

ALANNA MORRIS



MCKNIGHT
ARTIST
FELLOWSHIPS

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Bio

Alanna Morris is a Dancer-Choreographer, Educator, Artist Organizer, and Curator. Morris danced with TU Dance (St. Paul) under Artistic Directors, Toni Pierce-Sands and Uri Sands from 2007–2017. They were featured in works by Kyle Abraham, Gioconda Barbuto, Camille A. Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Gregory Dolbashian, Katrin Hall, Francesca Harper, Dwight Rhoden, and Uri Sands. In 2020, they served as the company's Artistic Associate and are a founding teaching artist at the School at TU Dance Center. In 2018 Alanna was named Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch!" In 2019, Minneapolis' City Pages' *Artist of the Year* and *Best Choreographer* for their solo, "Yam, Potatoe an Fish!" They have received fellowships from the McKnight Foundation for Dance (2015), Choreography (2021) and are 2022 Springboard Danse Montreal Fellow.

Morris is the Artistic Director of I.A.M. Arts, founded in 2017 to produce collaborative solo dance works and global commissions that uplift and inspire our humanity; educational programs that utilize the creative arts as a tool for self-development; and community-development initiatives that assist mid-career women Creatives with spiritual, professional, and economic resources to thrive.

Morris is currently touring *Let The Crows Come* with Ashwini Ramaswamy and Collaborators; and will premiere *Invisible Cities* (choreography for ensemble and performer), also directed by Ashwini Ramaswamy,

co-presented by the Great Northern Festival, Northrop and the Cowles Center for Dance in January 2023.

Alanna is a Visiting Professor of Dance at Carleton College and a graduate of the Juilliard School and LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and the Performing Arts (NYC). She was recently co-curator of the Walker Art Center's 50th Anniversary of *Choreographer's Evening* in Minneapolis.

iamartss.com

What are you working on in the next two years?

Alanna Morris is currently developing a multi-year, collaborative solo performance art project, ***Black Light_mysteries and manifestations of the creative life force***, which explores the nobility of black-ness and the eternal validity of the soul (Seth) from an anthropological, mythio-scientific and metaphorical framework. Its last public presentation as a research performance was featured in The Great Northern Festival, co-presented by the Cowles Center for Dance and Northrop in February 2022. The project would best be supported in an extended (1-3 year) university residency context. Morris would gain from research from departments of Africana Religions, Comparative Religions, Philosophy, Psychology departments, Gender Studies, as well as Cultural Studies from

an Caribbean Diasporic context. Black Light is simultaneously performance art project, methodology and praxis. Therefore, an opportunity where teaching, creating, embodied and scholastic research, as well as presentation would be ideal.

Collaborator-Performers: 4 dancers, 2 theater artists, 2 singers, 2 drummers

Tech needs: This project has been presented in phases on a proscenium stage, including cyc, wings, theatrical lighting, snow cradle, and sound amplification. Also interested in presentations in the round, as well as in outdoor/natural settings.

Repertoire Available for Development

Black Light is Morris' current research. To aid its development they will, over the next two-five years, bring on [Adesola Osakalumi](#) (Fela! On Broadway/Skeleton Crew) as Director, [Jamie J Philbert](#) (Bois Academy of Trinidad and Tobago, Art on Purpose) as Creative Consultant, and study deeply with an array of Master Teachers of traditional /sacred dances from Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba and Haiti: Patriann Edwards (multidisciplinary performing artist, dance educator & independent cultural researcher from Trinidad and Tobago); [Yesenia Selier](#) (Afro Cuban/Orisha dance and Caribbean histories and Caribbean futures); [Afoutayi Haitian Dance, Music and Arts Co.](#) (Haitian folk dances, songs, history and culture). Present collaborators also include: [Vie Boheme](#) (voice, theater and movement artist); Adam Barruch (physical theater artist); Demetrius McClendon (healer, activist, Black feminist scholar); Andréa Potter (Afro Cuban/Orisha dancer and Capoeirista); Gabrielle Abram (street styles dance artist); Paige Oyaleke Reynolds (theater artist and activist); Ashembaga Jaafaru (theater artist and dramaturg); and Baba Louis Alemayehu (poet and climate change activist).

Additionally, Alanna participates in the first cohort of The Imperial Corps Agoodjié of the African Diaspora in the Republic of Benin in February 2022 as a guest of Her Royal Majesty the Kpodjito Queen Mother Sêmévo, 1st of Bénin Republic (the first Queen Mother of the African Diaspora on the African continent). The travel/study traces the path of the divine women warrior hood from pre-colonial Kingdom of Dahomey and includes hand to hand combat training, nutritional and spiritual support, as well as cultural and historical site visits. In July 2023 Morris travels to Oyo, Nigeria as a guest of the Orisaworld Foundation to participate in cultural immersion in the practices and language of the Yorùbá and initiation to the indigenous religion that comprises a great archive of the world's scientific, philosophical and linguistic wisdom located in Western Africa.

