

# ***Recasting Reconciliation Through Culture and the Arts*** **First Institute: November 9-16, 2003**

**Prepared by Stephanie Marlin-Curiel and Cynthia Cohen**

*Coming to know an enemy is like coming to know a poem...as we listen to resonances and reverberations inside of us, we understand something about the poem and ourselves, or the enemy and ourselves, at the same time.*

- Cynthia Cohen, Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts Institute, Brandeis University, November 2003.

*Mostly, we spend our lives in two places, in the past and in the future, and we forget about the present. When you drum and sing together, you are only in the present, where the person standing in front of you is the only thing you have in mind.*

- Nicholas Djanie, Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts Institute, Brandeis University, November 2003.

The Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence, a program of Brandeis University's International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public life, is currently sponsoring a third Brandeis International Fellowship Program on the theme *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts*. This report documents the first of two institutes that are central components of the fellowship program.

**Overview of the Fellowship Program.** In conflict regions around the globe, many artists and cultural workers are engaging former adversaries in recovering from trauma, addressing painful history, building new relationships and imagining a new future for their communities. Yet rarely are their voices heard in conceptual debates about the meaning of reconciliation; rarely are their projects highlighted in compendia of practical models for conciliatory action.

*Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts* is designed to bring artists and cultural workers from different regions into conversation, to facilitate their learning from each other, and to support them to share their learning through public events and a publication. In the summer of 2003, five two-person teams, between them possessing both artistic and documentation skills, were selected from over 150 applicants from all over the world.

To read a description of the program, click link below:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/index.html>

**Overview of the institute.** The Fellows participated in a week-long institute from November 9 – 16, 2003 at Brandeis University. The institute was designed to create a sense of community among the Fellows and to facilitate learning through emotional,

intellectual and aesthetic engagement. Over the course of the week, the Fellows shared narratives about their lives and work, and led public presentations on the Brandeis campus. Core sessions focused on the meanings of reconciliation and the learning it entails, and the unique potential of the arts to restore capacities necessary to engage in it. By the end of the week, the Fellows established a collaborative framework for the inquiry and a research agenda for the coming year. In the months between the institutes, each team will build portfolios and write chapters for an edited volume as they reflect upon their on-going work of furthering processes of reconciliation through arts and culture. The Fellows will share their work when they reconvene for another week-long institute at Brandeis in October 2004.

To see photographs from the November 2003 institute, click link below:

[http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif\\_2003/nov\\_photos.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif_2003/nov_photos.html)

### **Institute Faculty**

- Cynthia Cohen, director of Coexistence Research and International Collaborations at the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence at Brandeis University (Institute Director)
- Jonathan Fox, founder of Playback Theatre (Institute Co-Director), and
- Farhat Agbaria, a coexistence facilitator and Director of Face-to-Face, a program of the Arab-Jewish Center for Peace at Givat Haviva (Facilitator)

To read more about the faculty, click link below:

[http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif\\_2003/faculty.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif_2003/faculty.html)

### **The Brandeis International Fellows '03 – '04**

- Kim Berman and Stompie Selibe, from Artists Proof Studio in Johannesburg, South Africa
- Bev Hosking, a Playback Theatre practitioner and documenter Jenny Hutt, a diversity consultant, from New Zealand
- Ly Daravuth and Ingrid Muan, from Reyum: Institute for Arts and Culture in Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- Lisa Kois and Iffat Fatima, filmmakers, working on *Road to Peace*, a documentary in Sri Lanka
- Lena Slachmuislder and Nicholas Kotei Djanie, musicians incorporating drumming into reconciliation efforts in Burundi, Rwanda and South Africa

To read more about the Fellows and their work, click link below:

[http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif\\_2003/fellows.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/fellowships/bif/bif_2003/fellows.html)

**Welcome and Introductions.** On November 9, 2003, the Fellows arrived at the Walker Center, a conference center located in Newton, Massachusetts, 4 miles from the Brandeis campus. Cynthia Cohen welcomed them on a journey to create a community of inquiry that would later share its learning and expand its reach to other scholars, practitioners, and peacebuilders world wide.

Following her welcome, the Fellows and the faculty expressed their eagerness to learn from each other and appreciated the unique opportunity -- and responsibility -- the program represents. The Fellows were asked to express their hopes and fears about the week ahead. Some expressed hopes of gaining new perspectives and answers to their questions. They hoped to gain a sense of mutual respect, to find common ground, and to learn something they could take back to the communities in which they work. They expressed fears about both too much humility and too much competition, and about both superficiality and too much emotion.

