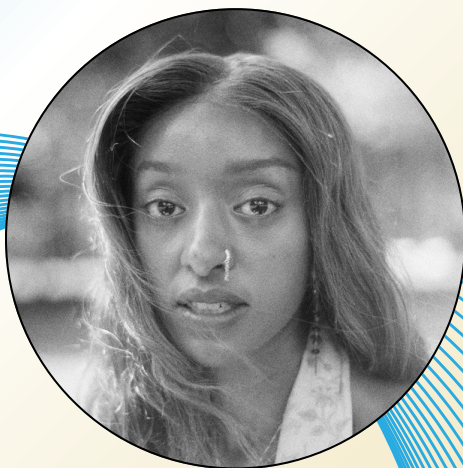


Meet Our Panelists

Panel 1: *"Finding Your Way in the Industry"*



Winta Hagos

DIRECTOR OF
ITSOK STUDIOS

CURATOR,
PRODUCER &
ARTIST

Laura Nanni



Shaunt Raffi

MUSIC CURATOR
& PRODUCER

FOUNDER OF
DAVIE STUDIOS

Shadia Ahmed





Winta Hagos

Winta is a Toronto-based multisensory artist, soundscape composer, and cultural strategist whose work explores sound as a structural, spatial, and public tool.

Rooted in research and public engagement, Hagos co-leads artist-run initiatives including It's Ok* Studios and Estrelar Sound, supporting Black and racialized artists through mentorship, equipment access, and experimental programming.

@WINTANAGLOBAL



Laura Nanni

Laura is a renowned curator, producer and artist. With two decades of experience in festival leadership, curation, and mentorship. Most recently, Nanni served as Artistic Director for Nuit Blanche 2024. Laura has held roles at SummerWorks and major civic institutions.

Her practice centers on access, inclusion, artist development, and sustainable creative leadership. She brings deep experience in guiding artists through both grassroots and institutional pathways.

@LAURA.NANNI



Shaunt Raffi

Shaunt Raffi is an Armenian music curator, DJ, musician and producer based in Toronto. Shaunt is the founder of some of Toronto's iconic community hubs for artists, including Antikka and the Oud & the Fuzz. He has now turned his attention to his newest venture, Tapestry, which functions as a music venue in the heart of Toronto's Kensington Market.

Shaunt has dedicated himself to simultaneously developing his own artistry while always providing space for others to shine and grow. He has always placed a huge focus on highlighting Armenian and SWANA culture in everything that he touches.

@SHAUNTRAFFI



Shadia Ahmed

Shadia is the founder and visionary behind Davie Studios, a live music company transforming Toronto's cultural landscape. Founded in 2022, Davie Studios has become a grassroots movement rooted in joy, excellence, and cultural representation.

Its mission is to inspire Toronto's creative spirit, elevate Black artistry, and put the city's music scene on the international map, one unforgettable night at a time.

@DAVIESTUDIOSTORONTO

Meet Our Panelists

Panel 2: “Practicing Creatively — Making, Sustaining, Evolving”



Jennarie

CURATOR, PRODUCER
& ARTIST

INTERDISCIPLINARY
ARTIST & CURATOR

Ziyaad Haniff



**Anthony
Gebrehiwot**

VISUAL ARTIST &
PHOTOGRAPHER



Jennarie

Jennarie is a Toronto-based independent artist who blends R&B and jazz into a sound that's entirely her own—soulful, bold, and rooted in emotional truth. Proudly queer, plus-size, and neurodivergent, she creates music that uplifts underrepresented communities and celebrates self-love and body liberation.

In 2024, her unreleased song *Never Been Small* went viral after she responded to online body-shaming with music, quickly catching the attention of SZA and amassing millions of views. The empowering track has since garnered over 2 million streams on Spotify and was recently featured in comedian Rosebud Baker's 2025 Netflix comedy special, *The Motherlode*.

@JENNARIEMUSIC

A self-taught artist and photographer, Gebrehiwot founded XvXy-photo in 2014, focusing on studio portraiture. To date, he has worked with several notable brands, such as Nike, Royal Bank of Canada, Vice Canada, Absolute, Hudson Bay, The City of Toronto, and LinkedIn. His work has been featured in over forty local and international publications.



Anthony Gebrehiwot

@TONYXTONES



Ziyaad Haniff

Ziyaad is a creative director, digital storyteller and Arts Facilitator based in Toronto. As a multidisciplinary artist, his diverse experiences often inform and amplify one another. Ziyadd continues to use his collection of talents to create consulting for startups, and eventually brought his narrative and visual skills together to direct in the film industry.

Supported by his collective and pseudo-creative-agency Storied, the multidisciplinary artist has spent the last decade orchestrating visuals for emerging artists, through to established enterprises

@ZIYAADHANIFF