



Exhibiting Migration and Gender

Companion Reader

H2020-INT-SOCIETY-2015
THE CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIAL DIMENSION
OF EU-LAC RELATIONS

REFLECTIONS,
RESPONSE &
RESILIENCE

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BIOGRAPHIES

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Ms. Cummins was founder President of the Museums Association of the Caribbean. She has also served as President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO. She is a Fellow of the Museums Association (UK) and an Honorary Member of both ICOM and the Cowrie Circle of Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM).

Kaye Hall is the Education and Community Outreach Officer at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society where she fosters partnerships with regional education bodies to ensure the propagation and revitalisation of heritage education, as well as with schools, colleges, communities and individual students to ensure that the inculcation of heritage is a rewarding lifelong learning experience. She holds a Master of Education (MEd) Social Context and Education Policy from The University of the West Indies (UWI) as well as a professional training certificate in Heritage Culture and Human Resources from the University of Florence. She is Vice Chairperson of ICOM Barbados and is the Moderator of the Heritage Education and Professional Development Forum for the Caribbean Heritage Network. She sits on the History Syllabus Development Committee for the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training. She was co-curator for *The Enigma of Arrival: The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain*, a major deliverable of the EU-LAC Museum Project (EU-LAC / UWI / BMHS, 2019).

Natalie McGuire-Batson's curatorial work engages community-driven discourse in culture, through research in Caribbean museology. Having completed a BA in History of Art at the University of Leicester and an MA in Museums and Cultural Heritage at the University of Auckland, she is currently a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill with a research focus on Anglophone Caribbean museums and community agency. She is the Curator – Social History and Engagement at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, and also serves on several committees, including as Public Relations Officer for ICOM Barbados, and a member of the board for the Barbados National Art Gallery. She was co-curator for *The Enigma of Arrival: The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain*, a major deliverable of the EU-LAC Museum Project (EU-LAC/UWI/BMHS, 2019).

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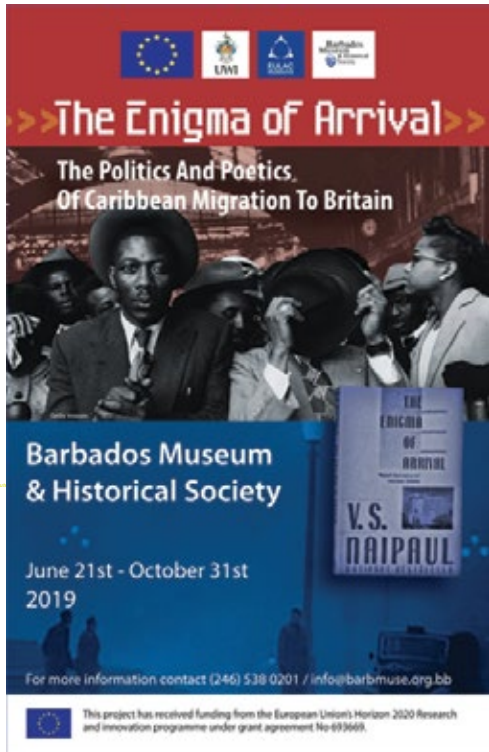
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Exhibiting Migration and Gender: Reflections, Responses and Resilience



The poster for the Enigma of Arrival Exhibition

“Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance)...To put it differently, any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly.” **R.M. Trouillot** (1995, 26-27)

Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History, Beacon Press, 2015

The Barbados Museum & Historical Society was appointed to implement the activity entitled 'Exhibiting Migration and Gender', a deliverable of the EU-LAC Museums Project. This companion Reader, 'REFLECTIONS, RESPONSES AND RESILIENCE' draws on a number of reports produced by The University of the West Indies project team for Work Package 7.

INTRODUCTION

The reports referenced below were all produced in fulfilment of the technical and formal requirements of the Horizon 2020 project 'EU-LAC MUSEUMS - Museums and Community: Concepts, Experiences, and Sustainability in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean' to which all partners in the consortium have subscribed.

The University of the West Indies in preparing report **D 7.6 on Work Programme Coordination and Development** – Phase II, highlighted the results drawn from the following project reports:

- 7.2 "Arrivants: Art and Migration in the Anglophone Caribbean World": Curating Migration and Gender - art exhibition development
- 7.3 Virtual Museum of Caribbean Migration and Memory
- 7.4 "The Enigma of Arrival: The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain" Travelling exhibition on migration and memory – history exhibition development
- 7.5 International Museums Conference: Itinerant Identities: Museum Communities/Community Museums



Caribbean Bus Conductors. © TfL from the London Transport Museum collection



En route to Panama. Courtesy the BMHS Collection

However, these did not allow for reflection on the experiences engendered by the events that informed the reports. One key aspect not captured in the official reports is the ‘voices’ of those who have been touched by encountering aspects of the project, particularly through its various iterations of exhibiting migration and gender, whether virtual, historic or creative. These voices are no longer confined to the boundaries of these reporting documents and have been captured herein to highlight the varying contexts, differing layers and wide array of: REFLECTIONS, RESPONSES AND RESILIENCE. This in turn has encouraged and inspired us to continue this exploration beyond the named exhibits, themes and agendas and into the strategic public programming, educational activities, and creative endeavours at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, The UWI Museum, and other partnering entities and spaces which have emerged as a result of these encounters.

The authors of this Reader are therefore pleased to have been given the opportunity to give due recognition to the unofficial and the informal, the authoritative and the awakening voices which are prominent in this companion booklet, and ask you to celebrate with us all the persons and places which have been touched by these ‘migration memories’.

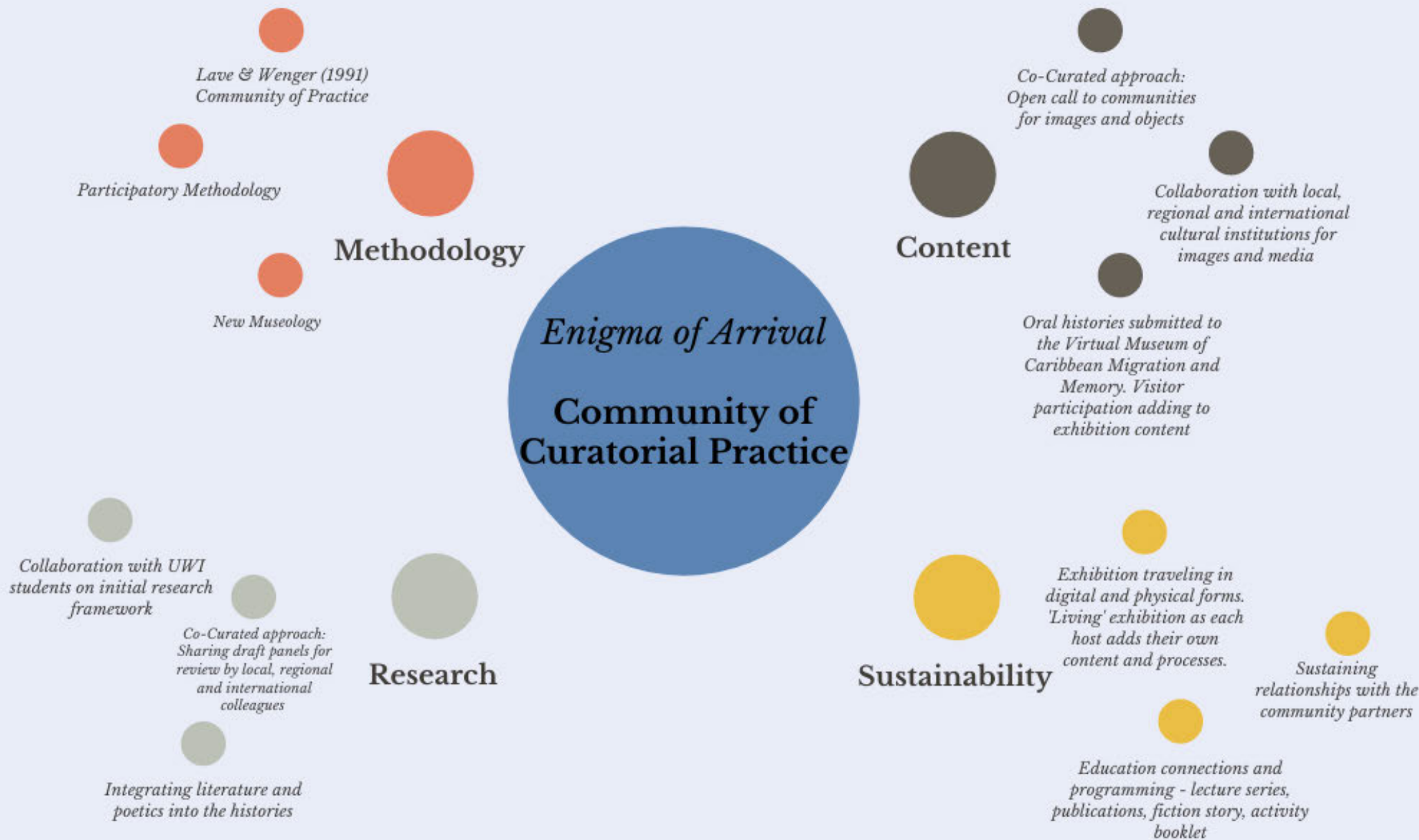
CONTEXT

The EU has indicated that “cultural exchanges between EU and LAC should be studied, for instance those brought about through long-standing migration movements between the two regions, as well as those taking place in fields such as arts, literature, sports and beyond”. The EU LAC Museums project has come to value the opportunity to examine the two axes together, a road little trafficked, shot through with the realizations which a nexus of gender and migration brings to the whole experience of heritage and identity constructions.

