

JACOB'S PILLOW
DANCE



2005 FESTIVAL PROGRAM

The Colorful Story of Jacob's Pillow

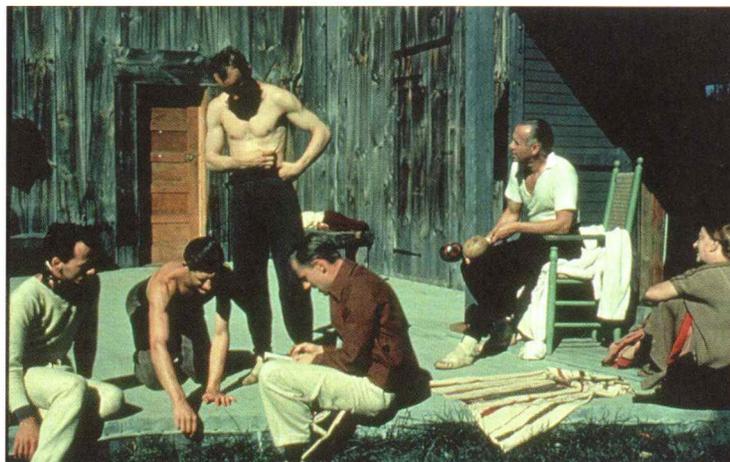
The photos in this section are a sampling of the treasures found in the Pillow's extensive Archives.

THE COLORFUL STORY OF JACOB'S PILLOW

Jacob's Pillow has a unique background that has earned it a place on the Dance Heritage Coalition's list of America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures, on the National Register of Historic Places, and designation as a National Historic Landmark by the federal government. But the story begins long before dance arrived on the scene. Jacob's Pillow was first settled in 1790 by the Carter family as a mountaintop farm at the crest of a twisting, climbing stagecoach road between Boston and Albany. Local folk viewing the zigzagging road from the bottom of the hill thought it resembled the rungs of a ladder, so these biblically-minded New Englanders named it Jacob's Ladder. Boulders dotted the

farm pastures, among them a curiously-shaped one located behind the Carters' farmhouse. The family knew well the story from the Book of Genesis, which tells of Jacob laying his head upon a rock and dreaming of a ladder to heaven. Given the rock "pillow," and the farm's proximity to Jacob's Ladder, the farm from then on was known as Jacob's Pillow.

In 1931, modern dance pioneer Ted Shawn bought the farm as a retreat. At the time, Shawn and his wife, Ruth St. Denis, were America's leading dance couple. Their Denishawn Company had popularized a revolutionary dance form rooted in theatrical and multi-cultural traditions rather than those of European ballet. Their



Ted Shawn (seated in chair) and Men Dancers at work in the Tea Garden, 1939. Photo: John Lindquist © Harvard Theatre Collection

trailblazing work and cross-country tours paved the way for the next generation of legendary dance pioneers: Martha Graham, Charles Weidman, Doris Humphrey, and Jack Cole were all Denishawn members. But Shawn and St. Denis had

recently separated, personally and professionally, and in the fall of 1931, Shawn conducted the last rehearsals of the Denishawn era at Jacob's Pillow.

Shawn had long harbored a dream of legitimizing dance in America as an honorable

A Timeline of Firsts

July 14, 1933
Jacob's Pillow presents its first performance, becoming the first dance festival established in this country that continues to this day.

1933 to 1939
Most of the works created by Ted Shawn for his company of Men Dancers are premiered at Jacob's Pillow.

1941
American Ballet Theatre (then known as Ballet Theatre) becomes the Pillow's first resident company after Shawn's.

1942
Asadata Dafora, the first artist to perform African dance on the concert stage, is part of the inaugural season of the Ted Shawn Theatre.

1942
Agnes de Mille first hears Aaron Copland's score for her to-be-famous ballet, *Rodeo*, when it is played for her by the composer and Leonard Bernstein in the Pillow studio.

1945
Tanaquil LeClercq, later one of Balanchine's leading ballerinas, gives her first professional performance at Jacob's Pillow.

1949
The first performance of Ted Shawn's *The Dreams of Jacob*, with music by Darius Milhaud commissioned by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

1950
Shawn invites Jack Mitchell to take his first dance photographs at Jacob's Pillow, launching the career of one of America's preeminent performing arts photographers.



