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# KD MAGAZINE

*Fall 2007 Vol. 2 Issue #1*

EXPLORING GHANA DARFUR CONFLICT COUNTRY FAIR BRAZILIAN MUSIC

KD
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*Fall 2007 Vol. 2 Issue #1*







# *departments*



# *features*

Early this summer, when the staff and I began brainstorming for our fall issue, everyone was eager to share his or her summer plans. For photographer/writer Matt Nicholson, plans included a life changing few months exploring Ghana, which he recounts in "Redefining Development." For others, the agenda called for staying local and exploring the perks of Eugene, from mouthwatering down-home cuisine at Papa's Soul Food ("He's Not Your Mama, But You Should Try His Food Anyway") to lively South American percussion music, performed by the "bateria" Samba Já ("Brazilian Beats"). And for almost everyone on staff, mid-July wās reserved for the Oregon Country Fair, which, every year, brings to Lane County an energetic array of beings from the far corners of Oregon and the world ("Oregon's Own Oz").

For those whose summers passed in the Northwest, the magazine brings news from different countries across the globe. Ireland boasts delicious food, traditional dance and craze-inspiring sports in the "Passport" section. In "Dialogue," Fulbright Scholarship recipient Ahmadullah Archiwal discusses journalism in Afghanistan and the United States. And the documentary film featured in "Lens into Darfur" explores conflict-torn Darfur.

Because this issue was produced in the summer, most of the staff interspersed their work with travels. Therefore, only by means of email and the Internet did we complete the magazine. And what better way for a culture-and-travel book to be produced than from across great expanses? (Admittedly, I can think of an easier way…) The effect we've seen includes a rich variety of voices and content.

As most of the staff reunites and resumes routines, summer adventure stories are shared as we proceed into the 2007-08 school year. The diversity we embrace and seek for KD instigates the fall hiring period, during which we'll recruit fresh new staff members with stories of their own to share.

Kelly Walker
Editor in Chief



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**COVER: Young children in a traditional bead making village outside Kumasi, Ghana, gather around photographer Matt Nicholson during his recent travels through the country.**


**Ireland is a dynamic and culture-rich destination for travelers everywhere. Its simple, traditional cuisine can be enjoyed here in the Northwest, at Kells Irish Restaurant & Pub, and beautiful dances are taught at The Murray School Of Irish Dancing. Gaelic football, however, is reserved for visitors to and citizens of Ireland.**

STORIES **WERONIKA BUDAK**

# The Truth About Football

The great game of Gaelic football enriches the lives of its supporters and rules the world for millions of human beings. As one of four Gaelic games, including hurling, camogie and handball, Gaelic football has evolved since its beginning in the 16th century and nowadays is a major spectator sport in Ireland. Gaelic football uses a mixture of European football—known in the United States as soccer—and rugby. 15 players from each team carry, kick, pass and bounce a round ball. The game requires accurate use of players' feet and hands for scoring goals.

Final scores are higher than in European football, which helps draw many spectators. Gaelic football is also faster and more intense, so games last either 30 or 35 minutes per half, depending on league level. The sport is so popular that, in the interest of order, the national association has divided leagues into different divisions for men, women and children.

Before every game, Irish pubs fill with noisy and colorful crowds. Fans identify with a team by painting their faces; wearing jerseys, scarves, and hats; and hanging flags with clubs' coats of arms and logos. Guinness beer is an inseparable companion for Gaelic football fans and also one of the main sponsors of the sport.

By standing in the stadium, listening to the national anthem, watching the flag wave in the air and cheering enthusiastically with the Irish, you can literally enjoy the taste of Gaelic football.

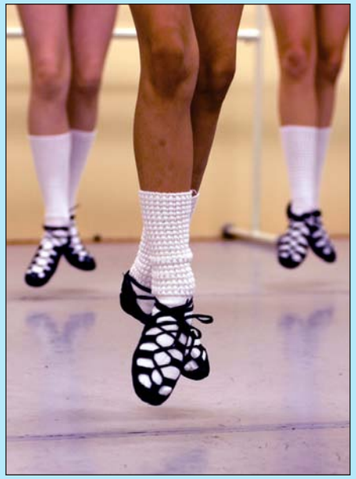
PHOTOS BY ASHLEY BAER & JAROD OPPERMAN

# Celtic Step Up

The Irish find great pleasure in traditional dancing, and many partake in the intense and intricate moves. When hearing the harp and the bagpipes, their ears absorb an energetic beat as the tempo changes; dancers move dynamically and zealously. Their feet cavort and accelerate on the floor expeditiously yet precisely while the upper body barely moves, and arms and shoulders remain straight. The pose is finally synchronized.

Irish dancing is an art in which both solo and group dancers express the Irish temper in dozens of original and regional styles. The famous dance "Shoe the Donkey" is a favorite social line dance. Combining elements of polka, mazurka and waltz, the dance involves several couples facing against the line, alternately stepping and hopping. "The Walls of Limerick" is a popular circle dance for two couples. Pairs change arrangements from clockwise to counterclockwise and swing harmoniously, creating the illusion of a reel. "The Bonfire Dance," another circle dance, allows an unlimited number of couples and consists of jigs and steps.

Set dances, performed by four couples in a square, allow the dancers to modify the choreography and create new variations to the traditional fiddle and flute music. Dancers who use up to six different major figures develop the series of steps individually.



Irish stepdancers show off their abilities at The Murray School Of Irish Dancing by rapidly moving their feet while keeping their upper bodies as still as possible.

Nowadays, the 150-year-old repertoire consists of as many as 64 commonly performed sets.

Step dance, a traditional form with modern twists, is the most complicated and competitive form of Irish dance. Step dance focuses on footwork and almost eliminates arm motion. The dance is often featured in St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The holiday becomes an occasion to perform the three oldest and principal national dances: "The Irish Hey," "The Rinnce Fada" and "The Trenchmore."

No dance would be such a spectacular show without shoes and costumes. Performers choose between hard hornpipe shoes, which are preferred for step dance, and soft shoes for light jigs and group dances. The heels of hornpipe shoes emit a rhythmic clicking sound when the dancers vigorously hit the floor.

Clothes make an atmosphere akin to the theatre play. Ladies wear fanciful imitations of peasant dresses from the 18th century with jewelry and accessories, such as large brooches. Men dress up in traditionally embellished kilts, jackets and cloaks. The predominant color is green, representing the most important symbols of Ireland: a shamrock, pure nature and the national flag.

Every performance imitates a part of the Irish lifestyle. Irish dance has something unique that we look for when gathering at the traditional "feis," or step dancing festival, to feel a historical atmosphere, experience a cultural diversity, discover musical influences from all around the globe and admire simple Irish beauty.

# Portland's Irish Oasis

Kells Irish Restaurant & Pub, located at 112 Southwest Second Avenue in Portland, is an excellent destination for those Northwesterners who wish to visit Ireland without leaving the country.

While relishing tasty food and drinks from different regions of Ireland, Kells diners are serenaded by folk music and can watch traditional Irish dancing. Sports enthusiasts can watch their favorite teams on the pub's large television. Irish cuisine does not consist of complicated dishes; its simplicity involves only a few spices to keep the natural flavor of aromatic ingredients.

The Irish love meat and fish prepared traditionally. A favorite dish at the pub is the Irish stew, made from either goat or lamb. Traditional soda bread complements this and nearly every other meal from breakfast to dinner.

Some refer to Ireland "potato country," since potatoes accompany the majority of meals, such as colcannon, made with cabbage or garlic; champ, which uses scallions; and a potato pancake called boxty.

Dessert, including coffee and liqueurs, usually follows and sometimes requires even more time to devour than the entrée. Irish coffee is a mixture of strong coffee and Irish whiskey, topped with whipped cream. Bailey's Irish Cream, another whiskey-based liqueur, has even more variations and may be served with ice cream, pudding or pie.


Beer often dominates the Irish beverage menu. Famous stouts and porters, historically rooted in Ireland, are easily available around the world. But when visiting Ireland, the locals will offer you a variety of flavored stouts, characteristic only of Ireland: chocolate, oatmeal, oyster and milk.

Nicknamed "Black Stuff" and "Devil's Nectar," Guinness is a bestselling drink and the favorite companion of European football fans. Its original recipe makes it one of the most recognizable brands exported from Dublin to 150 countries. The phenomenal industry started 246 years ago at the James's Gate Brewery, thanks to Arthur Guinness.

"Guinness is good for you," says one Irish proverb, and hospitable hosts will prove that to millions of tourists annually visiting the green paradise.

# The International Language of Journalism

STORY **ABBY DISKIN** • PHOTO **CONNER JAY**

**Fulbright Scholarship recipient Ahmadullah Archiwal tells of the cultural lines he's crossed between Afghanistan and the University of Oregon**

Imagine waking up in a foreign country and preparing for the first day of classes at a university that you have never seen before. Ahmadullah Archiwal, a recipient of the Fulbright Scholarship, traveled from Kunduz, the capital of the Kunduz Province in Northern Afghanistan, to Eugene, Oregon, in pursuit of his second master's degree in international relations.

Archiwal received his first master's degree in journalism from the University of Peshawar, Peshawar North Western, in Pakistan. He has trained journalists in the Institute for War and Peace Reporting as well as at the Center for International Journalism. Archiwal's perspective sheds light upon the differences between cultures and the styles of journalism in Afghanistan and in the United States.

The USSR occupied Afghanistan from 1979 to1989. Following the USSR's departure, civil war and political instability waged for roughly four years until the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 1994. In 2001, less than one month after the terrorist attacks on September 11, the United States began bombing suspected Taliban sites and invaded Afghanistan. Soon after, the Taliban fell from power and Hamid Karzai was appointed President of Afghanistan. Archiwal explains what it is like to be a journalist in post-September 11, democratic Afghanistan and why it is important to "give voice to the voiceless".

### What inspired you to study Journalism?

The first reason for me was that in our country, journalism is considered a very highly repudiated profession. The second reason is economical. In our country, journalists make a lot of money. The other reason that was very important for me is that journalism in societies like ours can serve the people and they can give voice to the voiceless people. Most of the journalists, they are not professional people. In our country, many people who are working as journalists are students of literature, or they have studied political science, so it is very difficult for them to serve the people in the right way.

### Are certain issues, such as the war and other violence, censored in the media in Afghanistan?

Well, in Afghanistan, journalists are enjoying a very good status, but still there are problems. We have 34 provinces, and most of our governors are ex-war lords who are fighting against each other...Those people are illiterate. Most of the security chiefs are also ex-war lords, and they think that journalists are against them, so most of the time they do not cooperate with them, and they do not allow journalists to write stories about the violation of human rights…They are also responsible; most of them are involved in human rights violations, so due to this reason journalists cannot cover most of the stories, especially the stories about…corruption in the government agencies. They cannot write reports about that.

### What is the largest difference between the media in Afghanistan and the media in the United States?

There is a difference in professionalism, and there is a difference in popularity. In Afghanistan, the most popular media is the radio. Newspapers are not popular over there. We do not have a transportation system to send newspapers from the big cities to the other areas, and most of the people are illiterate. They cannot read the newspaper. There is also a difference in the news in our country and in the U.S., because in Afghanistan, if a bomb explodes or people are killed, or they are being kidnapped, it is news for our people. They will not listen to news of reconstruction and rehabilitation. So, journalists report only the hard news; they don't write entertainment news and sport's news. They do not consider a cricket game news. They do not consider entertainment news at all.

### How are reporters regarded in Afghanistan?

This is a little bit of a generalization, but mostly in educated areas, among educated people and in cities, reporters and journalists are considered high-profile people, but this is limited to only the big cities where the government has control. Afghan journalists cannot go anywhere where there is a threat from the Taliban. The Taliban will kill a journalist and they will kill any educated person because they do not accept these things at all.

### Why would the Taliban kill educated people like journalists?

You know, the Taliban have their own mentality. They consider people who are educated, be them Afghan or foreigners, as the enemies of their religion and the enemies of their movement. So they kill engineers; they kill doctors; they kill the professional people of Afghanistan.

