



REX NETTLEFORD 20  
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**ABSTRACTS & BIOS**



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## REASONINGS

### Reasonings 1A – Dismantling Inequalities

*Remapping (wi)self: “Narrative Autoethnography”, Self-inquiry to Foster “we-search”*

*Webster McDonald*

University of Kansas, USA

In this paper, I critique my pastUniveir and its impact on the present construction of identity. I specifically focus on the ways in which European notions of acceptability create a binary of opposition between what I conceptualise as a ‘grammatically correct presence’ and an ‘ungrammatical presence’. By entering this binary, I deconstruct the traditional linguistic undertone but also locate other practices deemed grammatically correct in terms of meeting the principles of a particular form. I also use ‘ungrammatical presence’ to describe those practices (speaking patois, writing patois, queer) perceived as not meeting certain principles. I contend that Derek Walcott’s oeuvre is a site where irreconcilable ideologies coalesce. Like Walcott, who remaps his European and African background by and through cultural experimentation to remake himself, I attempt to remake the self by laying bare the opposing practices of the past to figure out how I self-represent in the present. From time to time, I shift focus from the self as primary object to scholarship that doesn’t specifically address ideas of two-ness in the context of one body being in two spaces, to think about intersectional debates around cultural binaries. By the end of this paper, I would have hopefully answered three fundamental questions: Is hybridity the answer to the legacies of colonisation? How can the researcher’s two-ness (Queer and Christian) be negotiated via similar processes of ‘cultural disobedience’? What are the ways in which a practice as research methodology via auto-ethnography both disrupt scholarly hegemony (the traditional archival recuperation of data) and propose a decolonial approach to critical gendered discourses?

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Webster McDonald is a Jamaican theatre practitioner and educator. He received a B.F.A. in Theatre Arts from the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) and a M.A. in Theatre Education: Theatre and Community from Emerson College. McDonald’s research delineates/deconstructs the relationship between masculinity, Caribbean culture, sexuality, and performance. At the doctoral level he intends to further critique and problematise the ways in which aspects of Jamaican popular cultural expressions such as Dancehall music serve to engender hegemonic constructions of masculinity and femininity and to provocatively explicate the intersection between heteronormativity and heteropatriarchy. McDonald will expand on his emerging theory “creative retributive violence” influenced by Fanon’s “The Wretched of the Earth”, which will embed radical social change practices while centering Dub-poetry theory, Jamaican Folk rituals, avant-garde theatre-making practices as sites for social critique and restorative justice.**



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## ***Black Womxn Osunality in Popular Visual Culture***

*Sasha-Kay Hinds*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts

Negative representations of black women in the media have been based in historical colonial stereotypes, that perceived black women as loud, hypersexual and ghetto. These stereotypes have trickled down into society and have impacted the way black women and girls are treated in their daily lives, where they are sexually exploited and abused. Although Black women spirits have been broken due to the evils of slavery, society, and religion, they are using social media tools to reclaim their representation and sexuality in the media. Developing hashtags such as #blackgirlmagic and #endadultificationbias has aided in the building of communities of support for black women and girls around the world. Using indigenous African Spiritual practices inspired by the concept of Osunality to decolonialise the way we analyse images of black women being unapologetically themselves online, the research findings highlight that black women have shared their own stories of exploitation through their mirror selfies, captions, and hashtags in order to promote self-care, self-therapy and self-healing for not just themselves but other black women and girls around the world.

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Sasha-Kay Hinds** is currently a student of Interdisciplinary Studies at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) in Kingston, Jamaica. In her practice as a visual artist, she uses skills she acquired from her studies at HEART TRUST NTA (2013-2017) to make works in digital art, photography, and textile design. Her practice has expanded to include other disciplines, digital projections, video art and installation. Hinds has exhibited works in a few exhibitions namely, *Manifestations*, EMCVPA Student exhibition, and *[Un]finished*. In 2021 she placed 1st in Research in the Arts Day, Research Pitch competition at the EMCVPA. Hinds has been awarded scholarships from: CHASE Fund, Grace Foundation, Edna Manley Foundation and CB Facey Foundation. She has also worked as a volunteer conservator at the National Gallery of Jamaica (2019) and was an intern at New Local space, NLS, both located in Kingston, Jamaica.

## ***What the Arts Reveal: An Exploration of Co-existing Contemporaries***

*Sameera Iyengar, PhD*

Freelance Creative Producer, India

The lens to understanding and embracing culture in India still runs by and large on the colonial model. We look at performance practices from rural areas with anthropological eyes, see the theatre form that was adapted from the colonists as modern/contemporary, and see the teleology of performance as decided by European and UK practice and scholarship. They (Europe and UK) are the future, and anything born out of our history is the past, of interest only as a relic. I work as a creative producer in India, and one of my obsessions is redefining what is understood as contemporary arts practice. How can we understand context, history, practice and contemporary audiences as defining a certain version of the contemporary? And how can we understand that many versions of the contemporary coexist, across forms and performances, and in the same



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performers as well? How can we claim the present and future for cultural expressions born out of this land, and in the process define our present and future not merely as colonial mimicry, but instead born out of all that has come together in our history (including colonialism)? How can a close study and communication of ongoing arts practices reveal the contemporary imperatives of societies, and the dialogue and response of the artistic expressions arising from and speaking to those societies? This paper, accompanied by a powerpoint presentation, attempts responses to these questions through an exploration of diverse living arts practices in India— the 2,000 years old Koodiyattam, the 300 years old Kattaikkuttu, the 80 years old Pandavani, and the urban theatre practice of Mumbai.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Sameera Iyengar is a creative producer and theatre person. Her passion lies in mobilising the performing arts as anchors for public discourse, towards the proliferation of critical thinking, ideas and understanding. She co-founded Junoon (2012-2020) to share the richness of the arts across India. Her earlier work includes a decade as Director Projects, Prithvi Theatre, and a stint as researcher/writer for Seagull Theatre Quarterly. She has created, curated and run festivals, arts conversations, school programmes, carnivals, children’s workshops and theatre exhibitions. Iyengar has also co-founded the India Theatre Forum and the SMART (Strategic Management in the Art of Theatre) capacity-building course, towards strengthening the theatre ecosystem in India. She co-edited “Our Stage: The Pleasures and Perils of Theatre Practice” in *India Today*. Iyengar graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a major in Mathematics and minor in Theatre. She has a PhD in theatre from the University of Chicago.**

## **Reasoning 1B – Decolonising Education**

### *Decolonising Education in Jamaica: The Practice of Freedom*

*Latoya Briscoe*

Independent Researcher and Writer, Jamaica

The education system in the Caribbean, like many others in the world, is largely modelled on a Western colonial framework. It is this education system that was used by former European colonisers to inculcate colonial subjects with ideas of their ‘inherent’ inferiority, and implant messages about their racial, social, cultural and political superiority. The legacy of this education model continues in 21st century Jamaica. This presentation explores how decolonising the Jamaican education system can provide liberation for a society which still espouses and frequently reinforces acts of oppression. By decolonising the system—students, teachers, curriculum and politics—we are able to engage in what Friere calls the practice of freedom. This practice enables citizens to think critically about their experiences and the occurrences in society and engage in “the expression of social discontents” which constitute real aspects of their oppressive situation (Weffort, 1967). In the education system, the teacher is often viewed as an authoritarian force with immense power to change the current education system. However, the teacher cannot engage in the practice of freedom, or lead students to engage in the practice of freedom, without thinking critically about his or her own values, beliefs and place in the colonial matrix of power. By using my experience as a black female English teacher in a traditional



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British inheritance school and my yearning for a greater understanding of self, I will show how I was able to arrive at the solution to the oppressive patterns which permeate the system—the decolonisation of education. It is important to confront and challenge the current power structure which influenced education in the past, and continues to do so today. It is only then that we can begin the process of practicing freedom not only as individuals but collectively as a society.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Latoya Briscoe is a writer, researcher and educator. Her interests in Afro-Caribbean, decolonial and feminist literature began during her final year of undergraduate studies in 2016, when she completed her research thesis on ‘performing’ Louise Bennett. She explored the prejudices ascribed to language in the Jamaican society and the ways in which they have shaped the performances of Bennett’s work in the local performing arts scene. Her passion for acquiring and sharing knowledge led her to a career in teaching English Language, Literature and History at the high school level in Jamaica. Her essay entitled “The Gordon Town Bruk-Weh” has been published in *Pree: Caribbean Writing*. She currently works as a Marketing and Communications Executive in Kingston, Jamaica and ultimately aspires to pursue a career which facilitates her exploration of decolonisation, cultural anthropology, research and writing. She enjoys reading and re-reading Caribbean and African diaspora classics.**

## ***Decolonising Education and Indigenous Representation in Jamaica***

*Lesley-Gail Atkinson Swaby, PhD*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts

The arrival of Columbus marks the commencement of almost five centuries of European colonisation in the Americas. The colonial legacy has penetrated the political, religious and economic structures. There is evidence of psychological scars and a cultural disconnect in the contemporary period. With Jamaica’s Independence, efforts were made to decolonise our education system and create a new Jamaican identity. Education is viewed as a largely systematic process from the primary to the tertiary levels. Our cultural practices are integral parts of our informal education systems, especially how they are manifested through our creative, visual and performing arts. Whether through formal institutions or informal systems, education plays a critical role in the shaping of identity, values, and representation of a nation and its people. By using the case of the Indigenous Taíno, this presentation will highlight key challenges observed in representation and depiction. The paper seeks to examine persistent colonial constructs in our formal and informal educational systems. Finally, through engaged dialogue, alternative strategies will be encouraged to reflect respectful treatment of the Indigenous peoples.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Lesley-Gail Atkinson Swaby has over 15 years’ experience as an archaeologist, cultural resource manager, researcher and educator. She is committed to the promotion and preservation of the heritage of Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean. Atkinson Swaby currently serves as an Adjunct Lecturer at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) where she teaches art history of the Americas and Africa prior to and after colonisation, along with Research Methodology.**



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## *Adopting Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles for Arts Education in Online Environments*

*Susan Lee Quee*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

The recent increase of online learning in tertiary education in the Caribbean, has given rise to a wide variety of traditional programmes being offered in full or partly online. However, designing online instruction for subject areas in the arts can be challenging. The visual arts studio disciplines, for example, has proved to be one such challenge for local tertiary art students because of the physicality and studio approach involved in the art making process. In addition, lecturers new to teaching studio art in this modality are often frustrated by the constraints and barriers of real-world representation in studio art courses. Consequently, the learning environment for the artist lecturer and artist student is static, unnatural, demotivational and awkward. There are necessary co-relations among the artist's physical art-making space, studio practice, studio habits of mind, the reciprocal observation, reflective critique and critical analysis that takes place between lecturer and the artist student, that is not holistically or inherently present in an online studio learning environment. There is limited research regarding embedding UDL tenets explicitly for the design and implementation in online visual arts courses.

