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**BEFORE HE WAS MALCOLM X,
HE WAS DETROIT RED**

**ARTSEMERSON PROUDLY PRESENTS
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF**

DETROIT RED

A WILL POWER AND ARTSEMERSON PRODUCTION

FEBRUARY 01 – 16, 2020

EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER ROBERT J. ORCHARD STAGE

PREVIEWS BEGIN FEBRUARY 1

OFFICIAL OPENING ON FEBRUARY 5

[VIEW TRAILER HERE](#)

[Boston, MA – January 17, 2020] – ArtsEmerson is thrilled to announce the World Premiere of **Detroit Red** by internationally renowned playwright Will Power. This theatrical exploration of the life of Malcolm X as he dwelled and came of age in the Roxbury section of Boston, plays the Emerson Paramount Center Robert J. Orchard Stage February 01 – 16, 2020.

The world forever knows him as Malcolm X, but when he lived in Roxbury, he was dubbed “Detroit Red.” Will Power, along with director Lee Sunday Evans, shine a light on a pivotal coming-of-age moment in the celebrated, controversial civil rights leader’s life in this world premiere piece. Boxed in by race and class in 1940’s Boston, “Detroit Red” (Eric Berryman) transformed from a rowdy teenager into a street hustler. **Detroit Red** vividly brings this world to life, depicting a brutally honest, human portrayal of the future activist as he navigates the criminal underworld, taking the first steps in his quest to define the type of man he would eventually become.



Illustration by Zlatko Mitec



Will Power, photo by Adam A. Anderson

A potent, heart-wrenching deconstruction of a future American hero in turmoil, **Detroit Red** features three shape-shifting actors who create a deeply dramatic and surprisingly funny theatrical experience. The production offers a radical take on traditional theater, illuminating an iconic African-American figure and the community and circumstances that helped form him.

Detroit Red plays for two weeks, February 1 – 16, 2020, at the Emerson Paramount Center Robert J. Orchard Stage. Tickets may be purchased at [ArtsEmerson.org](https://www.ArtsEmerson.org), by phone at 617.824.8400 or at the box office.

Tickets may also be purchased as part of an ArtsEmerson Season Package, featuring savings up to 25%. Groups of 10+ attending a performance save 20%-30%. For more information, contact the box office at Tickets@ArtsEmerson.org or 617.824.8400.

“It’s been a joy working with Will Power, Lee Sunday Evans, Eric Berryman and the community of Roxbury dramaturgs on the development of **Detroit Red**,” says ArtsEmerson Artistic Director David Dower. “When Will first described what he was aiming to do in this play we were immediately hooked. I loved that he wasn’t setting out to stage Malcom X’s biography. That story is told. I admired that he wanted to create this play in a deep collaboration with Roxbury itself.”

“Will has found a surprising and explosive point of entry through the story of teenage Malcolm Little’s days in our city,” continues Dower. “The entire play is set in a single moment of epiphany trapped in a moment of reckoning -- the sudden, impulsive moment of letting go of one story to make the space for the new story to unfold. The media is filled with stories of people who confronted this type of moment of reckoning, gun in hand. This play is about the moment Malcolm Little put his gun down, and let drop the story of **Detroit Red**. He changed his own narrative and, as a result, changed the world. Will and his team have zoomed in on that split-second decision, unpacking it for us on stage. And so we get to sit inside Malcolm’s head as he stood inside that Roxbury jewelry store at a life and death crossroads.”

“I am fascinated by Malcolm’s time in Boston,” says **Detroit Red** playwright Will Power. “It is an unexplored period in the trajectory of a future world leader, a period that, when you include both his time as “Detroit Red” and his time incarcerated, adds up to almost a dozen years in which he lived in the state of Massachusetts. Malcolm X came to Boston as a skinny, countrified teenager (a “hick” as Malcolm describes it), and left Boston as the man known to the world as Malcolm X. In some ways, like Malcom, the city of Boston is iconic onto itself-it represents both the achievements and the complexities that exist in America. I can conceive of no other place that this play could’ve originated in other than right here in Boston.”

