

# KARA JENELLE WADE

336.437.4479 | Los Angeles, CA | karajenelle@gmail.com | www.karajenelle.com

## CAREER OBJECTIVE

My mission as an educator and dance artist is to inspire and empower students through dynamic, culturally rich dance education that bridges tradition and innovation. With expertise in dance forms of the African diaspora, street dance, choreography, and interdisciplinary teaching methods, I aim to cultivate an inclusive and transformative learning environment. My goal is to contribute to the academic and artistic excellence of a forward-thinking institution, fostering creative expression, critical inquiry, and global cultural awareness in the next generation of artists and scholars.

## EDUCATION

<b>M.F.A. in Choreographic Inquiry, University of California Los Angeles</b>	<b>2021</b>
Department of World Arts & Cultures/Dance	Los Angeles, CA
<i>Capstone Title: "ÌYÁguration", Committee Chair: David Roussève</i>	
Graduate Commencement Speaker, Teaching Assistant & Graduate Student Researcher for Dan Froot	
<b>B.A. in Dance, University of North Carolina at Greensboro</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minor in African American Studies	Greensboro, NC
<b>Greater Greensboro Consortium Program, North Carolina A&amp;T</b>	<b>2009</b>
Liberal Arts with a Concentration in Dance	Greensboro, NC
<b>Study Abroad, University of Cape Town, South Africa</b>	<b>2007</b>
Dance & Sociology	Cape Town, South Africa

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### ACADEMIA:

<b>Elon University, Winter Term Guest Lecturer</b>	<i>upcoming Winter 2025</i>
2025 Spring Concert contributing choreographer	Elon, NC
<b>University of Akron, Guest Lecturer</b>	<i>upcoming Spring 2025</i>
21st Century Dance Practices	Akron, OH
<b>California State Fullerton, Guest Lecturer</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>
Artist Preparation for Commercial Dance Industry	Fullerton, CA
<b>New York University, Summer Intensive Faculty</b>	<b>Summer 2024</b>
Tisch School of the Arts & Ladies of Hip Hop	New York City, NY
<b>California State Los Angeles, Guest Lecturer</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>
P.S. Arts Curriculum Development & Teaching Certificate	Los Angeles, CA

**STEM From Dance** **Spring 2021 & Fall 2023**

Guest Artist workshop & choreographer incorporating STEM & Dance Brooklyn, NY

**Elon University, Visiting Guest Artist** **Spring 2023**

African Contemporary Lecturer Elon, NC

**Florida State University** **Fall 2021**

Guest panelist for MFA Dance Dept lecturers *virtual* Tallahassee, FL

**UCLA, Teaching Assistant & Graduate Student Researcher** **2019 - 2021**

VAPA courses, School of The Arts & Architecture + Dept Chair, Dan Froot Los Angeles, CA  
Assisted professors with lesson preparation and curriculum implementation while providing guidance and mentorship during office hours, review sessions, or one-on-one meetings. Served on recruitment panels for undergraduate applicants and offered constructive feedback through assignment and assessments.

**P.S. Arts, Dance Teaching Residency & Arts Integration** **2015 - 2019**

Inglewood Unified School District Los Angeles County  
Designed VAPA based dance curricula tailored to the residency's goals while catering to the needs of the students at K-6th grade levels. Incorporated elements of creativity, cultural diversity, and collaboration into lesson plans. Provided differentiated instruction to accommodate varying skill levels and learning styles while upholding the organization's mission to inspire and empower students through the arts.

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Guest Artist in Residence** **Spring 2018**

African Contemporary Lecturer Greensboro, NC

**Coppin State University, Delta Chi Xi & Guest Artist** **Spring 2014**

Delta Chapter Charter & Contemporary Lecturer Baltimore, MD

**University of Maryland, Delta Chi Xi & Guest Artist** **Spring 2012**

Gamma Chapter Charter & Caribbean Dance Lecturer College Park, MD

**Morehead State University, Delta Chi Xi & Guest Artist** **Fall 2011**

Beta Chapter Charter & Hip Hop Dance Lecturer Morehead, KY

**INTERNATIONAL & CULTURAL EXCHANGE:**

**Meridian International Center of Diplomatic Engagement, Faculty** **2024**

Next Level 10.0 U.S. Department of State Cultural Exchange Program Limon, Costa Rica

Through hip hop music and dance, Next Level fosters cross-cultural creative expression and exchange in diverse and underserved communities. The program promotes understanding and conflict resolution among local communities while supporting the professional development of local artists. Next Level brings people together and encourages greater understanding through the universality of music and dance as a form of self-expression.