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Susan Lee Quee is the acting Dean at the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts where she lectures across both the Visual Communications and Art Education departments. Lee Quee has delivered Graphic Design, Digital Design, Web Design, Interactive Media and Technology in the Arts Classroom and facilitated a Communication Seminar in Advertising course in collaboration with other Faculty. Lee Quee Susan is also the convenor for the Caribbean Examinations Council CAPE© Art and Design syllabus committee. With a deep interest in design research and emerging technologies in Art and Design Education, Lee Quee is an active design practitioner who has engaged in design research and led design projects for the editorial and design committees of the College including the Rex Nettleford Arts Conference and the Jonkunnu Arts Journal.**

## *Decolonising the Spirit of Cloth, A Triangulation of Identity: Jamaica and the Caribbean, Redressing History to Frame a National Forwarding*

*Miriam Hinds Smith*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

History records many signifiers that are recognisable heralds of a people, a nation, a society. However, in this instance, of critical concern is the cultural identity and ancestral resonance of cloth within the context of Jamaica, her Caribbean counterparts and the triangulation of nationhood through the lens of a post-colonial becoming. It would be remiss to not recognise the centrality of and important carriage cloth holds as a tool for the teaching of histories, as markers of resistance and the formation of national identity and legacy. Its integral components of fibre, origin, pattern, form, functionality, historical conveyance, and the spiritual function in our lives as tapestries narrating with a language of time past to present. We therefore ask the question, what of our deracinated indigenous retentions and how might this be preserved as the natural



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becoming as against the assimilated, the imposed? It is of significance to deconstruct and investigate the depositional historical sequence of the various layers of the use of the madras as our national heraldry through its Indian, British, Jamaican triangulation as an assimilated signifier for a post-colonial independent Jamaica. Of significance, however, is the questions of a way forward in the evolution of our evolving creole neonatal nation, to determine and engage a conversation of re-dress, essential is the reframing of our context of cloth as identity. The attempt will be made to demonstrate how positively impactful and relevant is the need within the educational framing of our people and de-stigmatisation of aspects of our practices and ways of being to positively affect our selfhood, our identity and our economies through this medium that defines us, our second skin, Cloth.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Miriam Hinds Smith is a mother, wife, artist, and educator, a multi-faceted individual committed to the development of aspiring artist and entrepreneurs. As the Dean of the School of Visual Arts, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA), she is driven to create collaborative opportunities for students across all sectors. A Chevening Alumni and honours graduate with a master's degree in Fashion and Design; Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton UK, Hinds Smith also studied at the L'Ecole des Beaux Arts; Alsace, France. Hinds Smith is also an honours graduate of the EMCVPA and is a trained educator from the University of Technology, Jamaica, with a desire to elevate the development and conversations around local textile underpinned by the carriage of history yet moving forward with opportunities afforded through technology.**

## ***All That We Lost: Recovering Ancestral Art Practices***

*Tessa Alexander*

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Euro-American art history and western art techniques continue to be privileged in the pedagogy including the naming and validation of artworks. Therefore, in seeking to decolonise art education and to bring equity into the visual arts in the region, it is imperative that the narrative of the art canon be critically analysed and space be created to insert the art traditions and potential art histories of the enslaved and indentured, pre colonisation. Indeed, it can be argued that although regional artists seek to forge a Caribbean canon, work is often produced as a response to colonisation or, when employing African or Indian aesthetic, rely on mimicry. By employing the five stages of decolonisation as outlined in Poka Laenui's *Processes of Decolonization*—rediscovery and recovery, mourning, dreaming, commitment, and action—this paper discusses the importance of including the art techniques and traditions of the ancestors of Caribbean people into the canon. Additionally, this paper argues that these art practices were denied by colonial narratives which maintained that the enslaved were without a history and civilisation, silenced, through creolisation and acculturation, belittled, by being relegated to primitive art, folk art and craft and/or tokenised. Therefore, recognition of these art histories and techniques will empower students who will now understand their ancestors were also artists, add nuance to the existing narrative, and bring about a more inclusive and equitable Caribbean visual arts canon.



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## **BIOGRAPHY:**

Nicola Tessa Alexander Sloane-Seale is a visual artist, part time lecturer at the DCFA (Department of Creative and Festival Arts) at the UWI, and creator of Kids Create 868, an arts-based programme for children specialising in cultural, historical and topical projects. She holds an MA in Cultural Studies from the UWI where her project *Nurturing the Outside Child* investigated the impact of mothering and motherhood on art practice. Sloane-Seale is currently pursuing her PhD, also in Cultural Studies. Her practice-based project, which is a critical analysis of the canon, is a reimagining of the potential art histories of her foremothers.

## **Reasonings 1C – Psychic Disarray and Reparation**

### ***Jah9: A Poststructural Approach to Reconstructing the Self***

Royane Green

National Library of Jamaica, Jamaica

Janine Cunningham, (artiste moniker “Jah9”) as a woman neo-reggae artiste, has eked out for herself a distinctive identity against the backdrop of the global reggae movement. Through her well-articulated recursive praxes involving yoga, Rastafari, and what she deems as self-study, she has become a leading voice in the discussion around modern afro-Caribbean identity reformation towards the healed or renewed self. This paper, through the lens of poststructuralism, situates the paradigm of subjectivity, as articulated by Robert G Dunn, within the discursive field of social identity, highlighting the notion of self-empowerment being practical and accessible through ritual. Identity is said to be established within discursive boundaries, structured through pre-existing power-relations which shape the world around us. The research asserts that through the expansion of “consciousness”, subjects are able to manipulate various “ways of being”, exercising agency in defining their own modes of relation (identity) through individualised recursive practice. A narrative exploration of the woman neo-reggae artiste Jah9 will be engaged investigating her own spiritual and mental liberation from oppressive colonial norms of Caribbean identity. The methodology includes discourse and content analyses making use of recorded interviews and original song lyrics triangulated with scholarly sources which focus on Rastafari, womanhood, and Caribbean identity.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Royane Green serves as the Director of Special Programmes at the National Library of Jamaica. He is a graduate student at The University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona, pursuing a Master of Arts in Cultural Studies where he uses the methodology of critical discourse analysis in his main research. Green has led an active professional life as a creative strategist with over 5 years’ experience in the fields of marketing and corporate communications, as well as special project management, event production and artist management. An avid dance theatre practitioner, Green has served his country through the facilitation of performance workshops and as a competition adjudicator with the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission and Festival Coordinator for Jamaica Dance Umbrella. He also leads the Movements Dance Company of Jamaica as a principal member.**



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## ***Separating Eurocentric Influences from African Performance Art Forms in Jamaica: A Survey of Cultural Revival Possibilities of Nigeria and Jamaica Interactions***

*Emmanuel Nwachuku, PhD*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This research is an exposition of Jamaican and Nigerian peoples shared origins and proposes revival possibilities for Jamaica's vanishing Afrocentric performance Art forms. The research identifies mutually beneficial grounds for Africans in diaspora to reconnect with Africa and has looked at such collaboration and interaction possibilities through the lens of the performing arts, with regards to Nigeria and Jamaica specifically. The design of this research involved survey design, which encompassed interviews, observation, content analysis and application of census sampling techniques. The findings identify that there are similarities between Jamaica's Jonkunnu dramatic masquerade dance and several Nigerian social masquerades and traditional dramatic performance forms, and that the Jonkunnu needs to find its African origins to be revived and avoid becoming extinct. Also found is a need for collaboration between Jamaica's "Jollywood" and Nigeria's Nollywood film industries. This study recommends that it is imperative for Jamaica to quickly develop her film industry through collaborative workshops and exchange programmes with Nigeria. Both governments should make purposeful investment in the film industry and local children television programmes, to project African culture, create jobs and development. Also recommended is that the Jonkunnu should be revived in dance troupes, using the culture and style of the Agaba, Kwagh-hir, Ekpo or Alarinjo masquerade theatre forms found in Nigeria separately for each troupe. This shall re-engage youths positively and improve on the African contents for tourist attracting performances and carnivals.

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Emmanuel Nwachuku is a Nigerian citizen. He has lectured for upwards of 22 years, first, at Lagos State University, then University of Port Harcourt and now at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) where he is also the Head of Department, Technical Theatre, and Design. He holds a professional Certificate in Theatre Arts (CTA- Acting track), and a Bachelor of Arts degree (B.A. – directing track), both from the University of Port Harcourt. He also holds a master's degree in Performing Arts (M.A. – technical track) from the University of Ilorin, and a Doctorate degree in Puppetry and children television programme design, from the University of Port Harcourt, all in Nigeria. He has several academic publications in Journals and books to his credit, and has scripted, screen played, produced, directed and designed many Nollywood movies and staged dramas.**

## ***Bogle's Redemption: White Art for a Black Public***

*Jesse Golding*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This paper is a critical examination of repeated controversies surrounding public monuments, particularly the 'Bogle' and 'Redemption Song' statues. This examination is undoubtedly framed by postcolonial theory under which one can find relevant conceptual tools for this engagement. Popular culture and representation are worthwhile points of entry for this assessment. These theories contain themes of class, race, identity, and power, which are all wrapped up in the



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controversies that arise around public monuments in Jamaica. In cultural studies, the terrain of popular culture is understood as an area of contention, a push and pull or tug of war over meaning, but more importantly, where power is expressed and challenged. An early understanding of the term presents popular culture as the culture of the unsophisticated masses in stark contrast to the more exclusive and refined high culture policed by the elite. This meaning is still very relevant when discussing visual art. The Paul Bogle statue was erected in front of the Morant Bay Courthouse, St. Thomas, in 1965 as a monument to the hero and the 1865 Morant Bay rebellion which he led along with George William Gordon. The 'Redemption Song' monument, a whole generation later, was erected in 2003 at the Emancipation Park, in the heart of Kingston. The first, a symbol of revolution and the latter, one of freedom. In the wake of the erection of both monuments, the public attempted to express the power in its collective voice. Reading the controversies around public monuments through a representation lens, one brings into focus psychological imprints that sculpt a postcolonial nature. No matter the terrain, somewhere beneath the surface, race, class and identity rub against each other destabilising dominance. Power is shared, exchanged and exerted between the triad of the patron, the artist and the public.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**African retention and Caribbean sensibilities underpin Jesse Golding's Jamaican-ness giving rise to a dexterity with which he manoeuvres time and space. Through his readiness and adaptability, Golding has garnered a wealth of life experiences of a personal and professional nature, all the while managing to find outlets for his creative expression. His drive and determination to achieve greater knowledge and understanding of Jamaica's cultural heritage, and his vow to advance his career and professional achievement, have propelled him, at this time, to pursue a MA Cultural Studies degree at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona's Institute of Caribbean Studies.**

## ***A No Evri Kin Tiit A Laaf/A Nuh Every Kin Teet' A Laugh: Comedy as Subversion in Jamaican Theatre***

*Brian Johnson*

The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica

This research paper investigates the subversive use of humour that has been passed down through generations from the slavery plantations to the theatrical productions of Jamaican Comedy today, since, though they incite laughter and provide 'escape', they can incite new consciousness that goes against the accepted norms of society. 'Theatre Semiotics', along with the 'Superiority Theories of Humour' and the 'Uses and Gratifications' model formed the theoretical underpinnings of the study where Jamaican Comedic plays were textually analysed, and theatre practitioners were engaged in a focus group discussion. The study found that Jamaican Theatre Comedy challenged norms related to Class and Capitalism, The State/Law, Sexuality and Gender, Music, Religion and Language. A recommendation of a Jamaican Theatre Model (JTM) of subversive comedic characters was made with a link to Jonkunnu, a traditional folk form that came out of expressions around Christmas time among the enslaved in Jamaica, as subconsciously it seems, Jonkunnu lives on in theatre. A presentation of this paper will include



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performances of Jonkunnu and Jamaican Comedy so that the convergences can be visualised from any points of departure.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Brian Johnson is a Master of Arts student of Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. He is a theatre practitioner who writes, directs, performs, produces and teaches. His work is dedicated to creative activism where he uses the arts to encourage the empowerment, especially of those who have been misrepresented and marginalised by oppressive cultural ideology.**

