



NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS | NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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**Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Kicks Off 2024 Season  
by Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of  
All-Male Comic Ballet Company  
Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**

**Shawn L. Stevens and Friends, M.A.D.D. Rhythms, and The School at Jacob's Pillow  
Will Perform on the Henry J. Leir Stage**

June 5, 2024 (BECKET, Mass.) — This summer's Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival will open with a trailblazing ballet company that joyfully sends up the conventions of romantic and classical ballet. Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo ("The Trocks") will perform from Wednesday, June 26 through Sunday, June 30 in the historic Ted Shawn Theatre. The company, which is proudly celebrating 50 years, will present the second act of *Swan Lake*, their singular take on *Paquita*, and other crowd-pleasing favorites.

Week 1 of the Festival will also feature one-night-only performances on the outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage by Stockbridge Munsee musician, dancer, and storyteller Shawn L. Stevens on Wednesday, June 26; and The School at Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Ballet Performance Ensemble on Saturday, June 29. For these one-night-only performances, tickets are available on a Choose What You Pay model. In addition, the Chicago-based tap dance group M.A.D.D. Rhythms will light up the Leir Stage on Thursday and Friday, June 27-28. Tickets to M.A.D.D. Rhythms start at \$40. All performances are now on sale.

Also during Festival Week 1, Jacob's Pillow will offer a free PillowTalk on Sat., June 29 at 4 p.m. with the artistic director of the Trocks, Tory Dobrin, discussing the company's success captivating audiences with all-male performances of classic ballets since 1973. Off-site, Jacob's

Pillow welcomes Camille A. Brown's community engagement initiative, Every Body Move (EBM), to Pittsfield for a multi-day community residency. This series of movement workshops led by dance artists Ethel Calhoun and Maxie Montilus will engage participants in the rich history of the cultural significance of African Diasporic Dance. Workshops are intergenerational, inviting participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

"We are thrilled to open our festival by celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the humor and brilliance of the Trocks," said Jacob's Pillow Executive and Artistic Director Pamela Tatge. "So much has changed in this country since the Trocks were founded in the wake of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City. So many challenges remain, and the Trocks have persevered through it all. Audiences of all ages can't help but get caught up in their humor and technical skill as dancers. Their gender-skewering approach to ballet and modern dance is such a phenomenon, and so worth celebrating."

Regarding the outdoor stage, Tatge continued, "we couldn't be more honored to open our Festival with Shawn L. Stevens, known as Red Eagle, a tribal member of the Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohicans. He will bring the music, dance, and stories of the tribe back to their ancestral homelands from where they now reside in Wisconsin. It will be so moving to see them perform against the backdrop of the Berkshire hills."

### **ABOUT LES BALLETS TROCKADERO DE MONTE CARLO**

Founded in 1974 to present a playful view of classical ballet in parody form and *en travesti*, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo first appeared after hours in Off-Off Broadway lofts. Since those beginnings, "the Trocks" have established themselves as a major dance phenomenon throughout the world, appearing in over 500 cities worldwide. The company of male dancers in all parts—delicately balancing on their toes as swans, sylphs, water sprites, and romantic princesses—means to lovingly enhance the spirit of dance as an art form, while also providing comedic moments.

Formed in the wake of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City, the Trocks perform a full range of ballet and modern dance repertoire, offering humorous yet faithful renditions that are both "delightful" and "rebellious" (*The New Republic*). After fifty years of globe-spanning performances, the company now plays to a world that is, as they put it, "catching up with their once highly-subversive viewpoint, allowing their style of ballet to be viewed simply as sheer entertainment."

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo first appeared at the Pillow in 2010, when the company performed Lev Ivanovich Ivanov's 1895 version of *Le Lac des Cygnes (Swan Lake, Act 11)* with music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Previously, the Trocks performed in a joint program presented by Jacob's Pillow and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams in 2019.

Watch clips on Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive:

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, 2010:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/les-ballets-trockadero-de-monte-carlo/le-lac-des-cygn-es-swan-lake-act-ii/>

### **ABOUT SHAWN L. STEVENS AND FRIENDS**

A spiritualist, musician, dancer, storyteller, historian, and sharer of knowledge, Shawn L. Stevens has been fulfilling his path journey for the past few decades by doing a variety of sharing in his people's ancestral lands as well as the Midwest. Shawn describes himself as a "helper" to not only his people but to all. He explains that his spiritual path is to share the many things given to him for spiritual direction and purpose.

