



Brave Soul Collective

PRESENTS

#BLACKMENFEEL

A Three Part Series
of Virtual Panel Discussions & Performances

ACT II - WOUNDS

**Sunday Oct. 25th, 2020
7pm (EST)**

Supported in part by: **CNP**

About Brave Soul Collective

Brave Soul Collective (BSC) is a Washington, DC-based multi-disciplinary arts, education, and HIV/AIDS outreach organization working to illuminate the lives of LGBTQIA people of color through the performing and healing arts. BSC aims to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS, by serving as a platform for open and honest discussion about prevention, stigma, and personal responsibility. In addition to our stand-alone productions, community discussions, and artist features, BSC regularly performs and presents workshops at HIV/AIDS conferences, as well as various LGBTQIA Pride and community events. 2020 marks BSC's 14th anniversary as an arts organization & company. For more info visit: <http://wearebravesouls.com>

Brave Soul Collective

presents

#BlackMenFeel

Act II: WOUNDS

Conceived & Produced by Monte J. Wolfe

PANELISTS / WRITERS

DaddyRod
Daniel J. Downer
Art Jackson
Dr. David Malebranche
Mark J. Tuggle

CAST

Donald Burch
Thomas Davis
G. Carlos Henderson
Rich Rocket
Michael Sainte-Andress
Michael Ward
Monte J. Wolfe

PLAYWRIGHTS

Mario Gray
Alan Sharpe
Monte J. Wolfe

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

George-Raymond

PANELISTS /CONTRIBUTING WRITERS



Daddy Rod is a native of San Jose, CA and currently lives in the Atlanta area. He has been a part of the Leather and BDSM/Kink Community for over 20 years with the last 18 years in the Atlanta area. He is currently the Treasurer of the ONYX National Council, Co-Founder of the Atlanta BDSM Workshops and Mr. Atlanta Eagle 2016. His involvement with the Atlanta Leather/BDSM and Kink community, and ONYX in particular, has helped Daddy Rod embrace Leather History, his kinks and become a more confident man with a passion for education and preserving Leather History! He truly enjoys

educating individuals of all races, genders and sexual orientations about the Leather and BDSM history and culture, and fetish communities. Daddy Rod is an avid fitness and bodybuilding junkie, loves traveling, and exploring new cultures. He is a former Radio DJ at a jazz station and also enjoys game shows where he has appeared and won on both "The Price is Right" and "Let's Make a Deal".

Daniel J. Downer is an award-winning community advocate and organizer; and the Executive Director of The Bros in Convo Initiative, a grassroots community organization in Orlando promoting and protecting the health equity of Black gay, bisexual, queer, and same gender loving men. Daniel J. Downer has a long history of advocating for Black and Brown LGBTQ+ and social movements in Central Florida.

Through his work with various community initiatives and organizations, he has led community conversations on and facilitated community education campaigns specifically addressing health equity, HIV, and LGBTQ+ issues.

Daniel served as the Act Against AIDS Ambassador, under the direction of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, from 2018 -2019 specifically working to bring attention, awareness, and practical solutions to health disparities that directly impact HIV positive communities in the South. As Executive Director of The Bros in Convo Initiative, he has guided the organization to become one of Central Florida's leading organizations while providing vision, energy, and leadership in the fulfillment of the mission of the organization, to provide comprehensive health education, STI prevention linkage, and peer support to Black gay, bisexual, queer, and same gender loving men ages 18 - 35 in Central Florida communities that are affected or impacted by health disparities.

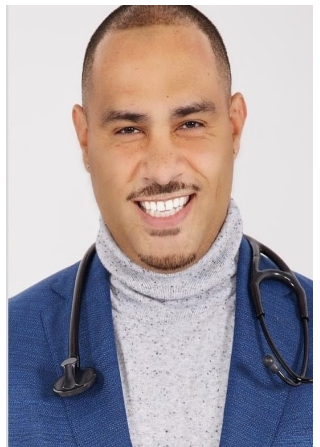


PANELISTS /CONTRIBUTING WRITERS (CONT)