About ArtsEmerson (Production Company & Presenting Organization)

ArtsEmerson is Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. Our mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — we committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative season of globe-spanning performances, film, and dialogue invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. For more information, visit [ArtsEmerson.org](https://www.ArtsEmerson.org).

About Emerson College

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city’s Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students

from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals, with the first program launching this fall in Paris. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu.

LISTINGS INFORMATION FOR DETROIT RED

Dates:

February 01 – 16, 2020

Venue:

Emerson Paramount Center
Robert J. Orchard Stage
559 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

Performance Schedule:

FEBRUARY 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						01 8pm preview
02 2pm preview	03	04 7:30pm preview	05 7:30pm press opening	06 7:30pm	07 8pm	08 2pm 8pm
09 2pm	10	11 7:30pm	12 7:30pm	13 7:30pm	14 8pm	15 2pm 8pm
16 2pm						

Ticket Information:

Online: ArtsEmerson.org

Phone: **617-824-8400**

In Person: **Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street)** open Tuesday-Saturday from 10am-6pm.

Tickets range from \$25-\$90 (subject to change)

[For production stills and other media kit assets, click here.](#)

CREATIVE/CAST LISTINGS & BIOGRAPHIES

Will Power: Playwright

Power is an internationally renowned playwright, performer, lyricist and educator. His plays and performances have been seen in hundreds of theatres and concert halls throughout the world including Lincoln Center (New York), The Public Theater (New York), The Battersea Arts Centre (U.K.), The Sydney Opera House, as well as numerous venues in Asia, Africa, Europe and throughout North America. Called “the best verse playwright in America” by *New York Magazine*, Mr. Power is an innovator and dramatic explorer of new theatrical forms. He is known as one of the pioneers and co-creators of hip hop theatre, a late 20th-century art form that led the way for future iconic works such as Lin-Manuel Miranda’s *Hamilton*, as well as dozens of hip hop education programs being established throughout the country. Power is also a master

craftsman of traditionally based plays and musicals. His straight play, *Fetch Clay, Make Man*, has been produced in various LORT theatres and regional companies, including the McCarter Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, Round House Theatre, True Colors Theatre Company, The Ensemble Theatre and Marin Theatre Company, to name a few. Other plays include *Seize the King* (La Jolla Playhouse, Alliance Theatre), *Stagger Lee* (Dallas Theater Center), *Five Fingers of Funk* (Children's Theatre Company) and *The Seven* (La Jolla Playhouse, New York Theatre Workshop, Ten Thousand Things Theater Company). Power's collaboration with Anne Bogart's SITI Company and composer Julia Wolfe resulted in the performance piece *Steel Hammer* (Humana Festival, UCLA Live, Brooklyn Academy of Music, plus world tour). Power has received numerous awards for his work as a writer and performer in the field, including The Doris Duke Artist Award, a Lucille Lortel Award, a United States Artist Prudential Fellowship, an NEA/TCG Residency Grant, TCG Peter Zeisler Memorial Award, a NYFA Award and a Joyce Foundation Award. Power is also a passionate teacher of writing and performance. He has held fellowships, residencies and faculty positions at the City College of New York, Princeton University, Occidental College, Wayne State University, The University of Michigan at Flint, Southern Methodist University and the University of Massachusetts (Amherst). Currently, Will Power is the Distinguished Visiting Professor of Theatre at Spelman College in Atlanta.