For the development of the exhibition “Enigma of Arrival: the Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration”, the team endeavoured to use a community of curatorial practice approach. This curatorial framework is derived from the Lave and Wenger (1991) concept of a community of practice, which speaks to a social theory of learning through “a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice”(98). In the exhibition development, the team adapted this for museum practice through the following ways:

1. Co-curating content. An open call was released for communities and institutions to share objects and images in their own collections that they would like to see in the exhibition. Images received from interested persons informed the curatorial direction.
2. Content peer review. The exhibition materials (mainly draft designs of the interpretive panels) were shared with professional peers for feedback on the narratives presented and imagery used.
3. Sustainable exchanges. The exhibition panels were also shared as an invitation for professional peers to host the exhibition as part of their own Windrush / migration commemorations and programming.

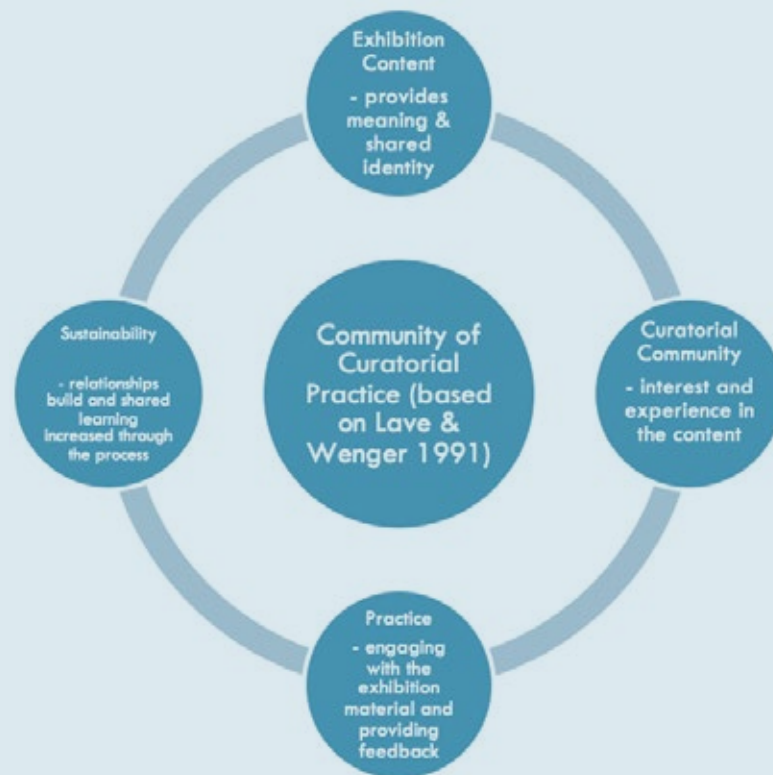
A community of curatorial practice is a beneficial approach in inclusive museology, as it provides a platform for multi-vocality in the exhibition design, as well as a pathway for more sustainable museum-community relationships.





Passengers disembarking from the Empire Windrush at Tilbury

Community of Curatorial Practice (based on Lave & Wenger 1991)



- Co-curating content. An open call was released for communities and institutions to share objects and images in their own collections that they would like to see in the exhibition. Images received from interested persons informed the curatorial direction. After an initial review of the contents of the draft panels and the receipt of feedback from a small group of colleagues, a community open call was circulated around the Caribbean region seeking further input from local / regional colleagues in March which was extended to international colleagues in April / May 2019.
- Content peer review. The exhibition materials (mainly draft designs of the interpretive panels) were shared with professional peers for feedback on the narratives presented and imagery used.
- Sustainable exchanges. The exhibition panels were also shared as an invitation for professional peers to host the exhibition as part of their own Windrush / migration commemorations and programming.



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“When I was growing up, being one of the first, one of the only black families in the area, and all my friends were white. I didn't really feel as though I fitted in with their world, but at the same time I didn't know much about where my parents came from. **You know I've never been to Barbados.** I've heard a lot about it, from my family and friends of family and **I'd like to visit, but it doesn't feel to me like home.** When my parents speak of home, I can't imagine myself, I'd never describe it as home. I don't feel that my connections are that strong to Barbados, but at the same time I don't feel as though I belong here. I don't regard myself as English. I've looked at calling myself British, but **I don't feel as though I belong, I don't feel as if I'm wanted here, and I feel like I'm caught between two cultures, and I'm trying to find where I belong.** I think you always need to make like a pilgrimage, to Barbados, to find, where I belong. And in a way I'm scared to do that, in case it's not home, well **where will I belong? How do I discover myself? What's my identity?** I'm a black woman, but **am I British or am I West Indian? Barbadian?** I don't know, I just get very confused.”

Statement captured in a 1997 televised interview in Claude Graham's series "Second Generation"

Traditionally, museums and curators have confined the treatment of both migration and gender to specifically articulated and segregated spaces within specially constructed institutions (migration museums, women's work/lives exhibitions), so that while an increasing number of exhibitions have addressed this issue, they are not permitted to intrude upon the Authorized Heritage Discourse. Typically, phenomena of migration, gender and diaspora are not given equivalence or space within the national narratives defined and depicted within the national histories, heritages, or artistic canons, interpreted and presented in national museums and national art galleries on either side of the Atlantic Ocean.

It is often imagined that globalization and technology bring us closer together and make us more connected, yet borders—both physical and ideological—increasingly divide us. Embodied in the successive generation ideas of C.L.R James, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, Stuart Hall, Edouard Glissant, Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott amongst others, are notions through which the museum/exhibition allows different groups to share a foundational philosophical space that simultaneously connects and separates them, to interrogate how borders shape identities and negotiate imaginary spaces from which art and memory can transcribe, transgress and transcend the barriers of history, geography, and culture.

The Project has recognized that there is a need for flexibility in museological research on migration, to add work which addresses shared experiences but that also allows focus to fall on those who resonate with their stated identities, or engage with their co-identities. Today more than ever, European governments and institutions (recipients of both migratory peoples and their heritages) are calling for the recognition of "shared heritage". The question is whether this convenient notion can or should be extended to 'shared (bicultural) identities' with the source communities – post-empire, post-colonial, post-Windrush, post-independence post -diaspora, post-Brexit, post-COVID?

A fundamental part of this shared vision is co-curation as it enables the growth of knowledge and understanding in ways which could not be otherwise communicated or supported. This in turn depends on partnerships between NGOs, academic and community-based entities, particularly those addressing both local and global responses to migration, as an essential ingredient in ensuring dissemination, education (and dis-education) about certain norms and beliefs. It is a critical ingredient in engendering new attitudes, new patterns and new behaviours among both recipient, source and migrant/migrating communities, and the evolving intangible heritage which is incubated and generated by such experiences. A shared vision makes the sharing of resources feasible, desirable and credible.

RESPONSES: ENGENDERING AND REPRESENTING MIGRATION

Migration has always been imbued with gender. Ideologies of gender were already at play before enslaved women and men were joined by indentured Indian labourers in the Caribbean and the Americas as the new unfree and abused labour forces. Migrations of gender operate in the physical presence or absence of women or men. The problematic treatment of relations of gender as synonymous with women, results in the tendency to interpret an absence of a focus on the visibility of women as an absence of ideologies of gender. Women were always already in migration from the pre-Colombian antecedents to the contemporary period. Treating 'gender' and 'women' as synonymous interchangeable terms creates analytical deficiencies in comprehending how sex and gender regimes have worked continuously through migration schemes to affect Caribbean citizens, both within the region and in the Diaspora.

The representation of migration and diaspora has thus been addressed through divergent tropes – social, cultural, political, some which places both artwork and historians and, by extension, the author and artist, in the comfortably relatable situation of an extension of British imperialism's legacy which remains redolent of the past, often nostalgic, a distinctly isolated relation with somewhat exotic roots. These have been primarily executed in survey and thematic exhibitions, most of which have been initiated, funded and toured by major institutions in the metropolitan centres but most of which have never even been shown in the affected regions—a major imbalance that needs to be corrected. The responses generated through the various exhibitionary activities, have suggested that Work Programme 7 has succeeded in redressing this museological injustice.





RESILIENCE: MIGRATION FOR NEW GENERATIONS

Most exhibitions have addressed issues of incoming immigration, while diaspora has been treated as separate, distinct, different and exotic. Approaches to these themes tend to be presented as isolated phenomenon where it attracts and engages the attention of one specific population, and have tended to ignore the spiralling patterns of migratory behaviours over time. For the Caribbean it is rather the reverse, some museums generally choose to address issues of outgoing migration, though largely an historic phenomenon, with little or no impact or importance beyond commemorative centennials or twenty-five or fifty years celebrations, which at the time signaled major changes to the local demographic, but beyond which little attention was paid once those who were leaving had left.

Both the Arrivants and the Enigma exhibitions, deliverables of the EU-LAC Museums Project, were curated from within and outside the Caribbean, and were premiered in the region. They focus on the issues represented from within the Caribbean itself, and take into consideration how such projects are negotiated in the Caribbean context. Post war Britain from the late 1940s to the early 1970s offered itself as a particularly important opportunity for young Caribbean professionals willing to contribute to the rebuilding of Britain and the reconstruction of its society. Eager to prove themselves and to improve the lives of their families back home they made inroads into positions which opened up in health, education, transportation and industrial settings. The continuing and ongoing interest in hosting these exhibitions throughout the Diaspora bear witness to its lasting relevance and sustainability as an area of continued exploration of our “shared heritage”. This companion booklet captures their contributions to both the Caribbean and Britain.

