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JACOB'S PILLOW AND MASS MOCA CO-PRESENT

STEPHEN PETRONIO COMPANY

WORK INSPIRED BY SHAKESPEARE'S *THE TEMPEST*

WITH ORIGINAL SCORE BY NICO MULHY

January 4, 2010 (Becket, MA) – In celebration of the dance company's 25th anniversary, Jacob's Pillow Dance and MASS MoCA team up to co-present Stephen Petronio Company in *I Drink the Air Before Me* at MASS MoCA's Hunter Center Friday, April 9 and Saturday, April 10 at 8pm. Petronio is acclaimed for his lush, sweeping performance landscapes enriched by artful pairings of contemporary music and movement. Roslyn Sulcas of *The New York Times* writes, "He is one of the few contemporary dance makers who have created an instantly recognizable style...fresh and unpredictable...infused with emotional texture and wit." Both performances will be followed by a free post-show talk with Jacob's Pillow Executive Director Ella Baff and Artistic Director Stephen Petronio.

"The Pillow is dedicated to bringing more dance to more people throughout the Berkshires. Our partnership with MASS MoCA has been a wonderful collaboration," comments Ella Baff. "Stephen Petronio is well recognized in the US and abroad as a bold, leading choreographer of his generation. He also collaborates with some of the most important contemporary artists in music, fashion, and the visual arts such as Laurie Anderson, Rufus Wainwright, Anish Kapoor, and a great painter who is especially familiar to us in the Berkshires, Steve Hannock."

The company performs *I Drink the Air Before Me*, titled after a quote from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* from the moment in which the sprite Ariel rushes away on Prospero's errand: "I drink the air before me, and return / Or ere your pulse twice beat." Moved by the character's willingness to throw himself in the path of a raging storm, Petronio combines inspiration from forces of nature, both environmental and human, and an original score by contemporary Nico Muhly, a composer whose work

has been performed by the Boston University Tanglewood Institute Orchestra, the Boston Pops, and the Chicago Symphony. *I Drink the Air Before Me* portrays both the calm and anger of storms, while a sailor (performed by Petronio himself) rides along. Gia Kourlas (*The New York Times*) writes, “The music and choreography create a sonic, ephemeral wave...ferocious speed, rigorous structure and dancers who ravel and unravel like ribbons.” Petronio created *I Drink the Air Before Me* in celebration of this year’s 25th anniversary of the company. He comments, “Instead of looking back on our achievements like photographs of old friends, I have chosen to look to the future with a new work. I wanted to give a dance that spoke of riding the awesome and unpredictable forces of now and I hope you will receive our presentation in that spirit of adventure and pleasure.”

Founded in 1984, Stephen Petronio Company has performed in 26 countries across the globe. Petronio has received numerous accolades including a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship and awards from the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, an American Choreographer Award, and a New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” Award. In addition to creating over 35 works for his own company, Petronio has been commissioned by William Forsythe’s Frankfurt Ballet, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Lyon Opera Ballet, Maggio Danza Florence, Sydney Dance Company, the Washington Ballet, and The Scottish Ballet, and his company works have been set on Norrdans in Sweden, The Scottish Ballet, Dance Works Rotterdam, Diversions Dance Company of Wales, and X Factor Dance Company in Edinburgh, among others.

Jacob’s Pillow and MASS MoCA have enjoyed a ten year partnership since the center for contemporary visual and performing arts was founded in 1999. The Pillow was an important initial supporter of MASS MoCA’s performing arts programming. As part of MASS MoCA’s year-round programming—which includes music, dance, theater, film, residencies and work-in-progress showings—MASS MoCA and Jacob’s Pillow co-present a dance event in support of both organizations’ missions to further the development of artists and art forms, encourage experimentation within and between various art forms, and further the public’s understanding of creative processes. Past co-presentations have included Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Philadanco, MOMIX, Dance Brazil, and Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo.

Performance and Ticket Information

Friday, April 9 and Saturday, April 10 at 8pm.

