

## **'Poohbah Lounge': A Place To Mix**

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Since its inception, the New York branch of the SGI-USA's Youth Peace Conference has strived to approach the concept of peace propagation through creative and innovative avenues. Hence, "The Poohbah Lounge." It was born in 1995 as a unique way to bring together SGI members and their guests in a unified ideal — celebrating global citizenship through poetry, music, dance, art and stories.

Recently, youth division member Andrew Gebert graciously surrendered his East Village loft to the renovating skills of his counterparts, who transformed it into a performance and buffet space. By 8:00 p.m., the performance portion of the evening was introduced by newly appointed YPC Chief Denise Royal.

Sharing the theme for the evening, "Building Bridges, Transcending Boundaries," she asked: "What are the boundaries we create?" Sex, race, music and money were among the answers.

Referring to the cultural mix in the city as well as in the room, Ms. Royal continued: "New York City is an amazing place for having to learn to deal with people. Housing conflicts, language differences, economics — what a place to experience human revolution.

"If there is something you would like to share tonight, please stand up and perform something for us or stay afterward and share with us your feelings about the evening."

Poetry from Maya Angelou and Persian poet Sohrab Sepheri, among others, a story by Rainer Maria Rilke and an a cappella rendition of a song by Desiree followed.

Several members also performed original pieces, which were moving, humorous, thought-provoking and sometimes personal. One person even shared thoughts from her daily journal.

The evening's success was marked not only by the smiles but by the new friends made and the new ideas learned.

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