

# The Alliance For Cultural Democracy

Dear ACD member,

Hi from Highlander. This is a first time Board member's biased account.

On February 21 the ACD Board gathered at the spectacular and historic site in the foothills of the Smokey Mountains at Highlander Center. I had never ventured further south than our capital. Here was an opportunity that I looked forward to—a winter break down South. It had not occurred to me that there might be snow in Tennessee in February.

With true Southern hospitality, Katherine Pearson escorted the first arrivals, Lina, Wen-Ti and myself, on a delightful tour of Knoxville. We crossed the Tennessee River and ventured to the site of the World's Fair, through the large developed university area and past the Jubilee Center into the quaint Shelton Quarter.

We met up with the rest of the Board that evening at the Bread and Puppet Theater's performance of the Hunger Cantata, a sobering experience and excellent preparation for the two days that followed.

Saturday morning we awoke bright and early. From the picture window we looked out on the fog covered hills. The air felt refreshingly cool and I longed to go for a walk in the woods behind the conference center. But no...

We each selected our rocking chair to ready ourselves. I made sure that I found one with a high back, since I had been warned about the duration and intensity of ACD Bd. meetings. (20 of us were at this one!) We thanked our president, Debbie Langerman, for the diligent and skillful organizing she had done since the Boston Conference.

Then we had a workshop on racism facilitated by Sharon King. We introduced ourselves by telling a story about problems and successes in working in multi-cultural settings. Jane Sapp (of Highlander) brought up the common remark, "I wish we could all get together and be the same."

"Like who?" Jane replied.

Kaye MacDuffie often found herself the "minority representative" in many community organizations. Wen-ti and Ricardo live with their bi-cultural heritage—playing different roles in each situation. John O'Neal spoke of a difficult situation in which Roots opened itself up to community performers and got a racist performance.

An informed sharing of experiences set the stage for a too-short discussion on where do we connect and where do we divide. How do we learn the difference between doing something with and doing something for someone? How does the myth of a democratic society divert attention from the economic and political issues of cultural differences?

We tried to glean the implications for the membership of ACD. We examined our organizational structure from bottom to top and realized that we need to develop and integrate our discussion into on-going ACD projects. For our words to take on meaning. In other words ACD needs a clearer structure or relationship between membership, projects and the stated goals of cultural democracy.

We gave ourselves the task of developing a plan. Committees met on: mission, goals, objectives, program, finance. First we met with our committee, then the committees met with each other until all committees had met with at least one other committee. Do you think this was confusing? I enjoyed this round robin game of sharing ideas and information.

By the end of the committee matching, however, we were talked out and exhausted. When all was said and done we descended to the dining room for great home style southern cooking. In the evening we were still meeting in small committees to synthesize and prioritize the information. Another committee was selected to integrate the mission with the other aspects of the organization and set priorities for the next year and the San Francisco Conference.

This lively group lay on the rug in the middle of the circle of now empty rocking chairs.

Dear members, do you think you could trust this worn out crew? Well, we did the best we could.

Meanwhile other Board members watched videos on the history of Highlander, a spoof on Miss America, and more.

A model projects program was adopted as a structural way to encourage critique and demonstrate what we actually mean by cultural democracy. Each region would be responsible for selecting a project that exemplified the underlying objectives of ACD. The project could be a single group or event or project or on-going institution like Highlander.

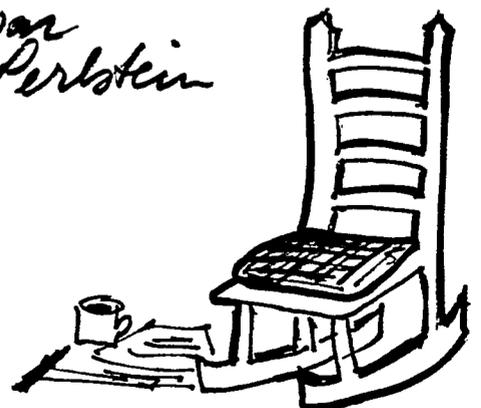
The region would be responsible for sending that model to the ACD conference. These models could be presented and discussed by the membership at the conference. They would also become part of the package that is sent to funding sources to exemplify the work of ACD. Hopefully in this way we could make our objectives concrete and integrate discussion, projects and goals.

