

## **AKU KADOGO**

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### Abstract

#### **Confluence: Where the Mississippi meets the Han**

Confluence, where we meet and how. There are spheres where Korean/Korean American and African American and the African diasporic communities intersect. A close examination reveals that Pansori and the blues, K Pop and hip hop, funeral rituals and gospel music share a creative tension that allows for a distinctive "take" on the ways in which American and Korean cultural production influence and interrogate their respective cultures. Citing examples from my own work, we will explore the ways in which similar and dissimilar music, movement and ritual formations can create space for a dialogue of compassion and understanding.

### Bio

Aku Kadogo is Chair of the Department of Theatre and Performance at Spelman College, arriving in 2014-2015 as the Distinguished Visiting Scholar for the Arts.

She is an international theatre director/choreographer, arts educator and cultural preservationist. This multi-faceted artist directs highly energetic, imaginative, original theatre works and has produced a number of international collaborative, inter-disciplinary projects. Her eclectic career has spanned the United States, Australia and Asia.

Prior to her arrival in Atlanta, Georgia she served on the Music/Theatre Faculty at Yongin University in Seoul, S. Korea where she lectured and directed productions for the university and the wider professional theatre community.

From 2006 – 2010 Ms. Kadogo was the Director of the Black Theatre Program at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Directing many works from the African American canon.

Her Broadway experience has been as an Associate Choreographer on the Tony Award winning show *RENT*, touring Australia, China and the United States and Cameron McIntosh' *Les Miserable*. As a performer she has worked in film, television and stage making her career debut in the original Broadway classic of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* by Ntozake Shange.