The picture says quite eloquently what people have been saying unanimously since the 23rd edition of the UWI Fete took place on January 13. The Fete, Yalla!, met its own benchmark for success and surpassed all others, leaving patrons with a really high point in the Carnival 2013 season. (Please see Page 5 for some highlights.)
Two New Appointments

Professor Alan Cobley has been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor for Undergraduate Studies with effect from February 1, 2013, succeeding Professor Alvin Wint who had served in the position for two outstanding three-year terms.

Professor Cobley joined the UWI staff at the Cave Hill Campus in 1987 as Assistant Lecturer in the Department of History and rose quickly through the academic ranks, having been awarded tenure in 1991, been promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1995 and to a Professorship of South African and Comparative History in 2002.

Global governance scholar, Professor W. Andy Knight, has been appointed Director of the Institute of International Relations (IIR) based at the UWI St Augustine Campus in Trinidad. A Barbadian by birth, Professor Knight has had a distinguished career as an academic and scholar in Canada, culminating in his heading the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta.

Professor Knight serves as Advisory Board Member of the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council on the Welfare of Children and a Governing Board Member of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) from 2007 to 2012. He co-edited Global Governance journal from 2000 to 2005 and was Vice Chair of the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS).

UWI Press Marks 20 Years

Last Thursday, the University of the West Indies Press celebrated its twentieth year of publishing Caribbean scholarship with an Author Awards Ceremony in Jamaica at The University of the West Indies Regional Headquarters.

According to Director Linda Speth, “The UWI Press Twentieth Anniversary and Author Awards Ceremony is designed to celebrate the contribution of all sixteen countries as it relates to the creation and dissemination of the Caribbean scholarship produced by the Press.” Among the fifteen award categories are the Chancellor’s Personal Award, the Vice Chancellor’s Personal Award, Bestselling Scholarly Monograph, Bestselling Textbook, Bestselling Edited Collection, Bestselling General Interest Book and Bestselling Kindle Book.

The UWI Press is a not-for-profit scholarly publisher serving local, regional and international markets. The Press publishes in thirteen academic disciplines and is particularly well known for its work in Caribbean history, Caribbean cultural studies, Caribbean literature, gender studies, education and political science. The Press has over 350 books in print and has 60 of these books available in the Kindle and Kobo stores. Its books are peer-reviewed and approved by an editorial committee composed of local and international scholars.

Established in October 1992, over the last twenty years UWI Press has won 42 international, regional and national book awards for scholarly, editorial and production excellence.

Managing a university is a very complex task, given that public, not-for-profit educational institutions are not driven by the same kinds of bottom lines or values as the average private corporation or private university.

What has been increasingly apparent in the last decade or so has been the rapid expansion of the higher education system, significantly enhanced student intakes, more providers/institutions, on-line delivery of programmes, Government’s support for the education sector with a secondary school system that is also widening and enhancing its capabilities, together with the GATE Programme, have been tremendous drivers.

Greater competition too, springing from every imaginable domain, has also increased the challenge to find creative ways to make our education systems not only quality driven, relevant and meaningful, but sustainable in every possible way.

It has meant recalibrating our instruments of planning and rethinking our roles and responsibilities as we rise to the demands of the times, as reflected in our Strategic Plan for 2012-2017, University wide.

As I humbly accept the vote of confidence placed in me by the University Council in supporting another term as Principal of the St Augustine Campus, I am mindful that what lies ahead requires a more vigorous shift in thinking that moves away from the concept of managing an academy to one that sees it as managing an enterprise, without departing from our core academic values. With 19,000 students and 3,000 staff members, needs are as numerous as the possibilities to partner with the public and private sectors. We are going to do much more here.

Our Strategic Plan narrows in on the realm of research and development initiatives such as the UWI-Trinidad and Tobago RDI Fund (Research and Development Impact) which provides funding and support for projects that can significantly enhance the quality of life. We are also pushing ahead with plans to adequately resource and reward a vibrant research culture and innovation – research that can translate into commercial activity is a priority.

A more entrepreneurial approach means that where we can package and sell our services and resources, we will. No area is to be left untouched; from the new package of services being offered by the Chemistry Department, the chocolates we are processing at the Cocoa Research Centre, to the RDI Fund national citrus project we launched in December, as featured in this issue of the paper. A key resource in this undertaking is our UWI Graduates, our Alumni, leaders in all fields. We are going to mobilise them more than ever before.

It is about making our resources and expertise available and making our resources and expertise work for us, that is, leveraging our assets; the essence of sustainable development. It is about transformation.
We must stay focused

As he gets going for his second term as Principal of the St Augustine Campus, Professor Clement Sankat talks to Nazma Muller about pulling the country's resources together.

“The perennial problem of how to diversify Trinidad and Tobago’s economy away from a hydrocarbon-based one can only be solved through a combined effort by the public sector, the private sector and research bodies such as The University of the West Indies,” says UWI Pro Vice-Chancellor and St Augustine Campus Principal Professor Clement Sankat. “As things stand, the few hundred researchers who are currently engaged in meaningful research in the country work on a wide range of disparate, unrelated projects. As to where and how their intellect should be engaged or harnessed to develop the country… well, we must build consensus among the population about the kind of development that the country should pursue.”

“There is no reason why we shouldn’t aspire to be like Singapore or even a South Korea,” says Professor Sankat. “Being small is a challenge for T&T but it also has its advantages. We should be able to manage and mobilise our people more easily than a larger country, for instance.”

