



**SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

Imagining the Guyanas

Ecologies of Memory and Movement Conference



27th – 29th October 2016
Senate House, London

This conference will include two special cultural events:
**A John Coffin Memorial Fund Evening: The ‘Rose Hall Panel’ and a Reading by
 Fred D’Aguiar (FREE), Thursday 27 October 2016**
**A Celebration of Guyana in Poetry & Music (£7, £5 for conference delegates),
 Friday 28 October 2016**





Conference Programme

Local Organiser:

The School of Advanced Study
University of London

Partnering Institutions:

Coastal Carolina University, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 (EMMA), Université de Poitiers (MIGRINTER)

University of Stirling, University of Antwerp, Society of Caribbean Studies

Steering Committee: Cédric Audebert (MIGRINTER), Rita Christian (London Metropolitan University), Bénédicte Ledent (Université de Liège), Tina Harpin (Université la Guyane), Ameena Gafoor (The Arts Journal), Catherine Gilbert (King's College London)

Ecotones Committee: Thomas Lacroix (MIGRINTER Université de Poitiers), Judith Misrahi-Barak (EMMA Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3), Maggi Morehouse (Coastal Carolina University)

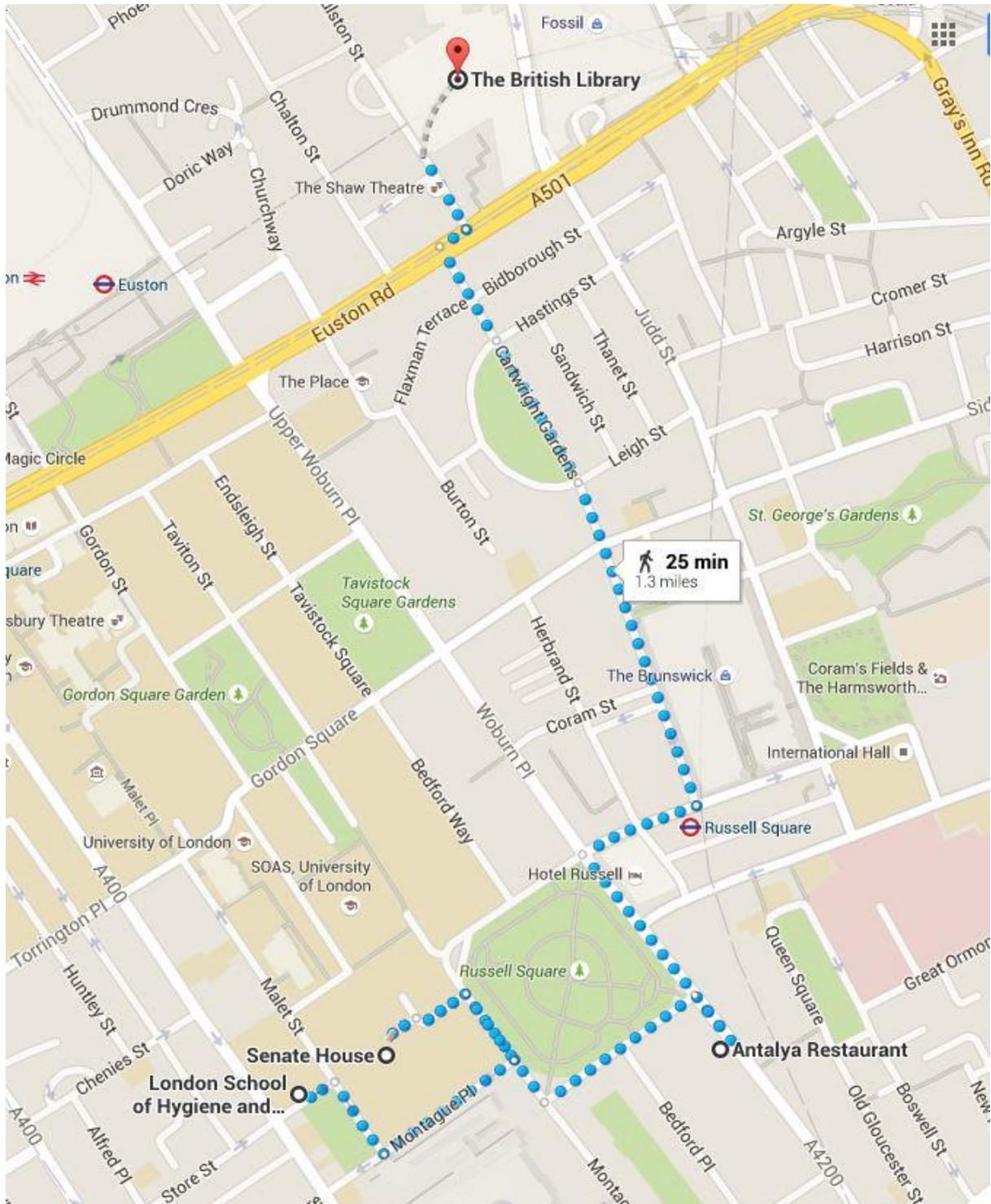
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Note on the venue

All conference events are taking place at Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU



Local Information

Underground:

Nearest stations: Russell Square (Piccadilly Line) or Goodge Street (Northern Line). Also within walking distance: Euston Square, Euston, Holborn, Tottenham Court Road, Warren Street, Portland Place, and King's Cross.

Overground:

National rail links within walking distance: Euston, King's Cross, and the international Eurostar terminal at St. Pancras. The other London mainline stations are a short taxi or Tube ride away.

National Rail Enquiries: www.nationalrail.co.uk; 0845 7484950

Bus routes:

Nearest routes: Russell Square / Woburn Place: 7, 59, 68, 91, 168, 188

Gower Street (heading south) and Tottenham Court Road (heading north): 10, 14, 24, 29, 73, 134, 309

Transport for London: www.tfl.gov.uk has information, maps and prices for travelling around Greater London. NB: Oyster Cards give the best value for money: for an initial outlay of about £3 an Oyster Card may be topped up with cash and kept for your next visit to London. PAPER TICKETS ARE VERY EXPENSIVE.

Car Parking:

Public car parking is not available at Senate House. NCP parking is available at Woburn Place and Bloomsbury Place.

Street Map: www.streetmap.co.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

Wifi is available throughout the building. The password changes each day and can be obtained from the main reception desk. Our network name is "UoL Conferences".

The School of Advanced Study is part of the central University of London. The School takes its responsibility to visitors with special needs very seriously and will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to its facilities in order to accommodate the needs of such visitors. If you have a particular requirement, please feel free to discuss it confidentially with the Institute of English Studies staff.

WHERE TO EAT IN BLOOMSBURY

Store Street

College Arms Pub with traditional British favourites; real ale
Olivelli Italian restaurant (pizza/pasta)
Café Paradiso Coffee, pastries, savoury snack lunches
Life Goddess Greek deli and café
Byron 'Proper hamburgers'
Busaba Thai restaurant

University Precinct

South Block Café behind the ceremonial stairs on the ground floor, serving sandwiches, cake, jacket potatoes, soup
Costa at Birkbeck Café on the ground floor
SOAS Self-service food with an oriental twist; Russell Restaurant open lunchtime

Brunswick Centre

Carluccio's Italian, light meals served throughout the day and evening
Patisserie Valerie Café, pastries and light lunches
Yo! Sushi Japanese-inspired, eat in/take away
Starbucks Coffee and sandwiches
Strada Contemporary Italian cuisine
Apostrophe Café, pastries and savouries
Crush Bar Juices, soups and salads
Hare and Tortoise Oriental food (corner of Marchmont Street and Coram Street)
Marquis Cornwallis Pub with regionally-sourced food; real ale; craft beer

Tottenham Court Road

Pret A Manger Café/take away
Tinderbox Café on the first floor at Paperchase
Marks & Spencer Coffee and sandwiches eat in/take away
Le Pain Quotidien Light meals and patisserie
EAT Soups, salads, sandwiches eat in/take away
Itsu 'Eat beautiful, eat lighter': salads, snacks and fruit
Nero Café, sandwiches, panini, pastries
Gail's Kitchen Snack bar and restaurant, modern European cuisine (corner with Bedford Square)

Russell Square

Russell Square Gardens Café
Coffee and snacks until late afternoon
Friend at Hand Pub at rear of Russell Hotel
Pret a Manager Café/take away opposite Russell Square tube station

Charlotte Street

Siam Central Thai cuisine
Drakes Tabanco Sherry bar with tapas (corner with Windmill Street)