Post-show talks with Ella Baff and Stephen Petronio will follow both performances.

Tickets in the orchestra section of the theater are \$38, mezzanine tickets are \$32, and student and children tickets are \$20.

MASS MoCA Box Office hours: Wednesday through Monday, 11am – 5pm. To purchase by phone: call the Box Office at 413.662.2111. To order online: www.massmoca.org.

The MASS MoCA Box Office is located at 87 Marshall Street in North Adams, MA, 01247. MASS MoCA theaters are handicapped-accessible.

For additional information on Jacob's Pillow or the 2010 Festival, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

Jacob's Pillow celebrates its 78th anniversary in 2010 and is home to a renowned international dance Festival, presenting and commissioning works of artists and companies from throughout the world. The School at Jacob's Pillow encompasses a professional training program in the diverse disciplines of Ballet, Cultural Traditions, Contemporary Traditions, Jazz/Musical Theatre Dance, and a Choreographers Lab, as well as an Intern Program in arts administration and production. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public free of charge, chronicle more than 75 years of the often ephemeral art form of dance in print, video, and more. Jacob's Pillow's year-round Community Programs enrich the lives of children and adults including *Jacob's Pillow Curriculum-in-Motion*® a nationally-recognized program for educational settings, and the Creative Development Residency program supports artists as they create work. In 2003, Jacob's Pillow was declared a National Historic Landmark and is the first and only dance entity in the U.S. to achieve this honor.

As of November 2009, major support for Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival has been provided by: The Barrington Foundation, Inc.; The Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation; Frances Alexander Family Fund; Cultural Services of the French Embassy; The Howard Gilman Foundation; The Florence Gould Foundation; The Harkness Foundation for Dance; The Leir Charitable Foundations, In Memory of Henry J. Leir; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Mertz Gilmore Foundation; Evelyn Stefansson Nef Foundation; New England Foundation for the Arts; The New York Community Trust—Wallace Special Projects Fund; *Leading for the Future Initiative*, a program of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; Bessie Pappas Charitable Foundation; The Prospect Hill Foundation; Neal Rantoul Foundation; Royal Danish Ballet; Arch W. Shaw Foundation; The Shubert Foundation, Inc.; Trust for Mutual Understanding; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; CEC ArtsLink and the Open World Leadership Center; Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency; MassDevelopment; Mass Humanities; National Endowment for the Arts; National Endowment for the Arts as part of American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius; ALEX®; The Legacy Banks Foundation; Pilgrim Inn; Quality Inn; Rodeway Inn; Super 8 Motel Lee; The Pillow Business Alliance; and Jacob's Pillow Members.

Major endowment support is provided by The Barrington Foundation, Inc.; The William Randolph Hearst Foundation; The Leir Charitable Foundations, In Memory of Henry J. Leir; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Onota Foundation; The Prospect Hill Foundation; Talented Students in the Arts Initiative, a collaboration of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and Surdna Foundation; and Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

MASS MoCA (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art) located at 87 Marshall Street in North Adams, is the largest center for contemporary visual and performing art in the United States. A well-established year round presence in the Berkshires, the galleries are open every day except Tuesday, and the institution produces more than 60 performing arts events all year long.. The museum exhibitions feature some of the liveliest, most evocative -- and provocative -- art being made today. MASS MoCA's thought-provoking and visually stunning exhibitions make it a "must-see" for art lovers.

MASS MoCA is housed in a beautifully restored 19th century mill. Critics have awarded MASS MoCA the nation's most coveted architectural and historic preservation honors for the spectacular renovation of the sprawling 13 acre factory campus. The astonishingly varied performing arts program has reshaped of New England's cultural landscape with everything from new work by Robert Wilson and Laurie Anderson to rollicking dance parties and crowd-pleasing "silent film/live music" series.

MASS MoCA creates more new work in both the visual and performing arts than any other single cultural institution, provides abundant space at economical cost, transforms decaying and unsightly structures into attractive and productive assets that provide jobs and income, and preserves and celebrates the industrial heritage of the region and the nation.

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