

# BLACK HISTORY 365

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IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

# MOTHER OF CARNIVAL REMEMBERED

**Angela Cobbinah looks back at the life of pioneering civil rights activist Claudia Jones who is to be included in a Royal Mail special stamp issue next year**

## Claudia Jones

ON a crisp winter's afternoon 21 years ago a group of people gathered in the shady grandeur of Highgate cemetery in London to commemorate the civil rights champion Claudia Jones. Deported to Britain from the United States during the McCarthy witch-hunts, she died at her home after playing a dazzling role in the anti-racist struggles of 1950s England.

Incredibly, the woman once described by Paul Robeson as "one of America's finest daughters", would lie in an unmarked grave next to Karl Marx's tomb, all but forgotten outside a loyal circle of friends and fellow activists. One of them was a former youth worker Winston Pinder who ran the Afro Caribbean Organisation in King's Cross in his spare time. A rallying point for local black youth, the organisation decided to launch a fund raising campaign to buy a headstone for Jones' final resting place.

"Claudia made an immense contribution to the fight for social justice and equality, yet there was no recognition of her," says Pinder. "We wanted people to know who she was and what she stood for."

The youngsters held a series of fund-raising parties at the Afro Caribbean Organisation's premises and donations

began to flow in. The biggest – £300 – came from the People's Republic of China which held Jones in particularly high regard following her visit there in the early 1960s.

But a battle royal ensued when Abhimanya Manchanda, Jones's boyfriend who had bought the burial plot, threatened Pinder with legal action for "interference". But a year later, on January 6 1984, a stone was laid at a moving ceremony attended by many of Jones's fellow campaigners including the American journalist Mikki Doyle, who had been deported with her, the actress Corinne Skinner-Carter and singer Nadia Cattouse. MP Tony Benn sent a message of support. But apart from a mention in the local press and the communist Morning Star, the event, like Jones's achievements, passed completely unnoticed.

Today, a resurgence of black consciousness has elevated Jones to the ranks of forgotten black heroes and heroines who have been reclaimed for posterity. She has also been the subject of a number of books including Claudia Jones: A life in exile by Camden-based historian Marika Sherwood. And on Thursday US academic Carole Boyce-Davies, is to inaugurate the Claudia Jones World Series Lecture at the London Metropolitan University in Holloway at a conference chaired by actress Cathy Tyson.

Even so, those who knew her feel that her extraordinary contributions have gone largely unacknowledged. "The younger generation of blacks

born here have no idea what life was like for us in the 1950s, so they don't make the connection," says Donald Hinds who worked closely with her. When Jones began her exile in Britain, growing hostility towards newly arrived Caribbean migrants would boil over into race riots in Notting Hill. Black London felt under siege and Jones, a charismatic speaker and brilliant organiser, was able to give it a voice through her tireless campaigning and her newspaper, the West Indian Gazette. In truth, they were one and the same thing.

In 1959, she also brought the first carnival to London. It was winter and it was indoors – St Pancras Town Hall – but it helped to wash away the bad taste of Notting Hill.

Jones had honed her political skills in the US, where she had emigrated from Trinidad as a child. A prominent communist, she was considered to be a subversive by the authorities, who jailed her for a year before kicking her out of the country in 1955.

Her health permanently broken, she nevertheless threw herself into the political frontline. Pinder, who had recently arrived as a young man from Barbados and worked as a Post Office engineer in King's Cross, met her while she was selling copies of the Gazette on a Brixton street corner. "We got talking and I agreed to sell it at work," he says.

Like many, he would come to regard her as a political mentor. He also recalls

Claudia Jones



a lighter side to her character. "Claudia loved to dance and have a drink and was always fun to be with," he says. Trevor Carter, a distant relative who lives in Archway and whose wife Corinne used to do Jones's hair, remembers how she stood out with her American style. "She was a power dresser who'd sweep into a pub and order a double Scotch while everyone else would be having half a lager and lime," he laughs. Yet beneath the charm and warmth was a very private person. Carter says: "You were drawn to her but she never let you in too close. And nobody could see what she saw in Manchanda."

In fact, few people realised how ill Jones was. When she died at her home in Lisburne Road in 1964 at the age of 49, she was alone and penniless. It was two days before anyone found her body. "She had spent just nine years in London but left us with so much," declares Hinds fondly. "Most of all, she taught us that there was hope as long as there were people around to say 'No'".

• Inaugural Claudia Jones World Series Lecture. London Metropolitan University, 166-220 Holloway Road N7

on Thursday November 3 at 7pm. The event is free but to reserve a place call 0870 240 4698.

• Angela Cobbinah is a freelance journalist who writes for BBC publications and African magazines.

## THE NEWSPAPER WHICH CLAUDIA BUILT

**Retired teacher Donald Hinds recalls his days as a reporter on the West Indian Gazette**

## Donald Hinds

On December 7 1955 at the Harlem Hotel Theresa, New York, some 350 people bade farewell to Claudia Jones as she was deported to Britain. A selfless and indefatigable fighter for equal rights, she continued where she

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## WELCOME TO BH365 : PAGE 2

LORD HERMAN  
OUSELEY  
CHAIR, KICK IT OUTLORD ANDREW ADONIS  
PARLIAMENTARY  
UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR SCHOOLS & LEARNERSMARGARET HODGE  
MINISTER FOR CULTURE,  
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND  
TOURISM

# THE NEWSPAPER WHICH CLAUDIA BUILT

had left off and set up the West Indian Gazette, Britain's first black newspaper. Published monthly, it was sold for six pence and accepted the few advertisements that came its way. Over its seven-year existence, it managed to sell on average between 3,000 to 4,000 copies. But during the month of the Notting Hill riots in 1958, it sold a record 30,000. That year, the Gazette's Brixton offices saw more worried blacks than did the government's Migrants Services Department.

During a meeting at the newspaper the idea of a carnival was suggested to wash the taste of Notting Hill out of our mouths. In Winter? Everybody laughed until Claudia called us to order. Why not? She asked. Could it not be held in a hall somewhere, which is where it ended up, in St Pancras Town Hall, January 31, 1959.

The West Indian Gazette took its role as a newspaper seriously. Through its pages freedom-fighters like Patrice Lumumba, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela became well known to readers while its trenchant editorials identified the Cold War hotspots. Radical writers from all over the globe would send in stories, including the great WEB Du Bois from his new home in Ghana.

Very soon nationalist leaders from the Caribbean were seen climbing the stairs to the editor's office, among them Norman Manley of Jamaica, Eric

Donald Hinds



Williams of Trinidad and Cheddi Jagan of British Guyana.

But the Gazette was not merely a news vehicle, it also commented on the arts in all its forms, reviewing novels by leading Caribbean writers of the day, and publishing poems and stories from unknowns, including myself. If you wanted to know where performers like Cy Grant or Nadia Catouse were appearing, you looked in the Gazette. But the Gazette was not a viable business and Claudia did not receive a viable salary as an editor. Its wobbly finances led to many threats of lawsuits demanding payment for outstanding debts. People stepped in to help out, including Paul Robeson who performed at St Pancras and Lambeth town halls to raise funds. But it was an uphill struggle and the Gazette was barely able to keep to its publication deadlines – when Claudia died the paper inevitably died with her.

# LORD HERMAN OUSELEY

CHAIR, KICK IT OUT, PRESET, POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON AGEING AND ETHNICITY, FIRST

“It is a sign of real progress that, after 20 years of Black History Month, the message is to percolate with meaningfulness within the formal education system. ‘Black History 365’ will bring enrichment to our national curriculum, will enhance learning and will help to connect history, reality and truth in order to help meet the diverse knowledge needs of all people in our society.” **Lord Herman Ouseley**



Herman Ouseley is the President of Different Realities Partnership Ltd., a consultancy specialising in equality, diversity and people management strategies. He was previously the Executive Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality (1993-2000). Before that

he was a local government officer for some 30 years, serving as Chief Executive of the London Borough of Lambeth as well as the former Inner London Education Authority, where he was also previously a director of education. He held a wide variety of different positions in other authorities during that period.

Herman Ouseley is actively involved with several charitable and voluntary organisations, such as being a Council member of the Institute of Race Relations, and holds the role of Patron for several others, including the National Black Police Association. He is currently the Chair of the following organizations:-

## PRESET

Education and Training Trust

## KICK IT OUT

(National campaign to kick racism out of football)

Herman Ouseley is the Non-Executive Director of Focus Consultancy Ltd and an independent adviser to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs on its equality and diversity development activities.

He was knighted in 1997 for services to local government and community relations in Great Britain. He was appointed as a member of the House of Lords in 2001 and sits on the cross-benches as an independent peer. He recently completed a three-year stint as the President of the Local Government Association (2002-2005).

## POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON AGEING AND ETHNICITY

## FIRST

(Focus Institute on Rights and Social Transformation)

# LORD ANDREW ADONIS

PARLIAMENTARY UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCHOOLS & LEARNERS



“We are delighted to support Black History 365 which brings together diverse stories in the telling of all our history. We welcome this publication as it attempts to bridge the gap between community activists and our museums, libraries and galleries, and the educational sector.”

As we strive towards greater social cohesion, Black History 365 emerges at a time of key changes to the national curriculum, which will now include aspects of history from the African diaspora.

This will show the contribution that black people have made. So let us all celebrate Black History 365”

**Lord Andrew Adonis**

# MARGARET HODGE

MINISTER FOR CULTURE, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND TOURISM



“I am very pleased to support Black History 365. Black History Month matters because it celebrates the histories and cultures of black people and inspires them to learn more about Caribbean and African history.

This year it falls in the bicentenary year of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act and I am proud of how our cultural institutions have led the way in commemorating this important year of events. This shows the reach and impact cultural and heritage institutions can have and I hope this will be one of the lasting legacies from this year.”

**Margaret Hodge**

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT

AN INVITATION TO JOIN  
**MIKE SQUIRES:**  
**SAKLATVALA AND RACISM**  
**FRIDAY 2ND NOVEMBER**  
**2007**

DRINKS RECEPTION, 8.00-9.00PM. THE EVENT WILL BE HELD AT CONGRESS HOUSE, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON WC1B 3LS

IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND PLEASE REGISTER BY CONTACTING  
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020 7467 1220 OR  
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# MIA MORRIS

MIA RUNS A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY WELL PLACED [WWW.WELLPLACED.CO.UK](http://WWW.WELLPLACED.CO.UK), [WWW.BLACK-HISTORY-MONTH.CO.UK](http://WWW.BLACK-HISTORY-MONTH.CO.UK) AND [WWW.INTERNATIONAL-WOMENS-MONTH.CO.UK](http://WWW.INTERNATIONAL-WOMENS-MONTH.CO.UK) THIS HAS AN EVENT MANAGEMENT, SEARCH AND TRAINING FUNCTION.

In the words of Nelson Mandela ‘ This statue will stand as an inspiration to all those heroes and heroines who struggle against injustice’

**‘It is important for you as leaders to ensure you empower those who scale mountains with you.’**

‘Though this statue is of one man, it in actual fact symbolises all of those who have resisted oppression, especially in my country.’

Welcome to Black History 365 a new A3 newspaper produced by Smaart Publishing in partnership with [www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk). Highlighting Black History Month activities across the UK with a look at various aspect of the bi centenary commemorations, with insight from grass root activist and foot soldiers from Plymouth to Burton upon Tweed to Glasgow and Ipswich.

Producing this has been a labour of love; it is about our past, present and future. We are telling the story in our own way.

We are delighted to support this publication which brings together diverse stories in the tell of all our history. We welcome this publication as it attempts to bridge the gap between community activists and the cultural sector our Museums, Libraries and Galleries together with the educational sector.

All vital cogs to the role of social cohesion and greater understanding the publication has come out a time during the onset of changes to the National Curriculum which include aspects of history from the African Diaspora.

Black History has made a significant impact and contribution to the world, let's all celebrate Black History 365

So sit back and enjoy

Mia Morris

Mia Morris



Photo Credit: Eddie Ochoa



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For the most of up to date information visit [www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk) [www.blackhistorymonth365.com](http://www.blackhistorymonth365.com)

Issue dedicated to Connie Mark, Helene Lembanka, my father Lord Desham- Gabriel Neville Morris and my mother Constance Morris Victoria Grenada

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# ABOLITIONIST WHO SAW RED

THE IPSWICH ANTI-SLAVERY PROPAGANDIST THOMAS CLARKSON OPENLY BACKED THE HAITI REVOLUTION

**Born in Wisbeach, East Anglia, in 1760, Thomas Clarkson was a leading abolitionist who turned the cause into a public campaign.**

A co-founder of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade with Granville Sharp, he went around the country on horseback gathering evidence about the horrors of the trade and was instrumental in persuading William Wilberforce, the MP for Hull, to become its spokesman in parliament. Once abolition was achieved in 1807, Clarkson worked towards the end of slavery itself.

He so angered powerful vested interests, that he narrowly avoided an assassination attempt against him in Liverpool, at the time Britain's leading slave port.

What is less well known is Clarkson's active support of the Haiti slave revolution of 1791 and its aftermath as the world's first independent black republic.

Central to this was his relationship with Henri Christophe, the leader of northern Haiti from 1807 to 1820. Although the two never met, they came to share a common vision of a new society and to work together to bring it about.

An ardent supporter of revolutionary France, Clarkson's first dealings with Haiti came in 1788 when he met one of its leaders, Vincent Oge, in Paris. Oge wanted mulattos (free people of mixed heritage) to be given equality in Haiti and to be able to speak in the French Assembly.

He failed to get the French to agree with his demands and ran out of money. However, Clarkson helped Oge to return home to Haiti, where he led a failed mulatto revolt against the French. Clarkson's enemies claimed that he had financed this rebellion.

When Haitian slaves began an uprising to permanently liberate the island in 1791, the pro-slavery lobby in England, terrified about the effect of the insurrection elsewhere in the Caribbean, accused Clarkson and the other abolitionists of having inspired the revolution.

In response, Clarkson wrote pamphlets and articles supporting the uprising and its leader Toussaint l'Ouverture. He was the only European abolitionist to openly support the Haitians.

The uprising was successful and led to the establishment of the world's first

Thomas Clarkson



© Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery

black republic in 1804. In 1807, Christophe, the leader of the northern half of the country, wrote to Clarkson and Wilberforce asking for help to provide free schooling for all Haitian children.

Clarkson found him teachers prepared to go to Haiti as advisors. As a result, Christophe was able to set up six schools. No other country in the world at that time provided free state education.

Clarkson entered into regular correspondence with Christophe, who on one occasion wrote, 'I am deeply appreciative of and touched by the great interest which you take in the cause of



King Christophe

© Stan Gundry 2008

© Courtesy of Stan Gundry

the Africans and their descendants, in the prosperity of Haiti...'

Christophe appointed Clarkson his spokesman in Europe and paid him £6,000 to help in his dealings with the new regime in France. By visiting the Tsar on three occasions, Clarkson was able to persuade Russia to block French plans to recapture Haiti.

When Christophe died in 1820 his regime immediately collapsed and his

wife and two daughters became refugees. Clarkson immediately wrote to Boyer the new president of Haiti, asking him to protect them and, when they arrived in England.

Alone of all the abolitionists, Clarkson welcomed Marie Louise and her two daughters, giving them the balance of the £6,000 he had been given by Christophe and sheltering them in his home at Playford, near Ipswich, for a year and a half.

# THE FIRST BLACK CELEBRITY

**A NEW JAZZ OPERA CELEBRATES THE LIFE OF 18TH CENTURY VIOLINIST GEORGE BRIDGETOWER, FAMOUS IN HIS DAY BUT NOW LARGELY FORGOTTEN. DR MIKE PHILLIPS, LIBRETTIST OF BRIDGETOWER - A FABLE OF 1807, TAKES UP HIS STORY**

**In the 18th century, George Augustus Polgreen Bridgetower was the first black celebrity – acclaimed throughout Europe for his virtuoso violin playing.**

A while ago, jazz musician Julian Joseph and I decided to write a new jazz opera about this extraordinary man, set against the backdrop of abolition and the work of people such as escaped slave Mary Prince. We were inspired to do so because Bridgetower was one of the most important musicians of the 18th century, yet he has largely been written out of music history.

George Bridgetower is an interesting person, not simply because he was born in the Esterhazy household; not simply because he was black; not because he was a child prodigy, but all those things together, at the time when he arrived in Britain and during his career, had a particular kind of significance.

He was born in Poland in the 1760s. His father worked in the Esterhazy household, and Joseph Haydn was the kapellmeister there. So Bridgetower, as far as we know, first learned his music under Haydn's tutelage.

Bridgetower arrived in Britain at around the age of 10. He had been invited to perform for King George at Windsor, and after that, he was invited to play at Bath. His father, who had taken him on this tour, was a genius in public relations. Before and after the performance, he strolled along the promenade at Bath with his son, dressed in Turkish costume, attracting the maximum of attention. Afterwards, he wrote letters of appreciation to the local paper, addressed to the nobility and gentry, visitors of that wonderful city of Bath. There is a piece in the Bath Journal which mentions him and says: 'The greatest attention and respect was paid by the nobility and gentry to this elegant father, who is one of the most accomplished men in Europe, conversing with fluency and charming address in several languages.'

Then at about the same time, Bridgetower sold out two more concerts in Bristol on Christmas Eve and New Year's Day. Eventually, the Prince of Wales, who was later the Prince Regent, became Bridgetower's patron.

The high mark of Bridgetower's career was when he went to Vienna, around 1802 or 1803, and played with Beethoven. Beethoven had been one of Haydn's protégés as well, and Bridgetower, came with superior introductions; he came with

the Prince of Wales's patronage. He met Beethoven and they appeared to get on well. Beethoven was just finishing what we now know as the Kreutzer Sonata. Bridgetower played the first performance with him.

The story that he tells about it, or the story that he told a couple of people later on, was that when they played, Beethoven had not yet finished the violin part, and he improvised a particular passage. This pleased Beethoven so much that he jumped up exclaiming 'Noch einmal, mein lieber Bursch - noch einmal!' which is, 'Play it again, Sam!' Then they had a row. Beethoven crossed out the dedication to Bridgetower, and dedicated it to Rodolphe Kreutzer, who was a premier player. But when it was sent to him, he said it was unplayable and sent it back! Bridgetower continued to be quite a well known figure in London. He was elected to the Royal Society of Musicians in 1807, and then took a degree at Cambridge, a Bachelor of Music, and wrote some compositions, most of which are lost.

I have asked myself more than once the question, 'Would English music have been the same without Bridgetower?' One cannot say. That brings me back to the issue of why musicians like Bridgetower have been more or less invisible in the canon until now.

One conventional view that is echoed by a number of scholars is that race in Britain and the position of black people, whoever they are, has to be seen in the context of a general unfamiliarity, until the middle of the 20th century. When minstrels emerged on the Victorian stage, this may also have affected how people saw the music and the performances that came to them from black performers.

When I look at people like Bridgetower, one of the things that strikes me repeatedly is the sense in which he coped with the environment that he came into and became not only a leading figure but an innovator within the musical environment, without any sense that there was any incongruity in their engagement with a European cultural tradition.

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Julian Joseph



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Jacqui Dankworth and Cleveland Watkiss



© English Touring Opera

Jacqui Dankworth and Cleveland Watkiss



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**Bridgetower - A Fable of 1807, is to be toured this autumn by English Touring Opera to Hackney, Cambridge, Exeter, Warwick, Truro, Malvern, Sheffield, Bexhill and Manchester [www.englishtouringopera.org.uk](http://www.englishtouringopera.org.uk)**

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ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

# PATRICIA CUMPER: ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, TALAWA THEATRE COMPANY

BH365 SPEAKS TO PATRICIA CUMPER WHO HAS BEEN WRITING FOR THE THEATRE IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE UK FOR NEARLY THIRTY YEARS.



## 1. What made you want to work in theatre?

I went to the theatre a lot as a child in Jamaica. I was that child that shouted 'he's behind you' during the pantomime. To me there is something magical about when the lights go up on stage particularly the risk actors take performing live every night. The best way to understand each other is to listen to each other's stories and there is no better way of telling a story that makes me want to listen than on stage.

## 2. What is the most affecting theatre you have seen in recent times?

'The Crucible' in the West End because the way people responded to the fear of witchcraft in the 17th century and the way societies today respond to the fear of terrorism have remarkable parallels. I thought 'Torn' at the Arcola was interesting

because of the way it talked about the African/Afro Caribbean divide, and I really enjoyed listening to a reading of Pure Gold, the play by Michael Bhim that we're producing at Soho Theatre in October. It looks at the choices facing a good man when he can't catch a break in life and it is so true it hurts.

## 3. Are our black writers supported adequately by our communities?

It is always worth celebrating when a Black writer's work makes it to the stage because it is a difficult and challenging process. It would be lovely if our communities came out to see the work and talked about it afterwards and told us what they enjoyed or didn't enjoy. We are already discerning consumers of the stories told in movies and on television. I'd invite them to come and see how we do when we're given the stage to strut our stuff.

## 4. What advancements and progress has been made in making black voices and actors included in mainstream theatre within the last 15 years? What still needs to be done?

I am the first one to admit that there are a lot more Black faces on stage than there were a couple of decades ago. The problem is that there are only a handful of writers and directors making successful careers, and when you look at what happens in design, backstage, in the administration and marketing of theatre, the number of Black practitioners are tiny. Things are better but they

are definitely not good enough. Forty percent of Londoners aren't white. Nowhere near forty percent of the theatre presented in the capital is created by BME practitioners. Five per cent would I think be a generous estimate.

