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**Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Welcomes Parsons Dance
Back to the Ted Shawn Theatre After 25 Years**

**Gibney Dance Company will perform on the Henry J. Leir Stage;
Querencia Dance Company will perform at Jacob's Pillow On The Road**

July 12, 2024 (BECKET, Mass.) — Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival welcomes the internationally-touring modern dance company Parsons Dance back to the Ted Shawn Theatre, 25 years after their last engagement with the festival in 1999. Beloved for their high-energy and athletic ensemble work, Parsons Dance will perform pieces choreographed by founder David Parsons, Robert Battle, and Jamar Roberts in the Ted Shawn Theatre from Wednesday, August 7 through Sunday, August 11. Tickets for Parsons Dance start at \$65.

Also during this week—the seventh of Jacob's Pillow's nine-week festival this summer—contemporary dance company Gibney Company will perform on the outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage from Wednesday, August 7 through Sunday, August 11. Tickets for Gibney Company start at \$40. All performances are now on sale.

On Saturday, August 10, a PillowTalk will be held in Blake's Barn featuring Diana Byer, founder of New York Theatre Ballet, unveiling a new initiative documenting the teachings of Margaret Craske, a famed ballet teacher and core faculty member at Jacob's Pillow for more than 20 years. An additional PillowTalk in Blake's Barn will follow on Sunday, August 11, which will highlight the current Pillow photographic exhibition entitled *John Lindquist: As of Today*. This Sunday talk will include Lindquist's protégé, Stephan Driscoll, and exhibition curator Norton Owen, in addition to an excerpt from a documentary film on John Lindquist. Also on Sunday, August 11, Jacob's Pillow will offer a modern dance workshop with Parsons Dance Company, which welcomes participants ages 16 and up and with all levels of dance experience.

“The return of Parsons Dance to the Pillow is a gift to all of us,” said Pamela Tatge, Executive and Artistic Director at Jacob’s Pillow. “They have put together a program of greatest hits along with the Pillow debut of choreographer Jamar Roberts, who has created a stunning work for the company set to music by jazz great Miles Davis. On the Leir Stage, we will host the return of a re-imagined Gibney Dance Company, presenting masterworks by Twyla Tharp and Swedish choreographer Johan Inger’s *Bliss* with music from “The Köln Concert” by Keith Jarrett. I can’t wait to see this joy-filled piece presented against the iconic backdrop of the Berkshire hills.”

This seventh week of the Festival also includes the final two events in this summer’s free Jacob’s Pillow On the Road series: a performance on Railroad Street in Great Barrington on Friday, August 9 at 7pm (as part of Berkshire Busk!), and a lecture / demonstration at the Becket Arts Center in Becket on Saturday, August 10. Both events will feature the Boston-based salsa troupe Querencia Dance Company. Jacob’s Pillow On the Road was created in 2021 as a series of free pop-up performances across Berkshire County, featuring touring and Berkshire-region dance artists. Lead support for Jacob’s Pillow On the Road is generously provided by Mill Town Foundation.

ABOUT PARSONS DANCE

This summer marks 25 years since the last Pillow appearance by Parsons Dance, the internationally-touring contemporary dance company based in New York City and led by David Parsons, “one of the great movers of modern dance” (*The New York Times*). Beloved for their high-energy and athletic ensemble work, Parsons dancers have wowed audiences in more than 30 countries, performing selections from a repertory of more than 75 works created by David Parsons, as well as established choreographers like Jamar Roberts and Rena Butler.

The return to the Pillow is a celebration of the company’s roots and staying power, the go-for-broke energy that Parsons dancers are known for, and the vision of David Parsons: “to bring life-affirming performances and joy to audiences worldwide.” The program at the Pillow will feature signature works including *Caught* (1982), choreographed by David Parsons, and *Takedeme* (1999), choreographed by Robert Battle, as well as *Juke* (2024) by Jamar Roberts.

