

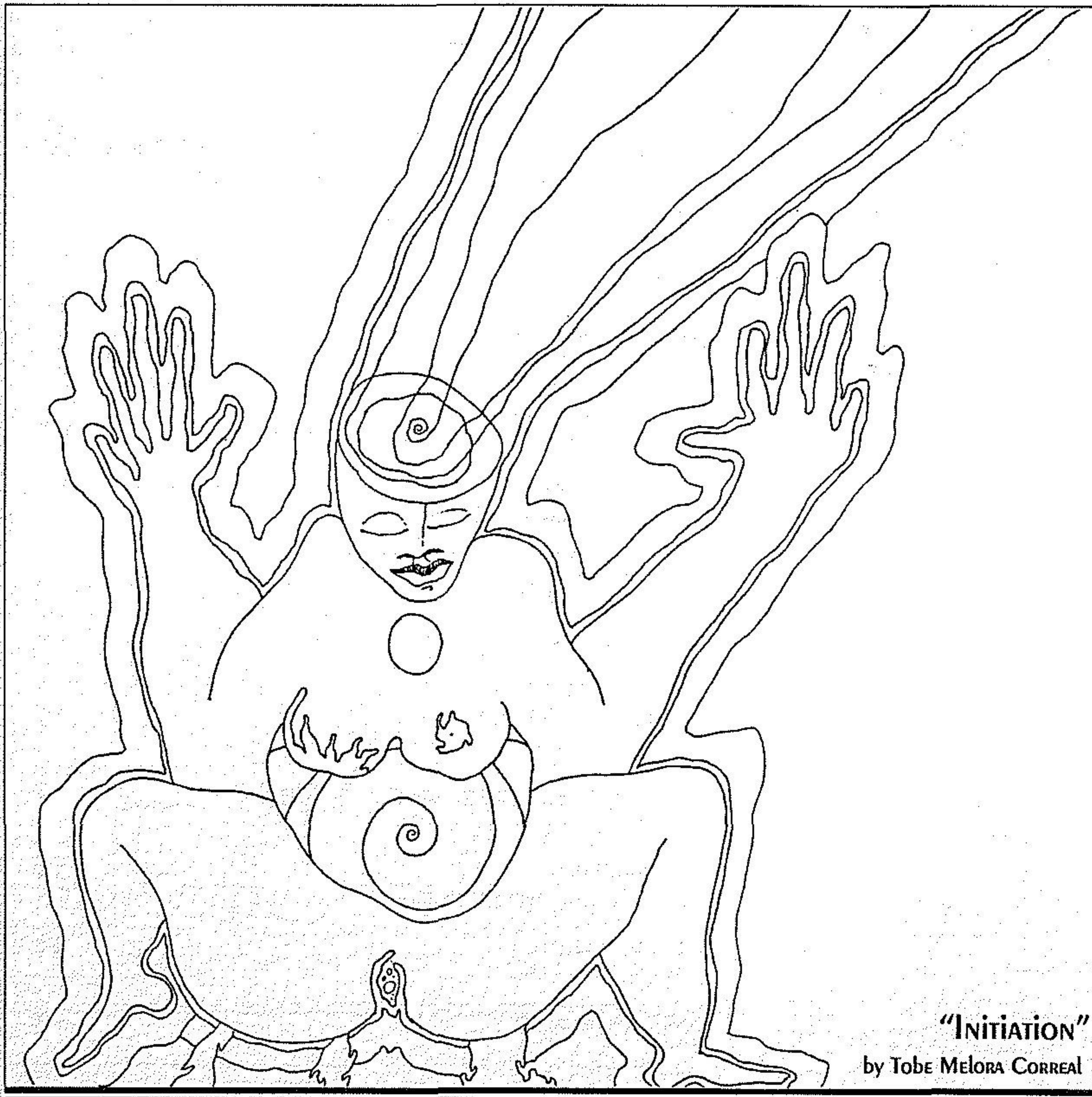
AKHÉ

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\$2

A Journal For Black Lesbians



"INITIATION"
by TOBE MELORA CORREAL



PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Lisbet

CONTRIBUTORS/PRODUCTION

Tobe Melora Correal
Elena Featherston
Debra K. Floyd
Rebecca Hall
Virginia Hall
Craig G. Harris
Montez L. Horne
Vivienne Louise
Adésina Ogunesé
Joselyn Segal
Stephanie Smith
Alix Stephens
Dorothy Taylor
Akiba Tiamaya
Janet Wallace
Skye Ward
Laura Whitehorn
Erica Wilson

Aché (pronounced a-chay) is a bi-monthly publication by black lesbians for the benefit of all black women.

Aché is available the 1st week (or close) of every other month and the deadline for submissions is the 1st of the month prior to publication. Handwritten, typed materials and 3.5" Macintosh disks using Word Perfect, MacWrite or Microsoft Word are accepted. Include name, address, & phone # on all submissions. Don't submit originals, as we are not able to return them. Please specify if you would not like your full name reproduced in Aché.

Aché will not print words & images we deem to be racist, sexist, ageist, etc. The appearance of names or images in this publication does not indicate the sexual orientation of that person or persons. Subscriptions are \$10-25/yr. (donations always welcome.) To subscribe, phone or mail your name & address to: Aché: P.O. Box 6071, Albany, CA. 94706 (415) 824-0703

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Aché is dedicated to the memory of Pat Parker & all the black women who have passed before us and whose work we continue today.

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ACHÉ'S FILM SERIES CONTINUES ...

"Hairpiece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People" (10 min.)

An animated satire of the question of self image for black women living in a society where beautiful hair is viewed as hair that blows in the wind and lets you be free. Motown tunes accompany a quick-paced inventory of relaxers, gels and curlers, an experience all-too-familiar to black women confronted with an unattainable ideal of beauty.

"Cycles" (15 min.)

A Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame award-winner, "Cycles" is an experimental film which focuses on a woman's determination to trick fate. Influenced by cultural antecedents of Caribbean folklore, the film uses animation, live action and photographic processes in an attempt to discover a film language that is unique to the daily lives of African American women.

"The Mark of Lilith" (32 min.)

Formerly featured in the S.F. and Chicago Gay & Lesbian film festivals, this film uses the genre of the vampire film to explore many taboos, from lesbianism to interracial relationships.

May 30th, 7:30pm



Aché presents a live performance by The Sapphire Theatre Company

of their production of a comedy of introductions "How Do You Do" by Ed Bullins with a lesbian slant - all parts are played by women. Starring Marilyn McClain and Sonia Brooks, directed by Sacul L'Adnre. The evening will also feature poetry by award-winning writer Sonia Brooks and accompaniment. Sapphire Theatre Company is a new bay area theatre group for women of color. It's objective is to entertain, educate and empower their audience. Please come join us!!

June 27th, 8pm, \$4-8.

ACHÉ'S PRESENTS FILMS (& MORE) THE
LAST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT
LA PEÑA, 3105 SHATTUCK AVE. IN BERK.

● From the Editor ●

Well, there's a lot going on and not much room left to write about it. Why? Because Aché has been getting submissions from all across the country and it looks like the days of struggling to put together 12 pages of *anything* is over. Many, many thanks to those of you who have sent us your words; for those of you whose work hasn't yet appeared - keep the faith, we save all of our unused submissions for future issues and even use them to determine upcoming themes. So keep them coming!!

Our next issue is on our relationships with men and building alliances with the black gay men's community. The deadline for submissions is June 1st.

For those of you interested in helping plan the upcoming themes for Aché, we'll be having an open community meeting to work out the next 6 months of the journal. If you'd like to have some direct input, come on out. It'll be held on Saturday, May 19th from 1-3pm at the Guardian Coffeeshop, corner of 40th & West streets in Oakland. If you can't make it then drop us a letter and let us know what's on your mind.

The S.F. Gay Day celebration will be held on Sunday, June 24th. The Nia Collective for black women will be having a contingent in the parade, if you're interested in marching with them, see their notice on the bulletin board (pg. 38.) Aché is looking into doing an after-party on Sunday afternoon following the parade, but we haven't yet confirmed the space. Check June's Bay Times listings or call me at 824-0703 for more info....

Until then, see you on the streets (I'll be sure to look your way)....
Lisbel

CONFERENCE REPORT

"TALKING BACK"

The 6th Annual Empowering Women of Color Conference at Univ. of California, Berkeley
Apr. 28, 1990

Keynote Speaker: BELL HOOKS

The tone of the 6th Annual Empowering Women of Color Conference was heavily influenced by the various graduate program sponsors, academic agenda and campus location; specifically the highly structured Boalt Hall law center. The one-day conference was well organized, well attended, and well intentioned; yet there was a rather constrained atmosphere among the 200+ mostly academic conference participants.

The conference had gotten off to a good start with a fierce and brilliant address by keynote speaker, black feminist author Bell Hooks. She covered a number of issues that women of color in academia must confront and challenge in order to maintain our ethnic integrity while pursuing academic goals. She also spoke at length about her experiences of being targeted and harshly criticized by overzealous colleagues. Hooks spoke of the need for women of color to develop feminist strategies that will assist communication among our diverse groups. "Like all women in patriarchal societies, women of color have to develop oppositional feminist strategy that will enable us to accept, respect and honor even

peers who are not like us."

Contrary to the conference theme of empowering women of color through "interaction" and "a passion for social change," the plenary and a couple of workshop sessions were characterized by highly structured proceedings that were not conducive to candid and open discussions. The more lively and critical discussions occurred in the hallways and courtyard. I might add that some of the more passionate and enlightened discussions were facilitated by the many lesbians of color who were in attendance. A major criticism of the conference in the past has been the lack of lesbian of color input and visibility at the conference. I was quite pleased to see lesbian of color community activists moderate and act as mentors to the more politically naive sisters of color. Indeed, the presence of lesbians of color at the conference provided practical and useful role models to sisters who expressed a desire to learn, listen, talk and most importantly develop real strategies for empowerment. ■

FREE Health Care thru June 30th

Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services will be providing free health care to low-income uninsured women of all ages until June 30th, 1990. This special program is being funded by a grant from the State of California, Dept. of Health Services.

Lyon-Martin has been providing primary and gynecological care in S.F. for over 11 years. Care is provided by medical doctors and nurse practitioners and is by appointment only. There are no strings: whether you want a physical, annual pap test, or have a specific medical problem, you can receive care free if you qualify.

Lyon-Martin is also holding a breast health day on June 5th, 1990, targeted specifically for low-income uninsured women over 40 years. A pap test and breast exam; information about breast cancer & risk factors; instructions in breast self-examination; nutrition information; and nurse consultation will be provided free by scheduled appt. in May. Women will be scheduled for mammograms on June 5th. There is a \$10 refundable deposit when scheduling the mammogram.

The medical suite is located at 2480 Mission St. between 20th and 21st st. in S.F. There is parking and public transportation nearby. Call 641-0220 for more information.

WinnSome Words

by
Winn Gilmore

Hello, you Negro gay ladies in periodical land. I, your faithful chronicler, am back. This fact will be heralded by some of you, while, by others, it will be lamented. Now, upon my recent return, I was informed that this trusty periodical's issue is devoted to myths. So, not knowing EXACTLY what the meaning of this monosyllabic, loaded word means, I reached for yon repository of explanations, Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. I found myth to be "a usu. traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon..."

Now, myths can be imposed by both external and internal forces. For example, a popular (and initially externally imposed) myth is that women SHOULD be with men because, after all, a woman has little, if anything, of value to offer. Furthermore, she CERTAINLY can't offer another woman what a man can.

Still, how many of you have had a mother, sister, het lady-friend, etc... ask you, "what do you see in another WOMAN? I mean," they ask, tossing their hands heavenward, "she doesn't have the right plumbing OR equipment!" This myth, initially externally imposed, has been internalized by many a supposed sister, and even by some dubiously labelled lesbians (see my article in the next issue).

Het women, by the way, are not immune to a variation on this

theme. Witness the number of them who constantly berate their het sisters: "I can't STAND women! They ain't nothing but dogs. And the blacker they are, the worse!"

So, add a layer to the myth of woman-as-no-good, and you get this: a woman of color who has even LESS to offer than a woman of non-color (aka racism) - has least to offer another woman of color. Mercy! All this leaves me wondering how any of you Negro gay ladies have come to actually WANT to be with each other. I mean, with all the self-loathing you've had incessantly tossed on you, it seems you'd run away from each other as soon as possible - if not sooner - and into the arms of anything with a penis between its legs, and especially if the penis-bearer were non-colored.

But, no...not you! It seems you've found your own set of myths which affirm not only your loving yourselves and each other (a herculean task in this self-hating world,) but you've even searched through the annals of her- and his-story to uncover myths older than any known society.

Now, that's power: to not only disinter your images buried by those who would prefer to see you dead, but to stretch back into time long gone and find that, yes, you were there, too. Finally, (and this is the clincher about you Negro gay ladies) your presence wasn't restricted to Europe and what the non-colored gay lady neophyte-herstorians call the cult of the white goddess, but you were also in Africa! ("Yeah," I can hear you testifying as your mind whirls back to something you read long ago about ladies in Dahomey who married

each other, and who, in a neighboring nation, literally designed and built the temples and monuments).

Somewhere back there, while you bent over the still-smoldering ashes of your pillaged past and vanished glory, you exhumed relics so omnipotent that they had caused mankind (yes, mankind) to revolt against it, you, and himself:

- Once upon a time, ladies ruled. Relics - both sacred and secular, have been exhumed that prove this.

- The land of Canaan, which the nascent Hebrews invaded, was a relatively advanced, matrilineal society: hence, the land of milk (sustenance from a female cow) and honey (sustenance from a female bee).

- Many pharaohs and warrior-queens were Negro females.

- And still are.

It seems these, and others like them, are the myths and legacies of you Negro gay ladies (well, some of you, anyway). Belief in the irreducible, quintessential power of what some of you call "Blackwomaness" is, I've been assured, one of your unifying myths. Then, of course, there's the myth - I've been told - that you believe there's NOTHING better than, or even equal to, loving on another Negro gay lady. I haven't finished my research on that one, but I have begun interviewing a sample population, and will let you in on the results as soon as I get them (the results, that is).

PROFILE: Gwen Avery
(CONSUMMATE) **MUSICIAN & PERFORMER**

GWEN AVERY WAS A LEGEND TO ME. FOR OVER A DECADE I HAD HEARD OF HER PERFORMANCES AROUND THE COUNTRY AND AT VARIOUS WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVALS. THE FIRST TIME I ACTUALLY HEARD HER SING WAS QUITE RECENTLY AT AN ACHÉ BRUNCH THAT TURNED INTO A LIVELY JAM SESSION. THE NIGHT OF THE ACHÉ ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, HOWEVER, I BECAME THOROUGHLY INTRIGUED WITH GWEN AVERY, THE MAGNETIC PERFORMER; THE BLACK LESBIAN ICON.

THE EVENT WAS AT ONCE A HOMECOMING AND A FIRST FOR GWEN; IT WAS HER FIRST TIME PERFORMING IN AN ALL BLACK WOMEN'S PRODUCTION & THE OVERWHELMINGLY BLACK LESBIAN AUDIENCE EMBRACED HER WITH SHOUTS OF, "SING IT GWEN!" "WE LOVE YOU!"

THE DIFFICULTY I HAD TRANSCRIBING THIS INTERVIEW WAS IN NOT BEING ABLE TO CAPTURE THE VIBRANCY, PAUSES AND REFLECTIVE GLANCES THAT ARE INTEGRAL TO A COMPLETE PORTRAIT OF GWEN AVERY. GWEN WAS QUITE HESITANT ABOUT DOING A PROFILE. HER RETICENCE AND CAUTION GAVE WAY TO A PAINFULLY HONEST AND INTROSPECTIVE DISCUSSION.

OUR CONVERSATION WAS PEPPERED WITH NERVOUS LAUGHTER AS WE PUSHED PAST OUR FEARS AND BEGAN DISCUSSING THE LACK OF BLACK LESBIAN SUPPORT AND VISIBILITY IN THE "EARLY DAYS." WE TALKED ABOUT THE EVOLUTION HER LIFE HAS UNDERGONE; FROM BEING "TOKENIZED" IN THE WHITE LESBIAN COMMUNITY TO BEING ASKED TO BE A SPEAKER (MAIN STAGE) AT THIS SUMMER'S SAN FRANCISCO GAY PRIDE DAY. OUR INTERVIEW CONCLUDED WITH A FEELING OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND ACCOMPLISHMENT - WE HAD BROKEN THE SILENCE; DARED TO SHARE AND CELEBRATE OUR BLACK LESBIAN HERSTORY.

I CERTAINLY HOPE ACHÉ READERS WILL APPRECIATE THIS WOMAN'S STORY AND SEE THE REFLECTION OF OUR LIVES IN HER WORDS.

(continued on page 7)

An interview with "Sugar Mama"

Skye: Where were you born?

Gwen: I was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1942. I grew up in Veronia, Pennsylvania, a segregated town where my grandmother ran a cross-cultural speakeasy. My grandmother had a jukebox, and everybody would come to have a good time. This is where I got my musical background.

