Cultural Rhythms '89: An Exhilarating Celebration of Harvard's Diversity

The Harvard Foundation's fourth annual Cultural Rhythms festival was held on Sunday, February 26, 1989. The festival is a celebration of the racial and cultural diversity of the Harvard community. The event exposes people to cultures other than their own in the hope of promoting understanding among diverse peoples.

Florence Griffith Joyner, 1988 Olympic gold medalist in Track and Field, was this year's guest host. She and her husband, Al Joyner, were met at Logan Airport by a delegation of

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Dr. S. Allen Counter, Director of the Harvard Foundation (left), and Fred Jovelt, Dean of Harvard College (right), present the Harvard Foundation award to Florence Griffith Joyner for her Outstanding Contributions to Athletics.

Olympic gold medalist Florence Griffith Joyner performing at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea.

Harvard students and Harvard Foundation representatives on Saturday afternoon. They were treated to brunch at Kirkland House on the morning of the show. Kirkland House residents and Masters Donald and Cathleen Pfister were given the opportunity to share their thoughts about Harvard and athletics.

Almost one thousand people packed Sanders Theater to view this year's cultural show. The show featured groups representing fifteen different cultures (continued on page 2)
from around the world. The show was
held on Sunday, allowing The Har-
vard/Radcliffe Hillel Society to join this
year’s celebration. Audience participa-
tion was encouraged by many of the
performers. For example, spectators
sang along with the Irish Cultural
Society and jumped on stage to join the
members of the Ngoma East African
Folk Song Troupe. Even Florence
Griffith Joyner could not resist danc-
ing to the Caribbean beat of La
Organización Estudiantil Boricua de
Harvard/Radcliffe’s dynamic perfo-
rance, El Carnaval. They were assisted
by a choreographer from Puerto Rico.
Some organizations, such as the South
Asian Association (SAA) and the
Koreans of Harvard/Radcliffe (KOHR)
presented traditional songs and dances
combined with elements of humor.
One of SAA’s selections was an exam-
ple of a courtship dance from modern
Indian cinema. KOHR treated the
audience to a Korean song complete
with literal English translations, demon-
strating that feelings such as love
are transcultural. During the
show, Dr. S. Allen Counter, Director
of the Harvard Foundation, and Fred
Jewett, Dean of Harvard College,
presented Mrs. Joyner with the Har-
vard Foundation’s award for “Out-
standing Contributions to American
Athletics.”

The food festival, held in adjacent
Memorial Hall, drew a larger crowd.
Great food from five continents was
combined with even more cultural
entertainment. Upon entering the Hall,
spectators were greeted with festive
decorations and a lively atmosphere.
Twenty food booths lined the walls,
and performances took place on a small
stage in the Hall. The food selection
tanged from Mexican desserts and
Neve American dishes to Vietnamese
lo mein and Greek pastries. The theme of
audience participation continued
when the Harvard Scottish Country
Dancers taught a few steps to the
adventurous. Many people were given
their first taste of exotic foods, and
most were back for seconds.

Proceeds from the event were
donated to Casa Myrna Vasquez, an
organization which provides help for
battered women, and the Pine Street
Inn, a shelter for the homeless. The
producers for this year’s show and food
festival were Michelle Mirhadani
‘90, Tammie Thomas ’90, and Carlton
Vann ’90. They were assisted by many
hardworking volunteers, without
whom this project could not have been
a success.

—Tammie Thomas ’90 and
Carlton Vann ’90
The board of Ceta Myrna Vasquez (an organization which provides help for battered women) receives $1,500 check from the Harvard Foundation's Cultural Festival coordinator, Michelle Mendelssohn '96, Tammy Thomas '90 (center, front row right), Dr. S. Alton Carter, Carlos Vasquez '90 (standing, back for right), and Angela Demmert. A second $1,500 check was given to the Peace Street Inn for the homeless.
BSA Conference: “Why We Can’t Wait—The Future of Blacks in America”

The BSA conference, sponsored by the Harvard-Radcliffe Black Students Association (HER BSA) and the Institute of Politics (IOP), at the culmination of two years of planning, began with an opening address by Congressman William H. Gray III of Philadelphia. Congressman Gray’s inspirational and riveting speech electrified the capacity audience at the John F. Kennedy School of Government’s Arco Forum. Congressman Gray’s speech also set the tone for the rest of the conference.

