



**Media Contact:**

Mariclare Hulbert, Publicist

585.278.2302

[mariclare.hulbert@gmail.com](mailto:mariclare.hulbert@gmail.com)

**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHOREOGRAPHY - AKRON AND THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON SCHOOL OF DANCE, THEATRE, AND ARTS ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCE ALEXANDRA BARBIER AS THE 2022 COMMUNITY COMMISSIONING RESIDENCY ARTIST**



Alexandra Barbier performing *Take this with you* (photo Todd Collins)

AKRON, OH (September 22, 2022) — **The National Center for Choreography - Akron** (NCCAkron) and **The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration** (DTAA) are proud to announce this year's **Community Commissioning Residency** as a part of the **Ideas in Motion** program, October 9-21. The 2022 Community Commissioning Residency artist is **Alexandra Barbier** (Urbana, IL), selected for her choreographic research involving queer Black dance vernacular and how it operates outside of the academic dance community.

The Community Commissioning Residency process invites DTAA faculty, students, and NCCAkron team members to nominate working choreographers to apply for this opportunity. Artist applications are reviewed by an Artist Selection Committee including members from The University of Akron dance faculty, students, and NCCAkron.

The Artist Selection Committee chose Alexandra Barbier for her refreshing perspective and exploration of queer Black dance vernacular such as twerking, waacking, and voguing. During her time on campus, Barbier will work alongside university students within their regularly scheduled classes such as ballet and jazz to explore the above mentioned movement vocabulary and will also offer a dance class outside the program for the general public.

A one hour open-to-the-public community class will be co-hosted with **Downtown Akron Partnership** at Cascade Plaza in downtown Akron on October 13 at 5:15pm. For more information or to register visit [nccakron.org/events](http://nccakron.org/events).

“This Community Commissioning Residency is an invaluable asset to our students and community at large,” says **Assistant Lecturer Christine Howe**, “I am very excited to see the curiosity and creativity that Alex will generate in their discussions of Black vernacular dance through the lens of social media and physical practice.”

NCCAkron is partnering with the student dance organization **Terpsichore** to offer a class rooted in the posing, footwork, and arm gestures of punkin'/waacking technique, and a brief history of this form and its evolution. Terpsichore is a student-run dance organization led this year by **DTAA senior Makenna Zelenak**. The club seeks to bring UA dancers of all kinds together to perform and find community, regardless of their selected major. **Club member and DTAA junior Molly Bagatto** adds that “a large portion of our program will be able to relate to this incoming artist, which I believe makes our learning experience more exciting.”

**NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director Christy Bolingbroke** remarks, “In our short operational history beginning in 2017-18, NCCAkron averages 24 in programmatic events open to UA students each year. Connecting an artist like Alex Barbier with a student-run club for the first time, further deepens and expands our working relationship with the UA community.”

To conclude the residency, Alex will have a public work-in-process showing of her new solo work, *Stations of Black Loss*, on October 21. For more information visit [nccakron.org/events](http://nccakron.org/events).

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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](http://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 Artist**

**Alexandra Barbier** (Urbana, IL) is an artist, educator, and performance maker whose practices emerge from dance, performance art, Blackness, and queerness. She promotes whimsy, humor, and playfulness while also inspiring critical thought and cultural/societal commentary and inquiry. Alexandra’s works have been presented through Of Moving Colors Contemporary Dance Company, the University of Utah, Deseret Experimental Opera, Salt Lake City Performance Art Festival, Great Salt Lake Fringe Fest, and Queer Spectra Arts Festival. She has been on faculty for the Joffrey Ballet and Jazz + Contemporary trainee programs and the Joffrey South summer intensive, has guest taught and lead residencies in several university dance programs throughout the country (including DeSales University, Davidson College, and University of Georgia Athens), and has held the Raymond C. Morales Post-MFA Fellowship in the University of Utah’s School of Dance. She is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate in Dance at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Alexandra holds a B.A. in French with a minor in Women’s and Gender Studies, and an M.F.A. in Modern Dance.

### **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/](http://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 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 masterclasses.

### **About Downtown Akron Partnership**

The mission of Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) is to promote and build a vibrant and valuable downtown that is open and welcoming to all. DAP is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing people, activity, business and a thriving civic life to the heart of Akron. Through strategic marketing, clean and safe programs and management of downtown's resources, DAP works to promote downtown as a gathering place in the center of our community.

DAP's members include property owners, business leaders and government officials who want to improve the image of downtown as a safe, convenient location for businesses, working professionals and families. DAP is governed by a board of trustees as diverse as the interests of our city. DAP receives general operating support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Akron Community Foundation, and GAR Foundation.