



7TH REX NETTLEFORD ARTS CONFERENCE

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ARTS AND CULTURE FOR
SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

OCTOBER 11-13, 2023

CONFERENCE
ABSTRACTS



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OCTOBER 11-13

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PRESENTATIONS • REASONINGS • EXHIBITIONS • WORKSHOPS

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ARTS VILLAGE

OCT. 11-13

Art. Craft. Food

WED. OCT. 11



6:00 PM



8:00 PM

OPENING CEREMONY

OCT. 12 / 7:00 PM

► KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
Professor Sir Hilary Beckles

FRI. OCT. 13

EDWARD SEAGA
LECTURE

► PRESENTERS:
Dr. Kirt Henry &
Cheryl Ryman
5:30 PM



FEATURING:
Regina Squire's
"Here Lies the Male Gaze"
Lennox Richards' "INNA City"
8:00 PM

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Paper Presentations

Azonto Across the Atlantic: The Relationship between Afrobeats and Dancehall Dance

Presenter: Ms. Shari Williams
Institute of Caribbean Studies, UWI Mona, Jamaica

Abstract

The presence of West African retention in Jamaican cultural expression is particularly evident in our music and dance. Scholars and practitioners have described how key components of West African music and dance have been retained on the other side of the Atlantic – from traditional Afro-Jamaican dances to current dancehall. However, the influence of Caribbean music on West African popular music is less thoroughly examined in academic discourse.

The current popularity of Afrobeats has necessitated a further exploration of how the music of Caribbean and African Americans continues to influence West African music. As early as the eighteenth century, the migrations of the West African diaspora across the Atlantic Ocean have facilitated this exchange of musical ideas. By the late twentieth century, Jamaican reggae, dub, and dancehall had a considerable presence in West Africa, and subsequently influenced Afrobeats artistes, producers, and dancers on the continent into the following century. Consequently, the popularity of Afrobeats in Jamaica can be attributed to a symbiotic relationship between the two regions, based on both West African retention as well as a collective recognition of popular Jamaican music in Afrobeats sounds.

This presentation will examine the relationship between Afrobeats and dancehall, with an emphasis on the dance moves associated with both genres. It will begin with a brief overview of the music genres these movements accompany, as well as the spaces they inhabit. Additionally, while the development of AfroJamaican dance and music will be addressed, this presentation will also discuss the influence of Jamaican music on popular music in West Africa. I will then do a comparison between dancehall and Afrobeats dance movements, highlighting similarities and differences, and how dancers combine both styles of movement in their performances.

Bio:

Shari Williams is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies, at the Institute of Caribbean Studies, UWI Mona. She holds an M. Phil in Cultural Studies from the University of the West Indies, as well as an MA in Musicology from the University of Calgary. She has previously acted as the senior research officer and the associate curator of the Jamaica Music Museum. Her primary research interest involves the history and analysis of music of the West African diaspora, with a focus on the nature of the relationships between traditional and popular music genres across the Caribbean.

Shari's current dissertation focuses on the symBiotic relationship between afrobeats, soca, and dancehall music in the 21st century. This analysis is contextualized using a discussion of Caribbean musical influence on the development of West African popular music in the 20th century.

BEYOND SECRETS, SILENCE and the MASK MEN, DANCE and MASCULINITY in the CARIBBEAN

Presenter: Dr John Hunte
Barbados Community College/UWI Cave Hill, Barbados

Abstract

“Let’s face it. Secrets are the fabric of society, Stu. Of any society, but especially ours...” –Gabriel in Glenville Lovell’s *Simone’s Place*

In the Caribbean, our practices as male concert dancers remain shrouded, taboo, un-interrogated, and spoken. We embrace self-alienation to strive for excellence in our chosen field. The assumption that “concert dance makes us gay” is still prevalent. To pursue dance, most of us embrace a “lone ranger masculinity”, ‘remaining silent’, embracing ‘silence’, risking disconnection from our humanity. We internalise our emotions, and self-censor to avoid alienation or “social death”. An initial ‘hush’ as we enter the room, remaining ‘stoic’ in the face of prejudice, silent to avoid or divert accusation, periodically distancing ourselves from others or from society, we use ‘silence’ to self-regulate as we submit to our calling. Activated, our ‘silence’ as consent, is subverted and is no longer a cover used to shelter and protect the status quo or render other expressions inferior by comparison.

“There comes a time when silence becomes dishonesty....”
–Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*

In this PowerPoint presentation, I suggest other ways that we, as male dancers, may invoke and use silence. I analyse the life stories of nine male dancers from a range of ages and experiences. Moving beyond the stigma elicits themes of facing alienation, isolation, and loneliness, going beyond secrets, ‘silence’ and engaging masks to construct, embody and negotiate identity. Underplaying achievements, courage, and significance is the price paid for pursuing our passion. ‘Silence’ mediates and negotiates societal obligations and taboos as we “go against the grain”, to resist scrutiny and oppression. One could imagine that a change in mindset, policy and practice should acknowledge how concert dance reflects masculinity as a central focus to constructs of identity and respecting its men.

Bio:

John Hunte is a performing arts practitioner, activist, and teacher, armed with a Diploma in Dance Theatre and Production from the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica, a BS Dance from State University of New York - College at Brockport, an MFA in Performing Arts Management from City University of New York Brooklyn College, and a PhD degree in cultural studies from the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus. Hunte serves as Executive Director with Barbados Dance Project Inc., an ongoing programme for budding dancers to educate, collaborate and engage the Barbadian community. He serves as Artistic Director-Principal at the Barbados Dance Theatre Company Inc. He sits on the Barbados Landship Association Advisory Committee. Hunte is an ordained minister in the Caribbean Regional Spiritual Baptist Community and currently serves as Chair of the Council of Spiritual Baptist Churches of Barbados.

The "Big Screen" as a Research Tool: Exploring Caribbean Somatics through Filmic Imagery

Presenter: Ms. Sonja Dumas
The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine
Trinidad and Tobago

Abstract

In a 2009 essay, Rex Nettleford expressed that, "The decolonization of the spirit, which forms the part of the ongoing quest for dignity, self-esteem and sense of place and purpose for most who inhabit the post-colonial world, not infrequently finds answers in the exercise of the creative imagination." As we reflect on the legacy of Nettleford, a leading Caribbean dance icon, on the 90th anniversary of his birth, I would like to look at dance and movement as a modality for exploring the Caribbean sense of self, and film generation and analysis as tools to help the process of understanding that movement. At its core, this interdisciplinary methodological approach seeks to investigate Caribbean somatics. I define somatics as that connection between mind and body that leads to embodiment, insofar as embodiment refers to the practice of meaning-making that the body stores and repeats through gesture and flow, which over time, becomes a shared, symbolic understanding. How does this somatic root show up in the dancing, moving Caribbean body? What of this embodiment has to do with the histories of that body and its forebears? How does that feed the Caribbean's "creative imagination"? By investigating these questions through the analysis of moving images, I will seek to demonstrate how two-dimensional film can help us to consider our multidimensional Caribbean sense of self. My presentation will consist of both filmic elements and a discussion that explores the film-based methodology that I am seeking to harness.

Bio:

Sonja Dumas is an arts practitioner, educator and theorist, specializing in Caribbean culture. Her main areas of concentration are dance and film. She is the co-founder of COCO Dance Festival, the largest contemporary dance festival in the English-speaking Caribbean, and is the founder and artistic director of Continuum Dance Project. Mostly recently, she founded Zum-Zum Museum, an interactive children's museum highlighting various aspects of Caribbean heritage. Sonja holds a bachelors degree from Princeton University, a Master of Business Administration (Marketing) from Columbia University and a Master of Arts in Carnival Studies from the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Cultural Studies at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine where she is considering speculative history models to investigate parallels between the somatic choices of enslaved Africans on their transatlantic journey of physical bondage and psychological trauma, and contemporary Trinidad and Tobago movement.

Redressing Style

Presenter: Amy Orchard-King
London College of Fashion.
England

Abstract

This paper will share a series of notes on the contradictions of the decolonial turn in fashion academia, manifestations of representation in the wake of the 'revelations' of the Covid years and Black Lives Matter and the colonial continuities within the current metrics of value which influence the mainstream systems of fashion consumption and production.

Rather than a finalised thesis, the intention of this oral/visual presentation is to initiate a collaborative meditation on the issues, voices and communities both centred and neglected by decolonial fashion scholarship and the potential of fashion as a powerful site for 'Reparatory Creative Justice'.

The influence of the aesthetics of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora, in particular the island of Jamaica, on the multi-billion-dollar fashion industry is undeniable; so too, is the significance of style to both the assertion and maintenance of identity. 'Black style', defined by Professor Carol Tulloch as 'the embodiment of dress, music, language and mannerisms' and thus further understood as 'a complex commodity to define [...] not attributed to tangible elements' is often positioned, within the context of fashion, as the product of material bricolage; assembled from fragments and though absolutely understood as carefully considered, rarely described as design and even less so read as a form of art. The result of the decided refusal on the part of the fashion industry to attribute creative gravitas via the language it uses to describe Black style, in addition to the consistent emphasis of various styles lack of specific cultural origin or ownership,

allows for cultural appropriation, commodification and the continuation of the colonial obsession with sartorial dispossession.

Bio

Amy Orchard – King is a textile designer, trend consultant and fashion academic based in England. As an associate lecturer at London College of Fashion and an active design practitioner the focus of Amy's research is surfacing the discrepancies between decolonial fashion scholarship and the business of fashion, with the ultimate aim of seeking Reparatory Creative Justice through cross-disciplinary engagement, the constant curation of a culture of care and design activism.

