



WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL

WORKSHOP

Preservation and conservation for beginners, with Danielle Fraser, NALIS conservator
Advice on preserving treasured books and documents. Includes a tour of the NALIS conservation lab
9 am–12 pm • *Heritage Library and Conservation Lab*

FIRST-TIME AUTHORS

Presentation by NALIS of tokens to first time authors, 2016–2017
10 am–12 pm • *AV Room*

PAVEMENT POETS JAM

Featuring some of T&T’s best young spoken word poets and musicians
10 am–12 pm • *The Breakfast Shed, Wrightson Road*

WORKSHOP

Tongueless whispering 1: a poetry masterclass, with Vahni Capildeo
A special two-part masterclass with the winner of the 2016 Forward Prize, investigating how to integrate non-human, historical, silent, or musical elements as “voice” into poems
10.30 am–12.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

WRITERS FIRST

A series of free seminars for budding and self-published authors on crucial aspects of the book business

How the publishing business really works, with Malaika Adero

Media relations for writers, with *Trinidad Guardian* features editor Franka Philip

How to win at social media, with novelist Nicole Dennis-Benn
5,000 and counting: how to make your book a bestseller, with Betty Peter
1–4 pm • *AV Room*

LIT: ON FLEEK

Drinks, music, poems, stories, and a sizzling open mic: come and line with some of the Caribbean’s best LGBT writers, plus some surprise guests. Featuring Kei Miller, Rosamond S. King, Nicole Dennis-

Benn, Rajiv Mohabir, Colin Robinson, Andre Bagoo, Angelique Nixon and more
8.30 pm *until* • *Euphoria Lounge, 58 Dundonald Street*

In partnership with Bohemia Posse and the Alliance for Justice & Diversity

THURSDAY 27 APRIL

FESTIVAL TRIBUTE

The legacy of C.L.R. James
Almost three decades after his death, the revolutionary insights and ideas of C.L.R. James seem to grow only more relevant. As we open the festival and a special day-long series of events considering his legacy, Evelyn Caesar-Munroe, Nigel Camacho, Jackie Hinkson, Louis Lee Sing, and Joan Yuille-Williams read excerpts from James’s works
9–10 am • *Old Fire Station*

PAVEMENT POETS JAM

Featuring some of T&T’s best young spoken word poets and musicians
10 am–12 pm • *Brian Lara Promenade*

DISCUSSION

C.L.R. James reconsidered
What can James’s writings and ideas tell us about contemporary predicaments in T&T, the Caribbean, and the wider world? Labour leader David Abdulah and scholars Kenneth Ramchand, Bridget Brereton, and Aaron Kamugisha debate the issue; chaired by Ardene Sirjoo
10.30 am–12 pm • *Old Fire Station*

WORKSHOP

Tongueless whispering 2: a poetry masterclass, with Vahni Capildeo
The second session in a special two-part masterclass with the winner of the 2016 Forward Prize, investigating how to integrate non-human, historical, silent, or musical elements as “voice” into poems
10.30–12.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

EXTEMPO DEBATE

CLR vs the Doc
Master calypsonians Black Sage and Short Pants debate the relationship between C.L.R. James and Prime Minister Eric Williams in unique extempo style
12–1 pm • *Abercromby Street Arcade*

FILM

Every Cook Can Govern
This historical tour-de-force of film

Except where otherwise indicated, events take place in the National Library and Old Fire Station, Abercromby and Hart Streets, Port of Spain.
All events (except workshops and First Citizens National Poetry Slam Finals) are free and open to the public — no tickets are required.

www.bocaslitfest.com

interweaves never-before-seen footage of C.L.R. James himself with personal contributions from those who knew him and astute historical and political analysis from leading scholars of his work
1–3 pm • *AV Room*

DISCUSSION

Are all rights created equal?
Human rights apply to all citizens, but should the needs of vulnerable communities — children, the disabled, the mentally ill — lead in setting the agenda? Youth activist Gregory Sloane-Seale, author Claudia de Verteuil, Police Inspector Derrick Sharbodie, and Keir Roopnarine of the Hindu Women’s Organisation discuss the question; chaired by Ira Mathur
1–2.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

