

# SHAPESHIFT



Sharing powerful stories through dance...

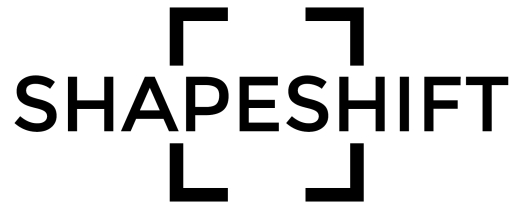


# [HISTORY]

Minneapolis based SHAPESHIFT is a hip-hop/contemporary storytelling dance company that uses a fusion of dance styles to create powerful theatrical productions tackling issues of social justice, sexual identity, family dysfunction, loss, love and human emotions.

SHAPESHIFT, a multicultural dance collective, whose founder performed with Prince's band 3rdEyeGirl and which has danced in front of 20,000 strong at Xcel Energy Center, was created on the fly.

Six years ago, Artistic Director, Ashley Selmer and a collective of then 9 dancers, joined together to create a one time show for their generation – something fresh and innovative that would feature all types of dancers from various socio-economic backgrounds, trained in dance styles from hip-hop, contemporary, to modern and Ballet.





# [MISSION]

To connect diverse dancers and carve creative and collaborative spaces!

# [VISION]

Engaging, educating and empowering dancers, choreographers, students & teachers and the community through theatrical storytelling productions, live performances and workshop environments - sharing our joy of dance around the globe.

# [VALUE]

Connection & Collaboration



# [TESTIMONIALS]

*"We loved having your company here. Thanks again for the gift that is GREY SKIES BLUE. Our KC audiences and staff adored it."*

-David Kilpatrick  
Director of Education Programs and Productions  
The Kennedy Center

*"The storytelling, diverse cast, various dance styles, and the concept are all very compelling. The piece is lovely. The company is very talented and I applaud their creativity."*

-Dionne Kennedy  
President & CEO  
Performing Arts Fort Worth

*"I really loved the company and the work!! Powerful, beautiful, serious, also so uplifting and so positive - great balance."*

-Anthea Scouffas  
Engagement  
Education Director



# [CREATIVE DIRECTOR]

## [ASHLEY SELMER]

Ashley is the Founder and Creative Director of SHAPESHIFT. She is trained in Jazz, contemporary, ballet, hip-hop and African. Ashley's credits include SHAPESHIFT productions: *Grey Skies Blue*, *XI:XI*, *XI:XI: The Awakening*; Associate Choreographer for hip-hop musical *Last Stop On Market Street* (Children's Theatre Company); Associate Choreographer *In The Heights*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Ordway Center for Performing Arts); Ensemble *West Side Story*, 2nd Assistant Director *Irving Berlin's White Christmas* (Ordway Center for Performing Arts); Ensemble *The Amen Corner* (Guthrie/Penumbra Theater); Film/TV credits include: Commercial, MN Zoo, African Penguin Exhibit. You also may have seen Ashley on the concert stage for The Official Prince Tribute with her SHAPESHIFT squad at Xcel Energy Center. In the studio, Selmer draws from life's real and imaginary experiences to craft stories that emote feelings and reflect diversity & inclusion. She emphasizes technique but prefers utilizing each dancer's unique and beautiful movements as tools for telling, moving, and interwoven narratives.

*"I encourage SHAPESHIFT dancers to openly share their personal experiences, and together we design choreography that captures common elements that make us the same, in so many ways, despite our socioeconomic or racial differences."*





# [COMPANY DANCERS]



## [ALAN MURE] - CREATIVE TEAM

As a dancer and choreographer, Alan is a two- time Sage Award Nominee in the State of Minnesota. Born and raised in the Twin Cities, Alan has been performing 10+ years and has been sculpting his craft as an all-around performer. He is a member of SHAPESHIFT's Creative Team, Immortal Dance Team leader, Head Choreographer for LegacyLiveEnt, Co-Founder of Rebirth Of Quality Art, and Creative Director for Global recording artists RajiTheOne and Anjanie Da Artist.

