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**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHOREOGRAPHY-AKRON ANNOUNCES
DANCING CONVERSATION: WOMEN & WITCHCRAFT WITH LIZ LERMAN
AND COMMUNITY INVITATION TO CAST A SPELL FOR FORGIVENESS AND HEALING**



Image: Joan Colbert, *What I Know*, 1996, block print

AKRON, Ohio (May 13, 2021)—**The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron)** announces its **Dancing Conversation: Women & Witchcraft** with acclaimed choreographer and visionary **Liz Lerman** (Tempe, AZ) on Thursday, May 20, at 7 PM ET through NCCAkron’s YouTube channel. This free public event invites Lerman to share three short films as a result of her Satellite Residency with NCCAkron this year. Additionally, University of Akron (UA) faculty and professionals will join **NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director Christy Bolingbroke** in a discussion about these films, the demonization of women into witches, and feminine archetypes. UA faculty and instructors include **Francisca Ugalde** (Curator & Instructor, Institute for Human Science and Culture), **Daniela Jauk** (Assistant Professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice), and **Heather Braun** (Associate Professor, English). After the virtual event, the Akron community can engage with Lerman by “casting spells for forgiveness and healing” through postcards available at participating locations.

Dancing Conversation: Women & Witchcraft with Liz Lerman

Thursday, May 20, 7 PM ET

Online event: NCCAkron's YouTube Channel

RSVP: nccakron.org/event-details/dancing-conversation-women-witchcraft-with-liz-lerman

Liz Lerman's 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*). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Lerman was developing a dance work called *Wicked Bodies* around these lines of inquiry. With support from an NCCAkron Satellite Residency, she chose to revisit and reimagine some of the material research in alternate ways resulting in three short films titled *Justice*, *The Cosmos*, and *Forgiveness*.

Following the Dancing Conversation virtual event, Lerman is seeking "spells for forgiveness and healing" from the Akron community to conjure continued research, connection with others, and the learning of how to be together in community, again. To cast a spell, Akron community members can pick up a postage-paid and pre-addressed postcard, write a message on the card in response to its prompt, and drop the card in the mail to be delivered to Lerman. Postcards are available at the below-participating venues until September 1 while supplies last.

The postcard features artwork by Akron visual artist Joan Colbert. The artwork, *What I Know*, is a block print from Colbert's series *Thirteen Ways*. The series contains thirteen small block prints based upon the poem, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird", by Wallace Stevens.

Postcard Locations

1. Akron Coffee Roasters, 30 N High St, Akron, OH 44308
2. Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, 73 S College St, Akron, OH 44325
3. Emily Davis Gallery, 150 E Exchange St, Akron, OH 44325
4. Gypsy Grace & The Vintage Goat, 451 W Market St, Akron, OH 44303
5. Gypsy Moon Lane, 1259 Sherman St, Akron, OH 44301
6. Hazeltree Interiors, 143 W Market St, Akron, OH 44303
7. Summit Artspace, 140 E Market St, Akron, OH 44308
8. Summit County Historical Society, 550 Copley Rd, Akron, OH 44320
9. Whiskertin, 1145 #306, Getz St, Akron, OH 44301
10. Zeber-Martell Gallery & Clay Studio, 43 Furnace St # G, Akron, OH 44308

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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.

Public programs and events like these are made possible with additional support by the National Endowment for the Arts, Ohio Arts Council, the GAR Foundation, and the Akron Community Foundation.

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Dancing Conversation and Artist Biographies

Liz Lerman (Tempe, AZ)

Liz Lerman is a choreographer and interdisciplinary artist and the recipient of honors including a 2002 MacArthur “genius” grant and the 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 cultivated the company’s unique multi-generational ensemble into a leading force in contemporary dance until 2011. Her most recent work, *Healing Wars*, toured across the US in 2014-15. Lerman teaches Critical Response Process, creative research, the intersection of art and science, and the building of narrative within dance at institutions such as Harvard University, 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. lizlerman.com

Daniela Jauk (Akron, OH)