Asadata Dafora



Nicholas Magallanes and Tanaquil LeClercq in *La Valse*. Photo: John Lindquist. © Harvard Theatre Collection



Ted Shawn in *Mevlevi Dervish*. Photo: Jack Mitchell



Composer Jess Meeker at an early Tea Lecture Demonstration. Photo: John Lindquist
 Harvard Theatre Collection

career for men. In 1933, he recruited eight men, including Denishawn dancer Barton Mumaw and several physical education students from Springfield College, for his new company. The tall and burly Shawn and his athletic dancers were intent on challenging the image of men in dance; they forged a new, boldly-muscular style. In their "off-time," they constructed buildings still used today at Jacob's Pillow.

In July 1933, Shawn and his Men Dancers started giving public "Tea Lecture Demonstrations" to promote their work—and to pay the grocer. The first audience of 45 curiosity-seekers expanded weekly so that by summer's end, people were being turned away at the door. During a period Shawn termed "seven magic years," Shawn and his Men Dancers toured throughout the United States and to Canada, Cuba, and England, performing more than 1,250 times in 750 cities, and continued the summer "Tea Lecture Demonstrations" at the Pillow.

Radical changes were necessitated by the Selective Service Act of 1939, although Shawn also justifiably believed that his artistic statement had been made and that it was time to end his successful crusade. In May 1940, The Men Dancers disbanded and joined the armed forces.

Deep in debt, Shawn proposed selling Jacob's Pillow to Mary Washington Ball, a dance teacher who leased the property and produced the Berkshire Hills Dance Festival on site in 1940. Shawn credited Miss Ball for beginning the diverse

programming that was forever after the Pillow's hallmark, but the summer was a financial disaster. Shawn leased the Pillow again in 1941, this time to British ballet stars Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin. Their International Dance Festival was so successful that local supporters formed the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Committee, raised \$50,000 to buy the property and to build a theater (performances had been held in the barn studio), and made Shawn director. Despite wartime hardships, such as gasoline and tire rationing, audiences climbed the hill on foot and horseback to attend a wide array of programs: ballet, modern dance, mime, ballroom dance, and folk and classical dance of many cultures.

On July 9, 1942, the Ted Shawn Theatre, the first theater in the United States designed specifically for dance, opened its doors. Architect Joseph Franz, who also built The Music Shed at



Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in *Jeux D'Arlequins*.



Balasaraswati. Photo: John Lindquist,
 Harvard Theatre Collection

1954
 The first time the work of 19th century choreographer Auguste Bouronville is seen in the U.S., when Danish ballerina Inge Sand appears at the Pillow.

1956
 Merce Cunningham & Company gives the first performance of *Nocturnes* at the Pillow, with décor and costumes by Robert Rauschenberg.

1959
 Both Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Ballet Rambert give their first U.S. performances at Jacob's Pillow.

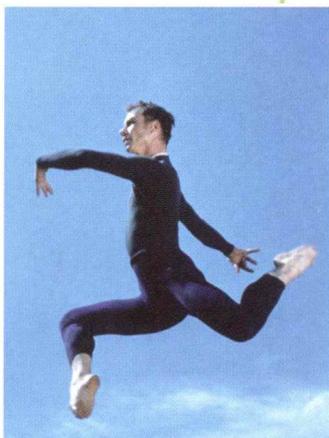
1960
 John Butler's popular duet, *Portrait of Billie*, premieres at the Pillow, performed by Carmen de Lavallade and the choreographer himself.

1962
 Balasaraswati, one of India's most famous and revered dancers, makes her first American appearance at the Pillow.

1970
 The first professional appearances by Dance Theatre of Harlem take place at Jacob's Pillow.

1973
 Dame Margot Fonteyn makes her Jacob's Pillow debut in the first performance of a commissioned solo, Peter Darrell's *In Nightly Revels*.

1982
 Mark Morris makes his first Jacob's Pillow appearance, dancing two solos.



Merce Cunningham in *Septet*. Photo: John Lindquist, Harvard Theatre Collection

Carmen deLavallade in *Portrait of Billie*. Photo: John Van Lund



Mark Morris in *Ten Suggestions*. Photo: Stephan Driscoll





The brand-new Ted Shawn Theatre in 1942. Photo: John Lindquist © Harvard Theatre Collection

Tanglewood, had agreed with Shawn that the theater exterior must harmonize with the existing farmhouse and barns. Franz also hand cut the weathervane atop the theater which depicts Barton Mumaw, Shawn's leading dancer. Inside the theater on either side of the stage are life-size portraits of Shawn in his *Hopi Indian Eagle Dance* and Ruth St. Denis as *Kwannon—the Japanese Goddess of Mercy*, painted during the Denishawn era by Albert Herter.