Following the introductory session, the group traveled to the Brandeis campus where they joined members of the faculty and administration in witnessing a performance of *The Long March*, performed by storyteller Derek Burrows. The story tells of a young Choctaw boy whose community is asked to donate money to help people in Ireland suffering from the potato famine. His great-grandmother meets his initial anger and transforms his resistance by re-telling the story of the suffering of the Choctaw people at the hands of the Europeans. "Our help will be like an arrow shot through time," she predicts, "bringing blessings to future generations." A coalition of Irish and Choctaw communities is currently raising seventeen million dollars to address world hunger, to complete the cycle begun with the original gift of 170 dollars made by the Choctaw community to the Irish people in 1847.

Brandeis Provost Marty Krauss and the director of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life Dan Terris formally welcomed the Fellows to the University and wished them a productive week.

**Building Community through Explorations of Identities.** Jonathan Fox opened the institute's first full day by leading a session of stretching, dancing, and learning to say hello in all the Fellows' languages. Recognizing the different national identities present in our group, and the fact that several of the Fellows had encountered frustrations in acquiring visas and being detained by security personnel en route to the institute, he asked participants to situate themselves along an imaginary continuum according their feelings about being in the United States at that moment. Discussion focused on conflicting allegiances, for both US citizens and for citizens of other countries, many of whom were also working away from their countries of birth. Several American participants expressed shame about the treatment of foreign visitors and residents and disagreements with U.S. foreign policy. Americans and non-Americans alike also acknowledged the benefits, freedoms and tolerance of difference that, while currently compromised in the U.S., still exceeds the privileges accorded to outsiders in other countries.

Jonathan then asked the Fellows to situate themselves in the space according to how strongly they identified with being either the artist or the documenter within their team structure. It became clear that many of the Fellows saw themselves as both artists and documenters. Overlapping identities and identities in conflict, in fact, became a focus for the day, and a theme that resurfaced throughout the week.

Farhat Agbaria continued the exploration of identities by asking the Fellows to create visual representations of their identities by arranging stickers of different sizes and colors on paper, mapping their identities according to their importance and their relationship to each other. Many were negotiating conflicts between their various national, racial, gender, class or ethnic identities, and between identities that were 'given' and those that were 'chosen.' Several described struggling against constraints on their work or personal freedoms because of identity-based societal norms. Farhat reminded the group that facing the conflicts between different aspects of one's own identity is imperative for professionals who work with groups in conflict.

The afternoon concluded with a session in which each team of Fellows presented the conflicts in their regions using the voices of the Choctaw great-grandmother and the angry boy introduced in *The Long March* the previous evening. A highlight of this session was Bev Hosking's and Jenny Hutt's dramatic rendition of some perspectives on Maori-Pakeha relations in New Zealand over the 150-year history.

Monday concluded with a vigorous evening drumming workshop led by Fellows Lena Slachmuis, Stompie Selibe and Nicholas Djanie.

In different ways, all of the week's activities contributed to the building of a community of inquiry.

Particular sessions on subsequent days were devoted particularly to the deepening Fellows' relationships with each other.

**Exploring Meanings of Reconciliation.** The second full day of the institute was devoted to theoretical and practical explorations of the meaning of reconciliation. Cynthia Cohen established the framework for this exploration, proposing that reconciliation refers to the creation or re-creation of the moral framework of a relationship between adversaries. It can best be understood as a process of change, through which former adversaries move gradually from states of alienation to greater appreciation for their interdependence and greater trust and trustworthiness. The processes of reconciliation must meet certain ethical standards – such as respect for the integrity of all parties. It involves learning (about both self and other) and the enhancement or restoration of capacities.

Reconciliation usually involves some or more of the following processes:

- Appreciating each other's humanity, culture and moral sensibilities
- Telling, revising, listening to personal and collective narratives
- Acknowledging harms and mourning losses
- Empathizing with each other's suffering
- Expressing remorse, repenting, apologizing, asking forgiveness
- Letting go of bitterness, forgiving

- Acknowledging and addressing injustices
- Imagining and creating a new future.

In the discussion that followed, Fellows raised additional concerns.

