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**INAUGURAL KNIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY PRIZE RECIPIENT  
ROSIE HERRERA COMES TO AKRON FOR CABARET RESIDENCY  
– Made possible by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation,  
This Award Invests In the Future of Dance –**



Pictured: Rosie Herrera; photos (left to right) by Adam Reign and Jared McEntire.

AKRON, OH (February 5, 2025) — Inaugural Knight Choreography Prize awardee choreographer **Rosie Herrera** (Miami, FL) will come to Akron February 24-March 1, 2025 for a residency with the **National Center for Choreography-Akron (NCCAkron)**. During this residency, Herrera and fellow artists will explore performance form and format that embraces her classical vocal training alongside her dance theater movement aesthetic, developing a work titled *Tropical Depression*.

*Tropical Depression* is a dance theater work by Rosie Herrera that celebrates the unique glamour and humor of the Caribbean. It will be the culmination of many years of research into the deconstruction of Cuban iconography, and the oppressive nature of nostalgia. The Akron community is invited to a Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre informal showing to get an inside look into this developing work.

## **Work in Process Showing: Tropical Depression by Rosie Herrera**

Saturday, March 1, Noon - 1pm

Guzzetta Hall Room 391, University of Akron

228 E Buchtel Ave, Akron, OH 44325

Space is limited, RSVP to NCCAkron here:

[nccakron.org/event-details/wips-tropicaldepression-rhdt](https://nccakron.org/event-details/wips-tropicaldepression-rhdt)

Herrera was the first recipient of the \$50,000 Knight Choreography Prize. Made possible by Knight Foundation, this award is designed to support the artistic experimentation and career longevity of choreographers in the United States. Each year the award will honor a living choreographer whose body of work is distinguished not only for their artistry but also for their originality of thought and impact. The award celebrates choreographers who provide significant contributions to the dance field, expand audiences for dance, and ensure the artform has a prominent place in U.S. culture. Herrera will receive an unrestricted cash award of \$30,000, plus \$20,000 in programmatic support over two years, co-designed with NCCAkron.

**Rosie Herrera** is a Cuban-American dancer, choreographer, and artistic director of Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre, founded in 2009. Over 15 years, her daring, vivid, multifaceted dance-theater work has combined personal experience – her Cuban heritage and Catholic upbringing – with broader cultural and socio-political themes and genres like drag, burlesque, contemporary dance, and hip-hop, all informed by her career as a dancer, choreographer, cabaret and burlesque performer, and classically-trained opera singer. Guillermo Perez of the *Miami New Times* describes, “Her shows could take us clubbing or give us a buzz in quite a bash for the senses, but there was always that startling peek behind the tinselled curtain and sober moments when a beleaguered figure signaled for the warmth and strength of human hands.”

Herrera has a longitudinal relationship with NCCAkron. In 2022, she participated as a visiting guest artist for the Ideas in Motion: 21st Century Dance Practices program, a partnership between NCCAkron and The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration. Rosie is also an alumna of the Creative Administration Research program, through which artists engage in investigative retreats; dedicate time to project long-term artistic goals; examine chronic pain points across operations; reconsider current habits and practices; and identify possible administrative experiments to evolve business operations.

### ***About the Knight Choreography Prize***

The Knight Choreography Prize is designed to support the artistic experimentation and career longevity of choreographers in the United States. NCCAkron intends for the award to provide essential time and space for the creative process, for research, and for rigorous play and positive failure. NCCAkron commits to co-create activities and residencies with artists as equal partners and promote equity in the arts by elevating underrepresented voices that are a valuable part of the 21st century dance ecosystem and the future of the artform. Rosie Herrera was announced as the inaugural recipient in May 2024 and Shamel Pitts was announced as the

second KCP awardee was announced in October 2024. Hereafter, the Knight Choreography Prize will be announced once a year, in the Fall.

### ***About Rosie Herrera***

Rosie Herrera is a Cuban-American dancer, choreographer, and artistic director of Rosie Herrera Dance Theater in Miami. She is a graduate of New World School with a BFA in Dance Performance. She has been commissioned by The Miami Light Project, The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Ballet Hispanico, José Limón Dance Company, The Ringling Museum, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Santa Barbara Dance Theater, New Dialect, GroundWorks Dance Theater, Houston Met Dance, Boston Dance Theater, Orchestra Miami, New World Symphony, and the American Dance Festival (ADF) in 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018 and 2022. Her company, Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre, has been presented by the Northrop Dance Series, New World Symphony, Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Miami Light Project, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Texas A & M University, Duncan Theater, The Annenberg Center, Maui Arts and Cultural Center, Dance Place, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, The Yard at Martha's Vineyard, Alys Stephens Center, Wilson Center at Cape Fear University, The Rialto Center, Gotham Dance at Skirball and Focus Dance at The Joyce as well as by The American Dance Festival at the Joyce NYC in 2016 and 2018.

Rosie Herrera 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 Miami Dance Fellow. She was awarded a Princess Grace Choreographic Fellowship for her work with Ballet Hispanico in 2013 and is a recent 2024 Guggenheim Choreographic Fellow.

### ***About NCCAkron***

The National Center for Choreography-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).

A discrete organization of its own, separate from The University of Akron but with offices based there, the establishment and general operation of NCCAkron are made possible by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

### ***About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation***

We are social investors who support a more effective democracy by funding free expression and journalism, arts and culture in community, research in areas of media and democracy, and in the success of American cities and towns where the Knight brothers once published newspapers. Learn more at [kf.org](http://kf.org) and follow @knightfdn on social media.

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