

YOUTH PROJECT!
BLACK LEADERS,
VISIONARIES & ADVOCATES
FROM OUR PASTS & PRESENTS



**YOUTH
PROJECT!**

CREATED BY THE STAFF
OF THE YOUTH PROJECT
(KJIPUKTUK/HALIFAX)

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Shea Diamond is an incredible singer, musician, and trans rights activist currently living in the US. Shea cites "the late great Whitney Houston, Tina Turner and Nina Simone" as integral influences to her powerful sound that centers themes of liberation, self-determinism, and revolutionary dreaming.

While experiencing the violence of incarceration at a very young age, she wrote her now popular song "I Am Her" which she describes as "a statement to a world that said I shouldn't exist". Currently, Shea uses her platform to speak about the critical need for abolition and the immense discrimination, isolation, and harm she faced as a trans woman in a mens prison.

It's Shea's goal to build more space for trans artists and creatives, she says "my music speaks about oppression... it speaks about how times should change." In 2019 Shea Diamond was nominated for the GLAAD Media Award and was included on Billboard's list of the best LGBTQ songs of 2020, we know that this creative momentum, recognition, and celebration will continue!



EVELYN

WHITE

AFRICVILLE
A SPIRIT THAT LIVES ON



Evelyn White's creative practice lives at the intersections of memoir, essay, and journalism. Apparent in her body of work, she has dedicated her practice to platforming the legacies of Black women that have inspired her, such as Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Viola Desmond, Esther Phillips, Gwendolyn Brooks, Aretha Franklin, and Audre Lorde. Using her abundance of knowledge, experience, and talent, Evelyn also writes for the legacies of Black women that are yet to come. Evelyn carves space to disrupt realities of anti-Blackness in Nova Scotia through her brilliant journalistic contributions to the Coast, Examiner, and NS Advocate. As a weaver of past and future, an archiver of Black excellence, and a story-teller for those without a voice, White is leaving a legacy of her own.

About the high standards she sets for herself, Evelyn has said: "I am a direct descendant of enslaved Africans who were forbidden, on the penalty of death, to learn how to read or write. As such, I approach my work as a journalist with uncompromising truth and integrity. I must be fit for myself to know."



DELARVERIE

Stormé DeLarverie, born December 24th, 1920 was a lifelong 2SLGBTQIA+ rights activist, advocate, and creative. Storme was an extremely talented drag performer and one of New York's Premier Drag Kings. From 1955-1969 Stormé traveled with the legendary Jewel Box Revue as their MC and only Drag King, inspiring many with her trend-setting style. Many say that she is a primary influencer of the gender-nonconforming fashion we know today.

Stormé loved her community and took on a community safety role called "Guardian of the Village" where she served as a security guard in the neighbourhood's gay bars and as a general watch-keeper. On June 28th, 1969 at the Stonewall Inn, Storme was violently arrested for dressing in drag, she fought back at the police violence encouraging her community to do the same. Stormé's revolutionary passion contributed to what we know as the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion.

In 2008, she disclosed to Curve Magazine that she was the long-unidentified "Stonewall lesbian" who helped incite the uprising, she became known as the "Rosa Parks of Stonewall." Storme was inducted into the National LGBTQ Wall of Honour in 2019 coinciding with Stonewall's 50th Anniversary.

JOSHUA
OBANWOLE
ALLEN



Joshua Obawole Allen is an imaginative poet, creative, and 2SLGBTQIA+ activist and advocate. They are deeply invested in building community spaces that are rooted in principles of abolition and uplift Black, Two Spirit, trans, and gender-nonconforming people.

Impacted and influenced by their lived experience, Joshua has cultivated critically needed resources in Lenapehoking (also known as Brooklyn, New York) such as The Black Excellence Collective. Joshua has served as a member of Resist, and the Sadie Nash Leadership Project and is currently working on their debut collection of poetry and prose titled *All the Things I Never Said*.

They strongly believe in the transformative power of arts as activism and the revolutionary importance of representative education. You can watch Joshua discuss gender non-conforming liberation on the recent debut of *Getting Curious*, a Netflix special.