## 5. Is black theatre seriously underrepresented regionally?

I don't pretend to know all about Black theatre in the regions, but it seems to me that there are a great many talented artists living and working in the regions, but their work is often on the small scale or in response to particular initiative. The Eclipse project is trying to fill the gap where medium sized theatres are concerned, but they only produce a play every two years and I think there is probably far more talent than opportunity in the regions.

## 6. Will we ever see a black artistic director of the Royal National Theatre?

Probably not in my life time, but then you never know. After all, forty per cent of Londoners are described as BME so that means in theory that this should be more than just a possibility. I doubt it however.

## 7. Whose work inspires you?

A lot of people inspire me. Recently, I watched three series of The Wire and loved the story telling and the acting in that, especially Idris Elba. Lorna Gayle in the West End production of The Crucible was remarkable. The young actors I meet as part of Talawa Young People's Theatre

always give me hope and Dr. John Kani who talked about how theatre helped to end Apartheid at our recent Talk Theatre meeting brought tears to my eyes.

## 8. What advice would you give to our young readers who might feel like they are not welcomed in a theatrical environment? Are they welcomed?

Talawa will certainly make all your readers welcome at our productions. We take a particular pride in that. I do know that sometimes it can be intimidating to go to the theatre. The only advice I would give is this: if you bought a ticket, you are a customer and should be treated as one. The actors on stage are performing live and they see and hear everything you do in the audience, so be aware of that. And if you have a query, comment or suggestion, let the theatre or the theatre company know.

## 9. And finally, any advice to our young readers who wish to embark on a career in the theatre world?

It is a very rewarding but very challenging career. Be sure that you see lots of theatre, read plays, perhaps even usher at a theatre or work with a theatre group, so you get a real feel for what the industry is about. If at all possible, try and go to the best drama school you can. Know who's who in the business and see what companies and directors you'd like to work with. After that, it's all down to you!

## Patricia Cumper – Artistic Director

Patricia Cumper has been writing for the theatre in the Caribbean and the UK for nearly thirty years. Her work has been produced throughout the Caribbean, in Canada and the US, and her first work to appear in the UK 'The Fallen Angel and the Devil's Concubine' was at the Almeida in the late 1980s. Her 2002 play, 'The Key Game', commissioned by Talawa and produced at the Riverside, was included in Time Out's Critics Choice and won four star reviews. Her work for radio includes a RIMA winning drama series, adapting Rita Dove's Darker Face of the Earth for the World Service and most recently a fifteen part serialization of Small Island for Woman's Hour. She has also worked as a critic and commentator on Radio 4 and the World Service, as script reader and dramaturg, and has had a novel and several short stories published

## ABOUT TALAWA

Talawa Theatre Company celebrated its twenty first anniversary in February of this year and is the UK's foremost Black theatre company. They've produced more than forty plays, including African, Caribbean and British classics alongside exciting new writing. Through their weekly Noticeboard, monthly salons, and annual summer school they contribute to the development of theatre practitioners in all areas of the theatre. Talawa are passionate about making and documenting their contribution to British theatre.

Talawa are currently led by Artistic Director Patricia Cumper and Executive Director Deborah Sawyerr. Over the years, as more Black work is produced by mainstream theatres and more Black practitioners make successful careers, they have continued to refine our vision and purpose so that today they are proud to focus on Black British work. Talawa Theatre Company's mission statement says:

Talawa Theatre Company is Britain's foremost Black led Theatre Company. we give voice to the Black British experience and we nurture, develop and support talent. We cultivate Black audiences and audiences for Black work. In so doing, we enrich British theatre.

We tell the iconic stories of the Black British experience and invest in the development of the practitioners who bring those stories to the stage. We therefore produce predominantly new writing and work with practitioners throughout the UK

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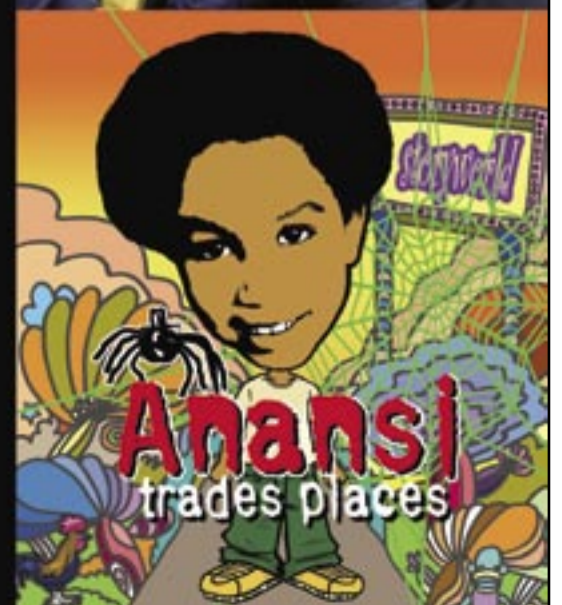
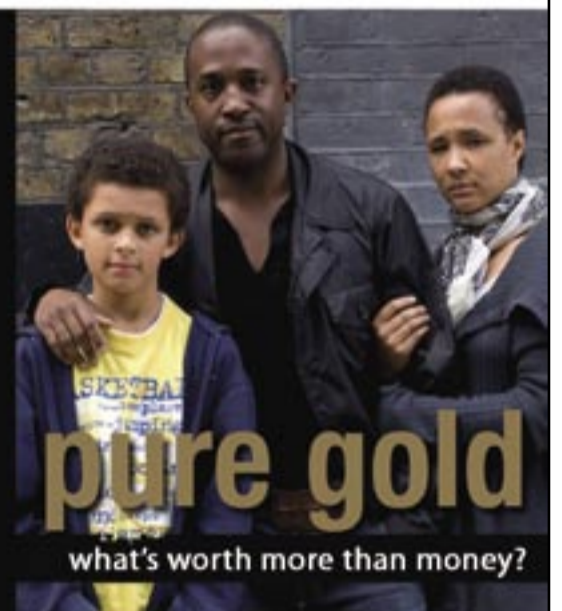
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# AMBIGUOUS MAJESTY

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**The majestic portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle, is in stark contrast to the numerous servile depictions of black people in 18th century European art. Dressed in a silk gown and adorned with jewellery, she is shown as a near equal to her companion, who touches her arm in a display of affection. Despite this, art historian, Leslie Primo reveals there was an ambiguity about Dido's position at the heart of elite society**

William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, was at the centre of the landmark ruling of 1772 in which the runaway slave James Somerset was set free. But Lord Mansfield had his own personal reasons for supporting Somerset – his own great-niece, Dido Elizabeth (Belle) Lindsay was a black woman.

Dido is famously captured in a double portrait, attributed to Johann Zoffany, 1725-1810, hand-in-hand with her cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray in the grounds of Kenwood House, London.

Yet even in this image associated with one of the leading abolitionists, care is taken to depict Dido as distinct and 'other' by giving her a supposedly exotic headdress.

Dido Elizabeth Belle was born 1761 and recent new evidence discovered by genealogist Sarah Minney indicates her baptism taking place at St George's, Bloomsbury, London in November 1766.

Sir John Lindsay, then in the Royal Navy, on duty in the West Indies circa 1760-

65, discovered Dido's mother, a slave, on board a captured Spanish ship. She was brought to England where a probably brief relationship between them resulted in Dido's birth. Soon after her birth Dido was taken to Kenwood House to be brought up, with her cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray by Lord and Lady Mansfield, John Lindsay's uncle.

Again recent evidence unearthed by genealogist Sarah Minney points towards the Mansfield's owning a house in Bloomsbury, hence this being the district of Dido's birth. This house was subsequently destroyed by fire and so the family moved from Kenwood, possibly taking Dido with them.

Sir John Lindsay died when Dido was about 25 (1788), leaving £1,000 in his will to share between Dido and a mysterious half-brother, an acknowledgment, perhaps, of Dido being Lindsay's natural daughter.

Dido lived at Kenwood for 30 years, and was described both as a slave by visitors and as a companion to her cousin, Elizabeth Murray.

Dido left Kenwood after Lord Mansfield's death in 1793, inheriting £500 and £100 a year for life. Despite the Somerset ruling, the kidnapping of black people continued and Lord Mansfield took the precaution of protecting his great-niece from the threat of enslavement, writing in his will, 'I confirm to Dido Elizabeth Belle her freedom.'

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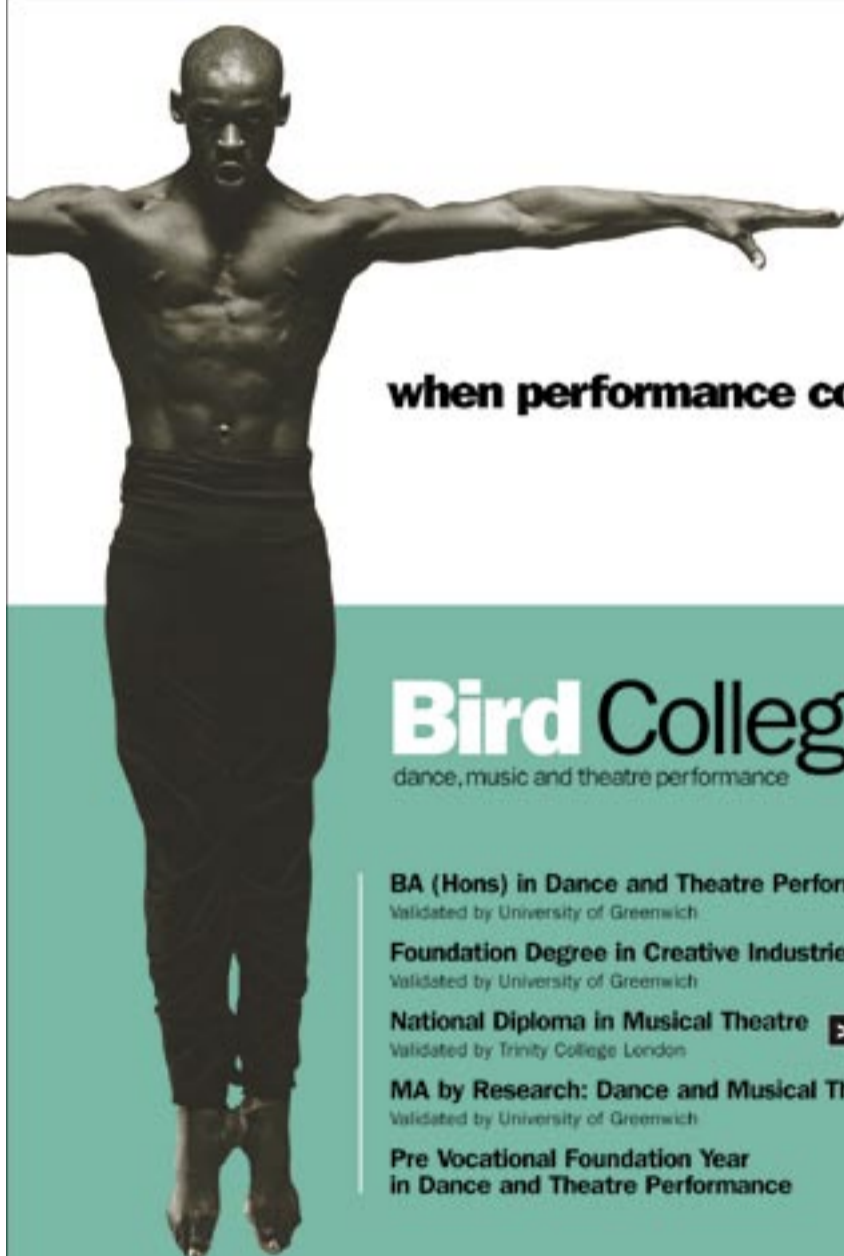
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# THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

A UNIQUE TRIBUTE TO BLACK BRITISH WOMEN SINGERS IS ON SHOW IN LONDON

**Celebrating black female singers in British entertainment, a unique installation at the National Portrait Gallery is the latest development in the Devotional Series, a body of work by the artist Sonia Boyce.**

The display takes the form of an elaborately hand-drawn installation on the gallery walls. A roll call of almost 200 names is illustrated by portraits of several of the singers, among them Shirley Bassey, Joan Armatrading, Cleo Lane and Ms Dynamite.

According to the National Portrait Gallery, the display pays homage to the great musical tradition created within the African diaspora following the transatlantic slave trade, and highlights the wealth of creative talent in Britain.

The Devotional Series began with a group of women from Liverpool, brought together with Sonia Boyce through the Motherlode Project, in association with the Foundation for Art

and Creative Technology. Asked to sing and recall the first record they ever bought, the women began to build a collective map of black women in the British music industry. The first name to be nominated was Shirley Bassey and from that the Devotional Series began.

Today the list contains 180 names. It has been produced twice (in different forms) and both now belong to the Government Art Collection. Each name celebrates an icon; each icon triggers a song; and each song a moment that is as significant to a personal memory as it is to a generation's collective memory.

For the first time, this installation will include 18 portraits of singers included in the series by photographers working in the music industry, like Bob Collins, Pennie Smith and Kofi Allen.

Assistant curator of the display, Eddie Otchere, was trained by the Arts Council Inspire Fellowship Programme that aims to diversify the profile of the

curatorial workforce in London's museums and galleries.

He said, 'To curate a display like this, is to develop a sensitivity with the subjects of the Devotional Series.'

Through their songs you engage with the source of their meaning and power. By collecting their iconography you present their histories through portrait photography.'

**Devotional is on show at the National Portrait Gallery, London W1, until November 25. Room 37a. Free.**

© estate of Bob Collins / National Portrait Gallery, London



Dame Shirley Veronica Bassey by Bob Collins, 1957

© Andrew Catlin / National Portrait Gallery, London



Neneh Cherry by Andrew Catlin, 1988



Mica Paris by Derrick Santini

© National Portrait Gallery, London



Ms. Dynamite by Spiros Politis, 2002

© Spiros Politis

# NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF YOUR DREAMS

Dr. Kenechukwu Igweonu - Lecturer in Performing Arts and Theatre Studies, Swansea Institute

**THEA NERISSA BARNES, RESIDENT DANCE SUPERVISOR FOR LONDON'S WEST END PRODUCTION OF THE LION KING WAS RECENTLY ASKED TO OFFER HER 'WORDS OF WISDOM' TO PRACTITIONERS OF AFRICAN PEOPLES DANCE (APD). APD BY THE WAY ENCOMPASSES BOTH AFRICAN AND AFRICAN-CARIBBEAN DANCE PARADIGMS, AND IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS BLACK DANCE.**

**Barnes' advice to them, "never lose sight of your dreams", apparently the title of this article, introduces my own succinct advice to young and upcoming Africa and African-Caribbean performers, who want to explore the possibilities of a career in the British theatre industry.**

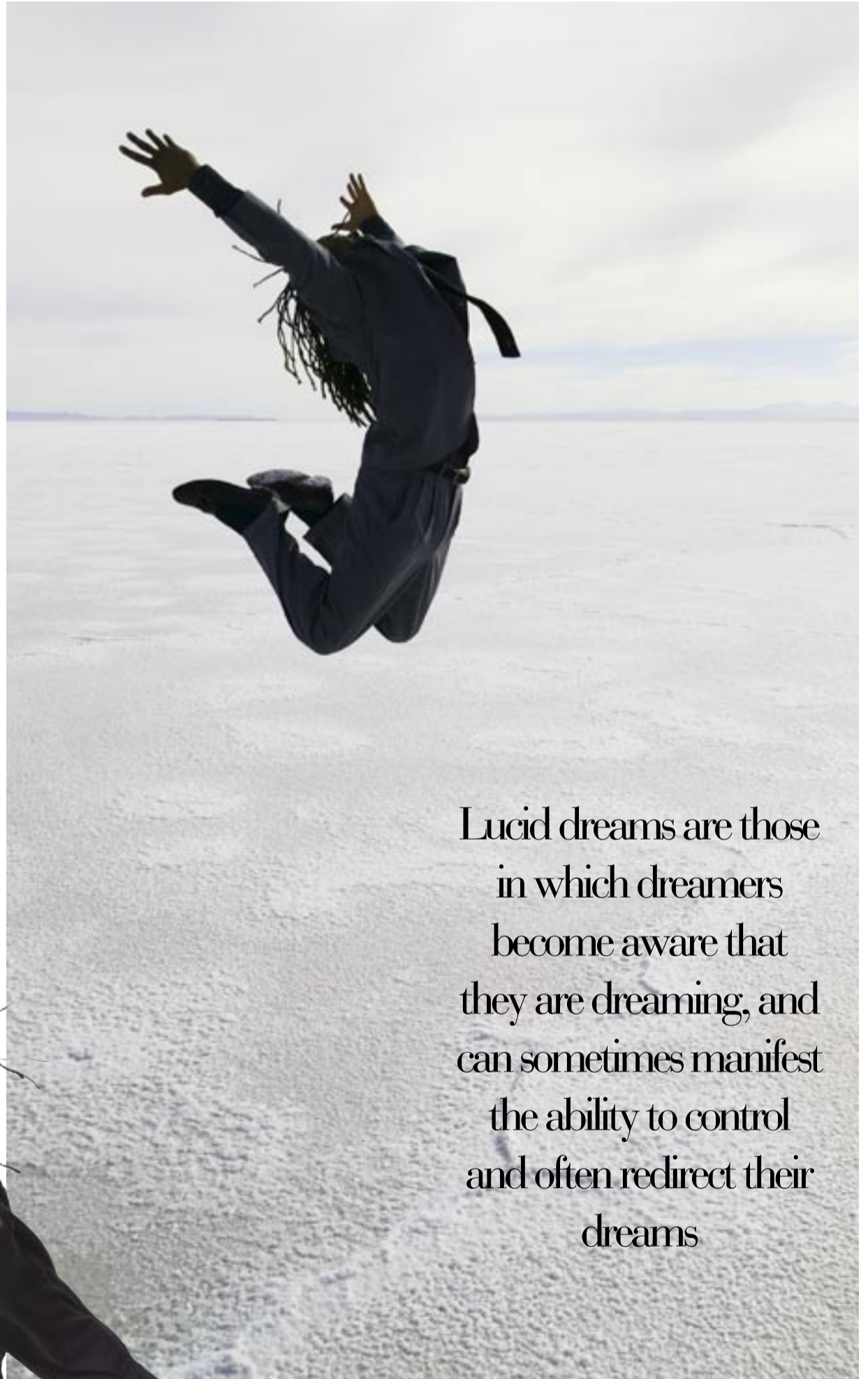
As a black person myself, I know that one question that aspiring Africa and African-Caribbean performer in Britain often ask is how their experiences as blacks figure in their work. This, I think, is the first issue that aspiring Africa and African-Caribbean performers must confront in order to move on. They must come to terms with is their apparent blackness, which invariably, informs the sort of reception that their efforts enjoy. Without addressing this vital concern, most upcoming performers will lose sight of their dreams as they will find it difficult to channel their creative efforts appropriately.

In a dream, one would usually experience feelings and emotions drawn from a sequence of events that are often difficult to control or recall. However, even though the events of a dream are not often susceptible to the control of the dreamer, there are exceptions to this. Lucid dreams are those in which dreamers become aware that they are dreaming, and can sometimes manifest the ability to control and often redirect their dreams. My interest in adopting Barnes' idea of dreams as metaphor for aspirations and ambitions is partly because of my personal experience as a lucid dreamer. The rationale is that, just as the lucid dreamer can control and take advantage of his dreams, burgeoning performers of African and African-

Caribbean origin must embrace and use their perceived "difference" to advantage. They must persist in identifying and addressing the place of the black performer within the mainstream British

theatre. They must, perhaps, start from the fringe and work their way towards asserting their own distinct form of Britishness by drawing on the sort of "post-imperial ideology" that has helped to sustain the Notting Hill Carnival as a celebration of black, mainly African-Caribbean existence in Britain.

Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips' incisive book *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Cultural Britain* (1998) presents the Notting Hill carnival, aptly captioned "explosion of black creativity" (p. 273), as a symbolic and cultural "re-colonisation" (p. 273) of Britain by blacks. One must also note that this "re-colonisation" is not hostile or aggressive; instead it is an uncompromising affirmation of the right of black people as equal citizens of Great Britain, an empire they and their ancestors contributed in building. The success of the Notting Hill carnival stands as a testimony to black people's redefinition of contemporary Britishness to include, not only themselves but other races and cultures as well. The carnival play a major role in promoting the consciousness of what it means to be British and black, to the effect that, the recognition of African and



Lucid dreams are those in which dreamers become aware that they are dreaming, and can sometimes manifest the ability to control and often redirect their dreams

African-Caribbean cultures as constituting contemporary Britishness was evidenced in the featuring of Notting Hill carnival as part of the Queens golden jubilee parade in August 2002.

If emerging black performers must rise from the chance of a few individuals having the good fortune to excel, to actually experiencing equal opportunities where a proportionate majority make it into the mainstream of British theatre, then they must learn to draw

passionately from their identity and history to project an image that is both black and British. By drawing inspiration from their identity and success stories such as Notting Hill carnival's rewriting of contemporary British history and identity, young African and African-Caribbean performers will have justified my confidence that given equal opportunities, they would transform and infuse new life and colour into the corpus of British Theatre.

# TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY

THE FIRST BLACK ACTOR TO PERFORM ON THE BRITISH STAGE, IRA ALDRIDGE, WAS BORN 200 YEARS AGO IN 1807, THE SAME YEAR AS THE ENGLISH SLAVE TRADE WAS ABOLISHED.

