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JACOB'S PILLOW ANNOUNCES CANCELLATION OF 2020 FESTIVAL

March 31, 2020 (Becket, MA)—Since 1933, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival has presented dance artists from around the nation and the world at its historic site in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts, in recent decades growing to a 10-week festival featuring more than 50 national and international dance companies with over 500 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs.

For the first time in its 88 year history, the Jacob's Pillow Board of Trustees and Executive Leadership have made the decision to cancel the 2020 Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, previously scheduled for June 24-August 30 along with its annual gala scheduled for June 20. The Pillow, which has expanded to a year-round center over the past four years, cancelled all public events, artist residencies, and rentals from March 13-April 25 earlier this month in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and in accordance with state and federal mandates.

"For the safety of our staff, artists, audiences, and the larger Berkshire community, this is our only responsible action. If our collective efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 are effective, and people are able to congregate again in August, we will make every effort to try to bring audiences together in keeping with the public safety guidelines in effect at that time," says Jacob's Pillow Executive & Artistic Director, Pamela Tatge. "This is extremely difficult news to deliver; in the coming months we will do all we can to take care of our staff, artists, community, and audiences."

"As the Board of Trustees, it is our first responsibility to ensure the health and safety of our staff, artists and audiences. The global pandemic has put our beloved Festival and all who animate it at risk. We also are charged with serving as stewards of the Pillow's fiscal health, and have been forced to make difficult choices as a result of the cancellation. I have tremendous faith in the Pillow's leadership and staff to shepherd the organization through these trying times," says Christopher Jones, Chair of Jacob's Pillow Board of Trustees.

The organization's operating budget is \$8 million and nearly 50% of its annual revenue comes from Festival ticket sales and ancillary activities. As a result of the cancellation, and to protect the fiscal health of the organization, the Pillow will reduce its year-round workforce of 45 full-time employees by 40%; laying off ten people and leaving eight open positions unfilled. Additionally, ten full-time employees will be moved to a part-time schedule, effective April 6. The remaining 17 full-time employees will receive pay cuts ranging from 20-30%. Contracts for more than 40 seasonal staff have

been cancelled and the organization's Intern Program for 33 young people from around the world has been eliminated for 2020. Those laid off will be eligible for coverage under the organization's healthcare, through July 31 of this year.

In the coming months, Jacob's Pillow will deliver digital content drawn from the Pillow's extensive Archives, create new programs featuring artists that were scheduled this summer, and produce a new series of online PillowTalks. The Pillow is also exploring moving its professional training intensives offered at The School at Jacob's Pillow online, and plans to resume its community engagement programs across Berkshire County as soon as it is safe to bring people together.

The full statement issued by Pamela Tatge can be found below.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of Jacob's Pillow, I send my warmest wishes to all of you and hope that you and your loved ones remain safe and healthy.

By now, I'm sure you have received many cancellation announcements from arts organizations you treasure. It is very hard to tell you that, for the first time in our 88-year history, our Board and Executive Leadership have made the difficult decision to cancel the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival this summer. For the safety of our staff, artists, audiences, and the larger Berkshire community, this is our only responsible course of action.

This is extremely difficult news to deliver to the hundreds of individuals that make the festival possible each year. COVID-19 has not only endangered the health and lives of millions around the world, but it has also devastated our field. The arts and entertainment industries have proven to be one of the most vulnerable sectors. Artists and arts workers are losing income, health care, and in many cases, are not eligible for unemployment benefits. We face a harsh and disheartening reality.

But we face it together. As stewards of the only National Landmark dedicated to dance, we at Jacob's Pillow reaffirm our faith in humanity's resilience and in dance as a force that mobilizes people toward a greater good. Dance is moving, it is about agility and strength, and it's about our need to partner to bring ideas to life. Dance is an expression of the irrepressible urge to create something out of nothing and give meaning to our precious time on Earth.

Jacob's Pillow remains unwavering in the commitment to our mission: To support dance creation, presentation, education, and preservation; and to engage and deepen public appreciation and support for dance.

In the coming months, we will do all we can to take care of our staff, community, artists, and audiences. With regards to our staff, many of you know that over the past four years, Jacob's Pillow has grown into a year-round center. With the necessary cancellation of Spring programming and the summer Festival, which comprises 50% of our income, we must greatly reduce our workforce and institute deep pay cuts

for those who remain. This has been an excruciating decision, as Team Pillow is a collective of like-minded people with shared values that does so much to advance our mission.

In recognition of the profound impact of this global crisis, we are working with Festival 2020 artists on how we can support their work now and in the future; we plan to resume our community engagement programs around Berkshire County as soon as it's safe to bring people together; Program Directors at The School are working on creative ways to deliver their programs online to nurture the artistic development of the next generation of dancers; and ticket buyers will be eligible to receive a full refund on their tickets and season packages, obtain a credit for next year, or if they choose, convert their purchase to a donation. Details are available now on our website.

Meanwhile, we will use our digital platform to offer ways for our Pillow community around the world to connect with what is quintessential about the Pillow experience. Every week, we will bring you content drawn from our extensive dance Archives. We will find ways to connect you digitally with Festival 2020 artists and we will host a new series of online PillowTalks curated by our Director of Preservation, Norton Owen.

We will also be in close dialogue with artists and our local community to inform our next steps. When the time is right, we'll look to create strategies that support our mutual recoveries and well being.

At times like these, we can find comfort in the courage and moral imagination of our ancestors and predecessors. In the midst of World War II, with its many shortages and hardships, Pillow founder Ted Shawn wrote, "Jacob's Pillow has great and necessary work to do...and we must carry on no matter what the difficulties." We continue with that conviction today more than ever.

We want to thank you for your enduring dedication to our beloved Jacob's Pillow. I particularly want to thank our Members, whose steadfast support enables us to dream big and achieve so many important milestones. Your support is needed and appreciated. If you are interested in learning how you can support dance artists and the Pillow during this time, I urge you to refer to a list of relief funds on our website and to consider making a tax-deductible donation to our organization.

If our collective efforts to "flatten the curve" of infection work, and people are able to congregate again in August, we will make every effort to try to bring people together in keeping with the public safety guidelines in effect at that time.

Meanwhile, please stay well. And keep in touch—reach out to us in the weeks ahead. We look forward to staying connected to you virtually and welcoming you back to the Pillow when it's safe, to celebrate this artform and what it represents: the indomitable resiliency of the human spirit. Again, in the words of Ted Shawn, "Dance We Must."

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, Musical Theatre Dance, Photography, Choreography, and an annual rotating program (Street & Club Dances in 2020). 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, 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.

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