When Kamau Brathwaite finally responded positively on 30th October 2018 to our request to use his title 'ARRIVANTS' for the art exhibition it was like a special birthday present.

“Congratulations [for] the great work of illumination you've successfully and been increasingly undertaking since you became 'The Museum' and glad to see yr reQuest to have one of yr forthcoming/Cummins to be called "Arrivants". Yes yes yes and honoured of course, but since the title of that trilogy is in fact THE ARRIVANTS, I hope you'll be able call it that way, if not explain why the difference in yr publicity and catalogue

Alas yrs is one more thing my illness prevents me from attending or being a part of. i mean, you well know who i am and what i represent and have been trying-for since BIm and the same THE ARRIVANTS. That i'm not/am unABLE to be 'about' continuing my dream of contribution - no Carifesta X111, no Poet Laureate, no more VOICES at the Museum and myself actively learning more of Barbados... But LOVE and yr continuation the MUSEUM's vision & work KAMAU ”

I hope it can be said with some pride that while he was unable to see his work being interpreted and displayed for a wide audience Kamau's unique VOICE as articulated herein shares space with the continuation of The University of the West Indies, the Barbados Museum and Historical Society and the EU-LAC Museum Project's VISION and work because this unique soul now departed was all about the community, the Caribbean diasporic community which he loved and cherished.

We offer this companion in special memory of him.

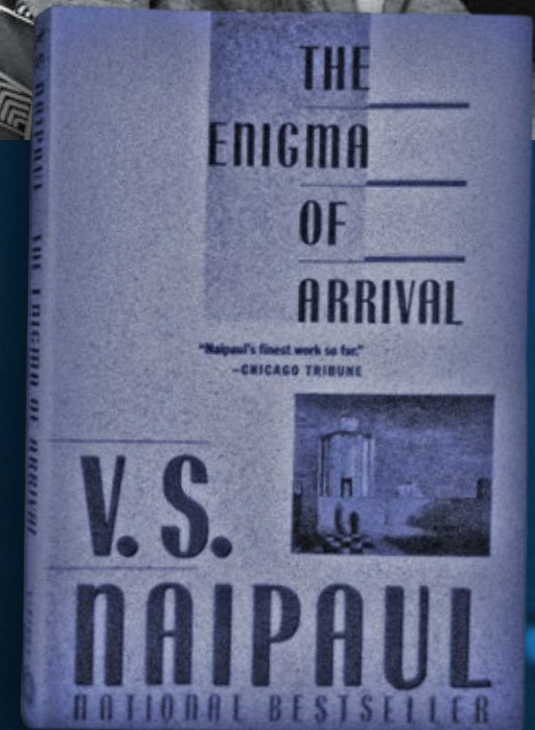
Alissandra Cummins. Varsha Persaud. Kaye Hall. Natalie McGuire. 2020 Vision/Vision 2020



The 70th anniversary of the arrival of the SS Empire Windrush with hundreds of migrants from Jamaica and elsewhere in the region provided a unique opportunity to commemorate this unknown chapter in our Region's history and reconnect with the people who left so long ago, many never to return, and the new generations which survived them. The processes of in-depth research and collaborative interpretation which were employed provided interpretive equity allowing for more accurate and mutual understandings of the recent past. These efforts helped to better contextualize such Caribbean migrations and the cultural connections, and contemporary identity constructions which derive from these experiences.

In keeping with the evolving paradigm of museums as responsible social actors as they seek to better engage with community concerns and global challenges, it is intended that this travelling exhibition, based on these particular episodes in Caribbean and British history, will provide new opportunities for the region's museums and communities to collaborate in the co-curation and co-creation of previously unarticulated National/Regional narratives to which they will be invited to add relevant local content.

Notting Hill Carnival. Getty Images.



Reflections

“Jus a pack dem bag an baggage
An turn history upside dung!”

Colonisation in Reverse, Louise Bennett



“[there is a need to] understand what Caribbean people [faced] leaving this environment going into a totally new world, having to start from scratch... and building a life and building families, and in many cases having to also support families that they left behind. That is a story that has not been told very well.”

Hon. John King, Minister of the Creative Economy, Culture and Sports, from “Museum tells

Windrush Story”, Barbados Today, June 23rd 2019



A community of curatorial practice is a beneficial approach in inclusive museology, as it provides a platform for multi-vocality in the exhibition design, as well as a pathway for more sustainable museum-community relationships. These experiences of working together to establish curatorial content and text and to share images and (digital) artefacts, allowed for a design process which resulted in a richer experience for communities at home and in the Diaspora and for host museums, to share in exploring new ways to acknowledge their routes to their roots.

Through a structured dialogic process, participants have explored potential collaborations and partners are learning how such human histories can be made real and relevant as well as from each other.



Left: Co-curators Kaye Hall and Natalie McGuire Batson at the exhibit opening
Above: Prof Mary Chamberlain and Natalie McGuire Batson review preliminary exhibition panels

“I was excited to work on this project because it gave me the opportunity to put my research skills to use and also helped me to do some additional research and expounded further on an area that my undergraduate thesis was based on.”

Rosalie Mayers – UWI researcher for Enigma exhibition



Other members of UWI team, the Caribbean museum community and advisors were invited to review revised content and provide written comments on the exhibition before it was finalized with the project designer, and other lenders to the exhibition to finalize artefacts which are to be displayed.



“ I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to attend and actively participate in the conference "Itinerant Identities, Museum Communities, Community Museums" in Barbados from November 7-9, 2018 at the EBCCI/Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies.

During this time, I was also privileged to assist in the development of the 'Enigma of Arrival' exhibit panels, lending both my editorial experience and knowledge of the Caribbean to such an important project. That the project leaders reached out to and engaged professionals from the region perfectly reflected the goals of EULAC to bring together museums, universities and other partners. I was particularly excited by how the exhibit complemented the Virtual Museum project, and I took great interest in reaching out to friends in the Diaspora to upload their personal stories of migration both within the Caribbean and to the Americas and Europe. The online exhibition content is particularly striking in its ease of navigation; moreover, the personal stories are engaging and 'jump out', making one truly feel a personal connection to the storytellers themselves.

All of these experiences proved immensely useful as I embarked on the redevelopment of the Museum of Nevis History and certainly inspired me to utilise archival material from the Oral History project, and formulate a strategy to gather and exhibit more voices from the community in our exhibitions.

Once again, congratulations on such a remarkable achievement, and I look forward to working with you on other museum projects in the future. ”

Lorna Glover Abungu – Consultant – Museums, Communications & Marketing, Nevis Historical & Conservation Society



The university [is] a very interesting space because one of the things is that...it started in 1948, quite a few of our first deans and professors were Caribbean nationals who also studied in the United Kingdom and so that's one level of the intimacy with the United Kingdom ...So there is a kind of legacy there and... out of their own work on Caribbean migration there was an audio collection of personal accounts about being in the United Kingdom and working through the complexity of race and Caribbeanness in the UK and its implications for our own understanding of Caribbean identity and our historic relationships with the United Kingdom.

... in the pulling together of the exhibition in terms of using our own objects to engage the text that was developed I actually found that ...we had the collection from the spoken word archive that looks at persons' accounts to the United Kingdom and then we also knew that in Jamaica especially, the deportation of the Windrush generation back to Jamaica has been at front and centre of the news.

So there's a way in which Jamaicans are regularly engaging it and I think within our context we have a particular understanding of what that move means for communities here as we are adjusting to it, so the exhibition is very present and it provides a kind of historical context and understanding of what is happening today.

... I think it will resonate with our audience because ..., the arrival of persons who are forcibly removed from the United Kingdom is actually something that we watch regularly on the news and this is an ongoing issue because even despite the current Covid conditions, we still have persons being deported....

... One of the issues I think that we had to navigate was the collection based elements of it... to effectively represent the Windrush experience. But some of it too is also the value that we put on the object that best represents our movement

...and the fact that we're dealing with issues with the Windrush generation is... it's very contemporary and we can feel strongly about it but it's part of the legacy of the push-pull relationship between the Caribbean and the former, Imperial nations....the ways we get used and then thrown away very often and then criminalised in that process.

And so I think that to show this very long history is a very important part... it helps to kind of see ourselves as this mobile people who are constantly navigating the complex relationships between the 'metropole' and the Caribbean.

Shani Roper-Edwards,

*Curator, The UWI Museum, The University of the West Indies Mona Campus, Kingston, Jamaica
[Interview with Exhibit Team, by Brendan Carr, Reading Museum]*



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Co-curation and education: L The consultant curators Allison Thompson (Barbados) and Veerle Poupeye (Jamaica) worked closely with both artists and student assistants to develop the installation of Arrivants by providing opportunities for consultation and communication. R Artist Ewan Atkinson, shown here with curator Allison Thompson, was also contracted to assist with the installation, troubleshoot various technical issues and to design the extended labels printed for the exhibition.

Young artists Simon Tatum (Cayman Islands) and Kelley-Ann Lindo (Jamaica), co-curators, provided technical assistance during the installation of the exhibition, having trained with the national galleries in their home islands. They also made professional connections with the museum staff and other artists, including Cosmo Whyte (Bahamas) whom they interviewed for the Arrivants blog.

For Whyte's work in the Arrivants exhibition, he has been granted access to intervene within a prison cell space at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society (BMHS). The BMHS site is housed in historic buildings originally used as the military prison at St. Ann's Garrison.

