

Caribbean Equality Project
Presents

Queer Caribbeans

of NYC | Stonewall 50

The first-ever multimedia historical retrospective showcase of the racial and cultural intersections of Caribbean LGBTQ rights activists. The exhibit contributes to New York City's immigrant history by expanding on Caribbean immigrant and first-generation Caribbean-American experiences, through exploring Queer, Transgender, and Gender non-conforming advocacy.



LaGuardia
and Wagner
Archives

QUEENS
MEMORY

PHOTO JOURNAL

SHOW YUH NATIONAL COLORS

NYC PRIDE PARADE 1998

Outreach in the pouring rain at Brooklyn Pride - what if nobody comes? We need a big banner in a bright, bright color so they can't miss us - & we will stay up all night an' make it - but what if is we one on 5th Ave.? Anybody see the truck? Suppose nobody come out?? Designer available on site for custom made t-shirts! What time is it? Anybody see the truck? It reach, it reach!! That dey



Take yuh time - the truck still can't turn the corner... Now, there is no way these two arms can stop this sea of people... Dominican flag-man say, if somebody did tell me, I woulda bring me costume! But yuh see all de people behind the the big truck?? 'Torol Torol!'; Are you ready to go home? NO!! Are you ready to go home? NO!! Jump up! Jump up! Jump up an' play your-self! Is a lon me did a wait fi see somethin' like dis! It better than Eastern Parkway, 'cause you can really play yuhself! Until next year... CP

is the truck?? I change my min' - I don't want to marshall again - it too big!! Wait, let me see if my flag is there...- alright, I can walk with the banner now: See me wid me flag an' ting...; Footsteeeeeppps! Footsteeeeeppps - on de groun', bum buh dum, on de groun'! This picture better find its way into de Guardian an' de Gleaner...; How much people we was expecting again?? Hold onto the big truck - Run!, the truck leaving wel

Photo Journal. "Show Yuh National Colors: NYC Pride Parade 1998," *Caribbean Pride Newsletter*. Summer 1999: Vol.1 No.2. Page 11.

Newsletter courtesy of Sandie Green



CONTENT

- 04 | **OPENING RECEPTION**
- 12 | **PROJECT OVERVIEW**
- 15 | **CARIBBEAN LGBTQ ORGANIZATION
HISTORY & TIMELINE**
- 17 | **CARIBBEAN PRIDE**
- 18 | **SISTAS OF CARIBBEAN ANCESTRY**
- 19 | **CURRY CLUB NYC**
- 20 | **CHUTNEY PRIDE**
- 22 | **GAY CARIBBEAN USA PAGEANT**
- 23 | **UBRAN & OUT**
- 26 | **CARIBBEAN EQUALITY PROJECT**
- 31 | **QUEER CARIBBEAN OF NYC**
- 58 | **PHOTOGRAPHER**
- 59 | **CURATOR**
- 60 | **IN MEMORIAM**
- 63 | **THANK YOU**

Cocktail Reception

PROGRAM

Afro-Centric Drumming

Opening Remarks

Mohamed Q. Amin, Founder, Caribbean Equality Project and Curator of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Kadeem Robinson, Secretary, Caribbean Equality Project and Assistant Curator of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Cultural Performance

Sundari – The Indian Goddess

Jumaane D. Williams

Public Advocate for the City of New York

Daniel Dromm

New York City Council Member representing District 25 (Jackson Heights & Elmhurst) and Chairperson of the Finance Committee

Matthew T. McMorrow

Senior Advisor, NYC Mayor's Office of Community Affairs Unit

Musical and Dance Performance

“The Body”

Music: "A virgin in dark" by Florence Price

Singer: Dr. Malcolm J. Merriweather, Music Director of New York City's *The Dessoff Choirs*

Dancer: Gregory Manning II, Classical Ballet and Modern Dance Performer

Closing Remarks

Darren J. Glenn, Programs Director, Caribbean Equality Project

**Networking Reception &
Tour of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition**

JUMAANE WILLIAMS

New York City Public Advocate



Jumaane is a first-generation Brooklynite of Grenadian heritage. He was diagnosed with Tourette's and ADHD at an early age, but made it through the public school system, from pre-school to acquiring his master's degree. He attended Philippa Schuyler Middle School for the Gifted and Talented and Brooklyn Technical High School, then earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Brooklyn College. After graduating, Jumaane began his career as a community organizer by serving as the assistant director for the Greater Flatbush Beacon School, then later as the executive director of New York State Tenants & Neighbors, where he fought for truly affordable, income targeted housing across the city and state. In 2009, he began his career as an activist-elected official in the New York City Council.

During his time at City Hall, Jumaane has championed landmark legislation that has resulted in transformational change. In his first term, Jumaane aimed to end the abuse of the NYPD's use of stop, question and frisk by sponsoring the Community Safety Act. The legislation passed despite a veto from then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and reformed the city's police department by putting an end to unlawful practices typically more used in communities of color; this was all done while creating the NYPD's Office of Inspector General, charged with investigating unlawful or unethical practices within the department.

As Co-Chair of the Council's Task Force to Combat Gun Violence, he helped create New York's Crisis Management System, which funds Cure Violence Groups that work to reduce shootings through a multi-pronged approach. Since then, New York has become the safest city it has been in more than 50 years. As Chairman of the Council's Housing and Buildings Committee, he challenged the de Blasio Administration's affordable housing plan, by advocating for more deeply targeted affordable housing to help prevent communities from being priced out of the five boroughs.

Throughout his three terms, Jumaane has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with marginalized communities fighting for justice and equity for all, and has proven that he is not afraid to get arrested in the process. In fact, he has been arrested more than any other sitting elected official, fighting for women's rights, immigration rights, housing rights, police injustices and more.

Jumaane recently ran for Lieutenant Governor of New York State, where his progressive campaign received more votes than any other candidate of more color in a statewide primary, and was endorsed by grassroots groups and individuals across the nation, including U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, The New York Times, and countless elected officials, unions and advocacy groups. He ran against the political establishment to transform the office of Lieutenant Governor so that it mirrored the office of the New York City Public Advocate--one that served as a true watchdog for New Yorkers, not just a rubber stamp to the Governor. Now, Jumaane is the New York City Public Advocate.

DANIEL DROMM

COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 25



Daniel Dromm (he/him/his) has been a progressive leader in Queens for over 20 years. Dromm was elected to the New York City Council in 2009 and represents District 25 (Jackson Heights & Elmhurst). He serves as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

- In the City Council, Dromm has been a tireless advocate with a proven track record of delivering for the community. This is exemplified in the following ways:-

- \$4 million to Elmhurst Hospital to create a Cardiac Care Unit and expand the Emergency Room.
- \$6 million to double the size of Travers Park in Jackson Heights, adding much needed green space.
- More than \$860 million to build new schools for our community, thereby fighting overcrowding in the classrooms.
- Led the effort to enact Local Law 6, certifying that all undocumented immigrants in the New York City foster

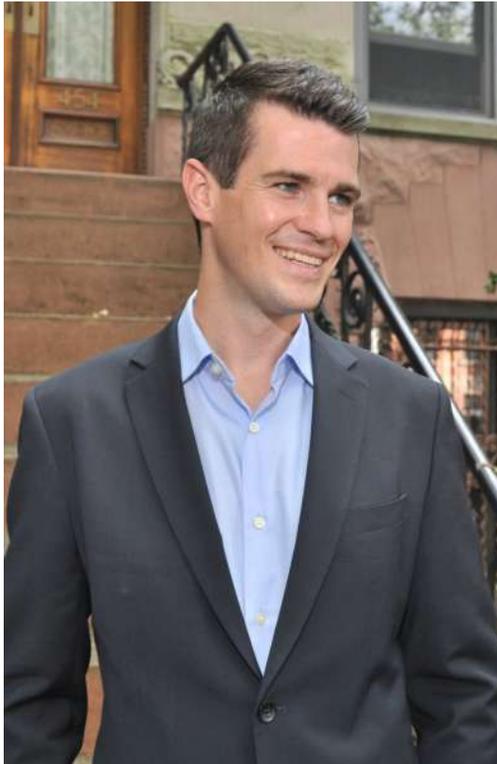
care program gets put on a path to citizenship.

- Helped to reform the Stop-and-Frisk policies – and implemented real policing solutions.
- Passed Paid Sick Leave defending workers from unfair employers and protecting consumers from the spread of contagious illnesses (and possible outbreaks in the workplace).
- Implemented innovative and successful open space initiatives like the 78th Street Play Street and Diversity Plaza (@37th Road) to promote local small businesses.
- Created IDNYC, the city’s first government-issued identification card.
- Established the community’s first slow zone, bringing crucial safety measures to the district.
- Funded the first LGBT liaison within the NYC Department of Education, helping to ensure no child falls through the cracks in our schools.
- Leading voice in the effort to end corruption and bring transparency to the Rikers Island jail complex.

Prior to his election, Dromm was an award-winning New York City public school teacher at PS 199 in Queens from 1984 to 2009. Dromm is a pioneer of the LGBT rights movement in Queens and organized the first Queens LGBT Pride Parade and Festival. A fluent Spanish-speaker, Dromm graduated from Marist College and earned his master’s degree at City College. He lives in Jackson Heights, Queens.

MATTHEW T. MCMORROW

Senior Advisor, NYC Mayor's Office of Community Affairs Unit



Matthew McMorrow (he/him/his) has been Mayor Bill de Blasio's Senior Advisor on LGBTQ Community Affairs since 2016. He represents the Mayor to the LGBTQ community, and he represents the LGBTQ community's issues and priorities within the Mayor's Office.

In 2017, he worked with First Lady Chirlane McCray to develop and launch the NYC Unity Project, the City's first comprehensive program to support and uplift LGBTQ young people where they live, work, learn and find community. He then led the effort to prepare City agencies and community stakeholders to host World Pride/Stonewall 50, the largest festival in New York City history.

Previously, McMorrow was the Director of Government Affairs at the Empire State Pride

Agenda until it closed earlier this year. During his tenure, he oversaw advocacy efforts in Albany and New York City. He developed and executed strategies to build support for legislation important to the state's LGBT community, including the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act, the Child-Parent Security Act, and the bill to prohibit mental health professionals from subjecting LGBT minors to conversion therapy. In New York City, McMorrow helped pass legislation to make it easier for transgender people to change the gender markers on their NYC-issued birth certificates, and he worked with coalition members to pass the bill that requires city agencies to collect sexual orientation and gender identity demographic data on people who access city services.

Prior to joining the Pride Agenda, McMorrow was the President of Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn where he led efforts to support the successful marriage equality campaign in 2011 and to help elect pro-LGBTQ candidates to public office, including Brooklyn's first openly-LGBT city council member, Carlos Menchaca.

During his career, McMorrow has worked for the NYC law firm Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, where he assisted pro bono clients to legally change their names and identity documents. Additionally, he served on the boards of directors of the Brooklyn Community Pride Center and the Counseling Service of the Eastern District of New York. He has been a consultant for some of the nation's top LGBT non-profit organizations, including SAGE, the Ali Forney Center, and Garden State Equality. He was also a co-founder of Equality New York, a group dedicated to advancing and defending LGBT rights in New York State.

Originally from Connecticut, McMorrow is a graduate of New York University and has lived in New York City for more than 20 years, primarily in Brooklyn. In 2015, *City & State* named him one of the *Forty Under Forty Rising Stars of Albany*. In 2019, it included him on their “Pride Power 100” list of influential LGBTQ people in New York State.



Bloodline Dance Theatre, formerly known as *Fierce Roots*, was founded as a collective arts vessel for dancers and emerging choreographers in Brooklyn, NY. Today, the company is comprised of five choreographers, and 20 dancers creating work focusing on socio-political issues both past and present. Bloodline Dance Theatre has performed in several NYC Public Schools, The West Indian American Carnival Association, The Brooklyn Museum, *The African Spirit Awards* and the St. Paul's Baptist Church. Currently, the company is in residency at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York.



Malcolm J. Merriweather

Conductor and baritone, Malcolm J. Merriweather (he/him/his) is Music Director of New York City's The Dessoff Choirs, best known for their performances of great choral works from the pre-Baroque era through the 21st century. He is an Assistant Professor, Director of Choral Studies and Voice Department Coordinator at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, Artist in Residence at Union Theological Seminary, and the Artistic Director of "Voices of Haiti," a 60-member children's choir in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, operated by the Andrea Bocelli Foundation.

Merriweather has conducted ensembles in venues that include Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Madison Square Garden, Westminster Abbey, and the Vatican before Pope Francis. His repertoire has included everything from Bach, to world premieres of contemporary music by Eve Beglarian and Matthew Aucoin.

Merriweather has been featured as a soloist throughout the United States. The baritone has premiered contemporary solo works by Eve Beglarian, John Liberatore, Ju Ri Seo, Douglas Fisk, and James Adler. He has been a fellowship recipient at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and at the Tanglewood Music Center.

Dr. Merriweather has earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Manhattan School of Music, and Syracuse University (*Summa Cum Laude*).

Please visit www.malcolmjmerriweather.com for more information. Connect with him on Twitter and Instagram @maestroweather.



Gregory Manning, II

An Indianapolis, IN native, originally born in Everett, WA, Gregory (he/him/his) began his formal training in classical ballet and modern dance at the age of 11. While attending Arts Magnet Public Schools as a Dance Magnet Program Student, Gregory was also introduced to other genres of dance. He further gained extensive training and performance experience throughout the Indianapolis Metropolitan Area, as well as in Chicago and New York City, graduating from The Ailey School's Certificate Program. Gregory has performed with *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*, *Philadanco!*, *Dance Kaleidoscope*, toured with the *Radio City Rockettes*, *The Lion King-*

Original Rafiki Company, on the Norwegian Bliss as a Production Principal in 'Havana!', and was a Las Vegas show boy in Jubilee. Mr. Manning was fortunate enough to return to his hometown as an educator-on-dance faculty at his alma mater, Broad Ripple Magnet Middle and High School for the Arts & Humanities. Gregory is also a recipient of the 2009 NAACP ACT-SO (Afro-Academic Cultural Technological & Scientific Olympics) National Gold Medal in Dance, received in New York City.

The Body

Music: "A virgin in dark" by Florence Price

Dancer: Soloist Gregory Manning

Singer: Dr. Malcom Merriweather

Choreographer: Lamont E. Joseph

PROJECT OVERVIEW

WHY

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, the [Caribbean Equality Project](#) presents "[Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50](#)," which is the first-ever multimedia historical retrospective showcase of the racial and cultural intersections of Caribbean LGBTQ rights activists. The exhibit will contribute to New York City's immigrant history by expanding on Caribbean immigrant and first-generation Caribbean-American experiences, through exploring Queer, Transgender, and Gender non-conforming advocacy.

This multimedia retrospective showcases the pioneering work of Caribbean activists, organizers, and artists who set the foundation for victories within the Caribbean LGBTQ+ diasporic community, and their contributions to the broader LGBTQ+ liberation movements of New York City. These include Caribbean Pride, Sistas of Caribbean Ancestry (SOCA), Curry Club NYC, Chutney Pride, Urban N' Out, the Gay Caribbean USA Pageant, and Caribbean Equality Project.

