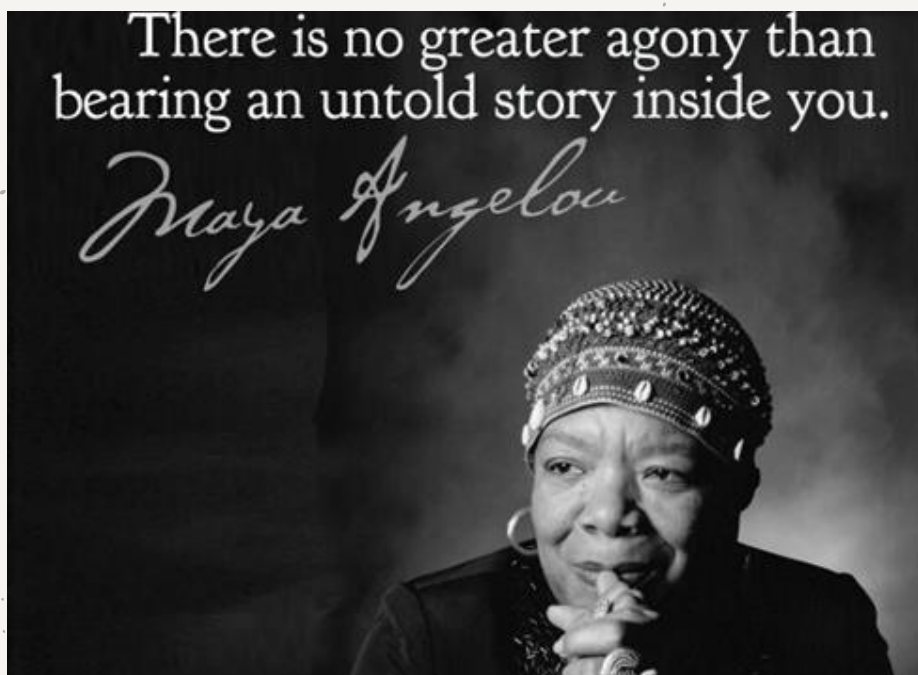


THE DRUUMM BEAT

SEPTEMBER 2018



IN THIS ISSUE

Muralist F. Michelle Santos

DRUUMM in Texas
October 19-21

GA in Kansas City

3 Questions for Melvin Hoover

AN INVITATION FOR YOU

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you”

Maya Angelou shared these words years ago, and they've always stayed with me. We live in world where stories of people on the margins are told more and more, and I have been personally grateful for the wisdom and insights I've gained from reading. Yet we also face a time where journalism is under attack, where news is questioned or worse, suppressed.

DRUUMM is proud to be revitalizing our newsletter. Our aim is to publish monthly as a PDF that will be shared electronically. We invite submissions via email by the 1st day of each month. Whether it is an untold story, art or another form of visual or written material, please consider sharing with us at editor@druumm.org.

Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons, Editor



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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Many of you may be wondering who are the UU's of Color and where are the UU's of Color. We want you to know that you are not paranoid. Indeed there are very few UU's of Color in the USA and Canada where DRUUMM centers our ministry. In brief, the best estimates are there are less than 2% UU's of Color, or around 4,000 across our 1,000 congregations. We are one of the few faiths that does not conduct demographic surveys on matters of racial/ethnic identity, and more information is needed.



MURALIST F. MICHELLE SANTOS

Michelle Santos is an artist and educator in the DC/Baltimore area. She led DRUUMM's children's programs at our annual conference at Murray Grove in the 2000's. Michelle has a passion for co-created public murals.

"My recent body of work exemplifies this evolution and my search for the Divine in my Self, as Creator and Created, as Human, as Woman, as a Woman of Color, as Mother, as Child, as Spiritual Being. For this particular body of work,

I worked in acrylic medium on large canvases, with myself as the model.

The physical manifestation of my art has evolved from sculptures and assemblages, to drawings and paintings. Currently, using my own form as figure, my work explores the Divine in the Self and the body as sacred, boundless, cyclic and connected. Body, housing mind and spirit, encompasses fertility, strength, power, healing, wisdom, beauty, freedom and transformation."

Learn more about Michelle's work at <http://fmichellesantos.com/>



GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN KANSAS CITY



This year's annual meeting of Unitarian Universalism met in the Midwest for five days of worship, workshops and delegate voting on association business. With over 3,000 in attendance, "GA" is one of the best opportunities to connect with other UU's of Color. DRUUMM has been organizing programs at GA for over 20 years that build community and advocate with our UU brethren to realize the world we dream of. Over 100 UU's of Color signed in at the DRUUMM welcome booth this year, and there were probably double that number in attendance. In addition to DRUUMM workshops on our "Global Majorities" project, and affiliated small group meetings, the DRUUMM Annual Meeting was held to elect new officers and provide a report on the activities of the organization. There was a nice moment recognizing elder and founding DRUUMM President Robette Dias,

who was accompanying Rev Danielle DiBona as she received the UUA's Distinguished Service Award.