On the second day of the conference, students were treated to a thoughtful address by the Honorable Richard G. Hatcher, former four-term mayor of Gary, Indiana and long time civil rights activist, on the importance of the African-American nomenclature.

Mr. Hatcher’s address was followed by student-run seminars that promoted student participation and interaction. Topics such as “The Declining Presence of Black Men on College Campuses,” “Conceptions and Perceptions of Blackness and Racial Identity,” and “Black Student Activism on College Campuses,” kept students in intense discussions both during and after the seminars.

After the seminars, the conference events continued at the Arco Forum, where Dr. Glenn Loury of the Kennedy School of Government and Sylvester Monroe of Time magazine discussed various approaches to solving the problems faced by Black Americans in the American underclass. The two-person panel, moderated by Mariel Spence, Director of Policy Analysis at Harvard University’s Office for Government, Community and Public Affairs, generated an intense question and answer period during which students discovered that there are no easy solutions to the problems the panel presented.

Despite the previous day’s full schedule of activities, conference participants returned to the Arco Forum the next day to hear Professor Willard Johnson of MIT discuss U.S. foreign policy towards Africa. Professor Johnson surprised the conference by bringing along Dr. Chester Crockett, former U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and visiting professor at MIT, to supplement the presentation with his expertise.

Visions ’89 Intercolligate All Ethnic Conference an Unprecedented Success

On the weekend of February 3rd, 1989, approximately one thousand East Coast college students of diverse backgrounds gathered at Harvard-Radcliffe for the intercollegiate, all-ethnic conference, “Visions ’89: Building a Common Future.” After addressing current issues facing different minority communities in five individual conferences (hosted by five of the minority student organizations on campus), students came together to develop a unified student voice on issues of race and ethnicity. Throughout the conference, students strove to define common concerns while developing a greater understanding and respect for different perspectives. Visions ’89 opened with a panel discussion featuring four student leaders from Stanford University, Rudy Fuentes, Bill King, Stacey Leyton, and Vivian Wu shared their experiences as student leaders working on race relations at Stanford with their East Coast peers. Examining their experiences in the recent Western Culture Campaign as a case study, the panelists and the student audience explored the strengths and the difficulties of coal-
tion building. Students looked to the lessons learned by Stanford students for strategies for successful and powerful coalition development at East Coast campuses.

After attending afternoon activities sponsored by the various student organizations, conference participants returned in the evening for the keynote address by Dr. Samuel Betances of Northeastern Illinois University. With a deft combination of passion and humor, Dr. Betances left the Sanders Theatre audience in tears. In the style of an evangelist, Betances stressed the importance of working together while respecting differences in an effort to improve race relations in the United States. He ended with a powerful plea, still echoed by students, to stop the self-defeating "competition of who has more scars" and form "coalitions of interests."

Subsequent to a full day of conference activities, over one thousand students packed Memorial Hall for the Visions '89 dance party.

As the heart of the conference were the discussion groups held Sunday morning. Discussion groups included: Afro-American and Ethnic American studies in the university curriculum, admissions and recruitment, racial harassment and violence, financial aid, community support, national politics, minority faculty hiring, primary/secondary level education, support for minority students on campus, and perceptions and stereotypes. Participants reviewed the current situations at different campuses and outlined strategies to take in the long run to achieve common goals.

Visions '89 was the first step for East Coast students towards developing a strong unified voice on issues of race and ethnicity that affect all people. Visions '89 sparked the enthusiasm and imagination of the students involved and helped to develop a student vision of our common future. With the memory of Visions '89, students on campuses throughout the East Coast have already begun to pursue a common vision.

—Irene Shih '90

Student leaders instrumental in the "Visions '89" conference's success (front row, left to right) Irene Shih '90, Edith Ramirez '89, Theodore Cheng '91, Jeff Camn '89, Denise Reid '86, (middle) Arlene Mayoko '90, (back row) Manuel Lopez '89, Erdin Fox Kore '91, Gustavo Lasso '90, Adrian Martinez '89, Cindy Cintrone '92, Elsa Lasso '90, Robert Henry '90 and Karen Ye '89.

"Visions '89" panel guests from Stanford University address a large gathering of intercollegiate conference members.

Professor Fernando Aguirre, President of the University of Puerto Rico, speaks at the Visions conference.