Torrington Place

Costa at Waterstones Café on lower ground floor
Patisserie Valerie Café, pastries, light lunches
Planet Organic Health food to eat in or take away

Southampton Row

Old Amalfi Italian restaurant open lunchtime and evening
Il Fornello Italian restaurant open lunchtime and evening
Trattoria Verdi Italian restaurant specialising in sea-food
Antalya Turkish cuisine
Cosmoba Traditional Italian cuisine (Cosmo Place)

Towards Holborn

Blue Door Bistro seasonal British dishes classically prepared (Montague Street)
British Museum Court Restaurant open daily for lunch, dinner Thursdays and Fridays; Gallery Café serving light lunches, sandwiches, soup and cake (Great Russell Street)
Truckles of Pied Bull Yard Wine bar; restaurant on lower ground floor serving traditional English food lunchtime and evenings (rear of Bloomsbury Square)
Café Le Cordon Bleu French patisserie and light lunches (Bloomsbury Square)
Tas Restaurant Anatolian cuisine (corner of Great Russell Street and Bloomsbury Street)

Imagining the Guyanas / Ecologies of Memory and Movement

The 3-G Network celebrates the Guyanas - French Guyane, Guyana, and Suriname

Keynote Speakers:

Alissa Trotz (University of Toronto)

Janette Bulkan (University of British Columbia)

This is the second conference of the 3-G Network's Celebration of the Guyanas, a gathering of scholars, authors, and activists, commemorating 40 years of Independence of the Republic of Suriname, 50 years of Independence of Guyana, and 70 years of the declaration of la Guyane as a French Département d'Outre-Mer. These countries are rarely focused upon together yet they are historically and culturally linked.

This conference seeks to engage the landscapes of memory as they are intertwined with the politics and ecologies of place and movement. These areas (French Guyane, Guyana, and Suriname) have been scarred by colonization and ethnic violence, their resources have been plundered, enormous political and ecological disasters have resulted. How are the changes within the ecological-scape articulated in the different communities that have been transported, or migrated, to and from one of these countries? How do the landscape disasters and environmental damages affect the different communities that compose the population in these 3-G countries? How do the different ethnic, religious and political communities resist these calamities and re-organize? What strategies of resilience and agency are being implemented locally and/or transnationally? How are these histories remembered, represented, imagined, and re-imagined in the memories and present realities of the peoples and communities living in these countries and the diaspora?

We are interested in these histories of multiple sedimentation. We welcome examinations of literature, comparisons of artistic expression, investigations of anthropological discoveries, as well as analysis of political, historical and literary accounts, that concentrate on the commonalities and distinctions within the lived and imagined experiences of the three Guyanas.

In the continuity of the first conference of the series, **The Pan-Guyanese Highway: Cayenne-Georgetown-Paramaribo** in Amsterdam (October 1-3, 2015), and of this conference in London, a symposium entitled **Imagining the Guyanas / Across the Disciplines** will conclude the series in Montpellier (November 4-5, 2016). It is possible to submit two different proposals for the two events provided they respond to the specificities of each call for paper.

This conference will include two special cultural events:

A John Coffin Memorial Fund Evening: The ‘Rose Hall Panel’ and a Reading by Fred D’Aguiar

(FREE), Thursday 27 October 2016, Chancellor’s Hall

Speakers at the ‘Rose Hall Panel’ chaired by Judith Misrahi-Barak and Clem Seecharan: Cyril Dabydeen, Gaiutra Bahadur, Jan Lowe Shinebourne

The names and biographies of four writers and scholars are listed below. What do they have in common ? They were all born in the Canje District, in Berbice, Guyana. They all grew up on, or close to, the Rose Hall Estate.

The idea behind this panel, revealingly entitled ‘The Rose Hall Panel’, is to bring together these exceptional personalities who have all physically moved away from Guyana to settle in the UK, the USA or Canada, but have all maintained a strong bond to Guyana through their fiction or non-fiction writing, through their poetry or their scholarly work, or through their commitment in favour of human rights.

Being able to have them meet in London at the School of Advanced Studies, and engage in a conversation with each other and with the audience, would be a treat many people would look forward to.

Gaiutra Bahadur is a Guyanese-American writer. She is the author of *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture*, a narrative history of indenture which was shortlisted in 2014 for the Orwell Prize, for political writing that is artful. Bahadur has received creative writing fellowships from the MacDowell Colony and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Her short story “The Stained Veil,” her first work of fiction, was published in September by the Commonwealth Writers Foundation at its new online literary magazine, *addastories.org*. Bahadur’s reportage and literary criticism have appeared in *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Nation*, *the Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Dissent*, *Foreign Policy* and *Lapham’s Quarterly*, among other publications. She was a daily newspaper staff writer in the United States for a decade, covering politics, immigration and the war in Iraq. For her work as a journalist, she was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard in 2007-2008. She is currently a fellow at the W.E.B. DuBois Research Institute at Harvard’s Hutchins Center, where she is at work on a book about Janet Jagan.

Cyril Dabydeen’s recent books include *God’s Spider/poetry* (Peepal Tree Press, UK), *My Multi-Ethnic Friends* and *Other Stories* (Guernica Editions, Toronto), and the anthology *Beyond Sangre Grande: Caribbean Writing Today* (Tsar/Mawenzi House, Toronto). Previous books include: *Jogging in Havana* (1992), *Black Jesus and Other Stories* (1996), *Berbice Crossing* (1997), *My Brahmin Days* (2000), *North of the Equator* (2001), *Play a Song Somebody: New and Selected Short Stories* (2003), *Imaginary Origins: New and Selected Poems* (2005), and the novel *Drums of My Flesh* (2007) - winner of the Guyana Prize for best novel, and nominated for the IMPAC/Dublin Prize. Cyril’s work has appeared in over 60 literary mags and anthologies world-wide. He is a former Poet Laureate of Ottawa (1984-87). He also worked for many years in social justice issues with federal and

municipal governments in Canada. He has done over 300 readings from his books across Canada, the USA., Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean. He teaches Creative Writing at the University of Ottawa. He was born in Pln. Rose Hall, Canje, Guyana.

Jan Shinebourne was born in Guyana in 1947. She received her early education in Guyana and started a B.A degree in English at the University of Guyana which she completed in the U.K when she moved there in 1970, then did postgraduate studies at the University of London. During the 1980s she was a cultural and political activist and was a book reviewer, writer and associate editor for several magazines, including *The Southall Review*, *Race Today*, *Spare Rib* and *Everywoman*. She was also a lecturer at several London colleges.

In 1991, she did a British Council reading tour in Germany, and in 1992, she was Visiting Fellow at New York University.

Peepal Tree Press has published her four novels and collection of short stories. In 1987, her first novel *Timepiece* won the Guyana Prize for a first novel. In 2005, her collection of stories *The Godmother and Other Stories* was shortlisted for the Guyana Prize.

A Reading by Fred D'Aguiar:

The 'Rose Hall Panel' will be followed by a reading and Q&A with Guyanese poet, playwright and novelist Fred D'Aguiar. Born in London in 1960 to Guyanese parents, D'Aguiar lived in Guyana until he was 12. He trained as a psychiatric nurse before reading African and Caribbean Studies at the University of Kent, Canterbury, graduating in 1985. His first collection of poetry, *Mama Dot* (1985), was published to much acclaim and established his reputation as one of the finest British poets of his generation. His first novel, *The Longest Memory* (1994), won both the David Higham Prize for Fiction and the Whitbread First Novel Award, and his latest, *Children of Paradise* (2014), tells the story of a utopian society and explores oppression of both mind and body. His plays include *A Jamaican Airman Foresees His Death*, performed at the Royal Court Theatre, London, in 1991, and his poetry collection *Continental Shelf* (2009) was shortlisted for the 2009 T. S. Eliot Prize. He was Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Miami and now teaches at UCLA.

This event is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a reception. Supported by the John Coffin Memorial Trust.

A Celebration of Guyana in Poetry & Music

(£7, £5 for conference delegates), Friday 28 October 2016, Chancellor's Hall

Guyana is a unique country on the continent of South America — from being the only English-speaking nation on the mainland to its diverse multiracial population, from its Dutch, Arawak and Caribbean influences to its rich plethora of natural resources, rivers and rainforests. And Guyanese culture is equally as polyphonic, melding ancient rhythms and languages of the indigenous populations with those of newer arrivals from Africa, India and Europe.

