CONGRATULATIONS

Henry Muttoo

HONORED WITH MBE FROM QUEEN

John Agard

JOHN AGARD RECEIVES QUEEN’S GOLD MEDAL
HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL OUR READERS!

Welcome to our first online magazine issue for the year 2013. In keeping with our Guyanese tradition, we extend warm New Year greetings to you all. We would like to give particular acknowledgement to all our writers and those who contributed to our online magazine last year.

At the dawn of the New Year, the cultural community was thrust into mourning the loss of four community stalwarts. We will pause to recognize, and celebrate the lives of Pamela Maynard, Trenton Mack, Jan Carew and Monty Burke, on February 24, 2013 at the St. Gabriel’s Episcopal Church on Hawthorne Street in Brooklyn. Their unselfish dedication in their respective fields of endeavor, have given us that drive to forge forward. In times like these, adequate vocabulary of words fails us and no matter how well framed, do not give justice to the unshaken contribution these icons demonstrated during their life span here on planet earth. Yes! They are gone but not forgotten.

We have just concluded the end of a calendar year, and many of us have transitioned effortlessly into 2013. Our chosen 2012 theme “Masquerade Lives” was well received and portrayed in every sector of our activities. The year end grand finale of our 10th Symposium of the Guyana Cultural Association of New York - the brainchild of our Secretary Dr. Juliet Emanuel was a tremendous success. We can safely state that Masquerade is alive and well.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport in Guyana, as well as community movers and shakers worldwide, educators, the elders and artists who responded admirably to our call for papers and everyone that participated. The summary proceedings of our visit, and the way forward is presented in this magazine by our President, Dr. Vibert Cambridge.

Last year we had preliminary discussions in deciding our theme for 2013 and recognized the richness of our culture, coupled with the sacrifices made by our ancestors and the legacy and hope for us to accomplish our objectives effectively. This year we will be observing some important and significant anniversaries in the history of Guyana:

February marks the 250th anniversary of the 1763 Berbice Slave Uprising, an event in which many lives were sacrificed in the pursuit of human dignity and hopes for social, economic, political, and cultural justice.

August 2013 will mark the 190th anniversary of the Demerara Rebellion. In 1823, enslaved Africans again rose up against an abusive system. Substantial sacrifices were made in the quest for human dignity and the hope of creating a society that was just and caring resulted.

On May 1838, two ships, the S.S Whitby and the S.S Hesperus arrived in British Guiana with our ancestors from India—a key moment in the creation of the contemporary Guyanese society. They too sacrificed and had hopes for human dignity and economic, social, cultural, and political development as free and authentic human beings. Hence the 175th anniversary of the arrivals of Indians in Guiana;

Also 1838 coincide with the 175th anniversary of the abolition of slavery, and the emancipation of enslaved Africans.

The first batch of Chinese landed in Georgetown, British Guiana in 1853, and for the next few years, all were men which marks the 160th anniversary of their arrival. Chinese women began arriving in 1860, but in small numbers. They too made significant adjustment and lifestyle sacrifices resulting in transitional changes and adaptation creating hope, dignity and cultural justice. A common theme of the way our multiethnic ancestors were perceived and treated by their colonizers was the emphasis on a human labor force devoid of any regard for human dignity, traditional culture and intellectual capacity.

Thus our proposed 2013 theme for the Guyana Cultural Association of New York:

250 + 190 + 175 + 160 = Sacrifices and Hopes

After the sacrifices … Accomplishing the Hopes!

Our executive Board will convene shortly to ratify our 2013 theme. These anniversaries are significant to all Guyanese. They must be used as the foundation that enables us to foster a greater understanding of ourselves and a deeper appreciation for each other. At the same time making our dear land of Guyana a peaceful, modern and prosperous society in which we can fully appreciate our motto: One People, One Nation, One Destiny.

Challenges are inevitable, but we have the skills, talents, artifacts and technology to accomplish our collective mission.

During a recent GCA of New York board election, the current Executive Board Members were duly elected for another term:-

Dr. Vibert Cambridge, President
Ms. Ave Brewster Haynes, Vice President
Ms. Claire A. Patterson-Monah, Treasurer
Mr. Edgar Henry, Assistant to the Treasurer
Ms. Claire Goring, Cultural Director
Mr. Maurice Braithwaite, Assistant to the Cultural Director
Dr. Juliet Emanuel, Secretary
Ms. Rose October-Rose, Assistant to the Secretary

This year we will also launch the annual Godfrey Chin Prize for Heritage Journalism, an initiative that was established in 2011 and is inspired by Godfrey Chin’s efforts to preserve, promote, and propagate Guyana’s rich cultural heritage and creativity. The prize has been established to encourage and reward writers whose published works promote an understanding and appreciation of the diverse strands of Guyanese heritage and contributes to celebration of the common histories that unite the people of Guyana. Further details, guidelines and deadlines are found in this issue.

In this edition, for your interest, we include a number of articles with diverse topics ranging from the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day which fell on January 21, the same date as the presidential inauguration of Barack Obama, to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II who recognized two Guyanese, John Agard and Henry David Muttoo – a GCA awardee - in her 2013 New Year’s Honors List, to the potential contributions the Guyanese Diaspora in New York can make to the Guyana delegation to GCA, Carifesta XI and 2013.

We will continue to stimulate your interest as readers with not only cultural programs, but also inspiring features on Guyanese and people who make us proud of their achievements.

Once more, a Happy New Year to all our readers

Edgar Henry
January Editor.
GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK INC. on-line Magazine

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Edgar Henry
January Editor

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

2012 ON-LINE MAGAZINE COVERS IN REVIEW
SHARING

The Dream

AND THE DAY

Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc. on-line Magazine
For the second time in its history, the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day fell on the same date as the presidential inauguration: January 21.

MLK Breakfast Celebrations, 2013
This year heralded the 23rd Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Holiday Breakfast, which was held in Minneapolis and around the country. The Breakfast usually provides an opportunity to celebrate the legacy of service of Dr. King and creates an imperative to live out and experience his legacy today in our homes, our communities and our world. An advocate for disadvantaged Americans, founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund, Ms Marian Wright Edelman delivered the MLK breakfast keynote with the theme – The Fierce Urgency of Now.

2013 inauguration of President Barack Obama
(Schedule: http://www.closeup.org/lib/CUF_Inaug_info.pdf)
The focus, however, was on President Barack Obama’s second inauguration (the 57th Presidential Inauguration) at the Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC.
To organize the event, there were 550 people who worked for the Presidential Inaugural Committee; 1,300 members of the military in support roles and countless security officials, including police from multiple agencies and Secret Service provided security; some tens of millions of dollars in donations were raised to pay for the parade and parties with more than $1 million is appropriated by Congress for the swearing-in ceremony.
President Obama revisited the historical context for his second inauguration, as evidenced by the Bibles he chose to take the oath of office – one owned by Abraham Lincoln, the great emancipator and one by Martin Luther King Jr., the leader of the civil rights movement.
Their selection was especially symbolic because the second inauguration fell on the federal holiday marking King’s birthday and in a milestone anniversary year involving both men.

Fifty years ago MLK delivered the “I Have a Dream Speech” from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. The choice of the Lincoln bible symbolized 150 years since Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.
President Obama invited Myrlie Evers-Williams, widow of slain civil rights figure Medgar Evers to deliver the invocation prayer. It was the first time a woman, and a layperson rather than clergy, had done so.

The 2013 inaugural poet, Richard Blanco, joined a select group that included Maya Angelou and the late Robert Frost. Blanco’s works is said to explore his family’s exile from Cuba and his cultural identity as a Cuban-American gay man. Blanco, 44, is said to have been the youngest-ever inaugural poet and the first Hispanic or gay to recite a poem at the ceremonial swearing-in.

