

for the Festival. Workshops will also be held during the Festival itself for whoever wishes to learn basic drama and dance skills.

\* **Schools theatre:**

This group will run training workshops specifically for high school students. Students will be taught how to create their own plays for use during alternative education programmes. It is also hoped that these workshops will lead to a high school play festival next year where all the plays entered would have been produced by students themselves.

\* **Semi-professional and professional theatre:**

Given the aims, nature and priorities of the Festival, much of the resources will be channelled into grassroots theatrical activity. However, progressive semi-professional and professional groups around the country are being invited to participate in the Festival too. As a means of making such productions accessible to most people who do not patronise established theatres, these productions will rotate between venues in the townships, on the Cape Flats and in the city centre. Ticket prices will take into account the economic levels of the communities in which performances will take place.

Semi-professional and professional groups are strongly encouraged to look for ways to fund themselves. Limited subsidies will only be made available in exceptional circumstances.

\* **Interdisciplinary workshop production:**

One of the aims of the Festival is to break down the barriers between the various art disciplines and to encourage cultural workers from different disciplines to work together collectively. This subcommittee exists solely for the purpose of creating such an interdisciplinary production for the Festival.

\* **Street theatre:**

Organisations will be trained and encouraged in the use of guerilla and street theatre as a means of raising issues in public places. Street theatre will happen throughout the Festival itself as well as before to advertise the Festival. Other Festival events will include short street theatre performances in their programmes.

## 2. MUSIC

The main thrust of the musical component of the Festival will be a variety of gigs (music concerts) which will take place throughout the Peninsula. These gigs will be used primarily to provide a platform for the forms of music which are currently denied airplay or coverage by the state and industry-controlled media networks.

Gigs will be planned and staged in conjunction with local community organisations. Drama, video, slides and art displays will be incorporated into the musical performances as a means of producing political input through accessible forms.

While music with a specifically South African content will be favoured, this will not be done to the exclusion of other forms. The idea is to present a diverse range of South African music to as wide an audience as possible. For example township jazz bands would share a bill with groups emanating from white youth culture. It is hoped that in this way bands would be able to play to new audiences and people would be able to be exposed to aspects of South African music previously unknown to them.

The Festival will also provide a unique opportunity for informal meetings and discussions between musicians. To facilitate such interchanges, practice facilities will be set up for the duration of the Festival. This space will double up as a workshop for informal jam sessions between local and visiting musicians.

Considerable energy will be devoted to documenting musical activities (as well as the Festival generally) which will enable resource material to be distributed to groups who were unable to attend the Festival.

### **3. LITERATURE**

Progressive poets, novelists and playwrights will be invited to display their published works for the duration of the Festival. Structures will be created whereby these literary workers can engage in interdisciplinary, co-operative work with cultural workers from other art disciplines.

A seminar on the aesthetics of literature in the South African context will be held. Publishers will be invited to be part of a panel to discuss the role of the publisher and other related issues such as the distribution of literature. Working groups will be formed in which writers will be encouraged to write dramatic sketches, songs, poetry and speeches for bilingual audiences.

Other ideas include producing a practical guide on how to organise cultural workers/writers based on the experiences of the Festival, a seminar on co-operative/interdisciplinary work in the arts and producing a book of short stories.

### **4. CHILDREN'S ART EXHIBITION**

More than 500 schools and numerous organisations working with children have been informed about the Festival. Entries have been invited around the theme "My Street" which has been chosen to juxtapose the different realities of South Africa as seen by children. Exhibitions will occur at different venues across the Peninsula

in conjunction with other Festival activities. Art workshops for teachers and students are also being held.

#### 5. POSTER EXHIBITION

Letters have been sent to trade unions, community, student and other progressive organisations inviting them to display political posters which they have produced. In addition, international anti-apartheid organisations have been invited to contribute posters as well. Already posters have been received from overseas and more than 1000 local posters are available at present.

#### 6. ADULT ART EXHIBITION

Artists throughout the country are being invited to contribute work reflecting the realities of South Africa around the theme "About Time". A large number of entries is expected so that hopefully two or three exhibitions can be held to reach as wide an audience as possible.

#### 7. SYMPOSIUM

A week long symposium will be held alongside other Festival activities. The symposium will be creatively planned to avoid academic esoterics and to facilitate as much productive and participatory debate around basic issues relevant to a progressive, people's culture.

