THE POPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

So We Stand Here On The Edge Of Hell In Harlem And Look Out On The World And Wonder What We're Gonna Do In The Face Of What We Remember" - Langston Hughes

FEBURARY / MARCH 2012

CELEBRATING OUR HEROES



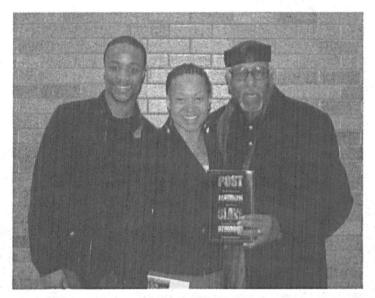
Inside This Issue

Brooklyn Bastard PAGE 6 The Black Lord of Russia PAGE 4 The Egyptian Revolution PAGE 7

Striving For Academic Perfection PAGE 8



Editor's Letter



In honor of Black History month, I'd like to revisit "A Conversation with Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary." On February 16, 2010, *The Paper* and The City College of New York were host to a discussion with author and lecturer Dr. Joy DeGruy, moderated by CCNY Black Studies professor and acclaimed author Herb Boyd. The discussion was a candid look at the hindrance and stressors unique to the African-American community, from the negative impact of slavery, Jim Crow and post -Civil Rights era structural racism and inequality.

Dr. DeGruy Leary's research traces the links that bind racism and the damage on the black collective causing disruption and harm to manifest throughout the many parts

Greetings Colleagues,

In the fall of 2011, we held several informal discussions on violence against women evidenced by rape cases in the aftermath of Katrina in New Orleans, the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti and the Nafisatou Diallo vs Dominique Straus Khan (DSK) case in New York City. Women of African descent gathered at the Morales/Shakur Center at City College of New York.

With support from Community Vision Council, we also attended forums and conferences on violence against women and related topics. On September 14th, we attended

• "She Asked for It – How Rape Myths Hurt Us All" at Pace University, NY http://www.safercampus.org/ blog/2011/09/nyc-event-914-she-asked-for-it-how-rapemyths-hurt-us-all; then

• "DSK vs Justice" on October 13th at Columbia University, NY http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhkYi-KD20E and on October 29th

• "Human Traffiking – What We Can Do About It" at Endicott College, Beverly MA http://www.tellcarole.com/1/ post/2011/10/sex-slavery-human-trafficking-aauw-speaks-outwith-liz-fragola.html.

We made a commitment to organize and plan a grassroots campaign supported by the resources and tools of 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, a 21 year old project of the Center for Global Women's Leadership at Rutgers University, NJ. On November 1st, we launched CCNY16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence as an ad hoc committee. The tri-chairs are Ms. Asantewaa G. Harris, Ms. Nathalie Deller and Ms. Stephanie Pettite Homme. We met weekly in a plan to design campus based activities to improve education, strengthen awareness and gain support for a dedicated women's center. In early October, Stephanie P. Homme made an appeal for a fully funded women's center to President Lisa S. Coico at a CCNY monthly roundtable and followed that with a written request for consideration and support from the college President. of one's life. The effects often result in poor mental and physical health, family and relationship dysfunction, and self-destructive impulses. She handed to us real practical solutions in dealing with the deeply rooted ideology of colorism in the black community, the white privilege as well as anti-intellectualism. Reflecting on the lessons of healing learned during the discussion and later in the delightful conversation with Dr. DeGruy Leary, I am proud of the success dreamed, pursued, and earned by African-Americans. Like her we have many people of color to honor and recognize. This month we introduce biographies of intriguing individuals and the progress they made in the world, such as, fiery poet Sonia Sanchez, elegant opera singer Camilla Ella Williams and decorated General Abram Petrovich Gannibal.

As we look to change and embrace what we learn from our own culture, we honor education. We've made a lot of progress since ending legal segregation in our schools since Brown v. Board of education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the number of African-American students graduating with bachelor degrees increased by 53 percent, during the years 1999 to 2009. I predict this number will increase in the next ten years based on the last 30 years, the national dropout rate for black high school students fell from 19 to 9 percent. Of course we as a people can do better and we are doing better! Join us in celebrating the accomplishments and contributions of people of color. Enjoy!

By Oronde Tennant

Letter to the Editors

CCNY 16 Days Campaign outcomes are:

• Financial, in-kind support and pledges from New York Women's Foundation, CCNY AEC, Citizens for NYC

• Three published articles in Amsterdam News, CCNY Campus, CCNY's The Paper

• Seven public activities were held and included an open mike "speak out", art exhibit, gender panel, a free selfdefense class, men's roundtable http://www.uptownnotes.com/ tonight-mens-roundtable-on-helping-end-gender-violence-atccny and a closing banquet. We reached more than 500 with our community outreach & nearly 200 people attended our 16 Days campaign events.

• The Men's Roundtable attendees also re interested in gathering on a monthly basis to continue this important discussion.

• Linkage and endorsements from Bella Abzug Leadership Institute, AAUW, Epsilon Tau/Delta Sigma Theta, Black Studies Union, Women Studies Department, Community Vision Council.

• Launched a 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence blog ccny16daysofactivism.wordpress.com.

• T-shirts, wristbands and newspapers were given away.

• Completed follow up survey with the Center for Global Women's Leadership at Rutgers University.

• We will continue with two Co- Chairs and are moving forward. We are deeply grateful for the encouragement given for this new initiative.

• Look to see you at the Networking Reception on Friday March 2nd 6pm - 8pm at the Morales/Shakur Center CCNY 160 Convent Avenue NAC Building Room 3-201 rsvp 212/650-5008.