To follow in the path of Asian tigers like South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, and make the leap from underdeveloped to almost developed, T&T must invest heavily in creating a fertile environment where research and development fuels creativity and innovation, with the aim of generating new infrastructure, products and services that can bring new value and support new policy formulation that enhances the quality of life of our citizens.

“Singapore has a population of five million but less than one-eighth the land area of T&T; yet it has managed to raise the standard of living of its population to almost that of a developed nation. Space being the one thing that it didn’t have, Singapore invested in creating an efficient transport system that minimises traffic and compensates for the prohibitively high cost of owning a personal vehicle. Wouldn’t that make sense in Trinidad, where every day thousands of people spend hours sitting – usually alone in their own car – in traffic? By now, with the proper empirical data, and the will to execute, we should have been able to come up with measures to solve the traffic situation across the country.

“Research should focus not only on wealth creation, but on treating behavioural and social issues,” Professor Sankat pointed out. “We need to put in place policies that can move us along from where we are now to where we want to be.” In that vein, research should also be applied to governance issues – including local government and constitutional amendments that would, for example, safeguard developmental projects, so they cannot be shelved by successive governments without good cause. “Some think that constitutional change will be the be-all and end-all, that it will fix all our problems,” said Professor Sankat, “but while this is important as we move forward, there are deeper social and cultural issues that will have to be dealt with.”

“Social dependence on the State is one area that should be addressed and while social safety nets are important, and good criteria should be employed here, we should also be looking to build sustainable economies,” he says. “Resources ought to be channelled into creating an environment for private enterprise and entrepreneurial growth to flourish.”

“We must first decide what we want Trinidad and Tobago to look like in ten years. And once we agree on that vision and the projects that can get us there, let us rally around them and ensure long-term continuity in spite of leadership changes at the national and institutional levels.”

“To this end, R&D must take in all aspects of our society – education, healthcare, crime, gender and discrimination, the creative sector – and provide our leaders with evidence-based ideas on how to make positive change, and create exciting opportunities for the next generation of Trinbagonians,” the Pro Vice-Chancellor says.

He believes T&T should focus on creating new products and services for the global market place. Indigenous products, such as our world-class cocoa, Scorpion peppers, chadon beni, spices and seasonings, can all be developed for export. “So should be our music, our musical instruments, our carnival and other national festivals.”

An engineer by profession, Professor Sankat gave Grenada the nutmeg cracker, which he invented as a young researcher at The UWI. T&T gave the world the first coconut dehusker, after all, and a young UWI engineer first developed the chataigne peeler. “We developed a pigeon pea harvester and a pigeon pea sheller a long time ago. Have we developed industries around these? He noted that many in the private sector remain content with simply dominating the manufacturing sector in the Caribbean region, and are not rising quickly to the challenge of innovating and creating goods and services that are globally competitive.” He noted the success of the SM Jaleel’s “Chubby” brand seen in many countries and an example of our possibilities.

“We must first decide what we want Trinidad and Tobago to look like in ten years. And once we agree on that vision and the projects that can get us there, let us rally around them and ensure long-term continuity in spite of leadership changes at the national and institutional levels.”

“Even in the chemical and petrochemical industry, from which we produce methanol, ammonia and urea and are globally recognized, we are seen as primary producers,” he pointed out. “We must go deeper. We are not seen as a producer of high-tech goods. Meanwhile, Costa Rica, with a population of 4.3 million, is producing micro-processors for export.”

Our music and film industries are also potential revenue earners. “But are we doing enough to propel our creative industries to the top?” Professor Sankat asked. “Tourism in Tobago should be booming, not struggling. We must stay focused and determined to move these sectors.”

“While endless reports have been commissioned and written over the years, implementation has bedeviled us. We must first decide what we want Trinidad and Tobago to look like in ten years,” Professor Sankat stated firmly. “And once we agree on that vision and the projects that can get us there, let us rally around them and ensure long-term continuity in spite of leadership changes at the national and institutional levels. Otherwise this is going to significantly retard our development and hurt our pockets!”

He suggests that a social compact between political parties (and perhaps the unions) to do what is best for the country would go a long way to ensuring that policies regarding long-term development cannot be changed, including, for example, food and agriculture, industrial and infrastructural development. “We have to be building upon previous achievements for continuous improvement.”

In his view, transport and communications are two prerequisites for development. Building highways from San Fernando to Cedros and to Mayaro would open up the south of the island to investors, tourism and manufacturing, he suggested. “Industry and enterprises will follow these highways!” he insists. “In a recession you ought to spend money to create new opportunities for wealth creation. But importantly, we will also bring relief to these distant, frequently underserved communities.”

While he agrees that wetlands and watersheds must be protected and other countries have done this, there is a lot of land that can and should be developed. In deciding how this development should take place, the government should draw on evidence-based research from UWI and other research institutions. T&T must move forward using a framework of knowledge and innovation that is research driven. “Already we have some elements of the foundation that is needed to do this – the UWI, UTU, SFC, CARIRI, CARDI, NIHHERST, MIC, etc – but these elements are not co-ordinated, directed or focused. If we could coordinate this group of 900 or so researchers, work with the private and other public sector agencies to address specific thematic areas, invest significantly in this, then we would make a lot more progress,” Professor Sankat concluded. “We need to put a National Commission on Science, Technology and Innovation in place to manage all of this beginning with NIHHERST for which a relevant study was already done. This was best practice in many countries,” he said.
With a good-sized crowd, decent weather, fantastic food and top-class entertainment laid out in attractive and hospitable surroundings, the 23rd edition of the UWI Fete was once again reviewed as an outstanding affair on the carnival agenda.