At least four levels of debate and discussion have been identified. These are:

- \* Among cultural workers within a particular art discipline to begin to talk about their forms, content, influences, problems and priorities so that a common theoretical base and framework is established among cultural workers themselves.
- \* Between cultural workers and the broader community to further the debate and mutual education between these two groups concerning issues such as mutual expectations, the responsibility of the cultural worker to the community, dictates of form and content.
- \* Between cultural workers and academics to confront the theory of academics with the praxis of cultural workers and so to synthesise new theory if necessary.
- \* Between cultural workers from various disciplines to encourage debate among cultural workers about basic and controversial issues confronting them in an emerging people's culture.

In order that the debate about people's culture can be made as accessible to as many people as possible, symposium venues will rotate between the townships, the Cape Flats and the city centre.

## 8. FAIR

Scores of organisations are being invited to host stalls at a massive People's Fair which will be held at the beginning of the Festival. Organisations will be asked to pay a small fee to be part of the fair and are then entitled to use whatever creative means they have at their disposal to advertise their organisation and/or to raise funds for their organisation.

It will be an all day affair with music, drama and many other forms of entertainment and creative political input. To ensure maximum accessibility to ordinary people, the Fair will be held in a large conspicuous area<sup>close</sup> to a major shopping centre.

## 9. ISIKHUMBUZO/WE REMEMBER

This event, scheduled for Monday evening 15 December, is intended to be a creative commemoration service in remembrance of fallen comrades (c.f. Heroes Day - 16 Dec). This subcommittee will liase with local community-based groups in organising this event.

## 10. TRIBUTES EVENING

The Tributes Evening will place the Arts Festival in its historical context by providing an overview of resistance culture in the last one hundred years. Tribute will be paid to significant cultural workers in our past. Much research is going into this event which will be recorded either through video or book form as an ongoing resource.

The evening itself will combine a range of art forms, audio-visual material and instruments to illustrate the well researched script.

## 11. FILM AND VIDEO

This subcommittee is organising a festival of local films and videos focussing on the work of community groups, universities and independent producers operating outside of the constraints of SABC/TV and mainstream cinema. Entries are not limited according to genre, scope or content provided that they show a conscious awareness of struggle and the nature of apartheid.

To overcome the bourgeois exclusivity of most film festivals, a variety of venues including community and church halls will be used.

A range of video units is also being invited to help document the Festival.

## 12. MULTI-MEDIA EVENT

This event is conceptualised as taking place in a large venue from 2p.m. till late. The range of activities, exhibitions and audio-visual effects includes:

# TOWARDS A PEOPLES CULTURE

# ARTS

# FESTIVAL 86

P O Box 423  
SALT RIVER  
7925

phone : 638-1452.

Much excitement is building up around the Arts Festival '86 which will take place from 12-22 December in Cape Town.

In the past few months, grassroots cultural activity has blossomed. Organisations are using culture as a means of gathering and mobilising people. The present state of emergency may have curbed "traditional" ways of organising but it has also awakened many organisations to the important role of culture within the struggle for liberation.

Arts Festival '86: Towards a People's Culture fits almost naturally into this cultural reawakening. Some see the Festival to be strategically important because it would allow organisations to express themselves in ways that are not limited by the emergency. For others, it is a means of making organisational gains within their particular constituencies. But many see the Festival as a short term focus to give momentum to the long term process of building a national, progressive people's culture.

## What are the aims of the Festival?

- \* to give momentum to the long term process in which the conscious and concerted building of a people's culture occurs;
- \* to further the struggle for political liberation by actively engaging in the struggle for cultural liberation;
- \* to facilitate the expression of grassroots cultural activity by making resources and space available for this purpose;
- \* to provide forums where theoretical issues related to a progressive people's culture can be debated;
- \* to promote the teaching and discovery of cultural skills;
- \* to foster relationships across ideological differences through co-operation and working together in the cultural sphere;
- \* to allow organisations to make organisational gains through participation in the Festival;
- \* to break down barriers between disciplines - to find new ways of working collectively in an inter-disciplinary manner;
- \* to be a springboard for organising cultural workers;
- \* to prioritise the creation and expression of grassroots cultural activity but