Other than a year sabbatical for an Australian

tour in 1947, Shawn remained at the helm of the Pillow until his death at the age of 80 in 1972. For a time, the survival of Jacob's Pillow seemed uncertain. Shawn's designated successor, John Christian, was unable to serve more than one year (1972) due to illness. Next was dance critic Walter Terry (1973), but a huge deficit sent the Pillow's Board of Directors searching again, and in the interim Charles Reinhart took on the Pillow in addition to the American Dance Festival (1974). A measure of stability came

with the appointment of Norman Walker (1975-79), who revamped and upgraded the Pillow's educational and presentational standards.

Liz Thompson (1980-90) initiated an artistic resurgence by welcoming new artists and audiences. Her innovations, such as the popular *Inside/Out* presentations and open access to the grounds and studios, are today an integral part of the Pillow's personality, and Thompson was also the catalyst for the construction of the Doris Duke Studio Theatre. Samuel A. Miller, who had worked in partnership with Thompson since 1986, followed (1990-94) with the sorely-needed renovation and enlargement of the Ted Shawn Theatre and the installation of Blake's Barn. From 1995 through 1997, Sali Ann Kriegsman led the Pillow through a difficult period, eliminating a potentially disastrous \$4.8 million debt, orchestrating a range of new projects, and

ending her successful tenure with a celebration of the 65th anniversary season. The Board then launched an extensive nationwide search and in 1998 selected Ella Baff to guide Jacob's Pillow into the 21st century.

Ella Baff's record-breaking seasons have confirmed that her adventurous ideas and wide-ranging knowledge of the field are perfectly at home at the Pillow. She is now leading the organization in new directions, while honoring the traditions that have made the Pillow a unique institution for more than seven decades: to create, present and preserve an unparalleled variety of dance forms, to educate artists and the community, and to engage and build audiences—a diversity unique among international festivals.

An illustrated history, *A Certain Place: The Jacob's Pillow Story*, by Norton Owen, the Pillow's Director of Preservation, is available at The Pillow Store.

1984
Martha Graham brings her company to the Pillow for the first time, coming full circle nearly 70 years after beginning her dance studies with Ted Shawn.

1985
New York City Ballet principal dancer Nikolaj Hübbe is a Pillow student and gives his first American performance here.

1987
The first activities of David Parsons' new company take place at the Pillow.

1994
The first film collaboration between choreographer Mark Morris and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, *Falling Down Stairs*, is created at the Pillow.

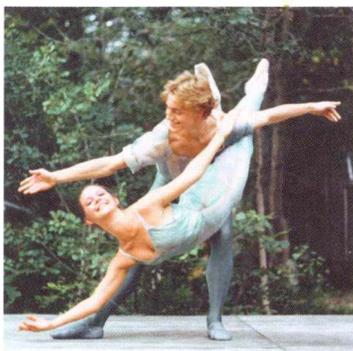
1995
Mikhail Baryshnikov premieres works by Mark Morris and Dana Reitz in his first appearance at the Pillow.

1999
The controversial production of the Chinese opera *The Peony Pavilion* makes its first U.S. stop at the Pillow, where the cast assembles for several weeks to rehearse and perfect the work prior to its New York premiere produced by Lincoln Center.

2003
Jacob's Pillow is named a National Historic Landmark for its importance in America's culture and history by the federal government, the first dance institution to be so honored.

2005
New works by Ronald K. Brown, Ben Munisteri, Susan Marshall, and Johannes Wieland are first performed, and Mexico's A Poc A Poc makes its U.S. debut.