Respectfully,

Asantewaa G. Harris/Co-Chair Stephanie Pettite Homme/ Co-Chair

The Paper: FEBURARY/ MARCH 2012

The Paper

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OUR MISSION

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In 1969 two student leaders, including louis Reyes Rivera, founded *The Paper* as a radical social voice for people of African descent. We stand on the shoulders of journalistic giants! our mission is to carry on this legacy. As an organization, we encourage and develop socially progressive student activists. *The Paper* will continue to serve CCNY and the surrounding Harlem community. VOL. 32, NO. 7

The Ffash Black

Because we strive to connect past lessons with today's struggles, we are thrilled to present this feature in our publications-the FLASHBLACK! For each issue, we will reprint articles and photographs from the Tech News and The Paper archives which are housed in our own cohen library. We encourage our readers to respond to these blasts from the past, build on their legacies, and spread the word about our college's amazing political history

THE PAPER

(aka Tech News)

So here we stand, on the edge of Hell, in Harlem, and wonder what we will do, in the face of all that we remember. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1970

-Langaton Hughes

Student-Mothers Plan Child Center

By JUANITA E. RAY

Sandra Small, Community Affairs Vice President for the Student Senate, disclosed plans for the opening of a Child Care Center here at City College this coming. February. Temporary quarters for the center, as of this writing, will be located on the fifth floor of Shepard Hall

Plans for the center are scheduled to be finalized at a meeting this Saturday, December 5th, as part of the work of a five-woman committee which has been working on the project since early September. The committee, headed by Miss Small, also includes Claire Rosner, Claudia D. Gerado, Maxine Alexander, and Desira Benjamin,

Accomodations

The temporary center itself is expected to accomodate approxi-mately thirty children at the out-

set, ranging in age from twelve. months to four and a half years. Since the center is insufficient to meet the needs of the expected number of parents wishing to participate in the program, the basis for selection will be one of economic necessity as well as the ability and willingness of those parents to devote portions of their time to volunteer work.

Mothers will not be charged for use of the facilities for their children, but if they're not able to volunteer any of their time to the center, they will be charged a percentage of their weekly income, as yet undetermined. This money will go into the treasury of the Child Care Center for helping to finance its operation.

Another requirement will be the (Continued on Page 7)

SEEK Students To Face New Attack

Marshak Denies Link With Cops By TOM MCDONALD

Robert E. Marshak, president I City College, denied at a restudent press conference, he gave the police depart-any sid in the investiga-which led to the arrest of students on Nov. 18th. The st lbase students has been Dec. 9th, and six of them in confinement because see been unable to post

mmenting on the allegahat he has had frequent and with the police de-tent during the past six . Dr. Marshak stated that the has had only one meeting to Inspector Walth, the head the Preventive Enforcement strol (PEP). Marshak said that Whith called him on the day after the article appeared in the New York Times which detailed the open use and sale of heroin on the South Campus

At that time the President Inormed Waith that he was taking "a hard line on hard drugs." Marshak related that his postthon wes takens as a realist several meetings with campus representatives on the drug sit-nation. He said that several people with whom he had met told

him that the drug problem "was significantly worse than it was last spring.

Marshak went on to say Dr that he received a letter, signed by 25 members of one of the college's departments imploring him to do something about the drug situation. However, he de-clined to comment when asked if that letter was sent by the Music Department.

The President continued, ex-plaining that his discussions with other members of the college community indicated to him the existence of a great feeling of analyzalense with re-gards to the handling of mari-juana usage. He stated that he communicated this information to Walth during bit to Waith during his meeting with the Inspector, As a result, the primary emphasis of the PEP equal's investigation was centered amund the sale and use

In speaking directly to the question of his role in the in-vestigation Dr. Marshak said that "we should feel very for tunate in having Chief Inspec tor Waith and has men handling this case; the sale and use of a dangerous drug such as herein (Continued on Page 3)

SEEK Programs of the vari-ous colleges of CUNY met in Finley 329, last week, to discuss the manifold problems of the SEEK program throughout the city. Foremost among the dif-ficulties discussed is the present status of the university-ad-ministered academic and dormitory facilities at the Alamac Hotel on 71st Street.

The present crisis stems from the present crisis stems from an acapuncement made on Fri-day, Nov. 20th, in which it was stated that the academic opera-tions of SEEK at the Alamac Hotel would be terminated as of Hatel would be terminated as a June, 1971 However, it was re-cently disclosed by reliable sources integrally involved with the program that, contrary to public belief, this is merely the initial step in a general phas-ing out of the SEEK program.

The meeting focused on re-constructing alternatives for SEEK and reaching a uniform agreement as to what was degram in the form of resolutions and future arientation. Since only four colleges were represented, those present were able to draw up any conclusive agreements; instead they agreed to carry their alternatives back to the college and to have atudent bodies alter them to suit student bodies and, ally in com-their needs individually in comjunction with the other Programs of CUNY.

Another meeting will be held the near future at which time variations of solutions will

be condensed and then pre-sented to the Board of Higher Education, and other concerned offices

One basic problem cited was that SEEK, as an experiment in "higher education" has never (Continued on Page 3)

Geary Greenwidge, of SEEK Sindent Government Jears shase-out of program. photos by Jeff Morgan



Sonia Sanchez: An Illuminating Public Figure

Page 4



Among the many inspirational African-American women, Dr. Sonia Sanchez is one who has courage, devotion, and dreams. A poet, playwright, educator, and activist, Sanchez was born Wilsonia Benita Driver in Birmingham, Alabama on September 9, 1934. After her mother died a year later, Sanchez was sent to live with her paternal grandmother. At age six, Sanchez suffered the great loss of her grandmother and it proved to be a major turning point in her life. In an interview with Susan Kelly of the African American Review, Sanchez discussed how her grandmother's death changed her life: "I began writing when I was a little girl and I began stuttering and being tongue-tied. The loss of Mama, my grandmother, made me begin that whole process of writing things

down." Sanchez moved to Harlem in 1943 to live with her sister, her father, and his third wife.

In 1955, Sanchez graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from Hunter College, where she had also taken a number of creative writing courses. Sanchez became involved with the Civil Rights Movement and joined the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Sanchez completed postgraduate work at New York University where she studied poetry. In continuing to achieve her goals, Sanchez formed a writers' workshop in Greenwich Village along with other poets and during the early 1960s she came together with Haki R. Madhubuti (Don L. Lee), Nikki Giovanni, and Etheridge Knight, to form the "Broadside Quartet," a group of militant poets. Later, Sanchez and Knight married and had three children: Morani Neusi, Mungu Neusi and Anita Knight. Sanchez divorced some time later.