Daniela Jauk, PhD, is Assistant Professor for Sociology and Criminal Justice at The University of Akron. She received an M.A. in Sociology from the University of Graz in her home country, Austria. She started her career as a social worker in feminist contexts and served as Independent Women’s Representative of the City Council Graz. She completed her doctoral work in Sociology as a Fulbright student at The University of Akron, specializing in Qualitative Research Methodologies and Sociology of Deviance and Gender Studies. Previously, she worked as a Research Specialist for Oriana House, Inc. gaining in depth experience with community corrections research, mixed methods research projects, and grant writing. Dr. Jauk is a certified Clinical Sociological Practitioner with the American Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology and holds a Certificate in Active Research Methods from The University of Akron. danielajauk.com

Francisca Ugalde (Akron, OH)

Francisca was born in Chile and relocated via Colombia and Puerto Rico to Ohio in 1999 and currently lives in Merriman Valley, Akron. She graduated from Kent State University with her B.F.A. in Painting in 2005 and earned her M.A. in Arts Administration from The University of Akron. She currently works as a curator and instructor at the Institute for Human Science and Culture at the Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology at The University of Akron. Francisca has been involved with numerous community organizations, including Big Love Akron and the Lock 3 Summer Arts Experience.

[linkedin.com/in/francisca-b-ugalde-z-233a7a12/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/francisca-b-ugalde-z-233a7a12/)

Heather Braun (Akron, OH)

Dr. Heather Braun is an Associate Professor of English at The University of Akron, where she teaches nineteenth- and twentieth-century British literature, composition, literary theory, young adult literature, and career exploration. She has published on David Mamet, Mary E. Braddon, Augusta Webster, Sydney Owenson, Norman Mailer, Oscar Wilde, Caroline Norton, Mary E. Coleridge, and the femme fatale in British literature. As a 2018-19 EX[L] Faculty Fellow and JSK Affiliate, Dr. Braun studied design thinking at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design and led workshops at Stanford's Bechtel International Center. She has worked alongside young writers in Summit Lake through Akron's Reimagining the Civic Commons initiative to foster economically diverse neighborhoods, build civic pride, and advance environmental sustainability. She also moderates sessions for Reflection Point, a non-profit that fosters inclusive workspaces through empathy and open discussion. Currently, Dr. Braun facilitates design thinking workshops at universities and organizations in Northeast Ohio.

works.bepress.com/heather_braun/

Joan Colbert (Akron, OH)

Akron artist, Joan Colbert, works in mixed media with an emphasis on printmaking, mainly relief prints and monotypes. Inspired by literature and influenced by her environs, her artwork is often thematic, frequently including references to her favorite motifs: blackbirds and bare trees. She strives to reach a balance between design and idea and hopes that in each piece there is just enough left unstated to evoke more personal interpretations. Her recent, ongoing series, *As Potent as a Charm*, explores the malevolent side of familiar plants in a collection of black and white linoleum block prints. Although the concept is botanical, allusions to dark tales and malfeasance hint at a narrative within each visual representation. In 2019 Joan was honored with the Arts Alive Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Summit Artspace in Akron, Ohio. She was gallery coordinator for the Summit Artspace Gallery from 2007 to 2013. She is a member of Artists of Rubber City and a longtime Highland Square resident. joancolbert.com

Christy Bolingbroke (Akron, OH)

As the Founding Executive/Artistic Director for NCCAkron, Christy Bolingbroke is responsible for setting the business model and curatorial vision for all programs. She works closely with every artist to support their artistic/administrative growth and to develop educational outreach opportunities for the local community to interact with the visiting artists. Previously, Christy

served as Deputy Director for Advancement at ODC in San Francisco, overseeing curation and performance programming as well as marketing and development organization-wide. Prior to ODC, she was Director of Marketing at the Mark Morris Dance Group. She is currently a consulting advisor for the Bloomberg Philanthropies Arts Innovation Management initiative, on the New England Foundation for the Arts National Dance Project Advisory Panel, and a member of the Akron Civic Commons core team. In 2017, DANCE Magazine named Bolingbroke among the national list of most influential people in dance today.