The Fete, noted as one of the primary fund-raising efforts by The UWI through the UWI Development and Endowment Fund to help students in need, came off on January 13 at its traditional home, the grounds of the Office of the Campus Principal.

Among entertainers were Stalin and David Rudder, Roy Cape, Dil-E-Nadan, JMC Triveni and Kes the Band. The food fare was sumptuous, with many booths featuring cuisine with Arabic or Syrian/Lebanese flavours to complement all the other culturally seasoned delicacies that were available.

Themed, Yalla!, a beautiful command (Let’s Go!), the Fete did indeed encourage quite a few to obey its summons. Here’s a sample of some of the images captured by photographers, Benedict Cupid, Yohann Govia and Aneel Karim.
Can the second mouse get the cheese?

The UWI, through the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, has embarked on an initiative to assist in the revitalization of the Trinidad and Tobago citrus industry. This project seeks, amongst others, to develop a new, sustainable agronomic model for the re-development of the Citrus Industry in Trinidad and Tobago; to increase opportunities for agri-entrepreneurs and to increase domestic food and nutrition security.

The project uses a demand-led approach where local farmers and processors can team up to get at least 25% of the $50 million frozen concentrated orange juice (FCOJ) import market and 50% of the apple and grapes market which has an import value of $25 million. The approach here is to increase fruit consumption across the youth population including through the School Nutrition Programme – to augment the health of the nation’s children; develop a campaign to increase consumption of citrus juices across the population and to increase competition to capture market share for local juices.

The project started with the nation’s school teachers since July 2012, encouraging them to simulate demand amongst school children.

Dr Govind Seepersad, Citrus RDI (Research Development Impact) Fund Project Team Leader reminded participants that no longer does the citrus business reside on selling fruits in recycled bags and boxes, placed in heaps and looking for buyers. The world has changed and the way business is conducted has changed. Suppliers must recognize that they have produced a great, healthy, nutritious product, one which buyers are willing to pay good prices if presented properly.

New marketing strategies are being developed to simulate demand. This includes highlighting the health benefits as a major driver to simulate demand.

Entrepreneurs are not to limit themselves by fresh fruit and juices alone. The project also highlighted emerging global trends such as new uses for lemon oil.

On the juice side, they are looking at a new acidulant application of lemon juice on fruit juices and derivatives with acid deficiencies. Lemon juice is also being used as a preservative for baby foods and lime lends itself easily to industrialization.

In the developing countries we found a range of new products. The trend of large companies is that of serving the food and beverage industry with the “freshest best quality citrus flavours and products”. Companies are now using words such as: “From the Named Fruit” citrus flavours “designed to enhance the overall flavour profile” of your juices, fruit juice drinks or confectionery products. They have recognized that successful flavours provide the cornerstone of a quality brand by building into the juice product: “a true and motivating difference in kind”.

Marketing trends are using citrus as a specialty product. Integrating proven flavoring components creates a synergistic result, providing “a beverage with a distinctive and exclusive profile”.

Also, they are highlighting: “Flavour is more than Taste”. Flavours provide an “emotion to the senses”, and “flavouring preferences are unique for each customer”. Even packaging and presentation have changed, making the products more user-friendly and attractive. Thus, local producers have a range of option and creativity to choose, from simple to innovative packaging to that of fresh juice and retail-sized concentrate packets.

Thus, as we try to re-engineer the local citrus industry, can the second mouse get the cheese? We think they can.

ONE-STOP CHEMISTRY

It’s not really the first place you’d go to for routine services requiring chemical analysis; it offers something more specialized than that. In fact, although it does offer some routine lab tests – soil or water analysis, measuring chemical content and so on – the Chemistry Department of the new Faculty of Science and Technology has come up with a practicable way to package its services that draws on a broad range of skills, equipment and technology to bring clients consultancy and analysis from one stop at UWI.

The Department, headed by Professor Anderson Maxwell, has come up with a business plan that focuses on leveraging its competencies to generate revenue and broaden its impact in a way it has not done before. Over time, the Department realized that several clients from various industries seek their services, but do not always know what tests they need or how to use the results. The Chemistry Department’s academic-led research service will be able to fill that need.

Under the leadership of Dr Leonette Cox, clients from academic and industry areas will find guidance from the Department as to what range of services will best serve their needs and once the model has been agreed, she will gather the requisite resources to fill them.

Dr Cox feels the Department can be the incubator of scientific and technological answers to solve the region’s socio-political and economic problems. They have expertise in a wide range of areas including solid-waste management (environment, plastics, reclamation); public health and safety; environmental issues; renewable energy and new product development (eg, drug design), she says.

“In the past,” she says, “the services have been available but they were not offered as a package and were often only used by people who happened to know of the Chemistry Department’s capacity.”

Now, she says, they want the world to know they are a one-stop shop and they’re open for business.
The School in Pan

“The name birdsong was chosen because the intention was to make music as sweet as the songs of birds and as with the songs of birds, different birds could be singing at the same time but the overall effect is harmonious music – no individual is more important than the other. And so, lowercase to underscore that all are equal, all have the same weight. All have a valid voice.” – Amanda Joseph.

When the birdsong Academy was set up in 2004, it was another step in the vision of creating a global brand of music excellence that the organisation had set itself when it was founded 40 years ago. Then, a group of mainly UWI students and staff, idealistic and full of seventies’ fire had come together to make a difference through pan.

