

AKHÉ

October, 1989

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\$2

The Bay Area's Journal for Black Lesbians



For more artwork and a statement by artist Sarita Johnson-Calvo, see page 25.

Aché

The Bay Area's Journal For Black Lesbians

OCTOBER, 1989

VOL.1, NO. 9

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**Special thanks to Janet Wallace,
and Toya Wright for everything!!

Aché is a monthly publication by Black Lesbians for the benefit of all Black women. Aché is available the 1st week (or close) of each month and the deadline for submissions is the 25th of each month. Handwritten, typed materials and 3.5" diskettes using MacWrite or Microsoft Word are accepted. Include name, address, & phone # on all submissions. Don't submit originals, as we are not able to return your submissions. Please specify if you would not like your name reproduced in Aché.

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Aché is dedicated
to the memory of Pat Parker.

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■ It's the 2nd of the month, and I'm forcing myself to finish typing these last words so I can go to bed. It's really hard to get inspired at 1am, it's also very easy to forget that all the effort is really worthwhile since sitting in front of a computer is very isolating. You know what makes a difference? Hearing from you, getting letters or anything at all in the mail! Please, give me some feedback - I know you're out there, just give me something I can feel (at 1am....)

■ Many of you have urged me to start charging a subscription fee for Aché. To this point I've resisted because I didn't want to make it not available for women who couldn't afford to pay. However, it's at a point where I can't afford to print more than 400 copies, and that's not enough to go around. I've started to ask for a \$2 donation at bookstores, simply because I could no longer afford to put out these copies without knowing where they were ending up.

Aché is intended to be a journal for Afro-American lesbians, however, it's obvious by the readership that the publication can be used by other communities. But since I can only afford to print so many copies, first I need to make sure that the Black lesbian community has enough copies to go around. To do this, I'm trying to develop a solid mailing list. If you are not currently receiving Aché in the mail, guarantee yourself a copy every month and sign up now.

Aché Shirts !!

For those of you who have not yet bought an Aché T-shirt or sweatshirt, now is the time. Sizes are selling out fast, so order yours now. T-shirts are white, 100% cotton in sizes S, M, L, XL (\$12) & 3XL (\$15). Sweatshirts are available in gray, red, white and gold in sizes M, L & XL (\$20). Special hooded and larger-sized sweatshirts are available in gray, red and white in sizes 3XL & 4XL (\$25). Not all colors and sizes are still available so call today to reserve yours.

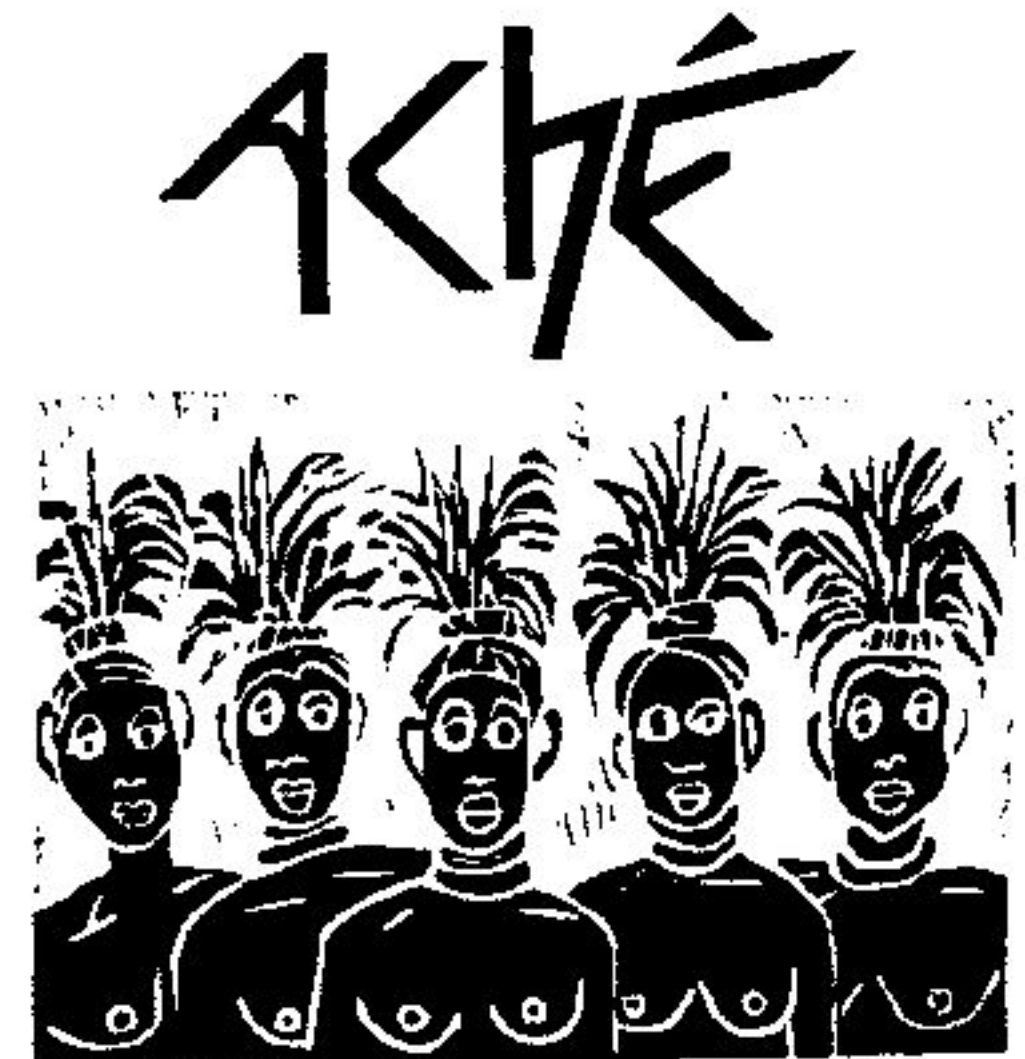
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(To save time, call first to double-check availability)



by Storme Webber



"5 Women Watching"
by Barbara Sandidge

(continued on page 4)

My Momma's Not a' Lesbian.... But She Has This One Friend

BY WINN GILMORE

Now, lest you readers think I'm some kind of inveterate iconoclast, let me start by saying that I am an all-American type of gal. Yeah, I believe in Mom and apple pie, especially when the former is radical and the latter is homemade. But, this month's topic that you gay ladies are advancing is a teeny bit off. You see, I'm more intrigued by the things mothers say and don't say to us. It's not women, per se, who are enigmas, but mothers. Mothers....you can't live with them, and you can't get here without them.

Observe: It was a moderately cool, barely fall morning last week, and my friend Marge was perched—and rather fetchingly, I must admit—on one of my kitchen stools overlooking the nearest graffiti-encased crack house. She lifted her mug of Ethiopian dark roast to her lips (and the thought raced through my mind that coffee is about the only Black African thing the North Americans feel safe importing and admitting is superior) and blew gently.

"You know," she said post-sip, "My mother was a coal-black woman, girl. Blue-black, as they call 'em in Mississippi." We laughed, minds rolling back, recalling our rich Southern heritage of color-naming. "Yeah, she was black-black. But, when she found out I was a Lesbian, the first thing

she said was, 'Marge, black women's is evil. The blacker they is, the eviler they is, too.'"

We stopped laughing, and I got up to refill our mugs. I tried changing the topic to something more positive, like who was slow-dancing with who they shouldn't have been with at the last party. But Marge was adamant.

"That broke my heart, girl," she said, stirring some cream into her freshly warmed brew. "See, I ex-

delving into what our mothers pass on to us. You know, I'd flitted around the subject before, but now I started sinking my teeth into it...biting off bloody chunks of it...and dissecting and investigating what I'd yanked out."

To paraphrase what Marge told me—and I can only hope she doesn't sue me for misrepresentation—her mother was a walking double entendre. It seems that, in her married relationship, her moth-

*to fill this need for intimacy,
Marge's mother had this
friend...*

pected her to give me grief about my sexuality, but not about myself.

When she said that about black women being evil, she was condemning me, her, and black womanhood, itself. She was saying, 'Hate yourself, daughter.' She was saying 'I hate myself and I hate you, too.'"

I told Marge that, surely, her mother didn't mean it.

"Sure, she did," Marge insisted. "And that's when I really started

er's need for warmth and tenderness was completely unfulfilled. She loved her man, though, and to this day Marge insists there's no one else who could predict just when the catfish were going to bite, or in which cove the fattest coon was hiding.

So, to fill this need for intimacy, Marge's mother had this friend. This woman, Mabel, was shaped like one of those old Coca Cola bottles, had breasts that refused to

(continued on page 26)

Doo-Wop Variations on a Poultry Theme

by
Paula Ross

Detroit, 1957

1. Black was just becoming beautiful
the year Stokely put us in our place,
a variation
on the theme of contradictions that would follow.

At the Midnight Hour
(or three o'clock in the afternoon,)
the Dissection
Chorus,
in exquisite
homeboy harmony,
still crooned,

"Oo-oo, Baby! Let me get next to some o' that!"

"Yeah Mama, look at them big Black legs!"

"The be-hind on that woman, oo-oo-wheel!"

Same lines from the same songs sung
when I was a child, and Beauty was
my mother.

A whole, entire woman.
Complete
Not thighs

breasts legs piece of ass
like packages of chicken parts.

The colour of her skin,
the curl and wave of her hair
under tiny hats with flirty veils,
the way she smelled,
the swirling of full-skirted dresses
above smoothly-stockinged legs
that ended in high-heeled pumps.

Beauty did not come in pieces,
it emerged fully formed.

