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**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHOREOGRAPHY - AKRON ANNOUNCES
DOMINIC MOORE-DUNSON WORK-IN-PROGRESS SHOWING: *INCOPNEGRO***



Left image: Artist Dominic Moore Dunson (Photo by Stephanie Ruth Roston). Right image (L to R): Maya Nicholson, Chris Coles, Kevin Parker Jr., Floco Torres, Dominic Moore-Dunson (Photo by Blaak Media).

AKRON, Ohio (November 16, 2021)—**The National Center for Choreography - Akron (NCCAakron)** announces an open-to-the-public Work-in-Progress Showing of *inCOPnegro* by creative residency artist and choreographer **Dominic Moore-Dunson** (Akron, OH). *inCOPnegro* is both an evening-length dance-theatre performance and podcast, which explores concepts of safety and police relations through storytelling and a community and parenthood lens.

The creation of *inCOPnegro* has been shaped by one-on-one interviews between Moore-Dunson and Akron community stakeholders, police officers, and criminal justice workers, as well as those outside the region. At the Work-in-Progress Showing, attendees will be invited to listen to excerpts of select interviews to offer context for the choreography, music, and spoken word of *inCOPnegro*. Moore-Dunson reflects, “These interviews are first-person accounts of racial injustice and the impact of policing. By listening to them, attendees will have a deeper understanding of the social, cultural and civic dynamics at work, as well as intimate access to the core material of this new performance.”

Work-in-Progress Showing: *inCOPnegro*

Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 7 pm - 8:30 pm ET

Location: Guzzetta Hall, 228 E Buchtel Ave, Akron, OH 44325, studio 194 (Level 1, lower levels)

Free and open to the public, limited seating

RSVP: nccakron.org/event-details/incopnegro

Inspiration for this project came from Moore-Dunson's own life experiences. He explains, "As a 31-year-old Black man, I have been pulled over by police no less than 45 times in my life. Then after the death of George Floyd in 2020, as a father-to-be, I realized for the first time I didn't only have to worry for my own safety, but that of my unborn son. I began reaching across my network asking Black parents, 'How do you teach your kids about the police?', and the overwhelming answer was, 'You just teach them to get home.'"

Highlighting an all-Black cross-disciplinary cast of five artists, *inCOPnegro*, includes artists: **Chris Coles** (composer and musician), **Moore-Dunson** (lead choreographer and dancer), **Maya Nicholson** (playwright and actor), **Kevin Parker Jr.** (assistant choreographer and dancer), and **Floco Torres** (hip hop musician).

Made for audiences of all ages, *inCOPnegro* and the forthcoming companion podcast, *inCOPnegro: Black & Blue*, both aim to peel back the stories of individuals on both sides of "the blue line" while Moore-Dunson, a new Black father, looks to answer the question, "How do we raise our children in a world where their safety is threatened every day?"

As a Creative Residency artist at NCCAkron, Moore-Dunson has leveraged the organization's resources, for example time, funding, and studio space, in the artistic creation process with his fellow artists. **NCCAkron Executive/Artistic Director Christy Bolingbroke** says, "The body is political and therefore the art of dance inherently carries the politics of the body, especially in terms of race and gender. When exploring complicated, unwieldy topics, dance is a powerful tool to employ the body to process these subjects. Dominic's community-centered choreographic research gives added voice and resonance to this incredibly important topic."

As part of the Work-in-Progress Showing, attendees will receive a coupon to try Moore-Dunson's ice cream flavor— **inCONEnegro** —at **Chill Artisan Ice Cream**. NCCAkron artists often contribute new flavors to Chill Artisan Ice Cream as a way to connect artists to the local ecology. inCONEnegro is a chocolate ice cream with

chocolate-covered waffle cone chunks. The ice cream shop is located in Downtown Akron at 209 S Main St, Suite 2, Akron, OH 44308.

The finished work is anticipated to premiere at full scale in Winter/Spring 2023. To learn more about *inCOPnegro* or share a personal story for the forthcoming podcast, visit incopnegro.com.

Phase 1 of Moore-Dunson's Creative Residency at NCCAkron is supported by the Akron Civic Commons and the Akron Community Foundation's Vernon L. Odom Fund. The development of *inCOPnegro* is also supported by a residency at Akron Soul Train.

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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.

The establishment and general operation of NCCAkron is made possible by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

Biography

Dominic Moore-Dunson (Akron, OH)

Dominic Moore-Dunson (he/him/his) has received numerous recognitions including 2019 Cleveland Arts Prize's Emerging Artist Award for Theatre & Dance, a 2019 fellow of The Ann & Weston Hicks Choreography Program at Jacob's Pillow, 2019 Akron Arts Alive! "Outstanding Artists in Dance", and 2019 "New Agent" by MOCA Cleveland, and 2021 Associate Artist at Atlantic Center for the Arts #180 with Doug Varone. Currently, Moore-Dunson is a Research Resident Artist at The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron) and helped launch the Akron Black Artist Guild in Akron, OH earlier this year. dommooredun.com

Chris Coles (Akron, OH)

Christopher J. Coles is a graduate of Cleveland South High School (2004). In 2009 Chris received his Bachelor's Degree in Saxophone Performance from Youngstown State University. It was here that he studied with world-renowned saxophonist and educator Dr. James C. Umble, jazz saxophonist Dr. Kent Englehardt, and jazz bassist

and composer Dr. David Morgan. In 2012, Chris received his Master's Degree in Saxophone Performance from The University of Akron. Chris also played at the North American Saxophone Alliance Regional Festival in West Virginia with the Dana Saxophone quartet. In 2008, The Dana Saxophone Quartet premiered and commissioned work by John Hollenbeck at the Whitney Art Museum Composers Workshop. myspace.com/chriscoles1

Floco Torres (Akron, OH)

Floco (pronounced Flock-o) Torres is a Hip-Hop musician 24 projects deep into his career. He has envisioned and revisioned his creative expression countless times and with this adaptive style, he has gained a steady following for his hip-hop-meets-alternative rock style. A New Jersey native, but current resident of Akron, OH, created the Hip-Hop duo, *Free Black!* in 2018 with producer/drummer HR3. Citing influences such as Kid Cudi, Tame Impala, and St. Vincent, Floco continues to redefine hip-hop with his style through his flows, production & graphic design. nobodycaresnews.com

Kevin Parker Jr. (Cleveland, OH)

Kevin is a graduate of Shaker High School and alumni of the nationally recognized Shaker Ensemble program, where he was awarded the Jeff Young Award. As a MAC scholar, he received the Rashad L. Burnley Award. Kevin trained with the Inlet Trainee & Apprentice Program for 3 years, was promoted to a Company B Member in 2016, and then promoted to Company Member in 2017. Kevin performed with Inlet at Jacob's Pillow as part of the Inside/Out Series and performed one of the lead roles in Inlet's national tour of *What Do You Do With An Idea?* Kevin is also a Licensed Massage Therapist pursuing a Doctorate of Physical Therapy at Cleveland State University.

Maya Nicholson (Akron, OH)

Maya Nicholson is a current company member at The Magical Theatre Company and at The Ohio Shakespeare Theatre Company, where she has written and performed modern and classical plays. In the last few years, she has directed some of her favorite productions: *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*, *Sister Act*, and most recently *Fences*, which was postponed due to COVID-19. She recently completed the touring Kid Scripts educational outreach initiative with The Magical Theatre Company. Currently, she is partnering with The Millennial Theatre Project, co-creating, *Say It Loud!*, a theatre initiative that brings to light systemic challenges on a local level in a creative form. Maya is an activist and organizer that would like to see theatre create change within her community.