The anniversary has been marked by a series of performances, workshops, discussions and an exhibition. The Ira Aldridge Bicentenary Project includes *Splendid Mummers*, in which Shango Baku plays the great man himself. Baku, who helped organise the project, pays tribute to the actor and later reflects on interpreting him for the stage

In October 1825, a young black man took centre stage at the Royal Coburg Theatre (now known as the Old Vic) playing the role of Oroonoko in the *Revolt of Surinam* or *A Slave's Revenge*. Born in America, he had travelled to England determined to make it as an actor.

The playbill advertising the show made reference to the actor being 'a man of colour', and emphasised the authenticity of his performance in a black and noble role.

Those who were attracted by the novelty of a black actor on stage, were in fact witnessing the rise of the first truly international black 'superstar'. Ira Frederick Aldridge went on to become the most decorated actor of modern times. He was also an outspoken abolitionist in an era when slavery was endemic in the southern states of his native America.

Aldridge was mercilessly slated by London critics for performances in Shakespearean roles that had been the exclusive domain of white actors.

He was a thorn in the side of those opposed to abolition. They singled him out for vindictive attacks, though he was lauded by theatre audiences for his magnificence in classic roles, particularly *Othello*.

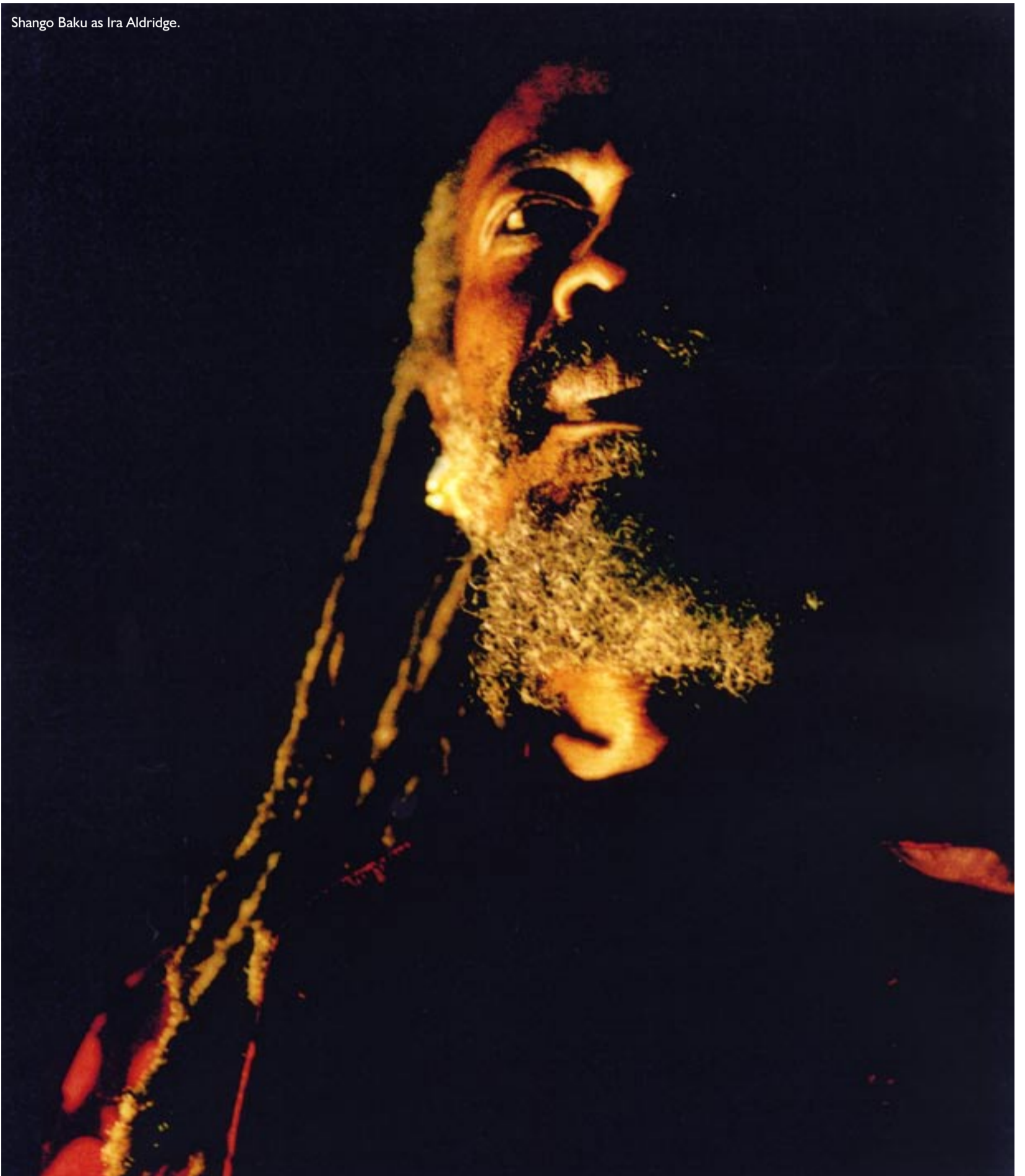
Undeterred, he overcame his detractors. He toured successfully throughout Britain and Europe, attracting awards and plaudits for his outstanding performances. His triumphs in Russia gave him iconic status during his lifetime. One Russian critic said that the evenings on which he saw Aldridge's *Othello*, *Lear*, *Shylock* and *Macbeth* 'were undoubtedly the best I have ever spent in the theatre.'

It is rumoured that Stanislavsky, the accredited author of method-acting, witnessed Aldridge's performances in Russia as a young boy.

Ira Aldridge remains an inspiring example of triumph over adversity, prejudice, and institutionalised racism. But 200 years after his birth, how is it possible that we know so little about this outstanding actor who single-handedly transformed modern theatre practice?

Until Aldridge, black performers were seen as lowly entertainers, buffoons or freaks, using exaggerated language and self-caricature to earn a living. After Aldridge came Paul Robeson, a century later, picking up where the old master had left off in the role of *Othello*. By then Aldridge had been consigned to oblivion, and his kudos usurped by others.

Shango Baku as Ira Aldridge.



## Becoming Ira

Initially, the words daunting, challenging, scary, sprang to mind. I mean, how do you fill the boots of one of the greatest actors ever to grace the British stage? How do you recapture the power of the man, his charisma, his depth of characterisation?

The first thing was – forget about all that. We have no records of Aldridge's voice or physical performance. We can assume from his reputation and the public responses to his performances, his multiple awards – that he was something else, a genius, an outstanding personage – so that, at least, was a pointer. I had to be something else.

Little by little the transformation

began to take place...or to be realised. Aldridge was an outsider. A black man "trespassing" on the hallowed ground of English classical drama. That part was easy.

As a Rastafarian, I was the modern-day theatrical outsider – relegated to exotic, criminal, cameo, or culture-specific roles. I'd painted myself into a corner with the dread persona. I was an intruder – even in black theatre. After years of confrontational roles, bit-parts and 'background' work, I had to write myself out of that corner.

I wrote and developed black plays for performance by Cultural Exchange Through Theatre In Education (CETTIE) up and down the country. So that became another link. The

touring thing. That's where Aldridge cut his teeth and developed his stagecraft.

Now I had two hooks: the outsiderism and the touring. Third hook was playing outstanding black characters – which Aldridge did all his life.

Finally, I discovered Aldridge in my workaholic schedule: making applications, finding venues, contacting actors, arranging publicity, rehearsals, interviews, releases, and the whole madness that goes with production.

I realised that Ira may have had to do much of this work himself, and that he probably honed his craft in these exchanges, creating the environment,

ambience and atmosphere he performed in.

In the end, there wasn't the space or time to be scared or challenged. I had met and merged with Aldridge across space and time. He once played a character called *Dred* from a Harriet Beecher Stowe novel of that title – an avenging spirit who appeared and disappeared at will, freed slaves and struck down cruel masters – an archetype of the black crusader for justice, a dark destroyer and a man of retribution.

That fascinated me. And it became a marker for becoming Aldridge – that righteous urge, that silent rage for equality and fair play that inspires all of us with thoughts of freedom and justice.

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**When the management of the Bristol Omnibus Company refused to employ any black bus conductors or drivers in the 1960s they knew that there was nothing to stop them.**

Not only was racial discrimination perfectly legal, it was tacitly supported by the wider society. It took a campaign inspired by the civil rights movement in America to bring about a change of heart and, eventually, a change in the law.

It was led by Paul Stephenson, a young firebrand who was determined to confront such racism head on. 'Racism in Bristol was rampant at the time,' he remembers. 'Black people couldn't get housing, they couldn't get jobs, we couldn't even go into a pub.'

He himself was once arrested in a Bristol pub after refusing to leave a licensed premises, in a case the courts eventually acquitted him from.

When Stephenson tackled bus bosses about the colour bar they operated he was told that it was not company policy to employ black people and that they had no intention of changing it.

'My aim was to expose such racism, fight it and defeat it,' said Stephenson, a youth and community worker originally from Essex. He took his inspiration from Martin Luther King who a few years earlier had helped lead

the Montgomery bus boycott in Alabama over segregation on public transport.

Launching his campaign in the St Paul's district of the city where many Jamaican migrants had settled, Stephenson called on people not to use buses – not just black people but anyone in Bristol who felt the policy was wrong.

As hundreds put on their walking shoes and the buses drove by half empty, what began as a little local difficulty soon developed into a national, then an international story.

The High Commissioners for newly independent Trinidad, the cricketer Learie Constantine, and his Jamaican counterpart Laurence Lindo, became involved along with Bristol East MP Tony Benn, who went out distributing flyers on behalf of the campaign. Harold Wilson, then leader of the opposition, sent a telegram in support.

But the the local branch of the Transport and General Workers Union, which the bus drivers and conductors belonged to, stood aside.

'The union claimed that their policy had nothing to do with racism but economics - they said black workers would lower wages even further,' explains Stephenson with a note of irony in his voice. 'They even brought in a sexual angle, peddling the line that women conductors would not be happy to work with black drivers after 6pm.'

It took four months for the bus company to cave in and begin employing black people. Two years later the Race Relations Act outlawed discrimination.

'The bus boycott was the first political fight against racism in the country,' states Stephenson with evident pride.

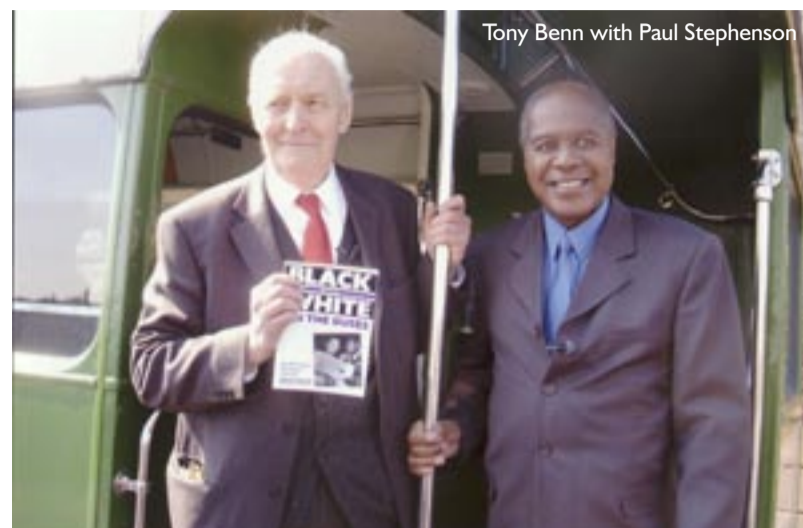
'It not only helped change the law it encouraged other black people to fight for their rights.'

A BBC radio documentary last year revisited the dispute and found some former employees of the bus company completely unrepentant. This comes as no surprise to Stephenson. 'Bristol history is steeped in racism because of its links to the slave trade,' he states.

Thanks to slavery, Bristol was second only to London before being eclipsed by Liverpool in the mid- 1750s. Most of Bristol's great and good made a fortune out of the trade and spent some of it changing the landscape of a city celebrated today for its elegant Georgian squares and grand buildings. Ironically, St Paul's was a once fashionable suburb favoured by rich slave merchants.

Yet according to Stephenson, until recently there has been little official attempt to own up to the city's slave past or challenge the entrenched racist fall out.

Stephenson, now 70 and as active as ever, has spent most of his adult life trying to



© Courtesy of BBAP



© Courtesy of BBAP

change all this. Earlier this year, he helped form the Bristol Black Archives Partnership to record the last 200 years of the black contribution to the city's history.

The bus boycott has pride of place in the archive. It has also made Stephenson a well known local figure. Once he was

taking a taxi from the station and the driver recognised who he was. Stephenson takes up the story: 'He told me, "That boycott you had was great". I said, "Thank you". He replied, "We did more business at that time that we've ever done".'

## LANG LIV DE AFRIKAAN QUEEN!

GUS JOHN PAYS TRIBUTE TO JAMAICAN ACTOR AND POET, LOUISE BENNETT, MISS LOU, WHO DIED LAST YEAR

**Never mind historical icons such as Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley. Louise Bennett was the mother, father and soul restorer of the Jamaican nation. No one has done more to assist the Jamaican people in understanding themselves and their uniqueness as a people crafted from the ravages of slavery and colonialism than Miss Lou. She devoted a lifetime to helping the nation to understand who it is, where it came from, how where it came from shaped who it is and how, in the process, ways of communicating were forged which were unique to Jamaica.**

Born in 1919, Louise Bennett was a child prodigy as far as the Jamaican language was concerned. Amazingly, while not yet a teenager, she determined that the language she spoke was the language that should be validated and used as a medium for expressing oneself in writing. She had experienced that language as the one in which ordinary people gave meaning to their lives, expressing their needs and wants, their joys and their sorrows, their aspirations and their regrets. Yet, the medium of teaching and instruction in school was not the language of the

Jamaican people but a foreign language that the majority of the nation could neither speak nor write.

By the age of 14, she had written her first poem in Jamaican English, then referred to as 'dialect'. Her creative abilities were apparent even then and in her twenties she won a scholarship to attend the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA) in London. She brought the art of dramatic expression to her interpretation of the Jamaican language, validating it long before it was accredited as such in the 1960s, largely through the work of people like Frederic Cassidy and Robert Le Page. The seminal writings of both these academics, especially Jamaica Talk (Cassidy: 1961) and Dictionary of Jamaican English (Cassidy & Le Page: 1967), include references to Bennett's work dating back to 1942 when The Gleaner published her Dialect Verses, one of her earliest published works.

She did more than most to develop an awareness and understanding of Jamaican folklore, of the sayings, proverbs and philosophies, the values and principles of the ordinary working people. Using the medium of poetry, drama and story telling

in what was predominantly an oral tradition, Miss Lou put the Jamaican people in touch with themselves, with their wisdom, their irony and their quirkiness. Above all, she put them in touch with their inner selves and their connectedness to Africa by pointing up the fact that the entire society and its culture are riddled with African retentions. Those retentions could still be seen today in rites of passage, in religious practices, in music, in the vocabulary and forms of speech in the Jamaican language, in percussion, in food, in superstitions.

Miss Lou brought it all alive through drama, poetry, prose, chants, dance and song, and through her radio and television shows that were hugely popular with people of all ages in Jamaican society, such as Laugh with Louise, Miss Lou's Views, The Lou and Ranny Show and Ring Ding.

When in the 1960s and 1970s children started to arrive in Britain in increasing numbers from Jamaica to join parents, a major issue in the assessment of their intelligence and their ability to cope with the British school system was their language. Because they were not seen



© Courtesy of Armet Francis

as having a language in its own right, they were deemed to be speaking and writing broken English. Louise Bennett's work was invaluable in that it provided the ammunition both to counteract those damaging and erroneous assessments and to give Jamaicans a confidence in the language that they spoke.

Miss Lou became ambassador at large for the Jamaican people, representing their country and its cultural heritage

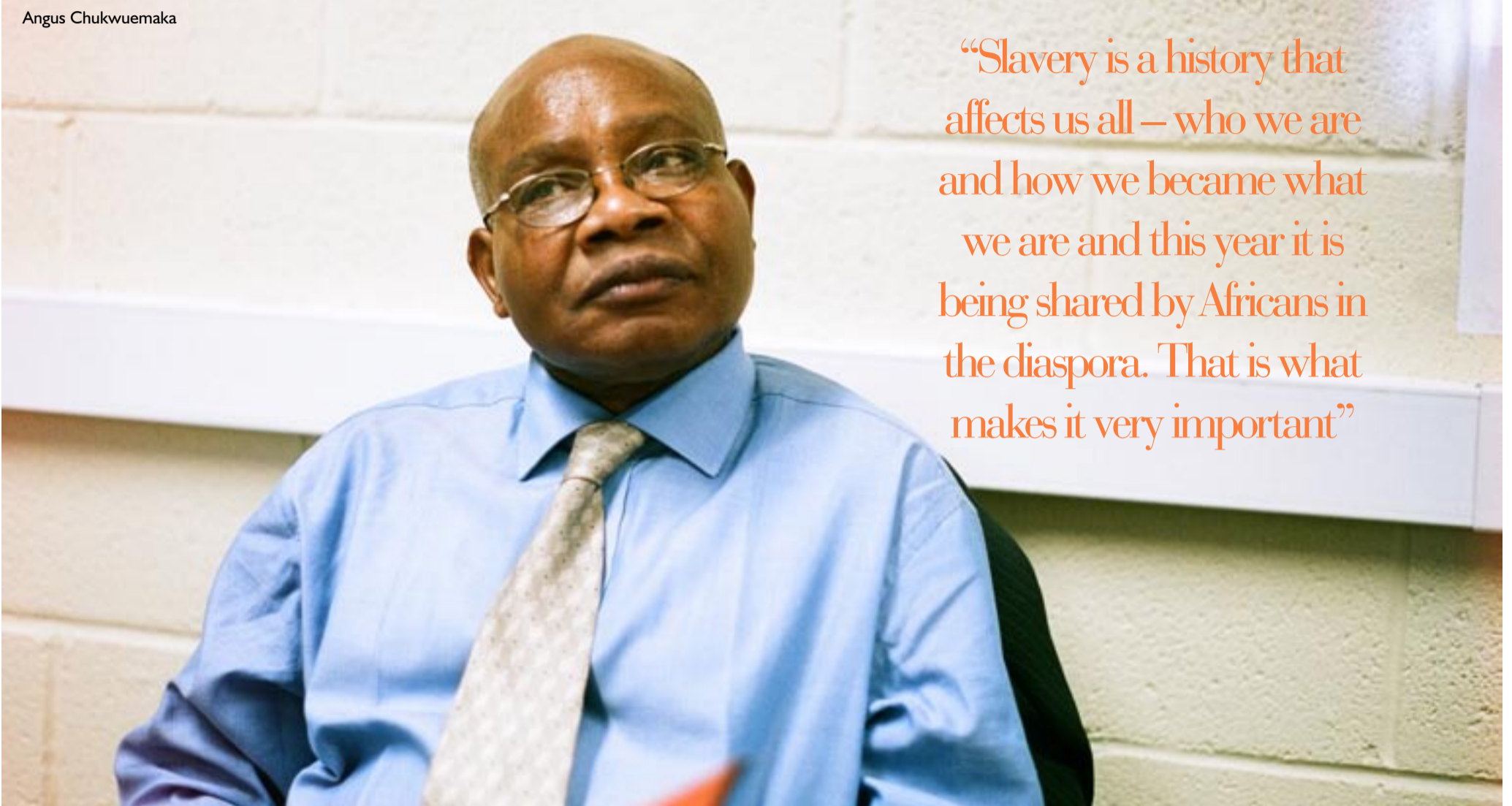
across the world and giving permission to those of us involved in song writing, music making, performance poetry, theatre and teaching, to claim the language and be assertive in our use of it. As such, she inspired other pioneers such as Andrew Salkey, Kamau Brathwaite, and latterly Benjamin Zephaniah and Linton Kwesi Johnson.

We all of us owe her an enormous debt and give thanks for her long life and pioneering life's work.

# FROM LAGOS TO LIVERPOOL

WHEN HE ARRIVED IN LIVERPOOL FROM NIGERIA 40 YEARS AGO, CHIEF ANGUS CHUKWUEMAKA HAD NO IDEA THAT HE WOULD BE ONE DAY PAYING HOMAGE TO HIS ENSLAVED ANCESTORS ON THE SHORES OF THE MERSEY, WRITES ANGELA COBBINAH

Angus Chukwuemaka



© Cobbinah Pix

“Slavery is a history that affects us all – who we are and how we became what we are and this year it is being shared by Africans in the diaspora. That is what makes it very important”

**Beneath a clear blue sky and watched by a silent crowds, Chief Angus Chukwuemaka solemnly performs a libation ceremony in memory of enslaved Africans.**

The place is the Liverpool waterfront where slave ships began and ended their gruesome triangular journey. The time is August 23, Slavery Remembrance Day, in commemoration of victims of the 18th century trade that transformed Liverpool from an obscure fishing port into one of the richest mercantile centres in Europe.

His voice steady but filled with emotion, Chukwuemaka repeats ‘This is your drink’ – to those who were sold into bondage, to those who resisted and to those who fought for the trade’s abolition. The final libation is poured into the waters of the River Mersey that glisten in the sunlight.

‘It is both an act of remembrance and celebration,’ explains Chukwuemaka afterwards, dressed in traditional attire of his native Igboland in south eastern Nigeria. ‘We remember the sufferings of our enslaved brothers and sisters but at the same time celebrate their efforts to free themselves.’

He has been performing the ceremony since 1999 in an event organised by the Merseyside Maritime Museum and Liverpool City Council following the latter’s formal apology for the city’s part in the slave trade.

