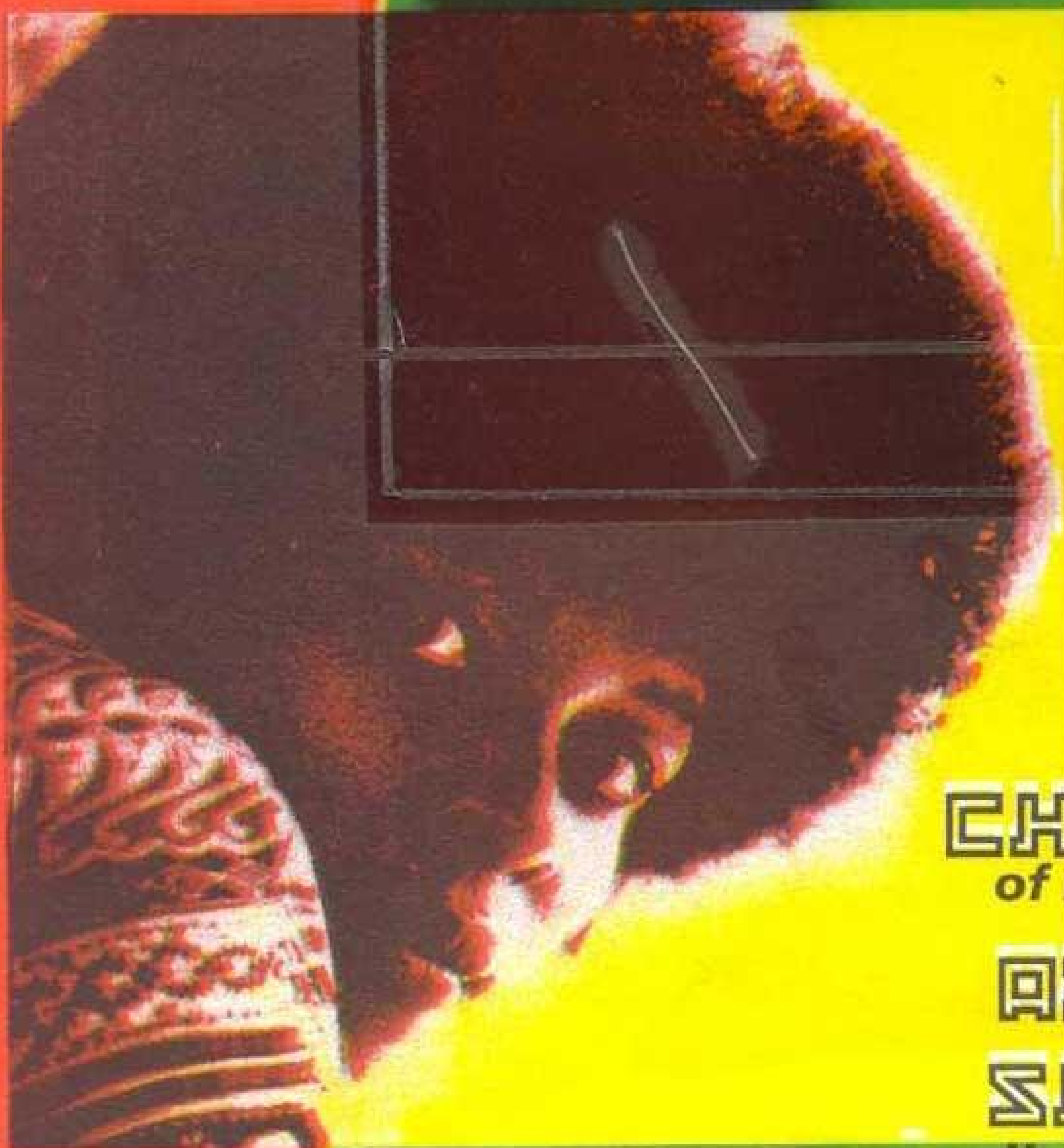


BLU

Issue #5

\$5 £3



CHUCK D
of Public Enemy

ASSATA
SHAKUR
live from Cuba

DWAYNE
WIGGINS
of Toni Tony Toné

Roberto Rodríguez
Alejandrina Torres

Black August
Christopher Arnold



Dwayne Wiggins

from Tony Toni Tone
talks to Blu's Dishonne Muhammad



"About a block away from the club, while I'm choppin' it up with my folks, man the police officer just did his thang, opened my car door up, and started choking me."

