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Jacob's Pillow Announces Artists and Schedule of Events**For 10 Pillow Lab Residencies****From October 2023 through July 2024**

August 22, 2023 (BECKET, Mass.)— Jacob's Pillow today announced the artists who will participate in 10 onsite residencies this fall through next summer, as part of the Pillow Lab residency program. Artists participating in this series, in chronological order, are: Ilya Vidrin, Sekou McMiller, LaJuné McMillian, Minty Fresh Circus, Aakash Odedra, Kyle Marshall Choreography, CONTRA-TIEMPO Activist Dance Theater, Hari Krishnan/inDANCE, Theresa Ruth Howard, and Miguel Gutierrez. Programming and dates are subject to change.

The Pillow Lab is Jacob's Pillow's year-round incubator of new work. The annual season of bespoke residencies supports U.S.-based and international dance artists during crucial development, research, and technical stages of choreography-driven projects. Lead support for the Pillow Lab is generously provided by the Mellon Foundation.

"I can't think of a more vital role for the Pillow to play right now than providing time, space and resources for artists to explore new ideas and develop new works," said Pamela Tatge, Executive and Artistic Director of Jacob's Pillow. "Companies in the Lab have 24/7 access to studio space for formal rehearsals and then spend informal time together making meals, taking walks, spending time in the Archives, and engaging with the generative energy of nature—it's a residency setting like no other."

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 in-kind housing, an artist fee for each collaborator, a grocery stipend, professionally filmed video documentation and a mini-documentary about their work, and access to the Pillow's extensive Archives. 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 seventh year in 2024, the Pillow Lab began as an anchor of Vision '22—the five-year strategic plan that was completed last 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 sets an industry example 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, staff, and students from the College Partnership Program, and engage the artists in a structured feedback session. For more information, visit jacobspillow.org/pillowlab

2023-2024 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.

Ilya Vidrin (Oct. 19-22)

Continuing his practice-based research on ethics of physical interaction (Pillow Lab '18 and Festival Residency '19), Ilya Vidrin's 2023 Pillow Lab will focus on developing a taxonomy of partnering with novel wearable technology.

Dr. Ilya Vidrin is Assistant Professor of Creative Practice Research and Core Faculty at the Institute for Experiential Robotics at Northeastern University. Born into a refugee family, Dr. Vidrin's research and artistic practice engage with the complex ethics of human interaction, including the embodiment of care, cultural competence, and social responsibility. Ilya has been featured as one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" (2022), and has been an artist-in-residence at BallettSchwerin, L.A. Contemporary Dance Company, North Atlantic Ballet, Ballet Des Moines, National Parks Service, Harvard ArtLab, The Walnut Hill School, Interlochen Arts Academy, MIT Media Lab, Boston Center for the Arts, Le Laboratoire, Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), and the New Museum (NYC).

Sekou McMiller (Oct. 25-Nov. 5)

Sekou McMiller is developing a new installment within his "Afro Latin Jazz and Soul Experience" series, tentatively titled *Shine*. In Afro Latin partner dances, "shines" are expressive sequences of footwork and body movements performed during musical breaks, enhancing the dance experience and inspiring friendly competition among salsa/mambo dancers. Inspired by the golden age of mambo at the Palladium nightclub in New York City during the 1950s and '60s, this new work critically explores how individuals separate to express their unique voices, fostering motivation and progress in everyday life, relationships, and communities. To bring the work to life, Sekou has curated a collective of skilled dancers, musicians, composers, and performers "Sekou & Friends." *Shine* will be an experience that fuse music and dance, celebrating their rhythmic nature while uniting once interconnected cultures. Sekou McMiller is a New York City/Chicago-based famed choreographer, teacher, curator, and producer at the forefront of a new movement in Afro Latin dance. McMiller's unique fusion style has a strong

