

THE MARSH BERKELEY PRESENTS  
**WELCOME TO THE CANCER CAFÉ**  
WITH POST-SHOW TALKBACK ENGAGEMENTS

Written and Performed by Judith C.

Directed by Rebecca Fisher

March 8 –March 22, 2020

BERKELEY, CA (30 January 2020) – A PT Clinical Specialist in Chronic Pain, **Judith C.** never imagined being on the opposite end of treatment —until she was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, an incurable blood cancer with a limited life expectancy. This March, Judith’s journey from diagnosis to stem cell transplant unfolds in her hilarious and heartbreaking solo show *Welcome to The Cancer Café* at **The Marsh Berkeley**. Enlightening, elevating, and deeply personal, Judith brings audiences on her unexpected journey from provider to patient, sharing the profound lessons this role reversal offers. Using actual conversations with providers, Judith portrays her interactions with the medical establishment, bringing keen insight and offering a better understanding of the journey and choices faced by people of similar circumstances. Proceeds from each show will be donated to a local cancer organization chosen by Judith. Talkback engagements after every performance will also be offered. *Welcome to The Cancer Café* will be presented **March 8 –22, 2020** with performances at 2:00pm Sundays at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. For tickets (\$20-\$35 sliding scale; \$55 and \$100 reserved) or more information, the public may visit [www.themarsh.org](http://www.themarsh.org) or call The Marsh Box office at 415-282-3055 (open Monday through Friday, 1:00pm-4:00pm).

Motivated by portrayals of cancer heroes, cancer miracles, and people that “fight” for their lives, Judith C. was determined to shed light on different responses to cancer than the typical warrior model. *Welcome to The Cancer Café* has been performed at the Stanford Oncology Grand Rounds (2017), Bone Marrow Transplant Life Survivorship Symposium in Denver, CO (2018) and Orlando, FL (2019), Kehilla Community Synagogue (2018), and for various cancer support groups throughout Northern CA. Originally presented at The Marsh Berkeley as part of its *Marsh*

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*Rising* series in November 2019, *Welcome to The Cancer Café* returns in March 2020 for a full run.

Proceeds from each performance will be donated to a local cancer organization chosen by Judith. Talkback engagements following all performances of *Welcome to The Cancer Café* will also be offered:

**Sunday, March 8:** Proceeds will go towards Camp Kesem (Berkeley), one of many chapters of a wider organization that supports children through and beyond a parent’s cancer. Founded at Stanford University in 2000, Camp Kesem has since expanded to 116 chapters in 42 states around the country, offering free summer camps for children who have been impacted by this life-changing event. Camp Kesem Outreach Coordinator Autumn Frlekin and Development Coordinator Shaked Salem will discuss how the camp brings together a community of children with similar experiences in a safe, welcoming environment to have fun and rediscover their childhood.

**Sunday, March 15:** Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic for Low-Income Women with Cancer in Oakland will be receiving proceeds from the March 15th performance. For 25 years, this free public health clinic and 501(c)(3) non-profit organization has provided integrative cancer care and supportive services that compliment mainstream cancer treatments. These services include acupuncture, herbs, homeopathy, bodywork, guided imagery, movement, and nutritional therapies. Dr. Loveleena Virk and Dr. Divya Chandrasekar, Palliative Care MDs at Kaiser Oakland, will discuss approaches that improve the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness.

**Sunday, March 22:** Proceeds from the final performance will go towards the Women’s Cancer Resource Center (WCRC) in Berkeley. This non-profit organization creates opportunities for women with cancer to improve their quality of life through education, supportive services, and practical assistance. Dolores Moorehead, WCRC Lead Client Navigator and Multicultural Client Support Clinician, will be accompanied by a client to share how this organization helps people with cancer navigate through the overwhelming health care system, allowing them to get the appropriate care and treatment they need.

Described by the San Francisco press as “the monologue maestro” and “the dean of solo performance,” David Ford has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. After seeing *Welcome to the Cancer*

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*Café*, Ford said, “I’ve worked for 30 years with people who are writing and performing their own stories. In that time, I’ve heard a lot of people give witness to the trials of having a life-threatening disease. Judith C. goes further than anyone I’ve ever encountered. She gets the awful contrasts of fear and courage, agency and impotence, armor and vulnerability.”

**Judith C.** (Actor/Writer) is a PT Clinical Specialist in Chronic Pain/Feldenkrais practitioner, with decades of clinical and teaching experience. At age 58, she was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, an incurable blood cancer with no clear, accepted treatment path. Following her diagnosis, Judith began writing and performing about her experience as a way to cope with her life as a Myeloma patient being the “new normal” – eventually leading to the birth of her first solo work, *Welcome to The Cancer Café*.

**Rebecca Fisher** (Director) is the creator of The Marsh’s Writing Cabaret and the co-producer of the long-running Marsh series *Tell it on Tuesday*. Her solo performance work has been called “smart, challenging, and unmistakably affecting” by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and has won a San Francisco Best of Fringe award. She has directed solo shows in national fringe festivals, as well as Mark Kenward’s *Nantucket* and Diane Barnes’ *My Stroke of Luck*, both presented at The Marsh. Fisher was a teaching artist with The Lincoln Center affiliated arts education program in Bay Area schools and has directed theater camps with the Berkeley Playhouse/Julia Morgan Center for the Arts and The Marsh.

**The Marsh** is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” It was launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, and now annually hosts more than 600 performances of 175 shows across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The *East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.”

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

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**WHAT:** A PT Clinical Specialist in Chronic Pain, **Judith C.** never imagined being on the opposite end of treatment —until she was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, an incurable blood cancer with a limited life expectancy. This March, Judith’s journey from diagnosis to stem cell transplant unfolds in her hilarious and heartbreaking solo show *Welcome to The Cancer Café* at **The Marsh Berkeley**. Enlightening, elevating, and deeply personal, Judith brings audiences on her unexpected journey from provider to patient, sharing the profound lessons this role reversal offers. Using actual conversations with providers, Judith portrays her interactions with the medical establishment, bringing keen insight and offering a better understanding of the journey and choices faced by people of similar circumstances. Proceeds from each show will be donated to a local organization chosen by Judith. Talkback engagements after every performance will also be offered.

**WHEN:** **March 8 – March 22, 2020**

**SHOWS:** 2:00pm Sundays

**WHERE:** **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley  
*Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck  
The Downtown Berkeley BART station is one block away on Shattuck*

**TICKETS:** \$20-\$35 sliding scale; \$55 and \$100 reserved

**INFO:** For information or to order tickets visit **themarsh.org** or call **(415) 282-3055** (Monday through Friday, 1:00pm-4:00pm).

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**PRESS:** Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.  
650.327.1200 | [sydney@cb-pr.com](mailto:sydney@cb-pr.com)

**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <http://cbpr.co/press/cancercafe>