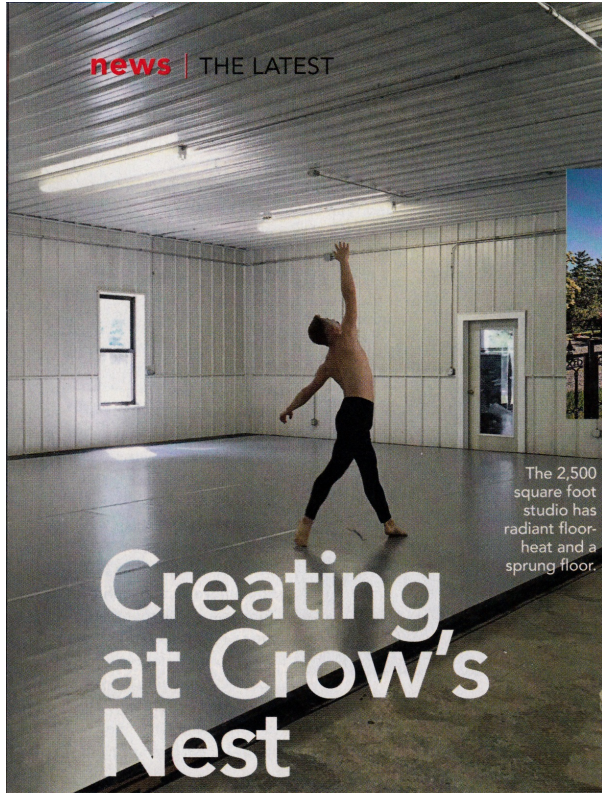


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The 2,500 square foot studio has radiant floor-heat and a sprung floor.

Creating at Crow's Nest

Stephen Petronio's new upstate retreat hosts its first residencies.

This summer, the Petronio Residency Center at Crow's Nest welcomes its first three artists in residence: Nora Chipaumire, Will Rawls and Kathy Westwater. The center, located in the Catskill Mountains, about two and a half hours north of New York City, is idyllic: The 2,500-square-foot studio has radiant floor-heat and a sprung floor, and the 6,500-square-foot house sleeps up to 10 people and has soaring views of the mountains. "As a creator, I understand the power of a residency," says Stephen Petronio. "I want the dancers to feel like they have gone to heaven when they pull up to the gate."

The PRC residency is an early-stage development facility. "I want to give artists a place to work, hike for three days, paint, read, do nothing—there are no deliverables for this residency," Petronio says. "Finding the value of zero, maybe that's what people need before going into a creative time."

The inaugural artists in residence were nominated by a panel of 12 "movers and shakers" in the dance field, including Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival director Pamela Tatge, LUMBERYARD director Adrienne Willis and American Dance

Festival executive director Jodee Nimerichter. The selection committee, comprising Ralph Lemon, Bebe Miller, Eiko Otake and Petronio, made the final decision. Each awarded artist receives a one-week stay, a \$5,000 stipend, \$1,500 in travel assistance and all meals prepared by a private chef using locally sourced ingredients ("If you feed a dancer they are yours forever!" jokes Petronio). He is excited by future possibilities of linking creators with other local residencies, such as more technically focused production opportunities at LUMBERYARD or Jacob's Pillow.

Petronio's desire for alternative, off-the-grid workspaces is a longtime pursuit. He began looking seriously in 2008, but the stock market crash caused donors to pull funding. The dream was delayed but not deterred. In December 2016 the company purchased Crow's Nest, a 175-acre sprawling property, for \$1.3 million. "This is one of the most exciting things that has ever happened to me—it is also more work than I could have imagined!" Petronio says. A lead gift from famed sculptor Anish Kapoor jumpstarted the \$3 million fundraising campaign, with his donated artwork titled *Strange Attraction (Violet)* fetching nearly \$500,000 in a private sale. The sculpture pays tribute to their collaboration on Petronio's *Strange Attractors*, which premiered in 2000.

Petronio wanted to provide his company with a country retreat of their own, but he also felt a sense of urgency to offer this space to the dance community. "I began to feel a more global sense of my life and work, and wanted to share these resources," he explains. While the space is not open to the public, opportunities for use by companies, boards or administrative staffs and visits can be coordinated by contacting Stephen Petronio Company. Petronio says, "We want this to be a place for the dance field to come and dream." —Jen Peters