Afro-Caribbean essence that is laced with many different dance techniques combined with an explosive energy. McMiller's choreographic work has been featured at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Dance Chicago, The Actors Fund Theater, New York City Center, Ailey CitiGroup Theater, Symphony Space, Edison Ballroom, the United Nations General Assembly, Olympic Park Stadium in Seoul, South Korea, the Great Wall of China, Harbour Dance Vancouver, and Winter Gardens in Blackpool, England. McMiller's diverse career ranges from performing off-Broadway to choreographing for Bravo, NUVO TV, and Good Morning America. He has also performed and choreographed for top Latin artists including Gilberto Santa Rosa, Willie Colón, Ismael Miranda, Cheo Feliciano, Johnny Pacheco, Tito Rojas, Tito Nieves, Pitbull, as well as the pop icon Madonna. McMiller can be seen in the Warner Bros. theatrical feature *In the Heights* (2021), directed by Jon M. Chu, and in the newly released documentary *Uprooted: The Journey of Jazz Dance*.

LaJuné McMillian (Nov. 8-19)

Spirit and Child is a series of prayers between Child and Spirit, presented as a live motion capture performance and installation. A healing ceremony unfurls as Child extends gratitude to Spirit for holding them through times of struggle and abandonment. Spirit manifests as a guide, reinforcing embodiment as a robust technology. *Spirit and Child* acts as a compendium of our collective experiences—beginning with the introduction of portraiture, expanding on the ritual of movement, and broadening to meditative aphorisms—and in closing, Spirit reminds us that home, a place many spend lifetimes seeking, lives inside ourselves. The avatars and movements are self-created using motion capture and 3D modeling software.

LaJuné McMillian is a multidisciplinary artist and educator creating art that integrates performance, extended reality, and physical computing to question our contemporary forms of communication. They are passionate about discovering, learning, manifesting, and stewarding spaces for liberated Black Realities and the Black Imagination. McMillian believes in making by diving into, navigating, critiquing, and breaking systems and technologies that uphold systemic injustices to decommodify our bodies, undo our indoctrination, and make room for different ways of being. McMillian has had the opportunity to show and speak about their work at Pioneer Works, National Sawdust, Tribeca Film Festival, Times Square, and Art & Code's WEIRD REALITY. McMillian was previously the Director of Skating at Figure Skating in Harlem, where they integrated STEAM and figure skating to teach girls of color about movement and technology. They have continued their research on Blackness, movement, and technology during residencies and fellowships at the Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship, Eyebeam, Pioneer Works, NYU ITP, Barbarian Group, and Barnard College.

Minty Fresh Circus (Nov. 29-Dec. 10)

Creator of Minty Fresh Circus Monique Martin investigates the power of Black music created by enslaved Africans as a healing alchemical force. In her first Pillow Lab Residency, she and her artistic collaborators Traci Bartlow and Adesola Osakalumi, along with invited circus and dance artists, will continue world building Minty Fresh Circus through a devised process. They will deepen the movement vocabulary, interrogate the narrative and explore the sonic bed with composers ChenLo and Asante

Amin. The seven rituals, which will shape the show arc, align movement and music with African performance rituals, cultural traditions, and ceremonies within a contemporary circus framework.

The name of this contemporary circus, Minty Fresh Circus, is inspired by the artists' Afrofuturistic Muse, Harriet Araminta Tubman (nicknamed Minty), abolitionist and conductor of the Underground Railroad. Africans who were stolen, transported to the U.S., and forced into chattel slavery have shapeshifted and recreated themselves over and over as a survival technique, thus becoming perpetually Fresh. The project has received residency support from Lake Placid Center for the Arts, Factory International (UK), La Grainerie (France) and the Apollo Theater.

As a propagator of art, culture and ideas, Monique Martin brings her passion and experience in community building through the arts to elevate and instigate. An independent creative producer, artist, curator, and marketing consultant, she has partnered with and produced for Joe's Pub, Disney Theatricals, Apollo Theater, New Victory Theater, Southbank Centre/UK, The MET Museum, The Shed, Park Avenue Armory, NJPAC, Queens Theater in the Park, and HBO. As Programming Director for the River To River Festival, SummerStage, and Harlem Stage, she commissioned artists to create new work while expanding the programming by including international artists, immersive work and contemporary circus. She is an artist and cultural worker creating projects at the intersection of imagination, sovereignty and joy. Her play *Cracked* was produced by Brava Theater's new playwright series in San Francisco during the height of the crack epidemic. She has created two highly successful series for Joe's Pub: *Urban Griots* and *Soul Erotica*, where she collaborated with some of New York City's disruptive artists in spoken word, music, and dance. Her *Soul Erotica* series has toured nationally and is currently being developed for TV.

