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**NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHOREOGRAPHY-AKRON ANNOUNCES
PREMIERE OF SHORT DANCE FILMS
-- Collection of Films Created Through Its Community Commissioning Residency --**



Residency Artists (L to R): Cara Hagan, Ananya Chatterjea (Paul Virtucio), Paloma McGregor (Melisa Cardona), Tamara Williams (Marek Ranis), Jacinta V. White, Sharon Bridgforth

AKRON, Ohio (May 6, 2021)—**The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron)** announces the premiere of a collection of short dance films by **Cara Hagan** (Boone, NC/Australia) and her artistic collaborators as part of NCCAkron's Community Commissioning Residency. Hagan's artistic collaborators include **Ananya Chatterjea** (Minneapolis, MN), **Paloma McGregor** (New York, NY/St. Croix, USVI), and **Tamara (Fákémi) Williams** (Charlotte, NC). The cohort works closely with poet **Jacinta V. White** (Winston-Salem, NC) and dramaturg **Sharon Bridgforth** (Los Angeles, CA). The films explore ancestry, embodied relationships to place, and the reframing of histories as women of color.

The collection of short dance films will premiere through NCCAkron's YouTube channel on June 19 at 3 PM ET. The premiere lands on Juneteenth, also known as African American Freedom Day or Emancipation Day. The virtual premiere is free and open to the public.

REFRAME / REMNANT / RITUAL: Film Premiere

Saturday, June 19, 3 - 4 PM ET

RSVP: nccakron.org/event-details/reframe-remnant-ritual-film-premiere

Hagan was selected as NCCAkron's Community Commissioning Residency artist for her choreographic research, which exists at the intersections of dance, filmmaking, writing, contemplative practice, and social justice. This past fall, Hagan was a virtual teaching artist at The University of Akron's choreography classes, where students engaged in screendance and created short dance film studies. This spring, Hagan and her artistic collaborators realized the commissioning component of the residency with the collection of short dance films discretely created across multiple places.

NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director **Christy Bolingbroke** praised, "The original idea behind a Community Commissioning Residency was to incorporate a visiting artist into the Akron and university community over a two week period. In addition to working virtually with UA students over four weeks in the fall, we were thrilled to follow Cara's lead as she expanded the idea of community and creative time beyond traditional borders to realize this project. Much more than an adaptation during COVID times, this work really is an authentic extension of her artistic ethos."

Hagan's practice of artistic surrogacy, which she describes as a way of transmitting ideas across borders and bodies, enabled her to work with communities across the country in ways that upheld the core values of the work while leaving room for translational growth. The collection of short dance films are influenced by frequent cohort meetings where concepts are explored through group discussion, writing, sharing, and ritual-making. Hagan explains, "This project is like jazz; we come together, we riff, we play, and we make music that speaks to our collective interests."

Jacinta V. White, poet, facilitator, and coach, explains, "I believe that art can bring people together in ways unimaginable and is a healing agent. As a poet, I'm thrilled to collaborate with this unique and brilliant group of dancers, and get a peek into their world and creativity and try to capture that with the movement of a pen."

The Juneteenth premiere of the collection of short dance films will conclude the inaugural Community Commissioning Residency. The Community Commissioning Residency is the second phase of the **Ideas in Motion** program, a joint initiative supported by NCCAkron, The University of Akron, The University of Akron Foundation, and the Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series in the Arts.

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About NCCAkron

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 NCCAkron is made possible by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

About Ideas in Motion

Ideas in Motion is a joint initiative supported by NCCAkron, The University of Akron, The University of Akron Foundation, and the Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series in the Arts. The annual fall phase of Ideas in Motion is the Community Commissioning Residency, where a nominated and selected artist engages and works across the community. The spring phase of Ideas in Motion is a capsule series called “21st Century Dance Practices”, where working dance artists are invited to guest teach classes in a dance course at The University of Akron.

About The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre & Arts Administration

The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration (DTAA) prepares students for successful performing, academic, and administrative careers in the arts. Its diverse student body works with distinguished, award-winning faculty in classes that offer technical training, theoretical study, practical experience, and creative skill-building. The Dance Program offers both a B.F.A. and B.A. with Business Cognate. The school’s M.A. in Arts Administration provides students the education necessary to work in all disciplines of the non-profit arts. DTAA is headed by Marc Reed, D.M.A., who also directs the School of Music. For more information, visit uakron.edu/dtaa/.