Fashioning Resistance: The Designs of Barry Moncrieffe

Presenter: Robert Hall

Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Abstract

Barry Moncrieffe at Caribbean Fashion week became part of the designers given preferred billing, pulling crowds locally and internationally. Known for his striking black white and red combinations and all-over elegance, the stylistic resonance had reflections of his iconic stature as a premiere dance artiste of the historically important National Dance Theatre Company. Born in Jamaica post the 1938 riots, his imaginations crystallised in a Jamaica veering away from a British colonial identity, a working class riled, poked and stoked by seeds of a Garveyite ideology, to rescue a sense of self and identity against prevailing hegemony. This paper looks at segments of the fashion design work of Barry Moncrieffe through Garveyite ideology using primarily ethnographic approaches. It argues for the consideration of his canon as resistive, mainly using Buckridge's theory of accommodation.

Transnationalism of Textile Culture 'Jadire', A Jamaican Textile

Presenter: Alao Luqman Omotayo

Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts Jamaica

Abstract

Textile design and textile craft have always played a significant social, cultural and economic impact on any society and it is a major component of material culture. 'Jadire', a Jamaica textile, derived its name from combining Jamaica with the Yoruba word "Adire" meaning (tie and dye textile), an indigo-dyed cloth made from southwest Nigeria by Yoruba women using a variety of resist-dyeing techniques. Among these techniques are Adire Alabela (candle wax), Adire Eleko (starch resist), Adire Oniko (tie and dye), and Adire Alabere (stitching method) which involves creating patterns, either by stamp or free hand

treating certain part of the fabrics in some ways to resist dye. These techniques were brought to Jamaica through bilateral relations with Nigeria's government under their technical aids corps whose objective was to create its typical model of tie dye/batik cottage industry in Jamaica.

This paper will discuss transnationalism of textile culture in Jamaica, pioneering artists, creation of 'Jadire' cottage industries, diasporic view of African fabrics and its business development among Afro-descendants of the Caribbean. Furthermore, as Jamaica has developed their own drawings and patterns for textile to express their culture and southwest Nigeria where Adire textiles originated still represent cultural identity and they are viewed as the products of technology, cultural symbolism, works of art, or as items of trade. However, our relationship to fabrics begins right after birth, as clothes protect us from the climate and it is our second skin to interact with others in a society.

Bio

Alao Luqman Omotayo, a Nigerian artist and Volunteer/ Cultural diplomat to Jamaica hold a bachelor degree in painting from University of Lagos, Master of Fine Art (MFA) printmaking from University of Benin. He was awarded 'Student with Leadership Qualities' at the University of Lagos Endowment Scholarship Awards/partners Forum 2008, Two times 1st Best, Faculty of Arts Researcher at the University of Lagos Annual Research Conference and Fair 2016 and 2017. He is a member of Society of Nigerian Artist (SNA) and member of Arts Council of the African Studies Association (ACASA). He has work with Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo), Ministry of Tourism Jamaica 2017/2018, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport 2019, and currently with Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Jamaica and also lecturer at Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica. He is the pioneer of the program " FESTIVAL OF THE CLOTH" an idea to create tie dye/batik cottage industries in Jamaica.

Garvey Mythology and Iconography-A View from the Grass Roots: Exploring Social Identities and Political Consciousness in Pre-Independence Jamaica

Presenter: Mr. Wesley Vanriel

Strategic Planning and Evaluation Consultant Jamaica

Garvey and Garveyism has been the subject of debate and discussion in Jamaica since colonial times. Independent Jamaica has appropriated Garvey's historical persona ideology and political platform into the national discourse with limited success, in my opinion. This paper seeks to explore an aspect of the national attitude to Garvey that is little recognised in Garvey literature, but which may have much significance.

Garvey is widely regarded among working-class Jamaicans, at least of the past generation, as a quasi-religious figure – a “prophet,” perhaps even more than a political leader. This perception is decidedly distinctive and in contrast to the perception of other social classes. One manifestation of this is in the prevalence of “Garvey myths” – apocryphal recordings of sayings and deeds of Marcus Garvey that confirm his spiritual power. This is often accompanied by iconography that prevails typically among working class people and within working class communities.

This paper examines some instances of this and attempts an analysis that connects perceptions of Garvey with social position, and argues that failure to resolve the conundrum contributes to some problems that exist in establishing Garvey and Garveyism as a truly national political consciousness in post-colonial Jamaica. The methodology is generally ethno-historical and qualitative. It examines and analyses perceptions. The main source of data is lyrics about Marcus Garvey in Jamaican popular music - For example “Where is Bagga Wire He Can’t Be Found” (Burning Spear); “Swallowfield Shall be a Battlefield” (Mighty Diamonds); and “When the Two Sevens Clash” (Culture). The presentation will include playing audio recordings of selected Garvey songs, followed by interpretation of these cryptic lines based on recollections of residents of a working class community of Trench Town, including the author. Political and social analysis is then applied to explore the contention that Jamaicans of different social classes have different perceptions of Garvey.

Bio

Wesley Vanriel holds a Master’s Degree in Economics from the University of the West Indies as well as a Diploma in Management Studies from that institution. A former lecturer in Economics, he has an ongoing interest in Jamaican Political, Economic and Social History. Having grown up in the working class community of West Kingston in the 1950s, Wes has many memories of presence and impact of Garvey and Garveyism on the community. This provides a factual basis of his analysis which draws upon social and political theory.

He is currently a Consultant with over 40 years experience in Public and Private Sector Development projects with extensive work experience in development planning, including senior technical positions in the GOJ from which he retired in 2013. His other pursuits and interests include visual arts and journalism.

Artificial Intelligence in Jamaican Music: Creating a Sustainable Future or Endangering a Culture?

Presenter: Debra-Ann Davidson
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts,
Jamaica

Abstract

When OpenAI announced the launch of ChatGPT on November 30, 2022, it seemed as though the research laboratory sounded the death-knell for science, education, academia, and the arts. Many feared that this “old-new” form of Artificial Intelligence would replace practitioners in certain fields. The Economist, for instance, carried a news story on April 14, 2023 titled, “ChatGPT could replace telemarketers, teachers and traders”. Among the doomsayers however, are a few positive voices who, at least cautiously, embrace the possibilities that ChatGPT could improve workflow at the very least.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been around since the 1950s, and ChatGPT, now ChatGPT-4 is simply an upgrade of earlier versions. Although the chatbot is limited to language, it, and AI in general, raises ethical issues that affect music industries. A new song can be created by using a pre-existing song and tweaking various parameters of the music. What results is music that is decidedly generic being fed to the public. Several AI-generated videos of Bob Marley’s music reside on YouTube alongside “no-name” musical compositions. The channels hosting these pieces are gathering a fanbase, and have the potential for monetising their output.

Jamaica has contributed to the on-going discussions regarding AI, but mostly in the area of plagiarism in the classroom. This paper discusses the impact that AI has on the music industry in Jamaica. It will address the questions that so far have received very little attention: “How do we distinguish between ‘good vs. bad’ AI-generated music? How do we even define such music? How can we use AI-generated music in the undergraduate music history curriculum?” Discussing these issues are critical for the future of Jamaican music and solutions are necessary to safeguard the music from endangerment.

Bio

Debra-Ann Davidson is a classical musician and educator. She is interested in all things technological in relation to education, particularly in the areas of online teaching, learning, and course design. She was one of the earliest adopters of online learning at Edna Manley College during the early decades of 2000, and has continued to design and offer online and blended courses in the areas of music history and research. She has been experimenting with ways in which ChatGPT can assist in teaching critical thinking and problem-solving skills in her music history and research courses, and using other forms of AI to teach musical structure.

Debra-Ann Davidson is currently on the School of Music faculty at the Edna Manley College for the Visual and Performing Arts.

How Can Participatory Theatre Engage Secondary School Students for Core Curriculum Learning in Jamaica and Support Sustainability?

Presenter: Ms. Evoné Walters
Artribute Limited,
Jamaica

Abstract

Underemployment and undervaluing of differentiated methods, including the use of the arts, remains a challenge in Jamaican secondary-level curricula. This results in a lack of diverse teaching styles and active engagement of students leading to their loss of interest in learning. There has been significant debate surrounding the efficacy of integrating the arts as a pedagogical tool in delivering core curricula, such as science, literacy, and mathematics in the 21st century. Theatre in Education

(TIE) is central to this discussion. TIE refers to using theatre specifically for educational purposes, including core curriculum learning, presented in school or outside a theatre setting.

Theatre is seldom done alone. Hence learning transpires through sustainable student-centred engagement involving interacting, co-operating and collaborating with others. Interactive theatre methods, breaks the metaphorical fourth wall by allowing students to enter the drama and further seat themselves in the characters' emotional, cultural and even physical positions. One such method is audience participation, rooted in activity-based learning which fosters engagement.

Lack of engagement negatively affects sustainability. TIE, including audience participation, provides a transformative method for moving beyond chalk and talk in service of strengthening student engagement is accomplished through resourcing sustainability in two approaches, reutilising human resources and the theatre environment. Developing activity-based learning actively centres students within the learning process, instead of regurgitating knowledge. TIE provides an outside of the classroom (EOtC) experience which introduces a new stimulant and fosters adventure and enjoyment. Hence learning through theatre and participation supports a more engaging and sustainable way of learning for Jamaican high school students.

Bio

Evoné Walters is a creative and social entrepreneur, theatre director, producer, four-time pitch competition finalist and winner as well as a 2021-2022 Chevening Scholar and a 2023 Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLA) fellow. She is a graduate of the Edna Manley College's School of Drama and holds an MA in Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (Distinction) from Goldsmiths, University of London. Evoné is the founder and managing director of Artribute Ltd., an arts education

company focused on integrating theatre and drama into the high school's core curriculum to provide an interactive and participatory way of learning. Since Artribute's inception in 2018, Evoné has been able to support 9126 English literature students from 80 schools in Jamaica through the staging of CXC CSEC English literature texts. She has staged *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (2018 & 2020), *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, dramatised by Christopher Sergel (2019) and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, dramatised by Artribute (2023). She is currently focused on finding different techniques of audience participation for high school students to foster learning.