POETRY FORWARD
Celebrating the vitality of contemporary Caribbean poetry
This special two-part event begins with readings by Forward Prize-winning poets Kei Miller and Vahni Capildeo and a conversation with Susannah Herbert, director of the Forward Arts Foundation; followed by readings from four debut books: *Pitch Lake*, by Andre Bagoo; *Make Us All Islands*, by Richard Georges; *Rock | Salt | Stone*, by Rosamond S. King; and *Everyone Knows I Am a Haunting*, by Shivanee Ramlochan; with music by Gillian Moor
7–9.30 pm • *Kaiso Blues Café, 85 Woodford Street*

WORKSHOP

Making your case, with Baz Dreisinger
For journalists and non-fiction writers addressing current affairs: fundamentals of research and interviewing, how to structure an argument and make the most convincing use of evidence
1.30–3.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Godfrey Smith**
The award-winning biographer of Michael Manley talks to Barbara Lalla about his move from active politics to biographical and historical writing
2.30–3.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

CODE’S BURT AWARD
Winners’ showcase
Lisa Allen-Agostini, Kevin Jared Hosein, and Viviana Prado-Nuñez, the three finalists for the 2017 CODE’s Burt Award, read from their work and discuss the challenges and opportunities of writing for young adult readers, with Barry Goldblatt
3.30–4.30 pm • *AV Room*

TAKE TWO

Growing pains
Novelists Nicole Dennis-Benn and H. Nigel Thomas read from and discuss their novels of queer Caribbean coming-of-age; chaired by Malaika Adero
4–5 pm • *Old Fire Station*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Dr. Keith Rowley**
T&T’s Prime Minister discusses his

recently published memoir, *From Mason Hall to Whitehall*, with Bocas deputy festival director Funso Aiyejina
5–6 pm • *Old Fire Station*

ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY
NALIS launches the latest edition of its nationwide community reading project, with Michael Anthony’s classic novel *Green Days by the River*
6.30–8 pm • *Library Amphitheatre*

POETRY FORWARD
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7–9.30 pm • *Kaiso Blues Café, 85 Woodford Street*

FRIDAY 28 APRIL

ONE-ON-ONE
With **David Dabydeen**
The celebrated Guyanese poet, novelist, and scholar talks to Susheila Nasta about his career spanning genres and continents, and how contemporary Guyanese writing tackles the intricacies of the country’s troubled politics and history
10–11 am • *Old Fire Station*

WORKSHOP

Writing for young adults: a masterclass with Barry Goldblatt
The literary agent and CODE’s Burt Award judge reveals how to be a successful YA author. What are teens, agents, and publishers looking for, and how do writers get in on the act?
10 am–12.30 pm • *2nd Floor Seminar Room*

DISCUSSION

Words + images
Writers and artists discuss books of hybrid genre where images are not merely illustrations and words are not merely captions. With Patricia Mohammed and Rex Dixon, authors of *Travels with a Husband*; Philip Nanton, author of *Canouan Suite*;

and artist Annalee Davis; chaired by Marsha Pearce
11 am–12 pm • *Old Fire Station*

STAND AND DELIVER

Our signature platform for new and budding writers
Feature authors Louis Lee Sing, Jannine Horsford, and Gilberte O’Sullivan lead a lineup of writers across genres. You can share your work too: sign up ahead of time at our info desk
12–1.30 pm • *Library Amphitheatre*

NALIS TOUR

Led by Debbie Goodman, Manager, Corporate Communications
5–6 pm • *Old Fire Station*

WORKSHOP

Learning from the classics, with Ishion Hutchinson
How the works of past authors — whether ancient classics or more recent masterpieces — can trigger inspiration and experiment, with special reference to poetry
1.30–3.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

CONVERSATION

Artist Kwynn Johnson discusses her drawing based on Derek Walcott’s play *The Haytian Earth*, installed in the Library during the festival
1.30–2 pm • *AV Room Foyer*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Nancy Morejón**
The celebrated Cuban poet talks to Nicole Roberts about her life and work and the crucial necessity of translation for Caribbean literary exchange
2–3 pm • *Old Fire Station*

TAKE TWO

Family ties
Trinidadians Aliyyah Eniath, author of *The Yard*, and Nathalie Taghaboni, author of *Side by Side We Stand*, read from and discuss their fiction based on complicated family stories; chaired by Monique Roffey
3–4 pm • *Old Fire Station*