The "Queer Caribbeans of NYC" exhibition will showcase the racial and cultural intersection of Caribbean LGBTQ rights activists with an extensive repository of never-before-seen photographs, news footage, posters, oral histories, and videos featuring interviews with well-respected Caribbean LGBTQ rights advocates. This will include the Tobagonian star of "Pose", Dominique Jackson; Trinidad-born activist Colin Robinson, co-founder of "The Big Truck," Carnival Movement -which is a tradition of Caribbean LGBTQ visibility and representation at the NYC Pride Marches- created in the late 90's; Bajan trans activist and co-founder of CK Life, Kim Watson; founder of Chutney Pride, Tina Arniotis, and the founder and Executive Director of Caribbean Equality Project, Mohamed Q. Amin.

A multimedia timeline from the early 1990's -to the present- anchors the exhibit, taking viewers through the struggles against fear and invisibility spurred by colonialism, the migrant "coming out" experience, and to the contemporary legal victories in Belize, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana (where four trans women won a lawsuit contesting Guyana's "cross-dressing" laws). The timeline concludes with a look into the future of LGBTQ+ rights in the Caribbean diaspora, through the lens of Trinidadian photographer and filmmaker Masheka Joseph's original portraits of over twenty notable LGBTQ activists, artists and academics of Caribbean heritage and/or descent.

This pioneering exhibition opens September 7, 2019, at the iconic Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center in New York City. The exhibition will then rotate periodically throughout New York City to other venues. The Queer Caribbeans of NYC archive will also be available online, and artifacts from the first edition of the exhibit will be compiled in a companion hardcover coffee table book.

The Opening Reception of this ongoing historical project coincides with the 2019 New York Caribbean Carnival week and the 52nd Annual West Indian Day Parade in New York City.

The Caribbean Equality Project (CEP) is a Queens, New York-based organization that empowers and strengthens marginalized voices of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people of Caribbean origin and descent through advocacy, community organizing, education, cultural, and social programming. To date, CEP is the only educational-based agency serving the Caribbean-American LGBTQ+ community in New York City by cultivating a supportive and progressive Caribbean community free of violence, oppression, and discrimination. CEP's advocacy efforts are directed toward fostering community partnerships and greater family acceptance. Additionally, the organization acts as a liaison to government agencies and elected officials with the collective vision of an equitable society based on respect, inclusion, and equality, regardless of an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity within the Caribbean diaspora.

Advocates across the Caribbean diaspora continue to galvanize the LGBTQ+ community against those who tell them that their existence contradicts the laws and cultural values of their home countries. But in 2018 and 2019, an unprecedented shift in policies affecting LGBTQ+ people of Caribbean & Central American heritage arrived: Colonial-era anti-LGBTQ+ laws criminalizing same-sex intimacy and transgender visibility were successfully challenged in Belize, Trinidad & Tobago and most recently in Guyana, where four trans women won a lawsuit contesting Guyana's "cross-dressing" laws. And despite the existence of similar anti-LGBTQ+ laws in Jamaica & Barbados, LGBTQ+ communities held the first-ever Pride celebrations in their respective nations.

With Dominicans, Jamaicans, Guyanese, Haitians and Trinidadians comprising five of the ten largest immigrant groups in New York City, people of Caribbean heritage - who make up almost thirty percent of the city's 3.3 million immigrant population - have made prominent contributions to New York City's food, music, business, political and cultural scenes since the first Jamaican immigrants arrived in the late 1800s.

Less prominent were the Afro and Indo-Caribbean LGBTQ+ migrants, whose identities and stories remained hidden from their conservative migrant communities. The founding of Caribbean Pride by Trinidad-born activist Colin Robinson in the late 90's, Curry Club NYC and Sholay Productions - two of the first known Caribbean and South Asian LGBTQ social spaces - in the early 2000's provided that small taste of their island homelands, while allowing opportunities for queer & TGNC immigrants and first-generation Caribbean-Americans to dance, network, celebrate cultural diversity and organize around social justice issues. This then gave rise to a generation of activists whose quiet, but significant contributions to the LGBTQ rights movement brought us Caribbean-oriented Pride events, rainbow flags staking their claim at widely celebrated religious and cultural holidays, and groundbreaking legislation spanning over 20 years.

We here at *Caribbean Equality Project* celebrate and express gratitude to the brave individuals who have made it all possible: from the activists, drag queens, lawyers, and academics, to the various others. The continued archiving and curation of "*Queer Caribbeans*" in the diaspora ensures they forever will be commemorated.

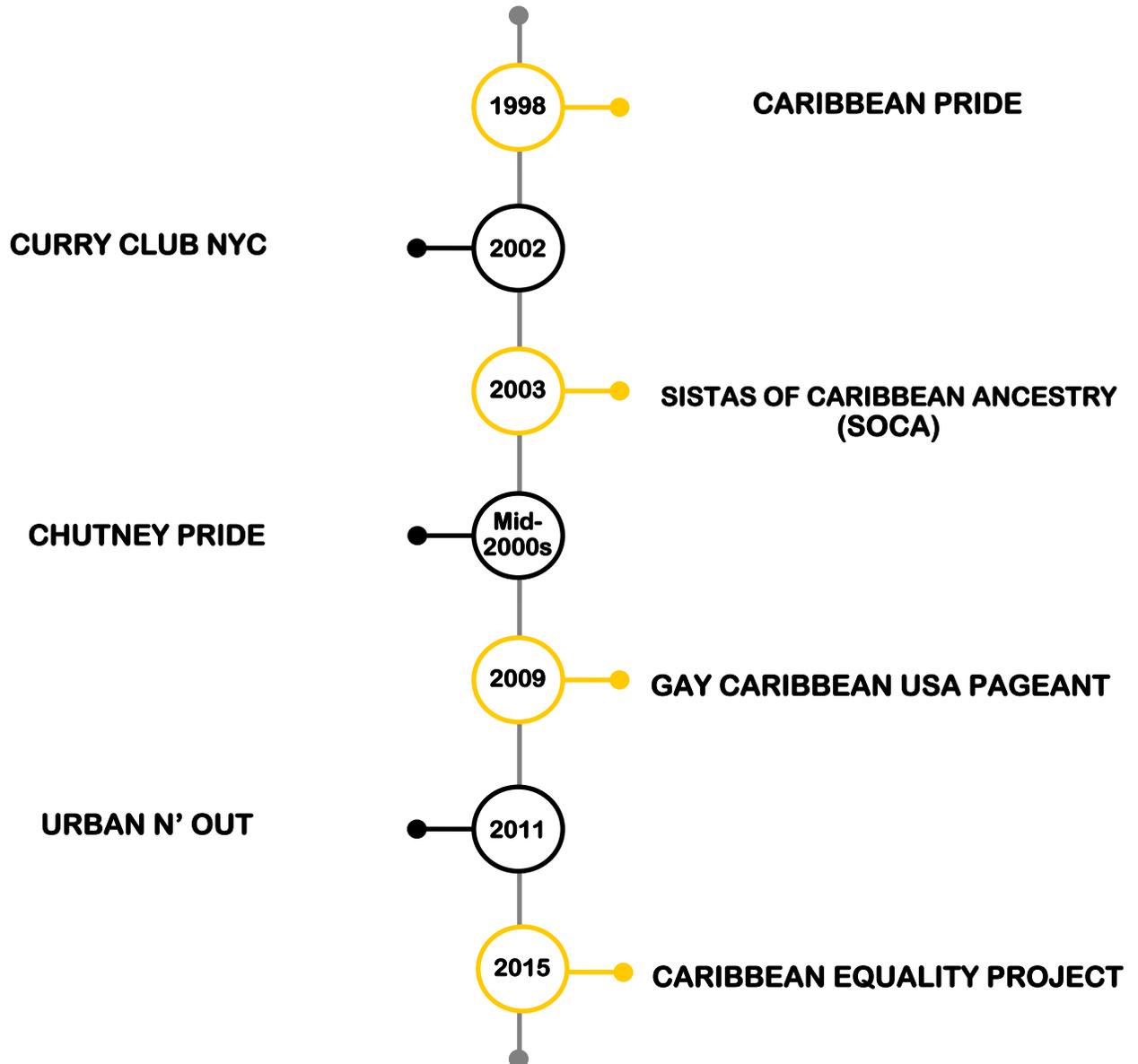
Curated by Mohamed Q. Amin and assistant curator Kadeem Robinson of Caribbean Equality Project, this exhibition is made possible through the generous support of The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBTQ) Community Center of New York City, the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives at LaGuardia Community College/CUNY, the New York City Council -through the office of Daniel Dromm-, the Queens Memory Project at Queens Public Library, and NAWS Central Queens.

QUEER CARIBBEANS PRIMARY GOALS:

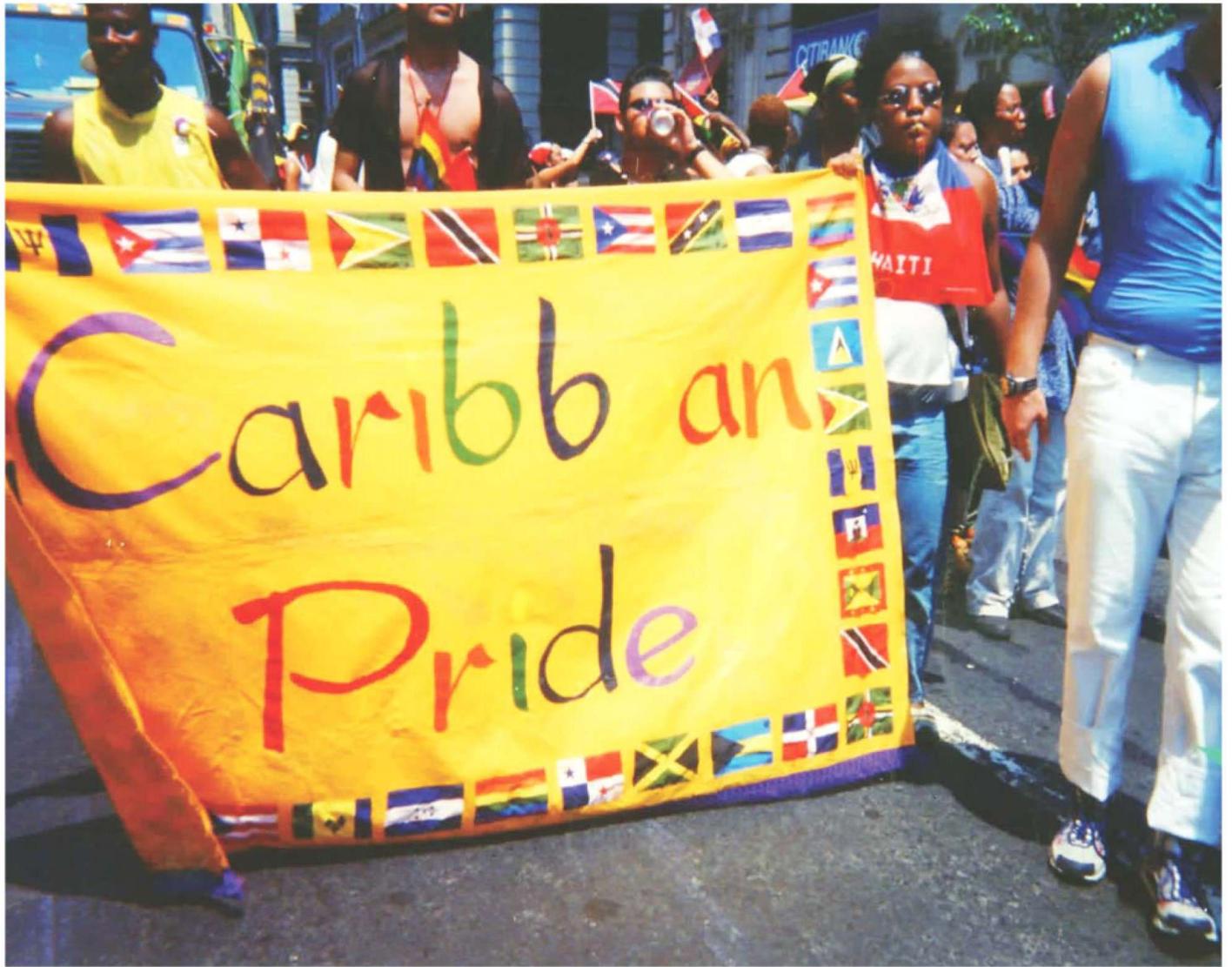
- **Contribute to New York City immigrant history by expanding on Caribbean immigrant and first-generation experiences as told through the eyes of LGBTQ artists, performers, activists, academics, leaders, elders, and other community members of the diaspora.**
- **Create a physical and virtual archive that is free and publicly available as an academic, journalistic, historical, and cultural resource.**
- **Serve as a public education program of Caribbean LGBTQ history, by lending our archives to educational institutions and museums.**
- **Continuous expansion of the archive to include more LGBTQ people across the Caribbean diaspora, with a focus of adding more voices of the Queer & TGNC community.**

CARIBBEAN LGBTQ ORGANIZATIONS

HISTORY & TIMELINE



*THIS FEATURED HISTORY TIMELINE OF LGBTQ-FOCUSED CARIBBEAN ORGANIZATIONS DOES NOT REFLECT ALL THAT EXISTS IN NEW YORK CITY.



Caribbean Pride "Big Truck" marchers at the NYC Pride March, New York City. 1998.

Photo courtesy of Sandie Green

WHO

Caribbean Pride was a social and political organization for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) persons who are of Caribbean heritage, and who identify as Caribbean or Caribbean-American. Founded by Colin Robinson in 1998 (and in subsequent years), *Caribbean Pride* developed into an organization geared towards promoting the visibility and awareness of LGBT Caribbean people in the Caribbean community in the U.S. and the region. The purpose of the organization became to provide support and create safe spaces for LGBT Caribbean people to affirm themselves and their identities as both Caribbean and LGBT, and to develop healthy lives as LGBT Caribbean people. Through *Caribbean Pride*, a social and cultural institution, leaders organized a historic 1999 reading of diasporic Caribbean LGBT writers (this was a first-ever event of its kind in New York City!) The organization was essential in advocating against hiring artists from the Caribbean who express homophobic remarks, most notably the 2006 Beenie Man shut-down.

Caribbean Pride also spent a great deal of time organizing events and initiatives around immigration forums and HIV advocacy in the LGBT Caribbean community. Questioning what the organization has done for “Caribbean queers in New York”, Colin Robinson and other pioneering activists organized the first soca “Big Truck,” a term coined to demonstrate a large truck during carnival-related events in the Caribbean. In 1998, *Caribbean Pride’s* big truck made its debut and became the largest Caribbean LGBT contingent to have ever marched in the NYC Pride Parade’s history. “The truck’s a fixture now. But back then, Caribbean folks were used to being queer outsiders, looking on at the parade. And suddenly they were watching ourselves all in it. The stories were breathtak-ing, beyond our imagination,” said Colin Robinson.