## [GABRIEL BLACKBURN]

Gabriel started his movement training at the tender age of five at Out on a Limb Dance School, and he fell in love with the art form in high school, while attending the Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists in St. Paul Minnesota. Gabriel is continuing to perfect his craft as a BFA candidate at the University of Minnesota School of Dance. Performing is his passion, but also is a dance instructor and choreographer. Gabriel loves music, fashion, longboarding, and always tries to be the best friend, son, and brother that he can be.



# [COMPANY DANCERS]



## [COREY BOZEMAN]-CREATIVE TEAM

Corey began studying dance at age 13. He has trained with Mathew Janczewski of Arena Dance, Kenna Cottman with Voice of Culture, Amy Sackett, Deborah Johnson, Arturo Miles, Erin Thompson, Pandora, Betsy Maloney, Laura Ciganko, Carol Schwarzkopf, Sonya Tayeh and Mia Michaels. In 2010 Corey graduated from the Main Street of Performing Arts (MSSPA) with honors and an emphasis in dance performance. Following graduation, he was invited back to choreograph a contemporary piece titled “Twilight for the MSSPA Dance Company”. While serving as a significant contributor on SHAPESHIFT’S creative team, he also is a competitive dance instructor and choreographer at Turning Pointe Dance Studio in Eagan Minnesota, where he has received many national titles, including 2014’s Triple S National Grand Champion title.



## [LUIS NUFIO]

Luis (age 21) hails from the 612 area code (Minneapolis). He started training at SPCPA, where he excelled in numerous styles (Modern, Ballet, Jazz) and world dances (African, Hip-Hop, Character). He has studied intensively with Uri and Toni at TU Dance. Among many other acting and dancing projects, his credits include performer and co-creator with LegacyLiveEntertainment and New Black City dance crew.

# [COMPANY DANCERS]



[RACHEL MILLER]

Rachel has been dancing since the age of 5 at dance studios throughout Minnesota such as Studio 4 Dance. She is trained in ballet, contemporary, lyrical, modern, hip-hop, jazz, musical theatre, pointe, and tap. Recently graduating from the University of Minnesota with a BFA in Dance, she has had the opportunity to have worked with artists from New York, Los Angeles, and the Twin Cities area including Gregory Dolbashian, Wynn Fricke, and Gerald Casel. She also has trained in intensives in Italy and LA, performed backup for Tori Kelly at the Official Prince Tribute Concert in 2016, etc. Rachel pays it forward as she also is in contemporary dance company Black Label Movement, and teaches/choreographs movement/technique in contemporary, hip hop, lyrical and ballet at Studio 4 Dance in Burnsville.



[NATE 'CRASH' MALISCKE]

Nate Maliscke started Breaking in 2012, and since then has taken his passion around the globe. Nate has competed on some of the largest breaking events such as Outbreak Europe, Silverback Open Championships, and Freestyle Session. He has travel and performed in 6 different countries with companies such as SHAPESHIFT, Break Free Ministries, and IMPACT Spain doing anything from large-scale stadium events, to small charity events. Nate has performed at The Lincoln Center, Cowles Center for Performing Arts, the Barbara Barker Center For Dance and many others. Today Nate is actively pursuing his passion of competing around the country with his crew Squad 7 and continuing to spread light to others through his gift of dance.



