

GUYANA FOLK

And Culture

Sept.-
Oct,
2018
Vol: 8
Issue:
9 &10

Medal of Service



CONGRATULATIONS

Desiree A. Edghill

FOR LONG AND RELENTLESS SERVICE WITH DEDICATION,
IN ADDRESSING SOCIAL ISSUES AND IN THE FIELD OF ENTERTAINMENT.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the combined edition, September and October 2018, of our global online magazine.

In this issue we are pleased to bring you articles that celebrate, proudly, the history and doggedness of the people of Guyana.

From the first essay on the recognition of the achievements of the talented Desiree Edghill to the final one on the perseverance of Victoria Village, you are immersed in the traditions of service and perseverance that characterize us as a people wherever we are in the diaspora. As observed in the article about HomeTown Associations (HTA) by Dr. Lear Matthews, our adjustments to the vagaries of life are part of our DNA. As GCA proves we look back even as we are looking forward. Note then how we enjoy the making of rangoli, using, in our typical Guyanese behavior, any materials that surround us. We make do, we make it last, we adjust as we may and we pass on these mantras to our children and their children.

We strive to recognize and honor many who during our past would have been or have been overlooked. Wherever we are, as in the case of Bob Ramdhanie in the UK, we put these formerly unsung heroes and heroines "out there" and collectively demand that their laurels be placed on their shoulders.

That we are a people of long memory is not something unknown. We have spoken of this trait in our collective consciousness repeatedly. In this issue, the call for an Indo Caribbean Music Festival – many names already mentioned -- and the promotion of the wearable art of Deborah Mathias represent the imbedded trait of Guyanese to concretize, when given the chance, the periodically ignored existence of our ancestors. But our roots run deep and the flowers and fruit do come into being, many times unexpectedly.

After you have read about Diwali in Guyana and the diaspora, do go to the article on Guyana in Brooklyn. Buy a ticket (\$5:00) to the event on November 20 at BHS, no, not that one, Brooklyn Historical Society. Interact with what Ingrid Griffith, Gaiutra Bahadur, Natalie Hopkinson, Rosalind Kilkenny McLymont in a panel discussion moderated by Grace Aneiza Ali have to say. Please note that you should check with BHS for updates on the line up because it changed recently.

The people. This is the genus GCA, especially through its work in the USA, represents. For an insight into this aspect please read the account on the involvement with the American Folklore Society with representation within this important body by Dr. Rose October Edun. And for another perspective on the same subject view the cosmetic art of Clinton Duncan and read his take on goblins and gods.

Feel free to talk about all these doings at the next GCA fundraiser, the Jazz Party event in November.

Dis Time na Lang Time: history and change; perseverance and connectedness, medals of service to one and all!

Enjoy reading our online magazine.

Thank you. Peace

Dr. Juliet Emanuel, Editor.

2 GUYANA FOLK**IN THIS ISSUE:**

PAGE 3: Congrats Desiree Edghill

PAGE 4-9: Diwali Celebrations

PAGE 11-13: Jewellery as Art

PAGE 14-15: GCA at American

Folklore Society conference.

PAGE 16-18: We Got Oil!

PAGE 19-21: Anansie

PAGE 22-24: Call for Indo-Caribbean Music Festival

PAGE 26: Victoria Village

Editor

Dr. Juliet Emanuel

Cover Design

Claire Goring & Ashton Franklin

Copy Editors

Edgar Henry. Lear Matthews

Layout & Design

Claire A. Goring & Ashton Franklin

Contributors

Dr. Lear Matthews,

Gail Nunes

Vidur Dindayal

Gibron Rahim

Joe Barlow

Photographs

Tangerine Clarke

Desiree Edghill

TJ Reshi R

Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith

Deborah Mathias

GCA Media Team

Ave Brewster-Haynes (Chairperson)

Dr. Juliet Emanuel, Edgar Henry

Lear Matthews, Claire A. Goring,

Ashton Franklin,

Margaret Lawrence, Gail A. Nunes,

Francis Quamina Farrier

Please join us on

Facebook: Guyana Cultural Association of New York

Website: www.guyfolkfest.org

GCA Secretariat

1368 East 89 Street, Brooklyn, NY 11236

Tel: 800 774 5762



Congratulations

As a renowned personality in popular Guyanese culture over the past four decades, Desiree Edghill is a household name.

With a Diploma in Public Communication from the University of Guyana, Desiree holds the many titles of Actress, Writer, Director, Producer, Trainer of Trainers, and Consultant, each with significant accomplishment and credit.

As Co-Founder and Executive Director of Artistes in Direct Support (AIDS) and in collaboration with five other Artistes, she helped create the first NGO that started HIV & AIDS work in Guyana in 1992. An Office of Artistes in Direct Support would eventually be inaugurated by her on September 11, 2001, with funding support from USAID/FHI.

Desiree A. Edghill

THEATRE PERSONALITY, WRITER, AIDS AWARENESS ADVOCATE

In 1999 Desiree was contracted by Family Health International (FHI) to develop a theme with IEC materials, for its first USAID-funded HIV/AIDS Project in Guyana. “The Guyana HIV/AIDS Youth Project” under the theme, “Ready Body! Is it Really Ready!?” was successfully launched in September of that year as a result.

As Executive Director of Artistes in Direct Support (a position that she still holds), Desiree wrote, directed and produced her first HIV play in 2000. “The Difference” was performed at the National Cultural Centre on December 1 to a packed audience. To date, she has authored nine plays, and was producer and director of ten annual World AIDS Day productions, specifically the theatre production “The Flame and the Ribbon”.

In addition to her numerous accomplishments, Desiree has worked with the youth in regions across Guyana, training in Peer Education and Drama. She has also conducted Awareness Training to adults and youths in workplaces and religious organizations.

Desiree Edghill adds to her list of accolades the phenomenal success of two hundred and eight (208) “Youth Talent & Voices” (YTV) programs for TV & Radio. A TV Movie, “Against all Odds”. The title of “CARICOM Champion for Change”. As a performer in more than 100 plays in Guyana, the Caribbean, and North America, her multifaceted accreditations include the NAPA Award for “Most Versatile Actress”, the GCA Wordsworth Mc Andrew Award for Outstanding Contribution to Guyana’s Culture and Heritage, and the Ministry of Health’s Long-Standing Service award.

Desiree is a mother of six, grandmother of twelve, and a great-grandmother of two with a passion for working with youths.



Rangoli

A TRADITIONAL INDIAN FORM OF ART USED TO DECORATE THE ENTRANCE OF HOMES DURING THE DIWALI FESTIVAL

Rangoli, which means a row of colors or layer of colors, is a traditional Indian form of art where women decorate the entrance of their houses early in the morning, especially during the Diwali festival. Rangoli designs competition is often held time to time in different regions of India. These designs are created using the thumb and the forefinger.

Rangoli is a form of welcoming guests and different deities into the house. As it is said 'Athithi Devo Bhava', which simply means that guests are a form of God, so everyone should treat them with hospitality.

Rangoli brings joy and happiness to everyone. Rangoli designs often brings out an artist in you. It is also believed

that with Rangoli, you are inviting all the gods to visit your home and give the blessings.

In the story of Ramayana, the people of Ayodhya painted Rangoli designs to welcome Shree Rama back after fourteen years of migration in the forest. In Mahabharata, this form of art, had been used by the gopis in their free time. It helped them refresh their mind and ease away the pain of separation from Lord Krishna. There are many other legends as well that are associated with Rangoli. Rangoli is made using various materials like rice flour; a flower petal, colored sand, and have been practiced for ages. In the ancient times, natural dyes like indigo, barks of trees, etc. were used to color these designs. Nowadays, synthetic dyes have replaced these natural dyes. Along with the Rangoli, diyas are lit and placed, in order to welcome Goddess Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity.

Rangoli is of any shape and size and a common Rangoli design that you will often see is the feet of Goddess Lakshmi. There are many more designs that are drawn by women like a peacock, many free-form images, flowers; religious icons, etc. The main motive of creating Rangoli designs is that it brings good luck. However, these designs are made with no gaps in between, as it believed that an incomplete Rangoli would attract evil spirits.