About the Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series in the Arts

Ideas in Motion is made possible by the support of The University of Akron Foundation’s Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series in the Arts. NCCAkron is grateful to Stephen E. Myers, trustee of the University of Akron Foundation and of the Myers Foundation and son of Mary Schiller Myers, for his support. Established in 1979 under the sponsorship of the Mary and Louis S. Myers Foundation, this endowed lecture series brings significant representatives of the arts to campus and community annually, to share their particular talents with students, faculty, and residents of the community. These events can include performances, lectures, and master classes.

Artist Biographies

Cara Hagan (Boone, NC/Australia)

Cara Hagan is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice is informed by movement, words, digital space, contemplative practice, and community. Hagan was awarded an artist residency at PLAYA Summer Lake for the fall of 2018 and at Elsewhere Gallery for summer 2021. A recipient of several grants and awards, Hagan received the “Best Southern States Documentary” award for her short film, *Sound and Sole* from the Southern States Indie Fan Film Fest in 2019. Hagan is director and curator for ADF’s Movies By Movers, an annual, international dance film festival. Her scholarly publications can be found in the International Journal of Screendance, the Journal of Sustainability Education, and in the book, *Dance’s Duet with the Camera: Motion Pictures*.

carahagan.net

Ananya Chatterjea (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

Ananya Chatterjea's work as choreographer, dancer, and thinker brings together contemporary dance, social justice choreography, and a commitment to healing justice. She is artistic director of Ananya Dance Theatre, a dance company of BIPOC women & femmes, and co-founder of the Shawngām Institute for Performance and Social Justice. In response to the Twin Cities Uprising (2020), she created the Kutumkāri (Relationship-making) Healing Movement series with a particular invitation to BIPOC women and femme healers. Her second book, *Heat and Alterity in Contemporary Dance: South-South Choreographies* was published in 2020. She teaches Choreographing Social Justice, Dance History, and Contemporary Practice at the University of Minnesota. ananyadancetheatre.org

Paloma McGregor (New York, New York/St. Croix, USVI)

Paloma McGregor (Director, Angelas's Pulse/Dancing While Black) is a Caribbean-born, New York-based choreographer who makes Black work with Black folks in Black space. A former newspaper reporter, she combines a choreographer's craft, journalist's urgency and anti-racist organizer's framework to activate creative communities and shepherd collaborative visioning. Working at the growing edge of her field, McGregor is a 2020 Soros Arts Fellowship recipient, and an inaugural recipient of several major awards, including: Dance/USA's Fellowship to Artists (2019); Urban Bush Women's Choreographic Center Institute Fellowship (2018); and Surdna Foundation's Artists Engaging in Social Change (2015). In 2017, she won a "Bessie" Award for performance with skeleton architecture. angelaspulse.org

Tamara (Fákémi) Williams (Charlotte, North Carolina)

Tamara Williams is an Assistant Professor at UNCC. She earned her MFA from Hollins University/Frankfurt University. Her choreography has been presented nationally and internationally in Serbia, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, Mexico, and Brazil. In 2011, Williams created Moving Spirits, Inc., a contemporary arts organization dedicated to performing, researching, documenting, cultivating, and producing arts of the African Diaspora. Williams' scholarly work includes: *Giving Life to Movement: The Silvestre Dance Technique*, "Reviving Culture Through Ring Shout" published in *The Dancer-Citizen*, and *The African Diaspora and Civic Responsibility: Addressing Social Justice through the Arts, Education and Community Engagement* (forthcoming). movingspirits.org

Jacinta V. White (Winston-Salem, North Carolina)

Jacinta V. White is a poet, facilitator and coach. She's the founder of The Word Project, where she has spent nearly 20 years facilitating creative workshops for those looking to use poetry and art as catalysts for healing. The Word Project publishes the international quarterly, Snapdragon: A Journal of Art & Healing, which Jacinta oversees. As a writer, Jacinta's latest collection, *Resurrecting the Bones: Born from a Journey through African American Churches & Cemeteries of the Rural South*, was published by Press 53. Jacinta is also the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, and has work featured in many publications. jacintawhite.com

Sharon Bridgforth (Los Angeles, California)

A Doris Duke Performing Artist, Sharon Bridgforth is a writer that creates ritual/jazz theatre. A 2020-2023 Playwrights' Center Core Member, Sharon has received support from Creative Capital, MAP Fund, the National Performance Network and is a New Dramatists alumnae. Widely published, Sharon has served as dramaturge for the Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Initiative's Choreographic Fellowship program; writer and performer for Amara Tabor-Smith's "REVIVAL Millennial Remembering in the Afro NOW"; and writer for Ananya Dance Theatre's "Dastak". Sharon is Executive Producer and Host of the "Who Yo People Is" podcast series. sharonbridgforth.com