One opinion that Lindo and Tatum were interested in hearing from Whyte was his thoughts towards addressing the prison atmosphere of the BMHS site within his short time limitations of the install. Whyte mentioned that he had engaged in a similar experience with time restraint during a residency in Panama in 2007. ... He saw that residency as a healthy experience because it challenged him to make new, experimental works and demanded him to negotiate his ideas towards the definitive construction of his artwork. Moreover, he carries that experience within his current practice

... Whyte described the install as an emotional experience that went through various stages, starting with his initial planning with co-curators Veerle Poupeye and Alison Thompson and ending with the definitive construction of the artwork with the help of the install team, the BMHS staff and other volunteers. Further, Whyte believes that the most difficult aspect of the install was the various conversations he has attempted to remain sensitive towards, that include the charged historical narrative embedded within the site, the joint role of historical intervention with the BMHS institute and the joint conversation of Caribbean migration with other Caribbean artists in the Arrivants project.

Additionally, Lindo and Tatum were interested in hearing how Whyte's assigned space guided his thinking for the new artwork, Whyte responded by mentioning the physical layout of the space was difficult to visualise through images and layouts. .. The moment that really changed the work and decided on its final format was when he was able to walk through the assigned prison cell, exit it and then look back into it from the visitors' window on the outside of the room. ... one element that has remained from his original designs and stayed consistent with his current practice was the use of water or the ocean as a perilous space and negotiating that idea through photographic imagery.





Staff orientation – following the opening of the exhibition, curator Allison Thompson organized a tour of the exhibition with Museum staff so that they were informed about the new works in their space and would be able to answer questions posed by the public. The tour included registrar and curators, librarian and researchers, administrative and maintenance staff, and security personnel. Following the tour, Thompson met with the staff to get their feedback on the exhibition and public response to it.

TRINIDAD GUARDIAN, Saturday, February 4, 1961

Migration Big Worry

Both sides of the House cheered Dr. Eric Williams, the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, as he slashed West Indian leaders for their "pusillanimity" in a speech before the Legislative Council yesterday afternoon.

The statement was prompted by a speech on the motion for adjournment by Mr. Mitra Sinanan (Ind., Caroni Central) that Trinidad and Tobago request West Indian governments to open discussions upon correspondence between these governments and the Secretary of State for the Colonies concerning West Indian migration to Great Britain.

Mr. Sinanan blamed the failure of the West Indies to achieve independence for the absence of its Prime Minister from the forthcoming conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers at which such a problem would most likely be discussed.

He charged that there were people in Britain seeking to impose upon West Indians restrictions now imposed upon aliens.

He said Mr. Macmillan and the British Government were pandering to South Africa's objection to seating the West Indies, and he warned that sooner or later Britain would have to make up her mind between having the West Indies and other coloured Commonwealth countries and having South Africa.

The Premier in his analysis of the type and extent of emigration by West Indians, termed it a necessary means of keeping under some control the region's economic problems.

PROSPECTS BLEAK

"We are playing around with inalienable and imperishable rights" and it would bedevil West Indian efforts in every field, he said.

The prospects for migration were bleak, but when the West Indies became independent he wished to see which countries in the O.A.S. for instance would dare impose against West Indian migrants conditions reserved for dependent peoples.

Trinidad and Tobago's concern about West Indian migration was great and immediate for the records showed, for example, that while 8,590 West Indians migrated to the United Kingdom in 1959, 6,115 West Indians from other islands migrated to Trinidad and Tobago during that year and the implication was that any numerical curb on the flow to [See PREMIER, Page 2, Col. 6]

“In the same ways in which there is no dominant strand or characteristic associated with the work of artists based in the Caribbean, the work of British artists of Caribbean background is similarly resistant to categorisation. Of course, one cannot easily speak of Caribbean art (or the art of British artists of Caribbean background) without being mindful of the extent to which diaspora is key to fuller understandings of these things. In much the same ways in which artists from many different countries have made a settled and acknowledged home for themselves in the Caribbean, Caribbean peoples themselves have now created their own unique diasporas, not just in Britain but also in countries such as the United States and Canada. Whilst diaspora speaks of international and transnational associations and histories, historically, there has only ever been the most fleeting and halting of art world connection and mutual recognition between Britain and the Caribbean.”

Eddie Chambers – *Caribbean migration and art in the UK: Some Considerations*
(extract from *Arrivants* catalogue)



Eddie Chambers at cliffs edge at Animal Flower Cave, Barbados, November 2018

“Tropical Forms are monotone paintings designed to act as organisms by adapting to the dimensions of their exhibition space and incorporating materials and references from the various locations they travel. The concept was created by Tatum during a residency in Leipzig, Germany. While in Germany, he learned that male Cuban contract workers were sent to Leipzig to work within the spindle factories because of a trade deal between Cuba and the German Democratic Republic. The Cubans spent limited time in Leipzig, but several of them intermixed with German locals and had children.

Moreover, Tatum is becoming interested in narratives of promoted migration caused by political matters and how such movement encourages sexual encounters and coupling between different cultural groups. Tatum realises that migration is historically recognised by both positive and negative circumstances, but feels that hybridising should be embraced and his Tropical Forms are attempted shrines for acts of hybridising.”

Simon Tatum - Artist/Curator

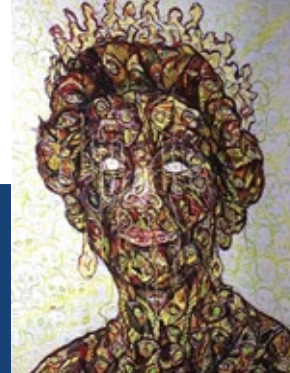


Simon Tatum - Installation of his work,
TROPICAL FORMS

Hew Locke's interventions at the recently launched Arrivants exhibition, also articulated the perspective of many from the Caribbean diaspora long embedded in Britain when considering the recent revelations of the Windrush Scandal. This video work was influenced by Hew's experience of growing up in Guyana, during which he remembers images of Queen Elizabeth II on his school exercise book covers remaining long after the country's Independence. As children, he and his friends would get into trouble for defacing the symbols of the monarchy by playfully giving her spectacles or a moustache. More seriously, Locke's current work challenges the dearth of more complex images of the royal family and instead creates images with a very different truth as art. In a recent interview he opined:

“Like most people, it never occurred to me that the Windrush issue was not settled, that it was even an issue at all ... This stuff is so hard to talk about, I get angry. Now, in the light of what we're facing with Brexit and ideas of national identity, I'm rethinking Britishness in different ways, saying to myself "OK Hew, so we're not as accepted as we thought we were", and that's disturbing. This is one of the things that motivates me to make work, to get up in the morning and head down to the studio.”

Hew Locke, *Interview in Hew Locke: Here's the Thing, exhibition catalogue, Ikon Gallery, 2018.*





Above - Minister John King and Professor Clive Landis at the opening of Enigma of Arrival,

Left - The cover of Barbados Today, online newspaper



Attendees at the Enigma of Arrival exhibition opening

The Barbados launch was highly successful and the exhibit was launched as a standing room only event to huge public acclaim, inclusive of favourable feedback from the Minister of the Creative Economy, Culture and Sports who lauded the exhibition for its scope and significance with regard to Barbadian history. In addition, the exhibition almost immediately started receiving requests to extend its initial time span of three months, for a longer period to increase access. As a result, the exhibition remained in place until year end, doubling its intended duration.

“The second thing that struck me is that this narration of history was being explored through the personal experiences and chronicles of ordinary people. This is consistent with the changing approach to the study of History which is increasingly shifting away from a narrow study of the elites and the power structures in society towards the lives of ordinary people – to the study of: women, working people, migrant families, and in this case the brave and blameless Windrush generation.”

Professor Clive Landis,

Remarks for the Opening of “The Enigma of Arrival” Exhibition “The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain” June 21st, 2019



“ My mother, came from Barbados in 1959, my father had sent for her to go to the UK. I recall a story she told me, when she first went to London, when she was going down the road she spoke to people. So [when she did that] people looked at her as though she was crazy, because that is the norm here in Barbados, and I guess she would have taken her behaviours and her values over there, and that was not the norm over there. So that was one story that really resonated for me.”

Hedda Phillips-Boyce, excerpted from her contribution to the VMCMM

Detained, Deported, Denied Rights...

In her conversation with Prof. Welch, Prof. Chamberlain recalled that when she first came to the Caribbean in 1987

“... I knew nothing about Caribbean History ...this was not at all uncommon. We were not taught about the History of the Caribbean.”

She therefore set about educating herself about her new home and came to understand through her research and interactions, the challenges West Indians faced in migrating to Britain

“...The day to day humiliations of not being able to get service [in shops], lack of encouragement to do well in school. The police, the judiciary ... you name it there was resistance which West Indians faced in Britain. But they were not passive. They organized... that was a skill ... West Indians knew how to organize, that they learned from the earlier 20th century migrations to Panama, to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, the United States... their presence was always contingent.”

“...they organized [not just] politically... but through progressive associations also just to support each other. Cricket clubs, island associations...They could get together and socialize and feel at home ...they recognized the relevance of family in migration ...They formed local communities, they set up mutual associations, they set up ...their own churches...welfare organizations, ...Saturday schools ... they organized the fight back against racism... they lobbied, I mean they were the ones who got through the 1965 and 1968 Race Relations Acts; they set up Notting Hill Carnival , now the biggest street carnival in Europe,... in response to the 1958 Riots; They set up publishers, they set up newspapers, you name it West Indians organized.”



