



NGC
Bocas
Lit Fest

WHAT'S
YOUR
STORY?

28 to
30 APR
TRINIDAD
& TOBAGO

THURSDAY 27 APRIL

CAISO presents BackChat: Telling Our Stories: Celebrating LGBTQI+ Voices

Powerful stories and poems, music and drinks!
9 pm until • CBs Bar-Bar, 15 Rust Street, St. Clair

FRIDAY 28 APRIL

BOCAS IS BACK!

The NGC Bocas Lit Fest returns to downtown Port of Spain, and poet **Shimiah Lewis** welcomes us back to the festival village
10-10.30 am • Old Fire Station

WRITERS FIRST

Free seminars for budding and self-published authors

- **The toughest audience: writing for children**, with Danielle Y.C. McClean, winner of the 2022 Bocas Children's Book Prize
- **What's your story?: an interactive storytelling session** with Hilary Copeland, director of Fighting Words Northern Ireland
10 am-12 pm • AV Room

WORKSHOP

Preservation for beginners, with **Danielle Fraser**

The National Library's conservator conducts a workshop on preservation of paper-based collections
9 am-12.30 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room
In partnership with NALIS

BIG IDEAS

Equal for all

How does the promise of equality written into our national anthem actually play out for people with physical and mental differences and disabilities? With **Kenneth Suratt** of the T&T Blind Welfare Association; **Lisa Ghany** of the Down Syndrome Family Network; **Tessa Pascall** of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services; and poet **Celia Sorhaingo**; moderated by **Jacqueline Huggins**, of the Division of Student Services and Development at UWI, St. Augustine
10.30 am-12 pm • Old Fire Station
This event will include simultaneous sign language interpretation

EXTEMPO DEBATE

Calypsonians **Black Sage** and **Dion Diaz** pay tribute in song to calypsonian Black Stalin and scholar Gordon Rohlehr
12-12.30 pm • Abercromby Street Arcade
In partnership with the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts

FILMS

Port of Spain: "A Writer's Heaven", dir. Dion Boucaud (2021, 27:00)
Trinidadian actor and performer Wendell Manwarren leads a walking tour of Port of Spain from a literary perspective.
"We Going Pan", dir. Walt Lovelace (2023, 2:30)
An anthropological, artistic look at one pangoer's love for the instrument
King David, dir. Walt Lovelace (2022, 25:00)
Calypsonian David Rudder talks about the the most impactful songs of his career
12-1 pm • AV Room

NEW TALENT SHOWCASE + STAND AND DELIVER

Our New Talent Showcase spotlights up and coming authors **Desirée Seebaran**, **Ark Ramsay**, and **Garvin Tafari Parsons**, followed by our signature open mic event
12.30-1.30 pm • Abercromby Street Arcade

TAKE TWO

Debut novelists **Cherie Jones** (*How the One-Armed Sister Sweeps Her House*) and **Sharma Taylor** (*What a Mother's Love Don't Teach You*) share their narratives about family, love, and loss. Hosted by **Alake Pilgrim**
1-2 pm • Old Fire Station

WRITERS FIRST

Our series of seminars for budding and self-published authors continues

- **MFA FAQ**, with Muli Amaye — for anyone who wants to understand what a creative writing MFA is really about
- **Ask a publisher**, with Jeremy Poynting — your chance to learn what happens behind the scenes in the publishing business
1-3 pm • AV Room

TAKE TWO

Jan Carson (*The Raptures*) and **Ayanna Lloyd Banwo** (*When We Were Birds*) read from novels exploring the boundaries between this life and the next. Hosted by **Hadassah K. Williams**
2-3 pm • Old Fire Station
In partnership with the British Council and the Belfast International Arts Festival

TAKE THREE

Debut books of poems exploring personal and collective Caribbean histories. Featuring **Desirée C. Bailey** (*What Noise Against the Cane*), **Safiya Kamaria Kinshasa** (*Cane, Corn & Gully*), and **Samantha Thornhill** (*The Animated Universe*). Hosted by **Shivane Ramlochan**
3-4.30 pm • Old Fire Station

NEW VOICES

A showcase of debut and self-published books by T&T authors. Featuring **Cecily Alexander Pouchet**, **AM . ALI**, **Carolyn Ali**, **Dion Carington**, **Tricia Chin**, **Keon Francis**, **Rori Heffes-Doon**, **Gavin Luke**, and **Elena Molchanova**
3-4.30 pm • AV Room