Stevens' performance at Jacob's Pillow on Wednesday, June 26 opens Festival 2024 with a centering of Indigenous voices, acknowledging and amplifying the fact that Jacob's Pillow is sited on the ancestral homelands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok or 'Mohican people'. For the Pillow's full current Land Acknowledgement and Commitment to Amplifying Indigenous Voices, please visit [jacobspillow.org/land-acknowledgment](http://jacobspillow.org/land-acknowledgment).

### **ABOUT M.A.D.D. RHYTHMS**

Based in Chicago, M.A.D.D. (Making A Difference Dancing) Rhythms is a multi-generational tap dance collective with one passion: to spread the love and joy of tap worldwide. They have gained increasing attention in recent years, and co-founder Bril Barrett was recently named a 2024 National Heritage Fellow. Featuring dancers with wide-ranging backgrounds from all over Chicago, the company's versatility and sense of play is a potent draw for all ages. Pillow audiences will see the full-length work *A M.A.D.D. Mixtape*, created by Donnetta Jackson, which combines the rhythmic connection of tap and footwork into an inspiring onstage party, featuring a live DJ spinning some of hip hop and R&B's most treasured musical gems.

M.A.D.D. Rhythms has performed widely across Chicago and neighboring cities, as well as at conferences, festivals, and community events. Through live shows as well as their Tap Academy—which has educated hundreds of students—the company is committed to bringing tap history and culture front-and-center for youth in underserved communities and unexpected places. In their words: access to tap dance “gives a child a greater chance at a positive life. Therefore, we will spread the joy, love, discipline, and expression of tap to as many children as we humanly can!”

M.A.D.D. Rhythms made their Jacob’s Pillow debut in 2017 when they performed *Supreme Love*, originally choreographed by Jumaane Taylor in 2015. Taylor created *Supreme Love* to pay tribute to John Coltrane’s “A Love Supreme” and to honor the art of tap dance. Michelle Dorrance, founder and artistic director of award-winning tap company Dorrance Dance, selected this work to be featured as part of her curated program, *TIRELESS : A Tap Dance Experience*, highlighting some of the most exciting tap dancers on the scene today.

Watch clips on Jacob’s Pillow Dance Interactive:

M.A.D.D. Rhythms, 2017:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/jumane-taylor/supreme-love/>

### **ABOUT THE SCHOOL AT JACOB’S PILLOW: CONTEMPORARY BALLET PROGRAM**

Performances by The School at Jacob’s Pillow Performance Ensembles provide an inside look at The School experience and feature repertoire created on the dancers by leading choreographers serving as program faculty. This performance is the culmination of a two-week Contemporary Ballet Program and features the dancers’ work with Program Director Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, répétiteur Anitra Keegan, and choreographer Silas Farley.

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.

## PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS

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

### **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**

June 26-30; Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8pm; Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2pm  
Ted Shawn Theatre | Tickets from \$65

### **Shawn L. Stevens and Friends**

Wednesday, June 26 at 6pm  
Henry J. Leir Stage | Choose What You Pay

### **M.A.D.D. Rhythms**

June 27-28; Thursday and Friday at 6pm  
Henry J. Leir Stage | Tickets from \$40

### **The School at Jacob's Pillow: Contemporary Ballet Performance Ensemble**

Saturday, June 29 at 6pm  
Henry J. Leir Stage | Choose What You Pay

## ADDITIONAL EVENTS

### **Every Body Move – Community Residency in Pittsfield with Camille A. Brown & Dancers**

June 28-30

Common Room at Zion Lutheran Church, Pittsfield | FREE

*Pre-registration is strongly encouraged online or by calling 413.243.0745. Registration is available at the door, pending availability.*

Jacob's Pillow welcomes Camille A. Brown's community engagement initiative, Every Body Move (EBM), to Pittsfield for a multi-day community residency. In partnership with Rites of Passage and Empowerment (ROPE) and Railroad Street Youth Project (RSYP), this series of movement workshops led by dance artists Ethel Calhoun and Maxie Montilus will engage participants in the rich history of the cultural significance of African Diasporic Dance. Workshops are intergenerational, inviting participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

- **Every Body Move — Black Girl Spectrum Workshops (BGS)**

Friday, June 28, 1-2:30pm and 3:30-5pm

Born from Camille A. Brown's choreographic masterpiece, *Black Girl Linguistic Play*, BGS is a unique program that aims to empower women and girls of all ages to develop pride, joy, collaboration, and confidence through the art of African American social dance. The workshop will provide participants with a safe and supportive space where they can explore and express their creativity and cultural heritage, and will also empower participants with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the importance of African American social dance in their lives. BGS workshops aim to nurture Black, Brown, and girls of color brilliance through social dance workshops that spur creativity and self-expression, promote health, well-being and body positivity, and nurture pride. Limited spaces available; contact [community@jacobsillow.org](mailto:community@jacobsillow.org) for details.

