

Brandeis International Fellowships (2003-2004):
Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts

SEEKING APPLICATIONS

The Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence, a program of Brandeis University's International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life, is currently seeking applications for the third round of Brandeis International Fellowships (BIFs), addressing the theme *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts*. This new round of BIFs follows on two previous rounds — *Coexistence and the Quest for Justice* (1998-2000) and *Human Rights, Intervention, and International Law* (2001-2003).

We are seeking applications from teams of two persons who live or work in the same geographic region. One member of each team should be an artist, cultural worker, or peacebuilding practitioner already exploring the intersection of reconciliation, culture, and the arts. The other member of the team should be a documentor — a writer, oral historian, filmmaker, photographer, or ethnographer, for example — preferably with experience working in historically divided communities documenting complex social processes and/or facilitating reflective inquiry. (In some cases, one or both team members might fit into *both* practitioner and documentor categories.)

INTRODUCTION

In communities torn apart by violence, the processes of rebuilding relationships are complex. They can be both personal and communal, pragmatic and symbolic, political and spiritual, judicial and economic.

'Reconciliation' is a term currently used by many peacebuilding scholars and practitioners to refer to the processes of restoring — or creating anew — relationships of trust between former adversaries following periods of alienation, violence, or oppression. For many scholars and practitioners, and in many cultures, reconciliation includes processes such as mourning losses, repenting for harm inflicted, expressing remorse, acknowledging injustices, addressing conflicting historical narratives, recognizing interdependence, giving reparations, granting forgiveness, and constructing new images of the future.

However, the term 'reconciliation' is still in the process of being defined. Scholars and practitioners, emerging as we do from different religious and cultural traditions and from different disciplines and professional fields, understand differently the meaning of the term and the processes it entails. A conversation has begun to take place among those working toward reconciliation in communities around the world — a conversation toward a clearer understanding of reconciliation and toward more effective practice.

Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts is designed to bring into this conversation the questions and insights of artists and cultural workers, many of whom are

already working in historically divided communities to facilitate conciliatory processes. In many places, artists and cultural workers are engaging former adversaries in expressive forms and creative projects. They facilitate the rebuilding of respect and trust through, for instance, collaboratively designing rituals and monuments, creating films, rehearsing dramatic presentations, mounting museum exhibitions, producing radio series, stitching quilts, composing songs, and through sponsoring exchanges of stories and other local cultural knowledge.

Yet artists and cultural workers have not yet enjoyed significant opportunities to reflect upon and theorize about how their work may facilitate reconciliation among people and communities in conflict. It is our hope that this new round of BIFs will highlight and strengthen artistic and cultural approaches to reconciliation by engaging those who already use them in documenting, reflecting upon, creating theory about, and sharing their work.

We will consider questions such as:

- How can the sensibilities and capacities required for reconciliation — such as receptivity, compassion, and creativity — be restored and/or nourished through aesthetic engagement?
- In what ways can artistic forms (drama, film, and literature, for example) be engaged to support former adversaries to acknowledge and grapple with divergent national and historical narratives?
- How can exhibitions, rituals and other symbolic forms be constructed to help communities mourn their losses in ways that allow people to imagine a new future, rather than remain trapped in a cycle of revenge?
- Can the insights and transformations achieved in small inter-group encounters be translated into larger scale social change using artistic and cultural forms such as museum exhibitions, popular music, or film? If so, how? How can artistic projects be linked to conciliatory processes at the national level?
- How can cultural forms that are part of everyday life – rituals, folkways, storytelling, for instance – be marshaled to strengthen trust between former enemies?
- Given the context-specific nature of reconciliation work, how can people working in different regions and through different media learn from each other's work?
- What ethical questions emerge as practitioners work to promote reconciliation through culture and the arts? How do they make choices in the face of ethical dilemmas?

GOALS

Through this fellowship program, we will develop a community of inquiry among peacebuilding practitioners and artists/cultural workers who are already engaged in exploring the intersections of reconciliation, culture, and the arts *and* scholars and documentors who have worked in historically divided communities. Since conciliatory processes are complex, unpredictable, and take place over many years, we are not asking Fellows to design and implement *new* projects. Rather, we hope to support the documentation of on-going work, deepen the level of reflection upon it, and create contexts for learning to be shared.

