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Jacob's Pillow Announces Pillow Lab Residencies for Fall 2022 and Winter/Spring 2023

August 31, 2022 (BECKET, Mass.)— Jacob's Pillow today announced the artists who will participate in 10 onsite residencies this coming fall, winter, and spring as part of the Pillow Lab year-round residency series. Artists include Michael Sakamoto, Sonya Tayeh and Jennifer Freeman, Mythili Prakash, Faye Driscoll, Camille A. Brown, Aakash Odedra, André M. Zachery, Abdiel, Larissa Velez-Jackson (Yackez), and Miguel Gutierrez.

The Pillow Lab is Jacob's Pillow's 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.

"I'm so grateful to the Mellon Foundation for their founding support of the Pillow Lab and for making it possible for us to continue to bring artists to the Pillow to create new works," said Pamela Tatge, Executive and Artistic Director of Jacob's Pillow. "It's thrilling to know that such a remarkable array of projects will be developed in the Lab and benefit from the generative energy of the Pillow, the ability to live and work here for one to two weeks and have 24/7 access to the studio. For most, it will be their first time experiencing this here. At a time when artists are still in recovery mode, space, time and compensation are vital to their ability to advance their ideas. We are thrilled to support them."

Pillow Lab artists and their collaborators receive unrestricted use of the Pillow's state-of-the-art facilities, including the 7,000 square-foot Perles Family Studio. Artists live on campus and receive free housing, a stipend, professionally filmed video documentation and a mini-documentary about their work, access to the Pillow's extensive Archives, and the presence of an "outside eye," an editor or dramaturg to provide important feedback. Jacob's Pillow seeks to provide artists with the retreat-like atmosphere and bucolic landscape that characterizes the Berkshires of western Massachusetts.

Residency programs at Jacob's Pillow have existed in various forms since its inception in the early 1930s. Now heading into its sixth year in 2023, the Pillow Lab began an anchor of Vision '22— the five-year strategic plan to be completed this year—and will continue into the future. Built from a field-wide scan which included interviews with a diverse group of 36 U.S.-based choreographers, as well as examinations of 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 residencies through the Pillow Lab are chosen by Tatge and Jacob's Pillow Associate Curators, Melanie George and Ali Rosa-Salas. Most residencies culminate with an informal, in-person, work-in-progress showing. Showings are limited to an intimate, invited audience of Jacob's Pillow Members as well as faculty and students from the College Partnership Program, and engage the artists in a structured feedback session. For more information, visit:

<https://www.jacobspillow.org/programs/opportunities-for-artists/pillow-lab/pillow-lab-2022-2023/>

Fall 2022 and Winter/Spring 2023 Pillow Lab Residency Season

Artist information and project descriptions follow. The work created during each residency is at varying stages of development and may or may not be performed as part of the annual Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

Michael Sakamoto (Oct. 24-30)

Garden of the Wilis is a devised work blending uplifting and what some consider the oppressive legacies in ballet and butoh with contemporary media culture's hyper-personalized desires. Reflecting aesthetic and cultural shifts in the performing arts, the personal narratives of embodied privilege in the "Boomer" and "Gen-X" lives of the lead artists—former ABT/Broadway/film performer George de la Peña and dance theater/media artist Michael Sakamoto—are in tension with digital age values of immediacy, virtuality and customized audiencing common to "Millennial" and "Gen-Z" artists and patrons.

Michael Sakamoto is an artist, scholar, educator, and curator in dance, theater, photography, and media. His creative works have been presented globally in 15 countries, including at Dance Center of Columbia College-Chicago, Vancouver International Dance Festival, REDCAT, Tokyo International Butoh Festival, TACTFest Osaka, Gøteborg Art Sounds, and other venues. Recent touring works include: *Flash*, a butoh/hip-hop collaboration with Rennie Harris and *Soil*, a dance theater trio featuring Thai, Vietnamese, and Cambodian performers.

Sakamoto's scholarship appears regularly in journals and anthologies in numerous disciplines. His book monograph, *An Empty Room: Imagining Butoh and the Social Body in Crisis*, is a critical autoethnography of Sakamoto's three-decade journey through butoh history, practice, and theory, was released in 2022 by Wesleyan University Press. Michael currently serves as Performing Arts Curator and Director of Asian and Asian American Arts and Culture at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst Fine Arts Center. Website:

<http://www.michaelsakamoto.org>.

