



Radha S. Menon: Playwright/ Producer
Donna Michelle St. Bernard: Director
Jason Chung: Salim
Molly Murray- Mutch: Fiona
Gisy Mohamed: Mo
Radha S. Menon: Set/ Costume Design
Donna Michelle St. Bernard: Sound Design
Jennie Esdale: Associate Producer/ Casting



Presented by Red Betty Theatre:
Red Betty Theatre's mission is to present the perspectives and distinct experiences of Canadian women of colour to broader and more diverse audiences, and increase access to these performances to contribute to the richness and diversity of Canadian Theatre through bold, relevant and artistic voices.

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We want to show gratitude and acknowledge Mother Earth, the Wind and all Bodies of water for strength and nourishment in this bountiful home.

We want to acknowledge the original caretakers of Turtle Island; the Erie, Haundenasaunee Confederacy, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Wendat, Nuetral and all other Nations acknowledged and unacknowledged, recorded and unrecorded. And that this land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant.

We also must acknowledge that we are settlers on this land and it's our duty to respect and protect Turtle Island and all the many living beings, human and non-human animals living here.

About Blackberry:

Up against racism, police violence, violence against women, homophobia and an ominous predator, Radha Menon's timely, searing, quick-witted and heart wrenching play gives voice to three teens who struggle to find a safe place to call their own.

THANK YOU!

HAMILTON FRINGE FESTIVAL, Anonymous, Anonymous, Anonymous, Katen Cirrius Realty Inc., Jennie Esdale, Rose Hopkins, Michael Kras, Treasa Levasseur, Radha Menon, Terrance Odette, Porch Light Theatre, T Taitt, Mary Tanner, Tony Sciara, Stacy Smith, Dylan Vandemaele, Amber Wood, Laura Welch, Asuf Ishaq, Philip Akin, Mel Hague, Obsidian Theatre, MT Space Theatre, Nightwood Theatre, YPT, Factory Theatre Canada Council for the Arts, and the OAC Creators Reserve



MUSIC CREDITS: 2,400 year by Radha Menon and David Panfili/ Free by G!sy Mohamed/ What U Can't See by Aldred Agot and Jason Chung

Directors Notes:

*the story in this play is about three young folx facing a decision. in working through its many threads, we found resonance with intimacy, aspiration and social performance. what we are allowed to feel, what we are allowed to want, and what part of us we can safely show to others. i give thanks for the spaces i am able to hold safe, sacred, inviolable. we all deserve that.

Playwrights Notes:

Blackberry is a coming of age story based loosely on my own experiences as a teenager living in one of the poorest parts of Birmingham city (U.K) with a predominantly black and Pakistani population, sprinkled liberally with sex-workers who were also forced out of 'nice' neighbourhoods. At sixteen my friends and I spent the entire summer roaming over-grown and unloved backwater canals of the city. These were troubling times for us all, not simply due to our overactive hormones and over-blown feelings of adulthood but also as 'black' British youth, we were disenfranchised with little access to most resources including education, we didn't 'fit' into British society; simply put we were not accepted and constantly vigilant against racist attacks that happened frequently.

I am particularly struck by the correlations between my experience and the experience of disenfranchised BIPOC ((Black, indigenous and people of colour) youth on Turtle Island and in Europe still up against systemic racism; a lingering stain of colonialism. Ursula Franklin said, "Peace is the absence of fear"; this derelict canal is where Fiona, Mo and Salim find peace in a place with no lack of freedom until urban forces threaten these children's fantasies.



Jason Chung
ACTOR- Salim

Jason Chung is captain of the triple threat Glee club at Cathedral High School. With Glee, he has performed at McMaster children's hospital, Carmen's banquet, and school as well as the cotton factory for the HYP poetry slam. Chung writes his own music and in a group called "DIAFORA". Jason made a single with another one of his friends, which was performed at the. Jason done some acting in his elementary school in hairspray playing as "seaweed" and acting classes at Theatre Aquarius.



