



# Art of Life MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2024 EDITION

## JAMAICA POETRY FESTIVAL ELEVENTH OF AUGUST 2024

Yasus Afari

Dr. Alfred Sangster

Sean Paul



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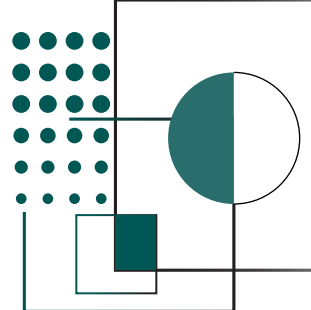
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# JAMAICA Poetry Festival Summer Edition

## 2024 EDITORIAL

### Human Arts in Action

In the 1980's, Jamaica Poetry Festival's founder-director, Yasus Afari, staged his first Poetry Production at CAST/UTech, Jamaica, on which he also performed. It was a fundraiser for the Commerce Department. Coming full circle, Yasus Afari's SenYAcum Edutainment is now collaborating with UTech in staging the 14 th annual Jamaica Poetry Festival 2024 at UTech, on which he's also performing. This is a significant and symbolic homecoming.

### Harmonizing Sports and Arts

Another important milestone for JPF 2024 is the fusion of Sports and Arts. In fact, we assert that Sports is being re-purposed as expressive, Performance Arts, making bold statements about our shared human experiences, ideas and perspectives. Indeed, the Sports and Arts Fusion is energy in motion - expressing ourselves physically, emotionally, mentally and intellectually. JPF 2024 Synchronized **Swimming to Poetry** bears witness to this fact, coupled with the Poetic Volleyball Demonstration. Sports and arts are inseparable, they belong to each other – expressing stronger synergy for our shared humanity.

### Synchronized Swimming to Poetry

Like in Drama, Music, Poetry, Film, Photography, Dance, Storytelling, Fashion and Painting, people, and youth in particular, are using Sports to learn and unlearn valuable life lessons and skills – to inspire, motivate, stimulate, empower and uplift. Ultimately, this natural synergy promotes discipline, innovation, commitment and creativity. Hence, we are totally delighted in the unprecedented response to our innovative **Swimming to Poetry**.

### Leading by Our Example - Poetry for Charity, Feast of Poetree Showcase and More

Jamaica Poetry Festival 2024 unfolds at 10am with free family-friendly creative arts workshops - drumming and poetry – in the Lecture Theatre, followed by Sports and Arts in the pool and auditorium, respectively. Our Charity Dinner, Poetry for Charity, in support of Mental Health / Harold Butler, follows at 4pm at the UTech Hotel. Our main event, Feast of Poetree Showcase follows at 7pm at the Caribbean Sculpture Park, complimented by an Arts and Craft Display. This includes Lifetime Achievement Awards of Honour to the legendary Dr. Alfred Sangster and global megastar Sean Paul, plus a Tribute to Gil Scott-Heron, Carla Thomas and Prof Edward Baugh, in a Poetic Showcase of the very best in Performance Poetry and Artistic Performances from leading Poets and other performers.

### Nurturing Com-unity

Once again, Jamaica Poetry Festival proves that a purely materialistic art would be like a tree that is expected to bear fruit without flowering and to sacrifice grace and beauty for mere utility. Therefore, we are honoured to bear Poetic Fruits in nurturing our community.

J A M A I C A

# POETRY FESTIVAL

2024

## Summer Edition

### **PROGRAM** Hosted by : *Simone Absolom-Gayle of PBCJ*

Special Interlude of Inspirational, Uplifting Music – PA System	6pm - 6:45
Audio-Visual Tribute to: Gil Scott-Heron, Carla Hewitt and Prof Edward Baugh	6:45 - 6:58
Regal Welcome, Thanks-Giving, Open Remarks - 1.5 Mins	6:58 Pm
Call to Order with Abeng-Drum by Calvin Mitchell - Master Drummer – 3-5 Mins	7:00 Pm
JPF 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award of Honour – Dr. Alfred Sangster and Sean Paul	5 Mins
Sports and Arts Presentations	
Denise Brown	7-10 Mins
Dalton Brown	7-10 Mins
Ossie Gee	10 - 15 Mins
Herbie Miller	10 - 15 Mins
Jazmin Headley	15 Mins
Prof Clinton Hutton	15 Mins
<b>INTERMISSION - 10 - 15 Mins</b>	<b>7:30 - 7:45 Pm</b>
Dr. Blossom O’Meally Nelson	15-20 Mins
Steppa	15 Mins
Hugo Barrington	15 Mins
Dr. Michael Abraham	15-20 Mins
Yasus Afari	25 Mins
Special Surprise Guest	15 - 20 Mins
Thanks-Giving, Guidance & Protection - Mentions & Credits	10:00 Pm

*See You @ JPF 2025 – Sunday, August 10 th , 2025 and PiM 2025 – Sunday, February 23 rd , 2025,  
JPMS 2025 – Sunday, March 30 th , 2025*

# Canada *Message From the Canadian High Commission*

The High Commission of Canada enthusiastically supports this year's staging of the Jamaica Poetry Festival and applauds the selection of dynamic Canadian and Jamaican poets. Canada's commitment to fostering cultural exchange and supporting the arts aligns perfectly with the festival's mission. We believe that poetry is not just a form of artistic expression but also a powerful tool for social change, capable of fostering dialogue, promoting understanding, and inspiring action.

The High Commission is proud to support such a meaningful event that will recognise outstanding talents that have helped to shape Jamaica's cultural fabric. Our involvement underscores Canada's dedication to promoting cultural diversity and supporting initiatives that drive positive change. This partnership between the High Commission and SenYacum Edutainment has highlighted the cultural ties between Canada and Jamaica, which are not always well-known, but which build bilateral relationships, strengthen people-to-people ties and advance our mutual interests.

In supporting the Festival, we reaffirm our belief that cultural and artistic endeavors are vital to the enrichment of our societies and we underscore the crucial role of the arts in development. We invite everyone to join in the festival and experience the profound impact that poetry can have on our world. Together, let us celebrate the power of words to inspire, to heal, and to drive development.



UTech, Jamaica



SenYacum  
"Living the Art of Life"





**Message by: Dr Carey Wallace,  
Executive Director, Tourism Enhancement Fund  
for the Jamaica Poetry Festival**

The Tourism Enhancement Fund is proud to sponsor this year's staging of the Jamaica Poetry Festival. This iconic event represents an incredible convergence of art and culture, celebrating the profound richness of Jamaican poetry and the creative arts.

Art and tourism share a symbiotic relationship, each enhancing the other. Unique events like the Jamaica Poetry Festival play a crucial role in diversifying our tourism offerings, presenting Jamaica not just as a destination of sun, sand, and sea but as a vibrant cultural hub. This festival draws visitors to our shores, inviting them to immerse themselves in our culture and heritage through the powerful medium of poetry.

