

THE ART OF SOCIAL CHANGE

“IF YOU HAD ASKED US IN 2007 if we could get 700 groups to organize events by and about women artists in 21 countries in the next four years, we probably would have said no – yet that is exactly what happened.” So wrote PDF grantee, **WomenArts**, about the SWAN Day and Harmony Project they developed to provide ways for women artists to take action together and demonstrate the diversity and power of their work.

Citing as their main challenge that “pervasive sexism in the arts tends to be trivialized because the arts as a whole are so marginalized in the U.S.,” WomenArts in Berkeley, CA say they sought to side-step the argument that arts are a “frill.” Support Women Artists Now (SWAN) Day provides women artists a way to affirm the intrinsic value of women’s work. “Rather than complain about discrimination, it tends to generate positive energy for the idea of gender equality in the arts, instead of defensiveness. SWAN Day is teaching us about the power of our ideas.”

More than a few PDF grantees use the arts to organize in their communities. From theatre of the oppressed to film to life-sized cutouts of community members, the arts provide an entry point for action, according to the **Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance** (KIWA).

A donor-advised grant from PDF made it possible for KIWA in Los Angeles, CA to hold regular classes throughout the year to provide Korean drumming in multi-ethnic venues in Koreatown and throughout Los Angeles in support of a range of social justice advocacy efforts. These included support for KIWA’s successful campaign for a Koreatown park.

Koreatown is the most park-poor urban neighborhood in the nation and Korean drumming was an integral part of events to support the campaign. Korean drummers showed up in support of an anti-war march, a gathering for workers’ rights, events in support of fair wages for immigrant carwash workers, better employment benefits for hotel housekeepers, and transparent investment practices at financial institutions. “Cultural arts have historically been for our society and for KIWA an effective entry point for individuals and families to become more active in civic and community life,” they say.

“Koreatown residents lack access to many basic resources, including education and cultural arts opportunities. This project expanded KIWA’s programming in an effort to increase community participation as a lead-in to further political action.”

GenderJUST develops the leadership and power of diverse Queer Chicagoans through a commitment to racial, economic and gender justice, and to the vibrant resistance cultures of their communities. They sponsored their second annual Queer Crafting for May Day event this year, urging folks to join them for a banner and poster making party for the May Day Workers Solidarity March. With a call to action on Facebook, “Want to participate in May Day but don’t know which group to join? Wondering about how to make connections between radical, fabulous queer politics and all the amazing labor and immigration

groups gathering on May 1?” they told attendees to just bring their imagination and their favorite crafting supplies, knitting, collage, etc., to work on while they had informal discussions about art and social justice. “Mostly, the idea is to connect radical Queers and crafting folks, and plan an amazing May Day.”

Other projects have used visual images to raise public awareness about often-invisible communities. “We have figures, as big as the human body, that represent the people who have been deported or who are in the process of it,” said Francisco Pacheco, as he and others called on President Obama to stop deportations, standing amid life-sized free-standing cutouts of people who can be deported alongside silhouettes of people who have been sent back to their home countries. Artists created the silhouettes of day laborers, mothers and others and placed the cutouts on people’s lawns. This stark reminder of the need for immigration reform was powerfully demonstrated by Los Angeles’ **National Day Laborer Organizing Network** (NDLON) in Arizona. A rally there in the form of an art exhibition emphasized the humanity of each person affected by deportation said Pacheco, one of the organizers for the rally.

The **Latino Advocacy Coalition** (LAC) in Hendersonville, NC has also used art to open conversations about immigration, notably through a traveling art exhibit from their *Raising Our Voices: 100 Stories Project*. After more than two years of story collection and analysis, their project corroborated findings from a national report based on data released by Immigration Custom Enforcement in April 2011: 70 percent of people deported under S-Comm (the federal Secure Communities program) in Henderson County, NC either had no criminal conviction or were convicted of minor misdemeanor offenses, like traffic violations.