Aakash Odedra (Dec. 9-17)

Leveraging their common cultural heritage, Aakash Odedra and Rani Khanam seek to explore and research form that upholds the sanctity of traditional Sufi Kathak, a classical style imbued with profound spiritual nuance and deeply rooted in the dance traditions of the Indian subcontinent, while also investigating its possibilities when viewed through a modern lens. The working title of their new piece is *Rooh (Journey of the Soul)*. With music composed and directed by Rushil Ranjan and Orchestral Qawwali, the project is an immersive dialogue between traditional classical Indian dance and music, renowned for its precise rhythm and storytelling, and the innovative perspectives of contemporary forms and processes. These artists' exploratory journey will present a captivating interplay between the spiritual charge of Sufism and classical technique and style. Islamic poetry, characterized by its profound depth and rhythmic flow, will intertwine with their research work, forming a critical part of the creative process. As this unique exploration unravels, Odedra and Khanam will illuminate the cultural richness of the subcontinent, emphasizing the extraordinary potential of its dance traditions when it engages with modern dance practice, assuring a dynamic blend of the old and new, tradition and innovation, spiritual and physical.

Aakash Odedra is a dancer, choreographer, and teacher. Born in Birmingham, England, Odedra trained in the classical Indian dance styles of Kathak (Nilima Devi, Leicester and Asha Joglekar, India) and Bharatanatyam (Chitrleka Bolar, Birmingham and Chhaya Kantaveh, India). Odedra formed Aakash

Odedra Company in 2011 as a vehicle for commissioning solos and to develop his own choreographic work, and as a soloist has performed over 300 full length performances in 40 countries in the past decade. Notable commissions include *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot* (Apollo Theater) and the opera *God's Little Soldier* (Theater Freiburg), The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and the closing of the London Cultural Olympiad. Odedra has received numerous awards including the Amnesty International Award for Freedom of Expression; Best Dance at the Eastern Eye ACTA Awards, 2018; a Dora performance award (Canada); Danza&Danza award (Italy); and a British Empire Medal in the Queen's 2021 New Year's Honours for his services to dance.

Additional support for this residency is made possible by the Vivienne Jones Endowment Fund at Jacob's Pillow created by Christopher Jones, Chair of Jacob's Pillow's Board of Trustees and his wife, Deb McAllister, in honor of Jones's mother. The Fund was established to enhance the reach of the Pillow Lab by supporting a residency for a company based outside of the United States.

Kyle Marshall Choreography (Jan. 31-Feb. 11, 2024)

In his first Pillow Lab, Kyle Marshall, director and choreographer of Kyle Marshall Choreography (KMC) will embark on the ambitious *Julius Eastman Trilogy*, a series of dances embodying the music and legacy of Black queer minimalist composer Julius Eastman. Kyle Marshall Choreography will use its Pillow Lab residency to focus on two works of the trilogy: *Feminine*, a radically queer, 70-minute embodiment of Eastman's jubilant minimalist composition of the same title, and *Gay*, a new duet on eternal love set to Eastman's brooding "Gay Guerilla."

A New York City-based contemporary dance company founded in 2014, Kyle Marshall Choreography sees the dancing body as a container of history, an igniter of social reform, and a site of celebration. Expressing "a choreographic voice like no one else's" (*The New York Times*), Kyle Marshall Choreography believes in the creation, sharing, and teaching of dance as a way to deepen our knowledge of who we are as individuals, how we develop relationships, and ultimately societies. Winner of the 2018 Juried Bessie Award, the company has performed at venues including Jacob's Pillow (most recently *Onyx* that opened Festival 2023), Chelsea Factory, BAM Next Wave Festival, Roulette, and New World Center. Commissions have included Philadelphia Museum of Art, Baryshnikov Arts Center, American Dance Festival, "Dance on the Lawn" Montclair's Dance Festival, and Harlem Stage.