I would watch my mother dress for parties,
the bathroom warm, damp and intimate from her shower,
the smell of Chanel No. 5
mixing sweetly with the steamy air.
I would zip up her dresses, tight at the waist,
flaring out into yards of swirling skirt,
standing on tiptoe to reach the hook and eye at the top.
Leaning against the sink,
staring solemnly in the mirror,
she would carefully fill in her eyebrows with a soft, smudgy pencil.

Smooth on foundation, pat on powder,
lips outlined and stained, then blotted on a piece of "kleenex."

I couldn't wait until I came of age,
old enough to wield my own tools of transformation.

The colours women painted themselves,
the carmine and burgundy and coral lipsticks,
the dusty rose and cherry red nail lacquers,
with names like "Toreador," "Flame," and "Roman Holiday,"

delighted my eye
and refused to remain faithful to my mouth and fingers.

And I knew, even through the perfumed haze
of those long ago bathroom fashion shows,
that these were acts in preparation for battle.

And later, when my stomach turned
from the strange taste of my own lipstick,
which I invariably licked off,
and my nails took on the mottled look
left by polish that always chipped within hours of being applied,
I marveled at the dedication of women like these,
like my mother.

And I wanted to find that place where we were the same,
not different.

Bright, observant, I planned my bluff;
little shirtwaist dresses and plaid pleated skirts,
Shetland wool sweaters with Peter Pan collared blouses underneath,
my first pair of stockings in the seventh grade.

But I couldn't become my mother; not many women can
or want to.

And the times were changing too quickly,
the definition and accessories of womanhood
tumbled head over heels
to escape the kitchens of Donna Reed and "Father Knows Best."

Doo-Wop Variations on a Poultry Theme

Detroit, 1961 II.

I listened to
Miriam Makeba
Odetta
Joan Baez
Marvin and Tammy
The Temps, Four Tops, Contours
Ian and Sylvia
and adopted the uniform of
female "beatniks" and "bohemians" from
The Village and
North Beach—
black turtleneck,
black tights,
black Capezio flats (or some knock-off from Sears)
with occasional variations of less grim colours,
like olive drab or khaki,
for the shapeless shifts, jumpers and skirts,
I left the house in for school each morning,
resentful of my mother's pained appraisals.

My feet were firmly placed on a path
she surveyed with horror.
My choices; however, were inevitable, not courageous,
or even of particular interest,
except to the boys (and later, men)
who insisted on playing Petruccio
to my involuntary Kate.
But I,
some say deliberately,
muffed my lines.
And understudies
queued up for blocks behind me.
I was easily replaced.
And my mother didn't understand why
I handed over my copy of the script
without a fight,
barely disguising
my eagerness
to be rid of it.

But it was all very simple,
inevitable,
not courageous.
And it had to do with chicken parts,
thighs
breasts legs a piece of ass
and scraps of a woman
who in the eyes of the
Doo-Wop Dissection Chorus,
could never
complete
men's dreams,
even when she had the will to.

III.

Black was just becoming beautiful
the year Stokely put us in our place,
a variation
on the theme of contradictions that would follow.
But because my mother was Beauty,
whole, entire,
emerging fully formed,
I embraced the contradictions,
turned the lyrics on their head,
became the woman
my mother taught me to be,
in whose face,
she saw herself reflected,
out of focus and unmistakable.

Paula Ross, a former television and newspaper reporter, was co-director of Women's Voices, a residential creative writing workshop in Santa Cruz from 1982-87. The editor of two anthologies, her fiction and reviews have appeared in Coming Upt , Nine, IKON, and Onyx.

The Funeral

by
Winn Gilmore

"Louise, get on in there and dress that girl! I done already ironed the white cotton dress for her. It's hanging on her bedroom door there."

Louise switched the radio station from the piercing, self-righteous exhortations of Reverend Ike to the equally loud, but enjoyable, screams of Tall Paul on WENN. "Right on! Right on! Down to the bone!" black Birmingham's favorite DJ yelled. "Sock it to me, Brother James!"

Louise stepped in front of the mirror, pulled the afro pick from the back pocket of her dun-colored, bellbottom dress slacks, and began teasing her do. She stepped back, smiled at her smart, but appropriately somber, outfit, and snapped her fingers to the dying beats of James Brown's "I'm Black and I'm Proud!"

"And now, y'all," the DJ belted out, "a new one from Tall Paul! We taking a soulful ride from the Godfather of Soul to the High Priestess of Soul: Nina Simone, y'all, with 'To Be Young, Gifted, and Black.' Louise took down Pookie's fresh white dress and looked at it uncomprehendingly. I'm a mother. She's really my daughter.

"Louise," Mrs. Martin called again, anger replacing the weariness in her voice, "Durn it! I said put that gal's clothes on her!" She nestled the black, felt hat on her head like some ominous bird perched above a chamber

door, and pulled the finely netted veil over her tear-lined, creamy face.

She was tired. Dan finally gone, praise God, she thought. Finally out of his misery, but he sure didn't leave me much. And now, this child actin foolish....

"I ain't gonna tell you no more, heifer," she warned, walking into the dining room and looking up like wide, squat mountain into her daughter's hooded eyes. "That ain't my child, you know. Ain't nobody told you to go out an get yourself in trouble when you was just sixteen. Lord, Lord, I got too many crosses to bear."

"BJ Jean," she yelled at another daughter, "you call the funeral home again, now. Don't want that limo to be late." She hitched up her girdle, then went back to her room to finish dressing. "Louise, put that youngun's clothes on, and right now!" she threw over her shoulder.

An hour later, the Martins clan was gathered. Maggie sat on the front porch swing, rocking gently and fanning lackadaisically with a Harrison's Funeral Home fan. Except for chirping crickets and the swing's lazy creak, the air was heavy and still.

JoJo was the only one missing. She'd called from California, though, apologizing tearfully for being unable to get time off from the nursing program she'd just been accepted in. Mrs. Martins had nearly slapped

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The Funeral

(continued from page 8)

Louise when she responded to her tearful sister that "Tears for the dead are useless, Sister. It's those of us still struggling that need to be cried for. Especially those of us still in the South. And anyway," she concluded into the telephone as her sisters stared gap-mouthed and teary-eyed, "Dan wasn't not good, anyhow. Never was a good daddy, even before he got sick, and you know it."

The hearse pulled up in front of the house in all its grand, black, dreaded glory. Behind it flowed its somber entourage, like vultures locking in on carrion. Louise came out of the house and stood holding her daughter's hand, looking out stonily at the cortege which was to carry Daniel Martins to Macedonia 13th Avenue Missionary Baptist Church. Hearses ought to be white, she thought. Death is white, but of course these racists link it with black. "I can't believe I'm actually going into a church," she said absently to her daughter. Thumb stuck firmly in her mouth, right fist balled up tightly, the three-year old looked up sagely at her mother.

"Lord, Dan," Mrs. Martins screamed as she burst onto her front porch and stood as still as death, itself. She snatched her eyes from the gleaming black hearse. "Too bad you ain't alive to see this," she mumbled, shaking her head and smiling sadly. "You'da preciated it for sure." Then, she threw back her arms and shouted, "He gone, Lord! Gone! Gone! Gone!"

"Willie Mae, stop shouting before you raise your pressure," Louise advised dispassionately. "No need to go screaming and crying. You didn't even live with the

man anymore."

Mrs. Martins stopped her tirade long enough to shoot a baleful glare at her youngest daughter. What she saw made her red-rimmed, puffy eyes bulge. "Gal, you ain't even dressed yet! Neighbors an friends already here, an you still dressed like you goin to one of them funny-assed clubs."

"Dear, hush!" Maggie insisted gently, hoping no one outside the family had heard.

"I am, too, dressed," Louise said, pulling herself taller. Pookie looked up admiringly at the tall woman who loomed like an oak above her, her brown trunk and limbs crowned by her incredible bush. "I told you I didn't want to step foot in that place - or any church - ever again, Willie Mae. At least I'm goin to the funeral," she pleaded. She lowered her voice and said, "I will not wear a dress."

"And you hair," her mother moaned, unbelieving. "You can't spect to go into that Church, that House of God, with your hair standin all out like some jungle woman! It ain't right, Louise! Lord, what have I done to deserve this punishment?" she asked to the palpitating, hot blue sky.

"Please, Louise," BJ begged. She wrung her hands nervously. "I straightened mine, and it's just for one day. To show respect...Please?"

Louise's nostrils flared, and she stepped away from her family and the curious eyes of friends who'd come to pay their last respects. She squeezed her daughter's hand and looked down intensely into her eyes. "See what happens when you start to compromise, baby?" she asked. "You start givin in just

a little bit to make somebody happy, and soon they're askin for your soul!" The child smiled at her mother, hoping this was what would make her happy again.

"Runnin round after all manner of womens," Mrs. Martins continued, shaking her head and throwing her hands skyward. The loose, tender yellow flesh beneath her biceps quivered, then lay still. "Lord! Stayin out all times of night..."

"Cut it out, Willie Mae!" Louise seethed. "It's my life."

"Runnin after that colored Communist from up the hill. Lord!"

"Now, Dear," BJ said soothingly. "Don't get your pressure up. You take your sugar medication today?" To her sister, she spat, "See what you done did, girl! Ain'tit enough that Dady's layin out there dead and bakin in the sun? Why you gotta go an upset Dear for?"

"They was gonna throw you under that jail, gal!" their mother insisted. "Talkin bout some 'Black Power' an 'Power to the People'." Louise sucked her teeth and looked into the oblivious, cloudless sky.