### If you could significantly influence journalism in Afghanistan, how would you do it, and what would you want to change?

In the beginning, I was working for the IWPR. It's an institute in the United Kingdom, and they are supporting journalists professionally in the post-war societies. In Afghanistan, we were the first trainers who knew the basic skills of journalism professionally and who were familiar with the Code of Ethics. We then we made our own center, which is called Center for International Journalism, CIJ. Now, if you ask a journalist if he knows the Code of Ethics of journalism, he knows what is objectivity, and at least he can cover a news story professionally. One great job we did was covering the presidential elections. This was the first time in the history of Afghanistan that people were electing their president, and it was the first time the journalists were getting their training in covering the presidential elections.

### Are there any laws in Afghanistan that grant reporters the right to say whatever they want?

Unfortunately, before 2001 there was no concept of free journalism, and our government was like that of the ex-USSR. Every journalist was bound to serve the government. After 2001, when the Karzai government took over, that trend has changed. The government realized that journalists are important and has made some laws for the protection of journalists. Besides that, the most important thing is that the government has made a commission. When a journalist faces problems, before he or she is tried, the commission decides his or her fate. But still this thing is in theory; it is not in practice.

### What is the general attitude towards the U.S. in Afghanistan news?

...They are friendly; they are friendly to the United States. This is the trend in news…in the news. (Laughter.)

### But outside of the news, they are not so friendly?

Well…by friendly I don't mean they say 'our friend, the United States'…Friendly means professionally; they are treated professionally.

### Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

You know, I am going to study international relations and in Afghanistan, our politics are not politics. It's a conflict and in a conflict, it becomes very difficult to decide about your future. If the situation goes in a right direction, I hope we will get good positions in Afghanistan and we will be in the elite class. Not only me but I also am expecting the same elite class position for all Afghans who are here studying in the United States. **KD**

# Rebuilding A Legacy

STORY **JESSICA BLUME** • PHOTOS **DAVE MARTINEZ**

ABOVE: The Many Nations Longhouse has helped to heal relationships across cultures, as well as provided a safehouse for traditional practices. OPPOSITE: Gordon Bettles proudly displays his decorative Oregon feathers made by his daughter. Due to their ceremonial significance, the feathers are rarely used.

**American Indians at the University of Oregon share their rich culture by rekindling relationships**

No one arrives in a foreign land and feels immediately as if he or she belongs. Regardless of the grasp of a language or the knowledge of a native tradition, there is always a deeply rooted connection to the culture into which one is born. When Europeans first immigrated to North America, American Indians were often made to feel like foreigners in their own country. In order to preserve their culture, many American Indians refused to assimilate into a predominately white world.

The decision to resist outside influence has followed some American Indians through life and into a university setting. At the University of Oregon, where the majority of students are Caucasian, American Indians form one percent of the student body, making them the smallest minority on campus, according to the University of Oregon's Office of Institutional Research.

But the one percent of students that makes up the American Indian population on campus has deemed itself a force to be reckoned with. The Native American Student Union (NASU), a group of students determined to acquire a space on campus to call their own, were given a World War II army barrack that served as a graduate student housing facility nearly 50 years ago. American Indian students transformed the hand-me-down building into a longhouse, a place of gathering free of outside influence. Soon after NASU received the time-worn army barrack, a plan to erect a new longhouse began to develop.

In one of the many lessons in surviving amid the university culture without sacrificing heritage of their own, NASU members learned the ropes of politics on campus.

"This is an idea that something came from nothing on the surface," said longhouse steward Gordon Bettles. "But below the surface, the American Indian students kept banding together and kept becoming stronger until they got enough political savvy over a period of years to finally state their case in the right way. So the university actually made the promise to build it."

In addition to building a new longhouse on campus, the university started an initiative to incorporate more courses pertaining to American Indian culture and to recruit more American Indian students and faculty. As the population of American Indians on campus grows, the need for a space where they could practice their cultural traditions free of judgment grew stronger. In response, Mitch Wilkinson and three others founded the Center for Indigenous Cultural Survival in an effort to preserve indigenous cultures from around the world, including that of American Indians.

"Being indigenous means you are people of the land and you've never forgotten that. It also has to do with your relationship to resistance of globalization and resistance to colonization," says Wilkinson. "There are people who you look at and typically they're indigenous people but their hearts and their minds are gone. They have no connection to community, they have no connection to their culture and they have no connection to their land."

The concept of staying true to indigenous communities everywhere proved difficult once fundraising for the longhouse began. Temptation came in the form of corporate sponsorship. Essentially, corporations vied through monetary donations for the right to brand the longhouse with their logos and namesakes.

"We were offered money from different larger organizations, but they wanted us to attach things like the names of their mothers or fathers," says Wilkinson. "And, you know, we can't call it the Betty Crocker Longhouse or the William Kellogg Longhouse; that's just not the way it works."

Wilkinson and others involved with fundraising for the longhouse were especially adamant that no money be accepted from corporations known to exploit indigenous people for sweatshop labor.

"We decided we would take no blood money from corporations who had earned their money off the backs of indigenous people, from the mistreatment of indigenous people," says Wilkinson. "So, we turned down potential donor after donor after donor." As a direct result of Wilkinson's "clean money" policy, the longhouse took more than 20 years to build, from the time it was proposed until the time it was completed.

As plans for the longhouse began to take shape, the tribes of Oregon were reluctant to contribute money to physical entities on campus; they were more apt to apply funding toward American Indian curriculum. Both Wilkinson and Bettles acted as liaisons between the nine federally recognized tribes and the university administration, which relationships had been strained or absent in the past. But as the project progressed, so did relationships among all people involved.

Some of the wood that frames the longhouse stands as proof that weak or wounded relationships can be mended. A strong windstorm that struck the University of Oregon campus in the late 1990s created a rare opportunity for the past to catch up with

*"We decided we would take no blood money from corportations."*

the present. Two Douglas-fir trees that were planted by the wife of the first president of the University of Oregon fell down in the storm and later were used in constructing the longhouse.

"[The university] didn't have such great relationships with native people back then, and it was nice to see that these trees that she planted so long ago could be used to create that relationship," says Wilkinson. "It was nice to see that over time we had created that relationship, that that relationship had grown. And these were hundreds of years old, these trees."

A large gap exists between the people who now inhabit America and those who were its original occupants. This gap exists at the University of Oregon, exemplified by the small population of American Indian students who stroll its tree-lined campus. The longhouse has started to bridge that gap, forcing cultures to come together and work side by side, each culture accepting the other and all working toward a common goal.

The longhouse is a reminder that not everyone has to be the same to coexist. With university support, the longhouse was realized as a space where indigenous peoples can practice their cultural traditions without judgment. Perhaps if those who sailed to this land long ago and claimed it as their own had adopted this attitude toward its original inhabitants, we wouldn't presently need an initiative to bring back the very people who occupied the land on which the university now stands.

As an American Indian, a university alumnus, and the current steward of the Many Nations Longhouse, Bettles sees this concept as inherent in himself.

"If I adopt university culture, I'm adopting something that's not mine, something that's not natural. And when you do that you lose your identity," Bettles says. "It's better to have a firm grasp on you own culture than learn about others, not the other way around."

The American Indian community as a whole suffers from numerous social problems outside of the university setting as well, according to Wilkinson. Being American Indian and a student is a double-edged sword. Not only are American Indian students struggling to preserve their culture within a university setting, but they are struggling to preserve their culture worldwide as well. Wilkinson believes higher education is the solution to these problems.

At the University of Oregon, the Many Nations Longhouse has helped American Indian students preserve their culture while studying within a community drastically unlike their own. But the longhouse did more than help American Indian students hold on tightly to their heritage. It has also become a space where international guests are formally welcomed to the university, standing to true its name. But most importantly, it serves as a place where relationships across cultures are formed and the walls that separate peoples worldwide start to come down, one brick at a time. **KD**

# The Chromatic Woman

STORY **JESSICA POLLEY** • PHOTOS **ASHLEY BAER & AMBER MEES**

From her colorful gowns to her colorful pills, former Miss Gay Oregon shares how HIV has affected her pageant and daily life

An assortment of ladies' wigs hangs above a long mirror lit with round bulbs—a mirror reminiscent of one that might be found in Marilyn Monroe's dressing room. A pile of lipstick, blush, eye shadow and fake eyelashes lays strewn across the counter. Five stools stand empty. Atop a sixth sits a middle-aged man. Wearing nothing but white boxers, he stares back at his reflection. With great concentration, he uses a brush to dust pale foundation over his already light skin. In less than 20 minutes, a new look emerges. Siren-red lip-gloss completes the facial change. Gowns in a myriad of bright colors and textures hang on the garment rack set against the dressing room wall. He removes one, sparkly and low-cut, and pulls it on. Five-inch heels and a blonde wig enhance the transformation. Plus fake boobs, of course.

Welcome to life, Tonya Rose.

Before long, seven more beauties sashay into the room from their dress rehearsal on one of the Hult Center stages, to change for the evening. Tonight these drag queens will take to the stage for their annual "Damsels, Divas and Dames" performance, for which they will sing and dance to raise money for the HIV alliance. They dress up as women, not because they want to become women, but because doing so gives them a fun outlet to showcase their feminine sides. But as Tonya Rose knows, it's more than just an act.

A few months later, Tonya sits in the home she shares with two roommates to chat more about her life.

"I started doing drag when I was 15 years old," explains Cecil, who prefers to be called by her drag name, Tonya Rose. "I wanted to go to a bar, so I was told if I dressed in drag I could easily get in. So I did, and it worked." This 44-year-old, who stares strongly into the eyes as she talks, shows modesty about her life and aches to be known by what she does, rather than by how people may label and stereotype her as a gay man. Especially since she lives with HIV.

Diagnosed in 2002, after spending Christmas in a hospital with pneumonia, Tonya has since faced more than her share of life's challenges. "When I was sick with pneumonia, I was hoping to die right there," she admits. "Then I was diagnosed with HIV. With HIV, I never know what my day is going to be like. It's hard to describe everything I go through. My feet are always on fire." She knows firsthand how much life can drag, no pun intended, but she is also wise enough to realize how precious life is and battles tirelessly to preserve it. Because of this, Tonya emerges with strength, will and a keen awareness about the good around her.

She had to quit working six months after her diagnosis, resorting to days of sitting on the couch and watching talk shows. "On my better days, I make dresses for myself and others, style wigs and work with silk flower-arranging to keep busy," she states proudly, her eyes lighting up.

Tonya rises from the table, grabs a Seven-Up off of the kitchen counter and heads up a flight of stairs. She leads to her bedroom, which reflects her vivid personality. A comforter with bright blue and pink flowers adorns the bed. A large pink lamp hangs in the corner. Then she opens a dresser drawer; pill bottles are filled to the brim. She removes a blue and white pillbox. Blue, yellow, pink, green and white pills of different sizes tumble into the palm of her hand. "I take these eighteen pills every day to stay alive," she says calmly. "Every month my medication costs $2,000. Luckily, an Oregon medical assistance program pays for it. It's poison, but it keeps me alive."

Although Tonya admits that the gay lifestyle can be quite promiscuous, she wants to clear up the misconception that gay men get HIV only because they are careless about whom they are intimate with and how they use protection. Tonya got HIV when an unknown man raped her.

"I had just come home from a fun night out with my friends," she explains. "They dropped me off and had just left so I started to get ready for bed. Then someone knocked on my door and said, 'It's me'." The voice was unfamiliar, so

BELOW: Tonya Rose wears a gold ring accompanied by a well-manicured set of nails. PREVIOUS PAGE: Putting on her wig and makeup in the dressing rooms of the Hult Center, Tonya Rose prepares for an HIV Alliance benefit whose proceeds support local HIV/AIDS prevention programs.


ABOVE: Cecil, pre-Tonya Rose, sits at home discussing her life as a gay man that performs as a drag queen.

she chain-locked the door, but the person busted through anyway. "Whoever it was, knew exactly what they were doing," she recalls. "It was the scariest thing of my life."

