



THE MEDEA PROJECT
THEATER FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN

For Immediate

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Release

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Brava! For Women in the Arts & Cultural Odyssey

Presents

THE MEDEA PROJECT: THEATER FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN in
“WHEN DID YOUR HANDS BECOME A WEAPON?”

In celebration of CULTURAL ODYSSEY’S 40TH ANNIVERSARY Brava Theater Center and Cultural Odyssey present ***WHEN DID YOUR HANDS BECOME A WEAPON?*** a collaboration between **RHODESSA JONES & THE MEDEA PROJECT: THEATER FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN** and the **Women’s HIV Program at UCSF**. All performances will be at Brava Theater Center, 2781-24th Street at York, San Francisco, CA 94110, Thursdays through Sundays, OCTOBER 25 – NOVEMBER 4, 2018. All shows Thursday through Saturday at 8 PM with matinees on Sundays at 3 PM and Saturday, Nov. 2 at 3 PM. There will also be a Special Gala Show Saturday, OCTOBER 27, 2018. There will not be a show on Friday, November 2. **TICKET PRICES** - Thursdays (pay what you can): \$0, \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20, \$25; Friday, Saturday, Sunday (sliding scale): \$15, \$20, \$25; Saturday, October 27 Gala Performance: \$25, \$35, \$50. For information and tickets please call (415) 641-7657 and/or log on to https://brava.secure.force.com/ticket/#details_a0S4100000EhY6IEAV

Supported in part by grants from the CREATIVE WORK FUND and NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, ***When Did Your Hands Become a Weapon?*** heralds the beginning of Cultural Odyssey’s 40th Anniversary Season. Developed far before the #MeToo movement, ***When Did Your Hands Become a Weapon?*** is a prescient call to action in perfect alignment with the issues surrounding the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment of women. This project is a major departure from previous theatrical spectacles focusing on these issues, heralding a new model of care that allows women to heal from past abuse and prevent further trauma.

Rhodessa Jones and her ongoing work with predominately African American women who are

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HIV positive is poised for a dramatic shift and change in approach and efficacy partially due to the UCSF June 2014 formal published study of the impact of THE MEDEA PROJECT on those who participated in the program. Prior to the study the affect and consequences of childhood and adult sexual and physical abuse and the wide — spread issue of violence was not a primary concern of MEDEA PROJECT methodologies. *When Did Your Hands Become a Weapon?* will be a major departure from previous theatrical spectacles focusing primarily on these issues. This departure and expansion of Rhodessa's work will herald a new model of care that allows women to heal from past abuse and prevent further trauma — called trauma-informed primary care.

In 1989, while conducting exercise classes at the San Francisco County Jail, Rhodessa Jones and prison officials observed that African American and Latina women inmates were more likely to honestly confront their personal problems by telling autobiographical stories than through traditional counseling techniques. Based on this observation, Rhodessa, together with representatives of the Sheriff's Department and the San Francisco Health Department founded The MEDEA Project in 1990 to explore whether an arts-based approach could reduce recidivism and divert women from the criminal justice system. Since that auspicious beginning THE MEDEA PROJECT has become a model for transforming and rehabilitating female inmates, and working with ex — inmates as well as HIV positive women utilizing the performing arts.

RHODESSA JONES is Co-Artistic Director of the acclaimed San Francisco performance company Cultural Odyssey. She is an actress, teacher, director, and writer. Ms. Jones is also the Director of the award winning Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women and HIV Circle, which is a performance workshop designed to achieve personal and social transformation with incarcerated women and women living with HIV. During fall 2017 and winter 2018 Rhodessa was a Frank H. T. Rhodes Visiting Professor at CORNELL UNIVERSITY and a MONTGOMERY FELLOW at DARTMOUTH COLLEGE conducting lectures and workshops at these prestigious institutions. In December 2016 Rhodessa received a THEATRE BAY AREA LEGACY AWARD presented to individuals that have made “extraordinary contributions to the Bay Area theatre community.” In 2014 she received THE SUI GENERIS FOUNDATION Achievement Award for “one of a kind contributions, which benefit society in unique ways”.

CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHO: RHODESSA JONES & THE MEDEA PROJECT: THEATER FOR INCARCERATED

WHAT: WHEN DID YOUR HANDS BECOME A WEAPON?

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