

**Media Contact:**

Mariclare Hulbert, Publicist

585.278.2302

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

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHOREOGRAPHY - AKRON RELEASES THIRD SEASON OF  
*INSIDE THE DANCER'S STUDIO***

**-- Podcast Features Interviews with Choreographers from Across the U.S. --**



Left to right: Rosie Herrera (Adam Reign), Kate Wallich (Calvin Chase), Courtney Lopes (Maeve FitzHoward), Ashwini Ramaswamy (Ed Bock), Helanius J. Wilkins (Christopher Michael Carruth), Christopher K. Morgan (Brianna Bland), Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Christy Bolingbroke (Dale Dong), Elena Muslar, Antuan Byers (Eric Politzer), jumatatu poe, Indira Goodwine (Ra-Re Valverde)

AKRON, Ohio (August 16, 2022)—**The National Center for Choreography - Akron (NCCAkron)** has launched the third season of [\*Inside the Dancer's Studio\*](#), a podcast that brings listeners into the process of creating dance. Through interviews with choreographers from across the United States, *Inside the Dancer's Studio* dissolves the mystique of dance-making into engaging, fun, and deeply human conversation about what moves artists to express their truths through creation and performance.

Artists featured in Season 3 include: **Rosie Herrera** (Miami, FL), **Kate Wallich** (Seattle, WA), **Christopher K. Morgan** (Maui, HI), **Courtney Lopes** (New York, NY), **Helanius J. Wilkins** (Boulder, CO), and **Ashwini Ramaswamy** (Minneapolis-St Paul, MN).

This new season will also feature bonus episodes from NCCAkron's recent Creative Administration Research Summit Convening — "Artists as Model for the New Socioeconomic Normal" with **Marc Bamuthi Joseph** (Washington, DC) and **Christy Bolingbroke** (Akron, OH); and "Money, Mindset, and Motivation: Where Artist Meets Enterprise" with **Elena Muslar** (Los Angeles, CA), **Antuan Byers** (New York, NY), **Indira Goodwine** (Boston, MA), **jumatatu m. poe** (Raleigh, NC) and **Rosie Herrera** (Miami, FL).

The podcast's host, NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director **Christy Bolingbroke**, poses a set series of questions about craft, process, and perseverance to each interviewee, including: how

do they name a piece? What do they look for in collaborators? What do they do if they find themselves stuck, creatively?

Each episode was recorded as part of a lunchtime conversation series presented by NCCAkron, with support from The University of Akron. These short talks are perfect for budding dancers, dancemakers, creatives, or anyone who has ever built something from scratch. New episodes are released each Friday on most streaming platforms, including Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

“I’m thrilled to share these conversations about how artists approach their craft, beyond just the latest project a choreographer is developing,” says Bolingbroke. “With each new episode we get yet another perspective on the choreographic process. The series represents the broad expanse and possibilities of dance making today.”

The podcast is produced by Jennifer Edwards with Ellis Rovin as engineer, transcription by Arushi Singh, theme music by Floco Torres, and cover art by Micah Kraus. Kat Wentz and Kira Ruffin coordinated the 2022 live *Inside The Dancer’s Studio* program.

The *Inside the Dancer’s Studio* lunchtime talk series is supported by NCCAkron, The University of Akron, The University of Akron Foundation, the Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series in the Arts, the GAR Foundation, the Ohio Arts Council, the Akron Community Foundation, and Peg’s Foundation.

For more information and to listen to episodes, visit [nccakron.org/podcast](http://nccakron.org/podcast).

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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.

### **Inside the Dancer’s Studio host biography**

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 member of the Akron Civic Commons core team and a mentor in the South Arts MOMENTUM initiative. In the past, she has also served as a consulting advisor for the Bloomberg Philanthropies Arts Innovation Management initiative, and on the New England Foundation for the Arts National Dance Project Advisory Panel. In 2017, *Dance Magazine* named Bolingbroke among the national list of most influential people in dance today.

### **Episode 1: Rosie Herrera (Miami, FL)**

Rosie Herrera is a Cuban-American dancer, choreographer and artistic director of Rosie Herrera Dance Theater in Miami. She is a graduate from New World School with a BFA in Dance Performance. She founded her company, Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre, in 2009. Rosie is also a classically trained lyric coloratura soprano and performs with the Performers Music Institute Opera Ensemble as well as works as an independent director and creative consultant throughout Miami, bringing over a decade of experience in both dance and cabaret. Rosie is a 2016 USArtist Sarah Arison Choreographic Fellow, a 2010 and 2018 MANCC choreographic fellow, a 2014 Bates Dance Festival Artist in residence, a 2016 Bessie Schoenberg Fellow and a 2011 and 2016 and 2017 Miami Dance Fellow. She was awarded a Princess Grace Choreographic Fellowship for her work with Ballet Hispanico in 2013.