August 23 is chosen because that is the day on 1791 that the slaves of Haiti began a revolt that would lead to the establishment of a free black state. But this year’s event is all the more symbolic because it takes place in the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade.

‘Slavery is a history that affects us all – who we are and how we became what we are and this year it is being shared by Africans in the diaspora. That is what makes it very important,’ Chukwuemaka observes.

He arrived in Liverpool from Lagos in 1968 as a wide-eyed but ambitious youth to study electronics. Once a city whose grandeur reflected the wealth of empire, Liverpool was now decidedly drab and down at heel. It nevertheless seemed a good port of call.

For one it was home to a sizeable number of West Africans, mostly merchant seamen who had decided to put down roots there. They settled in a district not far from the docks known as Toxteth.

An area of elegant boulevards and grand 19th century housing that had clearly seen better days, it was a far cry from the small town in which Chukwuemaka was raised. But he felt immediately at home. ‘You could never feel alone in Toxteth,’ he recalls fondly. ‘It was such a multiracial area and people were very welcoming. I

first lodged with a Greek family and was made to feel very comfortable.’

West African food came in regularly on the ships and a well-established network of social clubs provided ready company and entertainment. ‘Everyone was welcome, including white people, and you would be guaranteed a good time out. It was really beautiful,’ he adds, clearly relishing the memory.

Chukwuemaka enjoyed the place so much he decided to stay put, eventually raising a family of five with his wife, Christine.

Toxteth, often referred to loosely as Liverpool 8, the local postcode, is also home to black people whose ancestors had settled in the city as far back as the 18th century. Some were the descendants of slaves brought over on ships for domestic servitude in the homes of wealthy city merchants.

Others could trace their family tree back to the black US independence war soldiers who, loyal to the Union Jack, decided to flee to England. Liverpool, then the biggest port on the other side of the Atlantic, became a natural refuge. They were joined by the children of African rulers who had been sent to England to be educated and decided to stay on. This makes Liverpool’s black community the oldest not only in England but in Europe, with some people able to trace their city roots back three

centuries. Over the decades, Toxteth absorbed many other people living on the margins of English society – Jews, Greeks and Irish among them, and intermarriage inevitably took place.

But the tight knit community that Chukwuemaka so fondly remembers was as much a response to how the rest of Liverpool felt about Toxteth as how Toxteth residents felt about each other. Although they may have been Liverpool born and bred for several generations, they were never considered ‘one of us’, an attitude that was direct fallout of the slave trade.

Liverpool was the dominant English slave trading port, overtaking its main rival Bristol by the mid 18th century. According to the Merseyside Maritime Museum, 120-130 ships a year were leaving the port for Africa in the two decades before the abolition of the trade in 1807 compared with around 15 ships in the 1730s.

Slavery is a brooding presence in Liverpool, in the grand gothic sweep of its city centre buildings, in the African faces carved on the Town Hall frieze and in streets named after prominent slave traders like Foster Cunliffe, a former mayor, and John Newton, who penned in the hymn Amazing Grace. Goree Piazza, once part of the dockside area, recalls the gruesome island of Goree off the Senegal Coast, which was used as a slave holding centre by mainly by the French.

On his early visits to the city centre, a mere 10 minutes away from where he lived, Chukwuemaka was struck by the sea of white faces. ‘You just couldn’t see any black people there, either walking about or working and this was down to outright discrimination by employers.’

He quickly discovered that going for a night out to sample Liverpool’s legendary wit and warmth was also not on the cards. ‘It was difficult for a black man to enter a white club easily. They put up all sorts of entry restrictions, like members only, and this was the reason why we began to set up so many of our own associations.’

Denied good jobs and decent housing over the decades and discouraged from leaving the confines of their area, the people of Toxteth became effectively ghettoised. White women who set up home with black men were regarded as little more than prostitutes, while a Liverpool 8 address proved to be an early warning system for employers whatever the colour of the bearer.

In the ‘70s, government fears about the effects of black immigration intensified the racism, personified by a local police force which routinely targeted black youngsters with pernicious stop and search laws.

For almost two weeks in 1981, mounting resentment against this state of affairs turned Toxteth into a war

The Libation



© Cobblin Pix

zone as local youngsters, both black and white, entered into pitched battles with the police, armed with petrol bombs and bricks. A horrified Home Secretary William Whitelaw spoke of 'violence of extraordinary ferocity' and the police only regained control of the streets after rubber bullets were used for the first time in the UK outside Northern Ireland, resulting in a number of serious injuries. Up to 140 buildings were razed and one man was killed after being hit by a police Land Rover.

But like most locals, Chukuemaka was not surprised by the violence. By now busily involved in community politics, he was vice-chair of the Merseyside Racial Equality Council: 'In its 1979 annual report I warned that this would happen because of three things – the poor relations between police and young people, the unemployment, and poor schooling.'

The riots, the most serious of a wave of civil disturbances that took place in Britain's inner city areas that year, drew an immediate response from Westminster. Environment minister Michael Heseltine famously went on a three-week fact finding tour of Liverpool to find out what had gone wrong. He set up the Merseyside Development Corporation. This oversaw the redevelopment of the dockside area known as Albert Dock, where the Maritime Museum is now based, and the establishment of an International Garden Festival in 1984 to regenerate derelict land and create local jobs.

Chukuemaka notes that as neither of these prestige projects were in Toxteth itself, their benefits were limited. Residents were dismayed at the city authorities' decision to demolish

streets of run down housing in Liverpool 8 rather than refurbish them, and to move people to other areas. 'This has resulted in the break up of our community,' asserts Chukuemaka sadly. The place has become a ghost town.'

Although retired, Chukuemaka gives no indication that he is about to hang up his boots. He wears several civic hats including chairmanship of the Merseyside African Representative Council and sits at the helm of the Crawford House Community Enterprise Centre.

Built in the heart of Toxteth with the help of the European Fund and comprising of office, lecturing and shop space as well as community halls, it takes the notion of self-help to another level.

## Setting the truth free

As the first city to formally apologise for its role in slavery, Liverpool scored another first with the opening of International Slavery Museum in August.

The inauguration took place on Slavery Remembrance Day, August 23, and was attended by VIPs from around the world, including the singer Harry Belafonte.

He said, "It is a good thing that Liverpool, a city central in one of the greatest evils the world has have seen, slavery, has chosen to provide a facility that has global significance in educating people about it."

Based at the Mersey Maritime Museum and an expansion of the smaller Transatlantic Slavery Gallery, it examines both the historical and contemporary aspects of slavery, using multimedia presentations.

Highlights include the Middle Passage audio-visual installation recreating the dark and oppressive transpiration suffered by slaves, and an interactive music desk, charting the African roots of today's popular music.

Museum staff also travelled to eastern Nigeria to help them reproduce an Igbo family compound, the type many captives had lived in before being kidnapped and sold into bondage.

The new museum also includes a learning facility dedicated to Liverpool teenager Anthony Walker who was murdered two years ago in a racist attack.

Black History 365's Mia Morris said, 'We would like to pay tribute to all those who dared to dream a big dream and turn this museum a jewel in the crown internationally. It certainly lives up to its claim to set the truth free.'

**'The legacies of slavery are racism and disadvantage and we see this project as a way of overcoming them'**

'By renting out rooms we aim to become self-sustaining rather than relying on handouts,' he explains.

'The legacies of slavery are racism and disadvantage and we see this project as a way of overcoming them.'

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Dorset Teacher Training Partnership SCITT  
(Primary)  
[jmosborne@thomas-hardye.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:jmosborne@thomas-hardye.dorset.sch.uk)



Joan Jones, 59, taught in FE for seven years before moving to Bournemouth to start a GTP programme with Dorset TEP. She has a degree in Electronic Engineering, is both a qualified Cisco Instructor and a C&G Electronic Engineer and has been known to fix washing machines as well.

Joan wanted to be a school teacher because she could make a difference and become a role model for the younger generation. When I first started teaching, she says, I had no idea that I would enjoy it so much. Teaching young adults in FE was a good experience and there I encountered a student who had a big impact on my feelings towards teaching. As an under-achiever he was about to give up college but I managed to help complete his studies, rebuild his self-esteem and go on to gain a Computer Engineering degree. Later he thanked me for encouraging him to see things through.

The satisfaction I gained from that experience made me decide that I wanted to help younger students feel good about themselves and to raise their self-esteem before they get to college. Young students need to see how important education is and show their teachers that they aren't all monsters with horns growing out of their heads. I believe that every one has the potential to shine. It just takes someone to believe in them, motivate and encourage them.

I chose a school-based training route because I think it will give me an excellent foundation for secondary teaching, and because I am already settled in the school where I have enjoyed working as an unqualified ICT teacher for the last year. The atmosphere in the school is great. I have a good working relationship with the students and staff and it seems right to do my GTS training here. The GTP route is also an agreeable route for me because I have a family to support, and I need to be employed and receive a salary.

As to Bournemouth, I have always loved the sea. Living in Bournemouth gives me the best of both worlds – training as a teacher and enjoying beach life. Joan Jones, GTP Trainee at Oakmead Technology College, Bournemouth Jan 2005

# LOOKING FOR A CAREER? PROBLEM SOLVED!



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# TRAINING TO TEACH

TEACHING IS AN INCREASINGLY POPULAR CHOICE OF CAREER. RECORD NUMBERS CONTINUE TO ENTER THE PROFESSION, COMING FROM ALL MANNER OF BACKGROUNDS. MORE THAN 41,000 PEOPLE BEGAN INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING LAST YEAR, WITH ONE IN 10 FROM A MINORITY ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND ONE IN 20 WITH A DECLARED DISABILITY.

**There are many reasons for teaching's popularity. It is a career that pays well, with newly qualified teachers starting on a salary in September 2007 of at least £20,133 outside London and £24,168 in inner London. Depending on the size of school, pay can rise to more than £90,000 for head teachers – equivalent to the leaders of a sizeable business. And the progression to headship can be swift. Good teachers enjoy excellent career prospects, with heads in their 30s not uncommon.**

Teaching is also a well-supported job. Thorough training ensures teachers are fully prepared before they enter the classroom with newly qualified teachers benefiting from personal mentors. Classroom assistants are widespread and all teachers have half a day out of the classroom a week for planning, preparation and assessment. Subject associations and fellow teachers ensure that there is a substantial network that people can turn to for support and advice.

But what makes teaching different from other careers is the opportunity it offers to work with young people. They make teaching a creative and challenging career in which no two lessons – let alone days – are the same. Passing on your knowledge and enthusiasm and seeing a young person understand something for the first time is a uniquely rewarding experience. Above all, though, teaching is enjoyable. Psychologists were recently sent into classrooms in a variety of schools around the country and found that teachers break into a smile on average 10 times every half an hour and laugh out loud four times during the same period.

## How do I become a teacher?

There are several different ways to train to teach, suiting a broad range of circumstances.

All training routes lead to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) which is a requirement for teaching in a state maintained school in England.

You can train at a university or college, in a school, or on the job.

You will need to have a degree or equivalent, which should relate to the subject you want to teach. If you're looking to become a primary school teacher, that means the core subjects of the national curriculum.

All teachers must have also achieved a standard equivalent to at least a grade C in GCSE English language and mathematics and if they want to teach primary or Key Stage 2/3 (ages 7-14), a grade C or equivalent in a GCSE science subject.

## Undergraduate routes

There are two ways to compete your degree at the same time as qualifying to teach. You can study either:

- A bachelor of education (BEd) - an honours degree in education, which will give you qualified teacher status in addition to a degree.
- A bachelor of science (BSc) or bachelor of arts (BA) with QTS - these are honours degrees that also incorporate initial teacher training.

Like most degrees, BEds and BAs or BScs with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) usually take three or four years full-time. They are run at various universities and colleges around the country and their content varies accordingly. A BEd is a popular choice for people looking to teach

primary years but is also an option for people looking to teach secondary.

## Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE)

The most popular way for graduates to become a teacher is to complete a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), which focuses primarily on developing your teaching skills.

These are usually one-year courses taken at university or college. If it suits your circumstances better, they can be taken as two-year part-time courses and in some cases via flexible distance learning. PGCEs can also be studied in a school through a school-centred initial teacher training course (see below).

School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) courses are postgraduate initial teacher training programmes designed and delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges. As such, they are also often tailored towards the teaching needs of the local community.

Taught by experienced, practising teachers, SCITT courses allow graduates to complete almost all of their training in a school environment. This makes the SCITT route a good option if you would prefer to spend more of your training time in the classroom, putting theory into practice and developing confidence through contact with pupils and other members of staff.

Graduate teacher programme (GTP) The Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) is a good choice for people who want to become teachers but need to earn while they train. It is a programme of on-the-job training, allowing graduates to qualify as a teacher while they work.

Training is tailored to your own individual needs and leads to qualified teacher status (QTS). Training takes from three months to one school year, depending on previous teaching experience.

Registered teacher programme The Registered Teacher Programme (RTP) allows non-graduates with some experience of higher education to complete their degree and qualify as a teacher at the same time. It is a mixture of work-based teacher training and study.

To take part, you first need to be working in a school as an unqualified teacher. This makes the RTP another good option for people who want a teaching career but need to earn while they train.

Once on the programme your training will be tailored to your own individual needs and lead to qualified teacher status (QTS). Your school will also work with a local higher education institution to ensure that you receive suitable training to extend your subject knowledge to degree level.

## Funding

There are a variety of funding sources available to trainee teachers, depending on the training route.

If you follow a PGCE or SCITT course, you will be eligible for a non-means tested grant of £1,200 and be able to apply for an additional means-tested grant of £1,500. In addition, you will be entitled to a tax-free bursary of £9,000 (or £225 a week) if you are training to teach mathematics, science, English (including drama), ICT, design and technology, modern

languages and RE. For all other subjects and primary teaching, the bursary is £6,000 (or £150 a week).

From 1 August 2008, the bursary for trainees starting ITT courses in secondary postgraduate English, dance and drama will be reduced from £9,000 to £6,000 and trainees will not be eligible for a golden hello. The bursary for trainees starting primary postgraduate ITT courses will be reduced from £6,000 to £4,000.

When you have successfully completed your initial teacher training (ITT) course and accepted a newly qualified teacher (NQT) position, you may be eligible for a one-off taxable golden hello payment of between £2,500 and £5,000.



To find out more information about becoming a teacher visit

[www.teach.gov.uk](http://www.teach.gov.uk)

Alternatively, call the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991 / 992 for Welsh speakers (minicom 01245 45 43 43).





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**Black History Month.**  
Events throughout October 2007 see [www.go.herts.ac.uk/bhm](http://www.go.herts.ac.uk/bhm)

**Men into Primary School Teaching.**  
Thursday 5 October 2007, 18:00, de Havilland Campus. For further information contact Paul Purser on: **T** 01707 285648 **E** [p.purser@herts.ac.uk](mailto:p.purser@herts.ac.uk)

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# CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

As the winners gather this month to collect their prizes and celebrate the importance of equality and unity in a diverse world, the NASUWT is launching the 2008 Arts and Minds competition.

Now in its fourth year, the arts and creative writing competition challenges children and young people to express what cultural diversity, identity and equality mean to them. The competition goes from strength to strength with the number of entries growing each year.

The NASUWT is the largest union representing teachers and headteachers across the UK and as such the competition has attracted prominent supporters including Pearson Plc, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Refugee Council.

Arts and Minds is open to children and young people from primary, secondary and special schools across the UK and

entries are judged in two categories, art and creative writing. Entrants can submit poetry or short stories for the creative writing category and collages, drawings or paintings for the art category.

National winners are chosen by a panel of judges and they will be invited to a prestigious London awards ceremony next October, timed to coincide with Black History Month, where they will receive a host of top prizes. An overall winner will also be announced at the ceremony.

Arts and Minds offers teachers an exciting and stimulating way to introduce discussions around equality and diversity into the classroom and supports the new duty on schools to promote community cohesion.

Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT, urged teachers to get involved and harness the creativity of their students to send out a message of equality. She

said: "Promoting cultural diversity and combating racial discrimination is a very important part of the NASUWT's work and as an education union it is extremely important to us to encourage young people to get involved. Too often the focus is on that things that young people do badly and this is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the talent of pupils and support schools in promoting cultural diversity."

For more information on Arts and Minds and details of how to enter see the website at [www.teachersunion.org.uk](http://www.teachersunion.org.uk)

**NASUWT**



The winners of NASUWT Arts & Minds 2006



Donya Ghorbani, King Edwards IV High School for Girls, Birmingham, overall winner of NASUWT Arts & Minds 2006

**arts & minds**

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Pupils and their schools are invited to explore what racial equality and cultural diversity means to them by submitting creative writing and artwork. Winners will receive top prizes and be presented with their awards at a prestigious London ceremony.

For more information on how to enter go to [www.teachersunion.org.uk](http://www.teachersunion.org.uk)

**NASUWT**

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# REVLON PROFESSIONAL EAST AFRICA ACADEMY

"TEN YEARS AGO WE HAD A DREAM. THAT DREAM WAS TO CREATE A PLACE WHERE AFFORDABLE EDUCATION OF THE HIGHEST STANDARD, COULD BE PROVIDED TO AS MANY SALON PROFESSIONALS AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DESIRE FOR THE INDUSTRY AS POSSIBLE.

## That dream was realized in 2003 with the opening of The Revlon Professional East Africa Academy.

The vision, mission, values and principles set out by The Colomer Group this millennium took the dream one stage further.

One of the principles set out in the mission statement in 2001 was that of social responsibility.

This Academy now not only educates, assists, shares and trains, salon professionals that use our technical products, but since 2004, provides scholarships to young people who have a desire for hairdressing but are without the means to obtain a formal education.

The course lasts for 12 months and mainly concentrates on practical experience. Although we appreciate the benefits of theoretical knowledge, our extensive experience shows that 20% of the students' time spent on theory is usually more than adequate. This allows for more than 150 technical undertakings with real models.

This course is designed to give a total learning experience and provides salons with trained personnel of the highest quality.

In July 2001 The Colomer Group set out its vision: *"The creative source for inspiring and serving beauty professionals and consumers everywhere. We are endeavouring to achieve that vision. Thank you everyone for your help and support."*

## Randolph Gray

The Colomer Group's Technical Consultant for Europe and Africa, Randolph Gray, is a reflection of one of the company's basic philosophies: successful haircare is a result of well-trained hands using well-designed quality products.

Randolph is a man with many accolades to his name, as well as being an International Educator for The Colomer Group he forms part of Eugene Soleiman's prestigious team for International fashion catwalk shows in New York, London,

Milan and Paris. Some of the most prestigious catwalk shows in Randolph's armoury are: Armani, Calvin Klein, Chanel, D & G, Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Prada to name just a few. He has also led the Hair and Make up team for the past two years at Kenya Fashion Week held in Nairobi. Naomi Campbell and Ajuma are just a couple of the most recognisable models where Randolph's Hair expertise is in demand.

Educate and assist where ever possible is one of Randolph's mottos. That is why Randolph tries to extend his knowledge to the underprivileged. The Colomer Group and Randolph have been instrumental in the success of The Revlon Professional East Africa Academy. This hairdressing academy provides education to 48 young adults who have a desire to become hairdressers free of charge. In addition, in May 2005 Randolph returned from a Charity build in Nairobi which was led by British Airways in association with Microsoft and The Colomer Group. As an individual, Randolph is an extremely approachable guy with a zany sense of humour and a wholehearted, sincere willingness to help and advise regarding the specialist haircare ranges that The Colomer Group offers. From a creative and inspirational point of view, the best advice Randolph can give is to keep your finger well on the pulse of hairdressing trends: "We have seen remarkable changes in African-Caribbean styles recently", he says. "Girls are going for far more natural looks rather than the "rigid" effect of days gone by. This doesn't necessarily mean excluding wefts, weaves and extensions - the important criteria is that the overall look remains natural and free. We've all been getting more adventurous with colour as well, which is certainly a plus point, particularly for clients who wish to adopt a more flamboyant look."

Nigel McCarthy is one of the people behind The Colomer Group's presence in both Europe and Africa. As the General Manager of Colomer Professional International, leading a small prolific team he has been able to create awareness for brands such as: African Pride, Creme of Nature, Herba Rich, Lottabody Tress

Transitions, Natural Honey, Realistic and Revlon Professional.

It's not all just about global brand awareness for Nigel McCarthy however. He has taken his role in East Africa a few steps further. In September 2003, with the support of The Colomer Group, the Revlon Professional East Africa Academy opened in Nairobi.

The Revlon Professional East Africa Academy teaches young adults up to VTCT Level 2 in Hairdressing in their first year and following successful completion of 9 months practical salon experience, the opportunity to progress to VTCT Level 3 on a day release basis.

In 2004 the 6,350 square foot premises opened its doors to its first intake of students. The students were sourced from orphanages, recommendations from Salons of mainly shampooists who had the desire to become hairdressers but were without the means of obtaining formal training. An intake of 28 students saw 25 graduate in December 2004 with full qualifications.

In 2005 an intake of 48 sourced through various organisations, Street Families Rehabilitation Trust as recommended by UNICEF, Kenya Widows & Orphans support programme, SOS Children Villages Kenya, Good Samaritans plus the usual Salon recommendations. In December 2005, 36 of the original intake passed plus one from 2004 who was unable to complete the course in 2004.

The intake for 2006 saw over 250 applicants for just 48 available places - The new students included 6 street kids.

What initially was a dream of Nigel McCarthy's has now turned into quite a remarkable venture and has his full commitment. Nigel in his role finds that he is now often commuting to Europe and Africa - returning to his family at weekends.

