



NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS | NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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**Jacob's Pillow Announces Artists and Schedule of Events  
For 10 Pillow Lab Residencies  
From October 2024 through April 2025**

August 29, 2024 (BECKET, Mass.) — Jacob's Pillow is pleased to announce the artists selected to 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: Hélène Simoneau Danse; Emily Coates, Ain Gordon, and Derek Lucci; Music from the Sole; Andy Blankenbuehler and Kate Quinn; Brinae Ali; dani tirell; Peter Rockford Espiritu and Roberta Uno; Joanna Kotze; The Choreodaemonic Collective; and Rosy Simas. Programming and dates are subject to change.

The Pillow Lab is a residency program that supports U.S.-based and international dance artists in the crucial development, research, and technical stages of choreographic projects, and offers the opportunity for artists to work in the Pillow's retreat-like atmosphere, studio spaces, and generative landscape. Lead support for the Pillow Lab is generously provided by the Mellon Foundation.

"As the Pillow's year-round incubator of new work, the Pillow Lab plays a significant role in the creation, presentation and preservation of dance." said Executive and Artistic Director Pamela Tatge. "This program is a vital component of Jacob's Pillow mission and decades-long history as a hub of artistic development and exploration. We are proud to nurture the choreographic process, while cultivating opportunities for artists to debut new works at the Pillow and beyond."

Pillow Lab artists and their collaborators receive unrestricted use of Jacob's Pillow's iconic site, founded more than 90 years ago in the bucolic landscape that characterizes the Berkshires of

western Massachusetts. Artists live on campus and receive in-kind housing, an artist fee for each collaborator, a grocery stipend, and access to the Pillow's extensive Archives. Certain residencies may include video documentation and/or the creation of a fully produced short form documentary about the artists' work.

Residency programs have existed at Jacob's Pillow in various forms since the organization's founding in the early 1930s. Now heading into its ninth year in 2025, the Pillow Lab began as an anchor of a five-year strategic plan called Vision '22, and continues into the future. Built from a field-wide scan that included interviews with a diverse group of 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 as well as Associate Artistic Director Kim Chan and Associate Curator Melanie George. Most residencies include 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, community members, and artists' colleagues. For more information, visit [jacobspillow.org/pillowlab](http://jacobspillow.org/pillowlab).

## **2024-2025 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. Please note that only certain residencies will have showings.*

### **Hélène Simoneau Danse**

**Developmental Residency: October 16-27**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, October 26**

During her residency, Hélène Simoneau Danse plans to develop a new work titled *Late Bloomer*, which will examine themes of power in the context of belonging. The work will explore the desire to be included, the consequences of exclusion, survival, and the effects of being ostracized.

Simoneau is a French-Canadian choreographer exploring themes of intimacy, agency, identity, sexuality, and power. Her choreography has been commissioned by Oregon Ballet Theatre, The Juilliard School, Charlotte Ballet, PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, Vitacca Ballet, Amy Seiwert's Imagery, BalletX, the Ailey School, Dimensions Dance Theatre, and the American Dance Festival.

As a recent Choreography Fellow at New York City Center and a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship recipient, Simoneau has also been a resident artist at Baryshnikov Arts Center, NYU/Tisch, and NCCAkron. Simoneau was a fellow of The Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU, Ailey's New Directions Choreography Lab, the Bogliasco Foundation, and the Swiss International Coaching Project for Choreographers (SiWiC) in Zurich. Simoneau was awarded first place for Choreography at the 13th Internationales Solo-Tanz-Theater Festival in Stuttgart, Germany, for her solo *the gentleness was in her hands*. Originally from Luceville, a small village near Rimouski in Eastern Québec, Simoneau now divides her time between Montréal and NYC.

### **Emily Coates, Ain Gordon, and Derek Lucci**

**Research Residency (no invited showing): October 18-27**

Dancer and choreographer Emily Coates will return to the Pillow to develop a new performance project, which draws on George Balanchine's brief history in New England to reflect on how the body and spirit of a choreographer scatters, living on in unexpected places. Drawing on her background as a former member of New York City Ballet, Coates and her collaborators Ain Gordon and Derek Lucci will make a collage of traces of Balanchine and related artists, discovered in archives. Source materials will come from special collections (Wadsworth Atheneum, Houghton Library, Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Jacob's Pillow Archives), as well as the bodies of dancers who danced with him. Amplifying the quieted voices and neglected histories that lie on the outer orbit of a legacy, the project will result in an evening-length dance-theater piece for a multigenerational cast of performers and musicians.

