



# the **focas** **Lit Fes**

---

**MORE THAN A LITERARY FESTIVAL**

---

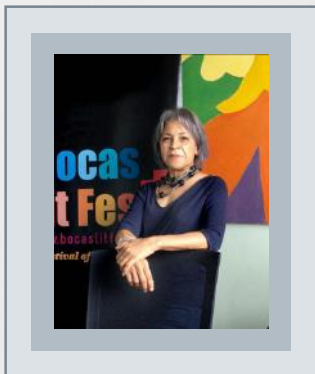
**2022**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



# LEADERSHIP

## PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT



MARINA SALANDY-BROWN

What a year it was! The uncertainties of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact upon Bocas Lit Fest activities in 2022, making the *NGC Bocas Lit Fest* in April the third consecutive annual online festival. It demanded yet more ingenuity from Team Bocas Lit Fest as the year progressed.

Ever responsive, our mid-year *Season of Independence* mini festival creatively punctuated the year. Then we launched our new YouTube children's channel, full of specially created content for under-12s, and held a second *Dragonzilla's Children's Short Story Challenge* for budding young writers.

The winning stories from 2021 and 2022 feature in the 10th children annual publication by our imprint Peekash Press and were donated to children's libraries and participants.

After two years of online events and growing online fatigue, we took a hybrid approach to our Youth programming in 2022. *The First Citizens National Poetry Slam* final and semi-finals were televised events with limited audiences, and the *NGC Bocas Youth Fest* was the very first in-person festival we produced in 3 years. The audiences were delighted, which portends well for a full return to live festivals in 2023, especially since we intend to increase our focus on T&T's young people. Ever innovative, we launched *We Lit* to complement the secondary school curriculum, piloting our first English Language and Literature lessons. They were oversubscribed.

The winners of both the *Bocas Children's Book Prize* for excellence in writing for young readers and the *NGC Bocas Young Writer Award* were from Trinidad and Tobago, which follows the current wave of success enjoyed by T&T writers internationally. To celebrate the phenomenon, the very first *Bocas UK* literary tour took 24 Caribbean-resident and diaspora writers to 5 cities in Britain. It was a highlight of 2022. The keen support of local, regional and international sponsors and partners made it possible, and the large, hugely appreciative audiences ensure another tour in due course.

Sustainability is our motto, and I am very pleased that our CEO and Festival Director, both appointed in early January, ushered our NGO into the next stage of our work, creating exciting new programming and maintaining the trust and backing of our loyal sponsors, to whom we are eternally grateful. I am indebted to our board of directors who generously offer their expertise to the Bocas Lit Fest, ensuring that we remain a well-managed and successful NGO.

To everyone who helped us make a difference in 2022, accept my deepest thanks. To all Caribbean writers, thank you for what you do and I wish you continued success.

**Marina Salandy-Brown**  
**Founder & President**

## Vision

The Bocas Lit Fest exists to develop and promote Caribbean writers and to grow Caribbean readers to realise the full potential of our literature in cultural, social and economic terms.

## Mission

To be the Caribbean's premier literary arts organisation, dedicated to the development of all our people, the broadening of our culture and the expansion of the literary industry.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Marina Salandy-Brown - President & Founder**

**Lucy Hannah - Vice President** - Producer of global literary initiatives

**Thackwray "Dax" Driver - Secretary** - CEO of The Energy Chamber

**Courtenay Williams - Treasurer** - Attorney-at-Law

**Stacy Ann Golding** - Principal, S N Golding Financial Services Limited

**Jacqueline Quamina** - Consultant in Corporate Law, Governance and Banking

## Advisor to the BOD

**Leslie Clarke**, Managing Director, Murphy Clarke Financial Limited

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

## The Festival



The beating heart of the Bocas Lit Fest is the annual literary festival. With the pandemic still dictating the pace, the 12th annual NGC Bocas Lit Fest featured a special online programme over four consecutive evenings in April. Each contained its own thematic focus, adding up to a bigger story of how ideas, stories, and words can change the world for the better.

The festival focused on some of the most vital books and authors in the Caribbean, whose work explore living in a world of extraordinary change — social and cultural, technological and environmental.

We confronted the impact of a pandemic that forced us to alter how we work, live and play while navigating the threat of global warming and confronting growing social inequalities and the dire need for new approaches. The events and conversations of the 2022 festival sought to investigate ideas about the changes we are living through in every sphere — whether personal or collective, political or cultural and the imperative of creating a more just society and sustainable future. At the end of the festival, a video tribute was streamed in honour of retired Bocas Lit Fest Director Danielle Delon, who also served as the Director of the Children's Festival from its inception.

Notwithstanding the quality and range of the festival programme and the move to an all evening events schedule, overall viewing figures were lower than in 2021 and 2020, which suggests online fatigue.

## A festival for 60 years of Independence



To commemorate the milestone 60th anniversary of Trinidad and Tobago's Independence, *Season of Independence* was a novel month-long online celebration (31 Aug - 24 Sept) of special literary events and programming, sponsored by NGC and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. It brought together newly commissioned writing by Trinbagonian authors reflecting on our past and future, and discussions and readings centred on recent books about the meaning of belonging and citizenship.

A musical performance and a curated playlist of video content from the NGC Bocas Lit Fest archives completed the programme. The events remain available on demand on the NGC Bocas Lit Fest YouTube and Facebook pages.



# FIRST CITIZENS NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

The level of creativity on display in the 2022 national spoken word competition, sponsored by First Citizens, continued to impress. This was the 10th year of the National Poetry Slam which has now established itself as the largest stage for spoken word in the Caribbean, with a TT\$50,000 first place prize, one of the highest value awards for Spoken Word artists in the world. During the pandemic, the SLAM had no live audiences but was streamed online, with the semis and finals being televised on TTT. In 2022, fans of the SLAM were able to be part of the limited live audience for the two semis and constitute a full live audience at the finals at the Naparima Bowl in San Fernando. The event was also televised on TTT and live-streamed.

