



CUTTING EDGES | NEW MEDIA AND CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP



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CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT ARTS JOURNAL

The concept of *CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT* to provide a creative meeting place for Caribbean artists to share their thought-provoking ideas and works within a community of cultural producers, students, scholars, activists and entrepreneurs. The word 'InTransit' signifies the historical and contemporary global movement of Caribbean peoples and the opportunities for development that this movement offers. Caribbean InTransit's approach to the exploration of Caribbean arts and culture is not insular, thus it incorporates artistic practices and beliefs external to the Caribbean.

Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 license, Caribbean InTransit is an open access academic journal with a rigorous blind peer review process. Submissions of essays, artworks, poetry as well as other art forms in English, French and Spanish are welcomed. Caribbean InTransit is published by African and African American Studies, George Mason University.

The cover image is from Versia Harris' "Riding Swan Series", a suite of seven digital stills (each 11.6" x 7.7"). She created a narrative of an original

character to address the perceptions of self, as it compares its image with unrealistic standards. Her primary media includes pen and watercolour on paper. She also uses Adobe Photoshop to manipulate her drawings and create animations. Harris' work explores the fantasies and experiences of an original character which is introduced to Walt Disney animations and consequently layers what she desires from these animations onto her life, especially her physical self. Her perception of and her relationship with her world changes, as she compares her reality and the fantasy of Disney Animated stories. She struggles with her perception of self as she in complete contrast of the Disney princess. Sparked by her interest in storytelling, Harris created the character and story to generate a comparison between Walt Disney iconography and her reality. Despite the fabricated narrative, Harris addresses issues that intrigue her, such as how one can be influenced by media, and the process of comparing oneself to another of unrealistic standards.

Website: <http://versiaabeda.tumblr.com/>

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CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT
ARTS JOURNAL

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CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT
was born out of a
collaborative conference
project initiated by creative
writer Alake Pilgrim.

We would first like to acknowledge George Mason University, specifically, Wendy Manuel-Scott and MiKa'il Petin in the African and African American Studies Department/Program, as well as Dean Jack Censer, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Studies Matt Zingraff, for their continued support of Caribbean InTransit. We are grateful for their faith and encouragement this Spring, as we continue to make significant and imminent changes.

Notably, we launched our third issue on “Arts for Social Change” with a panel discussion featuring curatorial staff from the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Kim Sojin and Arlen Reiniger, as well as School of Art Faculty member Peter Winant, and Benedict Carton from the Department of History at George Mason University. We are also in the process of becoming a non-profit, with directors resident in the Washington DC area, and with individual, corporate and institutional memberships available. We have launched a new product, our Caribbean arts newsletter called the Arts Menu available via free subscription; we registered with the Digital Library of the Caribbean where all of our publications can now be accessed; and partnered with the Postgraduate Program in Cultural Studies in hosting our first symposium, as part of our inaugural annual arts festival “Caribbean InTransit: The Meeting Place” in Trinidad & Tobago. We extend sincerest thanks to all of our panelists, our new directors, partners, incumbent team members and new institutional members who have made these developments possible.

Changes extend to developments with our team as well. Congratulations are in order! Caribbean InTransit team members Katherine Miranda, Njelle Hamilton, Marsha Pearce and new team members Marta Fernandez Campa and Kathalene Razzano have successfully defended their dissertations this past year. As the terms of two of our key team members come to an end, we want to take the opportunity to thank them for their commitment and service in those roles. To Marsha Pearce, outgoing Managing Editor, thank you for taking us through the first stages of Caribbean InTransit especially in ensuring that we begin to put in place new structures that will prove invaluable as we continue. To Njelle Hamilton, Submissions Manager, thank you especially for your work in engineering a seamless transition to our new online submissions platform. Fortunately we do not say goodbye to Marsha and Njelle but look forward to their service in new roles as Content Specialist and Copy Editor respectively. We are also delighted to welcome five talented, qualified and experienced new team members on board.

