



50 Years and Moving Forward

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Artist and Breast Cancer Survivor Esther Pagan Profiles the Struggles and Beauty of Her Experiences in *Esther Pagan: My Colors of Cancer*, Curated by Longtime NYC Arts Leader William Aguado

Longwood Art Gallery | October 2 — December 20, 2013

(September 23, 2013—Bronx) The Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA) and Longwood Art Gallery @ Hostos [Community College] are proud to present *Esther Pagan: My Colors of Cancer*, opening October 2nd as part of BCA's **First Wednesdays Bronx Culture Trolley**. *Esther Pagan: My Colors of Cancer* is a multi-media installation of photographs, hand crafted hats, sculpture, and poetry. The show is activated online through her interactive web blog mycolorsofcancer.com. Esther was forever changed by breast cancer, especially after receiving the diagnosis over the telephone following a routine medical examination in 2012. This exhibit invites us to share as it celebrates her life, artistry, and ultimate beauty created from personal struggle.



Esther Pagan, My Colors of Cancer Survival Bra, 2013. Leather, acrylic paint.

At 7:00pm on October 2nd at Longwood Art Gallery @ Hostos, Pagan will be presented with the Lucy Estrada Caregiver Award by the New York Chapter of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc., part of the Alice Cardona Cancer Awareness Project. Additionally, the evening will include spoken word poetry by artists personally impacted by cancer survivors and/or their spouses, relatives and friends. Poetry will begin immediately after the award presentation

A special series of custom-made hats, utilizing a wide variety of materials, has been created to share the artist's understanding of and response to being a survivor. They are crafted to express, engage and reflect how she worked through the trauma, the hope and the healing process. Photographs expose a sensual journey that shares the stages of her illness and the process of her healing. Pagan moves between her need for protecting and concealing and her desire to inform and expose. Photographic poses are coquettish and provocative, inviting the viewer to witness her transformation from cancer victim to cancer survivor. The works inspire dialogue and discussions on this ravaging illness. Finally, she employs the photographers lens to address healthcare issues of access, awareness and education, and the toll such illness takes across communities.

About The blog: After surgery and recovery, Ms. Pagan documented her journey on www.mycolorsofcancer.com, focusing on "a positive approach on combating breast cancer". The blog authenticates Esther's path — her moods, her ups and her downs during her recovery from breast cancer. This exhibit grew out of her reflections.

About the Artist: Esther Pagan is a practicing artist and writer. She is also a NYS licensed massage therapist who trained at the Swedish Institute in 1999 and a graduate of the BCA Art Handling Training Program (AHTP) in 2010. She currently works and lives in the Bronx. Her work was part of the group exhibition *Impractical Hats* at Longwood in 2010.

Public Programs (to be announced) will begin in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month. in October 2013. For further information and updates on a full schedule of BCA's fall 2013 exhibitions and projects, visit www.bronxarts.org.

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