I arranged to visit Dwayne Wiggins of Tony Toni Tone in his West Oakland "lower bottoms" recording studio. After entering the beautifully refurbished Victorian, home of Grassroots Entertainment Group — Dwayne's independent record label, I was led up a swirling staircase into the "quiet room." It is in this room that we had the opportunity to chat.

We were both seated comfortably on an antique sofa. A red light overhead faintly lit the room, creating a very relaxed and friendly environment. The smell of Nag Champa filled the air, as the smoke from the incense gently lifted from a bronze statue of Ganesh, one of the many novelties used for decoration throughout the studio. Dwayne comments in a passing conversation that each novelty has been collected during his travels at some point or another, and has now become a large part of the personality of his "home/work space—away from home." Here are the words that Dwayne Wiggins shared with Blu magazine.

Dishonne Muhammad: So, how long have you been living in Oakland?

Dwayne Wiggins: All my life. I grew up right down here. Right down on Lewis Street, over behind the West Oakland BART Station. When we first moved from down here, we moved to Sobrante Park, out in East Oakland, and I grew up on 80th from there.

Dishonne: Do you come from a large family?

Dwayne: Um huh. My parents had eight children. There are two younger than me. My brother Rafael, and my other brother Desmond.

Dishonne: Do you feel like you're a big part of the Oakland community?

Dwayne: I know I am, cause I know a lot of people from here. A lot of people. Their parents, and their kids. I know some generations. I know Oakland real well. Most of my neighbors are my cousins or somethin'.

Dishonne: How long has your studio been here in the "lower bottoms" of West Oakland?

Dwayne: About three years. What happened is I used to have my stuff in a warehouse in Richmond, but it always made me feel like I was going to work everyday.

I was going to move it into another warehouse around here, in West Oakland, but then I found a pad. I was like, "I'm going to take this Victorian, and cut the whole thang, sound proof it, and move all my shit in. Upstairs, downstairs, everythang...and it would be like I was at home all day."

Dishonne: And that's exactly what it feels like in here. It's very beautiful.

Dwayne: The coolest thing that worked out for me — because you know I have kids — is that right down the street is the babysitter. A nursery, and childcare. It's run by this black family. Real positive, real cool, you know what I mean? I drop my kids off at about 9 in the morning, and then I come here about 10, have a little breakfast, chill out or whatever, and I start work

usually about 12 o'clock, and about 1:00 my engineer gets here.

Dishonne: Oh really? How many children do you have?

Dwayne: I have three. Two boys and a girl. One's eight, one's three, and one will be a year this weekend. Ilhan, Dylan, and Jaden.

Dishonne: I always love doing these kinds of interviews, because everytime I do, I have the opportunity to see the "humanness" about the individual that I'm interviewing. Outside of whatever they do, whether they may be an artist, freedom fighter, politician, or whatever, we're all human beings first. You know what I mean?

Dwayne: Yeah. Yeah.

Dishonne: So, anyway, what happened at Dorsey's a few months ago?

Dwayne: A little incident with a police officer. Um, I was sitting outside in front of there just chillin' one night. I'd came there with a partner of mine. A buddy. We met another friend there, who's a female, and we went and dropped my partner off together, and her and I came back to the spot. I had just left the studio; you know what I mean? I was planning on coming right back. I happened to be in sweats, just chillin', drinking water. **About a block away from the club, while I'm choppin' it up with my folks, man the police officer just did his thang, opened my car door up, and started choking me.** I mean. Before he pulled up behind me, there was about two or three cars behind me. They'd been parked there for a while. The officer pulled to the back, driver's side of my car, and put on his parking lights so I could see him. I guess he was running my license or something. After a while, he put on his high beam lights, so I started my car up, and I got ready to leave. **As soon as I started it, the police said over his speaker, "Turn your car off."** So, I turned the car off, and we just sat there, and I'm sitting there talking to my friend, and the next thing I know, my car door is open, and the officer is choking me.

Dishonne: Wow! Just that quick?

Dwayne: Just like that. I mean it sounds silly, but...

Dishonne: That's what happened.

Dwayne: That's what happened. U know? [laughs] And so he started choking me, and then he started screaming, "Spit it out, spit it out!" And I'm thinking to myself, "Hold on I got this water in my hand." So then, I guess he recognized me, and he let me go, and started apologizing for the whole thang.

Dishonne: So what did you think about that?

