

# P. KIMBERLEIGH JORDAN, PhD

*Curriculum Vitae*  
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## CURRENT APPOINTMENT

Associate Director of Educational Design

Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology & Religion

Crawfordsville, IN

2020-the present

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## EDUCATION

### ACADEMIC

#### Ph.D.

Performance Studies Department – New York University  
Tisch School of the Arts/Graduate School of Arts & Sciences  
Dissertation Director: Dr. José Muñoz

**Dissertation Title: “My Flesh Shall Live in Hope”: Power and the Black Body Moving in Sacred Space**  
Concentrations: African Diaspora, Religion, and Dance

#### M.Div.

Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY  
Concentration: the Arts and Theology.

#### A.B.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Major: Public Policy Analysis; Minor: Arts Administration

### DANCE

*Ballet:* Maggie Black, Walter Raines, Nancy Schaffenburg, John Lehman and Shirley Fields

**Scholarship Student - Dance Theatre of Harlem Professional Training Program**

*Modern:* Cunningham Technique-Viola Farber, Ellen Cornfield, MaryLisa Burns & faculty of the Cunningham Dance Center

*Dance/Performance Composition:* Bessie Schoenberg, Viola Farber, Gabri Christa

*Tap:* James Leocarta, Rachel Sekyi

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## ARTICLES and BOOK CHAPTERS

“‘Make Me a Body’: Black Christian Liturgical Dance in New York City” in *The Oxford University Handbook of Black Dance Studies*, ed. Thomas F. DeFrantz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022). Forthcoming.

“Performing Black Subjectivity: Enfleshed Feminism in (Aretha’s) *Amazing Grace* and (Beyonce’s) *Homecoming*,” *Journal of Feminist Media Histories* 6:3 (Summer 2020): 79-103.

“‘Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around:’ Spirituals as Embodied Acts of Resistance,” *The Black Scholar* – Winter 2016.

“The Body as Reader: African-Americans, Freedom, and the American Myth” in Vincent Wimbrush, ed. *The Bible and the American Myth: A Symposium on the Bible and Constructions of Meaning*. (Macon, GA: Mercer University, 1999).

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Performance Studies; Black/African Diaspora Studies; Dance History/Critical Dance Studies;  
Worship; Feminist/Womanist Thought, Theory and Praxis; and, Ethnography.

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## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**DREW UNIVERSITY**                      **Assistant Professor of Religion, the Arts, and Black Studies**                      **2018-2020**  
**Director of the Chapel/Associate Professor in the Practice of the Arts**                      **2016-18**

African Americans & the Bible: Sites of Formation and Performance - Godtalk for Black Thinkers - Fall, 2016  
(Co-taught with Dr. Vincent L. Wimbush).  
Arts & Congregational Leadership – Spring, 2020.  
The Body in Religious Practice – Jan. Term, 2019.  
Chapel Practicum, Fall, 2016; Spring & Fall, 2017; Spring, 2018.  
Introduction to Preaching, Summer 2017, Summer 2018, Spring 2019.  
Introduction to Pan-African Studies - Spring, 2019.  
Mentored Portfolio/Vocation and Formation – Fall, 2018 and 2019; Spring, 2019 and 2020  
Sacred Dance & the Liturgical Arts – Fall, 2018.  
Travel Seminar: Proctor Conference – Spring, 2020.  
Travel Seminar: Walking and Dancing in the Footsteps of MLK – (Atlanta & Montgomery) – Summer, 2020.  
Women and Gender Studies (co-taught in the Graduate Division of Religion) - Spring, 2018.  
Worshipping in Black Traditions – Fall, 2019.

**UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**                      Ford Postdoctoral Fellow & Lecturer

Womanist Performance - Guided Reading, Spring 2015.  
Womanist Thought, Theory and Praxis - (co-taught) – Fall, 2013.

**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY (LINCOLN CENTER)/ALVIN AILEY**                      Lecturer

Black Traditions in American Dance (BFA) - Fall, 2015 and 2016.

**ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE CENTER**                      Dance History Faculty

Alvin Ailey & Histories of Black Dance (certificate program) - Spring 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**                      Teaching Assistant to Prof. Muñoz

Introduction to Performance Studies – Summer, 2006.