- They called for a broadening of perspective on the oppositional definition of adversary identities, and expanding conciliatory processes from the binary sense of the victim-perpetrator relationship to include third parties and international actors – many of whom may bear a portion of responsibility for the circumstances that gave rise to violence.
- They identified several issues to be made part of the research agenda, such as the fact that recalling the past can sometimes be hurtful and hinder reconciliation, prompting us to ask whether in some contexts trust can best be established by focusing on the present and on preventing violence in the future.
- Others noted that institutional structures or infrastructures were needed to implement a shared moral framework.
- Fellows were sensitive to the ways in which mediators coming from the inside or the outside may have ulterior motives; they may compromise or corrupt reconciliation by coercing (or otherwise failing to support the integrity of) the parties.
- Some raised caution against imposing methods of reconciliation without regard for indigenous practices.
- Of particular interest to this project is what role imagination might play in reconciliation and how imaginative capacities can be developed.
- Another key issue identified by the group is how to expand small group and bottom up reconciliation initiatives to the larger society.

That afternoon, Fellows identified a list of issues they wished to pursue and met in small groups to discuss three questions: 1) the role of the past; 2) the kind of structures that can help to sustain reconciliation; and 3) what we do to rebuild imagination and capacities. A full list of the questions that were generated is provided in Appendix One.

In addition, they began to share their experiences with reconciliation, in some cases illustrating how the arts can contribute to conciliatory processes, in other cases suggesting refinements to Cindy's theoretical framework by way of counter-example. Among the thoughts and moments they shared are these:

- *I chose to do a series of portraits of perpetrators, all the monsters of evil. This was an attempt for me to reconcile with the government. Each one was more evil than the next. I started with a black plate and carving out their humanity, looking for their humanity. I was also looking for that rage that was very angry so I scribbled all over them. It was a process of letting go of the bitterness; I didn't forgive them-*
- *I think [reconciliation] is about the creative space of finding meaning and purpose and excitement about life where there is helplessness and hopelessness and I think that is what art can do, provide opportunities to make a choice.*

- *We are reconciling consciously but not dealing with the heart.... That made me realize how powerful music is for the community, to share the process through emotions. People begin to tell stories by listening to sound. People get a chance to listen to stories of the apartheid era.*
- *Art can help reintegrate people into the community. So it is important to make art as an instrument, as a medium, not as a focal point. It almost has to be silent. It is a medium to get to another field [where we could not go without it]*
- *[There is] something interesting about the engagement of sound... helping them [an audience] to engage in telling their story because the musician helped to carry their burden.*
- *A formal judicial process...may limit the space for addressing different pasts and different memories that may be at odds with each other and that memory work or education may be a more constructive way to create that space, through art or education... ritual, or ceremony*
- *Oral history opens doors [to multiple perspectives] but [in some cases] international aid will only focus on the leitmotif past, official past or set framework*
- *When East Timor was liberated, there was a lot of aid from New Zealand. I was so happy that \$500 went to a traditional dance group. The fact that someone in that whole system had thought to put some money towards the work of a cultural group at that time was so unusual and wonderful.*

The group's understandings of reconciliation developed throughout the week through the sharing of stories and through the productive engagement of conflicts and differences among its members. While the group did not reach a formal consensus about the meanings of reconciliation that will guide our inquiry, we did carve out the parameters of a conversation in which we can productively and collectively grapple with its meaning.

**Distinctive contributions of cultural work and the arts to conciliatory processes.** The following morning the group focused its attention on a theoretical framework for understanding the contributions of the aesthetic domain to the educational work inherent in reconciliation. In her second theoretical presentation, Cynthia Cohen proposed that during intense conflicts, identities become polarized so that even the language adversaries use to perceive and describe their world tends to reinforce the enemy system. Part of the educational work of reconciliation, then, is to enhance the capacities of members of adversarial communities to make choices about the degree to which they accept or revise the discursive practices of their own communities.

Why are cultural work and the arts uniquely well-suited to meet these – and other – educational challenges associated with reconciliation? To answer this question, it is first necessary to understand the nature of aesthetic engagement, which is characterized by:

- The integration of sensuous and cognitive modes of understanding
- An intensity of engagement with forms bounded in space and time
- The mediating of tensions between innovation and tradition, the individual and the collective, and chaos and rigidity

These qualities of engagement allow for a kind of reciprocity between the viewer and a work of art, or between a participant and a ritual. That reciprocity can be understood by contrasting aesthetic engagement with, on the one hand, propaganda (in which the work is designed to overtake the viewer) and analysis, on the other (in which the viewer imposes his or her own categories on the perceived object or event).

Artistic and cultural forms and processes, therefore, can be crafted to embody the norms of fairness and respect required for reconciliation. Engaging with the arts can nourish, enhance and restore necessary capacities – such as listening, empathizing, embracing paradox and imagining a new future – which are likely to have been impaired by violence and trauma. The perceptual alertness invited by the arts, and the metacognitive awareness they support, can strengthen the integrity of those who participate.