There were blues players, men and women, that brought their guitars. Memphis Slim played blues there. There was a man from Italy who played accordion, and a man from Ireland who played the piano and would sing Irish songs. There were barbershop quartets that would gather in the house. This was like a regular Sunday of people getting together. You never knew who would show up, it was like a cultural haven. People would come in and hit that piano and play rhythm and blues, gospel and rock & roll. The Caravans came one night...Clara Ward, Shirley Caesar came to the house one night at two o'clock in the morning. They were young then and these people would come to the house and get on that piano and the roof would come off. I was like 7-8 years old. I was supposed to have been asleep but you know ain't no way you gonna sleep when this music was rocking out.

Skye: When I saw your performance at the Aché event you were rocking out yourself. Is the piano your first instrument?

Gwen: No I didn't start playing piano until 1974 - I never could get nothing on the piano! But I've been singing since I've been crying and I was entertaining since I was six months old. I would soothe my soul, nurture myself and nurture other people. I would calm the savage beast with my voice. I didn't know for a long time that singing was something that you could do for a career. I didn't have that association because my whole family sang.

Skye: How would you describe your style?

Gwen: I would call myself an original fusionist - by

fusion I mean a mixture of blues, gospel, jazz and rock. There have been many Black artists who could not be labeled. My mother had music from the late Sarah Vaughan, LaVerne Baker, and Ruth Brown. This is the kind of stuff I had in the late 40's. I was heavily influenced by Black female vocalists. The older I get, the more I listen to it and the better it sounds.

Skye: When did you come to California?

Gwen: I've been here since 1969. It was a place where people were talking about love, about being free, and they were talking about appreciating one another, regardless of race, class, and backgrounds. When I hit San Francisco, the rich and the poor, the Chinese, the Blacks and whites - everybody was there all smashed together on the cable cars. That was outstanding to me because Veronia was so segregated.

Skye: Where you out as a lesbian?

Gwen: Yes I was out. The first thing I did was try to find some women. When I first came my friends were white hippie gay men. I mostly found gay mens' bars, it was a long while before I found Maud's, Scotty's, Kelly's, Ollie's, or the Bacchanal. They were women's bars, but those all came much later. Around 1974 is when that scene happened. It took some time to find women and again there wasn't women of color. This part is really hard...

Skye: I would like to discuss a few remarks you made at the Aché anniversary performance concerning the lack of Black lesbian visibility and support in the early days. At the event you took your seat at the piano, glanced out into the audience and said "We used to do live things a long time ago too. I don't know where ya'll been. It's sure taken ya'll a long time to get here..."

Gwen: I notice there's a blues tinge in my voice that is actually a kind of pain, to think about how it was between sisters in the early days. I wasn't in the east bay, I was here in San Francisco, on the beachés, in

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Gwen Avery

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the parks, in the bars; and it was a predominately white gay and lesbian scene. I didn't see many women of color for quite a few years. By 1974 I had worked my way into these white women-run establishments. The Full Moon Cafe in 1974 which is where I met Pat Parker. Pat Parker, Linda Tillery, Barbara Glass, J. Casselberry and Jacque Dupree - these women were all performing separately as artists. We would be the only few Black women who would come to each others gigs. We were it! I'm just saying how it hurt and how scary it was not to see any Black women. White women were running around talking about, (it's amazing to me now as I think about it) how oppressed we were. White women were telling me that I had been beaten down by the white society and men - it was so weird! There were like only one or two of us and there were two or three thousand of them.

Skye: So the few Black women on the scene were subjected to white womens' group process...

Gwen: Yes. When I came to San Francisco even the Fillmore district was predominately hippies and they were not Black! Just like Sly and the Family Stone and Jimi Hendrix were real rare in the rock community - that's the way it was, the whole ratio was like that.

Skye: Then when we talk about the lesbian community of that time...

Gwen: Lesbian. Now there was a real rare word lez be an; BLACK LESBIAN...

Skye: Do you think the term lesbian was what kept Black lesbians from identifying with the larger womens' community, which was predominately white?

Gwen: I think there was a kind of cultural fear where you couldn't even mention the word. Women were afraid of women - gay women were afraid of gay women. To have a Black lesbian in the midst of white lesbians was real shocking; and then to look across and to see another Black lesbian with all these white lesbians...Whew! Amazons, lesbians...we didn't know whether we should breathe or not, we were so cultured shocked.

Skye: Although you were involved in these predominately white environments your music is deeply rooted in African and African-American traditions...

Gwen: I made a decision to share my roots. I really try to get as raw and deep as I possibly can. In the early days, I tried to drag the glossy, shiny slick look into the womens' community and show it off; because that was really what bedazzled me when I was growing up. I used to say, "look how pressed these people are!" They were not Black and not necessarily gay, but of the women that I knew, we were sharp as a tack! You were creased, buffed, your hair was just so - I mean you didn't hardly move nothing! We were off into it. There was no letting down your particular kind of game, it was all for show...

Skye: Where you into butch/femme roles?

Gwen: I was so butch...The interesting thing about that was, I was not interested in a "butch role." I was interested in the image of Gwen Avery in a masculine-looking red satin suit with silver platform shoes and an Afro and hair on my face - it was the epitome of 1940's people busting out in New York. That's what it meant to me.

And not only that but here I was as a gay woman and had a RIGHT to put on these clothes - I could say anything...The emancipation proclamation had been passed Jack - and we were stepping out!!! And when we are STEPPING - we ain't coming in here with no plaid shirts and no blue jeans on... We going shopping!

Skye: If not a butch role then why the flamboyance?

Gwen: It was to wake up the lesbians who were afraid of the shine. They were afraid of the brilliance and afraid to get DRESSED UP. To them it meant a totally different thing... In those days people were rather socialist. They were against the establishment, they were looking at a patriarchal society and what that meant. I was looking at Louis Jordon, The Step Brothers, Harlem, New York and I was just bedazzled with these men and women who would get all dressed up. I identified with them. I was a definite Black woman in an outfit that was just so outrageous. I had evolved, chile'...I went through some evolutionary changes! Now everybody dresses like that and it isn't any big deal. Everybody got their shoulder pads on and their neckties and pleated pants. (laughter)

Skye: When you perform in front of Black women

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and other women of color there is an obvious rapport, give and take - sistas chant up for you to sing. In the early days when you were performing in front of white women's audiences, how did you sustain that African vibration and Harlem flamboyance?

Gwen: I was not alone. I brought with me the spirit of my great-grandmother, grandmother, mother, and every Black female vocalist I had ever loved. I had with me my African culture, Native-American culture, and my Hawaiian culture all within me. I knew once I opened up my channel they were gonna move. I didn't care where they came from, I didn't care who they were. When I was a little child I didn't know nothing from who was Black or white...I just knew that when these folks opened up their mouths your hair would stand straight up on your head. I would say, "how did that woman do that?" She could do that just by tapping her foot, the stuff was so powerful when they were singing that you were going to move - *this is music!* My grandmother, father and mother would get together and they would sing in call and response and they would go through these songs: "*didn't it rain children, rain oh my lord! rain (didn't it), rain (didn't) oh my lord didn't it rain...*" they would sing, "*well go down Gabriel, (how long) I look around the altar, (how long) well I hit that trumpet, (how long) and begin to blow...*" These people were out of slavery by only two generations - this was field music - the real McCoy. These folks were from Tulsaloosa, Alabama and they're as close to aborigine as you can get - African-Indian mixed folks. They were the 40 acres and plow sharecropping people.

Skye: You demonstrated your ability to reach deep within our core at the Aché event. You had the audience so worked up I said, "'These sistas will start speaking in tongues any mintue now!'" I felt the moment was so rare because so many musicians are into "performing" these days...

Gwen: That's right. That's what was so exciting about "The Varied Voices of Black Women" tour. Pat Parker was one of the most attuned people to old rhythms and messages. I thought Pat Parker was one of the most exciting poets that I had met since I had been a child.



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"If you don't reflect back to me something I want to see, then get out of my face."

Virginia R. Harris

When I saw the topic for this issue I asked, "Why not?" What unites me with other black women? What makes the important friendships I have work? My focus always seems to be what separates black women. I have wondered about and agonized over failed relationships and friendships. I never explored why a relationship or friendship worked. It was as if friendship could be jeopardized by exploration. "Leave well enough alone." I've heard that all my life but it is not exploration that "ruins" a relationship.

My friends are different from me in lifestyle, values, color, ages, backgrounds -- all the things which generally separate us. So why do these relationships work? Elena and I have been friends for almost ten years and she is very different from me. We have unity in spite of our differences. In fact our differences are a unifying force in our relationship. I asked Elena if she were willing to explore our friendship, to ascertain specifically what unifies us. She said yes and we sat down with a tape recorder.

I. Elena Featherston

Sexism, sex, colorism, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, our mamas, men, age -- all covered a small post-it before Virginia could finish telling me about this issue of *Aché*. A tidy list of things which separate Black women. Things which seemed to have no place in our relationship as agents of disunity. Things which we have never discussed as having a place in our relationship is more accurate.

Virginia and I were born 10 years and a world apart. I grew up in the Bay Area, Virginia in various locations in the South. My father was out of my home by the time I was three and out of my life (excepting occasional visits), by the time I was seven. Virginia's was a nuclear family dominated by her father. My mother was not "owned by my father." I grew up in a woman-centered world: the men were not key players for me, the women were.

Our differences are many, bonding despite them, taking delight in them and finding common ground in struggle is what makes our friendship special.



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a dialogue between two friends

Searching for our authentic selves. . .

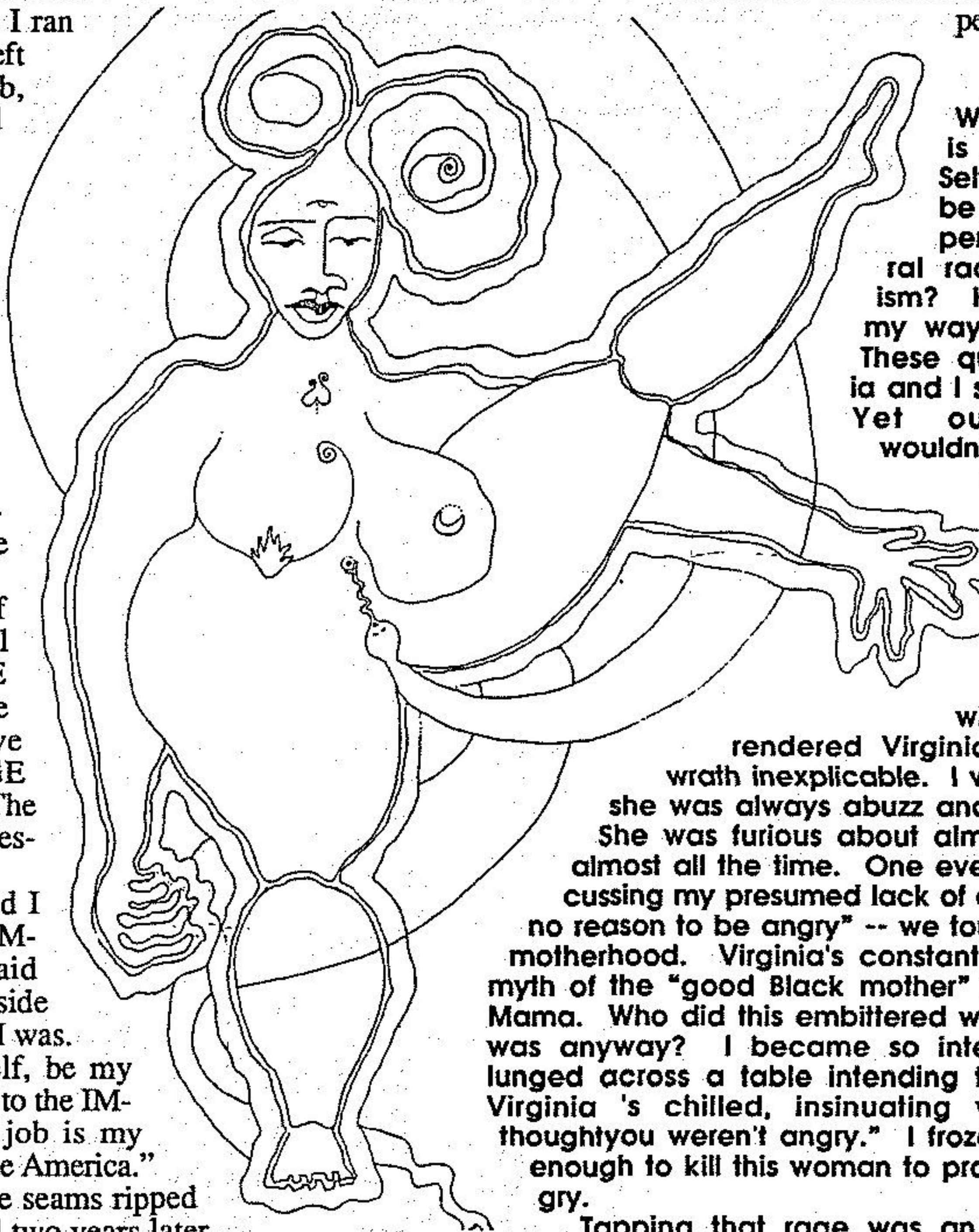
The search for my elusive Self began in 1975. I ran away from home -- left my friends, my job, my marriage, and came to the Bay Area. The one person I knew here told me I could be anyone I wanted to be since no one knew me or my history. The possibility scared the shit out of me and I immediately and unconsciously attempted to reconstruct the person I had been. The search for Self had begun but I still held on to the IMAGE for dear life. By the time I met Elena five years later, IMAGE was frayed, faded. The IMAGE of the professional black woman.

Habits die hard and I still tried to fit the IMAGE. I was afraid there was nothing inside and IMAGE was all I was. I wanted to find Self, be my Self and still hold on to the IMAGE. I said "this job is my ticket out of Corporate America." I had a plan. But the seams ripped with that picture and two years later IMAGE crumbled like dry rotted fabric.

I finally left what I thought I had left seven years before. I was ready to stop trying to make substance out of the American Dream.

You cannot imagine how angry I was to realize I had lived my life so totally devoid of Self. I knew I had always been angry (it was just about the only emotion I allowed myself). Anger triggered by the least little

thing, but I never knew why. IMAGE was what I learned in my family. Pieces of it still hang on my shoulders. I am constantly peeling it off



Who am I? Who is my authentic Self? Who would I be without the experience of cultural racism and sexism? How can I find my way to that Self? These questions Virginia and I speak to often. Yet our friendship wouldn't exist if I had not acknowledged my rage ten years ago.

Not understanding the extent of my anger when we first met rendered Virginia's everpresent wrath inexplicable. I was a rebel, but she was always abuzz and in an uproar. She was furious about almost everything, almost all the time. One evening, while discussing my presumed lack of anger -- "I have no reason to be angry" -- we touched on Black motherhood. Virginia's constant referral to the myth of the "good Black mother" invalidated my Mama. Who did this embittered woman think she was anyway? I became so intensely angry, I lunged across a table intending to strangle her; Virginia's chilled, insinuating voice said, "I thought you weren't angry." I froze. I was angry enough to kill this woman to prove I wasn't angry.

Tapping that rage was an important first step in my journey toward authentic Self. The fabulous coinage of Black female rage has long been undervalued. The dominant society has described us as "too loud, fighting too much"; stealing our power. The most important discovery was my herstory, not just knowledge of what women and Black people had done from the dim past to the present; but understanding the unique roles of Black women. Women writers, ancient rulers, warri-

artwork by Tobe Melora Correia

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If you don't reflect...

(from pg. 11)

ors, juju women and queens: these were tales of power, not stories told through a white lens darkly. I began to understand the "old ways and the old magic" of my people, I began to understand my Self.

My suffering in search of the authentic Self seems insignificant when compared to the suffering of my foremothers. I am compelled to control myself. Yet the pale shadows of this rage Black women lay to one another through invalidation and rejection. Unfortunately, we aren't just mad with "them," we're also angry with one another.

Your life doesn't have to validate mine. . . .

I am a lesbian. The decision to come out followed closely on the heels of IMAGE crumbling. Elena is not a lesbian. But she was one of the first people I told when the decision was made. She had the nerve to think it was funny when I struggled with the fact of being attracted to a woman.

Part of my IMAGE was to be rigidly heterosexual. I felt like black men owned my body. I didn't have the right to say no to my husband or any other black man I was involved with. But long before I met Elena I told my friends (all heterosexual) that I didn't want to spend all our time together complaining about men. We had lives and I wanted to talk about us -- Afro women, who we were, what we wanted. By the time I met Elena, all those friends had disappeared from my life. It seemed that my refusal to limit my discussion to men, left nothing for us to talk about. Elena and I talked about men but we talked about many other things, too. She was one of the first African American women I met who focused on what she wanted in life. Men are part of her life but not her focus. It certainly is no longer mine.

Wherein black men owned me, at the same time I would fight a white man to the death over access to my body. It is one of the contradictions that boggles my mind. White men and sex represent slave/master relationships. The connection of sex/racism is an issue I have made a conscious choice to avoid this time around. Elena is involved with white men. It is difficult to support her in these relationships. I do not give energy to white men on that personal a level, so there are times I call "time out" and don't give energy to Elena. It is the same as giving energy to the white man. It was the place in our relationship where I felt very re-

sentful. I had to choose. I could focus the resentment on the man she's involved with or tell her how I felt. I told her. It is my responsibility to say when I can give her energy around her relationship and when I cannot.