Sonya Tayeh and Jennifer Freeman (Nov. 1-13)

Is It Thursday Yet? is a stimulating hybrid of theatricality and clinical analysis, a solo dance work with live musical accompaniment exploring autistic choreographer and dancer Jenn Freeman's neurodivergent brain in motion. Diagnosed in her adulthood at age 33, Freeman's work seeks to foster the understanding of autism for herself and others. Directed by Tony Award® winner Sonya Tayeh, *Is It Thursday Yet?* will be scored with original live music from renowned U.S. musician Holland Andrews and utilizes recordings from Freeman's autism diagnosis sessions, with accompanying vocals, clarinet, drums and electronic music elements. Embracing child-like surrealism, the work in development will include vibrant, colorful, and tactile scenic design by Tony Award® winner Rachel Hauck is inspired by Freeman's sensory sensitivities to texture, color, light, and sound. Projected footage from her childhood along with clinical information will undergo digital re-imaging and will be woven into the story serving as a narrative.

Freeman is an American choreographer, dance performer, and educator based in New York City. Most recently Freeman premiered a new work at The Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur. This year she was commissioned to create a new work for the Martha Graham Dance Company. In 2018 Freeman self-produced and choreographed/directed Freemove Dance's debut evening-length work, *...it's time...* at the Theater at The 14th St Y. After a sold-out run the show was invited back for a second run in 2019. Freeman's choreography has been commissioned by Marymount Manhattan College, Wayne State University, BYU, and The University of Texas at Austin. Her work has also been presented at The Kaatsbaan Summer Festival, The Reverb Dance Festival, and The McCallum Theater Choreography Festival (Finalist). For over a decade Jenn has worked as Sonya Tayeh's associate and resident choreographer in the development of pieces for The Gibney Company, American Ballet Theatre, The Martha Graham Dance Company, Guggenheim Works & Process, LA Ballet, The Juilliard School, and Cirque du Soleil. Professionally, Jenn has danced in works by choreographers Sonya Tayeh, Kyle Abraham, Larry Keigwin, Charlotte Boye-Christensen (NOW-ID), and many others.

Tayeh is a New York City based Tony® Award-winning choreographer and director. Since paving her professional career, her work has been characterized as a blend of powerful versatility and theatrical range. Selected credits include: *Moulin Rouge! Broadway*, Australia, UK, Tour (Hirschfeld Theatre/Dir Alex Timbers), *Sing Street Broadway* (Lyceum Theatre/Dir Rebecca Taichman), Martha Graham Dance Company (Joyce Theatre/Tour), American Ballet Theatre/*What Becomes of Love* Film, *Unveiling* with Moses and dancers (Fall For Dance/City Center), *Rent Live!* (Fox Network/Dir Michael Grief and Alex Rudzinski), *The Lucky Ones* (Ars Nova/Dir. Anne Kauffman), *Face the Torrent* for Malpas Dance Co. (commissioned by The Music Center/LA), *You'll Still Call Me By Name* (commissioned by New York Live Arts and Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival), Martha Graham Dance Company's *Lamentation Variation Series* (Joyce Theatre), *Hundred Days* (New York Theatre Workshop/Dir. Anne Kauffman), *The Skin Of Our Teeth* (Theatre for a New Audience/Dir. Arin Arbus), Andrew Lippas' *The Wild Party* (City Center Encores!/Dir. Leigh Silverman), and *Kung Fu* (Signature Theatre/Dir. Leigh Silverman).

Related content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive

Sonya Tayeh in *you'll still call me by name* (2018):

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/sonya-tayeh/youll-still-call-name/>

Mythili Prakash (Nov. 14-20)

She's Auspicious blurs the lines between Goddess and Woman to examine the contradiction in Indian culture between reverence and worship of the Goddess and the treatment of women in society. For Prakash, the starting point of this piece has been the process of re-examination of her femininity and the way she performs it in her various identities as a woman, a mother, and a classical Indian dancer. Creating this piece has compelled her to confront her caste privilege and how it has allowed her to compartmentalize and disassociate from the complex histories of erasure and appropriation of her countries and the dance form she practices. Through the paradox of the Goddess/Woman, this work grapples with the hypocrisy, tokenism, and patriarchy that exists in society as well as within – the individual, a microcosm of society. It unravels the (Indian and U.S. American) socio-cultural myths, stories, and notions that Prakash has grown up with, which are beautiful and personal, but also complicated as they are deeply rooted in systemic oppression and patriarchy. Having previewed this piece at the Reflektor Festival in Hamburg in November 2021, the all female cast team will rejoin to further develop the piece at Pillow Lab.