Commissioned by Works & Process at the Guggenheim, the project will also be provided with a Works & Process LaunchPAD residency at The Church in Sag Harbor, New York, home to George Balanchine's grave, and will culminate in a showcase at the Guggenheim Museum as part of the 2025 Works & Process Underground Uptown Dance Festival. The project will continue to be supported with a Works & Process LaunchPAD residency at the Catskill Mountain Foundation. Additional developmental support is provided by Jacob's Pillow, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, the Quick Center for the Arts at Fairfield University, and New England Foundation for the Arts Dance Fund.

### **Music from the Sole**

**Developmental Residency: October 30 – November 10**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, November 9**

Music from the Sole is a tap dance and live music company that celebrates tap's Afro-diasporic roots, particularly its connections to Afro-Brazilian dance and music, and its lineage to forms like

house dance and passinho (Brazilian funk). Led by Brazilian tap dancer/choreographer Leonardo Sandoval and by bassist/composer Gregory Richardson, *Music from the Sole* embraces tap's unique nature as a blend of sound and movement, incorporating wide-ranging influences like samba, passinho, Afro-Cuban, jazz, and house. The company performed as part of the 2022 Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

During their Pillow Lab residency, *Music from the Sole* will expand and deepen their exploration of tap's fluid identity as both dance and music, focusing particularly on the development of a new, currently untitled evening-length work. This work is co-commissioned by the Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow, Works & Process at the Guggenheim, Guild Hall, The Yard, and Dance Place.

*Music from the Sole's* new work is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by The Yard, Joyce Theater Foundation Inc, Works and Process, Inc., Guild Hall of East Hampton, Jacob's Pillow, Dance Place, and NPN. The Creation & Development Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For more information: [www.npnweb.org](http://www.npnweb.org)

## **Andy Blankenbuehler and Kate Quinn**

**Developmental Residency: November 13-24**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, November 23**

During their residency, Blankenbuehler and Quinn will focus on a co-created piece, *Never Alone*. Through movement, light, and projection, the world of the piece shifts from the codebreaking huts of Bletchley Park during World War II to steamy dance halls, intimate bedrooms, and the confines of submarines deep beneath the sea. The poetic potential in dance emerges from the internal struggles these characters face—codebreakers straining their minds to make sense of chaos, submarine crews deep underwater anticipating their enemy's next move, and lovers reaching across distance, pouring their hearts and hopes into love letters.

Andy Blankenbuehler was a recipient at the 2018 Kennedy Center Honors for his work on the musical *Hamilton*. He is a three-time Tony Award winner for his choreography in the Broadway productions of *Bandstand*, *In The Heights*, and *Hamilton*, for which he also received London's Olivier Award. Other Broadway credits include *Bring It On*, *9 To 5*, *The People In The Picture*, *The Apple Tree*, *Annie*, and the 2016 revival of *CATS*. Most recently, Blankenbuehler co-wrote, directed, and choreographed the world premiere musical *Only Gold* at MCC Theater. He has received a Drama Desk and a Dance Magazine Award for his achievement in the theater.

Blankenbuehler has served as choreographer for the Universal/Working Title feature film of *Cats*, the Emmy-winning FX limited series *Fosse/Verdon*, and the Lionsgate/ABC remake of *Dirty Dancing*. He recently premiered his first ballet, entitled *Remember Our Song*, for the Tulsa Ballet.

Kate Quinn is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of historical fiction. A native of southern California, she attended Boston University, where she earned a bachelor's and master's degree in Classical Voice. She wrote four novels in the *Empress of Rome* Saga, and two books on the Italian Renaissance, before turning to the 20th century with *The Alice Network*, *The Huntress*, *The Rose Code*, and *The Diamond Eye*.

## **Brinae Ali**

**Developmental Residency: December 4-15**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, December 14**

During her residency, tap dancer and choreographer Brinae Ali will develop *The Baby Laurence Legacy Project*. This archival and performance initiative investigates and celebrates the artistic genius of Donald "Baby Laurence" Jackson, a Baltimore-bred innovator whose impact on tap dance and jazz music is being redefined. This evening-length production aims to build a platform for sharing Laurence's largely forgotten story with audiences by exploring the relationship between technology, tap dancing, and jazz music, featuring songs by Laurence such as "Baby at Birdland" and "Delilah's Theme" reimagined with new arrangements and choreography. Through this work, Ali seeks to reveal how Laurence embodied the bebop aesthetic, reflecting a defiance of the white gaze and a self-referencing Black consciousness akin to the music of Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Max Roach, and Charlie Parker.

