

Ogemdi Ude

Dance and Interdisciplinary Artist | Educator | Doula
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BIO

Ogemdi Ude is a Nigerian-American dance and interdisciplinary artist, educator, and doula based in Brooklyn. Her performance work focuses on Black femme legacies and futures, grief, and memory. Her work has been presented at Danspace Project, Abrons Arts Center, BRIC, ISSUE Project Room, Recess Art, Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Center for Performance Research, Movement Research at the Judson Church, Streb Lab for Action Mechanics, La Mama Courthouse, and for BAM's DanceAfrica festival. As an educator, she serves as Head of Movement for Theater at Professional Performing Arts School and has taught at Princeton University, Sarah Lawrence College, MIT, and University of the Arts. In collaboration with Rochelle Jamila Wilbun she facilitates AfroPeach, a series of free dance workshops for Black postpartum people in Brooklyn. She is a 2022-2023 Smack Mellon Studio Artist, 2022-2024 Movement Research Artist-in-Residence, and 2022 Center for Performance Research Artist-in-Residence. She has been a 2021 danceWEB Scholar, 2021 Laundromat Project Create Change Artist-in-Residence, and a 2019-2020 Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU Resident Fellow. In January 2022 she appeared on the cover of Dance Magazine for their annual "25 to Watch" issue. Her upcoming work includes a commission for Gibney. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a degree in English, Dance, and Theater from Princeton University.

PUBLICLY PRESENTED CHOREOGRAPHY AND PROJECTS

I know exactly what you mean (60 minutes), premiered at Danspace Project (New York, NY) in May 2022. Choreographer, director, performer. A part of Platform 2022 Festival: The Dream of the Audience (Part II) curated by Judy Hussie-Taylor. This piece playfully explores the roles of storytelling and lying in recovering cultural memory, establishing kinship amongst Black folks, and processing personal grief. Three Black femme performers call on nostalgic Southern music, collective memory, and personal narratives to draw audiences into the work and to create space for the healing and protective power of storytelling.

Sing (45 minutes), premiered at Abrons Arts Center (New York, NY) in April 2022. Creator, performer. A part of a trilogy (titled *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*) of evening length solos integrating movement, voice, and installation, to derive coping rituals in the aftermath of loss. In *Sing*, I restage my 16th birthday party and tell stories of coming of age in the aftermath of loss.

Hear (40 minutes), premiered at Abrons Arts Center (New York, NY) in April 2022. Creator, performer. A part of a trilogy (titled *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*) of evening length solos integrating movement, voice, and installation, to derive coping rituals in the aftermath of loss. In *Hear*, I pull from a bereft archive of video and sound bites in an attempt to materialize and present the profile of someone lost.

Dig (60 minutes), premiered at Abrons Arts Center (New York, NY) in March 2022. Creator, performer. A part of a trilogy (titled *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*) of evening length solos integrating movement, voice, and installation, to derive coping rituals in the aftermath of loss. *Dig* is a ritual of writing, sounding, and embodying the echoes of the sky cracking open.

Living Relics, presented at BRIC (Brooklyn, NY) in March 2022 and in residence at Recess Art (Brooklyn, NY) in Spring 2021. Co-creator. *Living Relics* is a performance installation - created in collaboration with visual artist Sydney Mieko King - integrating movement, sculpture, film, and photography. In it, we physicalize grief in order to process it.

Are They Still Here, self-presented (virtually) in October 2021. Director, editor. Received a grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and residency support from NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts for this virtual collage of dance films and original writing in which four Southern Black femmes try to find their way home.

368 (14 minutes), premiered (virtually) for ISSUE Project Room (Brooklyn, NY) in April 2021. Choreographer, director, editor, performer. A dance film that reckons with loss and accumulation, and embodied approaches to mapping private space. Inspired by the intricate and intimate instructions of Alison Knowles' *Proposition IV (Squid)*.

BAX Solo Duets II (7 minutes), premiered (virtually) for Brooklyn Arts Exchange (Brooklyn, NY) in March 2021. Choreographer, editor, performer. A collaboration between composer Bam Rodriguez and myself in which we explore limitlessness within limits, and building and breaking down sanctuary.

