

**FOR IMAGES AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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## **Oona Doherty/OD Works Makes its Pillow Debut in Week 5 of Festival 2023 as First Headlining Artist from Northern Ireland**

### **Resident Island Dance Theatre, Almanac Dance Circus Theatre, and Oyu Oro Afro Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble to Perform on the Henry J. Leir Stage**

June 28, 2023 (BECKET, Mass.)—In Week 5 of Festival 2023, Northern Irish company, Oona Doherty/OD Works, founded by choreographer Oona Doherty, will make its Pillow debut. The company will show Doherty's signature work *Hope Hunt and the Ascension Into Lazarus*, and the U.S. premiere of *Navy Blue*, her largest work yet, in the Ted Shawn Theatre from July 26-July 30. Alongside Doherty in the fifth week of the Festival are several one-night-only performances on the outdoor Henry J. Leir stage by Taiwan-based Resident Island Dance Theatre on July 26, Almanac Dance Circus Theatre on July 27, and Oyu Oro Afro Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble on July 28. Tickets for performances on the Henry J. Leir stage are available on a *Choose What You Pay* model. Tickets for all performances are on sale now.

In addition to these performances, all performances by Oona Doherty/OD Works will be preceded by a free 15-minute Pre-Show Talk led by Pillow Scholar-in-Residence, Maura Keefe, held in Blake's Barn 30 minutes before showtime. Following the Friday matinee performance will be a free Post-Show Talk with the artists.

On July 29, three choreographers will celebrate the anniversary of The School at Jacob's Pillow's 2002 Dunham Legacy program with a special performance on the Henry J. Leir Stage. Alumni from the program will present excerpts from works that extend from the artistic traditions of historic choreographer, Katherine Dunham. Choreographers include Paloma McGregor, Founding Artistic Director of Angela's Pulse, Michelle Grant-Murray, choreographer of Olujimi Dance Collective, and Stephanie McKee, artistic director of Junebug Productions. In addition, a free PillowTalk celebrating Katherine Dunham will be held in Blake's Barn on Saturday at 4pm, where a panel discussion will revisit the 2002 School program and the lasting impact of the dance legend and illustrious choreographer.

On Thursday, there will be a free community workshop in Pittsfield, a collaborative and exploratory practice where Paloma McGregor will lead participants in the *Fishtrap Method*, inspired by her ancestral home, St. Croix. Finishing out Week 5 on Sunday is a workshop with Patrick Parson, where participants will learn the movement aesthetics of the modern dance techniques of Dunham, Graham, and Horton while exploring the musicality of African and African diasporic dances. The workshop is open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+.

"This week we welcome new artists making their Pillow debuts including Northern Ireland's Oona Doherty/OD Works and Taiwan's Resident Island Dance Theatre, alongside artists who are returning for

what feels like a family reunion for the Dunham Legacy Program,” said Pamela Tatge, Executive and Artistic Director of Jacob’s Pillow. “These are choreographers who studied here with the great Katherine Dunham twenty years ago and will have time to celebrate her influence and share their remarkable work with the next generation of dancers and audiences. This is quintessential Jacob’s Pillow: we’ll experience the past, present, and future of dance from the U.S. and abroad, all in a single week!”

A rapidly rising star in contemporary dance, Oona Doherty/OD Works will be the first headlining artist from Northern Ireland to perform at the Festival. Doherty’s signature work, *Hope Hunt and Ascension Into Lazarus*, will begin with an outdoor pop-up performance that leads the audience into the Ted Shawn Theatre for the U.S. premiere of *Navy Blue*, driven by a thrilling in-your-face mash-up of ensemble dance, spoken word poetry, political candor, and eclectic music. *Navy Blue* premiered at Kampnagel in Hamburg, Germany last summer, and was also performed at Sadler’s Wells in London. “A massive talent and a hugely original voice,” (*The Guardian*) Doherty has created works that explore transformation and vulnerability.

The outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage this week features a series of one-night-only *Choose What You Pay* performances. In collaboration with Center Stage USA on July 26, Resident Island Dance Theatre will present *Ice Age*, performed by a physically-inclusive quartet. Another international group making their Pillow debut, this inclusive company is based in Taiwan’s rural south, and performs works that explore the human condition and the possibilities of an inclusive world.

Almanac Dance Circus Theatre, an award-winning contemporary circus company based in Philadelphia, will perform their work *Communitas* on July 27. Almanac’s genre-defying performance uses human sculptures and acrobatic encounters to animate the tale of the founding of a civilization. An original musical score by award-winning composer Jordan McCree intensifies the relationship between performers at the edge of their abilities and an audience witnessing genuine risk.

