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**NCCAkrON and The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts  
Administration Announce the Second Phase of Ideas in Motion:  
Community Commissioning Residency**



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AKRON, Ohio — **The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron** (NCCAkrON) and **The University of Akron School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration** (DTAA) are proud to announce a new annual **Community Commissioning Residency**, the second phase of **Ideas in Motion**. This year's Community Commissioning Residency artist is **Cara Hagan**, who was selected for her choreographic research involving working in film, social justice activism, and community engagement.

**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 initiative kicked off this past spring with a capsule series of classes called "21st Century Dance Practices" inside the Intermediate/Advanced Modern technique course. Over the course of a 15-week semester spring 2020, the class was visited by 9 working dance artists from 5 cities from all over the world. To continue this work of engaging students and the greater community with a contemporary leading dance artist, NCCAkrON initiated the Community Commissioning Residency as an annual fall phase of Ideas in Motion.

While it is typical for NCCAkrON to host artists in Akron for their residency, the pandemic shifted the needs and limitations of hosting an artist on the ground. With this in mind, the vision of the Community Commissioning Residency evolved into a satellite residency. This transformation led

to innovative search for artists whose choreographic research involves working in film to safely reach audiences while still serving the creative community.

Artists were invited to apply to the Community Commissioning Residency through a nomination process by The University of Akron faculty members. The selection process involved a committee consisting of The University of Akron faculty members and a team member of NCCAkron to review applications and select the residency artist. Cara Hagan was selected as the Community Commissioning Residency artist for her extensive practice and knowledge of dance on film and her evident excitement to engage The University of Akron dance students through a community driven process.

"It has been a dream of mine to work with the National Center for Choreography since it opened its doors in 2015. As an artist-scholar-activist, I am thrilled to be able to employ all parts of my identity to work with students and faculty, and artists and community members across the country as part of my project. In these strange times, artists are having to reorient our practices and devise new ways of making our work. NCCAkron is supportive of that and I am excited to be afforded the bandwidth to experiment and to participate in shaping how our field moves forward in light of global crisis. I feel like I am being gifted an opportunity to reimagine my practice and to retool. I feel shiny and new," says Cara Hagan, interdisciplinary artist and social justice activist.

Hagan visited NCCAkron in July 2018 as part of Dancing Lab: Screendance with The San Francisco Dance Film Festival. As part of the Community Commissioning Residency program, Hagan will guest teach dance classes including Choreography I this fall 2020 at The University of Akron. The dance course is led by **Christine Howe**, Assistant Lecturer of Dance at DTAA.

"It is such an amazing opportunity for the students to be able to have an extended screen dance residency with Cara. The influx of new ideas and new perspectives rejuvenates our curriculum and brings a current look into the dance field," says Howe. "As an instructor, this experience is also a great way to broaden my own pedagogical scope and be inspired. I can't wait to see what Cara and the students will create!"

With the commissioning component the intent is a continuation of the artistic surrogacy work Hagan has been doing since 2017, which engages artists in long-distance collaborative work. Through the spring 2021, Hagan will create an intentional community through the production of new screendance pieces.

An ongoing series of public events hosted by NCCAkron and community partners will unfold during Hagan's residency. This includes a panel discussion on **Wednesday, October 7 at 5:30 PM** about creating dance for the screen. The discussion is in partnership with **GroundWorks DanceTheater** and will be moderated by NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Christy Bolingbroke with choreographers: Cara Hagan, Mike Esperanza, Antonio Brown and David Shimotakahara. Visit [nccakron.org](http://nccakron.org) for a full listing of public 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).

### **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 Theatre Arts Program offers a B.A. with four tracks, including applied theatre and social entrepreneurship. 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 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 Biography**

**Cara Hagan** (Boone, North Carolina)

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 spring/summer 2020. 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 Film Fest in 2019. Hagan serves on the dance studies faculty at Appalachian State University, as well as serving as 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](http://carahagan.net)