In 1972, Sanchez joined the Nation of Islam. English professor Joyce Anne Joyce writes, "Her desire for cohesiveness within the Black community and her desire to enlighten the Black community of the vile of middle-class white America made her a natural follower of the teachings of Elijah Muhammad." However, Sanchez left the organization after three years because her position as a strong, well-rounded woman clashed with the lifestyle of a Muslim woman. Thus, Sanchez began to embrace feminism.

Sanchez has taught as a professor at eight universities and lectured at over 500 universities and colleges in the United States. While at San Francisco State College (now University) she played an essential role in developing some of the first black studies courses in the nation. She has authored over a dozen books of poetry, plays, and children's writing. Her first two collections, Homecoming (1969) and We a BaddDDD People (1970) are reflective of her radicalism and affiliation with the Black Arts Movement. She has read her poetry in Africa, Australia, the Caribbean, Europe, China, Canada, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

Sanchez's hard work and dedication has paid off with over a dozen awards which include the P.E.N. Writing Award, the National Education Association Award 1977-

1988, the National Academy and Arts Award, the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship Award in 1978-1979, the American Book Award for Homegirls and Handgrenades, the Community Service Award from the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the Lucretia Mott Award, the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Humanities, and the Peace and Freedom Award from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Most recently she was appointed as the first Poet Laureate of the City of Philadelphia and honored by the Artist Film Festival on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 at Columbia University Miller Theater. Overall, Sanchez' outstanding job at being a mother, educator, and activist, is one of the many reasons why Black History Month is in part a celebration of African American people who had dreams and goals and did everything in their power to achieve them and while doing so, enlightened people with their words and made an impact throughout.

By Zerline Alvarez

The Black Lord of Russia, Abram Petrovich Gannibal

The extent to which the African Diaspora is spread across the globe can be a source of amazement for the uninitiated. Beyond the Atlantic Slave Trade, contact between the peoples of Africa and the rest of the world shows up as whispers and shadows on the edges of American consciousness. Othello, of the eponymous work by the Bard, was to be played by a moor, so presumably London had a few Black men roaming about. Philip, disciple of Jesus Christ, converted and baptized that eunuch on the road, who was from Ethiopia, so he probably counts as Black. Hannibal and his elephants managed to severely wound the Roman Empire, and he was from Carthage which is in Africa, if you look at it geographically. And so on.

One impressive member of the diaspora, Abram Petrovich Gannibal, is a household name in Russia, but less than a whisper on the tongue in U.S. history courses. He was profiled some years ago in the UK's New Statesman when Maggie Gee reviewed Gannibal: the Moor of Petersburg, by Hugh Barnes. On this side of the pond, New York Times reporter Serge Schmemann more recently spoke of him in a piece covering the dedication of a plaque in his honor at a former artillery school in France.

Our Russian hero's birth name is unknown, but it is believed that he was born in Logone-Birni, in what is now Cameroon, in 1696 to the son of the nation's ruler. At the age of seven, he was kidnapped and presented to the sultan of the Ottoman Empire in Constantinople. There he was converted to Islam and renamed Ibrahim. The Russian ambassador to Constantinople then purchased him on behalf of Tsar Peter the Great. The tsar saw him as a way to disprove prejudices against African's intellectual and moral capabilities. He baptized Ibrahim into the Russian Orthodox faith and christened him Abram. He also took him as his godson, from which Abram obtained his 'Petrovich' appellation.

Abram served as the tsar's secretary, learning science, mathematics, encryption, and military affairs. In 1716, he accompanied Peter on a trip to Paris, then stayed behind to further his military education. Four years later, he enrolled in King Louis XV's newly established artillery academy. He gained practical experience when fighting with the French against Spain. It was at this point that he adopted the Russian form of the great Carthaginian general as his surname.

Russian politics being what they were at the time, Gannibal returned to Russia and received a warm welcome by Peter the Great, but was shortly banished to Siberia when Peter died and his successor took the throne. It was some time before he was allowed back in from the cold, but when he returned, he rose through the military, eventually becoming chief military engineer of the Imperial Russian Army. He was highly productive, developing the secret howitzer (a vital predecessor to the modern rocket), a series of canals later implemented by Joseph Stalin, and fortifications around St. Petersburg that later stood up to Nazi Germany's advances.

In 1742, he successfully petitioned for nobility, and was granted land and serfs by Tsarina Elizabeth. He rented the land and its serfs to a German aristocrat,

under the condition that the peasants not be mistreated in any way. When Gannibal received word of mistreatment, he sued the aristocrat in court and won, both setting one of the first precedents for peasants' rights in Russia, and making a lifelong enemy of the German aristocrat. When the aristocrat's nephew succeeded to the Russian throne as Peter III, Gannibal was again banished, and so he remained until his death in 1781.

He was survived by 11 children, one of whom was the maternal grandmother of Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, a man who was supremely proud of his African heritage.

By Dean James



Asantewaa Harris, Community Hero.

Accomplishments & Community Service:

- 1. Solution Building @ the Roots 2004 community forum in Bushwick, Brooklyn.
- 2. CVC Farmers Market planning meetings
- 3. 2005 Launched CVC Farmers Market the first farmers market in Bushwick approved by the Farmer Market Nutrition Program to accept vouchers from WIC families and Senior Citizens. CVC farmers David & Veronica Haughton are grandparents of three year old Sammy, a "CVC Bud & farmer in training".
- 4. Keep Dancing! a benefit featuring the film, "Mad Hot Ballroom" with two Middle School couples from the film and dancing elders, Etta Dixon and Clem Pouissant (their combined ages is 162 years)
- 5. Home Grown: Sustainable Roots local intergenerational workshops on sustainable living and alternative energy activities to improve community awareness. One senior council member has thermal solar panels installed on her home and another council member has been trained in photovoltaic installation. We held Dr. George Washington Carver Institute sessions at two Harlem sites - PS 76 School Garden and Senior Citizens Sculpture Garden & Park. We led workshops and break- out sessions at the following national activities: Growing Food & Justice for All Gathering in Milwaukee, WI, Real Food Summit in Amhearst, MA, CUNY Social Forum, NY, Food & Society Gathering in San Jose, CA and CSD 17 United Nations Training for Youth Caucus participants.
- 6. Wellness Wednesdays local activities that focus on disease prevention and health promotion. Senior Citizen upper body massage at local senior centers.
- Wellness Works! cultural arts activities that use dance, music, visual and culinary arts to promote wellness:
 Film screenings
 - Heal Thyself/Fasting Shut –In (quarterly)
 Grand Parents Day in Bushwick 2005, 2006, 2007