Sunday, October 2, 2022  
quarter 10:51

rec 23

## A legacy of influential oratory

From page 22

At the Old Fire Station, Port of Spain venue that year, the crowd was "ramona" as Sandy recalled.

"If literature had a party, it would have been that Poetry Slam," he added.

Bocas' formalised structure and larger audiences afforded the Slam a wider platform, and stability. By 2015, Slam was being held at Globe cinema which had the capacity to seat 1,200. The following year, the competition became known as FCNPS, establishing itself as Bocas Lit Fest's signature closing event.

"Bocas, I think, brought institutional strength to spoken word. Spoken was very organic. Bocas would handle the proposals, and funding. It gave it a focal point; every year we had a festival and as part of the festival it was the closing event. It gave the Slam a home. It gave young people a space to create," Courmand said.

"The Slam gave literature clout and (Bocas) really gave us clout as young people to really do what we were good at, almost freely and independently. Without Bocas Lit Fest, I don't think spoken word would be where it is today. Because from there, the Bocas Lit Fest also invested in our school tours for the first two or three years and probably even more. That contribution cannot be understated," Sandy said, crediting Sandy Brown with being one of the first teachers of the arts to respect spoken word as a

literary art form.

The Artistic Director of the 2 Cents Movement, Sandy nurtured his knowledge and passion for the spoken word, learning of its varied benefits in the academic, corporate, and entertainment worlds. Apart from promoting creative expression, spoken word has influenced social issues like child marriage and gender discussions, Sandy felt.

"Spoken word has been part and parcel of these campaigns. We have seen policies shift over time, obviously not on the strength of spoken word alone, but we were able to amplify the voices of certain organisations that people may not have known about. And because the art form is so accessible to youths, we have been able to bring that youth awareness to many issues."

The Slam also allowed artists to be seen by businesses and some were hired to perform at corporate events or appear in advertisements. It has helped launch the careers of poets like Tobago-born Camryn Bruno who was introduced to the art form through the 2 Cents Movement school programme and topped the 2019 New York City Youth Poet Laureate, youth advocate and 2 Cents Movement junior artist Jayden Phillip who was encouraged to join the spoken word organisation because of Sandy's work, and others who went on to win literary and arts scholarships.

Sandy himself has recently appeared at Diamond Jubilee Indepen-

dence events. He felt that the inclusion of spoken word by the Minister of Planning in celebrations marking T&T's 60th Independence anniversary was testimony to its mainstream acceptance.

"That would have been unheard of six, seven years ago spoken word poetry being mentioned in the same breath as calypso and soca etc. So, it was really refreshing to hear that. It really spoke to the longevity of the FCNPS and the Bocas Lit Fest, and all these young poets that would have dedicated years to making the art form what it is," Sandy said.

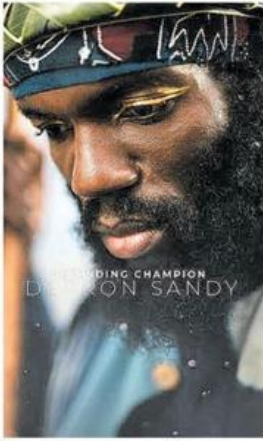
Slam, too, has sought to be inclusive, moving from a more youth-focused competition to one that embraces all age groups.

Last year, Sandy beat out two-time defending champion Alexandra Stewart and spoken word artist Michael Lagne with his composition "The Underground Warlords" an ode to food vendors in the face of COVID. This time around, Sandy has zoomed in on the topic of teachers, seeking to honour them as important contributors to the nation.

Tickets to the FCNPS cost \$200 and are available through the Bocas Lit Fest website, at Paper Based Bookshop, Hotel Normandie, St. Ann's, and at the Naparima Bow box office from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday.

The event will be pre-recorded and broadcast on TTT at a date to be announced.

Continues to page 26



Jean-Claude Courmand addresses the audience at Verses 2014.



## FCNPS: A decade of impact

**1009**  
Poets Auditioned

**\$450K**  
Paid in prize money

**298**  
Semi-Finalists

**52**  
SLAM Related Events

**99**  
Finalists

**30**  
Winners



# 2022 NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, June 19, 2022  
guardian.co.tt

55

## A WIN

FOR

OUR **EXPRESSION,**  
OUR **IDENTITY,**  
OUR **PEOPLE.**



Mark Loquan, President, NGC, and Lisa Burkett, Senior Manager, Corporate Sustainability, NGC, display the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago's Annual Award for Best Social Investment Project, presented to NGC for its support of NGC Bocas Lit Fest.

## NGC Bocas Lit Fest: Best Social Investment Project Award 2022

The Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago awarded its prestigious Annual Award for Best Social Investment Project to NGC Bocas Lit Fest – the Caribbean's annual celebration of our literary arts and culture – deemed one of the world's top literary festivals by Penguin Random House.

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) has been a deeply involved supporter of the Bocas Lit Fest since its inception in 2011, and title sponsor since 2012. We are proud to be part of an initiative that has created more space on the world's stage for the Caribbean's writers, storytellers, poets, and dramatists. The festival marks NGC's contribution to the preservation and growth of our literary and cultural landscape, and we are committed to a future of dynamic and meaningful work with the Bocas Lit Fest, as well as with and for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and the wider Caribbean.



THE NGC GROUP OF COMPANIES



# 2022 NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

## Caribbean writers achieve milestones



Trinidadian writer Ayanna Lloyd Banwo enjoyed a bumper year in 2022. Her debut novel, *When We Were Birds*, was named one of the best debut novels of 2022 by The Observer. The author was previously shortlisted for the Small Axe Literary Competition and the Wasafiri New Writing Prize.