"Where was your Black Power friends when they had you in the jailhouse, them thinkin you was that colored Communist from up the hill?" her mother insisted. "Not that you look that much like her, but both of you got that wild hair stickin out all over your heads, an you *know* we all look alike to them. You shoulda learned your lesson then, gal. Lookin like you do, ain't no way you *ever* done get nobody's respec."

"Look," Louise said patiently, "all you old Black-"

Her mother flinched. "Don't

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SKYVIEW

Profile: L. Clarissa Chandler

"We are black women who prefer the company of women.
We are black women who share a desire to be warm, open and supportive.
We are black women who reach out to share, care, and uplift other black women."

Earlier this year while attending the lesbian caucus of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership conference in Los Angeles, I expressed my concern about the lack of feminist consciousness at the "leadership" conference and asked that wimmin who shared similar concerns gather to exchange information and begin to formulate strategies for including Black feminist issues in upcoming conference programs. L. Clarissa Chandler responded immediately to my call and expressed her desire for a dialogue among Black lesbians on feminist issues and grassroots organizing.

Since our introduction at the conference, I have had the immense pleasure of learning more about L. Clarissa Chandler and her invaluable contributions to the Black lesbian communities of Los Angeles. Chandler is currently serving as Director of Prevention and Community Services for the Alcoholism Center for Women in Los Angeles.

ACW offers a variety of recovery, prevention and support programs for wimmin. The two large victorian houses that serve as the center's office and residence for several ACW staff and clients is located in a densely populated Latino and Black community. Chandler made a significant contribution to ACW and the Black lesbian community when she started the LAPIS program over three years ago. LAPIS is a full service program in itself - workshops, support groups, and entertainment nights that include films, dances, poetry read-

ings, and the Harambee: A Celebration of Black Women, are all elements of the LAPIS program. Under the LAPIS program is a weekly Black lesbian support group, one of only two in the Los Angeles area that meet on a regular basis. Chandler's commitment to helping wimmin help themselves is well established in her grassroots activism and advocacy for wimmin.

Skye: What is your background in recovery services?

Clarissa: I have always been involved in volunteering at battered wimmin's shelters, incest survivors support groups and other program for wimmin recovering from long term victimization.

Skye: Providing recovery services tends to be a high burn-out activity. What has sustained you over the years?

Clarissa: I like problem-solving and I want to help establish a community of support. Also, I believe people need a mixture of support and advocacy. That's why it was important for me to not just start and fund a Black wimmin's support group, but establish an entire program.

Skye: Please elaborate on your concept of establishing communities of support.

Clarissa: It's critical that individual wimmin get support, but she

also needs to live in a community of support. Black wimmin don't have time to go get one thing at a time. We won't go get services unless we can get three things at once taken care of. I assist wimmin in networking. I let wimmin know what's available in the whole community.

At LAPIS, the strength of who you are in the program is validated simply by who you are. You don't have to say "I have a problem" to be here.

Skye: I'm impressed by the extensive services LAPIS offers. How are you able to maintain such a comprehensive outreach program?

Clarissa: Well-established funding. What excites me most about the LAPIS program is the long-term funding from mainstream sources. When I conceptualized and designed LAPIS, I purposely sought funds from mainstream sources, so whether I'm here or not the program can go on. Mainstream wimmin's organizations develop long term funding but it usually takes some affirmative action to make them work for us [Black wimmin] and I don't think anybody should do less for Black wimmin....

Skye: Clarissa, thank you.

LAPIS, A Program of ACW
1147 So. Alvarado St.
Los Angeles, CA. 90006
(213) 381-7805.

Jazz Around the Bay

by
Angela Wellman

Greetings sisters, brothers & others, how can I write to you about Jazz for your listening pleasure when Bush is sending 9 million dollars to support Contra candidates, Chomoro, in the coming election in Nicaragua as our streets are filling everyday with homeless and hungry Americans? How, while congress spends even more millions to hire more police, build more jails, buy more guns in his latest escalation of the war against our people, a so-called war on drugs? How, when the nurseries of urban hospitals across the country are overflowing as African-American babies are being born addicted to crack every hour? How?

Remembering that Jazz was birthed from the revolutionary spirit of a fighting people renews my intention and motivation to report to you the latest on the Bay Area Jazz scene in hopes that you will support our musicians, whose music comforts, energizes, strengthens and motivates us to keep on keepin' on. Aché!

■ October begins with the **Oakland Jazz Festival on Sunday, October 1 at 6pm** featuring **Marlena Shaw, Donald Byrd, David "Fathead" Newman** and a host of others. Pianist extraordinaire, **Oscar Peterson**, certainly a legend in his own time opens at **Yoshi's, 6030 Claremont** in Oakland, on **Oct. 3-8**. If you've never had the opportunity to experience **Sonny Rollins**, one of the most innovative tenor saxophonists on the planet,

here's your chance. Take it! Check him out at **Slim's** on **Oct. 11, 333 - 11th St.** in S.F.

■ The Bay Area's own **Phavia Kujichagulia**, poet/trumpetist/composer, will throw a bit of magic your way with her 12-piece band **Jazzological Muse-oetry** on **Oct. 15** at the **Black Repertory Theatre, 3201 Adeline St.** in Berkeley from 3-4:30pm. Joining her will be dancer **Linda Johnson**, vocalist **Diane Witherpoon**, pianist **Ed Kelly**, and many other swingin Bay Area musicians. This one is a **MUST 'cause this sister is definitely on it!!**

■ The **S.F. Jazz in the City** series mambos in its 7th season with a tribute to Afro-Latin music at **Davies Symphony Hall, Grove & Van Ness** in S.F. on **Oct. 3**, featuring local and international Latin music greats such as the legendary **Cachao**, trumpeter **Chocolate Armenteros**, **Coro Folklorico Kindembo**, and the **Machete Ensemble**. Tenor saxophonist **Joe Henderson** performs with his big band double-billing with the **Ed Kelly Organ Quintet, Oct. 26, 9pm** at **Slim's, 333 - 11th St.** in S.F. **Don Cherry**, trumpet, and Brazilian percussionist **Nana Vasconcelos** perform **Cherry's "A Mass for all Religions"** on **Oct. 29, 8pm** at **Grace Cathedral, Taylor & California St.** in S.F. These are only a few of the artists performing in this year's **Jazz in the City** series. I'm sure you won't be dis-

satisfied and if you've never heard any of them, these are my recommendations. Pick one and enjoy! They all promise to be uplifting. For more **Jazz in the City** information phone (415) 864-5449.

■ **Ed Kelly** will be laying down his soulful keyboard sounds with his ensemble on **Oct. 10** at **Kimball's** in the city, 300 Grove St. Ed is tops for me when it comes to jazz pianists. Vocalist, **Ernestine Anderson**, opens at **Kimball's** on **Oct. 18-21** followed by the legendary guitarist **Kenny Burrell** and his trio from **Oct. 25-28. Kimball's East** at the **Emery Bay Marketplace, 5800 Shellmound St, Emeryville**, hosts **Eddie Palmieri** with some burning Latin jazz and a nice big dance floor. So go on down, **Oct. 4-8**. Don't worry 'bout dancing there with your sweetie, just go for it. I did.

■ If salsa doesn't get you sliding across the floor maybe the **Johnny Otis Blues Band** will do it to you. The dance floor will be open for dancing the blues away on **Oct. 18-22**. The **Timeless All-stars** featuring six jazz pioneers. These brothers paved the way for **Wynton Marsalis, TerriLynn Carrington, Terrence Blanchard** and the rest of today's up and coming jazz musicians. **Curtis Fuller**, trombone; **Harold Land**, saxophone; **Cedar Walton**, piano; **Bobby Hutcherson**, vibes; **Buster Williams**, bass; and **Billy Higgins**, drums, close out

(continued on page 26)

This Month In...

■ CLASSES

Tuesday, Oct. 3,10,17,24,31 - Orisa Song Workshop with Bobi Céspedes and live drummers is held every Tuesday from 7:30-10pm at Concepts Cultural Gallery, 480 - 3rd St., Oak. \$5.

■ DANCE

Fri.-Sun., Oct. 20-22 - The West Coast debut of former Alvin Ailey star **Judith Jamison** with the Jamison Project Dance Company with music by Bobby McFerrin and Philip Glass. Special guests include The Mandingo Drummers, a 14 piece group of West Africans, and on Sunday only the 60 voice Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir. \$15-30. 8pm, Sunday @ 4pm at the Calvin Simmons Theatre, Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, Ten 10th St. in Oakland. For more information call 653-4825.

■ EVENTS

Tuesday, Oct. 3 - UJAMAA general meeting will be held at the Asian Resource Center, 310 - 8th St. (at Harrison) in Oakland. 7-9pm. For more information call 255-2155 or 436-6145.

Friday, Oct. 9 - The Dynamics of Color art exhibit opening reception featuring lesbian artists work on racism. 6-9pm at the Sargent Johnson Gallery, in the Western Addition Cultural Center, 762 Fulton St. in SF. The exhibit will run through Nov. 4 every Wed. - Sat. from 1-6pm. For more information call 552-5677 (voice) or 530-7803 (TDD.)

Tuesday, Oct. 10 - Dr. S. Diane Bogus will read from her recent book "Dyke Hands & Sutras Erotic & Lyric" from 12-1:30pm at HSW 302, UCSF. Free. For more information call 476-5836.

Saturday, Oct. 14 - The Uhuru Festival, featuring live entertainment, speakers, food, and arts and crafts, will be held from noon to 6pm at Arroyo Viejo Park, 7701 Krause Ave. in Oakland. 569-9620.

