

## TURNING TRAUMA INTO RESISTANCE

- AIDS Aaron Frazier - Panel 2

“A time not so long ago, where the beats were fast, so fast, loud and rhythmic too. You did not want the night to end, hey ho, hey ho, remember when that chant or phrase was we don't need no water, let the motherfucker burn, burn bitch burn, a party, you know.

Remember when T. Scott would spin those old songs, which kept you young, Oh, black daddy bam a lam, better yet, Love sensation or Ain't no mountain high enough to keep me from you. Not one of those red lights special, a party that lasted to the early afternoon. Remember when breakfast became brunch and dinner was a late afternoon snack followed by a nap or some other party starting in the afternoon.

A good time, good people, long gone so it seems. A time not so long ago. Larry Levan, Larry Pattison before the last song was played. Carl Bean song became a national anthem, I am happy, carefree and gay. The straight kids, gay kids, both young and old could identify. Color barriers broken down, walls broken down and let's not forget Sylvester, You Are My Friend, Two Tons of Fun, It's Raining Men.

A time which hit the club culture hard through travesty an epidemic came and became the enemy. HIV and AIDS are nicer words now, but then AIDS related complex was it or ARC was named then. Stigma already attached just in the name alone neither knowing nor caring at the time it took a many promising artists, entertainers and prospective people away. The faces have changed, but the ignorance has not. Once again, the cycle is repeating itself because people of color may be living longer, yet a lot of our long-term survivors are dying quietly, kidney failure, liver failure. All kinds of formalities causing infinite casualties. Alone, they are not.

The voiceless has re-risen. This is not a time to be silent. This is a time to be invisible. Just because we are of color, look around would you please, because if you remember those fallen heroes and heroes gone too soon, listen to your heart, remember the pain and if you can't remember anything, remember a party never ends, it goes on.

Each and everyone here is here for a reason whether a friend, a lover or a family member. Transition due to illness or disease, that is no one fault, but ignorance allow our government to cut shred the little hope of dignity that any of us have left just because our lifestyle is different, our color is different, our religious belief different, we do not deserve a death sentence. Remember the beat goes on.”