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**The National Center for Choreography - Akron Announces
Spring Season of Dancing Conversations Events**



Dancing Conversations Artists (L to R): John Heginbotham, Colin Jacobsen, Liz Lerman, Charles O. Anderson, Jean Appolon, Kevin Lee-Y Green, Dominic Moore-Dunson, Iquail Shaheed

AKRON, Ohio (March 10, 2021)—**The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron)** announces its spring 2021 season of Dancing Conversations. These free public events locate dance among broader topics and offer an opportunity to demonstrate the aesthetic range within the dance field.

Past Dancing Conversations events have covered topics such as dance on camera (held at the Akron Public Library-Main Branch), nature as creative collaborator (held at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Conservancy), dance's role in cultural diplomacy (held at the Jewish Federation of Cleveland), and the intersection of dance and emerging technology (held at the Akron Art Museum).

Dancing Conversations will take place on the third Thursdays of April, May, and June at 7pm Eastern. All conversations will be virtual and open to the public, and registration is open now at <http://bit.ly/NCCAkronDCRSVP>.

NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director Christy Bolingbroke says: "Dancing Conversations invite audiences to see how dance can be about processing the world beyond the studio and stage. Dancing Conversations reveal how these topics can motivate the creation of art work or connect people across genres."

On Thursday, April 15, choreographer **John Heginbotham** (New York, NY) and violinist and composer **Colin Jacobsen** (New York, NY) will be the guest speakers. Heginbotham, an acclaimed contemporary and Broadway choreographer, is a NCCAkrón Research Residency artist, and also had a Satellite Residency with NCCAkrón during COVID. That Satellite Residency supported Heginbotham's *24 Caprices*, a project built around the work of composer Nicolò Paganini with Jacobsen — who *The New York Times* calls “born to the instrument and its sweet, lyrical possibilities” — as a collaborator. Heginbotham and Jacobsen will speak not only about this project but more broadly about the relationship of dance and music.

On Thursday, May 20, **Liz Lerman** (Tempe, AZ) and her collaborators will discuss the demonization of women, and the invisibility of women as they age. Lerman is currently developing a work around these topics called *Wicked Bodies* with support from an NCCAkrón Satellite Residency. Her four-decade career has involved personal story, public participation, and diverse collaborators including shipbuilders, physicists, construction workers, and cancer researchers. She is credited as “the source of an epochal revolution in the scope and purposes of dance art” (*The Washington Post*).

On Thursday, June 17, the artists of NCCAkrón's Dancing Lab: BLKmenMoves and Satellite Residency artist **Iquail Shaheed** (Philadelphia, PA) will discuss their experiences working as Black male-identified choreographers in relatively isolated creative communities. The BLKmenMoves artists — **Jean Appolon** (Boston, MA); **Kevin Lee-Y Green** (Wilmington, NC); **Dominic Moore-Dunson** (Akron, OH); with **Charles O. Anderson** (Austin, TX), as the program's facilitator and artist mentor — have been convening virtually for the past year. Their conversation will address the plurality of Black, male identities; decolonized metrics of success; and embodied resistance to monolithic ideas of ‘Black Dance.’

The schedule for this season of talks aligns with the 3rd Thursday initiative created by Downtown Akron Partnership, a monthly event that introduces Akronites and visitors to independent destinations and activities throughout the Downtown neighborhood and online.

About NCCAkrón

The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron supports the research and development of new work in dance by exploring the full potential of the creative process. In addition to offering studio and technical residencies to make new work, activities focus on catalyzing dialogue and experimentation; creating proximity among artists and dance thinkers; and aggregating resources around dance making. For more information, visit nccakron.org.

The establishment and general operation of NCCAkrón is made possible by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

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Dancing Conversation Artist Biographies

Charles O. Anderson (Austin, TX)

Charles O. Anderson is artistic director of Charles O. Anderson/dance theatre X, an afro-contemporary dance theatre company, which he founded in Philadelphia in 2003. Born and raised in Richmond, VA, Charles earned his BA in Choreography and Performance from Cornell University and his MFA in Dance from Temple University. He has performed in the companies of Ronald K. Brown, Sean Curran, Mark Dendy and Miguel Gutierrez among others. His work has been presented nationally and internationally and has earned recognition by numerous grants and organizations such as the Pew Fellowship in the Arts, one of “25 to Watch” by Dance Magazine, and one of ‘12 Rising Stars in the Academy” by Diverse: Issues In Higher Education Magazine. Anderson is currently based in Austin, Texas where he is Head of the Dance Program and an associate professor of African Diaspora Dance Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. Anderson also serves on faculty of the American Dance Festival six week school in Durham, NC. <http://www.charlesoanderson.me/>

Jean Appolon (Boston, MA)

In addition to being the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE), Jean Appolon is a successful choreographer and master teacher based in Boston and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Appolon received his earliest training and performance opportunities in Port-au-Prince with the Viviane Gauthier Dance Company and the Folkloric Ballet of Haiti. Appolon continued his dance education in the U.S. at the Harvard and Radcliffe Dance Program (1995-1996, Boston, MA), Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (1996-1998, New York, NY) and the Joffrey American Ballet School (1998-2003, New York, NY), where he graduated with a B.A. from a joint degree program offered by The New School. <https://jeanappolonexpressions.org/>