The inaugural theme, 2013, was “Our People, Our Future,” a reflection of the country’s diversity, strength of Americans and their ability to overcome challenges. Diversity had been a focus in choosing participants throughout the festivities, with performers and parade participants from all demographics and 50 states.
The festivities began on Saturday with the National Day of Service, with a fair in the National Mall, a call for Americans to serve their communities in all 50 states to honor King’s legacy.
Also on Saturday, first Lady Michelle Obama and Biden’s wife, Jill, hosted a concert for America’s children as they did four years ago, with popular young artists. The concert paid special tribute to military families as part of the two women’s focus on supporting their service and sacrifice.
At noon on Sunday, Jan. 20, the time the Constitution required the new term to begin, Obama took his official oath in the Blue Room of the White House with some media coverage, with Biden’s officially swearing in at the Naval Observatory. The public ceremony was held the next day because inaugurations historically have not been held on Sundays.
Civil rights leaders while at times enduring beatings and risking lives to promote racial equality and who came almost 50 years ago for Martin Luther King, Jr.’s March on Washington, were back in D.C. to witness this historic second inauguration of President Obama. Notably among them was Rev. Otis Moss Jr, who helped organize the bus-loads of whites and blacks to travel in 1963.
Rev. Moss delivered the opening prayer at the National Prayer Service, the traditional interfaith service at the Washington National Cathedral.
He said “We will feel the presence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., himself, of the four little girls who died in the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, of a Thurgood Marshall; persons who have borne thy burdens in the beat of the day and worked sacrificially for things to come, knowing that they would perhaps not live to see the fruit of their labors but nevertheless knew that this day would come.”
The Inauguration captured again President Barack Obama’s unique role in America History and his world vision, as he shared the Day and the Dream with Martin Luther King, Jr.
Four years ago, I had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., for the first inauguration of Barack Obama as president of the United States. I was able to travel along as the President and Vice President-elect rode the Abraham Lincoln Whistle Stop tour down to the nation’s capitol.

Excitement was in the air everywhere you looked and everywhere you turned.

Four years later there was still excitement in the air as President Obama took his oath of office for a second and final term on January 21. This time, the crush of people, though overjoyed at the making of history as the first African-American president was sworn in once again, was far smaller and more cautious in their views on what was to come.

There was much concern about changes that may or may not occur in the next four years. Elliott Stanley, a recent law school graduate, said he didn’t anticipate major changes that would benefit him. The president spent the past four years working through the fiscal morass he inherited from the previous administration, Stanley said, and will continue to battle with the stubbornly partisan legislative before he could make significant progress in other areas.

“I think he should be more decisive in his push for administrative gain than conciliatory,” said Stanley, who hasn’t been able to find a permanent job since leaving school.

Joycelin, a Washington D.C. resident who declined to give her last name, said the first-term sheen has worn off for the president, adding that he learned the hard way that there may well have been a decision by Republicans in the partisan House of Representatives to “just say no” to any, or many, of his policies and proposals.

He’s learned that whether he plays golf or not with the Republicans he can’t win them over with his demeanor,” Joycelin said. And while President Obama, like all presidents, wants to leave a positive legacy, the looming fights over the debt ceiling and spending cuts as House Republicans continue to refuse to “play nice” may derail his attempt to do so, Joycelin said.

Others cited persistent unemployment as a major worry. Many said they were pleased with the changes to healthcare engineered by the president, but fear this would be the only legacy of his historic presidency if the agenda of the republican majority in the House is to deliberately stymie progress.

A group of business owners who traveled from Florida, Ohio, Maryland and New York to attend the inauguration said President Obama has already secured his legacy with historic healthcare reform. They insisted, however, that in order to have a broader legacy of success, he has to ensure that the funding mechanisms to carry through on this reform are sustainable, and he has to manage the economy for the next generation, specifically by improving the nation’s aging infrastructure, fixing the weaknesses of our education system and immigration policies, and reforming so-called entitlement programs.
President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama at the Inauguration Parade on January 21, 2013
Youman Nabi Greetings

Mawlid Al Nabi or Ma'uled Al-Nabi

May Your Life Be Blessed!
YOUMAN NABI GREETINGS

CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMED

The Youman Nabi, the word Mawlid, or Milad, depending on the method of transliteration used, comes from the Arabic word for birth and usually refers to the anniversary of Muhammad's birth. This observance is also known as Mevlid Serif in Turkish, Mawlūd Sharīf in Urdu and Maulidur-Rasūl in Malay.

The Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca after the death of his father Abdullah. He lived up to sixty-three years. It was this prophet that created the Holy Quran. He dedicated his life to the teachings of Islam and showed through his life how wonderful it is to follow Islam.

During this time on Youman Nabi, Muslims in Guyana pay tribute to the mighty prophet Muhammad. This day is spent in prayers. A special service is kept or this occasion as well as religious programmes is broadcast throughout the day. On this day as well they give alms to the poor and persons who are in need.

At a critical point in his life, Muhammad received a vision of the angel Gabriel who called him into service as a prophet. He later received a second vision of Gabriel who told him to "magnify thy Lord." Muhammad then began to preach publicly in Mecca where he had lived for many years. Many people were receptive to his message but others ridiculed him.

Because of the opposition of many citizens of Mecca and threats against him, Muhammad fled to Yathrib in AD 622. This journey of nearly 200 miles is known as the Hegira and is so important that the Muslim calendar begins with the year of the Hegira.

Youman Nabi was first observed around the thirteenth century and was preceded by a month of celebration. The actual day of Muhammad’s birthday included a sermon, recitation of litanies, honouring of religious dignitaries, gift giving, and a feast. The festival spread throughout the Muslim world and is celebrated in many countries today. However, some conservative sects (example, the Wahhabiyah) consider the celebration to be an unacceptable 'innovation'. In Guyana, this point of view has never been widespread and when in the 1970's, the Muslim community was asked to suggest two of their holidays that would be placed on the calendar as “National Holidays”, Youman Nabi was one.

In his own lifetime Muhammad was not only a ‘religious’ leader, focusing on the spiritual obligations of man to God. He was also a leader of a state who dealt with the concrete challenges of the obligations of man to man.

“excerpt from article in Guyana Times.
HENRY MUTTOO HONORED WITH MBE BY QUEEN FOR HIS SERVICE TO ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

In addition to the groundings Henry received in Albouystown, he maintains that he was 'lucky’ to meet many people along the way who helped and influenced him, and to be the recipient of the tremendous body of work by many people around the region, who sacrificed much to lay the foundation upon which he stands.

Alex Neptune

Complete joy, ecstasy and then pride overcame me on December 30, 2012, when I learned that my friend, Henry Muttoo - the lil, loud-mouth bannoh from Albouystown, was being made a Member of The British Empire, MBE, by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This, for his services to Art and Cultural Heritage as the long time Artistic Director of the Cayman National Cultural Foundation.

This award, followed within months of Henry receiving Cayman’s second highest civilian honor - The Order Of The Cayman Islands (Officer Class), and being inducted into the Caribbean Theatre Hall of Fame in November 2012. These, and many others, including being honored in New York by the Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc., go a small way towards recognizing his skill, standards, accomplishments, and the tremendous amount of work he has done in Cayman and the region during an artistic career that spans nearly fifty years, and counting.

Many Guyanese will remember Henry for his acting at the Theatre Guild; particularly as a member of the famous 'All Ah We' company founded by Ken Corsbie and Marc Matthews. 'All Ah We' entertained and educated audiences in Guyana and all over the Caribbean, using all regional material – poetry, stories and music. They inspired many young performers and today 36 years after the group ceased to exist, their work still reverberates, making us proud of our rich cultural heritage. Thus, by the time he left Guyana in 1976, to study Theatre Design in the UK, he had already created a name for himself.

After graduating as a fully-fledged Theatre Designer, Henry was immediately called to join the staff of the Jamaica School of Drama as Technical Director. He spent six years in Jamaica establishing himself as an educator and theatre practitioner, winning several awards for his work designing settings and costumes and directing.

Most importantly, while in Jamaica, he met the love of his life, the beautiful, bright and talented Marcia King. I was not there, but a mutual friend who was, described it the way our iconic folklorist, Wordsworth McAndrews, would have; "He immediately went into a state of Confusius Ricaticks". For those new to this, that is Wordsworth’s 9th of his 10 stages of love. 28 years and three lovely successful daughters later, they are still happily married and successfully running the Cayman National Cultural Foundation.

Henry has always maintained that his artistic sensibilities and understanding of human culture and behavior were forged in the crucible of the Albouystown tenement yards, spaces he says, that are even now defined by systemic poverty, injustice and denigration; working class ‘marketplaces’ of ribald contestations that taught him the lessons of survival and the necessity of knowledge, love, compassion, respect, forgiveness, and dignity.

