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JULY 2019

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Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival

BECKET, MA As always, there's more happening at America's longest-running dance festival than any one person could experience. We have our sights set on **Lucinda Childs'** new vehicle for **Wendy Whelan** (*The Day*), premieres from companies like Compañía Irene Rodríguez and Gallim Dance, and Ice Dance International's Inside/Out performance featuring choreography by Trey McIntyre and Edward Villella, which marks the first time ice dancing (albeit on synthetic ice) has appeared at the Pillow. Anniversaries are big this summer, too, with the Pillow debut of Compagnie CNDC-Angers/Robert Swinston to mark the **Cunningham Centennial**, **Dance Theatre of Harlem** continuing its 50th-anniversary celebrations, and Mark Morris Dance Group looking ahead to its 40th in 2020. June 19–Aug. 25. jacobspillow.org.

ICE DANCE INTERNATIONAL PERFORM AT JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL

Posted on: 6/27/2019 6:00AM

In a first for the venerable Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the Maine-based company Ice Dance International (IDI) will perform "In Flight" at the Pillow's free, outdoor "Inside/Out" stage July 17 358 at George Carter Road in Becket, Mass.

Although Becket's average July high temperature is 83 degrees, the show's in no danger of melting away. "In Flight" will be performed on a synthetic ice surface of interlocking polymer panels that mimics the properties of ice and can be skated on with professional metal blades. Led by Artistic Director Douglas Webster – an acclaimed choreographer whose work has been seen in arenas, stadiums and on television around the world – six

members of the IDI troupe will perform three works inspired by flight (i.e., birds and space) and set to music by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Chet Baker and Max Richter.



Among IDI's international performers for this unprecedented appearance are six-time Great Britain Ice Dance Champion and two-time Olympian Sinead Kerr, eight-time international medalist and two-time Olympian from Turkey Alper Uçar, Azerbaijan National Champion Nadine Ahmed Kerr, and American professional figure skater and IDI founding company member Carly Donowick.

Ice Dance International (IDI) creates classical and contemporary ice ballet with its professional company. It also educates and inspires interest in the artform through mentorship, creative opportunities, collaboration, teaching, outreach and performance. IDI founding members include two-time Olympic figure skating champion Dick Button and Edward Villella, who is one of America's most-celebrated ballet dancers, a Kennedy Center honoree, and a National Medal of Arts award winner.

For further info on the show and how to travel to Jacob's Pillow visit [Ice Dance International](#)

Image courtesy of Ice Dance International *In the Light: Luminous* by Douglas Webster

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David and Jacob Guzman

ICE DANCE INTERNATIONAL

at Jacob's Pillow

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FEATURE ARTICLES

Ice Dance International skates at Jacob's Pillow: Finding flight and flow



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Ice skating. We think rosy cheeks and hot cocoa, or fancy judges and sequined dresses. But something like concert dance? Maine-based Ice Dance International (IDI) says yes! In fact, Artistic Director Douglas Webster shares how ice dance is a burgeoning form, growing from the work of pioneer John Curry. Webster was previously Artistic Director of Ice Theatre of New York, as well as the Creative Director of Disson Skating's ABC show, *Shall We Dance – On Ice*.

The IDI company, founded in 2014, will be dancing on synthetic ice at Jacob's Pillow's Inside/Out Festival on July 17, a preview of its coming winter tour of New England and New York City (with funding in part by an Expeditions grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts [NEFA]). The connection with Jacob's Pillow occurred at NEFA's Idea Swap, a pitching of ideas to the Jacob's Pillow Executive Team and arts organizations across New England.



Ice Dance International in Douglas Webster's 'Luminous'. Photo by Diana Dumbadse.

"Both NEFA and Jacob's Pillow have been so supportive and gracious," Webster shares. He explains how choreography will have to be adjusted to account for the realities of skating on synthetic ice but that the program will still be all about finding "flight and flow". The style "embraces how we want to not feel static and not be bound to the elements," Webster explains.