Wole Soyinka

Wole Soyinka born in Isara, Nigeria in 1934 was raised in the village of Ake. As a teenager, Soyinka was given the rite of manhood by his grandfather. As a part of the rite, Soyinka was consecrated to the god Ogun, ruler of iron and war. Ogun remains a recurring figure in Soyinka's work and has been described by the author as his muse.

Soyinka attended the University of Ibadan and the University of Leeds in Yorkshire. Before leaving Africa for the University of Leeds in England, Soyinka published poems and short stories in Nigerian literary magazine *Black Orphens*. His first play, *The Invention*, is a comic satire based upon a sudden loss of pigment by South Africa's Black population, and began the author's career as a playwright known for using drama as direct commentary upon the political situation in Africa. Well established as Nigeria's premier playwright, Soyinka published his first novel, *The Interpreters*, in 1965.That year also marks his first arrest by Nigerian police. He was accused of using a gun to force a radio announcer to broadcast

- Nutritional & Food Demonstrations @ the Beacon Lighthouse (2006) and CVC Farmers Market. (2007)
- Collective Kitchens (2006, 2007)
- Healing Dialogues Diabetes (2005) Cancer Survival (2006)
- Senior Citizen upper body massage at local senior centers (on-going)
- "Meet the Need" organized, collected, packaged and delivered six truckloads of direct relief for survivors impacted by the hurricanes in the Gulf States – Katrina, Wilma, Rita and helping those whose mandatory evacuations led them to reside in New York City.
- 9. Conferences U.S. Dep't of Health & Human Services/Office of Minority Health (2002 – Presenter) U.S. Dep't of Health & Human Services/Office of Disease Prevention & Health Promotion (2004 Presenter) Steps to a HealthierUS (Baltimore, MD 2005) UN Commission on the Status of Women (2005, 2006, 2007)

Faith Based & Community Initiatives (Boston MA, 2005, Newark NJ 2008) Food Project (Boston 2007) NYU School of Medicine 1st & 2nd Annual Health Disparities Conference (NY, NY) Columbia University 1st & 2nd Annual Health Disparities Conference (NY, NY) Black Church Means Business (2007) UN Commission on Sustainable Development 16 & 17 (NY, NY) Real Food Summit (Amherst MA 2008)

Growing Food & Justice for All (Milwaukee, WI 2008, 2009)

10. Media Appearances:

- NY Times July 10, 2005
- News Channel12 July 6, 2005
- BCAT June 21, 2005
- MNN
- WCBS Channel 2 News August 2005
- Bushwick Observer
- Ridgewood Times
- Our Time Press



- Bushwick Courier
- DC 37 News
- Park Slope Food Co-op-Lifeline Newsletter
- Word on the Street Newspaper
- "Story Corps" oral histories (two)

• "Race Realities in New York City" – Convention on the Elimination of all Racial Discrimination (CERD) 12/10/07 published Shadow Report

What we do:

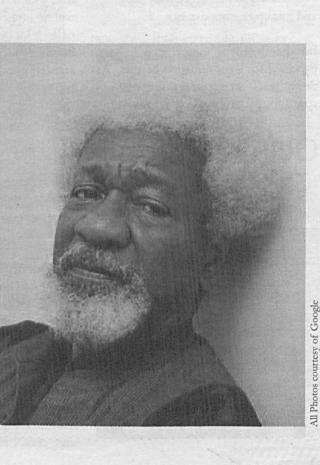
Community Gardens – Growing our own food; Urban/Rural Exchanges – Residencies and visits to garden & farm sites, Roots Work – intergenerational learning activities, & workshops, Consulting – technical assistance and organizational development; Presentations & Speaking Engagements – Our fees start at \$500.

Financial contributions big or small help strengthen our community. CVC's fiscal sponsor: IFCO Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, Inc, a tax exempt non-profit organization.

Sincerely,

Asantewaa Gail Harris Community Vision Council

incorrect election results, but no evidence was ever produced and he was released after a three-month internment. Two years later, at the height of the Biafran conflict, Soyinka, who was opposed to the conflict, especially to Nigerian government's policy of brutality toward the Ibo people, traveled to Biafra to establish a peace commission composed of leading intellectuals from both sides. Upon his return he was accused by the Nigerian police of trafficking in the sale of jet fighters to the Biafrians. Once again he was imprisoned, this time for two years. His diary, published as the Man Died: Prison Notes of Wole Soyinka, constitutes "the most important work that has been written about the Biafran war," according to one commentator. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986 and his more recent works include a collection of lectures titles Climate of Fear: The Quest for Dignity in a Dehumanized World (2005) and You Must Set Forth at Dawn: A Memoir (2006).



Page 6

The Paper: FEBURARY/ MARCH 2012

Book Excerpt Brooklyn Bastard and Democracy are literary snippets from Stanley Fritz's book "Beautiful Problems"

Brooklyn Bastard

They called me ghetto, my baggy jeans, foul mouth, and intimidating scowl didn't work well with what they enjoyed to see.

I walked the streets ready for war, mind set placed on hate, mannerisms aggressive. so they feared me, crossed the streets when they saw me. Had the cops on speed dial if I ever stepped foot in their neighborhoods.

