

CAP and MAPP— a people's culture

MAPP (Musical Action for People's Power) and CAP (Community Arts Project) are cornerstones for a new people's culture in South Africa.

They are community based organisations with similar principles and aims, but working in different spheres: MAPP is dedicated to musical training, whereas CAP is more comprehensive in the range of courses it offers.

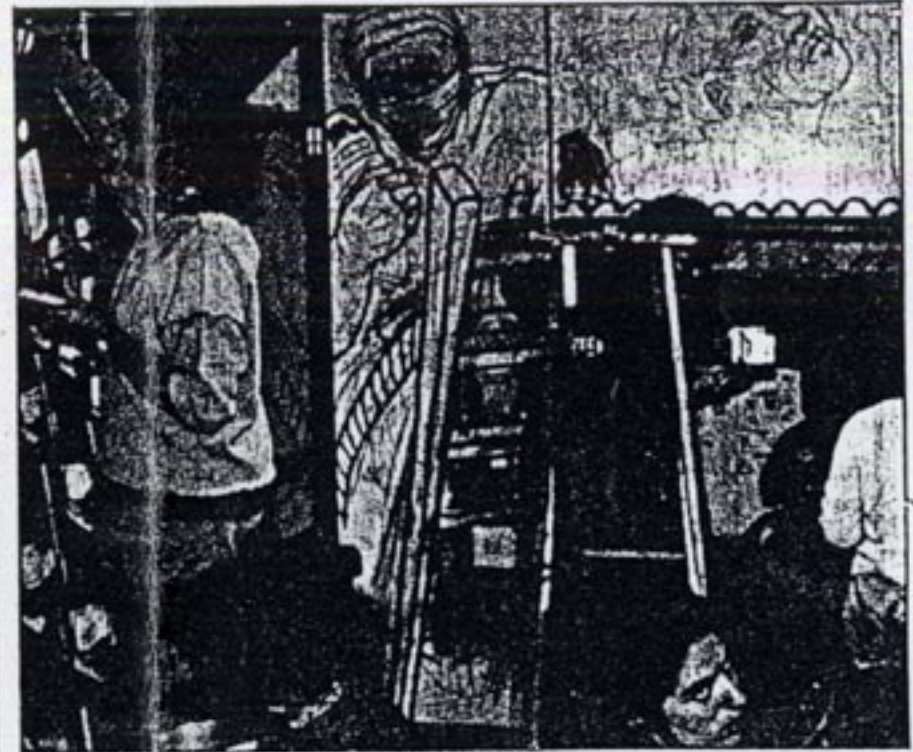
Although they focus on arts and music, they also aim to expand their pupils in a broader way. Their teaching develops a sense of a South Africa where culture is generated through community creativity and not merely carried on the shoulders of select individuals. Not only do they espouse progressive principles, but they also fulfill a need in the community which has hitherto been ignored.

Both organisations have mapped out ambitious futures, but there is still a need for further development before all dreams are fulfilled. The acquisition of the Joseph Stone complex, however, is a considerable victory for MAPP and people's culture, as it provides a base from which they can work.

CAP is presently involved in an art exhibition which opened on Monday and MAPP is organising a music festival for April.



•Self Portrait by Cameron Voyiya, a student at CAP



•CAP students painting a mural

A cultural training

CAP trains cultural workers by participating in building the growing cultural movement and developing grassroots cultural activities.

Founded in 1977 as a response to the events of '76, CAP was originally a white, liberal-based organisation serving the growing needs in the community for training in creative skills in 1979/80.

The project moved from its first headquarters into what is now the Mowbray Grand Bazaar building, to its present housing in the St. Phillip's Chapel, Woodstock. CAP's over response in an attempt to serve all of the greater Cape Town area as a resource/member organisation/school had to be reviewed in '85. The project was critically examined.

The demand for accountability to students and trustees, and the pressures on such organisations to support the broader struggle were considered. Early '89 saw the beginning of a new period, where CAP makes decisions independent of its cultural milieu. At present CAP is forming a democratic management structure and an SRC.

CAP functions as a progressive arts organisation. Though it supports the broad mass democratic movement, it is

non-aligned, in order that culture be accessible to any person. CAP trains cultural workers rather than artists, aiding the continual reconstruction and regeneration of an emerging South African culture.

CAP's programme of part and full-time courses for a minimal fee is open to all, but provides mainly for those who have no other access to such training. Courses are offered in media, visual arts, child's art and teaching training and popular theatre.

All students finishing a course are supervised for a year, to ensure that skills are ploughed straight back into the community. Some students leave to occupy jobs, others to return to the progressive organisations that mandated their training. For most, CAP creates new employment.

CAP described itself as a progressive, non-formal education and training institute in the arts that aims to train cultural workers through its fulltime and part-time programmes and is committed to supporting and developing grassroots activities.

In a transition stage at the moment, CAP is creating an identity as independent of, and yet serving the community and its progressive movements.