

## APRIL SAMUELS

*Professional drummer and founder of Breast Cancer Can Stick It!, a nonprofit foundation*

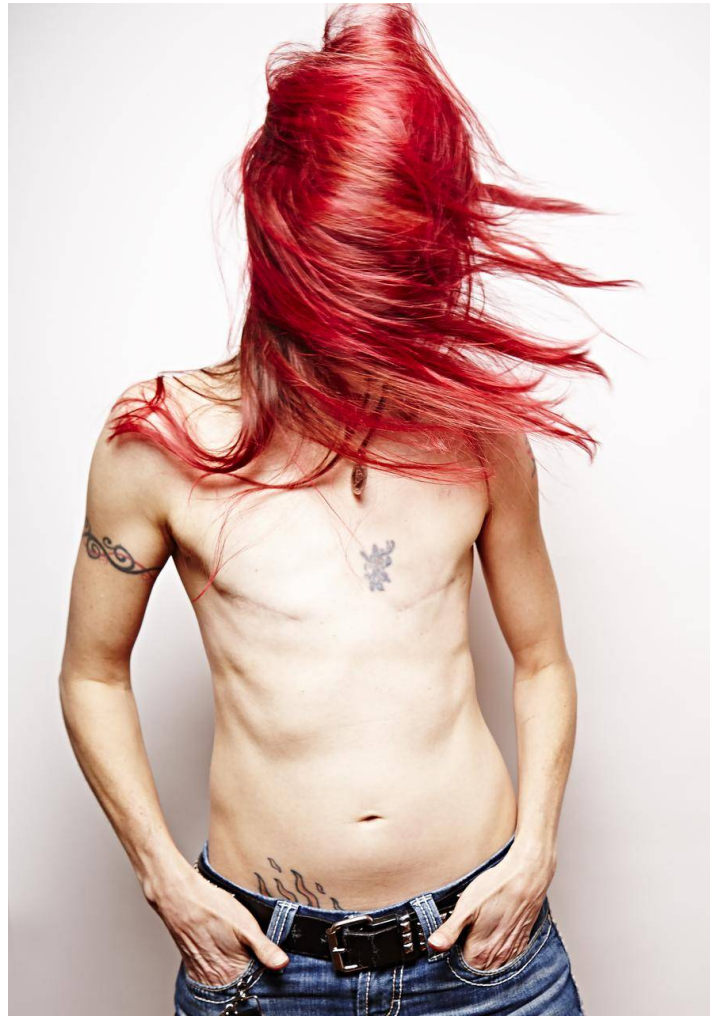
**Diagnosis:** October 2010 with triple-negative breast cancer, ER-, PR-, HER2-. On Nov. 10, she will celebrate five years cancer-free.

**Treatment:** Double mastectomy without reconstruction and four months of chemotherapy, the most aggressive option. “I chose to not to have reconstruction for multiple reasons: My breasts do not define me and my interest was in my future. Surviving breast cancer is enough physical stress without the additional trauma. Additionally, it makes it easier to find any potential cancer on my chest in the future, and it means no more mammograms. I wanted to ‘live’ above all else.”

**Survival tools:** “My friends, family and church — and raising funds in the fight against breast cancer through my nonprofit, Breast Cancer Can Stick It!, which I coined just a couple of weeks after I was diagnosed.”

**Her message:** “This is *your* fight. You choose how you want to attack it. Getting a diagnosis of breast cancer creates a lot of energy and emotion. Turn the negative into positive energy and focus on your goal: to win.”

**Meaning of her portrait,** photographed by Steven Visneau: “To me, this portrait means I do not need breasts to be a woman. I’m strong, passionate, proud and



Credit: Steven Visneau

fearless in defeating breast cancer for everyone, once and for all. **It's not about saving breasts, it's about saving lives.**"

**Support the cause:** Drummathon, Oct. 25, [breastcancercanstickit.org](http://breastcancercanstickit.org) (Bonus: Celebrity drummers Carmine Appice, Vinny Appice and Matt Starr will be participating.)