Kyle Marshall is a choreographer, performer, teacher, and artistic director of Kyle Marshall Choreography. He has received choreographic fellowships from Princeton University, Center for Ballet and the Arts at New York University, and residencies from the Monira Foundation, The 92nd Street Y, Center for Performance Research, American Dance Festival, and Bethany Arts Community. As an educator, Marshall is currently an adjunct professor at NYU's Open Arts Program, and has been a guest artist at Rutgers University, Ailey/Fordham University, Eugene Lang/New School, and Sarah Lawrence College. Kyle has engaged young artists through creative workshops at Operation Unite NY, Bloomfield College, and several New Jersey high schools. As a performer, Marshall was a member of the Trisha Brown Dance Company, Doug Elkins Choreography etc., and Tiffany Mills Company. He is a graduate of

Rutgers University with a BFA in Dance and currently resides in Brooklyn, NY.

CONTRA-TIEMPO Activist Dance Theater (Feb. 14-25, 2024)

During their Pillow Lab, CONTRA-TIEMPO will continue to develop their newest work, *jazúcar!*. Led by the vision of Alvarez, founding Artistic Director, alongside twenty artists and collaborators from across the country, *jazúcar!* brings to life the vibrations of Cuban musician Celia Cruz, and embodies personal narratives about sugar, Afro-Latin ancestral technologies, dance, music, and healing as a community practice. The development of *jazúcar!* is driven by questions of unearthing the history embedded in the artists' bodies to courageously name, confront, and intentionally obliterate the often unspoken undercurrent of anti-Blackness in Latinidad. In CONTRA-TIEMPO's residency, the artists will be deepening the narrative physicality and expanding the piece of *jazúcar!*.

Artistic Director Ana Maria Alvarez is a prolific choreographer, skilled dancer, masterful teaching artist, and movement activist. A 2020 Doris Duke Artist, an inaugural Dance/USA Artist Fellow, and a two-time grantee of NEFA National Dance Project, Alvarez has achieved multiple accolades for her dynamic works. In 2005, Alvarez founded CONTRA-TIEMPO, a Los Angeles-based activist theater dance company that draws upon salsa, Afro-Cuban, hip hop, and contemporary dance to awaken audiences and create communities. Alvarez recently joined the faculty of the Theatre & Dance Department of UC San Diego as she continues her research through her work with CONTRA-TIEMPO. The company has been celebrated by the *Los Angeles Times* as a company that "represents the kind of socially aware contemporary work that only a few dance artists such as Bill T. Jones reliably provide..." Alvarez and CONTRA-TIEMPO were invited for multiple tours in Central and South America as cultural ambassadors through the U.S. State Department and have toured their work for almost 2 decades.

Hari Krishnan/inDANCE (Feb. 28-March 10, 2024)

Hari Krishnan, a choreographer who specializes in Bharatanatyam, queer, and contemporary dance from global perspectives, will be developing *ROWDIES IN LOVE* in his Pillow Lab. The choreographic process will use an original contemporary Bharatanatyam movement vocabulary to explore representations of precision and queer intimacy. Krishnan will investigate the clichés of hyper-masculinity, ultimately burning these clichés by fluently shifting gender and contemporaneously shedding archaic cultural stereotypes. Krishnan aims to "reveal one's true self, as is, in the here and Now."

Described by the *Toronto Star* as a "maverick gadfly who is aggressively iconoclastic (and) a Very Naughty Boy who scoffs at tradition, turns things upside down and shakes out all the cobwebs," Hari Krishnan is a Connecticut and Toronto based choreographer and educator. A Bessie and Dora Award-nominated dance artist, he is the artistic director of inDANCE. Krishnan's choreography is technically rigorous, subversive, and fused with contemporary sensibilities. Some of his pieces are bombastic, boldly confronting political and sociological issues. As an educator, Krishnan is a Professor in the Department of Dance at Wesleyan University. His monograph *Celluloid Classicism: Early Tamil Cinema and the Making of Modern Bharatanatyam*, has been hailed as "an invaluable addition to the

scholarship on Bharatanatyam.”