Friday night’s performance will feature Oyu Oro Afro Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble on July 28. A New York City-based Afro-Cuban company, Oyu Oro was founded by the 2019 Dance/USA Doris Duke Fellow Danys “La Mora” Pérez, who is originally from Santiago de Cuba. The company is committed to building bridges among African diaspora and Hispanic cultures. Oyu Oro aspires to create works that audiences of all ages can enjoy, all in service of developing “art among people.”

### **ABOUT OONA DOHERTY/OD Works**

Based in Belfast and now touring internationally, Doherty – a choreographer, dancer, collaborator, and visual artist – was the recipient of the Silver Lion award at the Venice Biennale in 2021. She is known for her “gritty realism, visceral movement style and fearless attitude to confronting controversial topics.” (*Frieze*). Her work has been performed at Tate Britain, in a music video for indie artist Jamie xx, and in a piece co-choreographed for the Ballet de Marseille. In *Hope Hunt and the Ascension Into Lazarus*, the Irish choreographer embodies a social group rarely explored in dance – the working class male, specifically those of her home Belfast – with a chameleon-like transformation and physicality.

Doherty is not afraid to ask pointed questions of art and society. *Navy Blue*, Doherty’s largest work yet, will be making its U.S. debut at the Festival. Doherty meditates on dance industry conventions in this work, playing with the ideas of unison and compromise within a dance company. Seeing music as a driver for her work, Doherty worked previously with the xx member and producer on the music video for the track “Idontknow” as the choreographer and dancer. The pulsing, dystopian sound of Jamie xx

contrasts the classical Rachmaninoff that begins the performance, shifting from orderly unison to chaos.

#### **ABOUT RESIDENT ISLAND DANCE THEATRE**

Resident Island Dance Theatre (RIDT), a physically-inclusive company based in Taiwan's rural south, performs works rooted in the power of the human body and spirit. Founded and directed by maverick choreographer Chung-An Chang, RIDT is one of the few professional theaters outside of Taiwan's capital city, Taipei, to tour abroad, collaborating internationally with contemporary dance makers and integrating dancers of differing abilities into its company. When studying at the rigorous dance department at the Taipei National University of the Arts, Chang found himself losing his sight at age 18, and moved home after doctors cautioned against his physically demanding schedule. Chang created RIDT in 2010 when he saw a limited number of arts opportunities in his hometown of Pingtung in southern Taiwan.

Chang sought dancers who were outside of the typical mold of professional performers, incorporating a range of intellectual, physical, and emotional capacities. "A triumph of cross-cultural connection," (*The Scotsman*) *Ice Age* is an emotionally thrilling collaboration between Chang and co-choreographer Maylis Arrabit, a French dance maker. The piece explores the different ways people navigate and connect in their own cultural environments, and shows us the potential of a physically, mentally, and emotionally integrated world.

#### **ABOUT ALMANAC DANCE CIRCUS THEATRE**

Philadelphia-based Almanac Dance Circus Theatre combines the storytelling of theater, the movement of dance, and the acrobatics of circus to create virtuosic works of art. "Truly interdisciplinary," (*Colgate University*), Almanac's ensemble comes from a range of backgrounds including theater, dance, circus, gymnastics, education, event production, and advocacy. Since its founding in 2013, Almanac's 11 full-length productions have toured across the United States and internationally in Mexico and the United Kingdom.

Prioritizing community-centered event production, Almanac uses hybrid experimentation, deep narratives, and open environments of circus learning so audiences can experience the thrill of performance without barriers. *Communitas*, an "expedition into the concepts of unity and division," (*Phindie*), uses balance, support, and trust to confront what makes us human.

#### **ABOUT OYU ORO AFRO CUBAN EXPERIMENTAL DANCE ENSEMBLE**

Oyu Oro bridges traditional and unconventional dance forms of the modern age with the preservation of Afro-Cuban culture through dance, song, and music. Their traditional repertoire pays tribute to lineages of the African diaspora, and popular dance choreographies celebrate the national Cuban heritage. Oyu Oro, represented by the Center for Traditional Music and Dance, has performed at national and international cultural festivals. Founded by Danys Pérez, the choreographer is affectionately nicknamed "La Mora," a reference to the complex, multi-layered histories of her home Santiago de Cuba that influence her work.

Oyu Oro aspires to create works that serve as informational tools for researchers in academia and as a source of enjoyment for audiences of all ages and multicultural backgrounds who seek a greater development of "art among people." Pérez presents these works as a way to teach about the roots and nuances of Cuban culture, and exposes audiences to the power of tradition to renew and transform through dance.