- **Every Body Move — West African Dance Workshop**

Saturday June 29, 3-4:30pm

Led by artist Ethel Calhoun, explore the rich and rhythmic world of West African dance! This dynamic workshop invites you to experience the powerful movements and deep cultural roots of West African traditions. This intergenerational workshop invites participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

- **Every Body Move & Groove Dance Party**

Saturday June 29, 6-7:30pm

Groove to dances from Lindy Hop to the Electric Slide, from the Kid-n-Play to the Running Man, and more! Come with your friends or with family to get your groove on and immerse yourself in the vibrant world of social dance. This intergenerational event invites participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

- **Every Body Move — Haitian Folkloric Dance Workshop**

Sunday June 30, 2:30-4pm

Led by artist Maxine Montilus, experience the rhythm and passion of Haiti's rich dance heritage, where each movement tells a story deeply rooted in cultural traditions. This workshop invites you to explore, celebrate, and master the dynamic expressions of Haitian folklore. This intergenerational workshop invites participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

- **Every Body Move — Soca Dance Workshop**

Sun., June 30, 5-6:30pm

Led by Ethel Calhoun, get ready to unleash your energy and immerse yourself in the vibrant rhythms of the Caribbean with our Soca Dance Class. This high-energy class is perfect for anyone looking to dive into the exhilarating world of Soca, a dance form celebrated for its spirited beats and joyful movements. This intergenerational workshop invites participants of all ages to join in celebration and learning through dance.

### **Morning Classes**

June 25-28; Tuesday through Friday, 9-10am

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+. Offered weekly through the summer in Sommers Studio. \$12 per class; \$50 for 5 class card. Pay via online pre-registration or cash/card at the door.

- **Ballet:** Tuesdays through August 20
- **Contemporary:** Wednesdays through August 21
- **West African Dance & Spiritual Well-Being:** Thursdays through August 22
- **Hip-Hop/Street Styles:** Fridays through August 23

### **PillowTalk: Fifty Years of the Trocks**

Saturday, June 29 at 4pm

Blake's Barn | FREE

Since its first performances in 1973, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo has both amazed and delighted audiences with its all-male performances of classic ballets, explored here with director Tory Dobrin.

### **Workshop with Festival Artists: Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**

Sunday, June 30, 10-11:30am

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 12+

Have you ever dreamed of performing your own version of the iconic ballet solo, "The Dying Swan?" Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo invites you to create your own legendary moments of breathtaking beauty and hilarity while discovering your inner swan. Roy Fialkow, Trock Education Manager and former Trock, will take you step by step, encouraging you to create your own version of the Trocks take on the "terminal fowl" and holding a space in which The Dying Swan is accessible to all abilities and dance experiences. Wear comfortable clothing and ballet flats, socks, or dance sneakers.

## FESTIVAL EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES – ONGOING

### **JOHN LINDQUIST: AS OF TODAY**

It's impossible to overstate how the photographs of John Lindquist (1890-1980) have shaped public perception of the Pillow's first four decades and influenced all subsequent photographers here. Now the institutional home for Lindquist's body of work, Harvard University's Houghton Library has digitized many thousands of images, and we are able to learn more about our past through these carefully-selected new prints, many of which are being exhibited for the first time. This exhibit will be discussed in a freePillowTalk on Sunday, August 11 at 4pm. *Blake's Barn; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

### **ROYAL BALLET CONNECTIONS**

Even as this season marks The Royal Ballet's Pillow debut, the links between these two iconic dance institutions run deep. Some of the evidence is on display here, in rare photos and footage spanning the decades. From Alicia Markova and Antony Tudor to contemporary artists including Pam Tanowitz and Wayne McGregor, the shared histories are surfaced and celebrated. *Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

### **FANTASY MEETS REALITY: THE FAR EAST TOUR**

Curated by Phil Chan and Caroline Hamilton, this exhibition builds upon last year's initial look at Denishawn's 1925-26 Asian tour. With newly-discovered treasures, this re-examination of the tour focuses on the experiences of three Denishawn dancers: Ernestine Day, Mary Howry, and Jane Sherman. Included are costumes they retained, objects they purchased, and words they wrote—challenging viewers to ponder what it means to share culture with integrity. *Blake's Barn; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

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

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. *Blake's Barn; open Tues.-Sun., noon through final curtain.*

### **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).

## **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, which celebrates its 92nd season in Summer 2024. 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.

Founded by Ted Shawn in 1933, 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 its seasonal internship 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 highlighted 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).

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