



31 May 2019  
Birmingham, England

# SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

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@blackfuturesUK

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## Schedule

- 09:30 - 10:00** Registration (*Millennium Point*)
- 10:00 - 10:30** Welcome with Organising Committee
- 10:30 - 11:45** Panel 1: Deconstructing Educational Tools
- 11:45 - 12:00** Break
- 12:00 - 13:15** Panel 2: Creative Cultures
- 13:15 - 14:30** Lunch (*Millennium Point*)
- 14:30 - 15:30** Panel 3: Wellbeing and/as Leisure
- 15:30 - 16:00** Break
- 16:00 - 17:00** Panel 4: Sustainable, Smart Communities
- 17:00 - 17:15** Closing Remarks

## **Panel 1: Deconstructing Educational Tools**

Chaired by **Kelly Foster**

**Natasha Godfrey**, “Auto-ethnography as Activism: Using Your Lived Experience to Speak Truth to Power”

**Aleema Gray**, “Bun Babylon: An Oral History of the Rastafari movement in Britain 1936-2018”

**Abira Hussein**, “Nomad: A Somali Community Archive”

**Malcolm Richards**, “Ending Our Myopia? Deconstructing Race and Racial Inequality Within Teaching Thinking Resources Used in English Secondary Schools”

## **Panel 2: Creative Cultures**

Chaired by **Dr Shawn Sobers**

**Ama Josephine Budge**, “An Image of Tomorrow: Reading Rotimi Fani-Kayode’s Bodies of Experience Through the Potentiality of Intimate Ecologies”

**Janine Francois**, “Reparations for Black People Should Include Rest: An Afro-futurist Enquiry”

**Natalie Hyacinth**, “Afro-futurism // Black Existence”

**Shaun Wallace**, “The Rise of the Black Queer ‘Artpreneur’ in Digital Media”

### **Panel 3: Wellbeing and/as Leisure**

Chaired by **Dr Patricia Noxolo**

**Maxwell Ayamba**, “Black Men Walking: A Hilly Hike – ‘lived experience’ of the British Countryside Environment”

**Yvonne Connikie**, “Wellbeing, Ageing and the Role and Value of Community-Based Leisure Activities for Future British Caribbeans”

**Rose Sinclair**, “Where You From?”

### **Panel 4: Sustainable, Smart Communities**

Chaired by **Akil Scafe-Smith**

**Florence Okoye**, “Reconfiguring Community Led Smart City Design Through the Black Quantum Futurist Framework”

**Nathaniel Telemaque**, “Everyday Things: Exploring Territorially Stigmatised Marginalised BME Millennial Livelihood and Creative Praxis”

**Julian Thompson**, “Designing Equitable Futures for UK Black Communities”



## Panellist Biographies

**Maxwell Ayamba** is a PhD research student in Black Studies at the Department of American and Canadian Studies, University of Nottingham. He is an environmental journalist and founder of the Sheffield Environmental Movement (SEM). His paper situates lived experience of Black people in Britain in narratives of identity and belonging in the history of the British countryside. It draws on lived experience of Sheffield's 100 Black Men Walk for Health which inspired the national play "Black Men Walking". The British countryside is popularly perceived as a 'white landscape' and the presence of Black people in the countryside remains largely unproblematised.

[maxwell.ayamba@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:maxwell.ayamba@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Ama Josephine Budge** is a speculative writer, artist, curator and pleasure activist whose work navigates intimate explorations of race, art, ecology and feminism, working to activate movements that catalyse human rights, environmental evolutions and troublesomely queered identities. Her fiction and non-fiction has been published internationally and she is working on her first book: a speculative duology for young adults. Ama is convenor of I/ Mages of Tomorrow anti-conference (Goldsmiths 2017), co-founder of The Batty Mama Black queer club & performance night (2015-present), and initiator of Self Love and Ecstasy pleasure collective (aka SLAE). Ama is also a PhD candidate in Psychosocial Studies with Dr Gail Lewis at Birkbeck. Her research takes a queer, decolonial approach to challenging climate colonialism in Sub-Saharan Africa with a particular focus on inherently environmentalist pleasure practices in Ghana and Kenya.

[@amjamb](mailto:@amjamb) | [a.josephinebudge.com](mailto:a.josephinebudge.com) | [www.amajosephinebudge.com](http://www.amajosephinebudge.com)

**Yvonne Connikie** is a film curator, and ethnographer, whose work is focused on the Black community in South Wales. She is presently a part-time PhD student at the University of South Wales studying the leisure activities of first generation Caribbeans in Butetown, Cardiff.

