

The Eleventh Annual Lesbian Writers Fund Awards

Breathing Underwater

Lu Vickers



Samiya Bashir

One Small Step

Samiya Bashir

*She dons rubber gloves and
cotton mitts, surgical sweat
coats her brow, dots her lips.*

I reach up for a kiss.

*We stole the pink plastic cup
from the kiddie corner at
the clinic, hand made
the tube from an enema
bottle, bought at a
99-cent store.*

*Sometimes we like it fresh,
sometimes frozen.*

*Her brother, only 19, has
much to give, needs
no great notice.*

*She reminds me
she's loved me for almost
a decade, will love me for
centuries more – I always
get nervous at this moment.*

*I want to moan, raise my hips
to meet her hand, reach into
the forest of her hair,
whisper things.*

*I want to run to the back
of the wardrobe we share,
cower behind denims and silks.*

*She reaches up for a kiss,
returns her focus to our task.*

*We complete the operation,
and wait.*



Lu Vickers

Mama didn't move. I struggled to keep afloat, beat the water with my hands. She was going to let me drown and was weighing her gains against her losses. Watching me, eyes flat as pennies. I was Not the Right Kind of Girl. Never had been. Panicked, I went under again, holding my breath, my chest about to burst. I sank even though I kicked hard against the water.

Then there was an explosion, a blur of bubbles. Mama jumped into the canal next to me and sank beneath the surface, facing me, her eyes wide open. Her skin was waxy-looking underwater, like the worm on Maisey's hook. She held her hands out to me, scissored her legs. Her red hair floated above her head like silky grass. Silver bubbles leaked out of her mouth and nose. She clutched my hands and we sank deeper, where there was no sound. The water grew dark green in my mouth, the color of trees when night is falling. Her face was a question mark. That was the last I saw of her before everything went black. I floated backward through space, twitching like Maisey's worm, sinking, a voice whirling through my head, *wish I'd never had you.*

ASTRAEA'S LESBIAN WRITERS FUND ANNUALLY DIRECTS FINANCIAL AWARDS TO EMERGING LESBIAN VOICES IN THE FIELDS OF POETRY AND FICTION. Since its inception in 1991, Astraea has awarded nearly a half million dollars to openly lesbian writers whose work shows extraordinary promise. The judges who select the recipients are among the finest established lesbian writers in the United States.

The Fund expresses Astraea's dedication to nurturing lesbian culture in all its forms and provides financial support to help assist writers buy whatever they may need to continue their work. In addition to

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Dear Friends,

As we welcome in a new year, we extend warm greetings and deep thanks to all of you who have helped make this past year a productive one for Astraea and for the global community of activist organizations we support. In this issue of the newsletter we present a snapshot of groups organizing outside of the U.S, which Astraea has supported in the fall cycle of our International Fund. As we go to press, we are reviewing more than 100 proposals from groups working within the U.S.

All of these organizations—and there are hundreds of them—are raising their voices in the name of human rights and human dignity. They are voices that deserve to be heard and which articulate a creative, intelligent and passionate activism. In the face of chilling infringements on civil liberties and rights, escalating U.S. militarism, ubiquitous fundamentalism, and widening economic gaps, Astraea grantees are changing the landscape for social justice in very real ways locally and regionally.

We at Astraea are heartened to see so many organizations within the LGBT communities connecting their very important day-to-day work with speaking out for peace and against war. LGBT communities around the world know all too well that violence—or its threat—exact an immeasurable toll on people's lives and spirits. With that knowledge in mind, on January 3rd, Astraea joined with many ally organizations, foundations and individuals as signatories in a New York Times advertisement. The ad called upon President Bush and Congressional leaders to "Embrace Peace and Prosperity. Not War, Recession and Poverty."

In her book, Mobilizing Resentment, Jean Hardisty writes: "...people who have had trouble being heard may be the very people who hold the key to new visions..." We believe she's right. As we enter 2003, Astraea will continue to support those creative, intelligent and passionate voices.