Celebrating 50 years since its independence from the United Kingdom are four of the most well-known artists from Guyana, whose work reflects the country's colourful past and present. Come and listen to three award-winning poets – **John Agard**, **Malika Booker**, **Cyril Dabydeen** and **Grace Nichols** – whose lively work moves from a newly independent Guyana to a postcolonial Britain both uncomfortable with its new arrivals yet strangely home. Alongside them is noted flautist **Keith Waithe**, playing his distinctive fusion of jazz, classical, African, Caribbean, Asian and Western music. It promises to be an unforgettable 50th birthday party.

John Agard is an African-Guyanese poet, playwright and children's writer who has been living in the UK since 1977. Author of over 40 books, he has performed all over the world and his work is taught in British schools. He has won numerous awards, including the 1982 Casa de las Américas Prize (Cuba) for *Man to Pan*, the 2003 Cholmondeley Award and the 2012 Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry.

Malika Booker is a British writer, poet and multi-disciplinary artist of Guyanese and Grenadian parentage. She founded Malika's Poetry Kitchen, a writer's collective for beginning and emerging poets. Her poetry collection *Pepper Seed* was published in 2013; it was longlisted for the 2014 OCM Bocas Prize and shortlisted for the 2014 Seamus Heaney Centre prize for first full collection.

Cyril Dabydeen was born in Guyana and moved to Canada, where he teaches Creative Writing at the University of Ottawa. He has published 20 books of fiction and poetry. His many awards include: Poet Laureate of Ottawa, Certificate of Merit Government of Canada, Lifetime Achievement Award Council of Canadians, and Exemplary Achievement Award Guyana Cultural Council of New York.

Grace Nichols is a Guyanese poet whose first collection, *I is a Long-Memored Woman* (1983), won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize. Much of her poetry is characterised by Caribbean rhythms and culture and influenced by Guyanese and Amerindian folklore. In 2011 Nichols was a member of the first ever judging panel for a new schools poetry competition named *Anthologise*, spearheaded by Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy.

Keith Waithe is a Guyana-born musician, composer and teacher, based in the UK since 1977. He is best known as a flautist and founder of the Macusi Players – a world music jazz band whose name derives from the indigenous Guyanese Macushi people – and has been 'acknowledged as the best flute player that Guyana has ever produced'. He has developed a technique he calls 'vocal gymnastics', using the voice to reproduce percussive sounds.

This public event is organised by the conference partners in association with Speaking Volumes Live Literature Productions as part of the *Imagining the Guyanas*, a three-day Celebration of the Guyanas, and will be followed by a reception.



Conference schedule Thursday 27 October

Senate House, Court Room

9.00-10.00 Welcome coffee and registration
10.00-10.30 Conference Opening

10.30-12.00 **REPRESENTING, ARCHIVING, CURATING HISTORY IN THE GUYANA**
Chair: Maggi Morehouse

Grace Ali: Un|Fixed Homeland

Maria del Pilar Kaladeen: 'Rebel, Rebel'? Interrogating 'Archival' ; Representations of the South Indian Community of Guyana

Leon Wainwright: Transatlantic Material Mediations: The Political Geography of Caribbean Art and 'Exchange'

14.00-15.30 **LANDSCAPE & OIKOS (1)**
Chair: Kathleen Gyssels

Tim Cribb: The Guyanas: Writing Man

Michael Mitchell: Wilson Harris: Magus of the Interior

Gemma Robinson: 'Reality of Trespass'

15.30-17.00 **LANDSCAPE & OIKOS (2)**
Chair: Gemma Robinson

Kathleen Gyssels: 'To an unknown soldier': World War II and the Human and Ecological Disasters in French Guyane, Guyana, and Suriname

Marta Fratzczak: **Guyana and Western (Eco)Utopian dreams:** Comparative reading of *Shadows Move Among Them* (1951) and *Children of Paradise* (2014)

Harald Leusmann: **Fred D'Aguiar's 'Guyanese Days':** Imagining Guyana in the Ecotone

Senate House, Chancellor's Hall

17.00-17.30 Coffee and Tea

17.30-20.00 **Rose Hall Panel and a Reading by Fred D'Aguiar**
(John Coffin Memorial Fund evening, Free)

Speakers: **Cyril Dabydeen, Gaiutra Bahadur, Jan Lowe Shinebourne**

Chairs: Judith Misrahi-Barak and Clem Seecharan

20.00-21.00 Wine Reception

Friday 28 October

Senate House, Court Room

8.30-9.00 Registration

9.00-10.30 **A 'GEOTEXTUAL' POLITICS FOR THE GUYANAS?**

Chair: Thomas Lacroix

Ateeka Khan: Shared Resistance: Ethnic Identity and the Fragmented Rise of Nationalism in Guyana and Suriname

Jerome Branche: Wilson Harris/Walter Rodney: Of Writing, Knighting, and Nationness

Natalie Hopkinson: Beyond Cats & Dogs: An analysis of the Interactivity Foundation's cross-racial small-group discussions in Guyana in 2015

10.30-11.00 Coffee and tea

11.00-12.30 **ECONOMICS OF BELONGING**

Chair: Rita Christian

Clem Seecharan: Plantation Port Mourant — Cricket and Politics on the Corentyne after the Second World War

Chiel Verbruggen: Property Law in the Guyanas

Sonja Boon: Telling Stories with Gold

14.00- 15.00 **Keynote - Alissa Trotz:** 'The Bitten Tongue of Memory': Rethinking Violence in Postcolonial Guyana

15.00-17.00 **MIGRATION, MOVEMENT, DIASPORA**

Chair: Judith Misrahi-Barak

Yoshiko Shibata: Questioning 'Chinese-ness' in Guyana: Revisiting Diaspora Consciousness, Sense of Belonging and Transnational Movements

Kerry-Jane Wallart: 'wide is the span': Poetics of displacement in Martin Carter's University of Hunger

Senate House, Chancellor's Hall

17.00-18.00 Coffee and tea

18.00-20.00 **Celebration of Guyana in Poetry & Music,**
(£7, £5 for conference delegates)

Performances and Readings by :

John Agard, Malika Booker, Cyril Dabydeen, Grace Nichols, Keith Waithe

20.00-21.00 Wine Reception

Saturday 29 October

Senate House, Court Room

9.00-9.30 Registration

9.30-11.00 **CULTURAL PRACTICES**

Chair: Alissa Trotz

Michelle Yaa Asantewa: Guyanese Komfa: A ritual art in practice ; Re-membering and Recrediting the knowledge – arts and cultural expressions

Ananya Jahanara Kabir: Zouk, salsa, lambada, chutney: Dancing in and through the Guyanas

Sinah Kloß : Giving to Mother Ganga: Practices of Recycling Clothing in Transnational Guyanese Hindu Communities

11.00-11.30 Coffee and tea

11.30-13.00 **Keynote - Janette Bulkan:** Rentier Societies in Guyana & Suriname and the Consequent Lack of a Social Contract

14.00-15.30 **INDIGENEITY, MYTH & MEMORY**

Chair: Janette Bulkan

Katherine MacDonald: The Mythology and Ecology of the Rupununi Landscape

Lisa Katharina Grund: Makushi women in a frontier region: Experiences of movement

Gabriel Cambraia Neiva: A Journey to the Source of Imagination: A Reading of 'The Laughter of Wapishana' by Wilson Harris

Closing remarks

Abstracts of Papers

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Janette Bulkan: Rentier societies in Guyana and Suriname and the consequent lack of a social contract

Public lands make up over 80 percent of Guyana's and 90 percent of Suriname's territory and are held in trust by the State. The State is also the trustee of territorial waters and intangible public property like the airwaves. In both countries public property in both tangible and intangible goods is privatized *de facto* in 'evergreen' licences and increasingly concentrated in oligopolies linked to State cronyism. Furthermore, it is legal in both countries to be a rentier of those licences acquired to extract mineral and forest resources from, or to grow agricultural crops on, State Lands and State Forests. The rentier tradition started in Dutch colonial times and has grown into an excrescence on the body politic in both Nation-States. This rentier tradition contributes to the alienation, in the Marxist sense, of workers from the means of production; the continuation of exploitative labour practices; and the resulting lack of a social contract among the constituency / ethnic groupings in both nation states.

My talk examines the scale of rentier practices in the hinterland extractive industries of logging and mining. I consider how these practices are extended onto Indigenous communal titled lands (in Guyana) or on State-awarded logging concession licences (HKVs in Suriname). I consider how such practices are linked to current social pathologies such as the lack of a social contract intra- and inter-Indigenous and Tribal Communities, and inter- and intra- coastal / hinterland societies. I summarize the evidence of the persistence of geographical and social divides, endemic hinterland poverty and degraded coastal and hinterland spaces and water bodies. I suggest that a public discourse on rentier practices and pathologies would open up a space for building a social contract. I present examples of alternative paths, such as the focus on the Public Trust / Indigenous Trust paradigms in the USA and the adaptation to the 21st century of the Settlement Procedures in colonial Forest Reservation.

