

There was a special event in Baltimore, that far-away "Charm City" with the high homicide rate. It was last night, Tuesday, August 9.

What did it have in common with Columbia?

It was just a simple vegetarian potluck dinner with members of the peace and justice community at Homewood Friends Meeting House located at 3107 N. Charles Street, Baltimore City. It was followed by a talk by Firmin DeBrabander, professor of philosophy at the Maryland Institute College of Art. He is the author of "Do Guns Make Us Free?" (Yale University Press, 2015)

Quaker activists have been quietly "keeping in the light" the people of Baltimore who are often in the news as blacks victimized by racial profiling by police and gun violence.

Long time pioneering peace activist, Max Obuszewski, spoke about the efforts of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Commemoration Committee* at this 32nd annual Baltimore remembrance of the 1945 atomic bombings of

Calling All Artists and Art Galleries

by Mary Ellen Graybill
(aka "Traveling Gadfly")

Off to the side of the sometimes noisy meeting, was a silent testimonial to the black lives matter movement: Seven portraits in oil on canvas, carefully crafted and colorful paintings of black men and black women and a black father and black son, artwork that was definitely not for sale. They were painted by talented, self-taught artist, Kimberly Sheridan, a resident of Pig Town, Baltimore City, the

home of Freddie Gray whose death in a police van sparked the second Baltimore riot since the first one of 1968. Kimberly has started a powerful art project that promises to keep



Kimberly Sheridan and her 7 portraits



Left, standing: Max Obuszewski; Middle: David Eberhardt, reading his poetry; Right: Professor Firmin DeBrabander

Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 7). The Hiroshima Nagasaki Commemoration Committee wants the abolition of nuclear weapons, their development, production and maintenance.

But, the topic lends itself to activism against gun violence, Obuszewski notes.

"Besides our usual focus on nuclear weapons, the Fukushima tragedy, killer drones and weapons' contracts at Johns Hopkins University, we are highlighting this issue of gun violence. Besides, tragedies in Orlando, Dallas, and Baton Rouge, Baltimore could set a record this year for homicides."

growing. She was enraged when she learned of the numbers of black lives lost due to gun violence, and started the "MILLION GUN VICTIMS MARCH."

"I am only an artist," she thought initially. "What can I do? I can paint their portraits!" she exclaimed.

She is putting out a plea, a call for other artists to join her. Her goal is a million portraits, one for each victim. She researched and got a list of 96 Baltimore homicides starting January 2001 to the first months of 2016. "Black male, black male, black male...on and on ...on and on..." she says sadly. Someday, she envisions a billboard for the people that don't have a voice anymore that people don't notice. There is no federal funding at this point, but she has created a 501-C3. To join her by painting a portrait, or providing gallery space for a show, contact her at mgvm1million@gmail.com or go to www.mgvm1million.net

(*The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Commemoration Committee is based at 325 East 25th Street, Baltimore MD 21218 for more information, call 410-366-1637 or contact Max Obuszewski at mobuszewski@verizon.net