How to Make Rangoli

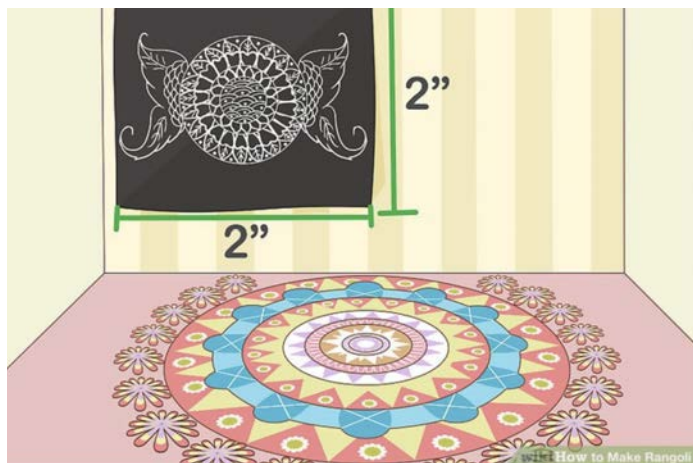
Rangoli is being encouraged among young children in many schools by holding competitions, every year, during the festival of lights, Diwali.

Historically created on floors inside and outside of homes, Rangoli can be made in a wide variety of designs, sizes, and materials. Whether you're looking for a fun activity to do with the kids or making decorations to celebrate Diwali, Rangoli can be enjoyed by beginners and experienced artists alike.

PART 1: DESIGNING YOUR RANGOLI

Choose the design you want to use. Rangoli can be made in any number of designs, but whether you choose a simple or complex design, most are symmetrical. You can use a plant or animal for inspiration, or you can create your own geometric design.

- Depending on your skill level as an artist, you can choose small, basic geometric or floral designs, or venture into designing larger, more complex animals, gods, or goddesses (like the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, who is traditionally honored during Diwali).[1]
- Flowers such as the lotus are very popular for Rangoli. Some other traditional designs are fish, snakes, tridents, and the peacock - India's national bird.
- You can also buy ready-made stencils to make the application even easier, or you can make your own. Stencils are easy to use and offer a variety of designs.



PART 2: DECIDE WHERE TO DRAW YOUR RANGOLI

You can draw it on a flat, dry floor inside or outside of your home, or you can draw it on paper to display anywhere.

The earliest Rangoli were created in small 2x2 patterns, but can now be any size, even covering entire

floors. The size of your design can help determine where you should draw your Rangoli.[2]

If you're just starting out, it is best to create your Rangoli on black paper, since there is more room for error on an erasable surface. The bright colors of your design will stand out beautifully against the black background. If you go this route, glue the paper to a piece of cardboard to give it some backing and structure.

If you decide to make your Rangoli on the floor, be sure to do it in a place that won't disturb normal walking



routes.

PART 3: SKETCH THE DESIGN OUTLINE ON PAPER

Use a pencil and eraser to practice drawing the outline of your Rangoli on black or white paper. Keep practicing until you are happy with your design.

If you are creating the Rangoli on black paper, feel free to practice the design on the black paper you're using for the finished piece. Just make sure to sketch lightly so you can easily erase any lines if needed.



PART 4: DRAW YOUR OUTLINE IN CHALK ON THE FLOOR

Draw your design outline in chalk on the floor. If you are not making your Rangoli on black paper, you will need to draw a basic outline on the floor, or wherever you are creating your Rangoli. Draw the outline in thin, light chalk lines.

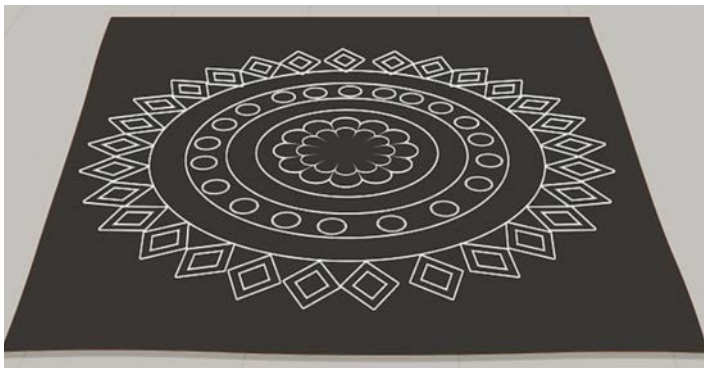
Draw the chalk outline lightly just in case you need to erase any mistakes.

6

PART 5: FINALIZING YOUR OUTLINE

Thicken the outline of your design with white chalk. This is good for beginners, as the white chalk helps cleanly and clearly define the borders of the design. Experienced Rangoli artists can skip this step.

- If you've already drawn a thin outline on the ground, darken it with one more layer of chalk.



Thicken the outline of your design with white chalk. This is good for beginners, as the white chalk helps cleanly and clearly define the borders of the design. Experienced Rangoli artists can skip this step.

If you've already drawn a thin outline on the ground, darken it with one more layer of chalk.

Using white for the outline is traditional in India. White is a sign of peace and purity, and it will also make the finished Rangoli look brighter and more polished.

PART 6: CREATE AN ADHESIVE SURFACE IF YOU ARE USING BLACK PAPER

If you're creating a Rangoli on black paper, you'll need a surface that the textured materials can stick to. Add a small amount of any cooking oil to your entire design to help the materials stick.[3]

Don't douse the paper in cooking oil. Just apply a little oil to the tip of a finger and follow the chalk outlines of your design. Then, use the same method to apply a little more oil to the inside of your



chalk outline.

Give dimension to your outline with a white, textured material. It is customary to use natural substances like semolina, rice, or

sand.

To easily and cleanly pour the textured material onto your chalk outline, roll a piece of newspaper into a cone, snip a hole in the narrow end, and fill the hole with the material. Using your finger as a stopper with which to control the flow, follow the borders you've drawn to outline your design.

Experts can add dimension by hand, rubbing the material between the thumb and forefingers and following the lines of the design.



PART 7: CHOOSE THE MATERIALS YOU WILL USE TO FILL IN YOUR DESIGN

Rangoli can be filled in with any number of colorful household materials like spices and grains, or with store-bought materials like pre-colored Rangoli powder.

It is traditional to use colorful, natural items like turmeric, chilis, grains, and even pasta.

You can also use natural materials found outside, like flower petals and dried leaves.[5]

Another option is to use ground up chalk, or even colorful powders specifically designed for making Rangoli (often mixed with white powder for a better consistency).

PART 8: FILLING IN YOUR RANGOLI

Fill the inside of your Rangoli with your chosen materials. Use the paper cone or your fingers to completely fill your Rangoli with the chosen materials. This is the most interesting step, and usually the most fun.

To fill in your Rangoli, you may utilize the same paper cone you used to add texture to your outline, or you can use the thumb and forefinger to manually add the materials.

In Indian culture, it is important to completely fill in your Rangoli, leaving no open spaces.

PART 9: MIX DIFFERENT TEXTURES AND COLORS IN YOUR DESIGN

Using a variety of colors and dimensions will enhance the artistic nature of the final design. The variety is what gives the Rangoli its wow factor.

This is where you can get really creative with your Rangoli design. Mix and match different materials until your Rangoli is full and you are pleased with the colors in your design.