## **Reasonings 1D – The Creative Ecology for Sustainable Development**

### ***Creative Climate Communication: Metaphor, Imagination, Transformation, and Sustainability***

*Caitlyn Kamminga*

University of Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

There is a gap between what scientists suggest needs to be done about the climate crisis and the human institutions' slowness and inaction in doing what is needed. Metaphors are a way of sparking the imagination, so that we can visualise new possibilities. While imagining may occur "outside" reality, the alternatives it brings to light can provide ideas on how to move people and organisations towards change and even transformation to a different reality. In the case of climate change, that alternative reality is one where life on the planet goes on because of the transformation of existing human systems so that the planetary systems will hold, allowing life to be sustained. Metaphors have the potential to spark a transformation, to invoke the need for 'action' to make a sustainable future for our species and many others simultaneously. Metaphors are also the key to a good calypso. "To be a good calypsonian, you must be a good metaphor man so that you will be able to mix and be very creative with words...using metaphors is the best way to say the inappropriate appropriately and get away" (Dr. Hollis Liverpool, *The Mighty Chalkdust*). Calypso is rooted in traditions developed by West African enslaved people brought to the Caribbean. Unlike many other folk traditions, calypsonians traditionally speak directly to politicians, offering prescriptive solutions to social problems. In this lecture presentation we will investigate the role of the artist in creative climate communication, examine an arts integrated project proposal for school residencies that explores climate change in small island developing states (SIDS), and identify why the fight for climate justice is also a fight for racial justice.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Caitlyn Kamminga is an Associate Professor of Music (Double Bass) at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, the Academy for the Performing Arts. She holds a BM and MM from the University of Southern California. Kamminga has worked and toured worldwide with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia, and the London Mozart Players and recorded the symphonic repertoire extensively with many leading symphony orchestras. She has been the recipient of major grants from the United States Embassy to Trinidad and Tobago and the Vincent Wilkinson Foundation for the creation of new works, including *Jab Molassie* and *River of Freedom*, which received an American premiere in 2018 at the Chautauqua Institution in New York. In March 2019, *River of Freedom* was performed to high acclaim at the African American**



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**Museum in Philadelphia. *Basses Are Loaded*, Kamminga's first play, was staged in November 2019 at the Zeider's American Dream Theatre in Norfolk, VA.**

## ***The Struggling Artist Marries Support. What are the Resources that Aid the Sustainability of The "Creative Entrepreneur"?***

*Renee Kitson*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This study highlights the support systems that are available to creative entrepreneurs. In doing such, the organisations that they interface and the strategies they use to sustain their livelihood are noted. The creative economy in which these entrepreneurs function generates financial outcomes through creative and cultural products. These products aid the creative entrepreneurs' identity and the physical space; their clients, cities, urban development, and audiences. They act as a "knight in shining armour", ready to rescue communities from social issues, creating social value. This study is essential as it will note the resources available to creatives, whether in art, design-based or art administrative careers. It comparatively analyses the perspectives of the UK-based creative hub, STEAMhouse, art-based social enterprise, BLESST Centre and Jamaican based creatives social enterprise, Life Yaad and the Tide Rising Art Projects. The study notes the issues of these creatives entrepreneurs and their stride to sustain their enterprises. The main methods of research were observational analysis and reviewing the literature. The findings highlight the opportunities available to the creatives through visibility of their craft, collaboration, accessing networks, pre and post-COVID-19 pandemic environment. The study gives a greater understanding of the creative and cultural sectors of Birmingham, UK and Kingston, Jamaica.

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Renee Kitson is a visual art creative, podcast host and lecturer in the School of Arts Management and Humanities at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA). She is a graduate of the School of Visual Arts at the EMCVPA where she completed a BFA in Visual Communication and of Birmingham City University where she attained a Master of Arts in Arts and Project Management. Throughout her career, Kitson has gained valuable knowledge in the design and marketing industry of Jamaica. Her master's study propelled her to research on creative based social enterprises and creative entrepreneurship within the urban spaces of Birmingham, UK. She now hopes to aid the Jamaican art world through engaging in and facilitating community art initiatives.**

## ***"We Don't Tell Our Stories Anymore..."***

*Laura Lee Jones*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

As a youngster, whenever there was a journey down memory lane by an elder, it started with the preamble "Once upon a time" at which point the listener would be engaged by the tales of days far removed from their own reality and where only the vivid descriptions of the storyteller painted images in the mind of the listener. As radios and televisions became accessible to the



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majority of the Jamaica populace post-independence, the less oral traditions continued. Radio became a medium to help transmit some of those stories and soon after, so did television. Radio and television were followed by the satellite dish, then cable, then the world wide web (internet). Today we are in the digital age where every and anything is a click away. Google it, and it will be found (or at least some semblance of “it”). Many stories are documented through various media and are accessible on various platforms. Content is king they say, but what has been the approach in Jamaica to tell more Jamaican stories and make Jamaican content accessible? Is there an audience for such content? Will the younger generation find relevance in the content generated? What are the stories to be told? This paper will examine the prospects of “creative content” represented as stories documenting the history, development and the future of Jamaica in the arts looking specifically at fashion, film and music. There is a symbiotic relationship between these three areas in the arts and are indicators of a Jamaican identity that is ever evolving and ever seeking to unpack the conversations surrounding de-colonisation. “I want to hear the stories of days gone by, of the present and of those to come...but I want to hear it in an authentic voice”.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Laura Lee Jones is a Senior Lecturer and Head of Department for the Applied Arts Department in the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA). Her career has spanned the areas of design, product development and business development within the creative industries (CI) for well over twenty years. Jones has worked with agencies such as JAMPRO, Jamaica Business Development Corporation, and the International Trade Centre. She also worked with UNESCO on world heritage and intangible cultural heritage projects.**

## ***Contesting Global Fashion Commodification: A Case of Jamaica***

*Robert Hall*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Dress is a powerful tool of expression in Jamaican popular culture. Dress is especially important to the negotiation of social space and dominance as seen in the work of Buckeridge in his discourse on Fashion, as well as Niaah and Hope in their bodies of work rooted in the nexus of Jamaican Dancehall. Dress, being a crucible of the Jamaican identity, becomes pertinent to global discourse in the extent to which countries are able to reap the full benefits (economic and otherwise) of a recognisable national identity. Commercial attempts to broker Jamaican dress to the international markets through Jamaican luxury brands have seen low success rates or simply low documentation at the point of writing this paper. Additionally, in the case of Jamaica, there have been many governmental missions to achieve global market penetration yet very little sustainable or enduring presence post initial impact. This paper proposes that the Jamaican presence and influence in international fashion is only tolerated as commodified tropes, fitting into the stories which perpetuate colonial or metropolitan domination of developing states and identities. This work will rest on the conception of scholar Mimi Sheller, seeing the Caribbean as a system of outflows organised in the service of metropolitan and first world spaces. Here, I assert that attempts at establishing dominance in fashion by and for the benefit of the Jamaica



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and the wider Caribbean region must recognise, confront and deconstruct the perspective of fetishisation while proffering wider understandings and thus praxes of local fashion industries.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Robert Hall is a Fashion Designer currently lecturing in the Textiles and Fibre Arts Department in the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA). He is also involved in the development of the local fashion sector through his engagement at the Jamaica Business Development Corporation where he is able to guide fashion as well as Gift and Craft clients in various stages of their company development journey. He has been consultant to numerous local brands, many at the forefront of the fashion industry, presented many technical workshops sessions covering topics inclusive of design and line development, and pioneered programs to evolve new generations of Jamaican designers. Currently pursuing a graduate degree in cultural studies, his research concerns surround the development of the local creative sector prioritising the fashion industry.**

## **Reasonings 2A - No Don't Stop the Carnival: Dis/rupture, En/rapture and COVID Carnival**

### *Panel Abstract*

*Alpha Obika*

The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica

*Camille Qaumina; Marvin George*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

*Kai Barratt, PhD; Melville Cooke*

University of Technology, Jamaica, Jamaica

The Canboulay riots of 1881, World War II, and the polio outbreak of 1972, marked three critical moments in history that disrupted carnival festivities in Trinidad and Tobago. During World War II, calypsonian, The Duke of Iron (aka Cecil Anderson) sang his timeless calypso refrain “No! Don't stop the carnival!” asserting public displeasure over the governor, Sir Hubert Young's, decision to ban all Carnival festivities throughout the war period. In 2021, the kaiso has been given reprise in Olatunji Yearwood's soca hit by the same name (ie. “Don't Stop Carnival”); this time serving as a lively lament over the cancellation of the full carnival festivities owing to the current Coronavirus pandemic. This action in Trinidad and Tobago has invariably threatened carnival's continuity across the region and in the diaspora. Carnival itself is a festival of the mass that thrives on bodily contact, and as such, its very ethos is diametrically opposed to physical distancing, one of the key health and safety measures of this time. This fact alone jeopardises its regular staging and places the ecology in disarray. Be that as it may, history has taught us that beyond its commercial relevance, the cultural and community regeneration significance ascribed to the festival holds as much if not greater value to the festival's devotees. As such, it was not surprising that the alternative strategies for facilitating a modified/scaled down version of the festival, became the enterprise of carnival industry workers and stakeholders. Moreover, in this time of dis-ease, the carnival, even in its alter-native form, is clearly needed to provide healing and restitution. Without an actual carnival, its essence has



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remained. Notwithstanding its virtuality, it has provided hope, proving that community and interconnectedness are among its essential virtues.

## **BIOGRAPHIES:**

**Alpha Obika** is a lecturer at the Caribbean School of Media and Communication (CARIMAC) and an Adjunct Lecturer at the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS), both based at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. Obika specialises in Communication and Cultural Policy, Event Management, and critical analysis of media and cultural products.

**Camille Quamina** is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Drama at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, and is currently a Cultural Studies PhD student at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine. As a theatre director, her ongoing praxis and research focus on Caribbean culture and aesthetics in performance.

**Kai Barratt** is a lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Technology, Jamaica. Barratt completed her PhD in Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona where her research focused on the performances of female soca artistes on and off the stage. Currently, her interests include exploring social media platforms as a space for carnival representations. She is also curious about the extension of the Trinidad-style carnival to other sites in the Caribbean specifically in Jamaica. Some of her work has been published in peer reviewed journals and others are under review. Barratt is a social media enthusiast and has her own blog.

**Melville Cooke** lectures in the Bachelor of Arts, Communication Arts and Technology (BACAT) programme, School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Technology, Jamaica. He is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Cultural Studies (ICS), The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. His current study seeks to deepen a research interest in communication utilising Jamaican popular music, that with his MPhil, which was completed at the ICS. Cooke's most recent publication is the book chapter "Dancehall Music's Resistance: Upstaging Diageo's Prescriptive Marketing Rules in Jamaica" in *Re-imagining Communication in Africa and the Caribbean: Global South Issues in Media, Culture and Technology* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).

**Marvin George** serves as the Dean at the School of Drama at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, and is a PhD student at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine. He is interested in the possibilities for traditional Caribbean cultural forms in contemporary performance making, popular education and development.