The Jamaica Poetry Festival is more than just an event; it is a celebration of our identity, our stories, and our artistic spirit. By integrating art into our tourism product, we not only enhance the visitor experience but also strengthen the cultural fabric of our nation. We are proud to be part of an event that welcomes poets and poetry enthusiasts from all corners of the globe to share in this enriching experience.

This year's festival promises to be an extraordinary celebration with a stellar lineup, including Sean Paul (JPF 2024 Lifetime Achievement Awardee), Blossom Omeally-Nelson, Yasus Afari, and many more. It will be an event that we will not soon forget.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organizers for what promises to be an incredible event. Thank you for your dedication to providing creatives with an outlet to showcase their art through spoken word.

I look forward to joining in this year's celebration of the art of poetry and the cultural heritage that makes Jamaica truly unique.






Dr. Carey Wallace  
Executive Director  
Tourism Enhancement Fund

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# Keith Errol Edwards

## EXECUTIVE RESUME

Address: 5 Halart Drive, Kingston 6  
Tel: 876-4130610  
Email: keithedwardse@gmail.com

### EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Mr. Keith Errol Edwards is a seasoned business professional with over 35 years of experience in manufacturing, real estate development, and construction. He has held significant leadership roles and achieved successful ventures in furniture manufacturing and real estate development.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chairman and Managing Director, Free Form Factory Company  
Tenure: November 1992 - Present (31 years 8 months)

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Setting long-term goals, defining the company's vision, and making critical decisions to steer the company toward achieving its objectives.
- **Operational Oversight:** Managing daily operations to ensure efficiency and productivity, including overseeing production processes, quality control, and resource management.
- **Financial Management:** Developing and monitoring budgets, financial planning, and ensuring the company's financial health through sound fiscal policies and practices.
- **Market Expansion:** Identifying and exploring new market opportunities, leading business development initiatives, and expanding the company's market presence.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, including investors, partners, clients, and employees, and ensuring their needs and interests are met.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensuring that the company adheres to industry regulations, standards, and legal requirements.

**Managing Director, Curved Space**  
Tenure: 1980 - 2013 (33 years)

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Product Design and Development:** Leading the design and development of innovative furniture products, including bean bags and contemporary furniture.
- **Marketing Strategy:** Crafting and implementing marketing strategies to promote the company's products and enhance brand recognition.
- **Operational Management:** Overseeing the manufacturing process to ensure high-quality output and efficient production.

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- **Secondary Education:** St. Andrew Tech, Jamaica
- **Higher Education:** Seneca College, Toronto
- **Studied:** Business Administration and General Management.

### ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Real Estate Development:** Successfully developed a residential and commercial project consisting of 202 lots at Pen Pass in St. Catherine, Jamaica.
- **Construction:** Utilized his building system to construct several houses and other buildings across Jamaica.
- **Founder:** Established his first business in 1979, focusing on furniture manufacturing.

### OTHER INFORMATION

Mr. Edwards continues to lead Free Form Factory Company with a commitment to innovation, quality, and excellence, driving the company's growth and success in the competitive manufacturing industry. His extensive background and hands-on experience have equipped him with a comprehensive understanding of the business landscape and the skills to navigate complex challenges.



## About FLAG UP SCOTLAND JAMAICA

Cllr Graham Campbell is Project Leader of Flag Up Scotland Jamaica (FUSJ) a twinning citizenship project linking the two countries launched in Glasgow in 2014 during the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow the company Professor Emeritus Sir Geoff Palmer, and representatives of the UK, Scottish and Jamaican governments as well as members of the Jamaica track and field team. Alongside Sir Geoff FUSJ has campaigned for Jamaica to be recognised as a country of special significance for

Scotland as the ‘most Scottish island in the world outside Scotland’ this included bringing a petition to the Scottish Parliament in 2015. Flag Up's work on cultural and artists exchanges has included Claudius Supa England; talks on slavery legacy with U of G scholar Dr Stephen Mullen and Scottish Actor David Hayman and being part of Jamaican UK diaspora efforts including preventing Windrush deportations of UK citizens of Caribbean descent.

FUSJ was recognised by poet ex-Makar in Professor Jackie Kay's recently published poem ‘Flag Up Scotland Jamaica’ in her new collection May Day. This poem which sums up what we are very well, and was specially commissioned for the occasion of the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UWI and University of Glasgow. (Credit UofG August 2019)

Slavery and Colonial Legacy Working Group The Slavery and Colonial Legacy Working Group (SCLWG) of Glasgow City Council is Chaired by Cllr Campbell and hears expert testimony from historians and African Caribbean and other community representatives on how enslaved African labour in Transatlantic tobacco, sugar and cotton trades made Glasgow wealthy. It has responsibility for leading public consultation on street names, statues and built heritage. In 2023 it conducted Ipsos Mori polling and Household survey questionnaires revealing majority public support for more education in Glasgow's slavery links, especially in schools.

The SCLWG's work culminated in Dr Stephen Mullen's March 2022 ‘Glasgow Slavery Audit’ report into Glasgow City Council's financial links to slavery revealing numerous Lord Provosts as enslavers, and exposing the Council's predecessor civic bodies (the Guild, the Town Council etc) as significant investors in slavery. This resulted in the Council unanimously agreeing a formal apology issued by Leader Cllr Susan Aitken for the city's slavery legacy in April 2022. The SCLWG made recommendations to the Council in late 2023 for a few streets to be renamed and for most of the 60 locations identify to have links to slavery to have interpretative plaques explaining that legacy.



**Cllr Graham Campbell** was elected as Glasgow's first African Caribbean city councillor for the Scottish National Party (SNP) in May 2017. Re-elected May 2022 he became Chair of Education Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee – working with schools, teachers and scholars to upgrade the Modern Studies curriculum with slavery legacy modules. In 2021 he was appointed by Glasgow City Council Chair of its Slavery and Colonial Legacy Working Group (SCLWG).

A longstanding Pan-African socialist campaigner for housing and refugee rights, in recognition of his campaigning in African & Caribbean communities for Reparations and Reparatory Justice he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Glasgow in 2022. Having been instrumental in persuading UofG to seek a partnership with UWI - which led to Sir Hilary Beckles signing a Memorandum of Understanding between UWI and UofG in 2019; Graham then enrolled in September 2023 as a masters student in Reparatory Justice.



## **DR. ALFRED SANGSTER**

### **The Legendary Educator and Pioneer**

**Professional Summary:** Highly accomplished and respected academic leader with extensive experience in higher education administration, research and teaching. Known for strategic vision, innovation and dedication to educational excellence, with a proven track record of fostering student success, advancing institutional goals and building strong community partnerships.

**Education and Professional Experience:** President, University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech)

- Provide visionary leadership and strategic direction to UTech, steering the institution towards academic excellence, innovation and global competitiveness

- Oversee all aspects of university operations, including academic programs, research initiatives, budgeting and infrastructure development
- Strengthened partnerships with industry leaders, government agencies and international institutions to enhance research collaborations, internship opportunities and student placement
- Spearheaded the implementation of new academic programs aligned with emerging industry demands, fostering student employability and entrepreneurship.