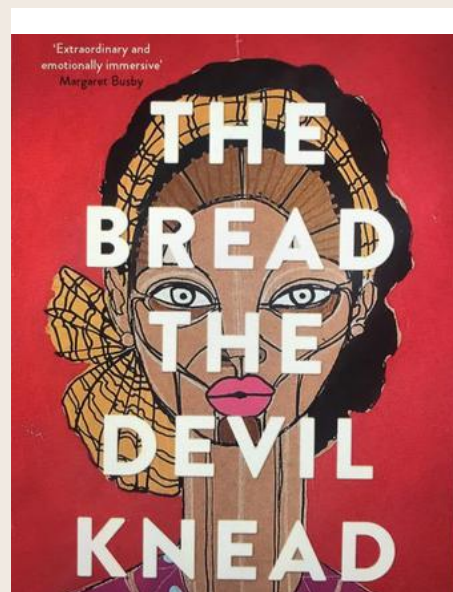


“Mythic and captivating... Banwo roots the reader in [Trinidad's] traditions and rituals, in the sights and sounds and colors and smells of fruit vendors, fish vendors, street preachers and schoolchildren. In the glorious matriarchy by which lineage is upheld. The result is a depiction of ordinary life that's full and breathtaking.”

-NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW



Lisa Allen-Agostini's novel *The Bread the Devil Knead* was shortlisted for the highly coveted and career-boosting Women's Prize for Fiction, catapulting the well-known Trinidadian author and editor into the next stage of her literary career.



Both Lloyd Banwo and Allen-Agostini credit the workshops, mentorship and support of the programmes of the Bocas Lit Fest and many celebrated Caribbean authors for assisting them in mastering their craft.

# 2022 NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS



2022 was a bumper year too for Shivane Ramlochan, poet and Bocas Lit Fest Literary Projects Consultant. She participated in the 25th Singapore Writers Festival, facilitated a Persephone Books workshop, where she read and discussed

her poems at Bath Spa University, hosted events at the first Bocas UK Tour event in London and co-hosted the Forward Prizes for Poetry in Manchester, UK.



Meanwhile, Bocas Lit Fest CEO Jean Claude Courmand attended the 2nd Global Association of Literary Festivals in Lagos, Nigeria, forging links for international literary exchanges.

At the 2022 Republic Day National Awards, Bocas Lit Fest Founder and President of the Board of Directors, Marina Salandy-Brown, was awarded the Hummingbird Medal Silver for her arts and literacy advocacy. The medal is awarded to citizens in recognition of long and devoted service to Trinidad and Tobago. She also received a silver medal from H.E. Juan Aníbal Barría, Ambassador of the Republic of Chile for her efforts to forge cultural links between the English and Spanish-speaking worlds through the Bocas Lit Fest.



Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley and his wife Sharon Rowley greet Hummingbird silver medal recipient Marina Salandy-Brown during the National Awards ceremony, NAPA, Port of Spain on Saturday. - PHOTO BY SUREASH CHOLAI



The Bocas Lit Fest met with His Excellency Victor Hugo Morales Meléndez, Ambassador of Mexico to Trinidad and Tobago to discuss future cultural cooperation between both countries.



# #BOCASUK22

## Bocas UK Tour



From 26 October - 3 November 2022, the NGC Bocas Lit Fest produced a series of events in five cities across the United Kingdom featuring stellar Caribbean and diaspora writers. This showcase of contemporary Caribbean literary talent included a day-long programme at the British Library in London, with 24 writers and performers. It attracted an in-person audience of over 200 and was streamed live to an international audience.

Originally planned to mark the Bocas Lit Fest's 10th anniversary in 2020, the tour was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participating writers included many past festival attendees and prizewinners, including the winners of the 2021 and 2022 OCM Bocas Prizes for Caribbean Literature, Canisia Lubrin and Celeste Mohammed.

## Event Snapshots



Sponsors, authors and the BLF team at the Bocas UK reception hosted at Marlborough House, London



From left to right: Marina Salandy-Brown, Nicholas Laughlin, Shivane Ramlochan and Lucy Hannah



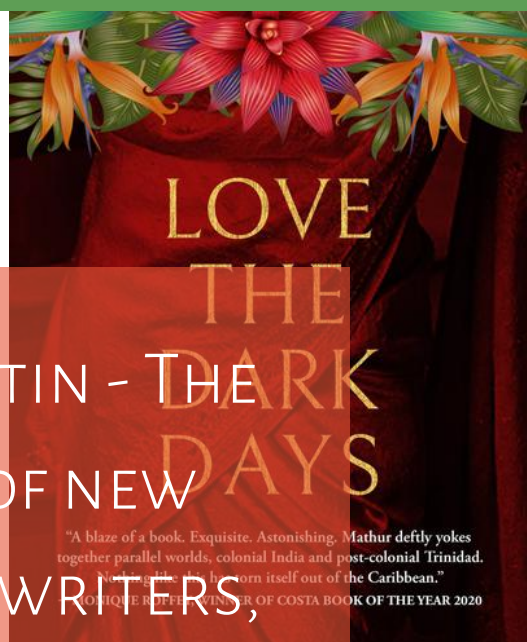
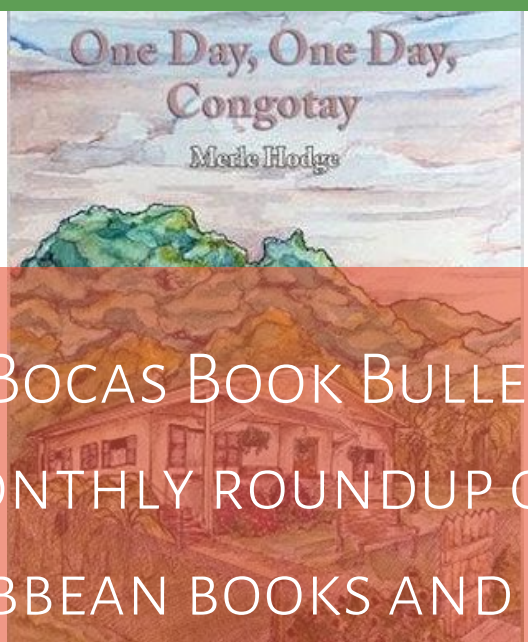
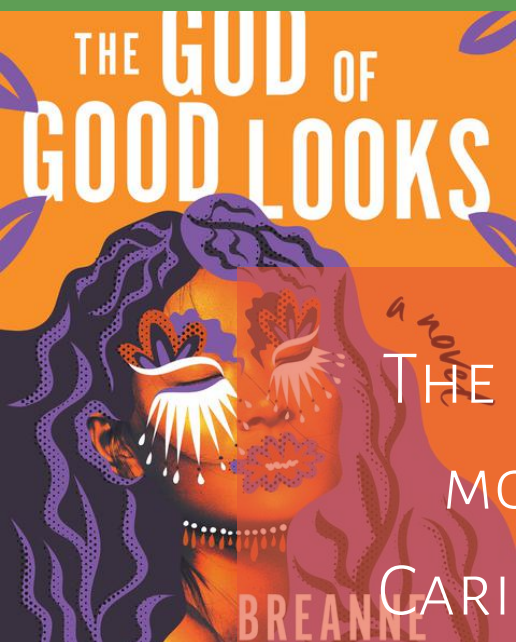
From left to right: Cecil Browne, Amanda Smyth and Nicholas Laughlin