WHO

Sistas of Caribbean Ancestry (SOCA) is an outreach, social, cultural and networking organization. SOCA was dedicated to addressing the needs of Lesbian, Bisexual, and Same-gender-loving women of Caribbean descent and heritage. SOCA also welcomed their partners, friends, families and allies, providing a nurturing and non-judgemental safe space safe space for women of the Caribbean to come together and support, share and meet other women of common mind.

MISSION STATEMENT

We strive to build friendships among Caribbean women and members of the LGBTQ communities through our meetings and social events. *S.O.C.A.* also wants to empower, educate, support, and unite the diverse community of our sistas, while creating a safe and peaceful environment in which each person is treated with unconditional positive regard and acceptance.

“ALL AH WE IS ONE FAMILY”

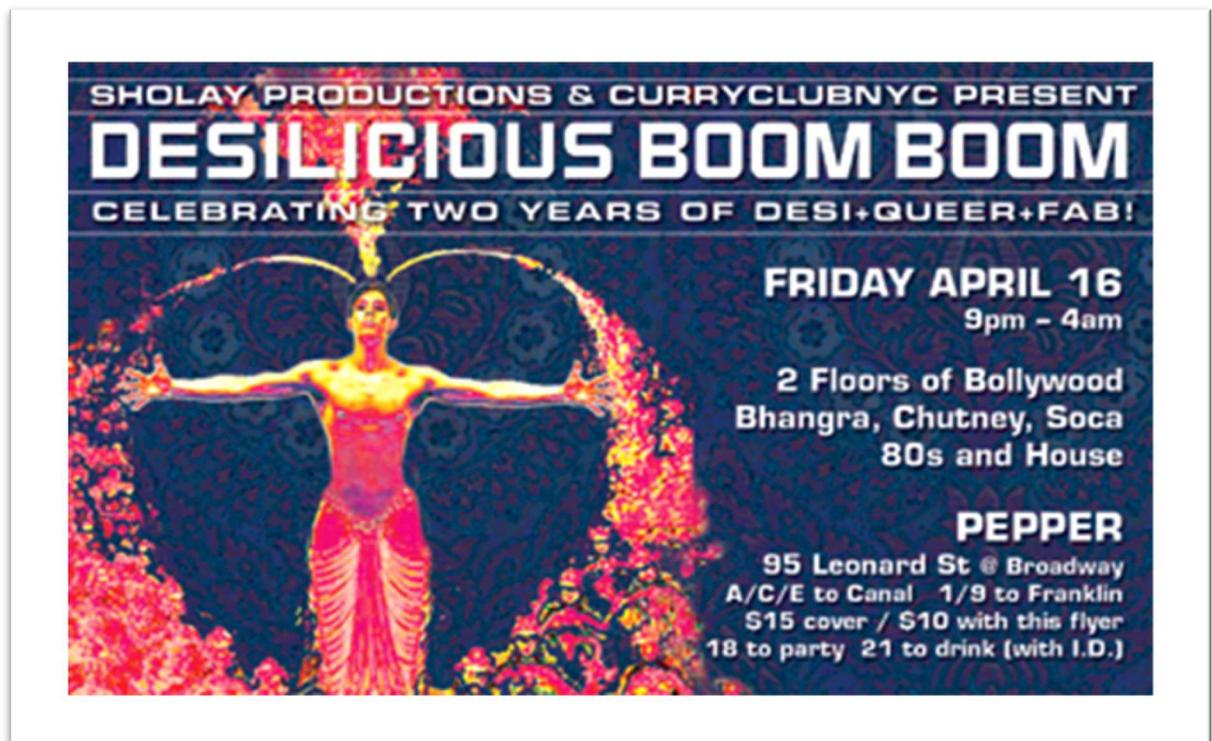


SOCA's logo, courtesy of Sandie Green

WHO

Curry Club NYC was a queer affirming social space throughout the NYC area, centering LGBTQ people of Caribbean heritage. Co-Founded by Trinidadian immigrant Richard Mohammed in 2002 in response to the lack of Caribbean LGBTQ spaces, Curry Club has collaborated with multiple social organizations in the area to build a community for queer people. Curry Club was launched at the Malika restaurant on 43rd Street, Manhattan and has since gone on to conduct social events throughout the greater New York area.

Later collaborations came with Sholay Productions, a South Asian collective that often hosts Desi LGBTQ social events. Curry Club would later develop into a monthly gathering of LGBTQ Caribbean immigrants and descendants, and would last for up to five years. The organizers continued supporting Caribbean LGBTQ mobilization and visibility work through the relaunch of Caribbean Pride in 2006, Chutney Pride in the mid 2000s, and Caribbean Equality Project in 2015.



Sholay Productions and Curry Club NYC. Flyer. “Desilicious Boom Boom,” New York City. 2004.

Flyer sourced from <https://www.sholayevents.com>

WHO

Chutney Pride is a nonprofit social organization based in Queens, NY. Chutney Pride adds a new perspective to the dialogue on sexual orientation and gender identity by advocating for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people of Caribbean descent in the New York area. Our advocacy will propose new approaches to community issues, and will develop programs promoting tolerance in the face of homophobia and other forms of discrimination. We believe that by creating greater awareness of individual differences, we can build a stronger community based on a culture of understanding and mutual respect.

WHY 'CHUTNEY'?

In the Caribbean, 'Chutney' is a genre of music derived from traditional Indian melodies and Caribbean Soca, combined in harmony to form one uniform sound; one rhythm for the body to dance; one celebration of the magnificent colors of sea, sky and land.

Throughout the world, 'Chutney' is a combination of tropical spices, fruits, hot peppers and sweetness blended together to compliment all foreign foods which can be shared and unite individuals of various backgrounds. Like the mosaic peoples of the Caribbean nations, chutney has a burgeoning identity that connects a proud past to an optimistic future, steeped in a powerful present.

The concept of Chutney transcends isolated cultures and the walls of division and ignorance. Chutney does not align with a single definition or identity, heritage or politics. It is a synthesis of sisterhood, brotherhood, awareness, progress, and connections to all

Chutney Pride is about uniting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) individuals and heterosexuals of Caribbean descent, by bringing together and blending individuals of diverse backgrounds with a common goal of empowerment. Our cultural events and collaborations are designed to promote a positive environment of support, and build access for LGBTQ Caribbean community to become more aware and involved in issues affecting our community. We encourage and promote our Caribbean culture, provide a safe space for socializing, cultivate opportunities to build relationships with organizations, businesses, and the wider Caribbean-American community.

HISTORY

The Founder and President of the organization, Tina Arniotis, is best known in the community as a grassroots pioneer for bringing awareness, visibility and creating safe spaces for the past 20 years in the metro area of NY where one did not exist. Tina began by hosting private parties in the 2000s for her friends and other LGBTQ members of the West Indian Community. As the parties grew in size, Arniotis incorporated the

organization and her parties were hosted in venues in Manhattan and Queens.

Chutney Pride would then go on to host the iconic "Big Truck" Caribbean contingent in the Manhattan Pride parade throughout the 2010s as well as having a presence in the Queens pride parade.



Chutney Pride "Big Truck" Masqueraders at the NYC Pride March, New York City. 2016.

Photo sourced from <https://www.facebook.com/CHUTNEYPRIDELGBT>

WHO

The Gay Caribbean USA Pageant is an events-based group, developed in Brooklyn, NY to help foster tolerance of the LGBTQ lifestyle within Caribbean-American communities in NYC. Founded by Hemish Marlon Kurt Gervis in 2009, the organization focuses on cultivating safe and affirming social spaces for queer Caribbean-born men, to be proud of their culture and sexual preferences in the same environment.

The 2009 inaugural pageant began on a comparatively small scale, when Hemish Gervais invited a few of his friends and acquaintances to celebrate talent in their community. Following the excitement of the first year, Gervis made the decision to publicize the pageant and invite the media. The pageant generated a lot of buzz within the Caribbean American and gay communities by being covered by a number of media outlets including *Caribbean Life*, *News Americas*, *Tropical Fete*, and *St. Lucia News Online*.

The level of publicity which the pageant received has set the stage for open discussion on matters relating to Queer, Transgender, and Gender non-conforming Caribbean immigrants in NYC. Through this publicity and visibility, Gervis created *Heat Wave Production* to facilitate the understanding, and eventually tolerance of LGBTQ people in Caribbean communities. The ultimate vision of the pageant was to give rise to positive change within Caribbean communities, by promoting tolerance through the arts & entertainment.

MISSION STATEMENT

Heat Wave Productions aims to bring a high level of quality entertainment to our diverse community, thereby fulfilling the desire for stimulating, new and exotic entertainment. Through this vision, *Heat Wave Productions* strives to expose and develop talent from various corners of our world, in an effort to satisfy the need for quality entertainment.

WHO

Urban&Out (urban-and-out) is a social impact organization that builds community, capacity, and social capital for LGBTQ professionals and leadership of color.

We provide spaces, opportunities, and resources to help build community, careers, and leadership; increase LGBTQPOC intersectional representation and inclusion; strengthen LGBTQPOC-serving organizations; and support work by/for/about (LGBTQ) people of color.

We believe that centering the work, worth, and wellness of LGBTQ people of color empowers all communities in which we live.

WHAT WE DO

Founded in 2011 to provide more community- and capacity-building spaces, resources, and opportunities for LGBTQ professionals of color, we have since engaged 1,000 people, held 30+ events in New York, New Jersey, and Washington, DC, and worked with two dozen partners. Going forward, our programming priorities include:

Individuals- How do we support individuals navigating the professional world, whether finding a job, building a career path, or launching a venture?

We provide professional/leadership development workshops, panels, and fireside chats; 1 on-1 mentorship and learning opportunities; digital profiles; and access to employers through our industry-specific Proud@Work sessions.

Organizations- How do we support LGBTQPOC-serving organizations that are in need of critical management/governance resources?

We provide capacity-building resources (program design; development; strategic planning; board and staff recruitment and training), through topical workshops and trainings, or project-based consultation.

Employers/Institutions- How do we make non-LGBTQ POC-centered spaces (companies, industries, communities) more intersectional and inclusive?

We provide resources such as presentations, research, and connections to LGBTQPOC talent through Proud@Work, and other mentoring and partnership opportunities.

WHY THIS WORK

LGBTQPOC start out at a disadvantage and continuously fall farther behind in our lives and careers-irrespective of education, acumen, ambition, and/or class. In addition to homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia, we confront huge racial gaps in employment, advancement, income, wealth, social mobility, housing, representation, and investment that continue to widen, and become worse. A few facts that support the work that we do:-

- 1/3 of LGBTQ youth drop out before graduating high school
- The racial gap in college admissions is closing, but the graduation gap is widening, students of color disproportionately end up at less selective schools, and end up in low income jobs and careers after graduation
- The black unemployment rate has remained twice that of whites for 50 years, irrespective of booms and busts
- Latinx households are worth less than 1/10 of white ones (& for the black ones, even less)
- Millions of queer and trans workers can be fired for their sexual orientation or gender identity, and existing protections are currently under threat
- Asian Americans are the least likely of all racial groups to be promoted into management (despite the public prominence of many Asian-American CEOs and the persistence of the 'model minority myth')
- Management in most industries, particularly higher-income ones, is overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, white
- We are almost nonexistent in leadership in all sectors-just 5% of Fortune 500 CEOs and 10% of nonprofit CEOs are of color
- Some higher-end industries- like banking-have actually gotten less diverse in the last few years
- Black and Brown entrepreneurs have almost no generational wealth and scarce access to traditional forms of credit and capital; as little as 3% of venture capital ends up in black hands
- Organizations and institutions for and led by people of color face daunting challenges, from securing funding and hiring competitively, to investing in governance, operations, and fiscal management

There are many parts of a movement. Engaging and empowering LGBTQ professionals and leadership is ours.

To learn more about Urban&Out, check out their website, www.urbandout.com, and email-info@urbanandout.com.

NUMBERS DO NOT TELL STORIES. **PEOPLE DO**



STORYTELLERS

TREE ALEXANDER
MPowerment Coordinator, BATF

DANIELLE FRANCIS
Associate Director, DCS

EVERETT JOHNSON
Masters Student, NYU

STEVEN-EMMANUEL MARTINEZ
Masters Student, Columbia

ROBERT SUTTLE
Deputy Director, SERO Project

THIS IS MY STORY

urban⁺out

February 7, 2014 | 6.00pm-8.30pm | MoCADA | 80 Hanson Pl | Brooklyn, NY 11217

RSVP by February 6th to: events@urbanandout.com or 718-399-0200 x.222



Urban&Out and Diaspora Community Services. Flyer. "This Is My Story," Brooklyn, NY. 2014.

Flyer courtesy of Urban&Out

WHO

The Caribbean Equality Project (CEP) was founded by pioneering Indo-Caribbean, Queer & Muslim, LGBTQ and Immigrant Rights activist native of Guyana, Mohamed Q. Amin, in response to anti-LGBTQ+ hate violence in Richmond Hill, Queens. The birth of the CEP brought hope, fearless leadership, and advocacy for inclusion, respect, and equality for the Caribbean Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer+ (LGBTQ+) community in New York City (NYC).

The Caribbean Equality Project is a Queens, New York-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization that empowers and strengthens the marginalized voices of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people of Caribbean origin and descent through advocacy, community organizing, education, cultural, and social programming. To date, CEP is the only educational-based agency serving the Caribbean- American LGBTQ+ community in New York City, with a dedicated aim to cultivating a supportive and progressive Caribbean community free of violence, oppression, and discrimination. CEP's advocacy efforts are directed toward fostering community partnerships and greater family acceptance.

Additionally, the organization acts as a liaison to government agencies and elected officials with the collective vision of a society based on respect, inclusion, and equality, regardless of an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity within the Caribbean diaspora. Since the official launch of the CEP in 2015, Mohamed and his team of dedicated volunteers have made significant strides toward the advancement and uplifting of LGBTQ+ Caribbean voices in NYC.

As an immigrant-led, social justice and human rights organization, inclusivity is the cornerstone of CEP's work, ensuring that our liberation movement educates, inspires, represents and empowers all of our Black and Brown, questioning and LGBTQ+, non-religious, Muslim, Hindu and Christian, documented and undocumented members of the Caribbean diaspora of all generations, all categories of ability and all HIV statuses.

In the face of anti-immigrant sentiment, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, gender, and racial discrimination, lack of access to health services and hate violence at the hands of their families, friends, employers, medical professionals and law enforcement officers (even in New York City), CEP's team members are dedicated to creating sustainable and progressive Caribbean diaspora communities, free of violence and all forms of discrimination.

Throughout the year, CEP does community outreach, community engagement, and

partnership projects to effectively challenge established systematic complexities on LGBTQ+ issues by providing opportunities for dialogue, education, and discussion. As such, throughout the year, CEP conducts various outreach initiatives and programming that provides an authentic, safe space for shared experiences, fostering new relationships by uniting intergenerational support with an array of pioneering programs and services.

The CEP programs, services, and initiatives are intersectional, with an emphasis on, but not limited to: family acceptance, awareness, HIV/AIDS prevention and care, education, cultural performing arts, visibility at citywide LGBTQ+ pride parades and cultural festivals, all aiming to promote acceptance and reducing stigma and eliminate all forms of discrimination in NYC.