Wishing you a peaceful new year,

Katherine T. Acey
Executive Director

NEW FACES Jennifer Einhorn Director of Communications



PHOTO: DEB KRIVROY

For the past 15 years, Jenn has been a communications strategist working primarily in the areas of social issues and the arts. She is the former Director of Communications for GLAAD, and MAMM (the magazine for women with breast and reproductive cancers), and a former music journalist for *The Boston Phoenix* and *The Boston*

Herald. She was a media consultant for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and has worked with Astraea for several years as a communications consultant. Astraea's tagline *Empower, Envision, Embrace* was created by Jenn. She has a B.A. in Political Ethics and lives with her partner, Deb Krivoy, in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn.

By Patricia Justine Tumang

Radical Resistance, *Radical Harmonies*: The Women's Music Cultural Movement.

Some of the legendary artists featured in *Radical Harmonies* make music at the film's Astraea screening



PHOTO: JEAN EINHORN

IT WAS AN ELECTRIFYING EVENING ON OCTOBER 21, 2002 when Astraea hosted the New York City premiere of *Radical Harmonies*, a film by Dee Mosbacher. The event benefited Astraea's Lynn Campbell Memorial Fund—honoring the life of an extraordinary lesbian human rights activist (see sidebar).

Radical Harmonies, which chronicles

Foremother of the women's drumming movement, Edwina Lee Tyler

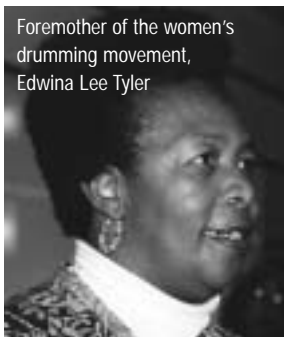


PHOTO: JEAN EINHORN

the women's music cultural movement, broke into the spotlight at this year's 26th San Francisco International Lesbian &

Gay Film Festival when it unanimously won the coveted Audience Award for Best Documentary. The film's Castro premiere was sold out; the New York screening was highly anticipated. By all accounts—it delivered.

The documentary explores the birth of a movement which changed the face of popular music forever. Through priceless vintage footage and refreshingly candid interviews, Mosbacher follows women's music from its birth in the 1970s to the present. Mosbacher recalled that the film, five years in the making, “was a debt of gratitude for me.”

In the seventies, she discovered the out lesbian folksinger, Meg Christian—whom many consider to be the “founder” of the women's music genre. “I remember feeling then, that I wasn't the only lesbian in the

world. To see lesbians who looked like a variation of me was very affirming—especially in a culture that was so homophobic.” Extremely thankful for the impact these women had on her life, Mosbacher yearned to “share this wonderful story of women's music with a wider community.”

The film features a virtual *Who's Who* of women's music pioneers: Christian, Cris Williamson, Holly Near, Linda Tillery, Margie Adam, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Ronnie Gilbert, June Millington, Alix Dobkin, Edwina Lee Tyler, Ferron and the late Kay Gardner. Also featured are Ani Difrancio, Judith Casselberry, Ubaka Hill, Toshi Reagon, the Indigo Girls and many others.

Radical Harmonies pays tribute to the array of courageous women who helped create and solidify women's music—those involved in the infrastructure of the music, as well as the performers. “At that time, to be able to sing their truths as out lesbians was often a difficult path. In fact,” she continued, “it was life-saving for a number of lesbians.”

It was not an easy time. Homophobia divided collaborations among heterosexual and lesbian musicians. The sexist mainstream music industry didn't believe in the selling power of women's music. And women of color were notably absent, and sometimes excluded, from participation.

In response, lesbian artists, with other women, creatively mobilized. Concerts were held in cramped halls and basements, sometimes with only a microphone, guitar and an eager audience. Cris Williamson's debut on Olivia Records proved that

Lynn Campbell 1955-1984

Lynn was a dedicated human rights activist who throughout her life organized on behalf of women's rights, workers' issues and LGBT causes. At age 17, Lynn led the California boycott for United Farm Workers and the “Yes on Proposition 14” campaign. Having worked for Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media, she helped organize the first conference on women and pornography and one of the first Take Back the Night marches.