A second generation Indian and American artist, Prakash is one of the most celebrated and respected young Bharatanatyam dancer/choreographers today. Her collaborations span a breadth of artists including Sitar player Anoushka Shankar, India-based Director/ playwright Gowri Ramnarayan, and her brother/vocalist Aditya Prakash. She worked with director Ang Lee as a choreography assistant and played the role of Pi's wife in his award-winning film, *Life of Pi*. Nominated by celebrated dancer/choreographer Akram Khan as "choreographer of the future" for UK-based Dance Umbrella's "Four by four commissions," Mythili premiered her solo work *HERE and NOW* at their 2019 Festival. She is currently touring in Akram Khan Company's *Outwitting the Devil*. Prakash's work *AR | DHA* was commissioned and presented by Jacob's Pillow, featured in the work *America(na) to Me*, which premiered at the Pillow in June 2022. She is also a recipient of the Sky Art's Artists Development program and collaboration with Akram Khan Company, in support of her current work in development: *One | All*.

Faye Driscoll (Dec. 5-18)

"Waves are the gifts of the invisible to the visible." —Drew Kampion

Created in collaboration with her long-time design team, Faye Driscoll's newest work *Waves* features six dancer/actor/singers who become a luminously living, breathing, leaking sculpture of humans. They surf waves of phenomena as ripples of light, singing, sound and skin surge into currents that cascade through bodies awash in the physicality of touch.

Waves radiates throughout the space, through voices, through audiences, through objects. Bodies flow on and around a spongy platform too small and too unstable to support them. The work asks: How can we know this flesh through, and beyond, its limitations? What forces sustain us as we struggle, push, flood and disappear into each other? Through an uncanny physical language and continuous chant-like singing, the entire theater hums with a vibratory and immersive sensorial complexity. Seismic undercurrents emerge, liminally legible. Fragmented scenes flicker. Whose arm is that? Whose back? Where did that voice come from? Where are we? What are we, all? Always porous, pouring. Come on now, as hard as we try, are we ever not touching?

Faye Driscoll is a Doris Duke Award-winning performance maker who has been hailed as a "startlingly original talent" by *The New York Times* and "a postmillenium postmodern wild woman" by *The Village Voice*. She is currently the Randjelovic/Stryker Resident Commissioned Artist at New York Live Arts, and is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship, a Bessie award, and the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award among many others. Her work has been presented at Wexner Center for the Arts, Walker Art Center, ICA/Boston, MCA Chicago and BAM, and internationally at Theater Bremen (Unusual Symptoms), Kunstenfestivaldesarts, La Biennale di Venezia, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Melbourne Festival, Belfast International Arts Festival, Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens and Centro de Arte Experimental in Buenos Aires.

Her most recent performance, *Space*, was the final live work in her *Thank You for Coming* trilogy. *Space* is a moving requiem on art, the body, loss and human connectivity, and was celebrated as "an exhilaratingly personal culmination of the series" by *Artforum*. In 2020, Driscoll's first-ever solo exhibition, *Come On In*, opened at Walker Art Center, offering gallery-goers an experience of six distinct audio-guided experiences from her series *Guided Choreography for the Living and the Dead*. Driscoll has also choreographed for plays and films, including the Broadway production of Young Jean Lee's *Straight White Men*, and Josephine Decker's award-winning feature films.

Related content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive

Faye Driscoll in *Thank You For Coming: Attendance* (2017):

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/faye-driscoll/thank-coming-attendance/>

Faye Driscoll in *Thank You For Coming: Play* (2018):

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/faye-driscoll/thank-coming-play/>

Camille A. Brown (Jan. 9-19)

Continuing her explorations of Black Joy, choreographer Camille A. Brown will create a new work for her company, Camille A. Brown & Dancers that launches new queries into the possibilities of imagination, investigating the past to boldly reimagine it.

While Brown has often upended our understanding of the past, in this new work, she will invite audiences to imagine a creative space for cultural liberation—conjuring new ways of being in this world. Inspired by the exhibit *In the Black Fantastic*, curated by Ekow Eshun, and building on Brown's earlier unearthing of Black joyfulness in *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play* and *ink*, this new work will feature an eclectic musical soundscape from Brown's youth in the 80s and 90s.

