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**RENOWNED TAP COMPANY DORRANCE DANCE &
PARIS OPERA BALLET OPEN FIRST WEEK OF JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL
IN A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND HYBRID FORMAT,
FEATURING ONSITE AND ONLINE PERFORMANCES**

June 15, 2021 (BECKET, Mass.)—Dorrance Dance and Paris Opéra Ballet will kick off Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2021 in its opening week later this month. Dorrance Dance's performances mark the first live, in-person performances at the Pillow since 2019, while at the same time Paris Opéra Ballet will stream exclusively online for two weeks - a first for the Festival. Dorrance Dance, helmed by artistic leaders Michelle Dorrance, Josette Wiggan-Freund, and Nicholas Van Young, will appear outdoors on the Henry J. Leir Stage and in a roving site-specific performance around the Pillow campus from June 30-July 4, which will be streamed online for free July 15-29.

That week, Crystal Pite's *Body and Soul*, performed by Paris Opéra Ballet, will be premiering virtually on July 1 at 7 p.m. and will be available on-demand through July 15. Streaming exclusively by Jacob's Pillow for the U.S. premiere, *Body and Soul* was originally filmed with 36 dancers in Paris at the Palais Garnier with jaw-dropping costumes, set design, and staging.

In addition to these onsite and online performances, there will also be both onsite and online PillowTalks offered free of charge including a conversation with South African artist William Kentridge (Friday, July 2)

"Dorrance Dance was set to 'play the Pillow' in 2020, but that was not to be because of the pandemic, so this extravaganza is long-awaited," said Jacob's Pillow Executive & Artistic Director Pamela Tatge. "Audiences will have the chance to experience two separate Dorrance programs, one on the Henry J. Leir stage that features excerpts of works the company has created during the past year, including one developed during their December bubble residency in the Pillow Lab. At the same time, we're thrilled to present the U.S. Premiere of Crystal Pite's *Body and Soul* to online audiences."

During July 4th week, celebrate at the Pillow with a uniquely American dance form—a tap dance takeover with dance and live music from Michelle Dorrance, Josette Wiggan-Freund, Nicholas Van Young, special guests, and the remarkable dancers and musicians of Dorrance Dance.

On the Pillow's outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage, Dorrance Dance premieres a world premiere full-company work by Nicholas Van Young with new original live music by Dorrance Dance musicians including Donovan Dorrance, Aaron Marcellus, and Gregory Richardson. Developed during a COVID-compliant residency at the Pillow Lab this past winter, the work is inspired by this past year's global experience of isolation and the concept of chaos and order. This piece is framed by a tantalizing excerpt from ...*Praise: The Inevitable Fruit of Gratitude*, created by Josette Wiggan-Freund and features the music of

jazz trumpeter extraordinaire Keyon Harrold, who will also perform live. The phenomenal company dancers and musicians embark on a journey that explores a rhythmical expression of the innermost yearnings of gratitude and praise.

In a site-specific world premiere, Dorrance Dance will also explore the unique and enchanting environment of the Pillow grounds. These special daytime matinee performances will take audiences on a roving journey that showcases the Pillow's 220-acre campus in a never-before-seen, or heard, way.

Crystal Pite's *Body and Soul* articulates Pite's ongoing fascination with conflict, connectedness and the embodiment of the human spirit. Performed in three distinct parts, with fluidity, generosity, and a rare intensity, the performance begins with a voice-over text that describes a scene of conflict between two individuals. As the performance progresses, the script's meaning morphs and deepens at each iteration, creating compelling tension between individuals, groups, and species. *Body and Soul* is a timeless, vast, and heartbreakingly intimate portrait of the human condition. Known for drawing from the languages of William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián and Mats Ek, Crystal Pite is a Vancouver-based choreographer whose work has been recognized by the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award and many other honors. This exclusive U.S. Premiere is co-sponsored by the American Friends of the Paris Opera & Ballet.

ABOUT DORRANCE DANCE

Based in New York City, Dorrance Dance was founded in 2011 by Artistic Director Michelle Dorrance with the intention to honor tap dance's history while also pushing the boundaries of the form. Dorrance Dance's work challenges the rhythm, technique, and concepts found in tap dance. Dorrance Dance received a Bessie Award in 2011 for the inaugural performances of *Remembering Jimmy* and *Three to One* and in 2015 for *The Blues Project*, a collaboration with co-creators Dormeshia, Michelle Dorrance, Derick K. Grant and musician Toshi Reagon alongside her band BIGLovely that premiered at the Pillow in 2013. The company has performed to critical acclaim in many venues across the U.S. including The Joyce Theater, The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Vail Dance Festival, and internationally in Canada, Spain, Germany, and Hong Kong.