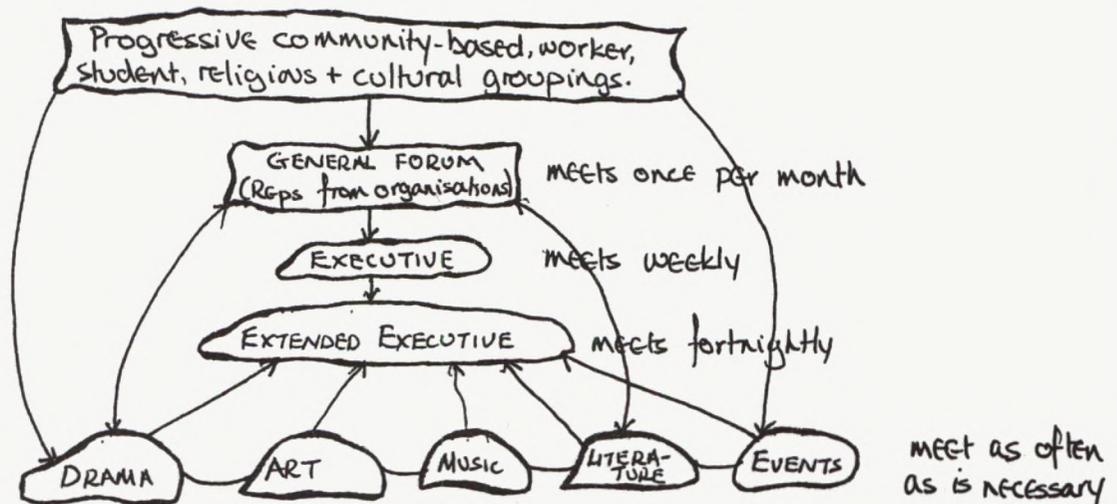
also to encourage progressive cultural activity among semi-professional and professional cultural workers.

### What are the origins of the Festival?

At the beginning of this year, the national conference of the End Conscription Campaign decided to host a cultural festival primarily to make gains in their constituency. However, with the declaration of the emergency, it was clear that ECC would not be able to host such a festival any longer. It was felt that the festival should go ahead but that a group independent of ECC should organise it. So a wide range of community organisations and progressive cultural workers was invited to be part of the planning and organising of the Festival.

As a result of this broadening out process which began in the middle of August, the aims, nature and priorities of the Festival have shifted from making gains in a particular constituency to advancing progressive, grassroots culture in general. Organisations are invited to be part of the Festival provided that they agree with the basic anti-racism, anti-sexism, non-profit, anti-militarism and non-collaboration with apartheid structures principles of the Festival. Rather than promote one particular ideological tradition, the Festival seeks to foster relationships across ideological differences within the progressive movement through working together in the cultural sphere.

### How is the organisation of the Festival structured?



All progressive organisations are invited to send representatives to the General Forum - the highest decision making body of the Festival. The General Forum elected an executive mandated to oversee the smooth functioning of Festival activities. Sub-committees consist of interested individuals and members of participating organisations and it is here that much of the Festival is planned. The extended executive made up of the executive and co-ordinators of subcommittees, meets to co-ordinate overall planning of the Festival.

### What are some of the activities planned for the Festival?

Drama events will include skills training workshops, a worker play festival, street theatre, children's theatre, a workshop production combining various art disciplines and working alongside community organisations to produce their own plays for the Festival.

An exciting range of progressive musicians from Cape Town and other places in the country will play throughout the Festival. In seminars, these musicians will share their experiences and questions of musical form and content will be discussed.

Three exhibitions will be held - one of national and overseas posters relating to South Africa; a child-art exhibition and an exhibition of progressive South African art.

A literature group is publishing a book of short stories. Progressive South African films and videos will be shown. A Tributes Evening will celebrate the contributions of our cultural heritage. A multi-media event including slide shows, music, videos, drama, alternative fashion and design, a cartoon exhibition and an exhibition of cultural posters is scheduled.

Other events are a week long symposium that will deal with issues related to progressive people's culture; a cultural rally; a Heroes Day commemoration event and a large people's fair.

The Festival has become a stimulating and informative forum for collectively working through problems and ideals related to the growth of a national people's culture.

### Where will the Festival take place?

Festival activities will try to reach as broad an audience as possible. Venues are being booked in the townships, on the Cape Flats as well as in the city. However, because it is easily accessible to a wide range of communities, Athlone will be the major geographical focus of the Festival.

### Will the Festival be a one-off spectacle?

One of the stated aims of the Festival is to give momentum to the long term process of building a progressive people's culture. In other words, the Festival would not be held simply for the sake of having a Festival. It would be an event which contributes to progressive cultural activity both before and after the Festival itself. Some of the projected off-shoots of the Festival include equipping people with cultural skills to advance their organisations, establishing popular culture centres to facilitate the growth of progressive culture, an organisation for cultural workers and contributing to the theoretical debates about a national people's culture.