Art Jackson was born in Orange, NJ and has been actively engaged in the fight for equality of LGBT people of color since 1979. Starting the 1st Black Gay Support Group in High school in 1980 in Orange, NJ to being very instrumental to the founding of GMAD, (Gay Men of African Descent) Art volunteered with GMHC in 1986 as well as volunteering at Harlem Hospital AIDS ward. Art has used his gift of spoken word to spread a message hope, love and peace while breaking down bias, stigma and fear for those living with and affected by HIV. Art is a 31 year HIV Survivor and has been an active participant in advocacy and activism for those living with the disease and is currently working on his first published book. Art currently host “Artistic Expressions” an open mic forum that uses the arts, spoken word and music to share a message of inclusion, understanding and hope with communities throughout the country and has developed several programs that address youth and community. Art believes that being engaged and working for change is vital to each day lived and works on several national programs that educate and prevents HIV/AIDS and works vigorously to “End The Epidemic.!!”

David Malebranche, MD, MPH, is a board-certified Internal medicine and sexual health physician, public health official, activist, and educator who lives in Atlanta, Georgia. He appears in the YouTube series “Revolutionary Health” as part of The Counter Narrative Project and also on the #AskTheHIVDoc video series. His writings and research have been published in JAMA, the Annals of Internal Medicine, the American Journal of Public Health, and Lancet. Dr. Malebranche also penned a memoir entitled “Standing on His Shoulders,” about his relationship with his father, which is available on Amazon.



PANELISTS /CONTRIBUTING WRITERS (CONT)



Mark J. Tuggle is a same gender-loving contemporary descendant of enslaved Africans. Mark is an activist, brother, educator, friend, humanitarian, mentor, tutor, writer, and spiritual being with a strong sense of justice. Mark was featured in, on, and with: Africana.com, BET Tonight with Tavis Smiley, BLACKLIGHT Online, BLACK NOIR, KLMO-FM, Longmoor Productions, MasculineUS Live, New York Times, Nuyorican Poets Cafe, Our Corner, POZ, PULSE, Rolling Out New York, Sexplorations, Sports Qualified, The CITIZEN, Trenton Times, UPN News, UZURI, Venus, VIBE, Village Voice, WBAI -FM, WNYC-FM, and WQHT-FM.

Please use the link below to participate in the 2020
National Black LGBTQ Community Survey, through October 30th!



Participants have an opportunity to win one of twenty \$100 gift cards.

The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete.

Please re-tweet and share!

<https://survey.cmi.info/se/359D342B06DB7A58?CMID=1003>
Survey ends October 30



Take the Black LGBTQ
Community Survey®

Start Now!

**Research
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www.BlackLGBTQsurvey.org

 Center for Black Equity

**Please use access link via
Rayceen.com**

CAST / PLAYWRIGHTS



Donald Burch III loves the theater and any opportunity to work with Brave Soul Collective and African-American Collective Theater. He's been working with these companies for several years, both in front of, and behind the scenes. Although this performances marks Donald's debut VIRTUAL appearance with BSC, his last stage appearance as part of the Brave Soul Collective ensemble was last year, as part of "*Impressions: Meditations on Black Gay Identity*" which premiered in April of 2019, at Anacostia Playhouse.

Thomas Davis is a dancer, choreographer, and HIV advocate from Colorado. Upon completing High School he moved to Los Angeles in 2010 to attend AMDA College and Conservatory of the Arts where he received his BFA in Dance Theater in 2013. Davis remained in Los Angeles after his graduation and focused on his career as a dancer and HIV advocate. He began touring with The Lula Washington Dance Theater in 2014 and has performed with them in places such as Santa Barbara, Washington DC, Montana, Las Vegas, New Jersey, and other cities for the past 5 years. He was last seen performing with BSC in "*Impressions: Meditations on Black Gay Identity*" which premiered in April of 2019, at Anacostia Playhouse. He is the Creator and Artistic Director of The Catharsis Project.



Mario Gray is a writer who originally hails from Baltimore, MD. He has written numerous works which have been featured in previous Brave Soul productions including: *UnFinished Business*, *Impressions: Meditations on Black Gay Identity*, and *#BlackGayRage*. He is the High Impact Prevention & Training Coordinator for *Us Helping Us, People Into Living, Inc.* He has over 7 years of experience in advocacy and nonprofit work, with a focus on minority rights. He is a certified facilitator for multiple CDC approved Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI). He enjoys video games and writing, referring to himself as a nerd.