Afraid that she would be killed if she resisted, Tonya thought it safest at the time to just let the rape happen. She never reported the incident to the police out of fear that they would not believe her. "I was living in Salt Lake City at the time," she says. "If I called the cops and told them I was raped as a man, would they laugh at me? Are they going to believe me?" The common assumption that men don't get raped is unfortunate. "Assault is assault," Tonya states. "Whether you are female or male, the same feelings are there." Four weeks later the same person tried to get into her apartment again, but Tonya warded him off by calling the police.

**They dress up as women, not because they want to become women, but because doing so gives them a fun outlet to showcase their feminine sides.**

Tonya con-tinues to have anxiety attacks going into public as Cecil. "I was raped as Cecil," she says. "But as Tonya, I am hidden in my mask so I can be who Cecil used to be: cheerful, outgoing and very social. In a way, the rape killed me."

She sips her Seven-Up, places her right hand on her hip, and shifts her weight from one foot to the other as she starts to discuss younger gay men. "Too many young gay people are out there doing things they shouldn't be," she explains. "Protected sex is the only way." Tonya and her friends often pass out condoms at bars to help educate younger members of the gay community. "Me and the drag community are more than just a bunch of gay men acting as women," she says. "We do a lot of good things for people." Her drag community, which she considers to be family, works hard to advocate and educate on safe sex through pageants, performances and other community events. Many of these events raise money for HIV research.

Tonya walks out of her bedroom with a slight bounce in her step, making her way down the stairs. It would be hard to guess this person is living with a disease, especially one so aggressive that it weakens the immune system and threatens sickness at all times.

Sitting back down at the dining table, she continues, now gesturing with her hands as she speaks. "You know, I was in McDonald's once, and I made a comment to someone about my HIV, and a lady near me stiffened and moved away from me," she says. "But I've developed a thick enough skin. If I let everyone get to me, I'd never go in public. I have to be brave. Love me. Or go away." Her eyes widen, and she grins.

You can almost see her brain working as she tries to discuss her lifestyle and how people react. The topic of religion and sin emerges, and she has a clear opinion on how she would respond to people who say her gay lifestyle is a sin in the eyes of God. In fact, she responds in a quick and assured manner: "I was born gay. My destiny was laid out for me, and God made me this way." Her brows furrow as she gathers steam. "When people think we simply 'choose' this way of living, they are wrong," she explains. "No one would choose a lifestyle where you are beaten for being gay, hated and despised."

After a quick and much-needed cigarette break in the backyard, where Tonya promises that she will quit one of these days, the subject of relationships and marriage arises. It's a topic

## “You don’t need a piece of paper to tell you that you love someone.”

against what many gay people have been tirelessly fighting for, but she sticks with her belief system. “You don’t need a piece of paper to tell you that you love someone.” Her belief has roots in her past; she describes how she had been burned too many times in relationships. She chooses to be single, not just to keep herself from being hurt again, but, as she puts it, “I’m not turning into a housewife. I will not be making breakfast for anyone!”

Certainly, it’s understandable from either a gay or straight perspective why being single isn’t so bad. Most would agree with Tonya that monogamy is a lot of work, whether in the homosexual or heterosexual community. For some, it’s better to just take care of yourself.

Then she reveals the most surprising thing about herself so far: “In 1981 I got married to a woman,” she reveals, smirking. “It was during a time when it was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve!” The marriage was an unsuccessful effort to hide the truth and for her wife to try and change whom “he” was at the time. They divorced within a year. Then it was time to “come out” to her parents, which was, as she lightly puts it, “a nasty experience.”

Although Tonya has known since fourth or fifth grade, she guesses, that she is gay, the truth didn’t come out to her parents until she was nineteen, after her failed marriage. “They simply didn’t approve,” she says, sighing. “My mother didn’t talk to me for two years. But to this day, she apologizes every single day for not accepting me for who I am. She knows now I didn’t choose to be this way.” Tonya stresses how it took 10 years for her parents to completely accept her life, and now they even attend her pageants and shows.

Tonya has been actively involved with pageantry for years. She was elected Princess XII of the Emerald Empire in 1986. After a successful reign and graduating from the University of Oregon in 1987, she returned to Portland and became Miss Gay Oregon. She spent years performing with the famous Darcelle Showbar. Although Tonya can no longer travel the country performing like she did in the past, when she often would attend more than 30 coronations around the nation every year, she continues to be involved in pageantry by helping design sets and costumes, performing in shows and passing along advice to others. “There’s one thing my drag mother always told me,” she says. “If you’re going to do drag, you need to know how to do two things: Sew your own dresses, and know how to style your own hair!”

It’s time for another cigarette break. Here, sitting against a patio chair, she emotionally reveals: “I’m so happy that I get to be interviewed. I’m so happy that all my years of drag, I did it for a reason. I feel like this is my reward for all the service to my community that I’ve done.” She uncrosses her legs, stands and moves back inside.

“I need to start painting my face,” she says. There’s a garden party tonight at a friend’s house, and Tonya is to perform. She heads to the bathroom to begin doing her makeup and hair.

As she delves into the ritual of shaving her face, she turns, razor in hand. “You know, everyone puts their clothes on the same way,” she exclaims, grinning and giving a little wink. “That's how I can live this way. They are all doing the same thing I am. I’m just doing it better!” **KD**

BELOW: Cecil holds a handful of the prescription medication that he takes as a part of his daily rountine, living with HIV. OPPOSITE: In full drag queen attire, Cecil transforms to Tonya Rose, his preferred persona.


# REDEFINING DEVELOPMENT

STORY & PHOTOS **MATT NICHOLSON**

**Where concrete and skyscrapers fall short, a different kind of development steps in to hold a young nation together**

Carefully sidestepping the massive drainage ditch one foot to my left, which looks and smells like it's filled with raw sewage, I hurry to keep up with the girl in heels who is leading me through the crowded market. The sun has set behind the city's hazy horizon and I have lost what little bearing I had on my way home. The streets of Accra, Ghana's capital city, spreads out before me in a tangled web, and I'm like a rat lost in an endless maze.

If you tell someone that you're going to study in Africa for a summer, they're likely to get a confused and worried look on their face. "Africa?" they might say. "But why? Where will you sleep? What will you eat? Will you bring a shield to protect yourself from the lions and spears?"

For many, the word "Africa" conjures images of ferocious animals, starving children and war-torn countryside. After years of selective media coverage, the image of Africa painted in many Americans' minds is that of a mysterious black hole, a primitive and uncivilized land inhabited by warring tribes. True, these elements do exist in some areas, but to use them exclusively as the definition of "Africa" overlooks some of the more developed countries that contain cities not too dissimilar from many cities in United States. Ghana is one of these developing countries, and over the course of six weeks I gained a brief first-hand impression of how this relatively young country—which is currently celebrating its 50th year of independence—is shaping itself to stand with the rest of the modern world.

While Ghana is one of Africa's most stable and developed countries, its modernization is a slow and ongoing process, and its growing pains are clearly visible in Accra. Just as a maturing adolescent awkwardly stumbles over his growing feet as he struggles to make the transition from childhood to adulthood, Ghana wrestles with the challenges of balancing industrial and technological modernization with the preservation of its cultural history.

After spending just one day in the bustling, dirty streets of Accra, it was immediately clear that Ghana is a developing country, far from being on par with the developed infrastructure and economy that most Americans are accustomed to. However, by the end of my six weeks I came to realize that while the country's economy and infrastructure are of a Third World standard, in a less quantifiable respect Ghana is more socially developed than America. By this I mean that Ghanaians seemed to place higher importance on generosity, moral standards and the preservation of culture and tradition than most Americans do. While I was amazed and often frustrated by the idiosyncrasies and inefficiencies of a city whose planning often seemed to be an afterthought, I was ultimately more amazed by the generosity and goodwill of the average person. To witness how the poorly developed city infrastructure interacts with the well-developed social community, all one has to do is get lost on the city's public transport system, the TroTro.

The TroTro is Ghana's bus service and primary mass transit system, but is nothing like the bus system we are accustomed to in the United States. These are not your typical 100-seat metro busses with automatic doors and a pull cords for signaling your stop. Rather, these are senile, industrial-sized delivery vans from the 1980s, whose innards have been gutted and replaced with five rows of bench seating into which 25 people cram shoulder-to-shoulder. These vans saw their prime days 20 years ago, and, as the sounds of their dying innards loudly attest to, age hasn't served them well.

As the busses chug their overloaded hulks down the road, they plead for mercy with a woeful song of mechanical raucous. While the sporadic backfiring of the tailpipe keeps the beat, the transmission grinds and snarls violent lyrics, threatening to jump ship with every shift. The rusting engine bay follows with the melody, lamenting its pained existence with a thunderous symphony of guttural mechanical noise sung to the tune of Bob Dylan and a howler monkey simultaneously strangling each other. You would think that no one would subject himself or herself to such an abrasive act, but tickets are cheap; the average fare costs the equivalent of just 30 cents, while private taxis cost 10 times as much.

As for organization, anyone used to a well-ordered bus system with fancy amenities such as time schedules and destination reader-boards would not recognize any kind of "system" in the operation of the TroTros. In reality, there is a method to the appar-

PREVIOUS: A local man sits upon the Cape Coast Castle, a central point in the trans-Atlantic slave trade though the 16th and 19th centuries. Located against a sunny beach and blue surf, the castle now acts primarily as a tourist attraction. ABOVE: Through the bustling streets of Accra, locals sell everything from okra to auto parts to knock off Nikes.

tor from the horizon," anyone you ask on the street will tell you it simply means "white person." It's not a derogatory term however, and most adults seem to use it jokingly. Young children love Obrunis, and when the other members of my study abroad group and I walk through our neighborhood, we are often followed by excited kids happily yelling, "Obruni! Obruni!" They seem fascinated by our pale skin, or at least entertained.

The young woman tells me where I need to go, but I still have a confused look on my face, so she motions for me to follow her. She walks with a young man up ahead, and I follow from a distance so that I don't interrupt their conversation. We weave in and out of busy neighborhoods, through crowded alleyways and across a freeway overpass.

Suddenly we are in a bustling street market, with vendors' booths lining both sides of the narrow street. With just enough room for three or four people to walk side-by-side, I feel like a salmon swimming upstream as I weave in and out of the crowd, trying to keep the black heels of the young woman's shoes in sight. She's a few meters ahead and we don't speak the entire time, but every so often she looks back to see if I'm still following and then goes back to her conversation with the young man.

The chaos of the market is overwhelming and assaults every sense with full force. The changing breeze alternates the smell of spicy rice and fried chicken with the pungent smell of urine, reminding me to watch my step as an open gutter housing stagnant sewage gapes just to my right. The poor sanitation system is one of the most noticeable and abrasive characteristics of Ghana's poorly developed infrastructure. Every city street is bordered by concrete trenches three feet deep, at the bottom of which lies a thick layer of curdled grey foam. It's hard to say exactly what this substance is, but all olfactory indications point strongly to human excrement. Also contributing to the sanitation problem is the popular trend of public urination.

I was first introduced to this trend while walking to the bus during my first week in Ghana. Walking along the side of the road, against traffic, I came across a man with his back to the passing cars. In plain view of 10 others and myself, the man was standing at the bus stop, peeing on the plants below in the ditch. Now, I'm not trying to downplay the convenience of public urination, but personally I try to find a place less conspicuous than the side of the highway. But maybe he's just more confident than me.

This occurrence proved to be a common sight; people would just stop what they were doing, walk up to a gutter or ditch and unzip. And while the putrid grey foam in the gutters suggests that there are bigger sanitation problems to worry about than urine, the spontaneous pit stops can't be helping.

In the market, I continue to maneuver my way through the maze of street vendors. My ears are bombarded by their shouts of "Obruni!" along with a dozen boom boxes all blasting the last hit R. Kelly made before famously relieving himself on a young girl's face. American R&B is hugely popular in Ghana, particularly by R. Kelly, due in part, I suspect, to his love for urinating in unusual places. The smells and sounds are all mixing together and turning to static, and I focus on keeping track of the girl in high heels.

