Alia Simon Montijo

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**Artist Statement:**

As a dance maker, I create choreographic explorations that challenge gender-reflective stereotypes and performer idealism and objectification. Inspiration is derived from investigations of feminist theory, colonialism, inequity, injustice, ephemerality, politics, physics and temporality. I actively work to achieve this through a comprehensive choreographic practice that equally involves traditional and studio-based research.

My choreographic practice is inquiry-based research actualized by the body through physical exploration. Finding resolve through movement uncovers somatic solutions that are not based exclusively on codified vocabulary, but through embodying inquiry and the lived experience. In this way, my choreographic practice is an integrative blend of corporeal discovery and technical manifestation. The somatic through line of my practice is question realized through movement exploration which is formed into choreographic structure and insists that the body is the epicenter of discovery. Therefore, it relies on the reciprocal sharing of the körper and leib or the organic physical body and the experiential and subjective body.

I have devoted my entire career to creating professional dance and youth dance programming that is financially accessible. From my research as an undergrad at Ohio State on the academic impact of dance enrichment in underserved communities to my work at Columbia College Chicago initiating federally-funded after-school arts programming and my most recent endeavor, the establishment of my dance school Dance Avondale that is committed to providing highly subsidized dance training, the driving force behind my artistic manifestation is the goal to provide a platform of dance professionalism that is economically accessible. Therefore, my artistry is built on creative corporeal solutions, driven by interest in unhinging traditional notions of the performer and motivated by my commitment to equity and inclusion.