Bocas UK Tour enthusiasts patronise the pop-up bookshop at the British Library



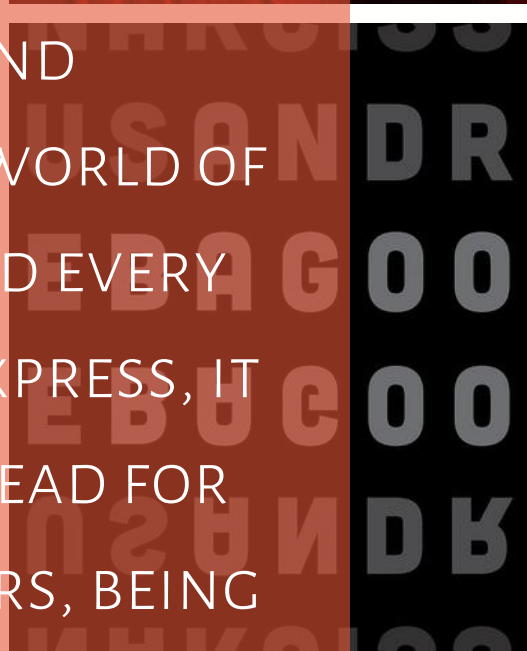
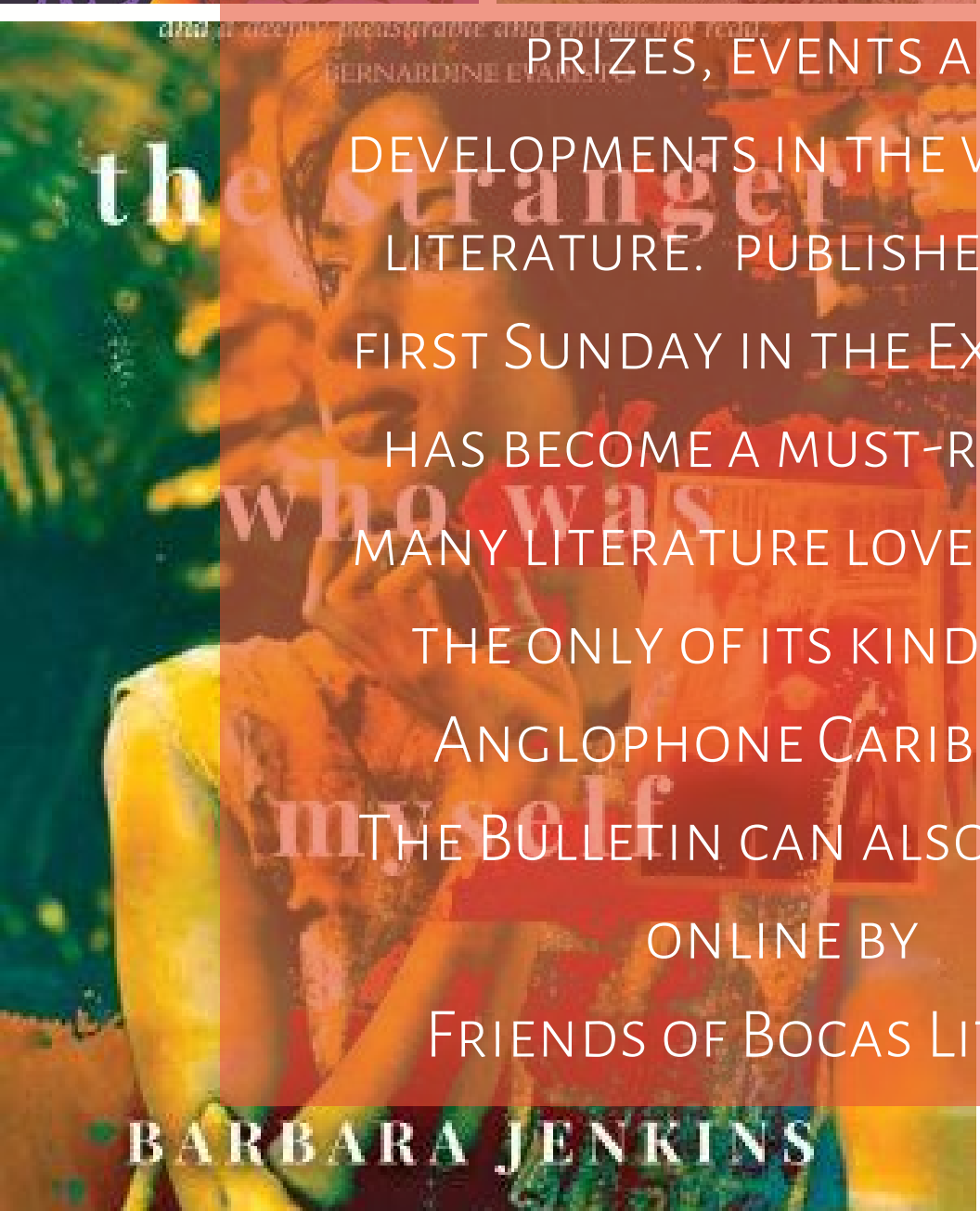
# BOCAS BOOK BULLETIN



THE BOCAS BOOK BULLETIN - THE  
MONTHLY ROUNDUP OF NEW  
CARIBBEAN BOOKS AND WRITERS,

PRIZES, EVENTS AND  
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORLD OF  
LITERATURE. PUBLISHED EVERY  
FIRST SUNDAY IN THE EXPRESS, IT  
HAS BECOME A MUST-READ FOR  
MANY LITERATURE LOVERS, BEING  
THE ONLY OF ITS KIND IN THE  
ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN.

