

Be Black Baby a House Party Presents

Edouard Glissant: Inhabit his Name

Curated by Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich & Simone Leigh

Featuring work by: Vanessa Agard-Jones, Becca Albee, Firelei Báez, Kelly Baker Josephs, Blackgold Dancers, Jayson Keeling, Kaiama Glover, Devin KKenny, Legacy Russell, and Yasmin Spiro



Friday June 17, 2011

7-9pm performances; 9pm– 12am dance party with DJ Khary Polk

June 17, 2011 — For the fourth installment of *Be Black Baby*, Leigh is collaborating with artist and scholar Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich to present *Edouard Glissant: Inhabit his Name*. The evening will track the collapse of contemporary space and follow the individual through the entanglements of language and locale. Taking Glissant's seminal text *The Poetics of Relation* as a point of departure, artists and thinkers will venture into the many mutations of multilingualism that is creolization. Using the Caribbean as a model of hybrid culture, *Inhabit His Name* will occupy the realm of the metropolis where those involved in the process and critique of creolization "have made a sudden appearance."

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Recess organizes and produces **Be Black Baby**, along with Simone Leigh, series founder and curator. For each iteration, Leigh selects a co-curator. From here, conversations problematize conventions of cultural politics including racial and queer identity. **Be Black Baby** extends from Recess's mission to highlight the path from idea to fruition. Celebrating the confident individual voice and body, the series takes on a question that may not find an immediate answer. This playful yet rigorous intellectual undertaking evolves into a dance party.

For more information visit www.recessactivities.org or contact info@recessactivities.org

Artist Bios:

Vanessa Agard-Jones is a Ph.D. candidate in the joint program in Anthropology and French Studies. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science at Yale University and a Master of Arts degree in African American Studies at Columbia University. A National Science Foundation Research Fellow and recipient of the French embassy's Bourse Chateaubriand, her dissertation project focuses on questions of sovereignty and sexual politics in Martinique. She serves on the Editorial Working Group of *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society* and with historian Manning Marable is editor of the volume *Transnational Blackness: Navigating the Global Color Line* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). With anthropologists Dana-Ain Davis and Shaka McGlotten she is co-editor of a double issue of *Souls* (Spring and Summer 2009) on Black Genders and Sexualities. Her work has also been published in the *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies*. Outside of academia, Vanessa is a former Board Chair and continued supporter of The Audre Lorde Project.

Becca Albee (b. Portland, Maine) is an artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her MFA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her BA from the Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA. Residencies include Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Atlantic Center for the Arts, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace program. She is a Summer 2011 MacDowell Colony Fellow.

Firelei Báez was born in the Dominican Republic to Dominican and Haitian parents and lives and works in New York. Báez received her BFA from Cooper Union, and her MFA at Hunter College. Her work has been exhibited in various national and international institutions, including the New Jersey City Museum, El Museo Del Barrio, The Cortona Archeological Museum (Cortona, Italy), The Caribbean African Diaspora Institute (CCADI) and in the Bronx Artist Biennial, BX1. She participated in Aljira Center for Contemporary Art's Emerge Program, and was a recent resident artist in The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She has received many prestigious awards including The 2010 Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award, The Jaque and Natasha Gelman Award in Painting, and The Bronx Recognizes Its Own (BRIO) Award among others. In 2011 her work will be featured in El Museo's Sixth Biennial *The [S] Files/The Street Files*.

Kelly Baker Josephs is Assistant Professor of English at York College, CUNY. She teaches courses in Caribbean, postcolonial and African diasporic literature and is currently at work on projects on representations of madness in Caribbean literature and Caribbean diasporic writers. She is Managing Editor of the journal *Small Axe* and *sx salon: a small axe literary platform*.

Blackgold Dancers are three choreographers working together sharing their love for dancehall. Hanna Herbertson, Korie "Genius" & Kendell "History" Hinds are a dynamic, versatile trio that are pushing Dancehall choreography forward in a new way. They are all trained in other styles like for example hip hop, gliding, flexing, popping, jazz & house.

Blackgold was founded in Sept 2009 and in a short period of time they have accomplished a lot. Performed at Mad Decent's Block Party alongside Max Glazer of Federation Sound + artists like Mr Lexx, Ricky Blaze & Shelley. In June 2010 they danced on the CBS Early show alongside Mr. Vegas & New Kingston in front of 3 million viewers. Performed with legendary artist Mr Lexx at Atlantic Records Core DJ event in Orlando, FL. Done stage coaching with artist Esco Da Shocker. Opened up for artist Collie Buddz at Santos Party House. Blackgold has also worked with reggae/dancehall artists Sheba, Cherry L & Donny Yardas on stage performances, music videos etc. Been seen at NYC marathon, Williamsburg Charter High School and at the hottest nightclubs in the city and the boroughs showcasing their unique dancehall style.

Blackgold teaches a weekly, open level, dancehall class at The Brooklyn Dance Project in Park Slope Brooklyn. Check out their website for the latest class info.