PART 10: ADD THE FINAL TOUCHES

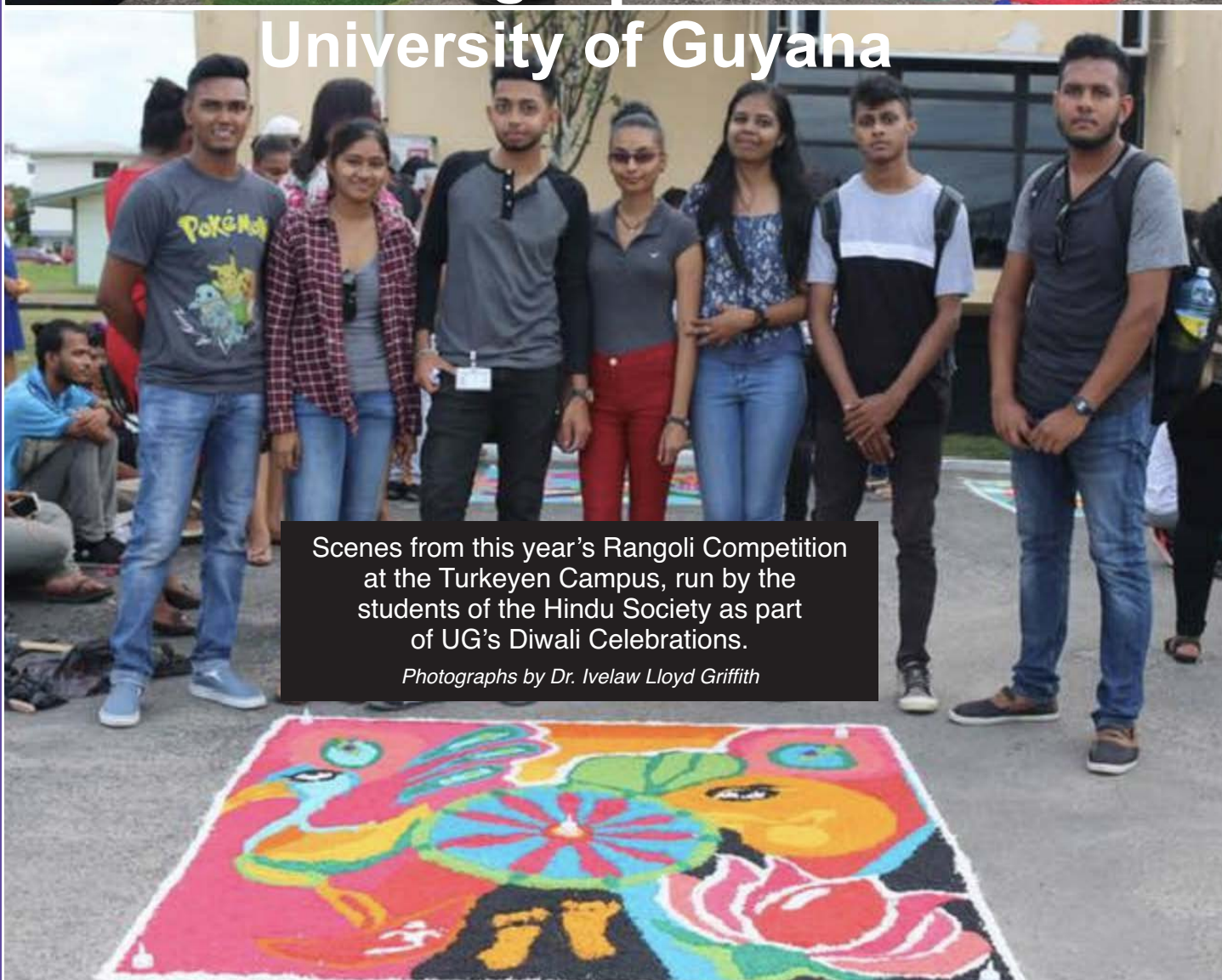
Add the final touches. Place some candles and clay pot-lanterns around your finished Rangoli to light up your design.

If you've created your Rangoli on black paper, move it outside or to the desired display area. Then you can surround it with any candles or final touches.

Use chalk to write in a few wishes if you want to make your Rangoli extra special.



Rangoli at the University of Guyana



Scenes from this year's Rangoli Competition at the Turkeyen Campus, run by the students of the Hindu Society as part of UG's Diwali Celebrations. Photographs by Dr. Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith



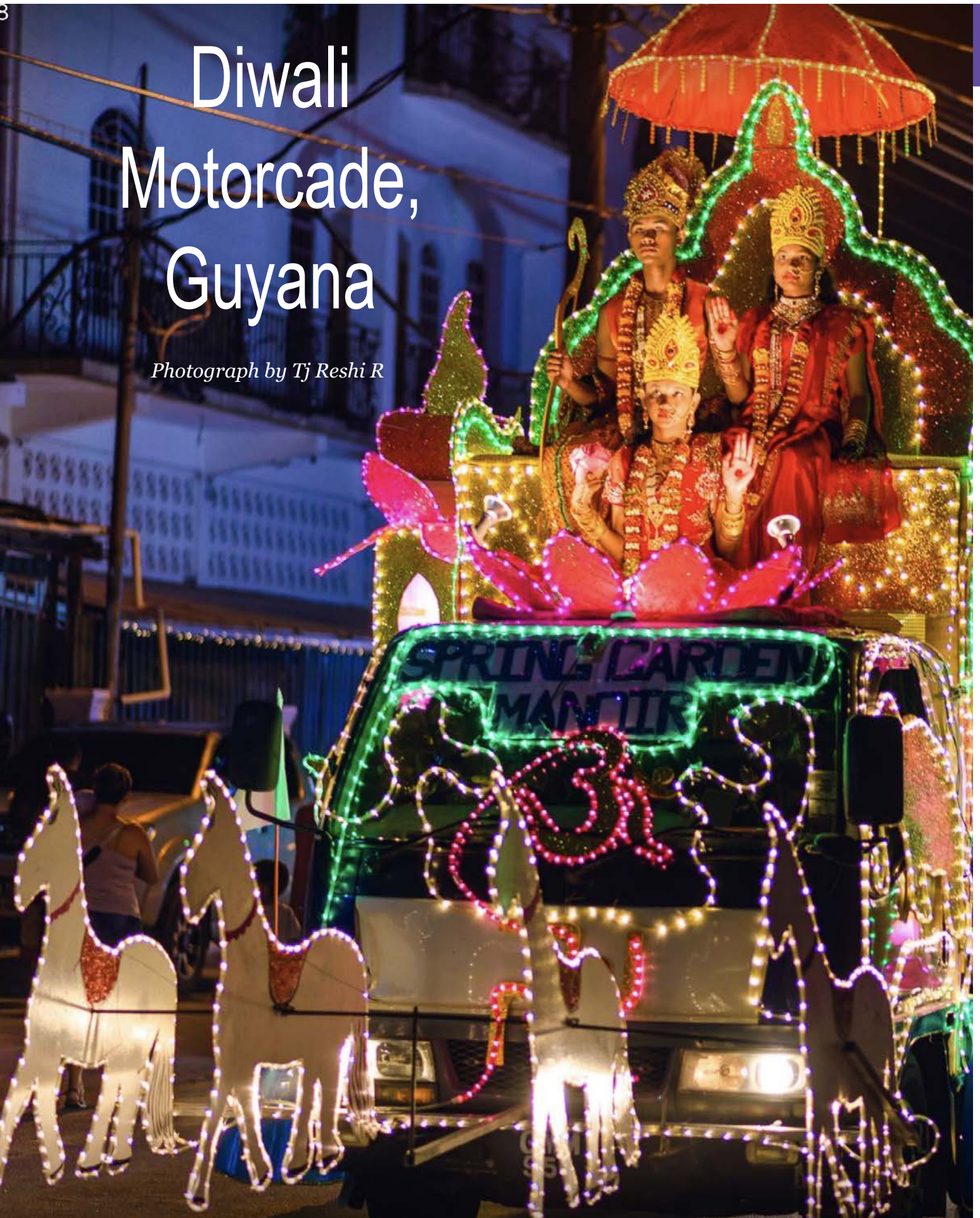
Leading the Diwali Parade, from left, Pandit Krishna, grand marshal, young women dressed in traditional Indian Sari, NYPD Officer, Khyume Khan, Barbara Atherly, consul general of Guyana to New York, (Honorable Guest), and Lakshmee Singh, organizer.

Photographs by Tangerine Clarke



Diwali Motorcade, Guyana

Photograph by Tj Reshi R



GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, INC.

After Thanksgiving Fundraiser

Featuring the

Prof. Keith Proctor Jazz Quartet

Guests Artists:

King "Souflantis" Edwards

Fluff Miller

Chenseng Smith

CLASSIC SOUL,
A GLASS OF WINE

Jazz Party

Dancing to Classic Soul - DJ Oswald Bobbo

TO BENEFIT THE WORK OF THE GUYANA ARTS & CULTURAL CENTER

**ST. GABRIEL'S
GOLDEN HALL**

331 Hawthorne Street,
Brooklyn New York 11225

**FRIDAY,
NOV. 23, 2018**

9.00 P.M.-3.00 A.M.

\$50.00

Includes
Hors d'oeuvres
10.00 P.M. -12.00 A.M

CASH BAR

FOR RESERVATIONS: CONTACT ANY GCA MEMBER

Clive Prowell - 631 829 8341	Edgar Henry - 718 930 9526
Maurice Blenman - 347 451 2683	Rose October-Edun - 718 755 4956
Donna Walcott - 718 462 6958	Claire Goring - 718 209 5702

Jewellery as art in its own right

By Gibron Rahim

First published in the Guyana Chronicle, October 7, 2018
(All photos courtesy of Deborah Mathias)



