

## ABOUT BLACK & RURAL

**dance Immersion** is thrilled to present the Toronto Premiere of this incredibly moving one-woman show by **Shayna Jones** of B.C., produced by **Pi Theatre. Black & Rural** incorporates spoken word, movement, and music to create an essential theatre experience that gives voice to rural Canadians of the African Diaspora.

**Black & Rural** is an artistic inquiry into the hearts and minds of Black folks tucked away on Canada's countryside. Project lead, **Shayna Jones**, aims to seek out, honour, and showcase stories from rurally based Blacks (like herself) to nuance and challenge the monolith of what matters to Black Lives. Created and performed by Shayna Jones and produced by **Pi Theatre**, Black & Rural weaves spoken word, movement, music, and verbatim theatre together in a spellbinding performance that is resonating across the country. [www.blackandrural.com](http://www.blackandrural.com)



The piece is approximately 60 minutes in length. An artist talk will follow the performance on November 22, 2024.



Producing, Promoting & Supporting  
Dancers & Dances of the  
African Diaspora since 1994

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# BLACK & RURAL

Created & Performed  
By **SHAYNA JONES**

Produced by **Pi Theatre**

**TORONTO PREMIERE**  
Presented by **dance Immersion**  
November 20 – 22, 2024  
at Tarragon Theatre

## CREDITS

### Written, performed, and created by

Shayna Jones

### Featuring voice-over performances by

Tom Pickett, Omari Newton, Kwasi Thomas,  
Giselle Clarke-Trenaman, Ivy Charles,  
Britney Buren, and Mariam Barry

### Directed by

Richard Wolfe

### Tour Manager

Kayleigh Sandomirsky

### Stage Manager

Maria Zarrillo

### Producer

Libby Willoughby

### Lighting Design

Brad Trenaman with Victoria Bell

### Lighting Consultant for Toronto Event

Gabriel Cropley

### Set Design & Costume Consultant

Cecilia Vadala

### Sound Design & Composition

Rufus Cappadocia

### Movement Director

Amber Barton

### Dramaturg

Angela Konrad

### Toronto Artist Talk Moderator

Nicole Inica Hamilton

### Opening Acknowledgement

Kim Wheatley

## SHAYNA JONES

Shayna Jones (she/her) is an award winning actor, a playwright, a folklorist, and a multi-disciplinary spoken word artist specializing in the traditional oral storytelling of African and Afro-Diasporic lore. As a professionally trained performer, vocalist, and fine mover, Shayna has crafted performances for countless audiences across Canada featuring Afro-centric Folk History, Folklore and Contemporary Experience. Learn more about Shayna's work at: [www.wearestoryfolk.com](http://www.wearestoryfolk.com)

## DIRECTOR RICHARD WOLFE

Richard Wolfe (he/him) is the Artistic and Producing Director of **Pi Theatre** as well as a dramaturg and a specialist in contemporary theatre and performance. He has been nominated 6 times for Outstanding Director (winning twice) and once for Significant Artistic Achievement in Vancouver's professional theatre. Canadian and world premieres he's directed include: *Black & Rural* by Shayna Jones, *Truth & Lies*, *Lampedusa*, by Anders Lustgarten, *Dance Like No One's Watching* by Munish Sharma (site-specific dance performance), and many more. Richard is grateful to *dance Immersion* for bringing this beautifully human story by Shayna Jones to Toronto audiences. [www.pitheatre.com](http://www.pitheatre.com)

## A NOTE FROM SHAYNA

"I am amazed to be with you here in Toronto presenting my piece *Black & Rural*, a west coast tale about the quiet draw to live close to the land and to one's heritage with dignity and courage.

There are so many beautiful souls and companies behind this moment. To begin, I am deeply grateful to *dance Immersion* and especially Curator & Executive Director Timea Wharton-Suri for fiercely supporting this work and furthering its reach within the Toronto Black community and beyond. Your efforts have been invaluable and have meant the world to me. With this, I'd like to heartily thank Adinkra Farm, Marcel Stewart and the team at *bcurent*, Lisa Cox, and the whole "Black & Rural: Embodied Storytelling Retreat" team for making a quiet dream of mine come true: Thank you, thank you.

And finally, but not at all least, I thank *Pi Theatre*, who believed in this vision when it was only an embryo and who continue to challenge me to take this piece even further. Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU."



Cover Image by Louis Bockner