The details of the conference were discussed, but finance, I felt, was slighted. We all need to think about how we are going to support ACD if we want it to exist. Each member should try and bring in at least one new member.

The meeting felt productive, interesting and warm, friendly and fun. However I never got to take that longed for walk through the Tennessee woods.

as ever,

Susan  
Perstein



AN OPEN CALL TO A.C.D.

PAINT IT, SING IT, DANCE IT, SHOUT IT  
IN THE STREETS

The time is ripe, the Spring is here, the President is floundering, PROTEST!  
The crisis of faith in the Reagan administration is growing daily; it is time again to make our rhythms and voices heard. An unusually broad coalition of labor unions, religious groups, and peace groups have come together to organize the next March on Washington, April 25-27, 1987: the Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa.

We in the cultural community know that the toll of these conservative times has been far-reaching, personal, domestic, and international. The choice to rally 'round anti-intervention in Central America and Southern Africa at this time is a choice of a newer, more radical common denominator. Four years ago a truly broad coalition could be brought together around, say, anti-nuclear work; but anti-intervention was the domain of the peace movement, the already committed. Not today. In 1987 the hypocrisy, exploitation, opportunism and violence of Reagan administration foreign policy is being exposed full force; several major businesses and universities have divested their support from the government of South Africa; and the 'Conragate' scandal has exposed the underbelly of a corrupt leadership. 'Conragate' shows the power of the peace movement and of our protests--it shows that the leverage of the people of the United States against the Reagan government is already so powerful that our commander in chief cannot exercise the power to make war, cannot send U.S. troops to Central America, and so has to resort to illegal subterfuge and mercenary armies.

Please become involved. Contact your local coalition, put together a presence to include in the march--your own full self expression of your reasons for coming, a performance with a friend, a bunch of people with musical instruments or noisemakers, a float; create a bamba or salsa line and dress brightly; contact a local union, find out who is going on their bus, and offer to get together with them and silkscreen t-shirts or learn songs; by yourself, with your friends, show the beauty of the life we want.

There will be a small festival the morning of the rally; there will be a meeting place for a CULTURAL CONTINGENT to march together; we could organize affinity groups of cultural workers to participate in civil disobedience together. For further information on all of

these possibilities, contact the National Cultural Coordinator: Tambrey Matthews, Mobilization for Justice and Peace, 712 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003, 202-547-0061. Take on as little or as much as feels right. I hope to see you here, with all your colors and passion--

*Susan*

Susan R. McCarn  
Cultural Consultant to the Mobilization

There is also a West Coast Action, April 25, in San Francisco: 255 9th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

CROWS FEET SUMMER WORKSHOP

Join the acclaimed Crows Feet Dance Collective, a multicultural women's dance/theater group formed from Wallflower Order, at our annual summer workshop. Including dance, Afro-Caribbean rhythms, sign language, martial arts, theater, and political discussion. Come to one or both of our intensive workshop weeks in beautiful Brattleboro, Vermont (August 10-15) or intriguing New York City (August 24-29). All levels welcome. Sliding scale fee from \$125 to \$200, scholarships available. Please call 212-620-0415 or write PO Box 1346, NY, NY 10009, attention Suchi Branfman. Hope to see you there.

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CULTURAL VIEWS, A Multicultural Arts  
Education Newsletter Begins

The arts have been a major force around the globe as an organizing tool within diverse ethnic communities for centuries. There have been very few publications written and produced by grassroots community people in the field.

Cultural Views, a new and exciting multicultural arts education quarterly newsletter begins publishing February 1987. It is for anyone interested in learning how the arts can enrich the lives of people within communities.

Cultural Views provides hard to find curriculum resources, profiles of successful programs, a calendar of workshops, conferences, and presentations and interviews with Community Artist Teachers. Themes this year include Community Folklore in Education, Ethnic Storytelling, International Children's Art Exchanges, and Multicultural Song Collecting. Subscriptions are \$15 a year for four issues.