Saturday, Oct. 14 - An evening to support women with cancer featuring Linda Tillery & her band, Carolyn Brandy, Mary Watkins & Ernie

Mansfield and others. \$10-25. 8pm at Wheeler Hall, U.C. Berkeley campus. 547-6947.

Sunday, Oct. 15 - Poet/Musician **Phavia Kujichagulia** will be leading an afternoon of "Jazzological Muse-oetry" with special guests Linda Johnson, Diane Witherspoon, Val Serrant, and Herbie Lewis to name just a few. \$10. 3-4:30pm, at the Black Repertory Theatre, 3201 Adeline St. in Berkeley. 562-2120.

Monday, Oct. 16 - Aché presents, straight from N.Y., poet **Storme Webber** who will be reading her own work. Webber was recently published in an anthology of lesbian erotica, "Serious Pleasure". \$4-6 sliding scale, this event is a benefit for Aché. Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St., SF.

Thursday, Oct. 19 - The Words Project for AIDS is sponsoring a reading featuring **Jewelle Gomez**, poet **Essex Hemphill**, **June Jordan** and others. \$5. 7:30pm. Victoria Theatre, 2961 - 16th St. in SF.

Thursday, Oct. 19 - Lesbian Erotica Reading Tee Corinne, S. Diane Bogus, Corbett, Rocky Gamez, Stephanie Henderson and Kitty Tsui will read from a new collection of lesbian erotica "Intricate Passions." 7:30pm, at Old Wives Tales, 1009 Valencia St. in SF. Donation. 821-4675.

Thursday, Oct. 19 - The SFSU Women's Center will offer a free safer sex workshop designed for lesbians from 4-6pm at 1650 Holloway, Student Union, 2nd floor in SF. For more information call 338-2235.

Thursday, Oct. 19 - There will be a slideshow & talk on the gay & lesbian community in Nicaragua held at Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St. in SF. 7:30pm. \$3-5 sliding scale.

Fri.-Sunday, Oct. 20-22 - The Black Arts Expo featuring 100 Black exhibitors will be held at the Henry J. Kaiser convention center, 10th & Fallon St. in Oakland. For more information call 763-0141.

Sunday, Oct. 22 - "Primal Persuasions" an exhibit of paintings by Orlanda Uffre. Reception from 2-6pm. Exhibit through Nov. 12 at the Grand Oak Gallery, 544 Grand Ave. in Oakland.

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This Month In...

Sunday, Oct. 29 - "Dynamics of Color in Concert" A benefit for the Dynamics of Color conference by, for and about Women of Color featuring performances by the jazz band **Different Touch**, poet **Kitty Tsui**, and comedian **Karen Williams**. 7:30pm. \$6-10 sliding scale at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. Wheelchair accessible, sign language interpreter.

■ FILM

Sun.-Thur., Oct. 1-5 - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'", a fast-paced documentary, filmed in Bedford-Stuyvesant during the 10 weeks Spike Lee was making his film, provides answers to some of the questions raised by "Do the Right Thing" and explains the artistic decisions made by Lee while giving insight into the making of a major motion picture. Also showing is "Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads", and "Do The Right Thing" (Fri.-Sun. only.) \$5. York Theatre, 2789 - 24th St., St. Call theatre for showtimes. For information call 282-0316.

Wednesday, Oct. 4 - "Bitter Cane" an award-winning film that looks at the history and realities of Haiti will be shown at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. \$3-5. 7:30pm.

Sun.-Mon., Oct. 8-9 - A tribute to Josephine Baker featuring "Zou Zou", a wonderful semi-autobiographical musical as a poor laundress who becomes the toast of Paris; and "Princess Tam Tam" a film only for die-hard Baker fans. Roxie Theatre, 3117 - 16th St. (at Valencia) in SF. Call theatre for showtimes, 863-1087.

Thursday, Oct. 12 - The Dynamics of Color film series presents "**Night Visions**" and "**Wild Women Don't Have the Blues**". "Night Visions" speaks to the ways in which the history and culture of women is lost, remembered or fought for based on stories, court cases, and events that have preoccupied Native and Women's communities in the last few years in

Canada. "Wild Women" shows how the economic and social transformation of African-American life early in this century gave birth to the blues. It recaptures the lives and times of Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Alberta Hunter, and other legendary women who turned their pain and spirit into an indelible part of American culture through their music. There will be two shows at the York Theatre, 2789 - 24th St. in SF (near Potrero.) \$5 admission. 552-5677. Bathrooms at the York Theatre are not wheelchair accessible.

Fri.-Thur., Oct. 13-19 - "J'ai été au bal" (I Went to the Dance) a documentary about the Cajun and Zydeco music of Louisiana, featuring classic performances by a who's who of the genre including Clifton Chenier, Queen Ida, and dozens of others. \$5, \$7 opening night since there will be live music. York Theatre, 2789 - 24th St., St. 282-0316.

Tuesday, Oct. 17 - Aché presents "**Bahia: Africa in the Americas**" a remarkable video that examines the African cultural traditions preserved by the people of Bahia, Brazil in their music, dance, art, food and religion. Donations. 7:30pm at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. 849-2568.

■ MUSIC

Wed.-Sun, Oct. 4-8 - Legendary Latin pianist Eddie Palmieri will be in the bay area for a special, special 5 nights at Kimball's East, 5800 Shellmound in Emeryville. This is a rare treat, don't miss it! \$15-18.

Fri.-Sun, Oct. 6-8 - The 8th Annual New Song Festival "Encuentro del canto popular" features 3 days of music from around the world. Friday's show with MC's Sergio Silva & Dominique DiPrima include Los Pleneros de la 24 and Luis Enrique Mejia Godoy, Nicaragua's well-known New Song artist; Saturday's show with MC's Piri Thomas and Maria Medina-Serafin include local groups Coro Folklorico Kindembo and Altazor; Sunday's show features Casselberry - DuPreé and Kulintang Arts to name a few. All evenings the show begins at 8pm at the York Theatre, 2789

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The calendar listings may change without notice so double-check with the source for any last minute changes. To list something in next month's calendar, mail notice by the 25th to:
Aché, P.O. Box 6071, Albany, CA. 94706 or phone (415) 824-0703.

Calendar - October 1989

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 F - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'"	2 F - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'"	3 C - Orisa workshop w/Bobi Céspedes E - UJAMAA general meeting F - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'"	4 F - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'" F - "Bitter Cane" M - Eddie Palmieri	5 F - "Making 'Do the Right Thing'" M - Eddie Palmieri	6 M - Eddie Palmieri M - "Encuentro del Canto Popular" M - Zulu Spear	7 M - Eddie Palmieri M - "Encuentro del Canto Popular" M - Zulu Spear M - Nigerian Independence celebration M - "Different Touch" R - Focus on Women in Music
8 F - Tribute to Josephine Baker M - Eddie Palmieri M - "Encuentro del Canto Popular" R - Profile of Mary Lou Williams	9 E - Dynamics of Color art reception F - Tribute to Josephine Baker	10 C - Orisa workshop w/Bobi Céspedes E - S. Diane Bogus M - Katie Webster	11 M - Sonny Rollins	12 F - "Night Visions" "Wild Women..." M - Our Boys Steel Orchestra R - "Straight from the Source"	13 F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary M - "History of Afro-Cuban Music"	14 E - The Uhuru Festival E - Support for Women with Cancer F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary M - Georgia Sea Island Singers M - Rumba Mexclao N - Benefit for Mujerio at Colors II R - Audre Lorde/Ntozake Shange
15 E - Phavia Kujichagulia F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary	16 E - Aché presents Storme Webber F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary	17 C - Orisa workshop w/Bobi Céspedes F - Aché benefit "Bahia" film F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary	18 F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary	19 E - Jewelle Gomez/Essex Hemphill... E - Lesbian Erotica Reading E - Safe Sex Workshop E - Nicaraguan lesbians/gays F - Cajun/Zydeco documentary	20 D - Judith Jamison Project Dance Co. E - Black Arts Expo M - George Clinton/P-Funk Allstars M - Jimmy Cliff / Thomas Mapfumo R - Alice Walker reading	21 D - Judith Jamison Project Dance Co. E - Black Arts Expo M - George Clinton/P-Funk Allstars M - Gladys Knight
22 D - Judith Jamison Project Dance Co. E - "Primal Persuasians" Orlanda Uffre	23	24 C - Orisa workshop w/Bobi Céspedes	25	26	27	28 M - Rumba Mexclao M - Conjunto Céspedes N-Dynamics of Color dance @ Colors
29 E - Dynamics of Color in Concert M - Don Cherry & Nana Vasconcelos	30	31 C - Orisa workshop w/Bobi Céspedes	<p>Calendar abbreviations are: C - class, D - dance, E - events, F - film, M - music, N - nightlife, R - radio, T - theater, TV - television For details on calendar listings, see pages 12, 13, 16 and 17. Calendar listings may change without notice, so double-check with the source for any last minute changes. To list something in next month's calendar, send description and details to: Aché, P.O. Box 6071, Albany, Ca. 94706 or phone (415) 824-0703. Deadline is the 25th of each month.</p>			

This Month In...

- 24th St. in SF. \$12 door/\$10 advance. Tix @ La Peña, Modern Times, Galeriaz de la Raza, and other locations. For more information call 824-7882.

Fri.-Sat., Oct. 6-7 - Zulu Spear will be performing So. African dance music at Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley. Opening bands at 9:30pm, Zulu Spear will come on at 11pm. \$7. For more information call 525-5054.