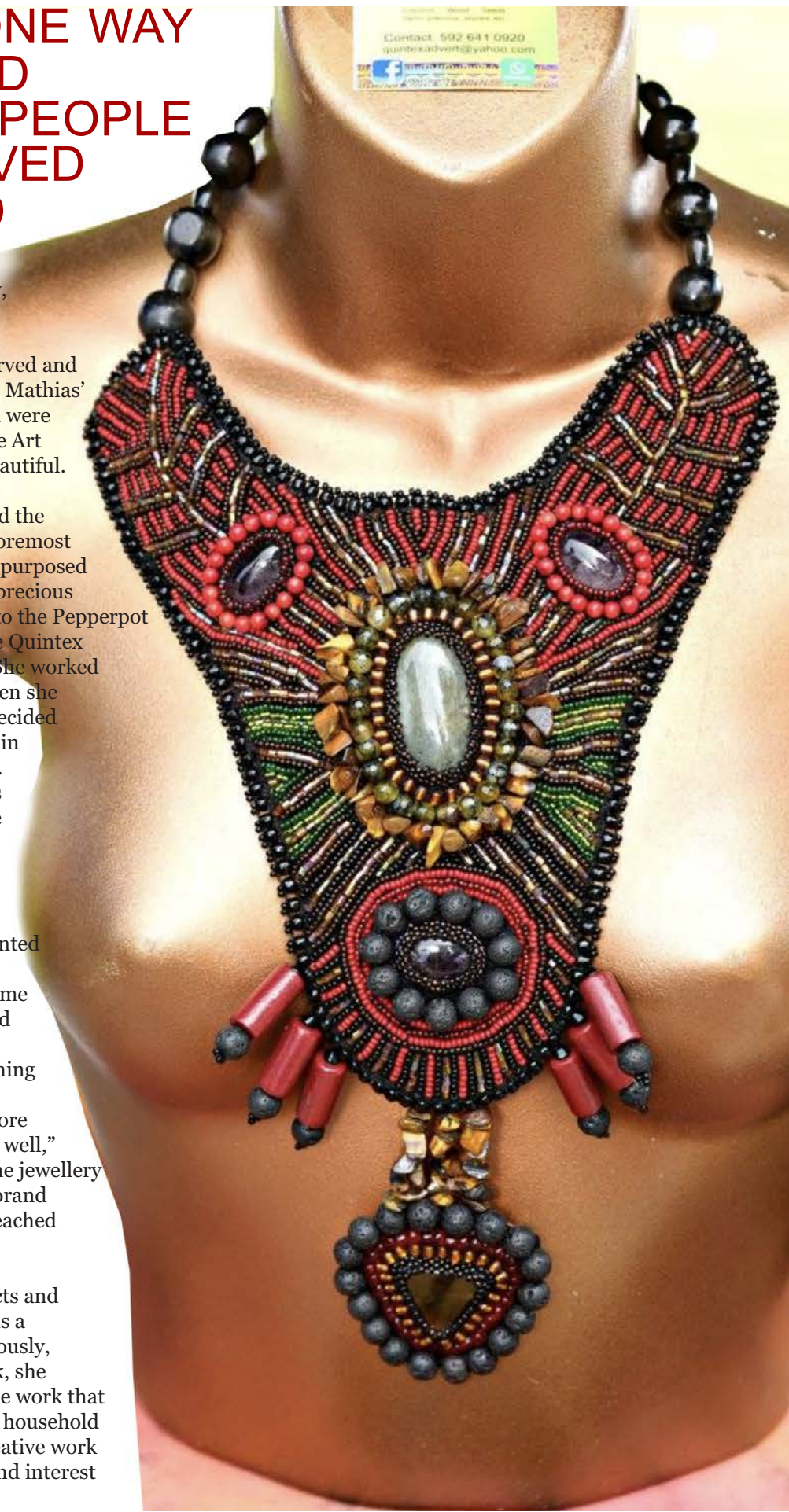
JEWELLERY IS ONE WAY THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF A PEOPLE CAN BE PRESERVED AND EXPRESSED

IT is undeniable that jewellery is created to be beautiful. However, pieces of jewellery, similar to pieces of art, can also convey messages. Jewellery is one way in which the history and culture of a people can be preserved and expressed. It is for this reason that Deborah Mathias' handcrafted jewellery pieces, some of which were displayed at the recently concluded Heritage Art Exhibition, are as meaningful as they are beautiful.

Deborah Mathias is the creative force behind the brand Rave Designs. Mathias is one of the foremost designers in Guyana who use natural and repurposed materials, as well as locally produced semi-precious stones, to create jewellery. Mathias related to the *Pepperpot Magazine* that Rave Designs came out of the Quintex Advertising Agency, her father's company. She worked alongside her father until his retirement when she assumed the reins. "Then at some point, I decided to take the company in a different direction in terms of being more artistic," she explained. "And so we decided to go with Rave Designs which I think was a better description of the work we were doing."

At that time the agency was focused mainly on costuming which Deborah noted is still part of the Rave Designs repertoire. She pointed out that costume work in Guyana is mainly done for Mashramani. It was during downtime between Mash seasons that Deborah decided to start designing jewellery to stay relevant. She related that she had already been designing jewellery as a hobby. "A lot of people were complimenting me on the jewellery that I wore and asked me to [design pieces] for them as well," she stated. Deborah revealed that moving the jewellery designing aspect of the business to its own brand is currently under consideration, as it has reached heights of popularity in its own right.

Deborah has been interested in all the aspects and facets of craft since childhood. Her mother is a dressmaker while her father, as noted previously, worked in advertising. Of her mother's work, she recalled, "I would always pay attention to the work that she was doing." By chance, she grew up in a household where both her parents were involved in creative work which in turn nurtured her own creativity and interest in the area.



The length of time it takes to create the pieces varies. According to Deborah, the beadwork pieces take about a day. "But it depends on how much time you put into it within the day," she was sure to note. That, she said, can be dependent on how long it takes the idea for the piece itself to develop. "Sometimes I develop it very quickly and I think it depends on how comfortable I am with what I'm doing at the particular time," she explained.

"Sometimes it takes me days to feel comfortable with a piece and actually move forward." Sometimes she even temporarily leaves a piece to work on another and then returns to the first one at a later time.

Deborah's three jewellery pieces that were on display at the Heritage Art Exhibition were titled "Atlantis", "Mayan" and "Pompei". She noted that the names were chosen to reflect great ancient civilisations that inevitably fell, pointing out that it is quite likely that civilisations will fall in a similar manner in the future. She posited that it is possible that those ancient civilisations fell because they were not evolving in response to the changes occurring around them.

SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES IN ART

The concept behind the three pieces was "sustainable lifestyles in art". That concept was based on the idea that indifference to our planet has led to the destruction of numerous ancient civilisations. That cycle can only be broken by learning to live in harmony with the planet as the Indigenous Peoples have done since ancient times. The three pieces on display were created using ethical methods and materials in an effort to raise awareness about living a sustainable lifestyle. They highlighted each of three areas where Guyanese need to embrace more sustainable practices, those that balance the use of resources with protecting the environment.

Atlantis represents the ethical harvesting and production of our ocean resources. The mainly seashell piece and its driftwood display speak to the use of found materials. Mayan represents the ethical harvesting and production of our agricultural resources. The coconut and calabash pieces speak to the use of natural foods, remedies and adornments. Finally, Pompei addresses the area of ethical harvesting and production of our mineral resources. That piece speaks to the fragile balance of the ecology in relation to the extractive industries that decimate the environment. The pieces altogether emphasised the need to exercise caution in our selection of the resources we consume with our very existence on the line.

Jewellery can undoubtedly also be art. "That is exactly how we portray our jewellery," said Deborah, "as an art form." She noted that, for security reasons, persons are shying away from the use of the more expensive metals in their jewellery. "We try to do pieces that people can wear and call 'statement pieces'," she said. Those pieces she said make a statement about the wearer's personality or that of a personality they aspire to.



GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE **AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY**

By Dr. Rose October-Edun



From left: Christopher Mulé, Victor Sirelson, Dr. Rose October-Edun, and Shahid Khan.

This year marked 130 years since the American Folklore Society (AFS) has been hosting the conference that was held from October 17-20 in Buffalo, New York. It was attended by approximately 600 individuals, national and internationally. The theme of the conference was “No Illusions, No Exclusions”, and GCA was present via an invitation by Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC).