Editor Ed Pazzanese recently compiled and co-edited Cultural Links, a multicultural education resource guide to be published in the spring of 1987. For info and subs:

Cultural Views  
281 Huntington Avenue  
Box 30  
Boston, MA 02115

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A PEDAGOGY FOR LIBERATION: Dialogues on Transforming Education with Ira Shor and Paulo Freire will be published by Bergin and Garvey Publishers this Spring. \$12.95 paper. B & G is at 670 Amherst Road, South Hadley, MA 01075

"If teachers or students exercised the power to remake knowledge in the classroom, then they would be asserting their power to remake society. The structure of official knowledge is also the structure of social authority." --Ira Shor



VOICES OF DISSENT: A Symposium on the Arts as a Force for Social Change...Philadelphia, April 10-12

As we approach the 200th Anniversary of the Constitution with many of our most basic freedoms threatened in political, religious, and cultural arenas, The Painted Bride and Big Small Theater invite concerned artists, art users and activists to join us in exploring the possibilities of using our cultural work to remake the society we live in. We do so with the belief that historically the role of artistic dissent has not been merely reactive, but visionary. At its most expansive it has remolded the forms and conventions of existing culture to suggest the possibility of another, more just one.

There will be panels comprised of artists, historians, and activists. Plus a wide selection of interactive workshops. Participants come from many communities.

The weekend conference is part of a two month series of events in Philadelphia commemorating the bicentennial of the Constitution.

Voices of Dissent takes place at Drexel U., located at 32nd and Chestnut in the University City area of west Philadelphia, 4 blks from the 30th St. Amtrak Station.

Registration info. income under \$12,000: \$15 \$12-24,000: \$25; over \$24,000: \$40. After March 31, add \$10 to each category. Info: 215-925-9914 Contact: Jenny Milner, Voices of Dissent/PBAC, 230 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

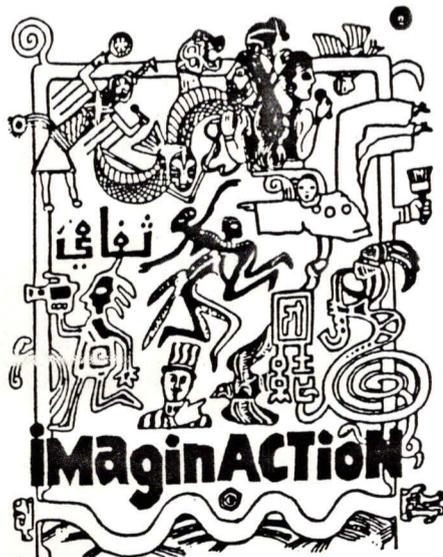
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CASA DE UNIDAD, a community based arts and media cultural center in Southwest Detroit, brings San Francisco's Teatro de la Esperanza to Detroit for a performance of "Loteria de Pasiones" on Saturday, April 4th at Holy Redeemer Auditorium, For information call 313 843-9598.

DETROIT MARCH AND RALLY: Sunday, March 29th  
STOP U.S. INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA  
For information call 313 965-5724

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INTERNATIONAL ARTS FOR PEACE announces its "Children are the Future" trip to the USSR to take place August 11 - September 3, 1987. They invite children ages 11 -18 with interest in painting, animation, film, singing, acting or jazz to participate. The trip cost is \$2200 with some scholarships. For applications contact "Children of the Future" P.O. Box 1063, Brookline, MA 02146. 617 232-4222.