Dwayne: Well first, you know, your ego. You trip out for a minute, then you got to get yourself together. You know? In that moment, I'm scared for my life. A man's got his hand at your

someone's jacking yo' ass, 'cause I'd been sitting there for a while, somebody could have been makin' me or somethin'. You know what I'm sayin'? **Even though he was in a police car, he didn't come; he didn't operate like a police officer. The first thing flipped through my mind, you know, was try to protect myself** or, "What's goin' down?" But afterwards it just started setting in on me, the more and more that I thought about it was the reality of what could of happened to a brotha'. You know? Just as easy as I was able to walk away and talk about it, I could of just been dead. Just flexin' from my ego, just flexin' from the response of going for something else besides my water bottle. You know what I mean?

Dishonne: Yeah I feel you...just in defense of yourself.

Dwayne: Um huh. I read about that little sister out there in LA, and then in New York man, I'm like...man. What's so different about my thang? After all that I found out about the whole thing that the DWB situation, and the racial profiling and all that shit. I didn't know nothing about it before, and that's what even tripped me out more. While all of this is happening around me, you know...and I'm being in my own little world, from my house to my studio. From off stage, to a hotel room, whatever, and I ain't trippin' on what's going on right around me. You know. I run into my little partners who be telling me, "I got ran on by the police...such and such and such." But, until it happened to me, I knew nothin' about it. You know what I mean?

Dishonne: Right.

Dwayne: So that's why I kind of like stepped out more so, because I know a lot of folks, and it's more personal with me.

Dishonne: So, exactly at what point did you decide to take this thing a step further, and make up in your mind that you weren't just going to let the incident die like so many similar incidents around the country. You know, the ones that we never hear about?

Dwayne: Um. A situation, the more you sit on it, and really think about it, you start feeling like...man, I'm a fuckin' person. I got bills just like you, and they can get up there. And you start thinking of all the things you gotta go through, and you trying to be a positive brotha', a righteous man, and do what's right by your children and your family and the whole bit, and just for your folk's in general — people around you. **You think how a police officer can just violate your rights. Come at you like, "Nigga you ain't shit". You know what I mean?** Anyway, I went to hire my attorney a few days after the incident. We initially had two meetings. One was when I first hired him, and the next one was when I got the chance to look at the transcript of the police officer's statement...

Dwayne: Right... then I saw this bold face fuckin' lie in the officer's statement. I was like, "Oh shit!" And then from there you... from me taking a trip to New York and finding out about the Diallo situation and all of that. All that. **It's a number of things - why I'm pursuing things from here. I mean I put that tag on it for \$1,000,000.00 but that ain't shit when you think about a mothafuckas' life.**

All I know is that, if I'd of died, that little \$1,000,000.00 wouldn't take care of nothing for me. You know what I mean? My family could pay a couple of bills, but you couldn't pay for the price of a person's life with it. Anyway...

Dishonne: Go ahead.

Dwayne: It's not just here anymore. It happened to me, here, in Oakland, but it's like, nation wide. This shit is happenin' all the time.

Dishonne: So what steps did you have to take? Did you call the police on the police or what?

Dwayne: Well what happened is, when I shot the message via one friend, he shot it to Davy D [a radio personality at KMEL radio station in San Francisco]. Davy hooked up an email, and it went from New York to Atlanta to Texas, Louisiana, and wherever else — even over in London. Then I started getting all these calls about it — Oakland's Mayor Jerry Brown, and everything. I'm just doing my thang. When I'm in my zone, and especially when I get calls after like 6 and 7 o'clock, I don't want to work, I wanna just kick it, and when people are calling me wanting to discuss that an all, I'm like, "What is this?" I'm trying to cover up. I hadn't talked to Jerry since I supported him during his mayoral election, and all of a sudden I'm getting these calls. So, I took the laid back approach and I started focusing in more on what was going on besides me taking my trips, besides things happening around just me, besides me bringing my kids to the studio — everything. It started to just play all in. **I feel like I would have been a punk ass not to go out there and try and represent.** You know what I mean?

Dishonne: Who are you representing for?

Dwayne: I'm representing for folks! The black people, the brown people,

people of all colors...just people. No one should be treated that way. That's just the bottom line.

Dishonne: So, did any music come out of that incident?

Dwayne: Oh, yeah. Hell yeah! Um, *Strange Fruit* — you heard that track?

Dishonne: No.