## **Reasonings 2B – The Stories We Tell: Narratives of Self in the Digital Age**

### ***Movement, Myths and Mas***

*McIntyre, Amanda*

She Right Collective, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

This presentation will reflect on the first ten years of my utilisation of the Baby Doll masquerade with discussions of the negotiations between the intersecting spheres of memory, myths and mas. I will also share from my current work that includes performance art in photography and film. I will discuss and show selections from *Dolly Ma Brigitta: Monday Mourning* and *Movement, Myths and Mas*, a collaboration with Nyugen E. Smith. *Dolly Ma Brigitta: Monday Mourning* (2021) contrived ways of presenting Carnival during the COVID-19 pandemic when it was



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cancelled for the second time since World War II and which echoed the 1972 postponement of the festival due to an outbreak of polio. This work is in solidarity with protests that took place across Trinidad and Tobago, during what would have been the Carnival season, condemning gender-based violence and in support of victims. It refers to the Haitian goddess of fertility Maman Brigitte who is patroness of mothers and women who seek her assistance especially in cases of domestic violence. *Movement, Myths and Mas* is a traditional mas art performance inspired by Simone Schwarz-Bart's one act play *Ton Beau Capitaine* (1987) and explores movement as dance, direction and socio-political development. It intersects queer, feminist and pan africanist themes to advocate for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in an illustration of possible meanings of separation, home and citizenship. There is no shared physical stage but there is a shared virtual stage with cross country distance between the performers. The religious imagery and symbolism of the play reference Vodou, Orisha and Roman Catholics traditions. The work includes the Baby Doll and King Sailor masquerades as counterparts to the main characters in the play and examines these within its literary framework.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Amanda T. McIntyre is a Trinidadian author, artist and advocate. She is the Interim Art Administrator at NLS, Kingston and served as an advisor for the 2020 Curatorial and Art Writing Fellowship hosted by NLS. She was also part of the faculty for the 2020 La Pràitca Group Residency. In 2018 McIntyre founded She Right Collective (SRC), a Caribbean feminist advocacy network. SRC is focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights through community outreach in the areas of medical interventions, legal aid and education programs. SRC programming includes the curation of platforms for contemporary art, literature and performance. McIntyre is an interdisciplinary artist with an award-winning performance practice. She is the creator of Dolly Ma Baby Doll masquerade. In 2017 she was awarded the title "Ole Mas Champion" by the Bocas Literary Festival and the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago.**

## ***Poetry Between Trinidad and Venezuela***

*Brent Crosson*

University of Texas, USA

In her classic essay "What is a Spanish?" anthropologist Aisha Khan (1993) argues that "Spanish" is a code word for racial ambiguity in Trinidad. But "Spanish" is more than a floating signifier for racial indeterminacy on the island. The word functions to conceal two partially overlapping cultural streams that have often been elided in paradigms of national identity. Firstly, "Spanish" can mask indigenous religious, musical, or phenotypical forms with a word suggesting European, colonial, or ambiguous origins. This poem looks at the word's other primary referent in Trinidad: the neighboring Venezuelan mainland, visible from the western and southern shores of the anglophone island. Since Trinidad's first human habitation, the island has been indelibly linked to Venezuela through indigenous transigrations. My own anthropological work there showed me how important Venezuelan music, food, and language was for the island's complex culture. Still, Venezuelans are often exoticised, objectified, hyper-sexualised, scapegoated, and stereotyped in contemporary Trinidad, facing serious discrimination there. Today, the answer to the titular question of Aisha Khan's classic essay should be unadorned of ambiguity. "Spanish" is a category based on language and nationality that facilitates



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discrimination and exclusion in Trinidad. But the word also reveals binational entanglements—entanglements epitomised by the daily migrations of the island’s national bird, the scarlet ibis, from Trinidad to Venezuela and back again that this poem/presentation depicts.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Brent Crosson is Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin.**

### *Shades of the Self: Digital Covid Chronicles – Silencing the Terror Within!*

*Coretta Brown-Johnson, PhD*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Self-exposure can be an exercise in vulnerability; vulnerability is inevitable when exposing the TRUE self, but what is this SELF? In context of the Arts this SELF should be in a constant state of exploration and evolution, this SELF should continue to emerge and re-emerge stronger as well as more grounded within the principles of the artistic endeavour, exploration and application. COVID-19 has transformed these narratives significantly. Since 2020 narratives have evolved to such a significant level that they have lifted many previously defined filters and boundaries. Students, teachers and professionals have had to integrate within an online environment to teach, express, evaluate and treat using methods sometimes never previously explored. This digital narrative will explore the tenets of Dance as movement and of therapeutic value, the stories students explored as COVID-19 forced them to go within, to intertwine themselves within the modality of digital expression on a pathway to knowledge, coping and healing. This narrative is dedicated to their resilience, to the resilience of the Lecturers who supported them and to the process, the process of pivoting which forced us within the Caribbean to come to terms with expressing ourselves within an online digital environment, a type of expression which continues to evolve. This narrative will explore the tenets of “The Self” according to psychological standards and theorists infused with Dance: The Art a catalyst for movement. An unexplored science within the Caribbean, the digital expressions of SELF, tells their own stories as we continue to grapple with “The Self” in context of life and living within a global pandemic.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Coretta Brown-Johnson has been in the youth services, intervention, psychology and educational field for over twenty-five years. She has managed to fuse both her expertise and experience within the Arts with her current field of Psychology. She is currently the School Psychologist for Sts. Peter and Paul Preparatory School heading the Guidance Department and recently served as Acting Vice Principal for the institution. She is also the founder of a non-profit organisation 3PM International and more recently The Psych Institute which specialises in youth services, assessment and behaviour modification intervention and treatment, as well as other services. Brown-Johnson has worked with Jamaican institutions island-wide from the primary through to the college level and also lectures at the Edna Manley College for the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) in Cultural Therapy, Dance History, Fundamentals of Movement and Body Therapies and other courses.**

*"i am\_Merikin"*

*Abeo Jackson*



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Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Theater meets Film meets Documentary. *"i am\_Merikin"* is a reflective look at the story, spirituality and contribution of the "Merikin" Maroon community of Trinidad and Tobago within the current context of social justice movements happening across the Diaspora in the midst of a global pandemic. The "Merikin" Maroons are descendants of ex-enslaved African Americans, who were runaways from plantations along the Chesapeake Bay, particularly Virginia and Georgia, who enlisted to fight on the side of the British as part of the "Corps of Colonial Marines" in the Great War of 1812. These "freedom" fighters were "rewarded" with lands and the opportunity to settle in the British colonies. "6 companies" settled primarily in south Trinidad between 1815 and 1816 and became known as the Company Villages in Moruga. Abeo Jackson is a 6th generation "Merikin" descendant. This work also exists within a further context of exploration and advocacy of the lived experience and ideology that is "Maroonage" across the Diaspora, as a member of "Maroons of the Diaspora", a growing community of descendants and advocates spanning across territories such as Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Dominica, Suriname, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Grenada, St Lucia, United States and Sierra Leone. This growing community, after working consistently for 5 plus years, is now carded to return to the UN in 2022 with the intention of petitioning for "Indigenous" rights, recognition and reparations for Maroons across the Diaspora. #iam\_Merikin is an intersection of original work by Jackson as well as various curated excerpts on "Merikins" from *Reclaiming African Religions in Trinidad: The Socio-political Legitimation* by Frances Henry, *Two Among Many* by Milton Hackshaw, "Merikins Heroes of the Forgotten War" by Judy Raymond of *Caribbean Beat Magazine* and various other online newspaper articles and resources.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Abeo Jackson is a multi-hyphenate creative from Trinidad and Tobago interested and engaged in ongoing #JametteDiscourse and the deconstruction of capitalist frameworks, while further exploring the underpinnings of art as advocacy. She is an Actor, Acting Coach, Writer, Dancer, Choreographer, Radio and Television Host, Creative Producer as well as a Theatre Producer. Jackson recently won "Best Supporting Actress" at the First Contact Film Festival in New Jersey for her role of "Edwards" in the Nour Wazzi directed, London produced short Film *Lab Rat*. Graduate of Dickinson College, USA (BA) and Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (MA), Jackson is also a Merikin descendant working as a creative/cultural advocate in Trinidad and Tobago. During the hours of 9am-12noon Monday to Friday you can find Jackson as "Abi" on local Trinidad and Tobago radio station Star 94.7fm.**

## **Forced Suspension of Di Grass ©**

*Neila-Ann Ebanks, Shasta-Lee Smith (Photographer)*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

*Forced Suspension of Di Grass ©* was premiered at the 2019 Rex Nettleford Arts Conference. Its point of departure was the upending of the EMCVPA's organisational stability, morale and continuity, created by the unceremonious suspension of the College's Principal, Dr. Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson in September 2019, by the College Board. It has been two years since this forced limbo took effect and the campus still hangs precariously in the balance. Holding on, but



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missing focus and fire, with no resolution to report, we wait. As the original programme note said, “*When ‘Di Grass’ in which we are rooted is suspended, we are all forced into suspension.. limbo... suspense.*” Using the puppets made for the 2019 choreographic work, the continued sense of limbo is explored through the photographer’s eye, and the reality is seen even more poignantly.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Shasta-Lee Smith is an actress, dancer and professional photographer. Her focus is using her tools and crafts to shift social boundaries and create an environment with the absence of hostility, inequality and oppression. Smith’s love for the Arts developed at an early age. She saw dance as a tool that created a space where peace and truth lived as such she moved on to study the form at The Excelsior Community College of the Performing Arts in Kingston and the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA). During her tenure at the EMCVPA she found and fell in love with the art of photography. From that grounds Smith went on to make strides; photographing for local and internal artists, featured and published locally and internationally with *The Gleaner, Buzz Caribbean, Urban Magazine* and *ColorBloc Magazine* and capturing memories for Dread and Dread Productions and SLEEK Jamaica Media.**

## **Reasonings 2C – Access, Inclusion and Equity in the Arts**

### ***Timamay Dramaturgy: A Playmaking Ethos Towards Theatre for Caribbean Children*** *Machailean Taylor*

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

This presentation will propose a method of creating theatre for Caribbean children by positioning them as principal stakeholders in the making, staging, and viewing of theatre tailored specifically to them. Timamay Dramaturgy involves a process of arriving at a script to be staged (theatre with children), as audience engaging in the performance (theatre for children) and as actors in child roles (theatre by children). Caribbean children need their own theatre that appeals to their imagination and addresses their societal pressures (age, gender, race, ‘fitting in’ etc.). Thus, this presentation will illuminate three important research strands that, once woven together, will become powerful constructs in the creation of theatre for Caribbean children—1. Giving agency to Caribbean children and their imaginations. Through a ‘drama research lab’ with children, that uses Process Drama and Story Drama as potential stimuli, data will be gathered from which to create theatre for Caribbean children; 2. The processes and products of Caribbean cultural forms that engage children such as Storytelling, Ring/Song Games, and children’s Carnival. They serve as fundamental resources, offering traditional cultural protections and bolstering the right of Caribbean children to access their heritages towards understanding themselves and their communities; 3. The co-creation practices of Caribbean Theatre, specifically Best Village Theatre and its collaborative prowess with communities, as an approach to creating theatre for Caribbean children. Timamay Dramaturgy follows, that post weaving these strands, a dramaturgical process of making and staging a play (also privileging Caribbean children as actors and audience) offers Caribbean children the ability to enjoy theatre specifically tailored to them whilst better preparing to be Caribbean citizens.



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## **BIOGRAPHY:**

Machailean Taylor is a Theatre educator, practitioner and researcher. In 2015 he attended Indiana University Bloomington on a Fulbright Scholarship, where he received an MA in Arts Administration. During his undergraduate degree in Theatre Arts with Literatures in English his passion- Theatre for children- was sparked. Since then, he has written two plays for children: *Red* (2020) and *Harry & Greta* (2014). He is currently pursuing a PhD in Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine where he explores giving Caribbean children agency in the creation of theatre for themselves. Presently, he teaches Drama, Theatre and Performing Arts at San Juan North Secondary School and is a Part-Time Lecturer at the Department of Creative and Festival Arts, UWI, St. Augustine. He is also one of the Artistic Directors of Tout Moun Productions and his recent credits include *Julius Caesar* (2017) and *Ti-Jean The Experience* (2018).

