

DARREN & HEATHER STEVENSON (*founding artistic directors/PUSHers*) Born and raised in England, Darren met New Jersey native Heather during their mutual studies at The Center in St. Louis. Their shared love of theatre and performing planted the seeds for their relationship and eventual collaboration.

PUSH PERFORMER BIOS

After founding the Studio School of the Arts in Atlanta, Georgia, the couple relocated to Rochester, NY with their two children in 2000. There, they created PUSH Physical Theatre, growing it over the next 18 years into the international touring company that it is today.

The Stevensons received the 2009 Performing Artist of the Year Award from the Arts & Cultural Council for Greater Rochester, the Community of Color/Anton Germano Dance Award, and the University of Rochester's Lillian Fairchild Award in 2017 for PUSH's collaborative work on a multi-media opera that brought together U.S. and Mexican artists.

Cross-genre collaborations with other world-renowned artists are becoming more and more frequent for the genre-defining company, such as its recent partnerships with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Ying Quartet.

JAMES CUNNINGHAM (*Lighting Designer/Technical Director*) owns and operates Rockshow Lighting, a concert lighting design company providing design and staffing for music festivals, touring acts, and venues. Recent adventures include multiple national tours with folk-rock act Carbon Leaf, international runs with pop-reggae act SOJA, and festival stage designs and staffing for FloydFest and Red Wing Roots. James uses the grandMA2 console line for lighting control, and employs Resolume Arena for video playback and live effects.

ERIKA RUEGEMER (*PUSHer*) is a trained dancer from the Twin Cities, Minnesota. She received her BA in dance from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. After graduating she pursued professional dance with ARENADances (Minneapolis, MN), gloATL (Atlanta, GA), PUSH Physical Theatre and FuturPointe Dance (Rochester, NY). Her teaching experience includes virtual studio sessions with The Cowles Center (Minneapolis, MN), Mosaic Dance (Iquitos, Peru), and BOCES Adept (Rochester, NY). Erika is the Founder and Artistic Director of Rochester Dance Theatre. She is a director, choreographer, teacher, and most of all, a performer at heart.

ASHLEY JONES (*PUSHer*) is a physical performer, actor, and deviser. After earning his BA European Theatre Arts from Rose Buford College, London and training in Physical Theatre at Academia Teatro Dimitri in Switzerland, he went on to train with Phillipe Gaulier and Angela De Castro in theatrical clowning. Ashley worked and trained with UK-based theatre companies Gecko Physical Theatre, Nonsuch Theatre, and Frantic Assembly. Recent credits include: *The Party's Over* (2017), *Eclipse* (2017), *The Russian Play* (2017) and *Into the Clouds* (2018). As Artistic Director of Theatre Kinaesthetic, Ashley explores physical modalities within ensemble and devised performance including *Rite of Passage* (2015, 2016).

ANDREAS GABRIEL WOERNER (*PUSHer*), a German transplant to the United States, is a movement practitioner and actor obsessed with researching and utilizing movement to empower and heal. He studied Theater at SUNY Fredonia and received his degree in psychology from SUNY Geneseo. Recent stage appearances include the role of Cusins in *Shaw's Major Barbara*. At day time he spends his time as a Certified Trainer at Penfield Sport and Fitness in Rochester NY, where he teaches and trains clients in efficient and strong movement.