THE BULLETIN CAN ALSO BE READ  
ONLINE BY  
FRIENDS OF BOCAS LIT FEST.





# CHILDREN'S PROJECTS

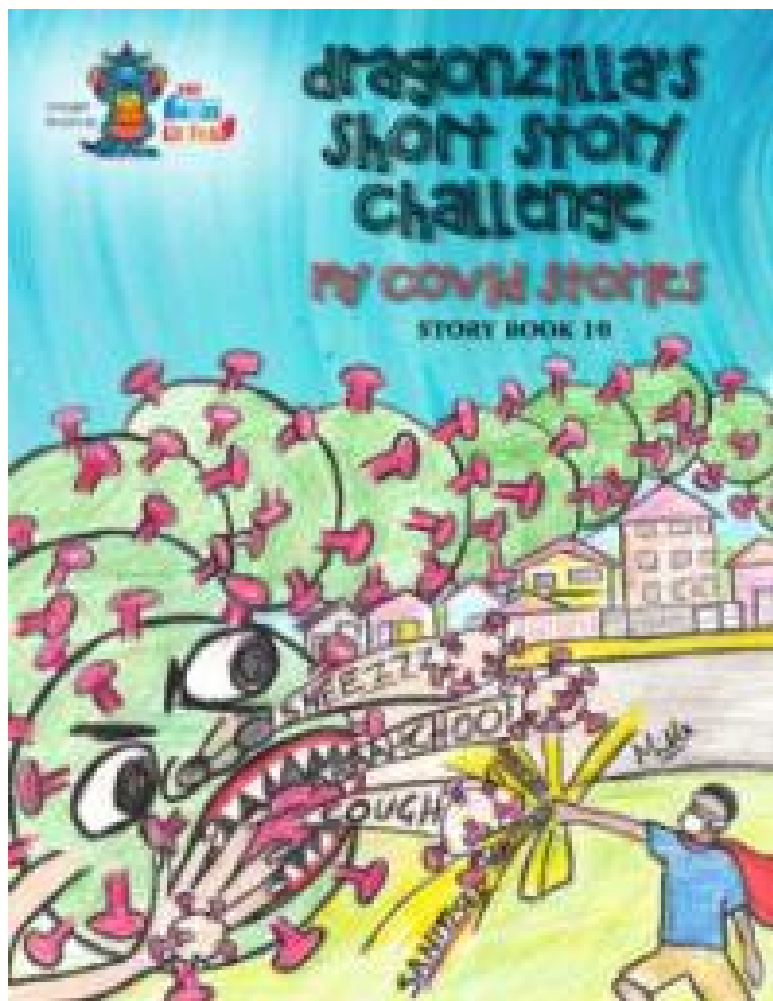
## Bocas Storytime



Bocas Storytime, a dedicated YouTube channel for under-12s was launched in 2022. Bocas Storytime delivers a diverse range of on demand videos, read-alouds, animations, storytelling, and fun workshops, all inspired by Caribbean writing and culture. It was designed to keep children engaged when face-to-face interaction was impossible during the pandemic.

## NGC Dragonzilla's Short Story Challenge

*My Covid Stories* is the 10th collection of stories written by children of Trinidad and Tobago and published by the Bocas Lit Fest's Peekash Press imprint. The collection contains winning stories of 2021 and 2022 about their experience of the Covid pandemic. These have been distributed to Challenge participants, schools and children's libraries.



*My Covid Stories* is the latest addition to a series of illustrated children's books written by children aged 5 to 12 who participated in the NGC Bocas Children's Storytelling Caravan, launched in 2011. Since then, Bocas Lit Fest has worked with thousands of children throughout Trinidad and Tobago to create the Children Festival Book series 1 to 10.

The Storytelling Caravan empowers children to tell their stories as a collective with imagination, and under the guidance of experienced storytellers. It nurtures not only an appreciation of literature and self-expression, but also provides them with the practical and technical tools to envision a future career as professional, published writers.

# YOUTH PROJECTS

## #ngcbocasyouthfest2022



On November 19th, the Bocas Lit Fest staged the second annual NGC Bocas Youth Fest - a full day of live, in-person events exploring writing, performance and creativity. Additionally, young participants had access to a career fair, creative business networking, workshops, a youth debate, Stand + Deliver, Open Mic, Backyard Lime, giveaways, and plenty VIBES!

## WriteAway!



The second year of Write Away!, the YA literature project funded by the Scotiabank Foundation rolled out in February 2022 to all secondary schools via the Ministry of Education's School Learning Management System (SLMS). English teachers and 12,000 literature students around the Caribbean benefited from the engaging digital content and the 9-part video workshop series that focuses on Caribbean poetry and remains available on demand.

The poetry course was developed by award-winning writer Lisa Allen-Agostini and prize-winning spoken word poets Darrion Narine and Alexandra Douglas present the videos.