WORKSHOP

What makes a great memoir?, with editor **Ian Randle**

How do you turn your life story into a narrative that's compelling for others to read? Veteran editor Ian Randle explains the key elements of any good memoir
3.30-5.30 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room

TAKE TWO

Family responsibilities collide with individual desires in the novels of **Kevin Jared Hosein** (*Hungry Ghosts*) and **Celeste Mohammed** (*Pleasantview*). Hosted by **Lisa Outar**
4.30-5.30 pm • Old Fire Station

FILMS

From the Banyan archive

Caribbean Eye: Visionaries (1992, 30:00)
Meet four visual artists who work on a large scale
Crossing Over (1988, 60:00)
Trinidadian calypso musician Lancelot Layne and Ghanaian highlife musician Koo Nimo visit each other's countries — bridging a gap of history between Africa and the Caribbean
5-6.30 pm • AV Room

SONS OF THE SOIL: SELVON MEETS STALIN

Words and music at the Big Black Box
Writers **Earl Lovelace**, **Anthony Joseph**, **Lisa Allen-Agostini**, **Andre Bagoo**, **Vashti Bowlah**, and **Lance Dowrich** mark the centenary of Sam Selvon, hosted by **elisha efua bartels**. Then musician **Chantal Esdelle** and her band **Moyenne** pay tribute to the late, great Black Stalin. Plus an afterparty with **DJ Rawkus**
7 pm until • Big Black Box, 33 Murray Street

SATURDAY 29 APRIL

ONE ON ONE

Booker Prize-winning novelist and literary activist **Bernardine Evaristo** talks to **Ayesha Harruna Attah** about her groundbreaking novel *Girl, Woman, Other* and the value of creative mentorship
10-11 am • Old Fire Station
With special thanks to the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative

FILMS

Gordon Rohlehr in his own words
Interviews in three films offer a portrait of the late literary scholar. Introduced by **Anu Laxhan**

From Apocalypse to Awakenings, produced by Paula Morgan (2010, 19:00)
Rivers of Sound, dir. Jean Antoine-Dunne (2009, 34:00)
Courtesy Tout Moun: Caribbean Journal of Cultural Studies

Late Night Lime with Gordon Rohlehr and David Rudder (1990, 60:00), from the Banyan archive

10 am-12 pm • AV Room

Daytime events take place in the National Library and Old Fire Station, Abercromby & Hart Streets, Port of Spain • Free & open to all! • Limited free parking at Greyfriars car park, 50 Frederick Street

www.bocaslitfest.com

WORKSHOP

Getting to the finish, with **Ayanna Lloyd Banwo**
Ayanna Lloyd Banwo, author of the novel *When We Were Birds*, shares tips and techniques for getting your novel-in-progress to the final chapter
10 am-12 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room

TAKE TWO

Lauren Francis-Sharma (*Book of the Little Axe*) and **Michael Magee** (*Close to Home*) tackle the never-simple bonds of family in their recent novels. Hosted by **Teresa White**
11 am-12 pm • Old Fire Station
In partnership with the British Council and the Belfast International Arts Festival

NDATT PRESENTS

Help

A dramatised excerpt from a play by **Kaithlyn De Gazon**. Directed by **Syntyche Bishop**; featuring **Shelby Outar**, **Nia Thompson**, **Judith Theodore**, **Joel Philip**, and **Khailah Bernard**
11.30 am-12 pm • Library Rotunda
Presented in partnership with NDATT and Playwrights Workshop Trinbago

TALL TALES

Moko Jumbies are a breathtaking sight every Carnival, and a link to ancestral traditions. Writers **elisha efua bartels**, **Caroline Mackenzie**, **Amílcar Sanatan**, and **Portia Subran** read newly commissioned stories, plus an adrenaline-raising performance by **Shynel Brizan** and **Stephanie Kanhai**
12-1 pm • Abercromby Street Arcade
In partnership with #1000mokos

FILMS

Jumbie Cinema

A lineup of short films investigates Carnival creativity and community
The Dying Swan, dir. Christopher Laird (10:00)
Fantastic Friday, dir. Shari Petti (10:30)
High on Mas, dir. Shaun Rambaran (4:14)
Pay D Devil (trailer), dir. Drew Howell (1:36)
Stick Is Life, dir. Miquel Galofré (9:50)
Mas (music video), dir. Shari Petti (5:09)
1-2 pm • AV Room
In partnership with #1000mokos

