



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Membership Renewal**
Time is **NOW!**
- **Member Perks & Opportunities**
- **Spring Cleaning Tips for Artistic Types**

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Black Expressions

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President's Column *SPRING CLEANING*



The season for me starts on the day after the Academy Awards. Just after the Oscars are handed out I take a look around my apartment and behold a depressing mess. Clutter abounds, squared.

A cosmic blanket of outtake pages from the novel-in-progress and printed out e-mails smother a jagged range of books, magazines, bills (all paid) and Xmas cards atop every available flat surface in the cramped abode. A coat of dust reigns supreme over all.

I dig into the pile to unearth a framed photo clipped out of the L.A. Times decades ago of a newly assembled Oscar statuette. Inspiration for the future March evening when the real thing will join my eternal junk pile. The photo rests cheek to jowl with my screenwriting award from the AFI Alumni Association, strewn amidst a swirl of paper clips, rubber bands and fast food receipts. Why am I keeping a receipt as proof of a dinner of a turkey tostada and large Sprite from October 2005? *Extra salsa verde, por favor.* Do I intend someday to return the long digested meal to the taco joint around the corner? Not likely. The truth is I am simply too lazy to throw it away.

Well, on this day all that changes. The laziness, I mean. It's time to get busy and clean

up this place once and for all. I start by making a trash heap in the center of the floor and it doesn't take long before the mountain of refuse has taken on a life of its own. I try not to examine what I am about to toss because it'll only slow me down. Old newspaper articles and unfinished scripts must go on the pile with a quickness. What I don't know about Tyler Perry and Madea will have to wait until my next trip to the barbershop. But then that old award-winning funeral home comedy I wrote set in New Orleans just might have a new life in a post-Katrina market. Then, darn it! I relax with that brainstorm and before you know it I'm sitting on the floor burying my head in something I wrote back in 1989. *Small matter*, I tell myself. Someday I'll hire a professional to get this place ship shape. Just like I imagine my role models Walter Mosley and Terry McMillan do in managing their domestic situations. Come on, now. Do you really think they clean their own houses?

Okay. I write this as a do-as-I-say not as-I do piece. It's time to get our houses in order in a figurative sense. And in a literal sense as well. Admittedly though, I clean my house simply to keep *from* writing. It's a wonderful excuse with the principle of the Chinese art of Feng Shui as justification. "I had to stop writing and mind my *chi* before completing that novel," I could alibi. Nine solid years of *chi* maintenance. But you wouldn't go for that, right?

--Wayne French



IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION!



See application on page 3. For your convenience, a return envelope has been provided.

IBWALA

PO Box 43576

Los Angeles, CA 90043

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION /
RENEWAL FORM ENCLOSED

News, Events & Announcements

The Octavia E. Butler Memorial Scholarship Fund will allow a minority writer to attend one of the Clarion writers workshops where Butler got her start. Three publishers, Warner Books, Seven Stories Press and Beacon Press, along with the Science Fiction Hall of Fame and Museum have joined forces to establish the fund to be administered by the Carl Brandon Society. The first scholarship will be awarded in 2007. The critically acclaimed author died in February.

Rhythm of the Drum: Our Wholistic Magazine is seeking articles that deal with our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, as well as our political, cultural and financial health. Submit to thedrum@inreach.com. Articles can be 500 to 1000 words. Contact Jacquetta for more info through e-mail or at 323-777-3300. Currently unpaid opportunity, but possible on further development of the publication.

Open studio for IBWALA board member Zeal Harris and all other Otis Art Institute MFA candidates will be held on the **afternoon of Sunday, April 9th from 2 - 5 pm**. Zeal's pieces may be purchased in her studio priced from \$200 - \$500. Open Studios at Otis Graduate Studios APRIL 9: **1550 E. Franklin Blvd, El Segundo, CA 90245**

The Invisible Universe Foundation is producing a web magazine and seeking contributors. If you are interested in reviewing SF books, televi-

sion, films, comics and/or video games this is the place to be! They are also seeking media artists and web designers to maintain their upcoming website. The Foundation is dedicated to researching and promoting the history of African Americans in speculative fiction (SF) literature, cinema and related forms through the activities of archiving, publishing and producing media materials and presenting cultural events. Persons interested in any of these positions should contact them at: info@invisibleuniverse.com.

Chasing Destiny, Eric Jerome Dickey's new book, goes on sale Tuesday, Apr. 11. Make your



date with EJD, whose Spring 2006 Tour has begun! Catch **Dickey in DC, April 17** at Borders (noon) or on the home turf in LA at **Zahra's or Eso Won, Apr. 28 and May 2** respectively, at 7 pm. **Dickey**, originally from Memphis, Tenn., is the national best-selling author of *Naughty or Nice*, *The Other Woman*, *Thieves' Paradise*, *Between Lovers*,

Liar's Game, *Cheaters*, *Milk in My Coffee*, *Friends and Lovers*, and *Sister Sister*, as well as a contributor to *Got to Be Real* and *NAL's Mothers & Sons*. He was first published in the IBWALA anthology, *River Crossings, Voices of the Diaspora*. His latest projects include work on a comic book series, horror/fantasy, stage plays, and screenplays. He worked as a computer programmer, a middle school teacher, actor, and stand up comic before becoming a full-time novelist.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CYNTHIA BERRY

TERESA BILLINGSLEY

CALVIN BIRDSONG

ROLAND J. DAVIDSON

WILLIA JOHNSON

KATHLEEN SHAW

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FOR OTHER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS BY

LOGGING ONTO OUR WEB SITE FOR CURRENT INFORMATION

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