CAST / PLAYWRIGHTS (CONT)

G. "Carlos" Henderson is a Houston native and Helen Hayes award winning actor who has worked and studied among personalities such as the late Michael Jackson, Katherine Dunham, Eartha Kitt, Alvin Ailey, Geoffrey Holder, Quincy Jones, and Mike Malone to name a few. Mr. Henderson delivers a complete package of dance, chorale, stage, film, studio recording, vocal production and classroom etiquette. Credits include directing, staging, and choreography for live stage, singing artists opera, film and television (Star Search) stand-ins, and worship centers.

He has appeared in music videos and films (The MC Hammer Story: Too Legit to Quit, A Devil in God's House and most notably the short film "BAD" - starring Michael Jackson).



Rich Rocket is creativity unleashed. Growing up with very humble beginnings, Rich learned at a very young age how to resourcefully make something from nothing. Originally out of necessity, Rich developed a love and passion for bringing visual concepts to life. After a bout with a former employer, Rich was thrust into entrepreneurship. After years of only admiring fashion, he decided to market his brand to the people, thus *Vintage Thrivals* was born. A clothing company that markets innovated, created, and vintage pieces while celebrating the coolness of today, the freshness of the 90's and the uniqueness of the 80's! Through his photography, musing, and other creative endeavors, he wants to show the world that the limits you subscribe to are only enforced by you. Rich's charisma, style and wit has put him on some of the largest stages in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area. His goal is to leave behind a legacy of creativity that will inspire the future generation to making lasting impressions, lasting impact, and a lasting imprint.

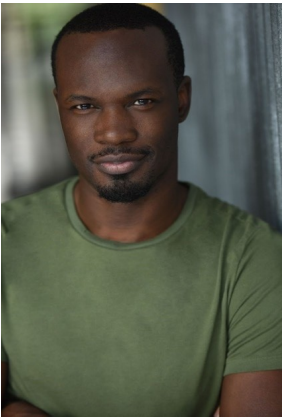
CAST / PLAYWRIGHTS (CONT)

Michael Sainte-Andress champions arts education in public schools, adult literacy, voter registration & civil/human rights. He is an educator, a professional multi-talented entertainer (actor/producer/director), an award-winning poet and writer, but more importantly he is fully committed to making the world a better place in which to live. He honorably served in the U.S. Navy and since 1974 has made DC his home. He is a two-time Mayoral appointee to the Ryan White HIV Planning Council & a Mayoral appointee to the Citizens Complaint Review Board. He does all these things with a determination and sense of purpose that is remarkable.



Alan Sharpe HIV+ Writer/Director co-founded African-American Collective Theater (ACT) after his move to Washington, DC. Since 1992, he has written and directed over 100 plays and short films, all showcasing contemporary Black gay and lesbian life and culture. Sharpe is proud to be a charter member of Brave Soul Collective (BSC) for which he has also written an ongoing series of plays, as well as the African-American Playwrights' Exchange (APEX), Urban Playwrights' United (UPU) and the Dramatists' Guild.

CAST / PLAYWRIGHTS (CONT)



Michael Ward is an actor, model, and writer. Onstage he's played in *One in Two* (Donja R. Love), *Nate in 2:30 Hookup* (Alan Sharpe), *Fences* (Stage Aurora), *Lines* world premiere at the Atlanta Black Theatre Festival (BJ Holmes), and Kyle in *Holiday Break* (Darrell Grant). He recently wrapped production on the film *Pulp Night Club* film (Steven L Coard) and *The One Who Marched* (Sweet Tea Productions). He hosts Counter Narrative Project's *Revolutionary Health*, the show focused on Black gay men's health and wellness. In addition, he is one half of *BLACK, GAY, stuck at home*, an interactive movie night experience while in self-quarantine.