ROWDIES IN LOVE is being developed with the generous support from the New England Foundation for the Arts through a National Dance Project Production Grant, with additional funding support from The Bank of Montreal and The Canada Council for the Arts.

Theresa Ruth Howard and The Pathways to Performance Choreographic Program (March 13-24, 2024)

Theresa Ruth Howard and The Pathways to Performance (PTP) Choreographic Program return to Jacob’s Pillow for their second Pillow Lab as a part of the collaboration between the Kennedy Center, Jacob’s Pillow, and Memoirs of Blacks in Ballet (MoBBallet), founded by Theresa Ruth Howard. MoBBallet’s PTP Choreographic Program cultivates and mentors Black choreographers (and those of color) who are working specifically within the ballet idiom, as well as contemporary choreographers interested in investigating ballet vocabulary. PTP aids established, though unknown and overlooked, dance makers in breaking the glass ceilings of the dance industry by providing concrete opportunities to create and present work while working to codify a studio culture that supports and reflects the shift in the ballet world related to equity, dancer agency and communication. PTP’s second Pillow Lab will focus on the development of works, which are set to be presented at both the Kennedy Center and the Pillow in July 2024.

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “A Force for Change,” Howard is a writer, diversity strategist, and former ballet dancer who has been a frequent Scholar-in-Residence at Jacob’s Pillow. She is the visionary founder and curator of MoBBallet (MoBBallet.org), which has been a pioneer in the efforts to create cultural reform supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism in the field of ballet and the classical arts through robust education and advocacy. MoBBallet has expanded the perception of ballet (who it is for and who participates) through its dynamic digital archive, illuminating the history of Blacks in ballet. Its captivating offerings include an Animated Timeline, Roll Call, Constellation Project, and digital installations. Alongside this archive in MoBBallet’s efforts is a series of educational and professional development initiatives, prominently represented by the annual MoBBallet Symposium.

Howard’s impact transcends the ballet industry, and extends outside of MoBBallet. Howard is an internationally-recognized diversity strategist, speaker, consultant, and curator who has worked with The Royal Opera, Dutch National Ballet, and American Guild of Musical Artists. Howard is also a notable dance writer, praised by former *New York Times* lead dance critic Alastair Macaulay as “one of the most valuable writers on dance today.” Through her work, Howard’s life motto resounds powerfully: “The only way to make the world a better place is to be better people in it!”

Miguel Gutierrez (July 2024)

Miguel Gutierrez is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Lenapehoking/Brooklyn, NY and Tovaangar/Los Angeles. For this Pillow Lab residency, Gutierrez will split his time between two projects.

sueño is a new music and dance project from 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. The dance is inspired by time spent in the Pillow's Archives viewing and reflecting on various icons of early 20th century modern dance, most notably Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers, but also including Harald Kreutzberg and Isadora Duncan.

(Untitled) engages performers from New York and Los Angeles: Justin Faircloth (NYC), Wendell Gray (NYC), Ajani Brannum (L.A.), and Evelyn Sanchez (L.A.). Together, they examine questions of archives, memory, and how context moves us into relation with ourselves and each other. How does the present re-shape our view of the past? How does the past tell us something about how bodies are changing? By toggling the lens of attention between the past and the present, this research project into performance is a marker and an examination of the challenges in coming together now.

Miguel Gutierrez creates empathetic and irreverent spaces for QTPOC folx to dream. His work has been presented internationally in venues such as Festival d'Automne/Paris, the Walker Art Center, and in the 2014 Whitney Biennial. 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 is an Associate Professor of Choreography at UCLA in the department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance. miguelgutierrez.org

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, 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.

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 August 14, 2023).

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