**Orisha House Dance, Attendee & Teaching Artist** **2024**

Festival designed for the Cuban community to further develop local artistry. Havana, Cuba

**Taiwan All Stars Teaching Residency, Featured Artist** **2019**  
 Week long intensive to share African diasporic forms of dance. Taipei, Taiwan

**Afreeka Best Dance Camp, Faculty** **2016 - 2019**  
 Masterclasses, battles and lectures of Afro-street dance. Barcelona, Spain & Paris, France

**Global Dance Centre, Faculty** **2015 - 2019**  
 Afro-dance classes & industry preparation for commercial dance. Amsterdam & Rotterdam, NL

**Afro-Dance Holiday, Attendee & USA Faculty** **2018**  
 Cultural exchange of Afro-street dance & professional performers. Lagos, Nigeria

### **CONFERENCES & FESTIVALS:**

**Orisha House Dance Festival** **2024**  
 Dance Faculty with Ladies of Hip Hop Havana, Cuba

**Ladies of Hip Hop Dance Festival** **2016 - 2024**  
 Faculty & Choreography Showcase presenter Los Angeles & New York City

**Pan-African Youth Conference** **2024**  
 Conference Faculty, Afro Dance Oakland, CA

**Diamano Coura Collages des Africaines** **2020 - 2024**  
 Conference Faculty, Afrobeats Oakland, CA

**Indiana Black Expo - Dance Heritage Festival** **2019**  
 Conference Faculty, Afrobeats Indianapolis, IN

**Versa-Style Summer Dance Intensive** **2017 - 2019**  
 Conference Faculty, Afrobeats Los Angeles, CA

### **STUDIO & ORGANIZATION FACULTY**

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**Ladies of Hip Hop Festival & Dance Collective** **2016 - Present**  
 Associate Artistic Director, Faculty & Creative Team New York City, NY  
 Curate performances, teach workshops, and host events that highlight the contributions of women in hip-hop across disciplines such as dance, music, visual arts, and spoken word. Producer for the Black Dancing Bodies project and LOHH residency in Atlanta, hosted by Georgia Tech Arts.

**Movement Lifestyle, Debbie Reynolds Dance Studio & Millennium DC** **2016 - 2021**  
 Dance Faculty - Afrobeats Weekly Class North Hollywood, CA  
 Teaching fundamentals of Afro-Street dance sharing movement, vocabulary & technique from South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Congo, Angola & Ivory Coast in the following genres: Pantsula, Afrobeats, Azonto, Coupé Décalé, Kuduro, Ndombolo. Classes entailed basics of West African djembe dance forms, music and rhythms; along with the connection to Black American dance forms & social dance roots and trends.

## **Dance Place**

**2010 - 2012**

### Internship

Washington, DC

Assisted with drafting contracts, processing payments, managing space rentals, and maintaining class attendance records. Promoted performances and classes, updated the organization's website, maintained press archives, and assisted with the design of email communications. Supported afterschool programs, assisted with class management, and communicated with parents regarding class updates and payments.

## **PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE**

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### **CONCERT DANCE & THEATER:**

#### **Black Dancing Bodies: Speak My Mind - Ladies of Hip Hop National Tour** **2023 - 2024**

Black Dancing Bodies (BDB) is an ongoing street and club dance project addressing the erasure, miscoding, and often intentional exclusion of Black women's work and voices. BDB has embarked on the journey to collect, preserve and tell the stories of these women through dance works, interviews and photo documentation; presented from stage to the streets.

#### **AFRONation Portugal - Musical Festival in Portimão, Portugal** **2019**

Assistant choreographer on the creative director team of Zin-Arts agency and performer for the following artists: Tiwa Savage, Davido, Jidenna, Rayvanny, Teni, Burna Boy, Adekunle Gold, Afro B, and Vanessa Mdee. Developed choreography, blocking and stage direction for a cast of 23 dancers and audience of 22,000 attendees.