Virginia and I are too different to seek validation, i.e., sameness in one another. I am not a lesbian woman. She is not a mother. My money sense is spurious at best, hers is razor apt, I create clutter by breathing, everything she owns has a place and is in it. She has been married, I never will be. Our "images" were in direct conflict: the "professional rebel" and the "successful executive." Yet we have solidarity and unity. We've taught one another ways to be in the world, broadening options from either/or to both/and. The rebel sees herself as Oya's daughter, a warrior woman, but also a sister to Oschun, a lover. Virginia's new image is still emerging.

Our most obvious difference is sex. What a difference 10 years make! The difference in sexuality is more profound than the issue of sexual preference. It has to do with how we see and be our sexual Selves. My relationships tend to last multiple years, most of Virginia's to date have not. I am flamboyant, Virginia guarded.

She has expressed once feeling she did not own her body. The idea is so alien, I thought she meant her parents did. Men "owning" me is impossible. My experience with my father, (feeling abandoned by him); and negation of so many Black men of my dark skin, makes that kind of ownership ludicrous. Ownership by a white man is outside the realm of consideration.

Virginia has problems with my relationships. She is aggravated by my willingness to be involved with white men. I believe she has the same sense of my wasting my time whatever the man's color, but she is much better able to deal with men who are not white.

Unlike Virginia I find white men's sublimated racism far easier to face than invalidation by Black men's internalized sexism and racism. I expect the most progressive white man to still be a product of white culture. I am so contemptuous of his ignorance; his racism cannot touch me; A Black person's invalidation of me, however, is devastating. I don't have a protective mechanism against assault by people of color. Virginia once viewed Black men as "the prize." I see competition for men in general as a waste of time and often divisive. I don't compete for men: "...a real good nuthin' is better than a sometimey sumthin." My mother

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FOUR WOMEN, ALL OF WHOM HAD A WHITE JEWISH PARENT AND A BLACK PARENT, GOT TOGETHER TO DISCUSS OUR EXPERIENCES. THE PECULIAR POSITION OF BI-RACIAL WOMEN IS THAT HALF OF US IS THE OPPRESSOR, WHICH PUTS US IN A DIFFERENT ALIGNMENT TO OUR LARGER BLACK LESBIAN COMMUNITY THAN WOMEN WHO ARE MIXED BLACK AND SOMETHING ELSE. HAVING A WHITE JEWISH PARENT ADDED ANOTHER LAYER TO THIS DISTINCTION. BECAUSE THEY ARE WHITE, THEY RETAIN ALL OF THE PRIVILEGES OF WHITE SKIN AND THUS REAP THE BENEFITS OF OUR OPPRESSION. HOWEVER, BECAUSE AS JEWS THEY FACE A HISTORY OF ANTI-SEMITIC OPPRESSION AND GENOCIDE, WE HAVE SOMETHING ELSE TO TALK ABOUT.

WE TALKED ABOUT TO WHAT EXTENT WE CLAIMED OUR JEWISH IDENTITY, THE CONFLICT WITHIN OURSELVES BETWEEN OUR BLACK AND JEWISH SIDES, AND THE LARGER CONFLICT BETWEEN BLACK AND JEWISH COMMUNITIES. FOR SOME OF US, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME WE HAD TALKED ABOUT THIS, AND HEARD FROM EACH OTHER OUR PERSONAL STORIES OF GROWING UP BLACK AND JEWISH IN AMERIKA, AND SO OUR CONFUSION AND GRASPING FOR CLARITY IS OFTEN QUITE EVIDENT. WE HOPE THAT OTHER BLACK JEWS OUT THERE WILL BE INSPIRED BY THIS, AND THAT THE REST OF OUR BLACK LESBIAN COMMUNITY WILL LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND OUR EFFORTS TO COME TO TERMS WITH ALL OF OUR IDENTITIES.

DISCUSSION: On Black Jews

Rebecca: I think it would be important to first talk about how we identify ourselves. For myself, I never saw my primary identity as Jewish. My mother is an atheist and she was really cut off from her people, so I didn't even have much exposure to Jewish culture. But when I identify myself I say I am Black and my mother is Jewish, I never say I am a Black Jew. My mother's sister, who is the only person on that side of the family I talk to, sees me as Jewish and nothing else. My mother is Jewish so I am Jewish according to Jewish law, period the end. She doesn't even care that I am a lesbian as long as I find a nice Jewish girl. More recently I have been participating in Jewish rituals and ceremonies. I'm not quite sure why other than I really like passover and I like the concept. My identity as a Jew is very confusing to me.

Joselyn: Mine isn't. My father (now deceased) was Jewish. Even though my father wasn't practicing, there was Jewish culture in the house, the language (Yiddish), the food, etc. So the question for me was do I want to become accepted as a "full-fledged" Jew. So I went through an orthodox conversion, and for me it was like a catalyst to get back in touch. I started get-

ting involved with the Jewish community. Having this whole interracial identity - for years it was "interracial Jew" and since living in California I have had imposed on me the term "Black Jew." Regardless, I feel really grounded in my sense of Jewishness.

Stephanie: Yeah I've got to say that it is all pretty clear to me too. I've always participated in Jewish ritual on a family level. Frankly, I don't know much about the Black side of my family. I had this real thirst to learn more about Judaism and embrace it but the fact was that the climate in St. Louis wasn't favorable when I was growing up. I wanted to be bat mitzvah'd. It was really important to me and so my mom looked around for some place....but she didn't want me to get hurt and rejected by Jews, which was what was happening.

Erica: I haven't done a whole lot of thinking about my identity as a Jew, I guess because I don't really think of myself as a Jew. My mother is an atheist and I think she feels a deep cultural connection but in a way that has nothing to do with religion.

Like Rebecca, I think of myself as a Black woman

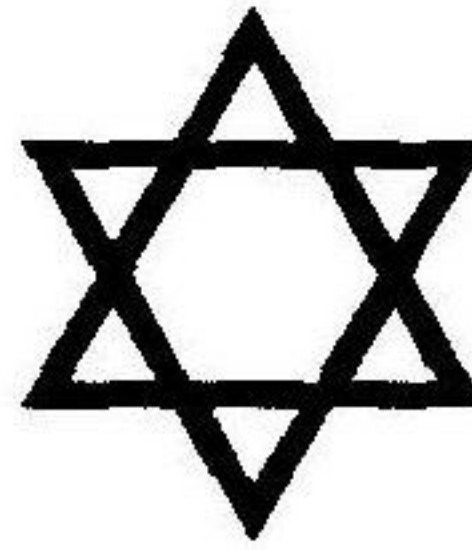
(continued on page 14)

a discussion on being

whose mother is a Jew which means that I have a lot of connection with Jews and I feel more comfortable with Jews than with WASPs. It is more a sense of culture and the way you understand and have a connection to people. However, the messages I got from my mother were kind of confusing around Judaism. She always knew that I would be looked upon as a Black woman which meant, for the most part, that I would be looked upon as Christian (not in a religious sense but in a cultural one; Goyische.) But also at the same time her signals were very mixed around that. I think she feels very alienated from many things in the world. As a Jewish woman who is not religious, who married a Black man, raising 3 interracial kids in America - who can blame her? She has really translated that to me...that you are just going to be very conflicted so just deal with it.

Rebecca: My mom also always identified me as Black. Growing up I always felt rejected by Jews, particularly my family, and I grew up in Brooklyn which is also very Jewish. Orthodox or Hassidic Jews handing out flyers to people who look Jewish as they walk by and they would never give me shit. My grandmother (when I was still trying to talk to her) once said to me when we were arguing about sending money to Israel that "enough has been done for your people, now it is time to help my people." So I always had this sense of well fuck them, my life is complicated enough. I don't need to assume an identity that doesn't make sense to me because I am not a religious person. On the other hand it has been confusing to me at

different times in my life because I really feel like there is a cultural heritage that is embodied in who I am. I feel it on a gut level, I feel a connection to that history and that heritage. It is just real, there is no other way around it. For example I went to Germany a few months ago, and I never felt more Jewish in my entire life. Almost like the dirt and the stones are speaking to you about the slaughter that happened. There really is this sense that I have to accept that [being Jewish] is a part of who I am.



Erica: I really like some of the ritual and the last couple of years have been doing that more, but it is more out of a sense of trying to get more ritual into my life in general and taking that from a lot of different places--from Judaism and Yoruba... And that doesn't feel conflicting.

Joselyn: When my father married my mother, his grandparents freaked out and the only one who stayed in touch with us was his mother. She would send the relatives pictures of us all over the years but not to my uncle Harry. It wasn't till my grandmother died that I met uncle Harry and all of the relatives because he had prevented the other relatives from wanting to meet us by saying my father fucked up because he married a schwartze and had these kids. But they saw

that we came out o.k. so a funeral brought us together. On my mother's side her mother freaked out when she was going out with my father because he looked Puerto Rican. Oh God, don't marry a P.R.!

I remember going to Israel and feeling connected there. That was the first place where my Jewishness was not challenged. That was the first place I saw Jews of a lot of different colors. I was blown away. I know there is a lot of shit over there, but when it comes to Jewish identity... If the shit hit the fan here I know I could end up over there. And I like that. I'm grateful.

Stephanie: I went through a big crisis with claiming a Black Jewish identity in school. During college I spent a lot of time trying to connect with Black women and with Jews and I felt really divided because the lesbians I hung out with were Jews and the Black women I hung out with were straight and frankly, they hated each other. A lot of the stuff I got from Black women was denial. If I didn't talk about that Jewish stuff it was ok, and as long as I didn't talk about that lesbian stuff it was ok, too.

I don't learn quickly. I would keep going back to the Black student meetings and they were "rah rah" about Black identity but I never felt I could be a part of it because to be a part of it meant that I could not talk about being a lesbian and not talk about being Jewish. And that was o.k. for a time but then it was not o.k. anymore. Among the lesbians I hung with at Barnard, there were some fierce zionists, incredibly strong Jewish women that embraced me because I

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Black and jewish...

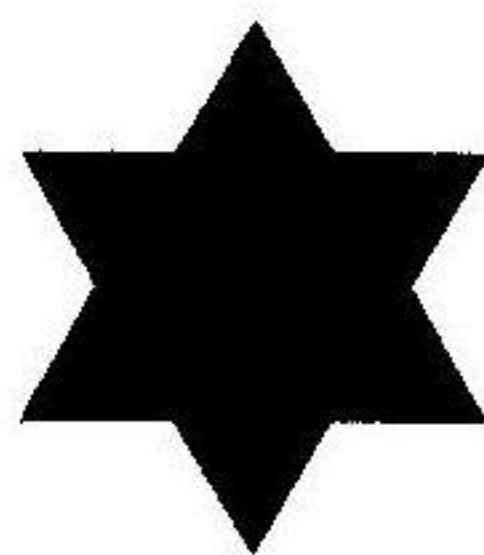
was Jewish but I couldn't really connect with them on all the other stuff I needed to connect on and so I still felt isolated.

Erica: I think there has been a lot of manipulation that has gone on. There is definitely a lot of hostility between Blacks and Jews and I don't know all the reasons for it, but there is also a lot of history of Blacks and Jews working together that is not talked about at all.

Rebecca: This whole issue about why there isn't unity is really complicated and I don't feel like I have a handle on it myself. I think there is a lot of manipulation, for example, the dominant class in this country gives Jews very few economic opportunities in this country, and one is to run stores in Black neighborhoods (they aren't allowed in W.A.S.P. neighborhoods) so of course there is going to be endless hostility. And there is a lot of anti-semitism among Blacks and a lot of racism among Jews. The way I see it, which isn't a very popular opinion, politically speaking it makes sense to me why there is not unity between Blacks and Jews. On the one hand you can say that we both have histories of oppression, in this country, around the world. We should be working together. On the other hand white Jews are white and as such they are oppressors of Black people. Black people can be anti-Semitic, but it is not equivalent to being racist because racism is prejudice plus power. Racism is a political institution whereby one group of people can oppress another group of people because they have the power to do so. Black people in this country don't have

the power to do that to anybody and I think to some extent Jews do. I am not saying that the anti-semitism of Black people is excusable because it is not, I'm just saying that you can't equate the two when you are talking about Blacks being anti-Semitic. So there is an intrinsic conflict or contradiction between Blacks and Jews in this country and I don't see how to get around that.

Joselyn: I don't either, and that is where I feel the conflict the most



because people have tried to take advantage of my position in the middle and I resent it because I am not going to make the bridges. The best I can do is dialogue with people coming from a similar position as I, so I can get some validation so I don't feel so alone...

Stephanie: When Farrakhan came to NY there was this a whole big thing because Black students were trying to get him to speak on campus. I don't care what color you are, hatred is hatred and I had a hard time with him on a lot of levels. I was in the center and Jews wanted to know what the Blacks were saying and they wanted to know what fascination he holds for the Black community. I spent a lot of time that semester being in the middle of that dialogue.

Rebecca: The reason why we wanted to talk separately from the rest of the biracial women was to pinpoint and isolate how our experiences are different from those who have a WASP parent. My feeling is, the whole thing that made it different to have a white parent, rather than, say a Japanese parent, or a Chinese parent, is having part of us be connected to the oppressor. That is relevant in this discussion as well, because our Jewish parents are white. I think it might be good to talk about how it is similar and how it is not.

Joselyn: The dissimilar part is Jews being different - having a different culture, something that is an enigma to most people, as Blacks are too. I feel like a walking enigma.

Rebecca: The whole issue of anger directed at us from the rest of the Black community comes from the idea that we have one foot in the door towards assimilation. So anything we do, it is, "see, she has her foot out the door"...I am wondering how much is that true for Black Jews? Where is our foot? It is not in dominant culture, but it still is white and in the hierarchy of oppression in this country, it is still a foot "up."

Erica: Yeah but it's not just "white," Jews are often targeted. You can't really talk about Christian white people, that is just everyone, you have to target someone. So not only do we have a foot in the door to white culture, but we have a foot in the door to money, Jew, white, clearly oppressing here, South Africa, Palestine, around the world - it is almost like

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The Sistah That Gets Us To Laugh:

Interview with comedian /poet Karen Williams

Karen Williams' rich voice (as she calls it "the tool of my trade"), full laugh and warm personality made for a funny yet deeply sincere interview. Her Bronx, New York accent is still very strong even after being in California for 16 years. She thinks of herself as a writer, poet, performing artist, and Black lesbian mom with two sons, Yusef, 18, and Keith, 7 years old. There are those of us that think of her as very funny and extremely talented.

* *

Debra: Tell me a little something about your background.

Karen Williams: I grew up in the Bronx and it was exciting. I think every kid should grow up in New York, that's the way I feel ; I'm prejudiced. Because it has the best and the worst (most of what you hear about is the worst) --it is still the most exciting place in the world.

Growing up there I took advantage of

all the city had to offer. I lived in the projects and was bussed out to elementary schools at a very young age to get into the [special progress] classes. I ended up going to the Bronx High School of Science, getting out of school at 16 and going up to the University of Connecticut. In all my gearing up towards academic success, to this day I do not have any degrees. I rebelled really hard about 16 or so, the pressure got to me. I had skipped two grades and emotionally was not mature enough to handle the direction I was headed in. I consider myself a self-educated person.