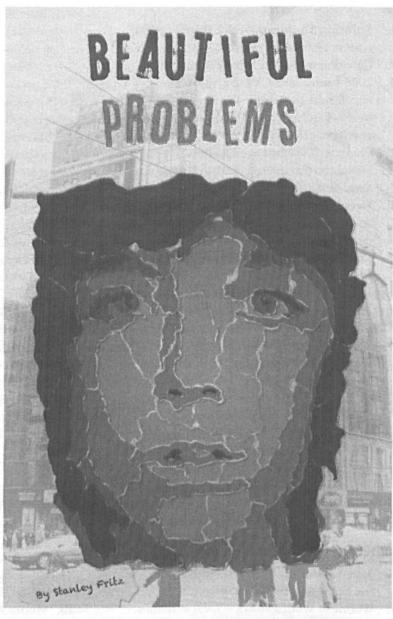
My fate was written before I ever took a breath, my criminal record would begin at 12, STD by 15, baby by 17, and either death or jail by 21. I'm a Brooklyn bastards; I breath dirt, bleed sleet, and sweat oil. There's no such thing as a future just a conclusion assumed from a statistic. So why should I even try to give any kind of shit. I exist in a world where single parent homes are the norm, go to schools where we got books older then our grandparents.

My role models sold poison to my neighbors and killed people who looked just like them, I was made to think that blue steel was my only friend. So as my anger climbs another tier, murderous thoughts become almost realities. I've been forced to find the light with no assistance. Apparently I show no signs of growth. With no jump shot, and no rap skills, the escape has to be created through another way. So I changed my patterns focused on a goal, and through the explosions of this everyday war I put my faith in a book that made a promise of something better.

You set me up for failure but I made it, prayed for my death but I'm living. I hope you enjoy the rise of your unwanted child, born without your love but still forced to live in your world. I'm unbeatable unbreakable, and tainted with an edge. While you're others are so easily broken, I've been trained for the long run from day one

Ten years later, and my reality has shifted. College educated, well spoken and a student of the world. I was born in sewage, but I used education as my conduit, my intentions are to be great, but now I'm facing a new rival.

By Stanley Fritz



Democracy

I was born with wings clipped for your convenience; this foreign speech of democracy is nothing but a deep rooted fallacy to me.

For thirty years I have been robbed of any opportunity to live life. Instead, my days have laid stagnant in an economy constructed to maximize your profits and minimize my existence.

But there's only so long you could have expected for a continuation of this. As things reach their lowest point, and your foundation begins to crumble, I find strength in my faith, and decide to stand against your dream.

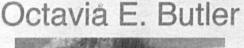
Before any structure can dictate how I speak, understand that I was born an individual me, with the right to shine in the form of a life that I deem best.

And your attempts to hold me down will no longer be tolerated. The threats of murder no longer frighten me, because for 30 years I have barely lived; and at this point more then any other I finally feel alive. There is no future for my child if I refuse to do nothing to abolish your form of power. So, I stand amongst the crowd signing this life sentence because I know so well that if we fail, my life will surely end with the blunt force of your rebuttal.

The media could never really tell the story of so many who have been cancelled for less than what I have done in these three weeks alone. Our beautiful country mourns a death toll that continues to grow for the foreseeable future. You say democracy but lash us with the whips of dictatorship, the question has changed. Before it was "How much longer can we take this, but with a family of ten thousand strong holding me up, I can't find a reason to change our entire course of reasoning and let you go.

All great battles have been fought by the people, the new constitution of life will be written in our blood because your reign will be over with what has now begun.

By Stanley Fritz



Octavia Butler's surprising death in 2005 left fans devastated. She is a beloved writer and will remain a historically essential name when discussing African American and female Science Fiction writers. Butler has written three sets of interlocking novels and two singlevolume novels; she credited the Writers Guild of America as most useful to her training. Her 1979 novel Kindred is perhaps her better known work. The main character is swept from her 1976 life to the antebellum south. Along with the uncontrolled time travel readers are forced to

consider ideas about America's long history of slavery. *Kindred* was later



recorded for Seeing Ear Theater with Alfre Woodard starring. Before her passing Butler published the eagerly consumed *Fledgling* (2005), it is called her "final masterpiece." Octavia Butler will continue to draw new readers as her fans love to spread the work of our Black female sci-fi writer. Reading her work is both a journey to the fantastical lands and a political experience.

By. Taqiyya Haden

Syrian Revolution: Under Fire

For a moment, you would be forgiven for thinking that the unrest of the Arab Spring, the wave of social turmoil rocking the Middle East with demands of greater democracy and an end to dictatorship, would play out in Syria as it did in Tunisia and Egypt. On March 16th of last year, mass protests erupted in the small southern city of Daraa, Syria. Some 200 people gathered in front of the Interior Ministry building, most of them relatives of longtime political prisoners as well as activists and students. They called for the release of those in custody. Within minutes, Syrian security men engaged the protestors, beating and isolating them, then placing several under arrest. The situation quickly developed into a full-scale nationwide rebellion, with protestors demanding the resignation of President Bashar Al-Assad and the overthrow of his government.

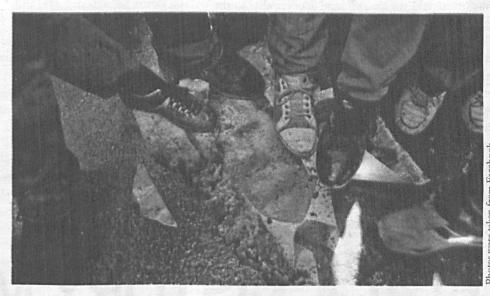
Drawing a great deal of inspiration from the successful revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, protestors in Syria are using tactics such as marches, hunger strikes, rioting, and vandalism in a nonstop campaign of civil opposition aimed at ending the five decades of Ba'athist rule. Syrian protesters also created a Facebook page, "The Syrian Revolution 2011," that has over 350,000 supporters. The page calls on people to protest against corruption and repression. The revolution was described as "extraordinary" by several political commentators.

The government has repeatedly been violent in its efforts to control the protests. In the wake of a failed Arab League attempt to stop the bloodshed in Syria, the international community appears to have little influence over the defiant government as the country plunges further into an expanded, chaotic and perhaps nonnegotiable conflict. "Day by day, Syrians are closer to fighting each other," said 30-year-old activist Abdel-Rahman in Arabeen, near the capital, as he joined a protest of 1,000 people there on Friday. "Bashar has divided Syrians into two groups - one with him, one against him — and the coming days will bring more blood into the streets."