To raise visibility on these issues, community members directly affected came together to create a traveling exhibit, *Our Stories, Our Voices*. They used art in different mediums and mixed media, backed by the voices of immigrants interviewed about their lives and experiences. *Our Stories, Our Voices* was displayed at five venues, including educational institutions and community events, reaching more than 3,000 people. “It generated dynamic conversations about immigration issues and galvanized grassroots members to engage with decision makers,” LAC says. The exhibition conveyed moments of resilience and celebration, as well as episodes of discrimination and fear experienced in a diverse range of ways. It also connected artists from many backgrounds and points of view. CONTINUED ON BACK



Courtesy of **Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance**

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New Technical Assistance Grants

A STAR DENOTES A FIRST-TIME GRANTEE

In addition to its other grantmaking, PDF made two rounds of technical assistance grants this year, the focus for its community organizing grants. “Many of these community groups need help building capacity,” said PDF Executive Director, Paul Haible. “They need support with board development, fund-raising, professional development or just replacing worn-out equipment, something which many foundations will not fund.”

Grantees received from \$1,600 to \$2,500 to do such things as attend the Midwest Academy’s Organizing for Social Change program, send educators to the Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track Action Camp, develop and distribute open-source petition technology, publish and distribute a directory of prisoner justice organizations, attend the UN Intertribal Youth Annual Conference, and upgrade technology.

- ★ The Alliance for Appalachia, Arnett, WV
www.theallianceforappalachia.org
- ★ American Indian Community House Youth Council of NYC, New York, NY
www.aich.org/services/youth
- ★ BreakOUT!, New Orleans, LA
www.youthbreakout.org
- California Coalition for Women Prisoners, San Francisco, CA
www.womenprisoners.org
- CAPACES Leadership Institute, Woodburn, OR
www.capacesleadership.org
- ★ Centro de Trabajadores Unidos: Immigrant Workers’ Project, Chicago, IL
www.centrodetrabajadoresunidos.org
- ★ Community Culture and Resource Center, Lexington, MS
Dallas Peace Center, Dallas, TX
dallaspeacecenter.org
- The Freedom Archives, San Francisco, CA
www.freedomarchives.org
- Gardening the Community, Springfield, MA
http://gardeningthecommunity.blogspot.com
- Gwich’in Steering Committee, Fairbanks, AK
www.ourarcticrefuge.org/gwichin-steering-committee/
- NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin Foundation, Madison, WI
www.prochoicewisconsin.org
- ★ NARAL Pro-Choice South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD
www.prochoicedsd.org
- New York State Prisoner Justice Network, Albany, NY
www.nysprisonerjustice.org
- North End Action Team, Middletown, CT
www.neatmiddletown.org
- Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, Spokane, WA
www.pjals.org
- Positive Peace Warrior Network, Oakland, CA
www.positivepeacewarriornetwork.com
- Prison Radio, San Francisco, CA
www.prisonradio.org
- ★ Racial Justice Action Center, East Point, GA
- ★ TGI Justice, Francisco, CA
www.tgijp.org
- Women for Genuine Security, Oakland, CA
www.genuinesecurity.org
- Teachers Unite Inc., New York, NY
www.teachersunite.net
- Tennessee Alliance for Progress, Nashville, TN
www.taptn.org
- ★ Workers’ Dignity Project, Nashville, TN
www.workersdignity.org

► For more information about PDF grantmaking, go to the “Grants and Programs” page on our website: peacedevelopmentfund.org.



Courtesy of **Americas Media Initiative**

Breaking a Diplomatic Deadlock

PDF grantee **Americas Media Initiative** (AMI) in Burlington, VT is the only organization in the U.S. that distributes the independent work of young, emerging Cuban filmmakers to universities and individuals. Previously, people could only access this material if they personally knew the filmmakers or via illegal copies. “Through the sale of these productions, we are able to pay royalties to the filmmakers, which helps them finance their on-going work in Cuba,” AMI explains.

“Cultural exchange plays a fundamental role in creating space for dialogue between Cuba and the U.S. We have seen the power of film to give Cuban and U.S. citizens a better understanding of one another.”

Last year they launched their pioneering *Closing Distances/Cerrando Distancias* U.S. Documentary Shorts Program with the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The program brought four documentaries and one animation to Cuba. Interviews and portions of their presentations were broadcast on Cuban national television—the first time that Cuba allowed a traveling film festival of this kind from the U.S.