## ***From Negro Aroused to a Black Vision of 2030: Perspectives of Jamaican Nationalism in Four 'Town' Murals***

*Melville Cooke*

University of Technology, Jamaica, Jamaica

The Vision 2030 mural at the entrance to Southside, South Camp Road, Kingston, is less than two miles from Edna Manley's sculpting *Negro Aroused* on the Kingston Waterfront, marking the 1938 labour upheavals that contributed significantly to Jamaica's nationhood. Edna told her husband Norman "the *Negro Aroused* was trying to create a national vision" (Thompson, 2004, p. 31), while *Vision 2030* is a government programme to make Jamaica "the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business" by its terminal year. The *Vision 2030* mural is compared thematically to two *Liv Gud!* murals, one on South Camp Road approximately 50 metres away from Southside's entrance and the other at the intersection of Downer Avenue and Old Hope Road, urban St. Andrew. The fourth mural is on The Gleaner newspaper's walls at North and East Streets, Kingston, therefore they are all in Kingston and urban St. Andrew, called 'town'. This paper examines racial composition, nationalism and gender (im)balance in the murals, keeping in mind Thompson's (2004) analysis of Blackness in Jamaican art from 1922 – 1944 when many "blacks could not imagine themselves as representable" (p. 3) and also remembering that "the meaning of art can be decoded regardless of the artist's or patron's intent. Interpretation is often affected by the viewer's own knowledge, experiences, and interests" (Dacres, 2004, p. 137). I find a generally sexist stance and myopic view of Jamaica's racial composition as except in one instance – which is open to interpretation – only Blacks are depicted. The murals expose the racial gap in Jamaica while, in presenting at best an optimistic, naïve understanding and at worst deliberately false view of Jamaican life, obscure the social shortcomings which have to be addressed in order to achieve the public arts' representation of Jamaican identity.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

Melville Cooke lectures in the Bachelor of Arts, Communication Arts and Technology (BACAT) programme, School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Technology, Jamaica. He is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Cultural Studies (ICS), The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. His current study seeks to deepen a research interest in communication utilising Jamaican popular music, that with his MPhil, which was completed at the ICS. Cooke's most recent publication is the book chapter "Dancehall Music's



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**Resistance: Upstaging Diageo’s Prescriptive Marketing Rules in Jamaica” in *Re-imagining Communication in Africa and the Caribbean: Global South Issues in Media, Culture and Technology* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).**

## ***Blind in Mind***

*Giovanni Govern*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Persons with varying disabilities often lack opportunities to use and access everyday products and environments. Universal design movements advocate for designs of physical spaces and technology to be inclusive of all people regardless of their disability. With over 2.2 billion of the global population blind or visually impaired, universal design can be considered in the early stages of product designing to create access to people with varying visual impairments. This paper provides a comparative analysis of strategies of universal packaging designs. The findings show that tactility, legibility, contrasting colour, and assistive technology are all used to provide innovative design solutions that aid in providing more accessibility in package design for the blind. Using these elements, designers can create a more inclusive society for everyone and generate wider independent participation from the visually impaired community. The historical, sociological, ethical and aesthetic discussions in the paper can be used as a starting point to consider the role of design in advocating social change and social equality.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Giovanni R Govern was born in St Ann, Jamaica in 2000. He is currently a final year student at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA), majoring in Visual Communication with a focus in Graphic Design. In 2017, he created his brand called GRG Design, where he does freelance visual identities for local and international companies. Govern is the recipient of scholarships from Sagicor Foundation and CB Facey Foundation in 2020. Passionate about volunteerism and community service, Govern is the Immediate Past Lieutenant Governor at Circle K International. This passion for service has informed his artistic practice. Additionally, his works explore abstraction and geometry in a more cultural context to create a new aesthetic in Jamaican art. Govern’s work has been exhibited in the 2021 Student Exhibition ‘Panopticon’ at the EMCVPA.**

## ***Films - Agwe and freedom2dance***

*Ina Sotirova*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

**Agwe** (Jamaica, 2018, animation, 10mins)

On a utopic Caribbean island inhabited by the survivors of a slave shipwreck, a young moon priestess must overcome her insecurities, defy tradition and step into her power to save her people from impending danger.

**freedom2dance** (New York City, 2012, documentary, 20mins)

freedom2dance plunges into the heart of New York City’s underground dance scene to explore the roots of this iconic subculture and the controversial history and implications of the city’s draconian Prohibition-Era Cabaret Law that made dancing illegal in NYC for almost a century.



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In 1970s New York, a liberating dance culture emerged in the face of social strife and inequality. But the city's once vibrant nightlife could hardly thrive when Mayor Giuliani revived a Prohibition-era Cabaret Law that makes dancing illegal. freedom2dance looks at the history and implications of this controversial legislation from the perspective of New York City's iconic underground dance scene.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Ina Sotirova**

### **Reasonings 3A – Radical Pedagogies: Decolonising Tertiary Education Practices**

*making mas with theatre; making theatre with mas*

*Marvin George*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

In the year-long course, “Caribbean Culture in Performance”, our students explore the dramaturgical and theatrical possibilities of traditional Caribbean cultural forms. In semester 1, we play with schema to help us read Caribbean cultural performances, one of which we experience as participant-observer. For the year's culminating assignment, students devise a new work using one of the cultural forms discovered in the plays studied in semester 2. But, they must first make and play a mas, for Jamaica's Jouvay, then have these mas characters and the themes they address in the street serve as the stimuli that theatre their new dramas. This process mandates a journey from ritual to theatre. In reflecting on this process, this paper examines the privileging of traditional Caribbean mas/querade performance in an exercise that interrogates the idea of a Caribbean theatre/performance aesthetic, and the implications for theatre/performance praxis and pedagogy in the Caribbean.

## **BIO**

**Marvin George serves as the Dean, School of Drama at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, and is a PhD student at the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine. He is interested in the possibilities for traditional Caribbean cultural forms in contemporary performance making, popular education and development.**

***‘Gih Dem Bois’: Devising Holistic Pedagogical Approaches to Training Cultural Entrepreneurs***

*Suzanne Burke, PhD*

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

This paper examines the teaching of cultural entrepreneurship as an integral part of the region's thrust towards bolstering its creative talent base in support of its cultural industry development efforts. This paper builds on the view that the successful development of a creative entrepreneur is based on the development of internal attitudes and behaviours as distinct from the need for a



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supporting operating environment. The research suggests that a more effective way to teach these skills is by rooting the pedagogy in a framework that is culturally appropriate (Romijn, 1989). The findings from cohorts of participants from three tertiary level programmes are examined to gauge the potential of an experiential approach to cultural entrepreneurial training and development.

## **BIO**

**Suzanne Burke is the Head of the Department of Literary, Communication and Cultural Studies, The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine. Her research focuses on Caribbean culture, festivals, cultural industries and creative entrepreneurship as these relate to the development and evaluation of cultural policies and programmes.**

### ***Beyond Distance: Liberating the Studio Through the Everyday, the Festival and the Sacred*** *Camille Quamina*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This paper examines pedagogical approaches to theatre training that challenge Occidental power structures in post-colonial contexts. The osmotic expressions of hegemony that prevail in current praxis dispossess Caribbean bodies of “fertile and redemptive expressions” necessary to articulate their unique humanities (Roach, 1996). The paper argues that Caribbean aesthetic practices hold liberation energy drawn from the spectrum of the performative. These ways of working, developed in the teaching of two acting courses at the School of Drama (ensemble playing and post-colonial theatre), privilege the agonistic principles of the liminoid in artistic expressions that are necessary for innovation, overturning, and the disruption of oppressive social ordering (Turner, 1969).

## **BIO**

**Camille Quamina is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Drama, The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica and is currently a Cultural Studies PhD student at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine. As a theatre director, her ongoing praxis and research focus on Caribbean culture and aesthetics in performance.**

### ***Destabilising Differentiation!***

*Patrice Briggs*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This presentation seeks to examine how an exploratory approach to teaching Drama in Education methodologies/strategies can stimulate and deepen the pedagogy for students as well as teachers in the classroom. This presentation will also showcase the teaching tools created by the Drama in Education IB students of the BA Drama in Education programme, as they were challenged finding new ways to stimulate learning using the concept of Differentiation during this destabilising period of the Coronavirus pandemic and the onset of online teaching. The processes and reflections of these students will serve as testimonials and evidence as to how these ground-



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breaking Educative Theatre teaching strategies can radically shift, transform and develop new pedagogies and educational practices in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom.

## BIO

**Patrice Briggs is a Lecturer in Drama in Education at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA), Jamaica. She previously served as an adjunct lecturer at the Department of the Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine and as Artistic Director of Arts-in-Action, the outreach applied creative arts programme of the DCFA, UWI, St. Augustine.**

## *Decolonising Dissertation: Pathway to Forward Thinking*

*Dorraine Reid*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

*Some scholars are concerned that such an effort may result in less rigor quality and excellence than seems to be associated with the status quo ideas about dissertation. I submit that such work may be more likely to reach standards of excellence than those projects whose authors are stifled by the confines of academic rules and habits. Alternative dissertation honor the centrality of the researcher's voice, experience, creativity and authority. (Four Arrows, 2008)*

Constant challenge to existing orthodoxies is fundamental to development and the expansion of the borders of knowledge. One area in which such a challenge is evident is pedagogies in higher education. Pressure has been placed on universities to expand their offerings, recognise and certify the skill-sets and professional designations of new and emerging fields. The term “alternative dissertation” represents one of the emerging responses by those educational institutions priding themselves on being at the cutting edge of best and next practices in academia. This places higher education in the Caribbean under the microscope, especially in the context of the imperatives of decolonization of inherited curricula and pedagogy. Against this backdrop, the players in the Caribbean education landscape will need to examine their pedagogical practice regarding thesis/dissertation and the extent to which they remain wedded to the traditional modes of presentations and assessments which ultimately bear the risk of constricting creativity and innovation. This paper therefore seeks to examine the location of Caribbean academy in this latest trend in higher education. It argues that the decolonising of existing curricula to reflect Caribbean/cultural face must also consider the revision of assessment pedagogy. Furthermore, an analysis of purpose, potential benefits, reasons, and types of alternative dissertation, may be a critical starting point for the way forward for higher education institutions in the Caribbean.

## BIO

**Dorraine Reid is the Head of the Drama in Education department at the School of Drama, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA). She is an award-winning theatre director, and one of the local Theatre Arts subject examiners for the Caribbean Examinations Council.**



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## **Reasonings 3B – Unmasking Covid**

### ***Cultural Empowerment in the music industry – Responses to COVID-19 – The Trinidad and Tobago Experience***

*Meagan Sylvester, PhD*

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

This paper intends to look at the ways in which Carnival cultures have grappled with the issues of power, disempowerment and empowerment during the pandemic. In many ways, COVID-19 has brought with it the cessation of power in several forms such as: (i) movement (ii) work (iii) travel. In many Carnival cultures however, the grueling effects of the pandemic has not been able to stymie the creative genius of cultural expression. Instead, the concept of power has been re-engineered to possess new meaning in festival spaces, and one such example is Trinidad and Tobago, the islands on which this paper will place focus. Popular music has had the reputation of constantly re-inventing itself in response to societal trends and innovative and technological changes in the music industry both locally and internationally. In this paper, Calypso and Soca music will be the popular music in focus where specifically the music of Trinidad and Tobago Carnival 2021 will be the main unit of analysis. Several Calypso and Soca artistes in the twin island economy took their performance power back during the 2021 Carnival season and appeared in several events online. Virtual music shows became the dominant form of festival culture as headliners took to the airwaves. Concerning itself with impact, identity and socio-demographic correlates of how musicians and the music industry organised to provide musical content in a world plagued by a pandemic, this paper will seek to explore these intersections using a music sociological lens.