On Sunday, January 29th, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, urged Mr. Assad to halt the violence against the protesters and said the time of dynasties and one-man rule in the Arab world were coming to an end. At a conference in Lebanon, the New York Times quoted Secretary-General Ki-moon as saying, "Today, I say again to President Assad of Syria: Stop the violence. Stop killing your people. The path of repression is a dead end." No one knows when this violence will end, but as time passes the vicious crime worsens while the world does nothing but witness the violence happening in Syria. One day Syrians will obtain the freedom they seek, just as their fellow Arabians in Egypt and Tunisia have done before them.

By Mai Sabour

Page 7



The Egyptian Revolution: Unfinished

One year ago, angry Egyptian protestors rebelled through the streets of Cairo into Tahrir Square fighting for bread, freedom, and equality. As Egypt marked the first anniversary of the January 25 Egyptian Revolution that ended the 30-year rule of Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, there was no agreement ---neither on how to celebrate, nor even if celebrations are in order. A massive demonstration on the first anniversary of the Egyptian revolution developed into a competition between Islamists and other activists over whether to celebrate or to continue the protest against the current rulers of Egypt, the military generals who took power upon Mubarak's abdication. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, or SCAF wanted to hold parties, parades, and floating military planes to rejoice in the revolution. On the other side, the youth groups and democracy activists who led the Revolution continued their antitotalitarian agenda with a campaign called "Kazeboon" (The Generals are Liars), with mini-demonstrations and movie presentations in the streets of Egypt documenting police and military brutality against innocent civilians. Islamic politicians, having won in recent parliamentary elections, played to both sides; at once praising the military's role while insisting that

an eventual transfer of power to civilians must occur.

On the human rights front, the Egyptians have precious little to celebrate. Following the ouster of a dictator from the Middle East's most populous country— at once was the record-breaking number of protestors on the streets demanding the end of military ruling. January 25th saw more people protesting than on the day of Mubarak's resignation. The protesters are united in their clear message: they demand change, the



possessing the most political power in the region and suffering from widespread poverty and extremely limited social mobility—not much has changed. Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians are still taking to the streets. They're still chanting the same chants and demanding the same demands from last year. The only change downfall of the current regime, and will continue the revolution until they achieve victory.

Mubarak is on trial for the deaths of protestors, a symbolic refutation of his cruel reign. Egypt has held a free election for a new parliament in which Islamic parties succeeded in competition with secular and liberal parties. Independent media now works hard to pinpoint government wrongdoing. Despite this, much of Mubarak's governing legacy has been preserved and further entrenched. The SCAF rules in his place and has demonstrated a strong desire to remain in power behind the scenes. Egyptians still live under Emergency Law-rules reinstituted following the assassination of President Sadat in 1982 which permits bans on public assembly, unlimited imprisonment without charge, and prosecution in special courts that allow no appeals process and the admission of confessions taken under torture as evidence.

On January 24th, the Supreme Council's Chief Field Marshal, Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, partially lifted the 30-year state of emergency but said Egypt would continue to apply the emergency law to cases of "thuggery," a charge that, along with "threatening the public peace," has been liberally levied against revolutionary protesters. After assuming power, the SCAF has frequently tried civilians in military courts, a Mubarak-era practice previously saved for exceptional cases. To compound these judicial abuses, the police and military have also taken egregious actions. In October,

Striving For Academic Perfection

As a senior at City College, I am still constantly reminded by professors, advisors and family members that maintaining good grades and improving on academic performance is expected in order to excel to the next level of an academic career. This is important advice to remember in the world of academia, however; not everyone has the resources and circumstances to score straight A's class after class and semester after semester. As individuals we have strengths and weaknesses that we face and it is essential to find methods to improve on our weaknesses and enforce our strengths. Whether it was a fault of our own or an unexpected incident that caused us to fall short in our academic performances, unfortunately, we are still held accountable to the grades that permanently remain on your transcript. My experiences at City College has taught me that it is important to work smarter rather than harder because the person that can problem solve and adjust to changes in a situation is the victor and not necessarily the person who has studied hours and hours and still does not understand how to approach a similar concept that appears different. The important thing to remember in school is that you should always do your best in your studies and not beat yourself about grades that are not what was expected. It took

Page 8

20

me years to realize that whether you graduate from undergraduate and prepare for graduate, medical or law school, it is not a reflection of your self-worth. It is difficult to have worked hard and see that a couple of C's or D's have appeared on your transcript. Rather than be hard on yourself and possibly fall into a state of depression or considering suicide, take the experience as a life lesson. Sharon Jayson's article in USA Today newspaper titled "More than 50% of

College student felt suicidal" explains that the reasons that college students think of suicide include emotional and physical pain, relationship troubles, a desire to ends one life, and problems with school or academics. Jayson reports that the method of suicide involves overdosing on drugs. Due to the increased severity of this mental health issue in college students, professional help is available. City College students have the option to seek help at the Wellness Center located in the Marshak building, room MR15.

Thanks to some of advisement at City College, I look forward to medical school with the mindset that even thought I will never be perfect in my academic performance and that I cannot control certain aspects of a situation, I can, however; control my reactions and attitudes.

By Vanessa Alexis







Legendary powerhouse Etta James whose bold, intense vocals gave life to hits such as "Something's Gotta Hold On Me" and the wedding favorite "At Last" was laid to rest on January 20, 2012. Her success was unlike any other and she will live on in the memories of millions and continue to inspire many generations to come. James first emerged on the charts in 1955, after successfully recording her first No. 1 hit, "The Wallflower (Dance with Me, Henry)".

Soon after, James signed to Chess Records where she recorded a number of R&B and pop songs including her signature hit "At Last". It was in 1961 when the songstress laid her heartwarming, soulful vocals on the song that can be argued to be the force that helped breakdown the culture curtain in America. Her music not only transcended different genres, but also captured audiences among both the black and white communities creating an indirect connection between races. James' success surpassed the expectation of many and it was incomprehensible that an African American woman could accomplish the things that she'd done and triumph in what was a male-dominated business. Nonetheless, with success also

comes failure. James faced several personal problems including poverty, financial rifts and her drug addiction to heroin. Although it seemed the songbird was due to take a blind dive that would lead to her demise, she overcame her addiction and bounced back. Her legacy is one that most artists only wish to achieve. Etta James gave us honesty and she gave us humanity in her music and that is why she will live on as one of music's great legends.