## We Lit

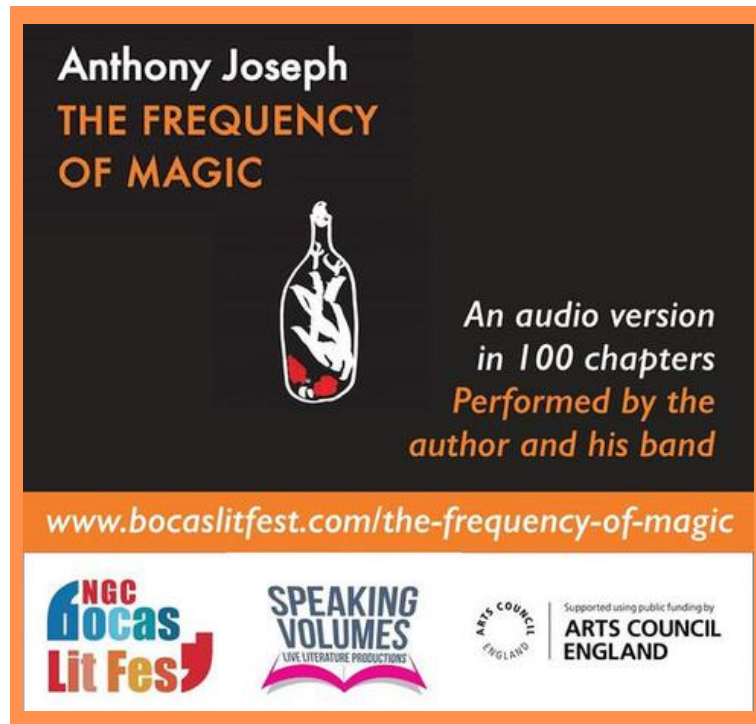


In 2022, the Bocas Lit Fest launched We Lit, a multi-layered CSEC online English Literature support programme sponsored by the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust. Former secondary school teacher Mrs Charlene Joseph-Holmes guided the students on their journey towards deepening their critical thinking and improving their competency in English to improve their life skills and personal development, as well as to excel in CSEC examinations. The project includes the chapbook *On the Day I was Born*, containing selected pieces of writing.



# SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

## Audio Book Series



## The Frequency of Magic

Speaking Volumes and the NGC Bocas Lit Fest presented *The Frequency of Magic* to BLF audiences. The series comprised 100 chapters, read by Anthony Joseph with musical accompaniment by Denys Baptiste, Andrew John, Thibaut Remy, Colin Webster, Jason Yarde, and Rod Youngs. Commencing on October 25, the Bocas Lit Fest released a new audio chapter daily as a gift to its valued readers and listeners.

## Tribute to George Lamming



To mark the 2022 passing of one of the fathers of 20th-century Caribbean literature, the Bocas Lit Fest team curated a selection of texts and videos exploring Lamming's life and work, including excerpts from two of his landmark novels, courtesy of Peepal Tree Press.

# YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING

In 2022, the Bocas Lit Fest continued many of its highly successful online projects and initiatives.

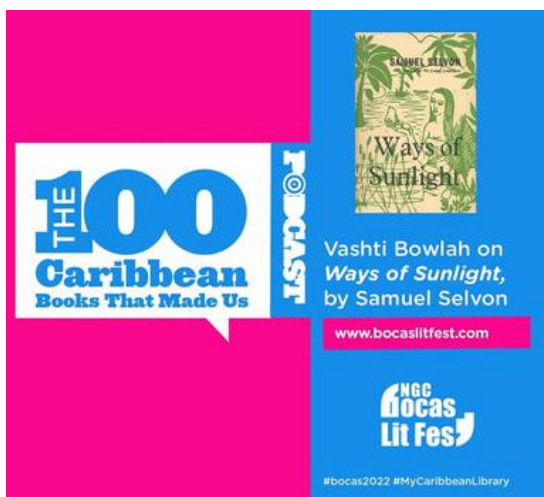
## Bios and Bookmarks

Season 5 was launched with "Telling Complex Family Stories" and closed off with an environmentally themed season 6. To add some fun to the season, a customised weekly Wordle game for word-loving Bocas fans was introduced.



## The 100 Caribbean Books That Made Us Podcasts

The podcasts were launched in 2022 to shine a spotlight on beloved Caribbean authors whose books were featured in the highly successful 100 Caribbean Books That Made Us project executed in 2021.



## Bring your Own Book and Bottle (BYOBB)



The Bocas Lit Fest hosted three BYOBB sessions for the ever-growing community of fun-loving readers and limers. A total of 50 authors and readers participated.

## Bocas Carnival Capsule

The Bocas Carnival Capsule launched in February, featured a library of 8 videos with a series of short films and archival NGC Bocas Lit Fest footage to celebrate the Carnival season. The capsule engaged over 400 viewers on our Youtube platform.



# YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING

## Workshops and Training



Building capacity to sustain the current literary hyperactivity in Trinidad and Tobago, the region and the diaspora is one of the aims of the Bocas Lit Fest. Workshops facilitated by leading visiting writers during the annual literary festival continued during the pandemic as online workshops and masterclasses.

In 2022, a total of 50 persons attended six workshops, of which three were master classes.



## Emerging Writers Fellowship

The recipients of the two new 2022 Bocas Emerging Writers Fellowships were Jannine Horsford for poetry, and Rajiv Ramkhalawan for prose. They each received a cash award of TT\$10,000, six months of mentorship from an established author, participation in a one-week intensive online writing workshop hosted by Arvon (UK) and the publication of their work in a chapbook. Both writers were also featured at the 2022 NGC Bocas Lit Fest to present samples of their works in progress.

The 2022 fellowships were funded by the generosity of prize-winning writers Canisia Lubrin, Dionne Brand, Christina Sharpe, and private donor Allyson Holder.

In 2023 Bocas Lit Fest will be seeking a new sponsor to fund this important developmental project, previously funded by the Hollick Family Charitable Trust and subsequently by Dr. Kongshiek Achong Low.



# PRIZES AND AWARDS

In 2022, the Bocas Lit Fest generated nearly TT\$ 220,000 in prize money and awards from its various sponsors and partners who believe in the value of language and ideas as human developmental tools.

## OCM Bocas Prize

*Pleasantview*, the debut novel by Trinidadian Celeste Mohammed, was overall winner of the 2022 OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature, copping the US\$10,000 cash award, sponsored by One Caribbean Media. The prize, now in its 13th year, remains the most prestigious in the Caribbean and continues to attract submissions from authors across the entire region and diaspora. Genre category winners collect US \$3,000 each.



