ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY IS A GROUP OF ARTISTS COMMITTED TO PREVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, SAVING LIVES AND PROMOTING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

MONTHLY BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2004

Welcome to the *Artists for Amnesty Monthly Bulletin*, which will keep you informed on critical human rights issues, cases of individuals at risk, and the life-saving work of Amnesty International. Our Monthly Bulletin will also highlight the efforts of artists on behalf of human rights.

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Kenyan environmental activist **WANGARI MAATHAI** has made history as the first African women to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in its 103-year history. The prize also sets a precedent in its recognition of the role of a healthy environment in global peace and human rights. Born in 1940 in Nyeri, central Kenya, Maathai became the first woman in East or Central Africa to earn a doctorate degree in Biological Science from America. Her path to the Nobel Peace Prize began in 1977, when as the head of the nation's Council for Women, she witnessed the destruction of Kenyan forests, committed with the full knowledge and cooperation of the government. Maathai has campaigned ever since for re-forestation in Africa, resulting in the planting of over 30 million trees. Maathai was beaten by private security guards as police looked on for planting trees on public land illegally sold to private interests that same year. In 1992, Maathai was placed under virtual house arrest when police surrounded her home. Amnesty International has pressured the Kenyan government to stop harassing non-violent environmental activists, like Maathai. On the relationship between the environment and peace and human rights, Maathai has said, "The environment is very important in the aspects of peace because when we destroy our resources and our resources become scarce, we fight over them." This simple logic will do much to preserve forest habitats and peace for future generations.

Wangari Maathai at the village of Miricu. © Sokoni Project (John W. Ahlhauser)

MISSION TO DARFUR

An Amnesty International delegation, which included AI Secretary Irene Kahn and Amnesty International USA Executive Director William Schultz, visited Darfur, Western Sudan from September 14-21, 2004, to gather information, assess the human rights aspects of the crisis and press the Government of Sudan to take action. The visit confirmed Amnesty International's earlier analysis of attacks on villages by government-supported militia, in some cases backed by the Sudanese armed forces, killing civilians, looting and burning homes. The trip included a visit with the displaced people from nomadic tribes who are now in the Musai camp near Nyala, where the delgates heard accounts of killings and rapes said to have been committed by the insurgents. AI condemns strongly all violations of international humanitarian law committed by armed political groups.

Bill Schulz interviews refugees in Kalma Refugee Camp. © Evelyn Hockstein/ Polaris

Sudan has been embroiled in a vicious civil war between the central government in the North and the rebels in the South fighting for political and economic autonomy, since the country's liberation from British control in 1956. With the introduction of Sharia law in 1983, and the creation of a military government in 1989, the conflict took on religious and ethnic dimensions as the central government sought to reshape social institutions in line with Islam. As the power sharing deal between the government and the Sudan's People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in May 26, 2004 has done much to resolve the larger conflict, the related atrocities in Darfur have been ignored by policy makers eager for an effective peace agreement.

JANE BIRKIN

With her gamine good looks and beguiling demeanor, **JANE BIRKIN** took London and Paris by storm in the 60s and 70s, both as an actress and as the muse to legendary French singer-songwriter Serge Gainsbourg. In a tribute to Gainsbourg, Birkin and Algeria's outstanding group Djam & Fam reinvent his songs in the dazzling context of North African folk music, mixing Moroccan rhythms, soulful Middle Eastern harmonies and elegantly sensual vocals.

Photographs | Gabrielle Crawford

On November 18, at Royce Hall, Jane Birkin will be performing a live concert and donating a portion of the proceeds to Amnesty International. For tickets please call UCLA Live: 310.825.2101 or visit: www.uclalive.org.

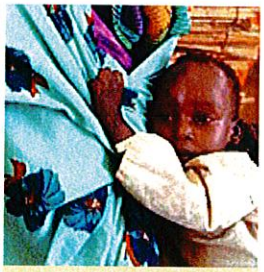
ON THE FRONTLINES

Artists for Amnesty would like to thank **MIRA SORVINO** and **HARVEY KEITEL** for spearheading our letter to President al-Bashir of Sudan, addressing the human rights crisis in Darfur, Sudan. Our thanks also goes out to all of you who took part in this special action to end human rights abuses in Darfur.

LILI HAYDN joins **U2, PAUL McCARTNEY, COLD PLAY, STING, PETER GABRIEL, MATCHBOX 20,** among others on a new compilation record benefiting the human rights movement in Burma and Nobel Peace Prize laureate **AUNG SAN SUU KYI**. Lili performed at the Viper Room on November 9, to celebrate the release of this new compilation, which has been banned in Burma. To learn more about Lili and her music, visit: www.lilihaydn.com

GET UP, STAND UP

DARFUR



Malnourished child hugs his mother at Mornay Camp, Western Darfur, Sudan. © AFP

Satellite images of the area between al-Jeneina and Zalingei in Western Darfur, commissioned by Amnesty International, indicate that 44 percent of the villages and settlements have been burnt. Most of the other villages have been abandoned. These satellite images of destroyed villages vividly illustrate the pattern of attacks, including burning, killing, looting and raping that extends throughout Darfur and has caused the crisis of forced displacement in the region. Amnesty International has also interviewed refugees in camps in Chad and found that many of the human rights violations in Darfur have been targeted specifically against women and girls. These violations have included abductions, sexual slavery, torture, and forced displacement.