In 1980, Lynn became Assistant Director of the National Committee on Household Employment for the National Urban League. She joined the Funding Exchange as Program Coordinator in 1981, and co-founded *Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues*.

A filmmaker as well, Lynn was the Associate Producer of *Greetings from Washington, D.C.*, a documentary on the 1979 Gay and Lesbian March on Washington; and Executive Producer/Co-Producer of *Rate It X*. She was honored by the Women's Art Association with the esteemed Women of Courage Award, and *Ms. Magazine* named her one of its “Eighty Women to Watch in the 80s.”

Lynn died of cancer in 1984 at the age of 29. Astraea's Community Funding Panel annually awards a grant from the Lynn Campbell Memorial Fund to assure that those with Lynn's spirit, courage and leadership can continue in her footsteps.

women's music had a large and supportive fan base. (*The Changer and The Changed*, remains one of the music industry's best-selling independent releases.) Eventually, women-only music festivals began drawing larger crowds and more diverse performers.

Linda Tillery, Gwen Avery, Mary Watkins and others, formed The Varied Voices of Black Women Tour. Women learned the ropes on their own, with many serving as their own techs and gaffers. And

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Astraea's Latest International Grantees

In September, 2002, Astraea's International Grants Panel met for our first of two grant cycles. \$91,500 was awarded to seventeen groups based in Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. We are proud to share with you this list of remarkable organizations from around the world:

**Associação Lésbica de Minas Gerais/
The Lesbian Association of Minas Gerais
(Belo Horizonte, Brazil) \$6,000**

ALÉM works with lesbians on an array of issues by providing an autonomous and safe space for lesbians to build self esteem, advocating for lesbian civil rights, and conducting workshops in schools and media outreach on the need to fight against prejudice and discrimination. ALÉM also provides STD prevention information to lesbian sex workers. **Grant is for general support.**

Asociación Lucha por la Identidad Travesti y Transexual/Association Fighting for Transvestite Identity (Buenos Aires, Argentina) \$5,000

The transvestite* movement is one of Argentina's most disenfranchised communities. Led by and for transvestites, ALITT works for the recognition of transvestism as a legitimate identity by educating and politicizing transvestite communities and by lobbying the government for rights to education, health, jobs and housing. The group's primary focus is on transvestites struggling with issues of poverty and unemployment. **Grant is for general support and for purchase of computer equipment and a video recorder.**

**Colectivo de Lésbicas do Rio de Janeiro/
Lesbian Collective of Rio de Janeiro
(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) \$10,000**

COLERJ, the only Black lesbian group in Brazil, defends the human rights of marginalized women in Brazilian society. They organize seminars and gatherings, pursue legal advocacy, and develop lesbian health and STD/AIDS prevention workshops. **Grant is for organizational capacity building and for working in prisons with incarcerated women on issues of health, race, and violence between and against women.**

**Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action
(New Delhi, India) \$10,000**

Through advocacy and research, CREA works to enhance women's leadership at local, regional and international levels. Their leadership trainings focus on issues of sexual rights, sexuality, reproductive health, violence against women, economic justice and women's rights. **Grant is for organizing a national meeting of lesbian groups in India to discuss advocacy strategies on issues of sexual orientation.**

**Fundación Ecuatoriana de Minorías
Sexuales/Ecuadorian Foundation for Sexual
Minorities (Quito, Ecuador) \$3,000**

FEMIS advocates exclusively on behalf of Ecuador's diverse community of sexual minorities. Since spearheading a national campaign which decriminalized

Astraea's purpose is to fund and support organizations and individuals focused on addressing the needs of lesbians. We have a commitment to funding organizations and projects that are feminist, that have the capacity to address interrelated forms of oppression and that not only serve lesbians but are committed to social change. Priority funding is given to lesbians of color, multi-racial lesbian organizations, or progressive, women's or LGBT organizations that have lesbians in leadership roles and include lesbian issues as an integral part of their work.

The Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation administers six grant programs:

➤ U.S. Grants Program ➤ International Fund for Sexual Minorities ➤ Lesbian Writers Fund ➤ Margot Karle Scholarship ➤ Lesbian Visual Artists Fund ➤ Donor-Advised Funds Program The U.S. Program, International Fund, and Writers Fund utilize community-based funding panels to review proposals and to make decisions.

homosexuality in that country, they continue to build alliances and public support for freedom of sexual choice. FEMIS also documents human rights violations around the country. **Grant is for general support.**

Jerusalem Open House (Jerusalem, Israel) \$6,000

JOH is a community center providing an open, safe, affirming, and visible space for LGBT people in Jerusalem. Collaboratively funded by Jerusalem's LGBT organizations, they operate a library, coordinate a speaker's bureau, and conduct public policy advocacy and litigation. **Grant is for an unprecedented Palestinian outreach initiative. The project includes disseminating Arabic-language LGBT resources; operating an Arabic-language telephone help line; hosting a monthly Arabic-language interest group meeting; and providing outreach to educational and social service organizations serving Palestinians.**

Kontra (Zagreb, Croatia) \$10,000

Kontra advocates for lesbian and women's human rights by lobbying for changes in Croatian legislation. They work to create feminist lesbian community groups around the country and to connect isolated lesbians through their phone hotline, trainings and cultural events. Kontra is the most visible and active lesbian organization in Croatia. **Grant is for general support. (www.cro-lesbians.com)**

KRUG (Murmansk, Russia) \$3,000

Members of Krug or "The Circle" work to protect the legal, social and economic rights of LGBT people by providing mental health consultations and STD prevention seminars. They assist LGBT prisoners, publish a magazine and participate in the convening of LGBT groups in the Northern region. **Grant is for establishing an LGBT counseling center. (http://krug.polarcom.ru)**

OUT (Pretoria, South Africa) \$3,000

OUT promotes LGBT identity, equality and a sense of community health and wellness in the Greater Pretoria area. They are focused on challenging heterosexism and homophobia, and addressing the disempowerment of Black LGBT people. They enact their work through public education trainings, lobbying, coordinating economic empowerment projects, advocacy and economic empowerment projects. In addition, OUT provides health and mental health services. **Grant is for general support.**

Prensa Editorial LeS VOZ, A.C./Les VOZ Publishing Press (Mexico City, Mexico) \$4,000

In addition to publishing a national feminist lesbian cultural magazine, LeS VOZ, the Press organizes annual conventions promoting lesbian literature, and issues a free bimonthly e-news bulletin of lesbian and feminist events to promote civic participation, they run human rights trainings and legal intervention workshops. **Grant is for outreach activities, publication of LeS VOZ, and website maintenance.**

The Library Foundation (Manila, Philippines) \$7,500

TLF is a Filipino gay men's organization working for a healthy, safe, and free Filipino LGBT community. Working in coalition with other LGBT groups in the Philippines, TLF leads the Stop Discrimination Now! campaign, a segment of which trains LGBT people to document human rights abuse and violations. TLF hopes that sharing that documentation with the public will increase awareness and bolster support for legislation protecting and promoting LGBT rights. **Grant is for the Stop Discrimination Now! campaign (www.tlfmanila.org)**

Triangle Project (Cape Town, South Africa) \$4,000

The Triangle Project runs health and social development programs for those LGBT people living in poverty and facing sexual and criminal violence. Triangle was one of the first groups to initiate an LGBT health project in an African township and continue to conduct in-house training for Xhosa-speaking fieldworkers. In addition to providing HIV prevention education, the Triangle Project conducts media outreach and visibility trainings to broaden the public impact of their issues. **Grant is for general support.**

**VIDA-Integración-Desarrollo-Amor/Life
(Lima, Peru) \$2,000**

Founded by young activists, VIDA is a lesbian-led feminist LGBT organization advocating for the human rights of lesbians and sexual minorities in Peru. They host leadership trainings and run media awareness campaigns on topics including reproductive health for young people. **Grant is for an audiovisual education project which will conduct outreach to poor communities.**