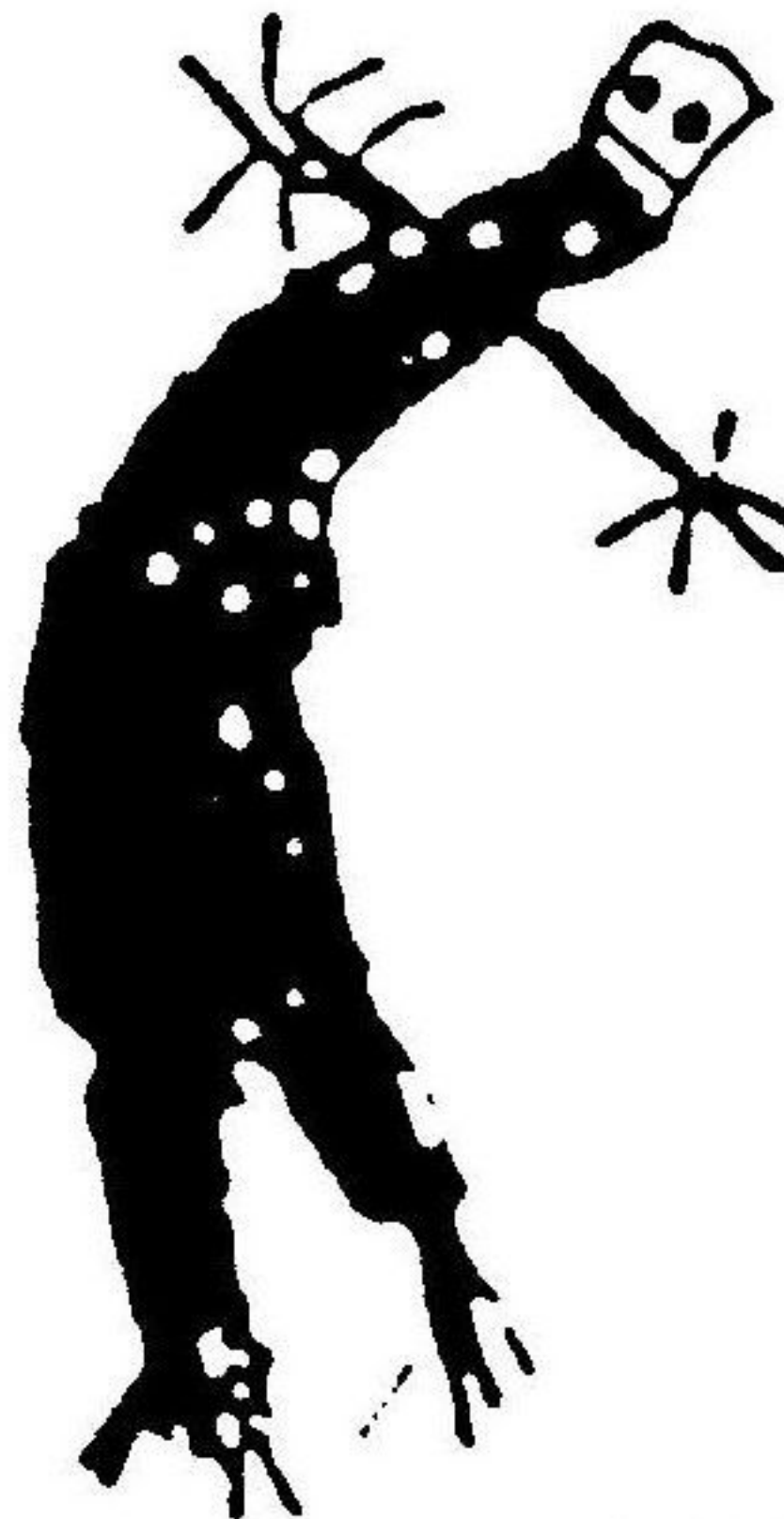
My performing career started when I about 9 or 10 years old, I actually started out dancing. I danced until I was about 22 or so and sustained a knee injury. Even though I still did some work, the injury knocked me out of it professionally. I did mostly African Haitian and some Modern. I lived in Connecticut for a while and had an all women's group. We performed locally and that

Interview by Debra K. Floyd

was a big deal to us. My great dream for myself was to be a dancer, but quite frankly I was not fortunate enough to have access to the training that I later found out was definitely required. So it is kind of a Karmic thing where destiny is leading you, and even though you are exposed to certain things and you get into them it may not be your destiny to be great at that thing.

I went from dancing to modeling, starting in my late teens. My dad was a cosmetologist and had a lot of exposure in the business. The funny thing was that the peak of my modeling career was between 28 and 33 -- they consider you dead by that age. I looked young, was able to sustain myself and was the type of person that every one loved to work with, (I follow directions.) The feminist side of me found modeling rather hard at times, but I liked doing live work [ramp modeling]. My personality was able to come through more.

Writing is something that I have always had and it just so happens that I have been kind of a story teller, the kind of person that tells a story and makes



"This is a picture of my mom"
- Keith

people laugh. I was telling a friend a story about being on the 57M and he was in stitches, I mean crying and I thought 'wait a minute,' this guy is cracking up and I was getting joy out of him laughing so I decided to write myself a little act. I just happened to be in the right place -- do you know Dap Harris? Dap is a comedian and has been working around Oakland for about 10-15 years and I saw him one night at the Hyatt. I don't know where he knew me from but he said that he was going to be out at the Lucky Lion and out of nowhere

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May & June Calendar Listings

ART EXHIBITS

(not listed in the calendar)

May 16-June 29 - Oakland artist/writer/poet **Amana Johnson** hangs a new collection of prints, paintings, and sculpture at The Brick Hut Cafe, 3222 Adeline (between Alcatraz and Ashby) in Berkeley on May 19th. The work, which will be welcomed with an artist's reception at the Cafe on Friday, May 25th from 6-8pm, will be on display through June 29th. For further inquiry, call (415) 654-6592.

May 18-June 16 - Ethnic Trip presents **Toni Lane**, at Western Addition Cultural Center, 762 Fulton St. in San Francisco. Opening and reception on May 19th from 6-10pm. Gallery open Wed.-Sat. 1-6pm.

DANCE CLASSES

(not listed in the calendar)

SATURDAYS & WEDNESDAYS (ongoing) advanced, beginning & intermediate modern jazz dance, with **Debra K. Floyd** and live drumming. These on going classes are located at Finn Hall, 1819-10th St. in Berkeley. Advance Beg. are on Saturdays from 10:00-11:30am and Intermediate are on Wednesdays from 7:30-9:30pm and Saturday, 11:30-1:30pm starting with floor barre. Fee \$7.00 single class (there are student and class card rates.)

DANCE

SUN., May 20 - "**Raices Afro-Cubanas**," is an evening of Afro-Cuban music and dance forms directed by choreographer Judith Justiz. 8pm. \$6. La Peña,

3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. For info: 849-2568.

FRI.-SAT. - June 1,2,8,9,15,16 - "**The Ethnic Dance Festival**" featuring 20 acclaimed companies performing music and dances from around the world with special guest artists The National Ballet of Zaire, will be held at the Palace of Fine Arts, Bay & Lyon St. in S.F. Pre-performance talks with dancers at 6:30pm on June, 2, 9, & 16. Tix. \$12-30. For information call 474-3914; for tickets, (415) 552-3656.

EVENTS

FRI., May 4 - Poetry reading by Margaret Sloan-Hunter who shares her experience as a black lesbian feminist. 8pm. Women only. \$5-10. Reservations suggested. Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 428-9684.

TUES. & THUR., May 8, 10 - Storyteller, author and artist Luisah Teish leads a workshop on performance and storytelling style development. 6pm, 5605 San Pablo Ave. in Oakland. For more information call 632-8488.

SAT., May 12 - Storytelling, song & dance with **Belinda Sullivan, Rhiannon** & others performing at the Berkeley Public Library on Shattuck & Center in Berkeley. 8pm.

SUN., May 13 - A mother's day BBQ sponsored by the Nia Collective will be held at Lake Temescal, Big Rock Site from 11am to sunset. For more information call 835-1155.

SAT., May 19 - **Aché** meeting open to all black women inter-

ested in helping select upcoming themes for the Aché journal.

This is a great chance to have your voice be heard! 1-3pm at the Guardian Coffeehouse, corner 40th & West streets in Oakland.

SUN., May 20 - "**A Celebration of Women in Music**" is a benefit for Marin Abused Women's Services featuring many performers including Karen Williams and Rashida Oji. 12-5pm at Forest Meadows Amphitheater, Dominican College in San Rafael. \$18 adv./\$20 door. For info: 457-3632.

THUR., May 24 - African-American poet, essayist and teacher **June Jordan** will read from her new collection of poetry, **Naming Our Destiny**. Considered the definitive collection of Jordan's work, this book compiles poetry from nearly 20 years. Donation, Old Wives Tales, 1009 Valencia St. in S.F.

FRI., May 25 - "**What Works**" A special reading of poetry & short fiction at Cloudhouse, 218 Laussat St. (behind Community Blend Cafe) in San Francisco. 8pm.

FRI., May 25 - An artist's reception for **Amana Johnson** (see Art Exhibits) 6-8pm. at the Brick Hut Cafe, 3222 Adeline in Berkeley.

FRI., May 25 - **Afro-Cuban folklore concert/dance** including rumbas, Yoruban chants, and original compositions by Guillermo Céspedes' workshop participants. 8pm \$5-10. La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley.

SAT.-SUN., May 26-27 - Carnaval '90, (Mardi Gras SF) is a 2-day celebration which lights up San Francisco's Mission district. Sat-

May & June Calendar Listings

urday features a street fair from noon to 8pm on Harrison St. between 16th & 21st streets with live music, food, arts & crafts and more. The Celebration peaks on Sunday with a colorful parade featuring extravagant floats, comparsas, costumed dancers, steel bands, music & dance. Parade begins at 11am starting at Bryant & 24th St. going to Mission. For more information call 826-1401.

MON., May 28 - Mujerio will be hosting a BBQ & softball game on Memorial Day. For more information call 587-7384.

FRI.-SUN., June 1-3 - **The Festival at the Lake**, a 3-day celebration held at Lake Merritt in Oakland featuring the bay area's best performers, arts & crafts, food, and much more. Friday's performers will include Etta James & Ronnie Laws.

SAT. - June 2 - **"Sisters & Allies"** a one-day workshop for women by the Lillie Allen Institute. Co-sponsored by the Bay Area Black Women's Health Project, this workshop is for women of color & white women, "standing together to give true voice to each and every one of our stories." \$20-50 sliding scale. 9:30am - 5pm. Mills College Student Union, 5000 Macarthur Blvd. in Oakland. For information call (415) 654-7753.

SUN., June 3 - **"Where Is Your Home For Tonite?"** A theatre performance piece produced by *Jazzy Feet* and choreographed by Debra K. Floyd. 2:30pm at Finn Hall, 1819 - 10th St. in Berkeley. \$5. (part of proceeds to benefit the Berkeley Emergency Food Fund.) Info: 548-2143.

SAT.-SUN., June 16-17 - **"The Rules of Attraction"** is a two-day conference on lesbian & gay media presented by the S.F. International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, 347 Dolores St., SF. For more information contact Frameline, 861-5245.

SAT., June 16 - **"Let It All Hang Out Day II"** is a celebration of fat dykes and the diversity of the lesbian and gay community. LIVE entertainment, dancing and much more. 2-6pm. Harvey Milk Plaza, at Market & 17th St. in S.F.

THUR., June 28 - **Belinda Sullivan**, storyteller, will be performing at Old Wives Tales, Valencia St. in S.F.

FILM

May 4, 5, 7, 10, 13 - **The 33rd Annual San Francisco International Film Festival** presents **"Dancing in the Dust,"** polygamy meets women's lib, African style. The film will be shown at the Kabuki theatre in SF, and on the 7th at the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley. This film is one of 30 films being shown in San Francisco & Berkeley. There are too many films to list but Festival guides are available at bookstore and cafe's throughout the bay area.

WED., May 16 - Sponsored by the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame **"James Baldwin; The Price of the Ticket"** (1989) a passionate, haunting elegy of writer, civil rights activist James Baldwin. 5, 7 & 9pm at the U.C. Theatre, 2036 University Ave. in Berkeley.

SUN., May 20 - The Warner Bros. suppressed film **"Malcolm X"** will be shown with a performance

by reggae band Inka Inka at Ashkenaz, San Pablo Ave. at Gillman in Berkeley. Film starts at 8pm, music begins at 9:45pm. \$5

WED., May 30 - Aché presents 3 unique short films: **"Hairpiece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People"** a satire on the question of Black women's hair & self image through an exploration of the world of relaxers, gels and curlers.... **"Cycles"**, an award-winning film by director Zeinabu Davis which focuses on a woman's determination to trick fate; and **"The Mark of Lilith"** about a black lesbian researching why goddesses of one culture become the demons of another who meets a white vampire. The films start at 7:30pm at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. Donations.

FRI.-SUN., June 15-24 - **The 14th San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival** will open on Friday, June 15th at the Castro Theatre in S.F. The 10-day festival will present screenings at the Castro, 429 Castro St., and the Roxie Cinema, 3117 - 16th St. in S.F.

TUES., June 19 - **"Thelonious Monk - Straight No Chaser"** filled with rare footage of Monk in performance, in the studio and behind the scenes. 7pm. Also showing with **"Bird"** about Charlie Parker. 8:45pm. U.C. Theatre, 2036 University Ave. in Berkeley.

MUSIC

FRI. & SAT., May 4-5 - Vocal jazz legend Jon Hendricks will be in concert with the Oakland Youth Chorus. 8pm. at the First Presbyterian Church, 27th & Broadway

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May 1990

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			R-"Acoustic Journey" R-"Spectrum" T-"Dolores St."	T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."	E-Margaret Sloan-Hunter F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Jon Hendricks R-"La Verdad Musical" TV-"South Africa Now" T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."	F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Jon Hendricks M-Gwen Avery N-Mujerio @ Colors T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."
		1	2	3	4	5
M-Orquesta Guayacan R-"Amandla"	F-"Dancing in the Dust" TV-"South Africa Now"	E-Luisah Teish	R-"Acoustic Journey" TV-"All God's Dangers" T-"Dolores St."	E-Luisah Teish F-"Dancing in the Dust" R-Crack Conference T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."	M-Donna Ozawa R-"La Verdad Musical" TV-"South Africa Now" T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."	E-Belinda Sullivan/Rhiannon M-Isoko Ferni T-"The Breadwinner" T-"Dolores St."
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
E-Nia Collective BBQ F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Cholo Eduardo @ El Rio R-"Amandla"	TV-"South Africa Now"		F-"James Baldwin" R-"Acoustic Journey" T-"Dolores St."	T-"Dolores St."	N-"le Gay Cabaret" R-"La Verdad Musical" TV-"South Africa Now" T-"Dolores St."	E-Aché meeting M-Conj. Céspedes N-Colors T-"Dolores St."
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
D-"Raices Afro-Cubanos" E-Karen Williams/Rashida F-"Malcolm X" M-Blazing Redheads R-"Amandla"	TV-"South Africa Now"	M-Dizzy Gillespie	R-"Acoustic Journey" R-Lesbian/Gay Writers Conf. T-"Dolores St."	E-June Jordan T-"Dolores St."	E-"What Works" reading E-Amana Johnson reception E-Afro-Cuban folklore R-"La Verdad Musical" TV-"South Africa Now" T-"Dolores St."	E-Carnaval '90 M-Gwen Avery M-Wozobia R-Women Rappers R-"Akabu" T-"Dolores St."
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
E-Carnaval '90	E-Mujerio BBQ TV-"South Africa Now"		F-Aché film series presents: "Hairpiece," "Cycles" & "The Mark of Liliith" R-"Acoustic Journey" TV-"Black Power, Black Panthers" TV-"A Raisin in the Sun"	M-Celia Cruz/Tito Puente TV-"Black Power, Black Panthers"		
27	28	29	30	31		

D-Dance, E-Events, F-Film, M-Music, N-Nightlife, R-Radio, TV-Television, T-Theatre

June 1990

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					D-Ethnic Dance Festival E-Festival at the Lake R-"La Verdad Musical"	D-Ethnic Dance Festival E-Festival at the Lake E-"Sisters & Allies"
					1	2
E-Festival at the Lake D-"Where Is Your Home..." R-"Amandla"	F-"Dancing in the Dust"	F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Nancy Wilson T-"Sarafina"	M-Nancy Wilson R-"Acoustic Journey" R-"Spectrum" T-"Sarafina"	F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Nancy Wilson T-"Sarafina"	D-Ethnic Dance Festival M-Nancy Wilson R-"La Verdad Musical" T-"Sarafina"	D-Ethnic Dance Festival M-Nancy Wilson T-"Sarafina"
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
F-"Dancing in the Dust" M-Nancy Wilson R-"Amandla" T-"Sarafina"		M-Eloise Burrell T-"Sarafina"	F-"Dancing in the Dust" R-"Acoustic Journey" T-"Sarafina"		D-Ethnic Dance Festival F-Lesbian & Gay Film Festival opens R-"La Verdad Musical"	D-Ethnic Dance Festival E-Gay Media Conference F-"James Baldwin..."
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
E-Gay Media Conference R-"Amandla"		F-"Thelonious Monk"	F-"Malcolm X" R-"Acoustic Journey"		R-"La Verdad Musical"	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
F-Lesbian & Gay Film Festival closes R-"Amandla"			R-"Acoustic Journey" T-Sapphire Theatre Co.	E-Belinda Sullivan	R-"La Verdad Musical"	F-Aché Film Series
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

D-Dance, E-Events, F-Film, M-Music, N-Nightlife, R-Radio, TV-Television, T-Theatre

May & June Calendar Listings

(continued from page 19)

in Oakland. \$14 general/\$12 students & seniors. For information call 832-6080.

SAT., May 5 - Gwen Avery, the Sugar Mama of soul music will be performing at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 8pm. Women only. \$6-8. Reservations suggested. 428-9684.

SUN., May 6 - Orquesta Guayacan will be performing their own brand of Cuban music at El Rio, 3158 Mission St. in SF. 4-8pm. \$7.

FRI., May 11 - Donna Ozawa, Japanese-American guitarist/songwriter will be performing at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 8pm. Women only. \$5-7. Reservations suggested. 428-9684.

SAT., May 12 - Isoke Femi, back by popular demand after performing a single song at Mama Bears, Femi will be performing for a full evening at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 8pm. Women only. \$6-8. Reservations suggested. 428-9684.

SUN., May 13 - Chalo Eduardo & the Brazilian Beat will be performing at El Rio, 3158 Mission St. in SF. 4-8pm. \$7.

SAT., May 19 - Conjunto Céspedes, the bay area's premiere Afro-Cuban band, will be performing at La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. 9:30pm. \$7. For info call 849-2568.

SUN., May 20 - The Blazing Redheads will be performing at El Rio, 3158 Mission St. in SF. 4-8pm. \$7. The place to be on a beautiful Sunday afternoon - check it out!!

TUES., May 22 - "Homage to Havana" The Dizzy Gillespie Quintet will be performing at Kimball's East, the bay area's premiere Latin jazz club. EmeryBay Market place in Emeryville. For info call 658-2555.