#### **BIO**

**Meagan Sylvester is a published author from the Caribbean twin island of Trinidad and Tobago. She is a The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine graduate and a Caribbean scholar whose doctoral research focused on Narratives of Resistance in Calypso and Ragga Soca music. Her continuing interrogation within the academy centers on Music, Gender, and National Identity in Calypso and Soca, Music of Diasporic Carnivals, Music and Human Rights and Steelpan and kaiso Jazz musical identities, while her teaching and research interests are Caribbean Music Cultures and African Diaspora Popular Culture.**

### ***The Nuts and Bolts of Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Arts Classroom***

*Phyllis T Hill, PhD*

Ohio State University, USA

***The Nuts and Bolts of Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Arts Classroom***, is a review of my experiences teaching in the COVID-19 environment and the strategies implemented in my virtual-visual art classroom to ensure that the social and emotional needs of my students were met without losing sight of their academic development. It provides candid commentary on my journey as an ‘older’ educator adapting to a virtual space and the impact this experience has had on my social and emotional development, both professionally and personally. I will share samplings of my COVID-19 curriculum (content, methodology, assessment and technology),



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which placed emphasis on the core competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible-decision making and relationship skills, while developing skills in art production, art criticism/aesthetics and art history. The exemplars of students' artworks, poetry and artistic statements, will present a lens for understanding the cultural climate in which they function; how they understand their personal and community identities and most importantly how they visualize their place in the world. Finally, the presentation hopes to open a pathway for art educators to utilise SEL as a means to understanding our learners, and guiding them into becoming 'worthwhile, productive citizens'.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Phyllis T. P. Hill is a Jamaican educator who currently who works as an art educator at Pasquotank County High School, in Elizabeth City, NC, USA. She received her Masters and PhD degrees from the Ohio State University, Department of Art Education. Her experience in the field of education is extensive and includes working in the area of educational reform throughout the Caribbean. Her research concerns issues of cultural identity, homogenization, and Western hegemony in an age of globalisation. Within the Caribbean she is actively involved in educational policy development, curriculum development and implementation, the development of educational resources for all levels of the education sector, e-learning and teacher training. Book:(Book) The Jamaica Master's Online Project: A Case Study ;2014**

## ***From Face to Face to this Virtual Interface: 8.7GB of Footage to Retrace: Reflections of a Jamaican Dance Educator's journey of teaching in a Pandemic***

*Sophia McKain*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

In a time filled with many questions, global crises, social and political upheaval and to top it all – a pandemic; it is important to have a first-hand account of the myriad of experiences individuals are having at this time. COVID-19 has showed us the discrepancies and disparities in our societies and has escalated the need for humans to be better—better to the environment, better to each other and better to ourselves. My firm belief has always been that the teaching and learning experience should be one that is focused on developing the holistic individual. There are many concerns that have been highlighted with the sudden thrust into teaching in a Pandemic, and more so teaching the art form of dance. COVID-19, has had devastating effects on the lives of all the world's citizens—loss of lives, the collapsing of various healthcare systems, social and economic turmoil and educational disarray. This paper is one that reflects on the experience of teaching dance in a pandemic. The use of the virtual space and technology has changed the way dance is taught... or has it? This presentation will contemplate the learnings, the concerns and the projections of teaching dance in Jamaica while still living though the COVID-19 pandemic. 8.7 GB of footage that was recorded in my initial stages of teaching dance online will be used as the basis for the inquiry. This footage, taken between March 2020 – June 2021 shows dance classes for various age groups and cohorts, discussions and meetings had, assessments conducted, all via Zoom. The paper will uncover the students' views, my observations and conclusions, along with possible projections for the future. What does 8.7GB of footage captured at a pivotal time say about the future of dance education?

## **BIOGRAPHY:**



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Sophia McKain holds a Master of Arts in Dance Education degree from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. She is also a graduate of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Performance and Choreography, receiving much coveted awards such as the Sheila Barnett Award for All Round Excellence and the Rex Nettleford Award for the Most Outstanding Performance and Choreography. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. McKain is a firm believer that dance is more than the learning of steps and based on its myriad of benefits, every child should be allowed the experience of dance. She is currently the Chair of the Education Board of Studies and the Head of Department of Dance Education at the EMCVPA.

## Reasonings 3C – Decolonising Education

### *Lessons Learned: Drama in the Post-COVID Reality*

*Elizabeth Montaya-Stemann, Eugene Williams, Jean Paul Menou, Pierre Lemaire, Abena Vincent*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

COVID-19 brought to drama lecturers, practitioners and students a new context for our teaching work that challenged our traditional face to face encounters. The aim of this paper is to investigate this experience to identify important challenges and discoveries that can point us to innovative and relevant approaches to the teaching of drama in the future. Students and teachers completed a questionnaire related to the positive and negative experiences in the virtual classes and their answers were analysed using interpretive analysis. The challenges highlighted the loss of adequate physical and social interaction that affected the learning experience. As a consequence, the lack of collective interactivity with peers, space and objects negatively affected the expressive development and the spontaneous engagement of their various intelligences and creativity. There were however positive discoveries such as development of students' self-discipline, awareness of the sacredness of the studio space, and the emergence of creative possibilities for staging. To conclude, the panel will discuss administrative strategies to compensate for students' "instrumental" shortcomings and raise questions for bridging the gap between conventional approaches and the effective COVID-19 teaching strategies.

### **BIOGRAPHIES:**

Elizabeth Montaya-Stemann is a PhD Linguistics student at UWI, MONA and holds a MPhil Linguistics, from The University of the West Indies (UWI), MONA; PGVS, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, UK; and a BFA Theatre Arts, Teatro Libre de Bogotá School for Actors, Colombia. Her teaching experience started in 1993, teaching Voice and Speech at Teatro Libre in Bogotá. In Jamaica, she has been teaching Voice and Speech and Acting since 1999 at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, School of Drama. She also serves as a director of productions and presently she is the acting Director of Studies of the School of Drama. Montaya-Stemann's research focuses on language confidence and competence especially the issues that future Jamaican performers display when presenting a poetic text written in Standard English.

Eugene Williams was Director of the School of Drama of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) for seventeen years. He retired in 2016. He is a Ford Foundation and Fulbright Scholar with an MFA in Directing (Brooklyn College – CUNY) and an MA in Performance Studies (New



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York University). This Guyanese/Jamaican is known in the local and West Indian theatre fraternity for his outstanding work as a Director and Dramaturge. As director his productions include classics such as *The Cherry Orchard*, *Waiting for Godot*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Black Jacobins*, *Playboy of The West Indies*, *An Echo in The Bone*, *Moon on A Rainbow Shawl* and *Ti Jean and His Brothers*. He is currently Adjunct lecturer [Directing and Playwriting] at the EMCVPA and Dramaturg for a new play for the National Association of Drama, Trinidad and Tobago.

Jean-Paul Menou has served as a Lecturer at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) since 2015. He teaches Acting, Voice and Speech, and Public Speaking. Menou is an award-winning actor who has featured in several local and international films, television shows and plays including the Off-Broadway premiere of Jean Cocteau's autobiographical *Le Livre Blanc*, which he also co-adapted. Menou co-conceptualised the 8x10 Short Play Festival and has directed several plays including an award-winning production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the School of Drama. Menou is also a radio and television producer and personality who serves as Spell Master for Jamaica's National Spelling Bee Competition; has hosted the reality competitions *NCB Capital Quest* and *Today's Money Masters*; and is best known as the Quiz Master on Television Jamaica's *Schools' Challenge Quiz*. He is a graduate of Columbia College in Chicago, Illinois.

Actor, teacher, puppeteer, mime artist and director, Pierre Lemaire is Jamaican and French citizen. He is a former School of Drama Dean at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA), and an adjunct lecturer at the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. Lemaire has directed and produced over 40 theatre productions, TV programmes and commercials, and hosted and produced radio programmes. As artistic director of Kidstuff Young People Theatre and Jamaica Alternative Theatre, he has been actively involved in children theatre and theatre with physically and intellectually challenged young people. He was awarded the "Ordre National du Merite" (French National Order of Merit) by the French Government in 2000, inducted in the Caribbean Hall of Fame 2012, in the category Drama Theatre by the Caribbean Development for the Arts, Sports and Culture Foundation.

Abena Vincent (BA Drama) is an alumnus of UWI Mona and Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (2015), playwright, dramatist and teacher. She teaches Theatre Arts, English Language, Literature and Basic Music at The St. Joseph's Convent Grenville, Grenada. She is also the founder and artistic director of the SJC Drama Society and the Labaye Youth Theatre Company; member of the UN Women Barbados Unite Artiste Ambassadors, Youth Leader of the Grenada Education Development Program (Grened); facilitator of Drama Workshop 'Process Drama Discovering Self' and Mediator for the iTAGE Youth Panel Discussion at the UNPGA 71st session on Education at the UN Headquarters in New York. Some of Vincent's recent creative works include the plays, *Powershift*, and *Vini u ka vini u ka vwe* (radio-drama).

## Reasonings 3D – Caribbean Voices of Renewal and Continuity

### *Fear, Mythology and Popular Jamaican Music*

*Nicole Plummer, PhD*

The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica

Obeah, Rolling Calf, River Mumma, Ol' Higue, Demons and Devils to Bad Mind, Iniquity and Wickedness, Jamaican mythology is replete with stories that test the boundaries of the imagination. Derived from the Christian Church and ancient Taino, African, European and Asian beliefs that precede Christianity, these stories infuse popular psyche and shape Jamaican identity;



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most certainly, the sense of self. In the era of new media, such stories continue to play an important role and colour the lens through which individuals frame and vision current issues ranging from the ever-present pandemic to those such as an inexplicable death. Despite the march of time and expanding educational opportunities, folk beliefs continue to hold some members of the populace in thrall. Music has always been a powerful and reliable conduit for such beliefs and remains such in the 21st century. This paper explores the role of music in spreading popular folk beliefs. Of significance is the extent to which current music derives inspiration from Jamaican folk beliefs and how they represent Jamaican folk practices and beliefs in the 21st century. Representations of fear and the evolution of mythological characters will also be explored in a sample of popular Jamaican music, namely, ska, roots rock reggae and dancehall.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Nicole Plummer is a Lecturer in the Institute of Caribbean Studies and coordinates the Institute's Undergraduate Programme. She is also the Associate Dean, Marketing and Outreach of the Faculty of Humanities and Education, The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. Over the years, she has received several awards and prizes including the Commonwealth Split-Site Doctoral Scholarship (British Council); Latham Trust Charitable Foundation Scholarship (UWI), Elsa Goveia Award for History (UWI), Second Year Faculty Award (UWI), the Community Service Award for participation in the Partners for Peace Inner City Programme, August Town (UWI) and the Jamaica Government Exhibition Scholarship. Her academic background is in history, though recently much of her work centres on Cultural Studies. Her Doctoral thesis is in the area of Caribbean business history and culture.**

## ***The Magic of Creole in Saint Lucian Politics***

*Travis Weekes, PhD*

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

The creole language appears to play a significant role in Saint Lucian elective politics. Usually, in the period leading up to general elections, we often have a phenomenon where particular catch phrases become so popular that they seem to spontaneously galvanise a new regime into power. Other times, as in the most recent election of 2021, catch phrases used in newly composed songs or old songs freshly improvised, would create a movement on 'de big truck' that sends the youth wild and sensitised to support a particular party. It is becoming evident to this researcher that, some of the phrases which have the most impact on Saint Lucian politics have their roots in the cultural history of the island. These phrases were part of folk narratives that issued calls for social and political change. Other phrases were part of musical forms that also resonated deeply within the cultural memory of the folk. In this project I seek to present an analysis of specific creole phrases and musical narratives while discussing their impact on social and political change on the island of Saint Lucia.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Travis Weekes is an award-winning Saint Lucian actor, poet, playwright, director. He is also a cultural critic. He studied Literature at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona; Theatre at the Jamaica School of Drama and Cultural Studies at The UWI, Cave Hill. As an academic, Weekes focuses on the creole traditions and discourse in work of Nobel Prize winner, the late Derek Walcott. He uses this research to develop**



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innovative, dramaturgical approaches to his own theatre practice both as a playwright and director. Weekes' poetry and drama is fired by the power of the Creole language and traditions of his native Saint Lucia. Currently a lecturer in Theatre at the Department of Creative and Festival Arts, The UWI, Saint Augustine, he has recently published two of his plays; *The Fight for Belle Vue* and *The Field of Power*.