Sunday, Oct. 7 - O.J. Ekemode and the Nigerian Allstars will celebrate the 29th anniversary of Nigerian independence day with the Ogene Ensemble from Nigeria; Remi Omotade performing traditional Yoruba dance; and fashions by Ade-Tade, at the Caribee Dance Center, 1408 Webster St. in Oakland. \$8. African dinners will be served from 6pm to 1am, show time is 8pm. For more information call 534-9612, 655-4291 or 835-4006.

Saturday, Oct. 7 - "Different Touch" Latin/Jazz/Fusion quartet featuring Tammy Hall (keyboard and vocals,) Dee Harris (bass,) Jane Kaufman (drums,) and Joslyn Segal (soprano saxophone and percussion) playing originals and standards. Brazilian taste plus some things of a Different Touch. 8pm. \$5-7, at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. Call 428-9684 for more information. Different Touch will also be featured in the Dynamics of Color conference benefit on October 29th at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. Info: 849-2568.

Friday, Oct. 10 - Pianist/vocalist Katie Webster "The Swamp Boogie Queen" will be performing at Koncepts Cultural Gallery, 480 - 3rd St. (off Broadway) in Oakland. 9 & 10:30pm. \$10. 763-0682.

Saturday, Oct. 11 - Sonny Rollins will be at Slim's, 333 - 11th St. in SF. 8 & 10:30pm. \$15.

Thursday, Oct. 12 - Our Boys Steel Orchestra from Trinidad & Tobago will be at Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley. 9pm. \$5. 525-5054.

Saturday, Oct. 13 - "The History of Afro-Cuban Music", presented by the Jazz in the City Festival, featuring guitarist Carlos Santana, legendary bassist Cachao, and other master Latin musicians Chocolate Armenteros, Armando Peraza, Orestes Vila-

to, and Walfredo de los Reyes. Also performing will be the bay area's Machete Ensemble and Coro Folklorico Kindembo. 8pm at Davies Symphony Hall, Grove and Van Ness in SF. \$12.50-\$21. 864-5414.

Saturday, Oct. 14 - The Georgia Sea Island Singers will perform songs, games, dances and tell stories from their unique heritage from the Georgia Sea Islands off of Georgia. 8:30pm at the Freight & Salvage, 1111 Addison St. in Berkeley. \$8 advance/\$9 door. For information call 548-1761.

Sunday, Oct. 15 - Rumba Mexclao, a women's percussion ensemble featuring Matu Feliciano, Mercedes Troncoso, Patricia Acosta, Kathy Martinez, Gale Kissen and pianist Sabina Stark will be performing with special guest Anna Maria Flechero at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. 8pm. All welcome, wheelchair accessible.

Fri.-Sat., Oct. 20-21 - George Clinton & the P-Funk Allstars will make their exclusive bay area appearance at The Fillmore, 1805 Geary St. in SF. \$18-19. 8pm. For more information call 922-FILL.

Friday, Oct. 20 - Jimmy Cliff and from Zimbabwe, Thomas Mapfumo and Blacks Unlimited will be performing at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium at 8pm. Tickets available at BASS. 429-3444.

Saturday, Oct. 21 - Gladys Knight will be performing with David Peaston at the Circle Star Center, Whipple exit/Hwy. 101 in San Carlos. 7:30pm. \$19.50. Tix at BASS.

Saturday, Oct. 28 - Rumba Mexclao, a women's percussion ensemble, will be performing with special guests Melanie DeMore, Sharon Isabel, Sylvia Kohan and Aida Bovine at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 8pm. (Womyn only/wheelchair accessible.) 428-9684.

Sunday, Oct. 29 - Don Cherry and Brazilian percussionist Nana Vasconcelos will premiere Cherry's "A Mass for All Religions" as part of the Jazz in the City series. Grace Cathedral, Taylor & California streets in SF. \$12. 8pm. For more information on all Jazz in the City events call 864-5449.

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This Month In...

■ NIGHTLIFE

Saturday, Oct. 14 - A Benefit for Mujerio to raise funds for the 1st annual No. California Latina Lesbian Encuentro will be held at Colors II, 59 Grand Ave. in Oakland with DJ's Chata and Claudette. 9-2am. \$6-10 sliding scale. 587-7384.

Thursday, Oct. 26 - DANCE AT COLORS sponsored by Dynamics of Color Conference. A night of dancing (with DJ) to an international mix of music. Back by popular demand, belly dancer and drummer show from 10-10:45pm. 9pm-2am at Colors, 22 Fourth St. (near Market) in SF. \$6-10 donation. Wheelchair accessible with dance floor raised 5 inches. For more information call 552-5677.

■ RADIO

Saturday, Oct. 7 - Focus on Women in Music will be spotlighting performers from SubSaharan Africa including, the Lijadu Sisters, Stella Chiweshe and others. 11am-noon, KPFA 94.1FM.

Sunday, Oct. 8 - A profile of the late pianist/composer Mary Lou Williams from 2:30-4:30pm on KPFA 94.1FM

Thursday, Oct. 12 - "Straight From the Source" is an African-American women's program looking at issues, ideas and solutions. 8-9pm on KPFA, 94.1FM

Saturday, Oct. 14 - "The Woman Weavers" is a program which combines readings and discussions with four major writers: Audre Lorde, Ntozake Shange, Judy Grahn and May Sarton. 12:30-2pm on KPFA, 94.1FM

Friday, Oct. 20 - Alice Walker will be reading from her newest novel "The Temple of My Familiar." 11am-noon on KPFA, 94.1FM.

COMING IN NOVEMBER

Friday, November 3

"Gay Lives '89", part of the 5th Annual Film Arts Festival presents several short films/videos including "Tongues Untied", (a 45 min. video by Marlon Riggs,) an affirmation of the black gay experience in America. The work interweaves poem, song, rap, chant, dance and personal testimony to showcase the voices and visions of a national community struggling within a sexually and racially divided world, to define a less conflicted sense of racial and sexual identity. World premiere. Also showing is "Dreams of Passion", (5 min.) by Aarin Burch, an exploration of desire between two black women, expressed through movement and dance. \$5. The program will begin at 9:30pm at the Roxie Theatre, 3117 - 16th St. in SF. To order tickets in advance call 552-8760.

Fri.-Sun, November 3-5, 10-12

"Black Choreographers Moving Toward the 21st Century" is a national dance festival showcasing 10 Black choreographers from across the U.S. The festival will take place for 2 weeks at Theater Artaud in SF and then move to Wadsworth Theatre at UCLA. The festival will include lecture-demonstrations, master classes, panel discussions and dance performances by N.Y.'s Urban Bush Women, Joanna Haigood, Alonzo King's LINES Dance Co., Dimensions Dance Theatre, Lula Washington's L.A. Contemporary Dance Theater, Cleo Parker Robinson, Donald Byrd/The Group and The Spotted Leopard Dance Company. Tickets are \$16-25. Panel discussions exploring the historical legacy, present contributions, and future possibilities of Black dance will be held throughout SF. Info: 621-7797.

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ON THE TABLE...

If you could say or express anything to your mother, what would it be?

Alesia Montgomery

Walking on Water

Mother, remember when you'd come in from work so tired, so tired that your 'mmhm, mmhm, and then what did he say?' on the phone turned into snores, so tired that the red grading pen dropped from your fingers and you used your second-graders' papers as a pillow? That was when I would slip beside your bed and whisper,

"Mother, can I have a syrup sandwich? Can I drink the last of the milk you were saving for breakfast tomorrow and put the string beans in the dog food can?"

And you'd mumble

"Yes, baby, go ahead....turn off the light before you leave."

I wish that it was as easy to win your approval now. I wish that I could catch you with your heavy armor down one night, your maternal weapons on the floor. I wish that I could whisper,

"Mother, can I be a bull-dyke? Can I wear my hair nappy and dance before the altars of Elegba, master of the nommo, and Oya-Yansa, queen of the winds of change?"

And you'd say

"Yes, baby, go ahead....turn off the light before you leave."

I don't need your permission

anymore. I am a dyke. I wear my hair nappy. I call on the Spirit in words that empower me, words that embrace my natural self and set it free....And yet I am afraid of using my power, afraid of this freedom that draws me away from you. I am afraid of wounding you, shaming you in front of your friends. I am afraid that you will reject me as your daughter. I fear that you will view me as lost in God's eyes, an evil stranger in your home. I am terrified of being lost, of losing you.

When I was a child your moods were my weather, my lightning storms and my tickling breezes, my sunshine and my deep cold snow. Even now, at the undeniably grown up age of twenty-seven, I run for cover at the mere anticipation of seeing a chill in your eyes or suffering the heat of your sorrow and anger. That's why I call and visit you so infrequently. I am trying to protect myself from you, trying to protect you from me...

Tonight as I write these lines I am the same age as you were when you gave birth to me. I've seen you pull yourself through many changes. I was the quiet one at your elbow, beside you in the car, on the church pew, at the dinner table, your only daughter, watching and learning from you. I remember when you wore mini-skirts and hoop earring and danced

the funky chicken to James Brown.

And I was with you when the Spirit struck at Papa Jones' church and you were "saved." There are times that I would like to turn the clock back to my favorite version of you, just as I am sure there are moments that you would gladly exchange me for the little girl in the frilly dress that I once was. Yet I am proud of the woman that you dare to be. Remember how you passed out church invitations at the facial products home demonstration? I was fifteen years old, a closet atheist.