Additionally, in 2018, the *Caribbean Equality Project* held its inaugural *Breaking Silences* conference in Toronto to unite activists centering Caribbean people in their LGBTQ+ activism, art, and academics in a transnational space--the first international program that CEP has undertaken.

Each year, the scale and scope of our programs expand through the generous assistance of our volunteers, and support of our community members and allies.



Caribbean Equality Project's Leaders and Volunteers at "Unveil," the launch of the organization, Queens Museum, Queens, NY. 2015.

Photo by Richard Persaud of Captured Society

Our programs include a culture-specific support group (UNCHAINED), and offers intersectional services with an emphasis on family acceptance, healthy relationships, education, faith, HIV/AIDS prevention and care, storytelling and visibility. The *Caribbean Equality Project's* main programs are as follows:

UNCHAINED

The first of its kind in New York City, Caribbean Equality Project's peer culture-specific monthly support group, provides a safe space to affirm the unique experience and identities of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) people of Caribbean descent and their allies, to combat discrimination and hate violence.

My Truth, My Story

CEP's multimedia oral history and storytelling documentary series that provides compellingly authentic unspoken stories of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) people of Caribbean heritage.

Knowing Matters

CEP's sexual health and wellness program, which aims to break the silence about HIV/AIDS through education, films, performing arts and promoting prevention, all while offering support to the Caribbean LGBTQ+ community living with HIV and AIDS in NYC.

Living Our Values Equally (L.O.V.E)

Grounded in celebrating Queer Caribbean LOVE, this annual benefit creates a healing space of dialogue, unity, and togetherness through educational presentations, cultural performing arts, storytelling, films, and panel discussions.

Breaking Silences

Established in 2016, in partnership with *Depressed Black Gay Men* (DBGM), this biannual symposium brings together international LGBTQ activists, researchers, academics, sex workers & community leaders of Caribbean descent, to discuss issues affecting LGBTQ communities across the Caribbean diaspora including immigration, mental health, HIV/AIDS, faith and family acceptance.

To learn more about the Caribbean Equality Project, visit www.CaribbeaEqualityProject.org & for regular updates on our work, connect with CEP on Twitter @CaribEquality and Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram at @CaribbeanEqualityProject.



Logo Concept by Mohamed Q. Amin.

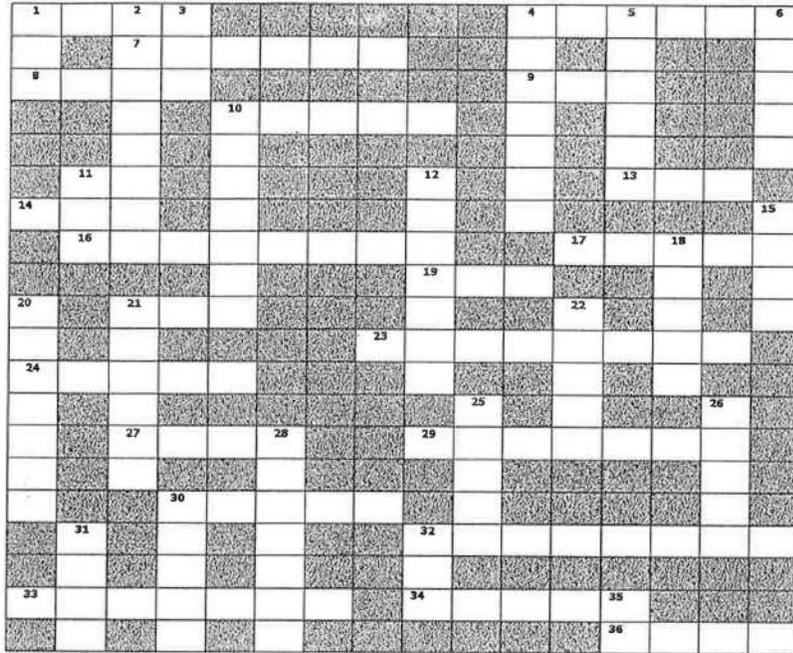
Deigned by Masheka Joseph of Akehsam Productions.

RIDDLE ME THIS

This space is designated for creative expressions – including short stories, poems, artwork, puzzles, etc – by lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender persons of Caribbean descent. Submissions are always welcome.

Caribbean Pride Puzzle Series No. 1 "Her True-True Name": Women Writers and Activists

by Natalie Bennett



Answers in next issue of Carib-Pride News. Next: "Who you callin' Mama Man?": Suggestions for puzzles are welcome!

ACROSS

- 1 "A West Indian term for women who work together as friends and lovers"
- 4 Author "Her Head a Village"; edited the anthology 'Piece of My Heart', a lesbian of color anthology; co-founder of Sister Vision Press.
- 7 ____ Roemer; Afro-Surinamese writer and poet.
- 8 ____ Francois, founder of NCWSA in Trinidad and Tobago.
- 9 For every stand pipe with water, there's a shop with ____.
- 10 "Black lesbian poet mother warrior"; author "Sister Outsider" and others
- 11 "____ Language is Neutral" – writings which look at what it means to be a black Caribbean lesbian in Canada.
- 13 Miss ____ and Miss May, activists in 1950's Jamaica; Both of Garvey's wives had this first name.
- 14 Lionheart ____; means "a strong and enduring woman", title of book by 20 Down.
- 16 Author of "A Small Gathering of Bones"; Latest work is "Pagoda"
- 17 When you "glad bag bus" or, feeling gay.
- 19 Last name "Marson"; founded the Jamaica Save the Children Fund in 1938
- 21 Author, "Ruby" and "The Friends"
- 23 Writer; Abeng, No Telephone to Heaven", etc.
- 24 Main character in Paule Marshall's Brown Girl, Brownstones
- 27 ____ Palmer Adisa; writer, "Tamarind and Mango Women and other stories" etc.
- 29 Editor, "Creation Fire" first anthology of Caribbean women's poetry
- 30 "A new ____ sweep clean; ol' one know the corner."
- 32 Kriki Kraki! Latest work is "Farming of Bones"
- 33 Joanne ____; author of first lesbian novel set in the Dutch Caribbean

DOWN

- 1 ____ Edgell, wrote "Beka Lamb"
- 2 A Voudou Priestess in Fort Greene, Brooklyn.
- 3 "I ____ long memoried woman", poem by Grace Nichol, won the Commonwealth Prize of 1983
- 4 ____ Nourbese Phillip, writer and activist in Canada
- 5 Imogene "Queenie" Kennedy, Jamaica's Queen of this African spiritual tradition recently passed away
- 6 Book by Merle Collins about the lives of 3 generations of women in Grenada
- 10 Founder of the Dominica Labor Party in 1955
- 11 A little shut-eye.
- 12 Co-founder, Communist Party of Harlem and West Indian Gazette in London
- 15 Second novel by Erna Brodber; ritual healing practices in a balmyard.
- 18 ____ Marshall; author; see 24 Across
- 20 Sister in struggle; also women's grassroots organizing group in Jamaica
- 21 First black teacher in London; Author, 'Black Teacher' and 'Frangipani House'
- 22 ____ Haniff; writer and activist; Author, "Blaze a Fire: Significant Contributions by Caribbean Women"
- 25 Acronym for a collective of feminist scholars and activists based in Cave Hill, Barbados.
- 26 The first woman dub poet; first book 'Riddym Ravings & Other Poems'
- 28 Her life story is the buried history of Guadeloupe, edited by Dany Bebel-Gisler.
- 30 Last name of author, see 11 Across
- 31 To worry, especially when "water more than flour"
- 32 Mahadai ____; Indo-Caribbean feminist and poet; author of "Bones"
- 35 not ____ we changin' the world, when!...

34 Author, "Cereus Blooms at Night"
36 Tongues of ____; first anthology of coming out stories by Caribbean women.

Bennett Natalie, "Caribbean Pride Series No. 1 "Her True-True Name": Women Writers and Activists," *Caribbean Pride Newsletter*. Summer 1999: Vol.1 No.2. Page 9.

Newsletter courtesy of Sandie Green



Queer Caribbeans

of NYC | Stonewall 50

Participants listed in alphabetical order of last name

Logo Concept by Mohamed Q. Amin and Kadeem Robinson.

Deigned by Ginger of Lions Imprint, Inc.

MOHAMED Q. AMIN

Founder, Caribbean Equality Project



Mohamed Q. Amin (he/him/his) is a pioneering Guyana-born, Indo-Caribbean, Queer and Muslim Human Rights activist, currently based in Richmond Hill, NY. On the eve of the 2013 NYC Pride Parade, Amin and his siblings were viciously attacked for being members of the LGBTQ community in their Southeast Queens neighborhood. In response to anti-LGBTQ hate violence, in 2015, he founded the Caribbean Equality Project (CEP), a non-profit organization that advocates for Caribbean LGBTQ + voices in New York City, and serves as the organization's executive director. Amin applies his professional expertise as well as his drive for gender equity and social justice to ending gender-based and anti-LGBTQ hate violence, racism, anti-transgender violence and dismantling systems of oppression. He is the director of "My Truth, My Story," CEP's multimedia oral history documentary series that curates "coming-out narratives of Queer & TGNC people of

Caribbean heritage in the diaspora. Grounded in the power of storytelling, the archive of stories reveals struggles with suicide, mental health, family acceptance and rejection, the intersection of religion and sexual orientation, and HIV/AIDS.

Beyond his storytelling work, Amin has organized and led various LGBTQ+ educational community engagement forums, participated in panel discussions, and conducted informative presentations at New York City public schools, and community organizations aimed to break the silence on Caribbean LGBTQ issues. In 2015, he became the first Indo-Caribbean LGBTQ+ activist to be featured on BRIC TV, an award-winning cable TV network based in Brooklyn, NY. In 2018, Mr. Amin co-organized Breaking Silences 2018-Toronto, the first International Caribbean LGBTQ+ conference in Toronto, Canada.

As an intersectional community organizer and coalition leader, Amin has been profiled in many media outlets, including *Voices of NY*, *Mashable.com*, *Vice.com*, *Queens Public Library Digital Archives*, *Caribbean Life Newspaper*, *Southeast Queens Press*, *Times Ledger*, and *The West Indian newspaper*. Following the horrific Pulse nightclub shooting in 2016, Mr. Amin's relentless advocacy to uplift Queer Muslim voices was recognized in a Proclamation from the New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito at the 2016 NYC Council Eid al-Fitr Celebration. That same year, he received a Citation of Honor from the Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, and New York City

Council Member, Daniel Dromm at the 2016 Queens Borough Hall LGBTQ Pride Month Celebration. In 2017, Mr. Amin was also honored with a Proclamation by NY State Senator James Sanders Jr. in recognition of his leadership, community organizing and fearless advocacy in the New York State 10th Senate District. In 2019, he was honored by Gay City News with an “Impact Award” for his work with the Caribbean Equality Project, the first for a Caribbean LGBTQ immigrant organizer in New York City.

Amin is a graduate of the New York City Anti-Violence Project’s Community Leadership Institute and Speaker’s Bureau: Intensive Organizing Training. Amin holds a B.A. in Economics, has over fourteen years of management experience in retail banking and financial literacy program development in immigrant communities, and is currently pursuing a Masters in Mental Health Counseling at his alma mater, Queens College.



Caribbean Equality Project’s group photo exhibited in “The Lavender Line: Coming Out in Queens” Exhibition at the Queens Museum, Queens, NY. 2017.

Photography by Ryan Tiscareno

TINA ARNIOTIS

Founder, Chutney Pride



Tina Arnotis (she/her/hers) is an activist, entrepreneur and public figure in the LGBTQ+ Caribbean scene of New York-born in Elmhurst, Queens to a Trinidadian mother and a father of Greek and Italian descent, and raised in Far Rockaway. After attending Nassau Community College, she enlisted in the Navy where she came out as a lesbian. Her post-Naval career was on Wall Street, at which time she started to become interested in creating spaces for the West Indian LGBTQ community to come together. There were spaces for the straight West Indian community, and for the LGBTQ community, but none that celebrated the intersection of both identities.

Arnotis began by hosting private parties for her friends and other LGBTQ members of the West Indian Community under the name “Tropical Kings and Queens.” As the group began to grow, so did the desire to move these gatherings to public places. Arnotis started by asking business owners in the Village if they would host a Caribbean-themed night one Saturday a month. It was a big win for businesses to agree to hold an exclusive event on Saturday nights, because those were big business nights.

The initial events had Caribbean music, Bollywood drag queens, etc. and she spread the word using flyers and AOL, as well as advertising in HX and Next magazines. She also installed a separate phone line at home to call and get information about events.

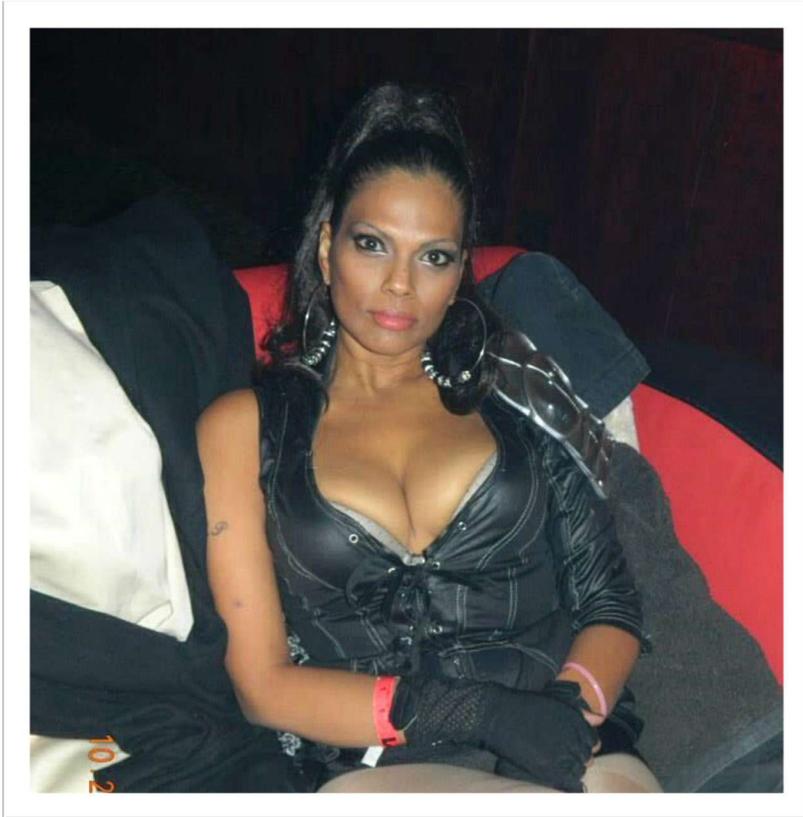
Arnotis eventually sought a venue in Richmond Hill, Queens due to the high West Indian population. As the community grew, she officially incorporated Chutney Pride in 2013. After the dissolution of Caribbean Pride and Curry Club NYC in the late 2000s, Arnotis then set her sights on organizing a Caribbean contingent to march in the Gay Pride Parade in Manhattan, to replicate the environment of the Caribbean Carnival.