Vice-Chancellor, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus • Directed the largest campus of the University of the West Indies, overseeing academic affairs, student services and administrative functions • Led initiatives to enhance teaching and learning outcomes, promote research excellence and support faculty development • Established strategic partnerships with regional and international universities, fostering academic exchanges and joint research projects • Implemented initiatives to promote student engagement, diversity, inclusivity and enhancing student success rates.

Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of the West Indies • Provided leadership and strategic direction to the Faculty of Social Sciences, overseeing undergraduate and graduate programs in disciplines such as economics, sociology and political science • Led efforts to enhance the quality of teaching, research and community engagement within the faculty • Developed innovative interdisciplinary programs and research initiatives to address emerging societal challenges and promote sustainable development • Fostered collaborations with government agencies, NGOs and private sector organizations to provide students with experiential learning opportunities.

**Professional Affiliations** • Member, Caribbean Association of University Teachers • Fellow, Jamaica Institute of Management • Board Member, National Education Trust



# University of Technology, Jamaica

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**For more information contact:**

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[/Centreforthearts.utechjamaica](https://www.facebook.com/Centreforthearts.utechjamaica)

## **Publications:**

- Author of numerous articles and book chapters on topics related to higher education, economic development and public policy.

## **Honors and Awards:**

- Recipient of the Order of Jamaica (OJ) for outstanding contributions to education and national development • Alfred M.W. Sangster OJ, CD, JP, BSc, PhD, FJIM

## **Family Legacy**

Alfred Sangster was born in St. Elizabeth on July 24, 1929, son of Peter Watt Sangster, a farmer, politician and Munro & Dickenson Trustee, who was a hero for his upcoming nephew Donald, who became Prime Minister of Jamaica. Alfred's mother, Iris M.L. Maxwell Sangster, was the daughter of a Scottish missionary who established many churches in St Elizabeth. Alfred established a foundation to help high school students associated with those churches.

## **Munro Days**

Alfred attended Munro College from 1940 to 1947. He achieved good scholastic and sporting accomplishments, was House Captain of Calder House and Deputy Head Boy, and was a scout as a junior and cadet as a senior. Although he has represented Jamaica in hockey, he was perhaps more remembered for tennis and track and field. Along with fellow inductee Hugh Hart, he was on the tennis team that won the Alexander Cup in 1947 and on the athletic teams of 1945, captained by inductee Lindy Delapenha and of 1947, both of which won Boys Champs for Munro College.

In cricket, he famously made a century against the Munro Old Boys. He earned his school colours in athletics, cricket, hockey and tennis.

He has described his Munro years as rich and rewarding. Passing his School Certificate Grade II with distinction in English Language in 1944, he went on to gain his High School Certificate in 1946, majoring in Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics.

## **Higher Education**

Going on to science at Queens University in Belfast, Ireland, he gained a First Class Honours BSc in Chemistry, a blue in athletics and was an executive in the Varsity Bible Union. He then came back to Jamaica and was assistant Lecturer in Chemistry, then Senior Lecturer and Supervisor of Research Projects between 1952 and 1970 at the University of the West Indies. Meanwhile, in 1958, he obtained his PhD in Organic Chemistry.

## Family Ties

1958 was a great year for him, as then he also married Trinidadian Velma A.I. Bodden. They have raised two sons and a daughter and are justly proud of them. Peter and David are mechanical engineers and Kathleen a medical doctor.

## Career

His career at what was first CAST and later University of Technology went from Vice-Dean of Evening Students to President of UTECH, where for a while his name became synonymous with the institution. He has been President of the Inter-collegiate Sports Association and a Member of Carreras Sports Foundation.

Out of this interest in sports, he espoused the principle of local training of athletes along with colleague Dennis Johnson, and this has seen the emergence of world-class local coaches and Jamaican athletes prosper, excel and dominate as never before.

Some of the things he remembers with fondness of the CAST/UTECH years are: student numbers going from 1,200 to 6,000; three (3) new departments; fifty (50) new programmes; the granting of degrees; growth of the physical plant; a growing number of Caribbean students; the 9th World Conference on Cooperative Education and restoration after Hurricane Gilbert in 1988.... Indeed, his legend work continues to grow and influence...

Undoubtedly, the legendary work of Dr Alfred Sangster is immortalized within Jamaica's educational wealth and national development. Accordingly, **JPF** is honoured to present **Dr Alfred Sangster** with the **Jamaica Poetry Festival 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award**.

*Specially researched and prepared for AoL Magazine – JPF 2024 - Summer edition*

# Synchronized Swimming to Poetry - An Innovation by Yasus Afari

## A JPF 2024 Experience



Artistic swimming, formerly known as synchronised swimming, is often described as a blend of swimming, dance, and gymnastics performed in water. It is a sport that embodies grace, strength, and creativity. Poetry, on the other hand, is a literary form that captures emotions, imagery, and ideas through the beauty of language. At first glance, these disciplines might seem worlds apart. However, a closer examination reveals a profound synergy between artistic swimming and poetry, highlighting their shared emphasis on rhythm, expression, and the power to move and inspire audiences.

Artistic swimming is an aquatic discipline that requires athletes to perform elaborate routines to music, combining intricate movements, lifts, and acrobatics. These performances are choreographed to flow seamlessly with the musical score, much like how a poet carefully crafts each line to create a harmonious whole.

The precision and timing required in artistic swimming are akin to the meticulous structure and rhythm found in poetry. Each stroke, kick, and gesture in the water parallels the deliberate choice of words, meter, and rhyme in a poem. Both artistic swimming and poetry are deeply rooted in the expression of human emotion and storytelling. An artistic swimming routine often tells a story or conveys a theme through the athletes; movements and expressions. These narratives are brought to life through the synergy of physical prowess and artistic interpretation, captivating audiences and evoking emotional responses.

Similarly, poetry uses vivid imagery, metaphor, and lyrical language to convey emotions and tell stories. Both art forms strive to connect with their audiences on an emotional level, transcending the boundaries of their mediums. The training and preparation involved in artistic swimming and poetry also share commonalities.

