



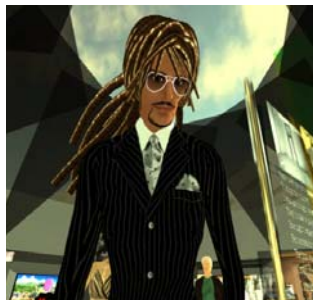
In the Sweet Bye & Bye

A transgenerational memoir of old songs and new work

Media art: Philip Mallory Jones

Poems: Dorothy Mallory Jones

by Pollywog Gardenvale



Artist and educator Philip Mallory Jones (aka avatar Jacque Quijote)

"In the Sweet Bye & Bye" is an artistic collaboration of mother and son; a personal expression of family stories and pictures, woven with threads of haunting images from the past.

Dorothy Mallory's poetry celebrates black womanhood and family. She describes her work as "factual, anecdotal, and autobiographical... born of remembered snatches of my own, and anybody else's family lore; of provocative family nicknames; of knotted, worked out hands of the grandmother; folded so patiently in her lap. It is the fruit of



"In the Sweet Bye & Bye" on Dr. Dobb's Island

a lifetime of standing back and watching the relentless energies of a race of stricken people, steadily galvanizing toward liberation. It is listening, always listening to the cadence, the flow, the pungent getting-to-the-heart of it that is our speech."

Clarissa Pinkola Estés, author of *Women Who Run With the Wolves*, tells of women who "storytell in the plain voice of women who have lived blood and babies, bread and bones. For them, story is a medicine which strengthens and arights the individual and the community." Eighty-seven year old Dorothy Mallory Jones is such a woman.

Philip Mallory Jones grew up on the South Side of Chicago and like his mother, is both a storyteller and artist. He is a widely respected media artist and educator, whose work has been recognized by the American Film Institute, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Black Programming Consortium. He has been artist-in-residence at the Institute for Studies in the Arts at Arizona State University and The Aesthetic Technologies Lab College of Fine Arts at Ohio University.

Philip describes their collaboration as having germinated for three decades or longer. "It comes out of, and marks, the paths we have traveled, my mother and I, from those early days of her teaching and me learning, to mature artists who respect each other's work."

It is as if artistic DNA was passed on from mother to son and is understood by both on a cellular level.

I met avatar Jacque Quijote while he was putting the finishing touches on the installation of "In the Sweet Bye & Bye" at Dr. Dobb's Island in Second Life. This is the second installation of his work in the virtual world. The first is on display at the Second Life campus of Ohio University, in the The Aesthetic Technology Lab.

The concept for the exhibit evolved from his design for a real world installation that used touchscreens and suspended plexiglass panels to create the feeling of immersion. Of course, the panels in the Second Life exhibit are suspended in air, but you can walk right through them. With this work, Jacque reaches a new, global audience with a universal message, and redefines what an art exhibit can be.

Jacque described the thrill of rezzing the miniature model on Dobb's Island, and then scaling it up to full size. "The two elements can be viewed together

See **Bye & Bye**, B2



7032 South Wabash Avenue
Family portrait, South Side Chicago,
circa 1957



Dance For Absent Partners



A video of a dancer with her partner is suspended on a translucent panel.

► Bye & Bye

CONTINUED FROM B1

or separately, depending on where you are and how you move. I am intrigued by the possibilities for creating meaning through this fluid composition."

"An example of the design concept is the combination of panels in this area. The painting on the wall is "Dance For Absent Partners." It is part of the allegory; a tale of the mythical Sisterhood where they perform a ritual to sustain the community in the face of absent partners who are out back, in prison, or the ground. The panel in front of the painting is the dancer with her partner in streaming animation. They are seen in combination, or separately."

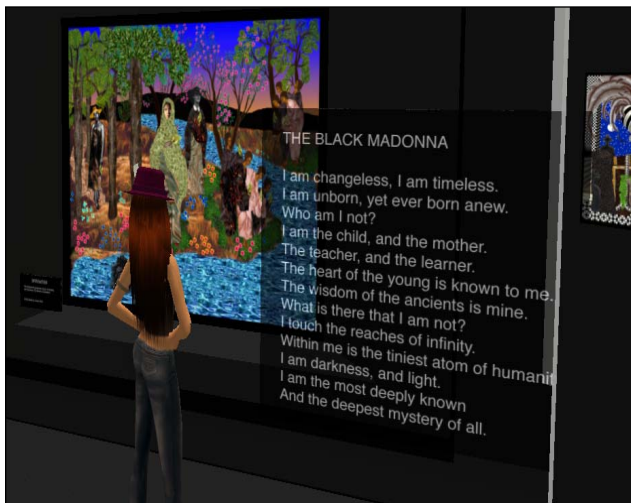
When asked about the symbolism in the images, Jacque explained that there are "many religious and spiritual aspects and references from black Protestant practice, to Ifa, Saneria, Vodou, and Candomble. That's a big part of the symbolic language research and also the visceral connection."

"At base, I want my work to function in the same way the drum functions in a ritual, or the mask, or a gesture. It is the membrane interface between this world and the unseen worlds. What better place to explore that than in a virtual world!"

Modern storytellers have been described as the descendants of holy people, troubadours, bards, griots, cantadoras, cantors, and traveling po-

ets—as well as bums, hags, and crazy people. It is this connection to the past that gives context to the future. Philip describes their relationship as having "come full circle, in a way, albeit to converse through our art, with a shared language, about the lore and legends of our family, and our extended family."

So like mitochondrial DNA, their artistic collaboration is a maternal inheritance passed on from mother to son. Interestingly, the word *mitochondria* is derived from the Greek word, *mitos*, for thread and *khondrion*, which refers to the membrane of the cell. How fitting that our mitochondrial DNA, which is the power source that drives each cell, can be inherited only from the mother. ☼



THE BLACK MADONNA

I am changeless, I am timeless.
 I am unborn, yet ever born anew.
 Who am I not?
 I am the child, and the mother.
 The teacher, and the learner.
 The heart of the young is known to me.
 The wisdom of the ancients is mine.
 What is there that I am not?
 I touch the reaches of infinity.
 Within me is the tiniest atom of humanity.
 I am darkness, and light.
 I am the most deeply known
 And the deepest mystery of all.

—Dorothy Mallory Jones

To see a video lecture of artist, Philip Mallory Jones discussing his work, visit:
<http://www.brightcove.com/title.jsp?title=823491679&channel=140825624>

In the Sweet Bye & Bye
 Convention Center,
 Dr Dobbs Island (74,94,34)