



2018 VIRGIN ISLANDS LITERARY FESTIVAL & BOOK FAIR A BENEFIT EVENT

Here we are on the other side of two category five hurricanes weaving together the strands of the 4th Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair 2018--- billed as a benefit event with an abbreviated itinerary scheduled for April 13 and 14.

Over the years, there were a number of events at the University of the Virgin Islands aimed at bringing authors and books together; however, the idea of establishing an annual Literary Festival and Book Fair is credited to Dr. Simon Jones- Hendrickson, former Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS). The first Program Chair was UVI Professor Dr. Valerie Knowles Combie. The 2018, program chair for the third year in succession is Alscess Lewis-Brown, UVI Professor and Editor of *The Caribbean Writer*.

“We are aiming to make this abbreviated version of our treasured festival an unforgettable event,” Brown said with decided enthusiasm. “And our central theme: **“Rough Tides, Tough Times: Reflections and Transitions”** is both a gesture to and a capitalizing on our all-around tumultuous transition into 2018.” As in the past, the festival is a toast to ideas and a celebration of the imagination through literature, panel discussions and workshops on writing and publishing. This year, there will be a special emphasis on photography and film production.” Main events will be held on the island of St. Croix on the Albert Sheen Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands. There will also be several other venues including the Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts on the waterfront in Frederiksted, Balter’s St Croix Restaurant in Christiansted and, for the first time, UVI’s St. Thomas campus where the keynote speaker, UCONN-Storrs Professor of Philosophy Lewis Gordon, will address an audience of bibliophiles in the Administration and Conference Center at 10:a.m, April 13th.

Who’s Coming to the Festival?

Dr. Lewis Gordon is also Honorary President and Core Professor at the Global Center for Advanced Studies; Honorary Professor at the Unit of the Humanities at Rhodes University (UHURU), South Africa and a musician who regularly performs in blues, jazz, reggae, and rock bands. He has lectured across the globe. His books include *Bad Faith and Anti-Black Racism* (Humanities Press, 1995), *Her Majesty’s Other Children* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), *Existencia Africana* (Routledge, 2000), *Disciplinary Decadence* (Routledge, 2006), *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy* (Cambridge UP, 2008) and, more recently, *What Fanon Said: A Philosophical Introduction to His Life and Thought* (NY: Fordham UP; London: Hurst; Johannesburg: Wits UP, 2015; in Swedish, *Vad Fanon Sa*, Stockholm: TankeKraft förlag, 2016), *La sud prin nord-vest: Reflecții existențiale afrodiasporice*, trans. Ovidiu Tichindeleanu (Cluj,

Romania: IDEA Design & Print, 2016), and, with Fernanda Frizzo Bragato, *Geopolitics and Decolonization: Perspectives from the Global South* (London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018). Interested persons can connect with him at <https://www.facebook.com/LewisGordonPhilosopher> and <https://twitter.com/lewgord>.

Jamaica Kincaid's appearance is confirmed. She will be joining us at this Benefit conducting readings and a workshop on writing memoirs. Kincaid is an award-winning Antiguan-American novelist, essayist, gardener, and gardening writer. She resides in Vermont and teaches at Harvard University as the "Professor of African and African American Studies in Residence."

Tiphonie Yanique is also scheduled to appear. This Virgin Islands-born author who has garnered wide acclaim for her new novel, *Land of Love and Drowning*, Yanique is the author of the poetry collection, *Wife*, which won the 2016 Bocas Prize in Caribbean poetry and the United Kingdom's 2016 Forward/Felix. She is also the author of *How to Escape from a Leper Colony*. She is the winner of a Pushcart Prize, the Kore Press Fiction Prize, The Academy of American Poets Prize, and a Fulbright Scholarship in writing and the Boston Review Fiction Prize. She is also the winner of the 2010 Rona Jaffe Prize in Fiction. Her fiction, poetry or essays can be found in the *Best African American Fiction*, *Transition Magazine*, *American Short Fiction*, *The London Magazine*, *Prism International*, *Callaloo*, and other journals and anthologies. She has had residencies with *Bread Loaf*, *Callaloo*, *Squaw Valley* and the Cropper Foundation for Caribbean Writers. She is a member of The Caribbean Writer's editorial advisory board. Yanique is a professor of Creative Writing and Caribbean Literature at Drew University.