The Fellows responded to Cindy's presentation with a range of theoretical insights and questions as well as examples from their own practice that illustrated and responded to the theory she proposed. Among the points raised are the following:

- Conflict creates fixed and polarized identities. Culture highlights multiple identities.
- The arts may also create space for common identities – as writers, musicians, storytellers, for example.
- Difficulties arise in trying to create a bridge between the small community nourished through arts activities and the larger society.
- Art makes it possible to approach subjects of taboo and fear – in part because symbols operate on many levels simultaneously, and because difficult issues can be addressed indirectly
- Art can create a third space dedicated to building community and imagining a new future by sustaining the dignity of the participants.
- Art can create a space of witnessing, which has the potential to be healing.
- Art can encourage people to face each other in terms of the present, rather than the past.
- Art can claim public space for a public need, a space of mourning or acknowledgement.

**Presentations and Exchanges with the Brandeis Community.** On Wednesday afternoon, the Fellows returned to the Brandeis campus to offer a range of workshops and presentations that engaged members of the Brandeis community and the general public. Stompie Selibe, Lena Slachmijlder and Nicholas Djanie presented a concert for Waltham fifth-graders as part of an on-going series, Music Unites. Bev Hosking and Jenny Hutt offered an introductory workshop in Playback Theatre to students and faculty

from the Theater Department and members of surrounding communities. Iffat Fatima and Lisa Kois showed clips from their film and discussed the challenges of reconciliation in Sri Lanka. Ingrid Muan and Ly Daravuth presented the work of Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture through images and stories. Kim Berman, Stompie Selibe, Lena Slachmujlder and Nicholas Djanie highlighted the links between arts and culture, on the one hand, and development efforts on the other, for a large audience of participants in Brandeis' Sustainable International Development Program. [A complete list of presentations on the Brandeis campus is attached in Appendix Two.](#)

**Reflecting on public presentations.** Thursday began with a session led by Jonathan Fox, in which Fellows and the faculty gave brief verbal 'snapshots' from the very full previous day at Brandeis. Several people appreciated the opportunity to learn more about each other's work and mentioned how impressed they were with each other's accomplishments.

In addition, important themes and questions emerged during this processing of the public that have significance for our inquiry and our work together:

- Sensitivities about presenting cultures not our own, particularly in the context of power differences based on race, gender, class, nationality, etc.
- Sensitivities about the politics implicit in the presentation itself, in terms of the sequence speakers and duration of turns, etc.
- A recognition of the possibility of pursuing links between the Brandeis International Fellows and other groups at the university, especially the South East Asian Club
- Challenges in the transition from the intimate space of our group to public presentations.
  - How can we productively acknowledge the doubts and dilemmas we face in our work with larger audiences?
  - How can we better manage the transition from the safety and intimacy of our small group to events that involve large numbers of people?
  - How can we make effective presentations for audiences that might have little background into the context of our work without either overwhelming them with historical details or minimizing the importance of context?

**Questions and dilemmas that arise in Fellows' work.** Thursday afternoon and much of the day Friday were devoted to sessions in which each team was invited to share with the group questions and dilemmas that arise in their work. The purpose of these sessions was two-fold: first, to provide a supportive space for people to acknowledge difficult issues, to refine their questions, and to benefit from the listening and the thinking of the group; and second, to articulate questions that might be addressed throughout the year as the Fellows engage in deeper reflection and documentation of their work.

Bev Hosking and Jenny Hutt, involved in leading and documenting the Playback Theatre Summer School in New Zealand, raised questions about the relationship between social dialogue, a framework they have used to describe their work, and reconciliation. They also discussed the extent to which the inclusion of Maori cultural forms together with expressive forms in the Summer School's Playback vocabulary might be helping to open



space for deeper sharing and trust-building. In conversation, others raised the question about the relationship between those who become fluent in the language of Playback and the larger society. Can those involved directly in Playback reach beyond themselves? They urged follow-up with participants in the School as a way of evaluating impact, and the possibility of linking with other organizations to join in advocacy efforts.