2006 was a very important year for the project. The success of the venture in terms of satisfaction was immediately apparent when the first 25 students graduated. The sheer delight in graduating with an internationally recognised Diploma gave a lot of young people a fresh start in life. The success in terms of how the



students career has progressed will soon become measurable. Some are already back taking advantage of attending the VTCT Level 3 day release course. The success in respect of quality is becoming more apparent as Salon owners are now seeking out our highly motivated trained and fully equipped students. From a business perspective it will be years before the success/benefits will be derived. The costs in running such an operation however become immediately measurable which is why sponsors are now being sought in an effort to reduce the current overheads and enable the Project to continue and expand.

So Nigel, How did it all begin? In 1995 when the professional haircare division formed part of Revlon I visited our distributor in Kenya to see how best we could help develop the market. It all started from there really. In an effort to create awareness and demonstrate the vast range of products we had on offer from salon exclusive professional products to retail we held big shows where Randolph Gray our International Educator and others would demonstrate to salons what was available and how to use them. These demonstrations took place all over East and Southern Africa running from Ethiopia down through Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania on to Namibia and Madagascar. This was a great

motivational and product awareness tool (which still has its place today) but what the people really needed and craved for was education. The shows projected a magical image but they did not teach. To my mind they were a bit like asking someone who had never driven before to sit and watch you drive round the M25 once and get out and throw them the keys. Result - accident.

So we looked at workshops and hairdressing school support. Venues for workshops were always difficult to organise and invariably places were ill equipped or too small. As far as school support was concerned we were unlucky in so far as we were unable to develop a strong working relationship with any particular school.

In the year 2000 The Colomer Group was founded and they purchased Revlon's Professional hair care business. As the mission of the Colomer Group is the same today as it was then, which is to be a globally recognised leader in the beauty industry through state of the art products, education and service plus with one of the principles being Social Responsibility a little sparkle appeared in my eye and a prayer was answered.



For more info or to help visit: [www.project-nairobi.org](http://www.project-nairobi.org)

# THE WORLD IN ONE CITY

## THE WORLD IN ONE CITY AT ONE TIME, ALMOST 50 DIFFERENT CULTURES INHABITED A SMALL QUARTER OF CARDIFF

### At one time, almost 50 different cultures inhabited a small quarter of Cardiff

The 1950s British suspense film *Tiger Bay* offers a momentary but tantalising glimpse of the multiracial Cardiff dockland district of the same name as a lively Caribbean wedding party spills out into the street, briefly lifting the gloom of post-war Britain.

For outsiders, the area's associations with exoticism continued with local girl Shirley Bassey, the daughter of a Nigerian seaman and English woman, whose belting voice found her fame and fortune.

Tiger Bay, part of a wider district known as Butetown, and is the most cosmopolitan part of Wales thanks to Cardiff's growth as Britain's largest coal exporting port towards the end of the 19th century.

The expansion of the port and ancillary industries attracted immigrants from all over the world and by the 1960s, when the docks were beginning to go into decline, there was a well established multiracial community with a flavour all of its own.

'Within the one square mile of Tiger Bay there were more than 50 different cultures, including Inuit and Apache,' explains Nicky Delgado, a local writer.

Among the largest communities were Somalians, West Africans, Yemenis and Chinese, mostly seaman who had decided to settle in the city.

'Cardiff has the oldest racially integrated community in Europe,' observes Delgado, who belongs to a well known local family.

'There was a huge intermixing of people and you would get two or three nationalities in a single family, not to mention more than one religion.'

Delgado, 58, has been researching the area's fascinating history for some time, using his own West African background as a starting point. 'My grandfather came over from Cape Verde in the 1900s as a seaman and set up a boarding house,' he explains.

'He met my grandmother in a cafe in Barry. She was also from Cape Verde and they eventually set up home together.'

He believes that seafarers from Cape Verde, a group of islands off the West African coast, were the first immigrants to settle in Tiger Bay, arriving in Cardiff in the 1800s and even earlier.

Apart from the jobs bounty that the Welsh capital once offered, he believes it was the friendliness of the

Nicky Delgado as a boy



local people themselves that persuaded seafarers to stay on.

That may be so but the wide society historically regarded Tiger Bay as a den of iniquity, where crime and prostitution flourished. After World War I, the seamen were additionally accused of taking jobs, and three black people were killed in Cardiff during five days of rioting in 1919. A number of official reports in the 1920s and '30s berated 'coloured pests' for their laziness, lack of hygiene and propensity for general badness, claims that were gleefully seized upon by the Western Mail newspaper. 'Half-caste' children inheriting the 'vicious hereditary taint of their parents' also exercised the minds of city mandarins.

According to the book *Black Wales: A History* by Alan Llywd, such hostility encouraged the people of the area to begin working together to establish a true community - 'This...was the beginning of the legendary Tiger Bay of multiracial harmony and tolerance: a defensive inner world to safeguard against an offensive outside world.'

In the 1960s, Cardiff City Council began a slum clearance programme that was to change Tiger Bay forever.

'Elderly people were moved out and two large tower blocks were built to replace street housing,' recalls Delgado.

'You would no longer walk down the road and bump into your neighbours or have a chat on the doorstep. The whole social structure started to be changed.'

Now with the disappearance of industry, Butetown has gone the way of other dockland areas to become a trendy enclave of the city, full of luxury flats, trendy shops and smart offices.

'Local people were not able to put up enough of an organised resistance to redevelopment and the change around here has been fundamental,' adds Delgado.

But while the original Tiger Bay community has shrunk it has reinvented itself in other neighbourhoods that were once 'white', like nearby Grangetown.

In the meantime, cultural activists like Delgado are working hard to sustain what's left of Tiger Bay, as well as create a living history of an area that is unique in Britain.

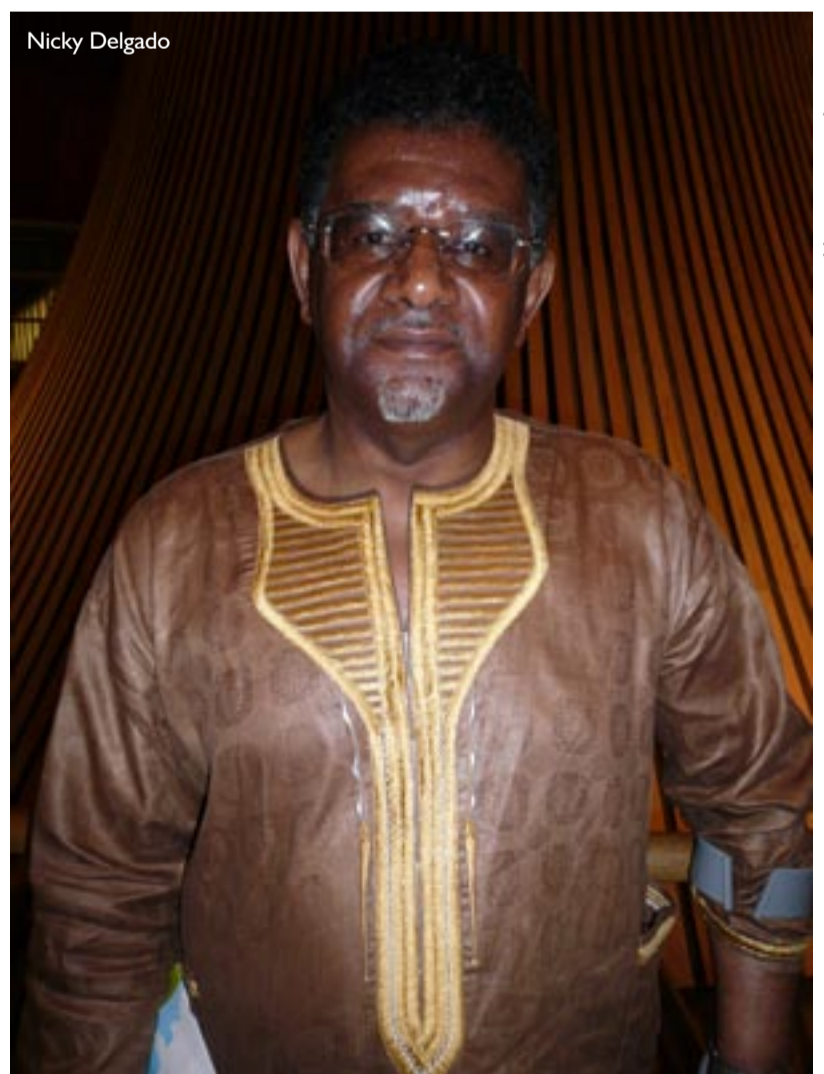
Various languages in the background.

My name is Nicky Delgado. My heritage is African, Portuguese, Arabic and Welsh... and I am a Culture Vulture.

Explain this line with rhyme.

Brought up in my grandfathers' boarding house  
previously offices and a huge warehouse  
with my extended family  
and our guests of much variety  
in Butetown, Cardiff - the place of fifty nations  
Europe's first home of cultural diversity and integration.  
This then was the deadly breeding ground  
where my cultural first bloomed in leaps and bounds.  
At sixteen I ran away to London town  
seeking stimulation of cultural gratification.  
Twice I hitch hiked across the European Nation.  
Then journeyed through North Africa  
My most spiritual uplifting adventure so far.  
A long career with communities, culture and arts,  
children and youths too, I've paid my dues.  
I've learn from you the air I breathe and you from me.  
Shadows of light I wish to cast  
in impassioned poetry.  
Thus I heard the future from your rhythmic creativity,  
to speak in many voices of roots and harmony.  
All that my kind fated faith bequeathed  
this colourful history.  
Peace, education, culture, fusion...  
children young and old, now to set us free.  
Just one last thing  
My unique one mankind workshop and exhibition  
Evidence from global countries of man kind's migration  
from Africa throughout the realm of history  
Proof we are all one man kind.  
No mystery, am I mad?  
afflicted by such attraction to difference  
cursed with the taste for humane dignity  
foolishly believing we are all unique in that we are all different  
and in this we are all the same.  
End of my story or the beginning.  
Nicky Miguel Delgado is my name.

Nicky Delgado



© Courtesy of Rachael Pepper

# THE HOMECOMING

THIRTY-EIGHT –YEAR-OLD DAVID MONTEITH IS ONE OF THE FEW PEOPLE OF CARIBBEAN DESCENT WHO CAN PINPOINT EXACTLY WHERE HIS AFRICAN ANCESTORS CAME FROM. UNIQUELY, HIS GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER, ARCHIBALD, DICTATED AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE TO A MISSIONARY, DESCRIBING HOW HE HAD BEEN TRANSPORTED FROM NIGERIA AS A CAPTIVE SLAVE TO WORK ON THE JAMAICAN SUGAR PLANTATIONS SHORTLY BEFORE THE ABOLITION OF THE BRITISH TRADE IN 1807. HIS STORY WAS CIRCULATED IN CHRISTIAN PERIODICALS ALL OVER THE WORLD. NEARLY TWO CENTURIES LATER, MONTEITH, AN ACTOR AND DRUGS COUNSELLOR, TRAVELLED FROM LONDON TO NIGERIA TO RETRACE HIS ANCESTOR'S FOOTSTEPS FOR A TV DOCUMENTARY CALLED THE LAST SLAVE.

**Where does a story begin? 'The story of black people does not begin and end with slavery,' I said to the producers of The Last Slave. So it was agreed that in making the programme we would travel to where all men have their beginning.**

My great-great-great-grandfather in one of the very few surviving narratives from the British speaking Caribbean, claims to be 'born in Africa and belong to the nation or tribe called Eboes'. And so I find myself on a plane travelling to Nigeria. I am excited, speculative, scared. Will I like Africa, will I be disappointed, rejected, welcomed, completed?

For the first time in my life I see Africa with my own eyes and its beauty takes my breath away. I drink in its colours from the hues of the Sahara to the verdant lushness of the bush.

Lagos is a maelstrom of glorious chaos punctuated by the incessant noise of drivers beeping their horns. But none of that matters for I am standing on African soil and a voice whispers in my head, 'I am home.' I do however take the decision not to drop to my knees and kiss the ground.

Two hours later I'm on a plane flying towards Calabar, an old port city in the south east of Nigeria where the majority of Igbo slave captives were taken through. Our search here begins with Nath Adediran of Calabar Museum. My ancestor's name is recorded as Aneaso but Nath informs me that the original form is Anyaso. The names means "The Earth shall not reject". His father was called Duru, his mother Dirinejah. These are Igbo names, I am told, and being specific to a region, they narrow the search to a 50km radius in the Igbo heartland of Anambra State.

I am back on the road, journeying to the city of Enugu where we meet with Sidney Emezwe, an expert in Igbo history. He offers to take us to Awka, which lies in the vicinity of where Anyaso once lived.

The elders of this small village are amazing – calm, self aware, regal. I am welcomed to the compound with a kola nut. I explain my mission and when I mention my ancestor's name. 'It is here,' they say, 'or one of the surrounding villages.'

Are there words to express the moment of being closer to one's progenitors than you ever thought possible? If there are, I

do not know them. This is where my beginnings are. I laugh like a fool for I cannot express myself. But for slavery and 200 years, I think, I could be one of the young men looking on.

The elders ask me to kneel. They bless me and name me Nwabofu - "Through the son we remember the father". The significance of the name is not lost on me and I have to wait for the lump in my throat to disappear before I can continue.

My journey, however, is not done. The following day I am back in Calabar and I meet Prince Iyamba of the Efik, whose ancestors may well have been involved in selling mine. I worry about the tone of our meeting but the prince is exceptionally civil and we talk long and hard. He shows me a bronze talking drum that his ancestor had had made in 1845 in England. 'Ten slaves this would have cost,' he tells me.

Our eyes meet and I see anger there. He turns and kicks the antique. 'Ten lives ruined,' he says, 'for this piece of materialism to gather dust. What would Africa have been if not for slavery?'

He leaves me with much to think about. The last part of my trip to Africa is in

Monteith with Prof Uya on Calabar river



many ways the one that holds most resonance for me. This was a trip down the Calabar River with Professor Okon Uya, who helped Alex Haley research his novel Roots. He explains to me that the Igbos would have been brought down Cross River to Calabar River and then to the mouth of the Atlantic where they would be put on board the slave ships for a 90-day journey to the Caribbean. It is beautiful here but I feel haunted knowing that 200 years earlier my ancestor took this exact same journey. I want to weep but the tears

do not come. Anyaso was stronger than me.

I leave Nigeria with so many thoughts in my head and feelings in my heart. Sadness that this country is not the world power it should be. Joy at finding answers and woeful at some of the answers I found. But something has been pulling at my mind and I suddenly realise what it is. Nigeria reminds me of Jamaica. The enslaved never abandoned Africa, they kept it alive far from home. This is where my story begins but it is far from finished.

## MY ANCESTOR, THE SLAVE OWNER

JOHN HOME ROBERTSON, UNTIL RECENTLY THE LABOUR MSP FOR EAST LoTHIAN IN SCOTLAND, IS A DESCENDANT OF NINIAN HOME, AN 18TH SUGAR PLANTATION OWNER WHO WENT ON TO BECOME GOVERNOR OF GRENADA. HERE HE REFLECTS UPON HIS ANCESTOR'S ATTEMPT TO BE AN ENLIGHTENED SLAVE OWNER

**My family archives reveal some intriguing insights into the mindset of a planter trying to reconcile the ownership of slaves with the new ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment.**

For example, in an utterly bizarre letter to Mr Jaffray, his plantation manager in Grenada on October 22 1789, Ninian Home of Paxton wrote: 'Sir, I have learnt with very severe concern that your conduct lately has been in many ways improper... Before I left Grenada I gave you the best advice I was capable of.... Kindness and humanity to the slaves was one of the things I endeavoured to impress most strongly in your mind.

'They poor things are so dependant upon the white people over there and so much in their power, that wantonly to use that power is the height of cruelty. A manager of a plantation should consider himself as the father of the slaves, and treat them with tenderness. They are human beings as well as ourselves. I will not keep any overseer that ill treats the negroes in any way.'

Today the notion of paternalistic slave ownership seems like nauseating hypocrisy. In the context of the growing campaign in Britain for the abolition of

the slave trade, Ninian Home may have been trying to put a benign spin on his business – just as apologists for apartheid later tried to foster the illusion of idyllic Bantustans. Or perhaps Home was genuinely trying to apply "enlightenment" principles to his West Indian sugar enterprise.

Ninian Home was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Grenada in 1793, four years after writing that letter about paternalistic slave ownership. He seems to have provoked French planters on the island who described him as a tyrant, and he was taken prisoner in a French-inspired slave uprising in 1795 led by Julien Fedon. Home was later beheaded with 46 other prisoners at Fedon's camp on mount Qua Qua. His body was never recovered.

Ninian Home had bought a newly-built Adam mansion in Berwickshire from his cousin, and his brother completed and furnished Paxton House after Ninian's death in Grenada. Among the pictures at Paxton are a set of eight gouache paintings of the estate of Paraclete in the Grenadian parish of St Andrew's by Adam Callender. Those paintings are unique images of 18th century Grenada, – complete with slaves working on the land.

When I visited Paraclete School in 1999 I tried to express my personal feelings about a shameful past. The immediate reaction of a teacher there was 'relax, man,- it's history.' Quite so, but it is an appalling history.

Today Paxton House and its paintings and furniture are owned by the Paxton Trust for the people of Britain – including British descendants of victims of slavery.

### LINKED BY HISTORY

Paxton House – an imposing 18th century mansion set in 80 acres of parkland in Berwickshire Upon Tweed on the English and Scottish border, was the setting for an extraordinary event earlier this year.

It was hosted over a weekend in June by then Scottish MP James Home Robertson for members of the UK's Grenadian community to commemorate the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade.

The link was Robertson's ancestor, Ninian Home, who owned two plantations in Grenadan towns of Waltham and Paraclete in the 18th century. Paxton House was his country seat.



Callender painting  
Grenadan group at Paxton House



Among those attending were the Grenadan High Commissioner Joseph Charter and a group of children from London arts and theatre project Descendants, who performed a series of sketches to mark the event.

It was Robertson's efforts to trace his family tree that led him to discover that his ancestors were slave owners. 'I found the process very poignant and moving, especially as I visited Grenada in 1999 and spent some time in Waltham and travelling around the beautiful island,' he said.

Paxton House, which contains the largest collection of art outside of the National Gallery of Scotland, hopes that this will be the first of its annual Grenadan weekends.

In the meantime, the Paxton House Trust has received, a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project entitled Slavery to Freedom - Grenada to Paxton, which aims to digitalise some 2,000 documents in the National Archives of Scotland that belong to the Home Robertson family relating to the two Grenadian plantations.

In addition, there are plans to encourage Berwickshire Schools to twin with those in Waltham and Paraclete.

High Commissioner Charter said, 'Projects like this gladden my heart as it shows that there are so many people involved in our story and our history who are willing to share their knowledge and interest years later.'

# MARY SEACOLE: A MONUMENTAL FIGURE

EFFORTS TO RESTORE CRIMEA WAR NURSE MARY SEACOLE TO HER PROPER PLACE IN HISTORY CONTINUE WITH THE CAMPAIGN TO ERECT A STATUE IN HER HONOUR, WRITES PROFESSOR ELIZABETH N ANIONWU

**In the Victorian age Mary Seacole was, like Florence Nightingale, recognised as a nursing heroine of the Crimean War. This is clear from Sir William Howard Russell, war correspondent of The Times newspaper when he said in 1857, 'I should have thought that no preface was required to introduce Mrs Seacole to the British public.'**

The quote is taken from his foreword in Seacole's bestselling autobiography *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands* (Penguin Classics, 2005). He also wrote, 'I trust that England will not forget one who nursed her sick, who sought out her wounded to aid and succour them, and who performed the last offices for some of her illustrious dead.'

The scandal is that, following her death in London in 1881, Seacole was virtually forgotten in Britain for nearly 100 years. This would have shocked the countless soldiers from all ranks and nationalities who recognised her tender hands-on nursing care and called her 'Mother' or 'Auntie Seacole'.

Unlike Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole was left out of the London Crimean War memorial erected near Piccadilly Circus in 1915.

Once you have read about her, I am sure that you might like to join forces with us in raising funds to erect a fitting memorial to Mary Seacole in the grounds of St Thomas' Hospital, across the bridge from the Houses of Parliament.

Mary Jane Grant was born in 1805 in Jamaica, then a British colony. Unlike many of her fellow compatriots she was not born into slavery despite the fact that emancipation of all slaves in Jamaica did not take place until 1838.

Her exact date of birth is unknown but the age of 76 was recorded on her death certificate. Her mother was a free black Jamaican creole, her father was a Scottish army officer and she had a sister, Louisa, and a brother, Edward.

Her mother kept a boarding-house called Blundell Hall in Kingston and practiced as a 'doctress'. Seacole recalls in the

opening pages of her autobiography how 'it was very natural that I should inherit her tastes; and so I had from early youth a yearning for medical knowledge and practice which has never deserted me. ....and I was very young when I began to make use of the little knowledge I had acquired from watching my mother, upon a great sufferer – my doll. ... and whatever disease was most prevalent in Kingston, be sure my poor doll soon contracted it.'

In 1836 Mary married Edwin Horatio Hamilton Seacole, godson of Admiral Horatio Nelson. There is no record of any children and Mr Seacole died in 1844.

