

October 31, 2002

Halloween, Women in Black, Concert & Song

Dear Friends,

Today is Halloween. Nathaniel has picked out his absurdly scary costume, the pumpkins will soon be carved, and the candy bowl is overflowing (we average at least 150 kids in our neighborhood). It's clear and cold - great night for Nathaniel's favorite holiday.

I've had my mind on other things this year. The world is altogether too scary these days to enjoy the fantasy terrors. So I think I'll spend some time following another tradition, that of All Saints Day (November 1st), and honor those who have been the Saints and Mentors, Prophets and Mystics who have so shaped me and helped me to find my purpose. In one of my classes this past week, on African religious traditions, we began our time together naming our ancestors. It was a powerful exercise.

One of the living mentors I honor is my mother, the original October Rose, who just turned 80. We celebrated with her, as she lit a candle for each decade of her life, telling us her story. I know that some of the best of who I am is because of my mom. Thank you, Jean Adeline Atwell Allen Barkley!

In another class at UCS on "The Mission of Art", I was reminded by my teachers, Alex Grey and Matthew Fox, of the importance of establishing meditative practices as a way of accessing the creative spirit. I forget that sometimes, as I plunge pell-mell into my day. So I've been paying more attention to morning walks and writing -- waiting before reading the paper or listening to the radio. And the creativity flows a little easier. A new song has begun. Some creative solutions are coming forth to family challenges. Our class also brought into sharp focus the importance of the gift that art is to a community -- and our responsibility as artists to use our gifts for the community.

I've decided to use my creativity for the community in one new way:

Establishing a WOMEN IN BLACK group here in Bellingham. So tomorrow (Friday) I stand with many other people IN FRONT OF THE FEDERAL BUILDING, corner of Magnolia and Cornwall in Bellingham. There has been an anti-war presence there since the 60's, but in recent weeks the numbers have swollen. COME JOIN ME! Women, just dress in black, maybe bring a candle, and maintain silence. This is a group that is an international network of women who stand in silent vigil, calling for peace, justice and non-violent solutions to conflict. Each group is autonomous. The peace vigil, which includes Fellowship of Reconciliation and many other individuals and groups, is held every Friday from 4:00 to 5:00 in front of the Federal Building.

Last Saturday I was in San Francisco for the big march there. How good it felt to see the incredible diversity and numbers of people (it took three hours for the parade to reach the Civic Center grounds.) The Creative Spirit was dancing all over the place! I heard a wonderful Korean drumming group, saw delightful and imaginative costuming, and great signs! There was also a strong sense of purpose, which I saw reflected in a very elderly man, trying to keep his balance in the crowds that pushed by. But he was there - along with the triplets in their baby carriage and the West Point grad in full uniform. It was quite a cross-section of American culture.

Speaking of signs --here in Bellingham we've had some controversy over a large sign saying, "Report Suspicious Activity". One of my favorite signs in San Francisco was "Report Suspicious Fascism!". Another favorite sign I've been seeing lately is REGIME CHANGE BEGINS AT HOME -- VOTE! Let's do it!

UPCOMING CONCERTS:

***SATURDAY! November 2nd!! SEATTLE

Woodland park United Methodist Church

(N. 78th and Greenwood Ave. N.)

Benefit for Heifer International

7:00 PM \$10.00 donation.

206-784-9270.

Monday, November 18th BELLINGHAM

Matthew Fox in Bellingham!

Western Washington University, Arntzen Hall 100

6:30, with music (provided by me), lecture and discussion.

360-676-9531.

Sunday, November 24 SEATTLE

Magnolia Church of Christ

7:00 PM (pot luck at 6:30)

(I'll be doing the alternative church service

called Spirit, which includes prayer time and offering)

206-283-1788.

Also, coming February 1st, I'll be doing a Keynote address at the Clark College Women's Conference, then sharing workshops on voice and songwriting with my daughters, Jen and Kristin Allen-Zito. Then we'll be doing a concert that night. Jen and Kristin are preparing to release their first CD, which we all hope will be ready by then!

My beautiful garden office is also now ready for visitors! So give me a call for

private lessons on voice, creativity, performance, beginning guitar, or any combination.

For more details, please visit:

<http://www.lindasongs.com/pages/itinerary.htm>

You may also now order all of my recordings on CD or cassette. To order through a secure server or via snail mail, visit:

<http://www.lindasongs.com/pages/ordering1.htm>

You can also see reviews and hear sound clips from all of the recordings.

I leave you with two songs I'm in the process of writing.

Where I Stand copyright2002 Linda Allen

Woman standing in the rain on a cold October day.

In her hands she held a sign that said there must be a better way

By her side a child asked, "Why do you do the things you do?"

"Once, she said, I did it for me. Now I'm doing this for you"

 "So you will know where I stand

 You will know who I am

 You will know where I stand

 If it all falls down"

Grey was the color of the courthouse steps, and grey was the autumn sky

Grey were the faces of the passing people, looking down as they walked by

Black and white was the news that morning in a world about to die

Red as blood was the sign above, and the child again asked why. CHORUS

Once, you know, I believed I could change some hearts with a hand-made sign

Now I know I gotta keep on goin' so that others won't change mine.

Sometimes things have to fall apart to make way for something new

Hold a sign, hold a vision, 'cause I'm leavin' it up to you. CHORUS

And this one --

May my hands do the work I was sent here to do

May my ears know the truth from the lies

May my voice speak for justice, may I walk unafraid

May I see through compassionate eyes.

Blessings and peace -

Linda