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FOREWORD: MOBILIZING CREATIVITY

Marielle Barrow, Editor - in - Chief

Artistic practice in the Caribbean arises at the juncture of new/old histories: historical articulations of a past that many Caribbean persons have sought to revise. This 'moment' characterized by the contestation of officially written history through self-situating practices of memory exists amidst elements that further complicate it. Trans-national flows of information and the doubling of selves via cyber-space (an online self that supposedly mirrors the physical self) simultaneously allow for fluidity or continuity yet a tenuous asynchronicity through a doubling of place and time. Through increasing dependency on new Internet technologies, we truncate, create and re-create our communities and ourselves. Concomitantly, there is an infiltration or blurring of traditional institutional and class boundaries via online social networking spaces. In many ways, this issue of *Caribbean InTransit* is a phenomenological study of the ways in which these behaviors are historically situated and evolve into unique patterns that exist within and across the Caribbean and its Diaspora. Such patterns evolve as artistic practices and mobilize around Internet technologies in myriad ways: as a conjoining

of artistic and civic practice; as a new artistic and spatial practice of voice and visibility; as a possibility of connection, livability and livelihood.

Artistry manifests itself as a conduit emanating from various needs and desires: needs for ancestral connections and spirituality; community and belonging based on interest, gender or family; financial well-being; or a more integrated connection between various human needs in establishing a sense of wholeness. Artistic practice is a conduit- a connector or space that enables exploration of the deeper recesses of self as self exists within discordant spaces, where relevant questions can be raised and shared and a conduit to financial well-being through creative entrepreneurship. This issue of *Caribbean InTransit* is not an exhaustive resource but begins to explore these possibilities and actualities by focusing mostly on the visual arts and design but also by touching on film, dance and other elements. "Cutting Edges: New Media and Creative Entrepreneurship" is cutting in that the 'new' is always both old and new, cutting away at our categories, definitions and delimitations by exploring connections, in this case, exploring the coming together of New Media and Creative

ABOUT THE EDITOR IN-CHIEF

Marielle is a Fulbright Scholar and currently Cultural Studies PhD candidate at George Mason University. She graduated with a BSc in Hospitality Management from The University of the West Indies, and the University of Technology in Jamaica and earned a Postgraduate Diploma in Arts & Cultural Enterprise Management and an MPhil in Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.

As an Arts Consultant Marielle helped create an Action Plan for the music and film industries for the

Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and presented at the 2009 CARICOM experts meeting in Haiti, on Cultural Industries, Trade and the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) in 2009. She has co-chaired the Allspice Festival of Arts and Humanities in Washington DC and continues to pursue painting as a professional passion. She founded *Caribbean InTransit* in 2010 and continues to develop it as a model for academic interrogation and development of the Caribbean arts and culture industry of the Caribbean. She is a Fulbright scholar at George Mason University.

Entrepreneurship and the arts in the Caribbean. Further issues of Caribbean InTransit will pick up where this issue leaves off, in examining the policy implications of artistic practice in the Caribbean. Our call for papers articulates some of the questions that we offered as starting points for this sifting.

Call for Papers written by Katherine Miranda

Throughout the Caribbean region and its multiple Diasporas, artistic form and practice are at risk. Since the beginning of a global economic crisis in 2008, the arts have been particularly impacted through severe losses of funding and institutional support. These ongoing global challenges to the practice and production of the arts affect the Caribbean in specific ways. Mobilizing the crisis as a critical point of departure, this volume of Caribbean Intransit seeks to examine both the inherent risks and possibilities of the intersection of new technologies, entrepreneurship and artistic practice. How might we deploy the cutting edges of artistry, technological innovation and business practices to find creative solutions to these challenges? How have entrepreneurship, electronic and digital networks, mobilities and artistic projects threatened or empowered the arts in times of crisis? Are indigenous or traditional practices at risk in the age of global communication and exchange? How can experiments in new media, performance, film, literature, music, art, and architecture articulate

financially sustainable aesthetic interventions in the contemporary moment?

This volume of Caribbean InTransit invites exploration of these cutting edges and their myriad interpretations as both pitfall and promise. Essays and creative works may explore but are not limited to the following possible topics:

Caribbean spaces and/or place-based art in digital representations

Nationality, transnationality and global citizenship

Narratives of cultural, entrepreneurial and/or community struggles

Locality and locatedness

Culture as a political, social and/or economic strategy

Case studies of cultural work, methods and iconographies

Intra- or cross-Caribbean spaces, engagements and discussions

Examinations of City/Country

Anti- and/or De-colonial aesthetics and transmodern strategies of re-existence

INTRODUCTION

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN GUEST EDITORS:

*Journeys in “Hybridity”
Journeys in “New Media”*

Keith Nurse, Alanna Lockward | Guest Editors, Issue 4

JOURNEYS IN “HYBRIDITY”

KEITH NURSE

As I write I am barrelling across Europe by train from the Netherlands to Belgium to present on the topic of diasporas and South-South trade. The intersection of diasporas and creative industries have dominated my recent work. This is an area I started working on early in my academic career and have returned to in the last few years because of the overwhelming interest in the topic in and out of the Caribbean.

