

## [SHERYL LEE RALPH: 'Cry' The Beloved Country](#)

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By Karu F. Daniels, [AOL Black Voices](#)



Original 'Dreamgirls' star [Sheryl Lee Ralph](#) is headed to the motherland.

The beloved stage and screen siren will take her acclaimed one-woman show 'Sometimes I Cry' to South Africa, as part of the "Vital Voices of Africa: Leadership Summit for Women and Girls" in Cape Town, Jan. 14 through Jan. 19.

**"This is my first time to South Africa which many view as the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic,"** Ralph told the BV Newswire yesterday. **"What better place**

**to go to create a new revolution in the way that women and young girls think about themselves and this disease?"**

**"We need a movement -- we need change,"** she continued. **"And my mission is to be the change I want to see. That change being; empowerment, enlightenment and education so that we will no longer be silent or afraid."**

Ralph, who has starred in a string of high profile movies and television shows such as 'Barbershop,' 'ER,' 'Mo'isha' and 'It's A Living,' is also recognized as an award winning AIDS activist.

**"AIDS affects us all and we can no longer be silenced by stigma, change and ignorance,"** she added.

According to a spokesperson, "Vital Voices" has a mission to bring together women and girls who are emerging and established leaders across countries, sectors and generations to grapple with some of the most pressing challenges facing Africa: economic development, trade, violence against women, HIV/AIDS and good governance.

The Summit also recognizes the critical role that African women and girls can and must play in moving the continent forward socially, politically and economically.

Ralph is also confirmed to speak as part of a panel of experts and artists who will share their thoughts on using art and communications as a means to raise awareness about the

impact of HIV/AIDS on women, and discuss how performance can be used as a means to empower others.

'Sometimes I Cry,' which traveled across America for the past six months, depicts real life stories of women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

It's the second production from the Ralph-founded Diva Foundation, a national not-for-profit organization -- established in 1990-- focusing on generating resources and coordinating activities to create awareness of and combat against HIV/AIDS via entertainment.

The long-running 'Divas Simply Singing's showcase holds the distinction of being the longest consecutive running musical AIDS fundraiser in Los Angeles.