The program, called *In Flight*, will include a piece titled *In Flight* set to Ralph Vaughn Williams' "The Lark Ascending", another entitled *Cool and Easy* set to Chet Baker's "As Time Goes By", and a last one called *Luminous* set to Max Richter's song of the same name. It will be full of Webster's stylistic "skate 360" signature, a way of using the whole body and its planes of movement, of really *dancing*, while skating. He teaches this style in workshops and camps for U.S. Figure Skating. Sinead Kerr (a two-time European medalist in ice dancing and Olympian), Alper Ucar (a Turkish ice dance champion, now coaching with Marina Zoueva's esteemed school in Florida), Nadine Ahmed Kerr (Sinead's Sister-in-law), Aaron Gillespie, Matej Silecky and Liz Schmidt will dance the program.



IDI's Lauren Farr and Neil Shelton in Douglas Webster's 'Eclipse'. Photo by 208 Images and Media.

In a wider view, connections with the dance world were present from the company's founding; iconic danseur Edward Villella was a founding member, along with Webster and Dick Button (the "Godfather" of figure skating, he says). Both Villella and Pillow favorite Trey McIntyre have created choreography for IDI, and former Bates Dance Festival Director Laura Faure has been an advisor to Webster, providing insight along the way. In years past, Webster has collaborated with dance luminaries Anne Carlson, David Parsons, Joanna

Mendl Shaw, David Dorfman, Elisa Monte and Jacquelyn Buglisi, among others.

As time went on, after these early collaborations and years of working with many of IDI's company members, some were facing retirement. Webster wanted to ensure that he could document their work and honor their performances, so he decided to create a couple of documentaries featuring IDI's repertory – *The World of Ice Dance International* and *In Flight: The Art of Ice Dance International*. This approach also had the advantage of expanding knowledge about the company and its work, thus potentially expanding audiences as well. These American Public Television shows continue to air on PBS and public television nationwide through 2021. Current listings are on IDI's website, and *The World of Ice Dance International* is available on Vimeo for purchase.

Webster explains how the company has two home bases, in Sun Valley, ID where the public television specials were filmed and Portsmouth, NH. Webster lives in Kittery, ME and the Board meets in New York City. "There are a lot of moving pieces, but it seems to all work out," he says.

In Sun Valley and Portsmouth, Webster fully believes that the company "contributes to the economy and social fabric of the towns." He shares how Sun Valley has a wonderful year-round outdoor skating rink, allowing the company to build and rehearse repertory in the mountain air.

The company also offers ice dance classes to both children and adults in both locations. This winter, in Portsmouth, the company will be in residence at The Strawberry Banke Museum, an Early American living museum with a seasonal outdoor site-specific skating rink of which Webster is one of the founders of. An amateur adult troupe under the umbrella of IDI dances a "candlelight stroll" during December weekends at the rink in a Currier and Ives-themed style as well.

Going forward, Webster wants to see these offerings to the local community expand. He also hopes to someday collaborate with other arts organizations in Sun Valley, including the Sun Valley Symphony and Ballet Sun Valley. Along with these initiatives, the company will continue to build and refine repertory. It's all in service of that idea of flight and flow, to "bring beauty and transport people," Webster shares. "It's all been a gift, and a humbling experience."



IDI'S Carly Donowick and Erin Reed in Benoit Richaud's 'Reflections'. Photo by David Seelig.

For more information on Ice Dance International, visit icedanceinternational.org.



JACOB'S PILLOW CONNECTIONS:

Didy Veldman first presented her choreography at Jacob's Pillow in 2005 when Les Grands Ballets Canadiens performed TooT. She has since presented other works, and has been a Guest Artist Choreographer for The School at Jacob's Pillow in 2010, 2013, and 2018, and is Co-Director of the Contemporary Program at The School at Jacob's Pillow during Festival 2019.

