



to Sister Sister



RUNWAY PEACE PROJECT GOES to SYRACUSE

By Maryam Roberts

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARYAM ROBERTS

“Anuradha, a veteran Marine Captain, is wearing the only remaining piece of her dress blues. This dark blue jacket is worn during Marines ceremonies that celebrate their history of military conquest.” As the MC, I narrated over a hip hop beat as Anuradha Bhagwati strutted down the runway.

“But she’s done with all that,” I continued. Cameras flashed, highlighting Anuradha’s dark curls with each strong step.

Stopping center stage in the spotlight, Anuradha whipped off the jacket, swung it above her head and threw it into the audience as I proclaimed, “Anu is reclaiming her cultural & spiritual identity as a child of immigrants and a woman of color!” Three hundred audience members roared with applause as she stood revealing a t-shirt that boldly stated, “Resist. Don’t Enlist.”

Anuradha’s outfit was just one among many designs created for WCRC’s Runway Peace Project pro-peace/anti-war fashion show staged at Syracuse University’s Feminism and War Conference on October

12th-21st, 2006. My role as the MC and coordinator of the event allowed me to bring a different kind of energy to the four hundred and fifty women scholars and activists gathered to exchange ideas and strategies on peace, gender, militarism, feminism and war.

In addition to the fashion show, WCRC also screened our new 10-minute documentary, *Fashion Resistance to Militarism*. Both the film and fashion show are innovative and fresh organizing tools used to take a critical look at how militarism has invaded our closets, and influences our acceptance of or resistance to endless occupations and wars overseas.

Krystal Kessee, Syracuse graduate student and fashion show model said, “My participation in the fashion show was an experience that really made me

Important Gifts

For this holiday season and all year long, you can purchase gifts for your friends and family and support WCRC at the same time! Beginning this winter, you can go to the new online donation marketplace, www.ImportantGifts.org, to purchase tangible gifts like two weeks of training for one low-income woman in our **TEMPO** radio production program, or a donation of our new anti-war curriculum, **Runway Peace Project**, to a community library. Visit ImportantGifts.org today to support WCRC.

Sisters of Fire Awards

Our 8th annual Sisters of Fire Awards was a wonderful success! Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors and staff members who helped put the day together. Turn to page 4 for more on Sisters of Fire 2006.

Out & About

On September 12th, Program Director **Kimberly Alvarenga** spoke on a panel for the Public Radio and Reporting class at **Mills College** about her work with TEMPO. Kimberly also appeared at a public hearing for the **California Commission on the Status of Women**, where she provided her testimony on the impact of family cap regulations on low-income women and children excluded from receiving welfare benefits. Visit www.coloredgirls.org to read Kim's testimony.

Program Director **Maryam Roberts** spoke at the **East Bay Peace Action Annual Gathering** in Oakland on November 12th, where she presented **Runway Peace Project** as an innovative tool to engage communities on issues of militarism and gender. On September 28th, Maryam spoke at a **Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors** event honoring Navy resister **Pablo Paredes**. She applauded Pablo's courage and

highlighted the need for mutual support between organizations of color in the peace movement. Maryam presented Runway Peace Project at **Syracuse University's Feminism and War Conference** on October 19th-21st.

Executive Director **Linda Burnham** chaired a panel on "Working Time Across Class Boundaries" at the "California Conference on Working Time for Working Families," held on September 8th at **UC Berkeley's Institute of Industrial Relations**. Her remarks focused on the ways in which citizenship, marital, and economic status affect how women of color negotiate their work and personal lives. Linda also presented on a roundtable discussion, "Critical-constructive Dialogue on (Trans)National Identities," at the **American Studies Association's** annual gathering on October 15th. Linda appeared on **KPFA's Saturday Morning Talkies** with 2006 Sister of Fire honoree **Cherrie Moraga**, where they talked about Cherrie's work and her award. Communications Director **Elisa Gahng** appeared on **KPFA's Morning Show** along with Sisters of Fire honorees **Tram Nguyen** and **Emma Lozano** where they addressed their work in the immigrant rights movement.