*Active audience participation by a returnee from the UK, who shared her experiences of migration, settlement and return in response to the presentation by Prof. Emerita Mary Chamberlain who asked the audience Have we been here before? Barbados' "Windrush" generation in historical perspective, on May 8th as part of the BMHS/UWI annual 2019 Lecture series entitled **From Invitation to Deportation: 70 Years of The Windrush Generation**.*

“She noted that most of her books on migration were based on “ Oral history ... my primary research tool for both Narratives of Exile and Return and the subsequent book Family Love in the Caribbean: Migration and the Anglo Caribbean Experience...using [family] memories... across generations so that you get the experiences of the grandparents who may be left in Barbados, the children who came to Britain, the little ones who were born in Britain or were transported to Britain, and you can begin to see then certainly how family stories for instance or family attitudes to migration to Britain are inherited through that generational memory. And the generational memory is actually a really important way of thinking about history.

Regarding the Windrush Scandal Chamberlain noted...there has always an ambivalence about West Indians, and about migrants, if you look at the history of 20th century history migration policy in Britain it's about pushing them away...that's part of the background. ”

“Part of the background as well is the complete failure to have any kind of public discussion about Empire for instance and the loss of Empire, much less slavery. ...Coupled with from ... the nineties, a vocal and increasingly vociferous and semi organized opposition to the European Union. So that ...the loss of status with Empire, coupled with what was argued as a loss of sovereignty to Europe and that Britain, Great Britain, was no longer great.

It coincided with an increase of migrants from Eastern Europe and the resentment, compounded by of course the 2008 Crash, meant that you had all the ingredients of a perfect storm ...there was a real hysteria against migrants. Theresa May (as) Home Secretary in 2010 creat[ed] what she called a 'Hostile Environment'... Caribbean people were 'profiled'...people were detained, deported, denied rights...what Brexit has released is a particularly toxic form of racism and English nationalism and it has been grotesquely and cynically whipped up by the Far Right. ”

“...a lack of history is what has fed into this Brexit debacle...the lack of debate about Empire, the posing of the European Union as the enemy is all based on a kind of misreading of history that was never the case but has become popularized...”

Oral history for her was an act of activism. The historian is not only the maker of history, but is reflecting on history...and those facts then come to inform action.

In closing Prof Welch indicated that Prof Chamberlain's work on Caribbean migration has become even more timely, it is there for us to read and reflect upon.

Challenges to reintegration – Family Relationships - Oral History - extracts

- "you want me to talk about dem people again? I don't think them worthwhile I talking bout, dem is something else bo. My return to Barbados din what I send from England down here to Barbados.

KENNETH WALTERS, of UWI speaking on "Only Five Years' Challenges of Return and Reintegration of Barbadians Who Migrated to the United Kingdom During 1950-1970." - 17 April, 2019

Why return? – Push Factors for Return

- The majority of person said that they went for five years. However the majority left in their 20's and returned in their 60's.
- Persons had reached the age of retirement.
- There was the double taxation agreement between the UK and Barbados.
- Government provision of concessions for returning nationals.
- The bad winters - the cold .

'Only five years'

- Five years and I stayed forty. That was the thing. The five years come around so fast. You know and you thought - five years already. You know - I always tell the old man I going up there for five years - not one more and it end up being forty years.

'Only five years'

- Because what I wanted I get and I come home ain't it? I went to get something better and you get something better and then you return to your country, ain't it? And as you work up there, you work to get to old age, what you waiting up there for? There is nothing up there for you now after.

Footnote!!!

- "Emigration was never a response to the threat of losing wealth or status, but rather of achieving it. Because of this, the process was seen by the majority not as permanent escape but as a temporary withdrawal, with the intention of **returning later to an improved material and social situation back home.**" (Thomas-Hope).



Public education and Promotion – Members of the public were invited to participate in a public Curator's Tour of the Arrivants exhibition conducted by curator Allison Thompson on December 28th. The turn-out was larger than anticipated with approximately 75 highly-engaged attendees, many of whom commented on how much they enjoyed the event.



During the Curator's Tour artists Caroline Holder and Ewan Atkinson spoke about their works in the show. At the end of the one-hour tour, we screened Kareem Mortimer's 20-minute film, "Passage" and Lisa Harewood's "Auntie" in the Walled Garden Theatre.

“ I did get away by myself yesterday to see the rest of the show in space [sic] and quiet and I thought it was pretty awesome. I particularly loved the variety of the work, range, material and execution and the way in which it was incorporated into the museum collection. ...I wonder what your thoughts are on the masses of statements about identity and otherness (mine included), whether after a while they all start to sound the same to you as a curator? Even though that is a real part of the work and the experience from which it springs. Or whether you see it more as a story that is finally building critical mass? Or both? The irony is that it once again pushes against the monolith of the existing norm rather than being (can it ever be?) purely self-referential...

While I would love to think that I/we could be pose own norm within the Caribbean, I guess there are still responses to misogyny, class and shadeism (t)here, that put us back into different boxes of Otherness... The conversation continues...”

Caroline Holder – Artist's response during Curator's tour of Arrivants, December 2018



As a project, **Arrivants** also reflects on the processes involved in art exhibition-making in the Caribbean, the challenges as well as the opportunities for new thinking and innovative approaches, and the critical need for capacity development. Caribbean artists and curators shared thoughts and space, issues and reflections, with EU policy makers and Barbadian political leaders, in articulating the importance and value of all citizens living artistic lives. Prime Minister of Barbados, The Hon Mia Mottley, toured and interacted with artists, curators, visual and performing arts students, as well as institutional and agency representatives. She expressed her deep appreciation for Arrivants and made clear its importance for the benefit of CARICOM citizens.





The BCC troupe with Minister responsible for Culture, the Honourable John King.



“Being invited to work with the EULAC project has been a significant honour for me and for the Theatre Department at the Barbados Community College. Firstly, being given the opportunity to present the performance at the EULAC conference spoke to the trust and investment which the BMHS has placed in the collaboration with the College. The management and staff of the Museum have supported our idea of bringing history to life through interactive theatre, and this performance was able to achieve just that. Secondly, the invitation from St Andrew's University to be included in the virtual exhibit was a nod, not only to the quality of the work, but also to its importance and relevance on an international scale. As theatre artists, we have a responsibility to archive these moments in our history. It was an honour to be given a platform through which to share the stories of our elders and ancestors on an international stage.”

Michelle Hinkson-Cox,

Tutor, Theatre Arts, Barbados Community College and Principal Rheema Acts

Left: BCC performing arts students “Windrush” performance



Windrush Performance, 2018

BCC performing arts students performing



“ I didn't know what the Windrush was before I started this process, and I am very grateful and happy that I could bring awareness to other people as well, because I am sure there are a lot of people who didn't know about the Windrush. It's important to me because not only is it a case of bringing awareness, but it's a part of Barbadian history and I think it's important for everyone to know it. And I know the effects are still like trickling down from generations of families, and I know there are families that have been separated and stuff. So I just think it's really important to know your past so you can have a better future.”



I have migrated twice in my life. It's no easy.

Immigration is TOUGH. A lot
Kudos to those who made it!
☆☆☆
KATRINA



Above - BMHS Education and Community Outreach Officer Kaye Hall sharing elements of the exhibition with Dr. Henderson Carter of UWI Cave Hill, who had contributed research to the exhibition.

Left - Visitors to the exhibition were invited to share their reflections on this feedback board via post-it notes. Many visitors shared their thoughts on the content and the stories, as well as their own experience of migration

Resilience

A key issue in diasporic experiences is the connection to place, both in terms of the imaginaries that surround the original homeland, and the sense of connection, or lack thereof, to the place of arrival and settlement, as is the at times perilous and alienating process of moving from place to place, whether by force or by choice. These are common preoccupations in the work of artists and curators who are themselves migrants, whose subjectivities are shaped by various diasporas, and who are part of the cosmopolitan societies of the Caribbean, as frequent travellers. Several of these concepts were explored during various conferences, meetings and workshops at which artists and curators are invited to participate. During the **OAS 8th Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture, Bridgetown, Barbados** - the theme - *Strengthening the Creative Economy and Culture Sector: Repositioning the Culture Sector to Secure Sustainable Development* underscored the importance of harnessing the power of the Creative Economy and Culture Sector to support jobs and growth; the potential for the sector to be an agent of cooperation, a recognition that culture is who we are and what shapes our identity, contributes to poverty reduction and paves the way for a human-centered, inclusive and equitable development; Artist/advocate Corrie Scott, **Arrivants** Curator Allison Thompson and The UWI Principal Investigator, Alissandra Cummins (not pictured) joined the debates and promoted the project findings through dissemination of EULAC MUSEUMS Brussels roundtable report to all delegations present, September 19 – 20, 2019.



Top: Artist Corrie Scott and Co-curator Allison Thompson, OAS 8th Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture, Bridgetown, Barbados

Middle: UWI Delegation in attendance at EULAC Museums Brussels Roundtable.

Above: Delegates including Varsha Persaud, Eudene Barriteau and Alissandra Cummins, accompanied by Kate Keohane

“Everyone has moments etched into memory that last a lifetime. Added to mine are the occasions when Bajans and other West Indians in the UK, often in their twilight years and unfamiliar to me, would approach and in introducing themselves shared hugs and sometimes heartfelt tears for what we achieved.

I can still feel the sense of relief within their frail grips and see the gratitude in their eyes that negated any need for words. What started as a struggle for justice had unexpected depths and undercurrents and I grew to realise that, much like being caught at sea around a storm, this was indeed a battle for survival.”

The Reverend Guy Hewitt, former Barbadian High Commissioner to the UK during the protracted negotiations over the Windrush Scandal during 2018 / “The Windrush Scandal: An Insider’s Reflection”, *Journal of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society*, December 2019

2nd Generation Barbadian and Friends Community

December 6th 2019 – January 2020

A community group in Birmingham alongside Brasshouse Lane hosted the Enigma exhibition from December 2019 – January 2020.



