

MILESTONES

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History
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Stone Center Welcomes the Many Talents of Sarah Jones

ON THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 13, A DIVERSE GROUP OF CHARACTERS WILL TAKE THE STAGE AT THE STONE CENTER THEATRE.

Though no one knows for sure, they may include an elderly black woman pondering the lack of poor peoples' voice in health care issues, a young, nervous Dominican-American female addressing a Congressional hearing on public health, an elderly Korean-American male speaking out on the rising cost of prescription drugs, and a young African American barber stressing the need for community health education.

But regardless of which characters show up, Sarah Jones will be there. In fact, the multitalented poet, actress, activist and playwright will be the only one on stage that night as she presents an 8pm showing of *A Right To Care*, a one-woman performance piece commissioned by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Jones' masterful use of comedic and poignant character portrayals explores the ways ethnic, racial and economic health disparities impact people's lives. In doing so, Jones' artistic creation sheds light on relevant topics of public health and the larger social issues they reflect.

A Right To Care is one of Jones' latest projects in a decade-long year career coated with critical acclaim. A multiple Obie Award-winner, the native New Yorker was recently labeled "a master of the genre" by The New York Times for her writing and stage performances. Jones' solo shows *Surface Transit*, *Women*



Sarah Jones

Can't Wait, and the Meryl Streep-produced *Bridge and Tunnel* have garnered numerous honors including a Helen Hayes Award, HBO's Comedy Arts Festival's Best One Person Show Award, and two Drama Desk nominations. Her plays highlighting her multiple roles have sold-out The Kennedy Center, the Berkeley Repertory Theater and the American Place Theatre, among others, and have enjoyed special showings with the United Nations, the Supreme Court of Nepal, and members of the U.S. Congress.

But perhaps the most important role Jones ever played was her real-life one as a protector of free speech against encroaching government regulation in a recent case with First Amendment implications. In May of 2001, the Federal Communications Commission declared that Jones' poetic recording, "Your Revolution," a feminist critique of misogyny in popular music, was indecent. An Oregon radio station that played it was fined, and the recording was essentially banned from the airwaves for two years before the FCC, in February 2003, reversed itself under pressure from a lawsuit by Jones and civil libertarian groups. After the government's retreat, Jones told the press she was "pleased the FCC has admitted its error," but not without further challenging the subjective nature of the censorship process. "I'm free for now," said Jones. "But who's next?"

Fortunately for North Carolinians, Jones will bring her activist spirit and many talents to the Stone Center on October 13 for an 8:00 performance of *A Right To Care*. Tickets are \$20 for general admission, \$10 for students, and are available at the Carolina Union box office. For more information, call the Stone Center at 919-962-9001, or the box office at 962-1449.



Stone Center Plans Year-Long Exploration of Black Popular Cultures/Black Popular Struggles

"The Black Arts and the Black Power concept both relate broadly to the Afro-American's desire for self-determination and nationhood... Both concepts are nationalistic: One is concerned with the relationship between art and politics; the other with the art of politics..."

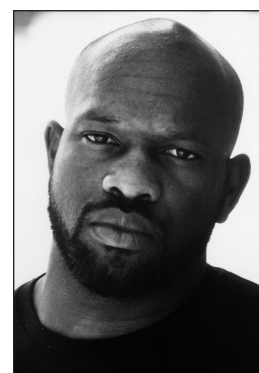
- LARRY NEAL

I can't define what is Black in my work. I think it's not necessary that I have to define it as much as I should know that it's there... I'm Black, and my sensibility derives from my being Black. But I'm also dealing with art... on the highest universal level. And that's what I want to be known for. I want to maintain that search for what it means to be Black, whatever it is... but at the same time, must deal with this within the issues that have grown out of the history of art..."

- JACK WHITTEN

A series of programs, discussions and events centering on Black popular cultures will be held at the Stone Center beginning with a September 22 roundtable discussion featuring social analysts, Bakari Kitwana and Raquel Rivera. Kitwana's works include the era-defining book, *The Hip Hop Generation*, and his latest release, *Why White Kids Love Hip Hop: Wangstas, Wiggers, Wannabes and the New Reality of Race in America*. He has written on society, culture and music for a wide variety of publications including The New York Times and the Village Voice, and recently appeared on *The Tavis Smiley Show* on PBS, and *News and Notes with Ed Gordon* on NPR. Dr. Raquel Rivera is a freelance journalist, sociologist and author of *New York Ricans from the Hip Hop Zone*, an examination of the New York Puerto Rican influence on hip hop culture. Rivera has written for numerous publications including *Vibe*, *Urban Latino*, *Stress*, and *The San Juan Star*.