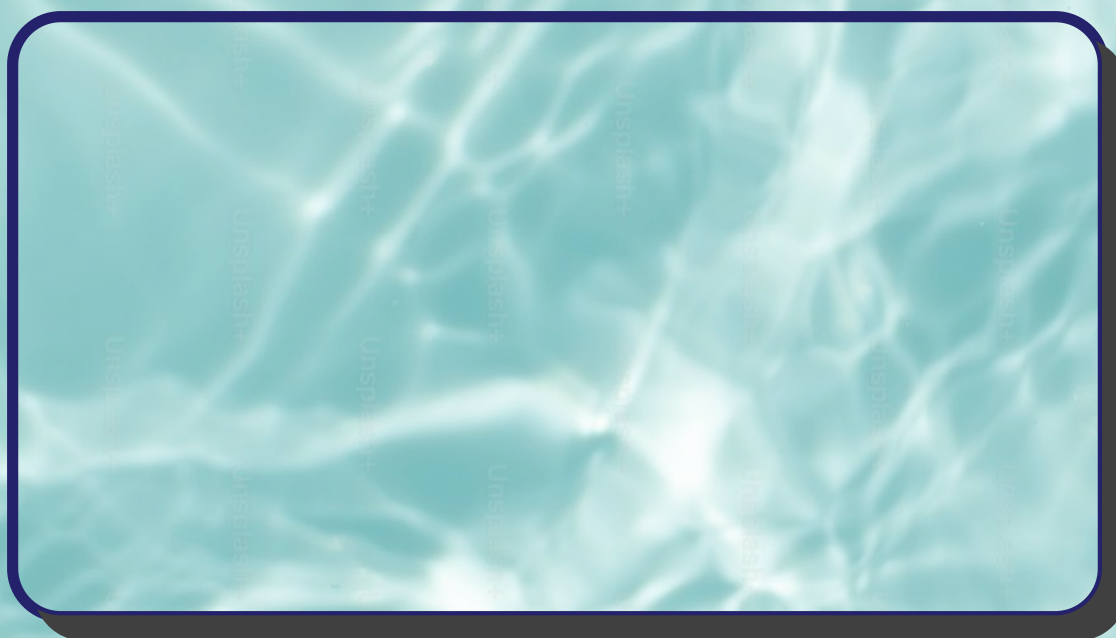
Artistic swimmers spend countless hours perfecting their routines, much like poets who painstakingly revise and refine their verses. The athletes dedication to mastering their craft is mirrored in the poet's commitment to finding the perfect words and rhythms to convey their message.

Both disciplines require a balance of discipline and creativity, with performers and poets alike pushing the limits of their abilities to achieve excellence. The physicality of artistic swimming adds another layer of connection to poetry. The fluid movements and seamless transitions in the water can be seen as a form of visual poetry, where the athletes bodies become the verses and the pool their canvas. The synchronization and unity among team members in artistic swimming are reminiscent of the coherence and harmony within a well-crafted poem. Each swimmer's role is crucial to the overall performance, just as every word and line in a poem contributes to its overall impact.

Moreover, the concept of rhythm is central to both artistic swimming and poetry. In artistic swimming, athletes move in time with the music, creating patterns and sequences that are visually and aurally pleasing. This rhythmic precision is essential to the sport, as it ensures the coherence and beauty of the performance. In poetry, rhythm is achieved through the use of meter, rhyme, and cadence, giving the poem its musical quality and enhancing its emotional impact. The rhythmic elements in both forms serve to engage and captivate the audience, drawing them into the experience.

International competitions and performances in artistic swimming, like poetry readings and festivals such as the Jamaica Poetry Festival, celebrate the diversity of human expression. These events bring together individuals from different backgrounds, showcasing a tapestry of cultural influences and artistic styles.

The universality of artistic swimming and poetry lies in their ability to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, uniting people through shared experiences and emotions. It is clear that the synergy between artistic swimming and poetry is a testament to the multifaceted nature of human expression. Both disciplines demand a blend of technical skill, creativity, and emotional depth. Whether through the fluid movements of an aquatic routine or the carefully chosen words of a poem, artistic swimmers and poets alike strive to capture and convey the beauty and complexity of the human experience. We therefore applaud the efforts of Yasus Afari in including our sport to be expressed in this complementary way and we look forward to the future association with the poetry festival.



Editor's Note – Synchronized Swimming to Poetry is an Innovation of Yasus Afari for JPF 2024.

Youtube Video source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inxin-shT80>



# JAMAICA POETRY MUSIC SYMPOSIUM

**PROMOTER** – SenYAcum Edutainment – Organized by Yasus Afari

**THEME** – Taking Ownership and Responsibility – Transforming Lives,  
Shaping Our Future

## COINCEPT

The inaugural staging of the Jamaica Poetry, Music Symposium is formulated to analyze, evaluate and assess our history, cultural heritage and aspirations, as a nation with a global influence, and to reassert and institutionalize our collective ownership and responsibilities. In doing so, we aim to look at our identity / who we are as a people, our resources, our cultural heritage, our aspirations, our strengths, our weaknesses, best practices, where we stand now and the best way to reset/reposition/renew and move forward, collectively.

## INNOVATIVE METHODOLOGY

We are working on the factual premise that ‘every song is a poem set to music’, hence the title. Therefore, we’re pivoting on music being the central leading edge of the Creative Industries which we aim to harmonize around and within the music of our people. Accordingly, we are and presenting persons, entities, institutions, agencies and pertinent ministries to compose the plural and inclusive representation which we seek across a wide cross section of our nation, including the Jamaican Diaspora and the international community. Attendant to this approach, we are operating within framework of our shared humanity, experiences and aspirations as the Jamaican Family. Hence, to help ensure this, we shall operate and relate on a first name basis, without titles, ‘jacket and tie’ and others elements of formality and rigidity, yet with mutual respect, dignity, integrity, civility and social grace. Additionally, all full-ticipants are required to adhere to our programme, time allocations and code of conduct, in harmony with tolerance, love and mutual-respect for one and all in attendance.

PS The JPMS was inaugurated in 2023 at the Institute of Jamaica and had the second staging in March 2024 at the Mico University College, where the historic document The Kingston Accord was duly ratified and which shall be circulated before JPMS 2025.

*See You at Jamaica Poetry, Music Symposium  
2025 - Sunday, March 30th*

# THE ART OF VOLLEYBALL



**Jacqueline Cowan**

At first glance, volleyball and poetry might appear to inhabit different realms—one rooted in physical exertion and team dynamics, the other in introspection and solitary creativity. However, a deeper exploration reveals a surprising and profound synergy between these two pursuits. Volleyball and poetry share commonalities that enrich both the athlete and the poet, demonstrating that the essence of human expression transcends conventional boundaries.

At first glance, volleyball and poetry might appear to inhabit different realms, a sport defined by its fast-paced action and strategic complexity, offers a rhythmic and almost lyrical experience. The game unfolds in a series of coordinated movements: the serve, the pass, the set, and the spike. These elements are performed with a precision and grace that can be likened to the construction of a poem. Just as a poet carefully selects words and arranges them into verses and stanzas, volleyball players meticulously execute plays, creating a flow that is both dynamic and harmonious.

The poetic nature of volleyball is further evident in the way players communicate on the court. The concise, often non-verbal cues exchanged between teammates mirror the brevity and potency of poetic language. A nod, a glance, a subtle hand signal—all convey meaning and intent, much like the carefully chosen words and lines of a poem. This efficiency of communication fosters a deep connection and understanding among players, similar to the bond between a poet and their audience.

