



Flying Focus Video Collective

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Using video as a tool for social change

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Black Lives Matter: More Civil Rights / Police Accountability Shows 2020

In the second half of 2020, Flying Focus featured many shows echoing the local, national and global movement for Black Lives.

Voices for Black Lives

On July 28, 2020, FFVC interviewed people at a silent walking meditation in Chapman and Lownsdale Squares, across from the "Justice Center" (Central Precinct). The event was coordinated by the Portland Buddhist Peace Fellowship in support of Black Lives to mark suffering caused by racist violence and police brutality. In *"Voices for Black Lives 1: Street Bytes at Walking Meditation,"* people from varied backgrounds share concerns about Portland police, the feds and racial injustice, explaining why it was important to be there. Their thoughtful statements show Portlanders are grappling with these issues in a way rarely seen on nightly news coverage of police. The show features interviewer Lisa Stiller.

A few days later on August 1, FFVC recorded an event at Portland's Salmon Street Springs. In *"Voices for Black Lives 2: Peaceful Portlanders Protest Racism,"* people there addressed structural and systemic racism, defunding the police, how to take back power from those who misuse it and much more. This show features interviewer Diana Rempé.

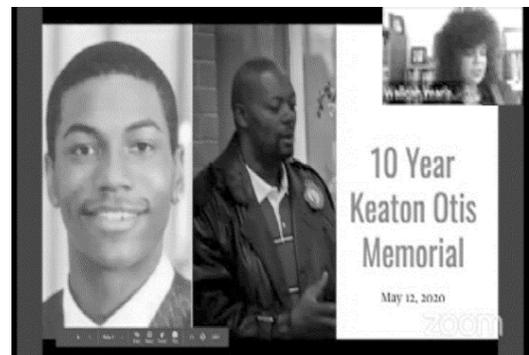
Both episodes (VB #117.3&4) were recorded by PC Peri and produced by Barb Greene with stills of downtown murals by Dawn Regier.



Portland Memorial for George Floyd

Days after the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police, the Portland NAACP chapter hosted an event in Terry Schunk Plaza. The two-part show *"A Eulogy for Black America 5/30/20"* (VB #116.9&10) features sights and sounds from around the park. A variety of speakers addressing police brutality, racial inequality, and the need for change included Nkenge Harmon Johnson, Executive Director of the Urban League of Portland, Rabbi Debra Kolodny of Portland's Unshul, Michael Alexander, a former Urban League director, Rabbi Ariel Stone with Portland Interfaith Clergy Resistance, Marcus Mundy, Executive Director of Coalition of Communities of Color, and

City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty. Saeeda Wright, a locally based musician, gives a beautiful rendition of the Black National Anthem. The show starts with images of a "die-in" in the street beside the Plaza. The video was recorded by KatMeow Garcia and Flying Focus field coordinator PC Peri. It was produced and edited by new volunteer Ben Duerksen.



2020 Memorial for Keaton Otis, Killed by Police in 2010

Keaton Otis was a 26 year old African American man pulled over in 2010 by Portland Police who "thought he looked like a gangster." They fired 32 bullets, hitting him 23 times. Keaton's father Fred Bryant started a monthly vigil to demand justice. Bryant died in 2013 from the strain of organizing. On May 12, 2020, the Justice for Keaton Otis Committee presented an online memorial for Keaton. Speakers talking about racism and police violence under the pandemic were eerily predictive of the death of George Floyd two weeks later.

Our show *"Justice for Keaton Otis: A Portland Police Shooting 10 Years Later"* (VB #116.1&2) is bookended by songs from Portland jazz legend Marilyn Keller. The event was hosted by author/activist Walidah Imarisha. Speakers include Joe Bean Keller, whose son Deontae was killed by the PPB in 1996, City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, Dan Handelman of Portland Copwatch (who produced this show for Flying Focus), and Alyssa Bryant, Fred's daughter/Keaton's sister. While the original 2-hour event is available at facebook.com/JusticeForKeatonOtis, these two half-hour episodes fix issues such as adding in the American Sign Language interpreter.

Rare Look at Community Advisory Board to Portland Police

A seldom-seen group of community members who advise the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) on training and use of force issues is featured on our two-part show *"Inside the Police Training Advisory Council 2020"* (VB #117.11&12). Using (continued)

(cont'd from page 1) screen capture technology to record the Training Advisory Council's July, September and November meetings, FFVC producer Dan Handelman, also a member of Portland Copwatch, presents the first known television programs about the TAC. In part one, the Council discusses Use of Force data and the TAC's effort to add population data to the Bureau's reports. Over 25% of people who have force used on them by the PPB are Black in a city with a 6% African American population. Part 2 includes a discussion of the PPB's anti-racism training, two reports prepared by the TAC about patterns in the Bureau's use of force, and a discussion of force data including at protests against the death of George Floyd. In just the first five weeks, the PPB used force 2378 times on demonstrators.