Related Events:

Inside/Out Performance Series: Ice Dance International

Wednesday, July 17 at 6:15pm

FREE; LIVE MUSIC


Led by Artistic Director [Douglas Webster](#), Ice Dance International (IDI) brings "ice" dance to the Inside/Out stage for the first time in Pillow history. IDI exists to showcase and promote ice dancing as an international performing art form that blends dance and skating, bringing the highest caliber of the art form to communities across the United States. Sharing the joy, flight, and flow of skating, the company has created two American Public Television specials currently airing on PBS nationwide called The World of Ice Dance International and In Flight: The Art of Ice Dance International. The specials feature ice dances by Pillow favorites [Trey McIntyre](#) and [Edward Villella](#), along with Benoit Richaud and [Douglas Webster](#).



Seacoastonline.com

Ice Dance International rehearsal in Kittery open to public July 15



 BUY PHOTO

 HIDE CAPTION

Carly Donowick and Jonathon Hunt of Ice Dance International perform during Seacoast Skating with the Stars at Labrie Family Skate at Puddle Dock Pond at Strawberry Banke Museum in Portsmouth. [Ioanna Raptis/Seacoastonline file]

Posted Jul 10, 2019 at 7:55 PM

Updated Jul 10, 2019 at 7:55 PM



KITTERY, Maine — Kittery-based nonprofit performing arts organization Ice Dance International will present a free-to-the-public open rehearsal and community skating demonstration on Monday, July 15 at 6 p.m. at the Kittery Community Center.

The company is rehearsing at the center on synthetic ice for several days in advance of its upcoming history-making appearance at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in the Berkshires.

The final dress rehearsal will be followed by a public question and answer session with IDI dancers and Artistic Director/choreographer Douglas Webster. A special skating demonstration for center campers – also open to the public – takes place earlier that day at 3:45 p.m. For both events, IDI dancers will perform on a synthetic ice surface similar to the one they'll perform on at Jacob's Pillow.

The rehearsals will include several big names in the skating community including Sinead Kerr, a seven-time British champion, a European medalist and a two-time Olympian, Turkish ice dancing champion and two-time Olympian Alper Ucar, Azerbaijan ice dance champion Nadine Ahmed Kerr, and skaters Matej Silecky, Aaron Gillespie and Liz Schmidt.

While the Kittery Community Center performances are free, tax deductible donations will be accepted to support IDI's Jacob's Pillow performance and its 2020 local season. Onsite refreshments and DVDs of two IDI television specials will also be on sale to support the company.

IDI is directed by Webster, a Kittery resident and internationally known ice dance choreographer who was one of the founders of the Labrie Family Skate at Portsmouth's Strawberry Banke Museum. Webster creates and choreographs the annual holiday Vintage skaters program during the museum's Candlelight Stroll. He and the company have produced world-class ice shows in the region for five years, and produced 2019's Seacoast Skating with the Stars event, which was won by Little Harbour School physical education teacher Sean McGrimley. The company will embark on a regional tour this winter including a local repertory performance, and will host a second Seacoast Skating with the Stars show.

The July 17 Jacob's Pillow performance is funded in part by New England Foundation for the Arts' New England States Touring Grant, the Virginia Hodgkins Somers Foundation and by local, regional and national donors. IDI's Strawberry Banke winter residence is funded in part by the NEFA Expeditions Grant.

In addition to its live performances, IDI has two American Public Televisions shows, The World of Ice Dance International and In Flight: the Art of Ice Dance International. currently airing on PBS member stations nationwide. Airdates for the public television specials and more info about IDI is available at icedanceinternational.org

An advertisement for the MINI Countryman. It features a side view of a red MINI Countryman parked in front of a building with a blue door. Below the image, the text reads: "PUT MINI COUNTRYMAN AT THE TOP OF YOUR LIST. GET UP TO \$2,000 OFF SELECT MINI COUNTRYMAN." At the bottom left is a red button with the text "OFFER DETAILS" and at the bottom right is the MINI logo.

THIS WEEK

BERKSHIRE RECORD • JULY 12-18, 2019



Lauren Farr and Neill Shelton perform "Eclipse."

208 Images and Media

Bridging art and athletics

Olympic, award-winning ice dancers at Jacob's Pillow

By Emily Thurlow

Despite the rising temperatures throughout the region, a cold front is gliding into town this month.