Mapping the Roots of Indigenous Bahamian Art Education

Presenter: Keisha Oliver

Visual Arts and Design Department, University of the Bahamas, Bahamas

Abstract

Formerly colonised countries in the Anglophone Caribbean exist in a 'residual conjuncture' plagued by systems that reinforce ideologies from the 15th century European regime. Colonisers cultivated societal norms that centered Eurocentric views as universally objective and unchallenged truths through a 'dominant 'master narrative' that erased Indigenous and Afro- Caribbean representation. Today the absence of these multi-cultural Caribbean epistemologies is evident in The Bahamas national archives and national curriculum.

The broader scope for this study is concerned with the intersection between curricula reform and decolonial archival practices as an entry point into cultural liberation. By interrogating the historical specificity of content gaps in The Bahamas' current K-12 Arts education curriculum an argument can be made for the creation of teaching resources that feature traditionally silenced voices and practices.

My presentation will focus on mapping the origins of Bahamian informal indigenous art teaching practices in relation to the formal art education system of the 1950s-1960s. During this time a wave of expatriate professionals migrated to The Bahamas seeking employment including the three architects of K-12 art education. Today Bahamian art education historical records only recognise Don W. Russell who was born to Bahamian parents in New York where he also studied; Horace W. Wright who was born in Chicago to Jamaican parents and was trained as an educator in London; and British filmmaker David Rawnsley who moved to The Bahamas to establish a pottery studio and apprenticeship program. But who are the unnamed figures who taught the indigenous practices of straw-plaiting, woodcarving, and shell art? Why aren't they seen in the historical record of Bahamian artmaking?

These questions are critical to this research which is concerned with disrupting the existing linear patriarchal narratives by giving visibility to the interactions, relationships, and communities that can be uncovered through archival ethnography and critical indigenous theory frameworks.

Bio

Keisha Oliver is a Bahamian visual artist, designer, and educator whose interdisciplinary practice explores themes of identity, social equity, and cultural heritage. Oliver is an Assistant Professor and first Head of the Visual Arts and Design Department at the University of The Bahamas. She is currently pursuing a dual-title Ph.D. in Art Education and African American and Diaspora studies at The Pennsylvania State University.

Her research in African Diaspora Studies focuses on underrepresented Black identities through the intersection of narrative inquiry, black feminism, and critical race theory. Her current work investigates indigenous identity and cultural preservation in The Bahamas, with a focus on the intersection of cultural formations and nation-building. She contributes as a writer, researcher, and independent curator with organizations invested in advancing Caribbean visual culture.

Making it Work: Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Jamaican Secondary Music Classroom

Presenter: Dr. Roger N. Williams
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Abstract

The intersection of culture and education, elements that support the formation and sustenance of students' cultural identity, continues to be of interest to educators. Although the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) aims to incorporate music that reflects the wider society of Jamaica, the opinions and cultural systems of youth often go unnoticed in the classroom. This can create a disconnect between the established curriculum, students' culture system, and how they are taught in the music classroom.

The purpose of this study was to examine how secondary school music teachers practised culturally responsive teaching by functioning as cultural organisers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning when student learning was (a) related to their preferred music, and (b) related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture. Three music teachers from three public secondary schools in the city of Kingston, Jamaica, participated in this research. Using an instrumental case study design, I observed each teacher's lesson online on three separate occasions and conducted three semi-structured interviews with each teacher. The findings from this study suggest that culturally responsive teaching does

not only support ethnically diverse student populations but can function effectively with music teachers supporting students in Jamaica's postcolonial environment. The teachers' understanding of Jamaican culture did not necessarily align with students' lived popular culture, but learning about students' preferred music and employing contextual teaching and learning were beneficial to the students. Understanding students' cultural background, their popular culture experiences, and including historical aspects of their culture to broaden their understanding of their own heritage, were critical to how teachers operated. In this presentation, I will explore how each teacher's approach offered students opportunities to deepen their classroom musical experiences.

Bio

Roger N. Williams is a Jamaican pianist, music educator, choral conductor, and church musician. He performs as a solo and collaborative pianist and has presented concerts in Jamaica and overseas. Dr. Williams's research interests include the intersection of music education and culture, piano pedagogy, and popular music education. He conducts workshops in piano pedagogy, choral directing, and church music, has conducted consultations as music curriculum specialist, served as an adjudicator for local music competitions, and as a music examiner for the Caribbean Examination Council. He is a founding director of the National Youth Orchestra of Jamaica, a non-profit organization that primarily provides free music lessons for at-risk youths. Dr. Williams holds a Diploma in music education, bachelor's and master's degrees in piano performance, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in music education. He is the Dean, School of Music, at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

Ginger Knight's Whiplash – De/Re-Constructing Caribbean Theatre as Decolonial Archive and Repertoire

Abstract

The drive towards political independence from the United Kingdom by the various Caribbean states in the 1950s through 1980s created an indigenous theatre focused on the ramifications of upsetting the region's social, political and historical orders, as well as offering interdisciplinary ideas of reconstructing citizenship. In more than twenty plays for the Jamaican stage, the work of renowned Jamaican playwright and producer, Keith "Ginger" Knight (1951–2023) speaks from the insider experience on the ways in which indigenous cultural expressions can, borrowing from Diana Taylor's framework, create a theatre which challenges hegemonic narratives, advances decolonisation, and reshapes performance practices.

Knight's 1983 drama *Whiplash* sheds light on the complex tapestry of Jamaican society during the 1970s by grappling with the ambiguities and contradictions of marginalised voices amid debates about issues of identity, social hierarchies, and the enduring legacies of colonialism.

On the occasion of the play's 40th anniversary, Honor Ford Smith, editor of *3 Jamaican Plays: A Postcolonial Anthology 1977-1987*, moderates a panel discussion with directors who have staged *Whiplash* over the years, Pablo Hoilett (1983), Eugene Williams (1997), Brian Heap (2012), and E. Wayne McDonald (2023), to explore the significance of Knight's work, national memory, contemporary performance, and the constitution of a post-colonial Caribbean theatrical canon.

Re-Imagining Teacher Education Curriculum – The Arts and The Struggle to Mirror Caribbean Cultural Identities in Caribbean Classrooms

Presenter: Ms. Anthazia Kadir
University of the Virgin Islands
U.S. Virgin Islands

Abstract

The struggle to capture the pluralistic nature of Caribbean Cultural Identities is theoretically examined in many art forms across the region. From the beautiful rhythms of calypso to the lyrics of Marley, the narratives of Caribbean writers and the philosophical writings of Stuart Hall and Sylvia Wynters, artistic expressions have proven to be one of the most effective ways to interrogate the nomadic identities of Caribbean people. However, more needs to be theorised and conceptualised on how the arts can be used within teacher education curriculum practices in the Caribbean to build educators' capacity to develop a mirroring of our cultural identities within their classroom practices.

Given the history of enslavement in the region, Caribbean Teacher Education programmes often fall into the trap of structuring their curriculum following methods that embrace Euro-Western pedagogical practices learned at the breast of plantocracy and continue through forms of coloniality. Hence this presentation will discuss how curriculum offerings rooted in arts-based practices inclusive of the visual arts, dance, drama, and creative writing can subvert colonising habits to culturally relevant invocations for the purposes of re-imagining teacher education curriculum in the region.

Therefore, resting in the work of Hall's 1995 *Negotiating Caribbean Identities* and 1996 *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* this presentation will critically examine how arts-based practices can serve as a guide for returning us to a sense of cultural hybridity/identities toward grounding us in who we are and who we are becoming. Thus, using my current doctoral work at Cave Hill as a backdrop, this presentation will explore how the arts can be used as a means to explore the intersections of our "CaribbeanNess" which, according to Hall is something, "a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express..." to come into the full realisation of who they are as a people. Therefore, this presentation will demonstrate how the arts can be used as a necessary emancipatory

curriculum practice to transform teacher education programmes within the Caribbean.

Bio

Anthazia has given over 20 years of service to the field of education. Her teaching resume spans Canada and the Caribbean. Her interdisciplinary teaching and research skills include the arts, curriculum studies, indigenous methodologies, Caribbean cultures and narratives, decolonization as praxis, teacher education and narrative research. She received her initial teaching certification from the Cyril Potter College of Education, Guyana, a BA(Hons) from York University, Toronto and a Master in Education - Curriculum Studies from The University of New Brunswick, Canada. For her doctoral studies, Anthazia returned to the salty blue waters of the Caribbean to pursue Curriculum Studies at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill. To this end, Anthazia continues her practice in Canada, offering ongoing support for educators, and social justice communities, facilitating dynamic curriculum experiences and contemplative arts-based healing-centred practices for educators in higher education. She also criss-crosses the Atlantic, leading re-storying curriculum conversations as a guest lecturer at universities, conference presentations, facilitates narrative writing workshops for educators and students, and mentors graduate students pursuing qualitative research in the humanities and education globally.

Festival Culture – Authenticity and Legitimacy in the Caribbean

Presenter: Meagan A. Sylvester
Queens College – CUNY
USA

Abstract

This paper intends to interrogate the concept "offshoring pleasure" as a lens through which Caribbean Carnival festivals can be operationalised. Caribbean festivals from the Anglo-phone Caribbean mainly patterned the Trinidad Carnival model with enhancements made to form and praxis based on indigenous culture and tradition. Festival culture in Carnival communities vary according to the link to pre-Lenten practices or other religious observances. While there is no specific blueprint for festivities during Carnival, questions of authenticity and legitimacy often arise as naysayers debate whether Carnivals linked to African culture are the true manifestations of expression as opposed to the more commercial version.

Bio

Meagan Sylvester is a published author from the Caribbean twin island of Trinidad and Tobago. She is a UWI, St. Augustine graduate who specialises in the Sociology of Music 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, Narratives of Resistance in Calypso and Ragga Soca music, Steelpan and kaisoJazz musical identities. Teaching and research interests are Caribbean Music Cultures and African Diaspora Popular Culture.