PHILIP

Aaron Rose Philip is a trailblazing high fashion runway model, activist and 2SLGBTQIA+ community advocate. She is the first Black, disabled, trans model to be represented by a major agency stating "It's important that it's not just a singular moment.. but the start of a more inclusive reality in fashion".

In her New York Fashion Week debut the Antiguan American supermodel made history at the Moschino's Spring 2022 show as the first disabled model to grace the runway using a wheelchair. Philips said, "The advice I give young disabled women who dream of walking the runway is to simply have faith in yourself," – "be assertive and persistent about your goals and aspirations".

Through her new powerful platform and social media following, Aaron is carving crucial spaces in the creative sector that disrupt anti-Blackness, ableism, transphobia and affirm and elevate Black, disabled, trans youth.



Portia White (1911 – 1968) was the first Black Canadian singer to gain international recognition. Born in We'kwampekitk (Truro) and raised in Kjipuktuk (Halifax), Portia began public singing at church when she was six years old. She studied at Dalhousie to become a teacher and eventually taught in Lucasville and Africville, while attending vocal lessons and competitions after classes. She went on to perform in nearly 100 recitals across North and South America, the Caribbean, and Europe.

She was known for singing in a variety of languages and styles (including Black spiritual music and classical European). Portia retired from public singing in 1952, but continued to teach music in Tkaronto (Toronto).

Today, many young musicians' dreams are supported in her honour. Although Portia is not known to be queer, her art and activism work helped pave the way for Black 2SLGBTQIA+ Canadian musicians to share their voices worldwide.

TOURMALINE



♥ Feel' Baby

Tourmaline is a creative visionary, filmmaker, writer, activist, and was named one of "Time Magazine's Top 100 Most Influential People of 2020." Tourmaline's brilliant work is archival, telling stories of 2SLGBTQIA+ leaders, dreamers, and community builders in imaginative ways. She has released works celebrating 2SQTBIPOC revolutionaries such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera through the film *Happy Birthday Marsha* and Miss Major through the short animation *The Personal Things*. Tourmaline first started her career in 2013 with her Tumblr visual project, *The Spirit Was..* which detailed the work of 2SQTBIPOC activists who have been left out of the popular whitewashed narrative of the LGBTQ+ movement.

