



A BIT OF BACKGROUND

Urban Bush Women's uniquely bold and boundary-pushing storytelling weaves contemporary dance, music, and text with the history, culture, and spiritual traditions of African Americans and the African Diaspora.

This radical re-imagining of an earlier work (HairStories, 2001) features the choreography of Samantha Speis and Chanon Judson in collaboration with the company, new music compositions by The Illustrious Blacks (Manchildblack and Monstah Black), with stage direction by Raelle Myrick-Hodges.

Crafted from personal narratives from our communities, kitchens and living rooms, social media, and YouTube, Hair and Other Stories is an opportunity to see a dance work that debates the center of perceived American "values" and celebrates the persevering narrative of the African Diaspora.

Hair and Other Stories will leave you wondrously and often humorously disquieted regarding the nature of our current society. The performance explores perceptions of body image, race, gender identity, economic inequities and what constitutes freedom, liberation, and release in our everyday struggles to rise to our Extra-ordinary Selves in extraordinary times.

With costume design by DeeDee Gomes, projection design by Nick Hussong, and lighting design by Xavier Pierce, Urban Bush Women's Hair and Other Stories invites its audience to delve into the complexities of individual identity versus collective society with humor and honesty.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What kind of emotions did you have when you were watching the show? What kind of emotions did you see being expressed?
- What kind of movements did you see? Fast or slow? High or low? Smooth or jumpy?
- How did the performers hold their bodies during the dances? How was their positioning different or similar to other dance?
- What did the music feel like? What effect did it have on you as an audience member? How did the rhythms affect you?
- Did you see any elements of storytelling in this performance? If yes, in what way?

A REMINDER FOR STUDENTS ABOUT THEATER ETIQUETTE

- LISTEN, EXPERIENCE, IMAGINE, DISCOVER, LEARN!
- GIVE YOUR ENERGY AND ATTENTION TO THE PERFORMERS.
- PLEASE DO NOT EAT OR DRINK IN THE THEATER.
- TALK ONLY BEFORE AND AFTER THE PERFORMANCE.
- TURN OFF WIRELESS DEVICES.
- NO PHOTOS, VIDEOS, TEXTING, OR LISTENING TO MUSIC.

*These are guidelines... We understand that some students may need to experience the performance in their own way, and we are here to support all students and their unique needs.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

We build relationships with others through honesty and appreciation of our unique and special qualities.

- Think of a dear friend or family member. What are the qualities that make them special? How did you build trust in your relationship?
- Reflect on your own assets, your special qualities and abilities. Complete this statement: "If you knew me, you would know "_(insert special quality)"_ Share your statement with a partner and, listen to their statement.

MEDIA PORTRAYALS OF BEAUTY

Think about magazines commercials, tv shows, music videos, youtube videos you've seen lately.. What images of beauty are promoted?

- What stereotypes are perpetuated? What's missing? Who's missing? What's the message to people consuming that media?
- If you were creating a campaign about authentic beauty, what would you include?