There is hardly a Caribbean government or development agency that is not now interested in how they can tap into the dynamism of the diaspora and that of the creative sector. This newfound interest reflects a search for alternative modes of creative industry development given the poor performance of Caribbean economies and the low returns of traditional development strategies. It also signals that the entrepreneurship of Caribbean peoples wherever they are located has become the focal point of regional and international agencies for innovation and change. Cementing this process and ensuring that the framework for engagement is built on civic and community partnerships is vital to achieving the desired outcomes. Scholars, writers and artists have a critical role to play if we are to forge new possibilities.

The Caribbean diaspora, like other transnational communities, operates in a hybrid and global space which challenges conventional conceptions of the Caribbean. Meeting Alanna, the co-editor, reminded me of just this. Her Dominicana roots and her multiple global projects (e.g. <http://decolonizingthecoldwar.wordpress.com/>) reinforced in my mind the significance of the Caribbean experience in contemporary globalization and the ways in which Caribbean personalities have shaped the multiple and contested strands of what we call modernity.

This issue of Caribbean InTransit contributes to this understanding of the Caribbean experience by bringing together a collection of works that explore the intersections of globalization, diasporas, hybridity and the visual aesthetic.

JOURNEYS IN “NEW MEDIA”

ALANNA LOCKWARD

Asked by co-editor Keith Nurse to articulate a personal note in the same vein as his, here is a reflection on “New Media”.

Having spent many years writing about and presenting moving images from the Diaspora in three different continents, the term “New Media” has been crucial to my praxis. Here is a excerpt from an essay I published in 2008 with the title: “Towards and

Utopian Archeology. Moving-image, Decolonization and Continuities in Haiti, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic".<http://alannalockward.wordpress.com/caribbean-video-art/>

"Observed from a distance, the moving-image landscapes in the Spanish, French and Spanglish Caribbean could appear as a typical result of postmodernism, with its juxtaposed narratives, hybrid discourses and reinvention's undertakings governed by global hegemonic parameters. But this is not the case, or at least not completely. Different discursive genealogies of resistance assert themselves within each particular socio-historical context in the atmosphere of these three Caribbean scenarios.

I would like to propose and approach these genealogies from an invisible matrix that after flourishing in Haiti in the 1940's and 50's is back in business in the Caribbean, even though still incognito. In that respect, in order to position the complicated and dislocated experience of the moving-image in these islands – that are not three, but two, I suggest departing from Lev Manovich's ideas on the discursive continuity between film and digital media. While searching for some similarities and differences evident in recent video-art practices from Haiti, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic from the perspective of cinematographic discourse, I will focus on the use or non-use of found-footage*, and on certain parameters of Otherness as well, which were introduced in cinema by the above-mentioned invisible matrix: director, theorist, writer, cinematographer, editor, performer and entrepreneur, Maya Deren.

In HARDfilms: Pixels and Celluloids, Kino Arsenal Berlin (2007), a curatorial essay that linked avant-garde, experimental cinema and video-art-, curator María Morata (1) focused on five principles established by Lev Manovich in order to define 'new media' and differentiate them from "old" ones:

* Numerical representation: new media objects exist as data.

* Modularity: the different elements of new media exist independently.

* Automation: new media objects can be created and modified automatically.

* Variability: new media objects exist in multiple versions.

* Transcoding: a new media object can be converted into another format.

Manovich, who grew up in Russia, also insists on positioning his methodology as a direct result of dialectic materialism and therefore primarily addresses the conditions of production of hardware and software; the material structures -- an alternative standpoint to that of cultural and literary studies that give the final product the last word:

"That's why I published this article called "Avant-garde software" where I was trying to suggest that perhaps the real new media art or the real avant-garde art is the software itself. Because it's actually software -like Microsoft Word, or Final Cut Pro, or browsers, or... languages where you see the new principles at work; there's much more theory... But the finished cultural products... they're too conservative (2)."