### How can individual organisations make gains from participating in the Festival?

Our organisations exist primarily to further the struggle for liberation in our country. The struggle for a liberated, progressive culture is integral to the struggle for liberation. "Culture" and "politics" should not be viewed as two separate spheres where culture is simply used expediently to advance the political aims of organisations. As such, organisations should rather ask how they can best contribute to the struggle for liberation by participating in the Festival.

However, organisations can certainly make gains eg publicity and recruitment through hosting specific cultural events, members of organisations acquiring cultural skills (media, drama etc) to further their organisations, contact and working with other progressive organisations and so on.

### Is the Festival a priority at this time?

Again, if we view "culture" and "politics" as two separate spheres, then we may have reservations about the Festival in terms of its expenditure (i.e. aren't there more "worthy" causes?) and its celebratory nature (i.e. with all the repression, is such a Festival justifiable?)

There will always be worthy causes to spend money on. And as the struggle intensifies so will repression. But if we view cultural liberation as being integral to political liberation then we would know that for too long has our culture been shaded or suppressed by the dominant culture of the ruling classes. Too long have we been taught to believe that culture and politics are separate spheres. Too long has our progressive cultural activity occurred on an ad-hoc, sporadic basis. The time is long overdue for us to consciously build a national people's culture. The time has come for progressive culture to be asserted.

With the wealth of grassroots cultural activity during the last few months of emergency repression, the Festival will but give impetus to a progressive cultural movement that is already there!

### How is the Festival funded?

The Festival is a non-profit venture. Participating organisations are asked to make a contribution to costs. Progressive church funding agencies are also being approached to cover any deficit. Money left over at the end of the Festival will be channelled into progressive cultural organisations to advance their work.

### Is the Festival a national or a regional event?

Unfortunately, time and financial constraints dictate that the Festival be a regional event. However, contact is being established with groups throughout the country

to inform them of the Festival. While local cultural expression will be prioritised, groups and individuals nationally are being invited to participate on the basis of their past contributions to the building of a people's culture.

There will be as much national input as is possible and hopefully the Festival will provide the impetus towards a national progressive arts festival in the near future.

For more information about the Festival phone (021) 638 1452 (office hours) or write to: Arts Festival '86, Box 423, Salt River, 7925.

- International
- Speakers - Pal  $\leftarrow$  <sup>International</sup> local
- Speakers cultural?
- cultural input - Pauls.

• Form of the rally  
- cultural vs speakers.

Cult Rally vs Charal evening.

1. Conceptualization of Rally  
- Form + content.

- international guests.

2. Pal speakers

3. Cultural inputs

4. venues / timing

5. immediate action.

3. general theme - one nation -

- matter of the nation  $\rightarrow$  Winnie Mandela
- resistance to apartheid
- breakdown of the reified of apartheid culture
- vision of a new SA.  $\rightarrow$  Now they have the responsibility to achieve it.
- $\hookrightarrow$  light at the end of the tunnel.
- is this war worth fighting for
- $\hookrightarrow$  how many people

2. Religious leaders.

- Arch of Canterbury
- Cardinal Arns.

International - draw card  
- protect  
- international interests

SA cultural rally.

Dis Bishop  
Sheena Owen.  
Deryl Cordus  
Rangooker.

Helon Joseph  
Albertina Sisulu  
Winnie Mandela  $\rightarrow$  matter of prin  
Beyers Naudé  $\rightarrow$  vision  
Tutu.

$\rightarrow$  dif Pop. groups.  
Representatives of dif. sectors  
worker etc.  
 $\hookrightarrow$  Elijah Benja

other sectors - / Bus Bloom  
Bosvine Shabest

Cultural  
Sport  
Poet

Nadine Gordon.  
Rev. Staphile, (Mona du Plessis) Andre Odendaal.  
Mzwakhe (UDF laund poet)

Hindus

Fair  $\rightarrow$  opening.

3. Township chairs (marimbas)

Eddie Nederlander

Senifer Ferguson

David Kramer

Poetry readings Mzawhwe

Jeremy Cronin. Nadine Gordimer

Pazil Coetzee

Drama → mine Cape Flats Players : Short snappy drama.

Madima Exeter women "you have stunk a road"

4. Good Hope • Monday.

• Security

31<sup>st</sup> August S. 30.

- Tutu → appoint
- Tutu list
- US funders
- Embassies.

- Nic
- C F
- Willie
- David Mwangi
- C F A F

**Collection Number: AG1977**

**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

©2013

**LEGAL NOTICES:**

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.