Alissa Trotz: 'The Bitten Tongue of Memory': Rethinking Violence in Postcolonial Guyana

May 26 1966 marked the inauguration of Guyanese independence, on the heels of more than a decade of external destabilization and internecine struggles, and in the aftermath of violence that swept the country's coast and whose principal casualties were Africans and Indians, descendants of enslaved peoples and indentured labourers. Against this backdrop, Guyanese poet Martin Carter's reference to "the bitten tongue of memory" captures the uneasy silence that continues to haunt contemporary Guyana, and that barely papers over competing and deeply polarised claims when conversations about 'the past' erupt into public space. Drawing on fieldwork from a bauxite mining community where violence was experienced by both Africans and Indians, I hope to offer a different reading, one that nudges certainty and its accompanying violence aside to make space for a different and embodied ethics of engagement. The talk takes its cue from Guyanese poetic and literary archives, transnational feminist analytics and the landscape of the community itself. Foregrounding place as a multilayered site of contact and relationality invites us to consider indigeneity and diaspora in this transnational space. What else, or in what ways differently from what we have, might these other geographies of memory offer us?

RESEARCH PAPERS in alphabetical order

Grace Ali: Un|Fixed Homeland

I am the Curator of 'Un|Fixed Homeland,' which brings together photographers and photo-based artists living/working in Guyana and its three major diasporic points in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. (Summer 2016, Aljira Center for Contemporary Art in Newark, New Jersey, USA.) The 3G London Conference poses this sobering question: 'How are the histories of the Guyanas remembered, represented, imagined, and re-imagined in the memories and present realities of the peoples and communities living in these countries and the diaspora?' To answer this question, we must look to the artistic production of artists coming out of and working in the region who are using their work to challenge and re-imagine the global public's view of the Guyanas. Via the work featured in 'Un|Fixed Homeland,' I unpack how artists engage and trouble Guyana as a fixed or unfixed homeland, a constantly shifting 'idea' or 'memory,' and the tension between place and placelessness, physical place or psychic space. The canon of contemporary Guyanese artists/photographers remains in the margins. Meanwhile, what the global public sees of the visual culture of the Guyanas centers on the exotic, tropical, and touristic. 'Un|Fixed Homeland' aims to counter this historic malpractice. In my presentation, I demonstrate how contemporary artists make imaginative use of photography and photo-based art to document realities of migration, tease out the symbols of decay and loss, envision experiences of displacement and dislocation, and offer new modes of viewing Guyana.

Michelle Yaa Asantewa: Guyanese Komfa: A ritual art in practice

Re-membling and Recrediting the knowledge – arts and cultural expressions

Komfa is an African derived spiritual practice found in Guyana. In comparison to other diasporic practices like Santeria (Cuba), Vodun (Haiti), Candomle (Brazil), Kumina, Myalism (Jamaica), Shango, spiritual Baptists (in Trinidad) and to some extent Winti in Suriname very little is known about this practice. It comprises an ethnic pantheon of spirits: African, Amerindian, Chinese, Dutch (Djukas) East Indian, English and Spanish. These ethnic spirits are included in the practice because they reflect the people who contributed to Guyana's economic, social, cultural and economic history. Whilst practitioners of the other African derived practices are experiencing renewed appreciation and interest in their craft, Komfa practitioners remain ambivalent about showcasing the religion. The forthcoming publications *Guyanese Komfa: the ritual art of trance* and *Something Buried in the yard* will highlight Komfa's artistic possibilities, reviving it from obscurity. This presentation will illustrate how Guyanese Komfa can be referred to as an empowering social and cultural experience within the Guyanese diaspora. The first Komfa ceremony—a 'drum wok ritual' was held in London at the end of 2015, which the presentation will showcase. It featured Pan-African elements, acknowledged the Amerindian spirits and included trance dancing. Formerly associated with the water mammi spirits from its ancestral roots in West Africa, Komfa was forced underground by British colonials who had likewise outlawed and discredited practices connected with their interpretation of obeah. Practitioners reframed the practice, absorbing some Christian aspects and identified a pantheon of spirits that are associated with Guyana's historical formation. The ritual in London featured an invocation to the water mammi spirit (to manifest) and the creation of a 'ganda' (a sacred space usually made in the yard) was considered an act of cultural liberation. The potential of Komfa to be an empowering symbol of cultural identity and form of artistic expression is relevant to a Guyana celebrating its 50th year of independence in 2016.

Sonja Boon: Telling Stories with Gold

From the mythical Eldorado to contemporary large-scale gold mining operations, gold has been central to colonial imaginings of Suriname. In the nineteenth-century, the discovery of rich veins of gold sparked a gold rush that brought workers from across Caribbean as well as Europe, North America, and South America to Suriname to seek their fortunes, with newspapers from as far afield as Australia reporting their finds. Today, 150 years later, gold remains one of the country's most important export products, with companies like Canada's IAMGOLD corporation, operating at the Rosebel mine site, exporting over 85,000 kg of gold over the past decade. As both natural resource and conceptual metaphor, gold has also played a central role in entangled family histories. Not only does it figure in stories of wealth creation, but it also appears in stories of migration and the complex and interwoven colonial intimacies that necessarily resulted from such migrations. In this autoethnographic paper, I draw on a range of sources, including historical newspapers, photographs, and other archival materials, as well as on scholarship on historical and contemporary gold mining in Suriname, to consider the conceptual and imaginative relevance of gold in family stories. In particular, I look at how gold has been mobilized in the service of loss, considering the intersections between place, environment, memory, and identity.

Jerome Branche: Wilson Harris/Walter Rodney: Of Writing, Knighting, and Nationness

The paper considers the recent knighting of Guyanese writer/philosopher Wilson Harris (2010), as a signal trans-national and post-colonial event. Given the independence of the former colony of British Guiana (1966), the event raises suggestive questions regarding sovereignty, (im)migration and national belonging. The younger Harris, based on his work as a land surveyor, may be said, in his early writings (*The Palace of the Peacock*, 1960, particularly), to have executed a creative narrative of nationalistic valoration and 'discovery' of his native land and its multiracial inhabitants, by way of a writerly performance that I refer to as 'geotextuality', on account of its imaginative investment in history and the landscape. A similar nationalistic trajectory to Harris's might be claimed by radical Guyanese intellectual and historian, Walter Rodney (1944-1981), both on the basis of his Pan-African concerns, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972), and the patriotic turn subsequently articulated in works such as *A History of the Guyanese Working Class* (1981), Kofi Baadu, out of Africa, and Lakshmi, out of India. Rodney, in contrast to the emigrated and celebrated Harris, was assassinated through the machinations of the 1980s administration in Guyana while pursuing a politics of national regeneration and uplift. Posthumous recognition of the latter, following 'knightly' premises of loyalty, honour, and courage, the paper proposes, may yet result in an after-the-fact recognition of the 'nobility' albeit vernacular, of Rodney. The paper proposes an intertextual and relational reading of the two, in order to tease out relevant issues relating to the national, the extra-national, the post-national, and the post-colonial imagined communities.

Tim Cribb: The Guyanas: Writing Man

The most comprehensive and practically informed imagining of the oikos of the Guyanas at the fundamental levels of plate tectonics, geomorphology, water cycles and resulting flora and fauna, both European and Amerindian, is that of Wilson Harris. This is because of the years he spent in the interior as a hydrographic surveyor. From this experience, and from the scientific principles of hydrographic method, he derives a politics not limited by national boundaries, an ethics independent of religiously sanctioned or humanist codes, and a psychology, including memory

psychology, enmeshed in intricate networks of motivations derived from physical place. The writing he develops is not landscape writing, nor discursive writing about the Guyanas, but a way for the land to write through him; yet its principles are not those of Romanticism, neither Wordsworthian theodicy, still less nationalist ideologies of blood and soil, but more the mechanics of Newtonian physics, including not only violence that humans wreak on the land but violence intrinsic to natural processes and artistic creation. I will demonstrate these principles with reference to the journey to the interior, including the psychological interior of the remembered journey, starting from the plane crash in *Da Silva Da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness*. My paper develops ideas first explored in 'Place and Time: the Two Anchors' in *The Invention of Legacy*, ed. Benedicte Ledent, Marc Delrez, Geoff Davis (Rodopi, 2016) and in 'Kaieteur: place of the *pharmakos* and deconstruction' in the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 49:2 (May 2013) : 198-208.