In 1989, on the recommendation of Guyanese musician and cultural icon, Dave Martins, Henry Muttoo moved to the Cayman Islands after having been offered the opportunity to manage the US $4 Million Harquail Theatre by the board of the Cayman National Cultural Foundation (CNCF). In selecting Henry for the post, his new employers had tapped into a wealth of cultural street sense, knowledge, theatre experience and creativity that would form the blueprint which would take the organization well on the path towards meeting the lofty goals prescribed by the CNCF Law, under which the organization had been established.

Muttoo drew upon every ounce of experience he cultivated in Guyana, England and The Caribbean to understand and work with the Caymanian people and their struggles to re-establish their strong sense of identity, of confidence in who they were, the things they did and the unique manner in which they did it.
HENRY MUTTOO AND “ALL AH WE” TEAM

Many Guyanese will remember Henry for his acting at the Theatre Guild; particularly as a member of the famous 'All Ah We' company founded by Ken Corsbie and Marc Matthews. 'All Ah We' entertained and educated audiences in Guyana and all over the Caribbean, using all regional material - poetry, stories and music.

Henry thanks his talented and patient wife Marcia, and three intelligent and beautiful daughters Janelle, Maia and Anjuli of whom they are proud.
Henry Muttoo...

IN ADDITION TO THE LOVE AND SUPPORT FROM HIS MOTHER, WIFE AND CHILDREN, HENRY ACKNOWLEDGES HIS SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADMASTER EDGAR WILSON WHOSE CARING AND GENEROSITY PROVIDED FOCUS; KEN CORSBIE, DAVE MARTINS, MICHAEL GILKES, MARC MATTHEWS, WORDSWORTH MCANDREW, QUAMINA FARRIER, DEREK WALCOTT, PETER MINSHALL WHO SAW POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH IN HIM AND MENTORED IT, AND FRIENDS LIKE ALEX NEPTUNE AND OTHERS WHO WERE HIS CONSTANT SUPPORT.

Gujanese ‘heroes’, both at home and overseas being utilized more for the development of the arts and culture in Guayna. According to him ”It is a disgrace that some people at home still see these heroes as foreigners “coming back, after they ran. Now they want to come back and tell us what to do”.

Alex Neptune

Muttoo’s Stage Setting for “Moon On A Rainbow Shawl, Opening Night, Nov. 9th 2006; University of South Florida.
John Agard Receives Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry

The second black poet to receive this medal, Agard, receives the 2012 prize on the basis of his body of work, with emphasis on his most recent collections *Alternative Anthem: Selected Poems* and *Goldilocks on CCTV* (a collection for children)

“I am delighted as well as touched to be in the company of such names as Charles Causley, Norman MacCaig, Gillian Clarke, Stevie Smith and Derek Walcott”.

John Agard, who currently resides in the UK, to which he migrated in 1977, is the author of several collections of poems for children and adults. His repertoire includes *Laughter is an Egg, No Hickory, No Dickory, No Dock* (with Grace Nichols), *Eat a Poem, Wear a Poem, We Animals Would Like a Word With You*, and *Mangoes and Bullets: Selected and New Poems*. His poem ‘Half Caste’ has been on the GCSE syllabus for numerous years.
I’m a full-blooded West Indian stereotype
Yuh see mih straw hat?
and mih hot shirt?
I’m a full-blooded West Indian stereotype.
yuh ask if I have riddim in mih blood?
Look man, beat de drum
and don’t forget to pour de rum
cause you see
I’m a full-blooded West Indian stereotype”

Johnny is like a lot of my friends – half this and half that.
I for one am one fifth this and one fifth that.
It’s 1981 in a small coffee shop somewhere in London, Johnny and I were meeting for the first time since he’d left Guyana (and the ALL-AH-WE team) to live in England in 1977. Coffee and cookies. Without me asking him, he launched into his latest poem, seemingly unaware that he was performing as if on stage in one of our ALL-AH-WE shows of the 70’s.

Tiger Batting Anancy Bowling
And is cricket Lovely Cricket
Cricket Lovely Cricket
“Hit It Hit It” Parrot telling Tiger
“Knock He ForR Four”
Tiger GiveE a Roar
“I Gun Show Anansy Who Is Forest Boss
Leb He Bowl One Full Toss
See If De Ball Don’ Loss”…….

And so the Anansi Cricket story goes. To this day, that delightful apparent children’s story with a sting in its tail that never ceases to “ketch the audience”, and several others, have been permanents in my poetry performance. (see http://youtu.be/1e3Z8Znaao ).

Who was I to think that one day one day soon (30 years soon) our Johnny Agard would have written and performed so much more poetry, so much more stories to receive the highest award possible in England and the Commonwealth. The Queen’s Gold Medal for Poetry!

Johnny’s story is one of perpetual forward motion - from playing Capt. Hook in the children’s theatre production of Peter Pan, to A levels in English, French and Latin, two books of poems while still living in Guyana in the 70’s, joining us in the then popular ALL-AH-WE team. In 1977 he immigrated to England and quickly establishing himself as a writer to be noticed and encouraged. John and his wife Grace Nichols (herself a well respected writer/poet in the literary world) were chosen by the educational system to tour every year throughout the United Kingdom reading and talking about their writings to thousands of school children.

They are prolific and relentless writers - between them they have published an astonishing number of books - last count was 60plus. There is probably nothing like that anywhere else of the Caribbean. Just take a quick look at Amazon and be astonished http://www.amazon.com/JohnAgard/e/B001HPPJBM?tag=yukko-20. If you say you like Guyana and/or Caribbean poetry and literature, you then have to ask yourself - “how come I never heard of these? How come I don’t hear of any of his poetry or plays or stories being performed or produced? How come I’m now hearing about this guy? How come the Queens recognized acknowledged and awarded him top honors, and that the only prestigious Caribbean award that I know of is the 1982 Casa de las Américas Prize (Cuba) for his book of poems Man to Pan?

From his children’s theatre times, he displayed a strong stage presence with that indefinable gift of finding a unique characteristic; it was the star quality that cannot be taught – Marc and Henry also had that gift, so I suppose that’s why ALL-AH-WE was so one-of-a-kind in its time; not to mention the array of our origins - truly six people one nation. John was, and still is, the ultimate Anansi - clever, tricky, mesmerizing, witty and wise.

Don’t take my word for it; that Johnny is nothing less than brilliant;

He was glorious as an embodiment of Georgetown streetmen at our Umana Yana production when he was stopped by the security guard at the entrance because he was so convincing as a crazy man - my memory says it was Francis Farrier who had to intervene and convince the guard that Johnny was an actor in the show.

Continued on page 29
CONGRATULATIONS FROM GCA & THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY OF GUYANA

Poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy says -

'John Agard has always made people sit up and listen. He has done this with intelligence, humour and generosity. He has the ability to temper anger with wit and difficult truths with kindness. He levels the ground beneath all our feet, whether he is presenting Dante to children or introducing his own (Guyana) culture to someone who hasn’t encountered it before. In performance he is electrifying - compelling, funny, moving and thought-provoking. His work in Education over years has changed the way that readers, writers and teachers think about poetry.'
Local Artist, Bernadette Indira Persaud, has been inducted into the Caribbean Hall of Fame for Excellence 2012. Mrs. Persaud received the Award for Excellence at The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, on November 23, 2012.

The award recognizes Persaud for her outstanding contribution and achievement in the field of Visual Arts. She was selected by the Committee of the Caribbean Development for the Arts, Sports and Culture Foundation in association with the Caribbean Community. The Foundation's main aim is “to recognize the development of the Arts, Sports and Culture in the Caribbean, and to encourage the natural genius of our people to reach the highest level. This prestigious award, is made by the Foundation in recognition of the notable contribution made by those who have achieved excellence in Arts, Sports and Culture, and is not influenced nor determined by factors of race, colour, religion, sex or political affiliation.”

Persaud, who has participated in workshops on art, as far off as Mauritius, has had a number of regional and international exhibitions and has her pieces in private collections overseas, including Russia, England and North America.

Her previous awards and accolades include:
- The Distinguished Visiting Artist’s Award – awarded by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations with India, in 2005
- Guest Artist – International Women’s month – Philip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts, UWI, Jamaica (1999) and the Arrow of Achievement, AA, 1997 (Guyana). Her regional and international publications were featured in countries that include Germany, New York, India and in major mainstream media houses such as CNN and BBC.

Previous inductee to the Caribbean Hall of Fame was National icon — Guyanese artist, Philip Moore.

