



Young people enjoy a puppet show at a community picnic sponsored by the Piedmont and

Humboldt Neighborhood Associations. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Atiyeh honors Shamsud-Din

Gov. and Mrs. Vic Atiyeh will host a reception honoring Isaac Shamsud-Din Tuesday, August 25, from 3:30-4:30 in the governor's ceremonial office.

An exhibition of 12 paintings and drawings by the Portland artist are on display in the governor's State Capitol office in Salem. The works on display include pencil drawings, pen and ink drawings, oil paintings, gouache paintings (this is a form of painting using opaque watercolors) and mixed-media artwork.

Shamsud-Din began his career as an artist at age eight, when he illustrated a slide show in school. He now spends from 14-18 hours a day on artwork, working in wood carving, ceramics, and silk-screening in addition to the works mentioned above.

Shamsud-Din said in describing his work that he is "attacking spiritual genocide by producing images worthy of being called Black images." He explained that "spiritual genocide happens when the necessary avenues for growth are cut off. This society does not permit this growth among African-

American people." Shamsud-Din said one purpose of his art is "to allow people to have a dialogue with themselves by reflecting and illuminating their spirit, ideas, and mode of thought."

Shamsud-Din has been the featured artist in one-man shows including exhibits at the Northwest Artists' Workshop, Lewis and Clark College, Portland State University, and the Albina Arts Center, all in Portland; and Mt. Hood Community College, Gresham. 25 of his works are included in a touring University of Oregon exhibit.

One of 14 children of an Atlanta, Texas, tenant-farming couple, Shamsud-Din and his family moved to Oregon in 1947. The artist, a recipient of an award of excellence from the PSU Black Studies Department, has taught Black studies at San Francisco, Calif., State University; Reed College, and PSU. He also teaches in the artists-in-the-schools program and has taught art classes at the Portland Art Museum and the Portland Children's Museum.

Politics of failure

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Blacks approved of the president's performance.

In the late 60s and early 70s, when Blacks were experiencing some social advancement, polls registered a significant sense of progress. In 1969, for example, 70 percent of Blacks felt that the situation of Blacks had improved during the past 5 years. In 1981 only 30 percent feel this is true.

The Gallup survey reveals one very dangerous trend. Only the barest majority of Blacks (51 percent) rejects violent protest as a means of accomplishing goals, and two-thirds of Blacks agree that the only time the federal government really pays attention to Blacks is when they resort to violence. This sense of frustration and rage must be confronted. Yet in the context of the Reagan Administration's retreat from necessary social programs and in the Administration's failure to

confront the reality of racial inequality, there are the seeds of disaster.

Black Americans have viewed the Administration with skepticism since Ronald Reagan took his oath of office. Yet the president has made no serious effort to diminish this skepticism by developing a policy which addresses the specific needs and problems faced by Blacks. Glib generalizations and assertions that the private sector will resolve the plight of the Black poor do not constitute a coherent policy on Black inequality. They constitute a serious failure of leadership.

In defending his economic policies, Ronald Reagan frequently asserts that "A rising tide lifts all boats." He, however, appears to have forgotten that those who are without boats may very well drown.

(Norman Hill is president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.)

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