# [COMPANY DANCERS]

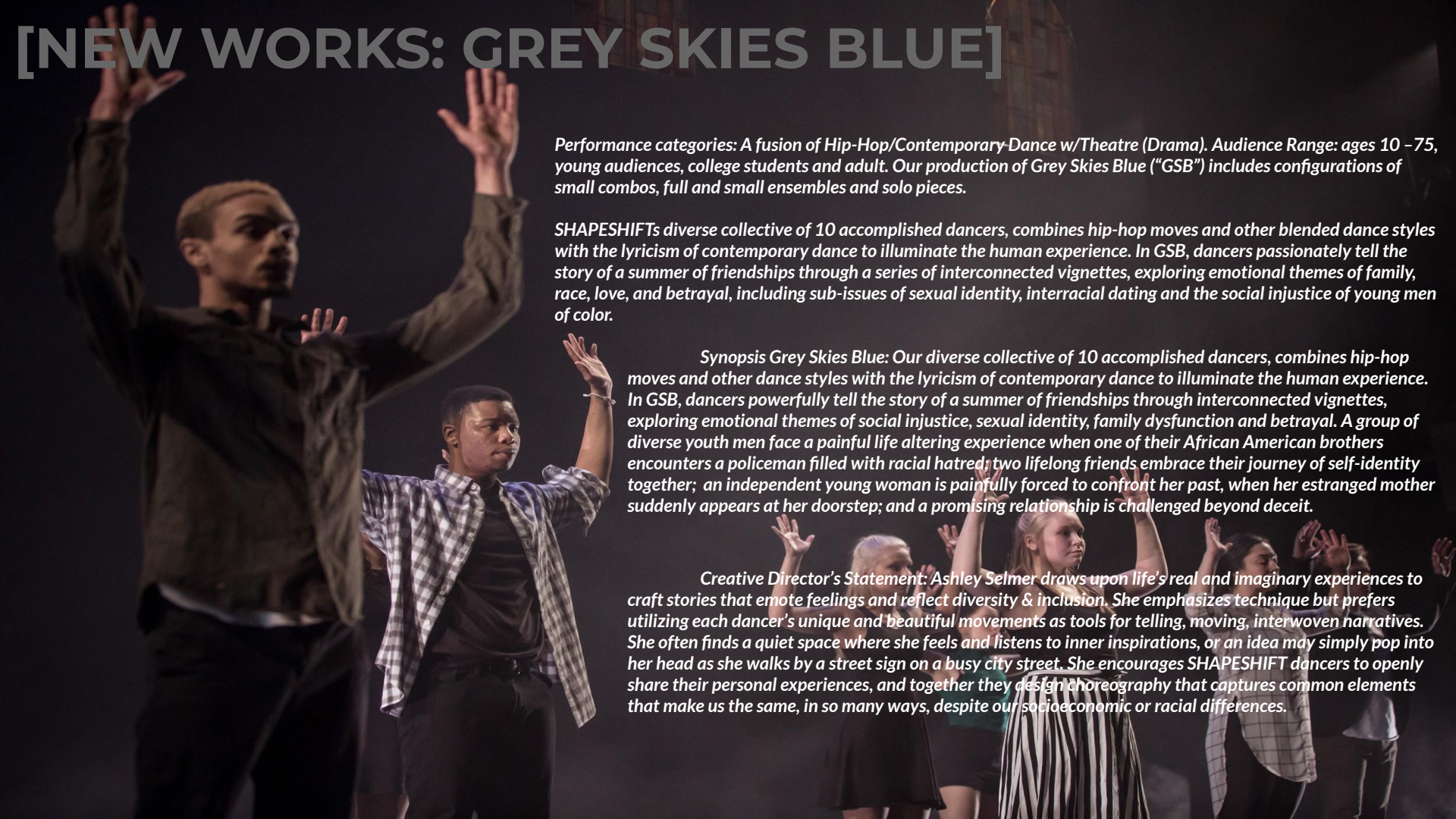
## [NATE KAY]

Nate was born and raised in South Minneapolis. Nate is a humble student of dance and hip hop. He would describe his style as unorthodox like Prince, not wanting to be closed into a limited box in anything. Nate enjoys cooking and working out at the gym with his friends. He is looking forward to continuing his training and exploration throughout his journey with SHAPESHIFT!