This cold spell is slated to take form as an isolated force sweeping in by way of Kittery, Maine to Jacob's Pillow in Becket on Wednesday, July 17.

For the first time in the history of the Berkshires-based venue, an ice dancing group will perform — outdoors. Through the use of a synthetic ice surface of interlocking polymer panels that mimics the properties of ice, members from performing arts company Ice Dance International will perform with skates that have professional metal blades, "In Flight," at Jacob's Pillow Inside/Out stage.

Inspired by the flight of birds and space, the performance shares the joy, flight and flow of skating, said Douglas Webster, founding artistic director. Six members of the troupe will perform three routines set to music by Ralph Vaughn Williams, Chet Baker and Max Richter.

"(The show) mimics those beautiful qualities of birds flocking and birds flying together in formations," said Webster. "The joy of flight and flow. We're trying to promote this idea as a beautiful art form."

Established at the end of 2014, Ice Dance International was founded to promote and

showcase ice dancing as an international performing art that blends dance and skating together, he said. In addition to Webster, the organization's founding members include two-time Olympic figure skating champion Dick Button and Edward Villella, who is one of the country's most-celebrated ballet dancers and a recipient of the National Medal of Arts award.

Because ice skating is so technically-demanding, oftentimes, it has been more prescribed in its judging, said Webster. But over time, the sport, through influences like British figure skater John Curry, ice skating has evolved to be seen as not just a sport, but also an art form, he said.

"Ice skating was caught in the dark ages where men, for example, had to be very severe (in their posture)," said Webster. "Now, men are much more multi-directional in their bodies, the way that dancers are. The science of movement, the joy of movement and the dynamics of movement are all things we want to see in ice skating."

Since its founding, the company has created two television special currently airing on PBS, including, "The World of Ice Dance International" and "In Flight: The Art of Ice Dance International," and also features Jacob's Pillow regular Trey McIntyre.

For the In Flight performance at Jacob's Pillow, several of the company's international

performers for this unprecedented appearance will take the stage, including, six-time Great Britain Ice Dance Champion and two-time Olympian Sinead Kerr; eight-time international medalist and two-time Olympian from Turkey Alper Uçar; Azerbaijan National Champion Nadine Ahmed Kerr; and American professional figure skater and Ice Dance International founding company member Carly Donowick.

For Kerr, who had teamed up with her brother John Kerr in achieving European bronze medals, life on the ice is more than second nature. Though not as accustomed to synthetic ice, Kerr says being able to perform outdoors on a rink will provide a unique experience.

"I feel more comfortable on the ice than I do on the ground. Really," she said with a chuckle. "The synthetic ice is something a lot of us aren't as used to, but we can still glide ... and seeing all the art forms that are performed (at Jacob's Pillow), it will certainly be magical."

Also performing in In Flight is Matej Silecky. A native of New Jersey, Silecky is known for having achieved runner-up status on the 2018 "Dancing on Ice" British television show. A graduate of the University of Cali-

Continued on B3

Bridging art and athletics

Continued from B1

fornia, Berkeley, Silecky was first introduced to ice when he was 4 years old with hockey.

Early on, he realized that he didn't enjoy being on the ice accompanied by a puck and a stick. Instead, he found more freedom in figure skating. And in working with Ice Dance International, Silecky hopes to open up the world of figure skating as not just a sport, but a form of artistry, he said. So often, figure skating is put into the context of athleticism and athletics and ballet is the art form, he added.

"It's hard to really encapsulate what it is we're doing. It's not just taking the paint and throwing it onto the canvas and calling it a painting," said Silecky. "What we are looking to share is a bridge between art and athletics. Artistry and athleticism brought into a 360-degree environment. It's not just a painting on a stage.

"It's not something you see every day."

In Flight will take the stage at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Inside/Out stage, located at 358 George Carter Road in Becket on Wednesday, July 17 at 6:15 p.m.

This performance is free and open to the public.