Later that year, AMI helped to bring three Cuban Filmmaker Fellows to New York. For many of the attendees at the Flaherty Documentary Seminar, this was the first time they came in contact with Cuban filmmakers living in Cuba. Says AMI, “The Cuban filmmakers were able to network with university professors, filmmakers and curators and made many new contacts that will help facilitate future invitations to the U.S. and continue strengthening cultural dialogue between the U.S. and Cuba.”

This fall, AMI will bring Cuban feature film director Marily Solaya to the U.S. to screen her documentary, *En el cuerpo equivocado (In the Wrong Body)*. The documentary details the first sex reassignment operation in Cuba in 1988. In spring 2014, Cuban filmmaker Marcelo Martin will arrive with his recent documentary, *Elena*, which follows the residents of a crumbling building in Central Havana and the three-year effort to get it fixed.

“The rapid recognition and interest in our work both in the U.S. and Cuba has demonstrated that AMI is filling a space that has been long neglected due to the complex nature of U.S. – Cuba relations.” ■

Can Music Make You Smarter?

In 1996, the College Entrance Exam Board Service conducted a study on all students taking their SAT exams. Students who sang or played a musical instrument scored 51 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and an average of 39 points higher on math. Is this an example of class privilege, or can musical performances really improve learning?

Community Culture and Resource Center (CCRC) in Lexington, MS works in one of Mississippi’s poorest counties, where the low education attainments of adults “often cause defeatism even within the ranks of the county’s leaders.

“Schools in this area face a challenging effort to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in crucial subject areas, [and] parents do not know how to become effective advocates for their children in local schools,” says CCRC. But their Music Makes You Smarter program helped improve student confidence, coordination and character through the study of music.

The beneficial effects of playing music are popularly known as the Mozart Effect, and scientists at Stanford University in California have recently revealed a molecular basis for it. Since 1993, Dr. Frances Rauscher has been studying the effects of music on the brain and says, “Our data suggest that students who learn to play a



Courtesy of **Community Culture and Resource Center**

musical instrument (rather than those who just listen to music) perform better on spatial-temporal and phonemic awareness tasks than children who are involved in other activities, such as swimming or computer lessons.” CCRC’s Music Makes You Smarter Program began in 2006 with support from The Mississippi Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. CCRC designed this project to fit its Youth Leadership Development and Creative Education Program focus during that time. The program was a community effort that included a cadre of volunteers with strong backgrounds in music like retired music instructors, band members, professional musicians and radio personalities. CCRC hosted recitals and received many donations or loans of instruments, both new and refurbished. CCRC found that the student participants did, indeed, improve their academic performance.

Joining a musical ensemble, learning to play together, creating chords, blending instruments and voices is also a way to join in and learn about community organizing. Anyone who has played or sung “We Shall Overcome” can attest to that! ■

Militarism Connects to Violence Against Women

“Feminists, filmmakers and scholars are making important connections between war violence and violence against women during militarized peacetime and war,” says PDF grantee, **Women for Genuine Security** (WGS) in Oakland, CA, which offers an important space to discuss gender and security. They point to the ongoing rapes by U.S. servicemen in Okinawa, South Korea and the Philippines as evidence of the connections between war violence and violence against women as well as the burgeoning scandal of sexual assault in the military.

Congress dragged its feet on re-authorizing the Violence Against Women Act and the Trafficking Victim’s Protection Act this year, two policies which directly impact women and highlight the gendered aspects of violence. As members of the U.S. Congress failed to prioritize gender violence within our own borders, WGS facilitated conversations and brought non-U.S. voices into these discussions. This is “vital for an analysis of militarism from a race, class, gender and nation framework.”

Last year WGS completed a 65-minute documentary featuring seven women leaders who are challenging the pattern of U.S. military contamination, prostitution and the occupation of indigenous lands. It was shown on PBS in California, and in colleges and community settings in California, Washington and New York. The award-winning film, *Living Along the Fenceline*, directed by Lina Hoshino, shows women who live alongside U.S. bases from South Korea to Puerto Rico, and challenges the assumption that military bases make people safe, while they advance alternative ideas of peace and security.

Although not considered war zones, these strategic locations are part of a global network of 1,000 U.S. bases that allows the U.S. to go to war anytime, anywhere. These women are not four-star generals or White House strategists. Their expertise comes from living with the tragic hidden costs to life, health, culture and the environment.