Tobias Buckell is welcomed once again. His work dubbed "violent, poetic and compulsively readable" by Maclean's Science Fiction, the New York Times bestselling author's Xenoworld series begins with *Crystal Rain*. Along with other stand-alone novels and his over 50 stories, his works have been translated into 18 different languages. He has been nominated for awards like the Hugo, Nebula, Prometheus, and the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Science Fiction Author. His latest novel is *Hurricane Fever*, is a follow up to the successful Arctic Rising that NPR says will "give you the shivers." For the last two festivals, Buckell has lent his flavor and nurture to the annual Student Writers' Competition, which itself has birthed a number of first-time published authors.

Born in the Caribbean, Buckell grew up in Grenada and spent time in the British and US Virgin Islands, the islands that have influenced much of his writing. He graduated from All Saints High School on St. Thomas in the same graduating class as our world famous, Virgin Islander Tiphonie Yanique. Buckell currently lives in Bluffton, Ohio with his wife, twin daughters, and a pair of dogs. He can be found online at www.TobiasBuckell.com

Paget Henry is Professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at Brown University. His specializations are Dependency Theory, Caribbean Political Economy, Sociology of Religion, Sociology of Art and Literature, Africana Philosophy and Religion, Race and Ethnic Relations,

Poststructuralist, and Critical Theory. He has served on the faculties of S.U.N.Y.Stony Brook, University of the West Indies (Antigua) and the University of Virginia. He is the author of *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy* (Routledge, 2000), *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua* (Transaction Books, 1985), and co-editor of C.L.R. James's *Caribbean* (Duke UP, 1992) and *New Caribbean: Decolonization, Democracy, and Development* (Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1983). His more than fifty articles, essays, and reviews have appeared in such journals, newspapers, and magazines as *Caribbean Quarterly*, *Social and Economic Studies*, *The Cornell Journal of Social Relations*, *The Encyclopaedia of the Left*, *Sociological Forum*, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *The American Journal of Sociology*, the *Antigua and Barbuda Forum*, *Third World Affairs*, *The Bulletin of Eastern Caribbean Affairs*, and *Blackworld*. Several of Henry's essays have been reprinted in anthologies on the best work in his fields. Henry is editor of *The C.L.R. James Journal* and co-editor of the Routledge series *Africana Thought*.

Sharon Lewis is a director, showrunner, actor, and writer. Her latest production is titled *Brown Girl Begins*, an afrofuturist feature film about a young black woman who is trapped in a world forced upon her. Find her at www.thesharonlewis.com.

Summer Edward is a Children's Literature Consultant and Childhood Literacy Specialist. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Millions*, *Horn Book Magazine*, *The Missing Slate*, *Nat. Brut*, *Kweli Journal*, *Matatu: Journal for African Culture and Society*, *The Ekphrastic Review*, *Bim: Arts for the 21st Century*, *Moko Magazine*, *sx salon*, *The Columbia Review*, *The Caribbean Writer*, *Obsidian: Literature in the African Diaspora*, *Duende*, *Negative Capability Press*, *Waxwing Literary Journal*, *Re-Markings*, *tongues of the ocean* and others. She is a Small Axe Fiction and Poetry Prize shortlistee, a Pushcart Prize nominee, and was selected for the NGC Bocas Lit Fest's New Talent Showcase, spotlighting the best emerging Caribbean writers. Her work has been anthologized in *New Daughters of Africa*, edited by Margaret Busby, *OBE and New Worlds, Old Ways: Speculative Tales from the Caribbean* edited by Mythopoeic Award winning author Karen Lord.

What's happening at the Festival?

A grand lot of books will be available for purchase, including two new titles to be launched this year at the Book Bacchanal hosted in cooperation with the Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts. Authors will not only read from their work but also make use of the Open Mic Poetry and Music. At the Book Bacchanal, Dr. Roslyn Rossignol will launch her first work of creative nonfiction, *My Ghost has a Name*. Rossignol is a former associate professor of English at the University of the Virgin Islands in St. Thomas, where she taught writing and literature. She is the author of two other books on the fourteenth-century poet Geoffrey Chaucer, as well as short stories, poetry, articles, and nonfiction essays.

