

KEYNOTE: TRUST BLACK WOMEN

Ra'anaa Ekundayo
(she/they)

Moderator



Ra'anaa Ekundayo received her Bachelor of Architectural Studies and Master of Architecture at Laurentian University's McEwen School of Architecture. Her masters' thesis laid the foundations for her passion for the intersection of art and activism (artivism). She further explores this with ardour in her capacity as Chair of Black Lives Matter Sudbury and Installation Coordinator for Up Here: Urban Arts Festival.

Ra'anaa has participated in and curated numerous activist initiatives and has contributed her talents to the development of many Afrocentric artistic installations. She has taken on many leadership roles, as an artist, activist, and academic, creating space for people of colour and continually promoting anti-racist practices.

A cultural curator and visual activist, Ra'anaa is currently pursuing her Ph.D. research on the emergence of Black arts and activism in N'Swakamok, at Concordia University in Tio'tia:ke, on the unceded Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory.

IN-PERSON PANEL: MARCH 4TH 2:00-5:00 PM
LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY FRASER AUDITORIUM



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El Jones
(she/her)

Keynote Speaker

El Jones is a spoken word poet, journalist, and community activist. She is an assistant professor in Mount Saint Vincent University's Political Studies department and served as the Nancy's Chair of Women's Studies for the 2017-2019 term. El is the author of *Live from the Afrikan Resistance!* and her most recent book *Abolitionist Intimacies*, a collection of poetry and writing about fighting atqte violence, was released from Fernwood Press in 2022. El was the fifth Poet Laureate of Halifax.

In 2016, El was a recipient of the Burnley "Rocky" Jones human rights award for her community work and work in prison justice. She is a co-founder of the Black Power Hour, a live radio show with people who have experienced incarceration on CKDU that creates space for people inside to share their creative work and discuss contemporary social and political issues.

El was the lead author of the report, "Defunding the Police: Defining the Way Forward for HRM." She is a regular contributor to *The Breach* and performs and speaks across the world.

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