### **Jacob's Pillow Connections**

Oyu Oro made their Pillow debut in 2011, as a part of the Inside/Out series of the Festival season. Their work *Raices* featured the Bicheb and Merengue, secular dances from French-Haitian-Cuban culture, and the Yagueto, a dance derived from the Old Dahomeyan Culture in West Africa. Their 2013 Inside/Out performance featured the world premiere of their work *Tempo Bantu*, and their 2018 Inside/Out performance of *Africana* explored the importance of transcending cultural boundaries.

## **PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS**

### **Oona Doherty/OD Works**

**July 26-30, Wed., Thurs. and Sat. at 8 pm; Thurs.-Sun. at 2 pm**

**Ted Shawn Theatre**

**Tickets from \$60**

Tickets are on sale now; online at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org) and via phone at 413.243.0745

### **Resident Island Dance Theatre**

**Wed., July 26, 6pm**

**Henry J. Leir Stage**

**Choose What You Pay**

Tickets are on sale now; online at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org) and via phone at 413.243.0745

### **Almanac Dance Circus Theatre**

**Thurs., July 27, 6pm**

**Henry J. Leir Stage**

**Choose What You Pay**

Tickets are on sale now; online at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org) and via phone at 413.243.0745

### **Oyu Oro Afro Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble**

**Fri., July 28, 6pm**

**Henry J. Leir Stage**

**Choose What You Pay**

Tickets are on sale now; online at [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org) and via phone at 413.243.0745

### **In Studio Pause in the Process Showing: The Dunham Legacy Revisited**

**Sat., July 29, 1-1:45pm**

**Perles Family Studio**

**In-person and on Instagram Live**

Join Artist Faculty and School dancers for informal sharings of their work in the studio together. Held in the Perles Family Studio. Seating is limited; priority entry given to visitors who pre-register online. Registration is now open.

Dancers of The School at Jacob's Pillow are apprentices, trainees, pre-professionals, and early-career professionals from around the world. The School's professional advancement programs are held onsite during the Festival to nurture the artistic voices and growth of the next generation of dance artists.

## **Dunham Legacy Project**

**Sat., July 29, 6pm**

**Henry J. Leir Stage**

**Tickets \$15-\$35**

The outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage celebrates the artistry of Katherine Dunham, and the anniversary of The School at Jacob's Pillow's 2002 Dunham Legacy program. This program features works by alumni from the program: Paloma McGregor, Founding Artistic Director of Angela's Pulse; Michelle Grant-Murray, Artistic Director of Miami-based Olujimi Dance Theatre; and New Orleans-based Stephanie McKee, Executive Artistic Director of Junebug Productions.

### **ALSO THIS WEEK**

#### **Community Workshop in Pittsfield: Paloma McGregor**

**Thurs., July 27, 6-7:30pm**

**Common Room, Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First Street**

**FREE**

This interactive workshop is rooted in story-telling and building community. Come prepared to write, move, remember, listen, and feel. Participants will be led by Paloma McGregor through the *Fishtrap Method*. The *Fishtrap Method* is a collaborative creative process developed by McGregor as part of her decade-long exploration of her father's vanishing fishing tradition and three driving questions that emerged after she left her ancestral home, St. Croix: What do we take with us? Leave behind? Return to reclaim? Participants should bring something to write with, clothes to move in, and an object or photo that has cultural/familial/personal significance. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged online or by calling 413.243.0745. Walk-ups welcome!

#### **Public Tour of Jacob's Garden**

**Sat., July 29, 12:30-1:30pm**

**FREE**

Join us for a quick, Ted Shawn-style outdoor stretch followed by a walking tour of the garden beds, apiary, rainwater harvesting system, and pollinator meadow of Jacob's Garden. Wear clothes you can move in and shoes suitable for uneven terrain. Tours meet at the Welcome Center. Iced tea and water will be provided. Online pre-registration encouraged.

#### **PillowTalk: Celebrating Katherine Dunham**

**Sat., July 29, 4pm**

**Blake's Barn**

**FREE**

As The School at Jacob's Pillow revisits a 2002 program led by Reginald Yates and Katherine Dunham herself, the lasting impact of this dance legend is spotlighted in a panel discussion.

#### **Workshop with Festival Artists: Surrender to the Rhythms with Patrick Parson**

**Sun., July 30, 10-11:30am**

**\$25**

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+

Learn the movement aesthetics of the modern dance techniques of Dunham, Graham, and Horton with Patrick Parson. Participants will explore the musicality and polymovement structure of African and African diasporic dances with roots from Guinea, Senegal, Ghana, and the Caribbean while expanding their understanding of what dance is. Wear comfortable clothing to move in. Online pre-registration strongly encouraged; observation welcome pending capacity.

