, an immersive dance experience of sound, light, and movement. *WIRED* traces the fine line between "us" and "them," while studying the gendered, raced, and disabled stories of barbed wire, showing how it shapes common understandings of belonging. Kinetic Light has performed nationally with support from the New England Foundation for the Arts and the National Dance Project touring grant.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Kinetic Light in *Under Momentum*:

[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/kinetic-light/under-momentum/](https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/kinetic-light/under-momentum/)

### **Stephanie McKee-Anderson**

Stephanie McKee-Anderson is a New Orleans-based performer, choreographer, educator, facilitator, and cultural organizer, as well as a 2019-2020 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellow. McKee-Anderson is the Artistic Director for Junebug Productions Inc., the organizational successor to the Free Southern Theater (FST), which was formed in 1963 as a cultural arm of the Civil Rights Movement. Her work is deeply committed to creating art that substantively reflects disparate conditions as a powerful tool for change.

The developing multidisciplinary project *I Am My Mother's Daughter...Black Women's Love Legacy* explores the love legacies told through the maternal line. McKee-Anderson hopes to weave together storytelling, dance, video projection, and audition recordings to map the maternal heart. She will begin with her own family to gather archives, artifacts, and stories that represent the different maternal love languages. McKee-Anderson is an alumnus of The School at Jacob's Pillow's Cultural Traditions Program.

### **Aakash Odedra**

Aakash Odedra is an internationally acclaimed British contemporary dancer who has trained in classical Indian dance styles Kathak and Bharatanatyam. His early development in the United Kingdom was supported by Sampad, an organization dedicated to South Asian Arts in the U.K., and Akademi, the official home of South Asian dance in the U.K. Based in Leicester, U.K., Aakash Odedra Company exists as a vehicle for commissioning solos and for developing Odedra's own choreographic work.

At the Pillow Lab, Odedra further develops the new work *Samsara* with Chinese collaborator Hu Shenyuan, considered one of the most outstanding dancers of his generation in China. Inspired by Wu Cheng'en's classic 16th century Chinese novel *Journey to the West*, this story of cultural exchange and common philosophy depicts the journey of Buddhist philosophy from India to China, inspired by the real life monk Xuanzang who undertook a pilgrimage in the 7th century.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Aakash Odedra performing Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's solo *Constellation* in *RISING*:  
[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aakash-odedrea/constellation/](http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aakash-odedrea/constellation/)

### **RUBBERBAND**

Founded in 2002 by Victor Quijada in Montreal, the company RUBBERBAND is recognized worldwide for its innovation and significant contribution in dance and for its role in a new style inspired by breakdancing, classical ballet, and dance theatre. Since its founding, RUBBERBAND has staged 14 full-length productions and toured throughout Canada, the U.S., Europe, and Mexico.

RUBBERBAND develops *Trenzado*, a new work that marks Quijada's return to the stage as a dancer. In a poetic way, the work raises the question of what it is to be from everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Quijada draws on his own background as a Canada-based American citizen of Mexican heritage and builds upon themes of roots, boundaries, homeland, and loss. The work is shaped in two parts, a solo and a group piece, and centered around a demountable aluminum structure by visual artist Sylvain Baumann. The production is set to original music by Jasper Gahunia—also present on stage—that reconfigures the traditional poignant Mexican musical genre of *canto cardenche* and deconstructs the *norteño* style (*corrido* and *ranchera*).

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

RUBBERBAND Dance Group in *sHip sHop Shape Shifting*:  
[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/rubberbandance-group/ship-shop-shape-shifting/](http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/rubberbandance-group/ship-shop-shape-shifting/)

## Didy Veldman

London-based Dutch choreographer Didy Veldman founded Humanooove in 2016 to discover new theatrical movement languages through research and collaboration. After a performance career that spanned 14 years with Scapino Ballet, Geneva Ballet, Alias Company, and Rambert Dance Company, Veldman has created over 45 works for 27 leading international companies including Cullberg Ballet, Goteborg Ballet, and Icelandic Dance Company. Since its founding, Humanooove has premiered two evening-length productions, *The Knot* and *The Happiness Project*, the latter of which had its U.S. premiere at Jacob's Pillow during Festival 2019.

*@HOME* is a physical, theatrical, and compelling performance about who we are, how we fit in, and where we belong in our ever-changing world. Inspired by modern working lives spent travelling across borders, transforming hotels, airplanes, and trains into de facto homes, this new work explores the diminishing importance of family rites and rituals in today's globalized and digitally driven society. Performed by a diverse cast of dancers with music from composer Sabio Janiak and an interactive set design, this thought-provoking work questions whether we fear to go beyond our comfort zones and what it means to truly feel at home.

Related Content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Didy Veldman in "Women in Dance:"

[danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/themes-essays/women-in-dance/didy-veldman/](https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/themes-essays/women-in-dance/didy-veldman/)

## Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre

Founded by choreographer Samar Haddad King, Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSDT) creates invigorating performance and education programs that expand access to—and promote understanding through—the arts. YSDT believes art should be liberating, transformative, and accessible to all. The company operates out of New York and Palestine and is committed to uniting diverse artists and audiences in the creative process.

The developing work *Last Ward* continues YSDT's vision to create work that unites audiences in the human experience and amplifies the narratives of marginalized communities. Written and directed by Amir Nizar Zuabi with choreography and music by Samar Haddad King, *Last Ward* blends dance and theater as it follows one man's journey towards death in a hospital room. Surrounded by the sterile mechanisms of modern medicine, the patient reflects on his life, relationships, and connection to place as the ritual of doctor visits and family calls merge with his imagination into an increasingly bizarre landscape of tragedy and humor. *Last Ward* has been created across three continents—through residencies at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York, at Chaillot Théâtre National de la Danse in Paris, and continues in its final creation period at the Pillow Lab.

## 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, currently in the midst of 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 over 500 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs. The School at Jacob's Pillow, one of the field's most prestigious professional dance training centers, encompasses the diverse disciplines of Contemporary Ballet, Contemporary, Tap, Photography, Choreography, and an annual rotating program. The Pillow also provides professional advancement opportunities across disciplines of arts administration, design, video, and production through seasonal internships and a year-round Administrative Fellows program. With growing community engagement programs, the Pillow serves as a partner and active citizen in its local community. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public and online at [danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org](https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org), 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. The Pillow's Director since 2016 is Pamela Tatge. For more information, visit [www.jacobspillow.org](http://www.jacobspillow.org).