Dwayne: *Strange Fruit* was written by Billie Holiday. She says, "southern trees bare strange fruit, blood on the leaves, blood on the roots", and I put my little tag on it. I say, "society bears no truth. Tell me... what's really goin' on?" All I did in that song was describe my whole little situation, but the hook tells that the world that's when I personally found out that, "southern trees bare strange fruit". The hook just tells it all.

Dishonne: Is that track going to be included on your new solo release this fall?

Dwayne: It's performed by the Toni's.

Dishonne: That sounds good. I hear that you're working with some cool artist on this project. Carlos Santana?

Dwayne: Yeah, and that's just from kickin' it. That's all I've been doing since we [Tony, Toni, Toné] put our last album out. I've been hangin' out. I ran into Carlos Santana, went over to his studio, and we jammed. Terry Ellis from En Vogue has been over here a few times. We were back in Mississippi and I was chilling with

Hootie and the Blowfish, we kicked it. Then, there's other artists from the Bay Area. From Berkeley, from Oakland - Najee. I'm working with some mad cool people on this project.

Dishonne: What exactly, if anything, would you like to change about the community?

Dwayne: Just be an example. That's all people need to do. You can do whatever you do, and still lead a normal and respectable life.



ASSATA SHAKUR

wrote this statement for recent events honoring Marilyn Buck, a political prisoner in Dublin, CA, who was involved in the effort to free Assata from unjust imprisonment.

Assata Shakur has been living in Cuba since 1986, when she escaped from prison where she was serving a life sentence imposed in a highly disputed trial. Assata was a Black Panther, then a Black Liberation Army (BLA) leader in the early '70s, so she was a target of the FBI's COINTELPRO operation. Assata was captured in yet another "driving while black" police action in 1973 on the New Jersey State Turnpike. A State Trooper was killed, as well as Zayd Shakur who was traveling in the car with Assata. Sundiata Acoli, the driver, remains in prison.



Sometimes when i think of Marilyn Buck, i think of her as a preacher's daughter. I imagine Marilyn as a young woman, searching for the truth, searching for meaning, in this tormented world. I imagine her in the segregated south, smack in the middle of the bible belt, trying to understand the nature of good and evil, trying to understand the nature of right and wrong.

For too many people goodness is expressed by meaningless rituals that have nothing to do with the moral and ethical challenges that we are facing today. They go to church on Sunday, dressed in their Sunday best, wearing golden crosses around their necks, while ignoring the burning crosses of racism. There are too many people who say their

prayers, but never once pray for those who are being preyed on. They do not confront the evils of oppression, the evils of poverty, of exploitation, or political repression. They think of themselves as moral, but never examine the inequities and the injustices of this world, nor do they condemn the inhumane system that perpetuates those injustices, trampling on the lives of so many people in the process. i think of her as someone who wrestled with the moral problems of our times, and who was not been afraid to take principled positions around those issues.

Marilyn had a choice. She could have remained silent, she could have reaped the benefits of white-skin-privilege, but instead she chose the path to righteousness. She was not placated with the appearance

POLICE BRUTALITY NATIONAL RESOURCES

October 22 Coalition

www.unstoppable.com/22
1-888-NO-BRUTALITY, email
Oct22@unstoppable.com
October 22, P.O. Box 2627,
New York, NY 10009.

Contact the national office to connect with the struggle in all parts of the country. Check the website for the powerful Call for October 22nd 1999 to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation. Mark your calendar for 10/22/99, show at your local events, wear black, fight back!

Speakers and student/youth action

Contact Andre English at (908) 301-1802 in New Jersey. Andre is a member of October

22's National Coordinating Committee and deserves big props for building a Student/Youth Network around the issue of killer cops and political prisoners. He and his crew can arrange for youth speakers and events and cultural happenings, so get in touch with them.

Community Based Services

www.ncupj.org
821 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15222. Phone (412) 261-1086, fax (412) 261-1312. Dedicated to educate, mobilize, organize and empower neighborhoods throughout urban America, including advocacy for police brutality victims, crisis intervention, and cultural events.

Black Panther Collective

www.panthercollective.com
PO Box 20735, Park West Station, New York NY 10025-1516. Contact: Shaka Shakur. Phone (917) 702-2478.

While not as publicized as their successful video camera campaign to monitor cops, the Black Panther Collective is equally active in the community organizing food and clothing drives.

Black Panther Party Ten Point Program, March, 1972 Point #7

We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color and all oppressed people inside the United States.