Monte J. Wolfe is an experienced producer, writer, director, musician & theatre professional with an extensive background in theatre performance, management, arts administration, and production. He has worked professionally in the DC metropolitan area since 1999. He is also a trained actor with various stage, film & television appearances to his credit. He is a graduate of the Howard University Theatre Arts Department, where he earned a BFA in Theatre Arts Administration in 1999. In his role as Artistic and Managing Director of Brave Soul Collective (BSC), Monte has devoted much of his time and energy to curating and producing intentional performances and community discussions which give voice to the identities, people and narratives that often still live in the margins of society and conventional theatre experiences. With BSC as his vehicle, Monte keeps his finger on the pulse of what's happening in the world at large, but most importantly to him, in the lives of Black LGBTQIA individuals. He lovingly dedicates this the entire #BlackMenFeel project in loving memory, to his friend and HU Theatre Arts brother, *Chadwick Boseman*.



NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

When I think about the ways in which patriarchy, misogyny and so many other toxic behaviors have been and continue to be carried out by men in society, it saddens me. As someone who is usually pretty obsessed with examining human behavior, I typically find myself fascinated as I witness situations play out in my life, the lives of those around me, in characters on television shows / films, and the world at large. As frustrated as I usually find myself when I see male fragility rear its ugly head, there's always a question in my mind that I cannot let go of thinking about which is - *WHY? Why are we like this? How did we get to this place where so much of what happens with men is shaped, informed, and colored by ego, sexual prowess, capitalism and a bunch of (what looks and feels to me like) pure immaturity and stupidity?*

Prior to March of this year, at any given point I was subject to feelings of sadness, despair, hopelessness, anger and depression pretty often. All of that has only increased and been magnified since the onset of COVID-19. After some pretty heavy mood swings and emotional ups and downs brought on by the financial strain of the pandemic in the four months time between March and July, I found myself in a frightening state of emotional fragility - more so than usual, which for me, is saying something. Looking back now, it makes perfect sense that on July 6th, 2020, I had a pretty serious suicide scare. While I'd had other run-ins with feeling like I wanted to end my life, this time felt markedly different and far more serious. The only way I know how to describe what I felt is to say here what I kept thinking that morning as I operated under a dark cloud that I could not seem to shake; *"I just don't have any more fight left in me"*. There's a lot more that I'm sure I'll write about and reflect upon at a later time but for sake of context, the valley that I found myself in that day was a definite catalyst for all of what we will talk about, write about and offer up artistically as part of this **#BlackMenFeel** virtual series.

If ever there was a time for the work of deconstructing black male emotions to happen, as far as I'm concerned, 2020 is that time. The severity of what we're facing right now, coupled with the weight and absence of what we knew as being "normal" before March 2020 means the stakes are beyond high.

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NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR (CONT)

So many of us as Black Men have been living, breathing, and operating as “the walking wounded” for far too long and for many of us particularly as Black Queer Men, the challenges we face feel even more insurmountable. It’s for that reason that I committed myself to seeing this project become a living and breathing thing. In doing so, I can only hope this will serve as an agent of change and healing for not only my Black Queer brethren, but for anyone who decides to take this journey with us as we begin the work of unpacking the wellspring of our individual and collective emotions.

Each writer, contributor, panelist and artist/performer who is part of this virtual series, I asked to participate because not only do I find myself inspired by each of them, but I also know that many of them share similar experiences with being challenged by the emotional weight of what happens when we fail to really truly deal with whatever it is that is hurting or harming us. That being said - talking about emotions and what’s underneath them - is anything but a straight line. It’s complicated and messy, like life. As we continue with *ACT II*, we take a deep dive into examining our “WOUNDS” - which is never easy, but is ALWAYS beneficial.

- Monte J. Wolfe

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

#BlackMenFeel would not be possible without the support of some key individuals.

We send our most heartfelt thanks to:

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BLACK, gay, stuck at home
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Daddy Rod
David Malebranche
Rich Rocket
Mark J. Tuggle
Art Jackson
Michael Sainte-Andress
Donald Burch
G. Carlos Henderson
Thomas Davis
The Catharsis Project
Lemar Johnson
Adodi National
Tamisha Ottley
Rayceen Pendarvis
Krylios
Zar
The Ask Rayceen Show
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& lastly, THANK YOU to each one of you reading these words, for taking an interest in our work!
We appreciate the support immensely!