Radha S. Menon
PLAYWRIGHT

Recipient of City of Hamilton 2020 Arts Innovation Award and 2016 Theatre Award, animal fanatic Radha Menon began performing in British theatre and television in her youth. Her plays have been produced for many theatre festivals in Canada, the U.S. and U.K. Menon is an activist, arts educator, founder and Artistic Director of Red Betty Theatre and holds an MFA in Creative Writing from University of Guelph. Her plays include Sita's Revenge (a devised, feminist, theatrical adaptation of entrenched, sacred Sanskrit literature, Ramayana), Welcome to my Underworld (RARE & Souleppper Theatres), Ganga's Ganja, Rukmini's Gold (Toronto Fringe New Play Contest 2015 winner, Hamilton Fringe Critics Choice Award 2015 & 2020 Sanhita Manch National Playwriting Contest), Rise of the Prickly Pear, The Circus & The Washing Machine. In addition, Menon is a filmmaker, general reveller and production designer for art house films, including Nayan & The Evil Eye, which garnered many awards including the Design Award – Here Be Dragons Int. Film Festival 2015.



Gisy Mohamed
ACTOR- Mo

Three years ago, Gisy began his acting path in a theatrical performance at Gage park with Theatre Aquarius Summer Stock program. Through high school Glee Club, he has been a featured performer at both national and local events like Show Choir Canada and Bishop Ryan Catholic School's Vocal fest. He performed in High School Musical at Hamilton Theatre Inc. and The Day They Shot John Lennon at the Players Guild. Gisy is a teaching artist with the Hamilton Youth Poets and is currently pursuing a career in both music and acting.



Molly Murray-Mutch
ACTOR- Fiona

Molly is a recent transplant from the New York City area and is a secondary school student. She has studied drama and musical theatre with Theatre Aquarius Theatre School. She's appeared in the award winning short film "Hungry" and PSA's "80 Billion" and "America's Promise". Molly has won several awards for Dramatic Interpretation in school Forensics club tournaments in New Jersey. She is currently starring in the graphic novel, "The Moon Prince" by award winning author and Dad, Kevin Mutch, <http://www.themoonprince.com/>



Donna-Michelle St. Bernard aka Belladonna the Blest
DIRECTOR

Donna-Michelle St. Bernard aka Belladonna the Blest is an emcee, playwright, director and agitator. Her staging elevates culturally specific and rhythmically resonant stories, including *Job's Wife* (Nolan), *A Perfect Storm* (Nolan), *Oops!* (Feld), *Mx* (Robinson) and *Our Fathers, Sons, Lovers and Little Brothers* (Simamba), as well as collaborating with Cole Alvis and Nikki Shaffeulah on the direction of *Lilies* (Bouchard). Her playwrighting work, the 54ology, includes *Cake*, *Sound of the Beast*, *A Man A Fish*, *Salome's Clothes*, *Gas Girls*, *Give It Up*, *The Smell of Horses* and *The First Stone*. DM is currently the emcee in residence at Theatre Passe Muraille, associate artist at lemonTree Creations, artistic director of New Harlem Productions and coordinator of the AD HOC Assembly.



Jennie Esdale
Associate Producer/ Casting

Jennie is a director, actor, playwright, and arts educator. She is program director of ODE, the Theatre school at Theatre Aquarius. With Red Betty Theatre she has been director of *Ganja's Ganja at Staircase/ Feminist Fuckit Festival 2019* and collaborator/ performer *Frost Bites 2018*. Originally from Alberta, Jennie's works have toured Canada, US, Brazil, Japan. Jennie has been nominated for Best New Play & Outstanding Performance twice, winning Performance; nominated for Outstanding Production of A Musical; nominated twice and won Outstanding Achievement in TYA. She is a member of CAEA and Playwrights Guild of Canada.