Philip Nash, one of the Visions speakers, addresses students at the Asian American Conference, "Interplay."
Harvard Foundation and Quincy House Remember David Aloian '49 and Honor Student Leaders

Plummer Professor of Christian Morals Reverend Peter Gomes inspired and enlightened Harvard Foundation guests and Quincy House residents as the featured speaker of this year's David Aloian Harvard Foundation Dinner Lecture. The dinner, attended by approximately 150 students, staff and faculty, was held in memory of the late David Aloian, former Quincy House Master and Director of the Harvard Alumni Office.

Reverend Gomes told the assembled guests that "Aloian was one of the Harvard Foundation's earliest supporters, having believed in the Foundation from its very inception, a time when most faculty thought that the fledgling organization would not last a year. At that time, Aloian devoted himself selflessly to the development of the Foundation's vision and its initial programs. His contributions, along with those of similarly dedicated faculty and students throughout the Harvard Community, helped ensure the Foundation a prominent place in the life of the University."

On hand to hear Gomes' lecture were Mrs. Mimi Aloian, former Co-Master of Quincy House, Fred Jewett, Dean of Harvard College, current Quincy House Masters Michael and Rosa Shinagel and Dr. S. Allen Counter, Harvard Foundation Director. Also present were the twelve recipients of the 1989 Harvard Foundation Director's Awards for "Outstanding Contributions to the Intercultural Life of the University." These students were: Kyra Armstrong, Mariana Ortiz-Blanes, Sean Brady, Jeff Camp, Robert Henry, Camille Holmes, Manuel Lopez, Eva Lunn, Michelle Merchandani, Edith Ramirez, Tammi Thomas and Carlton Vann. Dr. Counter praised the students for their tireless efforts and devotion to the cause of improving intercultural and interracial understanding at Harvard.

"-Sean Brady '89
Harvard-Radcliffe Raza Celebrates 17th Annual Cinco de Mayo Week

The 17th Annual Cinco de Mayo celebration sponsored by Harvard-Radcliffe Raza was the biggest ever. The traditional one-day celebration turned into a week-long conference this year. During the week of April 21st, there were a variety of activities for conference participants.

The week began with a showing of "The Milagro Beanfield War" in the Cabot House Junior Common Room. On Tuesday there was a reception and discussion session with Congressman Bill Richardson from New Mexico. The following nights two study breaks were held, titled "The Art of Mexican Comedy" and the "History of Cinco de Mayo."

The discussions were led by Professor Martha Monterro-Sieburth, from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Candelario Saenz, Visiting Scholar from the University of Texas.

On Friday night the activities continued at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where there were presentations by a muralist from Los Angeles and a poetess from New Mexico. The night ended with a party in Barros Hall at M.I.T.

At a small reception on Saturday, traditional Mexican pastry and hot chocolate were served to all of the guests and participants. The first speaker was Estrav Kristal, Assistant Professor of Latin American Literature in the Romance Languages Department. He spoke on the influence of Octavio Paz on Mexican artists and authors. Tino Villanueva, a professor at Boston University, followed with a presentation on the current status of Chicano literature in the United States. Following these presentations there was a performance by the Ballet Folklorico de Aztlán and a "patata."

The day culminated with a traditional Mexican dinner and an uplifting keynote address by Monterro-Sieburth on the status of Mexican-Americans in the U.S. today.

The tradition of the Cinco de Mayo celebration makes the Harvard community aware of issues that concern us all, but particularly those which pertain to the Mexican-American community. The program was designed to be educational and culturally enriching for all participants. The purpose of the historical perspective taken was to educate people about how the Mexican people came from the Cinco de Mayo Battle of Puebla in 1836 to form a thriving community of Mexican-Americans in the U.S. It was a successful and inspiring week and will definitely continue in the future.

—Hilda Alexander '90

Harvard Education Professor Martha Monterro-Sieburth delivers an inspirational keynote address to students, faculty and administration at the annual Cinco de Mayo dinner.

The Mariachi Guadalajara entertains guests at the Cinco de Mayo dinner.