Camille A. Brown is a 2016 Guggenheim Fellow, four-time Princess Grace Award winner, 2016 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award recipient, 2015 USA Jay Franke & David Herro Fellow, 2015 TED Fellow, and 2015 Doris Duke Artist Award recipient. Her TED-ED Talk *A Visual History of Social Dance in 25 Moves* was chosen as one of the most memorable talks by TED Curator Chris Anderson. Brown has created commissioned works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT), Philadanco!, Urban Bush Women, Complexions, Ailey II, Ballet Memphis, and Hubbard Street II. Her theater credits include: Broadway's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Fortress of Solitude* (The Public Theater), *Stagger Lee* (DTC), *Cabin in the Sky* (NY City Center Encores!), *BELLA: An American Tall Tale* (DTC & Playwrights Horizons) and Jonathan Larson's *tick, tick...BOOM!* (NY City Center's Encores! Off-Center) starring Lin-Manuel Miranda, and she is the choreographer for the Broadway revival of *Once on This Island*. As a performer, she has danced for Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE. Brown founded Camille A. Brown & Dancers in 2006.

Related content on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive

Women in Dance: Camille A. Brown by Maura Keefe:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/themes-essays/women-in-dance/camille-a-brown/>

Camille A. Brown in *Linguistic Play* (2017):

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/camille-brown-dancers/black-girl-linguistic-play/>

Aakash Odedra (Jan. 25-Feb. 5)

Aakash Odedra will be working on a new piece titled *MEHEK*, a work about Odedra's abiding dream to dance, one day, with his idol and one of Kathak's great exponents, Aditi Mangaldas. Mangaldas and Odedra are clear that this invented narrative, while acknowledging the weight of social expectations on both men and women, must seek to explore and celebrate the inner worlds of the lovers, their individual desires and doubts, the arc of a love that has its own life, fierce and vibrant, however long it lasts.

It is just the beginning, but watching them at work and play, in this stage of exploration, watching the birth of

movement and emotion, the viewer is, turn by turn, electrified, beguiled, shattered, and soothed. By shadows that meet and meld, by the cursive drawn by an index finger all the way down a tremulous back, by the ferocity and grace of rhythms imprinted by bare feet across a dance floor. These moments will be eclipsed, inevitably, as the piece evolves, as other, more refined sequences find voice, but for now, we plunge into riveting discussions and small epiphanies around staging the various colors of desire.

A contemporary dancer with roots in the classical Indian dance styles of Kathak and Bharatnatyam, Odedra is known for his mesmerizing agility and “ecstatic joy in dancing” (*The New York Times*).

Related content on Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive

Aakash Odedra in *Constellation* (2017):

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aakash-odedrea/constellation/>

André M. Zachery (Feb. 24- March 5)

Respiration will be an evening-length multimedia performance of dance, original music/sound and digital media inspired by and based on the novel *The City We Became* by acclaimed Afrofuturist writer N.K. Jemisin. This project, envisioned by Renegade Performance Group artistic director André M. Zachery, intends to translate the imagery of N.K. Jemisin’s text into an Afrofuturist choreographic work for an ensemble of dancers in collaboration with sound artists and musicians Sabine Blaizin, Okai Fleurimont, and Grammy-award winner Kendra Foster.

Zachery is a Brooklyn-based interdisciplinary artist of Haitian and African American descent, and is a scholar, researcher, and technologist with a BFA from Ailey/Fordham University and MFA in Performance & Interactive Media Arts from CUNY/Brooklyn College. As the artistic director of Renegade Performance Group, his practice, research, and community engagement artistically focuses on merging choreography, technology and Black cultural practices through multimedia work. André is a 2016 New York Foundation for the Arts Gregory Millard Fellow in Choreography and 2019 Jerome Hill Foundation Fellow in Choreography.

Abdiel and Do the Hustle Team (March 10-19)

Hustle is a child of the 70s disco era in NYC. Named after its fast paced stepping style, Hustle is a social dance form that emerged from pre-existing Latin and African-American dances. It is a part of the U.S. American cultural legacy and continues to capture the interest of people across the globe and generations. A groundbreaking movement form, it brought together queer and straight communities through touch and rhythm whereby the roles of leader and follower are not gender specific.

