

## **Nonkilling Arts RC Letter: February-March 2015**

Dear friends,

As I am on the road until April, there has been delay in sending out this NKARC letter. This is mainly on account of getting used to working on my erratic laptop. Spent last month in India and Ireland, a part of travel in India involved commemorating the 70th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent fast in restoring communal harmony in Kolkata on the eve of creation of India and Pakistan. Also the trip took me to Bhopal to speak to the faculty and students of new Jagran Lakecity University. An overview of the two events covered on CGNK website, click on [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org).

Related to the Nonkilling Arts, two items may be of interest to the readers. At Sodepur Gandhi Bhavan Memorial in Kolkata there is a floor to wall painting/fresco recording the horrific communal massacre with Gandhi sitting in an equi-pose witnessing the human tragedy. His solution to ending communal violence was not mere the act of undertaking fast unto death until all parties involved agreed to stop killings but his moral courage to be amidst the carnage to assert his nonviolent viewpoint. The huge fresco by Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore's Shanti Niketan art students is done in unique ivory and beige colours avoiding the usual gory red or black colours of blood and fire. For more on the story and painting, click on: [www.kolkataonwheels.com/article-details/hyderi-manzil.html](http://www.kolkataonwheels.com/article-details/hyderi-manzil.html)

At the Jagran university meeting, in a 'dug out' session with its Media students, we agreed about the raison d'etre of good journalism is to reveal multi-faceted TRUTH at all costs. With new technology, throwing light on truth despite media conglomerates is more possible than ever. Names of courageous ground breaking young whistle blowers Snowden and Dossange came up to whom search for truth has been more important than being afraid of being branded as unpatriotic. (For discussion on some of these aspects, check CGNK's publication Nonkilling Media edited by Joam Evans Pim, click on <http://www.nonkilling.org/node/18#Media> )

### **1. Nonkilling Media:**

Below is a recent insightful op-ed from our NKARC journalist colleague Bob Koehler

WAR AND PERPETUAL ADOLESCENCE by Robert C. Koehler

Bob writes: "The urgency I feel isn't any longer to stop a particular war but to interrupt endless war: to interrupt the narrowly focused geopolitical conversation, conveyed to us over and over by media stenographers, in which lethal intervention — wherever — is always the first and only choice. The uncertainty is never a matter of "if." It's only a matter of "when."

...And that's that. It's all so pristine and scientific-seeming. Never are the consequences of military action discussed, alluded to or acknowledged in the

mainstream media, even though the wreckage of our wars is all around us. That doesn't matter because grotesque, medieval hostility — beheadings, immolation — emerge from the wreckage. Unlike America's impersonal, high-tech and regrettably necessary killing, our enemies perpetrate Evil Itself. The over-the-top drama of what they do continually supplants any motivation we have to engage in political self-examination. Fear rules, but fortunately we have the technology and the bottomless budget to defend ourselves."

For full article, click on:

<http://commonwonders.com/world/war-and-perpetual-adolescence/>

Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist and nationally syndicated writer. His book, *Courage Grows Strong at the Wound* (Xenos Press), is still available. Contact him at [koehlercw@gmail.com](mailto:koehlercw@gmail.com) or visit his website at [commonwonders.com](http://commonwonders.com).

## **2. Nonkilling Play/Theatre:**

The marking of four year long centennial of the First World War since last year has seen a number of plays and productions mainly in the western world with reflections on the Great War which was supposed to be the "last of all the wars" that ended in fact as curtain raiser for the modern killing war machine, turning it into a great enterprise for powerbrokers who could use taxpayers' money and people to be used as fodder (both military and the people) in the name of nationalism, ideology, and material gain. Over 200,000 Irish went to this War, 49,000 were killed. When would politicians instead of commemorating courage and bravery also offer apologies on behalf of their predecessors and pledge not to make decisions that kill.

For the Irish, the year 1916 is an important one as it is reminder of the Easter uprising that eventually led to Irish Independence while at the same time some Irish went as happy colonists soldiering for the British Empire. The new Irish docu-drama - 'Pals - The Irish at Gallipoli', staged at former Collins Army Barracks (now The Decorative Arts & History Museum) in Dublin describes itself as the "untold stories of the 7th Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers during the First World War". The Irish Times critic Diarmaid Ferriter about this powerful complex dramatic story of Irish soldiers at Gallipoli says:

"Pals is not about celebrating or eulogising or playing politics, but amounts to an accurate and moving portrayal of the reality of war and underlines how some British historians were correct last year to challenge a jingoistic reading of the first World War being promoted by some British politicians, including the education secretary Michael Gove... Similar passions and conflicting interpretations are frequently evident in this country about 1916. What Pals does is to remind us of the broader context and the complex tapestry of propaganda, allegiances, motivations, sufferings, courage, fear, notions of duty, personal honour, outrage and sense of

"manliness" that were a part of the Irish experience of war 100 years ago and how selective the narratives became in the aftermath."

