

# ALESSANDRA WILLIAMS

## Education

**Ph.D., Program in Culture and Performance, Department of World Arts and Cultures** 2016  
**Dance, University of California, Los Angeles**

- Dissertation: *Decolonizing Alliances: Afro-Asian Choreographies by David Roussève/REALITY and Ananya Chatterjea/Ananya Dance Theatre*
- Committee chaired by Prof. David Delgado Shorter

**M.A., Program in Culture and Performance, Department of World Arts and Cultures** 2013  
**Dance, University of California, Los Angeles**

**B.A., American Studies major & Dance minor, Macalester College, Saint Paul,** 2007  
**Minnesota**

## Fellowships

- Inclusive Excellence Fellowship, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater 2018-9
- UCLA Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship 2010-14
- Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship 2005-07

## Honors and Awards

- East Side Freedom Library Conference Travel Grant Award 2017
- UCLA Office of Instructional Development Mini Grant Awards 2017
- Society of Dance History Scholars Travel Award 2016
- UCLA Departmental Dissertation Award 2015-16
- UCLA Institute of American Cultures Dr. Shirley Hune Inter-Ethnic/Inter-Racial Studies Award 2015-16
- UCLA Graduate Division Research Travel Grant 2014
- UCLA Center for the Study of Women Travel Grants 2014,2011
- World Arts and Cultures Dance (WACD) Travel/Research Awards 2011-4
- Mellon Mays Predoctoral Research Development Grant 2014
- UCLA Research Library Summer Teaching Institute Fellow 2014
- Mellon Mays Predoctoral Graduate Studies Enhancement Grants 2011-3
- UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Award 2013
- Community Foundation Stanley J. Tarver Memorial Scholarship 2012-3
- UCLA Chancellor's Award 2011-2
- Northwestern University Department of Performance Studies Black Feminist Performance Summer Institute Fellow 2011
- Minnesota Grassroots Solutions Organizer of the Year Award 2010
- Macalester College David Wick Endowed Prize for Choreography 2006
- Macalester Lilly Prize for Summer Internship 2004

## **Research**

- *Meditations on Dream*. Edited by Ananya Chatterjea, Hui Wilcox, and Alessandra Williams. “Decolonizing Feminisms: Anti-Racist and Transnational Praxis Series.” Seattle: University of Washington Press. 2019
- “Choreographing Afro-Asian American Alliances: The Contemporary Indian Dance and African American Theater of *Moreechika: Season of Mirage*.” In *Meditations on Dream*. 2019
- “Listening to Native American Women and Women of Color Artists.” In *Relay Relay: Interview Marathon on Contemporary Performance*. Organized by Emily Gastineau, Rachel Jendrzejewski, and Jeffrey Wells. Funded by MN State Arts Board, Art Works, and National Endowment for the Arts (2018): 87–102. 2018
- “Decolonizing Alliances: The Terms of World Dance in David Roussève/REALITY’s *Saudade*.” In *Talking Black Dance Inside Out/Outside In*, ed. Takiyah Nur Amin and Thomas DeFrantz (Conversations Across the Field of Dance Studies Series XXXVI), 28–33. 2016
- “Mixing Puppetry with Ethnography, Part Two: The ‘Fugitive’ Terms of Contemporary Indian Dance.” *UCLA Center for the Study of Women Newsletter*. 2015
- “Mixing Puppetry with Ethnography at the Ananya Dance Theatre: Field Report.” *UCLA Center for the Study of Women Newsletter*. 2012