National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement (NPDUM)

www.uhurumovement.org,
email apspuhuru@aol.com

If you're from Brooklyn you'll know Uhuru Movement from Dead Prez's concerts, video shoots, and political education events. NPDUM, a national organization founded by Omali Yeshitela, was at the center of a 1996 community action in St Petersburg, Florida that successfully repelled the police from Uhuru House- see web site for story and pics. **You can attend M1 and Sticman's PE classes every Sunday at 4PM @ 357 Marcus Garvey Blvd between Putnam and Jefferson take the A or C train to**

of morality; she fought for the essence of morality. She has never been just another voice singing in the choir, but someone who has risen her voice to praise freedom, and to condemn captivity. She has defended the have-nots, the powerless, and as a woman she has struggled for the liberation of all women.

Marilyn is someone who has continued to grow and to develop. She went from supporting the Civil Rights movement, to supporting human rights and the right to self-determination for oppressed people. She went from condemning poverty to condemning monopoly capitalism that causes it. She went from condemning U.S. military intervention to condemning international imperialism.

Marilyn is someone who has not only preached against evil, but she has devoted her life to destroying it. Because she has been so relentless, because she has been so unequivocal, because she has been so unshakable in her beliefs, the police, the FBI, the CIA, and all the other instruments of repression in the U.S. have tried to nail her to the cross. ...

The only reason that she remains incarcerated is because of her political beliefs and because of her political activism. As a political prisoner Marilyn has continued to grow, and continued to demonstrate courage and conviction. She has continued to create, to celebrate life, and to embody the spirit of goodness. She needs and she deserves the support of all those who are committed to the cause of social justice. She needs and deserves the support of all those who are committed to freedom and to the abolition of pain and suffering on this earth.

Marilyn is no longer the preacher's daughter. She is a preacher and a teacher in her own right. Her sermons are written in poems, in essays, and in the language of example. She is one of the finest examples of political and personal integrity on this planet. She deserves to be supported, she deserves to be respected, and she deserves to be free.



moon bereft

Beyond razor-wired walls
the moon shimmers in the late summer sky
spills over in pale brightness
to draw me into its fullness
washing my eyes in quicksilver

Now, in a heavy-lidded cell
moon-bereft nights leave me weeping
tears well up in dry cratered wounds
despair rises
dark and irradiated
to swallow starlight
and spit it out
like steel needles
that incite my loneliness

My soul careens off cell walls
wails till pain tires
and the pale moon of memory
appears to call me home

© Marilyn Buck

POLICE BRUTALITY NATIONAL RESOURCES

Anthony Baez Foundation

6 Cameron Place, Bronx NY 10453. Phone (718) 364-2879 or (718)-798-2466, fax (718) 653-1681.

Iris Baez's fight for justice for her son energizes and inspires everyone in the movement. The Foundation not only coordinates events in the community, they have also been key in documenting cases for the Stolen Lives Project.

Bay Area PoliceWatch

301 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco CA 94105. Phone (415) 543-9444.

Operating out of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, PoliceWatch runs a brutality

hotline, lawyer referral services and a cop observation network, among their many projects. Much respect to Van Jones for his solid work over the long term.

National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights

105 East 22nd Street, New York NY 10010. Phone (212) 614-5453, fax (212) 260-2861.

Richie Perez has focused on police brutality issues since his time with the Young Lords. The National Congress puts together the annual Racial Justice Day event in the spring. Shouting out Megan, who coordinates the cop watch projects.

Jews for Racial and Economic Justice

64 Fulton Street, #665, New York NY 10038. Phone (212) 964-9210, fax (212) 964-9275. The voice and commitment of forward-thinking Jews is having a big impact on the way the mainstream is talking about police brutality in New York.

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement

<http://members.aol.com/mxgm>

MXGM is based out of Jackson, Mississippi but has bases in Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Atlanta and other cities—go to the website for your local email, phone and address information. Karl Franklin holds it down with at the Center for Constitutional Rights.

Parents Against Police Brutality

Phone (718) 601-1863. Margarita Rosario—who Ghouliani blamed for her son Anthony's death, calling her "a neglectful mother" on the airwaves when she challenged him during a radio program—works with PAPB, as does Nicholas Heyward Sr.

Peace and Justice Foundation

8604 Second Avenue, Dept. 173, Silver Spring MD 20910. Phone (301) 681-2014, fax (301) 681-3681. Founded by Bu columnist Mauri Saalakhian, the Peace and Justice Foundation's focus is on police brutality, political prisoners and community work.