Related content on Jacob’s Pillow Interactive:

Parsons Dance, 1995:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/parsons-dance-company/sleep-study/>

ABOUT GIBNEY COMPANY

The creators of “sharp and satisfying” contemporary dance (*The New York Times*), Gibney Company lives at “the intersection of art and social action.” While Gina Gibney Dance performed three times at the Pillow from 1999 to 2001, Gibney completely rebuilt her company in 2020. This will be the reimagined group’s Pillow debut.

Founded in New York City in 1991 as a dance and social justice organization, Gibney has transformed dramatically over the past decade, and now tours with an “engaging” (*Boston Globe*) performance company that recently doubled in size, performing works by some of New York’s and the world’s most renowned choreographers. Gibney Company made their Joyce Theater debut in November 2021, and were featured in New York City Center’s Fall for Dance festival in 2022 and 2023. Following recent tour stops in Ontario, British Columbia, and The Hague, the company comes to Jacob’s Pillow as one of only two companies performing for a full week on the outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage. At the Pillow, Gibney Company will perform Johan Inger’s breathtaking *Bliss* as well as Twyla Tharp’s *The Fugue* and *Bach Duet*.

ABOUT QUERENCIA DANCE COMPANY

The Boston-based salsa troupe Querencia Dance Company features high-energy dances by performance teams as well as dances by founders and company leaders Michelle Garcia and Julian De Las Nieves. Garcia and De Las Nieves are accomplished salsa dancers who travel as performers, choreographers, and instructors not only throughout the U.S. but also internationally. They have a shared goal of inspiring people through the arts and continuing to put Latin dance on not only a more visible map, but also an academic one.

PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS

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

Parsons Dance

August 7-11; Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8pm; Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2pm
Ted Shawn Theatre | Tickets from \$65

Gibney Company

August 7-11; Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 6pm; Sunday at 12pm
Henry J. Leir Stage | Tickets from \$40

Jacob's Pillow On The Road

August 9-10; Friday at 7pm, Saturday at 3pm

Friday: Jacob's Pillow On the Road at Berkshire Busk! on Railroad Street in Great Barrington featuring Querencia Dance Company.

Saturday: Jacob's Pillow On the Road at Becket Arts Center in Becket featuring a special salsa lecture/demonstration with Querencia Dance Company Co-Directors Michelle Garcia and Julian De Las Nieves.

All Jacob's Pillow On the Road performances are free and open to the public. On the Road is made possible with generous support provided by the Feigenbaum Foundation, Mill Town Foundation, and the Pittsfield Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

Morning Classes

July 30 – August 2; Tuesday through Friday from 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: Margaret Craske and Her Teachings

Saturday, Aug. 10 at 4pm

Blake's Barn

FREE

The British ballet teacher Margaret Craske (1892-1990) was a core member of the Pillow School's faculty for more than 20 years, and disciple Diana Byer here unveils an exciting new initiative to document Craske's teachings in partnership with Dancio.

Workshop with Festival Artists: Parsons Dance

Sunday, August 11 from 10-11:30am

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+

The popular Parsons Style is known worldwide for its strength, high-spirited athleticism, unique shapes, dynamics, endurance, and humor. This American Modern-Contemporary class includes a Parsons warm-up followed by across the floor combinations. Participants will then learn choreographed phrases from the company's touring repertory. Experience first-hand knowledge of the Parsons Style! Barefoot, socks, or jazz shoes recommended.

PillowTalk: John Lindquist: As of Today

Sunday, Aug. 11 at 4pm

Blake's Barn

FREE

Kicking off with a film documentary excerpt on photographer John Lindquist's Pillow career, this event also features Lindquist protégé Stephan Driscoll and exhibition curator Norton Owen with behind-the-scenes stories.

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: THROUGH THE EYES OF A DENISHAWN DANCER

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. Co-curator Phil Chan will offer free public tours of this exhibition on Thursday, July 4 and Friday, July 5 at 4:30pm. *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.

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, 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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