

## Acknowledgements

None of the above would have been possible without the administrative support and guidance from the Centre for Commonwealth Education. The Commonwealth Education Trust generously provided funding for a 3 year project (2010-12) on Caribbean Poetry (CPP) to be linked to the online Poetry Archive initiated by the then Poet Laureate, Sir Andrew Motion. CET also provided extra resources to add Caribbean poets to the Poetry Archive. The project team are also grateful to the Advisory Panel, which meets twice a year, for their advice, interest and support and to all our partners in the enterprise who have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the project.

## Project Team

**Project Director: Morag Styles**, Professor of Children's Poetry, Centre for Commonwealth Education, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge (ms104@cam.ac.uk)

### Core Team

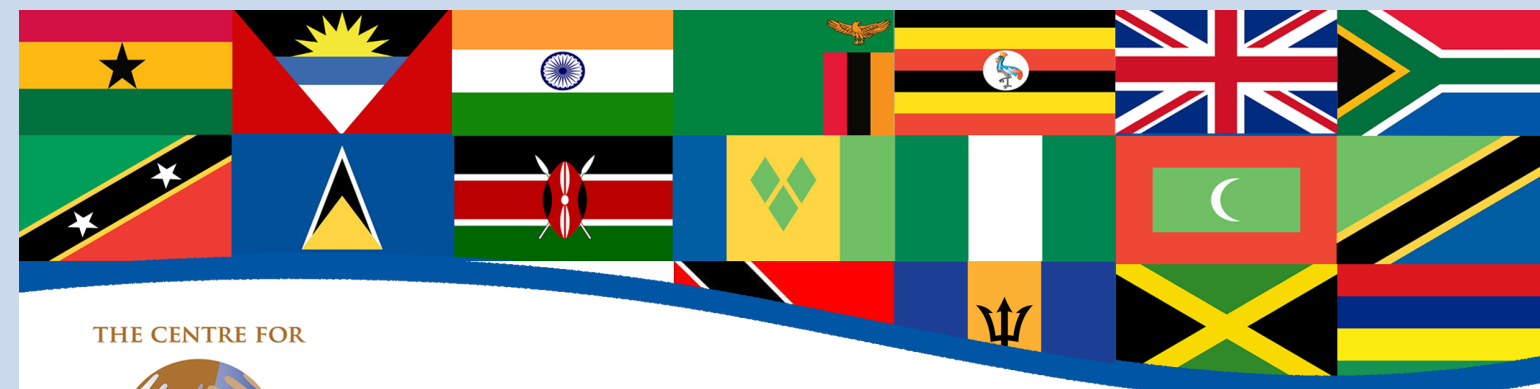
- **Professor Beverley Bryan**, Project Director of B.Ed online programmes, UWI, Mona
- **Lorna Down**, Senior Lecturer, Institute of Education, UWI, Mona
- **Georgie Horrell**, Director of Studies for English, Homerton College, Cambridge
- **Roz Hudson**, Fellow, Centre for Commonwealth Education, previously Head Teacher, Alexandra Park School, Haringey
- **Sharon Phillip**, Lecturer in Teaching of English, School of Education, Faculty of Humanities and Education, UWI, St Augustine, Trinidad
- **Velma Pollard**, Poet, Writer, Former Head of Education Studies, UWI
- **Sandra Robinson**, Lecturer in English and Education, UWI, Cave Hill, Trinidad
- **Aisha Spencer**, Lecturer, Institute of Education, UWI, Mona
- **David Whitley**, Lecturer in English, Faculty of Education, Cambridge

### Associate Members

- Richard Carrington, Poetry Archive
- Mark McWatt, Poet and Professor Emeritus, UWI, Cave Hill
- Mervyn Morris, Poet and Professor Emeritus, UWI, Mona
- Philip Nanton, Poet
- Esther Phillips, Poet, organiser of BIM Festival 2012
- Dorothea Smartt, Peepal Tree Press
- Sam Soyer, UWI, Cave Hill
- Erin Spring, Research Assistant, Cambridge
- Karen Thomas, Research Assistant to Sandra Robinson, UWI, Cave Hill