## **Papers and Presentations**

### **Scholarship**

- “Afro-Asian Alliances, Social Movements, and Dance: A Case Study of Ananya Dance Theatre,” Mid-America American Studies Association Conference, Iowa City, Iowa 2018
- Presenter, “Improvisation as Radical Dance Pedagogy: The Experimental, Cross-Cultural Practice of Choreographers of Color,” American Studies Conference, Chicago, Illinois 2017
- Presenter, “Narrating History, Practicing Experimentation: Choreographic Transmission in African and Asian American Contexts,” Dance Studies Association Conference, Columbus, Ohio 2017
- Presenter, “Decolonizing Queer of Color Bodies: The Narrative and Dance Technique of David Roussève/REALITY,” American Studies Association Conference, Denver, Colorado 2016
- Presenter, “Allying Against Appropriation: The Contemporary Indian Dance/Jazz Aesthetic of Ananya Dance Theater,” Society of Dance History Scholars, Pomona, California 2016
- Presenter, “Afro-Asian Performance Methods in the Americas,” for the Hemispheric Blackness: Afro-Diasporic Politics & Performance Across the Americas work group, Hemispheric Institute, Santiago, Chile 2016

## A. Williams CV

- Presenter, “Stardust: Dancing Queer Praxis,” for Queer Publics, Queer Praxis [QP^2] Graduate Student Conference, University of Minnesota

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Performing Social Justice: Ananya Dance Theater’s *Horidraa*,” for #Say Her Name: Black Women and Performance course in the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Department of Theater and Dance

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Writing and Performing Autoethnographies,” for Oral Histories in Performance course in the Macalester Department of Theater and Dance

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Critiquing the Possibilities of Resistance in Global Hip-Hop: A Dance Analysis of the Film *Rize*,” for Black History Month Series, East Side Freedom Library, Saint Paul, MN

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Theorizing Embodiment/Feminism,” for Civil Rights and Black Power Movement, 1954–1984 course in the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Department of African American and African Studies

2015
- Guest Speaker, “The Collaborative Aesthetic of Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane Dance Company,” for Arts Encounters course in UCLA Art and Architecture

2015
- Guest Lecturer, “Choreographing Labor: David Roussève’s *The Whispers of Angels*,” for Heteronormative Colonialism course in UCLA Department of Gender Studies

2014
- Guest Lecturer, “Performing and Writing ‘An Exploration of Land, Narrative, and Performance,’” for World Arts/Local Lives course

2013
- Presenter, “An Exploration of Land, Narrative, and Performance,” [the synopsis of the M.A. Thesis] for *Chew On This* Presentation Series in WACD

2012
- Guest Lecturer, “‘Run the World (Girls):’ Performing Neoliberal Theory and Practice,” for Introduction to World Arts and Cultures course

2011
- Presenter, “Why Transnational/Global Feminism?,” for Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Panel, Macalester College

2007
- Presenter, “‘The Black Dancing Body’,” for Annual Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Conference, Oberlin College

2005

**Teaching**

- Guest Lecturer, “African Diasporic Performance Analysis through works by Beyoncé Knowles and Kendrick Lamar,” for Sociology Club, St. Kate’s University

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Dancing Black Feminism,” for the Bodacious Hip Hop Dance Team, Macalester College

2016
- Guest Lecturer, “Close Reading Strategies: Chapter Three of *The Authors of the Impossible*,” for Aliens, Psychics, and Ghosts course, WACD

2014
- Roundtable participant, “Challenging Normative Teaching Paradigms,” for Teaching Assistant Seminar course, WACD

2014

- Roundtable participant, “Strategic Methods for Intersectionality and Positionality in Teaching,” for Teaching Assistant Seminar course 2013
- Roundtable participant, “Teaching Strategies and Best Practices,” for Teaching Assistant Seminar course 2012

### Service

- Moderator and Panelist, “Representing and Resisting Historical Injustices through Art, featuring John Matsunaga, Saymoukda Vongsay, Nikki McComb, and Alessandra Williams,” for East Side Freedom Library’s community event, Saint Paul, MN 2018
- Co-Presenter, “Segmented Communications for Mission and Donor Impact,” for MN Council of Nonprofits Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN 2018
- Roundtable participant, “The Politics of the Pantry: A Book Discussion with Dr. Emily Twarog,” for East Side Freedom Library’s community event, Saint Paul, MN 2016
- Introduction to Keynote Speaker Andrea Jenkins, for Winton Cornerstone Event “Learning to Breathe: Black Feminism, Performative Pedagogies, and Creative Praxis,” University of Minnesota 2016
- Introductory Address, “Bodacious-ness: Envisioning Black Feminism, African Diasporic Performance, and Social Justice through Hip Hop Dance,” for Bodacious Hip Hop Dance Team Showcase, Macalester 2011
- Roundtable participant, “Surviving Graduate School,” for the first year Graduate Student Introduction Series, WACD 2004
- Roundtable participant, “Examining the Souls of Black Folks: The Politics of Identity for Black People,” for *Soup and Substance* Series, Macalester Lealtad-Suzuki Center 2003
- Featured Student Speaker, “Don’t Trip,” for Southwest High School Graduation, Minneapolis, MN