I would like to agree with Manovich and Morata, that there is still no such a thing as a "new media", that experimental and avant-garde cinema is presented today in a digital format within the discursive positions of what we call: video-art. And also that the conditions of production are crucial to any attempt to approach video-art and any other form of art. In this sense, I propose that a pending decolonized utopian archaeology on video-art in Haiti, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic should discuss its conditions of production and also its different continuities related to Maya Deren's pioneering use of juxtaposition, dissolution and mimicry from/with the Other. There is, in my opinion, sufficient substantiation for a comparative analysis under these parameters. This discussion should ideally take place in an open forum directed and performed by the artists themselves. This is an introduction or motivation for this utopian forum that could start, for example, by commenting on certain parameters of Otherness signalled, as mentioned before, by the use or non-use of appropriated footage which functions as an indicator of the viewpoint of the subject with respect to the Norm, and to the hegemonic cultural reference represented by the appropriated images. Secondly, this forum could also take into account and comparatively analyse certain conditions of production that differentiate each scenario in these Caribbean landscapes. In the following pages, I will

offer some highlights on these perspectives as guidelines for future discussions."

It is in such open dialogue that the current issue co-edited with Nurse has expanded my involvement with the subject. Consequently, let me take this opportunity to thank Marielle Barrow for introducing us. It has been a wonderful collaboration indeed.

PERFORMING THE PERPETUAL EPISTEMIC SHIFT

In the combination of commercial and social entrepreneurship, the Caribbean arts landscape continues to perform a dance of perpetual re/invention. Co-editing this journal issue has become the ideal vehicle for me to keep track of this vitality, and the opportunity to expand Caribbean InTransit's resonance in different languages and media has been a pure joy.

After meeting co-editor Keith Nurse, in London, in the flesh for the first time at the end of 2012, the ways in which our perceptions and experiences of the Caribbean and its Diasporas complemented each other was truly extraordinary. In fact, the serendipities were so abundant that I suggested making this introduction a mirrored interview. Fragmentation and distance, two essential components of the Caribbean Diasporic condition, made this original attempt impossible to achieve. In his own path as a cultural critic, Keith has nurtured an approach very similar to mine that can be summarized as envisioning Caribbean presence globally as one of the most under-discussed issues in cultural studies. A case in point that left me completely baffled was the fact that Eugene Chen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Sun Yat-Sen, the first president and founding father of the Republic of China, was in fact a Trinidadian. After Keith shared that, our conversation blossomed into a symphony of mutual reassurance.

A month before, also in London, I presented a paper in an inspiring meeting at the Victoria & Albert Museum entitled "Curating the Black Diaspora" with a strong focus on the Caribbean. Quoting the (almost fanatic) interest of a major international curator, Hans Ulrich Obrist, in the theoretical legacy of Edouard Glissant, Paul Goodwin magnificently illustrated the

symptomatic contradiction between the ubiquity of Caribbean influence in global affairs and its lack of recognition as such. Yes, the Caribbean thinker is crucial to Obrist's current reading patterns while at the same time, Caribbean artists are absent in the vast scope of his curatorial projects. And this is why working on this issue of Caribbean InTransit is rewarding for reasons that go beyond the usual engagement of similar endeavours; it is indeed a very personal issue, something that deeply touches my work as a Europe-based Caribbean curator and writer.

Some of the contributions to this journal respond to the CFP guidelines rigorously, such as Arthur Asseo's essay, "A Socially Responsible Design Business' Approach to Puerto Rico's Volatile Market," which discusses the collaboration between Asseo and artist María de Mater O'Neill and their work at Rubberband, (their joint design studio) as an example of "how a social responsibility mindset with a design perspective can function in a volatile economy and under weak social stability". The same inventiveness can be found in Patricia Grassals' dismantling of coloniality in the prolific racialisation scenarios of the Caribbean, in her visual essay, "Mixing Art and Commercial Cosmetics: A Dominican Intervention on Hair Politics".

Multitasking is an essential characteristic of performing the Caribbean cultural practice, and this particular talent materializes brilliantly in the collaboration between Glenda Martinus and her son Quinsky Gario, both originally from Curaçao and currently living in the Netherlands. Martinus has transformed her thorough knowledge of Microsoft Word into art; her drawings, accomplished exclusively with the tools offered by the software, perfectly complement the poetry of her son, who is a spoken-word performer, music video producer and an activist deeply involved in contesting racialising colonial legacies such as the figure of the Black Peter in the Netherlands. His campaign is called "Zwarte Piet is Racisme". The same could be said about author and pop star, Rita Indiana Hernández, and Mónica Ferreras, who alternate between artistic practice and creating theatrical stage designs.