For Ferriter's full review, click on: <http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/diarmaid-ferriter-powerful-drama-tells-story-of-irish-soldiers-at-gallipoli-1.2111539>

### **3. Nonkilling Poetry:**

Three excellent poems from our NKARC colleagues: Ada Aharoni, David Krieger, and Francisco Gomes de Matos. Heralding the New Year, they all share a common optimism that the time is ripe for hoping for a transformative change.

#### **2015 - A SMILING YEAR OF HOPE**

by Ada Aharoni

Despite our wars, despite our tears,

Despite our aches, pains and furtive fears

We embrace you smiling Year of Hope -2015.

For, democracy and the Internet are spreading,

The power of women for peace is rising,

Global poverty has been cut in half -

Never before have ordinary people

Had more power to solve challenges

And to decide their own fate.

We're poised on the edge between

Our oldest fears and deepest dreams

We face a choice - to rise to this hopeful year

And throw the War monster out of our lives -

It all depends on us!

The peace lovers and war haters of our world  
Are the largest global community,  
So why do we still have wars? It is not democratic!  
This New Year, millions and millions of us  
Will end the game of war and terror.  
It will be magical.

From media, people and politicians,  
I hear the same thing -  
We peace marchers are bringing hope  
And hope is the game changer.  
Hope, is the wing on which we rise  
It is the map of how and where to fly ....

We salute you and embrace you hopeful 2015

Our so yearned -for Year of Hope and Nonkilling

Our promising smiling Year of Peace.

Ada Aharoni

International Forum for the Literature and Culture of Peace (IFLAC),

[www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

## **A POEM FOR THE CROSSROADS**

by David Krieger

I would like to write a poem and nail it  
to a stake at humanity's crossroads.  
It would say: choose your path wisely.

It would say: this path we are on is far too treacherous, a trap for the unwary and complacent.

It would say: take down the gun pointed at humanity's heart – enough of war, enough of nuclear weapons, enough of stumbling toward collective suicide.

It would say: enough homage to death – choose life and be a citizen of the world.  
It would say: be kinder than necessary.

It would certainly say: when it rains, the water sinks into the Earth and the grass grows toward the sun.

It would say: when the winds blow, the leaves will flutter from the trees like butterflies.  
It would remind us to stop and look at the beauty around us.

It would say: this is Eden, but it needs care.  
It would say: before you choose a path, think about the people of the future.

It would say: make each moment of your time on Earth matter.

It would say: choose the path of peace.

David Krieger,  
December 2014

David Krieger has a new collection of poems out, entitled, WAKE UP. For more on his WAKE UP, visit Nuclear Age Peace Foundation website: [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org)

### **Environmental Nonkilling: rhymed reflections**

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace-nonkilling linguist, Recife, Brazil

When you embrace a tree  
Eco-friendly you will be--

When you kiss a flower  
eco-dignity will become a power

When you water a plant  
In Nature you create a chant

When the felling of a tree you prevent  
Environmental Nonkilling you invent  
ABrAço  
Francisco

#### **4. Nonkilling Cinema:**

I was introduced this month by colleague Joam Evans Pim to the work of prolific documentary filmmaker Paul Saltzman. About his films, he writes:

"I've now worked, in person, with over 50,000 people, mostly young people, using my films and my skills at creating a safe space to explore with them the path of moving beyond prejudice, moving beyond hate, moving beyond violence.

The films work better than I could have imagined as a door-opener in the psyche that allows a deep transformative process to occur. I have seen this many times in my work across the U.S., Canada, and in Russia, Kazan and Israel. "

About his new documentary film, "The Moving Beyond Prejudice Day programs (MBP)". below the blurb on this insightful film:

"The film creates an intimate and fun experience that invites participants to see a critically important part of our society—prejudice and diversity—with new eyes. It begins with screening the award-winning documentary, Prom Night in Mississippi, featuring Morgan Freeman. The movie is entertaining, powerful and profound. It fills audiences with hope as it portrays a group of young people who, in the face of resistance and oppressive old prejudices, take charge with compassion and courage—successfully standing up for their core values of diversity and inclusion." His other docs include The Last White Knight - Is Reconciliation Possible? (click on <http://movingbeyondprejudice.com/the-last-white-knight/>)

Welcome, Paul. Our NKARC documentary film maker colleagues include Nahum Laufer, Vishnu Vasu, Stuart Cryer and Rich Panter.

My deep gratitude to above contributors to this NKARC letter.

With Nonkilling Regards,  
Bill

Bill (Balwant) Bhaneja  
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[www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)  
"Nonkilling is THE measure of human progress"