ONE ON ONE

Jamaica-born **Linton Kwesi Johnson** is celebrated for his poetry and music. Now a new book, *Time Come*, collects his prose in a wide-ranging exploration of Caribbean and Black British culture of the past five decades. In conversation with **Ronald Cummings**
1-2 pm • Old Fire Station

NEW TALENT SHOWCASE + STAND AND DELIVER

Up and coming authors **Akhim Alexis**, **Deneka Thomas**, and **Hadassah K. Williams**, followed by our signature open mic event, with featured author **Deborah Lee Matthews**, shortlisted for the 2023 Commonwealth Short Story Prize
1-2 pm • Abercromby Street Arcade

TAKE TWO

Poets **Jason Allen-Paisant** (*Self-Portrait as Othello*) and **Celia Sorhaingo** (*Radical Normalisation*) write about multiplicities of selves and personas. Hosted by **L. René**
2-3 pm • Old Fire Station

WORKSHOP

The intimacy of poetry, with **Adam Lowe**
How can you transform your experiences of intimacy into compelling poems? Adam Lowe, author of *Patterflash*, guides you
2-4 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room

ONE ON ONE

Elizabeth "Lady" Montano talks to **Keron "Sheriff" Thompson** about her long-awaited illustrated biography of her son Machel
2-3 pm • AV Room

BIG IDEAS

The crisis of our time?
Climate change is also a question of climate justice, tied to long histories of inequality and exploitation. How do we make it truly urgent to the masses of people in the vulnerable states of the Caribbean? With T&T's lead climate negotiator **Kishan Kumarsingh**; NGC President **Mark Loquan**; **Vianney-Marie Williams**, Caribbean Youth Environment Network PRO; and com-

munity activist **Roslyn Williams-George**; chaired by academic **Keron Niles**

3.30-5 pm • Old Fire Station

In partnership with the Cropper Foundation

THE SHORT OF IT

Today's writers are keeping the tradition of Caribbean short fiction alive, with vivid characters and themes. Featuring **Cecil Browne**, **Kirk Budhooram**, **Camille Hernández-Ramdwar**, and **Ken Jaikaransingh**, in conversation with **Celeste Mohammed**
3.30-5 pm • AV Room
In partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation

WRITERS UNION PRESENTS

Readings on the theme "The Return" by members of the Writers Union of T&T — plus a feature appearance by Jamaican writer **Sharma Taylor**, talking about how to build a literary career at home in the Caribbean
4.30-6 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room

OLE MAS COMPETITION

A changing climate

Ideas meet costumes and performance in T&T's traditional protest masquerade, with a theme asking how the Caribbean can tackle the problem of climate change
5-6 pm • Hart Street Arcade
In partnership with the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts

FILMS

From the Banyan archive

Caribbean Eye: Talk and More Talk (1992, 30:00)
Much of Caribbean culture is oral if not aural. Meet some of the Caribbean's best oral performers and "composers"
Caribbean Eye: Independent Voices (1992, 30:00)
Five Caribbean writers whose works are manifestos for Caribbean independence
Caribbean Women Writers (1994, 46:00)
Centred around the First Conference of Caribbean Women Writers, this programme features readings and discussion by major figures of Caribbean literature by women
5-6.45 pm • AV Room

OCM BOCAS PRIZE + BOCAS HENRY SWANZY AWARD

2023 announcement ceremony
Celebrating the past year's best books of poetry, fiction, and literary non-fiction
7-8.30 pm • Mille Fleurs, 23 Maraval Road
By invitation

SUNDAY 30 APRIL

TAKE THREE

Matters of the heart are the driving force behind novels by **Sarah Dass** (*When the Vibe Is Right*), **N.G. Peltier** (*Don't Go Baking My Heart*), and **Ayesha Harruna Attah** (*Zainab Takes New York*). Hosted by **Cindy Allman**
10-11.30 am • Old Fire Station

BOCAS HENRY SWANZY AWARD

2023 Bocas Henry Swanzy Award winner **Sandra Pouchet Paquet** discusses her life in and around literature with **Patricia Saunders** and **Ronald Cummings**
10-11 am • AV Room

WORKSHOP

Where the story starts, with **Jan Carson**
Interested in writing short stories? Belfast-based writer Jan Carson will guide you through writing engaging short fiction
10 am-12 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room
In partnership with the British Council and the Belfast International Arts Festival