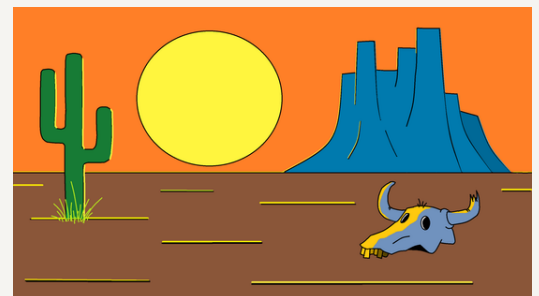
A remarkable number of UU's of Color are first-timers at GA, and are introduced to DRUUMM and related culturally-specific programs through the event. Many hands went up at the DRUUMM annual meeting and in youth & young adult spaces as facilitators inquired about newcomers. Connections, chance encounters and intentional relationships are nurtured through collaborative worship, hallway conversations and participating in the dozens of daily workshop sessions.

DRUUMM's activities are all-volunteer organized (as we are currently an all-volunteer organization). Special thanks to everyone who contributed. GA 2019 will be in Spokane Washington, June 19-23, 2019.

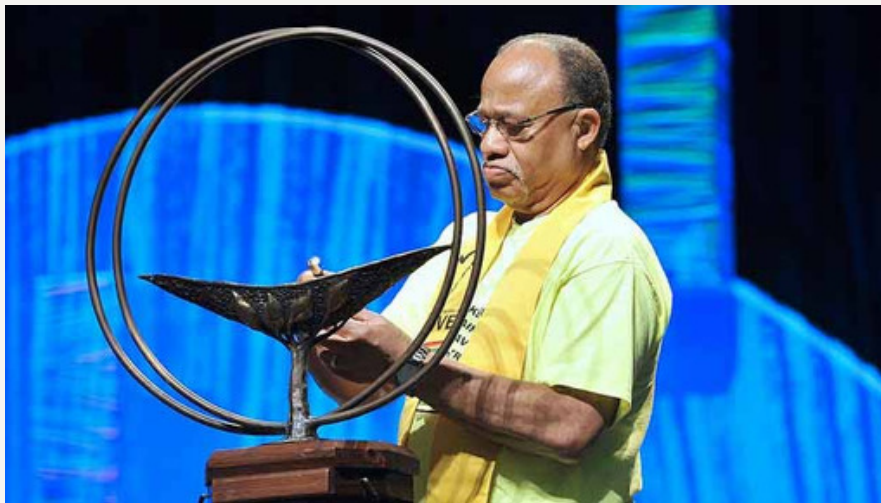


DRUUMM GATHERING OCT 19-21 IN TEXAS

DRUUMM's Annual Gathering, a meeting of UU's of Color from across North America, will be held at the First UU Church of San Antonio the weekend of Friday October 19th through Sunday October 21st. The weekend is a powerful opportunity to connect with new UU's and reconnect with old friends along our faith journey. Visit www.druumm.org for registration information and costs, or contact Rev. Marisol Caballero maricaballero79@gmail.com.



3 QUESTIONS FOR REV. MELVIN HOOVER



For over two decades, Rev. Mel Hoover served the UUA completing his work there as Director of Faith in Action. He then served as Co-Minister of the UU Congregation of Charleston West Virginia with his wife Rev. Rose Edington for eleven years. While at the UUA, he coordinated support, strategy and resources for the Journey Towards Wholeness (the UUA's response to the anti-racism/anti-oppression resolution) and advised on the formation of DRUUMM in the 1990s. DRUUMM honored him with the first Mel Hoover Beloved Community Award, an annual recognition to a UU of Color who has contributed significantly to the fellowship and empowerment of UU's of Color.

What role did you have with DRUUMM?

I worked alongside other religious professionals and UUA staff to catalyze DRUUMM in the 1990s. We organized at a moment in time when POC hadn't been well organized, or had been predominately African American, and there was a clear and deep for broader solidarity and community. More and more POC showed up at GA and were on the path to ministry; yet were struggling to thrive in a White denomination. I was tasked with providing support, in my role as Director of the UUA Faith in Action Department, and this led to the evolution and merger of professional associations for UU's of Color into DRUUMM.

Why is DRUUMM's mission important in this current political moment?

When you understand institutional change, and how systems of oppression operate, you have to have the wisdom and leadership from communities that are directly affected. To address racism we needed to unify People of Color, and we were clear we needed to build power to effectively nudge and push the UUA to achieve the Journey Towards Wholeness vision and call. DRUUMM was and is critical to surfacing key issues and solutions for over 20 years, and ultimately reshaping our Unitarian Universalist identity, values and UUA policy.

What inspires you about DRUUMM today?

DRUUMM has demonstrated a real commitment to developing leadership, preparing leaders to be in UUA and congregational roles. Leaders who bring a more inclusive and intersectional understanding. The faith is not yet where it needs to be and DRUUMM helps us all live up to who we say we wish to be.