By Pablo Salinas

Extraordinary Opera Singer, Camilla Ella Williams

Unbeknownst to many, Camilla Ella Williams was the first African-American to sign and receive a contract with a major American opera company; she made her debut in Puchinni's Madama Butterfly (1946) in the title role. Her debut desegregated the New York City Opera and came nine years before Marion Anderson's performance with the Metropolitan Opera in January of 1955. Born October 9, 1919 Williams' was raised listening to classical music and sung in her church choir. Both her grandparents and parents had been self-taught musicians. After

graduating from Virginia State College with a bachelor's degree in music education she moved to New York and studied privately under Marion Szekely Freschl who taught at Julliard. Her soprano voice, undoubtedly beautiful, gained her many performance opportunities after the debut of "Madama Butterfly" as well as opera tours in Europe. A lifelong member of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, she used her voice performing at venues to raise bail money for jailed demonstrators throughout the civil rights movement.

She also sung "The Star Spangled Banner" on the day Reverend Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream Speech". Camilla Williams dedicated her life to serving the black community teaching music. We remember her for her bravery, her humility, her instruction, and her voice.

By Jessica Hunter



All Photos courtesy of Google

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Egyptian Revolution, continued

soldiers ran over demonstrators with tanks and opened fire with live ammunition, killing 27 marchers at a Christian rally held to protest the burning of a church. In November, at least 40 demonstrators were killed by anti-riot forces during conflicts in and around Tahrir Square, still the center of protest. Police constantly beat demonstrators, women included. Human Rights Watch has documented these brutality and abuse of detainees by soldiers. Military personnel carried out invasive "virginity tests" on women in detention. One of these "virginity test" victims was Samira Ibrahim who came forth to the public and to the Egyptian media to tell of this ferocious crime. However, without independent media, her story and the many abuses of this caretaker regime would go unreported. The official state media outlets portray opposition groups and nongovernmental organizations like

Human Rights Watch as rebellious tools of dark foreign forces.

Egypt seated the new parliament on Monday. It is believed that they will act quickly to save the country from the Emergency Law that restricts freedom of speech, association and assembly while granting police extraordinary powers and freedom, which they wantonly wield with impunity. They are also expected to act to limit military court jurisdiction to military officials.

Egypt's new beginning has had a difficult start, but it is now the parliament's job to end Egypt's long-term rule by the SCAF and to bring to fruition the ideals of the revolution.

By Mai Sabour

Join us for this amazing film on

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 257TH, 2012

2:30 PM sharp!

Bronx Library Center 310 E. Kingsbridge Road near Briggs Street (MTA D or B trains to Kingsbridge Road)

Many of us will be wearing white! Refreshment donations for our post event tea party are welcomed! This is open to the public.

Promotional partners: Community Vision Council, National Black Writers Conference, CCNY 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (OTHER ORGS listed here)

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The City College

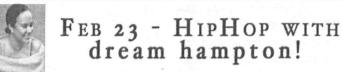
of New York

GO BACK AND TAKE SANKOFA

Co-Sponsors: Division of Social Sciences, The Office of the President, The Rifkind Center; The Rangel Center; RAP-SI [BMI]; St. Philips Episcopal Church, Swann Galleries;Langston Hughes Festival; Student Clubs; Cohen Library; Harlem Arts Alliance; Tod Roulette Fine Arts; History Department; Diversity Projects Development Fund; Leaders Against Systemic Injustice BLACK STUDIES PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Sponsored by the Black Studies Program: Bunche/Globus Funds

SWANN GALLERIES! THE SCHOMBURG CENTER!



HARLEM ARTS ALLIANCE! THE CHARLES RANGEL CENTER! & YALE DESCEND ON THE CITY COLLEGE CAMPUS

Feb 1, 7, 21 & 28: 2nd Annual Black Studies Fine Art Exhibition Panels: The Artists on Their Art Cohen Library Archives 6 - 8 P.M.

Tues. Feb 14: "Confronting the Carceral State II" A Symposium: Two Panel Discussions on the American Prison Industrial Complex Great Hall in Shepard Hall 1 - 7 P.M.

> Wed. Feb 15: African American Health Issues [TBA]

Fri. Feb. 17: Terry Mulligan book reading and signing of "Sugar Hill" Shepard Hall Rm 250 12-2 P.M.

Thurs. Feb 23: Africana Ambassadors' Panel Discussion: Critical Issues in Africa and the Caribbean NAC 5/101 11 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.

Fri. Feb 24: "Dance: Through the African Diaspora" KowTeff African Dance Company & Asase Yaa African-American Dance Theatre Aaron Davis Hall Tickets: \$20.00 General 7 P.M.

Fri. Feb 24: George Brandon and The Blue Unity Orchestra Legacy Concert: Ballroom 7:30 P.M.

Sun. Feb 26: Dr. Gordon Thompson at St. Philip's Episcopal Church Lecture on J. W. Johnson 10 A.M. and Panel Discussion on Assimilation and African American Writers 1 P.M.

Wed. Feb 29: S.T.E.M. Disciplines and the Social Sciences in Dialogue A Workshop: Career Skills for the 21st Century 5-7 P.M.

> Wed. Feb 29: Juan de Dios Mosquera **Colombian Historian on** Afro Colombian Educational Civil Rights NAC 5/101 6 - 8 P.M.

Monday, February 27, 2012 Dancer, Actor, Entertainer **Ben Vereen**

on Bert Williams Headlines Black History Month Aaron Davis Hall 5:30-7:30 P.M.



Ben Vereen

FILM SERIES: Tues. Feb 7: Spike Lee's "Bamboozled" The Rifkind Room NAC 6/316 12 - 2 P.M.