### **Teaching** (all courses taught at UCLA unless indicated otherwise below)

#### **Courses, as Visiting Assistant Professor, Lecturer, Instructor**

- DANC 315 Topics in Dance History: African American Dance & Gender, Visiting Assistant Professor (Carleton College, cross-listed with African American Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies departments) 2017
- WL ARTS 33 Indigenous Worldviews, Lecturer 2017
- AFRO/HIST 3120 Social and Intellectual Movements in the African Diaspora, Co-Instructor with Peter Rachleff (University of Minnesota) 2016
- DANCE 11 Beginning Yoga, Instructor 2015
- WL ARTS 33 Indigenous Worldviews, Instructor 2014
- WL ARTS 33 Indigenous Worldviews, Instructor 2013

**Courses, as Teaching Fellow, Associate, Assistant, or Preceptor**

- ART&ARC 10 Arts Encounters, Meryl Friedman and David Gere 2015
- WL ARTS 51W Aliens, Psychics, and Ghosts, David Shorter 2014
- WL ARTS 24 World Arts/Local Lives, Polly Roberts 2013
- WL ARTS 33 Indigenous Worldviews, David Shorter 2013
- WL ARTS 100B Art as Moral Action, Peter Sellars 2012
- WL ARTS 124 Introduction to Field-Based Research, David Shorter 2012
- WL ARTS 33 Tribal Worldviews, David Shorter 2012
- WL ARTS 1 Introduction to World Arts and Cultures, Rosemary Candelario 2011
- AMST 110 Introduction to African American Studies, Duchess Harris (Macalester) 2005

**Employment**

**Assistant to the Executive Director**, East Side Freedom Library, Saint Paul, MN Present

- Envisioned and coordinated a collaborator program to build volunteer & programming capacity
- Drafted and submitted grant applications in intercultural studies and arts-funding
- Managed media and communications for library events and programming
- Assisted daily visitors in online catalog searches and identifying materials in collections

**Visiting Assistant Professor**, Carleton College 2017

- Cultivated student mentoring through early reviews of written and oral work, holding office hours, and supporting student activities in Black Student Alliance and Fall Dance Concert
- Collaborated with dance program director to facilitate student participation in Ward Lucas Lecture Series in the Arts
- Actively participated in faculty networking through learning and teaching center, faculty retreat, and junior faculty meetings

**Lecturer, Teaching Fellow or Associate**, University of California, Los Angeles 2011–17

- Created course syllabus and managed online course website
- Prepared and executed weekly lesson plans, course lectures, and facilitated class dialogue
- Evaluated student assignments and held regular office hours
- Trained students in peer assessment of oral and written work
- Secured mini-OID grants to fund guest speaker series

**Campaign Coordinator**, HIRE Minnesota Coalition, Minneapolis, MN 2008–10

- Created the initial campaign brochure and other communication materials
- Built community partner and member database, maintained website, and co-crafted e-newsletter
- Organized executive board meetings, planned and administered town halls, marches and protests
- Co-created leadership development curriculum for low-income, people of color in green jobs
- Administered and expanded MnDOT's community-led group on minority hiring equity

**Region Field Organizer**, MN DFL Coordinated Campaign 2008

- Managed North Minneapolis campaign office, coordinated voter outreach and volunteers

**Performances****Choreographic/Creative Research**

- "Listening for Freedom: Remembering 'Watch Night' History through Improvisation Dance and Music," East Side Freedom Library, St. Paul, MN 2017