Marta Fratzczak: Guyana and Western (Eco)Utopian dreams: Comparative reading of *Shadows Move Among Them* (1951) and *Children of Paradise* (2014)

Sir Walter Raleigh in *Discovery of the large, rich and beautiful Empire of Guyana with the relation of the great golden city of Manoa* (1596), depicted Guyana not only as a possible El Dorado but also as truly untouched, yet welcoming tropical space, abundant in natural goods, ideal for 'hunting, hawking, fishing, fowling, and the rest', inhabited by the timid savages (1886 [1596]: 36). Though the factual knowledge of Guyana among the British imperial audience was slight, the myth of Raleigh's journey continued to draw to the country people looking for a respite from the constraints of the broadly defined Western civilization. Paradoxically enough, their search for pre-modern utopia has irreversibly spoiled 'the-yet-unspoilt' land, while solidifying the image of Guyana as an earthly paradise. The present paper proposes a comparative reading of two novels, *Shadows Move Among Them* and *Children of Paradise*, both revisiting the utopian myth of Guyana and effectively travestying the (neo)colonial Western utopian dream that, in fact, is still being revoked to justify the exploitation of the landscape and the Amerindian minority. Methodologically, the paper draws from theory of utopia, eco-critical and post-human studies with a view to indicate how the Guyanese authors have attempted to de-construct and deal with the heritage of colonial representations of their land and landscape. In a broader perspective, the paper tries to show that Guyanese literature may constitute a valuable reference point for the contemporary debates on the need to redefine Western thinking about the supremacy of man over nature.

Lisa Katharina Grund: Makushi women in a frontier region: Experiences of movement

This paper focuses on mobility among Makushi women in the Rupununi and South Pakaraima region, Guyana. It highlights the interconnection between gender and movement in order to unravel aspects of community life and people's relation to the landscape they inhabit, populated with different human and non-human beings. Two Makushi women, one living in the mountains, the other in the savannahs, will lead us through different journeys and life histories. In the first, a journey through a mountainous region, traversing the territory of different indigenous people, brings to light the social etiquettes of hospitality when on the move, in connection with communication, sharing and associated dangers. In the savannah, another middle-aged, married woman, despite having been taught about the virtue of permanence and to fear the unfamiliar, tells of her experience of travelling miles, sometimes even alone, to Lethem or Brazil, challenged by political and imaginary borders. Departing from the specific situation of individual Makushi women—and their experiences of temporary dislocation—, the paper aims to further hypothesise on the women's position in the

community, their imagination of the world and knowledge about how to move in it appropriately, taking into consideration the complex interplay of forces at stake inside and outside one's home.

Kathleen Gyssels: 'To an unknown soldier': World War II and the Human and Ecological Disasters in French Guyane, Guyana, and Suriname

Less studied and represented are the contributions by Guyanese soldiers to the terrible conflict in Europe during both the first and the Second World War. Not only do Carter, Damas, and Brathwaite address the material and human disaster caused by the wars, but also the ecological damages both in Centre and Periphery. French Guyane and Guyana, Suriname and the Caribbean have produced 'Black soldiers' who often paid with their lives the wars of their ex-colonizing forces. Poets such like Kamau Brathwaite (Barbados/ NY), Carter (Guyana) and Damas also have addressed the ecological disasters and chaos produced by these military conflicts.

Natalie Hopkinson: Beyond Cats & Dogs: An analysis of the Interactivity Foundation's cross-racial small-group discussions in Guyana in 2015

This multimedia presentation will analyze a series of discussions facilitated by and for young college students that took place in Georgetown, Guyana leading up to the national elections in May 2015. Small-group discussion is a rich part of Guyana's history—whether it was future presidents Janet and Cheddi Jagan in their Georgetown home before Independence, or Dr. Walter Rodney's 'groundings' discussions among the Rastafarians in Jamaica and Guyana. Guyana also has a well-known and exhaustively documented history of racial strife and racial violence. The U.S.-based nonprofit Interactivity Foundation trained a local facilitator who organized several small-group discussions among his peers leading up to the 2015 national elections. Although the facilitator and participants were all born long after free and fair elections came to Guyana, the historical contest between African and Indian Guyanese has created a deeply embedded cultural narrative. During one discussion, a university student of Indian descent said he never expected voters of one race to vote for another, because that would be 'like asking cat to vote for dog'. In the subsequent election, young voters belied this sentiment. Significant numbers of Indo-Guyanese voted for the Afro-Guyanese candidate, assuring his victory. The presentation will explore how in an ongoing context of racial essentialism, such discussions create space to humanize the Other, articulate fears as well as confront stereotypes. This presentation will conclude with recommendations for how well facilitated discussions can help young people of different walks of life, across the Guianas and beyond to challenge old narratives and create new ones.

Ananya Jahanara Kabir: Zouk, salsa, lambada, chutney: Dancing in and through the Guyanas

This paper will draw on empirical research conducted in Surinam and Brazil as well to define the Guyanas as embedded in an Amazonian-Caribbean duality which crossed linguistic borders and specific colonial and postcolonial trajectories.

Maria del Pilar Kaladeen: 'Rebel, Rebel'? Interrogating 'Archival' Representations of the South Indian Community of Guyana

The purpose of this talk is to analyse and question textual representations of the South Indian community of Guyana in colonial documents from the 19th and early 20th centuries and in contemporary works of literature by Guyanese writers. The term 'archival' is used in the title in its broadest sense; this talk will also include references to the author's personal archive of interviews

with members of the South Indian community of Guyana. In many countries that sought indentured labourers, South Indians formed a majority. However in Guyana and Trinidad this group continually constituted a minority against an overwhelming North Indian majority, making up around five percent of the total of indentured labourers who came to Guyana. Planter prejudice was one of a number of factors that played a part in the low number of labourers recruited from the Madras Presidency between 1838-1917. In colonial Guyana, South Indians were largely presented in official documents as rebellious non-conformists who were unable to respect the hierarchical nature of the plantation system. Guyanese writers such as David Dabydeen, Peter Kempadoo, Moses Nagamootoo and Jan Lowe Shinebourne have perpetuated and played with these ideas in their novels, celebrating South Indian characters as heroic, anti-colonial figures. This paper will interrogate the representations highlighted above and seek to examine why the same series of stereotypes simultaneously served both colonists and postcolonial writers. It will also suggest how we might helpfully look beyond these stereotypes to understand the fascinating history of this community in Guyana.

Ateeka Khan: Shared Resistance: Ethnic Identity and the Fragmented Rise of Nationalism in Guyana and Suriname

The indentureship system (1838-1940) continued the process of mass population migration to the Caribbean that had begun during slavery. In response to this global dislocation, a collective identity of 'East Indianness' developed among Indian migrants in the Caribbean, particularly in British Guiana (Guyana) and Dutch Guiana (Suriname). This ethnic identity played a key role in the resistance to colonialism, economic exploitation, and religious indoctrination. This paper will argue that the formation and development of this identity occurred in both the physical and social landscapes. Firstly, concentrating East Indians in plantation zones fostered a sense of community and undermined deeply rooted ideas of caste. Their shared concerns about food production and workers' rights on plantations and, later, at meetings of labour organizations tied economic concerns to this growing East Indian identity. Secondly, cultural and religious organizations allowed East Indians to cope collectively with migration. Drawing on both archival and oral records of cultural groups, labour organizations, and political parties, this paper will show that the geographical proximity of East Indians and the assemblies of social, cultural, and labour organizations created hybrid social spaces where anti-colonial, nationalist sentiments bred. However, this study will also show that an unfortunate effect of this close connection between economic concerns and ethnic identity was the racialized development of nationalism. These physical and social landscapes then engendered a fragmented nationalism that is constantly renegotiated when political changes occur in postcolonial Guyana and Suriname.