About Bernadette Persaud:
Bernadette Indira Persaud is one of Guyana’s best-known artists, writers and educators. She was born in Berbice in 1946 and is a graduate of the University of Guyana and of the Burrows School of Art in Georgetown. Her painting career began in the early 1980s, when she felt a need to express her ideas through her creativity. In 1985, she became the first woman to win the Guyana National Visual Arts Competition, and she continues to produce artworks that encourage a social, political and historical consciousness. Her most famous work from her series titled “Gentlemen in the Gardens” continued on page 17.
depicted camouflaged soldiers in a garden setting between tropical foliage like that of the renown Botanical Gardens in Georgetown.

Bernadette’s paintings have been exhibited and her writings published in Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Guyana. She has also written about art for numerous Guyanese publications. Bernadette was recently inducted into the Caribbean Hall of Fame for Excellence in November, 2012. The award recognizes her outstanding contribution and achievement in the field of Visual Arts. She was selected by the Committee of the Caribbean Development for the Arts, Sports and Culture Foundation in association with the Caribbean Community. The Foundation’s main aim is “to recognize the development of the Arts, Sports and Culture in the Caribbean, and to encourage the natural genius of our people to reach the biggest level. This prestigious award, is made by the Foundation in recognition of the notable contribution made by those who have achieved excellence in Arts, Sports and Culture.

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Bernadette’s regional and international publications were featured in countries that include Germany, New York, India and in major mainstream media houses such as CNN and BBC.

In a 2004 interview, Bernadette talked about what motivated her and said “In all of my work, whether I’m dealing with the ancestral cultural aspect of it, or whether I’m dealing with the man with the gun, I’m trying to show everyone that here is beauty — which, though it may be close to you, you don’t see, you don’t notice, because of your own conditioned blindness and ignorance, your own cultural limitations. This is what motivates me, this is what I try to take on in my art.”
A REFLECTION: GCA SYMPOSIUM 2012 “MASQUERADE LIVES” IN GUYANA

MISSION OF SYMPOSIUM 2012:
To organize an event that would contribute to public education and appreciation of the history and direction of Masquerade in Guyana

Vibert Cambridge

One of GCA’s hallmarks is to establish an annual focus and to organize our program of activities around it. In 2012, our theme was Masquerade Lives. The goal was to focus on a folk form and provide a space for exploration, celebration, and continuation.

The spirit behind the masquerade tradition guided the annual awards. Among the 2012 awardees were Mr. Lionel Blackett, Desmond “Putagee” Vivierios, and Andron Alphonso. These three individuals represented the tenacity, the virtuosity, and civic engagement associated with Guyanese masquerade.

Central to GCA’s annual program is the symposium. Since 2002, the symposium has been a day set aside to study and reflect on some aspect of Guyana’s cultural life. In 2012, the symposium took place in Guyana during the annual masquerade season and was a partnership with Guyana’s Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports.

The mission of the partnership was to organize an event that would contribute to public education and appreciation of the history and direction of masquerade in Guyana. As a result of national and international responses to the “Call for Participation,” the symposium became a five-day event. Over the five days, Guyanese and international scholars explored the origins and contemporary dynamics of the masquerade art form, artists developed murals, new music inspired by the masquerade heritage was premiered, and Victoria—Guyana’s first post-emancipation village, hosted the Masquerade Flounce Off.

The national press and cultural commentators have defined the symposium as a success. One day after the end of the symposium, the partners sat down for a frank review and evaluation of the event. The strengths and weaknesses of the arrangements were addressed and the lessons to be learned were identified. Of special importance were the next steps to be taken to support the preservation and promotion of masquerade in Guyana. It was clear that masquerade is not dead in Guyana. It is clear that the passion for masquerade is alive in Essequibo, Linden, Demerara, and Berbice. It is also clear that there is need for continued research and public education as there is need for the organization of the masquerade community. The latter cannot come from the government. Organization has to be organic and rooted in the community. There is abundant evidence that there is the capacity to organize within the masquerade community.

The public and the private sector have to create the enabling environment. The decision to declare an annual masquerade season is a welcomed step. This should allow for better coordination among the state agencies and the private sector.

In 2013, all of the video footage shot during the symposium (more than 25 hours) will be deposited in the National Archives. The proceedings of the symposium will be published by the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sport. There will also be television programs, including the seven-part television documentary series on the symposium and the related activities to be produced by the faculty and students of the Center for Communication Studies, University of Guyana.

There is much wonderful work still to be done. GCA looks forward to continuing its engagement with Guyana’s rich cultural heritage and creativity in 2013.
CELEBRATING THE 160TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARRIVAL OF CHINESE IN GUYANA

CHINESE MEETING HOUSE, PETERS HALL
CHINESE IN GUYANA 2013

A walk down any business street or shopping center in Georgetown would bring you into contact with "local Chinese". These are the descendants of the original Chinese who came to British Guiana as indentured laborers between 1853 and 1879.

The Chinese brought with them the love of food and ability to cook, so Chinese restaurants can be found on almost every block in the capital and in most country districts. Most of these restaurants are now run by newcomers from mainland China. In transporting their culinary expertise they transform national food found in Guyana by flavoring them with rum and ginger. In the case of the 'Chinese cake', the original was the Chinese bean cake, towsa peng, but with its local incarnation it was made with black eye peas. They made ham choi (preserved greens) with the local mustard plant that they grew here and salted egg with the local duck's egg to replace the hundred year egg. Today, Chinese fare has been taken to new heights with the establishment of high quality eateries. The New Thriving chain has become a place of choice for Guyanese celebrations.

Over the years, the Chinese have adapted to the English customs through churches like St Saviour's Parish Church, originally know as the Chinese Church, when it was consecrated in 1874 as part of the parish of St Phillip's in Georgetown.

Through the Chinese Sports Club, which became the Cosmos Sports Club, and later acquired by the Guyana Motor Racing Club, Chinese boys and girls excelled at lawn tennis and table tennis giving Guyana the West Indies Championship on several occasions. Hockey was another popular sport and in the 1960s and 70s the National teams were made up almost entirely of players of Chinese origin.

Through the British Educational system, members of Guyana's Chinese community were able to make their mark as scholars, teachers, university professors, lawyers, doctors, dentists, farmers, shopkeepers, business leaders and political leaders.

The only Chinese customs that have withstood the test of time are practiced by individual families; wedding customs, the hospitality of the people and the celebration of any event whatsoever, by a feast of Chinese foods.

I n 1834, the slaves who had been taken from Africa to the colonies of Britain were set free. In British Guiana a significant proportion of the freed men chose to live off the fertile land and sought paid employment on an irregular basis. The resulting reduction in the labour force caused the sugar plantation owners to search for replacement workers. They obtained large numbers of labourers from Madeira (Portugal), India and China each bound by a contract of indenture. The Chinese were the smallest group of these indentured workers.

When they came: The first batch of Chinese landed in Georgetown, British Guiana in 1853, and for the next few years all were men, most being taken forcibly. To curb the excesses of this trade in human cargo the British and Chinese authorities in Canton agreed to a formal supervised recruitment process and families were encouraged to emigrate. Chinese women began arriving in 1860, but in small numbers. The period from 1860 to 1866 saw a relatively large influx of immigrants, bringing the local Chinese population to a peak of 10,022 in 1866. Subsequently only two boats arrived with Chinese immigrants, one in 1874 and the other in 1879. After this Chinese immigrants came of their own free will and at their own expense.

How they came: The 39 ships that brought the Chinese labourers were chartered by recruiting agents based in Canton, China, with the cost of shipping shared between the colony's Immigration Fund and the plantation owners. The ships travelled by way of Singapore and Cape Town, arriving at Georgetown after a journey of between 70 and 177 days.

Where they went: The distribution of Chinese laborers to the sugar plantations in the three counties of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo was made by the Immigration Agent-General who based his decision on the quotas submitted by the plantation owners several months previously. Families were kept together in the distribution.

Who came: Passenger lists were maintained by the Immigration Office in Georgetown and an ongoing search is in progress to locate these and other relevant documents that give the names of the Chinese immigrants. The names of some individuals are presented in this compilation and further names will be added as they become known.