GCA has had a relationship with BAC for more than 10 years, and it is because of this relationship that BAC invited dancer and folklorist, Dr. Rose October-Edun, an Assistant to GCA’s Cultural Director to co-chair its panel. Mr. Christopher Mule, BAC’s Folk Arts Director chaired the panel that discussed “Your Illusions, Our Exclusions: Giving Artists a Voice to Rethink Public Sector Folklore”. Other folk-

loric members of the panel representing BAC were Chief Baba Neil Clarke, Shahid Khan, Aeilushi Mistry, Victor Sirelson, Esraa Warda, and the former Folk Arts Director, Dr. Kay Turner.

The panel’s discussion highlighted the challenges faced by individual artists and organizations in Brooklyn. Some of these challenges noted were the changes artists or organizations must make on their applications for funding, in order to get funding. Particularly of interest was the fact that panelists felt in making “commercialized” changes to specific traditional folk arts to fit the funding application requirements, the authenticity of the traditional folk arts is lost, and in some cases misappropriated and misrepresented.

The funding challenges were openly discussed as panelists referenced that because folk arts is their way of life, that each feels compelled to do it because each is responsible for keeping his or her “own” culture alive, despite the funding challenges.

One of the questions posed to the panel was about the first time experience and impression at this conference, given that each panelist was attending this forum for the first time. In response, some discussion points included the types of music and food experienced that were not in keeping with “folk arts”, and raised awareness about cultural sensitivity, given the nature of folk arts. Of additional importance was noting the fact that many scholars of folk arts are individuals not of the same cultural background as the group or culture they are studying, and the significant impact this has on research from “with-out” (not being a part of or having a similar cultural background) as opposed to “with-in” (being of

similar cultural background). One of the concerns here was that the researcher could be “exclusive” by speaking to one group of individuals, while ignoring the other group(s) about the same topics that are being researched.

Dr. October-Edun’s thread of the discussion was on “immigration and the migration process” and the impact of one’s traditional folk arts. In other words, it is because of migration that “traditional” folk arts has a forum. As part of the panel, it was punctuated that it is an “illusion” to say that there is no exclusion if traditional art forms must be altered to fit the requirements of funders. Dr. October-Edun further encouraged attendees to ponder the meanings of “acculturation and assimilation”. She emphasized that exclusion is present when addressing folk arts, given that folk arts are a part of an immigrant’s life and the migration process.



Dr. Rose October-Edun represents GCA at American Folklore Society conference.

From left: Shahid Khan, Dr. Rose October-Edun, Chief Baba Neil Clarke, Esraa Warda, Dr. Kay Turner, Victor Sirelson, Aeilushi Mistry, and Christopher Mulé.

REALIZING CHANGE IN GUYANA AND THE ROLE OF DIASPORA HOMETOWN ASSOCIATIONS

By Dr. Lear Matthews

WE GOT OIL!



PART 1

The nation of Guyana has been in the news lately for a good reason. According to Exxon Mobile, oil discovery off Guyana's northern coast will top 4 billion barrels, becoming a leading oil producing nation in the region. However, owing to the large number of Guyanese who emigrate, much of the nation's skills and expertise, including those that could contribute significantly to the oil industry's success, reportedly reside in the Diaspora. There has not been an effective strategy to engage expatriates. Despite the almost euphoric optimism expressed by Guyanese at home and abroad there are challenges only marginally discussed, but are beginning to emerge. One observer noted, "with major oil set to flow as soon as 2020, authorities are bracing both for the shock of wealth and its attendant woes". This article focuses on the potential role of Hometown Associations (HTA) in helping to understand the socio-cultural ramifications, identifying the risks and harnessing required skills, attitude and cultural adaptation needed to ensure reaping the benefits of this unprecedented, historic natural resource discovery.

HTAs are organizations formed by immigrants from the same village, town, community or shared institution seeking to support their country of origin, maintaining connections through cash or kind, while retaining a sense of community as they adjust to life in their adopted home. There are more than 400 Guyanese HTAs in North America, representing an impressive number of immigrant families. The primary support they provide to the home country are in education, community development, and healthcare. Resources sent represent a wide range of 'give back' mechanisms. The track record of these organizations places them in a unique vantage position for enabling the growth of local communities within the context of anticipated newfound wealth. Whereas in the past these organizations were viewed as doing "charity work", more recently their activities include far-reaching community development, sending collective remittances to villages, towns, regions, communities and members' past shared social institutions. HTAs, a popular conduit for Diaspora engagement, play an important role in sustaining vital cross-continental, cultural linkages.

The provision of various forms of assistance from overseas could create dependency or promote self-sufficiency, depending on the manner of project implementation and understanding community needs and capacities. Nevertheless, HTA members can be a collective asset in various capacities in a transforming society, helping to ensure that economic gains from oil royalties will be equitably distributed and used for the public good, particularly in areas of job creation, improved infrastructure, healthcare and the overall quality of life of citizens. Owing to the history of HTAs' efforts in providing assistance to various communities, executives should consider supporting the proposed idea of using cash transfers from oil revenues as a way of empowering people, particularly those in low income communities.

Director of the Guyana Environmental Protection Agency, Dr. Vincent Adams posits that there is an unprecedented "repository of knowledge and other resources in the Diaspora", while President David Granger prefers "brains, skills and expertise" over barrels. An emerging challenge for HTAs is to extend curriculum educational services that would improve the STEM program, identifying areas such as oil exploration, resource development, industrial engineering, environmental studies, industrial management and oil industry personnel training at all levels. Collaborating with the University of Guyana through funding and expertise, HTAs can enhance such training. Social scientist Norman Munro believes that following oil discovery, there will be "a need to develop global strategy training courses and career development support towards future technology".



Hometown Associations embody one of the conduits of knowledge and other resources that can play an intrinsic role in identifying and recruiting Guyanese (and others - particularly from the Caribbean region) who have expertise, knowledge and skills in the oil refinery and related industries. Furthermore, members of the Diaspora will be able to complement aspects of the local workplace culture, reciprocating ideas, strategies and a professional decorum that have been tested and successfully implemented in similar industries. These intersecting "social remittances", respectfully introduced and reinforced can enhance sustainable development.

Individuals and organizations in the Diaspora remit to their country of origin information, norms, practices, materials, identities and human capital that can both promote and impede development. Much of what immigrants "give back" to their country of origin is influenced by habits, tastes, technology and behaviors learned and inculcated in their adopted home. If HTAs are to make any meaningful, non-threatening contribution, the way in which these social remittances are introduced and monitored is essential. This is particularly important since the methods and attitudes exhibited by returning immigrants may conflict with traditional 'local ways' of doing things. Reportedly, local residents feel an existential threat from returning immigrants, while some in the Diaspora display unconscious bias by attempting to impose their 'foreign' ways of getting things done. This is sometimes exacerbated by preferential treatment of Non-Guyanese. These reciprocal actions and reactions often cause resentment and frustration among locals and 'comebakees' alike. Mutual respect, compromise, a sense of community, as well as validating strengths and acknowledging failure, underscore successful Diaspora engagement.

While immigrants continuously send personal remittances to family and friends, HTAs through collective remittances, have been increasingly helping to develop and sustain local communities, often in the form of community development projects, including rebuilding edifices, construction of new community centers, repairing schools, medical institutions, and other infrastructures. HTA members (including seniors and retirees) report that the organizations provide a sense of purpose, an opportunity to engage in philanthropy and to 'give back' to their native land. It is also an expression of generativity, i.e., promoting opportunities for future generations.