Specifically, the fellowship program is designed to:

- Explore meanings of reconciliation that emerge in various cultural and political contexts
- Explore the resources that exist within cultures and within artistic and expressive forms and processes to help members of divided communities work through aspects of the legacies that divide them and build relationships of greater trust
- Document and reflect upon on-going work that incorporates cultural work and the arts to promote reconciliation
- Share our inquiry into reconciliation, culture, and the arts with scholars, peacebuilding practitioners, artists, and students – through performance, exhibition, conversation, and writings
- Produce a book that documents such work, generates theory, and articulates an on-going agenda for research

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence at Brandeis University is soliciting applications for Brandeis International Fellowships on the theme *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts*. Through the fellowship program, Fellows will support each other to document and reflect on their practice, develop a research agenda, and share the results of their inquiries.

Applications are sought from teams of two persons who live or work in the same geographic region.

One member of each team should be an artist, cultural worker, or peacebuilding practitioner already exploring the intersection of reconciliation, culture, and the arts.

These might include:

- cultural workers and artists whose expressive work brings members of adversarial communities into relationships of greater trust; or
- coexistence or reconciliation workers whose peacebuilding efforts incorporate artistic and cultural forms and processes; or

- educators, clergy people, social workers, therapists, or other practitioners whose work to restore trusting relationships between former adversaries incorporates artistic and cultural forms and processes.

The other member of the team should be a documentor – a writer, oral historian, filmmaker, photographer, journalist, sociologist or ethnographer, for example – preferably with experience working in historically divided communities documenting complex social processes and/or facilitating reflective inquiry. In some cases, one or both team members might fit into *both* the practitioner and documentor categories. We welcome applications from teams whose members have worked together in the past as well as from partnerships formed newly for this purpose.

We are seeking applications from teams in which at least one member is engaged in work that helps former enemies not only to recognize each other's humanity, but to develop trust by working through the legacies of the conflicts that have divided them. Such work might, for example, engage adversaries in one or more of the following: 1) acknowledging each other's perspectives on historical injustices, 2) addressing painful and divisive history, or 3) imagining and creating the moral framework for a future relationship.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Fellows will attend two one-week institutes at Brandeis University. The first institute will be held November 9-16, 2003 and the second October 10 – 17, 2004. The institutes will be conducted in English.

In the intervening months, each team will document and reflect upon the on-going work of at least one member of the team that furthers processes of reconciliation through the arts and culture.

First Institute. During the first institute, Fellows will work together to develop complex and nuanced understandings of the concept of 'reconciliation.' They will consider the current state of reconciliation work, and examine both the efficacy and the ethical dimension of several cases in which reconciliatory processes have been furthered (more and less successfully) through artistic and cultural forms and processes. Through participatory workshops, presentations, and discussions, they will become familiar with each other's work, and develop both common and individualized research questions that will focus their inquiries in the months to follow. With support from the institute's participants and staff, each team will develop an initial plan for action, documentation, and reflection. Fellows will work together to plan the framework for a public event to coincide with the second institute.

Between the Institutes. Between the two institutes, each team will reflect upon and document reconciliatory processes that incorporate cultural work and the arts. In most instances, these efforts will not be new projects, but rather the organic or logical next

steps of the practitioner's on-going practice. The documentation can take many forms, but should not interfere with the conciliatory work itself and should not put people at risk. Where feasible, it should include some videotaped sessions and interviews as well as written notes. Between the institutes, Fellows will be supported to stay in touch with each other and follow the progress of each other's work.

Prior to the second institute, each team will submit 1) a portfolio and 2) a draft of a book chapter, both of which document and reflect upon their efforts during the year. Portfolios might include, for example, works of art, flyers of events, journal entries, photographs, or cassettes: each one will be unique.