<http://www.rosieherrera.dance>

### **Episode 2: Kate Wallich (Seattle, WA)**

Kate Wallich is a Seattle-based choreographer, director, educator – named one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch". She trained at Interlochen Arts Academy and holds a BFA Magna Cum Laude from Cornish College of the Arts. Wallich has been commissioned and presented by leading institutions including On the Boards, Seattle Theater Group, Velocity Dance Center, Seattle Art Museum, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Whim W'Him, Northwest Dance Project, Frye Art Museum and Henry Art Gallery. Her community class Dance Church™ serves over 250 people per week, and has partnered with local non-profit organizations including Raincity Rock Camp for Girls, Waterfront Seattle and Team Survivor NW among others. Nationally, Wallich's work has been presented at The Joyce, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Inside/Out and Newfields/Indianapolis Museum of Art. In 2016 she founded Studio Kate Wallich, a non-profit organization dedicated to cultivating a community of artists and the public through dance based, design forward experiences. With her company The YC, Wallich has created four evening-length works and 3 large scale site-specific works.

<http://katewallich.com>

### **Episode 3: Ashwini Ramaswamy (Minneapolis, MN)**

As an independent choreographer, Ashwini Ramaswamy's work references ancient myths and ritualistic practices, global literature and poetry, and the mixed media contemporary culture she has absorbed for 35 years, drawing from myriad influences to express a personal identity with collective resonance. Celebrated for her ability to "[weave] together, both fearfully and joyfully, the human and the divine" (*New York Times*), Ashwini studies Bharatanatyam from the legendary dancer/choreographer Smt. Alarmel Valli of Chennai, India, and Ranee and Aparna Ramaswamy, Artistic Directors of Ragamala Dance Company. As Choreographic Associate/featured performer with Ragamala, she has toured extensively, performing throughout the U.S. and in Russia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Japan, the U.K, and India. Ashwini's choreography was among the "Best of the Year" in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Big Dance Town, and MinnPost, and has been presented by the Joyce Theater (NYC), Triskelion Arts (NYC), Cowles Center (Minneapolis), The Yard (Martha's Vineyard, MA), and Just Festival (Edinburgh, U.K.), among others.

<http://ashwiniramaswamy.com>

#### **Episode 4: Courtney Lopes (New York, NY)**

Courtney is originally from Bermuda, attended The University of North Carolina School of the Arts for her high school education focusing on Contemporary Dance, and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BFA in Dance from SUNY Purchase in 2012. Courtney had the opportunity to study abroad in Taiwan at the Taipei National University of the Arts, and has studied with the American Dance Festival, José Limón Dance Company, and Doug Varone and Dancers. Courtney has recently performed *The Hard Nut* for The Mark Morris Dance Group and has performed works by Lar Lubovitch, Paul Taylor, Jessica Lang, and Huang Yi of Cloud Gate Dance Company. Courtney is delighted to currently be working with Dance Heginbotham, MeenMoves, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, Kathryn Alter & Dancers, and Megan Williams Dance Projects.

<http://www.courtneylopes.com>

#### **Episode 5: Helanius J. Wilkins (Boulder, CO)**

Helanius J. Wilkins, a native of Lafayette, Louisiana, is an award-winning choreographer, performance artist, innovator, and educator. He lived in Washington, D.C. for eighteen (18) years and founded EDGEWORKS Dance Theater, an all-male dance company of predominantly African American men that existed for thirteen (13) years (2001 - 2014). His honors include the 2008 Pola Nirenska Award for Contemporary Achievement in Dance, and the 2002 and 2006 Kennedy Center Local Dance Commissioning Project Award. He was a three times finalist for the D.C. Mayor's Arts Awards and Bates Dance Festival named him their 2002 Emerging Choreographer. In addition to performing the works of nationally recognized choreographers including Robert Moses, Joy Kellman, and Kevin Wynn, he performed with Maida Withers'

Dance Construction Company (DC) and as a guest with the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD). He has equally enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, creating, presenting, and receiving commissions for choreography throughout the United States and abroad.

<https://www.helaniusj.com>

#### **Episode 6: Christopher K. Morgan (Maui, HI)**

Christopher K. Morgan was born in Orange County, California. His Native Hawaiian ancestry and diverse, international modern dance career (Liz Lerman, David Gordon, Shapiro & Smith, Pilobolus, and others) both influence his choreographic voice. His work has been presented in 18 countries on five continents, addresses issues including sexuality, gender identity, race, climate change, and water conservation, and has been called "charming and poignant" by The New York Times. In 2011, Dance Magazine profiled Christopher as one of six breakout choreographers in the United States. That same year, he founded his company, Christopher K. Morgan & Artists. His 2010 work +1/-1, commissioned by the US State Department and CityDance, opened the Ramallah International Dance Festival and won the Dance Metro DC award for Outstanding New Work that year. Presenting highlights include The Kennedy Center (Washington, DC), The Maly Theatre (Moscow, Russia), the Hong Kong Cultural Center (China), The National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC), and the South Lawn of the White House. From 2007-2011, he served as Choreographer in Residence and Rehearsal Director for CityDance Ensemble.