Mary Seacole loved to travel and in 1850 went to visit her brother in Cruces, a gold prospecting town in Panama. When a cholera epidemic struck and the American doctor fled from the scene, Seacole just rolled up her sleeves and single-handedly took over caring for the patients. Back in Jamaica, she looked after victims of a yellow fever epidemic in 1853 and the British army asked her to supervise nursing services at their headquarters in Up-Park Camp, Kingston.

The Crimean War broke out in 1853 and a year later Seacole travelled thousands of miles to London. She repeatedly offered her services to nurse soldiers alongside Nightingale. Mary became depressed after five rejections, despite the glowing references she had from senior medical people who had witnessed her expertise in Jamaica and Panama.

This is when Seacole showed true tenacity. By 1855 she had raised enough funds to pay for her passage to the Crimea where she set up the British Hotel. This provided soldiers with accommodation, food and nursing care. The British public read all about her tender care, both at the Hotel and in the war zone, in media such as The Times, Punch magazine and The Illustrated News.

In 1856 the Crimean war suddenly ended and Seacole experienced severe financial difficulties and became bankrupt. All those who admired her came to her aid, whether soldiers, generals or members of the royal family. A gala was held in her

A bust Mary Seacole



© Courtesy of George Fowokan

honour over four nights at the Royal Surrey Gardens, on the banks of the River Thames in London, and more than 80,000 people attended.

Towards the end of her life, Seacole travelled back and forth to Jamaica and was also a masseuse to the Princess of Wales. She died in London on the May 14, 1881 and was buried in St Mary's Catholic Cemetery,

Kensal Green. Obituaries appeared in The Times and the Jamaican Daily Gleaner, with the latter stating that Mrs Seacole received 'English, French, Russian and Turkish decorations'.

After her death Seacole was virtually airbrushed out of British history. Then in 1973, a ceremony was held to re-consecrate Mary Seacole's grave and her autobiography

was republished in 1984. A fundraising drive was launched in 2003 by Clive Soley, then MP, now Lord Soley and chair of the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal.

In 2004 Mary Seacole came first in the 100 Great Black Britons online survey. Now school children are starting to learn about her at school.

## So how is the appeal coming on?

Over £60,000 of the £450,000 needed has been raised so far. St Thomas' Hospital has generously provided a site and more and more individuals and corporate bodies are coming on board. However, to succeed, we desperately need your support! You can help by organising fundraising events. For further details please contact me at [elizabeth.anionwu@maryseacoleappeal.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.anionwu@maryseacoleappeal.org.uk)

## About Elizabeth

**Elizabeth N Anionwu, CBE, FRCN, is Emeritus Professor of Nursing, Thames Valley University. She is vice-chair of the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal**

# ALI: MY INSPIRATION

AS WE LOOK BACK OVER 2007 AND REFLECT ON THE MANY MOMENTS IN HISTORY THAT LED TO THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE, I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO REFLECT ON MY OWN SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THROUGH SPORT, WRITES GEOFF THOMPSON

As a child, my social and cultural disaffection, lack of identity and purpose was aggravated by the loss of my father at a young age I was looking for a hero and I remember seeing

Muhammad Ali on our black and white television for the first time. A young African American, an Olympic gold medalist, who from the streets had become a global phenomenon. This was even more important when you consider the civil rights challenges of the '60s and what the boxing world heavyweight title represented to the oppressed African diaspora globally.

Ali's stand on human rights, his wish to discover his real name, his refusal to fight in the Vietnam war and the consequent stripping of his world title, and his 'Rumble in the Jungle' with George Foreman in 1974, all excited and further fuelled a fire raging in me.

One day I walked into a karate school and it changed my life. I won all the junior titles and became a world heavyweight champion. Like Ali, I challenged social and cultural barriers, and walked the talk on issues that affected my people. Like Ali, I was also to walk away from my sport in my prime in protest against a system exploiting the very people it should be helping – the young.

I met Ali in person in 1998 at the Goodwill Games in Seattle. I sensed his presence up to 200 metres away. As I rushed like an excited boy, I dragged the young athletes I was coaching to meet him. I remember

him shuffling along, now showing the effects of his MS. I don't remember what words we exchanged, but a friend was to inform me years later of two heavyweights exchanging a warmth, spirit and love, unique in anything he had seen before.

Twenty years later, in the year of the abolition of the slave trade, I was to travel to Atlanta in the deep south to Louisville, Kentucky, where Ali went to school. I had been given the ultimate honour of giving the Ali in Focus lecture to American sportsmen and women in the newly opened Ali Institute for Peace at the University of Louisville.

At a time when we look at the legacy of this year within the future of our young, I am reminded that we must dream the dreams of Martin Luther King, achieve them by any means necessary as Brother Malcolm meant, but with the words and gifts that we are blessed with. As Maya Angelou stated, "When we know better, we do better".

I found my way through the ways of a boxing legend, hero, role model, it doesn't matter which, for it is the spirit that must be enthused, fuelled and maintained.

Ali certainly did that for me and I was able to do that for the next generation.

**Geoff Thompson MBE, FILAM Hons, FRSA**



## A DONOR'S TALE



David Harewood who stars in the film 'Blood Diamond' signed up to become a bone marrow donor and donated earlier this year.

He was a bit apprehensive about the process which involved him receiving injections, being hooked up to a dialysis-type machine to give the blood stem cells which had been produced, in order to save someone's life.

"The Whole process took just four days, in which time I've hopefully managed to save someone's life," he says.

David isn't allowed to know who the patient is, but within 14 days the nurses will know if the patient has made a good recovery. "The only way you can give them that helping hand

is to get yourself on the register and donate your stem cells; donate your bone marrow."

The overwhelming message from David Harewood after the process -- take action, get yourself on the bone marrow register NOW!

**The Anthony Nolan Trust is encouraging more individuals aged between 18-40 years to find out how to join the register. If you want to find out more, contact The Anthony Nolan Trust on 020 7284 1234 or visit [www.anthonynolan.org.uk](http://www.anthonynolan.org.uk)**

There are many people from black and minority ethnic communities desperate for a lifesaving bone marrow transplant. Unfortunately, it's necessary to match tissue types or the transplant will be rejected. Compatible tissue types are generally found with people from the same black and minority ethnic background. This tissue "prejudice" means we urgently need donors from black and minority ethnic backgrounds as they are under-represented on our register. Your call could be someone's last hope. Please don't let them down, contact us today.

Please contact us on 020 7284 1234 or email us [azra2@anthonynolan.org.uk](mailto:azra2@anthonynolan.org.uk)

**THIS APPEAL IS RACIALLY PREJUDICED.**

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# MAN WITH THE COMMONS TOUCH

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE'S NAME WILL BE FOREVER ASSOCIATED WITH THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE, WRITES STEPHEN TOMKINS

**William Wilberforce was the British MP who led the campaign in parliament to outlaw the slave trade from 1788 to 1807.**

Traditionally, he has been remembered as the man responsible for the abolition, although today we realise that many other people also played important roles.

Wilberforce was a wealthy man who became MP for Hull at 21. Four years later he had a religious conversion and became an evangelical Christian.

It was his new religion which drove him to fight the slave trade, and he believed it was his mission from God.

He joined the Abolition Society that had been started by the Quakers. One keen member, Thomas Clarkson, had been uncovering evidence and drumming up support around the country. But the society needed someone in parliament if they were going to get the law changed. That was Wilberforce's job.

Wilberforce brought his first abolition bill in 1788. The abolition movement had become very popular throughout

Britain, and parliament received a record number of petitions in favour of ending the slave trade.

Wilberforce was a brilliant speaker, and on this occasion spoke in the House of Commons for three-and-a-half hours – some people said it was finest speech ever heard in parliament. The debate continued for two days. But in the end the abolitionists were defeated.

Wilberforce brought one abolition bill after another in the coming years, but repeatedly lost the vote, because many MPs had too much to gain from the slave trade.

The popular movement collapsed, the Abolition Society folded, Clarkson gave up and other leading members died. But Wilberforce kept going for 19 years, in which time he had 11 bills defeated.

The turn of the tide came when Britain and Ireland were merged in 1801 to create the United Kingdom. A hundred new Irish MPs joined Parliament, and as Ireland had few links with slavery they supported abolition. The abolition bill was finally passed in 1807, by a landslide, and Wilberforce sat through the debate with tears rolling down his face.

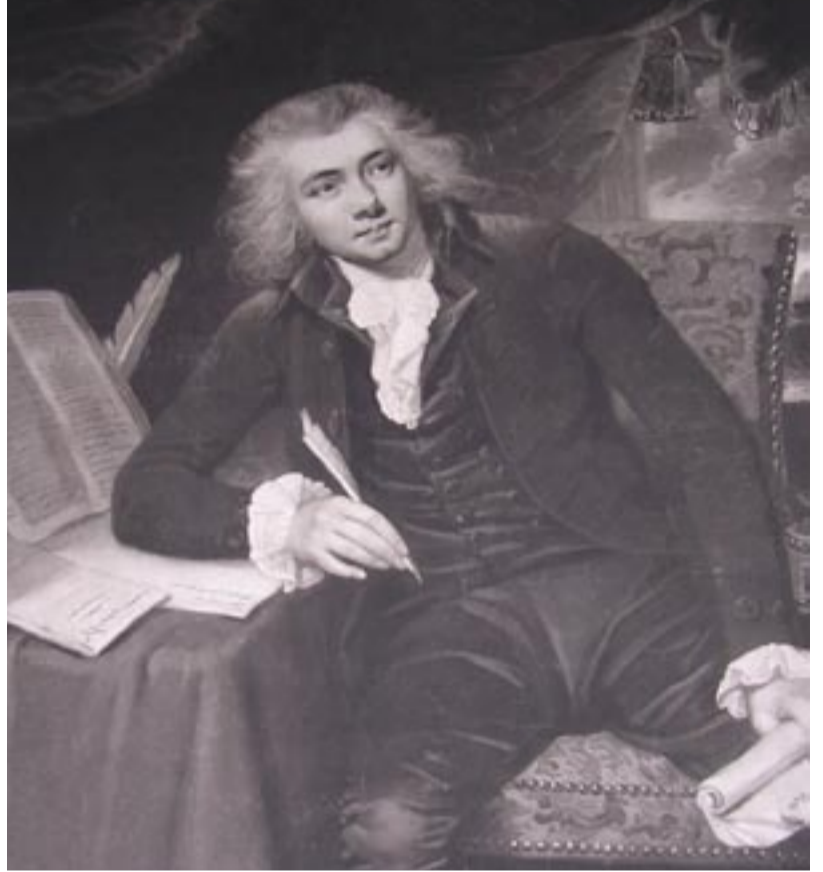
Unfortunately, much of the British slave trade continued after it was outlawed, so Wilberforce and his abolitionist friends spent another decade fighting to get the law enforced. They finally succeeded by establishing an official register of all enslaved people on British plantations, which largely prevented new people being added.

Wilberforce then wanted to move on to ending slavery itself, but after more than 30 years campaigning he was getting too old, and officially handed his role on to Thomas Fowell Buxton.

Wilberforce continued to write and speak against slavery, and he heard the news that it had finally been abolished two days before he died in 1833.

**Stephen Tomkins' biography of William Wilberforce, William Wilberforce, is published by Lion Hudson (2007)**

Museum of London and Museum in Docklands



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**Contact Marlene Joseph**

**IDMAN**  
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BLACK HISTORY 365



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# PLACE OF NO RETURN

IN MARCH, RICHARD REDDIE OF CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION SET ALL FREE, VISITED GHANA DURING ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. ONE OF HIS MAIN PORTS OF CALL WERE THE SLAVE FORTS, WHICH HELD AFRICAN CAPTIVES BEFORE THEIR JOURNEY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

**The word awkaaba, or welcome, greets me on numerous large signs as I make my way through Ghana's Kotoka International Airport after a six and a half hour flight from London. Like many of my fellow passengers, I am here to visit Ghana on its 50th year independence.**

I have always been intrigued by Ghana. As a student I read about the great heritage of this incredible African country and the struggle of Kwame Nkrumah to bring about independence. Indeed, many see this momentous event as the catalyst for the entire independence movement in Africa – what former British Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan would call the 'winds of change blowing through Africa'. Moreover, while a student, I carried out research into my ancestry which suggested that I was probably a descendant of enslaved individuals from what is now Ghana. Consequently this is something of a homecoming – a reconnection with my roots – so to speak.

Ghana was formerly known as the Gold Coast because of the abundance of that precious ore. However, it was the abundance of another natural resource, human beings, which made it the centre of the transatlantic slave trade for almost four centuries. As the project director of Set all free, the Churches Together in England initiative looking to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade act this year, I was in Ghana to make a radio programme for the BBC looking at religion and slavery.

The journey begins in Accra, Ghana's capital, and involves several hours' drive from that bustling city westwards to Cape Coast and Elmina, towns where infamous slave castles were built from which major European powers conducted the capture, trade and transportation of Africans.

Cape Coast Castle is a huge, imposing whitewashed structure, unquestionably the most impressive building in the town. The coastline of Ghana has many such castles and forts that were built by various European powers to advance their trading interests in West Africa. Cape Coast's was built by the Swedes in 1653, but over the centuries it fell into Danish, Dutch and, finally, English hands in 1665.

Curiously, and most disturbingly, it maintained a chapel above the male slave dungeon. Church services would struggle to drown out the groans of the Africans in the dungeons a few feet below.

Visitors enter the male slave dungeons via a tunnel. These are virtually pitch black, lacking any real ventilation, and deathly silent. The only sounds are in our imagination – of the suffering and dying Africans. As many as 1,000 African men would be crammed into a several dungeons no bigger than the average front room. Here they had to sleep, rest and relieve themselves. Indeed, in one dungeon the excrement formed a floor several feet deep. If the smell did not kill them, dehydration and disease would. Those who succumbed, were thrown over the castle wall to a watery Atlantic grave.

Elmina Castle, just along the coast, is within sight of the Cape Coast fortress and is equally as imposing. Built in 1482 by the Portuguese, it is now a Unesco World Heritage site. In many ways it chronicles the history of European involvement in West Africa. It was one where legitimate trade in products gave way to the illegitimate trade in human beings. As a consequence, the small warehouses that stored produce were converted to imprison enslaved Africans. Because of this, the conditions in the Castle are relatively more humane than those in the Cape Coast. Relative has to be the operative word though because all manner of abuse and suffering occurred there as well. The male dungeons could house up to 400 enslaved Africans at a time and it is estimated that one in three perished before embarking on the slave ships.

In the centre of the courtyard lies what used to be the St George's Church, arguably the oldest Catholic church in West Africa. After the Dutch captured the Castle in 1637, they turned the Catholic church into an officers' mess and built their Reformed church close to the governor's quarters. Over the entrance to the church is a plaque that suggested that God resided in this place. Directly below lay the female slave dungeons. Again, there was little doubt that church services would have been broken by screams and wails of the women below.

The governor had the best accommodation in the Castle. From his bedroom window he could see all the boats coming into the harbour and from his entrance hall he could watch the enslaved African women as they were paraded through the mini courtyard. Any who took his fancy were summoned to his quarters. Those who refused were chained to a cannon ball in the main square.

I saw that visitors from the diaspora were invariably more affected by what they saw or heard from the rather deadpan tour guides. It is not unknown for people to cry. Although I did not see anyone break down, I did hear some anger and resentment. One Rastafarian questioned the wisdom of black people following the Christian faith, which had helped enslave them. Most, however, were simply taken aback by the experience and wanted to be on their own to process their confused thoughts.

During my stay at the Castle I had talked with local historian and Elmina resident Ato Ashun who pointed out that the vast majority of local people had never visited the Castle. He even suggested many were not aware of its significance in the slave trade, a situation schools were trying to change.

Both castles are lasting symbol of the slave trade, which created massive depopulation as well as social and economic dislocation. Slavery introduced ideas about Africa and its people that still exist today. The Africans in Elmina who fail to connect with the Castle, do so because they are too busy trying to eke out an existence in a world where economic tariffs and trade restrictions make it cheaper for Ghanaians to buy tomatoes from Italy or butter from France than locally produced items.

• *This is an edited version of an article that appeared in the Church Times*



Cape Coast Castle

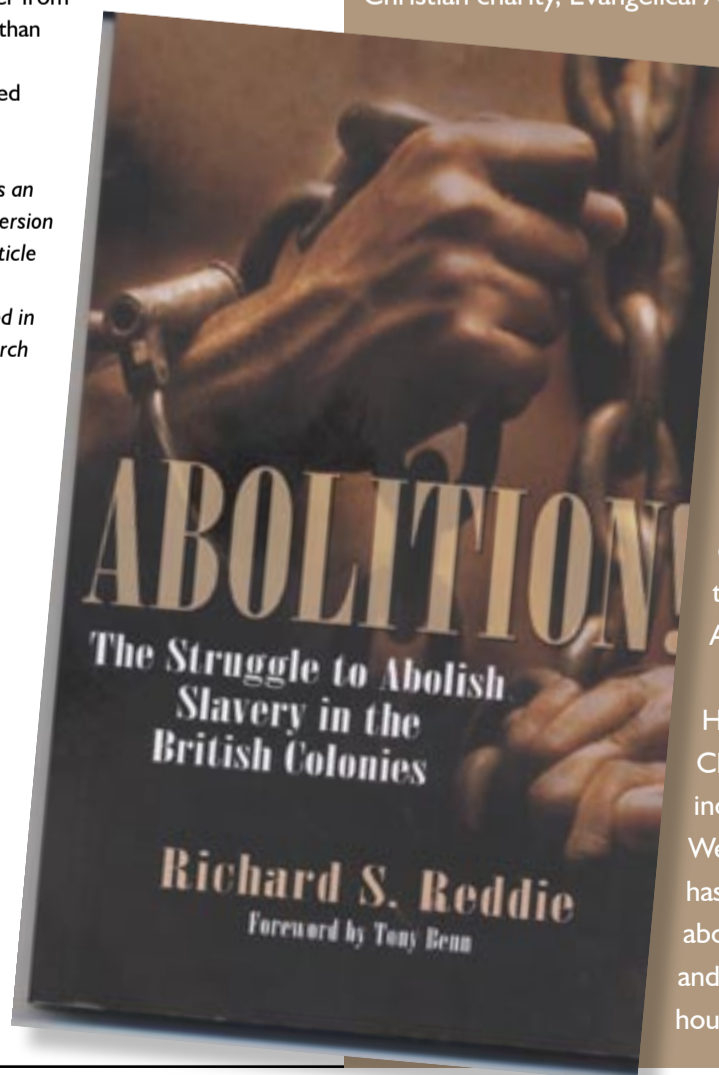
## RICHARD REDDIE

**'Richard Reddie was born in Bradford, England to Jamaican parents. He became interested in slavery after watching the docudrama 'Roots' as a ten-year old. He subsequently, began to study the subject seriously and part of his first University Honours degree in 'Spanish and Caribbean Studies' involved modules on transatlantic slavery in the Caribbean and the abolition movement in the UK. He subsequently travelled to numerous countries in South, Central America and the Caribbean that had slave-based societies to assess for himself the impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.**

He consequently took a masters degree in Information Management and worked as an information officer for the Christian charity, Evangelical Alliance. He then worked as an Education Policy Officer for the social policy think-tank ROTA where he devised programmes to raise the attainment levels of young pupils, especially pupils from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

Richard is currently project director of set all free, a Churches Together in England initiative established to commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 2007.

He has written for a number of Christian and secular publications, including Focus, Christianity, the Weekly Gleaner and the Voice. He has written the book Abolition, about the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its abolition for the publishing house, Lion Hudson.



# THE TOBACCO KING

GLASGOW'S SLAVE PAST IS REVEALED BY THE PORTRAIT OF A PROUD FAMILY MAN AND HIS SERVANT

**A portrait of wealthy Glasgow tobacco merchant John Glassford has become a symbol of the city's hidden involvement with slavery.**

The portrait, painted by Archibald McLauchlan in 1767, shows him with his family surrounded by the trappings of his wealth, not just his opulent surroundings but the presence of a black manservant looking over his shoulder.

According to Glasgow Museums, which is putting on an exhibition of the city's links with slavery using the portrait as a starting point, the employment of black pages and servants was fashionable among rich Glaswegians, brought over from the slave plantations of the American colonies and the West Indies.

At the time the portrait was painted, Glassford was living in Shawfield Mansion just off the Trongate in what is now Glassford Street. Archibald Ingram, another prominent tobacco merchant, also has a street named after him.

During the 18th century, Glasgow followed the pattern of other port cities in Britain, growing from a modest town to a wealthy city on the back of slavery. There was one important difference though - Glasgow made its money not from the direct sale of slaves but from importing commodities grown through by slave labour.

Chief of these was tobacco. After the Act of Union in 1707, Scottish merchants were permitted access to the England's trade routes and began to trade with the new colonies.

By the 1750s, with well established links with Maryland and Virginia, they dominated the European tobacco trade. Glasgow 'tobacco lords' like Glassford added to their profits by re-exporting tobacco through Scottish ports as well as by handling the domestic demand for tobacco. Sugar was traded in the same way.

A small number of Glasgow merchants were directly involved in the slave trade, but hid their involvement by using other ports for shipment.

The American War of Independence in 1776 rang the death knell for Glasgow's tobacco trade. Once free of British control, the United States could send tobacco direct to Europe, cutting out the need for Glasgow middle men.

But all was not lost. Scottish people settled in other parts of the empire, the very successful setting up plantations or helping to run them. According to anti-racist organisation, One Scotland, 'Many prospered. In 1796, Scots owned nearly 30 per cent of the estates in Jamaica. In 1817 they owned 32 per cent of the slaves.' The number of Caribbean families bearing Scottish names attests to this.