Blackgold are currently working on a mixtape together with DJ Gravy & DJ Select. The mixtape will feature artists that Blackgold has worked with and tunes they have used for shows and classes. They also have a couple of video projects in the works that will be posted online this summer.

Jayson Keeling lives and works in Long Island City, Queens. For most of his career Keeling worked almost exclusively in the medium of photography, but recently he has begun to explore painting, video and sculpture as well. His work has been featured in many exhibitions including; *30 Seconds Off an Inch*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC; *Behind The Green Door* (solo), The Abrons Art Center Henry Street Settlement, NYC (2009); *99 and 44/100% Pure* (solo), Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT (2009); *The Queens International 4*, The Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY. His residencies include, The Apex Art Out-Bound Travel Residency to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (2009), The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Swing Space Residency (2009) and Workspace Residency (2007-8), The Bronx Museum's AIM 27 (2006) and Aljira's Emerge 08 (2006).

Kaiama L. Glover Having received a B.A. in French History and Literature and Afro-American Studies from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in French and Romance Philology from Columbia University, Kaiama L. Glover joined the faculty of Barnard College as Assistant Professor of French in 2002. Her teaching and research interests include francophone literature, particularly that of Haiti and the French Antilles, colonialism and postcolonialism, and African cinema. She is an advisor to students in French, Africana Studies, Comparative Literature, and Human Rights. Professor Glover has been on the editorial board of the *Romanic Review* since 2002, is a founder and co-coordinator of the Transnational and Transcolonial Caribbean Studies Research Group, and contributes regularly to *The New York Times Book Review*.

Professor Glover's book, *Haiti Unbound: A Spiralist Challenge to the Postcolonial Canon* (Liverpool UP 2010), addresses the general issue of canon formation in the francophone Caribbean and the particular fate of the Haitian Spiralist authors vis-à-vis this canon. She is currently at work on a book titled *Disorderly Women: "Narcissism," Community, and Gender in Novels of the French-Speaking Caribbean*, a project that addresses the ethics of narcissism and writings of the feminine in 20th and 21st century prose fiction by novelists from Haiti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. She has also begun work on an edited volume dedicated to Haitian writer Marie Vieux Chauvet.

Madeleine Hunt - Ehrlich's photographs and writing on the Caribbean have been published by the Studio Museum of Harlem. Her recent exhibit, funded by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, *Things and Time* was on view this winter at Clemente Soto Velez gallery in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Her work considers the specific cultures of Caribbean-American neighborhoods such as Flatbush, New York and Little Haiti in Miami. She studied photography at Hampshire College where she received a Bachelor of the Arts degree in photography and film, as well as at Edna Manley College of the Performing and Visual Arts in Kingston, Jamaica and the International Center of Photography in New York.

Devin Kenny is an interdisciplinary artist based in New York. Hailing from the south side of Chicago, he relocated to New York to study art at Cooper Union. Since graduating, he has participated in the Bruce High Quality Foundation University ('09-'10) as well as the Skowhegan artist residency (2009) using text, photography, video, painting and performance as his mediums. Also as a member of the DADDY collective, he has pitched concepts for artist multiples and installations, and participated in other projects which explore the social and psychological effects of consumer goods and 'use' in contemporary life.

Working at an intersection of lecture, performance art, and music, he has created the Devin KKenny alter ego to make cultural ruptures as art that allow not only a variety of entry points, but also showcase connections between seemingly disparate fields. He will enter UCLA's New Genres MFA program in the fall of 2011.

Legacy Russell (LEGACY) is an East Village born-and-bred artist, writer, curator, and creative producer. Legacy holds a dual degree from Macalester College (2008) in Studio Art & Art History and English, with a concentration in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Residing in New York City, Legacy is the Studio Director at The Bruce High Quality Foundation. Legacy has worked at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art and The Brooklyn Museum of Art; she recently concluded a Curatorial Fellowship with CREATIVE TIME. Legacy is also the co-founder of online journal and project space ContactProject.net; via this portal she has curated a myriad of independent projects, ranging from performance art happenings to small-scale experimental exhibitions. Legacy has had work featured in a variety of publications including the Santa Fe Literary Journal, the Hip-Hop Feminist anthology *Home Girls Make Some Noise!*, and Robert Roth's literary journal *And Then*. Most recently, as part of her continued Studio practice, Legacy has begun building what she terms "social shrines" in and around Lower Manhattan. These will become part of a greater dialogue and project she will be expanding upon throughout the coming year entitled *OPEN CEREMONY*, presented by Trust Art.

Yasmin Spiro is a Jamaican artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. Working in installation, sculpture, film, drawing and mixed media. Her work explores issues of the female identity, cultural identity and socio-economic issues within the framework of urban development and social politics. Often through the lens of the Caribbean - specifically Jamaica. Her recent work explores the city as an organism and how that relates to concepts from the 50's through 80's of 'futuristic' models of cities and living spaces. It considers the way in which communication happens in a complex, sprawling city space, in both macro and micro ways.