Kevin Lee-Y Green (Wilmington, NC)

Kevin Lee-Y Green is a native of Bolivia, North Carolina (population 143) and a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where he studied contemporary dance and ballet. Over a 15-year career, he has worked with acclaimed dance artists including: Rosie Herrera, Sidra Bell, Camille A. Brown, David Parsons, Clay Taliaferro, Sean Sullivan (Limon), Dianne Markham (Louis & Nikolai), and Brenda Daniels (Cunningham). He is the founder of Techmoja Dance and Theater Company— an inclusive and diverse dance company created in partnership with his mother, community leader, and culture bearer Donna Joyner Green. <https://www.kevinleeygreen.com/>

John Heginbotham (New York, NY)

John Heginbotham was part of the Mark Morris Dance Group (1998-2012), and he founded Dance Heginbotham in 2011. Recent projects include John Adams’ *Girls of the Golden West*, directed by Peter Sellars (San Francisco Opera 2017, Dutch National Opera 2019); *Candide* with the Orlando Philharmonic (2016) and *The Knights* (2018, 2019); and Daniel Fish’s 2015 Bard Summerscape production of *Oklahoma!* (Off-Broadway 2018, Broadway 2019) which won the 2019 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical. Heginbotham received the 2014 Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship (2018), a City Center Choreography Fellowship

(2017-18), and an NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts Fellowship (2016). He is the Director of the Dartmouth Dance Ensemble, and he is a founding teacher of Dance for PD, a collaboration between the Mark Morris Dance Group and the Brooklyn Parkinson Group.

<https://www.danceheginbotham.org>

Colin Jacobsen (New York, NY)

Colin Jacobsen is a violinist and an eclectic composer who draws on a range of influences. He was named one of the top 100 composers under 40 by NPR listeners. He is also active as an Avery Fisher Career Grant-winning soloist and a touring member of Yo-Yo Ma's famed Silk Road Ensemble. For his work as a founding member of two game-changing, audience-expanding ensembles – the string quartet Brooklyn Rider and orchestra The Knights – Jacobsen was recently selected from among the nation's top visual, performing, media, and literary artists to receive a prestigious and substantial United States Artists Fellowship.

<http://www.colinjacobsen.com/>

Liz Lerman (Tempe, AZ)

Liz Lerman is a choreographer, performer, writer, educator and speaker, and the recipient of honors including a 2002 MacArthur "Genius Grant" and a 2017 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award. Key to her artistry is opening her process to various publics, resulting in research and outcomes that are participatory, urgent, and usable. She founded Dance Exchange in 1976 and led it until 2011. Her recent work Healing Wars toured the US. Liz teaches Critical Response Process, creative research, the intersection of art and science, and the building of narrative within dance at institutions such as Harvard, Yale School of Drama, and Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Her third book is Hiking the Horizontal: Field Notes from a Choreographer. As of 2016 she is an Institute Professor at Arizona State University. <https://lizlerman.com>

Dominic Moore-Dunson (Akron, OH)

A 2019 Cleveland Arts Prize Recipient, choreographer Dominic Moore-Dunson has been recognized as an emerging artist and arts leader. His recognitions and fellowships include MOCA Cleveland's "New Agent" award, Jacob's Pillow Ann & Weston Hicks Choreography Fellowship, the Devil Strip Magazine's 2018 Breakout Artist, National Arts Strategies (NAS) Creative Community Fellowship, and others. Dominic is an inaugural member of Leadership Akron's Diversity on Board Program and recently completed the National Arts Strategies Executive Program in Arts & Culture Strategies's certificate program. His large-scale community-based dance theatre project called The 'Black Card' Project premiered in September 2018 and is currently in its second iteration. Moore-Dunson currently serves on the board of ArtsNow and the Akron Cultural Plan Steering Committee.

<https://www.instagram.com/dmooredun/>

Iquail Shaheed (Philadelphia, PA)

Iquail Shaheed is the founder and executive artistic director of DANCE IQUAIL!. As a native of Philadelphia, Shaheed trained at Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts

and PHILADANCO before becoming a senior member of Danco II under Donald T. Lunsford II. Shaheed received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Ballet Performance from the University of the Arts, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Purchase College – SUNY. As a professional dancer, Shaheed has worked with companies such as Compagnie Thor (Brussels), The Sean Curran Company, Ronald K Brown/ Evidence, and The Fred Benjamin Dance Company and has appeared in various Broadway productions. He is on faculty at The Ailey School, Steps on Broadway, and Harlem School for the Arts. Shaheed has received Lower Manhattan Cultural Council grant awards, The Caroline H. Newhouse Award, The Suzanne and Larry Engman Award, The Philadelphia Dance Award (Rocky), The Marion D. Cuyjet Award, NAACP ACT-SO National Silver Medal, and The Promising Artist Award. <http://danceiquail.org>