The media depicts the female body from an unrealistic scope, creating women with unspoiled bodies that society longs for. This forces women to pick apart their figures to match the ideal female. As a result, women promote negativity towards their body and develop life-threatening habits towards their health. Women must see their bodies from a fresh perspective, transforming their idea of a “perfect” body to an idea of a healthy body.

“Denude” is a study of the female body and its struggle to fit in a society of “flawless” women. This piece displays the thoughts, feelings, and emotional turmoil of women’s body image in today’s society. In showcasing this piece, the dancers conceal, uncover, and reveal new identities that they hope change the stereotypical viewpoints that society conveys about women acquiring the “perfect” body.

“Denude” began as a solo study in my choreography class. Prior to this study, I researched the history of famous female dancers and their personal perception of their figures. I examined dance icons from the past and the present, noting dramatic changes of society’s view of body image. From there, I researched current dancers’ thoughts on the matter, relaying their personal struggles of depression, eating disorder, and body-dysmorphia. As a dancer who also battles with the politics of feminine figures and my personal body image, I felt it was necessary to present an alternative to the idea of a “picture-perfect” body. We as a society must change the way we view women physically. We must accept them for their struggle, their emotion, their talents, their “flaws,” and their realness. Most importantly, we must accept them for who they are, disregarding shape and size.

The openess, vulnerability, beauty, and honesty of the dancers in “Denude” depict the personal battle that women face daily and their desire to receive respect from the media and the public who force them to feel flawed. While I hope to raise awareness of female body image, I also hope that my dancers and all women view their body from a new encouraging perspective:

“What matters is what you see. Your body is your temple, it’s your home, and you must decorate it.” – Gabourey Sidibe