She is currently a Visiting Professor, Sociology and Anthropology at Farmingdale State College at The State University of New York and an adjunct professor of Africana Studies at Queens College, The City University of New York.

When the Night Changes: Shivratri and Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago

Presenter: Ms. Kamille Andrews
Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago

Abstract

In Trinidad and Tobago, there are religious festivals and cultural spectacles that illustrate the social, political and spiritual tapestry of the multi-ethnic society. In this paper, I explore Carnival festivities, specifically jouvert and the Hindu festival of Shivratri. I investigate the relationship between Indo and Afro-Caribbean cosmologies by comparatively discussing the histories, rituals and festival space. Against this background, I argue that Caribbean ritual and festival traditions must be inclusive of the multiple, intersecting and dynamic ethno-cultural imaginaries in the society. Shared themes of birth, destruction and renewal, the use of popular theatre, and community participation, feature in both Carnival and Shivratri. The data collected in this discussion draws from six (6) semi-structured, in depth interviews with festival practitioners. In addition to the discussion, I include my visual art representations of the co-imaginings of Carnival and Shivratri in Trinidad and Tobago. This study is important to expanding the Caribbean cultural understanding of selfhood and community. It also preserves the voices of practitioners in key cultural traditions and practices.

Bio

Kamille Andrews is a visual artist and creative writer from Trinidad and Tobago. Through her works, she explores the diverse experiences of womanhood, carnival cultures, human dignity and justice in everyday Caribbean life. Andrews' work has been featured jointly with local artists in national and international exhibitions. In 2021, her poetry was longlisted in Bocas Lit Fest's Johnson Amoy Achong Prize for Poetry. She holds a BSc. in Mechanical Engineering from The University of the West Indies and is currently enrolled as a student in the Mas Design Programme at the Caribbean Yard Campus, Trinidad and Tobago.

Cari-Comedy, Bring Remedy. Stop 'Tek' Comedians 'Fi' Joke!

Presenters:

Owen Blakka Ellis – Moderator

PANELISTS: Christopher Johnny Daley , Ian Ity Ellis, Errol Fabien, Dahlia Harris

Abstract

There is no denying the fact that the Caribbean boasts a rich cultural heritage, with comedy emerging and continuing to evolve as a dynamic tool for expressing our unique identity, challenging stereotypes, and advancing social cohesion. This panel brings together four renowned players in Caribbean cultural and creative industry - the comedic arts, to examine the transformative potential of Caribbean comedy in shaping perceptions and enhancing regional visibility on the global stage. More importantly, the panel posits an urgent demand for tangible recognition of the artform.

The panel will explore the power of Caribbean comedy as a vehicle for leveraging international perception for regional understanding and challenge the limiting connotations that frequently frame comedic art as content intended purely to offset serious or tragic episodes or simply to lighten the mood in tense or awkward situations. The presentations and discussion will cover the multifaceted aspects of Caribbean comedy, including its historical roots, artistic styles, societal impact and economic potential.

Furthermore, the panel will investigate the strategies for harnessing the global recognition garnered by Caribbean comedians to enhance regional cognition. Participants will examine successful examples of comedians breaking through international barriers and gaining global acclaim. They will discuss the significance of platforms such as social media, streaming services, and international comedy festivals in expanding the reach and influence of Caribbean comedy worldwide.

Ultimately, this panel aims to shed light on the immense potential of Caribbean comedy as a catalyst for regional development and recognition.

Bio

Owen Ellis

Writer, educator, performing artiste and scholar, Owen Blakka Ellis is known mostly for over three decades of work as a leading standup comedian. He has worked all over the world as actor, musician, motivational speaker and workshop facilitator and is one of the powerhouses behind the success of popular Jamaican television series 'The Ity and Fancy Cat Show' - a project he worked on as principal writer and co-producer, as well as making cameo appearances in some of the skits.

He is a senior lecturer in the School of Arts Management & Humanities at the Edna Manley College of the Visual & Performing Arts.

Errol Fabien

Errol Fabien is a recovering drug addict with over 35 years of being clean and serene. Today, Errol is mostly retired and engaged in some training and mentoring in this period of his life. He also currently operates a Caribbean Content Television station that is available throughout the Caribbean on cable TV, named Gayelle The Caribbean. Before, Errol was a very active comedian, host, actor, Calypsonian, Calypso MC, radio talk show host, TV presenter and volunteer Rehab counsellor. Errol is widely travelled as an entertainer and has had the pleasure of working with most of the Caribbean's entertainers in various disciplines of the performing arts. Errol served as the president of the National Drama Association of Trinidad and Tobago and served on the board of the Film Company of Trinidad and Tobago. Errol also served on the board of Directors of Eastern Credit Union.

Dahlia Harris

CEO of DMH Productions Limited, Dahlia Harris has steadily made her mark as a writer, actress, producer and director, mounting several award winning and critically acclaimed theatrical and television productions. Among them is Jamaica's number one television dramas Ring Games and Thicker than Water. A multi nominee and winner of Jamaica's actor boy awards, her work in Theatre has earned her a place in the Caribbean Hall of Fame, the Bigga High Achievers Award as well as the Flair Magazine Distinguished Woman Award. She is the convenor of the Jamaica Women in Theatre Festival.

Dahlia has been a media practitioner for almost three decades, working in print, radio and television. She presently co-hosts Jamaica's number one television morning show...Smile Jamaica it's Morning Time and the immensely popular afternoon radio programme Too Live Crew on RJR94FM. In the recent Best of Jamaica poll, she was voted Best TV Personality.

Dahlia is also one of Jamaica's best female stand up comedians.

A first class honours graduate of the University of the West Indies, with a double major in English and Media and Communications...Dahlia also holds a Masters Degree in Communication for Social and Behaviour Change. Her scholarly work on Miss Lou formed the basis of her graduate research. She is a Cultural Studies PhD Candidate in the Institute of Caribbean Studies.

Island Song: Of Nation, Beauty and Rejection in Jestina's Calypso and Ratoon

Presenter: Carolyn J Allen
Independent Scholar
JamaicaAbstract

Nettleford's *Mirror Mirror* takes its title from a well-known fairy tale, where a female character is seeking assurance of her beauty. The question posed is a complicated one to answer in the Caribbean space. I propose to examine

its treatment in two plays by the celebrated novelists: Earl Lovelace and Erna Brodber. In both *Jestina's Calypso* and *Ratoon*, the female protagonists are challenged and damaged by standards of physical beauty which alienate them from themselves. Brodber's Nellie, is persuaded to alter her physical appearance in order to attract the appropriate mate. Jestina is scared to present her true self to her beloved penpal. What do these dramas reveal to us about national identity and nation-building?

Jestina compares herself to Trinidad. The community's derision of her mirrors attitudes to the state. Through a masquerade-like performance the community mocks Jestina in a replay of her painful airport encounter. Self-deprecation is one of the lasting legacies of colonisation. In holding the mirror to society, theatre performance is an effective vehicle for the examination of the damage it wreaks. Nellie's birth community sings of the desire to build a new nation: "For in this lovely island there are lots of noxious things". The colour-class divide is one such thing and Nellie must learn to manoeuvre her way through it, or ultimately reject it. When it is revealed that the father of her unborn child has no intention of taking her as a life partner, the audience is invited to express their opinions about her situation and how to resolve it. In both plays the writers exploit popular song to voice opinion and provoke reflection.

Bio

Carolyn Allen is an occasional lecturer with research interests in comparative Caribbean Literature and theatre. She has taught in the Department of Literatures in English at UWI Mona, the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, School of Drama, and was Tutor/Co-ordinator of the Philip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts, UWI Mona (2002-2008). She serves on the Committee of the Schools' Drama Festival and is a facilitator with Jamaica Youth Theatre. She is also involved in the activities of Erna Brodber's blackspace and the Woodside Community Development Action Group.

Material Cultural Retention: Women Indigeneity and Sustainability

Presenter: Miriam Hinds Smith
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Abstract

In recent history, we have seen an amplification of discussions on authorship and indigenous creative practices and the significant roles played by women as keepers of these traditions. However, in light of the local schizophrenic and counterintuitive approach to the nurturing and retaining of these practices within the context of island cultures, principally Jamaica, coupled with the remnants of slavery, and capitalist colonialism, evidenced in relics of failed island political and social infrastructures, these - like baskets carrying water - hold little assurance. This presentation seeks to

identify signifiers that submit approaches to engender sustainability, continuity and authenticity in the retention of our nation's cultural artisanal identity and practices to amplify the need to reposition and redirect our islands' futures, the futures of the next generation.

Bio

Miriam Hinds Smith is a Jamaican mother, wife, artist, educator and collaborator who sees life through the lens of her passion for textiles and whose artistic process is inspired by local flora and fauna, her environment, and its historical and contemporary significance in our lives.

Hinds Smith is an honours Textile and Fibre Arts graduate of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts and trained as an educator at the University of Technology, Jamaica. She is a Chevening alumni, with a Master's degree in Textiles Design for Fashion from the Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, UK. She presently serves as the Dean of the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College.

She has exhibited at Gallery Mulhouse, Alsace, France, in 1992; and the Winchester Gallery and New Designers, in Islington, UK, in 1999. She has also exhibited in the National Gallery of Jamaica's Biennial in 2008, 2012, and 2016 and was one of the artists featured in Explorations 3: Seven Women Artists in 2015. She has been a regular exhibitor in the SVA Faculty Exhibitions and the Rex Nettleford Arts Conference exhibitions at the CAG[e], Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts. She was featured in the Imago Mundi publication, Islands: Contemporary Artists from Haiti and Jamaica (2017). Awarded UNESCO Artist in Residence, Centre d'Art, Haiti, 2022. Exhibited in Archipelago Mason du Fort Haiti, 2022.