When I saw that gleam in your eye as you pulled out the religious tracts, I thought "oh-oh", grabbed my head, and wished that I could slide under the table beneath the jars of almond facial scrub and miracle night dew moisturizer. The hostess, wine glass in hand, stepped back from you as if you'd suddenly turned into an alligator sitting at her dining table. After you witnessed to them a bit, we left. You hummed spirituals as we walked to the car, a smile crawling up your cheek. "Well," you sighed, "I guess she's not going to invite me to any more home demonstrations." We cracked up laughing. And you know what? I was proud of you. My face burned with embarrassment, yet I was proud. I thought, damn, my mother has guts! You didn't let the

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ON THE TABLE...

hostesses' rejection stop you from doing what was in your heart to do. You didn't choose to protect me or yourself from ridicule. You didn't choose safe ground.

My heart knows that wherever there is protection, there is also that which presses down the soul. If we hide our deepest feelings, if we lie or remain silent about who we love or what we believe then we cannot, to paraphrase Alice Walker, blossom as fully as we were intended. As long as I keep my lifestyle hidden from you, I remain in spirit a child sneaking forbidden treats. Perhaps my honesty will free you to reveal your vulnerabilities, and our relationship will mature with a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other's struggles. Or maybe you'll reject me. That's a painful thought, yet your opinion of me cannot destroy me.

Well, it's morning now. I fell asleep and awakened on these pages to you. This has been hard work. I'm not sure when and where I'll share this with you. I feel a little freer just writing my feelings down, but the Spirit says that's not enough. I want to stamp my feet and scream, "But I don't wanna tell my mama!! No no no! I'm scared!" The Spirit says "What are you scared of? You're drowning now. You can walk on the water, or you can sink on the ground."



Darlene Angela

Single Black woman who divorced before divorce was chic; single Black woman who provided for and raised five Black children; single Black woman who today, at 59, finally lives in her own home without familial responsibility - listen. I, your youngest female child proudly takes her place as your daughter.

Mother, all that I am today is a product of your teachings and advisings. Yeah, believe it or not, that shy, quiet child and adolescent who loudly said "no!" to you when she did not want to do something she felt was against her interests; who spoke her mind (a.k.a. "talked back") when you yelled at her; who refused to be hit by you ever again at the age of 13 and showed you in a physical fight, is now the shy, quiet adult who loudly and actively was "no!" to oppressive institutions, practices, and people; who speaks her mind/talks back to those who harass, trivialize, and invalidate her life, experiences, and very existence; who refuses to let anyone - male or female - trespass against her person and has been trained in ways to defend herself in the event anyone dares to try.

Yes, mother, I am the product of your words of wisdom. Once the romantic adolescent who wanted prince charming and twin baby girls at 18, I am now the (romantic) realistic adult who recognizes the value of having a separate bank account from my lover; of not raising children until education and fi-

nancial security are attained; of putting money aside for life's emergencies.

Yes, mother, I, your fourth daughter, am the product of your making. Once the hard-working high school student who was taught to never say "can't," I am now the hardworking graduate student who listens to her creative source and voice within when she develops ideas and paths on this bumpy educational road. I am she who knows no internal limits of her capabilities, dreams, and desires.

Yes, mother, I am your daughter. From you I have learned to stand up, defend, and fight loudly, confidently, and proudly for myself, for humanity, for mother earth.

Yes, mother, you - not the feminist movement - equipped me with the tools I need to survive (and live) as a Black lesbian, as a Black woman, as a Black person in a society hostile to my presence.

Mother, I am your daughter. Rightly and lovingly so.



Spring Haughton

Two months ago I would have answered this question quite differently, because for a long time I had a lot of things that I wanted to say to my mother that I didn't feel able to say. I just came through a very difficult stage in my life and was very deeply in pain about the fact that I couldn't share with my moth-

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A Black Woman's Traditions

by
Earthlyn Manuel

My mother used to say she wanted to live forever. I'd look into her eyes real close to see if she was serious. And I'd say, "mom you know you can't live forever." She'd laugh out loud as if she had a secret. And I wasn't too sure if she did have some special remedy for longevity. Now that I'm grown I realize she knew that the simple desire to live would almost

cook them in sweet butter and spices your sweet potatoe pie will not be stringy; and that chicken should be fried slowly in very hot oil. We somehow never get around to just holding our mothers as she held us in womb, in growth, in life. And when our mothers told us living was going to be hard, we were not fully aware that the reference point was as a Black woman, because

ing. It is visible in the way we express love, the way we carry ourselves, and the way we relate to each other. We learn tradition by sharing with each other: we gather in our favorite places and pass down some very important stories about the Black woman culture. It's vital for Black mothers to tell these stories, and to maintain that heritage, daughters must remember them.

There are certain things we all do as Black women and these things have become a way of life. We mock our mothers and her mother, in some way or form. Our fathers play a role, but ultimately, the traditions between Black mothers and her daughters mold the essence of womanhood. We create a Black woman's culture just by what we say and do everyday. We build a path to be followed; and the significance of this road by which tradition passes should not be taken lightly. Our culture comes so naturally it's easy to forget how we got it.

I am my mother's daughter, in the way I move, speak and live. I can't claim myself without looking back at the little girl and remembering the things my mother told me. As our mother's ways are a part of us, we are all parts of a total Black woman's culture.

And now we are like our mothers more than we care to admit...

make her immortal. I'm sure this is how I learned to love life and soak up the lessons of life she would be teaching.

There is such an exciting culture between black mothers and their daughters...a culture that most times is overlooked and taken for granted or lost all together. Just think of all the black traditions destroyed in incest, drugs, poverty or simple miscommunication.

We fuss and fight over little things with our moms and never get around to learning that mustard greens are more tender than collard; and if you cut the yams before you

we were still children, still daughters, still sisters, still cousins, not a woman at all. And now we are like our mothers more than we care to admit, therefore we may deny the similarities thus denying ourselves.

Sometimes I can hear my mother in my voice and when I look in the mirror her face seems to fade over mine. Funny, how I could not see or would not see this resemblance until now.

Black mothers creating black daughters, creating Black women is the cycle whereby our traditional, good and bad, old and new, survive. We learn tradition by do-

I Remember Mama
by Imani Harrington

I remember mama
I remember her beautiful face
I remember mama
I remember the inconsistent touch
she had for us all

Most of all,
I remember mama--eight kids
and no assistance.
Mama had more kids
than she could bare

I remember the moments
standing in the kitchen under
the cloud of lonely flour, the salt,
the pepper, the pressure and too much heat

There is no air.
A burst from within,
you can't move,
you're choking.
There is no air.
Mama's tears over all the years
fell into our well
and then we frowned

The steam of love bursting out
like hard drops on a rainy day.
The taste of salt on the tongue
dances its way into the eyes
rubs the years into the skin until
you taste a mother's love

Pain and pressure
swells the face of
the innocent
to make puffy eyes.

For all these years,
the tears bled into the cracks of walls
of wells of beings
a painted picture on the kitchen wall.

I remember mama
I remember her beautiful face

Imani Harrington is an actress and dancer, currently developing her writing skills. She is known for her one-woman piece "The Cries of South Africa," and was voted best actress by Theatre Rhinoceros for her portrayal of "The Queen of Swords."

To Dance

by
DeeAnne Davis

What was coming was a song
was a skip, leap through the air.
I was needin to twirl,
to cry Margaret's name,
who was Evelyn's, my granmama's, mama.
Needed some dancin and singin
to get my bones loose.
My stomach free of the kickin, creakin, screamin.
Let go all this holdin on.

Margaret woulda said,
"Go on, baby, take ya time and gi'me a few steps.
I'll hum ya'a tune."
Never knew my great granmama, Margaret.
Evelyn says she liked to sing,
watch the children make her mouth rhythms come
live.
They bodies movin, fillin up with joy.
"Little bodies sayin some'um," she'd say,
"and ain't opened they mouths one bit."

Seems like these days ain't no room for movin,
speakin that'a way.
So I watch myself jump bad,
needin to show
the tremblin goin on inside'a me.
Pointin my finger.
Lightin up my voice in this woman's face-to cleanse.
Cleanse my soul.
Want her to hear the hurtin
in my soul.

Tell me.
Would she have heard the dance?

This piece is for the women in the Developing Women's Leadership workshop, West Coast Community Development Institute, 8/7/89 - 8/11/89.

Mother

by
Darlene Angela

i claim to hate my mother
she does not understand me
she does not like the person i am
she does not like me because i
can tell her "no"
is what i say
to know there is a difference between
love and like
is to know there is a choice
throw away unconditional love
and one is forced to decide
if one actually likes
realizing one does not like
can be difficult
especially if the one not liked
is one's mother
apple pie
baseball
all american
first love
are the old tapes playing
to dream of mother being hurt
being killed
can remind one of something
liked to be forgotten
feel at twenty-two the childhood pang
of believing
hoping
wishing
mother can make
all things better
shedding silent tears

at the emotion
one thought was erased

all powerful
kiss and make it better
mother

mother mother mother
i claim to hate my mother
i can claim this no longer
today i acknowledge
my love for her
alone
to myself
unshared *
is how i acknowledge
my love
for my mother

*** i gave this poem to my
mother a month after i wrote
it so, my acknowledgement
did not go unshared.
darlene angela**

The Funeral

(continued from page 9)

you dare use that word on me. Colored, gal. We *colored*. Black is the color of that hearse yonder." She pointed a shaking finger at the road.

"All you old *Black* people turned your backs on her, and I know you want us liberators to do the same. My friends were there for me, but how could they get me out, knowing they would've been thrown in, too?" The cold voice cracked like thinning ice. Her mind leapt back to the greasy-haired cop kicking her down the stairs, to her head bouncing dully against the vomit-stained concrete walls.