Jamaican-born Jason Allen-Paisant's debut book *Thinking with Trees* was the poetry winner, and Jamaican Kei Miller's essay collection *Things I Have Withheld* won the non-fiction category.

Trinidadian-British writer Roger Robinson served as the chief judge of the final judging panel and was joined by Puerto Rican poet and academic Mayra Santos Febres, British academic and broadcaster Shahidha Bari, and Belizean biographer and attorney Godfrey Smith. Again, women writers outnumbered men on the longlist; this time, nearly 4:1 and five debut writers also made the cut.

Again, women writers outnumbered men on the longlist; this time by nearly 4:1, and five debut writers also made the cut.

Of the nine long-listed books, seven were penned by women, and five submissions were by newly published writers. Two of the writers were born in Trinidad and Tobago, and the others were from Haiti, Barbados, and Jamaica. An emerging trend for nonfiction works of memoir and local history, as well as self-published works can be detected from the record number of entries in all genres, with a more even spread between male and female writers.

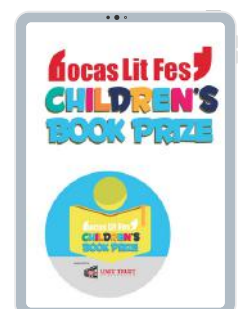
Overall, 66 eligible titles were received, of which 25 were fiction, 19 were non-fiction and 22 were poetry, and 17 of the titles were self-published. Males represented 45% of the total entries, and women represented 55%.

## Bocas Children's Book Prize



Now in its second year, the Bocas Children's Book Prize is gaining momentum as the only regional prize that rewards the most outstanding contribution to Caribbean literature for readers aged 8 - 12. The prize is sponsored by the Wainwright family and administered by the Bocas Lit Fest.

The winner of the US\$1,000 cash prize was Trinibagonian author Danielle Y. C. McClean for her book titled *The Whisperer's Warning: Secrets of Oscuros Tobago*. Entries were received from Jamaica, Grenada, St Lucia, Cuban and Puerto Rico and Trinidad and Tobago.





# PRIZES AND AWARDS

## NGC Bocas Youth Writer Award

Now in its second year, this award, part of the NGC Bocas Youth Fest, again celebrated a promising group of young Trinbagonian writers aged under 25, across a broad spectrum of literary genres. The 2022 award finalists and nominees included several budding and accomplished authors who will shape the future of T&T's literary landscape.

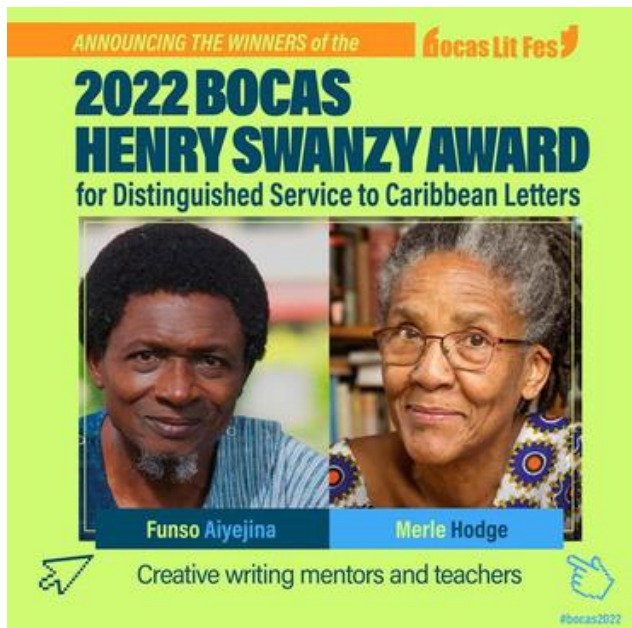


The finalists were Shimiah Lewis (spoken word), Kervisha Cordice (poetry), Ronaldo Katwaroo (creative nonfiction) and Rashad Hosein (fiction), who emerged the overall winner, copping the TT\$5,000 prize.

Twenty-four-year-old Rashad previously won the John Steinbeck Award for Fiction in 2021 and was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Short Story prize in 2019 and 2021. He will take part in the 2023 NGC Bocas Lit Fest.

## Bocas Henry Swanzy Award

This annual lifetime achievement award recognises service to Caribbean literature by editors, publishers, critics, broadcasters, and others who have shaped the evolution of Caribbean literature behind the scenes. It is the only award in the gift of the Bocas Lit Fest, all other prizes being judged by independent external panels of judges.



The joint 2022 awardees were writers and academics: poet Professor Emeritus Funso Aiyejina, who started the MFA degree at the UWI, St Augustine, the first degree-granting programme in creative writing in the Anglophone Caribbean, and beloved novelist and lecturer Merle Hodge.

Together they ran the influential Cropper Foundation Writers' Workshop for over twenty years, guiding and mentoring putative writers from around the Caribbean.

Their dedication to nurturing a generation of writers grounded in Caribbean literary tradition and language and their exemplary championing of fresh talent continues to fuel the Caribbean's literary potential.

Funso Aiyejina was also a founding member of the board of directors of the Bocas Lit Fest and Deputy Festival Director of the NGC Bocas Lit Fest where he oversaw and supported the development of the spoken word projects.

# BOCAS INITIATIVES

## Publishing Consultancy

This service will be relaunched in 2023, having waned during the pandemic. The increasing number of books being self-published by Trinbagonians makes this an even more important service to offer emerging writers who may need advice on editing and publishing their books commercially.

## Peekash Press



The Bocas Lit Fest imprint added the 10th Children's storybook, *My Covid Stories*, to its catalogue in 2022.

## Loyalty Programme

The Friends of Bocas loyalty programme added some new exciting merchandise for subscribers to purchase, including limited edition prints of past festival art, including the work of Chris Ofili, Nikolai Noel and Jackie Hinkson, who created the 10th-anniversary commemorative poster of the iconic National Library and the Old Fire Station, home of the festival.