DISCUSSION

The invisible editor
Magazines and journals are vital vehicles for sharing new ideas, and each is shaped by the interests of its editor. But should editors remain “invisible,” or take on a more public role? Kim Robinson-Walcott, editor of *Caribbean Quarterly* and *Jamaica Journal*, and Richard Georges, co-editor of *Moko*, discuss the question with Nicholas Laughlin
3.30–4.30 pm • *2nd Floor Seminar Room*

DISCUSSION

Why a free press matters
A free press is one of democratic society’s major safeguards — but the price of that freedom is permanent vigilance. Senior T&T journalists Wesley Gibbings and Asha Javeed debate the question with Kenyan journalist and writer Peter Kimani

and former government spokesman Andy Johnson; chaired by Mark Wilson
4.30–6 pm • *Old Fire Station*

NOIR BY NIGHT

Celebrating the launch of *Trinidad Noir: The Classics*
Explore the darker side of contemporary Trinidad and Tobago with Earl Lovelace, co-editor of a new anthology of classic noir writing, plus writers Elizabeth Walcott-Hackshaw and Sharon Millar, alongside Anthony Joseph, Kevin Jared Hosein, Ayanna Gillian Lloyd and more! Hosted by elisha efua bartels
7.30 pm *until* • *Big Black Box, 33 Murray Street, Woodbrook*

SATURDAY 29 APRIL

TAKE TWO

Untold Jamaica
OCM Bocas Prize shortlisted fiction writers Kei Miller, author of *Augustown*, and Marcia Douglas, author of *The Marvellous Equations of the Dread*, read from and discuss their novels reimagining Jamaican history and uncovering untold stories; chaired by Evelyn O’Callaghan
10–11 am • *Old Fire Station*

WORKSHOP

How to witness your own work, with Rosamond S. King
Reading in public is an opportunity to literally give voice to your writing. Whether you write narrative poetry, experimental fiction, or even scholarly prose, this interactive workshop introduces the basic elements of reading literature out loud
10 am–12.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Edward Baugh**
The eminent Jamaican writer and scholar talks to Ishion Hutchinson about a life and career in devotion to poetry
11 am–12 pm • *Old Fire Station*

TELLING TALES

Readings and performance of much-loved poems and stories in dialect by Talk Tent artiste Miguel Browne. For all ages
11 am–12 pm • *Library Rotunda*

STAND AND DELIVER

Our signature platform for new and budding writers
Feature authors Colin Robinson, Angelique Nixon and Otávio Maia Chelotti lead a lineup of writers across genres. You can share your work too: sign up ahead of time at our info desk
12–1.30 pm • *Library Amphitheatre*

WORKSHOP

The art of biography, with Godfrey Smith
Whether your interest is personal or family memoir or writing the biography of a historical figure, this introductory workshop covering the fundamentals of researching your data and organising your ideas will

help get you on the road to writing
1.30–3.30 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Peter Kimani**
The Kenyan author of *Dance of the Jakaranda* talks to Johnny Temple about his transition from journalism to fiction-writing, and the literary scene in East Africa
1.30–2.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

WRITERS’ LAB

Workshop your writing in a safe space with author and academic Muli Amaye, who runs the MFA creative writing course at UWI, St Augustine. Free and open to writers publishing their own work and with work in progress
1.30–2.30 pm • *2nd Floor Seminar Room*

TRINI TALK

In a lively, interactive session, Miguel Browne plays with our Trini-English language. Great fun for the whole family
2–3pm • *Library Rotunda*

ONE-ON-ONE

With **Eliot Weinberger**
The eminent American writer and translator talks to Nicholas Laughlin about his explorations in the art of the essay, from history to science to politics
2.30–3.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

DISCUSSION

Not just in the family
When does the history of one family become relevant to a broader society? Kevin Browne of the Caribbean Memory Project talks with Felicia Chang and Marina Salandy-Brown; chaired by Judy Raymond
3.30–4.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

DISCUSSION

How change gets made
In the push to advance LGBT rights in the Caribbean, which platform leads the way — legislative action, the courts, high-profile activism, or grassroots organising? And what’s the value of using the arts and scholarship to drive the narrative of change? With former government minister Wade Mark, attorney Arif Bulkan, academic and writer Angelique Nixon, and writer and activist Colin Robinson; chaired by Roberta Clarke
4–5 pm • *AV Room*

WRITERS’ UNION PRESENTS

Writers’ Union members share “Epic Poetry from the East”, as the literature of India becomes the inspiration for a new wave of T&T’s writers
4–6 pm • *2nd Floor Seminar Room. Presented in partnership with the Writers’ Union of Trinidad and Tobago*