Congratulations

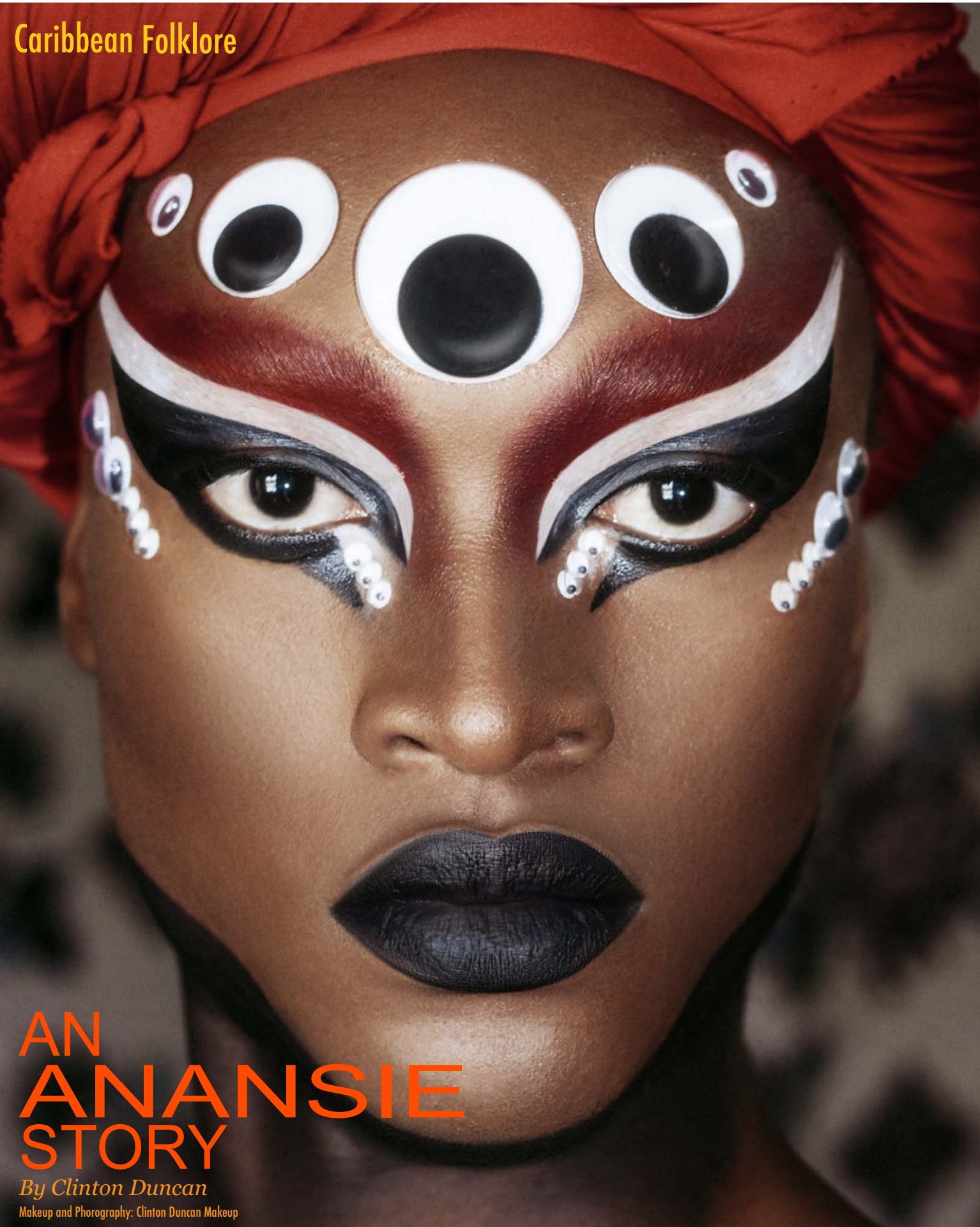
Director of the Rupununi Music & Arts Festival, Dr. Bob Ramdhanie awarded 'the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire' (MBE) for his contribution to the arts in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Ramdhanie who received his award, which is granted by the Queen to an individual who has performed 'outstanding service to the community or local 'hands-on' service', and was presented the award by Prince William at Buckingham Palace, shared the news with friends and family in Guyana. "It was a surprise to me," he said. "But I'm delighted to know that so many organisations and individuals in the UK nominated me for this award." Professor David Dabydeen, the London-based Guyanese academic and Patron of the Festival was one of many who supported the nomination and added that "it was well deserved!"

Bob is of Trinidadian/Guyanese parentage and has been actively involved in the arts in the UK for over 40 years, initiating and developing arts programmes and projects within local communities as well as working on a diverse range of arts festivals. His working career has been challenging, interesting and fulfilling, with him finding immense satisfaction both within 'macro' and 'micro' organisations. He pioneered many dynamic arts programmes, contributing to social cohesion, community education, entrepreneurial development in the arts and arts management, working in partnership with communities for the benefit of communities.

Bob continues to research and write about the arts and is currently working on two dance books which will be published next year. He continues to share his diverse working experiences with the team as collectively they aim to establish the Rupununi Music & Arts Festival as a major cultural event that would attract thousands of national and international visitors.

Caribbean Folklore



AN
ANANSIE
STORY

By Clinton Duncan

Makeup and Photography: Clinton Duncan Makeup

For this year's Halloween I decided to use the opportunity to drop some knowledge on my non-Caribbean friends and contacts about Caribbean Folklore every week until the holiday... first up...

Anansi (/əˈnɑːnsi/ ə-NAHN-see) is an Akan folktale character. He often takes the shape of a spider and is considered to be the spirit of all knowledge of stories. He is also one of the most important characters of West African and Caribbean folklore.

He is also known as Ananse, Kwaku Ananse, and Anancy. In the New World he is known as Nancy, Aunt Nancy and Sis' Nancy. He is a spider, but often acts and appears as a man.

The Anansi tales originated from the Akan people of present-day Ghana. The word Ananse is Akan and means "spider". They later spread to West Indies, Suriname, Sierra Leone (where they were introduced by Jamaican Maroons) and the Netherlands Antilles. On Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, he is known as Kompa Nanzi, and his wife as Shi Maria.

Anansi is depicted in many different ways. Sometimes he looks like an ordinary spider, sometimes he is a spider wearing clothes or with a human face and sometimes he looks much more like a human with spider elements, such as eight legs or multiple eyes.

There is an Anansi story that explains the phenomenon of how his name became attached to the whole corpus of tales:

Once there were no stories in the world. The Sky-God, Nyame, had them all. Anansi went to Nyame and asked how much they would cost to buy.

Nyame set a high price: Anansi must bring back Onini the Python, Osebo the Leopard, and the Mboro Hornets.

Anansi set about capturing these. First he went to where Python lived and debated out loud whether Python was really longer than the palm branch or not as his wife Aso says. Python overheard and, when Anansi explained the debate, agreed to lie along the palm branch. Because he cannot easily make himself completely straight a true impression of his actual length is difficult to obtain, so Python agreed to be tied to the branch. When he was completely tied, Anansi took him to Nyame.

To catch the leopard, Anansi dug a deep hole in the ground. When the leopard fell in the hole Anansi offered to help him out with his webs. Once the leopard was out of the hole he was bound in Anansi's webs and was carried away.

To catch the hornets, Anansi filled a calabash with water and poured some over a banana leaf he held over his head and some over the nest, calling out that it was raining. He suggested the hornets get into the empty calabash, and when they obliged, he quickly sealed the opening.

Anansi handed his captives over to Nyame. Nyame rewarded him by making him the god of all stories.



22 Call for an Indo-Caribbean Music Festival

By Vidur Dindayal

I would dearly love to see organised an annual music festival for our music, all and every kind- popular film songs, old and new, taan singing, chowtal, bhajans, Indian classical, and even chutney. It would be so nice to have such a festival here in London, and if none exists already, one in New York and one in Toronto.

If I were younger I would organise it all myself. Alas, I cannot do so now. Gone are the days when in my late teens, in the 50s we managed the Hindi Schools Sammeylan held at various centres, including, Skeldon, Rosehall, New Amsterdam and Georgetown. The most entertaining part of it was the singing, solo recitals and group singing by students of participating Hindi Schools.

Long ago we seem to have had more opportunity for singing and playing our Indo Caribbean music. Apart from regular, weekly functions at our local temple, we children used to go to functions in other villages and at New Amsterdam or Georgetown Town hall. We would dress up and attend. There was a great sense of occasion. We even took part in programmes on Radio Demerara where we sang bhajans. Those events were enjoyable, they remain in my memory and give me great fun ever reflecting on those heart warming times.

Here in London in the UK I am a great fan of an annual concert known as The Proms. Prom is short for promenade concert, a term which originally referred to outdoor concerts in London's pleasure gardens, where the audience was free to stroll around while the orchestra was playing. The Proms is an eight week summer season -July to September- of daily orchestral classical music concerts. There are concerts in the Royal Albert Hall, chamber music concerts at Cadogan Hall, additional 'Proms in the Park' events across the UK on the Last Night of the Proms, and associated educational and children's events. The season is a significant event in British culture. It brings people together. It is broadcast by the BBC.

The last night of the Proms is a popular fun night where the atmosphere is lively and lighthearted. The last night is traditionally in a 'winding-down' vein, with the audience fully joining in to sing popular classic British patriotic pieces: "Land of Hope and Glory", "Jerusalem", the British national anthem, and "Auld Lang Syne" after the end.

Why can we not have an upbeat annual music occasion for us Indo Caribbeans. Like everyone else the world over, we live our whole life with music, from cradle to grave, from sad times to happy jump up times, from light hearted occasions to sombre serious moments.

