

Visual Story for the Relaxed Performance of
How We Breathe



Relaxed Performance:

Monday May 20th, 9:30pm

Aki Studio at Native Earth Performing Arts

585 Dundas St E, Toronto, ON M5A 2B7

ABOUT THE SHOW:

The show is one hour long, with no intermission. It takes place at the Aki Studio at Native Earth Performing Arts. An usher will help you find your way into the theatre. There will be no assigned seating in the theatre, therefore you may sit in any unoccupied seating.



Photo of the Aki Studio At Native Earth Performing Arts

When you enter the space, there will be three chairs at the front of the stage along with a white cloth in front of them stretching across the width of the stage. Behind the chairs will be a table. There will be a backdrop with different coloured fabric hanging off.

WHAT TO EXPECT

How We Breathe is a play written by a collaborative team including: Rais Clarke-Mendes, Quenelle George, Alicia Plummer and Chel Carmichael. The play is an exploration into the complexities of mental health within the Black community.

The conversation is prompted when Andre confesses to Monique and Ricardo that one of their friends recently committed suicide. Following this, the three friends reflect on their own experiences that challenge them to assess their own mental health. Throughout the play, we are taken through “educational moments” where the cast explicitly explains reasons for why mental health within the Black community is stigmatized.

CONTENT WARNINGS

The play is an exploration of mental health. There are discussions of suicide included in the performance. The script was made within a safe and accessible space where each collaborator could create their own boundaries both physically and emotionally. These boundaries were treated with respect by each member of the team.

MUSIC

There is a lot of music used during the transitions in the play. For the relaxed performance, the volume will be slightly lowered.

LIGHTS

There will be various light changes throughout the performance. For the relaxed performance, the brightness will be slightly lowered. There will be house lights on for the duration of the performance.

SET

The set design is abstract. The set consists of three chairs and a table which the cast will move around the stage throughout the play. Additionally, there will be three clothing racks at the back of the stage with cloth hanging down them. The cast will use this cloth in various ways throughout the performance. These props are used by the characters to create various settings throughout the performance.

Towards the end of the play, Andre will recite a poem while Ricardo and Monique wrap cloth around them. At times they will pull the cloth a little tighter around Andre. Chel who plays Andre, feels no physical harm during this scene.



Picture of Andre (in our rehearsal space) with cloth wrapped around them

MEET THE PERFORMERS:



ALICIA PLUMMER

Alicia is playing Monique in *How We Breathe*. Throughout the play the audience gains an inside look into Monique's life and how she manages her mental health. Alicia also plays several other characters.



CHEL CARMICHAEL

Chel is playing Andre in *How We Breathe*. Throughout the play the audience gains an inside look into Andre's life and how they manage their mental health. Chel also plays several other characters.



QUENELLE GEORGE

Quenelle is playing Ricardo in *How We Breathe*. Ricardo is skeptical of discussing mental health. We gain an inside look into Ricardo's life and how they manage their mental health. Quenelle also plays several other characters.

CREDITS

These people created the show:

Written by: **Rais Clarke-Mendes, Alicia Plummer, Chel Carmichael and Quenelle George**

Directed by: **Rais Clarke-Mendes**

Starring: **Alicia Plummer, Chel Carmichael and Quenelle George**

Stage Manager: **Malaika Eyoh**

Set + Costume Design: **Rais Clarke-Mendes and Malaika Eyoh**

Lighting Design: **Duaa Zahra**

Presenting Partners: **Obsidian Theatre Company, Little Black Afro Theatre Company and Workman Arts**

The show is produced by **The Paprika Festival**