Brinae Ali performed as part of the 2023 Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Born and raised in Flint, Michigan, she is an interdisciplinary artist who believes in using the power of the arts to transform the conditions of the human spirit. Among her many roles as an educator and grassroots organizer, Ali has worked as the artistic director of Tapology, Inc., a youth based outreach program in Flint that believes in preserving the art of tap and jazz culture through education and performance.

## **dani tirell**

**Developmental Residency: January 29 – February 9, 2025**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, February 8, 2025**

tirell will use this Pillow Lab residency to develop a new piece titled *The Children Were Never Promised a House on Your Plantation*. This work will delve into the experiences of queer, trans, and femme individuals within family structures, examining the roles of women in family history to explore shared experiences and the significance of becoming an elder femme or non-binary caretaker. The movement score will utilize improvisational techniques rooted in African diasporic practices, focusing on matriarchy, the transition into elderhood, and the impact of traditional notions of femininity on family dynamics.

tirrell is a Black, trans spectrum, queer choreographer, dancer, and movement guide. Recipient of the 2019 Seattle Mayor Arts Award, tirrell is the curator for Central District Forum for Arts and Ideas in Seattle, as well as the host and co-creator of online talk programs *Sunday Dinner*, *The Living Room*, and *Intimate Conversations*. Formerly the Artistic Director of Dance Place in Washington, D.C., and currently the founder and Artistic Director of the movement/art group The Congregation, tirrell has taught at Northwest Tap Connection and University of Washington's Seattle and Bothell campuses. tirrell has created work for Dance This (Northwest Tap Connection), Strictly Seattle (advance/professional track), Seattle Repertory Theater, and Nina Simone Four Women (directed by Valerie Curtis-Newton).

### ***Waihona Kino*: Peter Rockford Espiritu and Roberta Uno**

**Developmental Residency: February 12-23, 2025**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, February 22, 2025**

Choreographer Peter Rockford Espiritu, a “Kanakanā Maoli” (Native Hawaiian), has pursued a paradigm-shifting movement vision for over 35 years; one that anchors Native Hawaiian and Pacific modalities and technique in conversation with Western dance influences. His vast body of performed and choreographed work centers Indigenous consciousness, narratives, and values creating an inspired Brown Dance footprint for future generations.

During this residency, Espiritu will develop *Waihona Kino (Body Archive)*, drawing from his corporeal archive and the deep memories held within. *Waihona Kino* is Espiritu's journey towards Pōhuli, the unique movement modality through which he has artistically reflected on the impact of what Oceania was, what it has become and where it is headed. In this dance, Espiritu not only pays tribute to Earnest Morgan, a mentor and friend, but also lifts up Morgan's historical contribution to the formation of contemporary dance in Hawai'i. Morgan, a Native Hawaiian and African American artist, is also part of a long, but often forgotten or overlooked cultural legacy of Blacks in Hawai'i.

This solo project will be created in collaboration with Roberta Uno, who is a theater director, dramaturg, haumana of Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine, and co-leader of the NYC hālau extension Pua Ali'i 'Ilima o Nuioka.

Espiritu is a master practitioner and the student of foundational Kumu Hula, masters of Hawaiian dance. As an 'ōlapa hula (Hawaiian dancer), he is the progeny of the Hawaiian lines Ka'imikaua, Luahine/Puku'i/Hoakalei, and Holokai ('auana). Uniquely, Espiritu is steeped in ballet and modern dance, having spent seven years in New York City, first training at The School of American Ballet and performing as a company member of New York Theatre Ballet, and for choreographer Ralph Lemon and others. Espiritu also performed extensively for Betty Jones, a founding member of the José Limón Company. Given his passion for both Native Hawaiian and Pacific dance, as well as modern and ballet, he founded Tau Dance Theater on O'ahu in 1996. Significantly, it has endured as the only contemporary dance company in Hawai'i founded and headed by a Native Hawaiian.

## **Joanna Kotze**

**Developmental Residency: March 5-16, 2025**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, March 15, 2025**

Joanna Kotze is a Brooklyn-based choreographer, dancer, and educator, active in the New York dance scene since 1998. During her residency, Kotze will investigate the phenomenon of history repeating itself through a two-part, unison, non-unison, non-hierarchical, canon dance. This new evening-length piece is a collaboration with an intergenerational cast of dancers and musicians contextualizing and reflecting on personal, artistic, and historical patterns and how context and time moving forward can inherently create change.