### **In Studio Observation in The School**

**Perles Family Studio**

**FREE**

Quiet observation of classes and rehearsals inside the Perles Family Studio will be open from 10:45am-12:15 p.m. and 2:30-4pm, Tuesday through Friday, June 20–Aug. 18, on a first come, first served basis. In the case of inclement weather, School observation hours will not be held.

### **Morning Classes**

**Sommers Studio**

**Tues. and Wed. 8-9 am, Thurs. and Fri. 9-10 am, Jun. 27-Aug.25**

**\$12 per class**

A variety of in-person dance and movement classes open to participants of all experience levels, including beginners, ages 16+ (sorry, no exceptions). Tuesday classes are body conditioning/pilates, Wednesday classes are modern/contemporary, Thursday classes are ballet, and Friday classes are West African/hip hop. Pay via online pre-registration at [jacobspillow.org/morningclasses](http://jacobspillow.org/morningclasses) or cash/card at the door.

## **FESTIVAL 2023 EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES—ONGOING**

### **Welcoming the World**

**Blake's Barn**

**Tuesday-Sunday, noon through final curtain**

**FREE**

From the first international artists who performed here in the 1940s to today, Jacob's Pillow has long worked to connect audiences with all kinds of dance. As people now emerge from extended isolation, the need for cultural exchange is keener than ever. Using historic photos and moving images that span the globe and transcend time, this exhibition demonstrates the wide-ranging definition of dance that has always epitomized the Pillow's worldview. *Co-curated by Tanisha Jones, Hari Krishnan, and Norton Owen.*

### **Envisioning a New Theater**

## **Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby**

**Open daily, noon through final curtain**

**FREE**

An international team of architects and designers/consultants led by Netherlands-based Mecanoo are now busily planning a new Doris Duke Theatre, reimagining the beloved structure consumed by fire in 2020. On display here are color renderings, a scale model, video simulations, and other resources to help audiences visualize this exciting new building project and its design process. With a projected opening in 2025, the Doris Duke Theatre is envisioned as a versatile home for dance-making and performance in the 21st century. *Co-curated by Katy Dammers and Norton Owen.*

## **Fantasy Meets Reality: The Far East Tour**

**Blake's Barn Special Collections Room**

**Tuesday-Sunday, noon through final curtain**

**FREE**

Denishawn's Asian tour in 1925-26 proved pivotal in the artistic evolution of Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis, as their famous oriental dance fantasies encountered authentic Asian dances and audiences. Shawn and St. Denis spent months studying with local artists, buying up hordes of set and costume pieces. Their return set off a renaissance of Western interest in authentic Asian dance, opening doors for Asian and Asian American artists. Today, costumes from the Far East Tour challenge us to grapple with how to share culture with integrity. *Co-curated by Phil Chan and Caroline Hamilton.*

## **Online Exhibit: Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive**

This evolving online resource features breathtaking video highlights of Pillow performances from the early 1930s through today, with an expanded section of multimedia essays featuring talks, photos, and other exclusive content organized into various themes. [danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org](http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org)

## **Jacob's Pillow Archives/Norton Owen Reading Room**

**Blake's Barn**

**Tuesday-Sunday, noon through final curtain**

**FREE**

This spacious, informal library and reading room allows visitors to view videos, browse through books, access the Pillow's computer catalog, or peruse permanent collections of Pillow programs and photographs from the Archives. The Reading Room and new Special Collections Room also feature recent donations and more archival treasures from the Stephan Driscoll Collection.

## **ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW:**

Jacob's Pillow acknowledges that it rests on the ancestral homelands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok or Mohican people. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors and elders past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all. In addition, we acknowledge the Nipmuc, the Wampanoag and other tribal nations who also made their homes in what is now known as Massachusetts. 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 its 91st season. 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, a prestigious professional dance training center, advances the careers of the upcoming generation of performers and choreographers; during the Festival, 100 international dancers evolve as artists in ballet, choreography, contemporary, musical theatre, tap, and other genres, and year round, artist faculty

and accomplished alumni nurture younger dancers in a series of Jacob's Pillow 360 workshops and intensives offered in partnership with leading dance institutions worldwide. 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. Through its 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](http://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](http://www.jacobspillow.org).

Jacob's Pillow is grateful to its global community of supporters and Members for their ongoing support for our mission. Major institutional support for Jacob's Pillow is provided by the Alphadyne Foundation, Arbella Insurance Foundation, Arison Arts Foundation, Arnhold Foundation, Barr Foundation, Doris Duke Foundation, Ford Foundation, William Randolph Hearst Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, Mellon Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Mill Town Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, and Jacob's Pillow Business Partners (as of May 23, 2023).

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