***Introduction of Tie Dye/Batik Cottage Industry in Jamaica a Study of ‘Festival of the Cloth’***  
*Alao Omotayo*

Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC), Jamaica

This paper will discuss the introduction of tie dye/batik cottage industries in Jamaica as a study of “Festival of the Cloth”, an initiation of Nigerian expatriates deployed to Jamaica to revive the art of tie dye/batik in Jamaica over the last three years. Though this art is not new to Jamaica, the practice was not viable due to the following—non-passing the knowledge to another and lack of documentation, non-availability and high cost of raw materials, loss of identity to western parodist, leadership by example and euro-centric attitudes towards their indigenous material. However, knowing that the country is greatly influenced by western parody due to its diverse culture owing to transatlantic slave trade that took place in 17th century the research will also discuss pertinent issues including the lessons that can be adapted from the Nigerian perspective, using cross-cultural exchanges to benefit the local textile industry as well as the policy and framework necessary to ensure growth and sustainability of the industry.

**BIOGRAPHY:**

Alao Omotayo

***Proudly Ashamed: The Denial and Affirmation of the Jamaican Language***

*Fabian Thomas*

The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica

What started as a recurring talking point in my public speaking and presentation workshops and many classrooms, morphed into a talk, reasoning and presentation and is now on a journey to becoming a paper. It is my desire for the Rex Nettleford Arts Conference 2021 to be part of this journey. *Proudly Ashamed: The Denial and Affirmation of the Jamaican Language* explores the continuing sanctification of Anglophone English, the concurrent denial of Jamaican Language as a nation language and the attendant national, societal and educational atrophies. It will also highlight the sharp contract of Jamaica as an internationally recognised cultural Superpower.

**BIOGRAPHY:**

Fabian Thomas is an Adjunct Lecturer, transformational trainer/facilitator and Life/Corporate Coach who has also made his mark across the arts as a performing arts specialist, director, writer, actor and spoken word performer. He holds a B.A. in Mass Communication and Literature (UWI, Mona) and a M.A. in Public Communication (Fordham University, USA). He is the founder and Artistic Director of the performing arts collective Tribe Sankofa.



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## PERFORMANCES

### **Performance 1A** – *35th Miner by Theatre in the Backyard*

*Mhlanguli George*

Theatre in the Backyard, South Africa

*Lisa Wilson, Maxwell Xolani Rani*

University of Cape Town, South Africa

*35th Miner* is a performance exploring the South African story of the Marikana massacre. On August 16, 2012, the South African Police Service (SAPS) opened fire on a crowd of striking mineworkers at Marikana, in the North-West region of South Africa. 34 miners died. *35th Miner* explores the voices of the young people left behind to live with the burden of August 16. In a decolonising spirit *35th Miner* explores aspects of Black lives in post-apartheid South Africa. Through the eyes of a young Xhosa girl who lost her father during the Marikana massacre, the dance theatre work embodies a decolonial aesthetic (Mignolo and Vazquez, 2013) of mourning, dreaming, healing and searching for answers as present structures in Black spiritual existence in democratic South Africa. *35th Miner* is staged in the backyard of a township dwelling rather than a traditional theatre setting where many Black communities do not have access and where stories of pain can remain as artefacts, detached from their lived socio-cultural and socio-political geographies.

### ABOUT

Theatre in the Backyard was conceptualised in 2012 by South African independent producer, writer, and theatremaker Mhlanguli George as a solution to a lack of access to mainstream theatre spaces in Cape Town. Theatre in the Backyard turns backyard dwelling spaces into theatre spaces and brings community audiences and local performers together in an intimate arts and culture experience that also brings benefits to the local community. In a decolonising spirit, Theatre in the Backyard integrates arts disciplines (music, dance, theatre) in its productions and performs stories that stimulate, provoke and reflect the township communities from which they emerge. Its model of partnerships and collaborations such as its recent one with senior lecturers/choreographers Lisa Wilson and Maxwell Xolani Rani from the University of Cape Town and music composer Bongani Magatjana in the creation of the production *35th Miner* promotes access and inclusion for marginalised voices and communities in the arts.

### **Performance 1B** – *Room for a Hug? © 2021*

*Neila-Ann Ebanks, Stefan Clarke, Students of the School of Dance, EMCVPA*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, the world's new reality is that a simple hug can be a dangerous thing. Still, we need human contact for psychological, emotional, physical and even spiritual reasons. This improvisational work sets up 'safe' hugging stations across the EMCVPA campus, by areas where persons come to for comfort and support (the Schools, Student Services Department for example) as well as where persons have to come into contact with each other because of business (Registry, Principal's Office Building for example). At each station, the



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designated performers will give and receive hugs through a specially-made plastic screen (frequently sanitised). ***Disclaimer: Primary engagement will be within the team. The performance will not be interactive with persons outside of the team because the safety elements [performer comfort, sanitisation] cannot be as easily controlled.***

## ABOUT

Neila-Ann Ebanks [Prop Maker/ Conceptualiser], Director of Studies, School of Dance, EMCVPA

Stefan Clarke holds a BFA in Sculpture from the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts. He has exhibited extensively including in three group exhibitions—*Not for Sale*, *Cathartic Diaries*, and *Skin*; at Kingston On the Edge events; at four National Gallery Biennials; and has been commissioned to create three sculptural works for the University of Technology, Jamaica—“Bird of Peace”, “Trinity”, and “Atlas” and to restore the Bob Marley Statue at the Bob Marley Museum in 2017. Clarke has worked in the capacity of Art Director of several projects including *Americas Next Top Model* (2012); *Magnum Kings and Queens* (2005 – 2015); *Wray and Nephew Contender* (2007 – 2014); and the movie *Sprinter*. Clarke is currently the Studio Manager in the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

Students of the School of Dance, EMCVPA—Kai Wiggan [Year 4, Team Lead], Le’Bron McLean [Year 2], Kimberley Barnes [Year 2, Deaf Dancer], Navesha Vickers [Year 1], Giselle Bain [Year 4, Team Lead], Yanique Brown [Year 4], Taneilla Francis [Year 3], Cristophe Phillips [Year 3, Deaf Dancer], Sherene Davis [Year 4, Team Lead], Kai Cole [Year 3], Damany Hughes [Year 2, Deaf Dancer], Zariya Richards [Year 1].

## **Performance 2A – *Physical Labrish: In Resonance***

*School of Dance Faculty*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

*Amidst the strident noise of pandemic times, what vibrations can we find in pause?*

*What stillness in movement?*

*What memories of our futures will reverberate?*

We pause to dance the echoes of our(ce)lles. We dance to remember our resonance. Physical Labrish: In Resonance is the School of Dance’s 2021 Faculty Concert which highlights the multiple ways through which we collaborate to see and make choreographic work. The works re/presented send out signals, pulses, frequencies of possibility in these times of distancing. In this way we are reminded that we resonate beyond the physical and beyond borders. The one-hour showcase will be followed by a ‘Resonant Reasoning’ between the dancemakers, in which they will unpack the processes of making and sharing their works in these unprecedented times.

## ABOUT

School of Dance Faculty

## **Performance 2B – *When a Woman Moans***

*Zahra Airall*

Sugar Apple Theatre Ensemble, Antigua and Barbuda



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*When A Woman Moans* is a compilation of stories based on the lives lived and lost by women in Antigua and Barbuda. Notably, many narratives of gender-based violence, passion, the maternal experience, and the very definition of the Caribbean woman is often penned by persons living outside of Antigua and Barbuda. While such narratives are not singular, this project has allowed the voices from a small island to be heard. Notwithstanding, Antigua and Barbuda remains conservative in its social discourse, heavily driven by the colonised religion of Christianity. In a country that has more churches per capita than schools, there remains a heinous darkness on the woman who dares to defy the social norms of this society. *When A Woman Moans* sheds light on such shadows, serving as a clarion call to break the mould and assert the presence of the woman as she defines herself; no longer will women in Antigua and Barbuda remain silent as they are attacked within their homes, workplaces, and especially the church. The first installation of this project was in 2010 after an overwhelming response from women across the twin-island nation to share their pain and passion. As the title suggests, the various monologues express the range of “moans” that escape the lips of women – from sexual euphoria to the sadistic assault of sexual violence. The juxtapositions serve to redefine womanhood while simultaneously declaring that these experiences are not unique, and though most go unspoken, are relatable to many women.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Zahra I. Airall is an Antiguan playwright, director, actress and spoken word artist who has used her creativity as a vehicle in her social activism. Her Bachelor’s in Psychology and Master’s in Theatre have allowed her to create workshops and productions that contain elements of drama therapy to both cast and audience. She’s worked with many local organisations, both government and NGOs, including UN Women and UNICEF, using theatre to raise awareness on several social ills. Airall is the founder of the award winning all-girls’ youth theatre group Honey Bee Theatre, the adult company Sugar Apple Theatre Ensemble, and most recently, the late teen/young adult group Raspberry Purgatory.**

## **Performance 2C – *Hair So***

*Tribe Sankofa*

Tribe Sankofa, Performing Arts Collective, Jamaica

A 20-minute excerpt from a work in progress exploring the beauty, power, trauma and struggle of having ‘black, tough, bad’ hair in Jamaica. It will be pre-recorded and combine drama, poetry/spoken word, movement and the visual arts.

## **ABOUT**

**TRIBE SANKOFA, a performing arts collective brought together by fabian m thomas, is a vibrant and eclectic cadre of multi-talented performers who combine their artistry to add an exciting new dimension to the performing arts landscape of Jamaica and the rest of the world. Our niche is “...borrowed and original spoken word/poetry, soulful song-styling uniquely blended with other visual and performing arts”.**

## **Performance 2C – *Dance Works: Past, Present and COVID Times [Encore]***



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*DanceWorks – the performing corps of the EMCVPA SCHOOL OF DANCE*  
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Emerging choreographers ... Emergent times... Stories to tell... This is an encore presentation of DanceWorks' 25th Season of Dance, presented in June 2021, exhibiting works created for screen by student choreographers of the EMCVPA School of Dance.