Kim Berman and Stompie Selibe of the Artist Proof Studio in Johannesburg, South Africa presented dilemmas that are emerging in the aftermath of a fire that burnt down their original studio and tragically killed Nhlanhla, the artist who had founded the studio with Kim. Can the studio sustain its programs while cultivating new black leadership? How can the organization relate to the racialized power dynamics that remain as a legacy of apartheid? What is the relationship between the reconstruction of the new South Africa and the reconstruction of the new Artist Proof Studio? Kim and Stompie presented these questions in the context of a documentary film that had been produced by a Harvard film student. Fellows raised questions about how the medium of the film and the documentation of projects might influence – or even interfere with – the process of recovery. What are the purposes of the film, and have those who were filmed consented to its uses? Questions about the politics and ethics of representation were a thread that ran throughout the sessions on many of the projects and about the work that will emerge from the fellowship program itself.

Ly Daravuth and Ingrid Muan of Reyum, The Institute for Art and Culture in Phnom Penh, Cambodia raised questions about the overwhelming commitment and personal sacrifice involved in sustaining Reyum. It is an institution with far reaching goals that has grown very quickly, now employing 27 people and teaching 140 children in its arts school. They addressed the tensions between their own impulses as artists and educators and the norms of the Cambodian artistic tradition – tensions that make it difficult to turn over responsibilities to local leaders. The group noted similarities between the dilemmas of Reyum and Artist Proof Studio. They discussed tensions that arise because of the enormous personal commitment involved in sustaining such institutions, and the challenges of cultivating new leadership while maintaining the vision that animates their work.

Before continuing with the next team, Jonathan Fox led a Playback Theatre activity to assist the group in taking stock of the thoughts, feelings, insights and questions of its members. He, Bev, and Jenny were joined by Stompie as they created fluid sculptures that embodied statements and questions from the group: Regret. Fear of losing control. Forgiveness. Endurance. Will I have to compromise too much? At least I'm still here.

Lisa Kois and Iffat Fatima discussed questions and dilemmas that have arisen in the production and post-production phases of their documentary film project 'The Road to Peace.' They are in the process of editing eighty hours of footage into a film of about an hour. They raised questions such as: How can we fully honor the trust people have invested in us? Was their telling of their stories helpful or hurtful to them? How can we take care of ourselves in light of the intensity of suffering we are witnessing? How can we work with the artistry of the medium in ways that don't overwhelm our subject? In

response, the group offered the idea that the transformation of a story into another medium, such as film, can help relieve the burden both for victims and for artist. The art form has been created to carry the stories, so to speak, to a meaningful destination. It was also suggested that receiving people's stories can help them make the transition from "victim" to "survivor". The group felt that the ethics of the film might be determined by the possibility of dialogue, rather than an interview, between filmmakers and victims, and the intended purpose of the film. Some admitted, however, that sometimes the creative process requires trusting the ethical commitments inherent within one's aesthetic sensibilities and setting aside ethical worries until the work is complete.

Lena Slachmuislder and Nicholas Djanie arrived with one basic question – how does drumming work to open people's hearts toward each other? – although they left with a few more. The discussion that followed turned to the dangers and ethical concerns invoked when an object (drum), which is connected to the spirit world is used for secular purposes. Displacing the object from its sacred context may help to avoid offending people or accidentally bringing on possession. Another question that emerged was whether it is necessary that the artists, who might come from opposing sides, be reconciled amongst themselves before they can reconcile their audience. Alternatively, Lena and Nicholas suggested, the act of performing together may lay groundwork for reconciliation which could be discussed after the performance. The group suggested that not to reconcile might mean that the performance would do harm, but also considered the possibility that reconciliation could be initiated through means other than talking.

### **Aesthetic Explorations of Reconciliation:**

Along with daily warm-up exercises and group-building activities drawn from theatre, movement, and music methodologies, two occasions during the week were specifically devoted to aesthetic exploration.

- On Monday evening, Lena, Nicholas, and Stompie led the group in drumming. The session was fun and a good release after a long day of talking. It helped us listen to each other and become aware of kinesthetic synergies. (It also raised some interesting questions about cultural representations that were explored later in the week.)
- On Friday, evening, the Fellows, along with members of the Brandeis and Boston area communities, joined in a participatory performance by the Hudson River Playback Theatre on the theme of Dialogue and Reconciliation: Stories of Challenge and Transformation. Throughout the evening, audience members shared stories and watched as their stories were skillfully re-enacted by an ensemble of actors and a musician. In a debriefing session the next day, the Fellows said they had felt some pressure to present themselves and their work both during the Playback performance and at Brandeis the Wednesday before. We discussed the challenges of moving in and out of the more intimate space of our small group. This led to discoveries and reflections about the difficulties in crossing thresholds of intimacy: sharing that happens in one space is not easily translated into another, less intimate, space. This idea is relevant not only to

Playback Theatre but to our broader question of how to take the learning that happens in a small group setting into the larger community. Processing the feelings about these tensions led us to another insight about reconciliation. Part of what makes the reestablishment of trust so difficult is that people of different backgrounds can have very different levels of tolerance for addressing conflicts directly and for expressing emotion publicly. Such differences are likely to make the building of relationships across differences more challenging.