When 'Doption' Becomes Language and Makes Road

Presenter: Dr. John Hunte
Barbados Community College/UWI Cave Hill, Barbados

Abstract

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1, KJV)

Spiritual Baptist services are oftentimes long because they do not rigidly follow prescribed formats. It is ritual masking as ceremony. At any juncture, a song or 'sankey' is pitched and, once a connection to the spirit world is established, road opens up for the indwelling, manifestation and transmission of the spirit. In these moments a song signals the opening of portals of mystical healing, of divine messages. The song becomes a symphony, its sonic disruption broadens, develops, and then transfers to bring an embodied rhythmic action called "the spirit of a doption". Here, a road to the spirit world is created and we "Spiritual Baptists" journey in the spirit. 'Doption' becomes an important mechanism for spirit to come in and for devotees to launch out, to travel to specific locations in

the spirit world, to commune and communicate with the divine, and then return to present time, often for the service to resume and continue to the next item in the programme.

In this article, I attempt to create an embodied visceral narrative for those of us devoted to Spiritual Baptist worship. Here the singing, rhythmic breathing, aspirating bodies are co-opted to fortify high energy portals between worlds. In this moment, literally, metaphorically, and symbolically, "the Word [is] made flesh, and dwells among us and we behold [its] glory... full of grace and truth." (John 1:14 KJV) With this mapping, I hope to make tangible what is very much this a lived experience for Spiritual Baptist practitioners. Hopefully, in trying to do so, I clarify (and complicate) some of the previous documents written about us, who we are and what we do.

'A Matter of Becoming': Revisiting Stuart Hall's Model of Identity Within the Context of the Contemporary Caymanian Cultural Experience

Presenter: Mr. William Helfrecht
National Gallery of the Cayman Islands,
Cayman Islands

Abstract

As a starting point for exploring the elusive nature of Caymanian culture, the writings of Stuart Hall offer insightful perspectives that provide a productive framework in which to situate such identity-based discussions. Drawing upon the discipline of cultural studies and the closely related field of postcolonial theory, the premise for this paper takes its inspiration from Hall's definition of culture proposed in his essay 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' (1990), in which the author suggests that identity, rather than an 'accomplished fact', should instead be thought of as a 'production which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation'. Whilst Hall locates the essence of Caribbean identity within a distinctly diasporic experience, Cayman's somewhat removed position from the rest of the Caribbean, both geographically and as a British Overseas Territory that has yet to initiate a formal transition to independence, presents a unique context in which to interrogate our Islands' complex relationship to its Afro-Caribbean roots. Drawing upon the research of Caymanian scholar Christopher Williams, this paper touches upon the tensions that hinge upon the often subjective criteria for assigning Caymanian identity, questioning the disputed definitions that are frequently invoked to validate an individual's claims to cultural 'legitimacy'. Given the multicultural composition of contemporary Caymanian society, it can be argued that a more elastic definition of culture such as that proposed by Hall offers precisely the model of cultural identity that best describes the multi-ethnic, polyglot reality of our globalised present. Adopting Homi K. Bhabha's notion of 'cultural hybridity' as a further frame of reference, this paper lastly attempts to consider

new perspectives on the nature of Cayman's relationship to the wider Caribbean, illustrating these through the work of contemporary Caymanian artists who explore this thematic terrain through the creative act of artistic expression.

Bio

William Helfrecht is Collections Curator at the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, where his research interests include Caymanian visual culture and contemporary Caribbean art. He has authored several catalogue essays on Caymanian art and artists and recently presented papers at the Museums Association of the Caribbean 2023 Annual Conference, and for the Cayman Art Week Symposium. He holds a BA in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art and a master's degree in Curatorial Studies from Columbia University and was the recipient of an Enhanced Chancellor's Fellowship in the Art History Department at CUNY Graduate Center, New York. Prior to joining the National Gallery in 2019, he worked as a Mellon Foundation researcher for the Walker Art Center, and as an assistant curator with New York based non-profit No Longer Empty.

Revival, Resistance and The Jamaica Baptists

Presenter: Marvia E. Lawes
Sligoville Circuit of Baptist Churches,
Jamaica

Abstract

This article offers a historical and theological perspective of the impact of the Third Great Awakening and revivals on the Jamaica Baptists, a critique of their response to the revivals especially during the period of the 1860s, and of what followed leading up to where we are today. The Baptists who faced persecution during the mid-19th century revivals, were accused of Africanising the Euro-American revival and spawning resistance movements. The persecution of the Baptists, with the majority Black membership, was marked by racial prejudices perpetuated in negative and harmful ideas, teachings and attitudes toward their African ancestry and religious roots. That we are now, globally, reclaiming once and still vilified aspects of our African heritage, while at the same time struggling to maintain other aspects of our cultural identity makes it even more urgent for there to be an assessment on our own terms of what is useful to us and necessary for moving forward. The time has come to revisit the inherited and continued opposition to, and criminalisation of some African religious beliefs and practices. Thus, the revisiting of Jamaica's revivals of the 1860s might assist current considerations and efforts to address specific legacies of slavery that contribute to the ongoing disempowerment and disenfranchisement of our people. It is time for a revival in the soul of Jamaica.

Bio

Reverend Miss Marvia Lawes is a pastor and public theologian. She pastors the Sligoville Circuit of Baptist Churches located in Sligoville, St. Catherine – Jamaica's first Free Village. As a Public Theologian, she has been a longstanding vocal advocate for decolonization in general and decolonizing theology, she describes her theological pursuits as being grassroots focused and undertaken with Pan-African Caribbean Womanist lens, and from an Historical Theological perspective. She has presented in several spaces locally and internationally on Gender, Racial Justice, African spirituality, and Christian Theology.

Increasing the Rate of Economic Growth Using West African Traditions in the Jamaican Education System

Presenter: Seretse Small
Avant Academy of Music
Jamaica

Abstract

This paper aims to explore the relationship between Michael Polanyi's concept of tacit knowledge, the theory of economic complexity, and the impact of the transmission of West African traditions through drumming programmes as a means of increasing the economic growth rate of Jamaica in the long term. Polanyi argues that much of what we know is tacit or implicit knowledge that cannot be easily articulated, and that this kind of knowledge is often vital to the success of complex processes. The theory of economic complexity asserts that countries tend to converge to the level of income dictated by the complexity of their productive structure and that this complexity is indicated by the capabilities and tacit knowledge embedded in the production of the nation's goods and services.

Over ninety percent of Jamaica's population is descended from West Africa and through processes of education and social control has been cut off from the history and traditions of previous generations. This paper proposes that this cultural interference has disrupted the continued transmission of tacit knowledge for the vast majority of Jamaicans and has resulted in decades of anaemic economic growth. Using case studies, interviews, and a review of the literature and primary sources, this paper argues that the inclusion of West African tradition through programmes in the manner of West African drumming in the educational system can have a significant impact on the country's economic growth rate by increasing the economic complexity through the inspiration of diverse streams of goods and services with specialised Jamaican know-how. Overall, this paper contributes to our understanding of the relationship between culture, tacit knowledge, education, and economic development. It suggests that decolonisation, supported by national educational policies can play an important role in increasing the rate of economic growth and quality of life for the long term.

Bio

One of the nation's most impactful musicians, Seretse Small, is an educator, performer, composer, entrepreneur and passionate philosopher who examines the complex dynamics of the Jamaican experience through the lens of history. In his many projects, Seretse is a cultural stakeholder in the tradition of Rex Nettleford and Sonny Bradshaw, addressing the issues of identity in the context of national economic progress.

Small is the managing director and founder of Avant Academy of Music. A highly accomplished and respected Caribbean jazz composer and musician, Small has held several positions in the fields of education and the music industry. He is the recipient of the Caribbean Hall of Fame for his contributions to the Jamaican music industry.

Combining a scholar's knowledge of history, a researcher's credibility through rigor, and an activist's passion for social justice, Small challenges all of us to examine the basis of our expectations for change.

Proposal For A Reasoning Amongst Change Agents

Presenter: Ms. Yasmin Dixon
Gallery x4, USA

Abstract

In this lecture, I will explore the premise that visual art has no obligation but to the good, the true and the beautiful. And, that social-economic transformation as posited by the establishment of CARICOM, the 60th anniversary of Jamaican independence, and the 220th anniversary of the Haitian revolution have largely failed to restore hope to an already failed Jamaican middle-class (which further necessitates art and performance as cathartic tools in service of the good, the true and the beautiful.) Furthermore, the neo-liberal capitalist "better life" policies imposed on Jamaica as--post Manley-- "an offer you can't refuse" have proved to be a Devil's bargain with Jamaica taking its place amongst the lower tiers (consistent rate of currency devaluation) of the global supply chain. The world (digital universe) now flat, flattens everything, everywhere, all at once. Politics informed by largely American media outlets (Covid-19) denies Jamaican agency, originality, and purpose.

There is a desperate need to restore and subsidise traditional arts and crafts both as skilled labour and source of innovation. The psychic mooring of handiwork may thus act, I will argue, as a hedge against the displacement posed by Korean manufacturers such as Rastaworld while trade agreements such as CARICOM have failed to institutionalise economies of scale; establish export markets and are still rooted in colonial ties. Ayiti remains a tragic drama of destabilisation, intervention and disrespect.

Without a robust middle class to bridge the high and low arts, Jamaica's agrarian centre and tourist -foreign exchange- periphery act as competing timelines that rarely, if ever, intersect. Nation building yields to partisan politics and accusations of corruption. The Jamaican Diaspora has its own issues of adaptation, assimilation, memory and survival. Vision and imagination are needed when Jamaica becomes an Abstract idea. Turning disadvantages into competitive advantages starting – with the unpolluted air and water of never having industrialised, (mining areas excluded) may jumpstart the transformational process but one has to leave Jamaica in order to no longer take them for granted. The ecology of zero waste is ripe for artistic disruption and intervention.