Sinah Kloß: Giving to Mother Ganga: Practices of Recycling Clothing in Transnational Guyanese Hindu Communities

When Guyanese Hindus conduct Ganga Puja, saris or five yards of cloth are offered to the deity and are placed in running water. While this religious practice of offering clothing and food ('charhaway') is common in Guyana, it is conceived as problematic in diasporic communities. For example in New York, Hindu 'shore rituals' such as Ganga Puja have undergone transformation as they are defined as 'pollution' in this new environment. U.S. authorities have implemented legal restrictions that prohibit the 'disposal' of offerings in water, as these are said to cause environmental problems. Consequently all offerings have to be recollected before going home. Such restrictions prohibit

Hindus to conduct pujas in their traditional way, a frequently lamented aspect among Guyanese Hindus. This presentation discusses how the practice of Ganga Puja reveals notions of pollution, disposal and recycling among Guyanese Hindus, both in Guyana and in the diaspora. It highlights how the 'disposal' of garments in water during puja is conceptualized as a ritual mode of gift exchange that creates merit and blessings for the giver, while the deity Ganga, who is said to reside in the water, receives these garments. Therefore, Guyanese Hindus do not necessarily regard all acts of 'disposing' objects in water as pollution, but conceptualize some of them as modes of recycling and exchange. Questions are raised such as: how are Hindu-Guyanese practices of offering clothing affected by migration? How are they influenced by changing social and physical environments? How do notions of thrift and wastefulness, pollution and auspiciousness influence practices of 'recycling' clothing?

Harald Leusmann: Fred D'Aguiar's 'Guyanese Days': Imagining Guyana in the Ecotone
'Ecotone' is the boundary, or transitional area, where two ecosystems meet. Derived from the Greek, it consists of 'oikos', which means 'home', and 'tonus', which means 'tension' and suggests that these two homes, or communities, or entities, coming together and generate a creative tension. In what Marie Louise Pratt calls a 'contact zone' between cultures and Avtar Brah refers to as a 'diaspora space', Fred D'Aguiar, in the long evocative poem 'Guyanese Days' from his first collection *Mama Dot*, has set himself up as an interpreter of the Guyanese diaspora experience with one foot planted in a Guyana he remembers from his childhood and the other foot planted in the environment of a 1970s Britain. Through the cultural practice of bringing the memories of a Guyana of his youth to Britain, D'Aguiar is like a guide, recording instances and occurrences that the generation of those Guyanese growing up in Britain was not able to experience. What they are able to experience though is vivid images of reading and writing that the poem's narrator mixes with the sensuality of the Guyanese landscape. The narrator's process of reinvention of a Guyanese landscape intends to show a younger audience in the Guyanese diaspora in Britain a window into a different, but in no way a single or fixed, origin and life away from the stark and challenging reality of growing up in the conflicting ecotone of being of Guyanese descent and not quite belonging to the place.

Katherine MacDonald: The Mythology and Ecology of the Rupununi Landscape
The mythological story of the 'Tree of Life' documents how the Rupununi landscape was created when a giant, mystical tree was cut down by Wapishana ancestors, and the fruits, wood chips, branches, and stump were scattered across the savannahs, becoming the nature farms, mineral deposits, rivers, and mountains seen today. This cultural knowledge of Indigenous landscapes, represented through ancestor stories, integrates both the geographical knowledge and the environmental knowledge of the Wapishana, and demonstrates continuity with the land since the time of the ancestors. However, the Indigenous Rupununi landscape is being increasingly threatened by the actions of outside forces and peoples, including localized climate change impacts, foreign miners, plantation agriculturalists, and international conservation organizations, disrupting traditional ecological connections. After examining these threats through an allegorical analysis of the Tree of Life story, this paper argues that in response to these external pressures, the Wapishana are exploring how their cultural knowledge, embedded with the geography and environments of the savannah, can be strengthened through the politicization of their mythological landscape.

Michael Mitchell: Wilson Harris: Magus of the Interior

This paper will investigate how Guyanese author Wilson Harris uses his experience of surveying in the rainforests and savannahs of the interior to develop a new literary language, and how he employs this to redefine the relationship between the human inhabitants and their natural environment. This involves not only showing how the forest, rivers and rocks can be seen in entirely new ways, but also how they are used to initiate a radical revision of the history and economy of the country and the roles played by the different ethnic groups that make up its population. Of even wider significance, however, is the use Harris makes of this new fiction to explore the interior of the human mind, which he achieves in terms of a philosophical, psychological and spiritual quest which makes his work relevant far beyond the country of his birth. Harris's approach resonates with recent discussions concerning the nature of space and time and fundamental global ecological, political and social concerns.

Gabriel Cambraia Neiva: A journey to the source of imagination: a reading of 'The Laughter of Wapishana' by Wilson Harris

This paper proposes a reading of the short narrative 'The Laughter of Wapishana', by the Guyanese novelist Wilson Harris (*The Age of the Rainmakers*, 1971). 'The Laughter of Wapishana' is a dream-journey of a young girl named Wapishana to the source of laughter, escaping from the plague of drought. The fictional narrative leads the girl, Wapishana, inside indigenous cosmologies and uses key philosophical concepts as pathways that, in the end, make her rediscover herself and her people. The interweaving of different logics and oppositions – e.g. Western and indigenous, drought and flood – are tensions embodied in the narrative that challenge Wapishana, but also allow a recreation of her world, by entering the very cosmogonic moment which formed spaces and peoples. Creativity, as mentioned by the author in an introductory note, has a political scale, even more so for indigenous peoples, whose territories are threatened by economic pressures. The girl, Wapishana, overcomes religious and commercial Western discourses in the antipode locus of creation, reflecting about human existence and also about Guyanese cultural diversity, in the backdrop of colonial processes. This reading will be guided by the Wapishana ethnography *As Flores da Fala* [The Flowers of Speech, Farage, 1997], a study on rhetorical practices of this people, in order to highlight fundamental aesthetical and ethical principles, with which Harris establishes a dialogue.

Gemma Robinson: 'Reality of Trespass' - proposal for Imagining the Guyanas/Ecologies of Memory and Movement

This paper revisits Wilson Harris's early work from the 1940s and 1950s, within the context of regionality and in particular Harris's interests in the Guyanas and the Americas. I argue that there is a 'geological turn' in Harris's work that opens up ways to think about the wholeness of Guyanese, Caribbean and American identities and poetics. In particular, I consider Harris's 1949 essay, 'The Reality of Trespass', in relation to his 1952 short pamphlet of poetry, *Eternity to Season*, and the later novel, *Resurrection at Sorrow Hill*. I argue that the notion of 'trespass' is advanced by Harris as a term to reimagine the cultural logic of conquest, colonialism and indigeneity, and to show the radical connectedness of 'new world' cultures. Since the fourteenth century the term 'trespass' has been associated with transgression, violation and offence, and as such is a model term for acts of 'new world' exploitation. However, its meaning in Old French and Medieval Latin is 'to pass beyond or across'. In choosing this word to describe the 'comprehensive reality' of 'the Americas', Harris introduces the idea of material and immaterial connection and movement across regions, without

glibly eliding the negativity of encounter. I will use this idea of 'trespass' as a twin for Harris's defining beliefs in cross-cultural bridging and to understand his art of intimate geographies of Guyana through to his visionary regional prehistories of land, sea and river.

Clem Seecharan: Plantation Port Mourant — Cricket and Politics on the Corentyne after the Second World War

This paper examines the unique role of one sugar plantation, Plantation Port Mourant, on the Corentyne Coast of colonial Guyana (neighbouring Surinam). It produced the famous politician Cheddi Jagan (1918-97), as well as several professionals in education, law and medicine. No less remarkable: it was also the nursery for many world-class cricketers, crucial to the dominance of West Indies cricket in the 1960s, under the first black captain Sir Frank Worrell (1924-67). The three most prominent were Rohan Kanhai (1935-), Basil Butcher (1933-) and Joe Solomon (1930-). It is arguable that Port Mourant – styled 'Little Moscow' – was a seminal source of the post-War radicalism in Guyanese politics, the Marxism of Cheddi Jagan, which alienated the Americans into fomenting subversive activities (led by the CIA) in order to make the colony ungovernable under Jagan. But it is also arguable that at Port Mourant this radicalism also found expression in a generation of dynamic, attacking batsmen, who sustained the sugar workers' pride and dreams of possibilities even as the radical agenda of Jagan collided fatally with American power during the Cold War in the region. The central argument is that Cheddi Jagan and Rohan Kanhai (one of the three best batsmen in the world in the 1960s) were shaped by the unique environmental, economic and cultural attributes of a plantation that had no parallel on the coastland of British Guiana, possibly all three of the Guyanas. It's a fascinating story that has never been adequately told.