## [JESSIKA AKPAKA]

Jessika is originally from Memphis, TN, and moved to Minneapolis at a very young age. She began her first formal dance training 7 years ago at Lundstrum Center for the Performing Artist where she was introduced to jazz, ballet, and musical theatre. She has studied horton and other dance styles at TU Dance Center. Continuing her gratitude for the arts, Jessika is a 2015 graduate from Perpich Center for Arts Education where she studied dance. She communicates predominately through elements of modern dance, hip hop, and improvisation. She has performed at The Guthrie, The Ordway, Northrop, The Kennedy Center, The Lincoln Center, and The Xcel Energy Center. In short, she defines her style as self truth, self experience mixed with modern, hip hop, and improvisation. She hopes to bring about healing, change, and conversation to the world through her artistry. She currently dances with the dance company SHAPESHIFT and with different artist in the Twin Cities.



# [NEW WORKS: GREY SKIES BLUE]

*Performance categories: A fusion of Hip-Hop/Contemporary Dance w/Theatre (Drama). Audience Range: ages 10 –75, young audiences, college students and adult. Our production of Grey Skies Blue (“GSB”) includes configurations of small combos, full and small ensembles and solo pieces.*

*SHAPESHIFTs diverse collective of 10 accomplished dancers, combines hip-hop moves and other blended dance styles with the lyricism of contemporary dance to illuminate the human experience. In GSB, dancers passionately tell the story of a summer of friendships through a series of interconnected vignettes, exploring emotional themes of family, race, love, and betrayal, including sub-issues of sexual identity, interracial dating and the social injustice of young men of color.*

*Synopsis Grey Skies Blue: Our diverse collective of 10 accomplished dancers, combines hip-hop moves and other dance styles with the lyricism of contemporary dance to illuminate the human experience. In GSB, dancers powerfully tell the story of a summer of friendships through interconnected vignettes, exploring emotional themes of social injustice, sexual identity, family dysfunction and betrayal. A group of diverse youth men face a painful life altering experience when one of their African American brothers encounters a policeman filled with racial hatred; two lifelong friends embrace their journey of self-identity together; an independent young woman is painfully forced to confront her past, when her estranged mother suddenly appears at her doorstep; and a promising relationship is challenged beyond deceit.*

*Creative Director's Statement: Ashley Selmer draws upon life's real and imaginary experiences to craft stories that emote feelings and reflect diversity & inclusion. She emphasizes technique but prefers utilizing each dancer's unique and beautiful movements as tools for telling, moving, interwoven narratives. She often finds a quiet space where she feels and listens to inner inspirations, or an idea may simply pop into her head as she walks by a street sign on a busy city street. She encourages SHAPESHIFT dancers to openly share their personal experiences, and together they design choreography that captures common elements that make us the same, in so many ways, despite our socioeconomic or racial differences.*

# [PRODUCTION TEAM]

## [SALIMA SEALE - Stage Manager]

Salima is a Minneapolis-based Stage Manager who hails from Washington, D.C. . She holds a BA in Theatre Arts from Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN. In addition to working with SHAPESHIFT, she is the Production Stage Manager and Open Eye Figure Theater in Minneapolis, MN. Recent production credits include Authentic (Penumbra Theatre Company), New Griots Festival 2017 (Guthrie Theater), The Red Shoes (Open Eye Figure Theatre), #SayHerName (Intermedia Arts). She is a budding Gardener, lover of cooking gadgets, and Take5 candy bar enthusiast.



## [JAMES GAVINS - Creative Collaborator]

James is an all-around artist who was born and raised in Chicago, IL. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he attained a B.A. in Theater & Drama. In 2008, James was granted the First Wave Hip Hop & Urban Arts Scholarship. He started off as a bboy (breakdancing) in his early teens, which led into popping (funkstyles). He then took a two-year break from college to dance professionally with GForce Entertainment on various Carnival CruiseLine ships. Thereafter, he returned to University of Wisconsin and completed his degree. James also is the Arts Education Outreach Specialist at UW - Madison. James' goal is for youth to turn their ideas into life changing opportunities.