Language Reversal (50 minutes), premiered (virtually) for Abrons Arts Center (New York, NY), in March 2021. Director, performer. Through a virtual call and response, collaborator Amrita Hepi and I consider how the shifting conditions of Black and Indigenous life lead us to reorganize our creative skill sets and move through uprisings towards utopias. Together, we find the dances embedded in their everyday to reveal remixed opportunities for intimacy, play, and maybe one day, progress.

The corpus is exquisite, the equinox is vernal (ceev) (10 minutes), performed (virtually) for Center for Performance Research (Brooklyn, NY) as work-in-progress and premiered (virtually) for Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (Bronx, NY) in June 2020. Choreographer, director, editor, performer. This convening is constructed from an iterative exchange between artist Malcolm-x Betts and myself as I continue my investigation into sensory memory, intersecting nostalgia, and forgetting.

Nothing like that is ever going to happen to me again (but if it does, at least now I have tools) (20 minutes), performed at Gibney (New York, NY) as work-in-progress and premiered at Brooklyn Arts Exchange (Brooklyn, NY) in December 2019. Choreographer, writer, performer. In this solo work, I examine holistic embodiments of grief, and our inherent mistrust of relationships and memories in the midst of said grief.

Video Vixen, formerly known as Video Ho (21 minutes), performed at Movement Research at the Judson Church (New York, NY) as work-in-progress and premiered at Danspace Project (New York, NY) in October 2019. Choreographer, performer. This duet investigates how black femmes simultaneously learn to embody, perform, and shame their own pleasure.

Radiobook Rwanda (10 minutes), premiered at Center for Fiction (Brooklyn, NY) in May 2019; co-presented by Brooklyn Academy of Music for DanceAfrica Festival. Choreographer, performer. A solo responding to the work of three young Rwandan writers, addressing relationships, resistance, and modern myths.

SOMA.2 (17 minutes), premiered at Center for Performance Research (Brooklyn, NY) in April 2019. Choreographer, performer. This "virtual duet" digs into our capacity for reflecting, re-membling, and regenerating.

Hiatus (13 minutes), premiered at Streb Lab for Action Mechanics (Brooklyn, NY) in June 2018. Choreographer, performer. Hiatus explores how we attempt to make performance when immersed in a moment where making, doing, moving - feels virtually impossible. Can coping be generative?

pace (13 minutes), premiered at Lewis Center for the Arts (Princeton, NJ) in April 2018. Choreographer. A solo commissioned by Princeton University for a senior's dance thesis. This work concerns racial identification in white spaces and complicates the question of what it is to present black work without preface.

SOMA (33 minutes), premiered at La Mama Courthouse (Melbourne, Australia) in November 2017. Choreographer, performer. SOMA uses sound and movement as analogy to challenge performers and audiences alike to investigate the stories that bring us into our bodies.

WORK IN DEVELOPMENT

Received a commission from Gibney to create an evening-length dance work – *Cameo* - to premiere April 2023.