Ed Bernhard '92, Fidel Ochile '92, Reu Perez '90, Hilda Alexander '90 and Luis Castro '92, are recognized for their efforts in organizing the successful week of events and activities.
Panel Discusses Academic Rights

The senior professors engaged in a vigorous and at times contentious debate on whether academic freedom can be made compatible with racial sensitivity in a Nativity Working Against Racism and Ethnocentrism (AWARE) panel yesterday afternoon. Speaking before an audience of about 100 people in Boylston Hall, distinguished panelists cut one another off occasionally during an intense discussion titled, "Racial Awareness, Sensitivities and Academic Freedom." Thompson Professor of Government Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr., '53, found himself at odds with his four peers and with the audience in declaring that self-censorship in the classroom was never justified to avoid racial insensitivity or the appearance of insensitivity.

"A university is a place where truth is spoken more feelings are cared for," he said, "Education doesn't mean repeating what you like," said Mansfield, who contended that the struggle to pacify ethnic groups obstructs academic truth-seeking. Mansfield argued that paying undue attention to perceived racial attacks "makes you think of self-defense instead of learning."

But most other professors were quick to counter his line of thinking, and most members of the audience—comprised mostly of students but including seven faculty and administrators—expressed sympathy. "I believe the pain that racism can create is so much that one should indeed sacrifice academic freedom," said Bigelow Professor of Ichthyology Karel F. Liem, "Academic freedom is a precious thing, but it is not as precious as human feelings." Liem, who traced his ancestry to Dutch, German, Indonesian and Chinese roots, called academic freedom a "precious right" but said he modulates his remarks particularly in larger, less intimate classes.

Professor of Anthropology Stanley J. Tambiah also questioned the existence of a single, objective academic truth. Conservative scholars like University of Chicago Professor Allan Bloom have recently renewed the argument that such truth lies in a Western cultural perspective as opposed to ethnic or gender views. "We cannot pretend that we are neutral scholars," said Tambiah, however. "Knowledge has political implications."

Both Tambiah and Mellon Professor of the Humanities Barbara E. Johnson cited for their defense the case of The Satanic Verses, which has spurred mass protests and death threats against its author because of its offensiveness to Muslims. Tambiah argued that the novel portrayed an extreme example of conflicting truths. "It's a total collision between secular and religious truths," he said.

In a diverse academic community, Tambiah said, members are less likely to assert an absolute truth, and the problem becomes "how to maximize diversity, pluralism, and knowledge." Johnson also used the Rushdie example to give a warning that the institutional authority invested in professors obligates them to be more cautious of offense in the classroom than in their personal work.

The panel discussion moderated by Harvard Foundation Director S. Allen Counter, Jr., concluded that maintaining academic freedom constantly risks offending members of the community. Faculty panelists added that problems vary between disciplines.

"I have perhaps let my concern for racial issues affect how I teach," said Arnold Professor of Science William H. Bossert '59. "I don't want to give ideas that support racists," Bossert said at one point, but he also said, "no one should feel inhibited to speak the truth."

A student at one point responded to panelists' remarks, saying that he sees "ideas and concepts" being taught instead of truths. Professors should say what they want, giving supporting data and challenging students to find their own data to prove or disprove the ideas, he said.

—Courtesy of the Harvard Crimson

ICS Celebrates Irish Cultural Awareness Week

The H/R Irish Cultural Society began its Awareness Week events at the Adams House St. Patrick's Day Tea. Harvard College students provided traditional Irish entertainment for the one hundred guests who crowded Masters Robert and Jana Kieby's residence.

ICS was happy to have Feilim O'AdhAmhail of the Massachusetts Inter-Celtic Association come to lecture about the role of the Irish language in Northern Ireland. Currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Ulster, Mr. O'AdhAmhail spoke in Ticknor Lounge to a very receptive audience. He discussed the controversy surrounding the illegality of public street signs in Irish (versus English), as well as the problems caused by laws which make non-English names unacceptable for official purposes. Although it was apparent that the language question was a very divisive issue in Northern Ireland, it was encouraging to hear this Ulster native express his opinion that the Irish language could be used as a source of reconciliation.

Later in the week, Harvard Administrator Edward Childs gave a vivid account of his recent experiences in Belfast to an appreciative audience of forty. Childs' personal observations, along with his own slide presentation,
allowed listeners to grasp more fully the problems which exist in Northern Ireland. Childs commented on how the American is eager to over-simplify the situation by attributing the ongoing conflict to religious prejudice rather than deep-seated political and economic problems.

ICS is pleased with the activities of the week and hopes to expand on them in the future. Special thanks to the Harvard Foundation for its continued support and interest in the efforts of the Irish Cultural Society.

