

### *Breast Cancer Plays*



### **And Still I Fly**

Breast Cancer will kill 5,800 African-American women this year.  
(American Cancer Society)

"As far as the eye could see, I saw them. Black women flying. They were really flying over breast cancer. They were flying over all the things that hold them back. They were flying."  
(Excerpt from the play)

This award-winning one-woman play explores breast cancer and African-American women. It examines the simultaneous oppression that they face of racism, sexism, and classism. These lively heart-wrenching characters bring laughter, tears, tragedy, and triumph to the experiences of African-American women. The characters come to life as they speak of being breast cancer survivors and the many hurdles that they have to overcome to keep on going. They make you laugh and cry as they tell stories about pity parties, monkey house shoes, breaking their silence about breast cancer, death, the power of the Bumble Bee, white fluffies, losing their breasts, feeling ugly, losing their hair, and regaining their power as women. We get the opportunity to visit them at a funeral, doctor's office, bedroom, High School graduation, and hospital. These

characters are far from ordinary they give their audience a glimpse into the complexities of African-American women that are breast cancer survivors. The survivor centered characters in this play have crossed racial, cultural, and gender boundaries with their audiences. Reanae ends her performance with powerful traditional African-American praise dance. This international one-woman play has challenged the world to think about, learn from, and love breast cancer survivors. An informative and encouraging letter from Reanae is provided to be passed out to all audience members who come to this play.

Reanae McNeal received the Hope Award for this powerful play from the Quad City Breast Cancer Alliance.

This play is dedicated to Louise McNeal (Reanae's mother and best friend) who is a thyroid cancer survivor, Granny Bo Bo (Reanae's grandmother) who was a breast cancer survivor and Aunt Signora (Reanae's great aunt) who has been a survivor of breast cancer for many years.

### Reflections on Who Holds The Mirror?

"We have gathered here today to tell our stories about breast cancer in our own words and experiences. We have gathered today as grandmothers, mothers, aunts, daughters, sisters, and friends to break our silence. We refuse not to be heard. Who Holds The Mirror? We do!"  
(Excerpt from the play)

This play was written in reaction to the powerful breast cancer mural called "Who Holds The Mirror?". This play explores breast cancer and multicultural women. It examines how women experience and explore breast cancer in their own unique way. It deals with the issues of racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, language barriers, hazardous working conditions, and pollution. These characters take on a host of issues as they open their hearts and tell of their tragedies and triumphs around breast cancer. We meet these women at a Breast Cancer Rally as they stand up and speak their truth. **We learn about the power of sweet grass in a Cherokee woman's story, the meaning of the butterfly, the voice of the immigrant worker, the beauty of friendship across cultures, the necessity of language, and the transformation of being a no-breasted woman.**

We get the opportunity to step into the world of diverse women on their journey of dealing with breast cancer in their communities. These characters reflect as they look through their own mirror and speak their experience from the essence of who they are. These characters hold up a mirror to their audience and they cause them to reflect upon the diverse experiences of breast cancer survivors. This play is dedicated to the many breast cancer survivors and women who have been killed by breast cancer from diverse communities. May I give voice to your suffering and your beauty.

### Speaking

Reanae McNeal is a powerful speaker around issues of breast cancer and women especially as it pertains to multicultural women, Indigenous women, and African-American women. She brings insight and wisdom into ways that we can serve women who are breast cancer survivors as well as how we can all empower ourselves around this issue. Reanae is not a breast cancer survivor herself but due to her experience and activism around this issue she leaves the audience with memorable stories of women in her family as well as others. Reanae interweaves her speaking with powerful songs. She is truly an inspiration to any audience that would have the privilege of hearing her empowering words around such an intimate topic.

#### Topics:

- Breast Cancer
- What Happens When you Hear The "C" Word  
(Reanae tells the journey with her mother as she fought thyroid cancer and how it impacted her family)
- We are more than our breasts  
(An empowerment speech specifically for breast cancer survivors)
- Custom made speeches around Breast Cancer, Cancer, Women in general, African-American women, American Indian women, and Multicultural women, and health.