

The Woman Behind the Storm

BY VINITA SRIVASTAVA

PHOTOGRAPHER RENEE COX IS AT THE CENTER OF CONTROVERSY OVER PUBLICALLY FUNDED ART, BUT SHE JUST WANTS TO RECLAIM HER POWER AS A BLACK WOMAN AND AN ARTIST.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MONTE ISOM

By her own design, photographer Renee Cox takes on many incarnations. Lounging in her tony Soho loft on a rainy Sunday morning, she is the banker's wife and the mother of two who summers in East Hampton. Then you spy the life-size photos adorning her living room wall: Cox as the Madonna, bedecked in Kente cloth. Cox in the nude with her infant son. Cox as "Raje," a larger-than-life superhero costumed in the Jamaican flag, her claws around a taxi in Times Square (ostensibly the only way to guarantee that a black woman will get one).