Music is part of our life. What these great ones write about music is all true. Shakespeare: If music be the food of love, play on. Plato: Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to



the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything. Thomas Carlyle: Music is well said to be the speech of angels. Colbie Caillat: A great song should lift your heart, warm the soul and make you feel good. Martin Luther: Music is the art of the prophets and the gift of God.

Our music, music of Indians of Guyana and the Caribbean is of great breath of styles and origins. It is multi dimensional, ranging from Indian film music, to taan, chowtal, bhajan, ghazal, geet, classical, chutney and others. These are all a vibrant part of our life over many generations.

Hindi film songs have been a staple for most Indo Caribbeans. Some of these songs are deeply embedded in our culture. Top of the list is Suhaani Raat from the film Dulari with Suresh and Madhubala. I think every Indo Caribbean knows this love song. In fact I have attended at least two funerals where this song was played as the cortege was ushered into the chapel. Hearing Suhaani Raat we imagine the star boy with his mandolin, singing with his painful expression, anxiously waiting for the star girl to join him.

Probably next in popularity is Dilip Kumar's Dil Mein Chupake from film Aan. He teases Princess Nadira, with words of his song, as she hides her admiration with a contemptuous look at the bold and handsome coach driver. The heart rending plea by Nimmi of Tum na jaane kis jahaan me kho gaye in the film Sazaa, brings tears to the eyes, yet I can listen to it all day. Ayega from the film Mahal captivates. We are gripped with its mystery. One moment the star girl is on the swing, singing, the next she vanishes and we see a black cat scamper away. A heart wrenching song from Neel Kamal, Babul ki duaayein leti jaa is when the father has to leave his daughter suffering in her in-law's home.



Bhajan singing is yet another great facet of our music. We have produced many great singers whose works have been recorded. We are great exponents of household favourites, recorded by, among others, well known international singers: Lata Mangeshkar, Anuradha Paudwal, Hari Om Sharan, Anup Jalota and Jagjit Singh.

Indo Caribbean music is all of the above. It is the music of my people, what I grew up listening to, and what I can identify as being Indian. Our Indo Caribbean music has its roots in India.

There are numerous benefits from an Indo Caribbean Music Festival. For a start, it should be great entertainment and a showcase for talent, in all forms of the music. The platform and stage will be one of many opportunities for our young and aspiring talent to express themselves. Here children can look forward to showing their talent and what they have learnt. It would be great experience for them which enriches their life forever. It would be a source of great joy also for parents and family.

There is plenty of music and singing in Indo Caribbean life to make organising an annual Indo Caribbean Music Festival, infinitely worthwhile. It would be great entertainment, of great variety, multi faceted, suiting all tastes, an event for communities to enthusiastically prepare for, and to look forward to participating in, whole heartedly and infinitely joyously.

Hindi film songs have been a staple for most Indo Caribbeans. Some of these songs are deeply embedded in our culture. Top of the list is Suhaani Raat from the film Dulari with Suresh and Madhubala. I think every Indo Caribbean knows this love song. In fact I have attended at least two funerals



where this song was played as the cortege was ushered into the chapel. Hearing Suhaani Raat we imagine the star boy with his mandolin, singing with his painful expression, anxiously waiting for the star girl to join him.

Probably next in popularity is Dilip Kumar's Dil Mein Chupake from film Aan. He teases Princess Nadira, with words of his song, as she hides her admiration with a contemptuous look at the bold and handsome coach driver. The heart rending plea by Nimmi of Tum na jaane kis jahaan me kho gaye in the film Sazaa, brings tears to the eyes, yet I can listen to it all day. Ayega from the film Mahal captivates. We are gripped with its mystery. One moment the star girl is on the swing, singing, the next she vanishes and we see a black cat scamper away. A heart wrenching song from Neel Kamal, Babul ki duaayein leti jaa is when the father has to leave his daughter suffering in her in-law's home.

We have kept up our Chowtal singing to this day and developed on it. It is a sophisticated art form. Two groups face one another.

The main singer from one group leads with a line, that is echoed by their group, then the opposing group replies in kind and both work up the tune into a frenzy, with vigorous clanking of jhang. Our Taan singing has also been kept alive and like Chowtal very IndoCaribbean in musical style.

Bhajan singing is yet another great facet of our music. We have produced many great singers whose works have been recorded. We are great exponents of household favourites, recorded by, among others, well known international singers: Lata Mangeshker, Anuradha Paudwal, Hari Om Sharan, Anup Jalota and Jagjit Singh.

Indo Caribbean music is all of the above. It is the music of my people, what I grew up listening to, and what I can identify as being Indian. Our Indo Caribbean music has its roots in India.

There are numerous benefits from an Indo Caribbean Music Festival. For a start, it should be great entertainment and a showcase for talent, in all forms of the music. The platform and stage will be one of many opportunities for our young and aspiring talent to express themselves. Here children can look forward to showing their talent and what they have learnt. It would be great experience for them which enriches their life forever. It would be a source of great joy also for parents and family.

There is plenty of music and singing in Indo Caribbean life to make organising an annual Indo Caribbean Music Festival, infinitely worthwhile. It would be great entertainment, of great variety, multi faceted, suiting all tastes, an event for communities to enthusiastically prepare for, and to look forward to participating in, whole heartedly and infinitely joyously.

Dis Time Nah Lang Time - The DVD

In celebrating the National Caribbean Heritage in June 2018, a video created, written and narrated by the Matthews brothers, Ted and Lear seeks to preserve aspects of Guyanese culture and history.

There have been multiple mediums of cultural connection and retention of the heritage, beliefs and practices among Guyanese and other Caribbean immigrants in the Diaspora. Aspects of the home culture are sustained through the Arts including multiple genres of music, dance, literature, sculpture, theater, festivals, heritage programs for children, and social commentary, representing the traditions of various ethnic and religious groups of the region. The Matthews brothers make their contribution through the spoken word, story-telling with creole vernacular, full of relatable heritage content and nostalgic recreation of the past. They seek to sustain the oral tradition of our ancestors as they share indelible memories, forging a cultural identity that reconnect us to the glorious days of old – "Lang Time". The presentations encourage us to think of how we got from 'there' to 'here'. To some extent the production pays tribute to cultural pioneers reminding us about the foundations of our life's journey. Where we "come from" is certainly the central theme.

Guyanese folklorists Francis Farrier, Ken Crosbie, Mark Matthews and culturalist Eusi Kwayana among others, affirm the timeliness and importance of the contribution: "A wonderful bundle of delights and insight... a delightful Dis Time... Classic pieces and such wonderful material to enlighten the youngsters about what life was like in British Guiana and early Guyana". "The Matthews brothers breathe new life into the title Dis Time Nah Lang Time with inspired selection and popular nostalgia. Baad stuff!... The past was never so delightful". "Ah get dee Rhiddim!"

Apart from the joy and elation the video apparently evokes, the most gratifying response has been its apparent positive effect on senior Guyanese viewers, whose memories seem to be jolted back in time with ecstatic delight. It has been therapeutic and empowering for some of them.

Other viewers' comments:

"Beautiful! "I got a trek down memory lane, Great!...Boy, yuh'all carry me way back!". "I am reminded of a rich cultural vocabulary that helped to define the building blocks of my Guyanese identity...made me laugh with nostalgia" "Reliving life experience of the past is gratifying."

"The challenge ahead for you and Ted perhaps is to explain/illustrate the nuggets of culture shared in the DVD so that the younger generations can best relate. I will explain to my adult children what it is to "get spot".

The DVD was produced and recorded by Bobbo Vision.



Nov
20

Brooklyn's Guyana

By Brooklyn Historical Society,
Queen's College of Guyana
Alumni Association (NY),
Guyana Modern

\$5

BROOKLYN'S GUYANA

While Brooklyn is widely known as home to one of the largest Caribbean diasporas in the world, lesser known is the presence of the Guyanese-American community, the 5th largest immigrant community in NYC. Join three of Guyana's leading female literary voices to explore the politics and role of migration in Brooklyn's dynamic community. **Gaiutra Bahadur** (*Coolie Woman*), **Natalie Hopkinson** (*A Mouth is Always Muzzled*), and **Rosalind Kilkenny McLymont** (*The Guyana Contract*) will also reflect on the importance of Guyanese women who, since the 1950s to present, have been a driving force in migration from the Caribbean. Moderated by **Grace Aneiza Ali**, Assistant Professor, NYU's Department of Art & Public Policy.