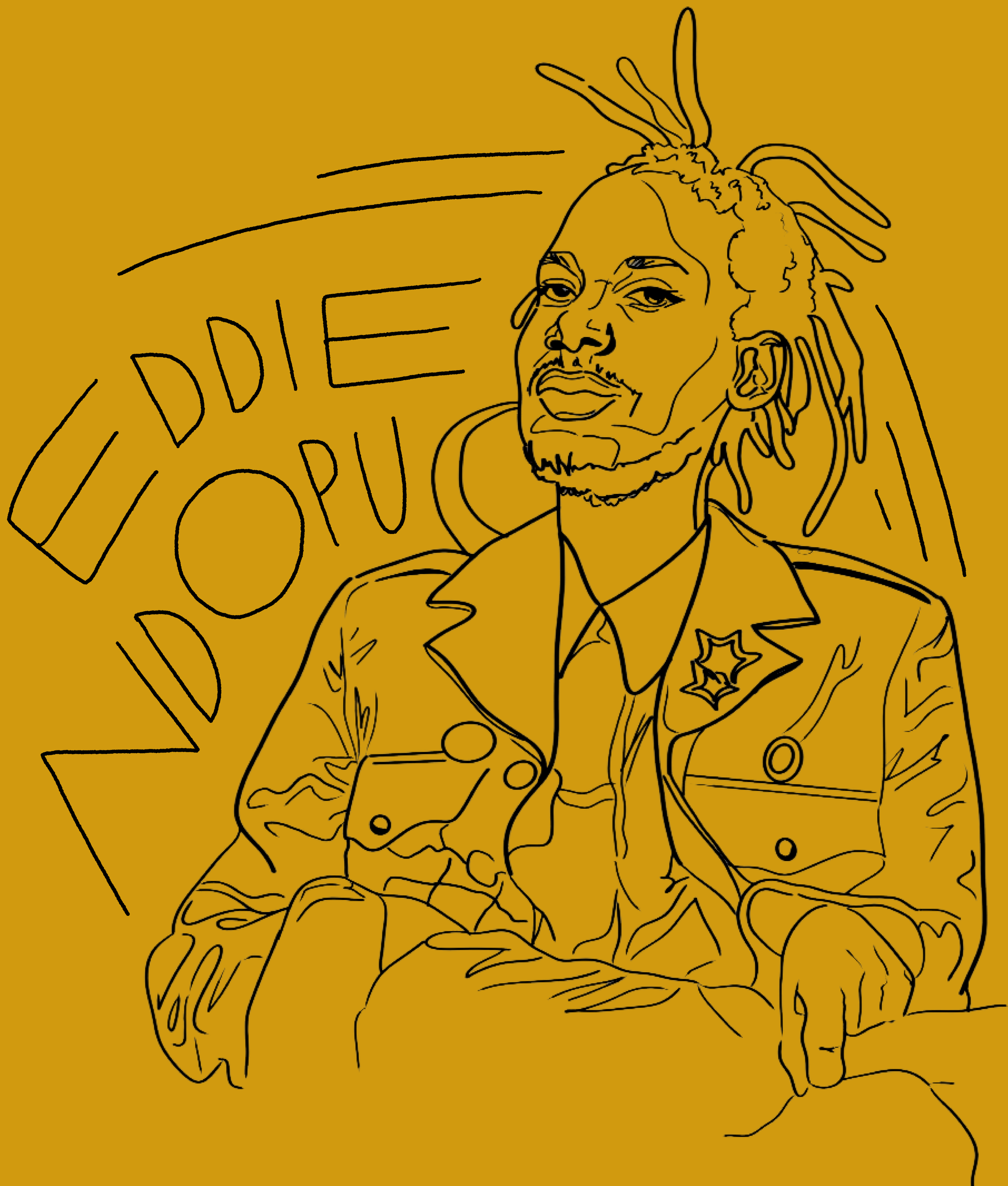
Tourmaline's most recent project, *Salacia*, is a short film that focuses on Mary Jones. Mary was a Black, trans, sex worker that lived in Seneca Village, which was the largest community of free Black people in New York city before it was torn down in the 1850s in order to build Central Park. We highly recommend engaging with Tourmaline's work to learn about these systemically erased legacies.



Ms.Myles is a vibrant and outgoing Jamaican-Canadian trans woman who creates beautiful art and engaging, educational content on her Instagram and TikTok.

Her goal is to create digital spaces that center and affirm Black 2SLGBTQIA+ experiences and prioritize their confidence and care. Ms.Myles' hope is to demonstrate the transformational power of community and chosen family - she knows how crucial it is to feel loved and supported in journeys of self-actualization.

She is a shining example of the representation our communities need. Ms Myles is making an active change in the lives of many through her leadership, creativity and hope.



Eddie Ndopu is a writer, storyteller, and humanitarian, and describes themselves as an “unrepentant bougie crip” – “unapologetically brilliant, Black, queer and disabled”. In his writing work (TIME Magazine, Forbes, The Guardian) Eddie centers his lived experiences of Blackness, queerness, and disability, and is currently writing his forthcoming memoir, *Sipping Dom Perignon Through A Straw*.

Eddie has an academic background in public policy, and is currently a United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocate. In their humanitarian work, Eddie’s focus is in offering advisory in scientific and medical fields around accessibility, universal design, and disability-based innovation.

“There’s no contradiction between being disabled and being utterly, mind-numbingly fabulous”, among other written celebrations of disability, can be found in his short-form written work on social media (@eddiendopu), and through his practice of disability justice. He invites his disabled community to “hold space for our agency, our sass, our messiness, our desires, our dreams, all of it”.