Their descendants: By 1900 the Chinese population in British Guiana had dwindled to 2,919 since the majority of Chinese at that time preferred to marry people from their own country but there were too few Chinese women available. Many also left the colony to seek their destiny in other countries; French Guiana, Surinam and Trinidad.
Trev A. Sue-A-Quan was born in November 1943 in Georgetown, Guyana. He is the great-grandson of an indentured labourer. Trev attended Queen's College in Georgetown and attained B.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Chemical Engineering at the University of Birmingham, England. He immigrated to Canada in 1969. He is the great-grandson of an indentured labourer who had embarked with his wife and son aboard the ship Corona at Canton. They arrived at Georgetown in February 1874 after 78 days at sea. The family was allotted to La Grange sugar cane plantation on the West Bank of the Demerara River. Many of the Chinese immigrants and their second generation descendants became shopkeepers, including Soo Sam-kuan the author's grandfather. In the process of cultural assimilation his name became transformed into Henry Sue-A-Quan thus initiating the distinctive family surname.

Trev Sue-A-Quan's generation was the one that typified the transition from shopkeeping to professions based on higher education. His brother and sister both graduated from Edinburgh, Scotland and became chief surgeon and mathematician/computer specialist, respectively.

Trev attended Queen's College in Georgetown and attained B.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Chemical Engineering at the University of Birmingham, England. He immigrated to Canada in 1969 but then pursued a career opportunity with a major oil company in Chicago where he was engaged in research in petroleum processing and fossil fuel utilization.

Eight years later Trev headed East - to Beijing, China, becoming Senior Research Engineer at the Coal Science Research Center. He spent 5 years there and in 1984 returned to Canada with his wife and son, both acquired in Beijing. They now make their home in Vancouver.

The interest in Trev’s family history came from a curiosity about the circumstances that caused his great-grandfather to leave his native land. Almost 20 years after obtaining a copy of his ancestor's contract of indentureship Trev has applied his training in analytical research to compile this comprehensive account of the experiences of the first Chinese immigrants in Guyana.

Trev Sue-A-Quan is the Author of *Cane Reapers and Cane Ripples*.

*Cane Reapers and Cane Ripples* is the story about the Chinese who were procured to replace the emancipated slaves on the sugar plantations of Guyana (then British Guiana). Following China's defeat by Britain in the Opium Wars in the 1840s the European powers, and Spain in particular, began a recruitment drive to obtain Chinese labourers for their colonies. This was executed using all manner of methods ranging from subtle inducement to kidnapping. Numerous abuses arose from this trade in human cargo and Britain later set up local emigration depots aimed at enlisting willing emigrants, with some degree of success. Between 1853 and 1879 a total of 13,541 indentured labourers arrived in British Guiana from China but by 1900 the resident Chinese population was down to 3,000 mainly because only 15% of the Chinese immigrants were females. The Chinese endured many tribulations both in the journey and after arrival in the new land. In the process of assimilation into Western culture some unique names have evolved for Chinese families, creating both a mystery and a topic of fascination for their descendants and for genealogists.

*Cane Ripples* is an integrated work that expresses the joy and pains experienced by a vital sector of Guyanese society during the 20th century. It uses oral histories, personal recollections, photographs, and archival materials to illuminate an important aspect of Guyana's complex history. We can see the names and the faces that influenced Guyana's social, economic, political, cultural, and scientific life. Contributors take us into their homes, share family histories, and tell us about the creation of some of Guyana's most successful institutions and enterprises.

Dr. Trev Sue-A-Quan must be congratulated for a most valuable and accessible contribution.
Dr. Ray Luck

PIANIST RAY LUCK has performed in concert and recital in several music capitals of the world. His performances in New York’s Alice Tully Hall, in London’s Queen Elizabeth & Royal Albert Halls, in Paris’s Théâtre des Champs Elysées and other major concert venues have won public and critical acclaim. He has appeared as soloist with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and City of London Sinfonia, and has collaborated in chamber music performances with the New World and Lark String Quartets. Concert tours have extended through East and West Europe, North and South America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Australia. In 1992 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Service of Guyana and awarded the Cacique’s Crown of Honor for outstanding musical achievement.

AFTER GAINING the Licentiate and Fellowship diplomas from the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity College, London, in Georgetown, Guyana, Ray Luck studied at the Royal College of Music in London, and later with Yvonne Lefebure at the Paris Conservatoire. He had the distinction of winning First Prizes in Piano and Chamber Music in his first year of study. As a recipient of a scholarship from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, he specialized in music from the Classical period with the British pianist, Denis Matthews, while gaining a Bachelor of Music degree with Honors from London University. In the USA he entered the graduate program as a student of György Sebok at Indiana University, and graduated with the D. Mus degree with High Distinction.

APPOINTED professor emeritus, Ray Luck at the Suzhou School of the Arts was the Charles A. Dana Professor of Music at Randolph College in Lynchburg, Virginia, until 2002. During his tenure he garnered a number of professional awards including the Katherine Graves Davidson distinguished faculty award, the Master Teacher Certificate from the Music Teachers National Association, and three Senior Fulbright fellowships to the Caribbean, Greece, and Canada.

International Concert Pianist: Music Educator; Festival Adjudicator; Fulbright Specialist, Member of the Order of Service of Guyana, Alumnus of Indiana University, Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique, Paris; University of London and Royal College of Music, London; Queen's College, Guyana; Lauréat du Concours International de Piano, Genève; Master Teacher

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CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING GUYANESE
A drunk man walk in a grave yard,
And to de top of his voice, start balling out hard
A drunk man walk in a grave yard,
And to de top of his voice, start balling out hard.

My friend I come, long time no see
I choose today to keep yuh company
I ain’t come alone, I walk wid de ting
He put down a lil bag and started to sing.

Why did you answer when Mr. Death called you?
Why didn’t you hide round de bend?
Why didn’t you smart him,
de way you does smart me?
Long ropes do have an end.

Sit down on a grave and start to laugh,
Put he han’ in de bag and tek out a half.
Well my friend, I must ask you how you how feel.
Cause it is my turn to break de seal.
I always use to warn you about yuh brain,
He open de liquor and start sing again.

You were a friend when others failed,
You were a friend who always near,
You were a friend who never spend,
but always blind drunk in de end.

He tek a big drink and call he friend name,
Tek out another drink and drink again.
Meh boy ah can’t tell you how I am happy,
Since you dead an gone I never outa money.
He up wid de bottle and done de rum,
Then lay down on de grave and start to hum.

I do not know, I cannot tell,
What pains you had to bear,
But I do know that one of these days,
That we will be lying here.

He get up crying, my friend it is true
You done me plenty wrong, but I still miss you.
Is I alone at nights now lef to roam,
So I taking a new road that will keep me home.
So mek right wid yuh Maker and please mention me
And he walk out of de ground wid a strang melody.

**Deep in my soul,**
**I hear my Savior voice**
**Oh, calling me, Oh calling me.**
**Deep from my soul**
**No more rum for me!**
**No rum for me!**

**Rest in peace Kaieteur!**
In addition to the several significant commemorative moments in Guyana during 2013—there will be Carifesta XI in Suriname from August 16-23.

The commemorative moments (250th anniversary of the Berbice 1763 Uprising; the 190th anniversary of the 1823 East Coast Uprising; the 175th anniversary of the emancipation of our enslaved Africans ancestors; and the 175th anniversary of the arrival of our indentured Indian ancestors) provide an opportunity to reflect on important moments in our collective history and identify paths forward for the construction of an equitable society and national cohesiveness. Carifesta XI provides Guyana with a platform to engage in the celebration of its Caribbean heritage.

Carifesta XI is being organized according to a new model—a model that is anchored on the proposition that national development is impossible without cultural development. For the organizers of Carifesta XI, cultural development is more than the showcasing of the arts. For the organizers, cultural development includes the way things are done. Specifically, the organizers are emphasizing participation, transparency, and accountability as key elements in the planning and organization of the festival which had its start 31 years ago in Guyana.

Satisfying the participation objective requires the engagement of the multiple dimensions of contemporary Caribbean society—the public sector, the private sector, civil society, the First Peoples, the sending societies that contributed to the populating of the Caribbean, and the diaspora with all of its geographies.

The ambitions of Carifesta XI are summed up in the

tag-line-“Our Cultures: the essence of our Future.” This demands the recognition and celebration of the region’s rich diversity. Accountability not only calls for prudent management of scarce resources (the Government of Suriname has approved a budget of $US5 million for Carifesta XI) and ethical approaches to cost recovery; it also demands ensuring that the festival is delivered in a responsible manner. To this end, special emphasis is being placed on ensuring that the young, seniors, and persons living in remote areas have an opportunity to participate in and enjoy the festival. The planners are also making arrangements to organize the program in a way that will provide the visiting artists, entrepreneurs, and audiences with opportunities to interact and exchange ideas and experiences. This is a deliberate effort and recognition of a perennial problem.