PERFORMANCE

Human, right?
A human rights-themed Ole Mas competition
Integrating this year’s human rights

agenda with one of T&T’s most cherished folk traditions, revered for its wit and homage to “picong”, this competition displays the finest coupling of the conscious and the humorous. Ole mas bands parade their genius for the public and judges for special prizes and bragging rights!
5–6 pm • *Hart Street Arcade*

OCM BOCAS PRIZE AND BOCAS HENRY SWANZY AWARD

2017 announcement ceremony
The festival’s centrepiece awards ceremony honours the past year’s best books of Caribbean poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, and we present the Bocas Henry Swanzy Award to Joan Dayal
7–8 pm • *Old Fire Station. By invitation*

SUNDAY 30 APRIL

DISCUSSION

The books that made me
Writers Edward Baugh, Vahni Capildeo, Rajiv Mohabir, and Danielle Boodoo-Fortuné discuss their key literary influences with Ayanna Gillian Lloyd
10–11 am • *Old Fire Station*

WOMENSPEAK PRESENTS

Your Story: a women’s writing workshop, with Monique Roffey
Writing can be a deeply cathartic way of exploring and shifting old stories. In this workshop, participants will use dynamic exercises, free writing, and meditation to get those stories locked inside onto the page. This is a closed, safe space for women to write their stories down on the page
10 am–1 pm • *1st Floor Seminar Room. Part of the WomenSpeak Project’s outreach programme to strengthen women’s advocacy*

DISCUSSION

Crime and punishment
As T&T struggles with a growing crime problem, is our criminal justice system helping matters, or making them worse? Justice Gillian Lucky debates the question with criminologist Ramesh Deosaran, teacher and writer Debbie Jacob, and scholar Baz Dreisinger; chaired by Francesca Hawkins
11 am–12.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

WALCOTT ON STAGE

In tribute to the late St. Lucian Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, inaugural winner of the OCM Bocas Prize in 2011, a series of readings from some of his most popular stage plays, *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*, *The Joker of Seville*, and *Beef, No Chicken*. Directed by Brenda Hughes and featuring Nigel Scott, Michael Cherrie, Aryana Mohammed, Ann Marie Grant, Arnold Goindhan, and Kearn Samuel
11.30 am–12 pm • *Library Rotunda*

STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

A human rights open mic
Read your original poems or stories

tackling human rights issues, and compete for the approval of Chief Justice Ivor Archie. With a feature performance by Midnight Robber Damian Whiskey
12.30–1 pm • *Hart Street Arcade*

WRITERS’ LAB

Workshop your writing in a safe space with author and academic Muli Amaye, who runs the MFA creative writing course at UWI, St Augustine. Free and open to writers publishing their own work and with work in progress
12.30–1.30 pm • *2nd Floor Seminar Room*

THE LION MAKERS

A dramatised reading from a new play by Raymond Ramcharitar, taking a sly look at the relationship between Eric Williams, C.L.R. James, Rudranath Capildeo, and Albert Gomes. Directed by Brenda Hughes and featuring Nigel Scott, Michael Cherrie, Arnold Goindhan, and Kearn Samuel
1–1.30 pm • *Library Rotunda*

TAKE THREE

Caribbean poetry’s new wave
A new generation of thrilling Caribbean and diaspora poets is on the rise. Ishion Hutchinson, author of *House of Lords and Commons*, Rajiv Mohabir, author of *The Taxidermist’s Cut*, and Safiya Sinclair, author of *Cannibal* (winner of the 2017 OCM Bocas Prize, poetry category), read from and discuss their highly acclaimed books; chaired by Shivanee Ramlochan
1.30–2.30 pm • *Old Fire Station*

CineLit

The Latin American and Caribbean Literary Film Festival

Library AV Room • see separate programme for daily screening schedule

Experience Bocas online!

Can’t make it to one of the events? Then listen in via the online festival livestream, featuring live audio streaming of all events in the Old Fire Station at mixlr.com/bocaslitfest

And don’t miss **Voices from Inside**, a special event at the Port of Spain prison hosted by writers Debbie Jacob and Baz Dreisinger, with readings by winners of the prisons poetry competition and Machel, Kees, Anya and others. Streamed live at www.facebook.com/bocaslitfest • *Wednesday 26 April, 4–6 pm*