Chutney Pride’s contribution to the Parade was continuing the “Big Truck” tradition (started by Caribbean Pride), which was a large truck with marchers dancing to West Indian music. Arnotis organized the Caribbean LGBTQ contingent of the Pride Parade for over a decade. In 2017, Chutney Pride had over 2,100 marchers registered for NYC Pride March, after only 600 in 2016.

Arnotis’ organizing career has been focused on creating space for individuals to connect, on all levels of their identities. One memorable milestone for Arnotis was the first time she was able to hang a Pride flag outside a bar where Chutney Pride was gathering at in Richmond Hill, Queens. The establishment was on Liberty Avenue, the main commercial strip in the neighborhood. Organizing these events also gave Arnotis the opportunity to educate community members about the LGBT

community such as providing sensitivity training for the business owners and bouncers who worked her events. The core mission of Chutney Pride was connection—not just of high quantity, but of high quality.

Arinotis’s long list of avid supporters included Simone Dolabaille, who passed away in 2016 but served as a major support system.



Simone Parson Dolabaille at Chutney Pride’s "HalloQueen" Social," Queens, NY. 2014.

Photo Courtesy of Chutney Pride

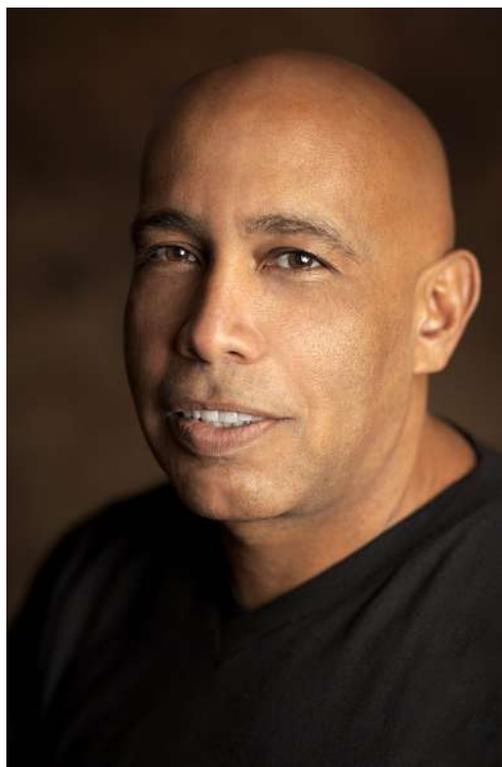
Tina Arinotis with friends, Queens, NY. 2009.

Photo sourced from <https://www.facebook.com/chutneypride1>

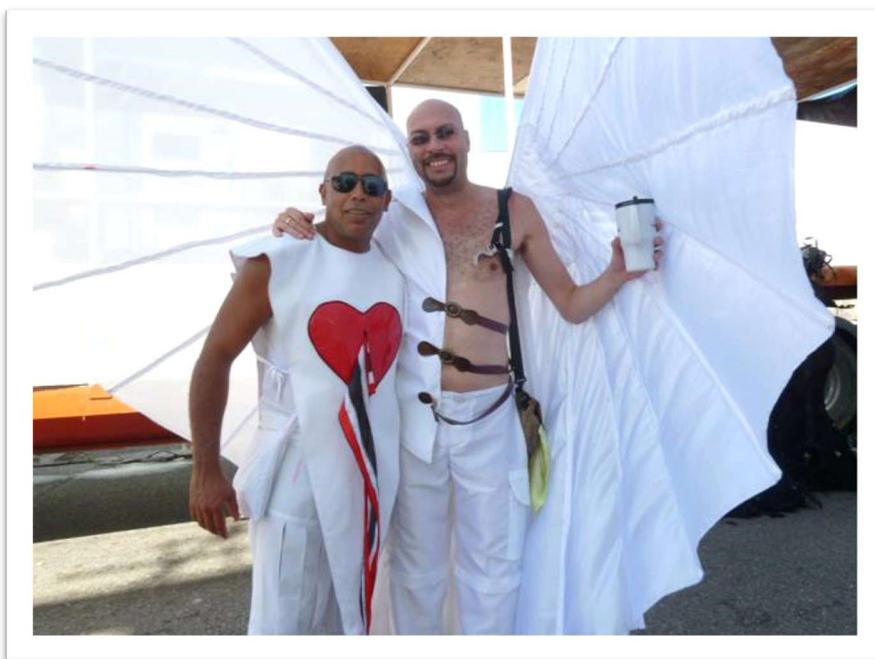


AINSELY BOISSON

Member, Caribbean Pride



Ainsley Boisson (he/him) is a Trinidadian-American community organizer. After migrating to the United States at the age of 17, Boisson became involved with Caribbean Pride to create safe public space for members of New York City's LGBTQ Caribbean community. Eventually, he became one of the lead organizers of Caribbean Pride's iconic "Big Truck," serving as a fundraiser for its very first appearance in the NYC Pride Parade. Under Boisson's leadership, Caribbean Pride was awarded the best Marching Contingent and Sound System in 2004. In addition to his work with Caribbean Pride, Boisson has helped organize and participated in several conferences in NY -and one in Jamaica- organized around the safety and wellness of gay Caribbean men. Boisson earned a B.B.A. in International Marketing at Baruch College, and continues to work in the greater NYC area.



2012, Ainsley Boisson with International Human Rights Activist, Jason Jones at Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, Trinidad and Tobago.

Photo courtesy of Ainsley Boisson

DETOXX BÚSTI-AE

Jamaican Activist-Centric Drag Queen

Detoxx Busti-ae is a native of Jamaica who currently resides in Brooklyn, NY, and is one of the few Jamaican Drag entertainers currently living in the melting pot of the world. Busti-ae goes by the pronouns of she/her when in drag, and he/him when out of drag as Steven Rose. She has been a drag entertainer for 10+ years, and brings her unique style of being an “NYC Drag Queen with a Jamaican twist,” around the world. As an emerging entrepreneur, Bu sti-ae merged her passion for art, fashion and drag to found Detoxx Creations, where she produces one of a kind carnival costumes, custom press on nails and lashes for drag queens. Busti-ae is an avid volunteer with the Caribbean Equality Project and enjoys using his/her platform to promote self-love and acceptance within the Caribbean LGBTQ+ community.



In 2017, Detoxx Busti-ae won the Queens Pride Drag Race Queenie Award. She was recognized for marching with the



Caribbean Equality Project's "Prideful Mosaic: LGBTQ People of the Caribbean" contingent in the 25th Anniversary of the Queens Pride Parade, showcasing a fabulous carnival costume made by EnJ Productions.

Queens Pride, “*Drag Race Queenie Award*” Winner, Detoxx Busti-ae at Club Evolution, in Queens, NY. 2017.

Photo courtesy of Caribbean Equality Project

#QueerCaribbeans



DJ DEBBIE

Queer Soca Artist



DJ Debbie (she/her/hers) is a renowned NY-based soca artiste, who is also openly lesbian. Debbie was born in Trinidad and migrated to Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York at the age of 11 with her mother and siblings. Hailing from a family of singers, DJ Debbie began "DJing" at age 14 at a family house party. From there, she began her career, exploring different genres and styles in music, including hip-hop. She has opened up for Queen Latifah, Yo-yo, Salt and Peppa among other artists.

In her mid-20s, DJ Debbie began attending *Shades of Lavender*, and through this organization, she grew much more comfortable in her sexuality. After attending *Caribbean Pride* meetings at the *Audre Lorde Project*, she learned to appreciate her Caribbean & Trinidadian identity simultaneously with her queer identity.

Dissatisfied with the lack of Caribbean LGBTQ DJs, DJ Debbie coordinated a weekly event "We Ting," where she curated spaces for Caribbean LGBT people. On the Thursday before Labor Day in the late 90's DJ Debbie received an opportunity to perform at a lesbian party named "G Spot" at the 14th Street club 2Y's. DJ Debbie made her name providing the intersection of Caribbean people and their cultural identities in LGBTQ spaces through her musical skills. DJ Debbie is now developing soca music under Ice Face Entertainment production company. Her first EP "DJ Debbie: Up Close and Personal" was released in 2005, and uses ragga-soca style, changing how she chants her songs through incorporating styles from reggae music. She hopes to continue her legacy of providing further visibility for the LGBT Caribbean community through her career in soca.

PRATIMA DOOBAY

Activist and Queer Hindu Priestess

Kushmani Pratima S. Doobay (she/her/hers) is an Indo-Guyanese musician (vocalist and instrumentalist), a feminist, human, and LGBTQI rights and social justice advocate who was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. She is the resident Priestess and Community Liaison for *Sadhana: Coalition of Progressive Hindus* and an active volunteer of the *Jahajee Sisters: Empowering Indo-Caribbean Women*.

As a passionate community organizer, in 2018, she organized “Mataji Chowki,” a semi-annual forum of veneration, dedicated to the nine forms of the Goddess through singing of bhajans (religious high-powered songs), messages of inclusion, empowerment, and community togetherness. The inaugural edition of “Mataji Chowki” was a historic convening in a Hindu Temple of the Indo-Caribbean community in New York City to focus on social justice issues, which included addressing gender-based

violence and uplifting LGBTQ+ issues in the Caribbean diaspora. The event featured two community-based organizations, Jahajee Sisters, a group committed to empowering Indo-Caribbean women, and the Caribbean Equality Project, a group that advocates for Caribbean LGBTQ + voices in NYC.

Pratima has been openly and actively advocating for LGBTQI rights for many years through volunteerism with organizations like APICHA, HRC, Chutney Pride, Caribbean Equality Project, NYC Pride, and through *Sadhana: Coalition of Progressive Hindus* as a spiritual platform to discuss LGBTQI inclusion.



DAMON DOLABAILLE

Professor and Social Justice Advocate



Damon Dolabaille (he/him/his) was born in Trinidad and Tobago and emigrated to NY with his family upon his graduation from St Mary's College in Port of Spain (which is also a seminary). As some fellow students joined the priesthood, and sought to reconcile their developing sexuality with their religious convictions, Dolabaille was called upon to assist in connecting the novitiates with DignityNY, the gay catholic parish. While attending CUNY Lehman College, Dolabaille became an officer with the Bisexual, Lesbian, And Gay Empowered Students (BLAGES), as well as a state representative with the social advocacy powerhouse, New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). Many projects in LGBT and women's rights and equality were the focus of his work. One particular success was creating a campaign to help defeat an anti-LGBT initiative in Colorado. After completing graduate work at Queens College in literary studies and leadership, Dolabaille lent his support to Curry Club NYC, Caribbean Pride, and Chutney Pride. As an educator with the

New York City Department of Education and The City University of New York, Dolabaille continues to advocate for social justice as an advisor and Restorative Justice Coordinator.



Damon Dolabaille with Family.

(L-R) Mother, Radica Dolabaille and sisters Simone Parson Dolabaille and Ria Dolabaille-Husein.

Photo courtesy of Damon Dolabaille.

CEYENNE DOROSHOW

Sex Worker Rights and Trans-Activist, Founder of GLITS

Ceyenne Doroshow (pronounced Kai-Ann) (she/her) is a performer, activist, organizer, community-based researcher and public figure in the trans and sex worker rights movements. As the Founder and Executive Director of *G.L.I.T.S.*, she works to provide holistic care to LGBTQ sex workers, while serving on 10 international boards including *SWOP Behind Bars*, *Lysistrata*, *SOAR Institute*, *Caribbean Equality Project*, *NYU Law*, *NYTAG*, *Transgender Justice of San Francisco*, the *Leslie-Lohman Museum*, and many more.

As an international public speaker, her presentations include The Desiree Alliance, Creating Change, Sister Song, Harm Reduction Coalition and the International AIDS Conferences. She was a featured emcee for Toronto Pride and MOMA/PS1's Sex Workers' Festival of Resistance, lifting her voice as a trans woman of color.



Known for her skills in the kitchen, Doroshow co-authored the Caribbean cookbook *Cooking in Heels*, while incarcerated on prostitution charges. Doroshow has been heavily featured in the media, has performed on television in Showtime's *OZ*, for the documentaries *Red Umbrella Diaries* and *Miss Major*. She is also featured in *PRIDE*: a Netflix documentary that will premiere this fall.



Late 2017, Ceyenne Doroshow was attacked in a transphobic intimate partner violence incident, but she was the one arrested. Pictured is a rally outside of the Queens County Criminal Court in New York City to support her case dismissal. Her abuser was never charged.

Photo Courtesy of SOAR Institute

HEMISH MARLON KURT GERVIS

Founder, Gay Caribbean USA Pageant



Marlon Gervis (he/him/his) is the founder of the Gay Caribbean USA Pageant based in New York. Gervis migrated from St. Lucia to Brooklyn, New York in 1996, bringing his passion and experience in stage hosting, event production and acting with him. After pursuing an education, he launched the Gay Caribbean USA Pageant (2009-2016).

This pageant ran for eight years, with an aim to bridge the gap of understanding and promote tolerance between the gay and heterosexual Caribbean-American communities. The aim of the pageant was of extreme importance at the time, given the known fact that persons of gay sexual orientation from the Caribbean usually face grave discrimination. During its run, the pageant featured representatives from various Caribbean islands. The delegates were either based in the USA or traveled from the islands to participate. The

inauguration of the pageant gained lots of media attention, which fueled needed and meaningful discussions on the acceptance and dynamics of the gay lifestyle.

While having acted in stage plays written by St. Lucian Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott and the acclaimed Francisco Arrivi, Gervis has also staged the glorious revival of his adaptation to the plays *“Letter from Leonora”* and *“Zingay”*. The staging of those plays on the New York stage has helped bring Caribbean cultural theater to the international platform, thereby reconnecting persons of the diaspora to their culture.

Gervis has also gained a name for himself, in creating events that continue to bring together people from various sexual orientations; thereby, fostering unity and mutual understanding. Some of his most popular events include a Summer Party Boat Ride in 2006, an annual New Year’s Gala and various bus trips.

SANDIE GREEN

Founder, *Sistas of Caribbean Ancestry (SOCA)*

Sandie Green (she/her/hers) migrated to New York City from Bridgetown, Barbados at age nine and grew up in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn. Green attended Bushwick High School while in the foster care system until she was 18, and later resided in a group home. During that time, she attended the Fashion Institute of Technology, and attained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Textile Surface Design, class of 2002.

Green's activism began when she attended an all-women's group. Green recalls having identified as 'gay' before learning of the term 'lesbian' at this women's group. Following this immersion into the LGBTQ community, Green became the coordinating assistant for the Audre Lorde Project in 1989. She later became a board member for *AALUSC: the African Ancestral Lesbians United for Social Change*, developing programming and coordinating fundraisers to support the black Lesbian community. She later became a part of the *SISTAH* group: *Sisters in Search of Truth, Alliance and Harmony*.



Circa 1998, through the Audre Lorde Project, Green became familiar with *Caribbean Pride*, which at that time, would only meet during NYC Pride. Given the lack of spaces for Afro-Caribbean lesbian women, Green initiated a tri-monthly social event at her home, where women would exchange Caribbean dishes, music and energy under the guise of *Caribbean Pride Sisters United in the Spirit*. This space later transformed to *SOCA: Sistas of Caribbean Ancestry* in 2003. Through *SOCA*, Green served as the Executive Director, and continued to curate spaces for Afro-Caribbean women. Sandie would also provide outreach and facilitate workshops examining topics related to health, sex and immigration. *SOCA* later disbanded due to lack of a physical space, among other new obstacles. Currently living in Crown Heights, Green continues her contribution to the Caribbean LGBT community as a board member of the *Caribbean Equality Project*, through which she aims to revive *SOCA*.