Goldsmiths October 1st – 31st 2019

Through the Centre for Caribbean and Diaspora Studies, the digital poster exhibition 'Enigma of Arrival' was installed at the Rutherford Building Library at Goldsmiths University. It coincided with the celebrations for Black History Month in the UK.

Online promotion of the digital iteration of the Enigma exhibition at Goldsmiths University



Exhibition poster for the iteration of The Enigma of Arrival in Birmingham



Video of Participants in the 3D Photogrammetry Summer Intensive 2019

The sustainability of WP 7.3 at the BMHS through the 3D Photogrammetry Summer Intensives has been so important to the museum's ability to provide a service to our young communities and engage them in digital heritage preservation. The open access to equipment has been key, as has the ongoing support from Alan Miller, Catherine Anne Cassidy and Iain Oliver (from USTAN) in each intensive. We have seen participants of previous intensives apply their work to ongoing studies from geology to game design, and even return to the BMHS to work on subsequent digitization projects. It is hopeful that these programmes can continue to be aspects of sustainability in the delivery of the virtual museum components.



3D model of suitcase in sketchfab



Suitcase artefacts in display in exhibition

Coming Home to Mother: Documenting the Migrant Experience

“From the moment of accepting the assignment there was an obvious question – how to dispassionately and objectively present the facts. I kept seeing in my mind a family issue whose “matriarch” showed herself to be devoid of the natural instinct to welcome and protect her “own children”. My mind kept compelling that those daring to undertake the Windrush experience were citizens of the British Empire – living in colonies administered by the crown. Yes! They were moving from one country to another, but that country was part of the wider realm. To view them as “migrants” put them in the category of outsiders – not belonging. Any travel documents (where procured) would attest to the fact of British citizenship. They were not migrants.

They were daughters and sons of a promiscuous “mother” – and as her offspring were scattered across the length and breadth of her extensive backyard and deserved a warm homecoming.

The Barbados Archives provided a wealth of materials. So too did the Guardian as well as publications by some of the “migrants” themselves for example; Professor Harry Gilbourne, E.R. Brathwaite and R.A.F war veteran Clinton Edwards among others. There was also a raft of materials from the CBC Archives, some of which were available to lend actuality to the presentation. The challenge was how and where to place them.

Let me conclude by thanking the Barbados Museum and Historical Society for taking the rather bold step to offer me the assignment.

It was a challenge worth accepting.”



Video Presentation of “**Coming Home to Mother: Documenting the Migrant Experience**”
by Claude Graham documentalist



Art Graduates: A number of recent graduates from the Division of Fine Arts at the Barbados Community College were recruited to assist with the installation of the exhibition. This helped them to build their own practical and professional experiences in this field: Alicia Daniel, Simone Padmore, Natasha Hall, Kia Redman, Akilah Watts and Anna Gibson. They helped to prep and paint the galleries, and assisted with the general set-up of exhibit pieces. Kia Redman assisted artist Veronica Ryan to source materials for her installation.

“ As an Associate Lecturer working between the Museum and Gallery Studies and History of Art Department at the University of St Andrews, I have utilised the exhibition **The Arrivants** at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society as a key case-study within my teaching: particularly with MA students during a seminar about the processes of how to conceptualise and deliver a successful exhibition. **The Arrivants** is a paradigmatic example not only of the discussions that underpin the display of art associated with national identity, but also the possibilities for the display of works that convey the experience of migration and diaspora with nuance and care. Working to meet the specifications of its context, the curators Allison Thompson, Veerle Poupeye, and Alissandra Cummins created a compelling exhibition statement and specification that addresses the absence of exhibitions of Caribbean Art within the Caribbean region itself. All too often, exhibitions that work to display the art of the Caribbean have taken place outside of the region and have addressed the place as theme, without the necessary travel arrangements to allow for democratised visibility or attention to the lived experience of working within and between the islands of the archipelago. These issues were at the heart of the curatorial premise of **The Arrivants**. The success of the opening night and the sophistication of the curatorial, and commissioned interventions - notably the moving performance by school-age students of a play in response to the Windrush scandal - will live on in the memories of all who were lucky enough to attend. It was a momentous occasion for the art of the Caribbean and will, I am sure, act as a model and touch-stone for many future curatorial initiatives. ”

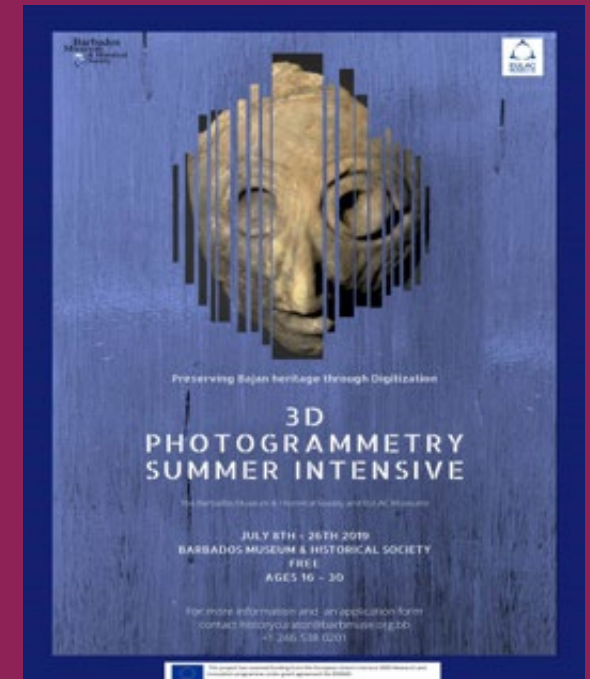
Dr Kate Keohane,

Associate Lecturer, History of Art and Museum and Gallery Studies, University of St Andrews, Scotland.





Museum professionals speaking with Catherine Anne Cassidy and Alan Miller of USTAN about the Virtual Museum of Caribbean Migration and Memory



“3D Photogrammetry is the digitization of artefacts, in order for them to reach more people.”

Abdullah Elcock,

Age 16, participant in the BMHS 3D Photogrammetry Summer Intensive 2019



3D Photogrammetry participant Genna using the digitization equipment for her project, 2019

The 3D Photogrammetry Summer Intensive is intended to be an extension of the 3D workshops hosted by the project in 2017. It demonstrates a possible avenue for sustainability of these workshops in the participating museums. So far, there have been intensives held in 2018 and 2019, open to young residents of Barbados interested in digitization.



“I chose to be a part of this programme because honestly, I’m a game designer, so I thought that getting into this would help me get into 3D more often, cause recently I’ve been only doing 2D stuff, and I thought why not do some 3D stuff, and I thought this would be a fantastic way to enter into it”

Nicholas Kinch, *Age 15, participant in the BMHS 3D Photogrammetry Summer Intensive 2019*

The Enigma of Arrival

There was an enigma
in your arrival,
A mystery we couldn't
quite unravel
and a future we should
have been prepared to face
but we had to wait for
three hundred years to pass
for the wise woman to remind
us how to boil up some fever grass
and honey it with arsenic.

And by then the enigma that
was your arrival was already
dead.

Now, it is the enigma of our
arrival, and you were the ones
huddling at the bottom of
the ramp
gawking at the boat-train that
ferried us into your land.
It was your turn to watch
with bated breath
at our arrival and what it meant.
And your turn to brew up some
deadly nightshade and paint all

the walls (white) red because the
sheriff rules Notting hill in
an iron skirt and for us
Robin Hood is dead.

It's been a longtime since
there was an enigma in our
arrival. A long time since we've
had to remember the taste
of honey scented arsenic dripping
from polite lips

But you never have, you've merely
stored it in the cupboards, boarded up
with cute phrases dripping in poisoned
sneers.

But we who can't remember the
sheriff in the iron skirt or those who
take care to forget
Are handed boarding passes
And served plump ripe berries with a forked
tongue smile as a happy parting gift.

Kelsia Kellman, BMHS Intern

Poem written and performed by BMHS intern Keisha Kellman during **Tea and Conversations** event.



Promotional poster for the public event The Enigma of Arrival Tea and Conversations, and R - a photograph of attendees at the event.

*Opening of “Enigma of Arrival: The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain”,
February 7, 2020 at UWI Museum, Mona Campus*



Above (From L – R) Dr. Roper (Curator), Mrs. Riley (University Archivist) and Mrs. Andre (Programme Officer with responsibility for culture, EU) cut the ribbon heralding the opening of the exhibition to our audience.



Dr. Hilary Robertson-Hickling delivering the Keynote Address.

UWI Museum February 2020

UWI Museum, Mona Campus installed their iteration of the Enigma of Arrival exhibition on February 7th 2020. The keynote address at the opening was delivered by Dr. Hilary Robertson Hickling who has written extensively on the mental health of Caribbean migrants to Britain and spearheaded the programme 'Dat time in Farin' which featured Caribbean migrants to Britain sharing their experiences. Visitors found it very engaging and eye opening. The opening was at 4 pm and there were approximately 50 attendees, the majority of whom were in the 18 – 25 age group. It was subsequently launched in a number of locations summarized below:



Museum personnel attending the UWI (Mona Campus) opening of "Enigma of Arrival" exhibit

EXHIBITION OPENING: ENIGMA OF ARRIVAL

Blog entry by *Uwimuseum* January 15, 2020

On Tuesday, April 15, 1948, some read it and others heard about via word of mouth:

Passenger Opportunity to the United Kindom – Troop-ship 'EMPIRE WINDRUSH' sailing about 23rd May. Fares – Cabin Class ... £48, Troopdeck ... £28.