SAT., May 26 - Gwen Avery shakes down the house at the Artemis Cafe - a full night of powerful piano & vocals. 8pm. \$4-6. 1199 Valencia St., SF.

SAT., May 26 - Danceable Afro-Funk with Wazobia. La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. 9:30pm. \$7. For info call 849-2568.

THUR.-SUN., May 31 to June 3 - The King & Queen of Salsa, Celia Cruz & Tito Puente will be giving a rare performance at Kimball's East, 5800 Shellmound, Emerybay Marketplace in Emeryville. For info call 658-2555.

TUES.-SUN. - June 5-10 - Nancy Wilson will be performing at Kimball's East, 5800 Shellmound, Emerybay Marketplace in Emeryville. For info call 658-2555.

SAT., June 12 - Eloise Burrell, with Magdelin Luecke on piano will be performing at Mama Bears, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. 8pm. Women only. \$6-8. Reservations suggested. 428-9684.

NIGHTLIFE

SAT., May 5 - Celebrate Cinco de Mayo Mujerio-style with DJ's Diane Felix from Colors, and Maria Medina Serafin from KPFA. 10-2am at Amelia's, 647 Valencia St. in S.F. \$5-10 sliding scale.

FRI., May 18 - "le Gay Cabaret" night upstairs at Amelia's starring

Rainbeau in "Dirty Rotten Ego," a study of attitude. Also live musical comedy & special guests. 647 Valencia St., SF. \$6.

SAT., May 19, June 2, 30 - Colors, the bay area's only nite-club operated by & for women of color is back!! Featuring the best latin & funk by guest d.j.'s. Held upstairs at Amelia's, 647 Valencia St. in S.F. 10pm -2am. \$5. The hottest people in the bay area come in colors!!

RADIO

FRIDAYS - "La Verdad Musical/The Musical Truth" with Avotcja. She plays jazz, blues, salsa, reggae, hip hop, and the whole spectrum of Pan-African music. Avotcja's show also has interviews and ticket give-aways. Fridays from 12-3pm on KPOO 89.5 FM. She also hosts "Rhythm Drive" on Thursdays from 4:30 to 6pm on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

SUNDAYS - "Amandla" a weekly multi-cultural news and information show on KALX, 90.7 FM from 5:30-6:30pm.

WEDNESDAYS - "Acoustic Journey" Surprise yourself with traditional music from Africa, Asia, Latin America and some new ways of using it. Karolyn van Putten pilots this musical voyage including in-studio guest interviews and live performances. KALW, 91.7 FM from 9:00 to 10:00 pm. Call 648-1177 for info.

WED., May 2, June 6 - "Spectrum - In Musical Form" is broadcast the first Wednesday every month with Tamu Duewa & Sadiqi Nia from 1:30am to 5am on KPFA, 94.1FM

May & June Calendar Listings

THUR. - May 10 - "Straight From The Source" is a show produced by African Women United for Development. Today's show is on the The Second Annual Crack Cocaine Conference in S.F. discussing the impact crack/cocaine has had on families and communities. 8pm on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

WED. May 23 - "The Best of the First National Lesbian/Gay Writers' Conference" includes Essex Hemphill, Judy Grahn, and other lesbian & gay writers talking about the effects of AIDS on writing life and style. 2pm on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

SAT. May 26 - "Focus on Women in Music" will focus on women rappers with guest DJ, Lady J. 11am on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

SAT. May 26 - "Akabu" (African Women) is a monthly program covering local and national issues & events relating to women of color. Hosted by Tamu Duewa. 1pm on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

TELEVISION

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS (ongoing) - **"South Africa Now"** is a weekly news magazine produced by black South Africans that airs every Monday at 11pm (on May 14th at 11:30pm.) on KQED, channel 9 & Fridays at 8:30pm on KQEC channel 32.

WED., May 9 - "All God's Dangers" From the off-Broadway

play starring Cleavon Little, the oral history of an Alabama sharecropper. 10pm on KQED, channel 9.

WED.-THUR., May 30-31 - "Black Power, Black Panthers" is a KQED documentary tracing the rise and fall of Huey Newton and the Black Panther Party, their influence on the city of Oakland and the rest of the country, and the fate of the party leaders today. On the 30th @ 9pm; on the 31st at 11pm on , channel 9.

WED., May 30 - Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun," a classic drama about a black family being torn apart pursuing a middle class dream starring Esther Rolle and Danny Glover. 10pm on KQED, channel 9.

THEATER

THUR. - SAT. thru May 12- "The Breadwinner" by Robert Sawyer. A young domestic worker in the 50's struggles to raise her two children alone. The movie "Claudine" was based on this play. Thurs. & Fri. at 8pm, Saturdays at 2:30 & 8pm. Black Repertory Theatre, 3201 Adeline St. in Berkeley. For info call 652-4017 or 652-2120.

WED. - SUN. thru May 26- "Dolores Street" is a comedy about 4 lesbians sharing an apartment on Dolores St. featuring Karen Williams. 8:30pm at Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 - 16th St. in SF. \$9-10. For info call 861-5079.

TUE.-SUN., June 13 - "Sarafinal The Music of Liberation" the wonderful musical celebrating the spirits of black South Africans will be running at the Golden Gate Theatre, #1 Taylor St. in S.F. Tue.-Thur. @ 8pm; Fri.-Sat. @ 8:30pm; Wed. & Sat. matinee @ 2:30pm; Sun. matinee @ 3pm. Tickets are \$17-35. To order phone 243-9001.

WED. June 27- Aché presents the **Sapphire Theatre Company** and their production "How Do You Do" by Ed Bullins. His comedy will be presented with a lesbian twist, all parts will be played by women. Starring Marilyn McClain and Sonia Brooks, directed by Sacul L'Adnre. 8pm. \$4-8 (no one turned away) a benefit for Aché. La Peña, 3105 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley. For information call 824-0703.

COMING UP IN AUGUST

THUR.-SAT., August 2-4 - Jazz vocalist **Cassandra Wilson** will be coming to Koncepts Cultural Gallery, 480 Third St. in Oakland. For more information call 763-0682.

The calendar listings may change without notice so double-check with the source for any last minute changes. To list something in the July/August calendar, mail or phone information by August 15th to:

Aché, P.O. Box 6071, Albany, CA. 94706 or phone (415) 824-0703.

What keeps us apart?

On Internalized Oppression... **by Akiba Tiamaya**

Growing up as a Black Woman in a White Supremist Rape Culture, I was encouraged from birth to be someone else. I was told in many subtle and not so subtle ways that something was wrong with me and I came to believe it was true. I was always trying to figure out what I had done wrong and then trying to make it right. I did lots of things that I perceived would make people, whom I thought didn't like me, like me. I was constantly comparing myself to oth-

I was constantly comparing myself to others, which left very little room for me to see and value who I really was.

ers and was very involved in the competitive syndrome, which left very little room for me to see and value who I really was. This way of not seeing was very devastating as it cut me off from my spiritual and psychic centers leaving me feeling defenseless and defensive in relationship to my environment. This being the same culture that my parents grew up in they could only teach me about self acceptance/self-love to the extent that they had experienced this

for themselves, so there was often very little unexploited territory in which we could celebrate our uniqueness, our differences, and the vast and rich cultures that we were part of. In fact this emotional and spiritual genocide created the perfect vacuum in which I could continue to exist feeling afraid and powerless.

This culture, this household taught me to hide myself, to feel ashamed, guilty and unworthy. It also said that trust was an impossible task, that my feelings and my emotions were inappropriate and therefore, needed to be controlled. Dealing with so much pain and so much anger juxtaposing my need to survive, I grew up swallowing a lot, the result of which left me with so many insecurities, fears, misconceptions, and judgements about myself, which at every opportunity I would project on to someone else. How did I begin to heal this? Quite often at another sister's expense. We "dump" all over one another - one critique of our behavior by another can often bring all those false bricks crashing down, caving in that vacuum that we've nourished, igniting all of those unexpressed feelings. And why should we have so much self esteem? How do you grow up non white and non male in a white patriarchal capitalist society with a healthy ego?

It hurts me deeply to admit to myself that I have internalized the racist sexist perspective of myself as a black/negro/colored/minority/ slave woman that the white supremacist mentality has created. Could I possibly be contributing to my own oppression, and therefore, the oppression of others. The truth of the matter is that I have and I do. In addition, I have also internalized "his" opinion of myself as a woman

(continued on page 25)

What brings us together?

loving other women and until I allowed myself to acknowledge that and made a conscious choice to heal, I continued to internalize the oppression rather than seek ways to transform it. I fought feeling the void, the pain, the rage, the sense of abandonment, which meant that there were a lot of other feelings that I also had to fight. I was busy trying to survive the assaults which called for strength, my interpretation of which did not include vulnerability. Each time someone would challenge my safe place - make me aware of my unease - I would project onto them the myths that had been created out of the mess that someone else had projected on to me.

How do you create shoes when you're not aware that you yourself have the materials? When you really believe that someone else is the keeper of the material and you have to go along with their "program" to get it? When you feel like someone is rocking your "status quo" because they've dared to step outside of your perception of the "norm." When she touches your class bombs and you just want to survive and to rest for a while to be accepted. You see this person and she creates 1000 crashes inside you, you want to reject her and claim her all at once. Somewhere inside you know that she is you. But she's a threat cause she's "too black," "too white," "too vulnerable," "too strong," "hair too nappy," "hair too straight," and on and on, and at this point the fact that she may reflect any part of you (if you've had the luxury of time and gone through the pain of getting to that point) is probably still only an intellectual process. You might patronize her, idolize her or resent her, very seldom will you love her - it's too risky, it requires too much feeling - unless of course

she happens to fit your present idea of the "status quo."

I say this response is the normal response according to the household we've grown up in - white male patriarchal capitalist USA-! My process has brought me to the realization that to embrace my whole self is a step in the empowering direction, because there is no way that I could have, should have, would have been different. I feel that non judgement begins at home with the acceptance of me. I feel that this process starts and continues to transform me when I allow myself to be vulnerable enough to embrace my

You might patronize her, idolize her or resent her, very seldom will you love her - it's too risky...

whole self, that which I term good as well as bad. The denial of certain parts of myself keeps me in the projection syndrome, because when I'm in denial I don't have to take responsibility for my actions and ultimately my personal power. I believe that every being who comes into my life has something to teach me (some lessons have been so painful and shattering that I just missed it - maybe next life,) but when I remember this I don't feel so separate and I don't work so hard to make myself feel important and powerful. When I can detach and give up some of my personal investment, which is usually old pain

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from my past, I find I am able to put stuff where it belongs and bring more honesty to the experience.

Some of us have been able to create political arenas where we can feel safe and name the tune as the "experts;" this can be a dangerous trap for one in the process of personal transformation. Because (1) where else can you go once you're the "expert?" (2) quite often there is no one there beside us in our tower to create the challenge so often needed for continual growth. Just as we might place ourselves in the position to experience another peoples culture by living in their country we must also be willing to place ourselves in situations that will challenge us to expand our awareness even though we are the "experts."

I believe that as peoples of color with such diverse cultural backgrounds and ancestral heritages, we are in an excellent position to support the healing/transformation of these experiences by coming together in groups. The acknowledgement that the transformation needs to occur, be it great enough will fuel the desire to trust the process. ■

Upcoming "On the Table" topics:

☛ July/Aug.
Our Relationships with men
(DEADLINE: June 1st)

☛ Sept./Oct.
Butch/Femme??!
ROLES: what they was,
what they is,
what they gon' be?
(DEADLINE: July 15th)

Submissions can be in the form of letters, essays, poetry/prose, short statements, or artwork. Please specify if you do not want your full name included. Mail submissions to:

Aché,
P.O. Box 6071,
Albany, CA. 94706

Sisterhood is Powerful

by Laura Whitehorn

**Brenda has one cigarette, and shares it
with a woman she's never seen before,
who sits on her bedroll,
abscesses freshly bandaged,
thin and shaken.**

Sisterhood is Powerful.

**Lurinda brags she's hard, won't give
away a thing without a trade.
But she's the first to slide
into the cell next door
to see that the new arrival,
withdrawing,
has what she needs
to get her through the sickness.**
Sisterhood is Powerful.

**And I, the communist, have learned
to give not just the easy things
but the hard.
to give what I didn't think
I had enough of,
to give of myself,
the only commodity left to me.
you'd have to see it to believe
how sisterhood is powerful.**

This poem is reprinted with permission from Out of Time, a publication by Out of Control -- women's committee to support women political prisoners.

LINES THAT SEPARATE

BY DOROTHY TAYLOR

**THE LINES BETWEEN US
LINES THAT SHOULD NOT BE
I CRAVE TO ERASE THEM FOREVER
SISTER, WHY DO YOU DESPISE MY ADORNING
AFRICAN LOCKS?
INWARDLY YOU CRINGE AS I STRIDE BY YOU
ON OUR URBAN STREETS
MY HEAD IS RAISED, EYES GLOWING, PRIDE
SHOWING
I SENSE YOUR DISCOMFORT ABOUT MY
BLACK EXPRESSION
BLACK-WOMAN UNIQUE BEAUTY
THE REMINDER OF ROOTS YOU AND I BOTH SHARE
ROOTS YOU HAVE BONE-STRAITED AWAY
ROOTS YOU UP-ROOT EVERY 6 TO 8 WEEKS
WHY MUST YOU MUMBLE "DYKE" TO YOUR
GIGGLING BOBBY BROWN-CRAZED GIRLFRIENDS?
"YEAH, HOW ABOUT THEM GIRLS IN 3-B?!"
"HONEY, I HOPE THEY DON'T TRY IT WITH ME!"
YES, REASSURE YOURSELF OF PREDESTINED
STRAIGHTNESS AND NORMALCY
YOU CLUTCH YOUR MAN'S HAND TIGHTLY--KISS HIS CHEEK
WHEN YOU SEE ME,
YOU SENSE MY DIFFERENCE,
YOU SEE THE LINES BETWEEN US
LINES YOU'VE TRACED AND RE-TRACED
WITH YOUR INDELIBLE PEN
SO NO ONE WOULD EVER QUESTION YOUR WOMANHOOD
YES, MY SISTER, KEEP YOUR HAIR "PRETTY" AND
S T R A I G H T
MAINTAIN THAT HIGHLY REWARDABLE MAN-WOMAN
RELATIONSHIP
DO EVERYTHING THAT IS NICE AND PRETTY AND
NORMAL AND DEFINITELY NOT QUEER
YOUR EXISTENCE IS NEATLY BORDERED BY
THE LINES YOU DREW
LINES YOU RE-TRACE
LINES THAT SEPARATE ME FROM
YOU**

Karen Williams

(from pg. 19)

I said "I do comedy" and he said "oh yeah?!" He asked me if I wanted to do 5 minutes in his act and I said sure! My friends looked at me and said they did not know I did comedy - I didn't know I did comedy. The day I went to the Lucky Lion I was as sick as a dog. He told me to be there at 8 for this 5 minutes and at 11:30 he announces me to go on. Now I had on this silk designer thing like the Senegalese dancers wear and my hair was braided in this elaborate crown. I'm about 5'10 so with heels I'm about 6'1, and I walk up there like this statuesque being who's going to tell jokes. I was feeling beautiful and confident and that just blew out every stereotype we associate with women in comedy. I have done all the local chitterlings circuit clubs. For the first two years I was really driven and did open mikes, got \$25.00 here and there. Someone saw me and asked me to do a benefit, I think at Ollies, and once I started doing AIDS benefits the Lesbian and Gay community scooped me up.

Debra: What would you say about yourself if you were seeing Karen Williams perform for the first time?

Karen: I like her!!! Most people like me. I say things they are afraid to and I say it in a way that does not make them feel alienated. My heart is that of a humanist, not a separatist. So.... I would say, she's funny, she's kind of ding-batty sometimes - sometimes she is very astute. I'm a Leo so I definitely have all that Leo performer-stuff happening and I have a Sagittarius rising which means I am philosophical to top it all off and

am opinionated beyond belief.

I like myself. People look at me and I think they like me because I like me. I have worked hard to like me. I have a special tie with comedy because it seems popular now, so many people are into comedy. What I see when I see people into comedy is that they are attempting to deal with those aspects of themselves that are in pain and in urgent need of healing. My urgency propelled me to just get out there and do it. I was in severe emotional pain and I have had to heal myself a lot. I am more grateful for the existence of comedy as a craft from that standpoint than actually focusing in on me like I am doing something so great. More and more I tip my hat to the existence of the craft to allow me this form of expression.

Debra: What are the performing no-no's for you?

Karen: Sexist stuff, racist stuff. I have had to tighten up my stuff around looks, coming from a modeling background. I have deep stuff about this society and what it does to people around how we look. I feel that getting older is a humbling experience so I am sensitive around age. I do not like what I call "male toilet humor" where it's largely putting down women.

Debra: What do you give to Black women with your craft?

Karen: I perform a lot for white audiences and that troubles me. I'm not from here so maybe I don't necessarily pull the traditional Oakland women's crowd. A lot of women do not know me and I don't know them. It bothers me

that there are not more Black women in my audiences. When I see them in the audiences and at the festivals, I'm a little bit more myself, a little bit more jazzy, a little bit more down or up, from the stand point of acknowledging their presence and thanking them for acknowledging me. I love laughing with sistah, sistahs hit their legs, hit each other, fall all over, yell, "stop---help, help." I love laughing with sistahs.