INTERNATIONAL DANCER ZAMAN

Queer and Muslim Indo-Caribbean Artist



ohamed A. Amin aka “International Dancer Zaman” (he/him), is an Indo-Caribbean Gay and Muslim Kathak, Orissi, Bollywood, Bhangra and Chutney dancer. He is a native of Guyana, who currently calls Far Rockaway, Queens, home. Zaman studied dance with the Ghungroos Dance Academy for five years under the instructions of DheerajGayaram. To further his passion for interdisciplinary performing arts, he took Caribbean & South Asian cultural workshops with the Raj Kumari Cultural Center and Nirvana Humanitarian Foundation in New York, the Jaya Devi Arts in Florida, and the Leela Dance Collective, led by Rachna Nivas, a renowned Kathak dancer, educator, and arts activist in California. Zaman is the first openly gay Indo-Caribbean dance artist in New York City. He is also an International-drag artist, where Zaman goes by the name of “Sundari –The Indian Goddess.” Both Zaman and Sundari uses performing arts to promote Indo-Caribbean Arts & Culture and the multiple,

intersectional identities of LGBTQ Caribbean immigrants in the diaspora.

In June of 2013, Zaman was hospitalized after he survived a vicious attack in an anti-LGBTQ hate incident in Richmond Hill, Queens. The violence mobilized local LGBTQ activists and allies to organize a Peace Rally, which eventually led to the formation of the Caribbean Equality Project in 2015.

Zaman is the recipient of various awards, including: New York State Assembly Certificate of Merit, 2018 Honoree Guyana Tri-State Alliance Inc. “Leader of Tomorrow” Golden Arrowhead Award, Guyana 52nd Independence Anniversary Award and various other awards from community organizations, leaders and events for his community service and civic participation.

International Dancer Zaman’s choreographies have been featured on the following platforms: Miss New York’s Outstanding Teen, Miss New York, Miss America’s Outstanding Teen, Miss World, Miss Universe Guyana, and on the film, “*Echos from the Plantation.*” Zaman is one of the founding members, and the lead choreographer of the Taranng Dance Troupe (Waves of the Future). This is a group of diverse, trained dancers amplifying visibility and unity within the Caribbean performing arts community in the New York metropolitan tri-state area.

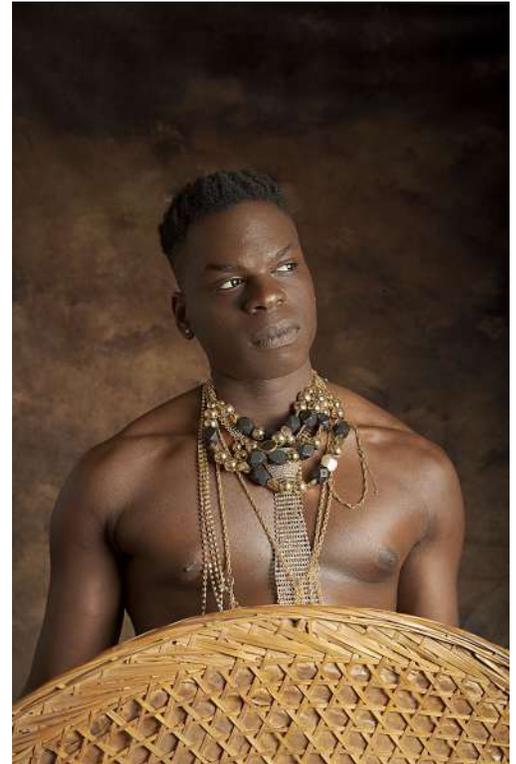
#QueerCaribbeans



LAMONT E. JOSEPH

Dancer, Bloodline Dance Theatre

Lamont E. Joseph (he/him/his) is a New York-based choreographer best known as the Artistic Director and Founder of Bloodline Dance Theatre. While in high school, Lamont relocated to Brooklyn, NY from South Carolina to live with his Trinidadian-born father, and take advantage of the many opportunities of New York. Joseph began his dance training at Brooklyn Academy High School where he studied under legendary choreographer Kim Holmes. Upon graduation, he enrolled at Medgar Evers College of City University Of New York. In 2006, Joseph, along with members and allies of the LGBTQ community started the first chartered LGBTQ organization of Medgar Evers College. Despite several challenges such as harassment, and discrimination from several students, the organization stood firm, with members becoming more visible every year and creating a safe space for its members. Upon graduation, Joseph began his career in the arts. With the support and guidance of Melvin Fogle Black, he has danced at



Forces of Nature, Something Positive, Creative Outlet, Balance Dance Theatre, Harambee American Dance Theatre, Dance Germaul Barnes Visic and the Imani Dance and Drum Ensemble. His film credits include *Nike, Vitamin Water, Dominoes, Ford, and ESPN.*

In 2011, Joseph became the Ali Forney Center Honoree for his continued work in the LGBTQ community, after which he started Fierce Roots, a collective arts vessel for dancers and emerging choreographers in Brooklyn, NY. Today, the company is comprised of five choreographers and 20 dancers creating works focusing on socio-political issues both past and present. Currently called the Bloodline Dance Theatre, his company has performed in several NYC Public Schools, The West Indian American Carnival Association, The Brooklyn Museum, at The African Spirit Awards, Brooklyn Academy of Music and at St. Paul's Baptist Church. Currently, the company is in residency at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York. With Melvin Black as the co-Artistic Director, the company has produced several critically-acclaimed productions, such as "Theories and Apologies", which is centered around the early stages of the HIV epidemic, and the children's favorite "The Afro-Sankofa Series." He has taught dance at several New York City schools, including Medgar Evers College Prep School, Manhattan Youth, PS 292, PS 284, and PS 269. Recently, the company has started its arts and education division, which teaches different forms of art, dance, step, drumline, steel pan, stilt-walking and many other art forms to children in the tri-state area.

HOLLIS KAM

Founding Member, Caribbean Pride— Reclaimed



Hollis Kam (he/him/his) is a Certified Coach and Human Resources professional of Trinidadian descent. For the past fifteen years, he has created the space and opportunity for people to ignite their most productive selves. Hollis works to energize nonprofits, company and community leaders and entrepreneurs in guidance in strategic planning, organizational development and professional growth. Also he facilitated trainings at dozens of organizations to strengthen leaders in their commitment to growth and development.

Dedicated to shining a light on the voices and stories of others has brought him to the nonprofit boards of the Caribbean Pride, CARIB NY, Audre Lorde Project, Camara Dance Unlimited and the Professional Performing Arts School. He was also an adjunct instructor of the College of New Rochelle. He is a graduate of New York University, Le Moyne College and the Coaching & Training Institute.



(L-R) Hollis Kam, Ingrid Griffith, Kenrick Ross, and Anton Nimblett posing for a post-panel discussion photo at the "ME Project," featuring Demarara Gold: A One-Woman Show starring Ingrid Griffith in New Jersey. Presented by CARIB: Caribbean Association for Resource, information & Building, and Urban & Out.

Be(come) Your Best Self Workshop

Be(come) Your Best Self Workshop will explore the following:
What is an area of your life where you would like to improve? Are you interested in learning resources or systems that will help you to be(come) your best self? This workshop will use the Wheel of Life* and SMART** structures to identify and help you to start achieving your goals. By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify an area of your life to focus on
- Create three goals to accomplish in your focus area
- Develop a system and accountability to achieve your goals

*The Wheel of Life is a tool for visualizing all areas of your life at once and helps you create balance and greater success in your life.

**SMART is a tool that gives criteria to guide in the setting of goals.



Location

Holyrood Church
715 West 179th Street
New York, NY



Free

Includes templates



Date/Time

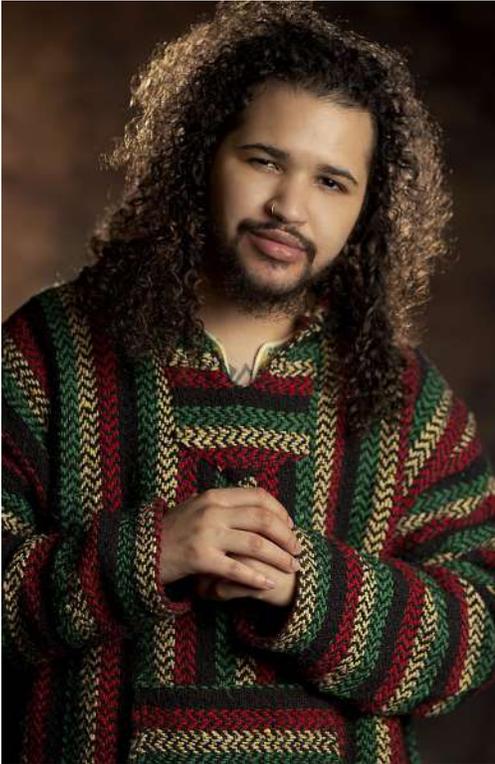
Saturday, June 16th
1:00 - 4:00 PM

Info/RSVP: <https://holliskam.eventbrite.com>

Photo sourced from <https://www.facebook.com/hollis.kam.5>

DEVIN MICHAEL LOWE

Trans Activist, Film Director



Devin Michael Lowe (he/him/his) is a first-generation Jamaican-American, queer man of color and person of transgender experience. Originally from Houston, Texas and now based in NYC, Lowe has been a community advocate and organizer in the city for over 6 years, working more specifically and proactively in the field of HIV prevention and care at GMHC since 2017. He is the lead facilitator for multiple LGBTQ+ & trans-masculine support groups throughout New York City that focus on sexual health, self-care, political education, and redefining & centering healthy masculinity.

Lowe was the first trans-masculine model and Ambassador for Spotlight Stories in 2018, GMHC's campaign that highlights the stories of young people to promote PEP/PreP as well as HIV/STI testing and care, and has recently been brought on as a model for the Prep4Pride NYC campaign funded by the Community Healthcare Network.

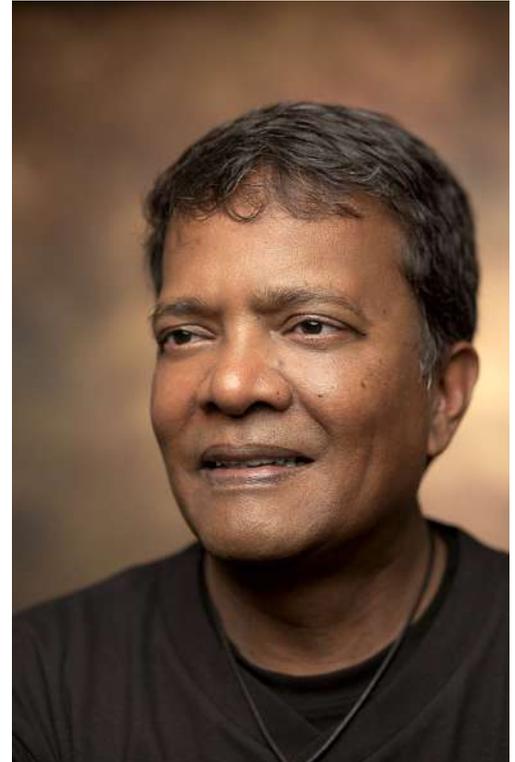
As well as being a public health educator, Lowe is also an actor and media producer, creating content that highlights the lived experiences of queer, transgender & gender non-conforming folk, with a special focus on Black persons and other communities of color.

He is both an actor and associate producer on "The Garden Left Behind" (2019), a film following an undocumented Latina trans woman navigating her life in NYC, and is the Executive Producer of a documentary currently in production, called "Redefining Masculinity," which focuses on masculinity from a Black trans-masculine perspective. In June 2019, Lowe became the founder and CEO of the Black Trans Travel Fund, a mutual-aid fund that pays for car ride services for Black transgender women in New York and New Jersey, in an effort to help them travel safely and free of harassment or physical harm.

GERALD MANWAH

Member, Caribbean Pride

Gerald Manwah (he/him/his) is a Trinidadian-American adjunct professor of law, and an expert in the arena of international financial crimes. He is the Head of the U.S. Financial Crime Compliance Executive Office at HSBC. Previously, he served as a Managing Director in Compliance and Financial Crime at Barclays. Prior to joining Barclays, he was the Global Head of Financial Crime Compliance for Credit Suisse, and managed the end-to-end compliance program related to Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering, and Economic Sanctions. He previously held various legal and compliance positions at American Express, ABN Amro, and Citigroup. Manwah is admitted to the bar to practice law in New York State, and completed an LL.M. at Harvard Law School. Gerald played a crucial role as a member of *Caribbean Pride* in the early 2000s.



2018:- Gerald Manwah, Ainsley Boisson, Joel Chee Alloy, Derek Williams, and Jan Willem Klosters all marching with *Caribbean Equality Project* in the NYC Pride March, New York City.

Photo sourced from <https://www.facebook.com/triniderek>

RICHARD MOHAMMED

Curry Club NYC, Co-Founder



Richard Mohammed (he/him/his) was born and raised in San Juan, Trinidad and Tobago. Growing up, Richard realized that his attraction to men started at age 14. After separating from his then partner in 1993, Mohammed migrated to New York City in 1994 and settled in Richmond Hill, Queens.

During his time in New York City, Mohammed became a bike messenger for three years, after which he accepted a role at Seagrams. Seven years following, he later accepted a position at the Gissendanner Law firm as a Catering Coordinator. As a new queer immigrant looking to connect with LGBTQ people, Mohammed found himself at a little bar named "Uncle Charlie's" in The Village; it was there that he met different LGBTQ men and women holding hands and living in their truth. Mohammed remembers having a screwdriver as his first drink in The Village. There he met different LGBTQ people from Trinidad, Guyana, and other Caribbean countries. In that moment, Mohammed felt

safe.

Mohammed, and his colleagues Zen and Joe Armoogan met in 2002 to discuss the lack of affirming Caribbean LGBTQ social spaces in New York City. Mohammed and Armoogan came up with the idea to launch an LGBTQ Caribbean gathering for their community. Zen suggested the name "Curry Club"—because everyone loves curry. *Curry Club NYC* was launched at the Malika Exclusive Indian Restaurant on 43rd Street in Manhattan.

This collaboration became an organizing effort, using mostly flyers and word-of-mouth to develop and promote *Curry Club NYC*. Later collaborations came with Sholay Productions, a South Asian collective that often hosts Desi LGBTQ events. This partnership led to the fusion of West Indian and South Asian cultures. *Curry Club NYC* would later develop into a monthly gathering of LGBTQ Caribbean immigrants and Caribbean-Americans, and would last for up to three years.

In the mid-2000s, *Curry Club NYC* became one of the only spaces for Indo-Caribbean LGBTQ people to exist safely. Richard acknowledges the collaboration, and help in developing *Curry Club NYC*, from persons such as Tina "DJ Mother Gay" Arniotis (DJ), Zen (aide), Sara Masala (drag performer), Joe Armoogan (graphic designer), Ms. Lily (drag performer), Karma Sutra (drag performer), and Skyler "Shammie" Manchoon (dancer).

