

DINNER AT JANE'S

a documentary film created by Suzanne Lacy



**Shot at Chicago's Hull-House Museum in September, 1993,
during the centennial celebration of the Columbian Exposition.**

In homage to the founders of Hull-House, who discussed agendas for change and visions of a better future at each evening's meal, fourteen world-renown international activists (Magdalena Abakanowicz, Cheryl Carolus, Hyung-Kyung Chung, Johnetta Cole, Mirna Cunningham, Nawal El Sadawi, Susan Faludi, Susan Grode, Anita Hill, Dolores Huerta, Devaki Jain, Wilma Mankiller, Gloria Steinem, and Addie Wyatt) were invited to actively envision the future within the context of a place rich with historical significance for women.

"Our vision higher; our love deeper; and our work more equal."

(Toast made by Korean activist Hyun-Kyung Chung at the end of *Dinner at Jane's*.)

"It's a great video, positively uplifting. The message is as relevant today as it was in the 1990s... demonstrates Illinois' historical role in facilitating dialogue on the global women's movement!"

-- Naseem Ahmed (AAUW Carbondale (IL) Branch Coordinator)

"*Dinner at Jane's* gives us the privilege of listening in on a group of worldly women discuss issues that are relevant to all."

-- Lori Switzer (AAUW Chicago (IL) Branch President)

Important note:

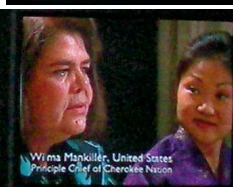
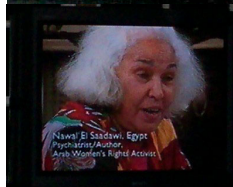
DINNER AT JANE'S is now available on DVD,
& can be rented for public screenings from Video Data Bank:

[http://www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi\\$stapedetail?DINNERATJA](http://www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi$stapedetail?DINNERATJA)

For pictures of audiences all around Illinois watching *DINNER AT JANE'S*,
visit the "Jane Addams Day" section of Jan Lisa Huttner's Blog:

TheHotPinkPen.com

Suzanne Lacy on *Dinner at Jane's*



“The impact of the dinner lies as much in the fact that the meeting actually occurred and who the women were as in any single exchange that took place. This gathering was a symbolic act; it operates best in the artistic realm of the visual and mythological. It is the relationship between women, evident through this event, that fueled Jane Addams’ social interventions and much of nineteenth- and twentieth-century feminist activism. It is this relationship that is so foreign to our popular culture which ignores or trivializes these female alliances. Yet it is the sustenance provided by these relationships that can provide the power for change.”



About Suzanne Lacy

Suzanne Lacy studied with Judy Chicago in the Feminist Art Programs at Cal State Fresno, Cal Arts, and the Los Angeles Woman's Building. Writing of those experiences in the Summer, 1991 *Art Journal*, Lacy recalls that she "began to develop a political art that was participatory, egalitarian and reflective of both the personal and collective truth of women's experiences. We wanted art that made changes, either in its maker or its audience." Lacy lists seven concepts that the Southern California group of feminist artists were formulating in the 1970s. The first is: "Art is a potential link across differences. It can be constructed as a bridge among people, communities, even countries. As a result of seeing art as a bridge, collaboration became a highly valued attribute of the work process, and its practice was much more complex than the sharing of work by two equal partners. Collaboration was explored as a concept that explained communication, effort and exchange between two or more differing entities."

Adapted from ***Empathy, Connection, Commitment: Community Building as an Art Form*** by Betty Brown

<http://artscenecal.com/ArticlesFile/Archive/Articles2002/Articles0102/BBrown0102.html>

About the creation of *Dinner at Jane's*

“Often artists pose questions that shape the outcome of their art. Suzanne Lacy approached “Culture in Action” with both a political and aesthetic query into the nature of “cultural forgetting.” She was particularly interested in the repression of the history of women’s contributions to the American public agenda... The question for Lacy was not so much why cultural forgetting occurred, but whether or not a cultural action, such as an artwork, could in some way inform this situation, provoking viewers to recognize the phenomenon and reframe their perceptions of gender. For her, social themes are a vehicle to question how we construct our perception of reality...”

From ***Culture in Action:***
A public art program of Sculpture Chicago curated by Mary Jane Jacob
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Mary Jane Jacob is a curator who aims to advance the parameters of artists’ public practices and examine assumptions about the audience for contemporary art. She is Chair and Professor of Sculpture at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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