Bio

Yasmin Dixon is a first generation/Windrush black British, naturalized American immigrant of Jamaican (slave-owning and maroon) heritage. As aTrans-Atlantean she has in various times and places been a visual & performing artist/ director/teacher/caregiver & consultant. An expert in boundary dissolution and reformation she has an e-commerce art print business: www.galleryx4.com. A graduate of Brown University she had the distinct pleasure of meeting Rex Nettleford when she conducted an independent study at UWI- Mona campus on Political development in Jamaica 1974-79.

Anchoring the Traditional in the Present: Constructing Critical Caribbean Art Dialogues by Occupying the Yard Space

Presenter: Kerri-Anne Chisholm
University of Reading
Cayman Islands

Abstract

The origin stories of the inhabitants of the Caribbean are as complex as the expansive histories of the region's flora and fauna. Situated within these complex narratives exists problematic colonial legacies that shape our communities and organisations— particularly arts and culture spaces that override the deep-rooted cultural practices of the peoples of our region. Additionally, these cultural spaces thrive on the exclusion of distinct people groups – the majority of which are of Afro-Caribbean ancestry and/ or migrant, dispossessed communities – thus shaping museum and exhibition going practices in the region as racialised, socio-political experiences. The participation within these cultural spaces enables the accumulation of social and cultural capital, of which the inverse indicates a deficiency of capital for the excluded groups. However, any attempt to compose a singular story subsuming each Caribbean island would be impossible.

Therefore, the locale of this presentation is the paradisaical territory of the Cayman Islands. Situated awkwardly between postcolonial thought and colonial rule, the Islands boast the highest GDP in the region and over 130 nationalities represented in a population pool of

approximately 71,000 people. However, it suffers from severe socioeconomic and cultural engagement divides, on account of the absence of cultural policy implementation and diversity of dedicated exhibition spaces that can be linked to the internalised questioning of what is Caymanian heritage and culture. This presentation will look at the development of the project space Gram Bella's in the Cayman Islands as a framework to speak of Bourdieu's capital conversion theory, and explore Fanon's examination of the sociopolitical and psychological impacts of colonised cultural spaces on the islands.

Gram Bella's is the first project space in the Cayman Islands seeking to create a safe space for previously excluded and disenfranchised groups to mediate and reclaim cultural identity as they acquire cultural and social capital.

Bio

Kerri-Anne Chisholm is a Caribbean cultural practitioner and social justice activist. Born and raised in the Cayman Islands, her deep ancestral ties to Jamaica, Cuba, and Scotland have informed her view of Caribbean identity, cultural production, and postcolonial thought.

She holds a BA in Fine Art and MA in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture, and has developed exhibitions as a curator and consultant at the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, the University of Oxford (UK), Tate Modern (UK), and community projects within England and the Caribbean.

Chisholm is a PhD student at the University of Reading and Zurich University of the Arts. Her research investigates the racialised, socio-political status of the exhibition going experience and aims to implement a project space in the Cayman Islands as a key component for social and community-focused impact, and mediation of decolonised contemporary identity.

Sybil Atteck: A Lost Legacy Rediscovered

Presenter: Mr. Keith Atteck

**Sybil Atteck Estate,
Canada**

This lecture introduces the work of Sybil Atteck (1911-1975) and her pioneering role in the history of modern art in Trinidad and Tobago, the broader Caribbean, and as a founding member of the Trinidad Art Society in 1943. Her

role, as a woman artist, in the development of Trinidadian art has been compared to that of Edna Manley in Jamaica, her contemporary.

Atteck's art education includes the London Polytechnic

Institute in 1935, the Escuela de Bellas Artes del Perú in 1942, and Washington University in St. Louis Missouri USA in 1948, where she received her BFA Degree. With an extensive record of local and international exhibitions, Atteck's reach included the Exhibition of West Indian Painting shown in Jamaica and Canada in 1945-46, the Royal Academy of Art in 1955, as well as a solo exhibition at the Institute of Jamaica in 1959. More recently, her work has been presented in *Circles and Circuits* (2018) in Los Angeles, *Fragments of Epic Memory* (2021) at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Canada, and *MAS ALLA, EL MAR CANTA (Beyond, the Sea Sings) Diasporic Intimacies and Labor* (2021) at the Times Art Centre in Berlin, Germany.

Despite Atteck's significant accomplishments, and the general recognition given to her role in the development of Trinidadian art, her life and work has been scarcely documented and the breadth and range of her artistic contributions is still insufficiently known. The Sybil Atteck Biography Project, which was initiated by her nephew Keith Atteck in 2018, has sought to address this gap in the Caribbean's art-historical scholarship. This lecture is based on this archival research and makes a case for Atteck's significance and unique place in the history and development of modern art in the British Caribbean during the period of decolonisation. Key works will be shown and discussed.

Bio

Mr. Atteck was born in Trinidad and migrated to Canada where he now lives. Atteck worked at a consulting engineering firm before a career in the mining industry for a combined 33 years. More recently he has been a professional consultant in the field of Information Governance for 9 years and is now employed at the Province of Ontario's electricity operator and regulator. Atteck's past interest included Eastern European and Balkan traditional folklore research and folkdance where he was a performer, artistic director, musician, and choreographer for 20+ years. Now he has turned his attention to his family's history in Trinidad and the Biographic and artistic research of his Aunt Sybil Atteck.

Lecture Demonstrations

Praxis for Change: Applying Applied Theatre Arts Practice for Adolescent Mothers

Presenter: Patrice Briggs
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, Jamaica

Abstract

Childbirth, whether experienced by teenagers or adult women, is a life changing and even traumatic experience. This experience comes with many mental and psychological health challenges for mothers. Postpartum depression is a mood disorder or depression that occurs mostly in women after the birth of a baby. In Jamaica, around one in seven women can develop postpartum depression, and adolescent mothers are twice as likely as their adult counterparts to have postpartum depression. This is a growing public health concern affecting women across the globe. However, the conversations, education and empowerment of these women and society on a general scale is limited or non-existent.

The community engagement of a theatre in education performance workshop, entitled 'The Breaking Point' done by my School of Drama, Theatre and Development students' class 2023 (aka Women's Empowerment Theatre and Development Group) at the Women's Centre, attempted to empower and educate adolescent mothers about this health issue. The impact of this theatre approach was both a valuable and transformative experience for both participants and students of this project. Theatre for change, referred to as a hybrid discipline of theatre and drama in education and applied theatre arts practices, is a 21st century practice that pays attention to praxis, commitment to methodologies of critical analysis, performance ethnography as well as evidence-based research.

This lecture demonstration seeks to reflect on this pedagogical approach of theatre for change, and share in an interactive way, how this praxis of applied theatre arts can empower, educate and bring about positive change with participants dealing with the issue of postpartum depression in and outside of the classroom.

Bio

Patrice Briggs currently serves as a Lecturer, School of Drama, Edna Manley College for the Visual and Performing Arts starting 2020. She teaches in the B.A Drama in Education and B.FA, Theatre Arts Programs. Patrice brings to Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, her valuable experiences within this field after working as an Adjunct Lecturer at the Department for Creative and Festival Arts, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine for more than ten years. At U.W.I she lectured in the BA Theatre Arts Program (DCFA) and B.Ed. Program (School of Education). Ms. Briggs was also the Artistic Director of Arts-in-Action (2015-2019), the leading Applied Creative Arts Company in the Caribbean. She graduated in the B.A English Literatures and Theatre Arts, and PG Dip. Program in Arts and Cultural Enterprise Management at UWI, St. Augustine. Additionally, she holds a M.A in Cross Sectoral and Community Arts from Goldsmith University, London.

Jamaican Dancehall reflecting African Amapiano and Afrobeats: Contemporary Compositional Potentials and Cultural Connections

Presenter: Professor Chris Walker
University of Wisconsin–Madison, USA

Description:

In this lecture performance, Professor Chris Walker delves into the contemporary possibilities within the evolving dancehall vocabulary, as it interlaces with the expressive movements and compositional elements found in South Africa's amapiano and West Africa's afrobeats. Anchored in the rich tapestry of dancehall mythology, this presentation brings together Jamaican dancers and choreographers to examine the creative potential of a unique cultural expression known as "rent-a-tile," which as a compositional device serves as a conduit for exploration and self-discovery.

Within the dancehall mythos, "rent-a-tile" emerges as a fascinating device that enables couples to embark on astral journeys, unraveling their stories, and granting individuals the power to instantly connect with the realms of love and joy by simply stepping on this claiming space. Rooted in the "inward stretch" charge championed by Nettleford, Professor Walker's work has been a continuous exploration of Jamaican dancehall and its intrinsic ties to the traditional and folk movements of Jamaica, serving as a wellspring for contemporary artistic expression.

This project expands upon that ongoing investigation, recognizing the increasingly global nature of popular culture and how dancehall contemporary art can serve as mirrors, reflecting and reframing society's values, challenges, and aspirations.

Through the lens of technology, social dances are now engaged in direct and profound conversations across communities, countries, and continents.

L'Antech Mirroring the Historical Ancestral Notations as CARIMOD 'Daaance'

Presenter: L'Antoinette Stines, PhD
L'Acadco A United Caribbean Dance Force, Jamaica

Abstract

This lecture demonstration contests the Euro/American hegemony of contemporary dance training in Jamaica. Across the Caribbean, for example in Cuba, Haiti and Belize, modern techniques that originate in traditional and popular dance have been created as codified language for training. The knowledge encoded in traditional and popular dance is documented and transmitted in these Caribbean training procedures. Conversely, in the

Anglo-Caribbean, structured training in modern and contemporary dance has not been codified to include traditional and/or popular dance. The dominant training procedures are the Lester Horton, the Martha Graham and Classical Ballet. There are as well, free form and many different shades of Pina Bausch.

The emergence of the 'CARIMOD' technique, L'Antech, marks a radical break from the politics of dependency on Euro/American models. L'Antech is a codified Anglo-Caribbean 'nation dance' technique that transports ancestral notations from 'yaad' to training, to stage, enabling renewal and continuity. L'Antech manifests the philosophy articulated by Rex Nettleford: "The language by which the body expresses itself does not have to be anyone else's language, least of all the master's".