**Guest presenter from the International Center for Transitional Justice.** Artemis Christodoulou from the International Center for Transitional Justice came to the Walker Center on Thursday evening to share her slide presentation on monuments and memorials and their uses in conflict regions around the world. She enlisted the Fellows' feedback and advice on how to improve her presentation. As artists, the Fellows offered suggestions about enhancing the aesthetic impact of the slide presentation. As people with personal and historic ties to some of the violent episodes represented in the slide show, the Fellows suggested ways in which audience members could be invited to engage in conversation during presentations.

**Focusing the inquiry: the contributions of cultural work and the arts to reconciliation.**

In the latter half of the week, there were several exercises, small and large group discussions devoted to refining the inquiry Fellows would engage in during the year between the two institutes. They established a research agenda, and proposed various formats for sharing knowledge with colleagues and the public at large. Jonathan Fox used a matrix to solicit ideas about concepts to be explored, methodological approaches, modes of evaluation, and the media through which learning could be shared. Dan Terris, director of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University joined a discussion to describe about The Center's goal of creating new knowledge in ways otherwise not possible through other academic channels, emphasizing that there is a dearth of published work about the use of the arts to facilitate reconciliation. He suggested that all of the Fellows, and all of their organizations, have rich stories to tell – and that he could imagine a publication emerging from this program that would tell these stories in powerful ways. Other ideas emerged as well, for instance an exhibition and a radio documentary.

On Saturday, Fellows broke into two groups to discuss the book and the exhibition. Those who discussed the possibility of an exhibition expressed the desire to share with each other extensively over the course of the year with the possibility of working across teams, dealing with a set of questions of interest to all. They also considered the possibility of sharing with a wide-ranging group including artists, policy makers, and funding organizations. No consensus on format was reached; rather three of the Fellows agreed to work as a committee to refine plans for an exhibition.

In the book group, the Fellows constructed a general outline for the inquiry they would embark on during the year. They agreed to document certain moments when they felt their work was “working; and also noted that it would be important to document when

and how their practice falls short of their hopes and expectations. Everyone agreed, that it would be important to include in the book an example from the U.S. where the arts are being used to help people understand their relationships to each other and to the histories of violence and discrimination.

An outline of the inquiry emerging from the institute can be found in Appendix Three.

**Points of Departure:**

The final morning of the institute was spent finalizing plans, expressing appreciation for each other, and briefly sharing what they had learned. Here are a few excerpts of what they shared:

- *Reaching inside is as important as reaching outside. It was useful to me to find a frame to hold the different concepts of reconciliation.*
- *Self healing and self reconciliation play an integral part in the larger processes of reconciliation.*
- *I see reconciliation as a question. I have been resistant to the term, but I think my understanding has gone up. It can include looking at issues of power.*
- *[Confronting differences here in the group] I found I had to be true to myself. So that gave me a lot of courage about how to begin to interact with people back home.*
- *One of the wonderful things about this week was to have shared it with my partner and have had the same input into our heads at the same time and so we can be thinking in the same conversation in the same space and time.*
- *In terms of listening to people's problems...Sometimes I couldn't stand it... I had to transform into something, by not listening to the full story, but now I feel something that is holding me. If someone is saying something, you have to stand firmly to listen to the person and not to interrupt and transform into something happy.*
- *Being in a group of people from different parts of the world – it feels like I have traveled to all those parts of the world, so I've learned a lot of different ways to tackle reconciliation. Being in Israel, being in Cambodia: I don't have that in my passport, but I have it in my heart.*
- *There can be a tension and balance between given and imagined identities*

- *I noticed and learned from my response to the different art forms and what each one opens up. In the spaces between them, some big space has opened up in terms of what is possible.*
- *A third space—a space for reflection and dialogue – is very important. I should think about boxing up a third space to take home to my real life.*
- *I feel I have to rethink all of my work in terms of reconciliation. Looking at processes through the lens of reconciliation lifts me.*

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Topics for discussion pertaining to the meaning of reconciliation**

- the role of the past
- how to involve all the actors
- with whom to start
- conditions for starting the process of telling
- what kind of structures can implement and sustain reconciliation
- what is the relationship between official and grassroots processes
- traditional sources
- how to win support from the private sector
- reconciliation as prevention
- how can reconciliation be co-opted
- imagination – how to (re) build imaginative and hopeful capacities
- can you sponsor reconciliation (what gets lost)
- can there be a universal reconciliation?
- balance of individual and social responsibility (for state actions)
- what are the required capacities and how to develop them?