The yearlong series will focus on representations of organized resistance to oppression that is connect-



Bakari Kitwana



Raquel Rivera

ed to popular or people-centered expressions of art, culture and Black aesthetics. Other programs in the series will examine *R&B and Soul Legacies*, *Sport and the Black Athlete*, *Film and Media*, and *Hip-Hop Culture*. The Stone Center's annual Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film will also spotlight films that explore the connections between culture and struggle. For information and updates, call 962-9001.



Human Rights & Youth Activist Malika Sanders to Deliver Twelfth Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture

Malika Sanders, Executive Director of the 21st Century Youth Movement, will deliver the Twelfth Annual Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture on November 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the Stone Center Theatre.

Sanders is an accomplished activist and community leader who has fought for change on a local and international level. At age 21, the Alabama native was appointed head of the 21st Century Youth Movement, a Selma-based nonprofit created by civil rights veterans and focused on youth empowerment, leadership training and community service. Under Sanders' leadership, 21st Century has grown from a modest volunteer effort into a leading 1500-member student organization with 35 chapters in the US, and 3 in western Africa. The organization, whose headquarters and training center is housed on 16 acres of land, has led its youthful participants to establish a credit union, prevent a landfill from polluting their local community, and secure referendums that created more resources for their local schools.

While her stewardship of the youth organization has garnered international attention and acclaim, Sanders reputation as a leader was solid long before she assumed the top post at 21st Century. At age 16, Sanders co-founded Student Movement Against Racial Tracking (SMART), a group that gained national attention by protesting the inequitable practice of 'ability grouping' and inspiring high school students and their parents to temporarily shut-down a Selma high school. As a result, the city



Malika Sanders

changed its policies to accommodate a more objective and inclusive process for black students. Sanders received the Martin Luther King Freedom Fighters Award for her anti-tracking efforts. While gaining a degree in Psychology from Spelman College in Atlanta, Sanders became involved with the Environmental Justice Movement in Georgia and addressed a congressional hearing on the pollutant, dioxin. For her work during these years, she received the Ashe Youth Leadership Award from her fellow youth activists.

Sanders' ongoing activism and work with 21st

Century has continued to garner awards and recognition. In 2002, she received the Reebok Human Rights Award, and she followed that up with the 2003 Redbook Mothers and Shaker's Award. In August 2003, Sanders was one of three young adult conveners of the 40th Anniversary of the March on Washington, and two months later, Essence Magazine tagged her as one of "50 Women Who Are Shaping Our World." Sanders also worked to organize the National Hip Hop Political Convention held in Newark, New Jersey in 2004. She continues her work against student tracking and for education with the Institute for Popular Education and the Coalition of Afrikans Reclaiming Education, two groups promoting education as an important human rights issue.

The Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture is the signature program of the Center. It features African American female lecturers whose work, scholarship and service epitomize the spirit of the late Dr. Sonja Haynes Stone. Previous lecturers have included Angela Davis, Dr. La Francis Rodgers-Rose, bell hooks, Congresswoman Eva Clayton, Kathleen Cleaver, Sonia Sanchez, Atallah Shabazz, Alfre Woodard, and Pearl Cleage.

This free lecture is open to the public. For more information, contact the Stone Center at (919) 962-9001, or visit www.unc.edu/depts/stonecenter.

THE STONE CENTER *an Overview*

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was established on July 1, 1988. Originally known as the Black Cultural Center, it was renamed for beloved faculty member Dr. Sonja Haynes Stone after her untimely passing in 1991. A scholar, activist and visionary, Stone inspired countless students and colleagues throughout her 17 year career at the University. Today, the center is one of the preeminent sites in the nation for the critical examination of African and African American Diaspora cultures, providing intellectual and cultural programming that is both timely and informative.

Early in its history, the Center began to outgrow its 900 square-foot space in the Frank Porter Graham Student Union. The need for a freestanding facility became a top priority. In 1993, after active urging by a coalition of students, faculty and staff, the Board of Trustees approved a site for the center. The much-anticipated groundbreaking took place in April of 2001. The tri-level 44,500 square-foot, freestanding Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History opened its doors in August of 2004.