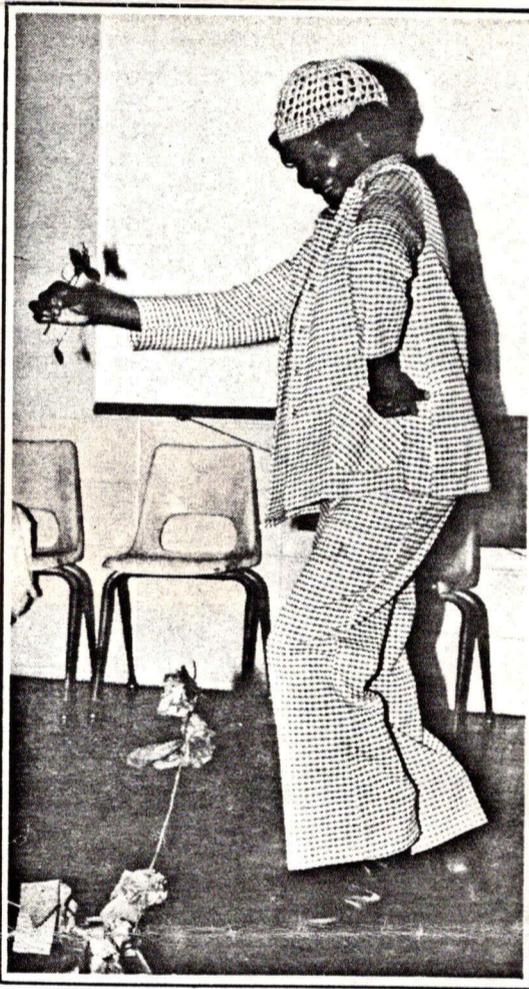


MID-ATLANTIC REGION MEETINGS: The region met on January 11 to begin to network in our area. The second regional will be held on Saturday, April 11 at 6 p.m. in Philadelphia, at the VOICES OF DISSENT conference. We will be discussing among other things a proposed fall 1987 regional conference.

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NEW YORK CITY ACD MEETING: The first NYC meeting was held on Sunday, February 8th. We are planning to have a works in progress workshop on the first weekend in May. If you are interested in presenting at this or future events please contact the organizing committee through Jim Murray at 212 787-1784.

## Elders Share The Arts, Inc.



425 E. 25th Street, Rm. 825  
New York, N.Y. 10010  
(212) 481-4330

ELDERS SHARE THE ARTS will present its Seventh Annual Living History Theater Festival on Thursday, May 21 at St. Anns Church, Bronx, N.Y. from 1-4 P.M. Several of the ESTA drama groups will perform original plays based on stories from their lives. Everyone invited. Free public performance.

ELDERS SHARE THE ARTS will be conducting a One Day Workshop on Living History Theater and Life Review for cultural workers at Hunter School of Social Work, 129 East 79th Street on Saturday, May 2nd from 10 -3 P.M. Fee \$50; Student rate \$35. For more information call 212 481-4330.



It from Betty to ...

- carry out research on community arts and cultural policy.
- consult with community groups and public agencies
- publish a newsletter, **Cultural Democracy**
- provide a forum for sharing and exchange among its members

**The Alliance exists to**

community and cultural work in urban, suburban, and rural settings. workers, musicians, writers, media artists, dancers, arts administrators, and others involved in community-based arts programs and activist artists. The Alliance's members are visual artists, theater community-based arts programs and activist artists. The Alliance's members are visual artists, theater community and cultural work in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

**The Alliance for Cultural Democracy** is the only nationwide, nonprofit organization for

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BULLETIN

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL

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Peter Gouffain

**THE ALLIANCE FOR CULTURAL DEMOCRACY**

BOX 2478 Station A  
Champaign, IL 61820  
(217) 352-2421 or  
(814) 627-3241



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**Join Us—Only Together Can We Build Cultural Democracy**

**Individual Membership** (\$25/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cultural Democracy** Subscription only  
 Individuals (\$15/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organizations and Institutions (\$25/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional Contribution (tax deductible) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Organizational Membership:**  
 Budget under \$50,000 (\$30/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Budget under \$100,000 (\$45/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Budget under \$200,000 (\$60/yr) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Budget over \$200,000 (\$75/yr) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail the above information to Neil V. Sieling, 3625 Bryant Ave. S. #1, Minneapolis, MN 55409. Make check payable to Alliance for Cultural Democracy (U.S. currency only).

Also, please put the ALLIANCE on your mailing list, and, if possible, enclose a brochure or other information about your work for the ALLIANCE's files.

Thank you for joining the effort.