As suddenly as we entered the market, we exit, and the street opens up to reveal a massive parking lot filled with lines of idle TroTros stretching as far as the eye can see. The faded patchwork of grungy paint mixes blues and oranges, reds and browns into a mosaic of the decrepit old delivery vans, and if it weren't for the sound of revving engines and backfiring tailpipes you might mistake the lot for a junkyard. But as tired as these old vans are, they continue to chug along, tailpipes spewing black exhaust fumes of leaded gasoline while the "check oil" emergency light blinks sporadically in a desperate plea for it all to end.

Air pollution is another glaring characteristic of poor development in the country. Despite its known poisonous properties, Ghana's gas still contains lead, a formula given up three decades ago in the U.S.

Once in the sea of TroTros, I am more disoriented than ever. The girl in heels waits for me to catch up to her, and even goes out of her way to take me to the right car. I thank her for helping me, and she and the young man continue on their way. My TroTro is a tired-looking blue Mercedes, and I climb aboard to wait for departure. While the TroTro sits idle, street vendors and beggars seize the opportunity of a captive audience.

I'm startled by a poke to my left arm and turn to see an ominous-looking homeless man standing outside the open window. He implores me with gaping, mournful eyes and points to his empty hand; he is a living symbol of the country's massive lower-class population. The wealth distribution in Ghana seems to be sharply divided between a large lower class and a small upper class; there isn't much of a middle class at all. This uneven wealth distribution is clearly illustrated in the relatively well-off neighborhood that our study abroad group lives in. On one side of the street stands the largest house I have ever seen in my life, occupied by a radio station owner. Directly across the street lies a collection of small concrete houses and patched-together shacks.

**The wealth distribution in Ghana seems to be sharply divided between a large lower class and a small upper class; there isn't much of a middle class at all.**

As the TroTro fills with passengers, a street vendor comes aboard and makes his case for the portable DVD player he is selling. To demonstrate the DVD player, the vendor plays a video featuring a disabled white boy who was born with no arms, save the one growing out of his waist. The video shows the boy in a swimming pool, shaking his hair is slow motion like CJ from "Baywatch." None of the passengers seem too convinced, and the vendor moves on to the next bus. Should have stuck with the real CJ.

Finally, the bus is full. It pulls out of the parking lot and onto the road, straight into four lanes of standstill highway traffic. Traffic is the most time-consuming vice of underdevelopment. Except for in the middle of the night and for a few hours in the afternoon, the highways are packed bumper-to-bumper with a good part of the city's four million inhabitants. Our bus sits perpendicular to the flow of opposing traffic as we wait for a spot to open. Once one opens, four cars converge on the same spot and start arguing by blaring their horns. The horn is the principle form of communication on the roads in Ghana. Mirrors and turn signals need not apply; simply set a bearing for a busy intersection, step on the gas and lay on the horn to let everyone know that you're coming through come hell or high water. With everyone observing this same rule, I was surprised to not see a single car wreck during my entire stay.

In between stops, the Mate collects money from the two-dozen passengers packed into the bus. People in the back of the bus pass their money forward, and their change is passed back to them, changing hands between several strangers to get to there. There seems to be a communal honor system on the TroTro, because everyone gets the right change back. Strangers also occasionally cover for one another if someone is short. One day I saw a kid get on without having enough money, and when the bus driver pulled over to make him get off the bus, a young woman volunteered to pay his fare. The TroTro is like a small temporary community that serves as a model for the general concept behind Ghanaian society: Things may not work smoothly and may be cramped and uncomfortable, but people get by—not only by watching out for themselves, but also by helping others in need.

As the TroTro bounces and chugs begrudgingly toward its destination, a noxious mixture of carbon monoxide and lead fumes permeates the cabin and weighs on my eyelids, and I wonder passively to myself whether I am actually on the right bus. Yet, though I'm probably headed in the wrong direction, I don't feel worried. I know that even if I do get lost again, odds are that another Good Samaritan will find me and point me in the right direction. **KD**

BELOW: Large crowds gather to watch performers at the Pan-African Conference parade, a celebration meant to commemorate the symbolic return of African slaves.

# oregon's own oz

## The annual Oregon Country Fair brings patrons from near and far to a whole new world of “hippie-fests”

STORY **JASON DRONKOWSKI** • PHOTOS **BRENNA CHEYNEY, CONNER JAY & DAVE MARTINEZ**

For this specific weekend in July, Veneta grows to one of the largest cities in Oregon.

PREVIOUS PAGE: A crowd festively dressed gathers outside the Oregon Country Fair's Energy Park, blowing kisses to passer bys and "waiting for the parade!" What exact parade they were waiting for was never clearly stated, just simply a parade to celebrate.
ABOVE: Samba Ja, Eugene's own bateria or thirty member percussion ensemble, parade through the winding paths of the Country Fair, playing the sounds of Carnaval in Rio de Janeiro and moving the crowds to dance in the dust.
LEFT: Friday night was fueled by the long running, open to the public fire show. Fire dancer from troops throughout the Pacific Northwest performed, including members of the Portland based group Flambuoyant.

Every year almost 50,000 people gather 20 miles west of Eugene, near Veneta. They come here to pay homage to the ancient hippie culture of Eugene and Lane County. Tie-dye, music, crafts and even drugs are all here in abundance. Some attendees annually travel the globe for this international event of three days of mischief and mayhem, love and peace. For this specific weekend of July, Veneta grows to one of the largest cities in Oregon. The immense population accounts for many different varieties of personalities, spanning from the remaining members of the infamous Merry Pranksters to white-collar businessmen seeking a vacation from the ordinary.

The Oregon Country Fair began in 1969. The original objective behind the Fair was to hold a craft, trade and bartering center where independent organizations could raise funds for alternative schools. Since its initiation, the Fair has established its own electrical, water and communication systems, an independent security force and the 380-acre plot of land on which the Fair currently resides.

Although the Fair's set-up is stupendously coordinated and hosted, the atmosphere created by the attendees is what makes the event unique. Hippie-fests, as many critics have grown to call them, are popular everywhere in the United States and throughout the world. Acid-associated music festivals occur every year in all corners of the country, and, lately, there has been a Summer of Love anniversary in almost every significantly liberal city. But something unorthodox in the Oregon Country Fair sets this particular event apart from others.

The spirit and enthusiasm of the Fair melts away any melancholy meandering. The Fair staff consists of thousands of volunteers, all contributing donations to non-profit organizations, specifically ones pertaining to art and basic human-needs support. The Fair's spirit also rests in its location; the grounds were an ancient gathering and harvest site for the Calapooya tribe and still contains archeological evidence, such as grain ovens, dating back 11,000 years. With this much faith and history behind the Fair, it's no wonder that the atmosphere is abundant with energy and diverse in spirit.

But it's also because the three-day residents of Country Fair aren't restricted to a specific outlook on life. Mohawk-adorned punk rockers strut through the dirt streets with bright smiles seldom seen in the streets of downtown Eugene. Fraternity alums, working for "the man" in large cities, drift away from the corporate stronghold to trod mercilessly in the outlandish masquerade. Foreigners from far-fetch regions of the world fly in to float on the groove of the woodwind quartets and acoustic artists. And, of course, decadently painted deadheads litter every square-yard of the grounds, thronging together near the speakers.

But that's not all; Jimi Hendrix is here, in several costumes, body structures and forms, as is every prevalent cult character known to man, from Benjamin Franklin to Darth Vader. They are all dressed up to promote a good time and instill a safe and righteous trip for anyone within the Fair's gates.

It may appear as wild as a lesser-sized Woodstock, but the Oregon Country Fair is never out of control. Children run freely


ABOVE: Goode Jones demonstrates to a crowd of onlookers how to create a fire using only tools found in the forest. While not at the Country Fair, Jones hosts the "Echoes in Time: Early Living Skills Workshop" at the Willamette Mission State Park teaching guests essential forestry survival skills. RIGHT: Juggler Michael Klinglesmitch uses his talent to teach fairgoers juggling tricks. Balls, hula-hoops and other toys were scattered around Klinglesmitch for general fun and games.

The atmosphere created by the attendees is what makes the event unique.

ABOVE: Music performers weren't the only ones entertaining the masses. Vaudeville shows and circus acts such as Dream Science Circus and Cherry Blossom's Visual Music amazed the crowds with flying colors. OPPOSITE: As the sun sets on the last day of the Oregon Country Fair, dancers continue to celebrate and enjoy the Fair just outside the main entrance.

throughout the grounds without parental caution, playing with life-sized chess pawns, painting their bodies and watching performing daredevils to their hearts' delight. Passed-out babies are strolled by in amply adorned buggies, lullabied by street ensembles playing bongos, congas, flutes and strings.

Toward the community village, near the center of the figure-eight walking path, which winds through nearly 40 acres, the drum tower projects a looming beat covering a dense, dancing crowd. Musicians slap their palms sore on stretched-skin drums, and frolicking fanatics chime in with clashing tambourines, bells and whistles; all contribute to a contagious rhythm that penetrates everybody's inner groove.

Near the main stage, the party turns up the volume. Surrounded by psychedelic music and cosmic costumes, Humboldt hooligans and liberal legionnaires slink through a pillow-blanketed meadow. While stumbling over concert surveyors and pot-smoking picnickers, it becomes obvious that there's no designated direction for passersby in this field. But using only ears and noses as compasses, Fair-goers easily navigate toward good tunes, hearty eats and festive people.

Which brings us to the grub available at the Oregon Country Fair: a smorgasbord of sensational treats and exotic dishes, culminating into an array of sweet and spicy smells near the main meadow. Toby's Tofu Palace is one of the longest running traders, serving up vegetarian noodles and rice for well over a decade. Nancy's Yogurt and the Springfield Creamery scoop desserts for the heated Fair-hiker, offering their famous vegan ice cream and historic Country Fair support. But unlike common rumors, the Fair caters to carnivores as well, making available authentic brisket sandwiches at the Frisco Café and generous portions of Southern rice dishes at Mickey's Gumbo.

Consequently, no one gets lost at Country Fair; one can only be found. While the havoc and multitude of party necessities and Fair-partakers can run any tourist amok, each area of the Fair holds its own beauty and pleasure. Instilling set prerogatives only pervades attendees to abstract from the basic notion of the Fair, which is a genuine gratification through an appeasing disorientation.

Adding new acts every year with changing climates, the Fair manages to contract more Fair-regulars every season. Contributing to the overall diversity of the event, Abercrombie-addicted teens now attend alongside the traditional tribesmen wearing deer-hide garments. Together, the mass creates an orgy of the unusual, never failing to meet standards and always serving a surprise to the syndicated hippie-fest follower. **KD**

Consequently, no one gets lost at Country Fair; one can only be found.

# Closing the Circle

Internationally adopted children grapple with the question of whether or not to search for their birth parents

STORY **ABEL PATTERSON** • PHOTOS **CHRISTIN PALAZZOLO**

"Who am I?"

Years before Rachael Yuanxi Swanson was old enough to ask that question, someone abandoned her on the steps of an orphanage in Changzhou, a city just west of Shanghai, China. Someone else left Ana, Rachael's adoptive sister, at a fire station in Hangzhou, another city near Shanghai.

Daniel, Rachael and Ana's adoptive brother from South Korea, had it comparatively easy. His parents turned him over to a loving foster mother, face to face.

This is all Kathy Gebhardt was told about her adopted children's first few months of life. As she and her family boarded a plane for the first of three 20-hour flights between Boulder, Colorado, and Asia, they knew next to nothing about the child they would be bringing home at the end of each trip.

They did know they were not alone on their journey. When they brought Rachael home in 1998, she was one of 15,774 foreign-born children to be adopted by American parents, according to the U.S. Department of State website. Eight years earlier the number was a little over 7,000. In 2006, almost 7,000 were adopted from China alone, and the total number of international adoptions was more than 20,000.

