

P U S H

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Pictured: Hien Huynh, Photo by Matt Haber

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**PUSH DANCE COMPANY ANNOUNCES
4th ANNUAL PUSHfest DANCE FESTIVAL
FEATURING THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *MOTHERSHIP (PART II)*
BY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RAISSA SIMPSON**

September 22-24, 2017 at ODC Theater in San Francisco

Tickets: \$15-\$30 or \$50 Festival Pass; 415.863.9834 or www.pushdance.org/festival

SAN FRANCISCO, May 24, 2017 — **PUSH Dance Company (PUSH)** kicks off its twelfth home season with **PUSHfest**, a mixed genre showcase of dance works by mid-career to emerging choreographers aimed at gathering wider audiences, **September 22-24 at ODC Theater**. This exciting new season will feature three world premieres, including ***Mothership (Part II)*** by **Artistic Director Raissa Simpson**, new works by Mary Carbonara for Dancers' Performance Project, company member Kao Vey Saephanh and company member Katerina Wong and performances by local artists like The Anata Project, Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble, and SOULSKIN, as well as visiting artists from New York and Sacramento.

“**PUSHfest** is a testament to the incredible vitality of the Bay Area dance community,” says Simpson. “Since its inception four years ago, **PUSHfest** has gone from an incubated idea to a multi-generational and mixed discipline dance festival.” With the return of **PUSHLab**, a performance workshop for pre-professional artists who will be selected from an audition process this summer, Simpson continues her educational partnership with Alonzo King LINES Dance Center. For eight weeks, **PUSHLab** participants will immerse themselves in a creative process culminating in Saephanh’s first piece for the participants.

Performance highlights for **PUSHfest 2017** include the return of Bay Area Bharatanatyam performer Lalli Venkat, and two group works by New York-based choreographers Jamal Jackson Dance Company and Rebecca McCormac’s CoreDance Contemporary. (See below for complete lineup.)

PUSHfest 2017 Promo Video: <https://youtu.be/av2H41Qy5cl>

World Premiere of Simpson’s *Mothership (Part II)*

PUSH Company presents the world premiere of *Mothership (Part II)*, the next installment of a three-part series by Simpson commissioned by the African American Theater Alliance for Independence (AATAIN), San Francisco Grants for the Arts, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation.

For *Mothership (Part II)*, Simpson again investigates Afrofuturism -- an artistic movement begun in mid-1990s predicated on imagining the past, examining the present, and predicting the future, often in somewhat science fiction-like terms. This second series sets itself apart from the first by examining indigenous peoples in a futuristic setting and will be performed by the full company. Simpson’s collaborators include costume designers Kristine Doiel and Fely Tchaco Martin.

Like an intriguing Sci-Fi novel, the work interrogates cultural traditions and appropriations alongside elements of new identity, specifically what is the Black experience in an intercultural setting? *Mothership (Part II)* borrows from current events while exploring social movements, cultural histories, and national identity in tandem with interrogating actions around defamiliarizing what is socially familiar. In this vein, Simpson will create new media and set elements to round out the piece.

“While working with a group of Black mothers this year on a separate project, I found it is almost impossible for us as people to conceive and discuss the future while we were focused on moments of survival.” Simpson explains, “Whereas I’ve approached my dances in a survivalist form, this new work allows me to imagine marginalized bodies in a space beyond the boundaries of this world. How we persevere is dependent upon having the capacity to use our imaginations.”

About PUSH Dance Company

Described as “emotional and kinetic” (*SF Bay Guardian*), Raissa Simpson’s **PUSH Dance Company** (founded 2005) has performed to critical acclaim while building upon the philosophy that pure movement and intellect can coexist and with a commitment to outreach and dance education programs, including **PUSHfest** (founded 2013). Recent major presentations include *Disequilibira (2015)*, which also marked a debut of Raissa Simpson’s set design for her dances. Simpson’s *Mothership (Part I)* premiered as part of **PUSHfest 2016**.

Hailed by *Dance Spirit Magazine* as “reflective contemporary choreography,” Simpson’s work has been performed in 50 venues across the country, including Dance St. Louis Spring to Dance Emerson Festival, Links Hall in Chicago, Ferst Center for the Arts at Georgia Tech, Joyce SoHo, Washington Ensemble Theater, Evolve Dance Festival in NY, Los Angeles Theater Center, Black Choreographers Festival, UC Davis, Sacramento State, Stanford University, SF State University, ODC Theater, Museum of the African Diaspora, Renberg Theater, and other venues.

