

WHO IS KWEEN?

POET. PERSONALITY. PLAYWRIGHT. PRODUCER

Poet, Actor, Playwright, Woman, Go-Getter, Artist- all these descriptions would be fitting for a “Queen”. Kween started her creative journey as a spoken word artist while she was serving her country in the United States Air Force. It was there she learned how to heal, create and inspire with words. Having such a great voice she appeared on “BET's 106 and Park”, “NBC”, Robert Townsend's, “Spoken”, Comcast's Community Showcase TV and she was also a featured guest on internationally known poet and author, “The Camille Yarborough Show” in many local television shows nationwide. Kween has been heard on radio stations in over 20 States and internationally on XM Satellite Radio. She has gained exposure on the front page of the LA Times, The State Paper, Crosswords News, Creative Loafing, Rolling Out, Home and You, Champion News and many campus newspapers.

Being an active member of the National Black Arts Spoken Word Tour and the National Black Authors Tour for over 20 years, she has lent her talents to many HBCU's, Colleges and Universities. Kween's aspirations have always been big-when she was two, she decided she would be a ‘punk rocker’, so during college she majored in business and marketing management so that she could one day call her own shots in her career. After a few school plays and various Poetry Slam's and Performances, Kween, (Kween Smith) decided she would use her creativity in writing skills to compose her own one- woman play- and won two awards for her first production, which she wrote and starred in. The noteworthy play, Open Scars is a theatrical masterpiece that is raw honest and intrinsically creative. Kween plays everything from a streetwise woman with a slighted take on ‘survival skills’, to a once -devoted wife who believes in the rigid hold of commitment in the play, and uses all her creative skills- improv comedy, poetry and imagination-to create part of a life story for women everywhere.

Kween has also used her former acting experience for roles in the off-Broadway production, Say It Loud: Being Black and Been Proud and To Be Young, Black and Gifted with Rap.

Currently, Kween has morphed into a few new roles as mother and Wife. She has found a way to marry her arts entirety with Mental Health and Wellness and Self-care. That marriage birthed a healing fitness product called, Cardio Cards, The Personal Pocket Trainer. She continues to be innovative, influential, and inspiring while keeping her artistic soul at the core of all new ideas and art forms.

Things that I had to overcome in the Military:

- Religious differences. I was at first person/ female ever to wear a religious head garb as an active duty service member in Uniform.
- I had to experience sexual assault. I was backed into many corners and it's also something that you cannot speak about because of the fear of not being believed the fear of demotion the fear of retaliation the fear of alienation and there is fear of rejection.
- I had to also deal with my chain of command and utilizing how the chain of command worked and being penalized for using the chain of command instead of going to my direct supervisor.
- I had to deal with prejudice amongst my own race of people. There were many frowns I received because I was wearing religious headgear as an active duty member in uniform and many of my own people felt like I was pushing the envelope and I was trying to create a new norm in the military and I was just not following the rules and making it hard.
- I had to overcome suicidal thoughts because of the pressure of a whole entire force of people being able to tell me what to do and command me what to do because I was under ranked.
- Even though it was the military, I was the classic Cinderella story, I was treated poorly, I was given extra duty, I was targeted and I was not supported because I seemed like I wasn't American enough because I had personal views as well as patriotic views.
- I dealt with privilege issues because of the fact that I could read the fine print and I was just an airman which is an E 1 and E-2 and I found a way to have the Air Force pay for me to live off base and have my own place and have them pay for me an extra food stipend because I just refuse to eat what was being served in the Chow Hall because of my religious way of life.
- One of the biggest things that I dealt with or learned was the corruption and the favoritism in the class system and sexism and colorism that goes on
- I served during 9/11 so the realism of how America works in conjunction with the United States Armed Forces. And think about my real-life commitment to my country and the things that I actually experienced while serving the country and coming out not quite the same.
- And then there's the aftermath of dealing of when you and if you decide to get out of the military and retire from the military or just not reenlist and I had to deal with the fact that I actually was not the same person and maybe not in the best

way because now for the rest of my life I am a mental health case and or mental health patient or I will have to deal with the fact that I have a mental health illness.

- I had to deal with Homelessness for a few years to adjust to being a Civilian and not a Soldier