Lee Sunday Evans: Director

Sunday Evans is a two-time Obie Award-winning director and choreographer, and was recently appointed Artistic Director of Waterwell. Her recent credits include *In the Green* by Grace McLean (LCT3); *The Courtroom* (Waterwell); *Dance Nation* by Clare Barron (Playwrights Horizons, Steppenwolf); *Intractable Woman* by Stefano Massini and *Caught* by Christopher Chen (Play Company); *The Things That Were There* by David Greenspan (The Bushwick Starr); *[Porto]* by Kate Benson (WP Theater/Bushwick Starr); *Home* by Geoff Sobelle (BAM); *Farmhouse/Whorehouse* by Suzanne Bocanegra (BAM); *Miller, Mississippi* by Boo Killebrew (Long Wharf, Dallas Theater Center); *The Winter's Tale* (The Public Theater); *Bull in a China Shop* by Bryna Turner (LCT3); *Macbeth* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival); *Wellesley Girl* by Brendan Pelsue (Humana Festival); *D Deb Debbie Deborah* by Jerry Lieblch (Clubbed Thumb); *A Beautiful Day in November on the Banks of the Greatest of the Great Lakes* by Kate Benson (New Georges/WP Theater). Her work has been presented/developed at Baryshnikov Arts Center, Sundance Theatre Lab, BAX, CATCH, LMCC, Robert Wilson's Watermill Center, Juilliard, among others. She received the 2017 SDC Breakout Award, and the 2016 Susan Stroman Directing Award from The Vineyard Theatre. The production she co-created and directed, *The Riddle of the Trilobites*, will have its world premiere at the New Victory Theater in NYC in spring 2019 after an acclaimed run at Flint Repertory Theatre in Flint, Michigan.

Eric Berryman: Performer

Off-Broadway: *The B-Side: Negro Folklore from Texas State Prisons, A Record Album Interpretation* (Drama Desk nomination), St. Ann's Warehouse/The Wooster Group; *Toni Stone*, Roundabout Theatre Company; *Steel Hammer*, *The Bacchae*, *Glory of the World*, BAM; *pool (no water)*, Barrow Street Theatre. Regional: *Moby-Dick*, *pool (no water)*, American Repertory Theater; *The Amen Corner*, The Guthrie Theater; *I Wish You Love*, Penumbra Theatre/The Kennedy Center/Hartford Stage; *Fly*, Ford's Theatre; *Red*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *Noises Off*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Everyman Theatre (Company Member). Film/TV: *Motherless Brooklyn*, *Marriage Story*, "Bonding," "Barry," Netflix; *Empathy, Inc.*; *After Louie*. Education: Carnegie Mellon University.

Edwin Lee Gibson: Performer

2017–2019 theatre credits: *The Royale*, Arizona Theatre Company; *Turn Me Loose*, Arena Stage (Washington, D.C.); *Battlefield*, Theatre Des Bouffes du Nord (Paris), National Theatre Studio (London) and international tour; *20K Leagues Under the Seas*, Lookingglass Theatre Company (Chicago); and *Beyond Caring*, U.S. premiere, Lookingglass Theatre Company (Chicago). Other selected theatre credits: *Love and Information*, U.S. premiere, Minetta Lane Theatre/NYTW (NYC); *The Royale*, American Theatre Company (Chicago); *The Seven*,

New York Theatre Workshop (NYC); *The Diary of Black Men* (London and Birmingham, UK); *Five 'Til*, Dixon Place (NYC); and *The Death of Bessie Smith*, New Brooklyn Theatre (NYC). TV: "Law & Order: SVU," "Shameless," "Chicago P.D." and "Proven Innocent." Film: *The Visitor*, *Marshall*, *Mom and Dad*, *Sweet Tooth* and *Blood First*. Mr. Gibson is the recipient of the O.B.I.E. (Off Broadway in Excellence) Award for Outstanding Performance. *Detroit Red* marks Mr. Gibson's 105th professional theatre production.

Brontë England-Nelson: Performer

Broadway: *Three Tall Women* (u/s, The Golden Theatre). New York: *Acolyte* (59E59), and workshops of *Rocket Park* (The Public), *Soldiergirls* (Rattlestick) and *Martyrs* (La MaMa). Regional: *Cadillac Crew* (Yale Rep); *Kleptocracy* (Arena Stage); *Three Musketeers and Henry IV, Part I* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare); and *As You Like It* (Hudson Shakespeare Co.). Television: "Blindspot." BA, UC Santa Cruz, MFA, Yale School of Drama.