The Academy came to be with a solemn mandate to empower the next generation, and to this end, decided it would accept students from 11 to 18 years old. Its focus, while being the development of musicianship, would be constructed on platforms that nurtured development: life skills, counselling on social, academic and economic issues, leadership grooming and so on.

Eight years later, its diary is impressive. From September to June, the Saturday programme runs from 8.30am to 4.30pm (and the five-week vacation programme had 80 students last year). Every June, every October, students do the Associated Boards of the Royal Schools of Music Theory and Practical examinations.

Last year, they put on performances at both Divali and Christmas time, and this year, Andy Narell will be arranging his composition, “The Last Word,” for Panorama. On June 22, they are having a scholarship benefit concert at NAPA, and a closing concert on August 10 at Queen’s Hall.

The not-for-profit company, birdsong, with its 16-member board (chaired by UWI Prof Clement Imbert), actually has three distinct thrusts. One is the birdsong Steel Orchestra which brings the music and entertainment; another is the Academy and the third is the social enterprises that have been agents of income and employment.

In 2002, using a business model with a board, they registered their Daily Environmental Services Ltd as a company and provided just that to a range of customers. In 2011, a similar company, bEnt was formed and the plan for this 40th year is to set up another with a different focus: food. With their eyes on ten acres at Orange Grove, the plan is for birdsong Agricultural Investments Ltd (bAgi) to get involved in agronomy and to continue the training along the lines of managing small businesses like farms.

Dennis Phillip, an economist of many parts, is one of the founding members who is on the current board, and has been mainly responsible for the Academy. Apart from trying to raise funds and secure partnerships, he has been devising and implementing the programmes that seek to expose the youngsters to the world of possibility and to give them the skills to inhabit it. Two of their students are currently abroad on scholarships. Being at birdsong, he says, opens their minds to possibilities because of the range of their exposure and the nurturing and encouragement they receive. Even so, he says, it is still difficult for them to believe that they can step outside of the parameters their environments have imposed; but still, lives have been changed.

Amanda Joseph, another board member, says the Academy is like a second home for some who live in challenging circumstances. Here, they can experience what it feels like to be good at something. One of the assistant tutors told her that the vacation camp he’d attended when he was 15 saved him from just “gambling on the block.” Another who was not doing well at school, was so determined and dedicated that he is now a member of the Fire Services Band.

Another student’s schoolwork was slipping through excessive Facebooking, she says. “We were able, with their parents, to mandate an improvement in behaviour and grades as a condition of continued enrolment in the Academy; grades were up at the end of the next term and his parents were pleased to say he was behaving more politely at home.”

“A consequence of having a free music education programme is that young people who would probably never meet, come together as equals to learn and make music and it is the very democratic measures of hard work, dedication, discipline and responsibility that determine who succeeds and advances. That they make friends despite different economic, social and academic circumstances is an added bonus,” she said. (Vaneisa Baksh)
And so it was. The Homecoming. From Daaga Hall to Daaga Auditorium. Almost 36 years later, birdsong returned to The UWI St. Augustine campus, on the same spot that birthed it. Except that it was not the old gym and old Guild Hall, but the new, sophisticated Daaga Auditorium. And it was not the group of young, exuberant UWI students in our early twenties eager to learn this truly fascinating and addictive musical instrument, but rather, a group of school children of the Tunapuna community and beyond, who could read music, who were playing pan and standard musical instruments with a most varied and rich repertoire. What an achievement!

The vision of the original birdsong finally fulfilled. On that Saturday in August 2009, it was an emotional, nostalgic feeling, indeed, a deep sense of pride that enveloped me as a founding member who had played on that same spot, on a Saturday evening in September 1973 when the then Chancellor of UWI, Sir Hugh Wooding had launched birdsong.

It was hot and there were several speeches. We were perspiring with nervousness. We had practised long and hard for that moment, all through the long vacation (summer as it is now called!) on discarded pans from Phase II, under the instruction of Selwyn Jones (Joe Beetle) and the visionary leadership of Teddy Belgrave. Unlike the birdsong Academy of 2009, our repertoire for the night was no more than six tunes, including what became our signature tune: ‘Memories’ by the Mighty Sparrow.

Dressed in our dark pants and blue and white flowered shirts that did not fit too well, we were excited nevertheless. Freddie Lera (Bug), Eastlynne Greene, Anthony Bartholomew (Bartho), James Howard and Joseph Howard on tenor pan; Michael Adams, Leslie Callender, Dave Clement, Andre Moses, Rhoda Reddock and Albert Vincent (Vinco) on double seconds; Terrence Farrell, Gerry Kangalee and Cyril St. Louis on the six bass; Jerry Sagar, Charles Da Silva (Charlo) and Ronald Hinds on the double tenor; Johnny ‘Slim’ Andalcio, Dennis Phillip and Margaret Hinds on the triple guitar; Cathy Ann Jones, Ronald Sandy and yours truly on the tenor bass, and the rhythm section comprising Teddy Belgrave, Henry Williams (Henny) playing iron with ‘Panther’ from Canada Hall’s cafeteria as the drummer. (I apologise for any omissions or errors in the names.)

For the Homecoming, Teddy, Dave, Jerry, Dennis and I from the original group were present, as were several others who had played in the band over the years.

And what was that original dream, that vision that had so captivated us that we would head to the panyard three times a week and sometimes more? It was the dream that birdsong would make a difference; that we would bring pan to the people; that, by virtue of our very presence on the campus and through our instrumentality, UWI would become the seat of pan research; that our music would be as sweet as the song of a bird; that the special brand of music we would be playing would have an everlasting impact on the society.