The current social and political challenges facing this country and the world at large—a threatened democracy, lack of public health strategy, white supremacist ideology and policy reigning—are nothing new. Yet, with each iteration, new individuals are deeply affected, and are fighting back, applying lived experiential knowledge to the solutions and progress made by generations before. Through cascading waves of intricate and personal movement, this new piece holds space for order and chaos, familiar and unfamiliar, building up and tearing down as we move forward.

Kotze's work—characterized by a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach—explores themes like effort, humor, and beauty through movement. She has presented work at venues including Jacob's Pillow, The Yard, and the American Dance Festival, and she has held residencies at the

Baryshnikov Arts Center, New York Live Arts, and Jacob's Pillow, among others. She teaches at Movement Research and has taught at institutions including The Ailey School, NYU, and Sarah Lawrence College. Originally from South Africa, Joanna holds a Bachelors in Architecture from Miami University.

## **The Choreodaemonic Collective**

**Developmental Residency: March 18-25, 2025**

**Invited Showing: Saturday, March 22, 2025**

Founded by Laurel Lawson and Sydney Skybetter, the Choreodaemonic Collective is a collaborative ensemble of artist-technologists that partner choreography with technology to investigate the boundaries of the individual, collective, and environment.

In this residency, the Collective will develop *The Choreodaemonic Platform*, an installation and performance in which artists, audiences, and artificial intelligence (A.I.) contend with the sometimes symbiotic, sometimes adversarial relationship between nature, art, and emerging technologies. The artists seek to work with projections and a floating robot dancer-body to refine the robot's kinaesthetic responses to people's movements and to explore opportunities for audience interaction to further develop a dance party concept.

Lawson is a transdisciplinary artist-engineer whose work imagines new kinds of experience, including traditional choreography for disabled and nondisabled artists, as well as novel ways of extending and creating art through technology and design. Lawson understands disability and access as aesthetic perspectives, leveraging user-experience design to create impactful immersive experiences.

Skybetter has been hailed as being among "the world's foremost thinkers on the intersection of dance and emerging technologies" (*Financial Times*), and his choreography has been performed at venues including the Kennedy Center and Jacob's Pillow. Skybetter is Faculty Director of the Brown Arts Institute at Brown University, and brings extensive expertise to the Collective.

*Major support for The Choreodaemonic Collective is provided by the Ford Foundation.*



## **Rosy Simas**

**Developmental Residency: March 26 – April 5, 2025**

**Invited Showing: TBA**

Simas (Seneca Nation, Heron clan) is a transdisciplinary and dance artist. Her knowledge of her Haudenosaunee family and lineage is the underpinning of her relationship to culture and history—stored in her body and expressed through her work—of moving people, images, and objects that she makes for stage and installation. Her work weaves personal and collective identity themes with family, sovereignty, equality, and healing. Simas creates with a team of Native and BIPOC artists.

During her residency, Simas will develop a new work that evokes her ancestors, their peacemaking, and their diplomacy to bring people together in action and rest. Her Haudenosaunee ancestors created the Great Law of Peace, a guide that united warring nations long before the founding of the United States. The words, methods, and actions of the Haudenosaunee served as a model for the creation of the U.S. Constitution. For this project, Simas returns to Haudenosaunee stories, ideas, and actions as a means to find peace and create a space that stirs the heart and mind—a place of rest for Native / BIPOC / LGBTQIA+ people in this time of divisive politics, bigotry, racism, and loss of life.

Throughout the cycles of the creative process, Simas will work with other Haudenosaunee artists, scholars, and community members, considering what parts of their ideas, stories, and words about peace should be shared with others—a critical question as they guard their culture against continual extraction from settler-colonialism. Simas creates content for Native audiences and then invites broader audiences into the space, offering content that deepens intimacy between everyone present. Her work is designed to be experienced in multiple ways: as installation/exhibition, performance, writing, and through community dialogue, gathering, and meal-sharing.

Simas is a Doris Duke Artist, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Fellow, Guggenheim Fellow, McKnight Foundation Fellow, Dance/USA Fellow, United States Artists Fellow, and a Joyce Awardee. Her other accolades include a Native Arts and Cultures Foundation SHIFT award and multiple awards from the New England Foundation for the Arts National Dance Project, the MAP Fund, and the National Performance Network. Simas is also the Artistic Director of Rosy Simas Danse and is currently an artist in residence at the Walker Art Center.

*Rosy Simas's new work is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by Walker Art Center, Jacob's Pillow, and NPN. The Creation & Development Fund is supported by*

*the Doris Duke Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency).*  
For more information: [www.npnweb.org](http://www.npnweb.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).

**Lead support for the Pillow Lab is provided by the Mellon Foundation.**



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