Carifesta XI will feature and celebrate the range of Caribbean expressive culture—the performing arts— theatre, music, dance, storytelling; the visual arts, including film; the culinary arts; book fairs; fashion festivals; industrial creativity—craft and trade fair; and symposia. In addition, special attention will be placed on knowledge transfer through master classes, workshops, and a daily reading program.

A conversation is just starting on the potential contributions the Guyanese diaspora in New York can make to the Guyana delegation to Carifesta XI. The Guyana Cultural Association of New York will be happy to contribute to that conversation. For further information on Carifesta XI, please visit: http://www.carifesta.net/
The theme for CARIFESTA XI: “Culture for Development: Celebrating our diversity and promoting the central role of culture in economic, social and human development”, encompasses all aspects of sustainable human development, while at the same time revealing an inherent respect for human rights by paying equal attention to diversity. “Since culture is one of the mainsprings of development, the cultural aspects of development are as important as its economic aspects, which individuals and peoples have the fundamental right to participate in and enjoy.”
AUGUST 16-23. 2013: NEW FORMAT OF CARIFESTA INCLUDES PARTICIPATION BY DIASPORA ARTISTS

Dr. Humphrey Hasrat, a retired army medical doctor and Suriname’s former ambassador to Guyana, serves as Secretary in the Management Team that is charged with organizing the 11th staging of the Caribbean Festival of Arts in Paramaribo from August 16 to 23, 2013.

Carifesta was first held in 1972 in Georgetown, Guyana, as the Caribbean Community’s premier festival of creative and performing arts. This will be the second time Suriname is hosting the event, but the first time in accordance with the new model prescribed in the strategic plan developed in 2004. The new approach provides more opportunities for professional and artistic development for the region’s artists, “but,” said Hasrat, “Carifesta 11 is also very much geared toward inclusion and creating legacy. Including the region’s Diasporas is but one of the changes that have been brought to the format of Carifesta.”

Aside from the European overseas territories in the Caribbean –the Dutch Caribbean, the French Departments and the British territories- and countries where most Caribbean people are rooted from –India, Africa, Indonesia-, the event is now including the Diasporas, as well as the countries of the Union of South American Nations UNASUR.

Carifesta 11, he said, would be centered in the wooden inner city of Paramaribo. “From the Independence Square and the Presidential Palace, down to the heart of town, people are supposed to feel that Carifesta is in town. Paramaribo is going to be a Festival City that week,” he said.

As host country, Suriname proposed in December 2011 at the Twenty-First Meeting of the RCC in Paramaribo, Suriname, the overall theme of CARIFESTA XI to be “Culture for Development: Celebrating our diversity and promoting the central role of culture in economic, social and human development”.

CARIFESTA XI WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM ELEMENTS:
1. Opening and closing ceremonies
2. Extended Grand Cultural Market and Trade Fair (incl. Fashion Focus, Culinary Arts, Visual Arts, Symposia)
3. Performing Arts: theater, dance, music and storytelling
4. Youth Focus
5. Children in Carifesta
6. Community Festivals
7. Super Concerts
8. Film Festival
9. Capacity building workshops, meetings and networking events
10. Traditional/Folk Village incl. Indigenous and Maroons
11. Signal Events
12. Showcases
JOIN US AT A MEMORIAL SERVICE

Guyana Cultural Association to celebrate the contributions of cultural and literary icons

Pamela Maynard
Trenton Mack, Montague Burke, Jan Carew and The Mighty Kaieteur

MEMORIAL CELEBRATION SERVICE

POSTPONED FROM JANUARY 27, 2012 TO
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2013
St. Gabriel’s Episcopal Church, Hawthorne Street, Brooklyn, NY
4.00 P.M.
When I first read about the Symposium on Masquerade, "Masquerade Lives!", organised by the Guyana Cultural Association of New York, I missed Christmas in GT all over again.

In early September, Dr. Vibert Cambridge asked if and how I could contribute. We explored the possibility of a Skype call, then, he asked if I could do a piece of music based on the Masquerade tradition. I told him that I had already started throwing ideas around in my head. It was established, at that point, that there would be a piece of music coming from me, as my contribution to the symposium.

I had always been passionate about Masquerade music coming into the mainstream of the Guyana soundscape:

1) as part of a commercial "GT Sound";
2) as part of “GT Art Music”, for the concert stage;
3) as a contribution to a “GT Jazz sound”, and by extension to Caribbean Jazz.

I was very excited! Dist’ing could wuk! I decided to call it, "Masquerade Sweet Suite!"

The ideas for piece were distilled over the ensuing weeks, and “production”, the studio aspect, took place in the last two weeks of the school term.

I will NEVER forget Sunday, December 16!

As the invited guests arrived at the Guyana School Of Music, there was an atmosphere of excited support. There seemed to be a foregone conclusion that they would enjoy what they heard.

The response at the end of the piece was moving. I cried! I felt like I had received a Grammy! I was flattered too, that a piece of MY music could generate the level of passion that was displayed during the question and answer session which followed. Everyone there respected it. Some "strongly disagreed" with the naming of it, and stated, in no uncertain terms, that they “did not hear Masquerade in it”, at which point others, equally passionate, sprang to defend. It was a warming experience. THANK YOU!

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Cambridge for the unconditional confidence he placed in me, and in my ability to deliver. I mean, without hearing it, he and his team set about building an entire event around “Masquerade Sweet Suite!”

While in GT, I heard about a competition where some participants are required to perform an original composition. Remembering my longing to hear more original compositions of a non-commercial nature, coming out of GT, I asked Mr. Andrew Tyndall to help me invite a cross section of musicians and artists to a "Conversation on Composition".

I hoped to:-

1) get a feel of how my fellow artists feel about original music;
2) engage in a conversation where we share ideas, techniques and perspectives on original non-commercial music in GT.

Given the short time between the idea and the event, and the Christmas season, the response was reasonable. Those who attended contributed to a vibrant, though sometimes side tracked conversation. Everyone left the event energized. So much so, that I wouldn’t be surprised if I heard a few Masquerade-based offerings for MASH this year.
CONGRATULATIONS FROM GCA & THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY OF GUYANA

John Agard
continued from page 14    Ken Corsbie

One of his strengths is the rewrite of well known stories and give them new life altogether, often in an understandable version of Guyanese and Caribbean dialect. His “The Emperor’s new Dan Dan” is an excellent example of this particular skill. It’s also a delight to perform.

It’s strange how one phrase or one line someone said a lifetime ago can resonate in your memory, and pops up at unexpected times. A Johnny Agard one liner of nearly 40 years ago, as near as I can remember - “Socialism is a wonderful thing, it takes away the headache of dilemma – one newspaper, one cheese, one choice – beautiful”, with his particular chuckle/laugh telling another story.

About eight years ago, Elizabeth and I spent a delightful day with Johnny and Grace at their narrow housing row apartment in the intimate village of Lewes. You just cannot imagine how they were able to fit so many books into the restricted space – every nook, cranny and whatever held books. He had built a narrow extension to the apartment (luckily it was at the end of a row of attached homes) into which they lined every square inch of walls with more books. Even up in the tiny attic he somehow fitted a hammock and what? More books. That so much production could emanate from so compact a home is almost a miracle of organization and method. What seemed even more amazing to us was that their

postage stamp size backyard was a flourishing garden complete with a miniature pear laden fruit tree. At the same time, Johnny’s mother was living with them. She and I hit it off immediately – at last someone of my age, Johnny and Grace have mastered the extreme skill of making the very most of their environment. Johnny and Grace have mastered the extreme skill of making the very most of what they have, both practically and artistically.

My boast, is that Johnny Agard is among my personal Band of Brothers, that several of his poems and stories are perennials in my performance repertoire, and that I have a dozen of their books and have been promised their latest. Here is one that is an extensively viewed youtube favourite..