Poet Suheir Hammad Visits Stone Center for Four-Day Residency in October

... let it rain the wrath of crazy horse
that manic native in the sky
let it flood with the sweat of shaka zulu
with holy water from frustrated vodou
cleanse your eyes of blond and blue
purify your spirit from red, white and blue
enough of this
colonial commercialization of ancient civilizations
right when we need to rebuild nations

get offa this suicide watch we on ...

excerpt from "Suicide Watch"
Born Palestinian, Born Black
Harlem River Press, 1996

Poet and activist Suheir Hammad will be a Stone Center artist-in-residence from October 4 through October 7. Recipient of the Audre Lourde Writing Award from Hunter College, the Morris Center for Healing Poetry Award, and a New York Mills Artist Residency in Minnesota, the Palestinian-American poet is the author of three books of poetry including *Born Palestinian, Born Black, Drops of this Story*, and her latest release, *Zaatardiva*.

As a featured artist and critically-acclaimed contributor to HBO's "Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry," Hammad's writing and performance skills have attracted national attention. In 2003, she was an original cast member and writer for the show's Tony Award-winning Broadway version, "Russell



Suheir Hammad

Simmons Presents Def Poetry Jam on Broadway." Hammad is also featured in *Listen Up! An Anthology of Spoken Word Poetry*, and several other collections. In addition to her work as a creative artist, Hammad has written and spoken out about issues such as the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, foreign affairs, domestic violence, sexual abuse, racism, and homophobia.

Her four day residency will include class visits, student organization visits, a community workshop on writing, facilitation of the Center's Hekima Book and Discussion group (featuring her work, *Born Palestinian, Born Black*), and a book signing for *Zaatardiva*, run by the University's Bulls Head Bookstore. For more information, call 919-962-9001.

A Quick Look Back: Highlighting the First Half of 2005

Stone Center Hosts Historic Black Radical Symposium

This past April, the Stone Center hosted the historic symposium “Black Radical Movements of the ’60s and ’70s: Legacies, Consequences and Futures.” The daylong event joined civil rights and black power era organizers with relevant authors, activists and historians for three roundtable discussions examining the impact of the resistance movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Among the twelve panelists were former members of such groups as the Black Panther Party, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Congress of African Peoples (CAP) and the Southern Africa Support Project.

The stated objectives of the roundtables was to outline the accomplishments of black radical movements, determine a viable definition of “black radical” in the 21st century, and initiate conversations about the politics, social dynamics and history of these movements. At the symposium, panelist Michael Simanga --a poet, novelist and former member of CAP-- offered perspective on the panelists’ historic activities. “What is (considered) ‘radical,’ clearly depends on who has power and who doesn’t,” said Simanga, noting that pledging to sit in the front of a bus at a time when one was not supposed to sit there was “a radical idea. For the people sitting on this panel who were involved in various movements, part of what engages you to want to

change society is human aspiration. This idea that you are restricted by somebody else’s notion of who you are or who you should be, in your soul, you know is unjust and wrong. And as you move around, you see others who have the same aspirations.”

Upon the symposium’s conclusion, the panelists committed themselves to dialoguing with student activists, to replicating the symposium at other institutions, and to further documenting their historic activities.

Other highlights from the past six months include the semester-long art exhibit, Como Se Cuenta El Cuento (How is the story told) by Afro-Panamanian collective, El Taller Portobello (The Portobello Workshop); the Stone Center’s sponsorship of a March performance and workshop by internationally-acclaimed song and dance ensemble, Peru Negro; a ten-day residency by award-winning writer and poet, Willie Perdomo; a March performance by jazz legend, Nnenna Freelon; an April concert by the innovative wind quintet, Imani Winds; a June presentation of Howard Craft’s dramatic play, *The Wise Ones*; and the co-sponsorship and hosting of the opening session of the annual Minority Health Videoconference with the UNC School of Public Health’s Minority Health Project.

Spring UISF Fellows and Beech Recipient Travel Abroad

Mejs Hasan and Amy Oraefo, rising juniors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will study abroad this fall after receiving Undergraduate International Studies Fellowships this past spring. The annual fellowship program, administered by UNC’s Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History, gives students from underrepresented groups up to \$2,500 each to pursue academic research or study abroad.



Hines

The center also presented a Harvey E. Beech Award to senior Maurice Hines, a communication studies major from Durham. The \$1,000 prize will allow Hines to travel to Morocco to study Arabic and Moroccan culture.



Hasan

Hasan, an economics major from Chapel Hill, will travel to the University of Stockholm in Sweden to research the Arabic language. Oraefo, a communication studies and cultural studies double major from Raleigh, will use her fellowship to research religious systems in western Africa.



Oraefo

“These fellowships are a way of supporting the university’s intentions of opening the international experience to all students,” said Dr. Joseph Jordan, Stone Center director.