Photo by Sam Carwell

BLK ARTIST:

jane oriel

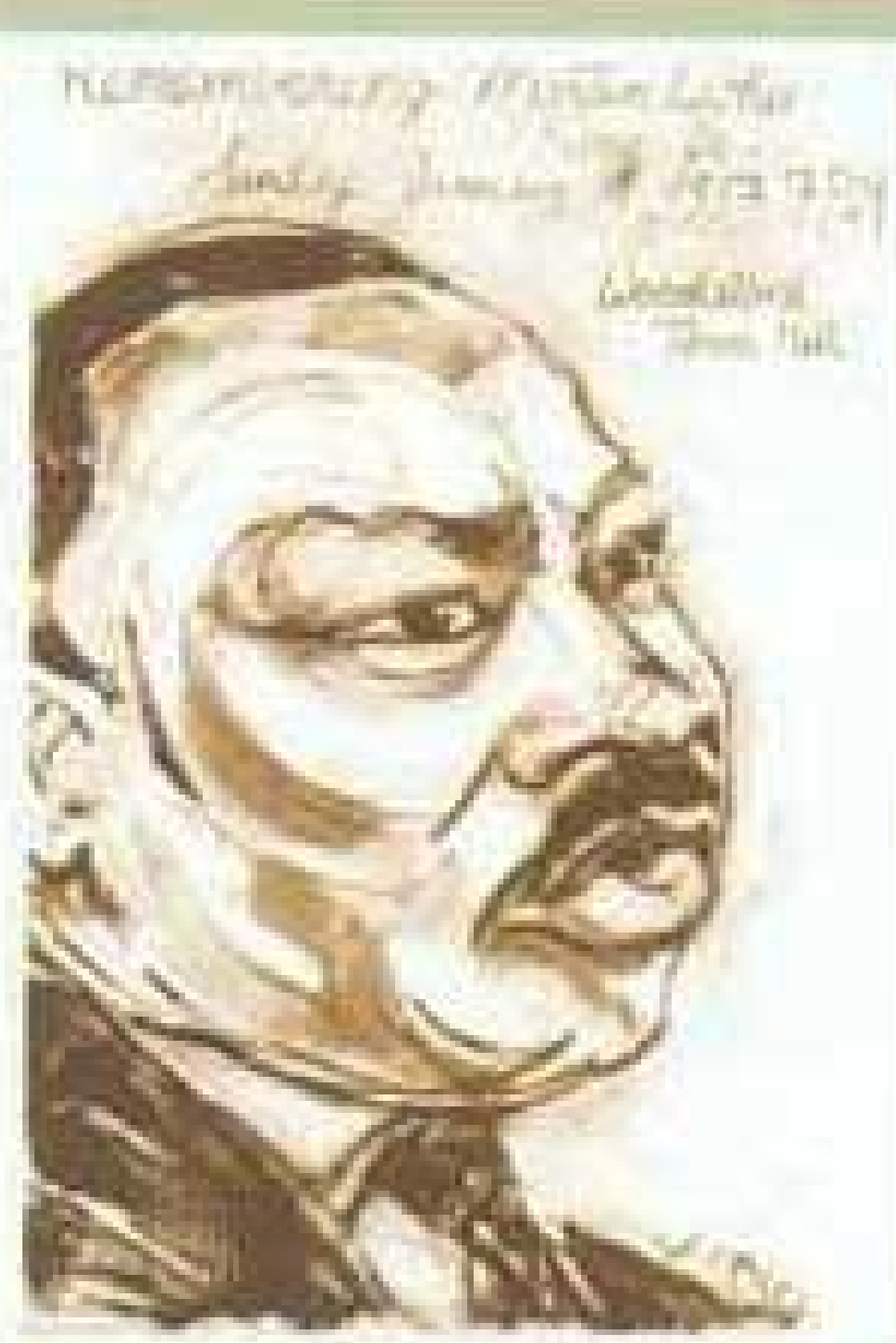
Jane Oriel, Woodstock

P.O. Box 1376 Woodstock, NY 12498

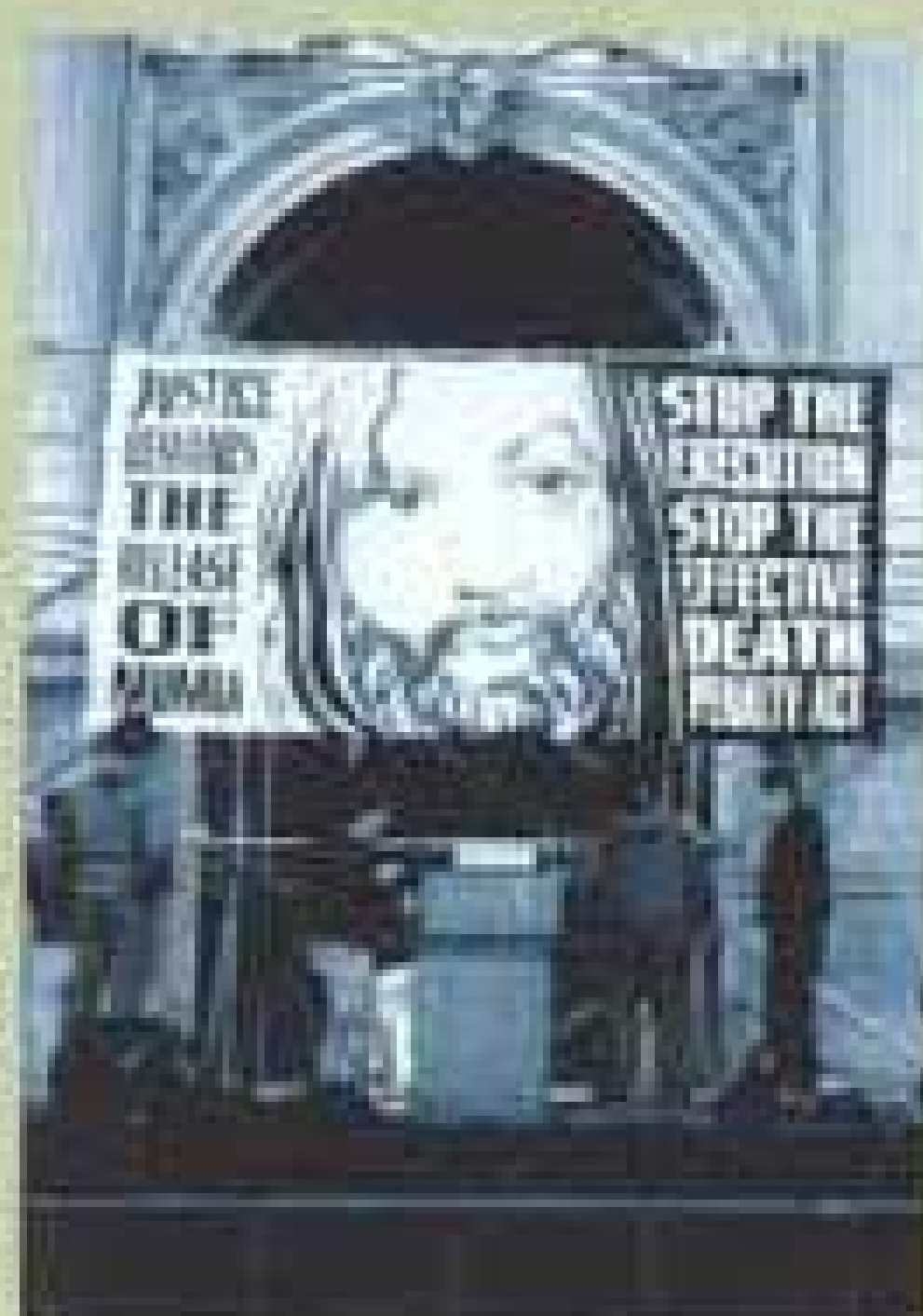
914-879-9611

Jane Oriel is a painter who lives and works in Woodstock, New York. Her work has been shown from coast to coast. She has exhibited extensively in galleries and public forums throughout the Hudson Valley region of New York. In April, 1999, her mural scale painting of Mumia Abu-Jamal occupied the main stage of the "Millions for Mumia" rally in Philadelphia. She recently finished a large painting in support of Puerto Rican political prisoners in conjunction with the Bruderhof Community in Rifton, New York. Her work encompasses political and social issues, portraits, caricatures, figurative, still life and landscapes. She has also created posters, logos and brochures for the United Farm Workers Union, Amnesty International, Nonintervention in Chile and San Francisco Women Against Rape. She has studied at the Art Students' League, School of Visual Arts and Parsons School of Design.