#### **The Migration : Reflections of Jacob Lawrence - Step Afrika! Off-Broadway tour** **2017-18**

Step Afrika!'s signature work The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence is based on Lawrence's iconic painting series that chart the story of African Americans moving from the South to the North in the early 1900s. Each piece uses the images, color palette, and motifs in the painting series to tell this astonishing story through pulsating rhythms and visually stunning movement.

#### **Ms. Lauryn Hill - Kings Theater Brooklyn, NY & National Tour** **2016**

Residency for performance "TIDAL x Diaspora Calling" featuring a line-up of Hip Hop, Caribbean & African emcees & vocal artists. This work was presented as a live concert, streamed on TIDAL network. My contributions as a dancer assisted the choreography team and lead, Shakira Marshall by fusing djembe dance forms with the current repertoire to showcase the pan-African movement across the diaspora and catalog of music by Ms. Lauryn Hill.

#### **STEP AFRIKA! National Tour** **2011 - 2014**

Dance artist performing for Step Afrika!'s collegiate and theater tour shows across the United States and Canada. Series of education workshops taught across the DC, Maryland & Virginia areas. Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities; traditional African dances; and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience.

#### **Fantasia National Tour** **2012**

Dance performer & team captain for Fantasia Barrino's live performances including AFRAM Festivals, Baltimore, MD, across North Carolina, Washington DC, and Detroit, MI.

## FILM & TELEVISION/INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE CREDITS:

Industry representation includes: MSA Agency, Go2Talent, Bloc Agency & DanceOn Network

<b>RedBull</b> Dance Your Style USA vs Africa ( <i>battle</i> )	<b>2024</b>
“ <b>Coming 2 America</b> ” ( <i>film</i> )	<b>2021</b>
<b>Ellen</b> Juneteenth episode special ( <i>tv show</i> )	<b>2021</b>
<b>Essence HBCU Graduation</b> ( <i>virtual commencement ceremony</i> )	<b>2020</b>
<b>Beyoncé’s</b> “Black Is King”: “Mood For Eva” & “Ja Ara E” ( <i>music videos</i> )	<b>2020</b>
<b>NBC’s The Voice ft. Black Eyed Peas</b> ( <i>asst. choreographer</i> )	<b>2019</b>
<b>Nike Commercial</b> ( <i>choreographer &amp; principal actor</i> )	<b>2019</b>
<b>Yemi Alade</b> “Issa Vibe” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2019</b>
<b>Khalid</b> “Right Back” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2019</b>
<b>Black Eyed Peas</b> “Explosion” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2019</b>
<b>Janet Jackson ft. Daddy Yankee</b> “Made for Now” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2018</b>
<b>Daddy Yankee</b> “Dura” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2018</b>
<b>Wiz Kid</b> “Like This” ( <i>choreographer, music video</i> )	<b>2016</b>
<b>Jidenna</b> BET Awards ( <i>award show</i> )	<b>2016</b>
<b>Ms. Lauryn Hill</b> BET’s Black Girls Rock ( <i>award show</i> )	<b>2016</b>
<b>Bomba Esterèo ft. Will Smith</b> “Fiesta” & Latin Grammys ( <i>music video &amp; award show</i> )	<b>2016</b>
<b>DJ Snake ft. Lil Jon</b> “Turn Down For What” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2014</b>
<b>Pharrell Williams</b> “Happy” ( <i>music video</i> )	<b>2014</b>

## CHOREOGRAPHY

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**STAGE:** Black Dancing Bodies “If I Could Speak My Mind” solo, Jaunt de Vibes - LOHH Showcase @ Ailey Citigroup Theatre, AfroNation Portugal, Ankara Festival, UpFront Summit - Pasadena Rose Bowl, The Migration: Reflections of Jacob Lawrence - Act 1 solo Off-Broadway.

**FILM & TELEVISION:** Move to Vaccinate - Contra Tiempo, “To Be of Use” - Motionpoems by MIKAMIL Entertainment, Nike Commercial, NBC’s The Voice Season Finale- Black Eyed Peas, Bomba Esterèo ft. Will Smith “Fiesta”, Wiz Kid “Like This”, Pharrell Williams “Happy”, Advil Commercial.

**DIGITAL CONTENT:** Creative Director & Choreographer for 18+ Dance Shorts via YouTube rendering 19.6 million views on personal artist channel, Kara Jenelle.

## FILM FESTIVALS & PRODUCTIONS

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**ÌYÁguration, by Kara Jenelle** the inaugural work celebrating the Black woman. **2021 - 2023**  
*Writer, Director, Choreographer, Performer*

‘ÌYÁguration’ is a dance film celebrating the history, resilience, joy and sisterhood among Black women throughout the diaspora. Utilizing storytelling, song, rhythms, and movement, this piece encompasses traditional elements connecting black women across nations and generations. Honoring the Yoruba language, I acknowledge IYA as "great mother" and the linguistic reference of inauguration as women of color continue to be uplifted into positions of power. I birthed this work within this era of historical firsts, social justice movements and a call for dismantling oppressive systems within a realm of pandemics.

<b>92 NY Harkness Dance Center Film Festival, Black Lives Rising</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Liberation Film Festival - SoCal Grantmakers</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Queensborough Community College Black History Special</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Washington Performing Arts MARS Virtual Festival</b>	<b>2021</b>
Produced and taught a series of Afro-dance workshops and choreography showcase performance for the Washington Performing Arts Virtual Festival.	
<b>Dare to Dance Film Festival Winner “Hell You Talmbout”</b>	<b>2018</b>
Co-choreographer & performer	
Dance film calling out the injustices of innocent Black lives that have been murdered by the hands of police brutality. Encouraging others to Say Their Names and to continue the fight for justice on their behalf. Concept choreographed to musical track by Wondaland Records.	

## **CONFERENCES**

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Dia de Changó	<b>2024</b>
Association of Performing Art Professionals - Moderator for Works & Process	<b>2024</b>
Unity Summit - Convening Toward Liberation	<b>2024</b>
International Association of Blacks in Dance	<b>2024</b>
National Center of Choreography - Learning Journey	<b>2024</b>
Movin’ Legacy - The Gathering	<b>2024</b>
Atlanta African Dance Conference	<b>2024</b>
Dancers Unlimited - Honolulu, Hawaii	<b>2024</b>
Kaloum African Dance Conference	<b>2023</b>
Wontanara African Dance Festival	<b>2021 - 2023</b>
Diamano Coura Collage des Africaines	<b>2018 - 2024</b>
AfroTech Annual Conference	<b>2021 - 2023</b>
Black Enterprise - Disruptor Conference	<b>2022</b>
ACCelerate Creativity & Innovation Festival @ Smithsonian	<b>2022</b>
National Dance Education Organization	<b>2021</b>
Professional Fraternity Association	<b>2019</b>
Afro Dance Holiday	<b>2018</b>
DanCe fluX Annual Conference by Delta Chi Xi	<b>2015 - 2018</b>
Maimouna Keita African Dance Festival	<b>2008 - 2016</b>
Dance Africa DC	<b>2008 - 2015</b>
Kankouran African Dance Festival	<b>2009 - 2014</b>
American Dance Festival	<b>2008 - 2010</b>

## RESEARCH & RESIDENCIES

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**Melanin Rich Projects**, Kaliba Jah Creative Collective **2024**  
*Creative Director & Choreographer* Los Angeles, CA  
Developing a series of choreographies with the research of literature from the “Banned Book List” and interviews rooted in the history of major cities, familial connections and musical scores to combat the erasure of Black contributions to American infrastructure.

**Around the Way Gurl** by Cheri Stokes, Hi-Arts NYC & Brooklyn Xchange **2024**  
*Performing Artist & Research Collaborator* New York City, NY  
“Around the Way Girl” (working title) uses Block Party dance vernacular as a movement investigation to study the women of Bed-Stuy, celebrating and highlighting their cultural significance to the community of Brooklyn and Hip-Hop culture (during the 1980’s and 1990’s). Using auto-ethnography to inspire movement and text, this work will examine the ways in which the duality of femininity and masculinity, intergenerational movement aesthetics, innate movement patterns, generational and community values, and Hip-Hop culture have all influenced my identity and the women from my community during that era. The BAX and Hi-Arts artist in residences will be used for research, process and continued choreographic development of “Around the Way Girl...” including ensemble and solo work, the use of projections (video interviews), and a live DJ.