—John Sheridan '90

The H/R Mozart Society Orchestra Welcomes Flutist Harold Jones

On April 30th, the Harvard/Radcliffe Mozart Society Orchestra presented a concert with Harold Jones, a highly acclaimed classical flutist from New York City. Accompanying Mr. Jones was composer William F. McDaniel, who wrote a concerto for flute and orchestra that was magnificently performed on concert day by Mr. Jones and the Mozart Society Orchestra.

The concert attempted to highlight the influence of minorities on contemporary classical music. Through their work in contemporary classical music, Mr. Jones and Mr. McDaniel both help to increase the presence and influence of minority in classical music.

The Mozart Society, in conjunction with the Harvard Foundation, sponsored two receptions for the musicians: the first on Friday afternoon in the Greenhouse Cafe, and the second following the concert in the Lyman House of Agassiz House. Both receptions enabled students to meet and talk to the musicians informally.

The entire weekend was extremely valuable to the Mozart Society Orchestra members and to the musical community of Harvard and Radcliffe. Approximately 150 people attended the concert. Many were students, but community members and professional musicians were also present. Mr. Jones and Mr. McDaniel are important role models for all aspiring young musicians, regardless of race. The musicians thoroughly enjoyed their visit and hope to make visits to Harvard a permanent part of their schedule.

—Anne-Marie Kim '91

Harold Jones poses with Mozart Society Orchestra members during intermission. (left to right): Mike Jakuchuncan '93, Jason Dunn '00, Harold Jones, Eric Schuman '99, Paul Green '99, Victoria Hebey '90, Julie Hohman '92 and (center) Henry Li '92.

Mozart Society Orchestra conductor Charles Fritz greets the audience prior to the concert.

Anne-Marie Kim '91, president of the Mozart Society Orchestra (left), and Stephen Shankland '93, string manager (right), bid farewell to special guests Harold Jones and William McDaniel at Logan Airport.
KOHR Hosts a Korean-American Exploratory Workshop

On April 22, 1989, the Koreans of Harvard/Radcliffe (KOHR) held a workshop at Currier House on anti-Korean-Americanism and anti-Americanism in South Korea. These issues have become increasingly important as hostilities grow and more Americans visit Korea. For Korean-American students who visit Korea every summer, this workshop offered a chance to examine crucial issues of ethnic identity and responsibility. For non-Koreans who attended, the workshop provided insight into Korean affairs and problems facing ethnic minorities.

KOHR had four excellent panelists and a Korean-style dinner for the 50 participants. Milan Jehtmanek, a Korean history Ph.D. candidate, spoke on the historical sources of anti-Americanism and explained the need for Americans to understand these causes. You Jong-II, a former student leader in Korea, explained the grievances of the Korean students and urged Korean-Americans to take an active role in correcting U.S. policy toward Korea. Jim Kim, a graduate student who has stayed in Korea for extended periods of time, portrayed his personal struggle with a dual and hyphenated ethnic identity. Finally, Heim Kim, a Harvard Law student and former reporter for the Far Eastern Economic Review, spoke on the problems within, as well as created by, the student movement.

Many participants commented that they gained valuable insight from the workshop and hoped to see these issues explored further in the future.

—David Shim '91

Hillel Sponsors Discussion on Black/Jewish Relations

In conjunction with A.W.A.R.E. Week activities and with support from the Harvard Foundation, H/R Hillel presented a discussion entitled “The Past and Future of Black/Jewish Relations in America.” The event took place on February 24th with an audience in excess of 150 students and community members. Jonathan Kaufman, a reporter from the Boston Globe, spoke on his recently published work, Broken Alliance: The Turbulent Times Between Blacks and Jews in America.

Mr. Kaufman won the Pulitzer Prize in 1984 for his work on a series that examined racism and shop discrimination in Boston. His sensitivity to questions of race and ethnicity led him to explore the growing rift between Blacks and Jews in this country in search of avenues of reconciliation.

In his book, as well as his lecture at Hillel, he concluded that the historic alliance between the two groups, forged during the turbulent civil rights era, can be rebuilt if common concerns are identified and addressed.

The question and answer period which followed Mr. Kaufman’s enlightening words provided an opportunity for members of Harvard’s Jewish and Black communities to discuss issues of mutual concern and consider a means of bridging these differences. The H/R Hillel found the well-attended forum both relevant and informative.