# 2022 METRICS

**\$233K**

awarded in  
prizes &  
fellowships

**66**

OCM Bocas  
Prize Entries

Ayanna Lloyd-Banwo  
won

**£20,000**

in prize money  
as a joint winner of  
The Eccles Centre & Hay  
Festival Writer's Award

Inaugural  
Emerging Writers  
Fellowship over

**100**  
entries

BLF  
featured in

**124**

local and  
regional  
media stories

**12,000**

Students benefitted  
from the  
**WriteAway!**  
Poetry Series

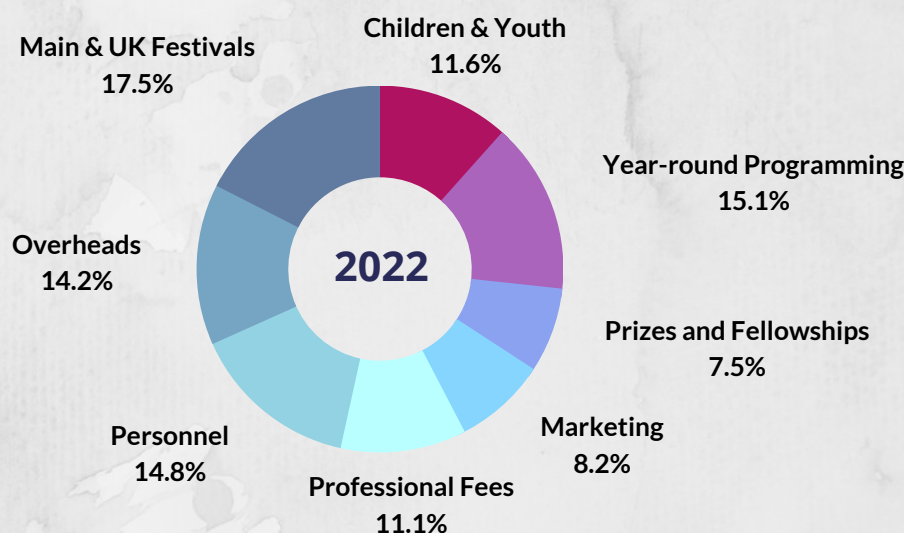
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

While the generous support of our sponsors continued to enable our work - 81% of our income was derived from sponsorship - diversifying our revenue base remained a key objective. In 2022, despite the pandemic-induced reduction in live in-person events and the concomitant lost opportunities for extra revenue from event ticket sales, workshop fees and TWC rentals, non-sponsorship income accounted for 19% of the annual budget. Prizes and Fellowships remain important items of sponsorship, with, for the first time, a group of writers enabling an Emerging Writers fellowship.

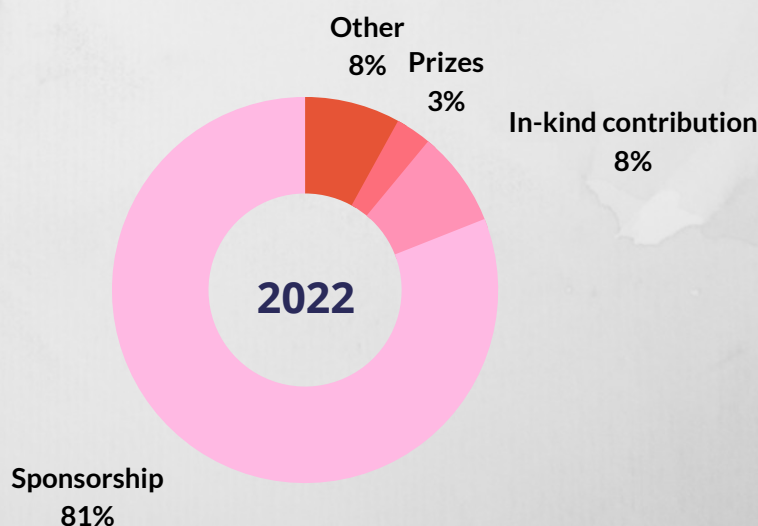
The various festivals for adults, youth and children, including the breakthrough Bocas UK 2022, constituted the largest area of expenditure, but the pandemic-induced, year-round programming also demanded a sizeable investment of funds. Collectively, all overheads, personnel and professional fees made up 40.1% of our annual budget. These costs were held down by full time staff shrinkage and by the preponderance of online events which are less demanding on physical and human resources.

Allocation of expenses and sources of revenue are highlighted below:

## Expenses



## Income





# MEET THE TEAM



**Jean-Claude Cournand**  
CEO



**Nicholas Laughlin**  
Festival & Programme  
Director



**Shivanee Ramlochan**  
Social Media &  
Literary Projects Consultant



**Marielle Forbes**  
Youth & Hospitality  
Manager



**Allette Liz Williams**  
Marketing Manager



**Anna Lucie-Smith**  
Festival and Publishing  
Manager



**Melvina Hazard**  
Children's Programming  
Manager



**Maiya Bijou**  
FoB Administrator



**Patrice Matthews**  
Exec. Administration &  
Project Management



**Maria Tappin**  
Festival Programme  
& Prizes Administrator



**Marshelle Haseley**  
Social Media Manager



**Stefan Rampersad**  
Digital Administrator



**Chinyere Herbert**  
Youth Programme  
Coordinator

# OUR SPONSORS

## 2022 NGC Bocas Lit Fest

### Sponsors and partners

#### Title Sponsor



#### Main Sponsors



#### Sponsors



#### Festival Programme Partners



#### Non- Festival Sponsors and Partners



#### Bocas Uk Tour Sponsors and Partners



#### Media Partners





# OUTLOOK

# 2023

## PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

### Proposed projects:

- More youth and children projects and events
- In-person NGC Bocas Lit Fest
- Return to events at The Writers Centre

## CONNECT WITH US



1-868 222 7099



[info@bocaslitfest.com](mailto:info@bocaslitfest.com)



[www.bocaslitfest.com](http://www.bocaslitfest.com)



The Writers Centre  
14 Alcazar Street  
St Clair, POS,  
Trinidad and Tobago