Debra: What would like to say to Aché readers?

Karen: Keep reading Aché. It's a great publication, it is very affirming as to who we are & we need it!! Let's make it so that for our next generation we can have our own clubs, t.v. stations, radio stations, and our own venues. It is happening, we are doing it. Come see me. Let us support the people that work in the places where we are. I want to look out there and see more Black women. ■

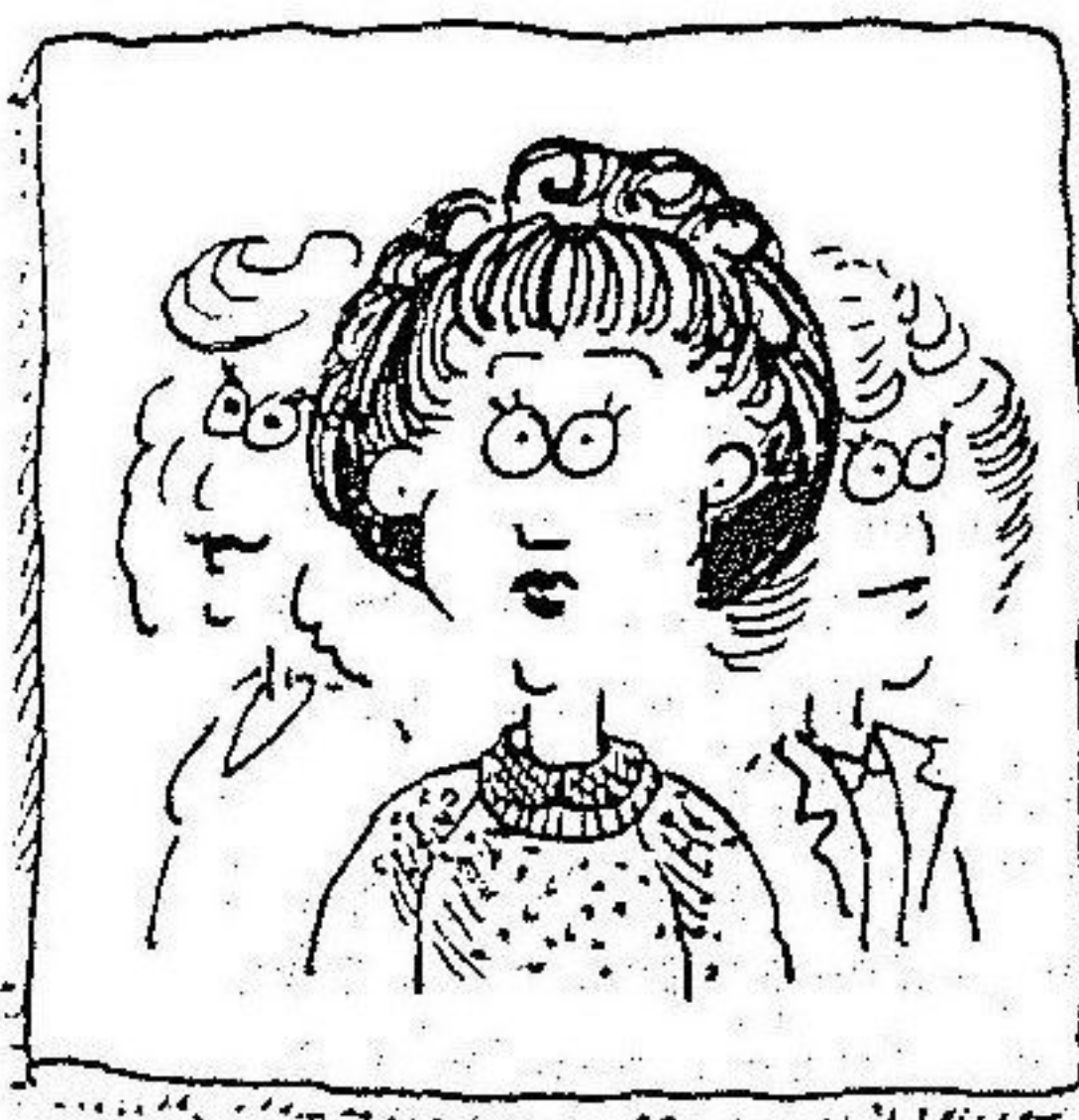
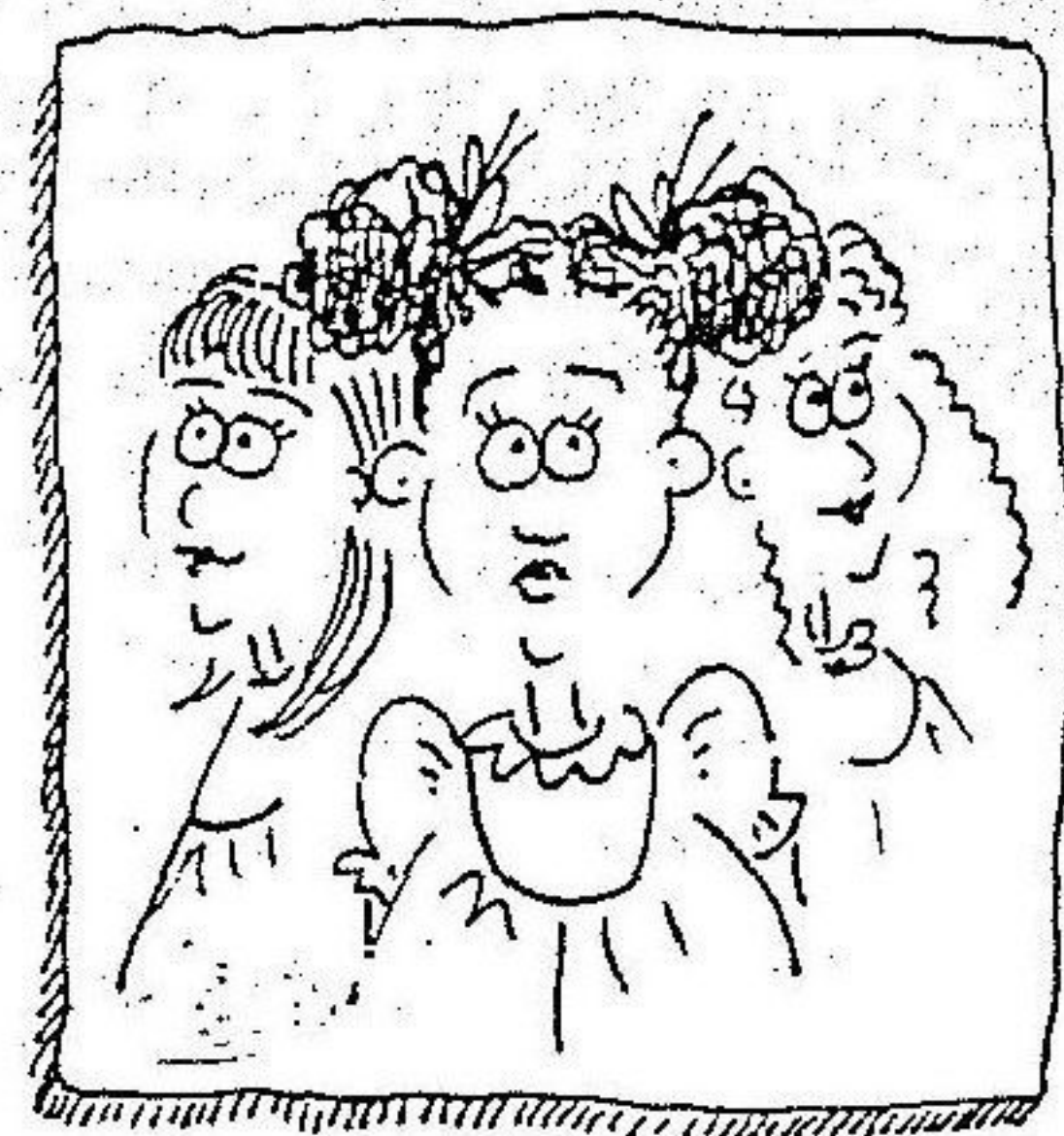
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Karen Williams is appearing in "Dolores Street," a light comedy about lesbian life in the city, at Theatre Rhinoceros on 16th St. in San Francisco. The show runs Wednesday's thru Sundays @ 8:30pm through May 27th. "Dolores Street" is playing to sell out houses and has recently been extended. Call 861-5079 for info and reservations.

COMING TO TERMS

MONTEZ L. HORNE, MARCH 1990

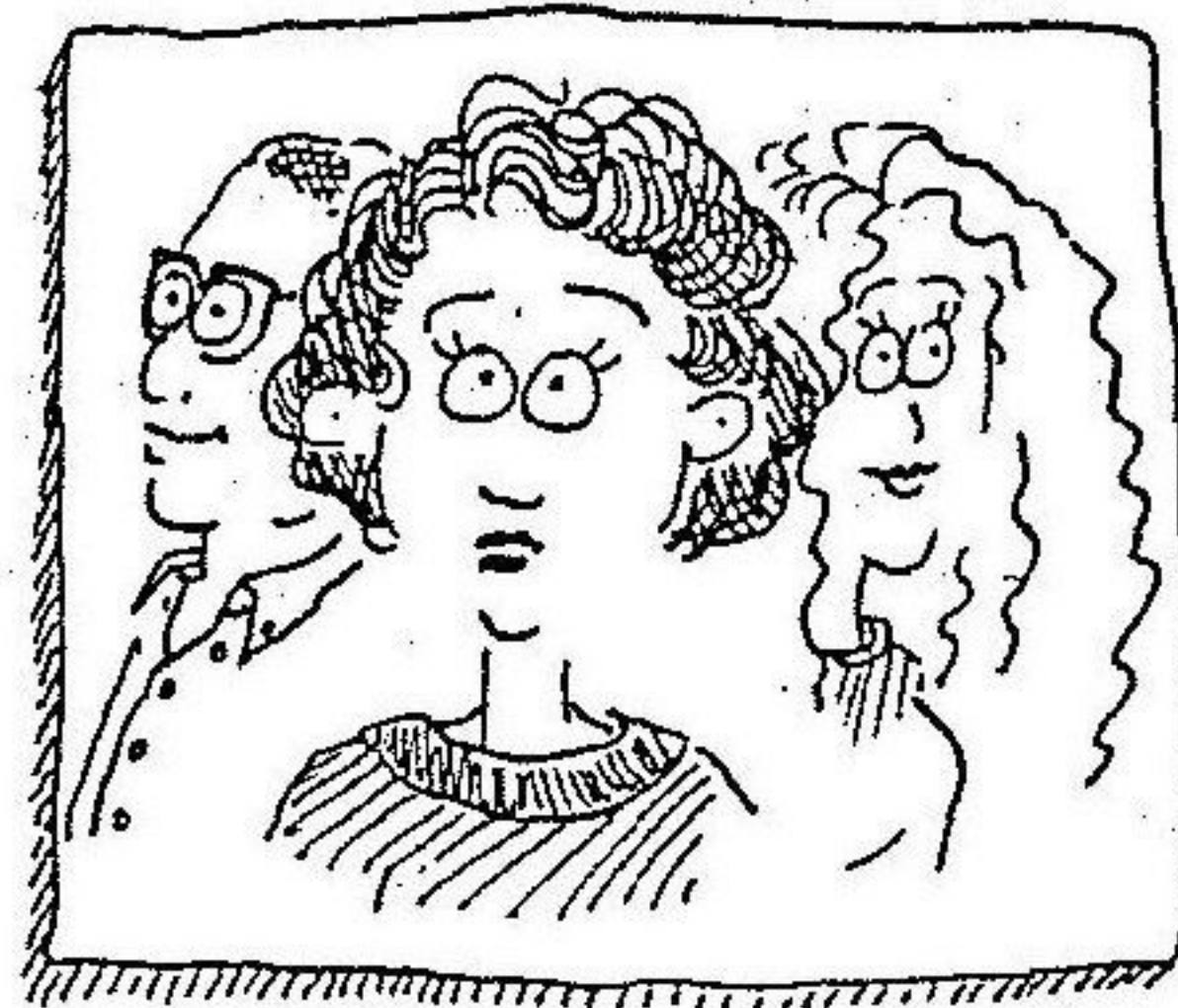
SAN DIEGO, 1971 - All that I ever wanted was bangs. My mom didn't understand - otherwise, why was she always trying to take me to *black* barbers? None of the other kids at school had hair like mine. Oh - there was this one other black girl in my class... but I purposely didn't talk to her... I mean - I couldn't. If I did, all of the other kids would think I was like her. You know, *black*. That's O.K. though, because as far as I remember, she did the same thing. We all did. Us black kids. There was this one new kid from England I remember. His name was Peter, and he was black. But he didn't know enough not to like other black kids, so he wanted me to be his girlfriend. He was o.k. and all, but I made sure all the kids knew he had *extra* cooties, and that I hated him extra much out of all the boys. I used to have this phobia of hypnotism - I was afraid that if somehow I accidentally got hypnotized I might say something that I didn't want people to know. Like I was ashamed about being part black. That was one of those things that even *I* didn't want myself to know. I don't know how, but there was this kind of code that the black kids seemed to have. Like we all knew what the other one was doing any why, but it kind of made you cry for some reason because somehow it was embarrassing to know that about someone else.



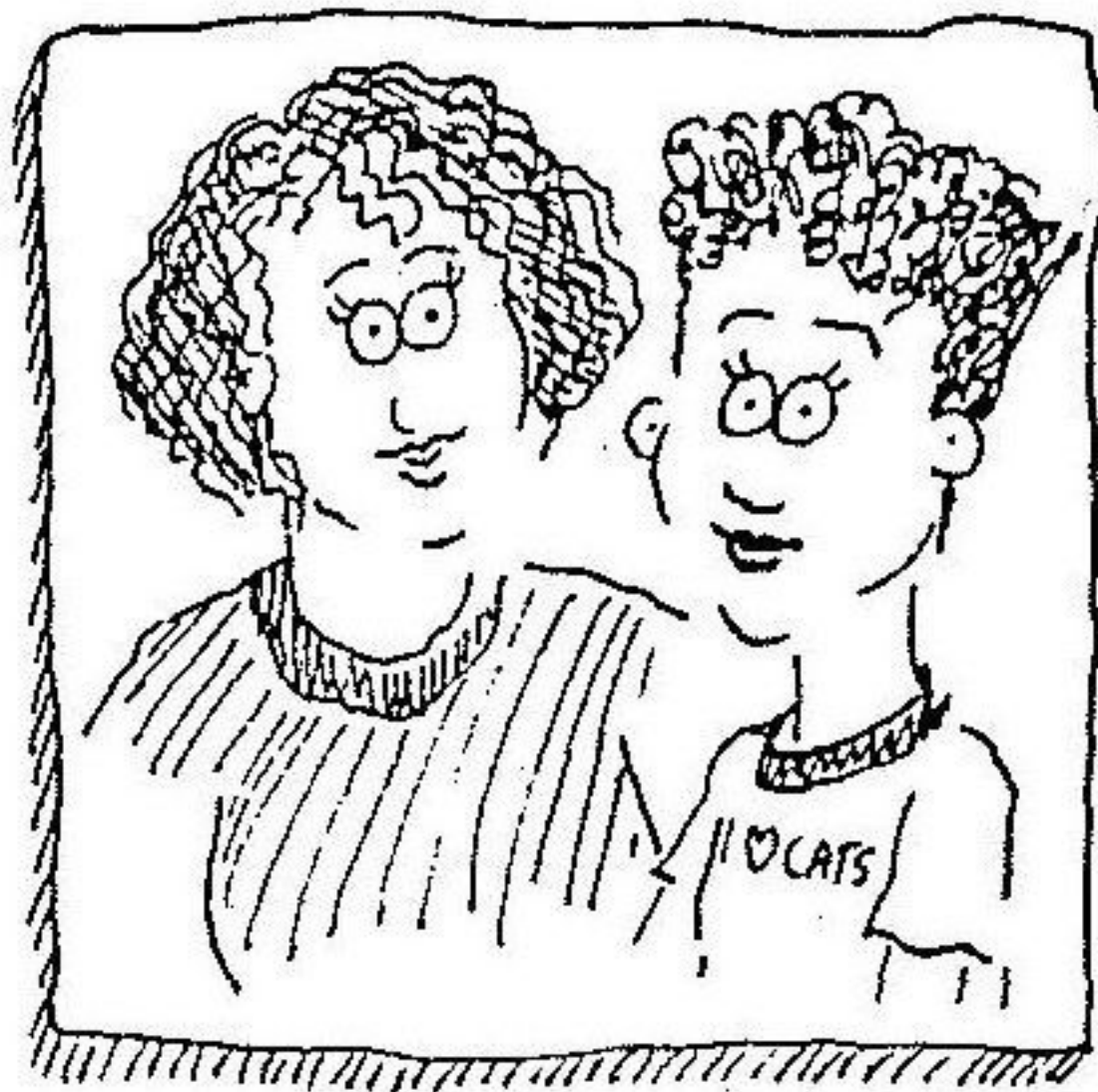
DENVER, 1978 - When I was thirteen we moved to a new neighborhood where I was going to get bussed to a school across town. The school was in a black neighborhood, and was supposed to be racially mixed. I'd never been to a mixed school before. I talked my mom into letting me get my hair straightened because all the black girls I saw had straightened hair and I wanted to fit in. I guess it took more than straightened hair to fit in. There seemed to be some sort of password I was missing - or else I had a tattoo I wasn't aware of that said "I only look black."