Beholding the event of August 8, 2009 reassured us that the vision was alive. Dennis Phillip, leader after Teddy Belgrave, has been determined, purposeful and relentless in his effort to ensure that birdsong makes that difference. Through the creation of the birdsong Academy in 2004, the band is finally having that positive impact in our society that is crying out for organizations and people to reach out and help our youths. By providing a structured forum for young people to achieve music literacy, learn to play the national instrument as well as other conventional ones, birdsong has gone where no other steelband organization has dared to go. Birdsong has taken the lead and is deliberately using the national instrument as a medium that could restore, renew and revive Trinidad and Tobago; birdsong has achieved that vision for the music to be as sweet as the bird’s song; birdsong is successfully playing a brand of music that incorporates the national instrument and conventional instruments in a variety of musical idioms through the work of Raf Robertson, Richard Quarterless, Terrence Sealey, Mark Hosten and others. Through the band’s close association with Professor Clement Imbert, its current chairman, we can even claim to be part of the pan research that is taking place at UWI through Professor Imbert and Professor Brian Copeland. As Dennis articulated in his closing remarks at the Daaga Auditorium, the objective remains the same as it was in 1973 at Daaga Hall, “we have to leave the world a little better than we met it.”

Jennifer Joseph is the University and Campus Librarian, based at the Alma Jordan Library, UWI St. Augustine. This is a slightly edited version of an article she wrote on August 13 2009, celebrating birdsong. This year marks its fortieth anniversary.
The visit to Rutgers was one of the activities planned for my sabbatical year's leave at UWI. It was a great privilege to be invited by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, as our own history at UWI, though young by comparison, has some similarity. Today, with more than 58,000 students, distributed over five different physical campuses located within New Jersey, Rutgers is one of the largest and most diverse public research universities in the nation. Women and Gender Studies and Caribbean Studies have been added to an impressive menu of scholarly offerings. The cross faculty connections that hosted my visit presented a good example of the contemporary interdisciplinarity in learning communities. My first meeting with Puerto Rican born Yolanda Martinez-San Miguel (Professor in the Department of Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies, Jamaican born Professor Michelle Stephens, and Indian born Anjali Nerlekar of the Department of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Literature threw some light on the nature of this collaboration. A relatively new programme called Critical Caribbean Studies supported by the Rutgers President’s Office had been initiated in 2011. This programme aimed to foster multi-disciplinary research about the Caribbean around four clusters of concern:

1) Critical Caribbean Studies, Theory, and the Disciplines
2) Archipelagic Studies and Creolization
3) Caribbean Aesthetics, Poetics and Politics, and
4) Caribbean Colonialities – a critical revision of debates on colonialism, neocolonialism, postcolonialism and decolonial thinking.

While we do not call what we do within our region Caribbean Studies, extracted from its geographical location, the umbrella of Critical Caribbean studies covers much of my work in film, visuality and gender studies and that of many of my colleagues at UWL, especially those in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The week’s events comprised several different engagements. One was a public reception and screening where two of my films “Windows to the Past” and “The Sign of the Loa” from the documentary series “A Different Imagination” generated a lively conversation on memory, belonging and history. Several key readings from my work had been circulated in preparation for this visit. My book, “Imaging the Caribbean: Culture and Visual Translation,” was a primary text in a graduate course called Caribbean Theorizing: Coloniality, Philosophy and Literature, taught by Professor Nelson Maldonado Torres and I had the pleasure of lunch and conversation with a group of graduate students from this course at the graciously appointed Rutgers Faculty Club. A second very exciting session was the Roundtable Panel in which I was joined by two other scholars, Professor Tatiana Flores (Art History and Institute for Women in the Arts, Rutgers) and Professor Aisha Khan (Anthropology, New York University) as we addressed the broad theme of Approaches to Critical Caribbean Studies.

Classroom visits to two courses, first Introduction to Caribbean Studies taught by Professor Kathy Lopez and Caribbean Pluraltities and Indo-Caribbean Literature taught by Professor Anjali Nelekak demonstrated the growing interest of a wide range of students, many not directly linked to the Caribbean in Caribbean studies.

The visit allowed other academic explorations: a visit to the Mason Gross School of Arts which houses the prestigious film programme of Rutgers; one to the Alexander Library where I was assisted by Rutgers’ librarian Kayo Denda for material related to my current research on Irish/US/Caribbean migration. There was also a chance to meet Denda for material related to my current research on Irish/ US/Caribbean migration. There was also a chance to meet up again with Professor David Hughes a Rutgers geographer who’d spent his sabbatical year at UWI.

I returned to Trinidad, re-energized by the collegiality I found at Rutgers, by the generous sharing of ideas and the close and critical interrogation of my work by a group of distinguished scholars outside of the region. The exchange brought me back to a question that I had posed during my elected year as President of the Caribbean Studies Association in 2008. How do we centre the Caribbean in Caribbean Studies? The Critical Caribbean Studies Cluster at Rutgers opens up a valuable space for dialogue between scholars in the region and those who examine it from a distance, a middle ground for the meeting of perspectives and sharing of insights. Rutgers has opportunities for publishing and post doctoral visits that should appeal to Caribbean based scholars. Yolanda Martinez-San Miguel extended an invitation to manuscripts for the Rutgers University Press book series in Critical Caribbean Studies (see link for more details: http://www.yolandamartinez-sannmiguel.com/rutgers-university-press-book-series-in-critical-caribbean-studies.html) and to interested young scholars to apply for Post-doctoral fellowships (see http://www.yolandamartinez-sannmiguel.com/postdoctoral-fellowship-in-critical-caribbean-studies-at-rutgers.html)
What Binds Art and Language?

