

Deconstruction Productions presents:



X and da Spirit by Donovan Hayden

Company Bios:

Deconstruction Productions:

Playwright/Performer Donovan Hayden, and Director Rais Clarke-Mendes first worked together helping to lead the Soulpepper's Black Youth Theatre Intensive Summer Mixtape in 2021. After Rais graduated from the National Theatre School of Canada, and Donovan from York University, the two teamed up again to develop this production for the fringe. With mentorship from Fringe and Toronto theatre veteran Brendan McMurtry-Howlett, they assembled a talented team of Black and POC artists for this production including York Theatre grad Trinity Lloyd, Edmonton hip-hop artist Just Moe on the sound design, and street artist Chris Leal recreating his original mural that inspired this story.

All of these young creators are artists-to-watch in Toronto's theatre scene over the coming years.

Cast and Crew:

Donovan Hayden (he/him) – Playwright and 'X'

Donovan is a Black theatre creator, organizer and activist. He strives to tell stories that center the dynamic lives of Black people and their everyday resistance. Calling both Pittsburgh and Toronto home, he is currently based in Toronto and an organizer at the non-profit Progress Toronto.

Rais Clarke-Mendes (she/her) - Director

Rais is a Trinidadian-Barbadian theatre artist currently based in Toronto, ON. She is a recent graduate of the Acting Program at the National Theatre School of Canada. Throughout her artistic career, she intends to collaborate with innovative artists to reimagine and reinvent the boundaries of what art can look like.

Trinity Lloyd (she/they) – ‘MC’

Trinity is a Jamaican and Filipino actor, director and creator based in Toronto. Trinity values bringing a myriad of lived experiences to the forefront of theatre, and is primarily focused on centering IBPOC voices.

Brendan McMurtry-Howlett (he/him) – Production Mentor.

Brendan is a director, performer, creator, and teacher. Brendan is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada and completed his MA at York University in Theatre and Performance Studies.

Nilanka Nisalagel (he/him) – Stage Manager

Theatre Practitioner based in Sri Lanka along with 10 years of experience as an Actor, Director and Writer. Recently moved to Canada and explored the Canadian theatre experience with every aspect of theatre from top to bottom. First-time participant at the Toronto Fringe Festival.

Mohamed Ahmed (he/him) – Sound Designer

Mohamed is a Sudani-Canadian Artist (Whatever that means) from Millwoods, on the southside of Edmonton. A recent graduate of the National Theatre School and a musician under the name “Just Moe”.

Chris Leal (he/him) – Set Designer

Chris is a self-taught visual artist turned graffiti/mural artist . Growing up in the city of Toronto has led his drive and motivation towards the arts and how it affects the spaces and people around it. Chris considers himself a multi-disciplinary artist here to make you think.

Emily Pople (they/them) – Lighting Designer

Emily is overjoyed to be working their first Fringe and being back in person after working in online theatre. They have recently graduated from University of Toronto - Scarborough and are excited to dive into full-time theatre. Within this year's Fringe they are also Stage Managing for *YES, VENUS, I AM*.

Jan Cruz (she/her) – Graphic Design and Marketing

Jan is an art director, illustrator and content creator from Toronto, with a degree in Advertising from OCAD University. Her focus is to communicate about social issues through design. You can view her portfolio and get to know Jan at: <https://meetjan.com/> or visit her Instagram @sailorblooms.