David Whitley and Morag Styles with Sandra Robinson and Karen Thomas on a visit to Barbados in 2012



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## PROJECT BRIEFING

July 2012



# Caribbean Poetry Project



Patron: Carol Ann Duffy

*The Caribbean Poetry Project is a pioneering collaboration between the Centre for Commonwealth Education (Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge), and the University of the West Indies at Mona (Jamaica), St Augustine (Trinidad) and at Cave Hill (Barbados). It aims to work with teachers, pupils, postgraduate and B.Ed students to foster greater understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of Caribbean poetry in both hemispheres.*

### Aims

The chief aims of the project are:

- to promote achievement through learning and teaching of Caribbean poetry in schools across the Caribbean and in the UK
- to develop a joint research element between the University of the West Indies (UWI) and Centre for Commonwealth Education, University of Cambridge (CCE)
- to expand the number of Caribbean poets on the Poetry Archive (PA) and incorporate elements of the PA within the project
- to ensure that the fruits of the project are long lasting and sustainable.

### Project Team

The project consists of English and Education lecturers (see below), all of whom are poetry enthusiasts and who teach, or taught, or are associated with either the University of the West Indies or the Centre for Commonwealth Education, University of Cambridge.

Highly regarded Caribbean poets agreed to become advisers to the project, including Kamau Brathwaite, as well as two past and present Poet Laureates. We have also established partnerships with Peepal Tree Press, the Poetry Society, the Poetry Book Society, South Bank Literature Department and, of course, the online Poetry Archive. Several poets actively working for the project have become associate members of CPP – John Agard, Professor Mark McWatt, Philip Nanton and Dorothea Smartt.

### Teaching Caribbean Poetry Course (TCP)

We spent the first year of the project developing a collaborative Teaching Caribbean Poetry course to be taught in the UK and the Caribbean, making reference whenever possible to the online PA. Shared areas of interest and concern in Caribbean poetry were quickly identified, including a strand on the environment, and the necessary research shared between members of the team to produce a truly collaborative outcome. It is a core course, suitable for adjusting to different constituencies, which can be run as shorter workshops, adapted to



undergraduate or masters level, or for secondary English student teachers or, indeed, primary teachers. Versions of the course have already been delivered and evaluated in Cambridge (CPD course, 40 hours, 2011) and a great variety of workshops have been delivered during the summer of 2012 (see below).

### Teaching Caribbean Poetry initiatives summer 2012:

- 2 day workshop, plus reading, St. Vincent (April)
- 2 day workshop, plus reading, Antigua (May)
- A workshop, Barbados (May, as part of BIM Festival)
- TCP course 39 hours (EDLA3111), Mona (May, a course for year 2, B.Ed students)
- 1 day course for Secondary English & Drama Postgraduate students, Cambridge (June)
- workshop with teachers as part of Poetry Parnassus, South Bank, London (June)
- workshops and questionnaire, St Augustine, Trinidad (May/June)
- 2 day workshop, plus reading, St Lucia (June)
- 2 day workshop, plus reading, Grenada (July)



Poets working with the project: Mark McWatt, Philip Nanton and Esther Philips

### Publications, Research and Dissemination

We are currently writing a major edited volume, *Teaching Caribbean Poetry* which will be published by Routledge in 2013. This will be followed by an

anthology of poetry for pupils 11-14 (to be published by the Commonwealth Education Trust); further CET publications may emerge over time. Plans are already underway for joint research papers and they will be finalised when the CPP team meets to discuss future business in September, 2012.

The dissemination process has already begun with the project being represented during 2011-12 at international conferences and events in Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica by Caribbean members and in London, Cambridge and Leicester by Cambridge members.