#QueerCaribbeans



COLIN ROBINSON

Founder, Caribbean Pride

Colin Robinson (he/him/his) is Director of Imagination for *CAISO: Sex & Gender Justice*. His thought-leadership on sexuality, gender, power and justice in the Caribbean is globally recognized. He is the author of the 2012 Commonwealth Opinion “*Decolorising Sexual Citizenship*”; and his work is the subject of Andil Gosine’s 2015 *Sexualities* article “*CAISO: Negotiating Sex Rights and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago*.”

Robinson’s contributions to analysis, culture, advocacy and organizations span four decades. He is Trinidad & Tobago’s leading national LGBTQI advocacy voice, and has led the work of CAISO since its 2009 formation (as the *Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation*).

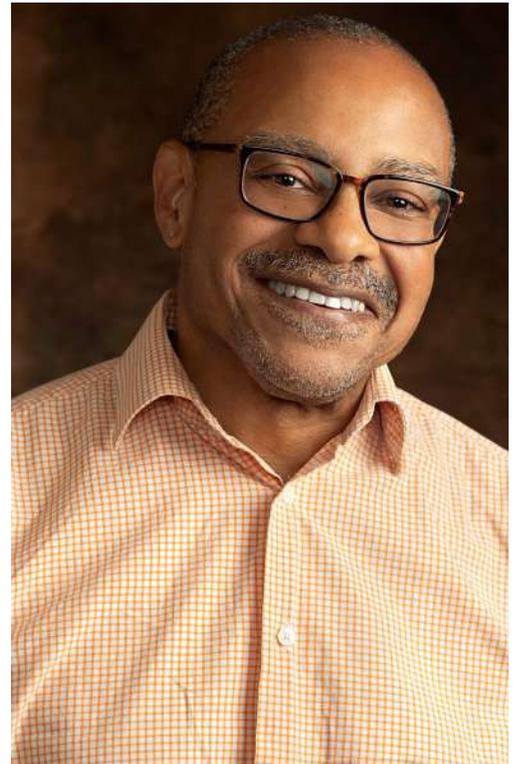
In 2011, he spearheaded the revitalization of the Caribbean Forum for Liberation & Acceptance of Genders and Sexualities, a 21-year-old regional LGBTQI coalition, and has

developed its academy to develop emerging Caribbean activists as transformational leaders.

In 2018, he was appointed by the InterAmerican Development Bank (T&T) country office to its NextGen board of changemakers, where he is spearheading a project to develop a shared facility to meet the management needs of smaller civil society organizations.

Robinson’s career also encompasses years of health justice advocacy, including HIV policy and training work with the Offices of the Prime Minister and the Chief Personnel Officer, the Ministry of Labor, the University of the West Indies Faculty of Medical Sciences; service on the board of the PanCaribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS, and the New York City Board of Education AIDS Advisory Council; and nine years in public policy and management roles at the largest HIV response organization in the United States, Gay Men’s Health Crisis. In 2017, the Office of the Prime Minister had him physically ejected from the re-launch of the National AIDS Coordinating Committee for engaging other invited guests about its lack of representation.

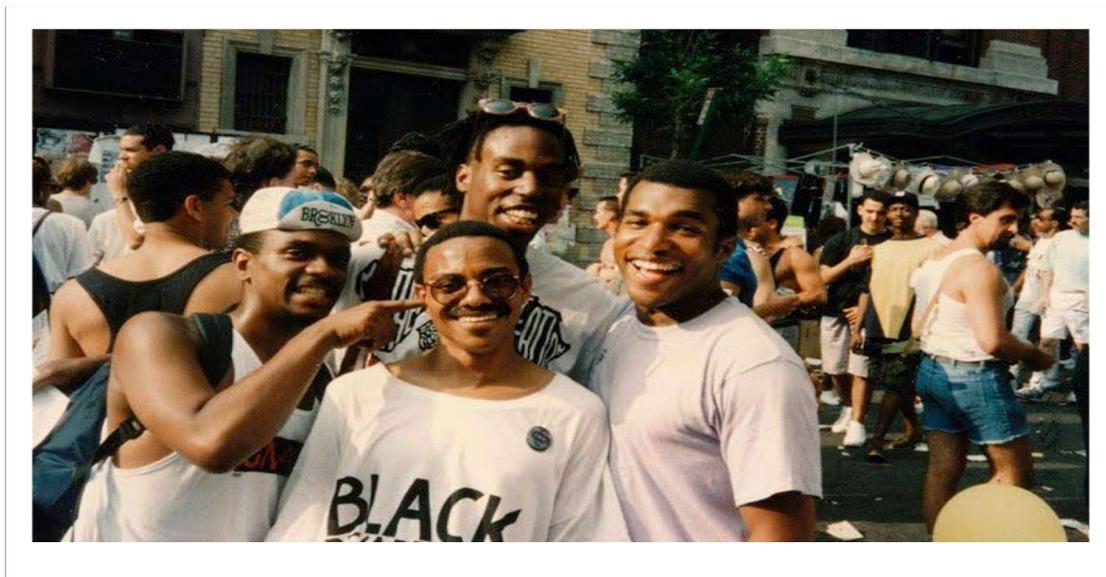
He led pioneering organizing work in LGBTQI communities of color in the US, including service on government planning and advisory bodies while an undocumented immigrant for over a decade. Robinson co-founded the Audre Lorde Project, an LGBTQ organizing centre; and



co-chaired the board of directors of the international human rights advocacy group, Out|Right International. He produced the 1988 issue of *Other Countries: Black Gay Voices*, a literary journal that won the US Council of Literary Magazines & Presses Seed Award. Colin also conceived *Think Again*, a 2003 collection of essays & poetry focusing on Black men who are gay, with emphasis on dealing with HIV prevention. This project was co-produced by the NY State Black Gay Network, Inc. & the Los Angeles AIDS Project. In 1998 and in subsequent years, while leading Caribbean Pride, he helped put a Soca Big Truck in the Manhattan LGBTQI Pride Parade, and organized a historic 1999 reading of diasporic Caribbean LGBTQI writers. In 2000, he was selected to be the Grand Marshall for the Brooklyn Pride Parade.

Robinson's poetry appears in the 2016 collection *You Have You Father Hard Head*, in "Lessons," a 1996 work by Ronald K. Brown's Evidence dance company, and in film collaborations with Sekou Charles (*Riding Boundaries*, 2011) and Marlon Riggs (*Anthem*, 1990). He co-edited the 2015 "Firing the Canon" special issue of *Moko: Caribbean Arts & Letters*, and his reflections on global advocacy against dancehall "murder music" appear in the 2009 *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies*. He served as a field producer for Riggs's landmark 1989 documentary *Tongues Untied*; and created the first three of the Studio Museum's (in Harlem) "A Day Without Art" responses to World AIDS Day (1989-91). Several 1980s and '90s programs also took the writer's works into gay bars and nightclubs, elite academic institutions and an emerging performance circuit. Since 2014, he has written a newspaper column, which currently appears in the Trinidadian *Newsday*, about bodies and nationhood.

Robinson has degrees in Anthropology and Management from New York University, and The New School Milano.



1989, Colin Robinson -center- and friends in the NYC Pride March, New York City.

Photo sourced from the Trinidad and Tobago's *Newsday*.

KENRICK ROSS

Founder, Urban & Out



Kenrick I. Ross (he/him/his) was born in Guyana and raised in New Jersey. He works in nonprofit management, social enterprise innovation, and simply enjoys all things tennis.

He currently manages the Small Business Support Project at Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, where he launched New York City's new legal services initiative for entrepreneurs. He is also the founder of Urban&Out, a social impact organization that builds community, capacity, and social capital for LGBTQ professionals and leadership of color. He also founded *ATLOVE*, which connects the LGBTQ community to sports, fitness and wellness opportunities that are LGBTQ-inclusive.

Ross has spent most of his career leading initiatives to empower communities of color. He formerly served as Executive Director of the Indo-Caribbean Alliance (ICA); Director of Education, Career Services, and Community at the

YWCA of Queens; and Director of Professional Development and Quality Assurance for The Leaguers, Inc.

As for tennis, he's deeply invested in opportunities for LGBTQ people to learn and play tennis. He has played more than 40 LGBTQ amateur tournaments (and won a couple), co-produced the tennis documentary "*Queens At Court*", and all done while he runs ATLOVE.

He holds a B.A. in Politics from New York University, and an M.S. in Urban Policy and Leadership from CUNY- Hunter College.

DOMINIQUE JACKSON

Actress- *Pose*, FX Network



Dominique “Tyra A. Ross” Jackson (she/her/hers) is a New York-based actress, author, and model is best known for her role as Elektra Abundance on the FX television series, “*Pose*.” Born in Scarborough, Tobago, Jackson fled to the United States at the age of eighteen, after experiencing bullying, abuse and family sexual rejection upon her coming out as transgender.

While living in Baltimore, Maryland in 1993, Jackson was introduced to the ballroom scene. She then lived in various “houses” and eventually settled in the House of Sinclair, which was stationed in New York City. After years of small and unpaid modeling gigs, she became a resident model for fashion designer Adrian Aicea in 2009 and walked for the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week. She has also modeled for *Vogue España*.

Jackson has appeared in “*Call Me*,” “*Christopher Street: The Series*,” and “*My Truth, My Story*”, a Caribbean LGBTQ

Oral History and Storytelling Documentary Series produced by the Caribbean Equality Project.

Dominique has also appeared in the documentary “*Visible: The LGBTQ Caribbean Diaspora*” and the Oxygen reality television series “*Strut*” (2016). Her work on “*Strut*” earned her a GLAAD Media Award nomination.

In 2018, Jackson began appearing in the leading role of ‘Elektra Abundance’ on the FX series “*Pose*,” based on the ballroom culture in New York City in the late 1980s. As such, she was part of a historic moment in media representation as the first season boasted the largest cast of transgender actors ever for a scripted network series.

In addition to her modeling and acting career, Jackson has also released her autobiography *The Trans-sexual from Tobago*, and has worked for several non-profit organizations including the Bronx-based LGBTQ+ services organization *Destination Tomorrow*.

JAHLOVE SERRANO

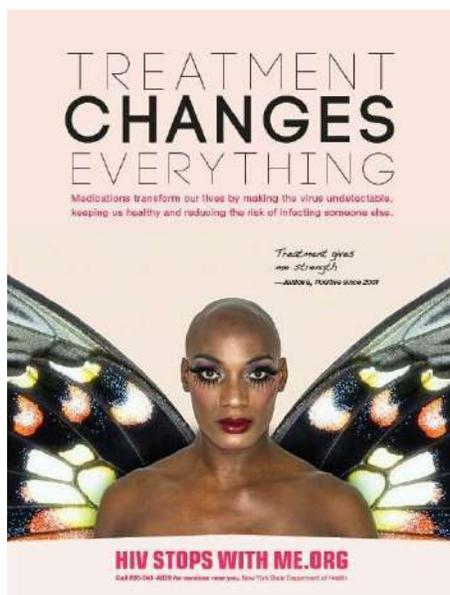
HIV/AIDS Activist & Drag Queen

Jahlove Serrano (he/him/his)-aka Jahlisa A. Ross- is a health educator, youth advocate, HIV/AIDS activist, androgynous model/runway coach, Drag Queen, background dancer and choreographer to the stars. He is also a Bronx native of Belizean and Guatemalan descent. Serrano's peer leadership began shortly before turning 16, when he contracted HIV and made the decision to be very public with his HIV status. He did this in order to combat the ignorance and stigma around HIV/AIDS within the LGBTQ community and in the Caribbean diaspora. Jah has been working in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, outreach and research on a global, national, and city level to address the needs of HIV positive youth (and with youth in general, regardless of their status).



Jahlove has worked with the NYC AIDS Institute, National Gay Mens Advocacy Coalition, The Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS North America (GNP+NA), AIDS ALLIANCES, The White House, and The Department of Health.

He's currently on a national campaign called "HIV Stops with Me," New York City's "In Care" campaign and Janssen "Positively Gearless" global campaign. Jahlove uses his entertainment platform to promote HIV/AIDS Awareness and education throughout the United States and beyond.



*"I just want to give a shout out to Jahlove!!!
I went to HS(Park West) with him and had
no idea he was dealing with such a big issue.
I'm proud of the work he is doing in
educating people."*

-Rosly Guerrero on 4/14/2017

<http://hivstopswithme.org/spokesmodels/jahlove/>

#QueerCaribbeans



SUNDARI THE INDIAN GODDESS

Indo-Caribbean Activist-Centric Drag Queen

Sundari – The Indian Goddess (she/her/hers) is a Guyana-born and an Indo-Caribbean drag entertainer, who currently resides in Far Rockaway, Queens. Sundari was discovered at the Raj Kumari Cultural Center in 2012, with the support of Prita Singh, Radha Singh, Denise Baboola & Detoxx Bústi-ae, becoming the first Indo-Caribbean/Guyanese Drag Queen to perform in a non-LGBTQ+ musical production in Queens, NY. She is a trained Kathak, Orissi, Bollywood, Bhangra and Chutney dancer. Sundari performs frequently out of drag as well, under the moniker “International Dancer Zaman.” In either persona, Sundari is the only Indo-Caribbean, Guyanese Drag Queen who uses performing arts to promote Indo-Caribbean Arts & Culture and the multiple, intersectional identities of LGBTQ Caribbean immigrants in the New York diaspora.



Since 2012, Sundari has participated in various community events, rallies, actions, and placed 3rd in the 2013 Miss Gay Caribbean USA Pageant. She is a pioneer, having broken through various barriers in the New York Tri-State area and internationally. She was the first Indo-Caribbean Drag Queen of Guyanese heritage to perform in a non-LGBTQ+ public musical Indo-Caribbean production, march in the Queens Phagwah Parade, perform for a Hindu temple, act and dance in a Hindu religious musical production, march in AIDS Walk NY, perform on the Queens Phagwah Parade Main Stage, perform at 1st United Madrassi Parade in New York, be featured on ITV Cable Television on the LTWL Show, perform at the Stonewall Inn; perform on the Brooklyn, Queens & Bronx Pride main stages, be featured on ABC7 News, perform at the 2019 World Pride Opening Ceremony in NYC with recording artist Cyndi Lauper at Barclays Center, Brooklyn NY; be a featured performer at an international academic community conference in Toronto (Breaking Silences 2018); be featured on a month-long digital Billboard in 5 different locations in New York City, and to walk the 2019 World Pride Opening Ceremony Rainbow Carpet.

In addition to her breakthrough achievements, she hopes her presence in the wider Caribbean Community will encourage LGBTQ individuals of Caribbean descent to get more involved in their local community issues and help make a difference in their world. Sundari is now a member of the Taranng Dance Troupe (Waves of the Future), a group of diverse trained dancers, who are amplifying visibility and unity within the Caribbean performing arts community in the New York metropolitan tri-state area.