## APPENDIX TWO

### Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts: Activities on the Brandeis Campus November 12, 2003

- **LUNCHTIME MEETINGS**

**Brandeis Adult Learning Initiative**

**12:00pm, Gosman Center, Napoli Room**

Fellows: Jenny Hutt, Ly Daravuth

**Justice Brandeis Scholars**

**12:00pm, Faculty Club, President's Dining Room**

Fellows: Bev Hosking, Ingrid Muan

- **MUSIC UNITES: TEACHING ABOUT CULTURE AND HISTORY  
THROUGH MUSIC**

**1:00pm, Slosberg Recital Hall**

**Co-sponsored by Music Department**

Fellows: Lena Slachmuislder, Nicholas Djanie, Stompie Selibe

*Music Unites*, a pilot program creating a partnership between Brandeis University and the Waltham Public Schools, featured a performance by Nicholas, Stompie, and Lena, who taught about their lives and work through playing and discussion of their music. 100 fifth graders from two Waltham elementary schools participated in this interactive program.

- **WOMEN IN CULTURE AND SOCIETY (WMNS 5A)**

**2:10pm, Lown 201**

Fellows: Kim Berman, Iffat Fatima, Lisa Kois

This class explores women's experiences in the United States and other societies, focusing on the diversity of women's lives. Basic social science assumptions and new feminist perspectives are used to examine a broad range of topics, fields, and issues. Fellows participated in a class discussion and related personal stories about how they got involved in the work they do, the condition of women in their societies, the kinds of social change they are hoping to promote, and whether and/or how they see themselves as activists.

- **REAL LIFE STORIES: AN INTRODUCTION TO PLAYBACK THEATRE**

**3:30pm, Alumni Lounge**

**Open to Public**

**Co-sponsored by Theater Department**

Fellows: Bev Hosking, Jenny Hutt

This was a participatory workshop introducing Playback Theatre's approach to re-enacting the essence of stories, and describing the work being done to train Playback Theatre practitioners in New Zealand, Fiji, and India that has relevance to reconciliation processes.

- **ART, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND RECONCILIATION IN AFRICA**  
**5:30pm, Alumni Lounge**  
**Co-sponsored by the Program in Sustainable International Development**  
Fellows: Kim Berman, Stompie Selibe, Lena Slchmujlder, Nicholas Djanie

Kim and Stompie discussed their work in community outreach and development programs that use art processes as a medium for engaging social change in South Africa. Nicholas and Lena spoke about how they have used African drumming, music and song to promote reconciliation in divided communities in Rwanda and Burundi.

- **RECONCILIATION IN SRI LANKA: OUR PERSONAL JOURNEYS**  
**7:00pm, Pollack Auditorium**  
**Open to Public**  
**Co-sponsored by International Club**  
Fellows: Lisa Kois, Iffat Fatima

Lisa and Iffat reflected on their personal experiences leading to and in creating "The Road to Peace," a film documenting how Tamil and Sinhalese communities are working through the legacy of the civil war through stories, visual art and ritual. A short portion of their rough cut was screened.

- **LEGACY OF ABSENCE: A CAMBODIAN STORY**  
**8:00pm, Pollack Auditorium**  
**Open to Public**  
**Co-sponsored by South East Asia Club**  
Fellows: Ingrid Muan, Ly Daravuth

Ingrid and Daravuth presented images and discussed their work at *Reyum*, the Institute of Arts and Culture in Phnom Penh. Through exhibitions, events, classes, and research, *Reyum* seeks to engage the community in addressing the legacy of the Khmer Rouge period, and create spaces for community reflection, conversation, and education.

- **PARADISE ON A RIVER OF HELL**  
**8:00pm, Village Commons**  
**Co-sponsored by the Indian/Pakistani Dialogue Group**  
Fellow: Iffat Fatima



Screening of the documentary film about violence in Kashmir during the 1990s, "Paradise on a River of Hell." Iffat engaged the group in a dialogue around Kashmir and the film's treatment of the subject.