The black kids avoided me like the plague, and I learned as I walked by them in the halls that I didn't act right or know who I was. Maybe they were right, but the white kids from my neighborhood didn't seem to have a problem with me. I even got to be kind of popular. In fact, John Faust (THE John Faust) once told me that he'd go out with me, if only I wasn't part black. I tried my best to blend in with my white friends... I lightened my pale skin with "Young Peach" makeup, avoided any clothes in pastel colors or white and got front row tickets for Van Halen. It was depressing though that I didn't have a boyfriend until I was seventeen... I mean, I knew that it was because all the cool guys I liked couldn't like me in the daytime...sober...with their friends watching. They all said I was cute and hardly looked black...but close wasn't close enough. I still got to hang around all the popular girls. Summer was worse though...because then they'd want to hang out by the pool all the time and they just couldn't understand how that meant *my* social life was OVER.

DENVER, 1985 - I had just bought a darling yuppie car to fit my darling yuppie life. I had a cute little studio all done up in Classic Country, a hip job as a graphic designer for an up and coming design studio, I was life-springed and mineral watered and best of all I had the WASPiest boyfriend in town. He was white, Anglo-Saxon *and* Protestant, came from a prestigious old Denver family, was thirty-something with a Saab *and* a Volvo, wore button downs and tortoise rims, was an independent video and film producer and best of all - he adored me. He said he didn't even think of me as black. Too bad his mother did. When she couldn't have me dis-invited to social functions where I might actually be seen and connected to her good family name, she'd introduce me as Miss Solomon - (my mother's maiden name) and hope that the lesser of my two ethnic evils would be the only one noticed. What the hell - I didn't bother to correct her. If it got me into the Junior League party... It wasn't that I was ashamed about being mixed anymore - I didn't need to be. All my boyfriend's friends were really very liberal and they spoke out against racism all the time. They thought black women were beautiful and exotic, and most of them had dated a black woman before. The only thing was...well, I just felt kind of uncomfortable when they would talk about their black nannies - and then when Buddy and Joanne had their first child they just insisted on finding a black woman to take care of the baby. It was just so much nicer, they said, and Buddy had such fond memories of his nannie back in North Carolina. I don't know...maybe my boyfriend was right, maybe I was just too sensitive.



BERKELEY, 1989 - The first day I met Heather she had the gall to ask me why I wasn't involved in the Black community. I stuttered, amazed at her bold acknowledgement. O.K., so she noticed (how rude) - now what was I supposed to do? When my eye finally quit twitching I patiently explained to her how I had learned long ago that just because someone can call you the "N" word doesn't mean automatic enrollment in the *BLACK* club. When she told me that she was mixed too I flew into a new series of knee jerks. This woman - *mixed*? My GAWD!! I had seen her on campus - waving hello to every black face and being greeted in return. Why hadn't they shunned her? I had never known another mixed person before (except for my brother - who's complete rejection of white society I took as confused rebellion) and I cried for hours to the first audience I'd ever had who actually UNDERSTOOD my cultural identity crises. I articulated for the first time in a violent, volcanic



explosion, my own self-hatred. I felt too white and privileged for the poor, angry and crime ridden black culture that I had known and too black for the racist and elitist Jewish culture that I felt a need to understand. I had accepted, for my own survival and self-respect, an ambiguous "bi-racial-multi-cultural-woman-of-color" status and starved myself of a specific identity.

She looked at me with soft brown eyes and said "I know." And she did.

Heather "brought me out" in the Black community, and the Jewish community. O.K., so all of the sudden I wasn't allergic to the sun - and my hair really was curly after all - and when blond haired and blue eyed David Bernstein said "funny - you don't look Jewish" I said "so what's a Jew supposed to look like?" Since "coming out" as an African American, I've realized that there isn't just one prescribed way to be black. My involvement in the community had less to do with how I was supposed to act than my personal acceptance that I was, indeed, Black. It's funny - now when I try to imagine what I might be afraid of saying if I were to be "accidentally" hypnotized. I can't think of a thing I'd be ashamed of anyone knowing. No - that's not funny - that's the way it's supposed to be.

Gwen Avery

(from page 9)

Skye: Who composed "The Varied Voices of Black Women," and when did the tour occur?

Gwen: It was in 1979 and under the direction of Olivia Records... The performers were Pat Parker, Mary Watkins, Linda Tillery, and myself. When we went to Boston to do a concert Barbara Smith went out and got a 30% Black women turn out !! She was the most wonderfully helpful conscientious sister I had seen in my life and she probably still is. She supported me beyond...I couldn't take in the appreciation I can today... "The Varied Voices of Black Women" performed for two nights and they made me the headliner. There was so much energy they were dancing in the aisles, people got up out of their seats in the auditorium - they were running up and down the aisles - you would have thought it was a sanctified church!

Skye: Wasn't there some controversy surrounding the treatment of women of color artists and the management at Olivia Records?

Gwen: Well it was simply that they were not living up to their policies. They would advertise they were in support of women of color, lesbians of color and they would ask these people to come to the record company; when in fact they would not live up to that commitment.

Skye: Recently I met a sista who was the only woman of color in an all women's band. She discussed with me the isolation and difficulty of being a Black female musician performing in women's establishments that are frequented by mostly white women. What measures should Black lesbians take in addressing implicit racism and exclusionary practices at women's establishments that claim to be open to the entire women's community - how would you suggest we support our performers in the process?

Gwen: By putting women like me, Rashida Oji, Yolanda Bush and other women on stages in places like Artemis and then making it a Black thing - and then letting it be known why the scene is the way it is... Go in and say we are tired of this, this is our community too - either you put your white supremacist sign up or you open your door and get yourself straightened out. We are getting tired of this backsliding gossip about people being racist, it's been going on for years.

Skye: Are you getting more Black women coming to your performances?

Gwen: I'm seeing more Black women and I'm very very happy about that. But I have not seen enough Black women and Black women performers have not ever seen enough support, and I think that message needs to get out.

Skye: In the late 60's and early 70's the internalized homophobia seemed so pervasive and it prohibited us from coalescing with one another. But we are now in the "gay 90's." Black lesbians have the support of various organizations and networks in building a viable Black lesbian community. Why do you suppose the visibility and support at these performances is still low?

Gwen: Black lesbians are not only dealing with homophobia but internalized racism as well. We are taught to look at each other strangely. It's about education, lifestyle, dressing, and it's about cultural differences....

Skye: So you think we are still afraid of one another?

Gwen: Yes, we are still afraid of one another. What we are coming to see is that we are not that different - we are learning that in our uniqueness we are alike. And that's what's so beautiful about us, that within each and every one of us is a beautiful individual and unique person unto ourselves. I'm looking at how we are waking up to the fact that "we are not free, until we are free." Until we begin to support and love ourselves individually and together there isn't going to be anything...

I think Aché is so important in exposing Black women to other Black women. It's a very powerful communicative device which is helping to bring us together. You're putting out something that we can hold on to until we can reach each other. It's a very important thing in the 90's in terms of the Black lesbian community. For example, the night we were at Konzept Cultural Gallery [the Aché anniversary event] I was so excited and so proud. A few times I found myself in tears - my heart was pounding so...I felt like I was at the prom or something, only it was a 70% Black and women of color turn out; an event that was put on by

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Gwen Avery

(from page 32)

beautiful women all housed in this one place, supporting and greeting one another; sharing music, poetry, dance, cultural ideas, political views, sexual differences and sameness within ourselves. I had looked for this, I had dreamed about it, I had waited for it...and this was only one. We're looking for tens of thousands of this thing to occur, 10,000 Black lesbians gathered together, just like Michigan had their white community of lesbians come together. Where white lesbians are invited to see us in color if you will; us flowering; us blooming; claiming our dignity; us saying what our rules are; us saying who we are and whose we are; and us saying what we are about to each other - the kind of love and support and beauty that we possess when we mirror each other, and shine for each other. I was so delighted, I said, "Oooh it's started."

[To quote] Mahalia Jackson who said, "My soul looks back in wonder how I made it over." This is what I'm looking at for us, "my soul looks back in wonder" saying look at us go! I waited at least two generations to see this happen because I've been gay for a long time.

Skye: In terms of outreaching the Black lesbian community what would you like to say?

Gwen: I would say, sisters the most important thing we can do with each other is to communicate. That is the essence of our life. We have been torn apart, and we have been taught not to communicate with each other and ourselves - the most important thing is for us to do is to relearn how to communicate with each other. That's a short statement for loving ourselves, for re-evaluating ourselves, for committing ourselves...We must become sister-kin again.

Skye: Gwen, thank you very much. ■

Gwen Avery, the "Sugar Mama" of soul music, will be performing at Mama Bears Bookstore Coffee House, 6536 Telegraph Ave. in Oakland. \$6-8. 8pm. Women only. Reservations suggested. For information call 428-9684.

Black jews

(continued from page 15)

a double oppressor.

Stephanie: I am trying to feel this. Yes I have got the sense from Black people that they thought I was going to trade on this, but I was never sure what goodies they thought were going to come from proclaiming myself a Black Jew.

Erica: It is about getting privilege based on that heritage. And often there is a lot of suspicion about mixed people as people who have historically sold our people out. Politically, people who are nationalists tend to be catalysts for movements and people on the edge become the beneficiaries of the work that nationalists do. Things get better to a point, nationalists get squashed and then all of these marginal people reap the benefits power-wise and economically and that's where some of the fears come from about people who are mixed.

Rebecca: I really take issue with this kind of idea that mixed people sell out their people. There are instances where that has happened but there are other instances where people who are not mixed have sold out their people. It is another way that the oppressor manipulates us to keep us separate from each other---by conferring a few more stupid petty privileges on a group of people who happen to be light-skinned or mixed. It perpetuates a divide and conquer situation.

Joselyn: In my personal experience, the only edge I have is I hear a lot of shit from both ends.

Stephanie: And unless you speak up, it's like you agree with this shit. It comes from whites and Blacks with their anti-semitic comments. The anti-semitism is so intense.

Erica: If I hear the word "J.A.P." one more time I'm going to slap somebody!

Rebecca: I had not encountered so much anti-semitism until I moved to California because I grew up in Brooklyn and you don't say shit because you will be dead! Here in public places the things you hear, like "so and so Jewed him down..."

Erica: Serious anti-Semitic violence, particularly in southern California is growing by leaps and bounds.

Joselyn: At the Dynamics of Color Conference, I

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Black jews

(continued from page 33)

helped facilitate a workshop about the similarities between Black and Jewish lesbians. Some of the things that came up were self-hatred around curly hair, noses, lips, as well as food and "good fucks."

Stephanie: That is part of the

"A genuinely candid confrontation between Negroes and American Jews would certainly prove of inestimable value. But the aspiration of the country are wretchedly middle-class and the middle class can never afford candor."

-James Baldwin, 1967

reason why I haven't felt conflicted in family stuff. I go to a Black relative's home and there was always food on the stove, and I go into a Jewish relative's house and there is always food on the stove. If they could get along everywhere else like they got along in my family maybe it would be o.k. They were a lot more alike than different.

Josylyn: I've come to realize in the past year that there are some differences, differences in values that impact on the way we bond. In most Jewish families there is encouragement to express. In Black families the type of expression is different. It is not as verbal for what ever reasons, political, historical... Because I come from both sometimes it can get me into trouble. Like my father was very expressive in articulating what he felt but my mom was so difficult. I didn't understand why she wasn't expressing and then I realized she expressed differently, like through

dance. It took me years to figure it out.

Erica: My mother talks, my father talks too but not about feelings. It's an overgeneralization but I think it's generally true that the Black community doesn't talk di-

rectly about feelings.

Stephanie: Not in the way Jews are encouraged to do that. This feels like dangerous territory - with racist overtones...

Josylyn: I know it is dangerous but this is the first and only place I felt the freedom to dare bring it up. If we had to summarize what difference the Jewish edge makes from the rest of the "mongrels," what would it be?

Erica: I think part of it is the concept that most Jews, even upper middle class Jews have, on some level white privilege but are still alien. Being white and still being alien. Being accepted sometimes and not being accepted sometimes.

Rebecca: And a constant underlying sense that at any time they will take your ass away. And that is real! Having to live with that no matter what money or privilege you

have in this society. I can relate to that as a Jew, and I can also relate to that as a Black person. And a lesbian.

Stephanie: Recently, I was at a cousin's house and they got a call on a Sunday afternoon and the caller said "this is Dr. Mengele from the lampshade factory"...An overwhelming feeling that it was not safe, a reminder. And I wasn't feeling particularly Black at that second.

Rebecca: What I am really discovering in this conversation is that I haven't thought about this shit. There are only so many identities I can handle at a given moment. Maybe I am more fragmented of a person but I have a hard time holding all of this stuff in my head at the same time, so one ejects itself while I am dealing with the other thing, to a certain extent. But I feel a definite connection to Jews, maybe because they talk with their hands, I don't know... a level of solidarity that is there and that is real. But because we come from two (or several) heritages of oppression, maybe we are better able to empathize with other people's experiences...

Stephanie: A heightened sensibility.

Josylyn: I would be so bold as to say that this edge is a privilege.

If you don't reflect...

(from pg. 12)

taught me there are only two kinds of men you can't get rid of: sons and brothers. The rest are in your life subject to your wishes and their behavior. A quality relationship is "the prize."

And then. . .

What does it mean to be responsible for my life, to live my truth? When I interact with another person I am offered a mirror to my Self. If I am IMAGE, I will see that reflected. If I be my authentic Self, she will be reflected. If I blame the person who offers me the mirror for what I see, I remain stuck in the victim triangle.

I get stuck more often than I like, but the time I stay stuck is getting shorter. It gets tricky because we are taught to get "power" through IMAGE and intimidation. It is difficult to keep our rage at the system out of our personal interactions. But saying "get out of my face" doesn't work. Whatever the person mirrored will show up again with someone else. Wherever I go I take me.

This dialogue with Elena has been brought up a lot of stuff. Some is here and much is not. We will continue to engage each other, see where it takes us. During the past ten years we have disagreed, we have argued, I even thought about strangling her once or twice, but I have never lost respect for Elena's personhood. It is a most nourishing encounter of/with Selves. *aché*.

This was the most difficult section to address; much has been left unsaid. Reconsider the impulse to tell people who don't mirror your experience to get out of your face. Our lives and experiences are not the same; but in no way does difference diminish us. Our negation of one another does that.

As I wrote I was afraid of Black women's rage. Will some of you dismiss me because I am not a lesbian? Who will think my background too middle-class? Am I too militant or too conservative? Perhaps I will be seen as a race traitor, or perceived as too dark to understand the dilemma of light-skinned and multi-racial sisters. I have opened myself up to negation by Black women. A wound worse than any a Black man could inflict. In the final analysis it is the angry rebuke of those most like you which causes the most damage and engenders the horror of isolation. But this is who I Be. ■

BOOK REVIEW:

by Vivienne Louise

"Movement in Black" by Pat Parker

Pat Parker -- Black lesbian poet, feminist medical administrator, mother of two daughters, lover of women, softball devotee, and general progressive troublemaker -- died of breast cancer on June 17, 1989 at the age of forty-five. I am pleased that Firebrand Books is able to publish this edition of her signature collection. Movement in Black, to coincide with Pat Parker's January 20th birthdate.²

Upon re-reading Movement in Black I was struck by its almost perfect symmetry. The book contains some well known pieces such as "Woman-slaughter" and "Movement in Black," along with the lesser known humorous poems such as "You Can't Be Sure of Anything These Days" and "To My Vegetarian Friends." Originally published in 1978 (Diana Press) it gives us spicy insights into events of Pat's life and is replete with her personal philosophies. The poetic meters are logical in a creative sense, singing in a contralto voice that goes low and high.