Diana Dumbadse

Dancer Beata Handra performs "In the Light."

fosters.com

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Gossip: Updates on Kathy Gunst, Rock Water Film Festival and Ice Dance International



Sinead Kerr, a seven-time British Champion, a two-time Olympian and a European Medalist, skates with her brother John Kerr. She is a member of the Ice Dance International troupe which will perform at an upcoming Jacob's Pillow performance on July 17 on synthetic ice. [Courtesy photo]

Ice show performers practicing

Ice Dance International is “channeling the chill,” while practicing its ice routine in the gym at the Kittery Community Center for a Jacob’s Pillow performance on July 17. It’s the first ice skating routine presented at Jacob’s outdoor, free concert series, thanks to the miracle of synthetic ice.

Executive Artistic Director Douglas Webster pitched the event at conferences, targeting Jacob’s Pillow. He sent photos of IDI’s PBS TV special and they went for it.

“They said they loved it, and said they’d like us to do a concert in the summer, and begin developing a relationship with us,” Webster says.

“We thought it would be a fun idea to present for the summer. ... They like their concerts to engage families.”

The indoor rehearsals will run for five days. On Monday, July 15 at 6 p.m., they’ll open one to the public. “Anyone can come and it’s free.” Of course, you’re welcome to donate, IDI is a nonprofit, he says, “but it is free.”

They will also offer a special skating demonstration for KCC campers – again open to the public – at 3:45 p.m.

The 6 p.m. demonstration/practice will include a Q & A. Webster will talk about the plans for IDI’s winter at Strawberry Banke Museum - its first as SBM’s company-in-residence.

“We’ll have a company living at the Banke for two months, building a program,” Webster, one of SBM’s Labrie Family Skate founders, says. “We’re also enlarging our program with public schools. ... We have one with Little Harbor School already, and now we’ll do more schools and more of it.”

IDI, which has its home-base in Kittery, also plans to expand programming into Maine’s York County in the near future.

The New York Times

7 Dance Performances to See in N.Y.C. This Weekend



Maria Kochetkova kicks off her program “Catch Her if You Can” at the Joyce Theater on Tuesday. Erik Tomasson

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL in Becket, Mass. (through Aug. 25). This week the festival welcomes the United States debut of the London-based [Umanoove in Didy Veldman's "The Happiness Project."](#) Created in collaboration with the Romanian violinist and composer Alexander Balanescu, this evening-length work explores the universal drive for fulfillment (Wednesday through July 21). The fine Mark Morris Dance Group & Music Ensemble presents “Prelude and Prelude,” which hasn't been performed since 1992, as well as his new “Sport” and excerpts from “Words” and “Grand Duo” (Wednesday through July 21). Other events include, on Friday, a performance by Charlotte Ballet; on Saturday, Dog Dance, a participatory event for people and their dogs (yes, really), and PillowTalk: Remembering Arthur Mitchell; and, on Wednesday, Douglas Webster's Ice Dance International. Here, synthetic ice is a must; works are by Trey McIntyre, Edward Villella, Benoît Richaud and Douglas Webster.

413-243-0745, jacobspillow.org



Ice Dance International 'In Flight' Rehearsals


Kittery Community Center
120 Rogers Road
Kittery, ME 03904
(207) 439-3800


Date: Monday Jul 15, 6:00 p.m.

Cost: Free

Event Categories: Benefit, Community, Dance, Featured

Website:
icedanceinternational.org

 Save to Google Calendar

 Save to iCal

Kittery-based non-profit performing arts organization Ice Dance International (IDI) will present a free-to-the-public open rehearsal and a community skating demonstration on Monday July 15th, 6 pm at the Kittery Community Center gymnasium, 120 Rogers Road. The company is rehearsing at the Center for several days in advance of its upcoming history-making appearance at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in the Berkshires.

The final dress rehearsal will be followed by a public question-and-answer session with IDI dancers and Artistic Director/choreographer Douglas Webster. A special skating demonstration for Center campers – also open to the public – takes place earlier that day at 3:45 pm. For both events, IDI dancers will perform on a synthetic ice surface similar to the one they'll perform on at Jacob's Pillow.

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