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Legacy on Fire: Celebrating GLBT literature from the African Diaspora at Fire & Ink

By Patricia Justine Tumang

The first-ever *Fire & Ink: A Writers Festival for GLBT People of African Descent* was a tough event to pull off. There was an impending storm brewing in Chicago. Conference Chair Lisa C. Moore's apartment was gutted in a horrendous fire the week before. But Moore, publisher at RedBone Press, was not daunted. She, along with other conference organizers and volunteers, made a heroic effort to persevere, and ultimately, panelists and participants came in by the dozens. The conference, funded in part by an Astraea grant, celebrated the magic of LGBT literature from the African Diaspora and was held at the University of Illinois at Chicago on September 19-22, 2002.

As an Asian lesbian feminist writer, I didn't know what to expect from a conference like this. Would I be the only other non-Black person of color there who bore witness to the living breadth of this work—this legacy that began with James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, Pat Parker, Essex Hemphill, Lorraine Hansberry and June Jordan? Happily, while there were only a handful of others, it was amazing to share our own experiences and hear the work and insight of marvelously diverse and talented Black LGBT writers.

The conference began with a tribute to the late June Jordan, Black poet, essayist, and bi-sexual activist, whose work greatly inspires my writing and activist pursuits. Writers Samuel Delany, Thomas Glave, C.C. Carter, Cheryl Clarke, Sharon Bridgforth, Pamela Sneed, Dorothy Randall Gray, James Earl Hardy, R. Erica Doyle, and Samiya Bashir, among others, enthralled us with their craft and artistic sensibilities. Stimulating workshops, readings, performances and rousing conversations filled the rooms with infectious energy and left participants hungry for the next conference.

Women's biographies *continued from page 1*

financial assistance, the Awards provide encouragement, visibility, and ample opportunity for isolated—and remarkably talented—writers to significantly expand their audiences.

Astraea proudly introduces the winners of the Eleventh Annual Lesbian Writers Fund Awards:

Lu Vickers, Fiction, \$10,000

Vickers received her Ph.D. in English from Florida State University where she was a Kingsbury Fellow. She has twice been awarded Florida's Individual Artists Grants for fiction, and her short stories and essays have been published in many journals, including the *Apalachee Review* and *Salon*. Parts of her first novel, *Breathing Underwater*, have been anthologized in *Every Woman I've Ever Loved* (Cleis Press) and *Women on Women 3* (Plume Books). Vickers teaches at Tallahassee Community College and lives with her partner of eleven years and their three sons.

Samiya Bashir, Poetry, \$10,000

Bashir, of Brooklyn, New York, serves on the Editorial Board of *Curve Magazine* and *NiaOnline.com*. Currently, she is editing *Best Black Women's Erotica 2* (Cleis Press), scheduled for release in January 2003. Her debut collection of poetry, *Blood and Wine*, is to be released by Third World Press. The University of California's Poet Laureate, her poetry, articles and essays have been published in an array of venues including *Contemporary American Women Poets* (Greenwood Press), *The American Journal of Public Health*, and *Kuumba: Journal of Black Lesbian and Gay Literature and Art #4*.

Kirsten Dinnall Hoyte, Fiction, Claire of the Moon Award, \$1,500

Dinnall Hoyte lives in Concord, Massachusetts, and is a doctoral student in Sociology and Social Policy at Harvard University. Her work has been published in *Sojourner*, *The Harvard Review* and many other publications.



Debra Busman, Fiction, Loving Lesbians Award, \$1,500

Busman is the Coordinator of Service Learning for the Institute of Human Communication at

California State University, Monterey Bay, where she teaches Creative Writing and Social Action, Literature, and Composition. She lives in Salinas, California.

Jenna Capeci, Poetry, Loving Lesbians Award, \$1,500

Born and reared in Brooklyn, Capeci received her B.A. in Biology and Women's Studies from the College of William and Mary. She recently returned to New York

after almost four years in Thailand where she worked with ethnic Burmese activists on issues of nonviolence and environmental protection.