OTHER ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE

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| 2022 | Dancer, <i>to love the rise/pt. 2</i> by Marion Spencer, Center for Performance Research and Roulette Intermedium (Brooklyn, NY) |
| 2022 | Writer, performer, <i>Keep Score Part 2</i> , Performance Space New York (New York, NY) |
| 2022 | Performer, <i>in place of catastrophe, a clear night sky</i> by iele paloumpis, Danspace Project (New York, NY) |
| 2021 | Performer, <i>._SUITABLE_FOR.EXE[CUTION]</i> by SHAWNÉ MICHAELAIN HOLLOWAY, Performance Space New York (New York, NY) |
| 2021 | Dancer, <i>part two</i> by Marion Spencer, Performance Mix Festival (New York, NY) |
| 2021 | Co-choreographer, <i>Beloved Land</i> a devised production by NYC Department of Education Citywide Theater Ensemble, Virtual (New York, NY) |
| 2021 | Performer, <i>What soil lines my vessel</i> by Jasmine Hearn (Brooklyn, NY) |
| 2021 | Dramaturg, <i>Collision Shop</i> by Dan Safer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, MA) |
| 2020 | Choreographer, performer, <i>Solo Duets</i> with Bam Rodriguez, Brooklyn Arts Exchange (virtually) (Brooklyn, NY) |
| 2020 | Performer, <i>Handles</i> by Haegue Yang, Museum of Modern Art (New York, NY) |
| 2019 | Dancer, <i>to love the rise</i> by Marion Spencer, Chocolate Factory Theater (Queens, NY) |
| 2019 | Performer, <i>Dead Matter Moves</i> by Éva Mag, Performa Festival, Judson Church (New York, NY) |
| 2019 | Performer, <i>Always, Already</i> by Raven White/BIRDHOUSE, World Trade Center Oculus (New York, NY) |
| 2019 | Writer, performer, <i>Keep Score</i> , Theaterlab (New York, NY) |
| 2019 | Co-choreographer, <i>Next Stop</i> a devised production by NYC Department of Education Citywide Theater Ensemble, French Institute Alliance Française (New York, NY) |
| 2018 | Performer, collaborator, <i>Language Reversal</i> by Aaron Landsman, La Mama Experimental (New York, NY) |
| 2018 | Choreographer, performer, <i>Hush Music Video</i> by Lola Scott (Melbourne, Australia) |
| 2017 | Choreographer, performer, <i>More Than This Music Video</i> by Amaya Laucirica (Melbourne, Australia) |
| 2017 | Dancer, <i>Evanesence</i> by Amos Gebhardt/Melanie Lane, Adelaide Biennial (Adelaide, Australia) |

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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| 2021 | danceWEB Scholarship, €4300, 5 weeks |
| 2021 | Queer Art Eva Yaa Asantewaa Grant Finalist |
| 2020 | Disability. Dance. Artistry. Dance and Social Justice Fellowship Program, \$1,000 |
| 2020 | Gibney's Moving Toward Justice Fellowship, \$6000, 6 months |
| 2020 | NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts Resident Fellowship, \$6000, 2 months |
| 2016 | SMASH Berlin Scholarship Recipient, €1200, 3 months |

GRANTS AND RESIDENCIES

2022 Danspace Renewal Residency, \$10,000, *Currently untitled majorettes project*
2022 Movement Research Artist-in-Residence
2022 Smack Mellon Artist Studio Program
2022 Brooklyn Arts Fund, \$4,600, *I know exactly what you mean*
2022 Dance/NYC Disability Dance Artistry Residency, \$6,350, *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*
2022 BRICLab, \$2500, *Living Relics*
2021 City Artist Corps Grant, \$5000, *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*
2021 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Creative Engagement Grant, \$5000, *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*
2021 Saint Anthony Educational Foundation Grant, \$3950, **Participation in danceWEB 2021**
2021 Dancing Feather Residency
2021 Abrons Arts Center AIRSpace Residency, \$7000, *Dig/Hear/Sing/--*
2021 National Sawdust and NYU Center for Ballet & the Arts Toulmin Creator, \$1500
2021 Holisticism Visionary in Residence
2021 Recess Art Sessions Residency, \$1500, *Living Relics*
2021 The Laundromat Project Create Change Residency, \$15000, *AfroPeach*
2020 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Creative Engagement Grant, \$4600, *Are They Still Here*
2019 Brooklyn Arts Exchange Fall Space Grant, 4 months
2019 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, \$1595, *SOMA.2*

TEACHING

Guest Artist, Princeton University Theater Department (Princeton, NJ) 2022
Head of Movement, Drama, Professional Performing Arts School (New York, NY) 2019-Present
Guest Artist, Sarah Lawrence College Dance Department (Bronxville, NY) October 2021
Teaching Artist, Movement Research/Girls Prep Charter School (New York, NY) 2020-2021
Guest Teacher, Jeff Whetstone's: Analog Photography, Princeton University (Princeton, NJ) March 2021
Guest Speaker, Judith Hamera's: Performance in Extraordinary Times: Documenting and Analyzing the Present, Princeton University (Princeton, NJ) October 2020 and March 2021
Faculty, Group Study: Researching Together, University of the Arts Dance MFA, (Philadelphia, PA) 2019-2020