Training and preparation in volleyball also reflect the creative process of writing poetry. Athletes engage in repetitive drills and practice sessions to hone their skills, akin to a poet revising and refining their work. Visualization techniques, where players imagine successful plays and outcomes, parallel the mental rehearsal poets engage in when crafting imagery and metaphor. Both disciplines require a blend of discipline and creativity, a balance between structure and spontaneity.

The synergy between volleyball and poetry extends to the emotional and psychological

experiences of their practitioners. Both athletes and poets experience moments of intense focus and flow, where time seems to slow down, and their actions become almost automatic. This state of being, often referred to as “the zone” in sports and “the muse” in the arts, represents a peak performance where the mind and body are in perfect harmony.

The exhilaration of a well-executed play on the volleyball court can evoke the same sense of fulfillment as composing a poignant verse.

Furthermore, volleyball and poetry both thrive on the power of storytelling. Each match tells a story of struggle, strategy, triumph, and sometimes defeat.

These narratives are captured not only in the memories of the players but also in the written and spoken accounts of the games. Similarly, poetry often captures the essence of human experience, weaving narratives that resonate with readers and listeners. Both volleyball and poetry offer a means of expressing and sharing personal and collective experiences, creating connections that transcend individual differences.

The cultural impact of volleyball and poetry also highlights their synergistic potential. Volleyball, especially at the international level, brings together people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of global community. Poetry, with its universal themes and emotions, transcends linguistic and cultural barriers, uniting people through shared experiences and feelings. When these two forms of expression intersect, they amplify their ability to inspire, uplift, and unite.

In essence, the synergy between volleyball and poetry lies in their shared pursuit of beauty, expression, and connection. Both fields demand a delicate balance of technique and creativity, discipline and passion.

Whether through the rhythmic cadence of a volleyball match or the carefully crafted lines of a poem, athletes and poets alike seek to capture and convey the human experience. By embracing this synergy, we can deepen our appreciation for both volleyball and poetry, recognizing that at their core, they are both expressions of the same human spirit striving to connect, inspire, and transcend.



By - Jacqueline Cowan – President,  
of the Jamaica Volleyball Association

# UTECH JAMAICA CENTRE FOR THE ARTS



The UTech Jamaica Centre for the Arts is situated in the heart of the campus. It is surrounded by the Caribbean Sculpture Park, the only sculpture park of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean. The Centre was established in 1998, with a mandate to help individuals unleash their creative energy towards living at the highest and the best of who they are, through exposure to the arts. It focuses on education in the visual and performing arts, cultural services and professional development through elective modules and performing societies.

It provides a place where students develop a greater sense of consciousness, confidence, competence and courage to fulfill their true potential by supporting the university community through public cultural engagement.

This includes the staging of cultural productions, presentations, consultation, and providing professional performances by the UTech, Jamaica Art and Theatre Ensemble. In addition, we provide heritage site documentation and heritage site maintenance. The Centre also engages students, staff and creative industry professionals through workshops, consultations, facility rental and guided tours of the Caribbean Sculpture Park.

## Visual and Performing Arts Programmes

We currently have three electives, Introduction to Dance, Introduction to Drama and Theatre Arts and Introduction to Music. The number of students enrolled in the elective programs in the academic year 2022-2023 totaled 36 students owing to the switch to online classes as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. This is a drastic decrease from an average of 120 students for both semesters in a face-to-face setting.

### Electives

The modules are now under the co-supervision of the Communication and Arts Technology program under the Faculty of Arts and Liberal Studies. Due to the pandemic and the subsequent shift to online learning the modules were converted to the online format. Therefore, all electives were offered on the online platform.

### Performing societies

The Centre is on a mission to enhance the level of professionalism presented by the performing societies and as such the students are benefiting from more training and exposure from the various expert tutors in the respective disciplines.



### *In Her Own Words*

My name is Winsome Miller-Rowe. I am a published writer and poet, composer, musician, and Nature photographer. My main job is a Medical Doctor and I believe that the Arts can play a great part in lowering stress and thereby enhancing the healing process. The mind and body are intrinsically connected.

Mind stress inhibits the immune system responsible for fighting illness, cancer and infections. The rhythm of music, poetry and dance and the beauty of Nature are tools for healing and therapy.

I compose and produce music for relaxation, Nature photography and videos enhanced with music, and rhythmic inspirational, and Nature poems. My quest is to enlighten and inspire others to use their mind to overcome stress and for transformation in living a better and healthier life.

## **THE HEALING POWER OF THE ARTS.**

Transforming Stress into Wellness Stress is the leading cause of disease, affecting both physical and mental health. Chronic stress has been linked to various health issues, including heart disease, hypertension, Anxiety, depression, and immune disorders.

To combat this, the Arts have emerged as a powerful tool in promoting healing and wellness by their ability to lower stress. Then too. All of life is rhythm and cycles, from the largest object to the smallest subatomic particle. Everything in nature vibrates, and the vibration of one object can affect the vibration of another when their frequencies synchronize. This is one of the ways we believe music, poetry (the music of language) and dance affect our physical bodies. This is called entrainment. The body and mind are intrinsically connected.

The Arts offer diverse approaches to Stress Management:

**Music:** The soothing melodies and rhythms of music may have a calming effect and promote relaxation.

**Poetry with rhyme and rhythm:** Engaging with poetry, whether reading or writing, offers a cathartic release and a means of expression.

**Nature photography and videos:** Image and videos of serene landscapes provide a therapeutic escape, alleviating stress and fostering emotional well-being.

**Affirmations:** Positive affirmations such as those focused on love, peace, health, abundance, and creativity, cultivate a constructive mindset, promoting self-belief and resilience.

**Nature photography and videos:** Displaying nature photography and videos in waiting rooms creates a calming environment. As a medical practitioner, integrating arts into healing has proven transformative. I have composed music for relaxation and meditation with affirmations, produced videos of nature with music, and used nature photography with inspirational and nature poetry. My messages are positive and musical with rhyme and rhythm.

