



Who is Mumia Abu-Jamal?

Mumia Abu-Jamal was a radio journalist in Philadelphia during the 1970s, the years of Mayor Frank Rizzo. A member of the Black Panther Party from age 14 and later a supporter of the MOVE organization, he was known as “the voice of the voiceless” on Philly air waves. He was the recipient of a Major Armstrong Award for radio journalism, and was named one of Philadelphia’s “people to watch” in 1981 by Philadelphia magazine. He was president of the Association of Black Journalists in Philadelphia. He had no prior criminal record.

In December of 1981, Mumia was shot by a Philadelphia cop and almost died when he intervened in a street incident where his own brother was being beaten by that same cop. The police officer was also shot and killed, and witnesses saw other men run from the scene. When more police arrived, they beat Mumia before taking him to the hospital, and he was immediately charged with murder. Mumia’s brother and another key eyewitness were later harassed by police and driven out of town. Other witnesses who changed their stories to implicate Mumia were rewarded. The dead officer was holding the driver’s license application of a third man, but this was never investigated.

It was Mumia that the police wanted. The FBI and Philadelphia police had amassed hundreds of pages of surveillance files on Mumia, beginning when he was 15 years old, for his outspoken opposition to racism and police brutality and his revolutionary politics. As a well known radio reporter, he was a leading critic of police violence against the minority communities of Philadelphia. (The brutality of the Philadelphia police was so notorious that the U.S. Department of Justice later filed an unprecedented suit against the force.)

When people began to question the murder charges against Mumia, the police put forward the absurd story—two months after the incident—that Mumia had “confessed” in the hospital emergency room, and they had simply forgotten to mention it at the time. The written police reports from that evening and the emergency room doctor say no confession ever happened.

Mumia was given an unprepared court-appointed attorney who was later disbarred. When Mumia tried to represent himself, the judge barred him from most of his own trial. The prosecution used eleven preemptory

challenges to knock almost all Black people off of the jury. Vital evidence was withheld from the defense, and part of the fatal bullet has “disappeared” from the police vaults. The political motivation of the prosecution was made clear when the prosecutor, arguing for the death penalty, read revolutionary quotations from an interview with Mumia published ten years earlier.

In the recent hearings for a new trial, a witness used against Mumia in his first trial came forward to say that she had lied earlier under police coercion. In retaliation, this witness was arrested in the courtroom as she stepped off the witness stand on an old warrant from another state.

In October 1998, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled unanimously against every issue raised in Mumia’s appeal and against a new trial. This ruling occurred in the wake of massive police scandals in Philadelphia, where dozens of people were released from jail because they had been convicted on the basis of evidence fabricated by the police.

A worldwide movement has grown in the last few years demanding a new trial. 35,000 people marched on April 24, California longshoremen staged a work stoppage, students did walk-outs. Those questioning Mumia’s conviction include the European Parliament, E.L. Doctorow, Toni Morrison, Jesse Jackson and Amnesty International. To counter this movement, the Fraternal Order of Police and other interested parties have orchestrated a well-financed national media campaign aimed at promoting false information on the case. Recently, for example, *Vanity Fair* and ABC’s *20/20* ran ridiculous rumors of a “confession” by Mumia—denied and refuted by Mumia.

Mumia’s appeal for a new trial will be entered in the federal courts by October 31. The potential to stop his execution is within our reach. But it will take a movement we have not seen in decades.

For the last 17 years Mumia has been locked alone in a cell 23 hours a day, denied contact visits with his family. His confidential legal mail has been opened by prison authorities. He was put into punitive detention for writing his book *Live From Death Row*, now in its 6th printing. Journalists are prohibited from filming or recording interviews with him. As Mumia has put it, “They don’t just want my death, they want my silence.”



MUMIA 911

National Day of Art to **September 11, 1999**

Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal

On September 11, 1999, artists from across the country are creating art and raising our voices to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. We are presenting works in theaters, clubs, galleries, cafés, and the streets, works which will move people to confront the issues crystallized in Mumia's case: racism, the death penalty, police brutality, incarceration of Black and Latino youth, persecution of revolutionaries, and government suppression of dissent. We are building a culture of resistance to stop the killing of Mumia Abu-Jamal and to transform the reactionary political climate in which those clamoring for his execution have thrived.

Hundreds of artists have signed the call for Mumia 911 including:

Steve Allen, Edward Asner*, Black Eyed Peas, Boots, Oscar Brown Jr., Jackson Browne, Don Byron, Chuck D, Chumbawamba, Jill Ciment, Common, Robbie Conal*, Cornershop, Peter Coyote, Cut Chemist, Kamau Daa'ood, Ossie Davis*, De La Soul, Deep Dish TV, Dread Scott, EPMD, Eve Ensler, Martin Espada*, Everlast, Fab 5 Freddy, Michael Franti*, reg E. gaines, Nikki Giovanni, Leon Golub, Danny Hoch*, Hothouse Flowers, Indigo Girls, Samuel L. Jackson, Jurassic 5, Mos Def & Talib Kweli, Last Poets, David Lester, Hugh Masekela, Keith Antar Mason, Tony Medina, Arnold Mesches, Kate Millett, Richard Montoya, Tracie Morris, Mutabaruka, Rage Against the Machine, Ozomatli, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Adrienne Rich, The Roots, Betye Saar, Sonia Sanchez*, Susan Sarandon, Pete Seeger*, Peter Sellars*, Ntozake Shange*, Shock G, DJ Spooky, Bill Viola, The Wailers, Alice Walker*, Naomi Wallace, Carrie Mae Weems and many more . . . *indicates Mumia 911 Advisory Board Member

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To contribute to Mumia's legal defense fund,
make checks payable to Black United Fund/MAJ,
and mail to:
Black United Fund
2227 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19132

For information about Mumia's case:

**International Concerned Family and Friends
of Mumia Abu-Jamal**
P.O. Box 19709,
Philadelphia, PA 19143

215-476-8812 / Fax: 215-476-7551

email: mumia@aol.com \ www.mumia.org

ICFFMAJ coordinates the campaign for Mumia nationwide.
Call to schedule Pam Africa, Ramona Africa and other speakers,
and find out about other events.

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