TAKE TWO

Family and friendship weave rich narratives in the fiction of **Breanne Mc Ivor** (*The God of Good Looks*) and **Cleyvis Natera** (*Neruda on the Park*). Hosted by **Caroline Mackenzie**
11.30 am-12.30 pm • Old Fire Station

TAKE THREE

Family journeys
Ira Mathur (*Love the Dark Days*), **Brian Samuel**

(*A Song for My Father*), and **Simone Dalton** (2020 RBC Taylor Emerging Writer Prize) tell stories of family and ancestry that range across oceans and continents. Hosted by **Paula Lindo**
11 am-12.30 pm • AV Room

NDATT PRESENTS

Dey Dey Gets a House

A dramatised excerpt from a play by **Judith Theodore**. Directed by **Penelope Spencer**; featuring **Trevon C. Jugmohan**, **Emmanuel Ansolia**, **Ahalia St. Bernard**, **Danielle Lewis**, and **Christopher Best**
11.30 am-12 pm • Library Rotunda
Presented in partnership with NDATT and Playwrights Workshop Trinbago

NEW TALENT SHOWCASE + STAND AND DELIVER

Up and coming authors **Jannine Horsford**, **Jay T. John**, and **Rajiv Ramkhalawan**, followed by our signature open mic event
12-1 pm • Abercromby Street Arcade

TAKE THREE

The intensity of queer desire burns in poetry collections by **Andre Bagoo** (*Narcissus*), **Adam Lowe** (*Patterflash*), and **Padraig Regan** (*Some Integrity*). Hosted by **Brandon O'Brien**
1-2.30 pm • Old Fire Station
In partnership with the British Council and the Belfast International Arts Festival

BOOK LAUNCH

The newly published *Selected Diaries and Writings of Henry Swanzy* introduced by **Jeremy Poynting**, plus a panel on the role of editors who shape our literature behind the scenes. With **Stephen Connolly**, **Ronald Cummings**, **Kelly Baker Josephs**, and **Lisa Outar**, chaired by **Nicholas Laughlin**
1-2 pm • AV Room

TRIBUTE

Ways of Sunlight: a tribute to Sam Selvon
Dramatised excerpts from Sam Selvon's beloved *Ways of Sunlight*, and the launch of the "Ways of Sunlight" writing competition. Featuring **Chelsea Ramjit**, **David Bereaux**, **Esther-Marie Jones**, **Jarod Baptiste**, **Keda Temporo**, and **Roderick "Chucky" Gordon**
2-3 pm • AV Room
In partnership with the EU-funded Global Climate Change Alliance+

WORKSHOP

Wearing your story: the basics of fashion psychology, with **Shakaila Forbes-Bell**
The bestselling author of *Big Dress Energy* leads a lively session on fashion psychology, and why it matters
2-4 pm • 1st Floor Seminar Room

ONE ON ONE

In *Sonnets for Albert*, winner of the 2023 OCM Bocas Prize for Poetry and the 2022 T.S. Eliot Prize, **Anthony Joseph** offers a moving portrait of the bonds and barriers between father and son. He talks with **Amílcar Sanatan**
2.30-3.30 pm • Old Fire Station

TAKE THREE

It takes a village
Cheryl Bowles (*The Ladder We Ascend*), **Dylan Kerrigan** (*Growing Up Woodbrook*), and **Beverly Scobie** (*Via the Roundabout*) balance stories of communities and individuals. Chaired by **Glenroy Taitt**
3-4.30 pm • AV Room

BOOK LAUNCH

In Search of Harold Sonny Ladoo
Half a century after the death of Harold Sonny Ladoo, **Christopher Laird**'s new biography offers analysis of his unsparing fiction. Joining him in conversation are writer **Kevin Jared Hosein** and academic **Gabrielle Hosein**. Chaired by **Jeremy Poynting**
3.30-5.00 pm • Old Fire Station

TAKE THREE

All in a day's work
Three memoirists share books about eventful careers. With **Ronald Harford** (*Nil Illegitimi Carborundum*), **Angela Laquis-Sobrian** (*Breaking Free*), and **Wendy Yawching** (*The Courage to Fly*). Hosted by **Franka Philip**
4.30 pm-5.30 pm • AV Room

FIRST CITIZENS NATIONAL POETRY SLAM FINAL

The festival's grand finale!
It's the year's biggest night of poetry, as T&T's top performance poets vie for the championship and the first prize of TT\$50,000
6-8 pm • Central Bank Auditorium
Tickets \$200

#bocas2023
#whatsyourstory