Established in 2004, the Undergraduate International Studies Fellowships are funded through the generous gift of an anonymous alumnus who maintains an abiding interest in the Stone Center. Applicants are evaluated on their academic records, extracurricular engagements, financial need and the objectives of their intended study abroad.

Upon their return, fellows must publicly share their research in a forum arranged by the Stone Center.

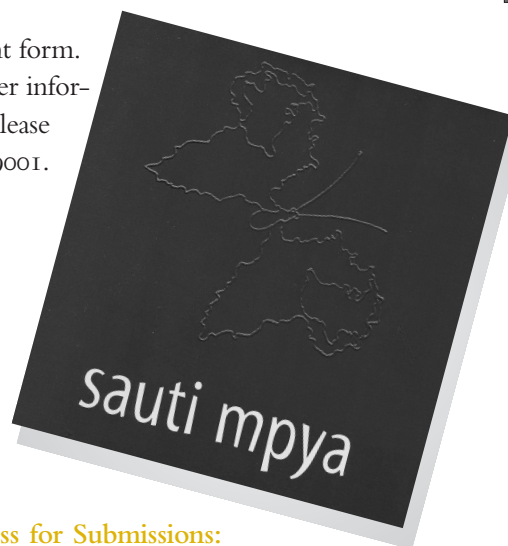
The Beech Award, which benefits students and student projects, is named in recognition of the late UNC law school alumnus and one of the first African-Americans to graduate from the University.

The Undergraduate International Studies Fellowship supports international travel and study for students, particularly those who do not otherwise have the financial resources to participate in study abroad programs and who are members of underrepresented groups in international study. Students in good standing and enrolled full time are eligible to apply for fellowships. Applications for this program are available in Suite 215 of the Stone Center or by download at www.unc.edu/depts/stonecenter.

Submission Call for Sauti Mpya

The Stone Center Literary Magazine *sauti mpya*, which is Swahili for “new voice,” is accepting submissions for Spring 2006. The magazine, founded in 1992, includes poetry, stories and essays, as well as color reproductions of artwork and photography. The purpose of the magazine is to highlight the African Diasporic experience through original literary and visual works. Submissions are open to UNC-Chapel Hill students, students from other universities, faculty members and the surrounding community. All material appearing in *sauti mpya* is reviewed by an editorial board. A limit of three works per author/artist may be submitted in any one category (poetry/prose/visual art). A separate form should be used for each submission including your name, submission category and complete contact information. All submissions must be on disk, CD, or slides. Submissions will not be returned. Accepted artwork may be used in future issues. All writers/artists chosen for inclusion in *sauti mpya* are sent a letter of notification and publication

agreement form. For further information, please call 962-9001.



Address for Submissions:
sauti mpya
 The Sonja Haynes Stone Center
 for Black Culture and History
 150 South Road, CB#5250
 Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5250

Yes, I want to support the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History

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Communiversality Takes on New School Year, New Director, New Coordinators

The Communiversality Youth Program heads into the fall semester with a renewed sense of purpose, a new director and two new student coordinators.



Lotticia Mack,
Communiversality Coordinator

Lotticia Mack, a former public school teacher and graduate of North Carolina A&T, will guide the popular academic and cultural enrichment program in its 13th year of operation. Joining her are two new program coordinators, juniors Nikki Roberson and Ebonie Leonard.

“My mission as the new director for Communiversality Youth Programs is to continue a path of empowerment and enrichment for our youth that parallels the vision and legacy of Dr. Stone,” says Mack, who taught English for five years in Virginia’s Fairfax County. Born and raised in Burlington, NC, she was also a program coordinator for Big Brother Big Sisters of Greater Greensboro prior to becoming a teacher. “The Communiversality Program is not only the cornerstone

of the Stone Center, it acts as a cornerstone for growth, change, and opportunity for many youth in surrounding African American communities.”

Roberson is a visual communications major in the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The Atlanta native has volunteered with Communiversality for the past two years. Like Roberson, Leonard is also a Georgia native and two-year volunteer of the program. She attended high school in Greensboro, NC before coming to the University and majoring in sociology, with a minor in women studies.

Since 1992, student volunteers for Communiversality—a coined shortening of ‘community university’—have reached out to children in communities beyond the University’s physical boundaries to offer educational and cultural guidance and resources. The program’s components consist of literacy enrichment (both cultural and academic), homework assistance, and outreach.

As an advocate for social justice and public service, the late Dr. Sonja Haynes Stone was committed to the cultural education of youth and the development of student leadership. Communiversality was created to honor Stone’s dedication to educating young people in communities surrounding the University. For more information, call 919-962-7264 or email the program at cyp@unc.edu.