

# creative workforce fellowship

cwf

## featured fellows

**Featured Fellow:** **Mikaela Clark**  
**Choreographer,**  
**Contemporary Dance**



2010 - Cleveland

### **What is your favorite place, event, or “hidden gem” in Cuyahoga County?**

The lake. There is a certain rock at Edgewater, just beyond the willow tree and tucked down at the water’s edge, so close that, on a calm day, the waves nearly splash to the top. It is there where I can often get swallowed up into a little piece of beauty and find rejuvenation and inspiration.

### **Who or what has influenced you locally and elsewhere?**

Bill Wade, director of Inlet Dance Theatre, has been a significant influence on me locally. I’ve been blessed to have him as an artistic mentor in my life and to be able to grow under his leadership.

Being blessed with multiple experiences overseas—encountering different ways of life, thought patterns, and philosophies on the world and existence—and yet being grounded through a solid family and guided by faith.

### **How do you generate new ideas?**

New ideas come to me in a myriad of ways—from

observing human interactions, to working out something within myself, to watching the cream swirl as it is poured into a cup of coffee. But with any new idea, improvisation often plays a huge part in discovering, molding, and developing those ideas. Often I will have very little to nothing to begin with when I enter the studio, and it is through “playing” that a new idea is born. By allowing myself to go exploring into the unknown, to take risks and be okay with falling (literally)—all the while listening closely to the richest elements that are rising to the surface—I can get past my finite mind and what I know and begin to touch on something greater.

### **What is the hardest part about creating?**

Emotional blocks and physical pain.

### **How has the Creative Workforce Fellowship affected your career as an artist or your art work?**

My career thus far has been very focused on my role as a dancer. I have always desired to pursue choreography, but felt the need to focus on and grow as much as a dancer while I could. Only recently have I begun to delve into the art of choreography alongside my close friend and fellow artist Mackenzie Clevenger. Together we dreamed up a project that is very close to our hearts but, because of its scale, we did not perceive we would have the opportunity to pursue for several more years. The fellowship has simultaneously allowed us the financial freedom we needed to pursue this project and catapulted us forward in our development as choreographers. We now find ourselves working on a much larger scale, collaborating with several extremely talented artists in this city with which I am honored to be creating.

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For more information about the Creative Workforce Fellowship or the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, please visit [www.cpacbiz.org](http://www.cpacbiz.org) or contact (216) 575-0331 or [info@cpacbiz.org](mailto:info@cpacbiz.org).

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