Legal Testimony on Climate Change

For the first time in U.S. history, to our knowledge, a judge gave a jury in Portland the "choice of evils" necessity instruction, indicating that breaking the law may have been done to stop a greater harm. Extinction Rebellion activists known as the Zenith 5 had planted a garden on railroad tracks in Portland to protest climate change. PC Peri was the pool videographer at the trial in February, 2020. The result was a hung jury. The DA's office declined to pursue charges against the defendants.

One of the expert witnesses who provided testimony that led to this important decision was Nicholas Caleb, JD, LL.M., staff attorney for the Climate Justice Program at the Center for Sustainable Economy. Caleb's legal and environmental background give him a unique view of the climate crisis. In "*Zenith 5 Trial: Nicholas Caleb Testimony*" (VB #116.5&6), Caleb provides a clear and comprehensive explanation for how we got here and how the system prevents climate protection. This is information we don't see in the mainstream media, because their corporate overlords would not be happy about it. This is a companion piece to VB #115.6&7 featuring the testimony of Professor Deke Gundersen.

An Afghan American Examines US/Afghanistan Relations

On June 29, 2020, Dr. Zaher Wahab gave an informative talk about the social, political, economic and military situation in Afghanistan, in particular US involvement. An American originally from Afghanistan, Wahab spent much of the past two decades in his country of origin, including teaching at the American University there. He touched on what it was like having to be shuttled to and from the school by armed guards, unable to stop and get out. He talked about the history of both the US and Soviet invasions and occupations of Afghanistan, the international interest in its natural resources, ethnic tensions,

and recipes for moving forward. The event was coordinated by Peace and Justice Works (PJW) Iraq Affinity Group as a livestream on YouTube hosted by local radio personality Ani Raven Haines. For the program "*Zaher Wahab: The US/Afghanistan Fateful Partnership*" (VB #116.13 & 117.1), Flying Focus producer (and PJW member) Dan Handelman cut the original 90 minute event down to a more digestible two half-hour segments. The FFVC version can be seen at www.flyingfocus.org/ZaherWahab20_streamingpage.html

See Clips from All of Our 2019-20 Programs on the 29th Busiversary

This year, when Flying Focus producers/volunteers emerged from behind the cameras to introduce clips from shows we produced (Nov 2019-Oct 2020), we were safely separated for COVID concerns. The "*Twenty-Ninth Busiversary*" (VB #117.7&8) continues the tradition of marking each year since the Flying Focus Video Bus premiered in November, 1991. This year we showcased 14 programs (made up of 25 episodes). Part one includes five about civil rights/police accountability, one about animal rights (with Ingrid Newkirk, founder of PETA) and a labor-related case from during the red scare (with author Raymond Caballero).

In part 2, four shows revolve around the issue of climate change, one features a talk from Professor Zaher Wahab about the US/Afghanistan "fateful partnership," while another covers a July 2019 protest against potential US wars in Iran and Venezuela. The show ends with clips from Hiroshima Day 2019, which being pre-COVID was held at Waterfront Park.

To create the host segments, FFVC improvised a makeshift studio in the classroom at Open Signal / Portland Community Media. Producers Barb Greene, Dan Handelman and Ben Duerksen introduce clips from the shows with help from field coordinator PC Peri (who recorded most of the shows).

See the Video Bus Live Anywhere in the World!

Just after Flying Focus completed its last newsletter, Open Signal/Portland Community media launched two live-streaming public access channels. Based on our current schedule, you can now watch the Flying Focus Video Bus live anywhere in the world at 6 PM Mondays (opensignalpdx.org/itm1) or 11 PM Wednesdays (opensignalpdx.org/itm2), Pacific Time. The Friday 9:30 playback time is expected to be streaming soon.

We recognize it's not easy to schedule time to watch TV; thus, we post some episodes on YouTube for on-demand viewing. All 29 Busiversaries (including this year's!) are at tinyurl.com/FFVC-retro. For other shows, we request a donation of \$75 (\$125 for larger institutions) to post them online and support the work that goes into creating the programs. You can also order a program on DVD or a USB Flash Drive. We're asking an additional \$3 to cover the costs of flash drive orders, so \$11 for one-part Video Bus programs, and \$14 for two (plus postage).

We've continued to gather footage "in real life" and by recording computer-based video, getting hard-to-find information to the public. As the country continues to grapple with issues around race, policing and endless wars, we bring fresh perspectives to educate the public. Whether or not you want to order a video, please consider a donation to Flying Focus, which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary this year! Thank you.