[171642601@students.southwales.ac.uk](mailto:171642601@students.southwales.ac.uk) | [@cinemagolau](https://www.instagram.com/cinemagolau)

**Kelly Foster** is a public historian, working both online and “on road” as a London Blue Badge Guide. She is the chapter lead for Creative Commons UK and founding organiser of AfroCROWD UK, an initiative to encourage more people of African heritage to contribute to Wikipedia and its sister projects. Kelly has worked with community/independent archives in London for over 15 years and is a founding member of TRANSMISSION, a collective of archivists and historians of African descent. [@LondonLabrish](#)  
[kelly@kellyfoster.co.uk](mailto:kelly@kellyfoster.co.uk)

**Janine Francois** is an associate lecturer at University of the Arts. She is also a PhD student researching, ‘if Tate can be a ‘safe(r) space’ to discuss race and cultural difference within a teaching and learning context,’ at Tate and University of Bedfordshire. Her practices centres women/femmes of colour by establishing ‘safe’ spaces as sites of resistance, disruption and co-production. She is interested in (re)production of dominance, ethics of care and the cultural politics of emotions (Ahmed, 2004) within cultural institutions. [@itsjaninebtw](#) | [itsjaninebtw.com](http://itsjaninebtw.com)

**Natasha Godfrey** is an actress, writer, researcher, theologian and first generation British-born daughter of Windrush pioneers. She recently completed her Masters in ‘Theology & Transformative Practice’ (with a focus on Womanist/Black Liberation Theology) at Queen’s Ecumenical Theological College in Birmingham. Her thesis: ‘Who Do You Think You Are’? A Black British Woman’s Journey on the Road to Defining her Voice, Identity and Spirituality’ explored her own personal history and present narrative, whilst also challenging the status quo by confronting the oppressive systemic structures embedded at the intersections of race, class and gender. Natasha uses evocative, poetic and performative autoethnography to explore these issues. She is currently an independent scholar.  
[natashagodfrey@hotmail.com](mailto:natashagodfrey@hotmail.com) | [www.theartspractice.com](http://www.theartspractice.com)

**Aleema Gray** is an Oral Historian, museum practitioner and co-founder of the Heritage Lottery Funded non-profit organisation, the Young Historians Project. Her interests rest in using the archives as a catalyst for change and her career thus far has been dedicated in its entirety to addressing the large gap in the historiography of Caribbean migration in Britain, and making this information accessible to the Black British community, with a focus on younger generations. Aleema has delivered a number of projects in Jamaica and London encouraging young people to look beyond a Eurocentric narrative. Her current funded PhD research at the University of Warwick looks at the Rastafari community in Britain under the wider rubrics of identity politics and Pan-Africanism. [@AleemaGray](#)

**Abira Hussein** is an independent researcher and curator specialising in Somali heritage, digital archives, migration, and health. In recent years she has worked with the British Museum, British Library, London Metropolitan Archives, Refugee Council Archive and Somali Week Festival, to deliver a number of projects and workshops engaging with the Somali Community. [@AbiraHussein](#)

**Natalie Hyacinth** has a passion for creating sound, primarily using hip hop and Dub production techniques to craft warm and intimate soundscapes. Their sounds have been played at various festivals and events including Play! Festival at Royal Holloway, Café Oto and the W3 Gallery. Natalie also collects vinyl, DJ and is particularly interested in the empowerment of women through the use of sonic technology. In January 2015 Natalie joined the UCL and Royal Holloway collaborative research project, Making Suburban Faith as a Doctoral Researcher. They are currently working on creating a series of soundscapes that speak to their doctoral research on the connection between music and spirituality. <https://soundcloud.com/sacredsonix>

**Dr Patricia Noxolo's** research brings together the study of international development, culture and in/security, and uses postcolonial, discursive and

literary approaches to explore the spatialities of a range of Caribbean and British cultural practices. Recent work has focused on: re-theorising Caribbean in/securities; theorizations of space in Caribbean literature; Caribbean laughter and materialities; re-thinking the decolonial city; and African-Caribbean dance as embodied mapping. Pat Noxolo is lead researcher on the Caribbean In/securities and Creativity (CARISCC) research network, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. She is chair of the Society for Caribbean Studies, co-editor of Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, and secretary of the RACE group of the Royal Geographical Society. [@Patnoxolo](#)

**Florence Okoye** is a user experience and service designer, interested in community centred and participatory design practice as an approach for creating sustainable solutions within complex systems. Since 2015, she has been part of AfroFutures\_UK, an interdisciplinary collective that explores the intersection of race and critical perspectives on technology.

[@FINOkoye @AfroFutures\\_UK](#)

**Malcom Richards** lives with his wife and two children in Devon where he is a teacher. He has worked across secondary, community and special education settings and is a trade union activist. A doctoral student at the University of Exeter, Malcolm writes, tweets and talks regularly about his areas of academic interest: dialogic pedagogy, 'thinking Black' and equitable futures in education. Malcolm is involved in the governance of several cultural education organisations. He is a radio show host, aspirational bookshop owner and has contributed to numerous articles, books and magazines on race, leadership and teaching thinking.