In this presentation, I underscore the parallel between the valorisation of English as the socially accepted language in Jamaica and the dominance of Euro/American dance techniques as normative in training. I deploy the body language of traditional and popular Jamaican 'daaance' as an affirmation of the value of vernacular techniques. L'Acadco: A United Caribbean Dance Force will perform as an extension of the lecture demonstration, to showcase the efficacy of L'Antech as a Carimod dance language.

WORKSHOPS

Unmasking and Coming Downstage

Presenter: Ms. Janelle Mitchell
National Cultural Foundation (NCF) Barbados

Abstract

COVID influenced many to masquerade as social media junkies when the world was thrust into the online space at a rapid pace. Many teens and creatives stepped on to the virtual centre-stage in a spotlight that shone a disparaging representation of their identity. Hiding behind the veil of their digital screens has given rise to this negative cultural manifestation which is a threat to art for social transformation. Journey downstage with me as we unmask and look into the mirror to reveal 'Black Skin, White Masks'. In this presentation/workshop, I will reveal some of the complexities we face as Caribbean educators/creatives in the post-COVID space, as we seek to make theatre with young people in this tech savvy environment.

Making theatre with young people can be enjoyed by all walks of life. An effective way of engaging with the youth is Theatre-in-Education; a mode of learning which caters to 11-24 year olds. As we have witnessed in the last three years, social media has taken the spot of centre-stage for teens and creatives worldwide. As a result, it is imperative to encourage them to 'Unmask and Come downstage' as we bridge the gap between social media and theatre to inspire social transformation.

Drama/Theatre enacts social transformation and can impact students' physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. This is why making theatre with young people can be life changing especially in a time when the digital space is threatening to have negative cultural manifestations. This enables creatives with the opportunity to reflect on our history and shape a new narrative as they tell stories of our culture and cultural forms. 'Unmasking and Coming Downstage' will help arts educators/creatives to redesign the ways in which we enact change via theatre in this digital space.

Bio

Janelle Mitchell, the former acting Cultural Officer - Theatre Arts (2018) at the National Cultural Foundation, is an ardent theatre practitioner and trained actor with a youthful and free spirit. Charged with a Master of Arts - Creative Arts, and in the final phase of a Post Graduate Diploma in Arts and Cultural Enterprise Management, she has a keen desire to add her two cents to the development of arts edutainment in Barbados. Jae is a trained graduate teacher at a Secondary School in Barbados where she reciprocates her artistry through teaching Theatre Arts and English. She is the recipient of the inaugural Spirit of Imagination Award, Emerging Young Leader in the Creative Sector from the Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination; University of the West Indies. Janelle tutored in Drama & Theatre Arts with several organisations over the past decade including the UWI Cave Hill Campus, Mustardseed Productions Inc., Drama in Schools Programme and Youth Achieving Results (YAR).

PERFORMANCES

Level 27

DANCEWORKS - the performing corps of the EMCVPA SCHOOL OF DANCE

This is an encore presentation of DanceWorks' 27th Season of Dance, presented in April 2023, exhibiting works created by faculty, guest and student choreographers of the EMCVPA School of Dance.

Going Back and Looking For-Word

**Presenter: Kacy Garvey,
Poetry Society of Jamaica
Jamaica**

Abstract

This 15-minute performance entitled "Going Back and Looking For-Word" consists of five original poems that focus on the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Haiti's history, ethnic diversity, Jamaica's political and social landscape and Brexit. The aim of this performance is two-fold. On one hand, the poems will reference factual information about the Black diaspora in regards to slavery, colonisation, and ensuing racial tensions and their lingering impact of these historical movements on the shaping of our country and region as we know today. On the other hand, poetic licence will be used to imagine how these macro-level dynamics affect each of us and all of us, and explores the challenges and beauty of navigating our present world against the backdrop of these realities. By describing events that took place across multiple countries (e.g. Jamaica, Haiti, Brasil), the poems highlight the diverse, vast impact of these historical events, while reminding us of the plethora of things we have in common, which should provide an impetus to strive for mutual support and learning from each other.

In the words of Plato, "Poetry is nearer to vital truth than history." The use of art to explore these themes allows for the expression and dignity of the emotional and psychological impact of these historical events and contexts on an individual and collective level. The freedom to ventilate trauma and celebrate victories will be further facilitated by a 10-minute question-and-answer segment. The presenter can provide any clarification on terms or issues raised in the pieces, while the audience can provide their perspectives. In doing so, the depth and communal nature of understanding can contribute to new ways to constructively contextualise our present realities, and challenge, change, and rebuild narratives that are more aligned with what we want to see in our country and region.

Bio

Kacy Garvey first became interested in spoken word poetry in the summer of 2008, when she attended her first Poetry Slam. By the end of that year, she joined the local poetry

scene through performances on the open mic. Since then, she has been a featured act at various poetry events such as Pen Soul, Sky Gallery's Art Wine and Poetry, Red Bones Monthly Poetry Night and Still Waters, Jamaica's premier Christian poetry and live music event. In addition to these events, Kacy has performed at numerous church concerts, conferences, and radio and TV programmes across the country. She is currently the host of the monthly fellowship of the Poetry Society of Jamaica.

Emerge-N-See

**Presenters: Rachael Allen, Kalisse Kelly and Syprian Fuller
Jamaica**

Abstract

Humans are social beings who influence and are influenced by the world in which we interact. As we stand and look in the mirror we see ourselves through the paradigm of our own minds; as others see us through their own paradigms. The schemas, concepts and categorisations we use to infer meaning to the world might vary from person to person, but there are threads of interconnectivity which must be realised and cultivated for a just society. The collaborative creative piece entitled

"Emerge-N-See", is conceptualised under the sub-theme "Of God's children, who is the fairest of them all". The word "fair" is interpreted and applied in reference to one's physical appearance, and also one's mentality of being fair-minded.

The comedic piece utilises Yoga, Dance and Drama to unfold what happens when two individuals from very different walks of life (a yoga instructor and a dancehall queen) are double booked to use a studio space. Through the strain of their interaction, they get to step through the dimensions of each other's lives, learn perspectives and somehow find a synthesis of their differing realities. The piece ultimately aims to explore how situational (external) factors and dispositional (internal) factors interact to manifest behaviours, perceptions and attitudes within/towards individuals and social groups. The main themes expressed in the piece are stereotype activation, Inequity, culture, identity and holistic development.

Bio

Rachael Allen is a multidisciplinary artist, realist, activist and entertainment specialist. She uses her wealth of knowledge acquired pursuing her BFA in Theater arts to influence her creative assertions and discipline.

Syprian Fuller is an Independent creative contractor who works diligently in social work, Creative writing, directing and stage/production management. He aspires to advance the practice of Drama therapy as a means of mental wellness and rehabilitation within Jamaican society. Kalisse Kelly is a Yoga instructor who uses fundamental values of

competence, commitment, consistency, communication and community to help people change their lives by improving their flexibility, mobility, strength and peace of mind. We proactively aim to produce innovative, thought provoking and transformative work in our creative capacities.

Balm Yawd

Presenter: Rajeave Mattis
Bodou Productions, Jamaica

Abstract

Transforming any form of self requires awareness. This is gained through the stages of truth, practice, and an ability to embrace and release both positive and negative aspects of existence. Considering these, our Caribbean space must consistently be aware of its truth, practise it, and become sensitive in embracing and releasing all its glory and imperfections. The first truth that we can observe is our blackness. I am black and my identity is formed through story, song, movement, beauty, love, anger and even war. This can lead to a transformative-practice that privileges art and creates structure. Art embraces ritual and festival which can frame and guide all we are. These artistic processes and practices help us to embrace, share and engage these experiences.

The stage play *Balm Yawd* explores the three stages of awareness in self transformation. It does not employ the Aristotlian plot. It is expressionistic and Brechtian, using the Theatre of Cruelty, and Caribbean Ritual.

All this acts as a mirror to Jamaican society, explicitly displaying how the plague of violence is birthed into our homes and communities. We see its causes and effects and how it exists in our own spaces. Following the story of a mother who struggles to keep her son from his father's violent influence, *Balm Yawd* aims to resolve itself within the practices of Revivalism, prayer and feminine energy (Womanness).

Bio

Rajeave Mattis is a BFA graduate of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts' School of Drama. He trained externally under the tutelage of Mr. Trevor Nairne at the Stages Creative Arts Workshop in 2017-2018, with his first professional directing debut as an independent artist. Mattis served as stage manager for the National Dance Theatre Company from 2017 to 2020. Being a part of the company's dance trainee class; he choreographed with the guidance of Marlon Simms, debuting his piece A Woman's Woe in 2018 on the bi annual Young Choreographers showcase. He taught at St. Jago High School from 2017 to 2018 and Haile Selassie High School until 2022. In addition, he served as a facilitator and parish lead of the Arts in Community Development at Children First and The Ashe Performing Arts Ensemble. Rajeave Mattis is the founder of the theatre group Bodou Productions serving as Artistic Director and Technical Manager (2020-2022). Now he resides in Spain completing studies in Language Proficiency to become an Educator in Europe.

Films & Exhibitions

Sites of Memory, and Recovery: A Black San Francisco Story in Dance

Presenter: Aliyah Dunn-Salahuddin
Stanford University, U.S.A.

Abstract

Sites of Memory, and Recovery: A Black San Francisco Story in Dance, is a short film that aims to capture the past and present experience of a still present, but diminishing community of Black San Franciscans. The film features improvisational performances by Eyla Josie Moore, Jarrel Philips, and myself in chosen sites of memory within the city. Analysts of San Francisco, be they scholars or journalists, often reflect on policies and municipal practices; however, my film focuses on the lived experience of the people that inhabit San Francisco. Using movement, storytelling, and chosen sites of memory, the three performers share their experiences of living and moving through an urban geography that often forgets and denies the vibrant and historically significant collective experience of blacks in Northern California. *Sites of Memory, and Recovery* resonates with the conference's theme as it seeks to raise awareness of the endangered Black community of San Francisco, California that, as I contend in the film, remains. I hope that my short film will allow people from San Francisco and beyond to better understand experiences of displacement and resistance in an ever-changing urban environment.