Meg Jochild, Poetry, Loving Lesbians Award, \$1,500



Jochild is from Austin, Texas, and writes and performs for Actual Lives, an "in-your-face" disabled theater troupe led by Terry Galloway. She has a daughter and grandchild and has been an active crusader in liberation

struggles for the past two decades.

Honorable Mention, Fiction, \$100

Felicia Luna Lemus, **Leslie Anne Leasure**, **Kathy Anderson**

Honorable Mention, Poetry, \$100

Myra Mniewski, **Liz Freidinm**, **Yvonne Etaghene**

Judges of this year's awards included:

Fiction:

Emma Perez, El Paso, Texas, is a historian, creative writer and feminist critic. Her publications include: *Gulf Dreams* and *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History*. Currently, Perez is Chair and Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas, El Paso. She is writing a historical novel *Forgetting the Alamo: Or, Blood Memory*.

Susan Stinson, Northampton, Massachusetts, is the author of two novels, *Fat Girl Dances with Rocks* and *Martha Moody*, as well as *Belly Songs*, poetry and short essays. She has received grants and awards from the Vogelstein and Wurlitzer Foundations, among others. Her work has been translated into German and Italian and featured in *Seneca Review*, *Curve*, *Sojourner*, *Women's Review of Books* and *Diva*. She recently completed *Venus of Chalk*, a novel about an awakening muse.

Poetry:

Eileen Myles, New York, New York, is a frequent contributor to *The Nation*, *Nest*, *Bookforum*, *Art in America*, *The Village Voice*, and *Seattle's Stranger*. Her other published works include *Chelsea Girls*, *Cool for You*, *School of Fish*, *Maxfield Parrish*, and *Not Me*. She co-edited *The New Fuck You: Adventures in Lesbian Reading*, which received a Lambda Book Award. In 1992 she conducted an openly female write-in campaign for herself as President of the United States.

Robin G. White, Kennesaw, Georgia, is the author of *Resurrection: A Collection of Work*, a 2002 Georgia Author of the Year Award finalist selection. She is the 2000 winner of the Chicago Literary Exchange Lisa C. Moore Award. She co-owns Kings Crossing Publishing, a company dedicated to promoting and publishing writers whose voices are overlooked by major markets.

IN HER OWN WORDS: Meet Astraea Member Dorothy Abbot

As a young girl growing up in Memphis, Tennessee in the fifties, I knew no lesbians. I probably didn't even say the word until I was almost an adult. And I certainly didn't know myself as a lesbian. But I did know who my heroes were and I picked them well: Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Mead, Virginia Woolf, Lillian Smith, and Ruth Benedict—all women I later found out to be women-loving women.

As a teenager I loved biographies of women and remember reading one about Jane Addams and Hull House. More than twenty five years later, in a women's studies class at the University of South Florida, I was amazed to discover that Addams had lived in the same house and shared the same bed with Mary Rozet Smith for forty years.

Why couldn't there have been a photograph of them together in that biography I read as a young girl? Why couldn't there have been just one page about those years during which they shared a vision of love

and concern for each other?

Audre Lorde, the "black, lesbian, feminist, mother, warrior, poet," was an adult when she discovered Angelina Weld Grimke. Grimke, a black lesbian poet, lived in total isolation and died less than two miles away from where Lorde grew up. Lorde said she often wondered what it would have meant to her as a young lesbian to have read Grimke's work; and what it would have meant for Grimke to know that someone needed her words. *They were lost to each other.*

Lorde didn't want this to happen to anyone else. If there was anyone who needed to know that Lorde was a lesbian, she wanted them to know. As Lorde taught us, silence is no protection. And for lesbians and gay people, visibility is survival. We need to be out in the world saying, "Here we are. Deal with us." We need to be united in our commitment to freedom; transforming the solitary voice to a collective one.



PHOTO: CAROL DEFRANCESCO

Author and peace activist, Barbara Deming, commented in an interview about her early life: "I could always tell a lesbian by the half-quizzical, wounded look in her eyes; but now we have the clearest faces." **I am a member of the Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation because they have made it possible for so many of us around the world to have those clearest of faces.** I am truly dedicated to Astraea's belief that only through action can we build a world of peace and justice for lesbians, and for society as a whole.