## APPENDIX THREE

### Articulation of inquiry to guide Fellows' research and writing during the year, refined from institute draft:

#### Overarching question:

How can cultural work and the arts be crafted to contribute to reconciliation?

#### Sub-questions:

How can cultural work and the arts be crafted to contribute to - The rebuilding of relationships?

- 1) The understanding of self and other, including both differences and commonalities?
- 2) Nourishing and enhancing the capacities required for reconciliation, including:
  - Listening
  - Telling important stories, such as individual of violence and inhumanity and collective narratives that define identity
  - Imagining a different future?
- 3) Recovery from trauma, including restoring capacities such as:
  - Listening
  - Telling individual and collective stories
  - Trusting?
- 4) The education and transformation of society at large?
  - Can learning generated in small groups be effectively and ethically extended to larger audiences? If so, how?

#### Themes:

Within these questions, we might consider the following themes, among others that emerge in our inquiry:

- \_ Relationship of personal/private imagination and public display
- \_ Sharing and healing; showing and healing
- \_ Healing of oneself and others
- \_ How to address the past and the sharing of stories
- \_ Directness and indirectness
- \_ The unspoken and unexpressed
- \_ Process and product
- \_ Intention and discovery/serendipity
- \_ Ethical dimensions of our work
- \_ Respect for the sacred
- \_ Leadership and dynamics within the organization
- \_ Balancing caring for ourselves and investing in others

- \_ Possibilities and constraints of insider/outsider roles
- \_ Relationship to context, including
- \_ Cultural, political and social aspects of the environment
- \_ The degree and kind of “alienation”/violence
- \_ The timing of our processes in relation to when violence occurred

(Note: this list can be expanded and refined as we review the notes from our sessions together.)

### **Forms:**

We will consider these questions in relation to a number of forms, including

- \_ Playback Theatre
- \_ Visual art
- \_ Film-making and documentary
- \_ Rituals and collective expressions
- \_ Writing
- \_ Other art forms

### **Aspects of the art-making process:**

We will consider these questions across various aspects of the art-making process, including

- \_ Art-making
- \_ Audience participation
- \_ Production
- \_ Organization
- \_ Public face

### **Planning to share our learning with others:**

#### **a. Book**

The book will consist of an introduction written by Cindy, and chapters on work being done by each of the BIF teams. One or both members of the team will write each chapter and with Cindy's support as needed.

Chapters will likely include the following elements:

1. Context: Social, political and cultural. This section might include reflections on questions of timing (i.e. how immediate or how far removed in time was the breach or alienation that we are addressing).
2. Description of how artistic forms and processes and cultural work actually work (and not work) to nourish capacities, facilitate learning, contribute to reconciliation. Each of us, and each of our projects and organizations, has a compelling story to tell. This section is where we can tell these stories. It will probably include specific examples of activities, projects, programs, moments. It can be crafted around portraits of individuals who have been involved in such activities.
3. Challenges, obstacles, shortcomings

4. Ethical questions and dilemmas
5. Perceived impact
6. Possibilities and perspectives; additional questions.

#### **b. Portfolio**

In preparation for writing and for sharing their learning in October. These portfolios will be shared with ourselves and with the BIF group. The portfolios will include both entries and reflections upon them. The entries will consist of elements such as

- \_ Photos
- \_ Cassettes/videos
- \_ Flyers
- \_ Journal excerpts
- \_ Visual art (slides, prints)
- \_ Reports or publications
- \_ Articles
- \_ Newspaper clippings
- \_ Interviews

\_ Other items. At the discretion of the producers of the portfolios, elements could be incorporated into the various forms through which we plan to sharing our learning with larger audiences and the public: a book, the colloquium, possibly an exhibit, possibly a cd-rom

We anticipate that portfolios will consist of 8 – 24 entries. Elements of the portfolios might be shared among us between now and next October, but the portfolios as a whole will be shared among us when we meet next October. If the group feels inclined, elements of the portfolio may also be adapted for an exhibition to be made a component of the October 2004 institute.

#### **c. Exhibit**

This remains a possibility, but details have not been decided. Rather, fellows will decide closer to the date, depending on how their portfolios are taking shape, whether or not they will want to share them publicly.

#### **d. Public event**

The Fellows agreed upon a workshop or colloquium to take place during the October 2004 institute. Details for this colloquium will be proposed by a committee consisting of Bev, Ingrid, and Lisa, along with one or more members of the Brandeis team. We envision a series of conversations with peer practitioners from the Boston area, focusing around the key questions and sub-questions of our inquiry. In addition, the event might include workshops, performances, presentations by speakers, etc.