Yoshiko Shibata: Questioning 'Chinese-ness' in Guyana: Revisiting Diaspora Consciousness

This presentation probes into diaspora consciousness and sense of belonging of the Chinese in Guyana based on my fieldwork. I focus on the situations until a decade ago, i.e. before the large-scale introduction of new sets of Chinese and their rapid participation/intervention in development, national and otherwise, but comparisons will be made with the contemporary changes in Guyana, Suriname and Jamaica. Contrary to the high affinity with China/Chinese mainlanders in Suriname, which declared to make the Chinese New Year a Surinamese national holiday since April 2014, Guyana still seems to search for its original relationships with China/Chinese. With massive emigration of the creolized local Chinese from Guyana, 'original' landscapes remembering Chinese heritages were scarcely left, except the Chinese Association and St. Saviour's (Anglican) Church in Georgetown as well as the monument in Windsor Forest. Disjuncture with Chinese roots and physical connections with 'original' Chinese seems to have dissociated some Chinese creoles from conscious remembrance of authenticated memorials or submerged such incentives partly because of their intermarriage and strong commitment as Guyanese citizens. Furthermore, utilizing digital technologies and remembering transnational 'branches' of their family trees, have stimulated their identification and ethnicisation. Witnessing gradual changes of human-, land-, and sound-scapes of their vicinities and media coverage also renewed their once 'diluted' 'Chinese-ness,' hence re-invigorating diasporic consciousness.

Chiel Verbruggen: Property Law in the Guyanas

A piece of land is a place to live on, build a family and a vehicle to leave accumulated wealth to the next generation. This paper is about property rights in the developed coastal zone, the economic

and political center of the Guyanas. The goal of this paper is to discuss three main characteristics of property law in the Guyanas. The first is that all land belongs to the government. This of course clashes with the rights of indigenous people and maroons. The second is that every citizen can ask the government for a piece of land. The government gives rights on pieces of land for free, where some get a right on land and others do not. The third is that modern property rights are not forever in the Guyanas. They end after a period of 15 to 70 years. During that period the government can end the right for the general good. This is not necessarily the best way to attract investments. These three characteristics will be explained, beginning with the rules in Surinam. From there the comparison will be made with Guyana and French Guyane.

Kerry-Jane Wallart: 'wide is the span': Poetics of displacement in Martin Carter's *University of Hunger*

The title poem, "University of Hunger", heralds the general sense of disorder which rules over Martin Carter's last collection. The place described is a waste land occupied by a nameless and lawless community; perspective has been replaced by a cubist landscape in several parts; free verse is more puzzled than liberatory; lyricism has been replaced by an unstable and vague enunciation vantage point. Abstraction and concreteness collude in violent paradox. Calls for social justice are curtailed by the foregrounding of matter, of details. Poetic diction comes into play with creole linguistic marks, creating a motley array of registers. Yet, such elements of dystopian fragmentation must be nuanced by a sense of awe, the unfolding of a 'pilgrimage' 'passing the ancient bridge'. I wish in this paper to scrutinize how a Derridean sense of a "trace" allows the poet to step in the footsteps of Wilson Harris and project explorations through nature which are both transgressive and redemptive. Through poetic displacement the I-persona retrieves a sense of place which was never lost, and whose recuperation is highly creative. While an anaphoric 'is' belied the process of the copula as analysed by Said (*Orientalism*, Vintage, 1979, p. 72), the repetition of 'wide is the span' concludes to the necessity, in spatial but also intellectual exploration, of a leap.

Leon Wainwright: Transatlantic material mediations: a political geography of Caribbean art & exchange

This presentation will address how social relationships are materialized and mediated through Caribbean art's ostensible detachment from conditions of inequality, from the frictions evident in global movement, and from the impact of art policy and curating on the lives of individual artists themselves. The horizon of the imagination merges rather messily with materiality. In the case study offered here—a programme of 'exchange' between the Netherlands and Suriname in the Caribbean—the idealization of the arts as an inclusive ecology of free creativity has allowed organisers and curators to frame their efforts at urban regeneration and multiculturalism, and the general extension of Dutch influence in Suriname through the arts. In an exhibition that travelled across the Atlantic from Paramaribo to Rotterdam, visual materials became tokens for 'exchange', but artists themselves were also produced and transformed into materials that could be mediated. Aside from the inequalities that this process maintains between regions of the Atlantic world, at the local level in the Caribbean it has multiple effects and it is these that the presentation will highlight, in particular the competing imaginaries of art patronage and display across a transatlantic geography.

Biographies

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Janette Bulkan is an Assistant Professor for Indigenous Forestry in the Department of Forest Resources Management in the Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia, Canada. She was Coordinator of the Amerindian Research Unit, University of Guyana from 1985 to 2000. For over 20 years she has carried out collaborative research with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Guyana. Her research interests are forest governance, collaborative natural resource management, concession systems, community forestry and third party forest certification systems. Janette serves on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Sustainable Forestry* and on the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal *Archaeology and Anthropology*. She is a member of the Governing Council of the Commonwealth Forestry Association (CFA) and of the Policy and Standards Committee of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Alissa Trotz is Associate Professor of Women and Gender Studies, and Caribbean Studies at New College, University of Toronto. She is also Associate Faculty at the Dame Nita Barrow Institute of Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies (Barbados). Her research interests include the gendered politics of neoliberalism, social reproduction and women's activism; and transnational migration and diaspora. Her current work explores history, memory and violence in colonial and contemporary Guyana. Her work has appeared in *Atlantis*; *Social and Economic Studies*; *Race and Class*; *Small Axe: New West Indian Guide*; *Macomere*; *Interventions: Journal of Postcolonial Studies*; *Global Networks*. Alissa is a member of Red Thread Women's Organization, Guyana, and edits a weekly newspaper column, *In the Diaspora*, in the *Stabroek News*, Guyana.

BIOS of RESEARCH Presenters in alphabetical order

Grace Aneiza Ali, Guyanese-born, is a faculty member in Art & Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. Her essays on contemporary art and photography have been published in *Nueva Luz Journal*, *Small Axe Journal*, among others. She is the curator of the 2016 exhibition 'Un|Fixed Homeland' on contemporary photography from Guyana. Highlights of her curatorial work include the following: Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts Curatorial Fellow; guest curator for the 2014 Addis Foto Fest; guest editor of the Fall 2013 *Nueva Luz Photographic Journal*; and host of the 'Visually Speaking' photojournalism series at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center. Ali is a World Economic Forum 'Global Shaper' and Fulbright Scholar. She holds an M.A. in Africana Studies from New York University and a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Maryland, College Park. She lives in New York City.

Michelle Yaa Asantewa taught Fiction and Non-Fiction Writing and English Literature for a number of years. This included courses on Editing fiction and non-fiction. She has recently

expanded her academic background to include Publishing, Editing and Tuition Services. Her first novel *Elijah* about a 15-year old boy's search for cultural identity; *The Awakening* collection of poems were published in 2014 by Way Wive Wordz publishing which she set up. Her books *Guyanese Komfa: the ritual art of Trance*, adapted from her PhD thesis, *Something Buried in the yard*, a novella which was part of her research on Guyanese Komfa and *Mama Lou Tales: a folkloric biography of a Guyanese Elder* were published in July 2016. Dr Asantewa writes a regular blog at waywivewordzforthespiritualcreative which combines spiritual, social, cultural and artistic expression. She is currently an independent scholar and resides in London.

Sonja Boon is Associate Professor of Gender Studies at Memorial University (Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada). She has research interests in the areas of identity, citizenship, embodiment, migration, life writing, and feminist theory. Her work appears in *Life Writing*, *Journal of Women's History*, *SubStance*, *International Journal of Communication*, and the *European Journal of Life Writing*, among others. Her second monograph, *Telling the Flesh: Life Writing, Citizenship, and the Body in the Letters to Samuel Auguste Tissot*, appeared in September 2015.

Jerome Branche is Professor in the department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures, University of Pittsburgh. He teaches and researches in the areas of Afro-Hispanic, Caribbean and Diasporan Literatures. He has published *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature* (2006), and *The Poetics and Politics of Diaspora: Transatlantic Musings* (2014), along with edited books and articles in the field. Branche is from Guyana.

Tim Cribb is a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, where, until retirement, he was Director of Studies in English and Tutor for Advanced Students, and for the Faculty of English the Convenor of the Subject Group Committee for Postcolonial and Related Literatures. He edited *Imagined Commonwealths* for Macmillan (1999) and has taught in universities in Nigeria.

Marta Fratzak, PhD, is a senior lecturer at the Department of English Literature and Literary Linguistics, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland. Her interest oscillate around Caribbean fiction, postcolonial and colonial studies as well as eco-critical and utopian discourses. She has recently defended her PhD thesis on the Guyanese novel entitled '(R)evolution in the perception of history, national identity and nature in the Anglo-Guyanese novel', which is due to be published in 2016 as a revised monograph.