<http://christopherkmorgan.com>

#### **Episode 7: "Artists as Model for the New Socioeconomic Normal" with Marc Bamuthi Joseph (Washington, DC) and Christy Bolingbroke (Akron, OH)**

**BAMUTHI** (Marc Bamuthi Joseph) is a 2017 TED Global Fellow, an inaugural recipient of the Guggenheim Social Practice initiative, and an honoree of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship. Bamuthi's opera libretto, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, was named one of 2017's "Best Classical Music Performances" by *The New York Times*. His evening length work created in collaboration with composer Daniel Bernard Roumain, "The Just and The Blind," was commissioned by Carnegie Hall and premiered to a sold out house at Carnegie in March 2019. His upcoming opera "Watch Night" is inspired by the forgiveness exhibited by the congregation of Emanuel AME church in Charleston, and will premiere at The Perelman Center in New York in 2023. Bamuthi is the founding Program Director of the exemplary non-profit Youth Speaks, and is a co-founder of Life is Living, a national series of one-day festivals which activate under-resourced parks and affirm peaceful urban life. His essays have been published in Harvard Education Press; he has lectured at more than 200 colleges, and has carried adjunct professorships at Stanford and Lehigh, among others.

**Episode 8: “Money, Mindset, and Motivation: Where Artist Meets Enterprise” with Elena Muslar (Los Angeles, CA), Antuan Byers (New York, NY), Indira Goodwine (Boston, MA), jumatatu m. poe (Raleigh, NC ) and Rosie Herrera (Miami, FL).**

**Elena Muslar** (Los Angeles, CA), Elena Marie Muslar is an arts, culture, and entertainment workforce development and equity specialist nurtured in South- Central, Los Angeles and now residing in Ontario, California. She is the Founder and Chief Empowerment Officer of Confide Creative, a coaching and consulting practice dedicated to the collective cultural and economic progress of pre- professionals and working professionals who have ever felt alone, uncertain, undervalued, or otherized while navigating careers towards, in, around, or beyond arts, culture, and entertainment. By prioritizing personal and professional wellbeing through career, mindset, and strategic advising, Elena’s coaching philosophy is rooted in three pillars: workforce liberation, racial justice, and radical self-care. Her clients include nationally- recognized arts organizations, major entertainment companies, higher education institutions, culturally- intentional community collectives, and passionate

**Antuan Byers** (New York, NY), Antuan Byers is a dancer, creative entrepreneur, and arts activist based in Lenapehoking (Manhattan, NY). He graduated cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program with honors in Dance, holds a Certificate of Fashion from the Parsons School of Design, and is an alumnus of Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. Antuan has been fortunate enough to dance alongside Grammy Award Winner, Erykah Badu, Tony Award Winners, Jennifer Holliday and Melba Moore, and Tony Award Nominee Felicia P. Fields. He has been featured in *New York Magazine*, *Dazed Digital*, *Tribeca Film*, *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Spirit Magazine*, *Pointe Magazine*, and more. Antuan has also cultivated brand partnerships with ASICS, Barney’s NY, Beats by Dr. Dre, Capezio, and Jaguar. Antuan is represented by Stetts Modeling Agency NYC. Antuan toured internationally with Ailey II before returning to Lincoln Center to rejoin the Metropolitan Opera Ballet. He has been a guest artist with the Washington National Opera Ballet, KEIGWIN + Co, and Ailey. Antuan was also an original performer in Nick Cave’s “The Let Go” at the Park Avenue Armory, choreographed by Francesca Harper, featuring Nona Hendryx.

**Indira Goodwine** (Boston, MA)

Indira Goodwine joined the New England Foundation for the Arts in March 2019 as Program Director, Dance. She directs NEFA’s National Dance Project and major dance initiatives in New England, as well as collaborates with other NEFA programs supporting the dance field. With a dual background in dance and arts administration, Indira previously served as the Managing Director of Camille A. Brown & Dancers (CABD, Inc.) for the past two and a half years and as the Company Manager for several years prior. At CABD, Inc., she shepherded the organization through the attainment of 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, established of the organization’s founding Board of Directors, enhanced the institutional and individual fundraising efforts, increased the budget by at least 30% per year since 2012, and provided oversight of the development, implementation and continued growth of CABD’s dance engagement program, “EVERY BODY MOVE.”

**jumatatu poe** (Raleigh, NC)

jumatatu is a choreographer and performer who grew up dancing around the living room and at parties with their siblings and cousins. Their early exposure to concert dance was through African dance and capoeira performances on California college campuses where their Pan-Africanist parents studied and worked, but they did not start “formal” dance training until college with Umfundalai, Kariamu Welsh’s contemporary African dance technique. Their work continues to be influenced by various sources, including their foundations in those living rooms and parties, their early technical training in contemporary African dance, their continued study of contemporary dance and performance, their movement trainings with dancer and anatomist Irene Dowd around anatomy and proprioception, and their sociological research of and technical training in J-sette performance with Donte Beacham. They produce dance and performance work independently, as well as in collaboration with idiosynCrazy productions, a company they founded in 2008 and now co-direct with Shannon Murphy. Most recently, the company serves as a resource to produce public dialogues around the integrations of art into society, and the social responsibility of the artist.