The main event of 2012, in which the entire team is taking part, is an international conference to be held in Cambridge, 20-22 September – THE POWER OF CARIBBEAN POETRY: WORD AND SOUND, featuring a lively range of academic papers, sessions which should be of particular interest to teachers and an outstanding line-up of poets – John Agard, Christian Campbell, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Anthony Joseph, Kei Miller, Mark Mcwatt, Mervyn Morris, Philip Nanton, Grace Nichols, Velma Pollard, Olive Senior, Dorothea Smartt .

### Outcomes of Caribbean Poetry Project

The anticipated outcomes of the Caribbean Poetry Project are as follows:

- to set up a short course on Teaching Caribbean Poetry for both trainee and experienced secondary English teachers in our universities in the Caribbean and Cambridge to run in 2011 and 2012
- to evaluate the effectiveness of this course, compare and contrast the outcomes in the Caribbean and UK, and disseminate this information
- to publish materials for teachers from this course which would be widely disseminated across the UK, the Caribbean and in Commonwealth countries
- to publish joint research based on the project between UWI and Centre for Commonwealth Education
- to enhance the representation of Caribbean poets on the Poetry Archive and to promote its work throughout the project
- to disseminate information about the project as widely as possible by setting up a CPP website

- to disseminate information about the project by giving papers at international conferences including the annual West Indian Literatures in English Conference in 2012
- to disseminate some of the outcomes of the project through an international conference on Caribbean poetry, to be held at Cambridge CCE in 2012.

All these outcomes have either been achieved or are in the process of being accomplished. In addition, CET recently funded the cost of a research assistant at Cave Hill for a year, and enabled us to make an extra visit to Barbados in order to give the project momentum. This was so successful that the TCP course has been able to expand from Barbados into the Eastern Caribbean. Working collaboratively with CXC, UWI and the various Ministries of Education, we have been able to establish two-day workshops, plus evening readings for two teachers from every secondary school in the different territories. Some of the costs were borne by the partners mentioned above and we hope they may eventually be self-sustaining.

### Developing collaboration with CXC

Collaboration with CXC – the examination board which administers teaching resources and public examinations throughout the whole of the Caribbean – will be central to ensuring that the impact of TCP initiatives are carried through into the future and maintained. For this reason, the positive exploratory lines of communication opened up with the head of CXC – Dr Didacus Jules – on Morag Styles and David Whitley's recent visit to Barbados must be seen as of crucial importance. Major areas of collaboration have been identified and we were delighted that CXC were extremely supportive of our current initiative, to take a version of the Teaching Caribbean Poetry course that we have developed together to four Eastern Caribbean territories between April and July. Dr Jules agreed to support this project by funding one of the poets accompanying the initiative (Professor Mark McWatt).

In the longer term, we have identified three major areas for collaboration that could build the TCP initiative into a sustainable culture of support for teachers in the future. These are: continued financial support for TCP workshops in the future, including the possibility of taking the course to other Caribbean territories; the dissemination of resources

developed by the TCP team to teachers through CXC web platforms (this may include some resources focusing on poems from the CXC syllabus/anthology); use of interactive websites that CXC are currently developing for teachers. The latter is likely to be of particular importance in securing long lasting impact for the project, since teachers all over the Caribbean will need access to dedicated sites where they can exchange views and information, as well as developing new resources to maintain enthusiasm and momentum.



### Future developments

We are pleased with the progress we have made in less than two and a half years but we would like to consolidate those courses and workshops that have been established and to widen our scope in terms of a blended learning TCP course across the Caribbean and to extend the project into the primary sector. We need to give further thought to how we can develop TCP courses in Cambridge and other parts of the UK at a time when the climate is not conducive to such initiatives. (We have offered a weekend TCP course at Madingley Institute of Continuing Education, Cambridge for 2013.) There is more writing, anthologising and research to be done in this field. We are bidding for funding to continue our work for a further three years with a view to leaving Caribbean poetry in a much more powerful and prominent position in schools, universities and with the wider public in the UK and the Caribbean.