“Half-caste”
a few lines
Excuse me
standing on one leg
I’m half-caste.
explain yu self
wha yu mean

when yu say half-caste
yu mean tchaikovsky
sit down at dah piano
an mix a black key
wid a white key
is a half-caste symphony?
(See http://youtu.be/5KqyVpMJ1gI )

ANANSI CRICKET http://youtu.be/Le3ZBZnaao

Now there is something that could be progressive in the Caribbean. I lived for 17 years in Barbados and only one school ever requested me to visit and perform Caribbean folktales, and was totally ignored by the CXC or local Dept of Education. I expect and hope things have progressed with the Caribbean Exams Council’s (CXC) long time mandate of Caribbeanizing the curriculum.
TIMEHRI TRANSITIONS: EXPANDING CONCEPTS IN GUYANA ART

damali abrams
Carl Anderson
Dudley Charles
Victor Davson
Marlon Forrester
Gregory A. Henry
Siddiq Khan
Donald Locke
Andrew Lyght
Bernadette Persaud
Keisha Scarville
Arlington Weithers

curator
Carl E. Hazlewood

TIMEHRI TRANSITIONS:
EXPANDING CONCEPTS IN GUYANA ART

January 23 - March 9, 2013
Sponsored in part by The Guyana Cultural Association of New York, Inc.

Reception: Sunday, January 27, 2013. 3 - 6 pm
Gallery Talk: Sunday, February 17, 2013. 3 - 5 pm
Hours: Wednesday - Saturday, 11 am - 6 pm

Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba
219 East 2nd Street (at Avenue B)
New York, New York 10009
(212) 674-3939

Kenkeleba programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and many generous friends.
The Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba House, presents, TIMEHRI TRANSITIONS: EXPANDING CONCEPTS IN GUYANA ART. This exhibition introduces ten international artists of Guyana heritage. Curator, Carl E. Hazelwood says, “I’ve chosen artists whose practice address everything from contemporary abstraction to work that bear a subtle political or cultural critique. For these artists it’s no longer about periphery and center. Practically everyone has access to the technological means of engaging with the borderless possibilities of visual knowledge.”

The artists included are: damali Abrams, Carl Anderson, Dudley Charles, Victor Davson, Marlon Forrester, Gregory A. Henry, Siddiq Khan, Donald Locke, Andrew Lyght, Bernadette Persaud, Keisha Scarville, and Arlington Weithers.

Known less for serious art and culture than for its lush physical presence, its paradoxical beauty and poverty, the Caribbean has lately been receiving focused attention as possible undiscovered territory for new art and fresh aesthetic approaches. Several books published in the last few years have added in various degrees to scholarship surrounding the idea of an art peculiar to the region. Organizers of major exhibitions recently on view in New York and elsewhere, seek to define the nature and historical sources of art and artists originating from within the archipelago. While the new exhibitions are beginning to provide a wider context for art created in the area, an English-speaking country like Guyana, situated on the Latin mainland of South America, receives scant attention in these visual extravaganzas—thus the need for exhibitions such as this one.

The word ‘Timehri’ in the title, TIMEHRI TRANSITIONS: EXPANDING CONCEPTS IN GUYANA ART, symbolically connects our endeavor to the first artists of Guyana, who produced the ancient Native American rock engravings and drawings of the same name (meaning either ‘mark of the hand of man’, or simply, drawings on rock) found in the deep interior of Guyana. Art in the show includes mural-sized work on paper and canvas, welded steel sculpture, photo-based artwork as well as video. There are works included of purely aesthetic value as well as some that hint of political and even religious expression.

The exhibition opens January 23, 2013 and runs through March 9, 2013. An opening reception will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2013.

THE GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK is sponsoring a gallery ‘walk and talk’ with the artists plus musical performances by Guyanese. This will be held on Sunday, February 17, 2013 from 3 to 5 pm.

About the Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba - Kenkeleba House has a long history of mounting exceptional historical survey of American art. Kenkeleba programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, and many generous friends.

The Wilmer Jennings Gallery is located at 219 East 2nd Street (at Avenue B) NY, NY 10009; 212-674-3939; public hours are Wednesdays - Saturdays 11 am - 6 pm. Corrine Jennings is the Gallery Director.
Nature as Terrified Bird in the Face of Man: Incubation

In this piece my aim was to say that there will always be the hope of nature re-hatching itself in all of its beauty, and that its long night shall pass. This painting was especially challenging to create—though in an exciting way. The inverted tree, composed of tracing paper glued onto the canvas presented a unique hurdle: to fuse the almost graphic design elements of it into the other parts of the composition that are traditionally, painterly. To make the design work with the overall composition I created the wave-like sweeps of monochromatic blues just about the separation line for the silhouetted tree and the reflection design. This was a joy to create.
On April 12, 2012, The Patch of Loganville, Georgia (an online newspaper) published a little story of Loganville artist, Harold A. Bascom, who, inspired by the demise of wildlife’s natural habitat, painted a series of bug-eyed red birds representing a personification of a terrified earth in the face of what we, man, is doing to nature. From that time to now, Bascom has continued to paint to the point where, after completing three series of artwork, he is the featured solo artist of an exhibition of paintings at the Grayson Branch library at 700 Grayson Parkway, Grayson, GA 30017.

His exhibition, entitled, Red Birds, Brownstones, and Earth Eggs, opened on January 19, 2013. The art loving public is invited to view this solo exhibition where artwork will be available for purchase.

Harold Bascom—Guyanese novelist, artist, and three-time Guyana Prize winning playwright—moved to Georgia from New Jersey in 2010. That is when he began setting up a studio in an effort to rekindle his artistic career. In 2011 he completed his Brownstone Series and began work on his Petrified Birds which he completed in 2012, and is now working on his New-Earth Incubation (Earth Egg paintings). Pieces from each of the latter series are on exhibit, hence the exhibition’s title.

The exhibit will continue through February 22, 2013.

Grayson Branch library hours are:
- Mondays: 12 pm - 8 pm
- Tuesdays: 10 am - 6 pm
- Wednesdays: 12 pm - 8 pm
- Thursdays & Fridays: 10 am - 3 pm
- Saturdays & Sundays: 12 pm - 5 pm

Admission to the exhibition is free.

Brick wall Slice of Life from a Brownstone Place: Madonna
This piece personifies the struggle and pain of the single mother so often left by errant male partners to fend for herself and children alone in the often harsh environment of urban America. This is a tribute to urban motherhood.
I thank Messrs Andrew Tyndall and Russell Lancaster and team of the first ever National Song Festival (for Choral Groups) for a delightful afternoon of glorious music held at the National Cultural Centre.

I was transported to my days at the Bishop’s High School when the indomitable Ms. Edith Peters made me appreciate music by having me learn to play the recorder and violin (to some extent) and allowing me to sing (be it thirds) in the school choir.

Those who missed the Festival did themselves a grave injustice and I was disappointed that the audience filled half of Auditorium Front. However we all enjoyed the presentations, judging from the thunderous applause and standing ovations.

The Groups, whether small or large, delivered our National Songs with great aplomb and the open selections varied from Folk Songs to Negro Spirituals with innovations that included the Doo wop style and excellent Acapella techniques.

I was heartened by the mixture of ages, maturity and experience, a new National Song from St. Mary’s Musical Academy of BV, wonderful young soloists from The Children’s Choir of Region 10 and Sophia SDA, the exuberance of Imani (just 3 weeks old) and the professionalism and attire of all the participants.

Congratulations to the winners: The Messengers, J 4 Inspiration, Circle of Love, Sasca Heraldiers, Brickdam Cathedral and New Amsterdam Secondary School who won their seniors by 12 points.

I trust that this event heralds the serious (re) introduction of music in schools and choirs in our Beautiful Guyana.
REMEMBER THIS?

SOCIAL PASTIME IN GUYANA

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND

THE STAGES OF DRUNKENESS

STAGES OF DRUNKENESS

• Ahhhh [first drink]
• Feeling Nice [after 3 drinks]
• Tipsy [laugh a lot & personality change]
• Political [arguing]
• Lil High [talking sh@t][slurring words]
• Hunger [order another large]
  [order food][shark, cook up, black pudding etc.]
• Feeling High [you are in a different place]
• Drunk - anything could happen [fighting][staggering]
• Totally Drunk [can’t walk straight or ride your bike]]
• Pi@@ing Drunk [baby stage]
• Blind Drunk [cannot see where you are going]
  [walking sideways][walk into a tree]
• Dead Drunk [out cold in a gutter]
• Stale drunk [next day hang over]

Do you remember your first drink? I was about 7 or 8 years old when my father while entertaining some friends at home decided to introduce my brothers and me to the evil/pleasure of rum drinking. He took a schnapp glass, pour some rum in it and gave us to drink. After our initial reaction to the burning in our mouth and stomach he said “Tek dat fo yo fasness” then gave us some water to chase it down. Later on you start to feel niceee, niceee and had something to brag about to your friends the next day.