Kathleen Gyssels is Professor of Literature at Antwerp University (Belgium). Among her recent publications are *Passes et impasses dans le comparatisme postcolonial caribéen: Cinq traverses* (Honoré Champion, 2010) and *Marrane et Marronne: la coécriture réversible d'André et Simone Schwarz-Bart* (Brill, 2014), and *Black-Label, les déboires de L.G. Damas* (Ed. Passage(s), 2016). She has organized several conferences on Black and / or Jewish Diaspora literatures. She is currently working on a project "A Diaspora in a Diaspora" (on the

Jewish legacies in Caribbean literature), and on a monograph on James Baldwin and Leon-G. Damas, entitled *Queering the Nation* (2017).

Natalie Hopkinson is an assistant professor in the graduate program in communication, culture and media studies at Howard University and a fellow of the Interactivity Foundation. A former staff writer, editor and cultural critic for the *Washington Post* and *The Root*, she is the author of two books: *Deconstructing Tyrone* (Cleis Press 2006) and *Go-Go Live* (Duke Press 2012). Her next book of essays on the arts and society in contemporary Guyana will be published in 2017 for The New Press. She holds a Ph.D. in journalism and public communication from the University of Maryland-College Park and a B.A. in political science from Howard University.

Maria del Pilar Kaladeen is an Associate Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies. She is currently working on the publication of her PhD thesis. Maria previously completed a Masters by Research at the University of Warwick's Centre for Caribbean Studies; the subject of her MA was the South Indian presence in Guyana. Her doctoral thesis, completed at Royal Holloway, University of London, was entitled 'With Eyes of Wonder': Colonial Writing on Indentured East Indians in British Guiana, 1838-1917.'

Ananya Jahanara Kabir is Professor of English Literature at King's College London and Director of the ERC Advance Grant Funded project, 'Modern Moves' (www.modernmoves.org.uk). Her work involves memory, post-trauma, embodiment in the Global South with a current focus on social dance and cross-creolisation processes.

Ateeka Khan is a PhD student in the Department of History at McMaster University (Ontario, Canada) under the supervision of Dr. Juanita De Barros. She examines the relationship between religious groups and politics in Guyana. Her project especially focuses on the social, cultural, and political history of Muslim groups from the end of indentureship, the post-slavery system of contractual labour, in the 1920s to the post-independence period of the 1970s. This project combines her undergraduate studies in Honours History and English at McMaster University, her graduate work at the University of Toronto in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, and her research assistantship experience in British Caribbean Studies.

Olívia Maria Gomes da Cunha is Associate Professor of Anthropology, Museu Nacional, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Her dissertation on vagrancy and identification science in Rio de Janeiro in the early 20th century was awarded and published by Arquivo Nacional in 2002. She was Post-doctoral fellow at Harvard University (1999-2000), Visiting-Professor at New York University (2006-2007), and a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation fellow in 2002. Her research for Guggenheim resulted in a manuscript on ethnography, archives, and artefacts of knowledge in Cuba, Brazil and US under evaluation. She has published on postemancipation and social movement in Brazil and Cuba, and her current research, initiated in 2009, is about art, creativity, and other cultural and political transformations among the maroon Ndyukas in Moengo, Eastern Suriname, after the late 1980s civil war.

Lisa Katharina Grund completed her MA in Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester, UK, after studying Geography and Political Science as an undergraduate in Bonn, Germany. The two years in the interior of Guyana, working in the area of audio and video documentation, were crucial for her decision to enrol in a PhD programme at the Centre for Amerindian Studies in St Andrews, UK, and to choose the present research topic. Her doctoral research among Makushi people in the Rupununi and South Pakaraima region, Guyana, discusses individual mobility, as well as settlement and group movements, across the border, between villages, towns and forest landscapes. During the period of her PhD, she additionally has worked for the Max-Planck-Institute, Nijmegen, in a language documentation project (DoBeS) on two isolated indigenous languages in the Brazilian Amazon. Although different, both projects are thematically connected and have contributed to her general understanding of Amazonian peoples.

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Katherine MacDonald's doctoral research was grounded in the Guyanese Amazon region across the Brazilian-Guyanese border (the Rupununi) where she examined the impacts of increasing resource extraction and the consequences for the ecological integrity of the region. In conducting this research, she focused particularly on how Indigenous worldviews are shaping and guiding relational understandings of the region, including nascent conservation initiatives framed by customary use, natural resource use and local knowledge, and Indigenous self-determination, and how these perspectives can contribute to a more sustainable future. In this research project, which was conducted in partnership with the Makushi and Wapishana peoples, she approached cultural protocols, values, and behaviours as integral to the methodology by privileging Indigenous voices, respecting customary practices, and by sharing jointly-created knowledge as an integral component of reciprocity and feedback. She currently teaches political ecology and direct undergraduate research at a field school in the Madre de Dios region of Peru.

Michael Mitchell is a Lecturer in English, University of Paderborn, Germany, having received his PhD in Comparative Literature, University of Warwick, in 2001. He is an Associate Fellow, Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies, at the University of Warwick. He is the author of *Hidden Mutualities: Faustian Themes from Gnostic Origins to the Postcolonial* (Rodopi, 2006) and numerous articles, on Wilson Harris, David Dabydeen and other Caribbean writers.

Gabriel Cambraia Neiva is a PhD Candidate at Latin American Cultural Studies Programme, University of Manchester. He has a BA in Literary Studies and his MA Research, awarded with a fully-funded scholarship, was entitled “Do canto xamânico e outras histórias” (UFRR, 2015). It is a comparative reading of Wilson Harris’ *The Age of the Rainmakers* (1971) and ethnographical and travellers’ accounts of indigenous textualities. For this research, he travelled various times to Guyana to do archival research and, during this time, had the opportunity to live in indigenous communities in the interior. Awarded with Presidential Doctoral Scholarship, his PhD project compares different literatures from the Guiana region, under the supervision of Prof Lúcia Sá.

Gemma Robinson is Senior Lecturer in the Division of Literature and Languages at the University of Stirling. She is the editor of *University of Hunger: the Collected Poems and Selected Prose of Martin Carter* (Bloodaxe) and the co-editor of *Postcolonial Audiences: Readers, Viewers and Reception* (Routledge) and *Out of Bounds: British Black and Asian Poets* (Bloodaxe).

Clem Seecharan was born in Guyana and came to England in 1986. He was the Head of Caribbean Studies at London Metropolitan University (Londonmet) from 1993 to 2012. Clem is the most prolific historian of the Indo-Caribbean experience and the only person to teach a course in Indo-Caribbean History at a British university. He was also the first person to teach a course on the history of West Indies cricket, and was instrumental in establishing the annual Sir Frank Worrell Lecture in 2005. Two captains of England were among those who gave the lecture: Mike Atherton and Mike Brearley. Clem is now Emeritus Professor of History at Londonmet, working on a three-volume history of cricket in Guyana, 1865 to 1966. The first volume, *Hand-in-Hand History of Cricket in Guyana: the Foundation*, was launched in Guyana on 13 May 2016. He also published a collection of his essays in 2015: *Finding Myself*.

Yoshiko Shibata is Professor of Anthropology in the Graduate School of Intercultural Studies at Kobe University (Japan). She has conducted field research over many years in the Caribbean with much focus on Jamaica and Guyana. Her publications include: *Rastafarian Music in Contemporary Jamaica* (1984), “Jamaican Women’s Survival and Challenges” (2015 in Japanese), “Changing Identities of the Chinese in the Anglophone Caribbean” (Routledge, 2012), “Empowerment and Sustainable Development of Guyanese Amerindians: Focusing on the Iwokrama Project” (2009 in Japanese), “Linda’s Agonies: Inter-marriage, ‘Racial Politics’ and Gender in Contemporary Guyana” (2008), “Race Consciousness and the Formation of National Identity in Modern Guyana” (2002), “Crossing Racialized Boundaries:

Intermarriage between Africans" (2002) and "Indians in Contemporary Guyana" (Berg, 1998).

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Kerry-Jane Wallart has been educated at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Ulm); she has been a Senior Lecturer at Paris-Sorbonne for six years and teaches postcolonial literatures and theory. Her field of research is Caribbean poetry, with a special interest in Derek Walcott. She has authored book chapter and articles on such authors as Derek Walcott, Fred D'Aguiar, Wilson Harris, David Dabydeen, E.K. Brathwaite, V.S. Naipaul, Pauline Melville, and Claude McKay. She has recently organised a conference on Caribbean literary reviews and is currently writing a volume about the migration of theatrical forms through contemporary Caribbean literature. She has guest edited two issues of *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*.