#QueerCaribbeans



KIM WATSON – BENJAMIN

Author, Trans Activist and Co-Founder, CK Life

Kim Watson-Benjamin (she/her/hers), is a mother, author of *“The Modern Day Woman,”* and woman of transgender experience who has been living with HIV for 30 years. She is the co-founder of Community Kinship Life (CK Life), an organization that provides services, resources, and support to transgender people. At age 23, after experiencing harassment in Barbados as an intersex woman, she migrated to New York City, hoping to escape the abuse and stigma. Two years after, as an undocumented immigrant, she experienced years of homelessness, engaged in survival sex-work, got involved in the West Village drag scene, overcame drug addiction, and ultimately dedicated 25+ years towards her work in trans advocacy. In 2015, Watson was featured in an article where she described facing deportation for being out of legal status, and how through active advocacy and representation, deportation proceedings were halted, and she is on track to obtaining legal permanent residence. Watson’s experience raised the issue that there are LGBTQ people from many

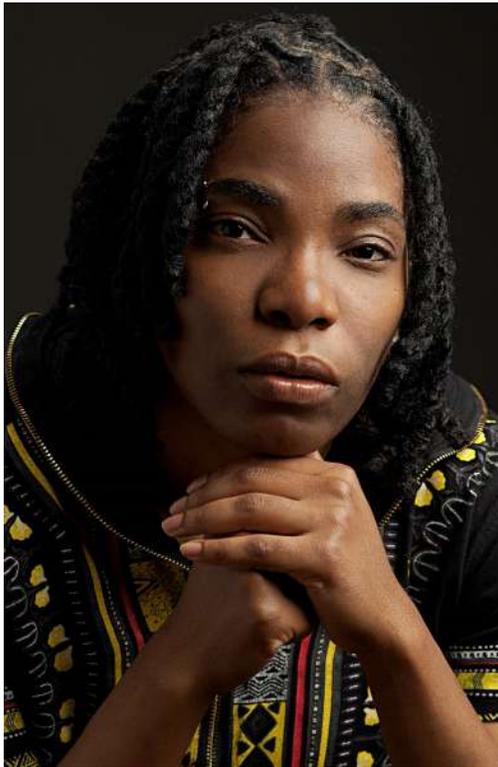


Caribbean countries in the NYC area, predominantly Brooklyn, Queens and The Bronx, who out of fear live in the shadows, oftentimes without access to health care, mental health care, and legal status. Many live and suffer from a variety of mental health issues, and many are also living with HIV, which adds another layer of stigma, shame, and discrimination – another secret to hide from themselves and their families. This led to the formation of a planning team for a day-long symposium titled “Breaking Silences.”

Watson is one of four co-authors of *“Healing Our Women for Transgender Women: Adaptation, Acceptability, and Pilot Testing”* published in October 2015. She is the recipient of many awards, including (but not limited to): the 2012 Black Trans Advocacy Community Award, the Christine Jorgenson Award, the 2013 Outstanding Transgender Award from Unity Fellowship Church NYC, The Bronx LGBTQ Center 2014 Citation of Merit and a Proclamation, both presented by Ruben Diaz Jr., the Bronx Borough President; the 2014 Depressed Black Gay Men Recognition of Resilience Award, the 2015 LGBT CAUCUS Award presented by NY City Council Member Ritchie Torres (D-15th District, Bronx), & most recently, the 2016 Black Trans Women Inc. (BTAC) Black Trans Advocacy Woman Of The Year Award.

MASHEKA JOSEPH

Photographer, Queer Caribbeans of NYC



Masheka Joseph (she/her/hers) is a self-taught portrait photographer. Born and bred on the Twin Islands of Trinidad and Tobago, Masheka presently resides in Brooklyn, NY.

Her introduction to photography began as a teenager, after finding her cousin's DSLR camera laying around. Not one for the spotlight, she found a pleasant comfort behind the camera, and a newfound ability to view the world and the people in it. Joseph is a renowned queer and immigrant filmmaker and photographer. She is the proud owner of Akehsam Productions, a multimedia company with over a decade of experience in the curation of Caribbean LGBTQ oral stories & culture, and has designed the logo for Chutney Pride and Caribbean Equality Project.

Her ultimate goal is to form a bond with each client, even if it's for a split second. The images she produces are done with the client's individual authenticity as a benchmark.

"A split second is all you need to capture the world, within someone else's eyes."

More of Masheka's photography can be found at:

Facebook: @AkehsamProductions

Instagram: @Akehsam_Photography

Website: www.akehsam.com



KADEEM ROBINSON

Assistant Curator, *Queer Caribbeans of NYC*

Kadeem Robinson (they/them/he/him) is a Jamaican immigrant, writer, and public servant. Robinson developed a passion for social justice and advocacy upon witnessing violence against women and homophobia growing up in rural Jamaica. At 14, following a slew of homophobic incidents, they committed themselves to studying and learning as much as they can to alleviate interlocking structures of oppression.

Robinson emigrated to the New York City at age 16, and attended John Jay College where he studied Humanities and Justice Studies and Theatre Arts. Through the Jeannette K. Watson Fellowship, the John Jay-Vera Fellows Program and the Urban Fellows Program, Robinson followed a path of advocacy through public service, government and direct service. They have pursued opportunities and have worked in Wellington, New Zealand, and Ningbo, China.



Robinson currently works in local government as the LGBTQ Outreach Coordinator and Policy Associate to the Public Advocate of New York City, and joins the Caribbean Equality Project as the Secretary. Throughout their time at the Caribbean Equality Project, Kadeem has conducted tabling, and is the co-curator for Queer Caribbeans of NYC, the first multimedia retrospective exploration of the racial and cultural intersections of LGBTQ Caribbean advocacy. Robinson is constantly exploring ways in which resiliency can overcome trauma, particularly through public policy and art, and hopes to contribute as much as possible to his LGBT Caribbean Community. Kadeem also is currently developing Queeribbean NYC, a virtual platform providing a space for Queer Caribbean folks to commune through art, academia and fashion. He will co-launch the podcast "*Stush an' Bush*", a Queeribbean podcast on Caribbean happenings and overall "mix-up and blend blend", with a queer twist.

In his downtime, Robinson dances to various genres of music, and is always searching for safe spaces to live his night owl escapades.

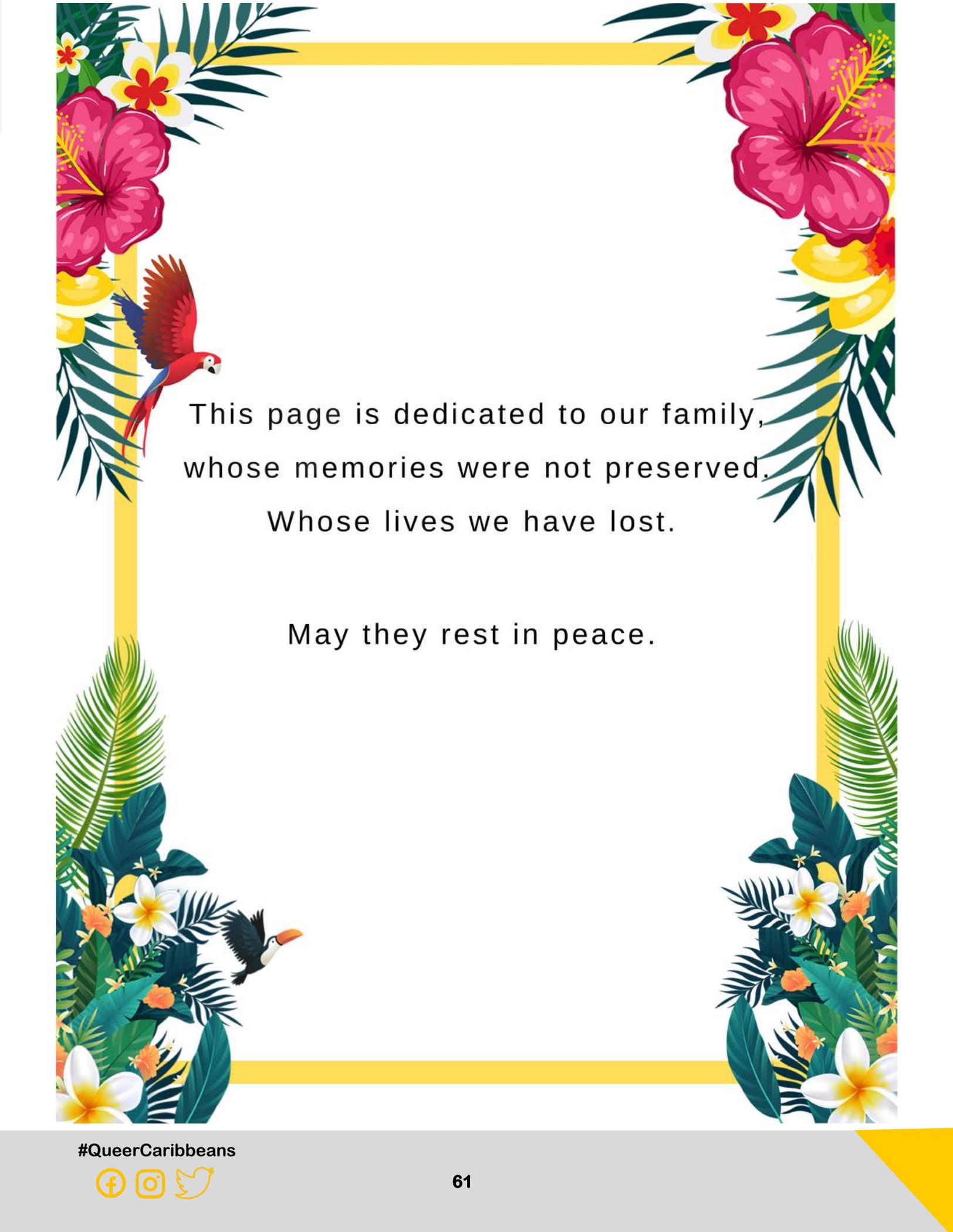
IN MEMORIAM

MERCEDES SUCCESSFUL

REST IN POWER

Mercedes Successful, a trans woman from Jamaica, competed in the 2014 Gay Caribbean USA Pageant. In 2016, she was murdered in Florida, becoming the 12th known transgender person killed in the U.S. that year. She was fearless, beautiful and an amazing competitor.

Photo from Loud Impressions Photography

A decorative border surrounds the page, featuring vibrant tropical elements. In the top-left corner, there are pink and white hibiscus flowers, a red and blue parrot in flight, and green palm fronds. The top-right corner shows a large pink hibiscus, yellow plumeria, and more greenery. The bottom-left corner features a toucan bird, white plumeria, and various tropical leaves. The bottom-right corner is filled with white plumeria, orange flowers, and lush green foliage. The entire page is framed by a thick yellow border.

This page is dedicated to our family,
whose memories were not preserved.
Whose lives we have lost.

May they rest in peace.

Caribbean Pride Members

SPEAK OUT!

CARIBBEAN GAYS & LESBIANS SPEAK OUT AGAINST ANTI-GAY ATTACKS

New York City -- On July 11, 1998, Fitzroy "Jamaica" Green was murdered by a man who claimed to have been angered to discover that the "woman" he had gone home with was "really a man." Fitzroy's murder has been just one of a wave of recent attacks on gays and lesbians and transgendered people in New York City.

During August and September 1998, there were over 26 attacks against lesbians and gays in New York City. Over half of the victims have been people of color, with the majority of those being of Caribbean descent. However, the mainstream media reports have focused primarily on attacks on white gay men.

Consequently, the Audre Lorde Project: Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirit & Transgender People of Color Communities and the New York City Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project organized a community teach-in on Saturday, October 3, 1998 at the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Caribbean Pride member, Torrence, read a prepared statement from the group to an audience of almost 200 people (see excerpt).

In response to the many calls in the audience for increased police vigilance around anti-gay crimes, Tamara, a Caribbean Pride member, suggested that the LGBT POC community ought to consider community-based responses to homophobic violence, since the history of police violence against POC communities have invariably led to mistrust of police intervention strategies. The comment was well-received, and marked a key shift in how POC communities are organizing in response the violence over the fast few months.

Caribbean Pride members carried the group's banner and marched alongside other LGBTST People of Color through the streets of Brooklyn, in protest of the violence being done against our community members, and encouraging bystanders to stand up against homophobia, including violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.

"A Summer of Violence Against Gays"
(excerpted from Caribbean Pride's statements
made at the teach-in)

Recent events occurring in the boroughs of New York have caused members of Caribbean Pride to proclaim the summer of 1998, a "summer of violence against gays." ...It has come to the attention of Caribbean Pride that some of the recent incidents against Gays and Lesbians some of which have not been reported in the media, have included attacks on or by people of Caribbean ethnicity. These incidents unfortunately not only reflect the reality of homophobia existing and perpetuated in Caribbean cultures, but also reflect poorly on the truly diverse nature of these nations which make up such a large percentage of New York City's residents.

It is the sincerest wish of Caribbean Pride that the perpetrators of these crimes be found and brought to swift justice. We cannot and will not sit silently by and allow these crimes to go unnoticed and unpunished, regardless of the ethnicity of the perpetrators.

In the fall, Caribbean Pride will host a community forum on anti-gay violence in Caribbean communities, and workshops on self-defense and conflict resolution. Speakers will include representatives from the Gay Officers Action League (GOAL), NYC Anti-Violence Project, Medgar Evers College's Center for Law and Social Justice, and the People of Color Anti-Violence Project. To help in planning this event, and for more information, call 718-596-0342 ext. 34.

OTHER COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBT PEOPLE OF COLOR

- ✓ ALP'S Working Group on Police Violence
718-596-0342 ext. 31
- ✓ People of Color Anti-Violence Committee
212-414-9344
- ✓ Coalition Against Police Brutality (CAPB)
212-473-6485 ext. 105
- ✓ Coalition Against Anti-Asian Violence (CAAV)
212-473-6485
- ✓ Center for Anti-Violence Education
718-788-1775

Caribbean Pride Members. "Speak Out!," *Caribbean Pride Newsletter*. Summer 1999:
Vol.1 No.2. Page 7.

Newsletter courtesy of Sandie Green

OUR TEAM



Mohamed Q. Amin, Founder, *Caribbean Equality Project* and Curator of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Kadeem Robinson, Secretary, *Caribbean Equality Project* and Assistant Curator of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Masheka Joseph, Photographer of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Nalima Amin, Designer of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Booklet

Darren J. Glenn, Programs Director, *Caribbean Equality Project* and Editor of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Booklet

Richard Morales, Manager of Community Partnerships,
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center

J.R. Sanders, Designer of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition

Delbert Browne, Community Outreach Coordinator, *Caribbean Equality Project* and Stage Manager of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition Opening Reception

Theo Brown, Public Relations Officer, *Caribbean Equality Project* and Volunteer Coordinator of Queer Caribbeans of NYC | Stonewall 50 Exhibition Opening Reception

To learn more about the Queer Caribbeans of NYC exhibition,
visit <https://www.caribbeanequalityproject.org/queercaribbeans>

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE INAUGURAL QUEER CARIBBEANS OF NYC EXHIBITION!

PRESENTERS & PARTNERS



LaGuardia
and Wagner
Archives

QUEENS
MEMORY

SPONSORS



#QueerCaribbeans