Co-Artistic Director Michelle Dorrance is a tap phenomenon known for her virtuosic performances and choreographic innovation that has "given tap a new physical profile" as her dancers "tap from all sorts of unlikely positions, balances and trajectories" (*Los Angeles Times*). She has a strongly rooted background in tap and music that includes mentorship from Gene Medler and performance credits with *STOMP*, Savion Glover's *ti dii*, Derick K. Grant's *Imagine Tap*, and indie band Darwin Deez. She breaks the mold of tap dance by experimenting with the emotional range of the form "while exposing its true nature: that it is music" (*The New York Times*).

Josette Wiggan-Freund, Artistic Associate of Dorrance Dance, is also an artist faculty member with the Tap Dance Program at the School at Jacob's Pillow. Wiggan-Freund began dancing with Paul and Arlene Kennedy in Los Angeles, and her love of performing was refined as an adult with Lynn Dally's Jazz Tap Ensemble. A graduate of UCLA, Wiggan-Freund's career highlights include the 2001 Spotlight Award winner, 1st National Broadway Tour of *42nd Street*, and studying with Germaine Acogny in Senegal. Alongside her brother, she was part of two original casts of Cirque du Soleil's *Banana Shpeel* and the Michael Jackson: Immortal World Tour. Wiggan-Freund is a sought-after teacher, choreographer, and performer.

Associate Artistic Director Nicholas Van Young is a 2014 Bessie Award recipient. A dancer, choreographer, and musician, Van Young began his professional career at age 16 with Tapestry Dance Company based in Austin, Tex., under Acia Gray and Deirdre Strand, where he later became principal dancer and resident choreographer. He spent nearly a decade performing with *STOMP* in New York, taking on the roles of rehearsal director and lead dancer. He founded the Institute for the Rhythmic Arts and Sound Movement dance company and has performed with Beat the Donkey, Manhattan Tap, and RumbaTap.

ABOUT CRYSTAL PITE

Crystal Pite has collaborated with celebrated dance artists, theatre companies and filmmakers in Canada, Europe, and the United States. Since 2002, she has created and performed under the banner of her own company. Her work and her company have been recognized with numerous awards and commissions. Kidd Pivot tours extensively around the world with productions that include *Betroffenheit* (2015), *The Tempest Replica* (2011), *The You Show* (2010), *Dark Matters* (2009), *Lost Action* (2006), and *Double Story* (2004), created with Richard Siegal. Kidd Pivot is the recipient of the 2006 Rio Tinto Alcan Performing Arts Award, and was resident company at Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, with the support of Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain, in Frankfurt, Germany from 2010 to 2012.

ABOUT PARIS OPERA BALLET

Paris Opéra Ballet, established in France in 1661 as the Royal Academy of Dance, is the oldest national ballet company and is an integral part of the Paris Opera. The Company is located at the Palais Garnier. Since August of 2016, the Ballet has been directed and managed by Aurélie Dupont.

Jacob's Pillow Connections

Michelle Dorrance first appeared at the Pillow in 2004 with Cintia Chamecki as part of the Inside/Out Performance Series, and returned to perform her own work with Dorrance Dance for the series in 2011. In 2013, Dorrance received the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award.

Most recently, Dorrance Dance performed at the Pillow in 2018 with her work *All Good Things Come to an End* alongside Hannah Heller, Melinda Sullivan, and Josette Wiggan-Freund.

Michelle Dorrance curated *TIRELESS: A Tap Dance Experience* for Jacob's Pillow during the 2017 Festival, which brought together gifted tap dancers from the U.S. and abroad. She served as the Co-Director of the 2017 Tap Program at The School at Jacob's Pillow alongside Dormeshia and as the Director of a similar program in 2014, when Nicholas Van Young joined her on faculty for two weeks.

Dorrance Dance has developed several works at Jacob's Pillow, including her *ETM* series over multiple residencies. The company has performed for sold-out engagements during the 2018, 2016, 2015, 2014, and 2013 festivals. *The Blues Project*, co-created by Dormeshia, Michelle Dorrance, Derick K. Grant and musician Toshi Reagon, premiered in 2013 as a week-long, sold-out engagement in the Doris Duke Theatre that was reprised in 2015 in the Ted Shawn Theatre.

Crystal Pite has a long history with Jacob's Pillow, first appearing at the Festival as a dancer with Ballet BC. Pite is the 2011 recipient of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award. Her company, Kidd Pivot, debuted on the Pillow stage in 2009 with the evening-length piece *Lost Action*. Kidd Pivot returned to the Pillow in 2011 and 2012 with *Dark Matters*. Pite's work *Grace Engine* was performed at the Pillow by Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet in 2013.

Paris Opéra Ballet dancers made their Pillow debut in 1963 and have performed several times in the decades since. 3e étage, an offshoot of Paris Opera Ballet, performed at Jacob's Pillow in 2013, 2011 and 2010. The name refers to the location of the studios of the Paris Opéra Ballet, the parent company for this nimble offshoot of the world's oldest ballet company.

Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Dorrance Dance in All Good Things Must Come to an End in 2018:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/dorrance-dance/good-things-come-end/>

Dorrance Dance in ETM: Double Down in 2016:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/dorrance-dance/etm-double/>

Crystal Pite in Lost Action in 2009:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/crystal-pite/lost-action/>

Related essay and videos on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive: Women in Dance: Crystal Pite by Maura Keefe:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/themes-essays/women-in-dance/crystal-pite/>

PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS

Dorrance Dance Plays the Pillow

June 30-July 4, 6 p.m. from Wed.-Sat. and 2 p.m. on Sun.

Henry J. Leir Stage

LIVE MUSIC

\$45

Tickets are on sale now; online at jacobspillow.org and via phone at 413.243.0745.

Dorrance Dance: Site-Specific Performances

June 30-July 3, 2 p.m. Wed.-Fri. and 12 p.m. on Saturday

\$45; free online

Available to watch online July 15-29; Online premiere July 15 at 7 p.m. Tickets for on-site performances are \$45. Online shows are free; register at jacobspillow.org. Tickets are on sale now; online at jacobspillow.org and via phone 413.243.0745.

ALSO THIS WEEK

Crystal Pite's *Body and Soul*, performed by Paris Opera Ballet at Palais Garnier

Premiering July 1 at 7:30 p.m.; streaming until July 15

Online only

\$15

“One of the finest dance makers on the world stage” (*The Guardian*), Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award winner Crystal Pite joins forces with the Paris Opera Ballet in *Body and Soul*, choreographing an internationally acclaimed full length work praised for “dashes of inventiveness, brilliance and poetry” (*The New York Times*). Streaming exclusively by Jacob’s Pillow for the U.S. premiere, *Body and Soul* was originally filmed with 36 dancers at Paris’s Palais Garnier with jaw-dropping costumes, set design, and staging. Co-sponsored by the American Friends of the Paris Opera & Ballet. *This event is available only to audiences in the United States & Canada.*

PillowTalk: William Kentridge: Starve the Algorithm

Friday, July 2, premiering online at 4 p.m.

FREE

South African artist William Kentridge collaborates with Wayne Ashley, Xander Seren, and Neil Souza in a Pillow-commissioned project envisioning a new virtual performing arts platform. This event is made possible by a gift from Hunter Runnette and Mark VandenBosch.

The School at Jacob’s Pillow-Contemporary Ballet Program

July 3, 2 p.m.

FREE

Available to watch online as a livestream at date and time of performance; free tickets for the livestream can be reserved in person as well.

Free performances by The School at Jacob’s Pillow Performance Ensemble provide an inside look at The School experience and feature repertoire created on the dancers by leading choreographers who serve as program faculty. Program Directors of the Contemporary Ballet Program are Annabelle Lopez Ochoa and Luis R. Torres.

Sunday Workshop with Festival Artists: Dorrance Dance

July 4, 10 a.m.

\$20

Take a one-hour tap class with an artist of Dorrance Dance. For intermediate/advanced dancers, ages 12+. Register online at jacobspillow.org. Participants younger than 18 will require a parent/guardian’s signature on a liability waiver. *\$20/class; pre-registration required.*

PillowTalk: Grand Union with Wendy Perron

July 4, 3:30 p.m.

FREE (ticket required)

Remembered today as the “accidental anarchists of downtown dance,” this seminal 1970s performance group is chronicled in a new book by Wendy Perron, who will participate in a book signing after the talk.

FESTIVAL 2021 EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES—ONGOING

Jacob’s Pillow Archives/Norton Owen Reading Room

Blake’s Barn, June 30-August 29

***Build Me a Theater*; exhibition, open Tuesday through Sunday. Wed.-Sat. from 12-8 p.m., Tuesday and Sunday from 12-5 p.m.**

FREE

This spacious, informal library and reading room allows impromptu visitors to view videos, browse through books, access the Pillow's computer catalog, or peruse permanent collections of Pillow programs and photographs from the Pillow's Archives. The newly expanded Norton Owen Reading Room also features recent donations and more archival treasures from the Stephan Driscoll Collection. Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive, available on a popular touch-screen kiosk in the Reading Room, provides instant access to rare film clips ranging from the present day back to the 1930s.

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, celebrating its 89th Festival in 2021. The Pillow announced its transition to becoming a year-round center for dance in June 2017 through a five-year strategic plan titled Vision '22. Each Festival includes more than 50 national and international dance companies and over 350 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs. The School at Jacob's Pillow, one of the most prestigious professional dance training centers in the U.S., encompasses the diverse disciplines of Ballet, Contemporary, Musical Theatre Dance, Choreography, and an annual rotating program (Gaga in 2018). 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. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

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