*Dr. Winsome Miller-Rowe*



## ***Harold "The Butler Did It" Butler: A Tribute to a Jamaican Musical Genius***

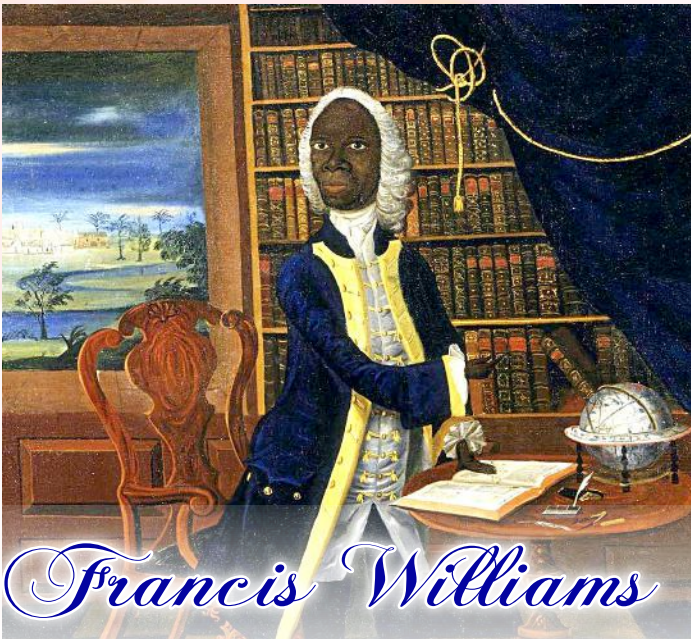
Harold Butler, a Jamaican pianist, composer, arranger, and producer, has left an indelible mark on the landscape of Jamaican music. Known for his exceptional talent and versatility, Butler has collaborated with some of the most iconic figures in the industry. His work spans genres and decades, with contributions that have significantly shaped reggae, jazz, and soul music. Butler, the younger brother of the renowned Leslie "Professor" Butler, began his illustrious career in the early 1970s. He quickly became a fixture in recording studios, working with legendary producers and artists. His songwriting prowess is evident in hits like Beres Hammond's "One Step Ahead" and "Got to Get Away," Cynthia Schloss's "Love Forever," and Ernest Wilson's "Let Love Be Your Righthand Man."

His musical genius also shines through in his contributions as a keyboardist, pianist, organist, and synthesizer player. Butler's skills are showcased on seminal albums such as Bunny Wailer's "Blackheart Man," Peter Tosh's "Equal Rights," and Jimmy Cliff's Grammy-winning "Cliff Hanger." He has also played a pivotal role in the music of Culture, Dennis Brown, Toots & The Maytals, and many others.

In the 1970s, Butler recorded five solo albums, including "Africa on My Mind," which features the poignant track "Crying in Soweto." This album blends jazz, roots, and soul with African influences, reflecting Butler's diverse musical inspirations and his commitment to addressing social issues through music. Despite his success, Butler's career has been marred by psychological challenges that limited his public appearances. However, his contributions to Jamaican music have not gone unrecognized. Butler was honored with the Order of Distinction for his significant impact on the development of Jamaican music.

Under the support and love of guitarist Maurice Gordon, he has been getting care and other support from a few friends of Gordon and his family. Today, though not performing in public except playing practicing and playing piano at Music Mart and Mr. Brown's Piano shop on Constant Spring, he also now has Gordon's piano at home to practice. Harold Butler's legacy as a pianist, composer, and arranger remains influential. His ability to blend genres and create timeless music ensures that his contributions to Jamaican music will be celebrated for generations to come.

By Maurice Gordon



## Francis Williams

Jamaica's First Poet, was born in Kingston, Jamaica, December 26, 1697. He was born the younger of twin sons, and an older brother John to a free black couple, Dorothy and John Williams.

Williams was a scholar, teacher, mathematician, composer, poet and author and was admitted to Lincoln's Inn London England on August 8, 1721. Following the death of his father John Williams Snr., in July 1723, Francis Williams returned to Jamaica to see to his Father's estate and to take up his inheritance of some twelve thousand pounds sterling on Nov. 19, 1724. Not long after his return to Jamaica, Francis set up a free black school in Spanish Town. At the time, most, if not all, free schools were only available to poor white inhabitants and inaccessible to Black children.

Williams was an activist who used the Law to claim the privileges of freed Africans in Jamaica and in the process earned the wrath of the white planter class and racists such as Edward Long who made it a study to publicly discredit Williams as a Poet and scholar. In fact, so intent were Long and his sympathizers in proving that Africans free or enslaved, were less than human, they engaged in a protracted public campaign to prove Williams was not a poet.

"...for Long and his sympathizers, if Williams could be denied the title poet, he could be denied the status of being fully human..." (Carretta, 2003).

Carretta (2003) argues that Williams established his own place in the tradition of classical poetry and points out that what motivated Edward Long and other defenders of slavery to deny the poetic achievement of Francis Williams the feverish need to protect the narrative of African inferiority, as "...if even one person of African descent was capable of producing Literature, the argument for African inferiority was challenged.."

Although Long wrote that Francis Williams was the subject of a social experiment by an English duke, John Montague who wished to show that Blacks individuals could match the intellectual achievements of whites and that this led to his studies at Cambridge University, there is absolutely no evidence of that and in fact may have been part of Long's propaganda to discredit and devalue Williams the Poet.

By the 1770s Francis Williams was one of the most powerful men in Jamaica, having inherited and amassed vast amount of land and consequently considerable political power. This made him a particular target of the Planter class and the Jamaica Assembly.

In one instance, he was reportedly called a 'black dog' by a white planter named William Broderick. Francis reportedly called Broderick a 'white dog' several times over. This resulted in a bloody fist fight and Francis was charged with assaulting a white man. Francis Williams successfully defended himself against the charge on the basis of self-defence. This led the plantocracy to argue that Williams was providing great empowerment and inspiration to both free and enslaved Africans in Jamaica so they brought in a bill to undermine Francis' position and that of the Africans. The bill entitled "An Act for the better regulating Slaves, and rendering free Negroes and Mulattoes more useful" was passed by the Jamaica Assembly on March 28, 1730. The resulting legislation made it illegal for any Black person in Jamaica to strike any white person, even if it's in self-defence.

We have come a long way with still a long way to go and so has Jamaican Poetry.

Poem by Francis Williams – Ode to George Haldane  
(An Excerpt)

**Rash councils now, with each malignant plan,**

**Each faction, in that evil hour began,**

**At your approach are in confusion fled.**

**Nor while you rule, shall raise their dastard head.**

**Alike the master and slave shall see**

**Their neck reliv'd, the yoke unbound by thee.**

Researched and written by Yasus Afari and KaBu Ma'at Kheru for JPF 2019 Art of Life magazine

Credit / Sources: Carretta, V. (2003). *Who Was Francis Williams? Early American Literature*, 38(2), 213-237. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25057315>



## Honouring Our Own Sean Paul

### Global Megastar - Sean "Dutty" Paul – Fresh & Clean

Sean Paul Ryan Francis Henriques, OD, was born 9 January 1973. He is an unprecedented and unparalleled Jamaican reggae and dancehall singer and DJ/rapper. Sean's first album, *Stage One*, was released in 2000. He gained international fame with his second album, *Dutty Rock*, in 2002. Its single "Get Busy" topped the US Billboard Hot 100 chart in the United States. "Temperature", from his third album, *The Trinity* (2005), kept the fire blazing for the rapid rising Sean Paul. Interestingly, SP frequently invokes the nickname "Sean da Paul", originating from the similarity between his first two names and world renown West Indies cricketer Shivnarine Chanderpaul. Most of SP's albums have been nominated for Grammy Awards for Best Reggae Album, with *Dutty Rock* winning the coveted award. Sean has been featured in many other singles, including chart-toppers "Baby Boy" by Beyoncé, "Breathe" by Blu Cantrell, "What About Us" by The Saturdays, "Rockabye" by Clean Bandit, "Cheap Thrills" by Sia, and "Fuego" by DJ Snake. "Cheap Thrills" and "Rockabye", along with Paul's own "No Lie" (2016), each have over 1 billion views on YouTube, with "Rockabye" having reached over 2.7 billion views.