Displaced people continue to live under the control of the very people who have caused their predicament. Janjawid militiamen continue to attack people outside the IDP camps and harass people inside. One displaced person who reached Khartoum after three months in Mukjar camp said, "It is not a camp but a prison." There have been numerous reports of men venturing outside the camps being killed and women and girls raped. In Mornay camp in March 2004, a shaikh told the UN that 16 women a day may be raped as they went to gather water in the riverbed. Rapes and other forms of violence also occur within the IDP camps.

Within the camps the humanitarian conditions are precarious. There is still not enough food in Darfur to last throughout the rainy season, which will cut off much of the region, especially Western Darfur. A resident of West Darfur told Amnesty International "The food is reaching hundreds but there are thousands who need food and receive nothing."

Please write to President al-Bashir, urging him to immediately:

- Disarm and disband the Janjawid militia;
- Suspend any member of the Sudanese armed forces suspected of having committed or ordered human rights violations, pending investigation;
- Prevent any member or former member of the Janjawid militia from joining police, military, or security forces and prevent any member or former member of the Janjawid militia from operating inside or on the peripheries of displaced persons camps;
- Provide full and unimpeded access to humanitarian agencies and human rights monitors to all areas and groups in Darfur; and
- Guarantee that displaced persons will not be forced back to any place where their lives, health, or safety would be at risk.

Send your letters to:

President Omar Hassan al-Bashir c/o Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Sudan to the United Nations
305 East 47th Street, FL-4
New York, NY 10017-2320

Telephone: (212) 573-6033
Fax: (212) 573-6160

AFTER ABU GHRAIB

Six months after photographs taken of prisoners facing torture in Abu Ghraib prison were publicized, Amnesty International in a 200-page report released on October 27, 2004, **HUMAN DIGNITY DENIED: Torture and Accountability in the 'War on Terror'**, has found that conditions for torture persist in U.S. policy

The report documents the pattern of human rights violations that run from Afghanistan to Abu Ghraib to Guantánamo Bay and extend to "secret" overseas detention facilities. It outlines how, despite the administration's claims that the atrocities of September 11, 2001, ushered in a "new paradigm" requiring "new thinking," the US has fallen into a historically familiar pattern of violating human rights in the name of national security. For example, Secretary of Defense **DONALD RUMSFELD** authorized stripping, isolation, hooding, stress positions, sensory deprivation, and the use of dogs in interrogations, as well as in effect authorizing a "disappearance" by ordering military officials in Iraq to keep a detainee off any prison register. In international human rights terms, his conduct, and that of the administration as a whole, has been far from exemplary. Indeed, he and the administration have authorized human rights violations. Despite this, to date no senior US official has been held accountable.

There has been a marked reluctance among members of the Bush Administration -- whose previously secret documents discussed how to narrow the definition of torture -- to call what happened in Abu Ghraib torture, preferring the term "abuse."

For copies of the report, please visit: www.amnestyusa.org.

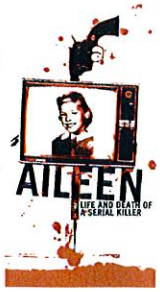
INNOCENT VOICES

Based on the true story of screenwriter **OSCAR TORRES'** embattled childhood, **LUIS MANDOKI's** ***INNOCENT VOICES*** is the poignant tale of Chava (played by **CARLOS PADILLA**); an eleven-year-old boy who suddenly becomes the "man of the house" after his father abandons the family in the middle of El Salvador's 12-year civil war during the 1980s. Throughout the war, government forces and insurgents routinely forcibly recruited children as young as twelve into their ranks. Today, there are over 300,000 child soldiers in over 40 countries.

Artists for Amnesty is hosting a special advance screening of the film on November 18. This will be an invitation only event.

AILEEN

On Monday, November 15, **HBO** will premiere the award-winning documentary ***AILEEN: LIFE AND DEATH OF A SERIAL KILLER*** directed by **NICK BROOMFIELD** and **JOAN CHURCHILL**. The documentary looks at the final days of Aileen Wuornos, who was executed for murder. **CHARLIZE THERON** won the Academy Award® for Best Actress for her role as Aileen in the feature film ***MONSTER***. *AILEEN* reveals the extreme hardships Aileen faced throughout her life, and asks serious questions about the use of the death penalty.



AFA Bulletin edited by Bonnie Abaunza, Jamie Skaluba, and Mario Tafur.

JOIN ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

Artists for Amnesty
2999 Overland Ave., Ste. 111
Los Angeles, CA 90064
p 310.815.0450 f 310.815.0457 e afa@aiusa.org
w www.amnestyusa.org/artistsforamnesty