As in England, abolitionists became active in Glasgow towards the end of the 18th century. In 1792 the Presbytery of Glasgow passed a resolution in favour of abolition and William Dickson, secretary to the governor of Barbados, visited the city in the same year to rally support.

Once the trade in slaves was abolished, leading figures in the



This painting has not been fully conserved yet and is still being worked on.

© Glasgow People Museum

movement like William Smeal continued to protest against the use of slave labour in the colonies until it was finally outlawed in 1833.

It is thought that as a result of anti-abolitionist sentiment, the servant in the Glassford family portrait was deliberately obscured so that now it only appears in outline.

The Glassford Family Portrait – A hidden legacy is on show until March 2 2008 at People's Palace and Winter Gardens, Glasgow Green, Glasgow

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# ARSENAL IN THE COMMUNITY

FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2007 ARSENAL FOOTBALL CLUB HAVE PRODUCED SOME RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ISLINGTON. OUR FOCUS WAS ON SOME OF OUR MOST FAMOUS BLACK PLAYERS SPANNING THREE DECADES. THEY ARE

**1970s:**  
**Brendon Batson MBE**  
AFC's first Black player. Born in Grenada, he became a youth team trainee for the Club before making several first team appearances.

**1980s:**  
**Chris Whyte**  
Islington born and bred, a local boy who achieved every local boy's dream.

**1990s:**  
**Paul Davis**  
Arsenal legend and one of George Graham's famous early 90s sides.

We wish for our BHM resources to be a celebration of these Arsenal legends, a positive focus on their fantastic achievements as professional footballers. We interviewed these ex-players not only about their time as players, but also about growing up/ living in London as a Black (Briton). We hope that the span across three decades will show both how football and life in London changed during those years. School children will be able to watch the dvd in class, answer questions and discuss the issues raised with their teachers. We hope that our efforts towards BHM will

complement the rest of the work being done in schools during October. We hope that a feature on this in the magazine or match day programme will also alert a wider fan base to BHM activities across London and the South East.

Our work for BHM 07 follows on from Nationality Week: The World on our doorstep in October 2006. The Club provided a range of education resources for local school children that looked at the different nationalities represented in the Arsenal team and the different languages spoken by the players. We wanted to celebrate the diversity of our team and the fact that it reflected the makeup of our home – the London Borough of Islington.

The Club have recently launched an initiative: Arsenal for Everyone which aims to celebrate diversity in all forms here at the Club. The initiative has been set up as part of the Club's work towards achieving the intermediate level of the 'Racial Equality Standard' in conjunction with 'Kick It Out' (the Club initially received the preliminary level of the RES back in March 2006). A decision was taken at Arsenal to shift the focus from 'Anti Racism' specifically to a theme of general diversity.

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**Brendon Batson MBE**



**Chris Whyte**



**Paul Davis**

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# FROM WELCOME HOME TO GO HOME

The Windrush generation was used to fighting for justice. In the decade prior to World War II, they had experienced an explosion of uprisings throughout the British Caribbean as West Indians demanded political and industrial justice. Many of the great figures who would lead the West Indies to independence played prominent roles during this period of unrest.

During World War II, the Caribbean rallied to Britain's defence in the great fight against fascism. Many of those who journeyed to Britain aboard the SS Empire Windrush in June 1948 had served in the war.

One London newspaper greeted these new arrivals with the headline 'Welcome Home'. Within 10 years, most of the popular press would be telling them to 'go home'.

During this period, these early post-war migrants would endure an increasingly hostile political and social environment, as they were condemned for taking jobs and homes from the indigenous population, and failing to assimilate fully into British society.

Speak to any of those who came over in the 1940s and '50s and they will describe the harsh and unwelcoming conditions of that period. Common features of the period were signs on rooms to let saying 'no coloureds', and jobs which would be declared non-existent or already filled as soon as West Indian applicants turned up and employers saw that they were black.

The greatest lesson that the generations that came after them can take from the ordeal of the Windrush generation is the resilience that they showed in the face of overt and sometimes extremely brutal discrimination. We haven't got rid of racism, but at least it's been driven underground.

We need to show the same resilience as this earlier generation as the black community turns its attention to the big and difficult struggles of today – reconnecting a worryingly large group of alienated youngsters, and getting young black boys to do better at school and set their sights on achievements within the mainstream of our society.

**Colin Douglas**

"Despite the doubters, naysayers and the establishment" said King vehemently, "they did not intend for us to stay, here we have stayed and contributed despite them". The Right Hon. Creech-Jones, Minister for the Colonies, said "Don't worry about it; these people are only adventurers, they will not last one winter in Britain".



I'm here nearly sixty winters. They did not want us. And what is important for us to tell the nation, and especially the young people, we survived. He certainly got that wrong'.

We are delighted to be part of the 60th anniversary celebrations to which Imperial War Museum London is opening the exhibition. Just imagine when I arrived in 1948, and walked from the Union Jack Club, Waterloo to Walworth Road, Southwark I did not see anyone else like me, it is a totally different situation now.

My blessings to the 3rd and 4th generation make us proud of you.

**Sam King**



## LEST WE FORGET



Theatre director Yvonne Brewster was struck by a unique float at this year's Notting Hill Carnival called WIndrush

**It was a cold August Bank Holiday but not as cold as it could have been. The patient carnival bands, vainly hoping to outperform the DJ bands, struggled for the most part to keep up with the monstrous trucks belting out their deafening, deadly cacophony.**

Every so often, an un-amplified steel band would roll on by, producing precious moments of creativity, melody and harmony.

Then quietly, amidst the noise and the battalions of police, came a float that resembled something seaworthy with around 18 elderly people on board, all beautifully costumed and playing their 'mas', which they called Windrush.

This relatively tiny band of very senior players managed to bring a moment of quiet, if fleeting, retrospection to the occasion.

Nigh on ten years ago, in June 1998, there was a rash of media attention given to the 50th anniversary to the arrival of the SS Windrush to the shores of green and pleasant England. Books were written, sociologists socialised, museums re-created the front rooms of the migrants; even the mighty BBC presented a major series of 'the epic untold story of Britain's black population and its impact on the politics, culture and identity of British society.

Back in 1948, on June 21, Lord Beaverbrook's Daily Express reported in the '500 unwanted people' who had arrived on the Windrush 'hoping for a new life.'

Overnight, however, 'the Jamaicans' who 'crowded the rails of the Empire Windrush as she anchored in the Thames' morphed into a 'problem for the Colonial Office and the Ministry of Labour'.

As the generation who braved the seas almost 60 years ago, such as Connie Boothe and Columbus Dennison, leave us for a better place, it is important for those of us who remain, privileged inheritors as we are of their wisdom, good humour and foresight, to ensure that we are part of the solution even if we continue to be seen only as the problem.

With dignity the octogenarians on the Notting Hill Carnival float were still leading from the front, 60 years on, setting that example. Others should find the challenge worthy of engaging with. Therefore in 2008, the 60th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush, lest we forget: 'What you do may be of little significance but it is very important that you do it.' (Mohandas Gandhi)

# OLAUDAH EQUIANO: SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

ALL BUT FORGOTTEN FOR 200 YEARS, OLAUDAH EQUIANO IS NOW THE SUBJECT OF A MAJOR EXHIBITION

In the 1990s, the black publishing company XPress brought out *The African*, its title for Olaudah Equiano's autobiography written two centuries earlier. For many, it was their first acquaintance with Equiano, a former slave who won his freedom and went on to be one of the foremost campaigners against the trade.

Penned in 1789 *The Interesting Narrative of The Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, The African* became an instant bestseller and a bible to the abolitionist cause, detailing as it did the horrors of slavery.

It went through eight editions in as many years and was published in continental Europe and America. Equiano toured Britain to promote the book spending several months in Ireland in 1791, where he sold almost 2,000 copies.

The book was a huge financial success and when he died in 1797, ten years before abolition was accomplished, he was both wealthy and famous. But after his death, Equiano swiftly faded from view before being eclipsed altogether by fellow abolitionist William Wilberforce.

'He was airbrushed from history for 200 years,' says historian Arthur Torrington. 'Nineteenth century historians didn't want him to be a hero. It was racism pure and simple.'

Torrington, a co-founder of the Equiano Society, has spent the last decade and more trying to restore him to his proper place in history.

'He was truly an inspiring figure and it is important to put the record straight,' he explains.

In March a breakthrough was achieved when Equiano's portrait appeared on the Royal Mail's special stamp issue commemorating six prominent abolitionists. Then in September, a major exhibition of his life opened in Birmingham. But the icing on the cake was the government's announcement earlier this year that Equiano is to be included in the English national curriculum.

All three milestones are part of this year's bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade, which in itself is the result of a longrunning offensive by campaigners like Torrington. 'The bicentenary didn't happen because the government wanted it all of a sudden,' he declares. 'We lobbied them hard for five years and to their credit they took it on board.'

Covering the life and times of Equiano, among the exhibition's highlights is an original first edition of the book that so galvanised the abolition cause.

*The Interesting Narrative...*, one of the earliest slave memoirs, opens with an account of how Equiano was kidnapped from his village in eastern Nigeria as a boy in the early 1750s and transported to the Americas.

He writes of the 'inconceivable horror' of the Middle Passage and routine murder, rape and torture they continued to subject to once sold into bondage.



Portrait of a Negroman Olaudah Equiano. 1780s, (previously attributed to Joshua Reynolds). Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Devon, UK, The Bridgeman Art Library. Nationality / Copyright Status: Out of copyright.

Although he himself was mostly spared plantation slavery by the 'hand of God' and sold to work on ships, he describes how he had to endure the trickery and disdain of those more powerful than himself.

Vividly written in a fluid, engaging style, the book is also a gripping adventure story as Equiano, renamed Gustavus Vassa by one of his owners, regularly cheats death, criss-crossing the Atlantic and the Caribbean, serving as a gunner for the Royal Navy and sailing to the Arctic Ocean in an abortive attempt to find the North Pole.

Equiano traded on the side and managed to save enough money to eventually buy his freedom. He made for England in 1767, where a heady mix

of evangelism and political radicalism were fuelling the abolitionist cause. Educated, well travelled and deeply religious, he threw himself into the campaign, exposing the scandal of the Zong, when 133 slaves were thrown overboard so that the insurance on them could be claimed.

He also set up the Sons of Africa, a group of black men who lobbied parliament. One of them, Ottobah Cugoana, is featured in the exhibition, together with fellow writers Ignatius Sancho and Phillis Wheatley, all of them former slaves.

Another important 18th century figure to be featured is James Somerset, the runaway slave who sued for his liberty and prompted the landmark legal ruling

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of **Olaudah Equiano**, written in 1789

*The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, written in 1789, is the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano. It discusses his time spent in slavery, serving primarily on galleys, documents his attempts at becoming an independent man through his study of the Bible, and his eventual success in gaining his own freedom and in business thereafter.

The book contains an interesting discussion of slavery in West Africa and illustrates how the experience differs from the dehumanising slavery of the Americas. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* is also one of the first widely read slave narratives. It was generally reviewed favorably.



of 1772 that slavery in England, if not in the colonies, was unlawful. As a result, black campaigners of the day could be assured that they remained free men and women.

With Equiano's life continuing to be the subject of much research, the exhibition in many ways is work in progress. 'In the end, he became such an obscure figure that we don't even know where he was buried,' says Torrington.

'But the exhibition will go a long way towards resurrecting his tremendous contribution to history and literature.'



## Othello

in Birmingham  
18th September - 13th October  
Box Office 0121 202 5000  
or 0121 616 1519  
[www.birminghamstage.net](http://www.birminghamstage.net)

in London  
16th - 19th October  
Box Office 020 7388 8822  
[www.theblossbury.com](http://www.theblossbury.com)

## MORE DATES FOR YOUR ARTISTIC DIARY

**7th October:** Children of the Kingdom Gospel Choir (CK) Showcase 12 -3pm @ Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden Town, London NW1 7PG

Cost £10. Tickets available from the Jazz Café

**27th October:** CK Gospel Choir "Open Rehearsal" 2pm - 4pm @ Big Chill House, 257-259 Pentonville Road, King's Cross, London, NI 9NL  
Cost: Free

**24th November:** CK Gospel Choir "Open Rehearsal" 2pm - 4pm @ Big Chill House, 257-259 Pentonville Road, King's Cross, London, NI 9NL  
Cost: Free

# AUNT ESTHER'S STORY

STEPHEN BOURNE'S DOCUMENTARY 'AUNT ESTHER'S STORY' SCREENS IN OCTOBER.  
HERE HE INTRODUCES ONE OF THE EARLIEST BLACK LONDONERS

**My Aunt, Esther Bruce was born in England just before the outbreak of World War I, and spent all of her life in west London.**

Her father, Joseph Bruce, the son of Guyanese slaves, had travelled to London on 'a ship and a prayer' during the Edwardian era when very few black people lived in the capital. He worked as a builder's labourer and raised Esther alone after her mother died.

Joseph instilled in his daughter a sense of pride in her African heritage. On Saturdays, Joseph took her to The Granville, a popular music hall in Fulham Broadway, and on Sundays they went to Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park.

Esther recalled, 'We were walking through Hyde Park when a toff passed by and insulted my Dad who retaliated. "Who the hell do you think you are?" he asked. "Where do you think you are? In India or Africa? When you're in England I'm no boy to you. I'm your equal so don't call me boy or there'll be serious trouble."

A proud man, Joseph always made a defiant stand against racism. In the early 1920s he was responsible for the sacking of a teacher who instructed his daughter and her (white) classmates at her school in Fulham's North End Road, 'not to talk to coloured people.'

In 1928 Joseph married Jennie, a children's nurse who had also travelled to London from Guyana. She taught Esther how to sew, and that was the profession my aunt entered after she left school. Esther worked as a seamstress for 60 years from the age of 14 until she retired at the age of 74.

From 1935 Esther was employed for several years by Miss Mary Taylor in Markham Square, off King's Road, Chelsea. It was a happy time for my

© Stephen Bourne Pics



aunt. Miss Taylor treated her well, and Esther told me they made dresses for 'ladies of the court' (Buckingham Palace) and several famous women including the glamorous black American singer Elizabeth Welch.

In the late 1930s, in North End Road, Esther met a famous black citizen of Fulham, the Jamaican nationalist leader Marcus Garvey who had settled in the area in 1935. She told me, 'He was a nice chap but he knew what the English were up to. He wasn't treated with respect like I was because, he said, "The English are no good." He didn't make many friends in Fulham. In the market in North End Road the

costers wouldn't speak to him, but they would speak to me.'

At the time of his death in 1940, Marcus Garvey was living at 53 Talgarth Road.

For many years Joseph and Esther Bruce were the only black members of their tight-knit working class community. Esther fondly recalled the community spirit that existed before and during World War II, 'In the old days the people of Fulham used to be one big happy family and we helped each other. We were poor but people cared about each other. People were friendly and that meant a lot.'

During World War II, Esther left Miss Taylor to work as a ward cleaner and

fire-watcher in Fulham Hospital and Brompton Hospital. After her father's death in 1941, Esther was adopted by her neighbour Hannah Johnson (my great-grandmother), affectionately known as Granny. She was the matriarch of their community.

Before the war, apart from entertainers like Adelaide Hall and Elisabeth Welch, there were very few black women living in Britain. However, during the war, the British public came into contact with many black women who were recruited in the Caribbean to join the ATS, and the nursing profession. They travelled to Britain to support the war effort.

## Esther on Screen

Stephen Bourne's documentary *Aunt Esther's Story* will be screened on **Saturday October 6** at the new Mediatheque in London's Southbank, as part of *Black in the British Frame*, 10am-4pm. Further information, 020 7928 3232

**Saturday October 20** at the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1, as part of *Keep Smiling Through: Black Londoners on the Home Front 1939-1945*, 2pm-4pm. Further information: 020 7091 3034

**Tuesday October 23** at the London College of Communication, Elephant and Castle, London SE1, as part of *Speak of Me As I Am*, 7pm-9pm. Further information: 020 7358 4178.

In the 1950s Esther's Guyanese cousin Leon settled in Croydon with his family. They were part of the Windrush generation. My aunt welcomed her relatives, and helped them to find a home and settle in.

A friendly, outgoing woman, my aunt integrated easily into the culturally diverse London of the 1950s, but she was horrified by the attacks on black Londoners which resulted in the Notting Hill race riots of 1958, not far from where she lived. She said, 'It was a terrible time for black people. I didn't think anything like that would ever happen in this country. Afterwards I noticed a change in some white people.'

Aunt Esther died at the age of 81 at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital on July 17 1994 of heart failure. Following her cremation, I scattered her ashes on her parents' unmarked grave in Fulham cemetery.

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# NOT IN CHAINS BUT BEHIND BARS

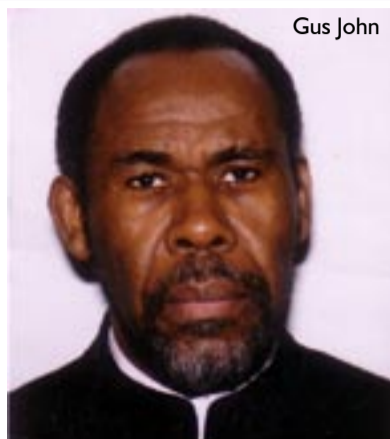
PROFESSOR GUS JOHN REFLECTS ON EVENTS THIS YEAR THAT SHOULD SERVE AS A WAKE UP CALL TO US ALL

This is a year in which there has been reflection and debate like never before on the significance of the abolition of slavery to the present condition and future of Britain and of the African diaspora.

This is also a year in which we have seen unprecedented killings of young African heritage men by other young African heritage men. Worryingly, that phenomenon is largely seen, even by some of us, as 'Black on Black' crime rather than as a horrifying aspect of the condition of Britain today and the status of dispossessed young black males within British society.

This tendency to see the state we're in as implicitly having to do with a genetic predisposition of black males to cause mayhem and commit murder is one sure way of focusing attention away from the root cause of all this.

The alienation from self that young black males live and feel, the utter hopelessness and recklessness that enables them to be in a state of mind to commit such monstrous acts, have nothing to do with their essence as African people. Rather, it is because their sense of who they are, where they came from and what went before them has been so systematically stripped away. They have been made to feel surplus to requirements in this society and they are turning on one another and creating enemies of their brother across the street or in another 'family'.



Gus John

But we are voluntarily returning to the plantations at a rate and putting ourselves back, not in chains, but behind bars. We are already over-represented in the 'secure estate' and we continue to be more populous there than in the universities. In the process, we are making a whole lot of modern day 'slave masters' filthy rich – those private companies that the state pays to keep us locked up in order to protect the public.

If this means anything, it signals the need for us to take stock equally about what we are doing to ourselves and not just what the system is doing to us. For it appears that the more comfortable we become in this place, the less we want to hear about struggle and about collective responsibility for one another. Let us pray that in this bicentenary year, the ancestors give us all an unmistakable wake up call.

## WHERE AND WHEN TO SEE GUS JOHN

### 5 September - 2pm

Delivering a Public Lecture at Harewood House, Leeds, on Roots of Identity: Slavery, Abolition, Reparation and Africa-Diaspora Reunification.

**Harewood House Trust, Harewood House, Harewood, Leeds. 0113 218 1000.**

### 10 September

Delivering the Manchester Council for Community Relations' Annual Lecture - Abolition, Restitution and the Building of a Common Future'

**Mayor's Parlour, Manchester Town Hall, 6pm. Khan Moghal 0161 227 8708**

### 11 September

Speaking at a lunchtime fringe meeting organised by the NUT at the TUC conference in Brighton on the Brown agenda for Education: Would we fare any better?

**Chris Brown (NUT) 020 7380 4764**

### 6 October

Keynote Address to Black Parents Education Group, Bristol

### 13 October

Conducting Pearl Connor-Mogotsi's Memorial Service at Wembley, 3pm. Church of the Ascension, the Avenue, Wembley Park, Middlesex.