Simpson has been honored with the Magrit Mondavi Award, ChoreoProject’s People’s Choice Award, BADw’s Choreographer of the Year 2012, and ATTAIN in association with Hewlett Foundation. She has held residencies at the Garage Artspace, Zaccho Studio, African American Art & Culture Complex, and Margaret Jenkin’s CHIME.

PUSH Dance Company and Raissa Simpson have received support by the California Arts Council, the African American Art & Culture Complex and Resident Artist Incubator, San Francisco Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts, Zellerbach Family Foundation, African American Theater Alliance for Independence (AATAIN) a project of the Hewlett Foundation, CA\$H, Dancers’ Group Lighting in Dance Award, SF Foundation, ODC Theater’s Fleishhacker Opportunity Fund, The Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Grants for the Arts , and generous individual donors.

Tickets for **PUSHfest 2017** are priced at \$28 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$15 for seniors and students, or \$50 for a Festival pass to both programs. A 10% discount is available for groups of 10 or more. Tickets and Festival passes can be purchased online at www.pushdance.org/festival.

PUSHfest 2017 Promo Video: <https://youtu.be/av2H41Qy5cl>

Hi-Res Photos are available for download at: <http://www.pushdance.org/ourphotos>.

Company Website: www.pushdance.org

PUSHfest Program Information
(indicates a world premiere)*

PROGRAM A: Friday September 22, 8pm & Sunday September 24, 4:30pm

Tanya Chianese, ka-nei-see | collective (*Berkeley*)

Claudia Anata Hubiak, The Anata Project (*San Francisco*)

Kendra Kimbrough-Barnes, Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble (*Oakland*)

Halifu Osumare, Halifu Osumare & the Sacramento State University Dancers (*Sacramento*)

Agatha "Agatron" Rupniewski, Iron Lotus (*San Francisco*)

Liv Schaffer & Cole Vernon (*Oakland*)

Adrianna Thompson, SOULSKIN Dance Company (*San Francisco*)

Lalli Venkat (*Fremont*)

Katerina Wong (*San Francisco*)*

Raissa Simpson, PUSH Dance Company (*San Francisco*)*

PROGRAM B: Saturday September 23, 8pm & Sunday September 24, 7:30pm

Adrian Arias (*Oakland*)

Lorelei Bayne (*Sacramento*)

Claire Calalo, for change dance collective (*Berkeley*)

Mary Carbonara, Dancers' Performance Project (*San Francisco*)*

Kathryn Florez, Fullstop Dance (*San Francisco*)

Jamal Jackson, Jamal Jackson Dance Company (*New York*)

Rebecca McCormac, CoreDance Contemporary (*New York*)

Kao Vey Saephanh, PUSH Dance Company + PUSHLab (*San Francisco*)*

Raissa Simpson, PUSH Dance Company (*San Francisco*)

For complete Artist Bios and more information, go to <http://www.pushdance.org/festival>.

P U S H

CALENDAR LISTING

DANCE, PERFORMING ARTS

"Ambitious" – *The New Yorker*
"Pushing the standard." – *SF Chronicle*
"Sleek and sexy." -- *SF Guardian*

WHO/WHAT:

PUSH Dance Company Presents

12th Home Season and Fourth Annual PUSHfest Dance Festival

Featuring two different programs of local and visiting artists over four evenings;

Mothership (Part II) - World Premiere, choreography by Raissa Simpson;

World Premieres by, Mary Carbonara, Kao Vey Saepanh & Katerina Wong

WHEN:

Program A:

Friday September 22, 8pm

Sunday September 24, 4:30pm

Program B:

Saturday September 23, 8pm

Sunday September 24, 7:30pm

WHERE:

ODC Theater, 3153 - 17th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

TICKETS:

\$28 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$15 for seniors and students

\$50 for a Festival pass that includes both programs.

10% discount for groups of 10 or more

Tickets and Festival passes can be purchased online at <http://www.pushdance.org/festival>.

BOX OFFICE: 415.863.9834 or www.pushdance.org/festival

MORE INFORMATION:

Hi-Res Photos: www.pushdance.org/ourphotos

PUSHfest 2017 Promo Video: <https://youtu.be/EBQFA40zQb0>

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