Susan Cox, Vice President of Public Policy and External Affairs at the Eugene office of Holt International, the oldest non-profit international adoption agency in the country, says that the national increase is largely due to China "opening its doors" to adopting parents from other countries in the early 1990s. Because of China's one-child law, and because there is a cultural preference for boys, thousands of Chinese girls are abandoned every year.

But the biggest change Cox has noticed since she started working with Holt in 1976 is the way the organization views issues of race, culture and identity.

When Holt was founded in the 1950s, Cox says, adoptive parents were told to "Americanize" the children as quickly as possible. The biggest concern was that the children would be perceived as different.

But now those priorities have shifted, Cox says. Heritage camps for international adoptees are springing up across the country. Adoption agencies like Holt have learned that the children are Americanized "by osmosis," as Cox puts it. "So, the greater effort needs to go to helping people stay connected to the country and culture of their birth."

Before adopting, prospective parents are often required to learn about and visit the country from which they are adopting.

"It's not a family who happens to be adopting a child of another race," Cox says. "You become an interracial family."

But as in Rachael's, Ana's and Daniel's cases, the desire of orphaned children to learn about their ethnicity and roots is not only trumped by their more immediate need for a loving family but is often virtually non-existent for the early part of their lives.

As they get older, Cox says, many will travel to their native country and try to find their birthparents. But for some, that's just not realistic.

Because Rachael and Ana were abandoned, Kathy knows nothing about their biological parents. She doesn't even know exactly how old the girls are. All that the Colorado family knows is how desperately the two girls were in need of care and affection.

Rachael and her adoptive siblings have shown almost no interest in things that remind them of their difficult beginnings. Rachael dislikes her middle name, Yuanxi, which was given to her by the orphanage staff.

"They told me it means 'garden of happiness,' which I think is wonderful," Kathy said. "[But] she hates it."

None of the children have wanted to attend heritage camps, though Kathy asks them every summer. They are bilingual but not

in their native tongue. Instead, they speak English and Spanish, because the family's nanny is from Mexico and takes an active role in raising the children.

Though none of them wants to explore his or her roots yet, Kathy said she would be receptive to the idea. She has some reservations, however, in part because of a story she heard from a neighbor who also adopted internationally.

The neighbor took his daughter back to Korea to meet her biological mother. As Kathy understood it, the daughter saw the trip as a door opening to a new relationship, but her mother had a different perspective.

"All [the mother] wanted was to know that her daughter was taken care of and happy," Kathy said. Once she knew that, the mother felt she could finally "close the door."

"I think you have to be emotionally and developmentally mature before you search," Cox says. "There is information and emotions that you're not able to process when you are younger."

She says that before deciding to search, adoptees should fully examine their motivations.

"Are you looking to fill a hole in your heart, or are you just curious?" she asks hypothetically. "If someone is searching because they think they're going to make their life easier or better, I don't think that's necessarily true. In fact, I think it's really important that you go through that process with a social worker or a therapist who can really make you be honest with those questions."

But no matter how prepared an adoptee might think he or she is, the emotions are overwhelming, Cox says, "because suddenly you add a dimension to your life that is very complicated."

If it sounds like she is speaking from experience, it's because she is. Susan Soon-keum Cox has a professional and personal relationship with Holt International.

Cox was the 167th child adopted through their program in 1956, the year Holt was founded. And now, at the age of 54, she is one of the most prolific advocates for responsible international adoption in the United States. She has spoken on the subject before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, at the Hague Convention and on a CNN interview.

At age 26, Cox began to explore her own Korean roots by visiting the orphanage where she spent the first four and a half years of her life. She even met some orphans who may have once shared a room with her.

"I just couldn't help but think how different our lives were," she says. "I'd gone on to have a family and go to school and live a full, rich life. They had not necessarily had the opportunity to go to school; many of them were still working at the orphanage."

Cox has returned to Korea periodically through the course of her life, and during each visit, she says, she tries to visit the orphanage.

"Over the years I've watched them grow older in the same way that I have," she says. "Now I think of them as orphans with grey hair."

As her 40th birthday approached and she became more familiar with Korea, she watched her children grow older. She thought about how her own birthmother would be getting older too, and it occurred to her that if she ever wanted to find her, she would have to do it soon.

Cox says her mental transition from an adopted daughter to a mother was solidified when she helped an adoptee with leukemia find his birthmother. His mother told him that not a day had passed that she hadn't thought about him.

"I transcended being an adoptee and tried to imagine what that would have been like as a mother," she says. "I felt a real longing to be able to find my birthmother and tell her she made the right decision for my life."

Using what she already knew—her age and that she was from Inch'on, South Korea—she placed an ad in the paper. With assistance from Holt Korea, she succeeded in finding out who her real mother was.

But her mother had passed away.

"And by coincidence she had died the same year that I went to Korea for the first time, in May of '78, and she had died in October," Cox says. "So there was literally very little overlap there."

Friends have asked her sympathetically, "Why didn't you look for her the first time?"

But Cox follows her own advice: if one is going to search, it has to be for the right reasons.

"Just going back to Korea and connecting with my birth-country was such a big deal and that sort of transcended everything else," she says. "There was a real sadness, but at the same time I was just so conscious of the fact that I wasn't ready in 1978."

She did find two half-brothers, who were unaware that she existed. Like so many orphans from South Korea, she was the result of a relationship not bound by marriage.

"I was a secret," she says. "They were totally surprised, because, if you think about it, that meant that their mother had this huge secret from them, too."

Through a translator, her younger brother told her something she will never forget. He told her that their mother's last words to him were, "You have a sister and she went to America."

"I have to tell you how much I treasure that particular story," she says. "It's sad that I never saw her again, but there is something incredibly comforting and satisfying about knowing that I was the last thing she was thinking of as she died."

Sarah Lanterman, **Kathy Gebhardt's biological daughter,** spends time with her adoptive sisters, Rachael Yuanxi Swanson, 9, and Ana Grace Ji Jong Swanson, 5.

Cox still keeps the Korean name her mother gave her: Soon-keum. It means "pure gold."

But she is quick to warn of the complexities that arise when international adoptees reestablish relationships with blood-relatives. All of her interactions with her half-brothers have been through a translator, which she says is "just not the same" as having a direct conversation.

Cox says that there is often guilt on the part of the birth-family and that the reunion can change the dynamics of the adoptive family by adding new members. The geographic barriers are challenging, too. Sometimes the birth-family wants a closer relationship than its long-lost relative does, or vice versa. The complicated nature of the experience is all the more reason, according to Cox, for the decision to search to rest fully with the adoptee.

> "It's not a family who happens to be adopting a child from another race. You become an interracial family."

Once Cox made her appearance, the secret was out. Her half-brothers' father had told them that their mother's deathbed confession was a hallucination. It wasn't until years later, when Cox found them, that they realized their mother had been telling the truth.

When she was first brought to the orphanage, it was clear that her mother had dyed Cox's hair a deeper black than it already was. Cox believes this was to hide the fact that she was a mixed-race baby. Her mother tried to hide that fact, but eventually had to give her up for fear of the affair being discovered. Because she is half-white, and was born during the Korean War, she has always assumed that her real father was an American soldier.

When people asked her who her real parents were, she would say jokingly, "My father was Douglas MacArthur," the general who orchestrated the Inch'on invasion.

Cox's search also led her to a half-sister, however, who revealed the truth about her real father. The fact that he was a British soldier was more disillusioning than she expected.

"I realized that I had this whole story in my mind of what had happened, and then realized I was going to have to accept that I was going to be learning the truth, which might be very different," she says. "It wasn't so much that it mattered to me that he wasn't an American soldier; that [he was British] had just never occurred to me, and it was a surprise to think about that."

Cox says that though she wanted to search for him, without his name, age or location, there was nowhere to start, so she probably will never meet him.

On Kathy Gebhardt and her family's flight to Korea to pick up Daniel, just six years after Susan Cox discovered that her father was a British soldier, another veteran was accompanying the adopting family. Kathy's father, Rich Gebhardt, had more than one motivation for the trip. It just so happens that 1999 was the 50th anniversary of the day he was taken as a prisoner of war, and he wanted to revisit the site of his capture.

It was the first time he had been back to Korea since the war. It was also the first time Kathy had heard him talk about that experience.

"And he hasn't talked about it since," Kathy says. "We had this little window and then the door closed again. But he has a Korean grandson now, so I thought that was a nice closing of the circle." **KD**

# Kingdom Uplifted

A popular new trend merges dynamic street dancing with spiritual praise

ABOVE: Andiel Brown, Haley Dairy and Seth Medina share a passion for K.R.U.M.P., which stands for Kingdom Radically Uplifted by Mighty Praise. RIGHT: Brown, a University of Oregon student and football player, asserts that the purpose behind the moves is to help release any forces that might be a burden.

PHOTOS BY BRENNA CHEYNEY

People watch in awe as Andiel Brown takes dance to a new level. He cranks up the music and opens with a chest pop, allowing his feet to carry him with the rhythm of the song to center stage at the Erb Memorial Union amphitheater on the University of Oregon campus. His muscular arms swing aggressively above his head as he stomps his right foot on the pavement. The crowd roars as he transitions effortlessly from one dance move to the next, his chest pulsating in and out as if his heart were beating with the spiritual conviction of the dance. A crowd of students gathers captivated by this new dance style: Kingdom Radically Uplifted by Mighty Praise (K.R.U.M.P.).

Brown, a 22-year-old University of Oregon student, explains that K.R.U.M.P. is unlike any other dance. He says that the purpose behind the moves is to help release any forces that might be a burden. Brown teaches students the fundamentals of the dance: raw, natural and expressive freedom of the body.

The movie "Rize," a documentary that follows two dancing sub-cultures in Los Angeles, Clowning and K.R.U.M.P.ing, introduced these forms of street dance and helped make them popular among today's youth. The term K.R.U.M.P.ing is often used synonymously with Clown dancing, a more popular form of street dance. Though the two dance styles have many similarities, the distinction is the purpose behind each.

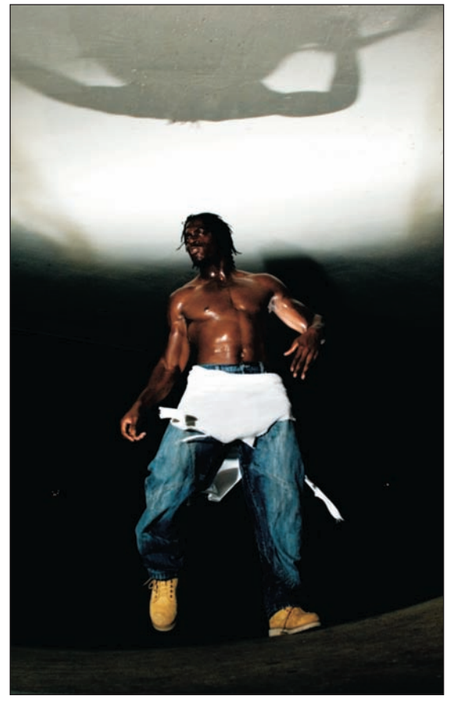
Clowning started when Thomas "Tommy the Clown" Johnson, was released from prison and decided to abandon his former troubled life by performing at birthday parties and events. Soon this style of dance began to spread among kids who wanted to turn their lives around and do something positive within their communities.

K.R.U.M.P., however, was established by former Clown dancers who decided to mold Clown dancing into a stricter dance with more violent movements, which would serve as a form of spiritual warfare. This group is commonly known as the K.R.U.M.P. Kings.

According to Brown, the K.R.U.M.P. Kings incorporated the three pillars into Clown dancing—the stomp, chest pop and arm swing—in order to give the dance a foundation and symbolic representation of warfare. These pillars shape the dance into a form of praise.

After deviating from Clown dancing and paving the way for this new art, K.R.U.M.P. King and founder of the movement, Tight-Eyez, explains that "Clowning is more about making the kids smile and be happy. K.R.U.M.P. is also about making people happy, but it's more of an in-your-face, raw action that the older people can enjoy. It's the uncovered side." While Clowning caters to a younger audience, K.R.U.M.P. dancing has taken this style of dance to a different level. It's more aggressive and has a warrior feel, explains Tight-Eyez.

K.R.U.M.P.ing is often referred to as "gettin' buck" or "gettin' amped." It's an energetic, volatile type of dance; however, it can also be very versatile since different personalities can adopt styles to suit their own dance. As K.R.U.M.P. has evolved, it has become structured; yet different styles have emerged.



Seth Medina, Brown's partner in the Eugene K.R.U.M.P. movement, explains that what differentiates Clowning from K.R.U.M.P.ing is the attitude of the dance.

K.R.U.M.P. resonates within Medina as a praise dance and a way to freely express himself. During a class held in Gerlinger Hall on April 21, he demonstrated his moves, and as he forcefully stomped and attacked the air with his arms, he seemed to enter into battle. The violent movements of his dance set off an air of authority; he had become untouchable by any force.

"The creators of K.R.U.M.P. may have got the vision from Clowning, but it has become a spiritual dance," says Medina. He further explains that K.R.U.M.P. reflects different stages and purposes for each of the three pillars.

A foot stomp must be done with authority as if the dancer were conquering whatever situation he or she is battling. Medina says that each stomp is as "if you are holding your ground, makin' sure you're steppin', standin' tall." The next pillar, the arm swing, Medina describes as "your sword; your weapon." With each arm swing, you are throwing off any burdens and cutting down any strongholds. The last pillar, and the core of the dance, represents of the dancer's heart. A chest pop done with confidence exclaims, "This is my heart; it's inside of me, and it's ready to come out!"

With its unique form and high energy, K.R.U.M.P. captures attention. Brown believes that the showmanship of this dance will allow him to minister to others within the Eugene community. "K.R.U.M.P. gave me the opportunity to witness while doing something I love to do," says Brown.

Brown's skills and technique have evolved over the past three years when he officially began K.R.U.M.P. dancing. He says that he was actually K.R.U.M.P. dancing long before he knew what it was and has since developed it into a ministry with Medina, who joined the K.R.U.M.P. movement about a year ago.

While Medina enjoys all types of dance, K.R.U.M.P. is "just different and more expressive," he says. "It already had a foundation."

The idea behind this K.R.U.M.P. ministry arose when Medina wanted to bring back the step team at his church, Jubilee World Outreach. His focus switched when he discovered that Brown was on this "K.R.U.M.P. kick," as he put it, and the vision of the K.R.U.M.P. ministry was born. Brown has been working to establish consistent classes for those wanting to learn how to K.R.U.M.P. dance and learn what K.R.U.M.P. is all about.

"People go around K.R.U.M.P.ing, knowing nothing about it and why they are dancing certain moves," says Brown. "Without an understanding of the moves, a person will look like they are flailing around, which gives no purpose to the movements."

Obstacles have stood in the way of Brown making K.R.U.M.P. classes available. His hectic class schedule, as well as being a member of the University of Oregon football team and other extracurricular activities, often makes it difficult for Brown to find time to K.R.U.M.P dance. Establishing a venue and time has also delayed the classes. Despite these set-backs, high hopes remain for this K.R.U.M.P. duo.

"It is time to get fired up and bring out your best moves with a sense of power and authority," Brown exclaims. In other words, "Get buck!" ***-Becca McKinley***

# Painting The Town Red
## (And Green and Blue...)

Eugene art programs work to erase the negative connotation that comes with graffiti

Down a narrow alley off of busy Willamette Street in Eugene, shades of purple, orange and turquoise splatter across the wall of a local shoe store, Shoe-A-Holic.

Within a month, feisty characters with thick, stylized outlines and the bold script "Hip Hop" appear on the wall.

This large mural, painted by local artists and youth during the spring of 2000, joins the highly provocative urban art form known as graffiti.

"It's the only art movement in the world where you will literally get killed doing it," says Steven "Frustr8" Lopez, now a Los Angeles-based artist who helped direct the painting on Shoe-A-Holic.

Although risky in some forms, the graffiti work on Shoe-A-Holic is not criminal.

Lazar, owner of Shoe-A-Holic, gave artists the freedom to paint his store's wall in the early 1990s. "I was a little bit afraid at first to see what they would put, but in the end I thought it was very beautiful," he says.

Then in 2000, the Lane Arts Council approached Lazar about painting over his graffiti wall. "I let the city paint it because I like to see new tagging. . . If I was the mayor of the city—which I plan to run for anyway—I would tell the people who own the buildings to put graffiti everywhere."

That year, the city granted the Lane Arts Council $25,000 to create a positive and legal artistic environment for youth as an alternative to vandalizing forms of graffiti. The Council created the ArtWall project, in which six different walls around town were brushed, rolled and splattered with graffiti art.

The idea was "to build trust and recognition, but it didn't continue. And that is one of the worst things to do for that population of kids," says Douglas Beauchamp, director of the Lane Arts Council.

Shoe-A-Holic features one of the four remaining paintings.

Out of the six walls commissioned for the project, two were removed. One of these was the Factory Fabrics wall on Seventh Avenue, which was a "free wall," or a wall that is legally painted with graffiti.

"The problems we experienced were that other local businesses were tagged too," says Lin Holmquist, Eugene's Community Service Officer and Gang/Graffiti Information Coordinator. "Many were tagging on their way to it and on their way out of it."

Today notions of graffiti oscillate between something creative and something destructive.

Literally, the word graffiti means drawings on a flat surface, coming from the Italian "sgraffio" (scratch) and the Greek "graphein" (to write). It formerly referred to scribbles found on ancient Roman architecture.

To police, graffiti is any inscription: words, drawings or anything "ascribed to a surface that the property hasn't given permission for," describes Holmquist.

But defining graffiti as just vandalism does not fit. "Labeling a problem doesn't do anything at all. And it's never going to stop people from doing it. It's now saturated in American media. It's as American as apple pie," says Lopez.

Modern graffiti grew out of New York's streets in the late 1960s, first appearing as "tags," or quick marks like names or personal logos.

The art evolved quickly. By the late 1970s, graffiti was linked with hip hop culture, and what were once small tags had become huge urban murals, or "pieces," as derived from the word "masterpieces."

What started in the streets is now a respected art form. Beauchamp explains, "Most graffiti is art. Tagging is often illegal and usually not very artful, just dumb . . . It has little to do with art, it's more about identity."

But to some, even simple tagging has its aesthetic appeal. "I think tagging is also an art. People shouldn't stop freedom of expression. I think art comes out of people in different forms," says Lazar.

Graffiti provides an atmosphere for artists to experiment with different forms. Expression comes out not only in paintings, simple and elaborate, but with scratches, stencils, paste-ons and stickers.

"I've grown from just writing my name on a wall," says Lopez. "To some, that's what it's really about. I can't do that anymore. I like productions; stuff that takes time and is thought out. I'm not really into stencils. That seems to be the hot trend right now, and I'm not feeling it."

To Lopez, stencil writers "can't call themselves graffiti artists or writers, because they are doing neither. Someone like Banksy, however, is flipping that script and taking that shit to another level. Everyone else is just at eye level trying to be an outlaw, because they have spray paint and a cookie-cutter piece of paper."

Banksy, an English artist from Bristol, has gathered fame with his anti-war, anti-establishment pieces written across walls of the London Zoo, British Museum and Zapatista-controlled areas in Mexico, among other places.

Graffiti is often linked with gangs and law-breakers. Holmquist explains that the usual offenders, motivated by a group mentality and competition, are aged adolescent to young adult.

"They're part of a sub-culture that paints graffiti if not for self expression, for notoriety and attention. They don't have permission, so it's a crime," says Holmquist. "They derive a certain excitement in doing so . . . It becomes a kind of adrenaline rush."

But gangs and other "street kids" are not the only ones discreetly creating art on city walls. "I see graffiti as a promiscuous art form. It will go with anyone that wants it. So in that sense, the age group is wide. The backgrounds are broad, from the most affluent kids doing it . . . to the rock-bottom dwellers," says Lopez.

A large appeal of graffiti art is the ability to reclaim the streets with one's personal mark. However, with so many artists at work, one tag is often soon hidden behind another. A giant masterpiece can last fewer than 24 hours.

"If you're going to paint somebody else out, you better be good," says Beauchamp, a graffiti artist of sorts. "I think it's about a passion, about control and a willingness to make art on the edge."

What makes the art so alluring and distinct is that "there's a strong political and social sense that speaks to those things in ways that other art does not," says Beauchamp.

**Defining graffiti as just vandalism does not fit.**

With programs like the Art Council's wall project, graffiti-type expression can give artists a voice and a purpose.

"I had told the city that if it could help only one kid, then I think it is successful. And some of them have become great in their own right. 2h is now in Seattle, and he's killing the gallery scene. He was part of the program," says Lopez. Artist 2h is currently showcased in Global Storming, an art exhibition by Thinkspace Art Gallery in Santa Monica, California.

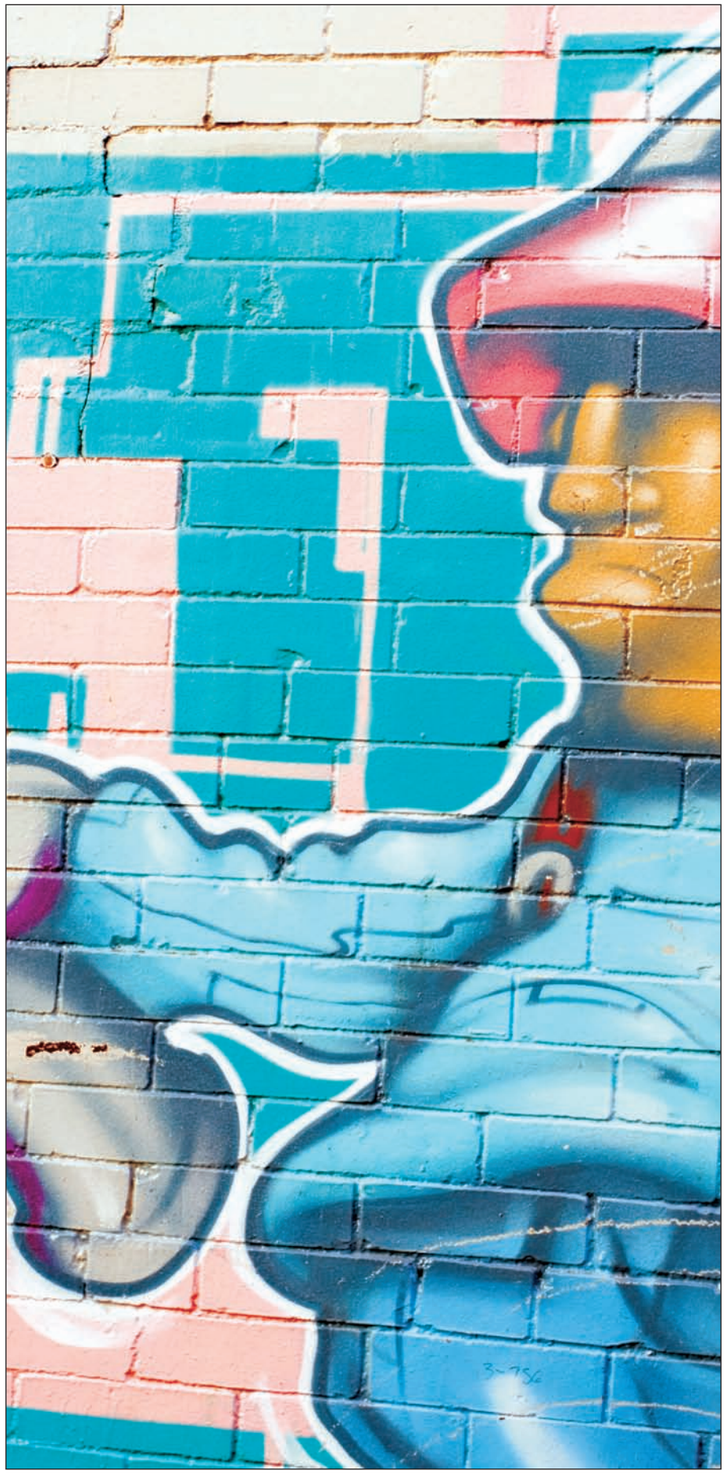
However, possibilities for renewing the project look dim. "I would love to do it again," says Beauchamp. "We have the knowledge now. I wish we had more time and funds."