Alan C. Edwards: Lighting Designer

Off-broadway: *Harry Clarke* (The Vineyard) for which he received the Lucille Lortel Award, *Kill Move Paradise* (National Black Theatre, [Drama Desk nominee]), *Fires in the Mirror* (Signature), *The New Englanders* (MTC Stage 2), *American Moor* (Red Bull), *The First Noel* (Apollo/CTH). Regional: *Lights Out: Nat King Cole* (Geffen, People's Light); *American Moor* (ArtsEmerson); *Twisted Melodies* (Baltimore Center Stage, Apollo, Mosaic); *Henry IV Part 2, Fingersmith* (OSF); *Penny Candy*, *Stagger Lee* (Dallas Theater Center); *We Are Proud to Present...* (The Guthrie); *Man of La Mancha* (Westport Playhouse); *Sweeney Todd* (CT Rep). B'way: Associate to Jennifer Tipton on *The Testament of Mary*. Member of the lighting faculty at Yale School of Drama. alancedwards.com.

Ari Herzig: Projection Designer

Herzig has designed projections/video for ArtsEmerson (**Kiss, Mala, Sugar**), Kitchen Theatre Company (*Grounded*, *Tribes*) SpeakEasy Stage Company (*The Bridges of Madison County*, *Tribes*), Revels Inc. (*Christmas Revels* 2016 and 2018), Lyric Stage Company (*Fast Company*, *Dear Elizabeth*, *Chinglish*), New Repertory Theatre (*The Snow Queen*), Poets' Theatre (*Albatross*) and the Huntington Theatre Company (*Ryan Landry's M*). They received an IRNE Award for Projection Design for a Small Stage in 2016 for *Albatross* at the New Repertory Theatre. Ari works as the Lighting and Projection Supervisor for the Office of the Arts at Emerson College. They graduated from Emerson College with a BFA in theatre design/technology. ariherzig.com.

Adam Rigg: Scenic Designer

2015 Princess Grace Award and a three-time Henry Hewes Design Award nominee. Recent designs since 2014: New York Theatre Workshop, Yale Rep, Soho Rep, Signature Theatre Company, Atlantic Theater Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Mark Taper Forum, LA Opera, Theater an der Wien—Vienna, Berkeley Rep, The Guthrie Theater, Cincinnati Symphony, Westport Country Playhouse, Theatre for a New Audience, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cal Shakes, Buena Vista Center, Teatro Municipal—São Paulo, Opera Omaha, Opera Philadelphia. Upcoming: Norwegian National Opera, The Kennedy Center, Santa Fe Opera, The Public Theater, The Old Globe, LA Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Opera Philadelphia, The Alliance Theatre, Asolo Rep, Trinity Wall Street/Prototype Festival, Round House Theatre and A.R.T. BA—UCLA 2010, MFA—Yale School of Drama 2013. adamriggdesign.com.

Angela Mantel: Assistant Projection Designer

Mantel is a current student at Emerson College pursuing a BFA in theatre design/technology. Other credits include Emerson Stage's *10 out of 12* (Lighting Designer) and *Augusta and Noble* (Master Electrician). Thank you to Ari for being so supportive and a great teacher!

Justin Ellington: Original Music/Sound Design

Broadway: *Other Desert Cities*. Off Broadway: *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Playwrights Horizons); *The Rolling Stone, Pass Over, Pipeline* (Lincoln Center); *Mrs. Murray's Menagerie* (ArsNova); *The House That Will Not Stand, Fetch Clay Make Man* (New York Theatre Workshop); *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box, The Winter's Tale* (Theatre for a New Audience). Additional: *Floyd's, Trouble in Mind* (Guthrie); *Father Comes Home from the Wars, How to Catch Creation* (Goodman Theatre); *Familiar* (Steppenwolf); *Kill Move Paradise* (Wilma Theater); *As You Like It* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival); *The American Clock* (The Old Vic).

Becky Scott: Wig Consultant

Scott is a wig and makeup designer based out of Chicago. She has designed for such theatres as Chicago Opera Theater, Marriott Theatre, Indiana University, Indiana Repertory Theatre and Annapolis Opera on such shows as *Moby-Dick, The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* and *A Doll's House, Part 2*. She is also Director of Wigs and Makeup for the American Players Theatre, where this summer will mark her 14th summer "playing in the woods" on such shows as *Julius Caesar* and *Rough Crossing. For Dad*.

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