BY PROFESSOR TATIANA FLORES

In our selection of readings, there were two texts that related to the visual arts, my area of expertise: the introduction to the tour de force book “Imagining the Caribbean” and “MORALITY AND IMAGINATION – MYTHOPOETICS OF Gender and Culture in the Caribbean – The Trilogy” by Professor Mohammed. Where the book constitutes an attempt to understand the Caribbean through a journey through images from the distant past, including some that have no discernible direct correlation to the Caribbean but are masterfully woven into the narrative nonetheless, the “Mythopoetics” article reads as a manifesto for the creation of images and other types of art forms in the future. In “Imagining the Caribbean,” we find multiple images of the colonial encounter, including maps, representations of slavery and indentureship in various forms, the construction of the Caribbean picturesque, and the ever elusive subject of the native indigenous population – that is to say, images of the Caribbean subjects by its European colonizers – in “Mythopoetics” Mohammed offers us ways out of what she calls “the imploded world views of the Caribbean colonial experience.”

In this movingly utopian text, she writes: “Our salvation lies in our capacity to create new and more inclusive mythologies, to move beyond the homeland myths of origin, as if return were at all possible one day,” citing Earl Lovelace’s proclamation that the task of the writer is “to lead society out of despair, to constantly provide hope.” She advocates a poetics of the transcendent, as opposed to realism and the rehashing of the familiar reductive binaries of African and European, rational self and irrational other, male and female, and tradition and modernity, in order to “move these societies beyond the literalness of any single group’s narrative to the melding of the historical experience which of necessity contains both the agony and ecstasy of survival.”

My own research cuts through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, examining in particular the conceptualization of modernity and modernism in Latin America at the beginning of the twentieth century and also the construction and presentation of the art of the present. Earlier, it was common for writers to engage in a similar advocacy as Prof. Mohammed does in her “Mythopoetics” article. Artists and thinkers in Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, the Andes, and indeed throughout the region, called on like-minded individuals grappling with similar issues in their search for a collective identity to consider certain approaches, such as revalorizing the indigenous world, the rhythms of Africa, and the forms of vernacular culture in literary and artistic creations. That kind of advocacy is not at all common now. Although art in our era of globalization is more plural than it ever was before, it is also more individualistic, and the art world remains more interested in identifying individual “geniuses” than with excavating generational or other kinds of collective narratives.

Poetics has not had much of a place in the contemporary art world either. I think it has come to be seen as antiquated, relegated to a similar state of oblivion in contemporary culture as aesthetics. The most recent edition of the Sao Paulo biennial, however, which I had the great fortune to see last week, was decidedly anti-trendy and invoked poetics in full force. Indeed, its title is “The Imminence of Poetics,” a concept which was inspired by a conversation with none other than Homi Bhabha. Writing in the catalogue, Bhabha describes poetics in relation to language: “Language never gets bogged down in reality; it hovers over the surface of the world and from that hovering height configures the making – the poetics – of our designs of our daily habitations and the horizons that point to our new destinations. Is this not why so many important liberatory thinkers – feminist, anti-imperialist, postcolonial, ecological, gay – find their persuasive ethical values of freedom and fairness in the flight of language, its metaphoricity?” Bhabha goes on to name Martí, Gandhi, Césaire, and Fanon, among others. As he continues, his commentary on the emancipatory potential of poetics resembles the power ascribed to it by Prof. Mohammed. “Language’s capacity for counterfactual experience and pre-figurative representation allows us the freedom to live paradoxically: to deeply identify with our embattled ways of being while envisaging, at the same time, the possibilities of reconstruction – the ways and means of affiliating with enlarged and inclusive conditions of life.”

The question to ask then, of the biennial and of Prof. Mohammed, is how do we configure the relationship between art and language? Does the image have the same liberatory possibilities as the written word? As an art historian, I find time and time again that the word is privileged over the image, and, indeed, much of Prof. Mohammed’s work is involved with justifying why images are important. Can a painting or another sort of artistic intervention have the same power as a manifesto? We find an answer in Prof. Mohammed’s writings in the following passage from the “Mythopoetics” article: “I am attempting to link the idea of ‘morality’ to the imagination, an imagination which gives primacy to the visual, to the collective unconscious of a piece of nature that we share amongst us and that has been entrusted to our preservation, and that which makes it possible for us to envisage beyond our present experience and perceptions.”

In the biennial, the reintroduction of poetics into the discussion of the visual arts was gratifying because it has not been a topic worthy of attention (at least in mainstream manifestations) for a long time. Since the chief curator, Luis Pérez Oramas, is a poet himself, it is not surprising.

As I read through Prof. Mohammed’s work in Sao Paulo, I was struck by the wonderful synchronicity between her “mythopoetics” and the biennial. As he so rightly notes in her writings and films, western conceptions of art have long relegated the Caribbean to a marginal status. The biennial’s reorientation of the art of the present towards poetics and other possible ways of seeing gives me hope that we can find a space for the Caribbean in mainstream art discourse.
Pumpkin Farmer Forum

From farm to fork

By Wendy-Ann Isaac

The UWI, St Augustine, in collaboration with McGill University, Canada has embarked on an ambitious project which aims at improving the nutrition and health of CARICOM populations with a systems approach to food availability, safety and quality. The four-year project: “Improving the nutrition and health of Caricom populations by increased food availability and diversity through sustainable agricultural technologies,” began in March 2011 and targets four Caricom territories: Trinidad, St. Kitts, St. Lucia and Guyana. The project is funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Canadian International Development Agency through the Canadian Food Security Research Fund.