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Bachelor of Arts (A.B.) in English, Certificates in Dance & Theater, 2012-2016
Thesis: Digging Up Bones: (Re)Staging Death in Black Performance Art
University of Oxford, Coursework in English Language & Literature, 2015

Workshops and Intensives:

danceWEB/Impulstanz: Anne Juren, Frédéric Gies, Kira Kirsch, Raja Feather Kelly, Maria Scaroni, Marta Coronado, Laura Aris, Emma W. Howes, Justin F. Kennedy, German Jauregui, Alleyne Dance, Damien Jalet, July-August 2021
Directors Lab Melbourne: Leisa Shelton, The Rabble, Tania Cañas, Darren O' Donnell, October 2017
Lucy Guerin Secondment with Prue Lang, September 2017
Chunky Move Easter Intensive Adam Wheeler, Lauren Langlois, James Shannon, Amber McCartney, Harrison Ritchie-Jones, Nat Abbott, April 2017
SMASH Berlin Anna Nowicka, Alessio Castellacci, Sonja Pregrad, Maria Scaroni, August-October 2016
Impulstanz Salim Gauwloos, Alleyne Dance, Thomas DeFrantz, Keith Hennessy, July-August 2015

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AfroPeach (Brooklyn, NY) 2018-Present

A collaboration with Rochelle Jamila Wilbun. Offering Postpartum-Centric support to Black birthing people through free dance classes and workshops with birth work professionals.

Birth and Postpartum Doula, Training Organization: Carriage House Birth (Brooklyn, NY) 2018-Present

Co-curator, No Longer Empty, Kings County Hospital (Brooklyn, NY) 2019, *(after)care*

Public Works Community Coordinator, The Public Theater (New York, NY) 2018-2019

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

"Finding the Right Dance: Ogemdi Ude in Conversation with Selah V. Hampton," Danspace Platform 2022

Catalogue: The Dream of the Audience, 2022

"Making Dance Out of Survival Skills and Reckoning With Grief," The New York Times, April 2022

"Ogemdi Ude with Lauren Wingenroth," The Brooklyn Rail, March 2022

"Ogemdi Ude '16 Turns Grief Into Joy Through Dance," Princeton Alumni Weekly, March 2022

Cover of "Top 25 to Watch" Issue, Dance Magazine, January 2022

"I Don't Think I Ever Want A Body to Be Embalmed," Movement Research Critical Correspondence, April 2021

"What's After the Afrofuture?" 3 Views/SideLight, October 2020

"With Intent," Imagining: A Gibney Journal, September 2020

"A DraftWork: Video Vixen, formerly known as Video Ho. Ogemdi Ude in Conversation with Seta Morton,"

Danspace Journal, December 2019

SELECT WORKSHOPS

"Performance Philosophy Reading Group," Center for Performance Research (Brooklyn, NY) October 2022

"Embedded Artist Workshop," Recess Art/BRIC (Brooklyn, NY) 2021-2022

"On Collaboration," NYU Center for Ballet & the Arts and National Sawdust (Virtual) May 2021

"Grief and the Dancing Body," Holisticism (Virtual) April 2021

"Contemporary Techniques," School of Contemporary Dance and Thought/freeskewl (Northampton, MA) February-March 2021

"Moving with/alongside/into Weight," freeskewl (Virtual) February 2021

"Lock and Release," freeskewl (Virtual) 2020

"Lock and Release," Dancehouse (Melbourne, VIC, AUS) February 2020

SELECT PANELS AND TALKS

"The In Between: Life, Death, and Limbo," Dance/NYC 2022 Symposium, March 19, 2022

"Inclusive and Decolonized Approaches to Art Making," Phillips Exeter Academy, February 18, 2022

"Spirituality of the Body," Gibney, December 1, 2020

"Dig Hear Sing," NYU Center for Ballet & the Arts Resident Fellow Seminar, April 2020