Second Institute. During the second institute, each team will present its work, focusing on its progress in addressing the research questions articulated in the first institute. When possible, Fellows will share brief portions of videotapes of their process. Working sessions will focus on feedback from other Fellows and an exchange of views on the chapters and presentations. The institute will culminate with a series of public sessions, perhaps in the form of a conference, in which work will be shared with a larger audience of interested scholars, peacebuilding practitioners, artists, and students. Following the conference, Fellows will integrate their learning, in part through the articulation of individual and collective research agendas for the years to follow.

Following the second institute, chapters will be edited and prepared for publication, and excerpts from portfolios and presentations will be mounted on a website.

THE AWARD

Fellows will receive round-trip travel and simple accommodations for both Brandeis institutes. Each fellow will receive \$1,000 to support the work and its documentation, \$500 at the conclusion of the first institute and \$500 upon submission of the chapter or portfolio. When necessary, we will work with teams to secure access to a digital video camera.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are due no later than June 2, 2003 at 5 p.m. Applications will be accepted by mail (Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence / Brandeis University / MS 086 / 415 South Street / Waltham, MA 02454 / United States), FAX (1-781-736-8561), or email (coexistence@brandeis.edu). Applications should include:

- Application cover sheet. (See below.)
- Personal statements by each member of the team. Personal statements should address why you are applying for this fellowship, what previous relevant experience you have, how you understand 'reconciliation', and specifically how you (with your teammate) will contribute to the development of theory and

practice in the area of reconciliation, culture, and the arts. *Each team member's statement should be no longer than three double-spaced pages.*

- Resumes or CV's for each member of the team.
- Two letters of recommendation for each member of the team.
- A jointly written team statement. The team statement should describe the ongoing reconciliation/arts work that you will reflect on and document as Fellows. It should discuss possible directions the work might take during the next two years. The statement should describe the relationship between the two teammates and the roles that they will each play in relation to the reconciliation work, the written documentation of the work, and the development of a portfolio. *The team statement should be no longer than three double-spaced pages.*
- OPTIONAL: Evidence of artistic, scholarly, or literary merit. If not already included in your CVs and letters of recommendation, applicants may send up to three reviews of artistic, scholarly, or literary work, as well as documentation of prizes and awards received.

NOTE: ANY MATERIALS THAT YOU SEND WITH YOUR APPLICATION BECOMES THE PROPERTY OF BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY. WE CANNOT RETURN APPLICATION MATERIALS.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

Fellows will be chosen based on evidence within their applications of the likelihood that they, as a team, can contribute to the development of theory and practice in the area of reconciliation, culture, and the arts. Attention will also be paid to the composition of the cohort of Fellows, as we are striving for geographic diversity as well as diversity of artistic and cultural forms and processes. All fellows must be sufficiently proficient in English to participate in the institute; documentors should also be able to write their chapters in English.

Ideally, the two team members will be from distinct communities within their conflict region (i.e. a Protestant and a Catholic from Northern Ireland). We are open to other pairings (i.e. two Catholics or a Catholic and an international person living and working in Northern Ireland); though if this is the case, we suggest that you address the implications of the composition of your team in your team statement.

For more information, visit the International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life on-line at www.brandeis.edu/ethics or call 781-736-5001. The Brandeis International Fellowships are funded by the Rice Family Foundation; Fellowships in *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts* are also supported by the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence at Brandeis University.

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Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

APPLICANTS' FULL NAMES:

1. _____

2. _____

APPLICANTS' COMPLETE CONTACT INFORMATION:

1. Address: _____
Telephone(s): _____
Fax: _____
Email: _____

2. Address: _____
Telephone(s): _____
Fax: _____
Email: _____

APPLICANTS' HOME COUNTRY, COUNTRIES, OR REGION:

PRIMARY ARTISTIC MEDIA:

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION (Use this space only):

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

(Please make sure that you have enclosed in this application each of the following items.)

- Personal statements by each member of the team.
- Resumes or CV's for each member of the team.
- Two letters of recommendation for each member of the team.
- A jointly written team statement.
- OPTIONAL: Evidence of artistic, scholarly or literary merit

Send all application materials to Dr. Cynthia Cohen at the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence:

By Post:

Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence
Brandeis University
MS 086
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02454
United States

By Fax:

1-781-736-8561

By Email:

coexistence@brandeis.edu