Nikolaj Hübbe and Laura Bernasconi.
Photo: Stephan Driscoll



David Parsons.
Photo: Philip Trager

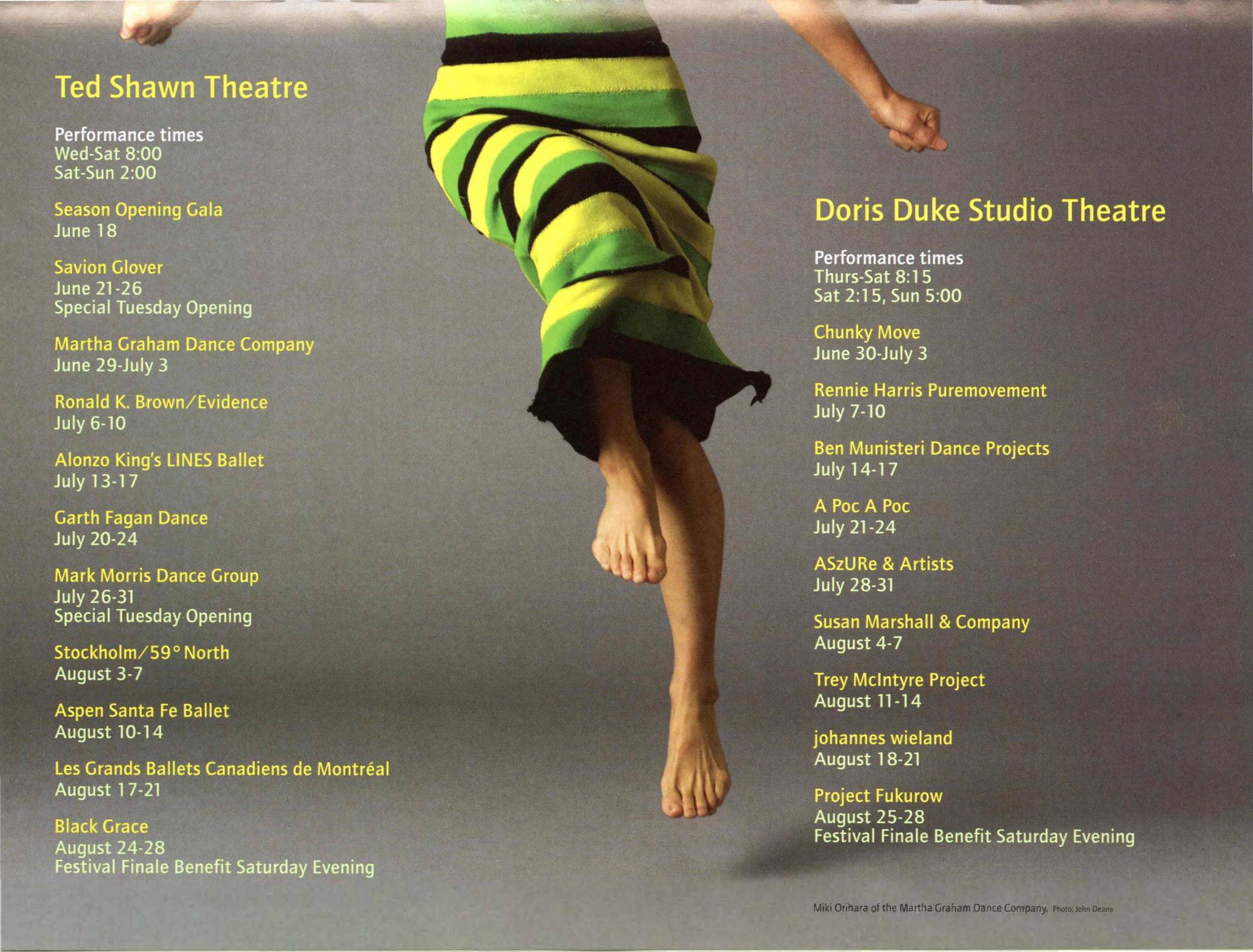
The Peony Pavilion.
Photo: Gemma Coimas



THE 2005 SEASON

JACOB'S PILLOW
DANCE





Ted Shawn Theatre

Performance times

Wed-Sat 8:00

Sat-Sun 2:00

Season Opening Gala

June 18

Savion Glover

June 21-26

Special Tuesday Opening

Martha Graham Dance Company

June 29-July 3

Ronald K. Brown/Evidence

July 6-10

Alonzo King's LINES Ballet

July 13-17

Garth Fagan Dance

July 20-24

Mark Morris Dance Group

July 26-31

Special Tuesday Opening

Stockholm/59° North

August 3-7

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

August 10-14

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal

August 17-21

Black Grace

August 24-28

Festival Finale Benefit Saturday Evening

Doris Duke Studio Theatre

Performance times

Thurs-Sat 8:15

Sat 2:15, Sun 5:00

Chunky Move

June 30-July 3

Rennie Harris Puremovement

July 7-10

Ben Munisteri Dance Projects

July 14-17

A Poc A Poc

July 21-24

ASzURe & Artists

July 28-31

Susan Marshall & Company

August 4-7

Trey McIntyre Project

August 11-14

johannes wieland

August 18-21

Project Fukurow

August 25-28

Festival Finale Benefit Saturday Evening

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