Whether or not there is organized street art like the ArtWalls in the future, Eugene's streets will continue to be splattered with graffiti, legal and illegal, for those like Lazar who think, "The more graffiti, the better."

*-Alison Goin*

OPPOSITE: This part of the mural on Shoe-A-Holic is one of the four remaining paintings from the ArtWall program.

PHOTOS BY JAROD OPPERMAN



# Lens into Darfur

## Darfurians told their jarring stories of death and survival, but the crisis continues

One year before a young American snuck across the Sudanese border in the cab of a pickup truck driven by members of a rebel movement, she couldn't have pointed out Darfur on a map.

But a lot has changed since Aisha Bain was first handed a file labeled Darfur, while interning at a small nongovernmental organization in Virginia. With instructions to figure out what was going on in Darfur, a western region of Sudan, nearly the size of France, Bain spent long nights listening to vivid reports about refugee camps overflowing into Chad and about mass murder. She developed numerous contacts in Sudan and Chad. These people told her horrific first-hand accounts of the killing and desperately waited for the world to hear their cries and intervene. But as Bain contacted numerous news media outlets across the United States, her horror compounded as the mainstream media stood silent.

Some had just covered a story in Uganda, and others said that if it wasn't already in the news, it must not be that big of a story. The replies she received from news organizations varied in their language, but their message was the same: At this time, they were not going to cover Darfur's strife.

When the atrocities in Darfur finally made their way into mainstream airwaves, Bain, her friend Adam Shapiro and Shapiro's friend Jen Marlowe had already decided to travel to Darfur to report on the situation independently. In the fall of 2004, armed with two video cameras, a still camera, and more than 40 blank videotapes, the trio illegally crossed the Chad-Sudan border into Darfur. What they brought back was far more compelling than any newspaper report.

"Being a victim is not an identity people choose for themselves," says Shapiro. "It is something thrust upon them, but too often that is how Westerners tend to view others enduring conflict."

The documentary film "Darfur Diaries" places a complex conflict into human terms. The filmmakers never appear on screen. The movie consists purely of the voices of Darfurians in Darfur and in refugee camps across the border, in Chad. The people share stark accounts, translated with subtitles, of vile attacks by the government and the Janjaweed. It reveals the crisis in the words and images of those who are living through it.

A death toll becomes a heart-wrenching account from a bright-eyed boy named Mubarak about the day he watched bombs kill his father. "I saw it with my eyes," he says. "Many people were killed with him."

Air raids become memories that haunt sleep. 10-year-old Ibrahim Yousef holds a picture drawn in crayon of a plane dropping bombs on homes. He points to his house in the coloring. Asked who is inside, he says, "My brothers and me. They died. My brothers all died, and I ran away."

Rebels become fathers and brothers desperate for rights and filled with anger and heartbreak. And victims become resilient survivors who push forward.

On one side of the crisis lie several rebel groups with various roots. The groups are fighting against the government and Janjaweed, but they have splintered into numerous factions over internal power struggles, further obstructing peace negotiations.

The Sudanese government, Khartoum, a brutal and oppressive regime led by President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, hoards a vast amount of the country's resources for an elite few. The government publicly denies any relationship with the Janjaweed but has armed the militia with artillery and finances as well as fought alongside the group. The government and Janjaweed have targeted rebel groups and civilian areas using bombings, rape and ground attacks as arsenal.

BELOW: In this photo provided by Paul Jeffrey/ACT-Caritas, people displaced by the violence in Darfur gather around a well they built in the Khamsadegaig camp with the assistance of ACT-Caritas, a joint humanitarian aid effort in Darfur.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAUL JEFFREY/ACT-CARITAS

LEFT: In a hospital ward for malnourished children in Garsila, Asha Ibrahim Musa sits with her 23-month-old son, Alyas Adam. RIGHT: A girl living in the Dereig Camp for internally displaced people skips rope. The U.N. estimates more than 2 million have been displaced by the violence. Photos taken in July by Paul Jeffrey/ACT-Caritas.

Janjaweed forces are almost entirely Arab, fighting against non-Arabs. But simple distinctions deny the situation's complexity. Both sides share a long history of common experience, Arabic language, intermarriage and Muslim faith. The people previously used traditional practices to resolve disputes, but the government destroyed these methods by arming the Janjaweed.

The current crisis involves a complicated past. Roots branch in many directions, including a complex history of government corruption, colonialism, severely marginalized people, conflict, drought and structural inequality.

Today, information about the crisis in Darfur is readily available. A Google search of "Darfur conflict" brings more than two million hits.

Debate surrounding Darfur has run thick, but action has fallen thin. In 2004, the United States Congress declared the situation in Darfur to be genocide, while a 2005 United Nations report said that it lacked the intent defined by genocide. Ultimately, the international community has failed to sufficiently intervene in Darfur as the death toll continues to rise, and millions of refugees and internally displaced people cannot safely return home.

"One shouldn't get hung up on the definition or the word but recognize the abuses of people and act," says Paul Slovic, University of Oregon psychology professor and founder of Decision Research. "The humanitarian aid effort has been heroic, and the people who are doing it are fantastic, but it's not enough."

Prolonged peace talks and negotiations have failed to stop the violence. This August, the U.N. passed Resolution 1769, authorizing the deployment of 26,000 troops to protect civilians and help humanitarian efforts in Darfur. China's relationship with the Sudanese government has proved to be a major roadblock in U.N. intervention. China signed onto the resolution only after the mandate was weakened.

"Given Khartoum's grudging and prevaricating "acceptance" of Resolution 1769, and a continuing unwillingness by the international community to compel real acceptance, the new African Union mission in Darfur may well be a failure of historic proportions," Eric Reeves, Sudan researcher and analyst, wrote in an article posted on his website.

As the appalling statistics continue to rise—Reeves estimates that 450,000 people may have died during the conflict, and the U.N. estimates that more than two million have been driven from their homes—the unique lens "Darfur Diaries" offers into the crisis becomes crucial. The film serves as a humanistic and emotional appeal, putting faces in the place of figures.

There is a wedding celebration and a light-hearted rendition of Bob Marley's "Buffalo Soldier." There is even laughter amid the tragedy.

"That's important for people to understand the atrocities," Slovic says. "To hear in their own words the people who have survived the assaults. It's not the same as meeting them, but it's certainly more personal than a news report."

Photojournalist Paul Jeffrey spent two weeks in Darfur this July. As he shared his work with the Lane County Darfur Coalition, he pointed to an image of Asha Ibrahim Musa seeking medical treatment for her 23-month-old son, Alyas Adam, who she held on her lap. Malnourishment had left the child's bones protruding and his eyes sunken in.

"What I really wish I could share with you is a sound," Jeffrey said. "It would be more meaningful than any photograph."

He described the child's cry: a weak, haunting noise, emanating from tiny lungs, as if it were all he had left.

"You really begin to hear at a gut level what it is like for people who continue to suffer and continue to die," Jeffrey said.

In refugee camps that lack even the basic survival needs, the documentary shows Darfurians who have formed schools. An unpaid teacher stands in front of a group of children with a makeshift chalkboard rattled by gusts of wind. Without a classroom, chairs or books, the students sit on the ground, propelled by their dreams and their parents' resolve that they will receive an education.

Together, these images boil down a complex situation into simple terms: What's going on in Darfur is wrong, and the world must act. ***-Desiree Affleje***

### What You Can Do

**Educate**

- Educate yourself and others about the conflict in Darfur.
- Learn about your elected officials record on Darfur, www.darfurscores.org.
- Continue to follow developments in Darfur.

**Act**

- Pressure elected officials to act.
- Ask the media to carry more news about Darfur.
- Support targeted Sudan divestment campaigns to build economic pressure on the government.

**Donate**

- Learn about organizations that are working on the ground in Darfur, and support them financially.

Information about upcoming local events can be found on the Lane County Darfur Coalition's website, lcdarfurcoalition.org

ABOVE: The agogô, a dual cowbell instrument, adds a high pitched, melodic rhythm, while the surdo, a large bass drum, serves as the foundation to the bateria's samba grooves.

# Brazilian Beats

## Bateria Samba Ja brings colorful rhythm from Brazil to Northwest music lovers

Twenty-six community members in matching blue tee shirts with personally accessorized decorations of blue and yellow sparkling scarves, beaded necklaces and feathers, line up in Ken Kesey Square of downtown Eugene. Drums hang at their waists. The hard beats of large bass drums called surdos propel the Samba. Caixas, like American snare drums with deeper sounds, run along with the deep-pitched music line. A rack of metal jingle shakers, chocalhos, creates a steady tempo. Agogôs, multiple-piece metal bells struck with wooden sticks, add high-pitched rhythm and promote the melody of the drums. Audience members cannot help moving their feet to the beat, and people start dancing. They express their appreciation by putting hands up, swinging with partners or hollering. On a weeknight in July, a "bateria," or percussion ensemble, called Samba Já turn the public space into a Brazilian world.

"I love it," five high school students echo to each other, moving to the rhythms of "batucada," the dense and complex musical texture that a bateria produces.

"Music is in my spirit," says dancer Angel Snell who indulges in Samba Já's enthusiastic music. Once people begin stomping their feet to the music, it doesn't take long for Samba Já to take the audience over. Despite the rain, nearly 50 people, ranging from children to seniors, stay until 11 p.m. enjoying the public rehearsal for the upcoming Oregon Country Fair.

Samba Já has been bringing the flavor of Brazil to Eugene venues for the past six years. The group strives to provide the audience and community with joy and energy by drumming and sharing their culture. The word "Samba" refers to the urban dance music of Rio de Janeiro, and "Já" literally means "already," but colloquially, "right now." The implied message could be, "You don't have to wait for Samba because Samba is right now."

Samba Já was co-founded by Jake Pegg in 2001. One day in a record store in

**"You don't have to wait for Samba because Samba is right now."**

Michigan, the track "Ritmo Number One" from the Mr. Bongo Records compilation "Batucada: Music of the Slums" caught Pegg's musical ear.

"I completely freaked out," Pegg says. "I just started dancing."

Later, in Eugene, University of Oregon professor Charles Dowd became a catalyst for getting Samba Já started. Dowd recognized Pegg's music ability at a party where Pegg "played [his] heart out." He offered Pegg a concert spot to play Brazilian percussion pieces that Pegg arranged and transcribed. Afterwards, Pegg complied with the requests of listeners and formed a group.

PHOTOS BY BRENNA CHEYNEY

ABOVE: The group rehearses every Saturday morning at the Core Star Cultural Center. Rehearsals are open to the public. BELOW: Samba Já co-founder Jake Pegg rehearses with fellow percussionists.

Since making its debut at the Eugene Celebration in September 2001, the group has grown to about 30 musicians. Members aged 18 to 62 include doctors, graphic designers and teachers. Many had no prior experience performing music but attended a practice and experimented with various instruments. It was so fun they came back the next time. Some were hooked after seeing Samba Já perform at Saturday Market, Oregon Country Fair, Take Back the Night, Sweet Cheeks Vineyard or Lorax on Alder Street. People join the group for different reasons; the only common factor is the passion for Brazilian rhythm. Steve White remembers the moment he saw Samba Já's performance at the Eugene Celebration while visiting his brother.

"I felt their energy. It was out of control," White says. "It was the coolest thing I'd ever seen. I had to join them."

On Saturday mornings, Samba Já rehearses at the Core Star Cultural Center. Standing in front, Pegg instructs members by blowing his whistles while making triangle-shaped gestures with his hands. People who play the same instruments then look at each other or use their own signs to make sure they start at the same time.

"It's really a unit. If you messed up, the whole band would mess up," says Gladys Campbell, who plays shakers such as ganzá.