# [PRODUCTION TEAM]



## [H. ADAM HARRIS - Acting Coach & Equity Consultant]

H. Adam Harris is an actor, director, teaching artist, and .cultural equity consultant. He works at the intersection of theatre, education, social justice, and community engagement. H. Adam is the Education Coordinator at the Playwrights' Center; Lead Facilitator at Penumbra Theatre Company; a resident teaching artist with the Guthrie Theater and CTC, and a freelance equity, diversity, and inclusion consultant for various organizations. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA Actor Training Program



## [MARY SHABATURA - Lighting Designer]

Mary is a Minneapolis-based lighting designer for theater, opera, and dance. Shabatura has previously designed for Theater Latté Da (*A Christmas Carol*, *Petersen*, *Ragtime*, *Gypsy*), Artistry (*Wit*, *The Secret Garden*, and more), Concordia University (*The Rhinoceros*), Transatlantic Love Affair (co-designer, *Promise Land*), Shakespeare Youth Theater (*The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet*), The Moving Company (*For Sale*), and others. She is resident lighting designer for Dark & Stormy Productions. Mary holds a B.A. in Theater Arts from the University of Minnesota.

# [PERFORMANCES]

University of MN-Morris | **October 25th 2019**

Saint Paul, MN

Sparkle Conference | **October 4-6, 2019**

Minneapolis, MN

O'Shaughnessy Auditorium | **February 19-22, 2020**

Minneapolis, MN

Saint Mary's University | **April 2020**

Winona, MN

Theatre L'Homme Dieu | **July 7-14, 2019**

Alexandria, MN



# [ENGAGEMENT]

## Ordway Center for Performing Arts

Flint Hill Children's Festival (2014 - 2017)

## Kennedy Center D.C

Talk Back (October 2017)

## Cowles Center Performing Arts

Talk Back (2015 - 2016)

## Boys & Girls Club

Performing Arts Youth Arts Initiative (2018)

## Minneapolis Children's Hospital

Performance (2017-2018)

## We Day Concert Tour, Xcel Energy Center

Performances (2015-2017)

## PIM Arts High School

Dance workshop & Discussion (2017)

## MTS Elementary

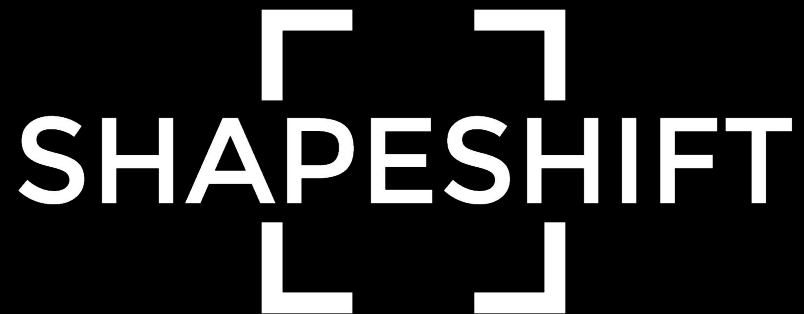
Dance/theater workshop, post discussion.

## Community and Educational Outreach

**SHAPESHIFT** members truly enjoy engaging in community and educational outreach. One of their greatest strengths is engaging people and making all feel welcome. Our dancers, who are trained in Latin, African, Ballet, hip-hop, contemporary, tap and modern, host dynamic works workshops for all ages & levels. Our collective has participated in numerous educational workshops/lectures in the Twin Cities 7 County metro area, including outstate Minnesota communities, and throughout the US. As part of our outreach, we provide both interactive discussions along with master classes, and we are open to residencies. We can supply a study guide to further enhance dialogue following our educational performances too. We also offer a variety of workshops, master classes, school programming, lecture/speakers, and talk backs!







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