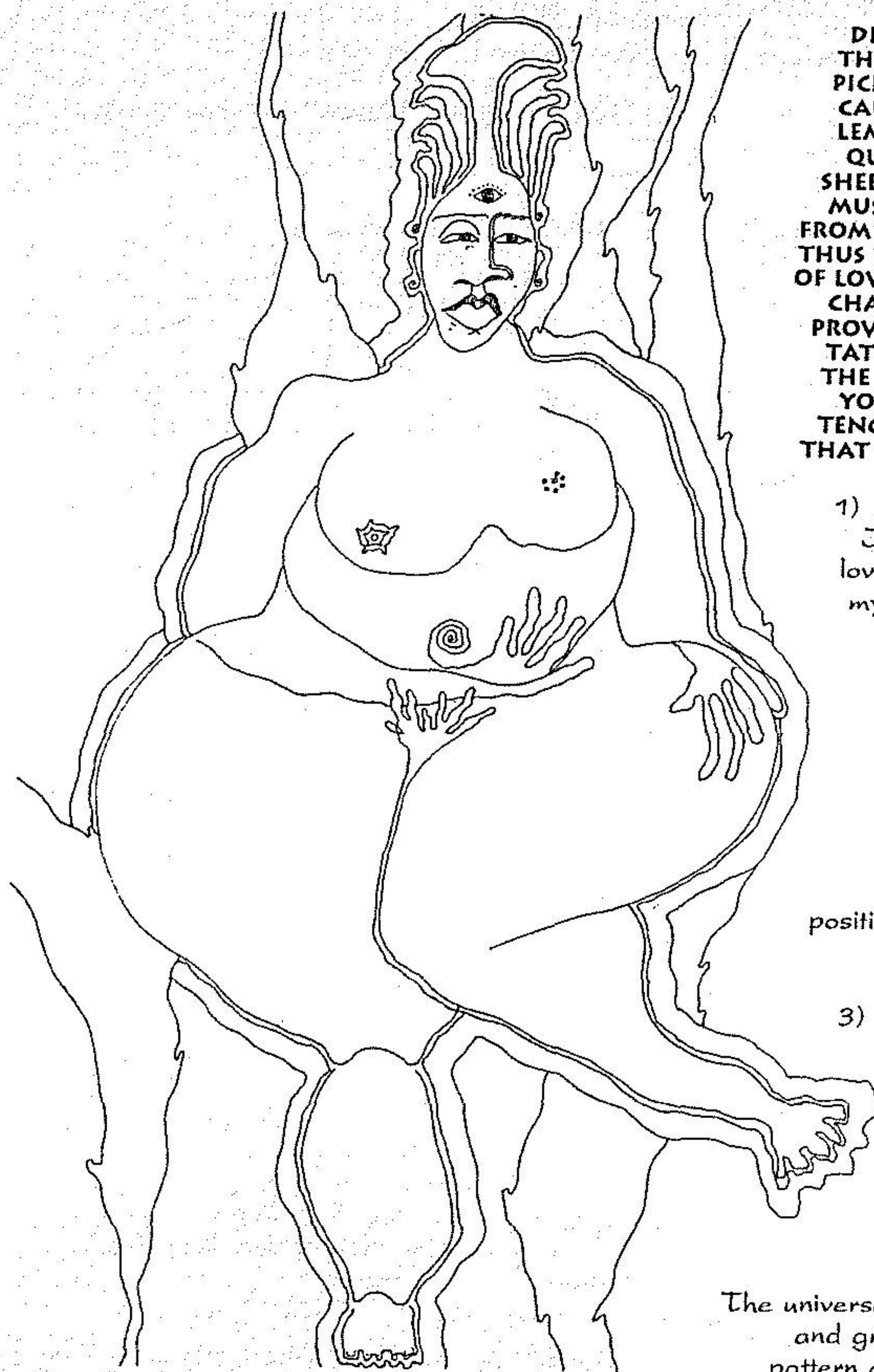
As a strictly prose writer I often find poetry tiresome; especially if it is long-winded and abstract. But Pat's poems flow on the tides of basic existence, exemplifying in written form the rhythms of life. It is earthy and ethereal, sweet and sour and blatant and obscure. Her directness permeates her words and I felt through out, that reading these poems was like talking to her over tea on a brisk morning in a lazy care. I understood, or at least thought I did.

Without hesitation I can recommend Movement in Black as an easy read for all of us non-poetic types and a pleasant study in simple depth for those given to poetic license.

² Publisher's Note by Nancy K. Bereano, December 1989 for Movement

Affirmations

prepared by Adésina Ogunelesé



Artwork by
Tobe Melora Correal

WE AS BLACK WOMEN HAVE TO DEAL WITH SO MUCH NEGATIVITY DIRECTED TOWARD US IN THIS SYSTEM THAT IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO PICK UP THE NEGATIVE THINKING THAT CAUSES MOST OF OUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS. AFFIRMATIONS HELP US TO CONQUER THIS NEGATIVITY THROUGH THE SHEER FORCE OF POSITIVE THOUGHT. WE MUST LEARN TO LOVE OURSELVES, SMILE FROM WITHIN, AND GIVE LOVE TO OTHERS THUS VALIDATING THAT WE ARE WORTHY OF LOVE. WHEN OUR THINKING STARTS TO CHANGE, WONDERFUL & PROFOUND IMPROVEMENTS OCCUR IN OUR LIVES. MEDITATE ON THESE AFFIRMATIONS ONCE IN THE MORNING & EVERY EVENING BEFORE YOU GO TO BED - REPETITION & CONSISTENCY IS THE KEY. NOTICE THE CHANGES THAT START TO TAKE PLACE IN YOUR LIFE.

1) I know who I am. I love myself, I transmute all negative energy into love & forgiveness. Love pours from my heart center spreading healing & harmonizing rays everywhere it touches. I am love in active expression. I am love in action. I am love. I am.

2) Today I choose to focus entirely on the positive. I accept only positive things to happen & keep my thoughts turned toward positive ideas. Today I know the joy of living positively!

3) I am financially secure. Since I am one with an infinite universe, prosperity & abundance are always available to me. Gratefully I draw upon an ample & ongoing flow of money into my life.

4) I welcome change. The universe is a continual process of change and growth. As a part of that unfolding pattern of perfection, I am thankful for the opportunity to become better, happier, & more fulfilled every day. I accept the best!

"CARETAKERS" BY CRAIG C. HARRIS

we call the women caretakers
praise them one day in May
or, the month of March
if we think ourselves truly
progressive
but who will take care of the women?

who will take care of the women
in a way that is not
paternalistic,
or colonialistic,
or chauvinistic,
just loving and humane?

who will inquire of the women
what they have done to nurture themselves, or
feed their souls?

who will sign a note of thanks
or offer a wave at the end of a hectic day
with the words take care
and mean it?

take care
afraid that the cyst
lodged in her left breast is malignant
Charlene places the infant's mouth
to her right nipple

take care
preparing for the parent/teacher meeting
Evelyn wraps a gele
covering the tell-tale baldness
of chemotherapy

take care
Wanda would have gone to work
but her man broke her right hand
with the empty gin bottle
so she dialed with her left to say
someone else would have to type today

take care
Mama left clear instructions
to take care of Daddy while

she was out, not knowing
Daddy would request of his daughter
the satisfaction she hadn't supplied

take care
Christine thought she had
the perfect relationship
until she got hip to the fact that
her woman was stealing her money
to fill her pipe with crack

take care
Mary, don't you weep
take care
you got to hold up
the blood-stained banner

take care
nam myoho rengo kyo
take care
asesu Yemonja, Yemonja
asesu Yemonja

take care
mama may have
poppa may have
but take care child
you're on your own

we call the women the caretakers
the breaking backbone
the undying strength
but who will take care of the caretakers
while they sacrifice their own needs
in service?
who will take care of the caretakers
when they realize that prayer
is a male supremacist
diversionary tactic?
who will take care of the caretakers
by doing no more or less
than allowing them the time
and space
to take care of themselves?

BULLETIN BOARD

**THE DEADLINE TO LIST ON THE NEXT BULLETIN BOARD IS JUNE 15TH.
THE BULLETIN BOARD IS AVAILABLE & FREE TO ALL BLACK WOMEN...**

▼ GROUPS ▼

Al-Anon for Black Gay & Lesbian ACofA's will meet every Thursday at 7:30pm at Bethany Methodist Church (social hall) 1268 Sanchez at Clipper -- enter Clipper St. First meeting May 10th. for more information call 995-2581.

Support group for black Lesbians in multicultural relationships meets 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 Takal at 346-5872.

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

Mujerio, the bay area Latina Lesbian organization, holds monthly meetings on the 3rd Saturday of each month, 5pm. All Latina Lesbians welcome. Info: 587-7384.

▼ HOUSING ▼

Temporary Housing Needed
Ach  woman Skye Ward is relocating to the bay area. She is looking for temporary housing from June-July; a room in a

house/apt., sublet, or housesit. If you have any information please leave a message at (415) 824-0703.

Lesbian of Color household forming. A 36-year-old black lesbian and a 38-year-old latina lesbian are looking for a 3rd l.o.c. to form a new new household. For more information call 563-3048 or 346-3081.

Two apartments in a 4-unit bldg. 1BR @ \$600 with backyard, util. included; 1+BR @ \$650 w/util. included. 29 Moss Ave. Parking extra. 222-3150.

▼ NOTICES ▼

The **Nia Collective** is sponsoring a contingent for Black lesbians in the Gay Day Parade on Sunday, June 24th, 1990. If you're interested in participating, call 532-2758 for more information.

Sapphire Theatre Company is looking for an artist to design their logo. If you're interested contact Sacul at 655-1615.

Help! I'm a 26-yr.-old African American lesbian looking to connect with my sisters everywhere but especially within Trenton, N.J. and surrounding areas. If this is you, please call me, Lisa (609) 396-0617.

EXPLORING THE AFRICAN PRESENCE IN MEXICO Departing July 14, 1990, Paris Williams will lead a group to Mexico to ex-

plore its ancient and modern African presence. This group will visit museums, art studios, and archeological sites that attest to this presence. A special feature will be a visit to an existing community of Black Maroon descendents. For more info call Jean. 697-7274.

The women of Ach  are taking a much-needed break and we're going on a camping/fishing trip up to Lake Sonoma on Sat.-Sun. July 21-22nd. If you'd like to come, call Ach  at 824-0703 & we'll save some space on the campsites.

Are you a disabled woman who likes to perform? Come join "Why Crips" - Disabled Women's Theatre Arts Project. We do readers theater, skits, songs, etc. Come share your creativity. Give us a call today at (415) 601-5819.

Donate your paperback books to women in jail! Especially in demand is poetry, lesbian erotica & fiction, and books by and about people of color. To donate materials contact Amy or Catherine at Alameda County Library Extension Services, (415) 745-1477.

A SEMINAR WITH J. CALIFORNIA COOPER Friday, June 8th, begins a weekend seminar with author/playwright J. California Cooper. The focus of the seminar is "Expanding Your Imagination." This is a writer's seminar for developing techniques to enhance the imagination & perceptual skills. Ms.

BULLETIN BOARD

Cooper will also preview her newest work. The seminar will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Luis Obispo. For information call (415) 697-7274.

Aché is currently putting together a fundraising committee. If you have any skills or experience in fundraising, grantwriting, or non-profit organizing, please contact Erica at 653-8328 or Lisbet at 824-0703.

Craftswomen of Color are urged to participate in the 12th Annual Women's Bldg. Crafts Fair, held in December at Pier 2, Fort Mason. Application deadline is June 20, no exceptions. Get your application now, call the Women's Bldg. at (415) 431-1180.

East Bay chapter of Camping Women is sponsoring a trip to Yosemite National Park on May 11-13th. \$25 per person. Children are free. For info call 465-8256.

Dancing Lady who is very interested in keeping her strip tease skills honed, is available for your next special event. If you're having a party or even a smaller more intimate occasion - let me entertain you!! Fee negotiable. For info. call Teri, 532-8836.

What is a Lesbian?

Seeking radical, creative, uncensored approaches to this question for upcoming anthology. Send with s.a.s.e. to Lise Weil, P.O. Box 70, Montague, MA. 01351. Deadline June 1, 1990.

Women interested in participating in making a panel or panels for the Africans who have died of AIDS to be in-

cluded in the Names Project Quilt. Please contact Reatha at (415) 835-1552.

"Black Lace" The first & only erotic magazine by and for African American lesbians. Black Lace will feature erotic photography, short stories, fantasy letters, poetry, feature articles and other items of interest to the African American lesbian community. Submit to:
Black Lace
P.O. Box 83912, Los Angeles,
CA. 90083-0912
(213) 410-0808

▼ SERVICES ▼

SUPER FUN KIDSITTING

Creative childcare specially tailored to meet your child's personality. Sports, arts and crafts or adventures. Occasional sitting ONLY. Take a break this weekend and leave your kids to us. (Oakland & Berkeley.) Heather, 832-4753.

Is your daycare provider understanding of your special family? Daycare by Stephanie, a developmental program for children. 8 wks. to school age. 7am to 6pm. Mon-Fri. O.M.I. area, SF. For info. call 334-2077.

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Children's rooms, kitchen, and bathrooms. Professional, experienced designer. Montez, 832-4753.

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"A SAFE & CARING MASSAGE"

by Debra K. Floyd for yourself or a friend. An hour treatment (\$35) consists of a full body massage, grounding, relaxation breathing and ends with a warm wrap. Call 548-2143 for an appointment.

THERAPIST AVAILABLE

Supportive counseling including cross-cultural, sexual abuse, and substance abuse issues for individuals and couples. East Bay. Sliding scale. J. Segal, MFCC Lic. # MX0 2357. (415) 532-2452.

MATH TUTOR

Black woman mathematician available for tutoring children and adults. \$12/hr. 654-5432.

GWEN AVERY FOR HAIR

Precision haircuts, styles, colors and perms. 550-7666.



*Let's Break The
Bonds Of The
Emotions Of
Oppression And
Fly With The Sun
In Our Hearts*

Counseling For Women
Simbwa 465-3933

THE BACK PAGE

Back on the Block COLORS!

upstairs at AMELIA'S
647 Valencia St., S.F.
latin & funk by guest d.j.'s
10pm-2am (\$5)

SAT. - May 5th, May 19th
June 2nd, June 30th

The bay area's only
niteclub operated by
& for women of color.
The Bay Area's hottest
people come in colors...

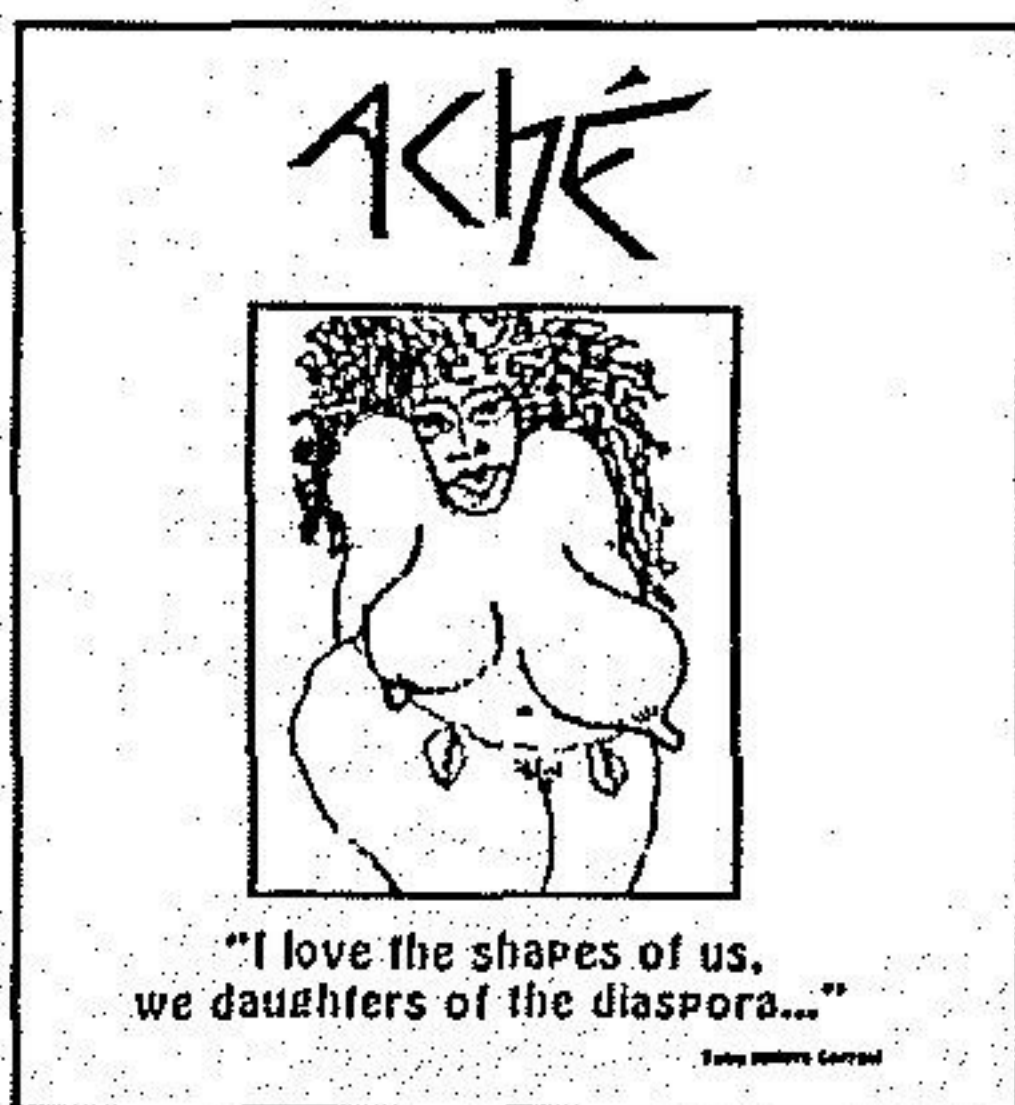


MIDNITE MADNESS



New Aché Shirts!!

by Tobe Melora Correal



T-shirts are white 100% cotton available in Lg & XL (\$12)
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"Ach  ." Ach  , vol. 2, no. 3, May-June, 1990, p. [1]. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, link.gale.com/apps/doc/MSXQDU596096581/AHSl?u=umuser&sid=bookmark-AHSl&xid=f99d1a55. Accessed 8 Dec. 2022.