Their songs include "Magalenha," which sings about flirtatiousness, and "Negrume da Noite," a song of the beauty of Afro-Brazilian music and fruits, and of the struggles of Afro-Brazilians. Samba Já uses a variety of Brazilian drums: caixa, cuíca, pandeiro, repique, surdo, timbal, tamborim and zabumba. The different squeaks, barks, yelps, buzzes, slaps, cracks and cries the instruments emit express joy, sadness or tension. Pegg says responsorial singing, heard in such songs as "Claro Que Sim!" "Maculélé" and "Bambaataa Car Wash," is part of the music's African heritage.

Sometimes at the beginning of or during a song, Pegg kneels on one knee, lowers his head and plays his drums, as if devoting all his spirit. Alternating sticks, thumbs, fingertips or palms produces the different patterns of high and low notes. When the group plays well, he sometimes dances and sings to show his excitement.

"I feel an element that's not on the earth," Pegg describes. "It takes me to wonderful places…I feel great when I have concepts of sounds in my head, and can hear them through the band." But when the group is not playing well, he says, it's sometimes frustrating. When that happens, he hides his irritation to avoid letting band members pick up on it, which might affect their music. He knows, however, that learning to communicate negative critiques in a non-hurting but honest way is important.

Samba Já's rehearsals continue for about three hours. Drops of perspiration shine on foreheads. Not everyone is young; their arms and legs seem heavy. Yet, no one dances sluggishly. Where does their energy come from?

Pegg's answer is easy. "This music provides everything."

Now the band members feel satisfaction when they look back on their performance at the Country Fair; they amazed the audience that packed the main-stage meadow.

"We communicated our energy to the audience," says University of Oregon faculty member and Samba Já musician Michael Clark. "I felt like we were sharing our passion for the music."

The next goal of Samba Já is to maximize the direct interaction with the audience. One of the ways to do that is through choreography, Pegg says.

The bateria promises to expose a broader community to the Brazilian world.

***-Maiko Nakai***

# He's Not Your Mama,
## But You Should Try His Food Anyway

Papa's Soul Food features the taste of the South

There's no other way to say it: Papa's Soul Food Kitchen cooks in every way, shape and sound. As a down-home, Southern-style restaurant, the joint offers clean and rich eats with rustic music. From the entrance, this place undoubtedly pays patronage to blues legends Son House, Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. And the only thing more robust than what's fried or roasted in the kitchen is the atmosphere and art.

"It's just homey," remarks Papa, the restaurant's owner and founder. "People come here as they are. And if you've got 10 bucks in your pockets, you're going to leave fat and happy. And that's with something to drink."

While attendees are ubiquitous, the kitchen house is unique, succumbing to a Southern attitude while dismissing soul food stereotypes. Multimedia artwork adorns four walls. Dedicated to Papa's favorite blues bandits, intricate installations instill faith and adoration in the owner's influences and upbringing. Paintings of Muddy Waters and Son House are combined with small plastic skulls, dice, pocket watches and guitar picks to create statues for the deceased who once sold their souls for their passion.

**"If you've got 10 bucks in your pockets, you're going to leave fat and happy. And that's with something to drink."**

Papa and his cooks accordingly acquire that mythical Southern mojo. Frying up succulent catfish for the traditional taste buds, the cooks also pull together pork and jerk chicken sandwiches while heating up essential "Nawlins" style gumbo. And a side of baked yams, collared greens or black-eyed peas will help settle any rumbling appetite.

More than often, Papa receives the tedious Southern customer who will question the authenticity of his cooking. But Papa's menu features more than a few Southern cornerstones contrived through generations of home-style recipes, and any dubious palate will inevitably fall under the spell of Papa's Soul Food.

"I always hear, 'I'm from the South; my mama used to cook this type of food; I know what it's all about,'" says Papa, paraphrasing the common interaction between a Southerner and head cook of the soul food joint located 2,500 miles northwest of Dixieland. "And I just say, 'Well, my name's Papa; I'm not your mama, but you should try my food anyways!'"

As always, a stubborn soul food-filled throat needs lubrication, and for this, Papa has an elaborate selection of thirst elixirs. As in any boisterous bar, the drinks also encourage amusement. For those not able to acquire a shot of Tennessee whiskey or Kentucky bourbon, Papa's scrumptious sweet tea will suffice, served in a Mason jar big enough to give anyone a sugar high. The coffee is always concentrated and hot, and the lemonade is fresh enough to pucker giggles from a frown.

Papa is celebrating his restaurant's second anniversary. The man stands heavy but is light-hearted. His large arms rest politely atop his plentiful belly as he explains his addiction to soul food and blues.

"To cook with me, you gotta be able to know and think what I'm tasting," asserts Papa.

His face holds the rare glow of a happy, self-made man. His ever-present smile stretches from cheek to cheek, only breaking perfect structure to emit a hilarious remark. When he laughs, his entire body rumbles with the soothing vibrations of an after-squall calm. His chuckle is deep and assuring, attracting enough attention to animate anyone sulking at the bar. He wears his confidence about him like an aura acquired from a mystic, using extravagant gestures with his husky extremities. Almost effortlessly, he excites himself explaining recipes and tunes.

Next to food and family, Papa has always held music closest to his heart. As a child, his mother ran an R&B bar in Long Beach, California, called The Colonial. Papa procrastinated bedtimes to hear the hollers of soul musicians, as well as nibble on some of his mother's Southern-style food. Sometimes, Papa had the pleasure of jam sessions coordinated in his own home. His mother ran a local music production syndicate searching for SoCal talent during the riotous rock and roll age.

"Growin' up, even in the living room of my house, there was always these old-school '70s-style house parties," says Papa with a reminiscent nod. "There were always musicians listenin' and jammin' it up, doin' what they did back in the day."

Papa intricately explains his soul food upbringing: a parental philosophy that will be infinitely passed on. In order to pull off a great party, you need good music and even better food. Hence, Papa pursued a cooking career as a young adult, hoping one day to open his own Southern-style bar and grill. He picked up a few years of professional culinary training. However, culinary studies failed to serve his interest, lacking courses instructing the intricacies of Southern fried food. But this was no excuse to Papa's mother, whose rational rage scared Papa into roaming the South, evidently perking his senses to Southern smells and sending him searching for home-style recipes.

"I just let the passion take over," says Papa while listing the numerous locations where he learned his trade, from California to North Carolina, with even a short stay in Jamaica. "It was easier to drop out of school farther away from my mom, because she would've kicked my ass."

After his self-searching chef travels, Papa finally came back to the West, determined to take some classes in restaurant management and start up his own place. For many years, Papa filtered through every fine dining kitchen in Lane County, finally opening and operating his own vending stand, where he sold some of the same menu items featured at the Soul Food Kitchen today.

Now the future remains unwritten but encouraging for Papa. His kitchen at 400 Blair Boulevard stands only as a starting point. Eventually, Papa hopes to establish another location in Springfield, where he suspects a large number of soul food fans resides. He also leads his own soul music band, which originally began as an ad-plug ploy for the restaurant. But music is a hobby to Papa, something to add to the atmosphere of his exquisite, exotic and addictive Southern menu, which he truly masters with experience and machismo.

"I'll never get too big for my own britches," says Papa. "I just wanted to cook food and, maybe, get a little rich. I've always wanted to be ghetto fabulous. They say more money brings more problems, and I've had enough of those." ***-Jason Dronkowski***


ABOVE: Papa's Soul Food Kitchen also serves as a weekly blues joint, featuring live and local musicians, including Papa himself. Standing in front of his favorite piece of artwork, Papa plays his harmonica. BELOW: Papa's Soul Food Kitchen specializes in New Orleans style soul food, serving up dishes ranging from deep fried cat fish, jerk chicken, fried okra and hush puppies. Pictured here is a plate of fried cat fish with a side of macaroni and cheese.

PHOTOS BY DAVE MARTINEZ

# Gitanas and Americanas

STORY **ELIZABETH CHAPMAN** ART **KELLY WALKER**

People pack the streets, alleys and plazas like a concert. In Granada, Spain immigrants of Arabic, Christian, and Muslim decent and occasionally Morocco move as migratory birds in different flight patterns. Within the fast-paced city, they make up a distinct circus of people whose lives lack the tradition of the average Spaniard. These are the street performers. The characters in this free production are cast of Gypsies, musicians and artists that coexist in Plaza de las Ramblas.

One gaggle of women in particular command attention from the tourists and apathy from the locals. They are a social species capable of mobbing predators as they gracefully donn waredrobes similar to Joseph's Coat of Many Colors.—they are the Gypsies. The older Gypsy women dance wearing long flowing skirts, large over-sized men's sweaters and boots. Like unpreened peacocks their wild wavy hair hangs to the middle of their backs where it as it sways defiantly unlike the starched, shirt straight hair that is fashionable for Spanish women.. Younger generations of gypsy women trample around in high heels, clicking furiously as they approach spectators.

Before I left to study abroad, my grandmother warned me about the Spanish Gypsies. An English-speaking tourist, she used emphatic gestures to express the universal word "No" to Gypsies begging for money. It was humorous to see a woman in her eighties clutching her purse and shaking her head like a crazed woodpecker. But I knew if my Mama Claire was scared of the Spanish Gypsies, I should be too.

I arrived in Spain to meet those mysterious women I had been warned of. In Plaza de las Ramblas an older troupe of women traveled toward me as I mentally rehearsed my only defense: Mama Claire's pantomime. These women were armed and dangerous toting sprigs of sage. Their heavy soles pounded on the cobblestone faster and faster. The unknown was approaching: I was terrified.

"¡Toma para suerte!" the elder Gypsy declared in Spanish, shaking her sage in my face. She wants me to take it. "¡Toma!" I knew if I accepted her gift, reciprocity would obligate me to give her something in return--this is how it worked. "¡Toma!" My economics professor taught me there is no such thing as free, although sage is an abundant herb in dry Andalucia. "¡Toma!" Out of

> Her power fell as a bird shot in midair. She was no longer an aggressive salesman but another human being.

fear, poor Spanish skills and my desire for her to stop harassing me, I caved. "¡Toma!" I just wanted her to stop repeating her mantra. This graying woman with coffee colored, experienced eyes could command the neighborhood.

She was armed with sage, confidence and a sense of entitlement from years of practice. I was a foreigner. She shoved the sage into my hand. I was dumbfounded. I surrendered a shiny euro.

Over the next six months, I grew to admire and dread their presence. For them, being a gypsy was serious. Their hours coincide with a tourist's agenda: a morning convocation near the cathedral to confront those leaving mass, a brief siesta at lunch and a final afternoon tour.

Modernity implied Gypsy women should conform to Spanish customs, yet there was nothing traditional about these women.

Exotic and foreign traditions leave many curious as they observe these outsiders. I no longer felt like an outsider.

As spring came, I found myself confident with Spanish, enough to converse comfortably. One particularly hot afternoon I was feeling irritable as I exited a store near the popular tourist plaza. A middle-aged Gypsy approached me outside. She insisted on giving me some sage. I was ready to assert myself. I blatantly refused her plea and she ardently harassed me.

I quipped back with my western ideals of free, "Si es gratis, ¿porque estás aquí dando regalitos?" ("If it's free, then why are you here giving gifts?") Her power fell as a bird shot midair. She was no longer an aggressive salesman but another human being.

I had directly addressed her ploy. We were both embarrassed. This was her culture and identity and I had insulted it.Her begging disturbed me, but not for her lifestyle but for my distain of it. Wounded she fled and began to approach other tourists. This time I noticed a secret dignity in her ability to continue on her route.

Cultural identity distinguished us but humanity bound us together. I was an exchange student who was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to study abroad. Her circumstances led her to beg but her bohemian heritage was seductive with flamenco guitar music and dance, secret courtship rules within the gypsy community and years of folklore that taught outsiders to fear but respect the gypsies. Who was I to judge her lifestyle and treat her with unkindness? I was unable to understand her drive but I respected it. These Spanish Gypsy women fly as a colony asking for money, offering a traveler sage for luck, or a palm reading into the future. They can be intimidating and powerful but without Gypsies, Spain would lose part of its mystery and identity. **KD**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