Staff Updates

WCRC welcomes three new interns to the team! Peace & Solidarity intern **Maryam Afaq** comes to us from UC Berkeley where she is studying English. Maryam, known lovingly around the office as MoMo, is working on Runway Peace Project. Also joining the team from Mills College's Institute for Civic Leadership is **Ariel Bowering**. As the Economic Justice & Human Rights intern, Ariel is assisting program director Kimberly Alvarenga with the new TEMPO program. Communications intern **Adriana Lujan** is also at UC Berkeley study-

ing English and Interdisciplinary Fields Studies, where she recently won the California Alumni Association's Leadership Award and Scholarship. Adriana has worked on several projects including media work for Sisters of Fire and this newsletter.

TEMPO Update

The 15 women of TEMPO (Technological Empowerment and Media Project of Oakland) have completed their first month of training! As part of their training, in addition to technical know-how, the women decide the content of their own audio documentaries. This group has decided to address the widespread sexual exploitation of underage prostitutes in Oakland and the impact that mainstream hip hop has on women of color and children. Stay tuned for more updates! TEMPO is a 12-week program that trains low-income women of color in radio production and leadership skills. For more info about TEMPO, email kalvarenga@coloredgirls.org.

WCRC in the news!

TEMPO was featured in a front-page story in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on women's increasing presence in radio. In the September 15th article, TEMPO mentor **Renita Pitts** was quoted about her involvement and about the importance of opening up media access to the voices of women of color.

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SYRACUSE

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question my closet. I realized how much I contribute to the war by simply what I wear. Before the show I thought I had it down. I didn't question my politics, but after the show I realized the importance of further questioning what is hanging in mall windows and what is draped across the US. The influence of war is vicious."

WCRC brought two powerful women of color veterans, Anuradha Bhagwati and Eli PaintedCrow to participate in this presentation of Runway Peace Project. Both Anuradha and Eli created outfits for the fashion show that transformed uniforms from their military service into expressions of peace. Eli altered the desert camo uniform she wore in Iraq into a traditional ghi, "Warrior for Peace" outfit. She creatively replaced the official military badges with symbols of peace like an illustrated peace dragon seal sewn onto the back of the shirt.

"The process of creating, wearing and giving away the uniform was also a very healing, powerful act for me. It reaffirmed that I continue to be a warrior following my truth, rather than a soldier just taking orders," Eli PaintedCrow said. "In making a give away out of this outfit I released my past and created a new path, one with heart, justice and truth, breaking the illusions that I once had. I thought that being a soldier was the same as being a warrior."

Anuradha and Eli were also able to share their personal military experiences and how they transformed their lives to work for peace in a special conference session titled, "Women of Color Veterans: Powerful Voices for Peace."

"This nation was founded on violence, it does not know peace," said Eli PaintedCrow, a retired Army

veteran with 22 years of service. Eli enlisted just before her 21st birthday, as a single mother with two children and no high school diploma. Eli served in many positions and was deployed to various locations throughout her service. Her last deployment was to Iraq, where she, "observed Iraqi culture being erased by U.S. soldiers, just as Native American culture had been."

Anuradha Bhagwati became a Marine for different reasons. "I wanted to push my boundaries. I wanted to be G.I Jane," she said. Her experience as a Captain in the Marines for five years taught her something different. "I found rampant sexism, racism, classism and homophobia. I was left wondering, 'What does a strong woman look like? A confident woman?' [In the military] I became something hateful, not human," she said.

Feminist Scholar and WCRC Board Member Margo Okazawa-Rey attended the session and was moved by Anuradha and Eli's stories. "The experiences and insights shared by Eli and Anu were the first-hand details and concrete examples of the theoretical discussions in other panels. These sisters' words cut to the heart of militarism: the necessary dehumanization - in myriad ways - of both military personnel and 'the enemy.'"

The Syracuse Feminism and War conference was a critical opportunity to reflect on how gender issues relate to this country's permanent drive toward war. We were glad to be there, lifting up the voices of women of color veterans who have chosen the path of resistance and strutting our stuff in the name of peace.