Thurs. Feb 9: "Brother to Brother": **A Motion Picture** The Rifkind Room NAC 6/316 12 - 2 P.M.

Thurs. Feb 16: "Black to Cuba": Q&A with Producer Robin Hayes [TBA] 12 - 2 P.M.

Thurs. Feb 23: "Black August: A Hip-Hop Benefit Project": Talk Back with dream hampton [TBA]

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND WITH REFRESHMENTS (EXCEPT VVHERE INDICATED)

R.S.V.P.'s Requested

Black Studies Program Professor Gordon Thompson NAC, Room 6/109 **Convent Avenue at 138th Street** New York, New York 10031 TEL: 212-650-5352/8117 FAX: 8548 www1.ccny.cuny.edu/prospective/socialscl/blackstudies

Freedom's Sisters

FORD TO HOST POWERFUL WOMEN'S FORUM AS CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM'S SISTERS EXHIBIT OPENING IN NEW YORK

- "An Evening with Freedom's Sisters" features national icons Myrlie Evers-Williams, Sonia Sanchez, and Ruby Dee as well as celebrated journalists and authors Tonya Lewis Lee and Constance C.R. White.
- Freedom's Sisters panel discussion to focus on the role of African American women in history.
- Freedom's Sisters is an innovative exhibition honoring 20 African-American women who profoundly impacted the fight for justice and civil rights in American. New York is the final venue for the exhibit.

DEARBORN, MICH., February 3, 2012 - As part of the Freedom's Sisters New York exhibition launch, Ford Motor Company and The Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center (The Shabazz Center) will host "An Evening with Freedom's Sisters" this evening, at the Shabazz Center from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. An invitation-only event, "An Evening with Freedom's Sisters" will feature prominent African-American women who are committed to addressing critical issues impacting women in their community and in the twenty-first century.

Moderated by producer, author, activist and attorney Tonya Lewis Lee, panelists include Myrlie Evers-Williams, the widow of civil rights icon Medgar Evers; Sonia Sanchez, a poet, professor and international lecturer on black culture and literature; Ruby Dee, playwright, actress and activist; and Constance C.R. White, the new editorin-chief of Essence Magazine.

"In honor of the women featured in Freedom's Sisters, Ford is excited to co-host a panel with a group of extraordinary women" said Pamela Alexander, director, Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services. "The evening will be an exciting, impactful discussion surrounding the Freedom's Sisters in the exhibit, the role of African American women in history and the importance of sharing and protecting that legacy."

The Freedom's Sisters national exhibit is an extraordinary multi-media and interactive presentation celebrating the lives and contributions of 20 exceptional African-American women of the late 19th and 20th centuries and their contributions to the cause of civil and human rights in the United States. Figures range from key 19th century historical icons such as Ida B. Wells to contemporary leaders like Sonia Sanchez. Dr. Betty Shabazz is also one of the women featured in the exhibition. Their stories of courage, commitment and struggle in the name of freedom helped shape the spirit and substance of civil rights in America.

Freedom's Sisters was created by Cincinnati Museum Center and organized for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. The national tour is made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund. The exhibition will remain at the Shabazz Center through April 22, 2012 which is located at 3940 Broadway, New York, NY 10032. For more information on the Freedom's Sisters exhibition goes to www. freedomsisters.com visit www.theshabazzcenter. net or call 212.568.1341.

About Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services works with community partners to advance driving safety, education and community life. For more than 60 years, Ford Motor Company Fund has operated with ongoing funding from Ford Motor Company. The award-winning Ford Driving Skills for Life program teaches new drivers through a variety of hands-on and interactive methods. Innovation in education is encouraged through national programs that enhance high school learning and provide college scholarships and university grants.

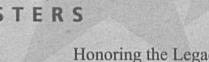
Through the Ford Volunteer Corps, more than 25,000 Ford employees and dealers work on projects each year that better their communities in more than 40 countries. For more information, visit www.community.ford.com

ABOUT CINCINNATI MUSEUM CENTER

Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal is home to the Cincinnati History Museum, Duke Energy Children's Museum, the Museum of Natural History & Science, the Robert D. Lindner Family OMNIMAX® Theater, and the Cincinnati Historical Society Library. It is a nationally recognized educational and research resource and one of the top cultural attractions in the Midwest. Cincinnati Museum Center serves more than one million visitors annually, reaching out to almost 200,000 young people through hands-on exhibits and programs. As a center for the community, more than 700 events are held in the building each year. Originally built in 1933 as the Union Terminal train station, the building is a national historic landmark and was renovated and reopened as Cincinnati Museum Center in 1990. For information, call (513) 287-7000 or 1-800-733-2077 or visit www. cincymuseum.org.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TRAVELING EXHIBITION SERVICE (SITES)

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 50 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of



Honoring the Legacy of African American Women

Much of our national memory of the civil rights movement is embodied by male figureheads whose visibility in boycotts, legal proceedings, and mass demonstrations dominated newspaper and television coverage in the 1950s and 1960s. While less prominent in the media, a group of extraordinary women also shaped much of the spirit and substance of civil rights in America, just as their mothers and grandmothers had done for decades.

Made possible by a grant from Ford Motor Company Fund, *Freedom's Sisters* is a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and Cincinnati Museum Center that brings to life 20 African American women. The women range from key 19th century historical figures to contemporary leaders who have fought for equality for people of color. This multimedia, interactive exhibition is designed to appeal to people of all ages and backgrounds, and is organized around the themes of Dare to Dream, Inspire Lives, Serve the Public, and Look to the Future.

Freedom's Sisters also includes educational and community outreach components to facilitate engagement with local audiences. The exhibition will tour eight selected cities after opening at Cincinnati Museum Center in March 2008.

exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. For more information, including exhibition descriptions and tour schedules, visit www.sites.si.edu.

ABOUT THE MALCOUM X & DR. **BETTY SHABAZZ MEMORIAL AND** EDUCATIONAL CENTER

The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center continues the work of Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz through the advancement of human rights and social justice. Our goal is to empower oppressed peoples to promote greater participation in civil society and facilitate social transformation beyond tolerance to understanding between all people.

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