The relationship between these creative struggles of re-existence and the patronage and network that nurture them is given an insightful approach in the

essay by Yanique Hume, "Art Patronage in A Caribbean Context: The Awon And Akyem Connection." Hume explores the definition of Caribbean patronage based on the relationship between artist Ras Akyem Ramsay and architect and collector, Mervyn Awon. As a Dominican, I am particularly moved by this essay since it highlights the decisive influence that the Caribbean Biennial, initiated by the late Porfirio Herrera Franco, has had in the career of this Barbadian artist. Hume's analysis indeed fills me with a certain nostalgia for a golden era, given that I worked as Director of International Affairs on Porfirio Herrera Franco's first team, when he was inaugurated in 1987 as director of the Museo de Arte Moderno (then still Galería de Arte Moderno). Barbados is also the subject of a diagnosis by British cultural expert, Asif Khan, in "The Web's Obeah: Threads of Imagination". Always in conversation with the artists, Khan dialectically articulates the epistemic shifts in the trajectories of Ras Akyem Ramsay and newcomer Sheena Rose, and the dynamics

of Internet-based art practices in relation to public and private funding strategies.

It is in this mode that we offer this present issue, hoping that it will accurately reflect the phenomenal stamina of the region and its Diasporas, that these artistic and entrepreneurial achievements find a dignifying echo in these pages. Finally, our sincere thanks to the artists for sharing their visual essays with such generosity and panache. Your works mirror our epistemic endeavours with lunar precision.

Works Cited

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ABOUT THE GUEST EDITORS

KEITH NURSE
ALANNA LOCKWARD

Keith Nurse

Director of the Shridath Ramphal Centre for International Trade Law, Policy and Services at the Cave Hill Campus (Barbados) of the University of the West Indies (UWI). Prior to that, he was senior lecturer at the UWI Institute of International Relations, president of the Association of Caribbean Economists, and coordinator of the postgraduate program in Arts and Cultural Enterprise Management at the Centre for the Creative and Festival Arts (UWI), Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Nurse is also a consultant to international, regional and national agencies such as the South Centre, FOCAL, Inter-American Development Bank, Organization of American States, CARICOM, CARIFORUM, UNESCO, Caribbean Export Development Agency, and the Tourism Industry and Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago.

Alanna Lockward

Author, critic and independent curator specialized in time-based undertakings. In 1988, she was appointed Director of International Affairs at Museo de Arte Moderno in Santo Domingo. She is the founding director of Art Labour Archives and has been award jury of the 26 Bienal Nacional de Artes Visuales in Santo Domingo (2011) and V Bienal del Istmo Centroamericano in San Salvador (2006), among other competitions. Her theoretical work has been published widely in English, Spanish and German and she has worked as guest lecturer at the Humboldt University Berlin, Transart Institute, Goldsmiths University of London, Dutch Art Institute, University of Warwick and the Roosevelt Academy of the University of Utrecht. She is currently associate curator of the Ballhaus Naunynstrasse and general manager of the Transnational Decolonial Institute.



CALL FOR PAPERS for "Body | Institution | Memory"

CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT LAUNCHES ITS
1st Annual Symposium
Theme: Body | Institution | Memory
October 25, 2013

CARIBBEAN INTRANSIT HOSTS THIS SYMPOSIUM AS A PART OF ITS FIRST ANNUAL FESTIVAL "*THE MEETING PLACE*", IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN CULTURAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES (UWI), ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Dr. Erica M. James
Assistant Professor, History of Art
and African American Studies,
Yale University

Erica Moiah James, PhD., is Asst. Professor jointly appointed in the Depts. of History of Art and African American Studies at Yale University. Before arriving at Yale, she served as the founding Director and Chief Curator of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. Dr. James earned an MFA from The University of Chicago and a PhD in Art History from Duke University. While at Duke, she was awarded several fellowships including the International Association of University Women and The John Hope Franklin Fellowships. Since that time she has served as a Clark Fellow at the Sterling & Francine Clark Art Institute and as a post-doctoral teaching fellow at Washington University, St. Louis.