To bring Runway Peace Project to your campus or community, contact Maryam at mroberts@coloredgirls.org.



Sisters of Fire 2006

■ By Adriana Lujan

The clear sky and brilliant sun were in our favor on October 22, 2006 as WCRC celebrated our 8th annual Sisters of Fire Awards Ceremony at the Rotunda Building in Oakland City Center. There was no better way to start such a beautiful morning than with the smooth tunes of the young musicians from **Oaktown Jazz** and a silent auction that boasted numerous artworks and desirable gift items.

Three hundred WCRC supporters gathered from all parts of the nation on Sunday morning to celebrate the work and lives of five remarkable women. After an appetizing brunch catered by **California Rose**, we presented awards to honorees **Monique Harden**, **Emma Lozano**, **Cherríe Moraga**, **Tram Nguyen** and **Deborah Vaughan**. The program also featured performances by **Youth Speaks** and **Dimensions Dance Theater's Rites of Passage**, as well as a special tribute to honor the lives of sisters who have passed this year.

Oakland City Council Candidate **Aimee Allison** shared her words of congratulations, emphasizing the importance of grassroots organizations for the development of strong communities and for continuous efforts towards social change.

Our thanks to board members **Genevieve Negrón-Gonzales** and **Derethia DuVal**, who served as emcees for the program, and to our table hosts, sponsors and volunteers whose work made this wonderful event a great success. Very special thanks to all the individuals and businesses that contributed to our Silent Auction. Pictures, audio clips of the day's speeches and honoree's bios will soon be available at our website: www.coloredgirls.org.





TOP : HONOREES TRAM NGUYEN, CHERRÍE MORAGA, MONIQUE HARDEN, DEBORAH VAUGHAN, AND EMMA LOZANO

BOTTOM : DIMENSIONS DANCE THEATER'S RITES OF PASSAGE TAP GROUP PERFORM.

OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP: AMIE ALLISON

BOTTOM: YOUTH SPEAK POETS

Reports

Building a 21st Century Transnational Women's Movement

Published by The Global Fund for Women and the Women of Color Resource Center

Review by Adriana Lujan

On September 10, 2005, women activists from many countries, races, ethnicities, and ages gathered for three and a half days of in-depth discussion about the effects of current U.S. policies on the lives and communities of women across nations.

Discussions centered on the effects of U.S. foreign policy on globalization, family and community displacement, migration and immigration, militarism and gender-based violence, and religious fundamentalism. The report, published by the Global Fund for Women and the Women of Color Resource Center, provides a thorough account of the collective discussions among the 80 women leaders, includes a call to action, and outlines next steps towards building transnational resistance.

U.N. Study on Violence Against Women

Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence

The recently released United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Women provides an in-depth look at the persistence of violence against women in every country as a human rights violation and offers recommendations both on the domestic and international levels. As a companion to the U.N. study, our sisters at MADRE facilitated a report by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) on violence against Indigenous women. Titled *Mairin Iwanka Raya*, the companion report addresses persistent gaps between the global women's movement and the international Indigenous movement by putting forward an Indigenous conception of gendered violence. With a strong focus on the contexts that give rise to violence against Indigenous women, the report highlights promising practices in areas of research, political mobilizations, and community-based civil society organizations and outlines further challenges to securing Indigenous women's right to a life free of violence.

Look for both reports online at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/violenceagainstwomen-studydoc.pdf> and at <http://madre.org/>



Books

Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology

Edited by Incite! Women of Color Against Violence

Published by South End Press, 2006

Review by Adriana Lujan



In *Color of Violence*, INCITE! brings together the voices of 30 visionaries in an anthology that places the spotlight on the experiences of sexual and domestic violence survivors in order to demand solutions that put women of color at the center of discussion. In the tradition of *This Bridge Called My Back*, INCITE! brings together writings by both survivors of gender-based violence and activists to analyze interpersonal assaults as well as violence from the state, forcing the reader to reconsider our dependence on the state's criminal justice system for "solutions." *Color Of Violence* addresses the effects of U.S. militarism on women in dominated countries, as well as assaults by the medical industry as women continue to be targets for sterilization and population control policies.