### Early life

While Sean Paul was born in Kingston, Jamaica, his mother Frances, a painter, is of English and Chinese Jamaican descent and his Portuguese paternal great-grandfather's Sephardic Jewish family emigrated from Portugal to Jamaica in the 17th century. While his paternal grandmother was Afro-Jamaican, SP's father, Garth Henriques, was believed to be descended from Portuguese, who were rumoured to be notorious horse thieves who were fleeing from bounty hunters in a ship that sank in Jamaica. Intriguingly, when Sean Paul was 15, his father was reportedly arrested on charges of manslaughter and sentenced to 15 years in prison; he was released for good behavior when Paul was 19. Sean was raised as a Catholic, though he also attended the Jewish private school, Hillel Academy in Jamaica. Several members of his family are swimmers. His grandfather was on the first Jamaican men's national water polo team. His father also played water polo for the team in the 1960s and competed in long-distance swimming, while Sean Paul's mother was a butterfly swimmer. Paul played for the national water polo team from the age of 13 to 21, after which he gave up the sport in order to launch his career in music. He attended Wolmer's Boys' School and the College of Arts, Science, and Technology, now known as the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), where he was trained in commerce with a perceived aim of still pursuing an interest in swimming. Sean reportedly worked as a bank teller and enrolled in a hotel-management program, learning the basics of French cuisine.

**Unmatched Music Career 1994–2000: Early beginnings and rise to fame** In 1994, Sean Paul appeared in Carrot Jetter's music video "Nice Time". Zachary Harding told his brother, Jeremy, about a singer that he had heard perform live at a small open mic event in Kingston, who sounded a lot like dancehall deejay and toaster Super Cat. Jeremy eventually met the singer when Sean came by his studio to ask for some advice. During the meeting, Paul recorded a vocal track over one of Jeremy Harding's rhythm tracks and in the process created the song "Baby Girl". Jeremy subsequently became Sean Paul's manager and producer. SP began hanging out at the studio regularly and the pair collaborated on several more tracks. When they recorded "Infiltrate" they decided they had something good enough to get on the radio. As Paul started to attract local attention, Harding began looking after his affairs. It is claimed that Jeremy's support of Sean Paul's fledgling career initially led him assuming the roles of "DJ, manager, road manager, and security-guard".

In 1997, Paul collaborated with singer Spanner Banner on the song "Ladies Man".

Sean made a cameo in the 1998 film *Belly* on stage performing. He made a successful collaboration with DMX and Mr. Vegas, "Top Shotter", to the soundtrack of the film.

In 2000, Sean Paul released his debut album, Stage One with VP Records. In the same year, Sean Paul collaborated with Canadian rapper Kardinal Offishall and singer July Black on the song Money Jane from Kardinal Offishall's album Quest For Fire: Firestarter Vol. 1.

2001–2015: Atlantic Records deal and international success In 2001 Sean Paul released a single "Gimme the Light" after writing and recording his lyrics to the "Buzz" riddim, the single turned out to be a nationwide success in Jamaica and eventually became a worldwide smash hit in 2002, ultimately reaching number 7 on the Billboard Hot 100, the early crossover momentum of the single would help SP secure a record deal with Atlantic Records in a joint venture deal with his label VP Records, the single would then appear on his second studio album, Dutty Rock which was released in November 2002. All of its latter hit singles would also receive heavy airplay and rotation on MTV and BET.

In early 2003, the second single "Get Busy" was released and ended up topping the Billboard Hot 100 months later, making it SP's first number-one hit. It was also the first ever dancehall song to top the chart. Dutty Rock became a worldwide commercial success, peaking in the top ten on the Billboard 200, was certified double-platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and eventually selling over six million copies worldwide. Dutty Rock won the Best Reggae Album at the 46th Annual Grammy Awards in 2004. "Get Busy" was also nominated for Best Male Rap Solo Performance in that year. Simultaneously, Paul was featured on Beyoncé's U.S. number-one hit song "Baby Boy" and Blu Cantrell's "Breathe".

While "Breathe" didn't perform very well in the United States, it was a massive hit in Europe. Both helped to push his reputation further in the USA. This album further popularized dancehall music in the 2000s and helped develop and popularize the genre of dancehall pop, a musical fusion between the rhythmic styles and melodies of dancehall and pop music. Paul's third album The Trinity was released on 27 September 2005. The album debuted at number 5 on the Billboard 200, breaking records with its first-week sales for a reggae/dancehall artist, eventually going Platinum in the United States and selling 4 million copies worldwide. The album produced five big hits, "We Be Burnin'", "Ever Blazin'", "(When You Gonna) Give It Up to Me" (featuring Keyshia Cole), "Never Gonna Be the Same", and the U.S. chart-topping smash hit "Temperature", making it his third number-one hit on the Billboard Hot 100 with "Temperature" becoming one of his signature hits.

The video of "(When You Gonna) Give It Up to Me" was featured in the film Step Up in 2006. He was nominated for four awards at the 2006 Billboard Music Awards, including Male Artist of the Year, Rap Artist of the Year, Hot 100 Single of the Year, and Pop 100 Single of the Year for "Temperature".[39] He also won an American Music Award for "(When You Gonna) Give It Up to Me", beating Kanye West and Nick Lachey, who were also nominated for the award. "Send It On" from The Trinity featured on the 2005 Vauxhall Corsa advert. Paul often contributes his songs to various Riddim Driven albums by VP Records. In March 2007, he returned to Jamaica to perform at the 2007 Cricket World Cup opening ceremony.

Paul appears in the video game Def Jam: Fight for NY as part of Snoop Dogg's crew and again in the game's sequel, Def Jam: Icon.