## **ABOUT**

**DanceWorks – the performing corps of the EMCVPA SCHOOL OF DANCE**

### **Performance 3A – Voices [un]Masked**

*Zahra Airall*

Sugar Apple Theatre Ensemble, Antigua and Barbuda

With the pandemic sending the world into periodic lockdowns, this project focuses on one fraction of the demographic who often feel oppressed, ignored, and irrelevant—the youth. Many educators would have witnessed and been the sounding board for young people who became withdrawn, demotivated, and frustrated having to deal with not only a global pandemic, but the abrupt assault of online and blended learning thrust upon them. *Voices [un]Masked* uses a drama therapy-based workshop that allows teenagers in secondary school up to the CAPE level to freely explore and express their experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it has affected them. Unfiltered, this presentation will be a culmination of music, dance and drama. Transformation through storytelling, playing and dramatic projection are some of the techniques that will be utilised to bring the students to a safe and creative catharsis. This project serves to not only demonstrate the untapped resilience of students in the arts, but demonstrate their approach to re-defining the parameters of theatre in this new era.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Zahra I. Airall is an Antiguan playwright, director, actress and spoken word artist who has used her creativity as a vehicle in her social activism. Her Bachelor's in Psychology and Master's in Theatre have allowed her to create workshops and productions that contain elements of drama therapy to both cast and audience. She's worked with many local organisations, both government and NGOs, including UN Women and UNICEF, using theatre to raise awareness on several social ills. Airall is the founder of the award winning all-girls' youth theatre group Honey Bee Theatre, the adult company Sugar Apple Theatre Ensemble, and most recently, the late teen/young adult group Raspberry Purgatory.**

### **Performance 3B – Resilience is Research: Lessons from the Final Year Frontier**

*Shavaughn Byndloss, Oracia Morris, Kaya Phillips*

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

This showcase features the Independent Study projects from the 2020/ 2021 Final Year cohort of the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Performance and Choreography. Members of this cohort found their



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already interrupted “last lap” compounded by Mother Nature’s tropical storms, hurricanes and volcanic ash and have very important insights to share regarding Caribbean resilience and the Arts.

## **ABOUT**

**EMCVPA SCHOOL OF DANCE School of Dance Final Year students  
Shavaughn Byndloss, Oracia Morris and Kaya Phillips**



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## LECTURE DEMONSTRATIONS

### **Lecture Demonstration 1A – *FLIP IT: Towards the Use of Digital Technology in the Development and Animation of “Estageplays”***

*Christopher Roger Williams*

C. R. Williams Performing Arts Academy, Grenada

The Caribbean voice risks fading to black as the (foundation) dramatic arts blooms in academia, amidst the clamour for Caribbean statelessness. Caribbean emerging artists search for content, yet this quest is fulfilled at “high academic levels”. While works are written many are yet to be discovered and shared for the strengthening of cultural heritage. Plays and playwriting should be stateless and unshackled in order to foster Caribbean survival! As a lecturer, I have discovered that students at college and secondary levels do not like reading stageplays. Even students who audition for entrance to the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica and C.R. Williams Performing Arts Academy, Grenada, have not (and some have never) read an entire play notwithstanding the fact that many have done CSEC Theatre Arts examination. Some declare that plays are boring in the form of textbooks. Additionally, many highlight that stageplays are not readily accessible. Others indicate that the library is “a boring place to be” underlining that it does not cater for their different learning styles. Attendees will witness an action research which adds value to stageplays using a “flipped” approach. This demonstration will establish the path for an audiovisual “eStageplay” book, consequently invoking an avid interest in the consumption of Caribbean plays. It will feature an amalgamation of authentic Caribbean accents/voices. Further, it highlights the commencement of a new era of publication of dramatic arts pieces. Moreover, participants will recognise an opportunity for visual and performing artists to showcase their talent and find future employment. This presentation therefore, introduces a channel to unleash the shackles that suffocate the dramatic arts in the Caribbean.

#### **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Christopher Roger Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Drama in Education. Williams is multilingual, a Certified Filmmaker, Specialized Drama Educator, Action Researcher, Theatre Practitioner, Published Author, Musician, Radio and Television Producer. He is a Certified Gender Advocate who uses Drama as a means of rehabilitation and Therapy. His Drama for Peace programme has rehabilitated over 50 persons (victims of abuse, trauma, suicide ideation, depression, OCD, ADHD). Williams is a former Adjunct Lecturer at T.A. Marryshow Community College and Lecturer at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA), Jamaica where he delivered lectures in Theatre Arts and Drama in Education. Williams holds an MBA-International Business and is currently pursuing a DBA-Administration and Management. He is the Founder of the C. R. Williams Performing Arts Academy, Grenada.**

### **Lecture Demonstration 2A – *Engaging Music Students with Caribbean Folksong Arrangements***

*Aiden Chamberlain*



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University of Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

As music educators we know there are many benefits to developing skills in performing music such as being “associated with generally higher academic achievement”. We want our students to be engaged with the music they perform but sometimes that can clash with the need to meet certain assessment points. Why do we have assessments in music? Research has found a “positive association between taking particular music qualifications and achievement”. Qualifications are often useful, both from the point of view of setting goals but also demonstrating one’s achievements against a commonly known benchmark. However, for the Caribbean student, the syllabi set in international exams can often lack music that they recognise and identify with. This can lead to a perceived gap between assessed musical goals and personal goals. This gap is especially noticeable in the syllabi for brass instruments, despite the fact that they are often used in local musical ensembles. To fill this gap, appropriate published repertoire is needed that both develops the brass student’s instrumental skill but also engages with their local culture and, as an additional benefit, creates a stronger awareness of their culture’s musical roots. Assistant Professor Aidan Chamberlain has worked with experts in the field to create new arrangements of Caribbean folk songs for brass students that develop their technical skill and musical phrasing whilst instilling a knowledge of local traditions. Through the publication of these arrangements, he hopes to engage Caribbean students in a stronger understanding of their own roots while allowing students from other cultures to benefit from this wealth of material that reflects the lives and musicality of people in the Caribbean. This lecture demonstration will look at folk song research, implementation into local syllabi and publications that take these works to students globally.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

**Assistant Professor Aidan Chamberlain has been on faculty at the University of Trinidad and Tobago since 2009. He teaches Applied Brass, Ensemble, Music Theory and Arranging. He includes a wide variety of musical styles in all areas of his teaching to foster students’ creativity and increase their opportunities for employment in the music business. Chamberlain’s focus in recent years has been on including folk songs in student performances and arranging music to fill that need, both for solo and ensemble performances whilst studying similar songs in academic classes. Prior to coming to Trinidad, Chamberlain worked in a number of countries as a professional trombonist and brass teacher. He has performed with some of the world’s greatest orchestras, performed regularly in Theatre’s in London’s West End and toured extensively in Europe, Asia and the US.**

## ***Lecture Demonstration 2B - Carnival Dawn: Collaboration and Flexible Participation during the COVID-19 Pandemic***

*Adam Walters, PhD; Josh Watkins, PhD*

University of Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

New artistic endeavours embedded in the concept of creative ecology are timely and necessary with the current COVID-19 pandemic now often altering the traditional working methods of practitioners. Whilst online concerts and recordings have become widespread, these can amount



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to little more than digital versions of performances of pre-Covid material that previously would have been experienced live. The more innovative online offerings from 2020 and 2021 build options for participation into their design, and in this way they embrace the possibilities afforded by the global connections that, paradoxically in a socially-distanced world, are now easier than ever to establish thanks to online technologies. *Carnival Dawn* is a work for percussion ensemble written by Adam Walters as the result of a commission by Josh Watkins. Colleagues who, pre-pandemic, worked together whilst living in Trinidad, Walters and Watkins collaborated in an online space to bring about this cross-cultural work for tenor steelpan and orchestral percussion that draws upon both their first-hand experience of music-making in Trinidad's steelpan orchestras and upon their backgrounds in western classical, world, and popular styles. Watkins recorded all parts in his home studio and has kept his DAW session "open" in order that other players - especially advanced student players - be able to contribute their own recordings to add to the whole. In this way, the piece exploits current technological possibilities to become a vessel for international collaboration that has the potential to connect people musically to form entirely new creative ecosystems. This presentation offers insights into the potential of online collaborative music projects for bringing musicians together in times of separation, and includes a pre-recorded performance of *Carnival Dawn*.

## **BIOGRAPHIES:**

**Adam Walters is a Visiting Fellow in Music (Composition) at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. Walter's compositions often focus on Caribbean themes, expressed in a musical language that blends elements from Trinidadian and western classical styles. His experiences playing steelpan with Massy All Stars Steel Orchestra and attending Spiritual Baptist church services in Trinidad have impacted significantly upon his music. He now lives in London where he works as a composer and French horn player.**

**Josh Watkins is Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of Trinidad and Tobago and performs regularly with UTT Ibis Ensemble. He has performed in a variety of arenas including jazz, Latin, commercial, world music, steelpan, and orchestral music. As a guest artist, he has developed seminars for professional and student percussionists. He is the founding president of the Trinidad and Tobago Percussive Arts Society (PAS) and an active member of the PAS International Committee.**

## **Lecture Demonstration 3A – *The Four Responses to White Hegemony***

*Larry Shaw*

bARTer & build THINK tank, Costa Rica/ United States

In this lecture we will explain the four responses that all Afrikan people and other indigenous people have to white hegemony. We will go into detail for each response and provide the steps it takes to have the correct response, and begin to solve the problems we face.

1. Homicidal Response
2. Suicidal Response
3. Assimilationist Response
4. Nation Building Response

Our thrust is to inspire those in the audience to commit to collective action that leads to Expiation!



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## **BIOGRAPY:**

Larry Shaw is a Pan-Afrikan Political Educational Activist, Lecturer, Afrikan Womanist, and a Gullah Revolutionary Theoretician. Shaw's best-selling Children's book *Raising Me* has afforded him the opportunity to travel across the globe working with a number of schools and community organisations. Shaw is a founding member of the bARTer and build THINK tank, and political education and organisation group of Afrikan Women and Men across the globe.

## **Lecture Demonstration 3B - The Practice and Process of Movement and Memory: Shaping a Somatic Ethnography of the Middle Passage**

*Sonja Dumas*

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Coming from and living in a twin-island state surrounded by two large bodies of water, I often look to the Caribbean Sea or to the Atlantic Ocean for answers about the contemporary Caribbean condition. I would like to share my idea and current process for planning a series of installations that is a continuation into my questions about the bodies of water that fuelled the very evolution of race, status and what it means to be Caribbean. My point of departure is the Middle Passage and what Trinidad and Tobago movement practices would have evolved from that experience. Specifically, I want to consider the immersive and liminal influences of these large bodies of water, and how those intersect with the interiority of physical, neurobiological and psychological terror that African bodies would have faced in the Middle Passage moment. The goal is for this series of installations to help to unpack those influences. With soft sculptures, layered with interactive breath, movement and gesture, I would try to understand ways in which the Africans who made that trip may have embodied that experience. I plan to link that to resilience and how contemporary ways of moving manifest both past and present. This, as a dance practitioner, filmmaker and someone who has begun a somatic ethnography on the Middle Passage through my practice-based Ph.D. in Cultural Studies, is what ultimately drives me to this process of using practice as research to understand physical memory and its influences.

## **BIOGRAPHY:**

Sonja Dumas is a multi-hyphenate arts practitioner, educator and theorist, specialising in Caribbean culture. Her main areas of concentration are dance and film. Mostly recently, she founded Zum-Zum Museum, an interactive children's museum highlighting various aspects of Caribbean heritage. Dumas is an honours graduate of Princeton University, and also holds a Master of Business Administration in Marketing from Columbia University and a Master of Arts in Carnival Studies from the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine.