

Sarah Ashkin

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EDUCATION

University of California Davis, Davis, CA

2020 Cohort PhD Student in Performance Studies

University of Roehampton, London, UK (January 2018)

Master of Arts: Dance, Politics, and Sociology GPA: 4.0/4.0

Received the Excellence in a Dissertation Award for *My Dancing Whiteness: Tarrying with the White Supremacy of British Dance Studies*

Faculty: Avanthi Meduri, Stacy Prickett, Andree Grau, Sara Houston, Cristina Rosa, Erica Stanton, Anna Pakes with mentorship from Simon Ellis

Wesleyan University Middletown, CT (May 2011)

Bachelor of Arts; Major: Dance, Certificate in Environmental Studies GPA: 3.7/4.0

Received High Honors for Undergraduate Thesis *Full Body Free Body: Somatic Cultural Praxis in U.S. Dance Forms*

Faculty: Pedro Alejandro, Nicole Stanton, Katja Kolcio, Susan Laurie, Rachel Boggia, Hari Krishna, Idi Sakka, Eiko Otake

artEquity Facilitator Training, Atlanta, GA, (2019)

An 8 day training in delivering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion trainings in the arts sector.

Arts For LA ACTIVATE Arts Advocacy Leadership Fellowship, Los Angeles, CA (2018)

A year long leadership training in effective arts advocacy in Los Angeles public schools.

Urban Bush Women Summer Leadership Institute:

Confronting Internalized Racism within the Dance Community (Summer 2017)

A two week institute lead by the company members of Urban Bush Woman addressing issues of racism through theoretical trainings, movement, and performance making.

Candoco Dance Company Teacher Training: Working With Students with a Disability, London, UK (February 2017)

Equity in Action: Santa Fe Art Institute (Spring 2016)

A 6 week inter arts organizational training on better serving Immigrant communities.

Empowering Creativity through Movement, Metaphor and Dance Kentfield, CA (Summer 2010)

A ten-day intensive in the Life/Art Process with Anna Halprin at the Tamalpa Institute

Embodiment in Education Course Berkeley, CA (Summer 2010)

Teacher training in Experiential Anatomy for Teens taught by Susan Bauer of the Moving On Center.

Headlong Performance Institute Philadelphia, PA (Fall 2009)

Studied hybrid Theater and Dance Performance with faculty of the Headlong Dance Theater and Pig Iron Theater Company. Received training in Lecoq Clown and Neutral Mask, Comedia Del Arte, Dramaturgy, Improvisational Dance, Strategic Planning for Artists, and Creative Process.

Faculty: Andrew Simonet, David Brick, Amy Smith, Quinn Bauriedel, Emmanuele Dellpech, Aaron Cromie, Mark Lord

Intensive Instruction/Master Classes:

Juliette Mapp (Wesleyan, 2007), Jennifer Monson (MELT 2008), Irene Dowd (MELT 2008), Anne Carlson (Wesleyan 2008), KJ Holmes (Wesleyan 2008, Earthdance 2010, MELT 2014), Robert Battle (Wesleyan 2008), Doug Varone (2008), Ishmael Houston-Jones (Headlong Performance Institute 2009) Jumatatu Poe (Headlong Performance Institute 2009) Liz Lerman (Wesleyan 2009), Jowlae Willa Jo Zollar (Wesleyan 2010), Body Cartography (Earthdance 2010), Margit Galanter

(Earthdance 2010), Andrea Olson (Wesleyan 2010), Kyle Abraham (Wesleyan 2010), Jeanine Durning (Wesleyan 2010, DNA/NYC 2013), Reggie Wilson (Wesleyan 2008, 2011), Mary Armentrout (CounterPULSE 2011), Jess Curtis (CounterPULSE 2011), Neil Greenberg (MELT 2014), Meredith Monk (New Mexico School for the Arts 2014), Sherwood Chen (London, 2017).

RESEARCH AND WRITING

Making Visible: Understanding White Supremacy in Dance Studies (2019)

Manuscript currently under review for Journal of Dance Education, Race and Dance Education Special Issue, 23 Pages, This paper uses critical whiteness theory and postcolonial dance scholarship to provide a framework for understanding whiteness as foundational to the field of dance education.

My Dancing Whiteness: Tarrying with the White Supremacy of British Dance Studies (2017)

University of Roehampton MA Dissertation in Dance, Politics, and Sociology, 75 Pages

Dance Studies, as a field of western higher education, suffers from what Black Feminist Australian scholar Sara Ahmed calls, 'ubiquitous whiteness' (Ahmed, 2012). Choosing British Dance Studies as a case study, this dissertation addresses the ways in which the methodology, curriculum, faculty demographics, and culture of university dance departments serve the white supremacist project through historical and present day practices of racist knowledge production.

The Proscenium Theater as a White Space: Phenomenologies and Architectures of Exclusion. (2017)

University of Roehampton Centre for Dance Studies, 12 Pages

This paper explores the ways in which the proscenium theater has been experientially and architecturally as a device for racial exclusion.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Founder/Co-Director /Curator/Dancer for GROUND SERIES (2012-Present)

GROUND SERIES is collaborative site-specific/multimedia/inquiry-based ensemble using performance as political intervention. Each GROUND SERIES production is rooted in ensemble collaboration, interdisciplinarity, inquiry-based content, and site-specific dance making. GROUND SERIES understands the gathering of an audience as an opportunity to build connection, stir dialogue, and make space for self-reflection.

experiments with land and dance

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Presented by Buckwheat Space, Morongo Valley, CA (Fall 2019)

A social practice focused sharing of a weeklong residency in the desert terrain of Buckwheat Space exploring light, water, touch, and resonance.

Our Bodies Warm in the Sun, Unsettled

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Presented by Mountain House, Chantry Flat, Arcadia, CA (Winter 2018), Clair Trevor School of Art and Design, UC Irvine (Spring 2019), and Ring Mountain Open Space Preserve (Fall 2019)

A site-specific duet, *Unsettled* is part nature walk, part dance performance offering a critical reflection on white supremacy in the "great outdoors".

no grounds

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Presented by The PASEO FESTIVAL, Taos, NM (Fall 2018)

no grounds was a durational solo performance which engaged festival goers in interactive contemplation of colonialism, land seizure, and white identity in the Western United States.

task

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION Presented by Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, CA (Summer 2018)
This evening-length dance theater duet confronted white supremacy through dance performance. Using satire, dance improvisation, and voice, *TASK* dealt with the ways in which western concert dance has perpetuated white supremacy throughout its history and present day practices.

listenings

University of Roehampton, London, UK (Winter 2016)
A three hour solo installations in University lobby that asked passersby to listen to poems, films, stories, and news footage from by the Water Protectors Standing Rock Reservation. I wore a large sculptural listening device as I moved slowly through a real time listening and movement practice.

White Ways of Knowing

University of Roehampton, London, UK (Winter 2016)
A twenty minute solo staged for my classmates and professors of the Dance Studies Department, that engaged with our personal and communal complicity in the eurocentric dance curriculum. Throughout the dance theatre performance I exhibited a portrait of each of the white scholars, choreographers, dancers, and critics that made up the 97% of our syllabi.

Dancing In A Hard Place

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION Presented by Center for Contemporary Arts, Santa Fe, NM (Summer 2016)
This full-length ensemble dance theater work set in the gallery drew attention to our wavering connection to self, home, and landscape amid the global climate crisis.

Median Dances/ Dance for Film

A GROUND SERIES Production, Santa Fe, New Mexico (Summer 2015)
Median Dances explores the median as site of heterotopia.

123

A GROUND SERIES Production, Presented by New Mexico School for the Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico (Summer 2015)
An evening length work created by braiding a solo, two duets, three trios and a group work into a weaving of human experience.

Inside/Out Site Specific Performance Series with Students of New Mexico School for the Arts All At Once (2012), Rite of Way (2013), SHED (2014), and blind SPOT (2015).

Cross of the Martyrs Memorial Park; (2012) Santa Fe Railyard (2013); Water History Park and Museum (2014); City of Santa Fe Parking Garage (2015), Santa Fe, NM

Each year in the New Mexico School for the Arts Dance Department I co-choreograph a site- specific performance located in the community with the student dancers. The students study the history of the site, conduct research with site stakeholders, explore the landscape and architecture of the place, and perform their embodied research as a multimedia original production.

model citizen

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, New Mexico Dance Coalition Choreographer's Showcase, Railyard Performance Center, (Summer 2014); Yoga Moves, Santa Fe, NM (Spring 2014); Santa Fe University of Art and Design (Winter 2014)
A dance theater solo set on performer Paolo Speirn exploring themes of communication, fairness, and citizenship.

