

# Melanie Anastacia Van Allen

Dance Scholar | Choreographer | Dancer | Teaching Artist

New York, New York

mel.anastacia@gmail.com · www.melanastaciadance.com

**Melanie Anastacia Van Allen** (Ph.D. M.A. M.F.A.) is a New York City-based choreographer, dancer, teaching artist, and emerging scholar of dance. Melanie holds a Ph.D. in Dance Studies from Texas Woman's University. She also holds a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies from the Draper Program of Social Thought at New York University and a Master of Arts in Performance Studies from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. She also holds a Master of Fine Arts in Dance Choreography/Performance from the University of Michigan. Melanie's scholarly and artistic work investigates the intersections between the practical and theoretical, with an interest in performance studies, dance ethnography, Detroit's electronic music and dance culture, and interdisciplinary methodologies of research and performance. Most recently, she has presented her research at various academic conferences and artistic events in Chicago, Hawaii, London, and Bolivia.

Melanie's choreography has been presented internationally at Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) in Orizaba, Mexico, Centro Artistico Pereyra with members of *Ballet Oficial de Bolivia* and the professional Modern company *ARTEMOVIDA*, La Paz, Bolivia, the Linea Classica Dance Festival, La Paz, Bolivia, and the International Dance Carnival, Berlin, Germany. In the United States, Melanie presented work at YAGP, in Chicago, Detroit, The University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Ohio State University, Michigan State University, The National Dance Education Organization Conference, The Charles Wright African American Museum, The Michigan Youth Arts Festival, Savannah Arts Academy, and Wayne State University's Annual Umbrella Concerts. Melanie has also held dance adjunct faculty positions at Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, and taught as a graduate student instructor at the University of Michigan.

Melanie is also a certified yoga instructor, completing her 200-hour yoga teacher certification at Pure Yoga in New York City in 2018.

## EDUCATION

MAY 2019

### **Ph.D. | Texas Woman's University**

Department of Dance

Doctor of Philosophy in Dance Studies

Dissertation: *"D"-Cyphering the Jit: Dancing Detroit History and Culture*

MAY 2016

### **M.A. | New York University**

John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master's Program in Humanities and Social Thought

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Study

MAY 2012

**M.A. | New York University**

Tisch School of the Arts

Department of Performance Studies

Master of Arts in Performance Studies

MAY 2004

**M.F.A. | University of Michigan**

School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

Department of Dance

Master of Fine Arts in Dance Choreography and Performance

JUNE 1999

**B.F.A. | The Ohio State University**

Department of Dance

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Choreography and Performance

## AWARDS

AUGUST 2019

**Dance Studies Association | Mellon Pre-Conference Seminar for Emergent Scholars**

Northwestern University, Evanston Illinois

Awarded a tuition and travel scholarship to present dissertation research and receive feedback from senior and early career scholars in dance studies.

2014-2019

**Texas Woman's University | Graduate School of Arts and Sciences**

Awarded tuition scholarships and grants to present dissertation research at various academic conferences.

2013-2016

**New York University | John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master's Program in Humanities and Social Thought**

Merit-based tuition scholarship.

JANUARY 2012

**New York University | Tisch School of the Arts**

Department of Performance Studies tuition scholarship.

2002-2004

**University of Michigan | School of Music, Theatre, and Dance**

The Julian and Vera McIntosh Memorial Fellowship

The Rackham Graduate School Block Grant  
Full tuition paid fellowship and graduate student instructor position.

## ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

OCTOBER 2021

### **World Dance Alliance**

#### **Americas Conference: *Ecologies Of and Through The Body***

Dance Film Presentation: "Powdered Footwork: "D-cyphering Detroit Jit"  
Virtual Conference

OCTOBER 2021

### **Dance Studies Association**

#### **Annual Conference: *Galvanizing Dance Studies: Building Anti-Racist Praxis, Transformative Connections, and Movement(s) of Radical Care***

Dance Film Presentation: "Powdered Footwork: "D-cyphering Detroit Jit"  
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

OCTOBER 2021

### **Women in Dance Leadership**

#### **Annual Conference: *Gender Equity for Now and Future Generations***

Dance Film Presentation: "Powdered Footwork: "D-cyphering Detroit Jit"  
Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois

JULY 2021

### **Annual International Conference: *Keep It Simple, Make It Fast! DIY Cultures and Global Challenges***

Dance Film Presentation: "Powdered Footwork: "D-cyphering Detroit Jit"  
University of Porto, Porto, Portugal

APRIL 2020

### **PoP Moves Americas**

#### **Annual Conference: *Higher Ground: Mediating Popular Dance Histories***

Accepted Paper Presentation: "#detroitaintdead: Jittin' Has Risen"  
York University, Toronto Canada  
Cancelled due to COVID-19

MAY 2020

### **The International Association for the Study of Popular Music**

#### **Annual Conference: *BPM: Bodies, Places, Movements***

Accepted Paper Presentation: "#detroitaintdead: Jittin' Has Risen"  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Cancelled due to COVID-19

OCTOBER 2019

**The National Dance Education Organization**

**Annual conference: *The Creative Process: Choreography, Choice-Making, and Communication***

Miami, Florida

Poster Presentation: "D-Cyphering the Jit: Dancing Detroit History and Culture"

JULY 2015

**World Dance Alliance**

**Americas Conference: *Spaces and Places: Exploring Dance Narratives Through Alternate Lenses***

University of Hawaii, Honolulu

Paper Presentation: "The Jit: An Economy of Gesture"

APRIL 2015

**University of California at Riverside | Dance Under Construction**

**Conference: *Boundaries, Borders, Bodies: Tracing Edges within Dance Studies***

Paper Presentation: "The Motor City Machine: Assembly Lines, Techno, and Jitting Automatons"

OCTOBER 2013

**The University of London, Royal Holloway**

**Conference: *Indigeneity, Performance, Globalization***

London, England

Paper Presentation: "Bolivian Tinku: Dancing Visibility, Identity, and Citizenship"

## ACADEMIC TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2004-2006

**Eastern Michigan University**

Department of Dance

Adjunct faculty: Jazz

2004-2006

**University of Michigan**

Department of Dance

Graduate Student Instructor: Modern, Ballet, and Jazz.

2004-2005

**Oakland University**

Department of Dance  
Adjunct faculty: Jazz and Tap

## GUEST ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE POSITIONS

2006-2019

### **Centro Artístico Pereyra**

La Paz, Bolivia  
Artistic Director

Staged works for the professional company, presented in Bolivia and internationally.

2011

### **ARTEMOVIDA Dance Company**

La Paz, Bolivia

Premiered *Van Allen Belts* on members of the *National Ballet of Bolivia*.

2005-2006

### **Eastern Michigan University**

Department of Dance

Premiered *HOOD* on members of The University Dance Company for the Annual Faculty/Guest Artist Concert

## TEACHING POSITIONS

2006-2019

### **Centro Artístico Pereyra**

La Paz, Bolivia

Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Hip Hop, and Choreography Workshops

2012-2014

### **Hudson Dance and Movement**

Hoboken, New Jersey

Modern and Contemporary

2001-2010

### **Detroit-Windsor Dance Academy**

Director/Choreographer for the Pre-Professional Companies

Choreographer/Instructor for Summer Dance Intensives

Presented work at: The 6th Annual *National Dance Education Organization Conference: Merging Worlds: Dance, Education, Society and Politics* at

Michigan State University, Wayne State University's Annual Concert and Umbrella Concert, The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit Music Hall, and The Detroit Opera House.

2005-2006

**Dance Academy of Boca Raton**

Modern and Contemporary

Summer Dance Intensives

## CERTIFICATIONS

2018

**Pure Yoga**

New York City

200-Hour Yoda Teacher Training

Yoga Alliance Certified