

#HealMeToo Festival

#HealMeToo Festival asks how we can heal from sexual violence

Press contact: Rachel Hills (rachel@rachelhills.net)

From March 27 - April 14 2019 at the IRT Theater in the West Village, the **#HealMeToo Festival** will bring together over 50 leading artists, experts, and activists for a multi-disciplinary exploration of gendered and sexual violence and how it can be healed.

Program highlights include *Truth and Reconciliation of Womyn*, an anthology of restorative narratives by leading intersectional feminist playwrights curated by Tony-winner and early #TimesUp member **Tonya Pinkins**; Broadway's **Shona Tucker** (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) performing her solo play *Growing Wild*, about a family's inter-generational quest to heal from the trauma of a mysterious sex crime; and *Identifying "the Predator" in the Era of #MeToo*, an immersive panel curated by filmmaker **Carmen LoBue** with performances, screenings and talks by celebrated guests including **Tonya Pinkins**, NYT bestselling author and actress **Jennifer Esposito**, activist **Ruby Anaya** of the Generator Collective, and others.

Founded by theater artist and activist Hope Singen, the Festival seeks to create an intersectional space for conversation that inspires healing and cultural change.

Singen finds inspiration in Tarana Burke's "**metoo.**" **Movement**, which since 2006 has been empowering survivors of sexual violence through empathy.

"#MeToo totally changed how I feel when I tell my story," says Singen. "It made a huge difference to know people were starting to feel the reality behind the statistics. As survivors, we don't have to feel so isolated, so on the outside of culture. We are the majority. Together, we have the power to provoke real change."

The Festival also builds on the conversation started by NOW-NYC and RAINN's #HealMeToo campaign, which provided survivors of sexual violence with resources to get help and speak out about their experiences.

As a survivor herself, Singen wanted to create a platform for stories that expand people's understanding of how sexual and gendered violence operate in different communities, and how

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we can collectively begin to heal: from organizing, activism and policy change, to therapeutic and bodywork, to creative expression through all the arts.

The result is a bill of boundary-pushing work that spans everything from intimate partner violence experienced by undocumented women in New York City, to harassment and coercion in the theater industry; from a U.S. student's search for Justice in the French courts, to a woman's struggle to reclaim intimacy after childhood sexual abuse; from the continuing impacts of colonialism, slavery, and lynching, to the healing of trauma for gender nonconforming artists.

"After you experience sexual violence, you can't go back and undo it," says Singesen. "This festival is about what happens next. We want to give survivors a place to find each other, work together intersectionally to prevent sexual violence, and share ways we've moved toward healing."

The **#HealMeToo Festival** is founded by Artistic Director and Executive Producer, Hope Singesen, with Managing Producer Charlotte Arnoux, Production Supervisor, Clarissa Marie Ligon, Technical Director, Alexandra Lane, Producing Associate, Marcela Barry, Marketing Producer, Jordan Bean, Social Media Producer, Jessica Schmidt, and Co-Executive Producer Rachel Hills. Supported by Festival Expert Panels & Podcast Sponsor, [New York Women's Foundation](#) and Festival Sponsor, [The Art Therapy Project](#), the #HealMeToo Festival is presented, in part, through Kori Rushton and IRT's Residency Season ([irttheater.org](#)). All events will occur at the IRT Theater, 154 Christopher Street, west of Hudson.

Website: healmetoofest.com
[Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) handles: @healmetoofest

For press enquiries or to arrange an interview with Artistic Director Hope Singesen, please contact Rachel Hills at rachel@rachelhills.net.