### **Gimme the Light – The Imperial Blaze!!! Renewed Rise and Success!!!**

Now, we're going to leave it right here, as we forecast the Renewed Rise and Success of Sean Paul's unprecedented musical career as he provides the Light of the Imperial Blaze to carry Jamaican Popular Music to unparalleled heights and brilliance. Fittingly, we are delighted and honoured to bestow the mantle of *Jamaica Poetry Festival 2024 - Lifetime Achievement Award of Honour on Sean "Dutty" Paul, the Ever Fresh and Clean!!!*

Compiled by Art of Life Magazine – JPF 2024 – Summer Edition

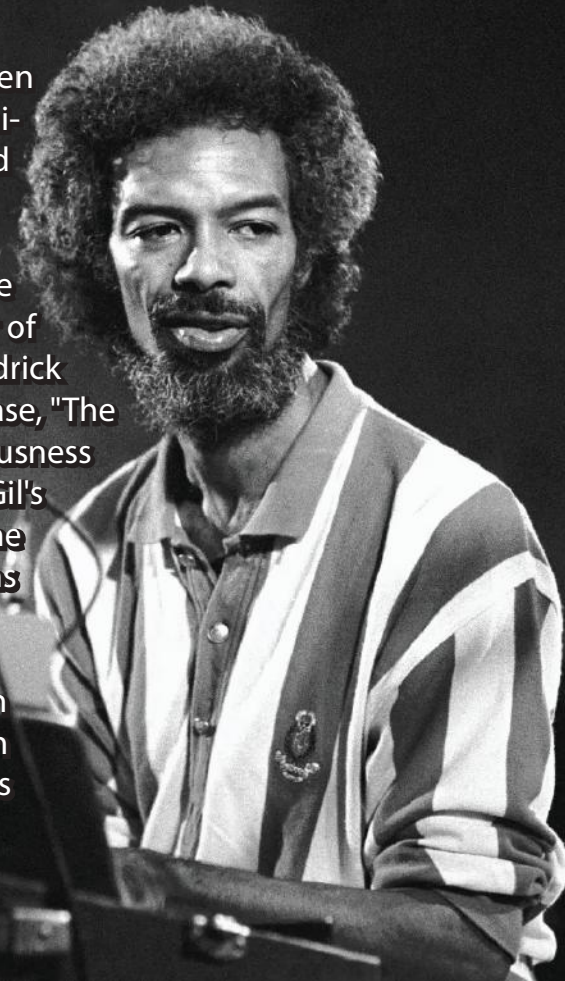
## Gil Scott-Heron (1949 - 2011)

Gill Scott-Heron was an intellectual, street-smart writer, Poet, Spoken Word Artiste Performer and musician, based in New York, with Jamaican roots, via his father, Gil "The Black Arrow" Heron, who played football in Glasgow Scotland.

Gil Scott-Heron's songs of the 1970's are reputed for laying the groundwork for Rap Music and was fittingly dubbed the godfather of rap. His music has been sampled by the likes of Common and Kendrick Lamar. In fact, his timeless, immortal and somewhat prophetic phrase, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" was chronicled into Black Consciousness by the One and Only Gil Scott-Heron. Actually, it's the title of Gil's world-famous poem which depicted the disconnect between the mass media and the realities of the masses and their demonstrations in the streets.

One of Gill Scott's most famous work is "Whitey on the Moon" which is a piercing and sarcastic critique of USA's misguided interest in space, taking precedence over the interest and welfare of it's citizens here on earth, especially the so called, African American citizens.

AoL Magazine – Summer 2024 Edition



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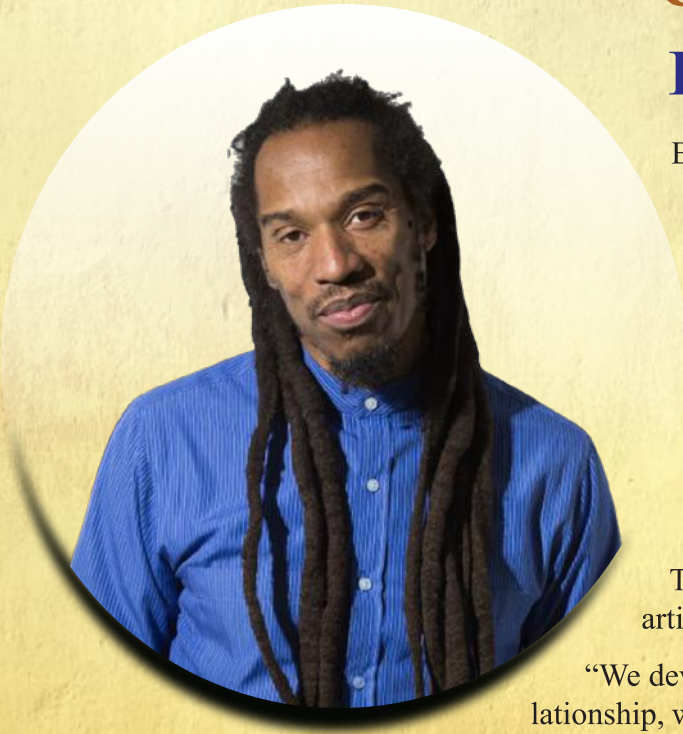


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# Remembering

## BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH



Benjamin Zephaniah, the uncompromising British poet who died in London on December 7, was one of many artistes of West Indian heritage whose work was inspired by racial intolerance in the United Kingdom.

Zephaniah, who was 65, was born in Handsworth, Birmingham, to a Barbadian father and Jamaican mother whose roots are in Treasure Beach, St Elizabeth.

He was known to have visited Jamaica several times to record songs.

Dub poet Yasus Afari knew of Zephaniah since the 1980s. They met for the first time in 2007 when the former was artiste/poet in residence at Birmingham City College.

“We developed a very good personal and professional friendship/relationship, which saw and witnessed us spending time brainstorming and networking. I also spent some time at his home in Spalding, an isolated village/town quite a bit outside of London. This was very special, as he is a bit of a reclusive warrior and a private person,” Yasus Afari told the Jamaica Observer.

Zephaniah wrote the introduction to *Vocal Ink – The Mental Intercourse*, Yasus Afari’s book, and collaborated with him on the song *Who Put The Pressure Pon Society*.

“Benjamin Zephaniah was a grass roots revolutionary, academic, and intellectual philosopher poet, who got his training and orientation in the trenches of the struggles and the streets. He then brought this unique revolutionary flavour and impulse to literature, books, the stage, boardrooms, film, TV, radio, and academia,” said Yasus Afari.

*Pen Rhythm*, Zephaniah’s first book, was published in 1980. Two years later came *Rasta*, his debut album.

The dreadlocked artiste was raised in an English society struggling with the influx of immigrants from the West Indies. That indifference resulted in race riots during the 1970s and early 1980s, which influenced his writings and music as well as that of fellow poet Linton Kwesi Johnson and roots-reggae band *Steel Pulse*.

In 2003, Zephaniah rejected an Order of the British Empire (OBE) from Queen Elizabeth II. He said accepting an award from the British Crown would validate its role in the transatlantic slave trade which enslaved hundreds of thousands of Africans.

Writing in *The Guardian* newspaper, Zephaniah addressed his defiant gesture.

“Me? I thought, OBE, me? ... I thought. I get angry when I hear that word ‘empire’; it reminds me of slavery, it reminds of thousands of years of brutality, it reminds me of how my foremothers were raped and my forefathers brutalised.”

His autobiography, *The Life And Rhymes of Benjamin Zephaniah*, was released in 2018.

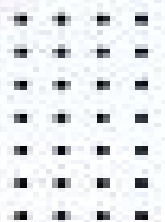
Among his recent work is a castmate on British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) drama *Peaky Blinders* in the role of preacher Jeremiah “Jimmy” Jesus, appearing in 14 episodes.

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