The project was conceptualised with a farm to fork approach with agricultural diversification, conservation of water and the efficient use of land increasing farmer productivity and supplying the population, particularly vulnerable groups such as women and children.

The research activities in this project revolve around three fundamental themes: Community nutrition and health; socioeconomic and market access, and water and land resources. The latter comprises a number of subthemes: protected agriculture and open field diversification, irrigation and water and soil conservation; small ruminant production; food safety and quality and postharvest technology.

The project targets primary school children, women and smallholder farmers as the agents of change, given the dominant role these groups have in influencing household eating behaviour. This approach increases the likelihood of success in achieving food and nutrition security in the project countries.

Under the subtheme “protected agriculture and open field diversification,” the research team has evaluated various pumpkin varieties at the University Field Station and in collaboration with farmers from the Cunupia Farmers’ Association.

Pumpkin (Cucurbita maxima) is an important traditional vegetable crop in Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean countries. It is a commodity loaded with vitamins A and E, minerals (iron, potassium, calcium and phosphorus), anti-oxidants such as leutin, xanthin, and carotenes, dietary fibre and low calories. These antioxidants decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease and lung cancer and help protect against age related eye disease. It is an important part of the local diet where it is mainly produced by small farmers. In 2004, Trinidad exported over 2200 tonnes of pumpkin which translates into substantial foreign exchange earnings. Production has since been declining. There is a gap between actual and potential yields and hence there are opportunities for enhanced productivity through the adoption of improved varieties in the local production systems. Varieties suitable for the local market are determined by taste and thickness of skin, whereas those suitable for the export market are the smooth variety, while conserving land and water.

Many farmers grow pumpkins because it takes a relatively short time to produce fruits, between 3-3.5 months. Yields are between 8,000-10,000 pounds per acre. Most farmers plant one crop in June/July and the other crop in October/November.

Participants in consumer sensory evaluation panel

Farmers who have access to irrigation systems can often produce the crop year round. If pumpkins are harvested, handled and stored correctly, they can remain marketable for up to two months. The varieties under evaluation include Crapaud Back (popular local variety), Bodles Globe (new Jamaican variety) and Future NP-999 (Chinese variety).

The project hosted a Pumpkin farmer forum in December, 2012 at the Frank Stockdale Building, St. Augustine Campus. The forum was opened by Dean, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, Prof Carlisle Pemberton and presenters included Dr Isabella Granderson, Dr Wendy-Ann Isaac, Dr Majed Mohammed and Prof Neela Badrie.

This forum allowed discussion on the major concerns facing the industry and share best practices in production. Farmers were also introduced to new trial varieties that would improve production. Representatives from the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago (ASTT), Cunupia Farmers Association, the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Company (NAMDEVCO), Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA), the National School Feeding Programme (NSDLS) and Ms Albada Beehkm, Research Officer from the Ministry of Food Production as well as UWI technicians and lecturers attended.

They participated in a consumer preference evaluation of five pumpkin varieties, including three of the varieties being evaluated, Chinese squash (a new variety gaining popularity in local markets) and CES STARZ (a new variety developed by the Ministry of Food Production for the export market). They evaluated the overall acceptability based on colour, texture, taste, sweetness and cooking quality and rated their preference for export and local markets. They also sampled several pumpkin products including, bread, muffins, cookies, patties, drinks, ice cream and soup. The Forum will be one of many planned outreach workshops to educate farmers about best practices to improve production both in scope and variety while conserving land and water.

For further information on the project, please contact Ms. Takiyah Defour, Project Manager, 662-2002 ext. 83200. Dr Wendy-Ann Isaac is at the Department of Food Production, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, UWI, St. Augustine.
SAVE THESE DATES

- **RESUME WRITING**
  Thursday 24th January

- **INTERVIEW PREPARATION & NETWORKING**
  Thursday 31st January

- **WOW SEMINAR**
  Saturday 2nd February

- **MOCK INTERVIEWS**
  Saturday 23rd February
  Faculties: Engineering
  Food & Agriculture
  Science & Technology
  Medical Sciences

- **MOCK INTERVIEWS**
  Saturday 9th March
  Faculties: Law
  Social Sciences
  Humanities & Education

- **NETWORKING PRACTICAL**
  Thursday 14th March

- **RECRUITMENT FAIR**
  Thursday 21st March
  (Vacation Employment)
  Friday 22nd March
  (Graduate Employment)

REGISTRATION CLOSES WEDNESDAY 30TH JANUARY, 2013
Students must register to ensure participation in WOW 2013
Visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/wow](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/wow) for more information
Please visit Student Advisory Services (SAS) to register

The World of Work Programme is made possible through the generosity of Republic Bank Limited,
as part of its Power to Make a Difference Programme
FOR TOO LONG, language barriers have limited the ways in which the Caribbean is read, perceived and interpreted. Border Crossings removes these barriers by ingeniously presenting all of its stories in English, French and Spanish. In this groundbreaking collection of short stories, the words of celebrated writers of the English-speaking Caribbean – like Trinidad and Tobago’s Shani Mootoo and Jamaica’s Olive Senior – stand side by side with those of storytellers from Guadeloupe, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Edited by Dr Nicole Roberts, a lecturer in Spanish and Hispanic Literature, and Dr Elizabeth Walcott-Hackshaw, a senior lecturer in French and Francophone Literature, from the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics (MLL), Faculty of Humanities and Education, UWI, St. Augustine, the anthology’s offerings do not, by and large, have a comforting end. Instead, they suggest the possibilities and complexities of depicting the plurality of the Caribbean, one that is open-ended and without borders.

