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Proposal: The Impact of Jacob's Pillow

This research will illuminate the many programs, performances, and opportunities that Jacob's Pillow offers to dancers, choreographers, artists, and the larger community in which dance is embedded within. More specifically it will discuss how and why Jacob's Pillow creates an environment that allows both the dance and the community to thrive. First, it is important to note the history and the story behind the structural, organizational, and creative foundations of Jacob's Pillow. Modern dance pioneer Ted Shawn's exemplary vision resulted in the formation of Jacob's Pillow. Pillow continues to foster Shawn's positive values and mission even after his death. Through this research, I will focus on Jacob's Pillow programming. I will share the experiences and opinions of those who have interacted with Jacob's Pillow to show how people have been impacted after attending a performance.

Critical analysis, multiple dance reviews from a variety of Jacob's Pillow performances, and choreographic analysis from reviews and videos will be used to estimate the impact of Jacob's Pillow. Jay Rogoff, in his review named, Taking Off, concludes that the evening length concert he attended in 2016 had multiple pieces all based and themed around "flight" in their own unique ways. Rogoff said this experience was special and exhilarating because dance can effectively be compared to defying gravity. In Serving Up a Smorgasbord of Choreography, dance critic Jack Anderson argues that a concert at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival was "an artistically delectable treat" because of the diversity and assortment of ballet choreography. Gay Morris's review of Pillow performances from 2009 provides a more critical view (acting as a counter argument), but overall states that there were many pleasant surprises within the unexpected and diverse programming of the concert. These writers' movement descriptions and

observations to support their claims in their reviews help me understand the historical festivals better. The website of Jacob's Pillow has a wealth of information.

It contains the Pillow's history, program and opportunity descriptions, as well as dance archives and videos. The documentary *Never Stand Still* and the short film *Behind the Lens* with Adam H. Weinert in "Dance of the Ages" are also prominent sources in this research. These videos feature performances by world-renowned dancers, intimate interviews, behind-the-scenes insights on reconstruction of pieces, and rare archival footage.

This research is necessary because it illuminates why and how the Pillow became prestigious while introducing and promoting Jacob's Pillow to dancers and artists who might think of engaging with this initiative as dancers, choreographers, students, and scholars. Many may not know about the festival and its programs, and my research could even inspire other artists around the world to create their own festivals or programs. This snowball effect is significant in producing creating more opportunities and communities for artists around the world. Surprisingly, Jacob's Pillow has not been a well-researched topic and there is a glaring lack of comprehensive research dissemination on this phenomenon. Historical research and dance reviews on Jacob's Pillow remain sporadic and separate. Therefore, by discussing the history, programs and opportunities, and various perceptions of Jacob's Pillow, I hope to provide a body of knowledge about this national dance center. This body of knowledge will allow access to an comprehensive overview of Jacob's Pillow that can encourage other dancers and artists, especially my classmates, to try and engage with or take advantage of the opportunities the Pillow offers in some way, since we are emerging artists.

Bibliography

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