"I'm tired of fighting with you about this," she sighed. "Look, you can have me in church with my hair like it is, or you can have me not in church at all. And," she added, more gently, "I ain't wearing a dress, OK?" There was a plea in her voice, a begging for understanding. She knew that her lifestyle, both her politics and her personal life, had forever estranged her from her mother, but a faint hope for understanding still flickered within her, a spark wrapped protectively in callous hardness, which, when unwrapped, blazed forth mightily, as now.

Her mother's eyes softened, and her heart lurched. Was this her baby? Could it be the same one who, just yesterday, it seemed, was shooting marbles, wrestling with boys, and fighting for her sisters? I shoulda knowed then. Had she grown up already? How had she missed it? My head been bowed too long while I stood over them boilin pots and hot stoves in them white folks kitchens, she thought angrily. Her eyes went granite-hard again. Gotta be

strong, Lord. It's too late for all that, anyhow. What's done is done.

The phone rang, and she rushed from this stranger, her daughter, to it. Louise's tense shoulders drooped as she heaved a weary sigh. She couldn't meet her sisters' razor-sharp glances. She almost saw me, she thought. Almost. I felt it.

She knew it was Jean by her mother's iciness toward the person on the other end of the telephone line. "What you want with her? Don't you know we got death in the family? She ain't here." She slammed the phone into its cradle.

Louise rushed past her and yanked the telephone to her ear. "Don't you ever do that again!" she yelled.

Her mother recoiled, again frightened by the fierceness of her child. What did I create, here? she asked, her hand flying nervously to her heart. "You better leave these women alone, Louise. They ain't nothin but trouble. Nasty, that's what it is! Just pure, D nastiness." She stalked out of the house.

Louise dialed Jean's number. "Hey, baby," she murmured into the cool, black speaker. All anger had dropped from her voice like dew sucked from the grass by the sun's fervent, adamant kisses.

"Back at you, girl," Jean whispered. Her voice was cool and low, and fluttered from her lips like soft summer winds souging through pines. "Your momma's got to go," she laughed. "Can't believe she's still up to her tricks."

"Yeah, I can't either." Louise ran her fingers along the wall. "I mean, she calls Yvonne 'that colored Communist'; calls you everything but your name; and she can't

stand me."

"Yeah, but she does love you. Baby, I know it's hard." Jean wrapped one long, cinnamon-brown finger in the telephone coil. She stretched her long, patent leather-booted body across her bed, and propped her naturally red bush-topped head on a pillow. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath before saying what always put Louise on edge. "Louise, we could move in together." She said it more as a question than a statement. Her heart raced.

"You know I can't do that, Jean. As much as I love you, as much as I love the Movement, I need to take care of my home first. My mother, you know. And Pookie," she added softly.

"We could take her with us. You're her mother, after all. You're over eighteen, too."

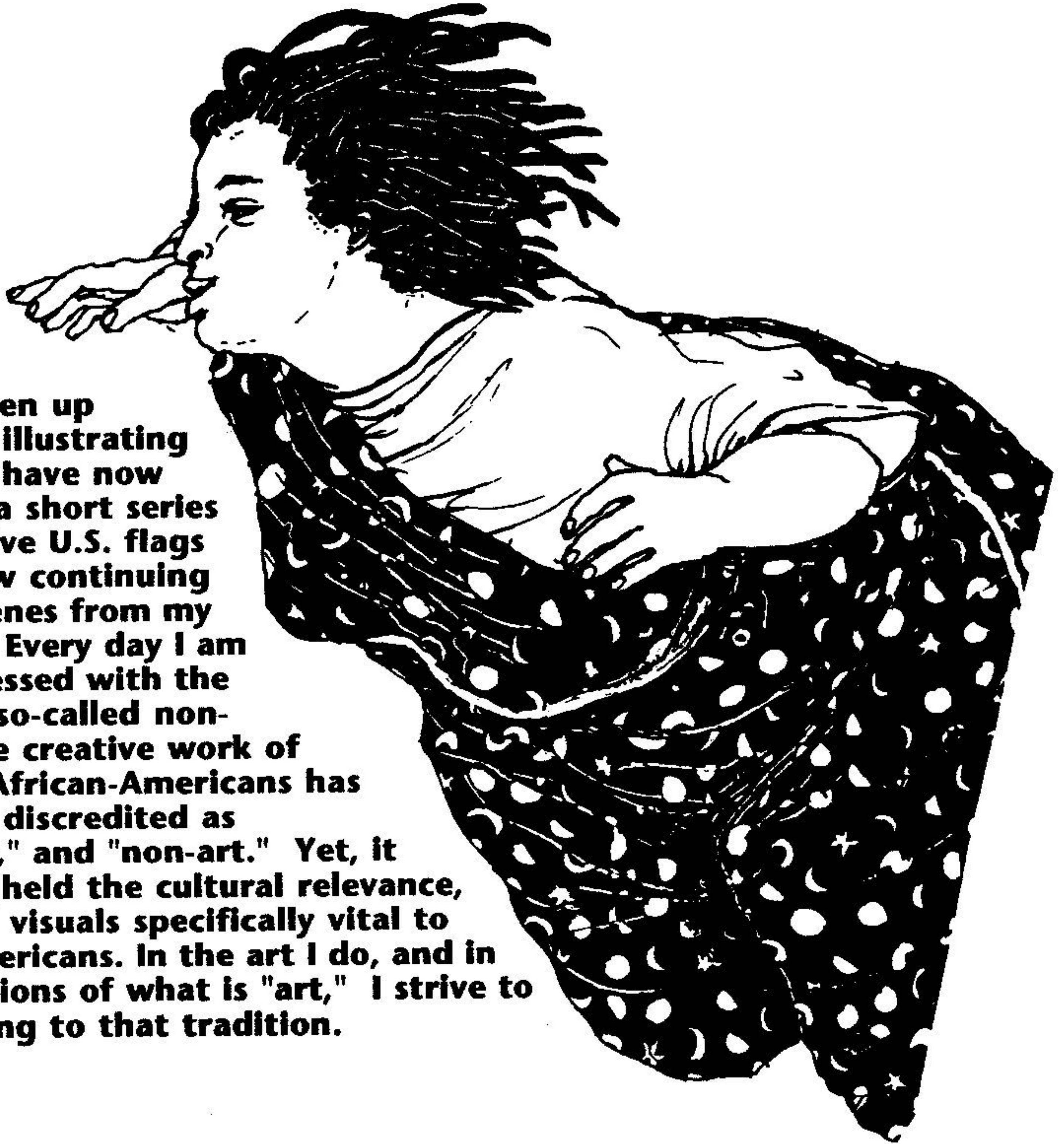
"Jean, stop jivin yourself. What court would...I don't even want to talk about it," she moaned. Tears sprang to her eyes. What she wouldn't give to just lie in Jean's arms right now. And not worry about the damned funeral, her crazy family, or the demanding Movement. "I've gotta go. The funeral, you know."

"OK," Jean said assuringly, hiding the unresigned sorrow from her voice. "Be cool, baby."

"Power to the people," Louise said, raising high her clenched left fist. She rested the phone in its cradle, and headed for the front door. She stopped, looked in the living room mirror, and patted her fro. She walked to the front porch, ready for the funeral.

Artwork by Sarita Johnson-Calvo

Having given up the idea of illustrating the Bible, I have now completed a short series of alternative U.S. flags and am now continuing to paint scenes from my childhood. Every day I am more impressed with the artistry of so-called non-artists. The creative work of untrained African-Americans has often been discredited as "decorative," and "non-art." Yet, it has always held the cultural relevance, values, and visuals specifically vital to African-Americans. In the art I do, and in my perceptions of what is "art," I strive to give meaning to that tradition.



My Momma's Not a Lesbian....

(continued from page 5)

be imprisoned in any white man's bra, and was as black as midnight. (Anyhow, that's the way Marge described her. If you ask me, it sounds like Marge was sweet on the woman.) Mabel and Marge's mother were inseparable. They picked collards together, had their babies together, and, when their husbands died, moved in together.

To this day, they spend all their time together, but her mother still prays nightly that Marge will find a "good, decent, Christian man" like the one she'd had. When Marge told her mother that, instead, she should be praying that Marge find a woman like Mabel, her mother called her a no-good evil black bitch.

Now, I don't want to bend your ear too much, so I'll cut this short. I just want you gay ladies to think about something: How many of your sisters have repeated to you the words in the article's title? What is it that our mothers find so strong in themselves that no one—except for the few Mabels—has been able to love? What is the something that not even they, themselves, can love, and feel they must pass on—a venomous self-love/hate—to their daughters? I wonder.

Could it be that our Lesbianism is an actualization of themselves? Could it be that they aren't amazed, after all, that we love ourselves and other women, and that we also love our decent fathers? Could it be that they're proud that, like them, we hate the indecent fathers?

Could be. Could be, too, that

when Marge's mother is in the big feather bed with Mabel, she doesn't call her an evil black bitch. Could be she calls her nascent Nubian nymph. Could be that one day, black mothers will have the sense to share these feelings with their young daughters; that there's an insuperable power in self-love, and that no one can love or hurt a black woman like another black woman.

Winn Gilmore ©1989

Interested in film and video?

Third World Newsreel, the oldest Third World media center in the U.S., provides information and assistance for media works of relevance to People of Color.

Several resource materials available include: Independent Black American Cinema (1982) a survey from 1920-1980 with film descriptions, interviews and filmographies; In Color: Sixty Years of Minority Women in Film (1984) a look at images of Women of Color on screen and behind the camera; and Journey Across Three Continents: Films from the Black Diaspora (1986) a detailed listing of Black cinema focusing on Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas and Europe. Each is available for \$2.00.

