

New Monuments dance & film production blends art & activism

All-star cast of IBPOC creatives including Julien Christian Lutz pka DIRECTOR X, Tanisha Scott & Umbereen Inayet re-imagine the future

Toronto, ON (June 15th, 2021) - Canadian Stage and Luminato Festival Toronto team up to present *New Monuments*, an original dance and film production featuring over 40 of Toronto's leading IBPOC dancemakers and an all-star cast of multi-disciplinary, award-winning, Toronto bred creative talents, which will have its world premiere at Luminato Festival Toronto, streaming on CBC Gem on October 15th.

Co-produced by **Canadian Stage** and **Luminato Festival Toronto**, directed by award-winning filmmaker **Karen Chapman** (Walk Good, Measure), and conceived and curated by Toronto's iconic, Grammy nominated, multiple award-winning director and installation artist Julien Christian Lutz pka **DIRECTOR X** (Drake, Rihanna, Rosalia, Superfly movie) with award-winning artistic producer and curator **Umbereen Inayet** (Nuit Blanche Toronto, Awakenings, TEDx) and visionary three-time MTV VMA-nominated **Tanisha Scott** (Beyoncé, Sean Paul) as lead choreographer, *New Monuments* comes to life on the shore of Lake Ontario, through the talents of Toronto-area dance companies in a cathartic story that takes us from the beginning of colonization to a more hopeful and equitable future.

“In this new civil rights movement that we find ourselves in, *New Monuments* is a work of art that uses movement to tell a story. It shows how the subjugation that’s happening now, is tied to subjugation that happened in the 1800s,” explains co-curator Umbereen Inayet. “It’s a catalyst for change, a place for healing and catharsis, and it actually asks us what we want to take into the new world, and what we want to leave behind”.

“All of us have come together to realize this ambitious project that celebrates the beauty, the talent, and the resiliency of Toronto’s dance community,” adds Brendan Healy, Canadian Stage's Artistic Director. Directed, conceived and developed through a distinctly IBPOC lens, *New Monuments* asks tough questions - Do the statues that adorn our public spaces speak to the values that represent us as a city, and elevate our values of freedom and diversity? Should they be dismantled piece by piece? What are the new standards that define us, and which ones should make the cut? - and then proceeds to answer some of them, by imagining a future world where racist monuments no longer exist, and where IBPOC art and activism continue to seamlessly intersect.

"*New Monuments* could only happen in Toronto, and I believe it will reflect the city in this time of change through the eyes and imaginations of artists who live here," says Naomi Campbell, Luminato's Artistic Director.

New Monuments masterfully teams up internationally-recognized IBPOC Toronto talent working alongside homegrown talent, in a fully collaborative space where live performance meets film, while featuring a wide array of dance styles (ballet, street style, contemporary) all coming together as one.

New Monuments is also timely and topical, as multi-disciplinary IBPOC artists throughout Toronto and around the world continue to put their mirrors to reality and are focusing their artistic output around current social protest movements. Some activists in Toronto have literally toppled colonial monuments that serve as symbols of active oppression, to raise awareness of the truth and move towards reconciliation. *New Monuments* is a once-in-a-lifetime collaboration that intentionally and urgently blends the worlds of IBPOC art (dance, film) and activism into a cohesive “artist” statement.

To help realize a project of this scale, Harbourfront Centre, the National Ballet of Canada, the National Arts Centre, and TO Live have also come on board.

New Monuments

Streaming October 15th on **CBC Gem**

New Monuments is co-produced by Canadian Stage and Luminato Festival Toronto, in association with Harbourfront Centre, National Ballet of Canada, National Arts Centre, and TO Live.

Directed by Karen Chapman, co-curated by Julien Christian Lutz pka DIRECTOR X and Umbereen Inayet.

Lead Choreographer Tanisha Scott.

Featuring choreography by Sze-Yang Ade-Lam, Nova Bhattacharya & Kieran Herallal, Robert Binet, Esie Mensah, Fizz Oladiran, Kevin A. Ormsby, Nimkii Osawamick, Natasha Powell, Sandra Laronde, and "Snapp" Jan Yalda.

New Monuments is presented by Ian and Kiki Delaney, C.M. and CBC Arts, with lead support from Joan and Jerry Lozinski.

Canadian Stage would like to thank its government supporters, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and Toronto Arts Council. Luminato is grateful for the support of its founding government partner, the Province of Ontario, and its major partners, the Government of Canada and the City of Toronto.

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ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage is one of the country's leading contemporary performing arts organizations. A collision of disciplines and cultures, Canadian Stage reflects the dynamism and complexity of Canada and is a vital artistic force locally, nationally, and internationally. In its over thirty-year history, Canadian Stage has employed thousands of artists and developed and

produced hundreds of new productions. Many of the plays developed by Canadian Stage have been awarded and nominated for Canada's most prestigious literary and performing arts honours, including Governor General's, Chalmers, and Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Throughout the theatre season, nearly 100,000 patrons attend performances and workshops in its three Toronto venues.

ABOUT LUMINATO FESTIVAL TORONTO

Luminato Festival Toronto is an international arts festival dedicated to performance, media and visual arts, and programming that cuts across traditional artform boundaries. Luminato works closely with Canadian artists to support the development and creation of distinctive new work, as well as presenting artists from around the world.