

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **KUUMBA: Toronto's Longest Running Celebration of Black History Returns for its 24<sup>th</sup> Year**

Featuring an all-star lineup of speakers and performers including Trey Anthony, Gina Yashere, Dominique Jackson and others

Free and ticketed events take place this February at Harbourfront Centre

February 1 – 28, 2019

### [Download Festival Images](#)

**Toronto, ON (January 28, 2019)** – Toronto's longest running Black History Month event, Harbourfront Centre's **KUUMBA** festival will celebrate the heritage, culture and traditions of black Canadians with a series of talks, workshops, events and performances throughout February. The 2019 festival features a powerful lineup of thought leaders, comedians and performers from Canada and around the world including award-winning playwright and producer **Trey Anthony** (*'da Kink in my Hair*), **Gina Yashere** (*The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*), **Dominique Jackson** (Golden Globe nominated *Pose*), and **Legendary Renaldo Tisci** (ball icon and Alvin Ailey alumnus) among many others.

**KUUMBA** takes its name from the Swahili word for "creativity," a theme that is central to Harbourfront Centre's long-standing commitment to provide relevant artistic, cultural and educational experiences.

More than half of the events are free with advance registration available online. Ticketed events start at \$10 and are available for purchase at [harbourfrontcentre.com](http://harbourfrontcentre.com), in-person or by calling the Harbourfront Centre Box Office at 416-973-4000. Tickets on sale now. For more information and a full lineup of programming, visit [harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba](http://harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba).

### **KUUMBA Highlights:**

- **Journey to Black Liberation Symposium – Friday, February 1 to Saturday, February 2, various times, Harbourfront Centre Campus (FREE with registration)**  
This symposium featuring nine panel discussions and workshops kicks off the festival with an in-depth exploration of community, belonging, race and politics. Featured discussions include: **What is Blackness? A Conversation about Race, Politics and Gender in the Black Community**; **What are Black Fathers Teaching Their Sons About Love?**; and **Black People Being Honest: A Conversation Around Monogamy, Polyamory and Black Love**. Co-curated by Brandon Hay (Black Daddies Club), Twysted Miyake Mugler (co-founder of the Toronto Kiki Ballroom Alliance) and Michael Roberson Maasai Maison-Margiela (consultant on *Pose*). Visit [harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba](http://harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba) for a full schedule.
- **I AM WOMAN – A Conversation with Dominique Jackson – Saturday, February 2, 2:30pm, Harbourfront Centre Theatre (FREE with registration)**  
As part of the Journey to Black Liberation Symposium, model, actress and author, Dominique Jackson ("Elektra Abundance" on the 2019 Golden Globe nominated series *Pose*), shares experiences, challenges and achievements that have made her the woman she is today. After enduring intolerance and discrimination, Jackson left school and moved to NYC, where she won six titles as a member of the Ball Community, was featured in *Vogue* and the *New York Times*, and penned her autobiographical memoir *The Transsexual from Tobago (Revised)*.
- **The Black Liberation Ball – Saturday February 2, 9:30pm, Longboat Hall (\$10 in advance, \$15 at the door)**  
A signature event at **KUUMBA**, this 'vogue' competition pays tribute to the ball culture of NYC and provides a transnational stage where performers from across North America come together to illuminate themes of race, gender and sexual orientation. Co-curated by Brandon Hay, Twysted Miyake Mugler, and Michael Roberson Maasai Maison-Margiela, the evening features ball icon Legendary Renaldo Tisci, (Precious from the Vice TV series *My House*), Toronto's DJ Blackcat and DJ Karim Olen Ash (named "one to watch" in 2019 by *NOW*).

.../more

- Trey Anthony's OH NO! I'm Becoming My Mother and Other Fears of Black Women – Friday, February 15, 8pm, Harbourfront Centre Theatre (\$35+)**

The visionary and hilarious **Trey Anthony** (award-winning playwright, executive producer, actor and comedian; *'da Kink in my Hair*) returns to Harbourfront Centre for the second installment of **KUUMBA 2018's A Black Girl In Love (With Herself)**. Focusing on black women's relationships with their mothers and themselves, this interactive night of discussion explores lessons learned from mothers, infertility, choosing not to have children, and how to balance work, love, and motherhood. Featuring a screening of the short documentary film *How Black Mothers Say I Love You*, the evening promises to have attendees laughing, crying and yelling "yes girl!"
- Trey Anthony's Dat Gyal Funny! Ft. Gina Yashere – Saturday, February 16, 8pm, Harbourfront Centre Theatre (\$35+)**

The show that took Toronto by storm at the 2018 **KUUMBA** festival is back by popular demand! Hosted and produced by Trey Anthony, starring stand-up comedian and British Correspondent on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* Gina Yashere, and featuring Martha Chaves, Hoodo Hersi, Rhoma Spencer and Enoje, the evening promises to be a night of pure belly laughs.
- Black Writers Matter – Wednesday, February 20, 7:30pm, Lakeside Terrace (FREE with registration)**

Presented in partnership with the Toronto International Festival of Authors, the evening celebrates the release of the *Black Writers Matter*, an anthology of African Canadian creative nonfiction from established and emerging writers. Editor Whitney French moderates a conversation with authors Scott Fraser, Simone Dalton, Angela Wright and Phillip Dwight Morgan about the importance of sharing black narratives, the origins and personal significance of their respective pieces, and how each of their stories contribute to a nuanced understanding of the black Canadian experience.
- Reflections of Love – Friday, February 1 to Thursday, February 28, Marilyn Brewer Community Space (FREE)**

This moving and thought-provoking photography exhibition explores the many forms of love within black communities through reflections of self, identity and acceptance. Curated by Ashley McKenzie-Barnes (a curator for 2019 Nuit Blanche), *Reflections of Love* features the works of 21-year-old NYC-based Quil Lemons, also known as GLITTERBOY; multidisciplinary artist and founder of sportswear label NEEDS&WANTS, Sean Brown; Nigerian photo-based visual artist Stella Fakiyesi; portrait photographer Jah Grey; and prominent photographer and cinematographer Yannick Anton.

Presented by TD The Ready Commitment. Funded by the Government of Canada. Financé par le gouvernement du Canada.

#### About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is a registered, charitable not-for-profit cultural organization operating a 10-acre campus on Toronto's central waterfront. A leading international centre for contemporary arts, culture, and ideas, we inspire audiences and visitors with a breadth of bold, ambitious and engaging experiences.

#### #Kuumba2019

Twitter: [@HarbourfrontTO](https://twitter.com/HarbourfrontTO)

Instagram: [@harbourfrontcentre](https://www.instagram.com/harbourfrontcentre)

Getting Here: [harbourfrontcentre.com/gettinghere/index.cfm](http://harbourfrontcentre.com/gettinghere/index.cfm)

#### Media Contacts:

Tran Nguyen, KWT Global  
647-490-6601

[tnguyen@kwtglobal.com](mailto:tnguyen@kwtglobal.com)

Andrea McLoughlin, KWT Global  
647-490-6602

[amcloughlin@kwtglobal.com](mailto:amcloughlin@kwtglobal.com)