For many Jamaicans and other Caribbean nationals, this was indeed an opportunity, because the mother country was supposed to be the place of success and prosperity where a better life was guaranteed. Thus, they drew for the bank book, pulled out the money from under the old mattress, emptied the piggy pan (saving pan), sold the cow, goat or pig, called friends and family at 'yaad' (in Jamaica) and abroad because the fare must be gathered by any means necessary, for that trip to England was compulsory. The "Sunday Best" would undoubtedly be worn for this journey because after all, they were going to the mother country, that land of prosperity. Money – check, attire – check, Caribbean nationals were now ready to populate the troopdeck.

Life will be much better, they thought, one can just imagine all those wonderful fantasies.

With excitement and high success in imaginative view, on May 24, 1948, they took off on their journey. The sense of high anticipation is exemplified in Lord Kitchener's **"London is the Place for Me"**

“London is the place for me”

“London this lovely city...”

“To live in London you are really comfortable”

“Because the English people are very much sociable...”

“London that's the place for me (abr.)”

Sadly, when faced with unkind reception and the realities of their misperception, the people realized that London was not the loveliest place to be. These tensions are reflected in poet Linton Kwesi Johnson's piece **'Inglan is a bitch'**

“Inglan is a bitch”

“Dere's no escapin it”

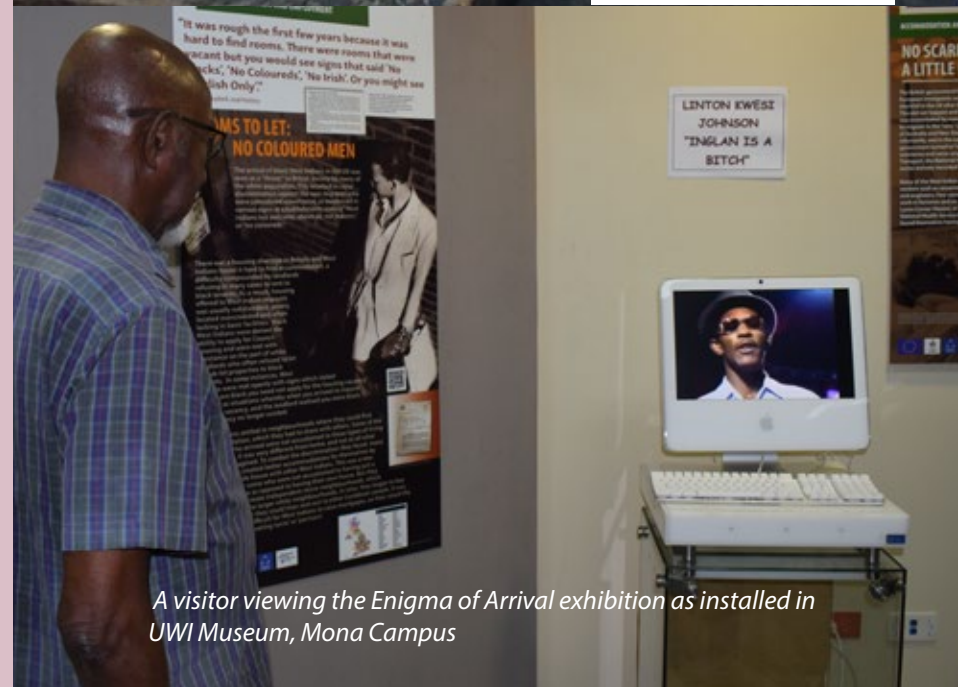
“Inglan is a bitch”

“Dere's no runnin' whey fram it”

We explore the tensions, legacies and impact of Caribbean Migration to Britain the EU-LAC-UWI exhibition *"The Enigma of Arrival: The Politics and Poetics of Caribbean Migration to Britain"* which will run from February 7, 2020 to May 1, 2020.



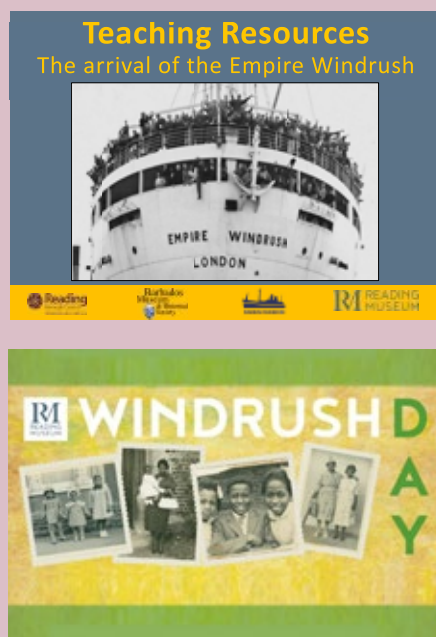
Right: UWI Mona video for the Enigma Exhibition, narrated by Dr. Shani Roper



A visitor viewing the Enigma of Arrival exhibition as installed in UWI Museum, Mona Campus

Reading Museum June 2020

As a part of their Windrush Day commemorations, Reading Museum are launching a digital iteration of the Enigma of Arrival exhibition in June 2020. They are integrating content from the exhibition panels into a virtual display on their website, as well as generating new content in the form of community videos, objects and photographs, and developing educational materials. They are co-creating their content with a Caribbean community steering group, and are working in close collaboration with the exhibition team from the BMHS.



From June 22nd – July 22nd 2020, **The Black Professional Network** will host the exhibition poster panels on the **Vodafone UK** staff intranet as a part of their Windrush Day celebrations. This is of particular importance to them not only in sharing of some of their own heritage, but of educating their colleagues about this important aspect of Britain's history. The exhibition will be free to access for all Vodafone UK employees, of which there are approximately 11,500. This additional engagement with the exhibition is led by Mr. Rodney Harewood. Mr. Harewood is a part of the community committee for Reading Museum's exhibition team developing an iteration of the exhibition also in June 2020. His role within that committee is to foster greater connections between the Reading Museum staff and the Caribbean community and has a particular interest in the Barbados-Reading connection. A subsequent iteration of this exhibition in Reading speaks to how a community of curatorial practice encourages community groups to take ownership of the exhibition content and narratives, and share them in new ways and with new networks that are not in direct contact with the core exhibition team.

“Understanding that dimension, it [was] seeking to be more than a singular story, and generating material from here, is a really interesting piece of museum practice, for a start.”

55

Brendan Carr, *Community Engagement Curator, Reading Museum*

“ Reading Museum’s digital staging of ‘Enigma of Arrival’ is the result of a deepening collaborative relationship between Reading Museum, Reading’s Caribbean community and the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. Reading Museum, together with the town’s Caribbean community associations secured a grant from the UK’s Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, to develop projects that would contribute to establishing June the 22nd as the UK’s National Windrush Day. This is a chance to educate, celebrate and commemorate the contribution of the Windrush Generation and their descendants to British society.

Originally, Reading Museum had planned to stage a physical version of the ‘Enigma of Arrival’ exhibition. However, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our plans needed to be completely overhauled. It is a testament to the strength of the community relations that we enjoy in Reading, that over a very short period of time, we were able to produce a new digital version of the exhibition, which opened on Windrush Day, accompanied by a programme of community generated educational materials and digital events.

The success of the ‘Enigma of Arrival’ exhibition was recognised when it’s digital presentation within the Windrush Day programme in Reading this year was singled out by Arts Council England as an example of excellent digital practice. The exhibition also received a Ministerial visit via conference call on the day of the Windrush celebrations itself.

The ‘Enigma of Arrival’ is highly impactful because it relays the Windrush Story in an engaging, accessible and visually compelling form. It pulls no punches about the truths of the



Windrush Day - The Enigma of Arrival

Windrush Generation's experiences. This comes as a result of the skillful curation and expert scholarship that was applied to the exhibition's development in relating the first-hand accounts gathered from those that were there. It has enabled Reading Museum to present the Windrush Story to our audience with authenticity and credibility.

The response we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. The evidence of our digital analytics shows that the exhibition and community programme led to more than 9,000 visits to our website, as well as reaching tens of thousands of people across social media. This encourages us to think about the ways in which our exhibition programme can be complemented in the future with similarly ambitious and creative digital offers. We have been encouraged to see that our audience extends far beyond our town's boundaries and that by harnessing advances in digital communications to collaborate with colleagues across oceans, we will be enhancing possibility for further understanding and exchange.”

Brendan Carr, Community Engagement Curator, Reading Museum
<https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/resources/windrush-day/windrush-day-enigma-arrival>

"The Lonely Londoner"



I am the lonely Londoner,
Stepping off that boat-train
Shedding skin like a rattlesnake,
To blend in with the vipers
That swarm at the end of this
Ramp; whispering behind
Forked tongues:
Go to hell long back...

(To) the place where sunshine
Stretches like a mile long
Shadow and the earth
Beneath your feet is solid
And smooth and not made
From red bricks that slope
And slide when wet with

(Blood) rain that never seems
To stop falling.
Are the heavens crying?

White flashes greet me as my
Foot hits cobblestone street
And for a moment I blink,
And picture rock hard cement
But then I remember:
I am a lonely Londoner

And these teeth smiling and
Hands waving are not the same
Ones that will play mas or
Leave taking the only bat cause
Yuh out! De ball hit de stumps!
But will still be enchanted by the
Sound of dominoes hitting
Wood and laughter sweeping the air.

Cause dis ain't home
An' dere ain't got no
Distinction
between what is
Black
Or

High brown
Cause de silk
gloves dat place
tickets in seats so
they never have
to get dirty
An' de signs written
in we queen english

Makes sure to remind me
That with every step
I must remind myself
I am nothing but

The Lonely Londoner
and nothing else.

