

WATCH! A Poet & A Playwright: Staceyann Chin & Donja Love Inspire on PBS' First Person

 broadwayblack.com/staceyann-chin-donja-love-inspire-pbs-first-person/

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I get excited when I see artists and creative producers seeking to increase visibility about diversity within black queer communities. Queerness like Blackness includes a wide spectrum of experiences. The visibility of these experiences is needed to understand the contributions Black Queer people make to society and see clearly the struggles Black Queer people still face. First Person, the PBS Digital Studios show about gender identity, sexuality and queer community hosted by Aaryn Lang, Donald Shorter, Kirya Traber and TonyIn Sideco, brings these narratives to the forefront. First Person recently interviewed gay Black playwright **Donja R. Love** and nationally renowned Black lesbian poet and activist **Staceyann Chin** about their lives.

Donja R. Love is a Philadelphia born and raised Afro-Queer playwright, poet, and filmmaker. In Season 2 Episode 1: *Boundless Black Masculinity*, Donja Love shares his experience of surviving depression and suicide ideation, expanding notions of Black masculinity, and what he refers to as the radical power of “softness.” Love discusses coming out, his strong relationship with his parents and offers advice to his younger self.

In Season 2 Episode 2: *The Evolution of Staceyann Chin*, spoken-word poet Staceyann Chin talks about growing up in Jamaica when derogatory words were words available to identify queer people or lesbians. This lack of language led to a late discovery that she was a lesbian. While attending college in Jamaica, the young poet was sexually assaulted by 13 boys after she began verbally declaring her sexuality on campus. Chin talks about her journey to find her voice as an activist and raising a child as a single lesbian.

Love and Chin offer tender reflective testimony about their queerness. For these artists, their queer joy, queer struggle, queer experiences are intersectional and deeply connected to systems of race, gender, class, and mental health. The richness in their narratives is bolding and inspiring offering a generous honest what it means to be black, queer and creatives.

Staceyann Chin is currently living in NYC with her daughter and is on tour with Jill Scott.

Donja Love is now preparing to make his Off-Broadway debut with *Sugar In Our Wounds* at Manhattan Theater Club. The play is one play of a trilogy titled The Love Plays, that explores Queer Love during pivotal moments in Black History.

First Person can be seen online at [PBS](#) or on [Youtube](#)