A Ripple in the Water

Narrated by
Charlayne Hunter-Gault

Produced by
Eileen M. Foti and Patricia Piroh

Funded in part by a generous grant from the NJ Council for the Humanities and from Johnson & Johnson Corporation

Photos left to right: Charlayne Hunter-Gault; Kim Berman, *Fire in Lowveld*, 2004; self-portrait of Floyd, a student at APS; women stripping fiber from the Winterveld Project; embroideries at the Chivirika Project; Members beating sisal at the Cloe Project; APS launch performance; Kim Berman at the Winterveld Project.
Art practices are now being used to address the current issues of poverty, illiteracy and the AIDS crisis in many provinces throughout South Africa. There has been positive social change through the programs set up by one woman: Kim Berman. Her creation of both the Artist Proof Studio in Johannesburg and the poverty relief papermaking/embroidery projects are particularly important because in South Africa, as well as in this country, art is often seen as expendable, as one of the first things to go when budgets are cut. Yet through the use of art, we find a unique and surprising way to help people. We have traveled to South Africa and have interviewed Kim and the art/AIDS awareness trainers that she has put in place, along with many of the women from impoverished communities who have been directly affected by her initiatives. Through their words and their faces, we see the true impact of what Kim has done and of what art has done for them. We will see how art contributes more to our world than ever imagined before; that besides the traditional view of art simply enriching our lives, we will find how there are also humanitarian uses, extraordinary social and economic advantages, and cross-cultural communication benefits as well.

“I think what we were faced with was not teaching art making, it was teaching life skills, it was teaching leadership, it was teaching how to be a professional.”

--Kim Berman

Above: South African artist/activist Kim Berman visiting the Tswaraganang project in Winterveld. Left: Project members from Kopanang working on embroidery.
The importance of this documentary is twofold. First, it is critical for people to understand that like Kim Berman, one person can do something and can make a difference in the face of such a large problem. Second, through the use of something unlikely as art, we find we are able to “treat” the human being who is experiencing the reality of living with AIDS. A single person may not be able to solve the problem of AIDS—that is for teams of doctors and researchers to do—but a person can help to ease the pain, help to give self-respect back and help many of the afflicted learn to help themselves.

“I don’t know how some of them find the strength to get up in the morning,” Sister Sheila Flynn, Director of the Kopanang Project about 30 miles outside of Johannesburg has said. These women are dealing with family members and community members dying on a daily basis. They are burying children on a daily basis. They don’t have enough money to pay for the basics in life, to provide for their sick children. Yet they find a way to get up in the morning. They do because programs like the Kopanang Project, inspired by Kim Berman, give them a reason to get up, give them an outlet for expression, an opportunity to support themselves, and give them a reason to hope. Most importantly, these programs are designed to be self-sustaining projects that will continue to help the communities once Kim’s efforts are established.

"Artists should not be excused from life because they are busy with lofty ideas and making beautiful things. I believe that artists have a role to play. They can make a difference." --Kim Berman

South African artist and activist Kim Berman
Eileen M. Foti is an Assistant Professor at Montclair State University. She was the Master Printer and Print Studio Manager of the Rutgers Center For Innovative Print and Paper in NJ from 1989 to 2004. She was the Interim Education Director at Tamarind Institute from 1998-99. She has exhibited and lectured throughout the United States, as well as abroad, and her work is included in many collections such as the Museum of Fine Art in Croatia, Moussem Assilah in Morocco, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and The Jersey City Museum. She has received fellowships from the NJ State Council on the Arts and the MidAtlantic Arts Foundation, and has had artist residencies in countries such as Morocco, South Africa, Botswana, Thailand, Croatia, Russia and throughout the Caribbean. She has been the professional consultant to Crow’s Shadow Institute on the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon, and she is on the Board of Directors at the Printmaking Council of NJ.

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Eileen Foti ~ Co-Producer

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Foti is on the Board of Advisors for the Artist Proof Studio in Johannesburg, and has worked closely with its founder, Kim Berman, to facilitate training programs for young artist/printers since 1997. She has made yearly trips there to teach, collaborate, and run educational workshops for both young emerging and professional artists throughout the community.