—Susan Wicksdale '90 and
—Don Seeman '90

The “Moods, Music and Movement” of Expressions’ Spring Concert is Captivating

The spring concert, “Moods, Music, and Movement,” was presented in two shows on April 30th in the Radcliffe Dance Studio. Members of Expressions, a multi-racial dance company, performed both old and newly choreographed pieces. The music used for the performances ranged from Billie Holliday’s blues to calypso, to the more contemporary jazz of Gil Scott-Heron.

The company focuses primarily on African-American styles of dance. This year, however, the repertoire was more eclectic and presented ethnic dances from India and the Caribbean.

This spring, Expressions Dance Company had the pleasure of working with a well-known professional choreographer, Ms. Marla Blakey. Her credits include “Motown Returns to the Apollo” and “The Cotton Club Show,” and was kind enough to come and rehearse with Expressions members. Ms. Blakey choreographed a piece to Anita Baker’s “Good Love” and taught it to members of the company who performed the piece during the spring concert.

The experience of working with such a distinguished and knowledgeable choreographer was an extremely beneficial experience for the dancers. Thanks to the support of the Harvard Foundation, Expressions Dance Company’s 1989 spring concert displayed a new professionalism.

—Rachna Dhanda '91
Legislation Introduced to Help Tribes Achieve Federal Recognition

Washington — Chairman Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs recently introduced legislation to dramatically streamline the administrative process which Native American tribes must now undergo to achieve federal recognition of their tribal status.

"There are now over 1,000 petitions pending within the Bureau of Indian Affairs," Inouye noted, "and they only manage to complete the review of two (tribes) a year. On top of this unacceptable delay, some tribes have spent as much as $550,000 to meet the petition requirements. It's time Congress stepped in and established a fair, reliable and efficient system for evaluating the status of these tribes." In May 1988 oversight hearing, Inouye asked the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) to coordinate a national working group to research the issue and make its recommendations available to the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs. In that hearing NARF attorney Faith Roessel presented testimony urging that the longstanding problems which had previously been identified in hearings in 1978, 1983 and 1988, finally be corrected.

Afrindeur

The recent declaration by Reverend Jesse Jackson that Americans of African Ancestry should henceforth be known as African-Americans adds a popular voice to a concept put forth by Black intellectuals for years. This is no insignificant matter, since it affects the identification and labeling of some 30 million North Americans (and millions in the Caribbean and Latin America), who can trace part of their ancestry back to Africa. In our search for a positive identity of our own choosing, we have gone from African, to Colored, to Negro, to Black (a protest term which demonstrated that we preferred to identify with our African rather than our European-American past). While the term African-American does represent an advance in the continuous evolution toward a true identity for a people whose ancestors were forcibly brought from Africa to this hemisphere by Europeans, forcibly held in slave labor, and forcibly mixed in racial composition, it is imprecise, or equivocal at best. A name must reflect the biological, cultural, historical and national integrity of a people. Genetically, almost all of today's "Black Americans" are a racial mixture of African, Native American, and European bloodlines. Regardless of the skin color (phenotype), we are a unique genetic creation of this hemisphere and America is our only home. Perhaps the name Afrindeur? (African: Afr + Indian: ind + European: eur) would be more precise.

—By the Bureau of Indian Affairs to implement the Indian Reorganization Act which allows for the preparation of tribal constitutions, the organization of tribal governments and corporations, access to the revolving loan fund, and power to prevent the loss of tribal lands;

—By the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Department of Education to award education grants that can be used at any institution of higher learning.

"The Bill, as being proposed, appears in no way to loosen the standard already in place for federal recognition," Roessel noted, "but it will surely improve the system."

—Courtesy of the Lulita Times

By Dr. S. Allen Counter

Director of the Harvard Foundation
H/R Chinese Students Association Celebrates the Year of the Snake

On February 11th, 1989, the H/R Chinese Students Association (H/R CSA) held a banquet and dance at Memorial Hall to celebrate the Chinese New Year—the Year of the Snake. Approximately 250 people attended the event, which lasted until 1:00 a.m. Each year, H/R CSA celebrates the New Year with an evening of traditional food and entertainment open to all members of the Harvard community. The Year of the Snake proved to be another successful celebration as everyone enjoyed the food, entertainment and dance party. The experience enlightened those who had never celebrated a Chinese New Year.

