

# ***PRISONER OF TEHRAN***

## **PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES**



### **JAMES CROKER**

Originally a sheep shearer from Australia, James came to Canada to study dance, theatre and mime at Guelph University, Guelph Ontario, and the former Academy of Performing Arts School in Cambridge, Ontario. James worked for the Academy for over a decade, creating and performing productions in China, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and North America. Eventually James became the arts school director, teaching and training international young people in dance, theatre and mime. In 1990 James began his own company MOTUS O and has since been working the roles of Co-Artistic Director as well as Choreographer, Performer, Set and Prop Designer. He has created over 70 original works for the company and has toured them throughout England, Australia, the U.S.A. and Canada. James also is a teacher in dance and theatre with repeated teaching engagements in various Ontario High Schools in their drama and dance programs as well as leads workshops for individuals with Aphasia, Autism and those in Hospice. James is a Co-director of MOTUS O's Junior Company training and creating shows for youth ages 10 – 18.

### **CYNTHIA CROKER**

Cynthia grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota studying all forms of dance ranging from ballet and jazz to tap dancing on dinner plates. She trained professionally in voice, flute and gymnastics as well performed in many musical theatre productions. After studying vocal education at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota she came to Canada and joined the staff of the Academy of Performing Arts School (Cambridge, Ontario) where she taught master classes in jazz dance, voice and flute and directed numerous productions internationally. Cynthia is a Co-Founder of MOTUS O as well as holds the positions of Co-Artistic Director, Choreographer, Performer, Teacher and Costume Designer. She has created over 70 original works for the company and has toured with them throughout England, the U.S.A. and Canada. Cynthia teaches movement with various social service organizations including individuals with Parkinson's, Cerebral Palsy, Hospice, Autism and Aphasia. As well, Cynthia provides Artist in Residence programs for School Boards in Ontario; partnering with teachers to include innovative dance programs in their schools. Cynthia is a Co-director of MOTUS O's Junior Company training and creating shows for youth ages 10 – 18.

### **JACK LANGENHUIZEN**

A former national figure skater, Jack began, at the age of 18, his training in dance at Toronto's Roland and Romaine Dance School, including jazz, tap, ballet, musical theatre and ballroom. He also took summer classes at York University in Toronto for 2 years. After completing a Bachelor of Arts Degree at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo Ontario he joined the former Academy of Performing Arts School (Cambridge, Ontario) where he taught and continued his studies in dance now including modern and contact improvisation. He then toured with the Academy's dance school in Europe, Central America and throughout North America. In 1990 Jack co-founded MOTUS O as well as took the roles of General Manager, Choreographer, Performer and Teacher. Jack has created over 70 original works for the Company and has toured and taught with them throughout England, Australia, U.S.A. and Canada. Jack continues to tour with MOTUS O as well as provides movement classes with various social service organizations including individuals with Aphasia, Autism and those involved in Hospice. He also teaches and choreographs for high schools and figure skating clubs throughout Ontario.



### **PETRA BLENKHORNE**

Petra makes the most of the great variety in her life. When not on the road with MOTUS O (which is her favourite) she can be found trying to perfect the dance of life – balancing several jobs and home life with two rapidly changing teenage boys. Thanks to husband Ted for pulling up the slack whenever dance calls! Having danced as a child, Petra pursued her passion for more training at the former Academy of Performing Arts School (Cambridge, Ontario). Upon completion of courses in a variety of dance styles, she joined MOTUS O in 1992 helping launch the company's first production Human Knots. After touring productions with the company for several years, Petra took a hiatus to begin a family and rejoined MOTUS O in 2016 to continue in her love for dance.

### **EMILY REDFORD**

Born in Markham, Ontario, Emily started dancing at the age of 2, studying various styles including ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, contemporary, ballroom, and many more. At the age of 6, she began to compete and since then has studied with masters such as Jonathan Morin, Travis Knights and Joseph Wiggan. She discovered her love for drama at the age of 10 and has been performing in shows ever since. She is currently a part of the Arts Unionville Dramatic Arts Program at Unionville High School, where she continues to develop her creativity as an artist. Emily is thrilled to be performing professionally with MOTUS O, and can't wait to share her experience with all of you!

## **STAGE MANAGER BIOGRAPHY**

### **JUSTIN CROKER**

Justin Croker has in some ways always been working with MOTUS O. Son of the company's co-founders, James and Cynthia Croker, Justin was surrounded by the performance world since he was born. Growing into a talented visual artist he inadvertently began supporting the company with his versatile skills ranging from costume and prop/set construction, poster designs, video editing and now stage management. Justin has been a professional DJ and Event Producer for the past 8 years. Working over 100 events annually his DJ work extends into clubs, weddings and corporate events. Notable gigs include the Bill Clinton Foundation (Toronto), Roberto Alomar's Wedding (Toronto) and numerous other NHL events including the Toronto Maple Leafs Official Playoff launch in 2013 (Toronto). When Justin isn't Disc Jockeying or working with MOTUS O, you will find him skateboarding in your local neighbourhood or tucked away in a studio working on new visual art projects.