LUMP TRAFFIC

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Liberty Lands Park Philadelphia, PA (Summer 2013)
A site specific piece created as choreographer in residence with No Face Performance Group focused on the private/ public nature of city parks.

East Coast Bound

A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Temescal Arts Center, Oakland, CA (Winter 2012)

This benefit dance concert consisted of 4 short original works created by GROUND SERIES by co-directors myself, and Brittany Delany.

ORE

Santa Fe River Arroyo, Santa Fe, NM (Fall 2011)

This evening length site-specific piece questioned the value systems placed upon nature and the body.

Dismantle

'92 Theater, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Spring 2011)

In fulfillment of my honors thesis, this work explored the effects of capitalism and mechanicity upon the somatic bodies of women.

Soft Catapult

Davidson Courtyard, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Fall 2010)

In fulfillment of my honors thesis, this site-specific piece depicted the poetics of tension in relation to research of somatics.

PERFORMANCE COLLABORATION

Seeking, Good Trouble Makers, Black Choreographers Festival, Dance Mission Theater, San Francisco, CA (Winter 2018)

Chancy Dancing, Pedro Alejandro Dance and Dancers, A GROUND SERIES PRODUCTION, Railyard Performance Arts Center, Santa Fe NM (Spring 2015)

Across that Divide, Pedro Alejandro Dance and Dancers, New Mexico Dance Coalition Choreographer's Showcase, Railyard Performance Center, Santa Fe NM (Summer 2014),

Federal Dances, Micaela Gardner Projects, Federal Park, Santa Fe, New Mexico (Summer 2014)

Windswept, Pedro Alejandro Dance and Dancers, Bessie Schonberg Studio, Wesleyan University (Winter 2013)

Windswept Dance For Camera, Pedro Alejandro Dance and Dancers; The Foundry, Berkeley, CA (Fall 2013)

Public Horse, Shayna Keller, Judson Memorial Church, New York, NY (Winter 2012)

Fascinating! Her Resilience, Gina Athena Ulysse, Crowell Concert Hall, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Spring 2011)

Weathering, Shayna Keller, Indian Cove Amphitheater, Joshua Tree National Park, CA (Spring 2011)

The Energy which Remains, Katja Kolcio, Ukrainian Cultural Center, New York City, NY (Spring 2008)
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PRESS

Meet Sarah Ashkin, Local Artist Profile Voyage LA, 2019

GROUND SERIES presents their strong work "TASK" at Highways, LA Dance Chronicle, Jeff Slayton, 2018

Confronting White Supremacy: An Interview with Sarah Ashkin and Brittany Delany, Stance on Dance, 2018

Footloose, Santa Fe Reporter, Emmaly Wiederolt, 2016

Customized dance: GROUND SERIES develops works specific to a particular site, Albuquerque Journal , Jackie Jadrnak, 2016

DANCE/MOVEMENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lead Facilitator and Founder, Practice Progress, Addressing White Supremacy through Body Based Learning in schools, the workplace and community. Clients: Sonoma State University (2020) TCU (2020), CalArts (2020)

Master Teacher, Inquiry Based Making and Whiteness in Dance, Undergraduate Courses: Advanced Composition and Introduction to Dance Appreciation, Sonoma State University (2019)

Teaching Artist, Social Practice and Racial Justice, Undergraduate Course: Basics in Social Practice, University of Irvine Claire Trevor School of the Arts (Winter 2019)

Workshop Facilitator, Embodiment and White Supremacy, Alliance of White Anti-Racists Everywhere LA (Fall 2018)

Teaching Artist, Site-Specific Dance Making, Workshop for Professional Dancers and CalArts Students at Navel LA, (Fall 2018)

Guest Lecturer, Tarrying with the White Supremacies of Western Concert Dance, Lecture/Demonstration, Pieter Performance Space (Summer 2018)

TK-8 Dance Program Director and Instructor, Arts In Action Charter School, Los Angeles, CA (2018-Present)
Designed / implemented a K-8 dance curriculum for gang impacted immigrant students based on movement problem solving.

Facilitator, Racial Justice in Dance Studies, University of Roehampton, London, UK (2016-2017).

High School Dance Faculty, New Mexico School for the Arts, Santa Fe New Mexico (Fall 2012-2016)
Site Specific Dance Making, Composition, Senior Projects, Dance as Culture: Dance Forms of the Southwest, Modern III, Dance Conditioning,

Pre K- 6th Grade Dance Teacher, Moving Arts Espanola, NM (Fall 2015-2016) Creative Movement, Pre Ballet, Modern I

Teaching Apprenticeship with Paul Langland: New Mexico School for the Arts, Santa Fe, NM (Fall 2014)
Course Assistant for *Postmodern Forms of Steve Paxton and Meredith Monk*

High School Modern Dancer Teacher, Oakland International High School, Oakland (Fall-Spring 2012-2013)

Preschool Creative Dance Teacher, Neighborhood Preschool, Middletown CT (Spring 2011)
Designed and implemented "Anatomy, Dance, and Fun" for 4 year old beginning dancers.

Course Assistant for Site-Specific Dance Making, Prof. Pedro Alejandro, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Spring 2011)

Course Assistant for Composition I: Solo Making, Prof. Nicole Stanton, Wesleyan University, Middletown CT (Fall 2011)

Course Assistant for Modern III, Prof Rachel Boggia, Wesleyan University (Spring 2010)

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, The Willows Community School, Culver City, CA (2017-2018)

Supported families, students, administrators, and teachers in drafting a mission statement for our school in our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, launched an Equity Read Aloud Program in the elementary school, and mentored middle school students in leading an assembly for their peers on fighting oppression and discrimination.

DK- 5th Grade Multi-Subject Instructor, The Willows Community School, Culver City, CA (2017-2018)

Dance Department Assistant Administrator and Producer, New Mexico School for the Arts, Santa Fe, NM (Fall 2013-2016) Duties included family and staff communications, performance producer, guest artist program coordinator, admissions and recruitment coordinator, college counseling, student well-being advocate, curriculum and assessment development

Co-Facilitator of African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and Allies (AAHANAA) Student Group, NMSA (2015-16) Provided support to students in their planning of school wide assemblies for Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Native American History Month, Asian American History Month, and Combatting Islamophobia in Our Community

Recruiter/ Admissions Assistant NMSA (2013)

Traveled Across New Mexico visiting middle schools and high schools recruiting applicants for arts charter high school. Assisted in admissions administration and event organizing.

Producer, for DNAWORKS' *Hamamah: The Map*, NDI- NM, Santa Fe NM (2013)

Program Coordinator, Emergent Art Space, San Francisco, CA (2012- 2013)

Oversaw communication, program development, artist outreach, and web design updates for digital platform for international student arts: www.emergentartspace.org

Arts Administration Intern, CounterPULSE, San Francisco, CA (2012)

RESIDENCIES

Buckwheat Space, Morongo Valley, CA (2019)

Center for Contemporary Arts, Santa Fe NM (Fall 2015)

No Face Performance Group, Philadelphia, PA (Summer 2013)

The Foundry, Berkeley, CA, Fall 2013

Joshua Tree National Park with Shayna Keller Dance (Spring 2011)

Earthdance, SEEDS, Plainfield, MA with Pedro Alejandro Dance and Dancers (Summer 2010)

CONFERENCES

Dancing Around Race, University of Utah, UT, 2020

I will be presenting my performance TASK, which uses dance as a tool for confronting white supremacy, as well as leading a follow up session for conference participants.

DANCE/ USA, Los Angeles, CA 2017

Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts Catalyst Conference Los Angeles, CA 2018

Presented my research on Site Specific Dance Making with High School Students as a form of democratic practice

Confluence: University of Dance and Circus Stockholm, Sweden 2017

Presented my research on Site-Specific Dance Making with High School Students

Allied Media Conference, Detroit 2015

DANCE/USA, Philadelphia 2013

Congress on Research on Dance, Albuquerque 2012