Bio

Aliyah Dunn-Salahuddin is currently a PhD candidate of history at Stanford University. Prior to entering Stanford University, she earned both her B.A. and M.A. in American History and a minor in Dance at San Francisco State University. She went on to become tenured-faculty at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) where she taught both African-American and United States History. Her current research interests are focused on the intersection of racial inequality, environment, and infrastructure in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point and the Black experience in California. Aliyah is also a performing artist interested in utilizing public history as well as the visual and performance arts to make history more accessible to people outside academia. Her most recent publication is "A Forgotten Community, A Forgotten History: San Francisco's 1966 Uprising" featured in *The Strange Careers of the Jim Crow North: Segregation and Struggle Outside the South* (NYU Press, 2019).

Chenee (2023)

Presenters: Andreas Antonopoulos & Deboleena Paul
University of The West Indies, St Augustine
Trinidad and Tobago

Abstract

In Hindi, "cheenee" means sugar—the resource behind the forced relocation of thousands of Indians to Trinidad and Tobago in the nineteenth century. *Cheenee* is the story of how Indian immigrants struggled and later flourished, building communities and developing distinct architectural styles in the Caribbean. *Cheenee* is an evocative documentary that delves into Indian history and identity in Trinidad and Tobago. The narrative intricately weaves architecture, dance, and still photography theories and practices, culminating in a mesmerising blend of narrative documentary and contemporary dance.

Trinidadian Indians constitute a significant ethnic group within the diverse tapestry of Trinidad and Tobago. This documentary intricately explores the formative era of their arrival and the subsequent metamorphosis that gave birth to a distinct and captivating cultural identity. Central to our narrative is the profound concept of transformation, which forms the bedrock of our cinematic endeavour. We contemplate the temporal nature of historical events and human actions, viewing the passage from one secular state to another as a profound and dynamic manifestation of transformation.

A significant segment of the film is dedicated to dance, reflecting our rigorous research into dance theory and practice. Central to our inquiry is the transformative process of translating these insights into a performance for an observational documentary. To this end, we collaborated closely with a team of twelve talented dancers from Trinidad and Tobago, crafting choreographies that encapsulate the essence of our exploration.

The Temple Manuscripts

Presenter: Russell Watson

Abstract

"The Temple Manuscripts" is an ever-growing library of digital assets that incorporate motifs from Caribbean mythology, folklore, spiritual iconography and nature forms which evolve intuitively out of learned and lived cultural memory, idiosyncratic dream worlds, and socio/political observations. The exhibition of the manuscripts, which include drawings, still and motion photography, sound fragments, mixed soundscapes, graphic elements and animations is sampled, mixed live and presented as large or small-scale projection or as single or multi channel installations. The process of making the assets is an attempt to map and make sense of my subconscious imagination by allowing idiosyncrasy, intuition and happenstance to guide

a process of juxtaposing learned and lived cultural memory with dream worlds, and socio/political observations. This work is intimate and is a space of introspective thought, discovery, healing and transcendence.

Biography

Russell Watson is an artist and teacher working in theater and digital imaging. He studied Drama in Education and Theatre Arts at the Edna Manley College in Jamaica and Film, Video and New Media at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He has been Curator of Art and Media at Chicago's historic Hot House Center and Youth Program Coordinator at New York's Studio Museum in Harlem. His feature film *A Hand Full of Dirt* won the 2011 ReelWorld Film Festival Audience Award and was nominated for the Pan African Film Festival's 2011 Best First Feature Director Award. Russell Watson is currently a lecturer in film at the Faculty of Culture Creative and Performing Arts at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus and the lead artist at the multimedia workshop RSTUDIO. RSTUDIO offers a wide range of photo, video and graphic design services and maintains a client base that includes corporate entities, government agencies, theatre companies, fine artists and academics. His work in 'expanded media', specifically video art, multimedia performance and projection mapping allows him to explore media strategies that challenge the conventional audience relationship with cinema. www.russellwatsonart.com

On Drawing

Presenters: EMCVPA School of Visual Art Faculty

Description

Drawing has been the benchmark of the creative impulse since the art of the cave painters. This form of mark-making and composition has been embedded in the earliest impulses of the notion of design and communication. This essential way of laying down an idea is still very vital today. So much of our modern world has infused the craft of design through drawing as part of the primary language through which any product interfaces with its audience.

This exhibition seeks to explore those fundamental notions of drawing and design and the ways in which the programme at the School of Visual Arts at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts has used these traditions as the undergirding of our curriculum. The works on display are examples of what our esteemed faculty has been producing as a call to our student population. The body of work also serves as the School of Visual Art's contribution to this year's staging of the Rex Nettleford Arts Conference

This iteration of the exhibition features faculty whose focus as lecturers sits within fine art tradition, primarily those working in painting, printmaking, and sculpture, Israel Delmonte, Hope Brooks, Cleve Bowen, Sana Rose,

Omari Ra, Greg Bailey, Prudence Lovell, Phillip Thomas, Raymond Watson, Paula Daley, Camille Chedda as well as Miriam Hinds Smith who works primarily from an applied arts grounding. Each artist explores drawing as a medium, exploring mark-making in conjunction with other modalities such as collage, textiles, printmaking, and photography. It is our hope that this exhibition will highlight the need, nuance, and varied nature of drawing, as an essential component of any creative engagement.

Playground

By Scott Braque

...explores millennial adulthood, childhood influences, and identity. It poses the question: "Can we become adults if we don't let go of childish things?" The metaphor of a playground symbolizes life's complexities, and the project challenges the idea that adults must put away childish interests. It reflects on the changing concept of adulthood and personal identity, particularly in the context of being a Jamaican man.

Narrative Themes: As children it's easy to see ourselves as the heroes in our own stories, maturity asks us to look at ourselves, not just as the heroes, but as the villains, the poison, salvation, the one locked away in the tower, and the monster needing to guard what's inside. Maturity also asks us to lean on our childhood bravery, on the limitlessness of childhood imagination, to use every tool in our reach. How does the sense of imagination find itself embedded and confined to personal and intimate examinations? How do we face our demons, are they still just the monsters under our beds? Scott Braque is a multi-talented artist whose creative journey spans a diverse range of mediums. Drawing inspiration from an eclectic mix of influences, Scott's artistic expression reflects a fusion of traditional and contemporary elements.

Rooted in a deep appreciation for artistic masters such as Peter Paul Rubens and the dynamic allure of iconic anime like Akira, Scott's work transcends specific genres. His art is a testament to a commitment to the broad exploration of creativity rather than being confined by any particular medium or style.

Beyond the canvas and digital realm, Scott's dedication to his craft is evident in his ongoing exploration of diverse themes and styles. His portfolio showcases a dynamic evolution, as he consistently pushes the boundaries of artistic expression.

Biography

As an artist, Scott Braque invites audiences to experience the intersection of tradition and innovation. His work is characterized by a unique blend of influences that reflects a global perspective, creating a narrative that resonates across cultural boundaries.

In addition to his artistic pursuits, Scott draws inspiration from his Jamaican roots, infusing his creations with the vibrant spirit of dancehall culture. This cultural influence

adds a distinctive layer to his work, creating a dynamic and engaging visual language.

Scott Braque's artistic journey is an ongoing exploration, an invitation for viewers to step into a world where creativity knows no limits. His commitment to the pursuit of creative excellence, coupled with a diverse range of influences, ensures that each piece tells a story that is both compelling and universally resonant.

School of Visual Arts Student Exhibition: Emergence

This year's Student Exhibition titled Emergence, was chosen to represent the designation given to young artists at the early stages of their artistic careers, entering the art scene, defining and manifesting their artistic vision and identity. As visual art students, this exhibition is intended to act as a platform for students to engage an audience with their work. Students present their artistic expression to the public and Jamaican art community (some, for the first time). Open to all years and departments, students are invited to submit their creations using a variety of media: Painting, Photography, Drawing, Animation, Sculpture, Fashion, Jewelry, Fibre Arts, Printmaking, Ceramics, Installation, New Media etc. Students are encouraged to explore themes they deem pertinent to their society as well as relevant to emerging artists.

These themes may include;- Identity, Spirituality, Time, Memory, Nature, Crime and Violence, Trauma, Inspiration, and Transformation. As we seek to EMERGE from the cages of stigma, inferiority, and abuse, we use our memories to find our identities both spiritually and creatively. This initiative will serve to encourage and foster young minds to engage and discover their full potential in order to contribute to the legacy of this great country.

The School of Visual Arts; as a part of their becoming, provides through practice, the opportunity for students to both create and curate a body of work that they collectively determine under a selected theme. The student exhibition requires the students to be a curator group and mount and manage an exhibition showcasing artworks from the school's student body. Overseeing this production was Adjunct Lecturer and Conservator with the Art History Department, Joelle Salkey; the Curatorial Studies course instructor.

Practice SVA II

Practice is a body of work presented by Lecturers at the School of Visual Arts. As Artist Educators it is paramount to maintain an active practice as this provides points of research and departure for discussions which also heightens students' awareness of the breadth and reach of concepts as they develop their own trajectory of becoming.

Exhibiting Faculty: Paula Daley Director of Studies and Laura Jones Head of Applied Arts, Passage: Break Glass in Case of Emergency. Greg Bailey Lecturer, Painting, with Filter, Robert Ayre Photography, with Rear View and Freewill, Sana Rose, Head of Department Art Education with Bloodlines and Michael Layne Past Head of Department now Adjunct Lecturer with Vessell and Jill Becker with Checkered Life.

NOTES