## A. Williams CV

- “Layers: Black Transnational Bodies,” Macalester Black Liberation Affairs Committee (BLAC) & The Spark Collaborative Showcase, Weyerhaeuser Chapel 2016
- “An Exploration of Land, Narrative, and Performance,” [the solo performance] *Chew On This* Presentation Series in WACD, Kaufman Hall 2012
- “Until the End of Time,” *Quantum Leaps*, Macalester’s Student Dance Concert, Janet Wallace Building 2007
- “Raging Humanity,” *Inverted Force* Macalester Student Concert
- “Amazing Grace,” *Toeing the Line* Macalester Student Concert 2006
- “Who Amongst You Here Today,” Macalester BLAC Showcase, Campus Center 2005
- “A Scintillating Performance,” Macalester *Umoja Show*, Alexander Hill Ballroom 2005
- “Thriving Souls of Survival,” *Peripheral Movement*, Macalester Student Concert 2005
- “Spoken Expression,” Macalester *Diversity Weekend 2004: Race and Leadership* 2004
- “Dance Expression: ‘Get Busy,’” *Diversity Weekend 2004*, Campus Center 2004

**Performances**

- *Shaatranga: Women Weaving Worlds*, Ananya Dance Theatre, O’Shaughnessy, St. Paul, MN 2018
- *Shyamali: Sprouting Words*, Ananya Dance Theater, O’Shaughnessy; Kelly Strayhorn Theater, Pittsburgh, PA; UtahPresents! at University of Utah, Salt Lake City; Association of Performing Arts Professionals, New York City, NY; Maui Arts and Cultural Center, Kahului, HI; Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA; Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia, PA 2017
- *Horidraa: Golden Healing*, Ananya Dance Theater, O’Shaughnessy
- “Stimela,” Fall Dance Concert, Macalester Department of Theater and Dance 2016
- *Dreams of Our Ancestors*, Macalester African Music Ensemble, Mairs Hall 2016
- “Gazillion Strong,” Ananya Dance Theater, Bedlam Lowertown, St. Paul, MN 2016
- *Roktim: Nurture Incarnadine*, Ananya Dance Theater, O’Shaughnessy 2016
- *Mohona: Estuaries of Desire*, Ananya Dance Theater, O’Shaughnessy 2015
- *Moreechika: Season of Mirage*, Ananya Dance Theater, the National Academy for the Performing Arts, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad 2013
- *Moreechika*, Ananya Dance Theater, Southern Theater, Minneapolis, MN 2012
- *Moreechika*, Ananya Dance Theater, Conwell Dance Theater, Philadelphia, PA 2012
- *Disclosure Tactics*, choreographed by Sarah Wilbur, Kaufman Hall, UCLA 2012
- *Ashesh Barsha: Unending Monsoon*, Ananya Dance Theater, Southern 2012
- *Pipaashaa: Extreme Thirst*, Ananya Dance Theater, Southern 2009
- “Special Guest Choreography” by Patience Sewor, *Macalester and University of St. Thomas African Music Ensembles*, Mairs Concert Hall 2007
- “A Sunday Afternoon,” choreographed by Theresa Madaus, Macalester 2004

**Service****University**

- Co-Chair, Professional Development Committee, WACD
- Macalester Hip Hop Dance Team, Founder, President, Choreographer, and Creator of the Executive Board 2011–12  
2004-7
- Co-Chair, Black Liberation Affairs Committee, Macalester
- Facilitator, Black Women of the Diaspora Collective, Macalester 2005–6
- Student Representative, Chaplain Visioning Team 2004–5

**Community**

2004

- Review Panelist, Arts Access Grant Committee, Minnesota State Arts Board
  - Certificate Recipient, Neighborhood Leadership Program, Wilder Foundation
- 2016  
2017–8

**Other Skills**

- Yoga Alliance Certified Instructor (2010-present)

**Professional Memberships**: American Studies Association, Dance Studies Association,  
National Women's Studies Association