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## SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS/PRESENTATIONS/PANELS

Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Antiphony, Otherwise: A Symposium. Presenter, April 2019.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Denver, CO– Wabash Center –Presentation: “Transferable Course Design” – Nov 2018.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Denver, CO– ARTS Committee - Moderating a Panel in Response to Katherine Dunham’s *Southland* (excerpts), performed by the Cleo Parker Robinson Ensemble– Nov, 2018.

Consultation on Ecstatic Dance and Religion – Radcliffe College/Harvard University – Convened by Dr. Kimerer L. LaMothe – June 1-3, 2016.

Association of Practical Theology – Fordham University (Rose Hill Campus)/United Nations, NYC- Plenary Panel on #BlackLivesMatter and Practical Theology - April 8, 2016.

Collegium on Dance in the African Diaspora — Duke University, Durham, NC - Plenary Presentation – Convener and Moderator: “Dance Theatre of Harlem and Black Ballerinas Disrupting History.” February, 2016.

Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), Charleston, SC – Performing the Diaspora: Black Dance, Resistance, and the Complexity of Black Bodies Panel – Presentation: “Run to the City of Refuge:” Performing the Ring Shout as An Embodied Act of Resistance. Nov. 4-7, 2015.

Montclair Public Library, Montclair, NJ, Panelist: From the Mountaintop: Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Civil Rights Movement – Jan. 13, 2015.

Ford Fellows Conference, Irvine, CA – Research Poster Presentation on Women in the African Diaspora, Religion, and the Body. September 25-26, 2014.

Collegium on Dance in the African Diaspora — Duke University, Durham, NC - Theories of Black Performance– Presentation: “Moving and Performing the Spirituals as Private and Public Power.” February, 2014.

Trinity Institute (NYC) 43rd National Theological Conference, Theme of Conference - The Good News Now: Evolving with the Gospel of Jesus. <http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/file/trinity-institute-2013-kimberleigh-jordan> Performance Presentation: “What is the Good News about Abundance?” November, 2013.

Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, MI – Consultation on *Readings in African American Church Music & Worship*, October, 2012.

New Brunswick Theological Seminary, Panel: “The Belhar Confession & the Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King,” <https://www.rca.org/Page.aspx?pid=7668>. March 2011.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Montreal, QC, Canada–Religion and Cities Consultation/ Black Theology Group – Paper presented: “Moving Bodies in the Intersection: Dance, Hip Hop, and Black Religiosity” – Nov, 2009

New York University – Tisch School of the Arts - Dance Department Annual Research Colloquium: Paper presented: “Moving the Ring Shout” – May 2009

Society for Dance History Scholars Annual Conference, Saratoga Springs, NY, Plenary II- Paper presented: “Intersections and Intersectionality” - June 2008

Performance Studies International #13: *Happening, Performance, Event* - NYC- Paper presented: “Dancing in the Spirit”- Nov. 2007

New York University – Tisch School of the Arts - Invited Lecture for Prof. José Muñoz’ Introduction to Performance Studies class, “Religion, Ritual and Performance” –Summer Session, 2006

“Songs We Thought We Knew”: A Conference Celebrating the Work and Thought of Delores Williams – New York City, Union Theological Seminary– Future Directions Panel – Paper presented: “The Body as a Starting Point for Womanist Thought” - Spring, 2004

The Collegium on African American Research, Sardinia, Italy - Expanding Boundaries of African American Dance Research Panel – Paper presented: “Tracing the Trajectories of Black Sacred and Liturgical Dance” - March, 2001.

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## SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

Freedom School/Social Justice Leadership Project – Moderator and host for Roundtable Discussion with artist Chester Higgins – March 2020

Social Justice Leadership Project – Liturgist for weeklong Writing Conferences: “Writing in Color” and “Writing for Your Life” – Summer, 2019

Pan-African Studies Committee, 2017 – present

Co-Advisor for Black Ministerial Caucus – 2018-19

Advisor for 1<sup>st</sup> year M.Div. students, 2018 – 2019

Advisor for 2nd year M.Div. students, 2019 - 2020

First Year Experience Faculty Team, 2018 - present

The Dean’s Building and Space Committee, 2016-present

M.A/S.T.M Curriculum Transformation Committee, 2017-18

Tipple Vosburgh Annual Convocation Workshop Leader – Title: “Black Bodies Matter: Then and Now,” 2018

Tipple Vosburgh Annual Convocation Panelist on *America’s Original Sin* by Jim Wallis with the author, 2016

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## RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Professional Dance Performances**, in choreography by: John Lehman (Ballet Theatre of Raleigh – *Nutcracker*, *By this River*, et al.); Dance Theatre of Harlem Workshop Ensemble - Arthur Mitchell (The Metropolitan Opera – *Porgy & Bess*); Sal Aiello (NC Dance Theatre – *Coppelia*); Frank Martin (American Contemporary Dance Company); RoseAnn Elmer; Gina Buntz, etc.

**Consultant**     **The Equity Project: Increasing the Presence of Blacks in Ballet**     **Sept 2017 - June 2020**  
Design & co-facilitate collaborate with a team others to produce and deliver the content of a multi-year diversity, equity, and inclusion transformational platform for the Artistic and Executive Directors of the twenty-one top organizations in professional ballet in North America for the purpose of building more diverse organizations and specifically, increasing the presence of Black people in the arts industry. <https://www.danceusa.org/announcing-equity-project-increasing-presence-blacks-ballet>

**Facilitator**     **Princeton Black Theology & Leadership Institute**     **summer, 2017**  
Served as theologian-in-residence for weeklong intensive continuing education event for clergy and laity for training, worship, and fellowship at Princeton Theological Seminary. The institute is designed to deepen the thinking and preaching of emergent leaders as they learn from scholars of theology and religion.

**Consultant**     **Auburn Theological Seminary, NYC**     **2010 – 2016**  
Worked with the Director of Women’s Multi-Faith Programs to create the Sojourner Truth Leadership Circle, a womanist leadership development program for women of color faith leaders from diverse faiths. The program’s goal is to nurture activism, while encouraging theological reflection, wholeness and wellness.

**Consultant**      **Avery Institute for Social Change (NYC)**      **2004**  
Worked with Avery Institute founder, Byllye Avery, to create and carry out a multi-faceted program of health and wellness in four Harlem faith communities. The work included design and implementation of program in written and spoken and interpersonal interfaces, as well as plant seeds to advocate for universal healthcare policy.

**African Americans and the Bible: an Interdisciplinary Research Project**      **Union Theological Seminary**  
**Assistant Director**      **1996-97**  
Assisted Professor Vincent Wimbush, the Director, in all facets of establishing research project funded by the Lilly and Ford Foundations & housed at Union Theological Seminary, including surveying multidisciplinary scholarship, maintaining communication with board of interdisciplinary scholars, supporting the growth of the project from vision stage through its first conference.

**Social Science Project Coordinator**      **1998**  
Laid groundwork for nationwide ethnographic assessment of the ways that sacred text is shaped by/shapes the worlds of people of African descent in the U.S. Included facilitating & supporting a team of social scientists and researching potential sites of observation.

**Arts Education Specialist**      **Gantt Center for African American Arts & Culture**      **(Charlotte)**  
Envisioned & shaped arts education program for children using the visual and performance arts resources of the Center; created arts day camp & supervised after-school arts education program; designed adult education programs related to gallery exhibitions, theatre & music performances; collaborated with other arts institutions, such as Mint Museum Film Festival and the Children's Theatre.

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## MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCE

**Director of Worship (Interim)**      **The Riverside Church, NYC**      **2012-2014**  
Liturgically and logistically prepared all worship services at the Church, from high church Sunday Services to midweek prayer and praise services. Prepared clergy, lay leaders, and youth for effective worship leadership. Directed and managed all Festival Services, including Candlelight, Watchnight, Lessons & Carols, Advent Worship, as well as Holy Week and Easter Services, and served on the Executive Leadership Team of the Church.

**Associate Minister**      **Marble Collegiate Church, NYC**      **1997- 2010**  
Developed and led ministries to young adults, women, artists, and a year-round anti-hunger ministry; designed, led and hosted annual spiritual formation retreats for young adults, women, families, artists, the gospel choir; leadership development on an on-going basis, plus two annual congregational leadership retreats; congregational and pastoral counseling; preaching; teaching and supervision in adult and children's Christian Education; oversaw annual Collegiate Church grant-making project for programs supporting women and girls locally and globally; administrative, and other duties as required.

**Pastoral Care Team**      **Union Theological Seminary, NYC**      **1995-97**  
Served as Pastoral presence on the residential floors of the seminary. Duties included pastoral care related to academic stress or personal matters, as well as conflict resolution and residential community building under the leadership of the Seminary Pastor.

**Intern**      **People's Congregational UCC Church, Washington, DC, summer '96**  
Served as instructor for summer arts program for teenaged girls focused on liturgical dance and Christian spirituality; led worship.

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## LITURGICAL DESIGN/ CHOREOGRAPHY (selected)

**Union Theological Seminary - 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – planning a festival worship service for April 19, 2012 to celebrate and offer thanks to God. The service will include special dance and music commissions.

**The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color** - University of California at Santa Cruz - designing the opening ritual to precede the keynote address by Dr. Angela Davis.

**Reformed Church in America - General Synod** - Worship & the Arts Liturgical Design Team for seven worship services at international denominational gathering in Long Island, NY.

**African Americans & the Bible**- liturgist for interreligious worship service during international scholarly conference focusing on “Socio-Cultural Formation and Sacred Texts” - including conceptualizing and performing a danced “sermonic event” in collaboration with a poet and DJ.

**God Had Something in It** - Riverside Church, The Fosdick Preaching and Worship Convocation - (Collaboration with poet, Mariah Britton & musician/composer Vince Anderson) - “sermonic event” based on the life of Hagar (Genesis 16 & 21) in the Biblical text and in the culture of Black people in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The choreography was particularly inspired by womanist theology.

**Pentecost** - St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church, NY, NY- dance solo incorporating the processional. The major part of the dance is accompanied by the multi-language reading of the Pentecost scripture.

**Variations on Grace** – UTS Dance Choir- James Chapel, NY, NY-a danced worship service focusing on the varieties of God’s grace-choreographed for Dance Choir, soloists and musicians-accompanied by Calvin Hampton’s “Variations on Grace for Organ and English Horn”.

**Communion Service** - UTS Dance Choir- James Chapel, NY, NY- a danced worship service, combining improvisation, set choreography and congregational participation culminating in the Sacrament of Communion.

**Choreographic Ritual for Baptism**- People’s Congregational UCC, Washington, DC-A dance in two halves that lead the processional as a preparation for the sacrament and the recessional as a reaffirmation of Baptism for the congregation.

**Jeremiah 1: 4-10** – People’s Congregational UCC, Washington, DC- Weaving of dance and Biblical text as a vehicle to present the lectionary reading. Danced by the Youth Dance Ministry.

**Answering Yes** -- (collaboration with composer Vince Anderson)-This is a mostly nonverbal sermon on God’s call in my life and my artistic response. It is thirty-minute worship service featuring dance and including scripture, solo and congregational singing. The dance is accompanied by piano and drum.

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## HONORS, AWARDS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

**Wabash Center Fellowship Grant** for the “Art and Science of Teaching Religion and the Arts” – pedagogical research project – 2018-19

**Wabash Teaching Workshop for Early Career Theological Faculty** – 2017-18

**Ford Fellow** - Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship – Union Theological Seminary - 2014 – 15

**Coolidge Fellow – Crosscurrents Research Colloquium** – Crosscurrents: The Center for Religion and Intellectual Life - Summer 2015

**Paulette Goddard Scholarship** - Tisch School of the Arts scholarship awarded to young artists – 2001-05

**Honorable Mention** - Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship - 2007

**North Carolina Fellow** – for exemplary leadership qualities and potential - UNC – Chapel Hill

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## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

### **The American Academy of Religion**

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Steering Committee (2016- present)  
Women and Religion Steering Committee (2004-07)

**Association for the Study of African Life and History (ASALH)**

**The Collegium on African Diaspora Dance (CADD)**

**Dance Studies Association**  
Program Committee for 2021 Conference

**Society for the Study of Black Religion – inducted 2017**

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION

**Media Training – Auburn Theological Seminary**

**National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity**

**Center For Teaching Excellence – New York University**

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