Dorothy Abbott is a resident of Memphis and has been an Astraea member since 1996. As founder of the Women's Radio Fund, Abbot has a long history of involvement with media, including print, radio, music, film, and the oldest medium of all . . . conversation.

Grants *continued from pg. 4*

Women's Action for Change (Suva, Fiji) \$4,000

WAC facilitates the development of marginalized groups in Fiji (women, children, sexual minorities and the poor) through education and awareness building. They use theatre and performance as a way to address issues of reproductive rights, children's rights, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy and conflict resolution. **Grant is for conducting human rights awareness and self-defense workshops for LGBT people, and for skill-building workshops to teach local communities how to create their own support groups.**

Women's Association KONSOLA (Poznan, Poland) \$2,500

KONSOLA creates artistic and educational initiatives designed to promote women's culture, break stereotypes of the traditional role of women in Polish society,

and counter negative societal attitudes toward feminism. They are well known for their annual feminist conferences which attract academic, eco-, anarcho-, and lesbian feminists from around the country. **Grant is for the lesbian and bisexual women's support group, a groundbreaking initiative for lesbians in Poland's fifth-largest city.**

Anonymous (Africa) \$4,000

This LGBT group is one of a small handful of agencies in Africa providing HIV/AIDS prevention services to gay men and sex workers via education, counseling and training. Successfully bridging the gap between knowledge and behavior within the gay community, they are actively planning to establish an information resource center and meeting space. **Grant will support Bridging the Gap program.**

Anonymous (Africa) \$7,500

The lesbian-led group in this East African country—where lesbians can be prosecuted and sentenced up to 14 years in prison—conducts outreach in five regions of the country, offering peer support and human rights activism trainings. Their goal is for each region to send ten participants to a forthcoming national three-day conference to solidify the organizational structure of the group and to further hone human rights advocacy skills. **Grant is for general support and for the planned lesbian human rights conference.**

*The term transvestite, while not widely used in the U.S., is the preferred term of this grantee

Music *continued from pg. 3*

women's music distributors like Goldenrod and Ladyslipper—which were started to support that early music—are still going strong twenty-five years later!

Eventually expanding beyond its folk roots, women's music incorporated new genres and influences ranging from punk, soul and eclectic to symphonic and classical. Changes such as the creation of the sliding-fee scale and accommodations for deaf women and women with disabilities continued to alter the shifting landscape of

women's music and the landscape of popular music as well.

After the New York screening, several performers dazzled the audience by breaking out in song onstage. Ferron performed what many consider a lesbian anthem—"Testimony." Alix Dobkin closed the night leading performers and the audience in "This Little Light of Mine" with Edwina Lee Tyler using the podium as a drum.

Benefit co-chair and Astraea board

member Carol Alpert observed that "the musicians on stage had a profound effect on the audience." Poignantly, Alpert also pointed out that "Astraea has always recognized the power of film in organizing for social change. This is part of our mission. And it was also part of Lynn's vision."

To order a copy of Radical Harmonies for \$39.95, call Transit Media at (800) 343-5540 or visit <http://www.woman-vision.org/radicalharmonies/index.htm>.

WomenWill *Meet Jomal Alcober*



JOMAL ALCOBER, A LONG-TIME SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST, has listed Astraea as a beneficiary of her retirement accounts. A friend to Astraea for over a decade, Alcober attributes her decision to become a member of Astraea's *Women Will* Program because of her belief that Astraea's mission and values are similar to her own. "Women's leadership is so important in the current local and global political climate," she says, "...and Astraea is willing to address issues and support those people willing to take risks and leads on important issues around the world. I want to see that work continue."

Alcober was also moved to join *Women Will* when she reached a particular stage in her life and stated, "There comes a point in time when you begin to look at your own mortality and, given the fact that I don't have offspring, I wanted to become part of Astraea's longevity."