Hustle can be perceived as a joint celebratory outburst of energy, where a person and a partner — or two — hold hands to embark on an ever-present, expansive, twirling journey across a fierce dance floor to the sound of disco. *Do the Hustle* is led by Abdiel, Alessandra Marconi, and Joana Matos, in collaboration with composer Chari Glogovac-Smith, who are fueled by a common mission to ignite and unite human beings through music and dance. This project stands for inclusion, cultural/historical preservation, creativity, and innovation.

Ultimately, *Do the Hustle* aims to provide a transformational experience by presenting a program that will contain three consecutive segments — an interactive performance; a dance class; and a dance party.

Larissa Velez-Jackson (Yackez) (March 27-April 5)

For this project, *Yackez Love For A New World Paradigm*, Larissa returns to directing and choreographing Yackez, her collaboration with her husband, musical director Jon Velez-Jackson. This work redefines family-friendly entertainment with an inclusive performance installation of live acoustic healing instruments, original digital-based sound and living sculpture by Yackez. This project also highlights a new direction of Yackez, where emphasis is placed upon telling their story of healing and changed perspectives by way of their experience of illness and disability. The immersive environment is meant for the audience to experience the show as they wish as sculptural elements—like their foam mascot, Yacky—come alive.

Yackez, aka the world's most lovable art-pop duo, is the multimedia collaboration of Larissa and Jon Velez-Jackson. As *Culturebot* wrote of the duo, they are "so beloved and so natural in their campy stage antics they seem to defy what it means to perform absurdity at all times." Jon is a songwriter, writer and full-time journalist. Larissa (LVJ) is a New York-based choreographer, movement educator and multi-platform artist. She is also an older adult fitness specialist who has incorporated older non-dancers in her and Yackez's intergenerational projects. LVJ was nominated for a 2016 New York Dance and Performance Bessie award for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer and received a 2016 Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Grant to Artists Award.

Miguel Gutierrez (August 2023)

sueño is a new music project from Miguel Gutierrez. Singing in English and Spanish, Gutierrez uses dreamy synth sounds, spare arrangements, and his long-standing obsession with church-like harmonies to make tiny epic songs dedicated to melancholy and longing. *sueño* exists as both musical project and performance fantasia. Gutierrez's Pillow Lab residency will precede performances at the Pillow, for which Gutierrez has dived into the extraordinary Pillow Archives. Movement inspiration for the performance comes from a host of early 20th century modern dance choreographers such as Ted Shawn, Harald Kreutzberg, and Isadora Duncan. Gutierrez appropriates their modernist and expressionist aesthetics in the service of a contemporary ritual of spirituality and delicate decadence for our turbulent times. Gutierrez plays keyboard and sings, accompanied by multiple singers and performers. Sound artist/musician Rosana Cabán assists with arrangement, production, and sonic transitions. www.miguelgutierrez.org

Gutierrez is a choreographer, performer, music maker, writer, visual artist, educator, and Feldenkrais Method practitioner who lives and works in both Brooklyn and Los Angeles. He makes performances to create empathetic and irreverent spaces to talk about things in complicated ways beyond the limitations of propriety, party lines, and conventional logic. His performances are immediate and honest, untamed, and flush with joyful color, bringing audiences together in the experience of being alive. His work has been presented internationally in over sixty cities in venues such as the Walker Art Center/Minneapolis, Wexner Center for the Arts/Columbus, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Festival d'Automne/Paris, Festival Universitario/Bogotá, and AMERICAN REALNESS. Recent projects include *I as another*, a duet about intimacy and the unknowable, *This Bridge Called My Ass*, a performance that queers tropes of Latinidad, and *Cela nous concerne tous*, a commission for Ballet de Lorraine. He is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, United States Artists Fellowship, Foundation for Contemporary Arts Award, four NY Dance and Performance "Bessie" Awards, and a 2016 Doris Duke Artist Award. He was a selected artist for the 2014 Whitney Biennial. He has been a guest lecturer at many universities, including UCLA, Princeton University, and Hunter College. His podcast *Are You For Sale?* examines the ethical entanglements between money and art making.

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 celebrating its 90th Anniversary Season. Jacob's Pillow acknowledges that it rests on the unceded lands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok and recognizes the Agawam, Nipmuc, and Pocumtuc who also made their homes in Western Massachusetts. We honor their elders past, present, and future. Each Festival includes national and international dance companies and 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, 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 Executive and Artistic Director since 2016 is Pamela Tatge. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

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