**Milverton Wallace - 07771861906**

### 14 October

Speaking at the Centreprise International Black Book Fair Literary Festival

(Details from Centreprise Trust), **Andrea Enisuoah 0207 254 9632**

### 3 November

Keynote Address to the NUT Annual Black Teachers' Conference, Stoke Rochford Hall, Grantham, Lincs, on 'Born To Be Great.... not to die before you finish school'

**Samidha Garg NUT 020 7388 6191**

### 13 November

Keynote Address at National Black Boys Can Conference, Birmingham; Building Successful Futures & Saying NO to Murder and Self Destruction

**Cheron Byfield 0121 358 8618**

### 17 November

Keynote Address to the Derby West Indian Community Association Youth Conference on 'Young, Gifted & African and Skilled for 21st Century Living

**George Mighty (DWICA) 01332 371529**

# LION HART

ROXANNE WILLIAMS OF OUR HISTORY OUR HERITAGE, PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE 90-YEAR OLD CARIBBEAN ACTMIST AND ACADEMIC RICHARD HART

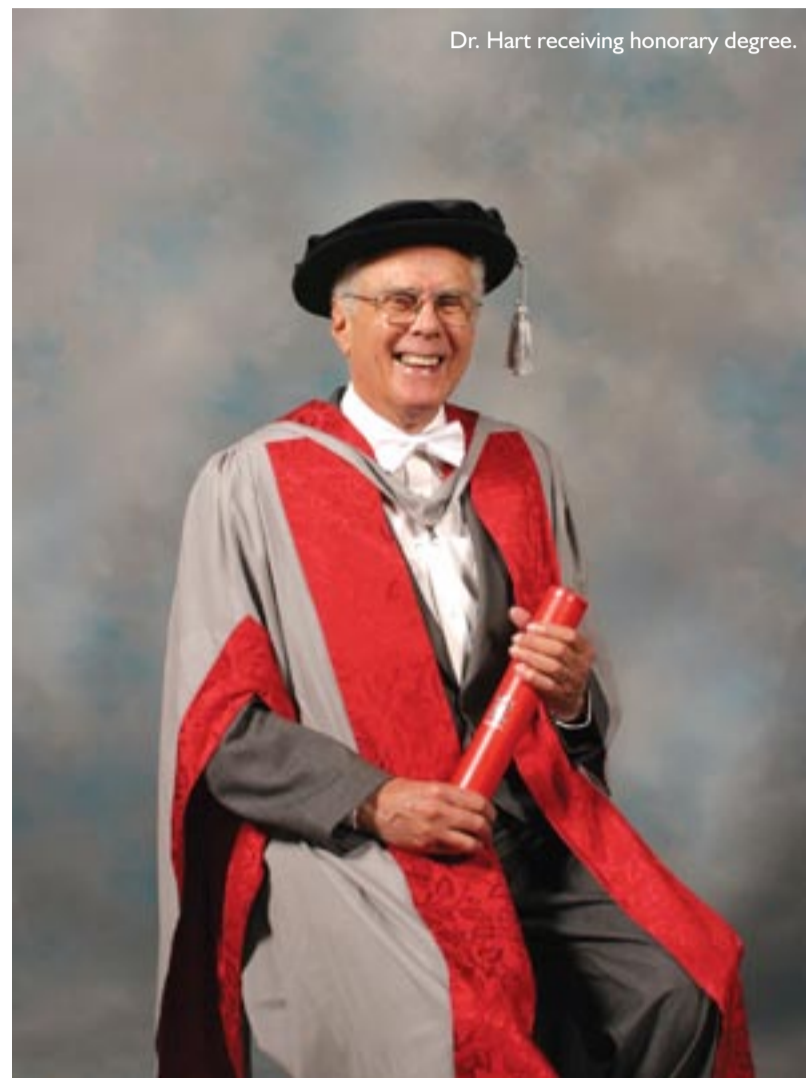
**Our Stories Make Waves, a group of Bristol artists, has devised a tribute to the life of one of the city's extraordinary elders, Richard Hart.**

Titled I Witness, it was written by Ros Martin, director of Our History Our Heritage. 'Like most people's granddaddy, Richard might seem mild and unassuming, but don't let that fool you!' she says.

When most men reach 65, they take out their pension, put up their feet and say "Thank the Lord!" But not Richard. He went to Grenada in 1982 to join the freedom fighters who formed the People's Revolutionary Government as it came to power. Richard was appointed attorney general until he and his comrades were ousted by the US invasion the following year, a pattern all too familiar around the world now.

Richard Hart was only 21 when he and a group of fellow radicals set up their first political party, the People's National Party of Jamaica, which would eventually propel the country to independence. At the age of 27, Richard found himself imprisoned for four months without trial [by the governor general in a clamp down on nationalist politics]. Despite this, he continued to campaign for the rights of the working people of Jamaica and the Caribbean.

So what inspired this remarkable man to do the things he did? 'I used to recount stories of slave rebellions from the political platform and people were amazed to learn that they had



Dr. Hart receiving honorary degree.

ancestors who fought, rose up and resisted slavery,' he says.

Richard went on to write a two-volume study of this and during this year's Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, he was invited by Our History Our Heritage to give a series of talks in Bristol's Old Vic theatre titled 'Slaves Who Abolished Slavery'.

Ros Martin says, 'Let our inspiration be those who have gone before. We want to ensure that as many people as possible have access to Richard Hart and his legacy, because it's in these little known parts of our history we discover the fullness of our rich inheritance as a people of dignity.'

## STILL GOING STRONG

One of the most significant figures in 20th century Caribbean history, Richard Hart, turned 90 in August. A lawyer by profession, Hart helped shape the region's political and economic destiny, later becoming a renowned academic.

Born in Jamaica in 1917, he threw himself the fight for independence at a young age. He also became a prominent labour activist, later serving as a vice-president of the Trade Union Congress of Jamaica, from 1949 to 1953, and secretary of the Caribbean Labour Congress between 1946 to 1953.

In 1963, Hart moved to Guyana to be the editor of the progressive Mirror newspaper for two years before settling in Britain. He worked in local government until 1982, when he returned to the Caribbean, this time to revolutionary Grenada.

After the government there was removed by the US invasion he returned to private practice and devoted himself to academia, lecturing across the world and writing a number of books, including From Occupation to Independence: A Short History of the English Speaking Caribbean Region.

But he has remained politically active, continuing to work for the release of those who were imprisoned by US invading forces.

Looking back on his long life, he says, 'People come to history for many reasons. I did because I was embroiled in union and political activities as a law student in Kingston in the 1930s. My father, also a solicitor, had a library full of books on the Caribbean from which I first learned of these remarkable leaders of slave rebellions.'

## I witness will be performed in BRISTOL on...

**October 11, at Kuumba, Hepburn Rd, 8.00 pm;**

**October 13, at Kuumba, Hepburn Rd, 8pm;**

**October 17, at Cotham Sch, Cotham Lawn Road 3pm;**

**October 18, at Cotham sch, Cotham Lawn Road, 8pm.**

**All performances £5.00 and £3.00 concessions available.**

**An archive photo exhibition will accompany the performances along with Richard Hart's books which will be available for sale**

# Black History Season Glossary/Resources

## Glossary

### National Portrait Gallery

Abolition of the Slave trade trail, Portraits, People and Abolition, which has now finished but remains online on our website ([http://www.npg.org.uk/live/abo\\_index.asp](http://www.npg.org.uk/live/abo_index.asp))

### English Heritage

Heritage Counts Case Study

SS Mendi

On the morning of 21 February 1917, the British steamship Mendi sank about 11 nautical miles south-west of the Isle of Wight following a collision with another British vessel, the Darro. At the time of the accident the Mendi was on UK Government service as a troop transport, carrying 823 black enlisted men and white officers of the 5th Battalion, South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC) from Cape Town to Le Harve in France.

The Mendi sank within 20 minutes, and within an hour of the collision 607 black servicemen, 9 of their white countrymen and 30 members of the ship's crew were dead.

The story of the Mendi is a tragic tale of terrible, unnecessary loss, but at the same time one of incredible bravery and sacrifice. The wreck itself provides a portal for the examination of a forgotten chapter of the history of World War I. It serves as a physical link between the present and a huge, but virtually unknown global military labour corps which was developed during the war to provide logistical support for the British Empire's fighting troops.

For these reasons, in the year of the 90th anniversary of the loss of the Mendi, English Heritage commissioned Wessex Archaeology to carry out an assessment of the wreck. The aim of the project, undertaken with the support of the South African Heritage Resources Agency, was to examine how the remains of the Mendi can act as a focus for a wide range of different interests and research themes, including those referred to above. Through this, the project tried to demonstrate how a single historical or archaeological site can be the subject of widely differing meanings of 'place' and a range of potential 'ownership' issues.

The project examined the available information about the sinking, the SANLC and the wider foreign labour corps, and produced an appraisal of the current state of the wreck itself, based on available survey data and information supplied by the diving community. The results have demonstrated the potential for using what at first glance appears to be a very ordinary underwater archaeological site, to explore a wide range of themes with an unusually wide range of potential audiences, both in the UK and in South Africa.

Further information on the loss of the Mendi and the SANLC is available from: <http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/marine/eh/ssmendi/index.php>

Follow up stories on abolition visit [www.english-heritage.org.uk/abolition](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/abolition) website

which follows up on the legacies of Lord Mansfield and Dido Belle, entitled Slavery and Justice. This display explores Kenwood's connections through Lord Mansfield the former owner of the house. Find out more about Dido Belle, Mansfield's great-niece, the daughter of an enslaved African woman, raised by him at Kenwood.

### Anti Slavery

#### Anti-Slavery International Educational Resources

The struggle for the liberation of over 12 million enslaved men women and children still continues today. Anti-Slavery International has a range of printed and online educational resources to support teachers of History, Citizenship, Geography, and English at Key Stage 3, and Key Stage 4. The resources provide background information, lesson plans, quizzes, maps, and suggestions for activities around historical and contemporary forms of slavery including human trafficking, forced labour and child labour.

Anti-Slavery International also has educational resources dedicated to increasing understanding of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This was a dark and painful period in history, which should be taught with sensitivity and links to present day legacies of poverty, discrimination, racism and underdevelopment. The Breaking the Silence website is designed to provide teachers with a variety of resources and ideas to teach the subject holistically and accurately.

The Breaking the Silence website can be used alongside Anti-Slavery International's newest website Recovered Histories, which contains over 40,000 digitised pages giving an insight into the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the struggle between those seeking to maintain the trade and those fighting for its abolition. Recovered Histories chronicles enslavement as an institution, the Middle Passage and Triangular Trade. Included is evidence gathered to present to Parliament in the 18th and 19th centuries, illustrations of life on the plantations, and the attempts by many enslaved Africans to liberate themselves and determine their own futures.

For more information or for speakers for school events please contact Michaela Alfred-Kamara, Anti-Slavery International Education Officer, email: [m.alfred-kamara@antislavery.org](mailto:m.alfred-kamara@antislavery.org) or call 020 7501 8935.

Anti-Slavery International also has exhibitions available for hire to complement the resources. To hire or for further information please contact Gemma Wolfes, email: [g.wolfes@antislavery.org](mailto:g.wolfes@antislavery.org) or call 020 7501 8936.

For further information about slavery in general, see [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)

Harness the abolitionist spirit and sign the Fight for Freedom 1807-2007 Declaration today!

### Parliament and the slave trade

By submitting material to Parliament and the British Slave Trade 1600-1807 you are agreeing to its publication. We cannot guarantee to publish all contributions.

Parliament and the British Slave Trade 1600-1807 is a Parliamentary Archives project produced in association with the 24 Hour Museum.

The Parliamentary Archives has custody of the archives of both Houses of Parliament. These records are made available to the public for research, lifelong learning and leisure. For more information visit the Parliamentary Archive Pages at [www.parliament.uk/archives](http://www.parliament.uk/archives) or consult the online catalogue at [www.portcullis.parliament.uk](http://www.portcullis.parliament.uk).

The 24 Hour Museum [www.24hourmuseum.org.uk](http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk) is an independent charity, funded by the Department of Culture Media and Sport, which promotes the UK's museums and galleries. The site offers a unique mix of content including: daily arts news, exhibition reviews, in-depth features, listings, and educational resources. It also houses a comprehensive, searchable database of more than 3,500 cultural institutions. Show Me [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk) is its dedicated site for children aged 7-11.

### Set All Free info

Kate Duffy  
Rachel Black

Equiano  
[www.equiano.org](http://www.equiano.org)

George Bridgetower  
[www.englishtouringopera.org.uk](http://www.englishtouringopera.org.uk)  
Competition to win a signed copy of programme and a pair of tickets, one entry only, closing date 8th October 2007

Please 'fill in the blank' for the middle name - like 'George Augustus \_\_\_\_\_ Bridgetower'.

## Books

'Celebrating Black History' by Errol Lloyd  
Oxford University Press  
2007  
ISBN 978-0-19-846125-8

This is a book for year 5/6 which concentrates on biographies - 9 in all. All well known generally, but a few new to children I expect: Olaudah Equiano, Marcus Garvey, CLR James, Una Marson.  
Black Inventors, Crafting Over 200 Years of Success

From the beginning of the oldest and greatest civilization - the ancestral link from the Blacks in Kamit (Ancient Egypt) to their descendents who are now scattered to the four corners of the world - the world of creating, inventing and designing has always been a part of the Black experience.

Over the last 500 years Black people from Africa, and their descendents have fully participated in the development of the world's agricultural, business, medical and scientific innovations and inventions.

When citing inventors few books mention the accomplishments of Black inventors outside the United States. That's about to change, with the internet, access to library resources, and good communications being the key to unlocking the past. The work of uncovering Black inventors has begun.

Following in Mr Baker's The Colored Inventor footsteps, is the booklet Black Inventors, Crafting Over 200 Years of Success, covers Black innovators and inventors from a Global perspective.

This book gives the librarian, reader, researcher, student and teacher the opportunity to discover inventors from your country or state. It is an invaluable booklet that reveals information on inventors who until now have remained obscure and unknown. This book will be published in the fall, 2007.

For more information contact:  
The Global Black Inventors Research Project, Inc.  
Tel: 646-610-1485  
Fax: 718-284-8965  
Email: [Kcholmes50@gmail.com](mailto:Kcholmes50@gmail.com) or [Kcholmes@i-2000.com](mailto:Kcholmes@i-2000.com)

Slavery, Emancipation, and Abolition visit [www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk)

**Ancestry.com** Slave Registers of former British Colonial Dependencies, 1812-1834 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2007. Original data: Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves and Slave Compensation Commission: Records; (The National Archives Microfilm Publication T71/553-564); Records created and inherited by HM Treasury; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England.

<http://www.setallfree.net/>  
Set All Free: "...has been established by Churches Together in England to commemorate the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 2007 in ways which challenge modern society to engage with Christian values. The project aims to highlight how the abolitionists' values can transform our relationships on an individual, community and society level."

<http://www.brycchancarey.com/index.htm>  
"Web site ... concerned with the history and literature of slavery and abolition, and with black writers in eighteenth-century Britain, including Resources for slavery, abolition, and emancipation; Ignatius Sancho (1729-1780); Olaudah Equiano; Ottobah Cugoana; British Abolitionists; Discourses of Slavery and Abolition. On these pages you will find extensive information, including history, literature, biography, bibliography, links, maps, and images."

<http://www.nmm.ac.uk/freedom>  
"The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich has recently launched a new Key Stage 3 resource called Freedom. It

# Black History Season Resources

investigates the history of slavery and the Transatlantic Triangle of Trade through real objects. Students are asked to interpret the objects by creating their own exhibition. Students' exhibitions can be saved on the site by logging in and they can be viewed in an attractive format for class presentations."

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/slavery/>  
Rare reports and manuscripts on slavery. (USA site)

<http://www.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/index.shtml>  
Breaking the Silence – Learning about the Transatlantic Slave Trade: "This site aims to help teachers and educators to Break the Silence that continues to surround the story of the enslavement of Africa that began over 500 years ago. Teacher 'Briefings', Links, easily downloadable 'Ready to use lesson plans and activities', a 'Pick and Mix' assortment of useful resources, and more.."

<http://www.antislavery.org/2007/about.html>  
Join the fight for freedom 1807-2007: "The campaign is about commemoration and liberation. Anti-Slavery International will take the opportunity of the 200th anniversary to raise awareness of both historical and contemporary forms of slavery. Many people think that slavery no longer exists. Yet at least 12 million people live and work in contemporary forms of slavery which have been defined and prohibited in international conventions. This campaign aims to revitalise the abolitionist spirit which created the momentum to end the slave trade in 1807 and harness it to make the abolition of all forms of slavery, in law and in practice, a priority for each and every government in the world. Sign Up - Join the fight for freedom and help us make slavery a thing of the past once and for all."

<http://www.discoveringbristol.org.uk/>  
Discovering Bristol - Bristol and Transatlantic Slavery: "Find out about Bristol's role in the transatlantic slave trade. Who was involved, what was bought and sold, who stopped it, and what is the effect of the trade today?" Includes Timeline, Slavery Routes, The Places Involved, The People Involved, Black resistance, Campaign against the slave trade, Effects on Bristol and The wider world.

<http://www.headleypark.bristol.sch.uk/slavery/main.htm>  
Bristol Slavery: Sections include: Background; Pre 17th Century Slavery; Why were slaves needed?; Why African slaves?; The Trade Triangle; Transatlantic Trade; The Outward Passage; The Middle Passage; The Slave Auctions; Plantation Life; The Return Passage; People and Companies; Edward Colston; The Pinney Family; Royal African Company; The Merchant Venturers; The End of Slavery. <http://www.mersey-gateway.org/>  
Port Cities Liverpool: The Slave Trade: "The site contains more than 500 images relating to the slave trade. Looks at the origins and development of the slave trade, at the individuals and organisations involved in the campaign for abolition, and at the impact of the slave trade on the city and port of Liverpool".

Resources: Liverpool and Slavery CD: This Key Stage 2 learning resource is aimed at primary school teachers and pupils studying local history. It looks at the leading role the city played in the slave trade, which was a major source of Liverpool's wealth in the 18th century. For more information or to obtain a copy please contact: [marketing@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:marketing@liverpool.gov.uk)

Port Cities: London and the transatlantic slave trade  
Includes the Elizabethan slave trade, 17th-century expansion, 18th-century peak, The horror of the slave trade, The rights of Africans in Britain, The abolition campaigns, and the Final balance sheet. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/NorthAmericanSlaveNarratives/>: "collects books and articles that document the individual and collective story of African Americans struggling for freedom and human rights in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. This collection includes all the existing autobiographical narratives of fugitive and former slaves published as broadsides, pamphlets, or books in English up to 1920. Also included are many of the biographies of fugitive and former slaves and some significant fictionalized slave narratives published in English before 1920."

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/aahistory/ugrr/ugrr.htm>

The Underground Railroad: "The Underground Railroad refers to the effort - sometimes spontaneous, sometimes highly organized - to assist persons held in bondage in North America to escape from slavery." SEE also Harriet Tubman links in Historical Figures section.

<http://www.diduknow.info/slavery/>  
Slave stories: "The year is 1780. In this year European traders will take thousands of Africans into slavery. This website follows four of those people. You will meet them on board a transatlantic slave ship. As you follow each person you will see the other three Africans on the left of the screen. Click on them to see what they are experiencing at the same stage of their ordeal - every African had a different experience of slavery."


UNESCO Slave Trade Archives  
"UNESCO has launched the Slave Route Project in 1994. It aims to break a silence and make universally known the issue of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, its causes and dramatic results, by means of scientific work." Many weblinks.

The Stono Rebellion  
1739: Twenty black Carolinians began the Stono Rebellion, the largest slave uprising in the British mainland colonies prior to the American Revolution. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/sep09.html> - Library of Congress webpage on the revolt  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p284.html> - Public Broadcasting Service (PBS - USA) story on the revolt

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/doughtml/doughome.html>  
"The Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress presents the papers of the nineteenth-century African-American abolitionist who escaped from

slavery and then risked his own freedom by becoming an outspoken antislavery lecturer, writer, and publisher. The Papers contain approximately 7,400 items (38,000 images) relating to Douglass' life as an escaped slave, abolitionist, editor, orator, and public servant. The papers span the years 1841 to 1964, with the bulk of the material from 1862 to 1895. The collection

consists of correspondence, speeches and articles by Douglass and his contemporaries, a draft of his autobiography, financial and legal papers, scrapbooks, and miscellaneous items. These papers reveal Douglass' interest in diverse subjects such as politics, emancipation, racial prejudice, women's suffrage, and prison reform."



## SYMPOSIUM

### Dress and the African Diaspora: Tensions and Flows


Friday 28th and Saturday 29th September 2007  
Lecture Theatre, V&A Museum, South Kensington, London, SW7 2RL

This international symposium will consider 'the notion of the between', that is, the tensions and flows of ideas and historical or cultural activity that have influenced African diaspora dress, textiles, and beauty regimes, and its associated wearers, producers and observers. Speakers include: Professor Anita Nettleton, Professor Leslie Rabine, Professor Susan Kaiser, Dr. Jessica Hammings, Dr. Van Dyke Lewis, Eke aus dem Moore, Frances Ross, Kast Debo, Tina Bini, Christine Checinska, Dominique Heyse-Moore, Rochelle Rowe, Rose Sinclair, Nicola Stylianou, Helen Mears.

This is a free event. To secure a place please contact V&A bookings on telephone 020 7942 2211 or email: [bookings.office@vam.ac.uk](mailto:bookings.office@vam.ac.uk) For further information contact Carol Tulloch: [c.tulloch@vam.ac.uk](mailto:c.tulloch@vam.ac.uk)

# dAdN

Dress and the African Diaspora Network



### Victoria and Albert Museum Sunday 7th October The Remarkable Ira Aldridge

Panel discussion, exhibition, book display and performance With Makeda Coaston, Oku Ekpenyion, Leon Robinson, Burt Caesar, Hazel Waters, Martin Hoyles. Shango Baku as Ira Aldridge. A sumptuous bicentennial tribute to a master of Theatre

Part 1: 1.45-3.00 Panel Discussion and Presentation

3.00-3.30 Exhibition/Book display Intermission

Part 2: 3.45-5.15 Splendid Mummer/Audience feedback

Free event. Book in advance.

Friday 19th October  
Splendid Mummer @ Kuumba Centre  
2 performances  
2.00 and 7.00 pm Admission £7/£5 conc.  
20-23 Hepburn Rd  
St Pauls, Bristol BS2 8UD

### Aldridge exhibition by Positive Steps 17-27 October

Monday 22nd October  
Splendid Mummer @ Stratford Library  
Free event  
6.30 - 8.30 pm  
with Shango Baku  
Introduced by Burt Caesar

Saturday 3rd November  
Splendid Mummer @ The Drum  
7.30 pm  
144 Potters Lane Aston Birmingham B6 4UU  
Adm: £6/£4 conc  
Aldridge Exhibition 7th November – 7th December

Friday/Saturday 8th+9th November  
Splendid Mummer @ Yaa Asantewaa Arts Centre  
7.30 nightly  
1 Chippenham Mews  
W9 2AN  
Adm.: £8 /£5 conc.