Extremely active in numerous social justice movements since the early 1970s, Alcober moved to New York in 1988 from Washington D.C., her home town. She is a former Human Rights

Specialist/Civil Rights Investigator of the New York City Commission on Human Rights, and is currently employed by a midtown Manhattan

law firm. A former student of Political Science and Public Policy at City College of New York, Alcober received several scholarships in Political Science, Public Policy and History, including four Congressional scholarships. She is also a jazz vocalist and published poet.

"I have seen many organizations come and go in the AIDS/HIV pandemic and through environmental and social justice movements, she said, and I am impressed with Astraea's consistency and willingness to dare to take a stand against oppression against women on the global scale." Having been a witness to and a contributing agent of various movements of social change over the last thirty-five years, Alcober remains inspired by Astraea's ideals: a commitment to justice in all its forms and a willingness to address issues at their core.

WomenWill

A GIVING CIRCLE FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE MADE PLANNED GIFTS AND BEQUESTS TO ASTRAEA FOUNDATION.

Astraea has been the beneficiary of gifts entrusted to us by generous donors. Too often, these gifts have gone unrecognized because they have come at the end of a donor's life. The Women Will Circle provides a way for Astraea to recognize and thank donors who have designated us as a beneficiary of their estate during their lifetime and to involve them more intimately in the Foundation's work.

Women Will Circle members will be recognized in Astraea publications and at special events.

If you have designated Astraea as a beneficiary in your will, insurance policy or retirement fund, please notify us so we can include you in our Circle.

WOMEN WILL CIRCLE MEMBERS

Victoria Watkins, *Circle Chair*

Katherine Acey

Jomal Alcober

Carol Alpert & Sarina Scialabba

Diane Bernard & Joan Heller

Gail Bernstein

Melanie Berson

Pam Calvert

Donna Cassyd

Judith Clark

Jennifer Dryfoos

Pamella Tucker Farley

CJ Griffin

Lois Fink & Phyllis Steiner

Debra Hirschberg

Sheryl Kaplan

Donna Korones

Marilyn Lamkay

Marjorie Lightness

Kate O'Hanlan & Léonie Walker

Joni Ross

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Dixie Sheridan

Cindy Sterling

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To give a gift in honor or in memory of someone, contact Astraea at info@astraea.org or 212-529-8021 ext. 20, or send in a pledge envelope filling out the appropriate section.



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- 1) Lynn Campbell's family with Katherine Acey, Executive Director (third from left) and filmmaker Dee Mosbacher (first from right)
- 2) Women's Music Legends Ferron and Alix Dobkin, with veteran concert producer, Virginia Giordano
- 3) Karen Zelermyer, Ann Northrop, Katherine Acey, Jenn Einhorn and Christine Lipat at the New York Astraea Member Briefing hosted by Ann Northrop
- 4) Anjana Suvarnananda (far right) with fellow activists at the Association of Women in Development Conference in Guadalajara, Mexico
- 5) (Left to right) Laura Perry, Kathleen Bresnan, Victoria Watkins and Samiya Bashir at the New York Astraea Member Briefing hosted by Ann Northrop
- 6) (Left to right) Sandra Robinson, Lisa Jones, Sonya Shields, Chiqui Cartagena, and Jennifer Knight at the New York *Radical Harmonies* premiere
- 7) Katherine Acey, Executive Director (far right) with members of Astraea grantee Grupo Lesbico Pattalonalli in Guadalajara, Mexico
- 8) Anjana Suvarnananda, Program Officer (center), with activists from Astraea grantee Women's Action for Change of Suva, Fiji.

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Our Mission

Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation is a feminist public charity whose purpose is to advance the economic, political, educational and cultural well-being of lesbians, their families and allies working for social justice. Our mission is enacted through a variety of programs including grantmaking, training and technical assistance, philanthropic advocacy and education, and fundraising.

Who is Astraea?

Astraea or "Starry One" was the Roman title of the Goddess of Holy Law or Libra, and was also known as the Goddess of Justice. In most ancient writings, Astraea is associated with natural law, matriarchal justice, and the personification of truth and justice.