Gwyn Kirk, co-producer and co-director of the film and co-coordinator of WGS says, “Sometimes these efforts seem very small. Nevertheless, I want to express and act on my beliefs for a sustainable future, based on community, justice and love. Three hundred years from now I imagine people will look back to these times and wonder: ‘What took them so long?’ Thankfully, we did not give up.” ■



Courtesy of La Peña Cultural Center

CENTERS FOR CHANGE

FORMER MAYOR OF CHICAGO, Richard Daley, said, “Politicians don’t bring people together. Artists do.” Venues where artists can meet and audiences can experience theater, music and the varied representations of their lives can be powerful tools for self-identification and social change. Studios where young artists can learn skills and practice self-expression can strengthen communities. Two PDF grantees have created very different spaces for the arts in San Francisco’s Bay Area.

La Peña Cultural Center in Berkeley, CA has benefited from grants through PDF’s donor advised funds. La Peña has become a nationally recognized venue for arts with a political message. The Center was incorporated on September 11, 1974, in recognition of the one year anniversary of the military coup that ousted democratically elected socialist President Salvador Allende. As they explain it, “La Peña is inspired by the peñas (gathering places) of Latin America where contemporary social movements have been nurtured by collective action and the wisdom of cultural traditions.”

Since La Peña’s opening, they have become a community space to foster collaboration between different Latin American communities through arts, cultural exchange, education and social action. La Peña provides a space for a wide variety of arts, including musical performances, art exhibits, film screenings, murals, dancing, storytelling, and other community events and classes, all with a social, cultural or organizing message.

In addition to promoting local national and international social movements, La Peña’s focus on the arts provides exposure for new artists. The Center provides space for artists, activists and community members from different movements and organizations to make connections with each other in order to exchange information and share ideas, “with opportunities to create collaborative projects, productions and

Cultural and community organizers address the pressing needs in their communities.

coalitions to promote art and action.” The newly opened Café la Peña exemplifies their goals by offering a gathering space for food and discussion, as well as a performance venue. With this café, they hope to “coordinate programming between the theater and the café to create a truly integrated ‘Peña’ concept.”

PDF’s Development Officer, Ray Santiago, was on their

board of directors for five years. He recounts, “I had known about the organization for several years before joining the board and had attended a number of cultural and community events in their theater or lounge over the past 15 years. What attracted me to La Peña and continues to draw me to the Center is its unique ability to present programs that connect a wide range of social justice work going on here in the San Francisco Bay area and around the world with progressive artists and performers who incorporate these various struggles into their art form.”

Homies Organizing the Mission to Empower Youth (HOMEY) in San Francisco, CA provides activities that equip youth with tools that allow them to transform their emotion into self-determination and community activism. They received a technical assistance grant from PDF this year to develop two artistic expression efforts: a Native Graphix Internship in their screen printing workshop and the Tupac Amaru Recording Studio. The grant will help them create the infrastructure for these projects that will allow them to expand with positive and productive opportunities for the youth.

Native Graphix is both a custom screen-printing business and a work readiness program. Program participants learn basic graphic design and how to screen print. As part of their internship, participants will develop their own t-shirt design, print their order and market their product. The Native Graphix Internship will also provide the interns with marketable skill development in managing a small business. At the completion of the internship, they will have a preliminary work portfolio including a résumé.

Youth who have worked at Native Graphix have gone on to work at other local screen printing shops, attended college to study graphic design, started their own businesses and been recognized for their work. They have designed images for schools, non-profits, various campaigns and programs in San Francisco, including t-shirts to promote HOMEY’s message of youth empowerment and community development.

In 2010, youth and volunteers at HOMEY started the Tupac Amaru Shakur Recording Academy in honor of

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PDF BOARD MEMBER, TINA REYNOLDS, will be spending a Five Colleges public policy residency in coordination with PDF’s Amherst office this fall. The **Social Justice Practitioner-in-Residence** program brings to the Five Colleges individuals with experience shaping or creating public policy. While the program does not limit the field in which residents have worked, residents’ endeavors are focused on policies that advance social justice.