On Saturday morning, the now-famous Bush Tea Morning Social will open with music, live performances and a good old-fashioned Caribbean breakfast. At 9:15, Dr. Gordon will deliver the keynote address. Following Gordon's address, retired UVI Professor Dr. Marilyn F. Krigger will launch her new book *Race Relations in the US Virgin Islands St. Thomas—A Centennial Retrospective*. Her book is a history of race relations, mainly on the island of St. Thomas. It begins with the Danish background, 1672 to 1917. However, the book's main focus is on the changes that have taken place since the advent of U.S. rule in 1917, particularly greater economic growth (largely through tourism) and greater racial and social separation.

Following Dr. Krigger's presentation, an exciting panel discussion will take place around five historic Virgin Islands authors and their books, many of which are out of print. These works from Edward Wilmoth Blyden, Hubert Harrison, Frank Crosswaith, Mario Moorhead, and Adolph "Ding" Sixto will be expounded upon by panelists Gerard Emanuel, Sele Adeyemi, Carol O'Brien Henneman, Randal Macedon and Deanna James. That discussion is themed: *"Recurrent themes in Virgin Islands Literature: Implications and Messages for the Future."*

The morning events will culminate with a brown bag lunch and a presentation on "Copyright Laws and Intellectual Property Rights," delivered by Ayesha Duval and Publisher Mario Picayo. In the afternoon, the workshops are tuned to developing writers and other imaginative works.

Other authors, discussants and presenters will be featured at this two-day event. Visit our website at www.vilitfest.com for more information.

The Youth Writer Element

Another activity to take place on the morning of Friday, April 13th is the Author Cavalcade - a journey into St. Croix schools, sponsored by the Virgin Islands Department of Education's Division of Cultural Education and Division of Curriculum and Instruction. Concurrently, another stop will be on St. Thomas where international, author and scholar Dr. Lewis-Gordon will make a presentation at 10:00 on the St. Thomas Campus at the University of the Virgin Islands. That same afternoon at the Caribbean Cinemas in Sunny Isles, Caribbean Film Academy Producer, Sharon Lewis will treat a St. Croix audience, including students, to an insightful conversation on basic film production. Following her presentation will be the screening of Culture **Clash**, a Caribbean documentary film about the unique challenges second-generation Caribbean immigrants encounter and the effort to maintain their parent's heritage and cultural identity in an American society.

VILF: A Unifying Event

It is our hope that each year, the VI Lit Fest will probe new ideas, offer new opportunities for writers to hone their craft and become one of the most unifying cultural events within the Virgin Islands, the region and the world. Besides offering a space for purchasing books and promoting critical thinking in our exchange of points of view with authors, we hope that the festival will

become a place for exhibiting the intellectual and spiritual dynamism of the cultural life in the Virgin Islands. If you wish to join our Cavalcade or launch your new book, contact us at usvilitfest@gmail.com.

For VILF Guests: What to Expect

Food and Lodging

Accommodations are provided by The Buccaneer, St. Croix's finest. Resort guests receive complimentary breakfast, served each morning on the Terrace from 7am until 10:30am daily. Guests can choose from an elaborate buffet of egg specialties, breakfast meats, pancakes, waffles, French toast, hot and cold cereals, freshly baked breads, muffins and pastries, fresh cut fruit selections, yogurt, juices, coffee and fine teas.

VILF Fare

A light supper will be served at the Friday evening reception while breakfast and lunch will be served at the Saturday program.

Transportation

Transportation will be provided between the hotel and all VILF venues. Arrangements will be made for pick up and drop off times.

Sponsorships

This event would not be possible without the support of a number of partners. They include Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, The Buccaneer, The University of the Virgin Islands' College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, UVI Research and Technology Park, The Virgin Islands Department of Education Divisions of Cultural Education as well as Curriculum and Instruction, Caravelle Hotel and Casino, UVI's Cooperative Extension Service, University Bound Program, Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center (VICCC), St. Croix Foundation, Balters St. Croix, Innovative, Candia Atwater, Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts, *The Caribbean Writer* and the newly formed Virgin Islands Writing Society.