

In 1949, **Janet Collins**—the first Black artist to appear on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera—and **Jean-Léon Destiné** made their debut appearances at Jacob's Pillow. Famous for his work with Katherine Dunham, Destiné was the first of many Black artists to teach in The School at Jacob's Pillow in 1949, and returned to direct the Cultural Traditions Program in 2004. Over 100 students from around the world attend this professional-track School at Jacob's Pillow each year.

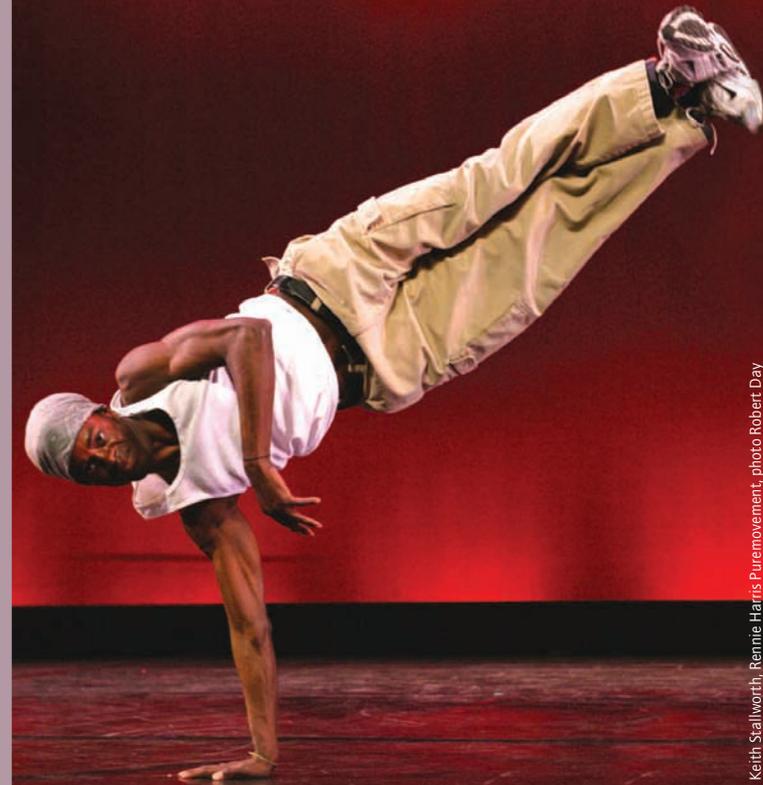
The ground-breaking **Lester Horton Dance Theatre** made its Pillow debut in 1953. Several of its young members, **James Truitte**, **Carmen de Lavallade**, and **Alvin Ailey**, would leave a lasting impression on the dance world. Truitte, who became one of the leading exponents of Horton's modern dance technique, later became a longtime faculty member of The School at Jacob's Pillow and DeLavallade has the lengthiest performing record of anyone in Jacob's Pillow history,



Geoffrey Holder, photo John Lindquist courtesy of Harvard Collection

Jean-Léon Destiné's company along with Spanish and Hindu dances. It was a bold move, and its legacy is seen today in the all-encompassing dance programming at Jacob's Pillow. In 1970 Ted Shawn presented Dance Theatre of Harlem's first formal "engagement." Critic Walter Terry praised the company's debut and Shawn referred to the Dance Theatre of Harlem performance as a "highlight of the summer."

Beginning in the 1980s, African-American companies appeared at the Pillow more and more frequently. Highlights since then have included engagements by tappers **Savion Glover**, **Gregory Hines** and **Jimmy Slyde**, hip-hop from **Rennie Harris**, and world premiere dances by **Bill T. Jones**, **Ronald K. Brown**, and **Garth Fagan**. In 2002 the great scholar, anthropologist and choreographer **Katherine Dunham** made her first Pillow appearance at age 93, teaching in the Pillow's School.



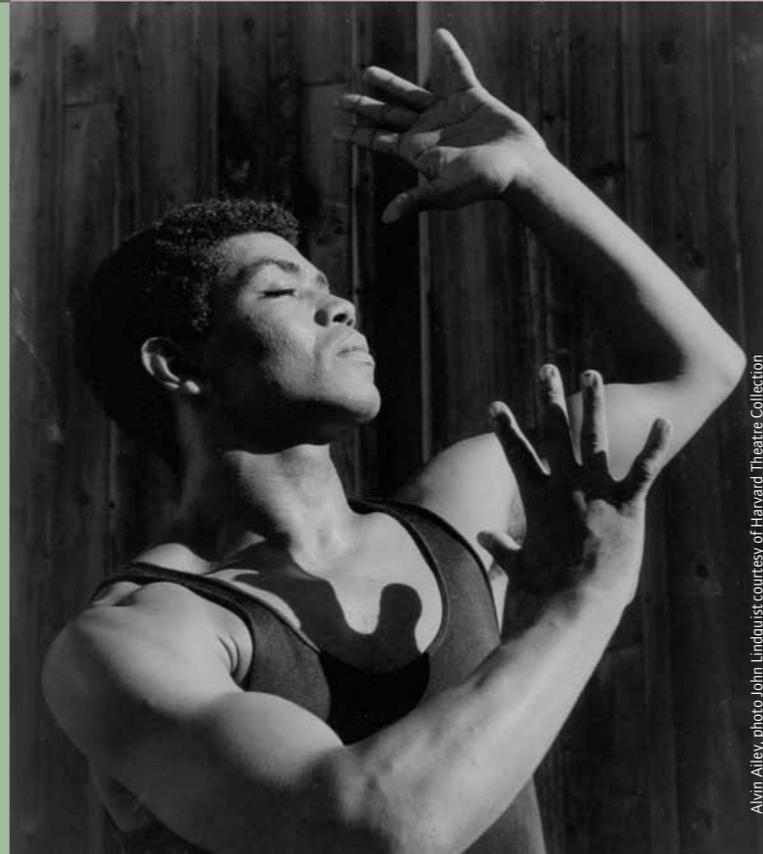
Keith Scallworth, Rennie Harris Puremovement, photo Robert Day



Carmen de Lavallade, James Truitte, and Lelia Goldon, photo Constantine

most recently onstage with *Paradigm* in 2004 and returning in 2007 with husband **Geoffrey Holder** for the film screening of *Carmen* and *Geoffrey*. When Lester Horton's company returned to the Pillow in 1954, 23-year-old Ailey had taken leadership of the group. He and his own company later made several appearances at the Pillow, including the first performance of *Revelations* in its present form, the world's most-performed modern dance work, in 1961.

The great choreographer and dancer **Donald McKayle**, who would later serve on the Pillow faculty and Board of Directors, was introduced to Jacob's Pillow audiences in 1953. Both the McKayle and Horton companies were racially integrated, putting each director, as well as the Pillow, ahead of their time. Performers with McKayle's company in 1953 included **Arthur Mitchell**, the New York City Ballet star who went on to found the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and the eminent Black dance scholar **Joe Nash**. That season an "All-Ethnic Week" featured



Alvin Ailey, photo John Lindquist courtesy of Harvard Theatre Collection

"The traditions of Africa, the Diaspora, and the contemporary work of African-Americans have produced a revolutionary and illuminating contribution to dance and American culture. They are a distinctive and celebrated part of the identity of Jacob's Pillow."

— Ella Baff, Executive Director