“In this groundbreaking collection of short stories, the words of celebrated writers of the English-speaking Caribbean – like Trinidad and Tobago’s Shani Mootoo and Jamaica’s Olive Senior – stand side by side with those of storytellers from Guadeloupe, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Cuba.”

SAM SELVON COLLECTION on Memory of the World Register

The Memory of the World Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (MOWLAC) has inscribed the Sam Selvon Collection, housed at The Alma Jordan Library of The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus, on the regional Memory of the World register. The nomination was accepted during the Regional Meeting of MOWLAC, hosted by Trinidad and Tobago in October 2012, where the main item on the agenda was the assessment of 13 nominations of regional documentary heritage collections for possible inscription on the Regional Memory of the World Register.

The Sam Selvon Collection spans the period 1948-1985 and consists of manuscripts of Selvon’s published works: poems, plays, short stories, articles and non-fiction. It also contains correspondence and manuscripts of many unpublished items. The collection is significant to the region as it provides documentary evidence of the work of an important writer who contributed to the development of Caribbean literature. In the renowned trilogy Lonely Londoners, Moses Ascending, and Moses Migrating, Selvon captures class struggles; and the sociological and psychological experiences of the West Indian immigrant in Britain in the 1950s.

UNESCO established the Memory of the World (MOW) Programme 20 years ago, following a growing awareness of the inadequate preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage (books, manuscripts, drawings, maps, films, etc.) in various parts of the world. The MOW Programme recognizes and maintains registers of documentary heritage of international, regional and national significance. Trinidad and Tobago has the second largest number of collections on the international register from the Latin American and Caribbean regions, a total of six: the Derek Walcott Collection, the Eric Williams Memorial Collection, the CLR James Collection, the Registry of Slaves of the British Caribbean (1817-1834), the Constantine Collection, and the Records of the Indian Indentured Labourers of Trinidad and Tobago (1845-1917). These collections are housed at the National Library, the National Archives and at The UWI, St. Augustine.
UWI CALENDAR of EVENTS
JANUARY – AUGUST 2013

ANDY NARELL
& RELATOR
January 30
Learning Resource Centre
UWI, St. Augustine

The Psychiatry Unit of the Faculty of Medical Sciences hosts Andy Narell and Relator, along with special guests David Rudder and Lord Superior, as The University of Calypso comes to The University of the West Indies. Limited advanced tickets cost $250 and include complimentary drinks & hors d’oeuvres.

For further information and tickets, please call the Faculty of Medical Sciences at 662-3968.

POSTGRADUATE OPEN DAY
February 21
UWI St. Augustine Campus

An open day where you can obtain accurate postgraduate information pertaining to programmes and scholarships in order to help interested persons in advancing their personal and professional development. There will also be the opportunity to meet expert research and teaching staff and do on-site applications.

For further information on postgraduate applications please call 662-2002 exts. 84367, 84191, 82379.

THE OLD YARD
3 February, 2013
UWI Department of Creative and Festival Arts
Agostini St, St Augustine
11am

The Old Yard, the evolution of the Viey La Cou, is a dynamic mix of a journey into cultural history and a traditional carnival masquerade showcase within the format of a heritage fair. Set in this traditional environment, this year’s event features a Tobago Speech Band.

For further information, please contact Roberta Quarless at Roberta.Quarless@sta.uwi.edu

WORLD OF WORK 2013
INTERVIEW PREP AND NETWORKING
Thursday 31 January, SPEC
SEMINAR
Saturday 2 February, SPEC
MOCK INTERVIEWS (FSA, FEng & FMS)
Saturday 23 February, SPEC
MOCK INTERVIEWS (FSS & FHE)
Saturday 9 March, SPEC

For further information, please visit www.sta.uwi.edu/wow or call 662-2002 ext. 82325.

UWI DISCOVER TOURS
BRAZIL
17 May-9 June
INDIA
12 July - 2 August
Discover contemporary Brazil or India under the stewardship of The UWI. These trips are open to staff, students, alumni and the community of tertiary institutions.

For further information, please visit www.sta.uwi.edu/discover or call 662-2002 ext. 84184

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE
22 March, 2013
Hyatt Regency, Trinidad

The Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business hosts its Distinguished Leadership and Innovation Conference featuring Marcus Buckingham, a best-selling author, leadership expert, strength strategist and founder of the Marcus Buckingham Company which specializes in the creation of tools and training to help managers and organizations access the untapped potential of their people’s strengths.

To register, persons can access the registration form from the website, and either email it to conferencing@lokjackgsb.edu.tt or fax to 662-1411.

JOUVAY AYITI

Jouvay Ayiti is a mas camp-us: the band is a collaboration involving the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), at The UWI. Curepe Scherzando Steelband, the Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies and Studio 66. It winds up its programme of workshops and its Masters of the Mas series (the final one is a tribute to Bill Trotman on 1 February at Studio 66).

Its Jouvet 2013 production is ‘Mamaguy and Pappyshow in a Family Bacchanal,’ with music from Scherzando. The cost is $150.

For further information, please email jouvay.ayiti@gmail.com or call 3200041.

UWI TODAY wants to hear from you

UWI TODAY welcomes submissions by staff and students for publication in the paper. Please send your suggestions, comments, or articles for consideration to uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu