

(http://clarioncontentmedia.com/2014/10/its-not-me-its-youand-the-emerging-dance-culture-in-durham/)

ABOUT(HTTP://CLARIONCONTENTMEDIA.COM/ABOUT-2/)

GAWMPQL4g

SPONSORS(HTTP://CLARIONCONTENTMEDIA.COM/SPONSORS)

SUBMISSIONS(HTTP://CLARIONCONTENTMEDIA.COM/SUBMISSIONS/)



(http://clarioncontentmedia.com/)

OCTOBER 20, 2014

# 'IT'S NOT ME, IT'S YOU' AND THE EMERGING DANCE CULTURE IN DURHAM



**A** renaissance is taking place in Durham.  
*The new school are moving in, and the old school are moving back.*

Economic opportunity that did not exist in Durham several years ago now provides a canvas for anyone with a vision to paint their masterpiece. For **Anna Barker** and **Wilks**, that masterpiece is rooted in modern dance.

Barker and Wilks have traveled similar paths. Both are graduates of Durham area schools; **Durham School of the Arts** (Barker) and **Carolina Friends School** (Wilks) respectively. They met through mutual friends in the summer of 2008 while attending American Dance Festival. Like many of their peers, they both journeyed to a big city after college, hoping to find traction in their quest for a career in dance. Exhausting all of their creative energy for the endeavors of others, they decided to temporarily return to their home state of North Carolina to reevaluate the direction of their career. Wilks, and a year later, Barker, chose to make the move back to Durham permanent to pursue their own vision for modern dance.



[http://clarioncontentmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IMG\\_2319.jpg](http://clarioncontentmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IMG_2319.jpg)

*Hey, are they dancing in front of Liberty Warehouse?? Photo by Luke Bar*

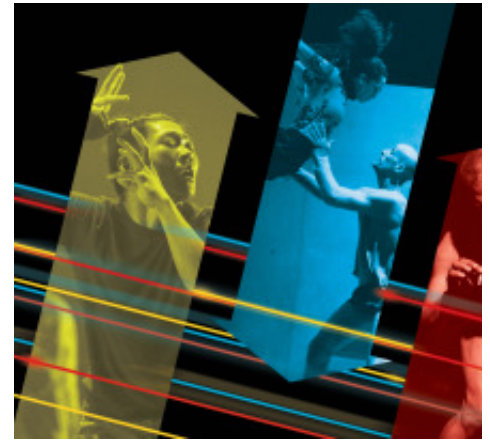
Now, both young ladies are leading the charge to help cultivate the emerging dance community in Durham. “There are other performers moving here to dance,” Barker “not just people who happen to be here and dance.” The grueling day-to-day of life in a major metropolis like New York City became burdensome and artistically draining for Barker, while the lethargic West Coast lifestyle was not stimulating enough for

“ Life in New York City is fast and intense. The San Francisco/Bay Area is real life but everyone moves slow. Durham is the best of the both worlds; slow but intense. – Wilks ”

Ambitious dancers and choreographers are flocking to Durham because of this combination of attitudes along with the low barrier to entry. This allows for more collaboration and a “sense of camaraderie between performers” which spawned groups like **Durham Independent Dance Artists** ([DIDA\(http://www.didaseason.com/\)](http://www.didaseason.com/)), an

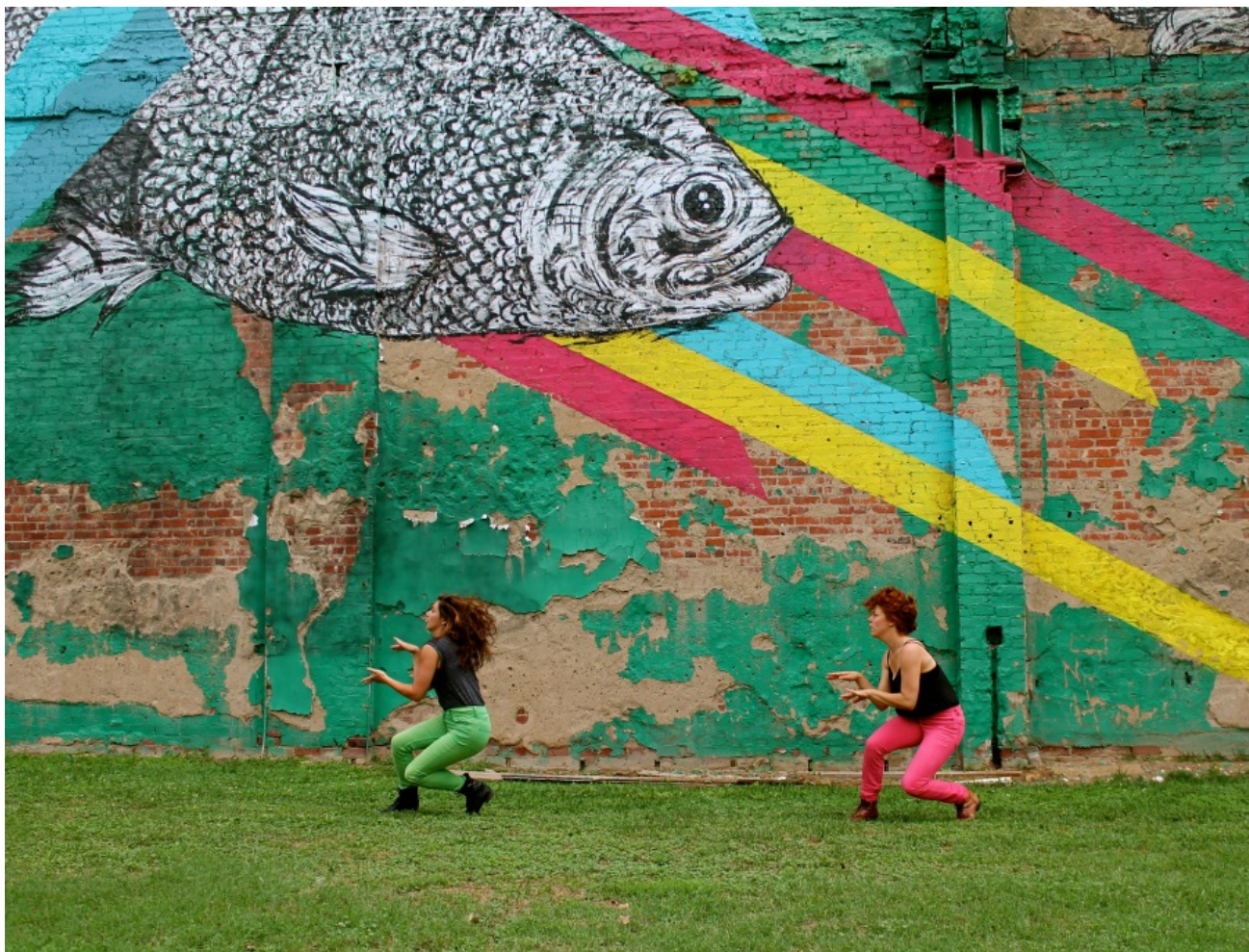
organization established to bridge the gap between dancers and their audience.

(<http://www.americandancefestival.org/>) Many residents are familiar with dance due in large part to the **American Dance Festival**, one of the nation's most highly-regarded dance organizations. ADF has [called Durham its home](http://www.americandancefestival.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/ADF-Timeline.pdf) since 1978, but has struggled to connect modern dance to the modern generation of young people now living in the city. This year, thanks to the [ADF](http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/06/07/3916277/american-dance-festival-kicks.html)



[GO](http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/06/07/3916277/american-dance-festival-kicks.html) Barker says “there is a little bit more awareness about modern dance.” ADF has found ways to engage the choreographers and dancers in Durham after the dev of **ADF Studios** on Broad Street above [Hummingbird Bakery](http://www.hummingbirdurham.com/), offering practice space and lessons to aspiring and polished dance

Spaces like ADF Studios are an important asset for the dance community because of the scarcity in resources currently available. “Dance is the least funded performance art form,” Barker says, with a strong reiteration from Wilks who points out that available dance performance continues to shrink, putting a strain on choreographers and dancers. DIDA helps facilitate some of the outreach and resource acquisition necessary for dancers to showcase their bodies of work.



([http://clarioncontentmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IMG\\_3017.jpg](http://clarioncontentmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/IMG_3017.jpg))

*I believe this dance move is called "The Fish." Photo by Luke Barker*

This Fall, **DIDA** is hosting its first season of performances all centered around dance. Barker and Wilks will open the series with a self-choreographed piece hosted by Barker's dance company, **real.live.people.durham**. The show is entitled **It's You** and will play at **Motorco Music Hall**(<http://motorcomusic.com/real-live-people>) on November 8th and 9th. The theme for the evening features stories of love, loss, awkwardness, and the "grey area" in our life's relationships. Barker and Wilks have launched a Kickstarter campaign for *It's Not Me, It's You* (seen below), that aims to raise funding and awareness for the presentation and ultimately the modern dance scene as a whole.

“ I want my work to be accessible. – Anna Barker ”

The DIDA season will run through June 2015, hosting a total of 9 performances. All performances are self-produced by Durham-based artists. You can find more

information about DIDA and upcoming shows at their [website](http://www.didase)(<http://www.didase>

You, **“and everyone you know,”** can support the Kickstarter campaign

[here](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1952812911/reallivepeopledurham-its-not-m-ref=popular)(<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1952812911/reallivepeopledurham-its-not-m-ref=popular>).



(<https://www.twitter.com/buddyruski>)(<http://buddyruski.tumblr.com>)([https://www.linkedin.com/profile/public-profile-se-trk=prof-edit-edit-public\\_profile](https://www.linkedin.com/profile/public-profile-se-trk=prof-edit-edit-public_profile))(<https://www.instagram.com/buddyruski>)(<https://www.facebook.com/runawayclothes>)  
 Justin Laidlaw(<http://clarioncontentmedia.com/author/buddyruski/>)



(<http://clarioncontentmedia.com/author/buddyruski/>)