Kelsia Kellman,
BMHS Intern



Televised Programming: Jewel Forde, a broadcast journalist with The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and host of the programme Eye on the Arts, filmed a 30-minute episode devoted exclusively to the Arrivants exhibition. The quality was very good and it stands as an important record of the show. A copy of this production has been acquired for the purpose of extending the educational components of the exhibition and copies will also be archived as part of the exhibition resources with Cave Hill.

BARREL STORIES INSTALLATION

“Traumatic memories are forever susceptible to change, each time there are attempts to recollect it, and it is that fragility I have explored, through the use and manipulation of fragile materials. My ongoing body of work seeks to establish a conversation around the dynamics surrounding the 'barrel children' syndrome within the Caribbean culture - a term referring to children who have been left behind by one or both parents who have migrated. The term also reflects the parents' need to disguise their absence with the provision of material goods and remittance for the children. This body of work raises questions about Migration, Caribbean family structure, material relationship between experience, memory, story and identity.

Through abstraction, I have absorbed the tradition of remembrance art into daily practice as an act of catharsis. The works do not reference recognisable form. The results are deconstructed to the extent that, meaning is shifted and possible interpretation becomes multifaceted.”

Kelly–Ann Lindo, *Statement in Arrivants Catalogue*



*Opening night with audience encounters, interactions and conversations with Lindo installation **Barrel Children**.*

“...Now, preparing for this unique journey into the pelagic world, which I have titled 'Drifter in Residence,' I am minded to take nothing for granted. There is a great degree of preparedness that must be met, especially when one has to potentially face the unexpected – when situations are literally life or death [...]

Since the inception of this project I have encountered a series of hurdles due to circumstances beyond my control: inclement weather conditions, as well as logistical, technological and financial challenges.... With every step, however, there has been a learning curve... The beauty in exploration lies not only in attaining the objective one set out to achieve, but also in the unplanned developments that happen along the way.

I call now, on the open sea, in all its density, to shower me with inspiration; to quench my creative thirst and to serenade me with whispers of loud silence rolling off the Tongue of the Ocean. I never fathomed that my work would get this deep but there is something to be said for 'going with the wind'.

My mind drifts.☹☹

Kishan Munroe, December 18th 2018. [Blog Post in *Arrivants : Making Exhibitions in the Caribbean*] Source: <https://arrivantsexhibition.wordpress.com>



Kishan Munroe

PAUL DASH
ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Self-Portrait (1979)
Oil on canvas
35 x 25 cm



“The portrait was painted at a time of some frustration for me at not having access to a studio or area dedicated for making work. This lack of space and time for working, resulted in unsatisfactory, “experimental” pieces appropriate to my domestic arrangements and circumstances. Self-confidence was rapidly diminishing. I decided that a challenge was needed to showcase my skills and give meaning to making encounters above and beyond a few ill-conceived collages and crudely worked still-life set-ups. The choice of subject had the advantage of a permanent, largely unchanging presence and it engaged those aspects of making in art I most enjoyed: drawing and painting in oils.

At that time I had not painted a full-on portrait of a black sitter and hadn't seen many portraits of black people in the flesh; paintings in which there was a black presence yes, but few portraits in which artists struggled to say something specific about such sitters. Rembrandt, Pieter Paul Rubens, Marie Benoist, Augustus John and others had made wonderful paintings of black subjects but I hadn't yet seen them in a gallery setting or had the opportunity to study such works in depth...”

...This self-portrait, while not borrowing heavily from his technique, was inspired by Gauguin's confidence in finding colour specific to representing the exquisite browns, purples and other hues intrinsic to the colouring of the black body. Most of all Gauguin taught me to look and peel away extraneous material not implicit to an understanding of the subject under scrutiny.

“I made the painting in the bedroom I shared with Jean, which was situated on the northern side of our first-floor apartment in a block surrounded by other high buildings. Although the room was dark, its position should have been an advantage by offering consistency of light throughout the day. Over time, however, I became disillusioned with the poor quality of light. To counteract this, I introduced the pale yellow hat, which was a mere roll of paper. It, however, added balance to the work and sparked new life in what was a truly difficult but stimulating challenge.”



VERONICA RYAN
ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Shack Shack (2018)
Mixed media
Variable dimensions

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“Enquiring into ancestral history, Veronica Ryan makes work in materials ranging from the ephemeral to stone, bronze and aluminum. Exploring psychological subtext, and perception of reality states, she is currently making work with fragments/ fractured, and found elements.

The dystopian climate of psychopathy, the environmental and sociological discord is evidenced in sargassum seaweed along the beautiful beaches, and large beautiful coral suggestive of a wry climate warming. Part of the work for the Arrivants exhibition includes pods from the Shack Shack tree, related to the Tamarind genus tree family; . Work also includes coral, plastic, string and other paraphernalia.

Part of this interest is the sometimes disjuncture of plants and vegetation in places of different origins from their original place and climate. She is concerned about the effects of climate change and pollution on the natural environment.”

Veronica Ryan said:

“I have memories of going to Ridley Road Market with my mother as a child to buy fruit and vegetables, fabrics, and sewing materials. Little did I know, those early experiences would become essential material for my practice as an artist.”

“I remember as a toddler during the 1950s the difficulties my young hopeful parents from Montserrat dealt with, navigating a new country and often inhospitable circumstances.”

A R R I V A N T S

Art and Migration in the Anglophone Caribbean World

Ewan Atkinson
James Boodhoo
Karl Broodhagen
Eddie Chambers
Paul Dash
Stanley Greaves
Francis Griffith
Caroline Holder
Nadia Huggins
Ras Ishi
Leasho Johnson
Marianne Keating
Winston Kellman
Kelley-Ann Lindo
Hew Locke
Philip Moore
Kishan Munroe
Lynn Parotti
Keith Piper
Sheena Rose
Veronica Ryan
Simon Tatum
Golde White
Cosmo Whyte
Aubrey Williams

Barbados Museum and Historical Society
at the Garrison Savannah
Opening November 8th at 6 pm
Exhibition continues until
February 3rd, 2019
Opening hours:
Monday to Saturday 9 am - 5 pm
Sundays 2 - 6 pm

Curated by Veerle Poupeye
and Allison Thompson

Film Screenings:
Lisa Harewood - "Auntie"
Kareem Mortimer - "Passage"



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THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE
WEST INDIES



Museums and Community:
Concepts, Experiences and Sustainability in
Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean

Artists' Experiences and Responses: – This exhibition was unprecedented in terms of bringing together more than two dozen artists from throughout the region and the wider diaspora. Several of these artists, particularly those living in the UK and US who have very well established artistic careers – such as Hew Locke, Keith Piper, Eddie Chambers, Paul Dash, Veronica Ryan, Cosmo Whyte, and Lynn Parotti – had not previously exhibited in Barbados. Many of the other (emerging) artists – Simon Tatum, Kelley Ann Lindo, Leasho Johnson, Kishan Munroe, and Marianne Keating – had also never exhibited in Barbados before.





- “ I was part of a migration, my parents migrated to England in 1958. I joined them in 1968, typical circumstance. I was 13 years old when I was taken from Barbados to Birmingham. All of my teenage life was spent in the UK, I grew up there, and I returned home at the age of 30. My family is a British family, my parents, my brothers, my sisters, all of my family are British. I am the only one in my family that is not a British citizen, and that is very significant because I chose not to be. I could not accept the status of being British in the context of what I was experiencing as a teenager, as a young man in England.”
- “ When my father left this island, he was 32 years old, he was a master Tailor, having spent five years as an apprentice Tailor to become a master Tailor. He had a little shop in St. Andrew, A.A.A Beckles Master Tailor. This is a very big thing, for a young man in the 40s to have his Tailor shop with the Master tailor name up there... He goes to the UK, went to every tailoring store, factory, cannot be employed as a Tailor. Because the unions in Britain are saying 'you



*Sir Hilary McDonald Beckles KA (b. 1955) eminent historian, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI) and chairman of the CARICOM Reparations Committee., delivered the inaugural lecture in the BMHS series, entitled **Barbadians in the UK after 1945**.*

cannot bring these West Indians into this country to do skilled work, the unions will not have it.'...Thousands of Barbadians were deskilled in that manner... ”

- “I arrive from Coleridge and Parry, four years of secondary education, loving all the mathematics, the Latin, and all the classical education we got in Barbados. I arrived in the UK, not knowing anything, and like hundreds of other children, thrown into an industrial vocational school. Where we did woodwork and metalwork every day. So we're in these vocational schools, and we're clustered as West Indian children....Who could not hold their own because the educational system was horrendously racist.”
- “My poor Bajan mother had to cook one meal for her Bajan children, and another meal for her English children. And that becomes a serious sociological, cultural identity rift right there.”
- “It was the discovery of West Indianness that brought us together, because gradually they came to realize they could not separate themselves. That they were West Indians. That they had a West Indian identity. And eventually they formed that bond of West Indianness...So they arrived there as Barbadians, and as Jamaicans, but within 10-15 years they had formed a West Indian identity which was palpable...we discovered our West Indianness from Britain.”

Hilary Beckles quote – *Barbadians in the UK after 1945*, BMHS Lecture Series, March 11, 2020



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"My children will always carry the legacy of Windrush, but they and their peers are already redefining what that means in a new century. They aren't so much chameleons, changing coats to suit the surroundings, as creatures whose coats of many hues allow those confident enough to do so to move around with greater ease than we could... Windrush is a cloak they wear as they choose, not the straitjacket it could be for my generation."



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