Chinese stringed instrument. In addition, students and members from the Yao Li Kung Fu Academy in Chinatown performed a series of martial arts demonstrations which entertained the crowd. After the show, people danced into the early hours of the morning.

The 1989 Chinese New Year Banquet and Dance attracted a diverse crowd, including students from Harvard graduate schools, MIT, Wellesley College and Phillips Exeter Academy. The evening was a great success and the Harvard community joined in to celebrate this important aspect of Chinese culture.

—Jeannie N. Yee '90

HASA Sponsors African Cinema

It is rare that one has an opportunity to see films by a reknowned African filmmaker, and even rarer when that filmmaker is a woman. To introduce the spring semester film festival, "African Cinema and Cultural Identity," the Harvard African Students Association (HASA) screened Angolan filmmaker Sarah Maldoror’s Gold Palm award-winning film, Sambangi. The film was shown to a group of thirty undergraduates and graduate students in the Junior Common Room of Dunster House on January 13, 1989.

By making the film festival a House event, HASA was able to draw a general movie-going audience as well as those specifically interested in Africa. Most often, the images of Africans in the cinema are limited to an anthropological or Hollywood perspective which rarely presents a modernized African society. As HASA attempts to educate the Harvard/Radcliffe community about African culture and politics through its campus events, film (an essential aspect of popular Western culture) seems an ideal medium to combat the stereotypes of the romantically primitive or savage African.

Sarah Maldoror portrays the struggle of the Angolans resistance from an insider’s perspective, rather than from that of an anthropologist or other social scientist and thus is able to create both a compelling and accurate picture of the situation in modern Angola. The Harvard African Students Association encourages students and members of the general community to attend future African film showings.

Mosaic Concert: A Celebration of Jewish Music

On Sunday, April 16th, 1989, approximately seventy people gathered in Paine Hall for a concert of contemporary and traditional Jewish music. Numerous students and community members attended the program.

The concert featured the world premiere of "Canticles for Jerusalem," a piece for mezzo-soprano and piano by noted American composer Vivian Fine. Ms. Fine was present at the concert; she declared afterwards that the performance of her piece was not as she expected, but "different, and much better!" The work was performed by Maria Teges, soprano, and Geoffrey Burleson, piano, two artists from the Boston area.

"Songs of Longing" by Harvard composer Noam Elkies was also presented. Amy Cohen and Edward Whalen performed the vocal parts and Jason Anderson '90, Marie Park '90, and Vonatan Malin '89 performed the cello, oboe, and flauto alotto flauto piccolo parts. Noam Elkies conducted the work.

Zamir Chorale of Boston performed the second half of the program, presenting a set of choral works, contemporary and traditional, centered around the theme of Jerusalem.

—Sarah Strasser '90 and
—Alex Sagem GSAS
H/R Kuumba Singers' Mid-Winter Concert

The Harvard/Radcliffe Kuumba Singers is an organization founded on the idea of cultural creativity and devotion to the principle of promoting Black spirituality. The organization would like to extend a sincere thank you to the Harvard Foundation for assisting the group in the purchase of additional choir robes for its mid-winter concert held on March 10, 1989 in the Agassiz auditorium.

The concert was a success. Not only did students and followers from the greater Boston area crowd the auditorium, but the choir also delivered its song and poetry with buoyancy and expression. The concert brought to the forefront those tragic and joyous events which mark the Black experience.

Kuumba's black robes, laced with vibrant red and green trim, symbolized the choir's uniformity with a message... it recognized the group's oneness with the ideals of African independence and Black pride. Wearing these vestiges of symbolism, the H/R Kuumba Singers are able to continue to venerate those historic figures who understood the importance of these ideals and the purport of cultural expression.

The Kuumba Singers' final concert for the 1988-89 academic year was Friday, May 1st at Paine Hall.

—Samuel L. Smalls '91
The staff of the Harvard Foundation

Clockwise from upper left: Angelique Danner, Project Coordinator; Charlotte Kim '90, Student Assistant; Sean Brady '91, Student Assistant; Denise Pardo '90, Student Assistant; Luis Gonzalez '92, Student Assistant; Irene Shih '90, Student Assistant; Adrienne Storger, Self Assistant; Arthur Jan '90, Student Assistant; Mona Nalbandian '92, Student Assistant; Theodule Cheng '91, Student Assistant.

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