Gaiutra Bahadur



Natalie Hopkinson



Rosalind Kilkenny
McLymont



Grace Aneiza Ali

DATE AND TIME

Tue, November 20, 2018

Doors: 6:00 pm

Event: 6:30 pm

\$5 General Admission

LOCATION

Brooklyn Historical Society

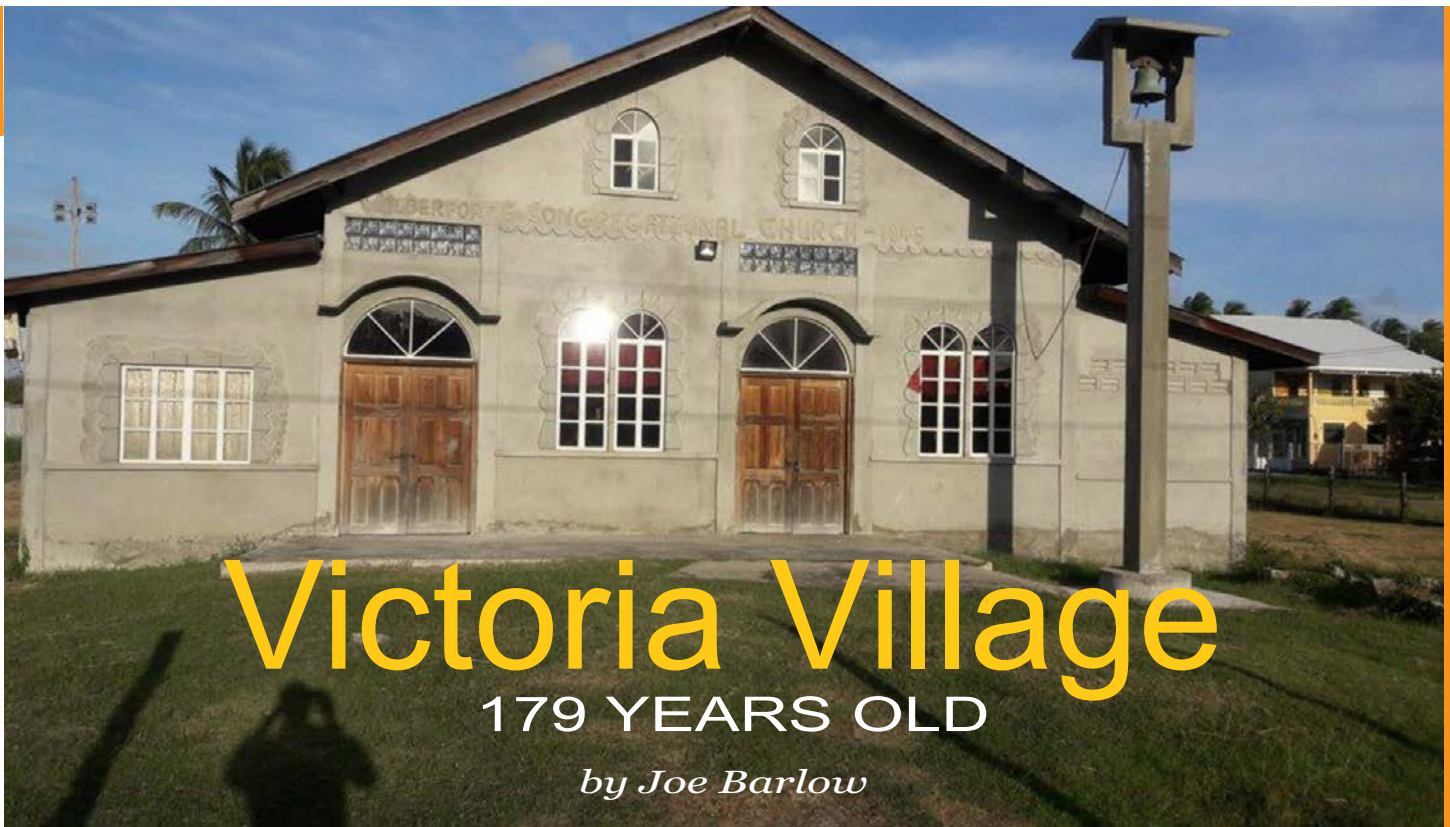
128 Pierrepont Street

(Brooklyn Heights)

Brooklyn, NY 11210

Tickets can be obtained from <https://brooklynguyana.eventbrite.com>





What the future holds?

I see a renaissance and new beginnings, not without challenges, that will be overcome by dogged persistence, realising that there is no room for failure.

November 7th marks the 179th anniversary of the purchase of Plantation Northbrook by manumitted Africans from the 5 abandoned estates of Dochfour, Ann's Grove, Hope, Paradise and Enmore. It was later renamed Plantation, Victoria and then Victoria Village. Lying 18 miles East of the capital city of Georgetown, it ushered in the VILLAGE MOVEMENT and was the guiding light and lens through which other abandoned plantations would soon be bought by other manumitted slaves. It became the epicenter of social, economic and political thinking and attracted the Crème de la crème of progressive and forward-thinking Africans. Born in the 1940s I was privileged to have met the descendants of some of these trail blazers and also privileged to stand on their shoulders and enjoy the legacy of their efforts. They have all gone the way all the earth goes and it is incumbent on us, now seniors, to show that light that glowed on our path to the younger generation so that, hopefully, they too will do same to a generation yet unborn. This village has a rich and colourful history much of which is yet untold. It is my fervent hope that somewhere there is a little ONE whose pen has not yet touched paper and whose literary skill is now being honed to come forward, in the fullness of time, and do justice to the history of this once great hamlet. I am a proud Victorian and long for the halcyon, tranquil days of yore when we were self

sufficient, where we Housed, Fed and Clothed ourselves long, long before that political meme became a rallying call.

What the future holds? I see a bristling village, chuck full of young academics and artisans taking the baton and running with same. I see a sense and sincerity of purpose in their efforts to live up to what is expected of them and so leave a legacy of hope and a path of prosperity for others to follow. I see a renaissance and new beginnings, not without challenges, that will be overcome by dogged persistence, realising that there is no room for failure. I see the dawn of a new era with young entrepreneurs as economic trailblazers putting a lie to the dogma that as a people we are not business oriented. In short, I see a bright future with young risk takers.

As we celebrate this day let us mark our calendar for Thursday, November 7th 2019 for on that day the village will celebrate its 180th Anniversary, What is coincidental is that November 7th 1839 was also a Thursday. While the earthly remains of those who blazed that uncharted trail 179 years ago have all returned to dust from whence they came, let us salute them for their vision, selflessness and rich legacy bequeathed to us. Together, we shall endeavour to make them PROUD.

The picture above is the Wilberforce Congregational Church founded in 1845 as a two storey wooden building which served both as a church and school with the last Head Master being John Lucy Griffith. It's of great significance to this village and was the church of the founding fathers back in the early years of the purchase.



UNIVERSITY of GUYANA

THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

2019 NEW PROGRAMMES

APPLICATIONS OPEN SOON

TURKEYEN CAMPUS

January

Associate of Science (Petroleum Engineering)

Bachelor of Arts (Youth & Community Development)

Bachelor of Science (Food Science)

Master of Science (Psychology)

Master of Science (Petroleum Engineering)

BERBICE CAMPUS

January

Bachelor of Science (Nursing)

September

Bachelor of Science (Civil Engineering)

For more information contact

The University of Guyana
Registry (Admissions), Turkeyen Campus
Email: admissions@uog.edu.gy
Phone: (592) 227-2740 / 623-8325

Upcoming Events

Turkeyen & Tain Talks 15

Biodiversity and Guyana's Future

Pegasus Hotel, Kingston Georgetown

Wednesday, November 7, 2018 | 18:00

Annual Human Rights Film Festival

Commemoration of 70th Anniversary of Adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Wednesday, November 7 - Sunday, November 25, 2018

9th Renaissance Lecture

Biological Control Systems:

The Future of Engineering in Medicine

Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen Campus

Thursday, November 15, 2018 | 17:00

10th Renaissance Lecture

Guyana on the International Stage: Engagement at the 2018 UN General Assembly

Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen Campus

Monday, November 19, 2018 | 17:00

The UG Press Book Launch

Dynamics of Caribbean Diaspora Engagement: People, Policy, Practice

Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen Campus

Thursday, December 13, 2018 | 17:30

Designed by:

Office of Strategic Initiatives, Vice Chancellery
(592) 222-8063 | (592) 222-4932 | (592) 623-0926