**“Speak My Mind” Black Dancing Bodies** by Michele Byrd-McPhee, LOHH **2024**  
*Performing Collaborator & Associate Artistic Director* National Tour  
Supported by Works & Process, this project was created to capture the beauty and power of Black female street dancers. The exposure for Black bodies in dance is a very exclusive lens that overwhelmingly focuses on Black dancers that perform eurocentric dance aesthetics (modern, contemporary and Ballet, etc..). Black women in Hip-Hop dance don't often get covers of dance magazines. While often undervalued and rarely celebrated, Black women have been holding this country down since its formation and continue to lead across industries often with less visibility than their white counterparts, and with little to no accolades. So, when Black women are invited or featured with their white counterparts; it is overwhelming through the white lens.

*Works & Process, Georgia Tech Arts, Bethany Arts, Kennedy Center Office Hours, Sozo Mgmt.*

**Black Body Amnesia** by jaamil olowale kosoko, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute **2022**  
*Production Assistant & Virtual Doula* Troy, NY  
Blending poetry and memoir, conversation and performance theory, Black Body Amnesia: Poems and Other Speech Acts enlivens a personal archive of visual and verbal offerings written and organized by jaamil olowale kosoko. Inspired by Audre Lorde’s concept of biomythography, kosoko mixes personal history, biography, and mythology to tell a complex narrative rooted within a queer, Black, self-defined imagination. This collection of intertextual performance acts captures the ephemeral data of kosoko’s live performances. Developed out of their ongoing, multi-media live art project, American Chameleon, and elaborating on the artist’s unique practice of Socio-Choreological Mapping as a means to explore queer theories of the body and its "hydraulics of grief," this book offers critical-creative frames to consider the fluid identities and life-worlds embedded inside contemporary Black America.

## **ARTS ADMINISTRATION**

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### **National Center for Choreography Akron - Creative Administrative Research 2023 - 2025**

The Creative Administration Research (CAR) program is intentionally designed to build a bridge between 20th century working knowledge and the 21st century dance ecosystem. The CAR program supports U.S. dance artists and challenges the field to think beyond the boundaries of known, traditional models and “best practices.” Since 2020, the program has initiated six cohorts for a total of 22 Artist Teams from across the U.S.

### **Georgia Tech Arts, Atlanta GA 2021 - 2024**

Engagement Coordinator & Interim Assistant Director for Producing & Residency. Expert in arts programming, cross-departmental collaboration, and community engagement, with a proven track record in implementing strategic plans, curating interdisciplinary initiatives, and hosting impactful events that integrate the arts, technology, and DEI principles.

### **Delta Chi Xi Honorary Dance Fraternity, Inc. Founder & 1st National President 2010 - 2016**

Founded & incorporated DCX as a non-profit organization to highlight the academic excellence, talent and communal service for dance majors & minors across collegiate campuses. Chartered 8 chapters and hosted annual DanCe fluX conference and benefit showcase at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center on the University of Maryland’s campus.

## **HONORS, AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS**

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National Center for Choreography Akron - Creative Administration Research Cohort	<b>2023-25</b>
The Creatives Project Artist in Residency	<b>2023-24</b>
National Black Arts Festival - Artist Project Grant	<b>2022</b>
UCLA Newsroom & Daily Bruin Article & Artist Feature	<b>2021</b>
Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute	<b>2021</b>
James A. Doolittle Scholarship	<b>2020</b>
UCLA’s Graduate Opportunity Fellowship	<b>2019-21</b>
Senate Certificate of Recognition	<b>2018</b>
Karen Lux Scholarship	<b>2009-10</b>
Cheney Dance Scholarship	<b>2008-09</b>
Weaver Travel Grant	<b>2007-08</b>

## **PHILANTHROPY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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Black Dance Changemakers Josephine Baker Cohort	<b>2024 - Present</b>
UCLA Black Alumni Network	<b>2021 - Present</b>
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc - Inglewood & Decatur Alumnae Chapter	<b>2019 - Present</b>
World Hope Academy - Nairobi, Kenya	<b>2011-15</b>
Global Health Outreach - El Salvador	<b>2010</b>
The PeaceJam Foundation - South Africa	<b>2007-08</b>