



(R)evolutions New Work Festival

presents a Staged Reading of

Challenging Brown

by Cris Eli Blak

Wednesday, May 31, 2023 @ 7pm

Directed by Cassandra Svacha

Dramaturgy by Nya Johnson

CAST

Gordon Brown:	Ural Grant
Dolores Brown:	Princess Beyoncé Jones
Betty Adams:	Anne Damman
Vincent Adams:	Billy Konsoer
Price Dennis:	Dominik Greyson
Jojo:	Cassius Merriweather
Stage Directions:	Olivia Kiefer



Cris Eli Blak (he/him) is an emerging Black playwright whose work has been performed around the world. He is the winner of the inaugural Black Broadway Men Playwriting Initiative. He is currently the artist in residence at the State University of New York - Oswego, a 2023 FORGE Fellow, and the recipient of the inaugural Emerging Playwrights Fellowship from The Scoundrel & Scamp Theatre. He was a resident playwright with Fosters Theatrical Artists Residency, Paterson Performing Arts Development Council and La Lengua Teatro en Español/AlterTheater Ensemble; the recipient of the Michael Bradford Residency from Quick Silver Theatre Company; and was in the inaugural class of fellows for the Black Theatre Coalition.



Cassandra Svacha (she/her) is a theatre-maker specializing in new works, devised theatre, adaptations, and musicals. Most recently in 2022 her collaborative show Hurricane Season took the Winners Circle Award, and Audience Favorite Awards at the Collab 24 Devised Theatre Festival. Other Past works include Dry Powder, FWP, Love and Information, Feral, Beauty and the Beast, Once Upon a Mattress, and Oliver. Cassandra carries an MFA in Advance Theatre Practice from Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London, UK.



Nya Johnson (she/her) known as Nya J. with her work, is elated to be an official University of Michigan alum (Class of 2023)! With a mission to become as versatile as a young woman, an artist, and a leader as possible, she has taken on roles on both sides of the production table in many university, student, and independent projects including producing, dramaturgy, performing, voice over engineering, game show hosting, designing, directing, and more! Nya is truly grateful that her journey has led her to this new festival! She is honored to be working on Cris Eli Blak's thought-provoking piece titled, Challenging Brown. It is simply brilliant, and she hopes the audience will see that too! Her next step? Law school at Wayne State Law this fall!

All glory belongs to the Lord! @simplynyaj



Princess Beyoncé Jones (she/her) is looking forward to reading as Dolores Brown in Challenging Brown for the Revolution(s): New Works Festival. This will mark her second appearance working with RC Rep since their production of Witty Fools and Foolish Wits. Princess obtained her acting degree at Oakland University last April. Other production credits of hers include Love and Information, Romeo+Juliet, and Sense and Sensibility. She sends huge thanks to her family and friends who've fiercely loved and supported her on and off stage. Social Media: IG: @princessbeyonce_18 FB: Princess Jones



Billy Konsoer (he/him) lives in Farmington Hills with his wife and 2 children and has been performing since childhood both onstage and in front of cameras. Billy is a proud member of SAG and is grateful for the opportunity to participate on this thought-provoking script.



Cassius Merriweather (they/them) Performing in everything from straight plays to short films, Cassius is absolutely dying to challenge beliefs and the questions posed in Renaissance City Repertory Theatre's reading of Cris Eli Blak's Challenging Brown. Studying under Henri Franklin, John Sloan III, and Kelli Crump they've appeared in productions of Romeo and Juliet, She Kills Monsters, Blood at the Root, and many more whilst finding a home in Poetry Slams throughout the state. They aim to breed Theater and Poetry into something truly special.

@ItsMcCassiusIG and @ItsMeOnStage



Olivia Kiefer (she/her) is a multifaceted artist and a recent graduate from Oakland University with a BFA in Acting. Her recent projects include directing a production of *Pizza Man* at OU, as well as performing as Juliet in Water Works Theatre Company production of *Romeo+Juliet*. Olivia is exceedingly excited to put her dramaturgical skills to work and to aid in the production of a new theatrical piece. oliviakiefer.com
[@olivia.kiefer](https://twitter.com/olivia.kiefer)

Where:

Oakland University West Campus, 1500 University Drive (door #6),
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

RC Rep is providing a ***FREE live stream*** option for audiences who cannot attend the staged readings in person. We want to share these exciting new plays with as many people as are interested and ask that you consider making a tax-deductible donation to RC Rep. *Tickets are required to attend in person – \$10 per play, or \$15 to attend both readings. No donation is too small, or too large
– <https://www.rcrep.org/support>

Without ticket sales and donations, RC Rep would not be able to bring invigorating and thought-provoking stories to the stages of Southeast Michigan. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to ensure these stories have a platform on which to be seen and heard: <https://www.rcrep.org/support>