To order contact Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th St. 5th Fl., NY, NY. 10018 ph. 212-947-9277.

Jazz by the Bay

(continued from page 11)

October at Kimball's East, Oct. 25-28.

■ Finally, end October with the infamous drummer, **Donaly Bailey**. Formerly with jazz organist Jimmy Smith, Bailey has put together a band the Bay Area has been waiting for. Blending a cool California sound with a hard-driving East Coast swing, **8-Misbehavin'** is HAP-PEN-IN!! The band features **Graham Bruce** on trumpet; **Susie Lorraine**, on tenor sax and flute; **Fred Lambertson** on baritone sax, flute and bass clarinet; **Malesio Magdaluyo** on alto sax and flute; yours truly **Angela Wellman** on trombone and vocals; **Gary Fisher** on piano; and **Tim Hauff** on bass. Check us out at Yoshi's, 6030 Claremont in Oakland on Oct. 29. Shows at 8 & 10pm.

Next month: Local jazz clubs and who's in them. I'll let you know where to go to hear the best Bay Area musicians playing some of the best Jazz on the West Coast.

Till then, mucho aché to all.

Modupué.

ANGELA WELLMAN

Bulletin Board

Black Lesbians!

I need your help for the completion and success of my masters thesis on Black Lesbian Identity formation. Come make herstory with me!! Subjects needed for November. Those interested, please call Darlene Angela, at (415) 821-9207. Thank you!!



Black Lesbians!!

Come to the 2nd annual gathering, sponsored by the NIA collective, Nov. 17-19, 1989 at the Marin Headlands Institute in Sausalito. This year's theme is "Loving Ourselves."

We have space for 150 women and the weekend will include workshops, entertainment, and free time for fun. The workshops will be on such topics as interracial relationships, teaching in underprivileged neighborhoods, black lesbian in academia, abuse and co-dependency, and AIDS. The cost is \$75, which includes meals and dormitory accomodations. Call for a registration form at (415) 531-2682.



Black Lace

The first and only erotic magazine by and for African American lesbians will be published by the BLK publishing company. **Black Lace** will feature erotic photography, short stories, fantasy letters, poetry, feature articles and other items of

interest to the African American lesbian community.

"This is the sleazy, raunchy magazine [we've] been horny for!, declared editor, A. Lane. "I believe that **Black Lace** will satisfy the community's desires."

Women interested in submitting their work to **Black Lace** should write the editor:

Alycee J. Lane,
P.O. Box 83912, Los Angeles,
CA. 90083-0912
(213) 410-0808



Sources

a magazine that reviews books and publishes writing by Black women, is looking for writers. We need:

Book reviews.

Interviews with authors.

Historical features highlighting Black women whose main body of writing occured thirty or more years ago.

Autobiographical pieces by soon-to-be published or recently published writers emphasizing their relationship with their work, and how they go about being a Black woman writer in today's society. A piece of the author's finished work will also be printed in the same issue as her autobiographical piece.

Send for writer's guidelines, send submissions to Janet Wallace, P.O. Box 20390, Oakland, CA. 94611 or call 531-2682.



BLACK FEMINIST WRITER seeking women with **DREADLOCKS** for anthology. Wants photographs and women's own words on the experience of locking their hair. If you are a DreadWoman or know of any, please contact Terri Jewell, 211 W. Saginaw #2, Lansing MI. 48933. Will give full information upon request.



Women interested in participating in making a panel or panels for the Africans who have died of AIDS to be included in the **Names Project Quilt**. Please contact Reatha at (415) 835-1552.



UJAMAA

The Women's Building Project of the East Bay. A new group of women of color, dedicated to the concept of cooperative economics and survival. Our initial goal is to secure funds to purchase a multicultural center. Task committees now forming. General meetings are held the 1st Tuesday of each month through 1989 at the Asian Resource Center, 310 - 8th St./nr. Harrison in Oakland from 7-9pm. For more information call (415) 255-2155 or 436-6145. UJAMAA's mailing address is: 2500 - 25th Ave., Oakland, CA. 94601.



THE BACK PAGE

Make Aché work for you!! List your service (send us a business card), find a roommate, organize a group whatever!! FREE...The deadline for all submissions is the 25th of each month.

✓ Groups

Lesbians of Color Support Group, every Thursday evening from 6:30-8pm at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berk.



Support group for Black Lesbians in multicultural relationships meet the 1st Sunday of each month in Oakland. For info: 839-3302 or 653-5732.



Black Lesbians exploring the issue of fear in our lives, and how it separates us. Group meets weekly on Friday eves. 3-month commitment required. For info call Joyce at 839-3302 or Takai at 346-5872.



Mujerio, the bay area Latina Lesbian organization, holds monthly meetings on the 3rd Saturday of each month. 5pm. (There will be no meeting in October due to the first Mujerio retreat.) All Latina Lesbians welcome. For information call 587-7384.

✓ Housing

Beautiful sunny room for rent in a large victorian apartment in S.F. near Golden Gate park. For information call 751-8924.



Sunny, open, spacious artist space to share in SF - also possibly live-in arrangements. Call 586-4485.

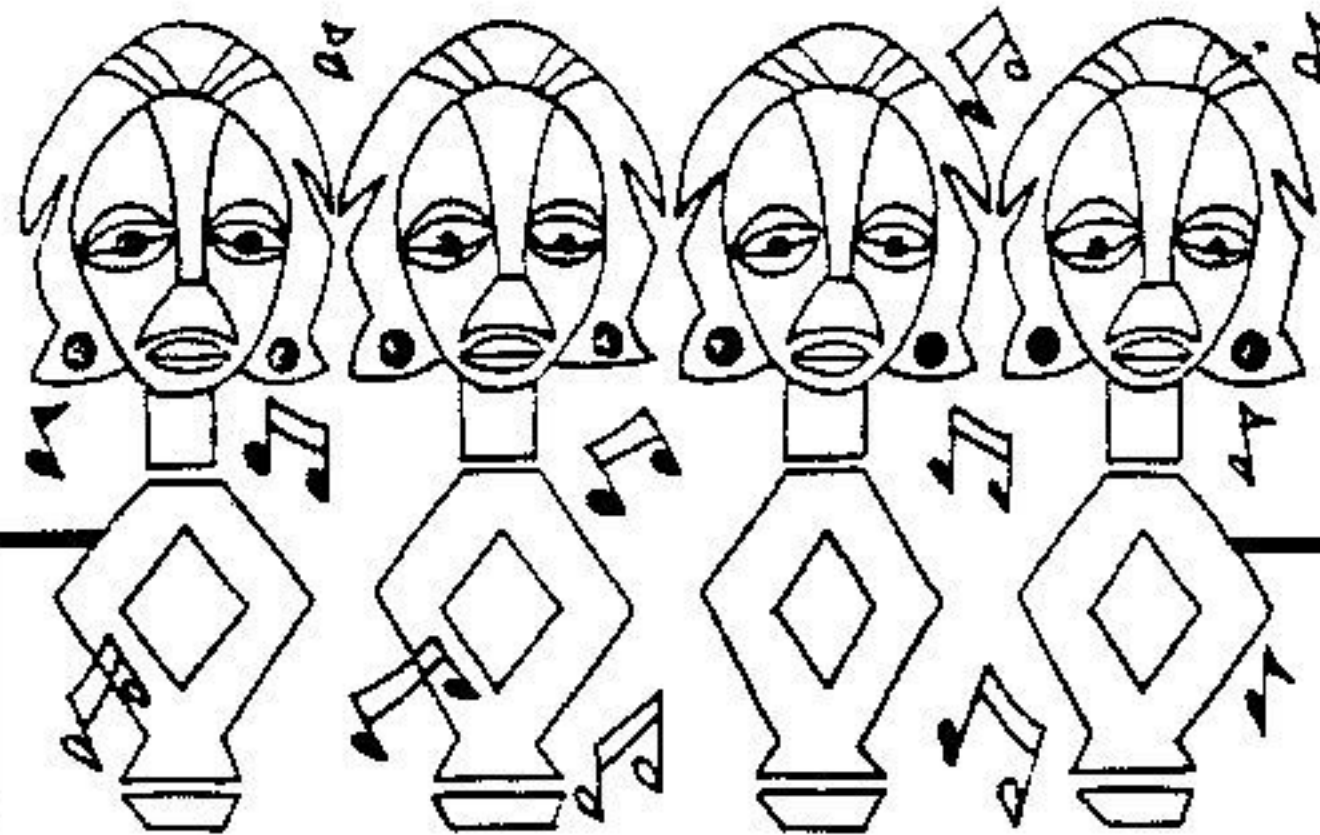
✓ Services

Black woman mathematician available for tutoring children and adults. \$12/hr. For info call Marguerite at 654-5432.



Counseling people on easing emotional barriers that separate disabled people from able-bodied people by Aisha Rahim. \$40 sliding scale. 547-7690.

Avotcja models her shekeres after those originating in West Africa (Niger, Benin, Togo). Music is an integral part of African daily life



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and ritual, and as such occupies a position of high value. Avotcja's attachment to her cultural legacy is thus expressed: "The shekere is one of the most wonderful and beautiful of Africa's gifts to the Western hemisphere. It is one of the most powerful and magical instruments on the planet, both religious and secular, sensual, medicinal and spiritual. Let it heal what ails you. Que viva la musica."

"Ache." *Aché*, vol. 1, no. 9, Oct. 1989, p. [1]. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, link.gale.com/apps/doc/SPDMTP677378382/AHSI?u=umuser&sid=bookmark-AHSI&xid=18938668. Accessed 8 Dec. 2022.