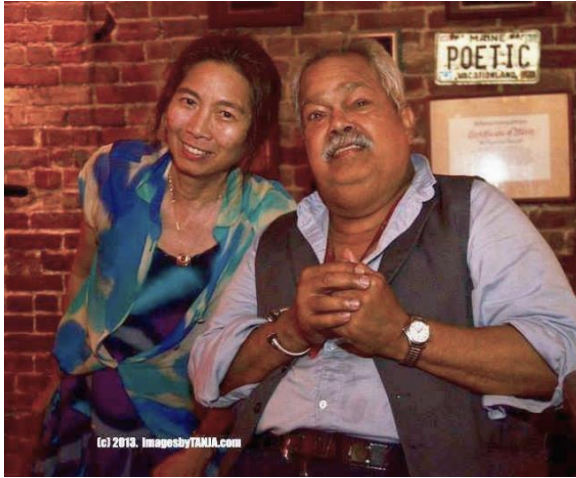


Susan Yung Remembering ...



Miguel Algarín always called me “Fay Chiang,” that stuck in his mind. He could never call me Susan Yung or just Susan. In his twisted mind, and I believe, not out of viciousness, he is referencing “All Asians are alike.”

Unfortunately, for a community in crises during the 70s & 80s, we gathered together to voice urban blights that ethnic minorities were invisible entities. That living in the East Village was a war zone for drug addicts, gangsterism, alcoholics and such low lives. If ignored by the majority, the problem will go away. Just continue to send soldiers overseas to fend for our democratic rights. As one individual is to be identified as being of another ethnic group i.e. Hispanic, Harlem or other groups, there shall be only one poet/artist from each ethnic group, so Miguel settled for a Fay Chiang. She emulated the Nuyorican style. Always greeted a Hispanic with “Que pasa?” that drew attention for her to hear their stories. As artists, we worked on CityArts murals depicting impoverished communities to build a brighter future.

While Fay began attending 7 Loaves or Charas meetings, I became an administrator for the Basement Workshop. Eventually, I attended the meetings to assist in writing proposals and sharing updated community events i.e. Street fairs on Mott St. or the Basement Workshop Board of Directors’ decisions, and upcoming activism for Confucius Plaza demonstrations. This allowed Asian Americans to voice their outcries for more jobs. Hispanics and Blacks as well as the end of the Vietnam war, provide ethnic studies in colleges and define cultural identities in America.

During these activities, Fay’s father was dying of liver cancer, her brother had developed Hodgkins Disease and she rarely focused on the struggle of the people even though she was too secretive about her ambitions to become director of the BW organization. Later after the Confucius Demonstrations, Fay instigated a coup of ridding the progressive Asians out of the Basement. I began a torrid relationship with a Nuyorican Vietnam Veteran for 2 years. It was a love affair.

Years later, I worked as a videographer for Rome Neal’s Banana Puddin/ Jazz where Miguel Algarín would pontificate at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe. He had become boisterous, loud and Gay besides struggling with his HIV illness. I would talk about how my Nuyorican ex became a PhD psychiatrist and had traveled around the world. Miguel told me of his first Chinese girlfriend named Julie Chu. Then, later Martin Wong, an artist from SF became his lover. Martin had died of AIDS, leaving Miguel alone. Rome & Miguel would always make side comments. It was their family joke. Miguel at least would do his ritual on Nuyorican’s Stage which was to wiggle his

back, swaying his hips while reciting a chant. There was much respect and freedom in his presentation.

Once I attended Taller Boricua on 1680 Lexington Ave near E. 106th St for poetry & art opening of Nuyorican artists. Miguel was there socializing. Later when the event was over, I worried that Miguel was too drunk to take the subway. So, I wound up taking the taxi to LES with Miguel. He still kept calling me “Fay.” I kept reminding him “I’m Susan.” Miguel would just laugh. The taxi did cost a bit and I sent the bill to Taller’s director. He said, “Never, take a taxi to LES with him.

Susan Yung; Domestic-violence; misogynist-hater; anti-racist; democractic-anarchist; ghetto-girl; Chinatown-Harlem; East Village-West Village; homesteader-gentrifier; yuppie-squatter; homeless-sheltered; American-Asian; World-Traveller; Adventress-Common-Law-Wife; Photographer-Videographer; Martial-Fine-Artist; Musician-Drummer; Artist-Scientist; Geologist-Librarian; Mathematician-Designer; Collector-Exhibitionist; Buyer-Seller; Cook-Politician; Migrant-Worker; Independent-Dependent; Pacifist-Activist.