We Got Issues: A Young Woman's Guide to a Bold, Courageous and Empowered Life

Edited by Rha Goddess and JLove Calderon

Published by Inner Ocean Publishing, 2006

Review by Maryam Afaq



We Got Issues is a brave and ambitious collection of stories, interviews, poems and advice encouraging young women around the country to reclaim themselves and have their voices truly heard. The book, featuring 80 or so pieces by various artists, writers, poets and activists, focuses on everything a young woman in today's world could be concerned about from spirituality to motherhood to racism and much more. Aimed primarily at women between the ages of 18 and 35, the guide invites readers to reflect on the candid discussions and offers rituals that they may incorporate into their own daily lives. For more information, check out www.wegotissues.org/.

CONTINUE HEADS UP ON PAGE 8

from Women of Color Resource Center



NEW! RUNWAY PEACE PROJECT

Educate with Style! Runway Peace Project organizes anti-war fashion shows across the nation. This multimedia kit looks at the powerful influence of U.S. militarism on popular culture.

The kit includes:

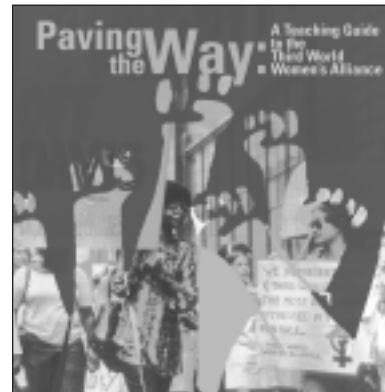
Fashion Resistance to Militarism DVD: A 10-min documentary that asks: What's so hip about wearing camo?

Create Your Own Fashion Show! CD: A step-by-step guide on how to organize an anti-war fashion show.

The 411: What Every Girl Should Know (about militarism): The facts and stats on how women and youth of color are impacted by militarism.

Bring Runway Peace Project to your campus or community!

Kick off a conversation about war, militarism, women and youth. To host an anti-war fashion show, email mroberts@coloredgirls.org



NEW! PAVING THE WAY: A Teaching Guide to the Third World Women's Alliance

The **Third World Women's Alliance (TWWA)** mobilized women of color into the vibrant political ferment of the late 1960s and 1970s. Now the history of this pioneering organization is captured in a PowerPoint presentation, including striking graphics from the period and four sections:

Origins traces the trajectory from the 1968 Black Women's Caucus to TWWA.

Political Outlook, Program & Goals outlines TWWA's political analysis that integrated race, class and gender, and broke new ground in feminist thinking.

Political Action details the projects and campaigns that were led by the TWWA or in which they participated, including their newspaper, *Triple Jeopardy*.

Lessons and Legacy summarizes the main contributions of TWWA.

ORDER FORM

☐ **Runway Peace Project** . \$39.95 each \$_____

☐ **Paving the Way DVD** \$29.95 each \$_____

Sales Tax (CA residents only) 8.75% \$_____

Shipping/Handling
(\$3 for first item, \$1 for each additional) . . . \$_____

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Call for discount rate on bulk orders. All orders must be prepaid. Order securely on-line by credit card. See www.coloredgirls.org to order or for more information about publications and WCRC.

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1611 Telegraph Ave. #303, Oakland, CA 94612.**

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Film

NO! Confronting Sexual Assault in our Community

DVD, 94 minutes, 2006
Producer/ Director: Aishah Shahidah Simmons



NO! is a documentary film depicting the impact of sexual violence on women and girls from the Black community. With the continuing rise of sexual assaults on women, the film addresses how sexual violence affects the lives of women of color with first-hand testimonials from survivors, while offering healing support for affected women as they negotiate their identities and sexualities without violence. "This ground-breaking work creates needed space to debate the issue of how violence against women harms Black women and those who love them," says MacArthur Genius Award recipient and University of Maryland professor Patricia Hill Collins. *For more information on the film or to purchase a DVD, visit: <http://www.nootherapedocumentary.org>.*

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