For everyone the reaction to that first drink differs from person to person. As you become a seasoned drinker that first drink is usually: “Ahhh, clear the throat, the sinus or just open up the appetite to eat or to start the first round of weekend drinking.

After 2 or 3 drinks: YOU FEELING NICE, NICE. At this stage every part of your body starts to loosen up especially your mouth, if you are generally a talkative person you begin to dominate the conservation talking about things that you would not talk about when you are sober. If you were not a talkative person you giggle and agree with everything.

As you approach stage three: YOU FEELING TIPSY. At this stage some personality changes are noticed, you become louder, laugh a lot and conversation shift to you and your ability to function as a man or you start to cuss your boss and anyone who at one time or another “mek da eye pass yo” [disrespect you].

Stage four the argument slide into POLITICS: Everyone is now an authority on politics and have a better idea how the President/Mayor should run the Country /City and how the president and the Mayor is a country boo boo and don’t know nothing.

Stage five you LIL HIGH. Your words are slurring and you are accused of talking sh@t. Arguments are now a free for all and all subject is debatable, no one is making any sense but you are holding your ground because you believe “the dam cricket federation is full of old man who can’t even play bat un ball” As the last drop of rum is squeezed from the rum bottle a money pool quickly hits the table and a demand for another large with ice and chaser reaches the ear of the waiter via the clicking of the two fingers, Thumb and middle finger, followed by “mis, mis over here”. Then the order is placed: One large bottle of rum and some cutters: this includes shark, fishcake, salted nuts, and some black pudding and souse, this is the sixth stage where “AH FEELING HUNGRY” As the eating of the ‘cutters’ disappear the drinking continue until you hit a HIGH. The seventh stage. At this point you are in a different place, your mind is in an uproar, your mood starts to change, cussing and swearing has becomes a thing of beauty, trying to stand up becomes a challenge, life is beautiful.
REMEMBER THIS?

Maurice Braithwaite

DRUNK. Yes, you have finally reached that point of no return. Anything could happen, depend on your personality. Singing, becoming the world's greatest orator, the urge to beat up somebody who disagreed with you earlier or to pinch the waiter's backside which could result with a slap on your head. As you fire one for the road you are now...

TOTALLY DRUNK: Time to go home but you can't walk straight or ride your bike. You can't depend on your friends to take you home because, like you, they are in the same predicament. You set off for home using your bike as a brace to keep you upright. As you try to ride your balance is out of whack and you end up in the gutter or smack into a tree or lamp post.

PI@@ING DRUNK: This is the baby stage. You have no control of your limbs; in fact you have no control. You are now lying on the grass, in the gutter or brace up against a tree or lamp post, your imagination is the only thing that function. You imagine you are sitting on your posy/toilet and you want to we we so you let it go with a groan and you end up pi@@ing in your pants. Eventually you carry the mark of a man who is pi@@ing drunk. A big ring is form in front of your crutch this is the tell-tale sign that the local kids refer to you as pi@@-a-pants Josie

BLIND DRUNK: At this stage you can't see anything, you can't hear nothing and you don't know nothing. You drift along aimlessly and somehow or other you end up in front of your house mumbling to yourself or singing the standard drunk song to the embarrassment of your wife and neighbors. Of course the neighborhood kids find this very entertaining and you end up with the typical false name “bount-to-drunk”.

DEAD DRUNK: If you did not make it home blind drunk you end up in a gutter or somewhere out cold lying in your vomit. At this point the local stray dogs are having a feast licking the vomit off the grass around you and getting drunk themselves and fighting over the remnants of vomit left on your clothes and face.

STALE DRUNK: This is the hangover you feel the next day from all the run drinking. In order to get over a hangover you need one drink to clear your head. So off you go to the rum shop, order a shot of rum, down the hatch and you ready for the day.

Guyanese Beggar

Every morning John would drive by Bourda Market and every morning he would stop and give the resident beggar G$200.00. After a while John started to give the beggar G$100.00. The Beggar noticing that his money has been reduced was not too pleased, but said nothing. John then dropped to G$80.00. The Beggar noticing this further decrease became noticeably upset and decided to speak to John about it.

He stopped John one morning after accepting the G$80.00 and said,

'Wah happening man'.. yuh use to give me $200.00, den yuh cut it down to $100.00, now is $80.00 whuh goin on?'

John replied, 'Boy, times get hard. Meh eldest boy just start UG and meh daughter now in High School...so you know how it is.'

The now irate beggar asked in a tone of disbelief,

'So wait nah... yuh mean fuuh tell me that is outa MY money yuh sending YOUR chirren to school?'
NEW BOOK BY RAY SEALES FOR SUMMER LAUNCH

QUIET, STANDBY, YOU’RE ON

These were the words uttered by Al Seales before a recording session. A session at GEMS was an all day event.

The first session I witnessed as a young boy was done by Billy Moore and the Four Lords singing “Barney di Fowl Thief”. I accidentally stumbled into the recording while playing hide-and-go-seek with my sisters. I opened the door to the store and attempted to hide under one of the counters but did not realize that they had been moved to accommodate the musicians and the instruments.

Before each session, GEMS was actually transformed into a recording studio with heavy blankets on all four walls and a thick carpet on the floor.

In my childish manner, I had disrupted a good take of the recording which made my father angry as this had been the fifth attempt and possibly the best. I was on the verge of being on the receiving end of my father’s belt but the musicians saved me and suggested that a better form of punishment would be to have me sit and listen all day to the sessions. Funnily enough, I began to enjoy my time in the studio and I found it very stimulating and for the first time I saw a different side of my father—a man in total control, a professional. I was amazed at his talent, discipline and commitment to perfection.
The Guyana Prize for Literature was established in 1987

- To provide encouragement for the development of good creative writing among Guyanese in particular and Caribbean writers in general.

During the Awards Presentation on the Twentieth Anniversary of the Prize it was declared that after contributing to the advancement of the literature through the recognition of Guyanese writers, the pledge to Caribbean writing should now be honoured in a specific and direct way. This need was further felt since there was still no literary prize offered within the region for Caribbean literature.

The pledge became a reality when it was announced in Georgetown on November 2, 2010, that the Government of Guyana had provided funds to the Management Committee of the Guyana Prize for the first Guyana Prize for Literature Caribbean Award, starting with the Prize for 2010.

There will be three Awards in the categories of Fiction, Poetry and Drama, with a prize of US$ 5,000 for the winner in each category.

ELIGIBILITY
The Prize is for published books and is open to works by citizens of Caribbean countries: CARICOM States, the Commonwealth Caribbean, the Netherland Antilles.

To be eligible for entry, a book must have been
- originally written and published in English
- published in the calendar years 2010/2011; i.e. between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2011;

for Drama, entries must
- be full-length plays, first published/performed between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2012.

Each publisher may enter a maximum of 5 works in each category.
No more than one work by any author may be entered in each category.
It is the responsibility of the publisher to verify the nationality of the authors where necessary

SUBMISSIONS
Entries should be submitted to
The Management Committee
Guyana Prize for Literature Caribbean Award
School of Education and Humanities
University of Guyana
Turkeyen Campus
Greater Georgetown, Guyana

Closing date for entries is February 14, 2013.
Entries must be accompanied by a separate sheet with the following information for each author
- name, date and place of birth, citizenship
- address, telephone number, Fax number, e-mail address
- title of work
- date and place of publication
- date(s) and place of performance or publication for plays
- brief bio-sketch/career resume of author
- photograph of author

Four copies of each entry must be submitted

Winners in the three categories will be decided by a Jury of eminent persons in the field. A shortlist of finalists will be announced approximately one month before the Awards Ceremony, and may be used as a part of promotion for the Prize.

The winners, as a condition of entry, are expected to attend the Prize Awards Ceremony to be held in Georgetown, Guyana in May, 2013, on a date to be announced, and should also be prepared to give public reading(s) from their works as organised by the Guyana Prize Management Committee. Airline tickets and expenses for the visit to Georgetown will be provided where necessary.

Al Creighton
Secretary, Management Committee