Martin Luther King Jr. 6x4 feet oil on canvas



Millions for Mumia 8x16 feet oil & metallic on canvas



Bruderhof kids in front of Puerto Rican Banner



Mumia Abu-Jamal 7x4 feet oil on canvas



Sundiata is a brilliant mathematician, artist, and committed freedom fighter for the New Afrikan Nation. In 1969 he was imprisoned without bail in the notorious Panther 13 case. After being acquitted in 1971 he was forced underground by police harassment and joined the Black Liberation Army. After he, Assata Shakur, and Zayd Malik Shakur were ambushed by police on the New Jersey Turnpike in 1973, Sundiata was sentenced to life plus 30 years because a cop died in this incident. Zayd Shakur was also killed. Sundiata is one of the longest serving political prisoners in the world. Bu asked him what has made it possible to hold on for all these years:

Looking back i can only truly speak for myself on what makes a PP/POW stay strong, but i don't think my experiences are much different from most PP/POWs who have remained strong in their beliefs despite long harsh years of imprisonment.

When i decided to join the Black Panther Party — meaning i'd decided to wage *serious* struggle against the system — **i knew that the most probable outcome would be death** or imprisonment and that there was only an outside chance of victory in our lifetime. So my decision wasn't made lightly but only after sober reflection of the consequences. But i had simply come to the point where **i couldn't tolerate the injustices** that this society heaps upon Blacks, other people of color, and the oppressed. **i decided i would rather fight** against it than acquiesce to it. In other words, at the very outset my decision to struggle was a step upon the path of no return.

But remaining strong is not a one-time decision that's written in stone. The enemy has a thousand-and-one ways and a lifetime to test a PP/POW's

reserve. And he does so constantly, usually by threats to life and limb but just as often thru offers of compromise, to take the easy way out or "slow your roll." Every long-held PP/POW knows what i'm talking about. All of us have at one time or another questioned whether we made the wisest decision or compromised too much in a particular situation.

Often when i'm faced with a hard decision, that is, whether to **do the right thing at the risk of great personal sacrifice** or to compromise (and one *knows* when he or she has compromised whether others know it or not at the time) i usually immediately slam the door to the offer, tell them, "**Hell no! i ain't the one!**" case closed. No chance of mulling it over, getting weak and selling out. Then i stand ready to deal with the consequences.

A problem is that over time, or at times, it becomes hard to tell whether one has become too foolish, proud, obstinate, irrational, or even masochistic to make sound decisions on tough issues. At those times, i go to the hardest, strongest comrade or friend available whose judgement i value, lay the situation out and ask their advice. Usually they advise the

Sundiata EBERHARD

Eberhard Arnold rejected a promising academic career for life in a poor rural community where all property was shared. These words were spoken during the 1930s as the Bruderhof Community, which he had founded, was being targeted by the Nazi regime because of a deep commitment to God's kingdom of justice. *Salt &*



hard choice that i didn't care to make alone – and i grit my teeth and follow their advice.

Making hard decisions is never easy but experience almost always proves it to be the best path in the long run. By doing so the most one can expect is to become accustomed to it thru repetition until it becomes a habit and part of one's character. Altho it's never easy, making hard decisions is the key to staying strong.

for more information:

www.prisonactivist.org/pps+pows/sundiata.html

write Sundiata:

#39794-066 Box 3000

USPAllenwood

White Deer PA 17887



ACOLI
ARNOLD

In the life of a community several decisive questions will need to be confronted again and again: how are we called? to what are we called? will we follow the call? Only a few are called to the special way that is ours. Yet **those who are called - a small, battle-tried band**, who must sacrifice themselves again and again will hold firmly for the rest of their lives to the common task shown them by God. They will be ready to sacrifice life itself for the sake of unity.

People tear themselves away from home, parents, and career for the sake of marriage; for the sake of wife and child they risk their lives. In the same way **it is necessary to break away and sacrifice everything** for the sake of our calling to this way. Our witness to voluntary community of goods and work, to a life of peace and love, will have meaning only when we throw our entire life and livelihood into it.

The strongest love and justice goes to social outcasts. Whoever experiences this justice of love will never feel like a benefactor condescendingly distributing alms, but will know the fulfillment of his deepest calling in service and interdependence with all people. Whoever lives in this spirit draws the kingdom of God into the present. Where this spirit is alive, **the kingdom of God rushes violently in and is won by storm.** It reveals itself everywhere as good news for the poor, liberation for the oppressed, enslaved, imprisoned.

Reflections on Struggle and Staying Strong