Ms. Reynolds is the co-founder and executive director of **Women on the Rise Telling HerStory** (WORTH), a nonprofit organization in New York City that works with currently and formerly incarcerated women to confront barriers they and their families face during and after prison.

During her Residence, Ms. Reynolds will teach a seminar entitled, “The Impact of Mass Criminalization on Women,” for Five College students who may or may not have directly experienced the fallout of incarceration. She will also deliver a public lecture at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 24th at UMass Commonwealth College in Amherst. Ms. Reynolds will also be available to visit some classes or programs in the Five Colleges and related communities. ■



An Artist Celebrates Peace with PDF

ARTIST FAITH RINGGOLD has generously allowed PDF to use the image of her Story Quilt, Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles, on a poster celebrating peace and justice. “I like that word, peace,” Ringgold told us. “It’s not one I hear enough.”

Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles is from Ringgold’s French series. “After I found my voice as an artist, I went back to some of the artists who inspired me,” she explained. Van Gogh—pictured in the upper right hand corner—was one. But she had something critical to add to Van Gogh’s sunflowers, a quilting bee of African American women such as Sojourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hammer, Rosa Parks and others sewing “An International Symbol of our Dedication to Change the World.”

Ringgold’s work has taken many forms, from social realism, performance art, soft sculpture and children’s books to her famous Story Quilts. Several themes underlie her work. One is the desire to raise awareness of the cultural heroes and beauty within African American culture. Two, is the myth of a white male dominant society. And three, the issues confronting all women. She is the recipient of more than 75 awards and honors and her work is in the permanent collections of numerous museums in the U.S. and abroad including The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; The Baltimore Museum of Art, MD; The Boston Museum of Fine Art, MA; The High Museum, Atlanta, GA; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, NY; The National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC; The Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; and The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England.

The 1996 lithograph of this piece is flanked by PDF’s mission statement, and is courtesy of ACA Galleries in New York City. This special run of signed 20”x14” posters is available for sale, \$29.95 including postage and delivery in the U.S. ■

To order your poster, go to PDF’s website, www.peacedevelopmentfund.org/article/151. All proceeds benefit PDF grantmaking.

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THE ART OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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“Our Voices, Our Stories developed our community organizing capacity by engaging members of the community to take collaborative action such as signing petitions, lobbying decision makers and planning community campaigns to counter anti-immigrant bills, support access to a Drivers License and higher education for immigrants without a social security number,” explained NCLON staff member, Carolina McCready. “This project reached more hearts by helping the visitor visually understand the realities of immigrants in the mountains of North Carolina.”

As former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan stated so emphatically, “The arts are not a frill.” PDF grantees have found that the arts can be a powerful tool for promoting social change, working on both minds and hearts. They are participatory, whether you are the performer or the audience, telling stories or listening to stories, creating a t-shirt or wearing the t-shirt.

Congresswoman Jordan went on to say, “The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up.” ■

Courtesy of
**Latino
Advocacy
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CENTERS FOR CHANGE

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multi-talented Tupac Shakur who was murdered in 1996. The goal of the music studio at the Academy is for youth and young adults to aim high and enhance their creative talents. The Tupac Amaru Studio will be a site where young people can learn to use voice and beats to express their view of their communities and their world. “We have a waiting list of youth who want to use the studio!” HOMEY staff enthuse.

“These two particular projects have been long-time dreams of HOMEY and given the need of the youth, the positive direction of the organization and the availability and commitment of the staff and consultant, we are ready for successful programming.”

La Peña and HOMEY have created two centers that are crucial spaces for education, collaboration and community building. Ray Santiago observes, “The Tupac Amaru Studio and La Peña inspire us all, where cultural organizers and community organizers can come together to address the pressing issues in their communities.” ■

▶ Browse t-shirts at
Native Graphix's on-line store,
www.homey-sf.org/shop-online.html.

MISSION STATEMENT

The PEACE DEVELOPMENT FUND works to build the capacity of community-based organizations through grants, training and other resources as partners in the human rights and social justice movements. As a public foundation, we nourish, foster and encourage the diverse, self-sustaining and economically viable communities that are essential to building a peaceful, just and equitable world.



Courtesy of **La Peña Cultural Center**