[malcolm.richards@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:malcolm.richards@hotmail.co.uk)

**Akil Scafe-Smith** is a co-founder of RESOLVE, an interdisciplinary design collective that aims to address multi-scalar social challenges by combining architecture, art, technology and engineering. They have since gone on to deliver numerous projects, workshops, and talks, in London and across Europe as well as working to pilot projects that introduce young people



from under-represented backgrounds to STEM subjects and concepts in interdisciplinary design. Akil is also an alumnus of Public Practice, an initiative supported by the Mayor of London, which places a new generation of planners within local government to shape places for the public good. Here he worked in the London Borough of Croydon's Spatial Planning Team and conducted a research project into how Local Authorities can better facilitate meanwhile use projects for long-term community benefit.

[akil@resolvecollective.com](mailto:akil@resolvecollective.com)

**Rose Sinclair** is a Design Lecturer (Textiles) at Goldsmiths, University of London, she teaches Textiles/Fashion and Design related practice at Postgraduate level. Rose has authored several textile books, the most recent, Textiles and Fashion, Materials, Design and Technology (2015). A PhD candidate her current research focusses on black women and their crafting practices, where she uses installations, and crafting workshops to discuss issues of gender, race, identity, and settlement, through safe making spaces. Her research also reflects on how the history of the Dorcas Clubs and Societies can influence contemporary textiles networks and practices. [r.sinclair@gold.ac.uk](mailto:r.sinclair@gold.ac.uk) | [@dorcasstories](https://www.instagram.com/dorcasstories)

**Dr Shawn Sobers** is Associate Professor of Lens Based Media at University of the West of England, and teaches BA (Hons) Photography degree, MA Research Practice, and supervises MRes and PhD students across a broad range of subject areas and topics, including creative activism, social history, archiving, photography, film, and artists books. Shawn studied Media Anthropology at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and has carried out a wide range of research projects spanning diverse topics, ranging from legacies of slavery, African presence in Georgian and Victorian Britain, disability and walking, Rastafari language and culture, and creative citizenship in social media. As a filmmaker and photographer his work has been exhibited and screened nationally and internationally, and has directed and produced documentaries for BBC1, ITV and Channel 4. Principles relating to community media and participatory practice underpin much of his work. His recent research projects include

the Ethiopian connections with the city of Bath, how artists in Bristol have responded to the presence of the Edward Colston statue, and the Black cultural history of everyday life. [shawn.sobers@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:shawn.sobers@uwe.ac.uk) | [@shawnsobers](https://www.instagram.com/shawnsobers)

**Nathaniel Telemaque** is your everyday photographer, researcher & writer. His multidisciplinary background in Criminology, Sociology & Urban Studies, sees him focusing his lens on the contemporary and creative livelihoods of Black Millennial urbanites. As a lifelong student of cities and their respective processes of change, he has worked on various research projects with C.U.N.Y, the University of Southampton & the University of London. His visual arts praxes has seen him publish two photo-books (Authors of The Estate & A Pesolife), and exhibit his photographic works at the DesignFesta Gallery in Tokyo, Japan. [nathaniel.telemaque@gmail.com](mailto:nathaniel.telemaque@gmail.com) | [@Detelemaque](https://www.instagram.com/Detelemaque) (Twitter) | [@Pesovisuals](https://www.instagram.com/Pesovisuals) (Instagram)

**Julian Thompson** is a Social Designer & Strategist working at the intersection of services, communities, and government, designing 21st century services and solutions. His recent projects have spanned projects at Department for Education, Lambeth Council and a local health centre. For the past 10 years he has been working with Black Third sector community organisations supporting them build their innovation and digital capabilities (the focus of his Public Policy MA). Passionate about tackling racial inequality and design practice, he is the founder of Rooted By Design, a community of Black designers developing and challenging design practice and perspectives in order to design services centred on equity and the needs and lived experience of UK Black communities. Julian holds a Law degree and is the Vice Chair of a mental health organisation for young people who have experienced the criminal justice system. [@julesequity](https://www.instagram.com/julesequity) [@rootedbydesign](https://www.instagram.com/rootedbydesign)

**Shaun Wallace** has a career portfolio that spans arts, education and project management. Shaun was offered the post of Head of Education at the

Thought Pyramid Gallery, Abuja, in May 2014. While there he developed a world class education programme and continues working as adjunct international consultant, today. Returning to London, full-time, in November 2018, he went on to work for Ameena McConnell, the Arts Council Change-maker at the Design Museum, London. Commissioned to evaluate the sessions of Ameena's programme, he then went on to assist her as an Event Associate for the On the Radar Salon. A member of Museum Detox, Shaun now continues his work: encompassing Art of the African Diaspora, (in its UK iteration) and Black Queer UK Culture, under the 'Arc of Triumph' Arts/Heritage organisation, of which he is the Director. His most recent presentation, in April 2019, was at The Courtauld Institute of Arts' Res Fest19. As part of a Museum Detox takeover, Shaun introduced his current project 'Queerology' by presenting the work of black queer artists in the UK from the 1980's to present day. [arcoftriumphuk@gmail.com](mailto:arcoftriumphuk@gmail.com)

Thank you for joining us!  
In solidarity,  
**Keisha Bruce, Rita Gayle and Ian Sergeant**  
*The Organising Committee*



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