Patricia Piroh ~ Co-Producer

Piroh is a producer for the Department of Broadcasting at Montclair State University. For twelve years she has been the series producer for Carpe Diem, an award-winning magazine format program that airs throughout New Jersey, producing over 350 half hour programs. In addition, she has produced, among others, Conversations With Olympia Dukakis, Dance Across the Dateline, a program that chronicled a dance troupe’s performances in Australia, Beyond 911: The Unresponsive Infant, an educational video about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Reaching Out to the Future: American Women in Radio and Television, a video about the New York city chapter of the national organization. She is also the coordinating producer for The O’Toole Report, a series on cable that features political leaders in NJ. Her production credits range from news to sports to daytime drama and include the 2004 election coverage and Republican National Convention for NBC News, the 1998 XVIII Winter Olympic Games for CBS Sports and the New York City Marathons 1987-1991 with ABC Sports. Piroh has an MA in Communication Arts and also has 12 years of teaching experience.

Her work has been recognized by the U.S. International Film and Video Festival, Telly Awards, IABC Gold Quill Awards, CAPE Award for Best Educational Series, and APEX Grand Award of Excellence.
The Production Team, continued

Larry Londino ~ Director

Larry Londino has maintained an active professional life as writer, producer, director and editor of film, television and radio projects since his undergraduate days at Seton Hall University. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and is currently chairman of the Department of Broadcasting at Montclair State University.

Directing credits include documentaries and instructional television programs for Connecticut Public Television, New Jersey Network, WNET Channel 13, the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as numerous commercial and promotional media projects for a variety of clients. He researched, produced and directed a public television documentary, *A PLACE FOR US*, which chronicled the history of the first African-American golf and country club in the United States. In fall of 2005, Greenwood Press published *A Biography of Tiger Woods*, a text for a high school audience, written by Londino. In addition to producing virtually all of Montclair State’s promotional video materials, under Dr. Londino’s direction the department has produced numerous professional projects over the past ten years: most recently a dramatized instructional video teaching local EMS and police personnel how to deal with possible SIDS situations, and highlights packages of the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional Baseball Championships, distributed via satellite across the country.


Mirjam Lablans ~ Associate Producer

Mirjam Lablans recently received her graduate degree in Communication Studies from Montclair State University. Winner of a 2001 national American Women in Television and Radio Gracie Allen Award for her documentary, “Light in Silent Sorrow: The Story of My Oma” about her grandmother’s experiences during World War II, Mirjam has also worked for Fox News Channel and as associate producer for *Caucus: New Jersey with Steve Adubato* and *One-on-One with Steve Adubato*, where she has produced programs such as “Clearing the Air” a public service panel discussion about the negative effects of second-hand smoke, and “Caucus Up Close with John McGoldrick” Vice President of Bristol-Meyers Squibb about the AIDS epidemic in Africa. She is currently an associate producer for ABC Network News.

Janet Pirchio ~ Videographer

Pirchio has been a part of the production crew for *Carpe Diem*, a weekly cable newsmagazine program, for over 40 programs, directing over 15 of them. She also was a videographer for *Inside MSU*, a news program cablecasted weekly to the entire campus. She has been PA for Image Stream Productions, an independent production company. She received the 2003 Cento Amici Scholarship Broadcasting Award and the 2004 Faculty Award for her accomplishments.

Pirchio spent 6 weeks of the summer of 2002 in Italy, traveling with a group from Montclair and shooting a segment on Italian culture. She is currently working with AmeriCorps, a year-long volunteer program.
**Timeline**

*A Ripple in the Water* will be completed by April 2007 and will be submitted to NJN for scheduling. It is anticipated the documentary will air in the next six months.

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**For More Information**

Kim Berman  
*Women of Madibogopane*  
Collagraph, 1993

Patricia Piroh at 973-655-5158  
pirohp@mail.montclair.edu

Eileen Foti at 732-809-3578  
foti@patmedia.net

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Artist Proof Studio student members at work.