

FRAGMENTS OF EPIC MEMORY

September 2021 – February 2022



Gomo George, *Women's Carnival Group*, 1996. Watercolour on rag paper, 55.9 x 76.2 cm. Courtesy of the artist. © Gomo George.

Fragments of Epic Memory will invite students to experience the history of the Caribbean and its diaspora through historical photographs and a range of artworks by contemporary artists. Inspired by poet Derek Walcott's Nobel lecture, the exhibition presents a selection of the Art Gallery of Ontario's recently acquired **Montgomery Collection of Caribbean Photographs**—photographs ranging from 1840 to 1940, tracing the region's histories from post-emancipation into the 20th century.



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, VISUAL ARTS, MEDIA ARTS, LANGUAGE

SOCIAL STUDIES

Grade 6: Communities in Canada: Past and Present, Canada’s Interactions with the Global Community

Grade 11: Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology (HSP3U/HSP3C): Theories, Perspectives, and Methodologies, Explain Social Behaviour, Socialization

Grade 11: Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice (HSE3E)

Grade 12: Challenge and Change in Society (HSB4U)

Grade 12: Equity and Social Justice (HSE4M)

Grade 12: World Cultures (HSC4M)

HISTORY

Grade 10: Historical Inquiry and Skill Development

Grade 11: Origins and Citizenship (CHE30): The Ethnic Group in Its Region of Origin, Factors Influencing Migration to Canada, The Canadian Experience, The Ethnic Group in Contemporary Canada

Grade 12: World History since the Fifteenth Century (CHY4U/CHY4C)

GEOGRAPHY

Grade 8: Global Settlement: Patterns and Sustainability, Global Inequalities: Economic Development and Quality of Life

Grade 9: Changing Populations, Livable Communities

Grade 12: World Issues (CGW4U)

Grade 12: World Geography (CGU4M)

VISUAL ARTS

Grades 9-12: The Creative Process, The Elements and Principles of Design, Production and Presentation, Art, Society, and Values, Connections Beyond the Classroom, Terminology, Conventions and Techniques, Responsible Practices

MEDIA ARTS

Grades 9-12: The Creative Process, The Principles of Media Arts, Using Technologies, Tools and Techniques, The Critical Analysis Process, Identity and Values, Connections Beyond the Classroom, Terminology, Contexts and Influences, Responsible Practices

LANGUAGE

Grades 4-8: Oral Communication, Reading, Writing, Media Literacy



A NOTE TO READERS:

This resource is intended to serve as a pedagogical guide and introduction to the Caribbean. Included, is a section detailing the brief history of the Caribbean to provide context for frequently used terminology that includes: slavery, emancipation and indentureship.

The resource is not intended to provide a chronological introduction to the exhibition, but rather a reference for teachers to select artworks that support their students on their learning journey.

There are many ways to reference this manual in the classroom and beyond. We have added curriculum links, suggested creative responses and activities that can be adapted to a range of grade levels. Although geared toward a high school audience, the content can easily be adapted to younger audiences.

In no way is this an extensive guide to the vastness and diversity of the islands, but an entry point for further conversations and extended research.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Art Gallery of Ontario operates on land that is the territory of the Anishinaabe (Mississauga) nation and was also the territory of the Wendat and Haudenosaunee. The Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant is an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinaabe Three Fires Confederacy to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

The work of the AGO and our members takes place on traditional territories of the Indigenous nations who have lived on these lands since time immemorial. The land we call Ontario is covered by 46 treaties, agreements, and land purchases, as well as unceded territories. The AGO is located in Toronto, on lands that are the traditional homes of the Anishinaabe, the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Huron Wendat and the Haudenosaunee. Ontario continues to be home to many Indigenous people who live alongside settlers, newcomers, and people whose ancestors were enslaved across the Americas and the Caribbean.

THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean is a group of islands and countries that stretch around the Caribbean Sea. The region's bodies of water include the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. Countries include: Cuba, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, to Aruba, Curaçao, and Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana and more. The Circum-Caribbean includes parts of the American mainland that have historical, migratory, and cultural connection to the Caribbean, including the Florida Keys, Louisiana, Columbia, Venezuela, and the land from the Mexican peninsula to Panama.







THE MONTGOMERY COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Assembled by New York-based filmmaker and photography collector Patrick Montgomery, the photos included in the exhibition bring to life the changing economies, environments and communities that emerged following the abolition of slavery.

Acquired with the support of individuals from Toronto's Black and Caribbean communities, the historical photographs from the Montgomery Collection, juxtaposed with contemporary works from *Fragments*, invite teachers and students to consider the Caribbean not only as the site of complex histories, historical narratives and representation, but also as a space where these histories and ideas are constantly revisited and reimagined through artistic production over time.

The photograph below is from the Montgomery Collection and is on view as part of the exhibition *Fragments of Epic Memory*.



Duperly Brothers, *Port Royal, Jamaica*, ca. 1890. 2019/3071.



SPOTLIGHT I:

FIRELEI BÁEZ, LEFT: *ADJUSTING THE MOON (THE RIGHT TO NON-IMPERATIVE CLARITIES): WANING*; RIGHT: *ADJUSTING THE MOON (THE RIGHT TO NON-IMPERATIVE CLARITIES): WAXING*

2019–2020



Left: Firelei Báez, *Adjusting the Moon (The right to non-imperative clarities): Waning*, 2019–2020. Oil and acrylic on panel, 289.6 x 198.1 x 3.8 cm. The Komal Shah and Gaurav Garg Collection. Right: *Adjusting the Moon (The right to non-imperative clarities): Waxing*, 2019–2020. Oil and acrylic on panel, 289.6 x 198.1 x 3.8 cm. Private Collection, Toronto, Canada. Courtesy of the artist and James Chan. New York. @ Firelei Baez.

GUIDED OBSERVATION:

- What are three words you would use to describe this work?
- What catches your attention? What are you curious about in your observations?
- If you could ask the artist five questions, what would they be?
- How has the artist used line, colour and texture to create a narrative? What do you think the narrative in this work is about?



CONTEXT:

Born in Santiago de los Caballeros to a Dominican mother and a father of Haitian descent, artist Firelei Báez work ties together subject matter mined from a wide breadth of **diasporic narratives**.*

Baez’s works are often described as lush, complex and ambiguous. She re-works visual references from portraiture, folklore and nature, and often paints directly onto historical material such as found maps, manuals and travelogues, creating rich and complex layers.

In this diptych, Baez references the shape-shifting Ciguapa figures who have burst through their bodily boundaries. Ciguapa (pronounced see-GWAH-pah) is a trickster figure from Dominican folklore who for the artist embodies the potential to defy oppressive conventions. The figure is cast within arch-shaped colonial architectural elements, seemingly breaking the **trompe l’oeil**** frame of the past and future. The figures dissolve into fragmented explosions of colour and by doing so presents fictional alternative universes.

*What is a **diasporic narrative**? A diasporic narrative can be described as a discussion of works about people living outside of their ancestral homelands while preserving a connection, cultural, social or religious with their ancestral homelands.

****Trompe l’oeil** is an artistic term that translates to “deceives the eye” or “fools the eye”. It is used to describe a visual illusion in art where a two-dimensional surface appears to be a three-dimensional object.

CREATIVE WRITING:

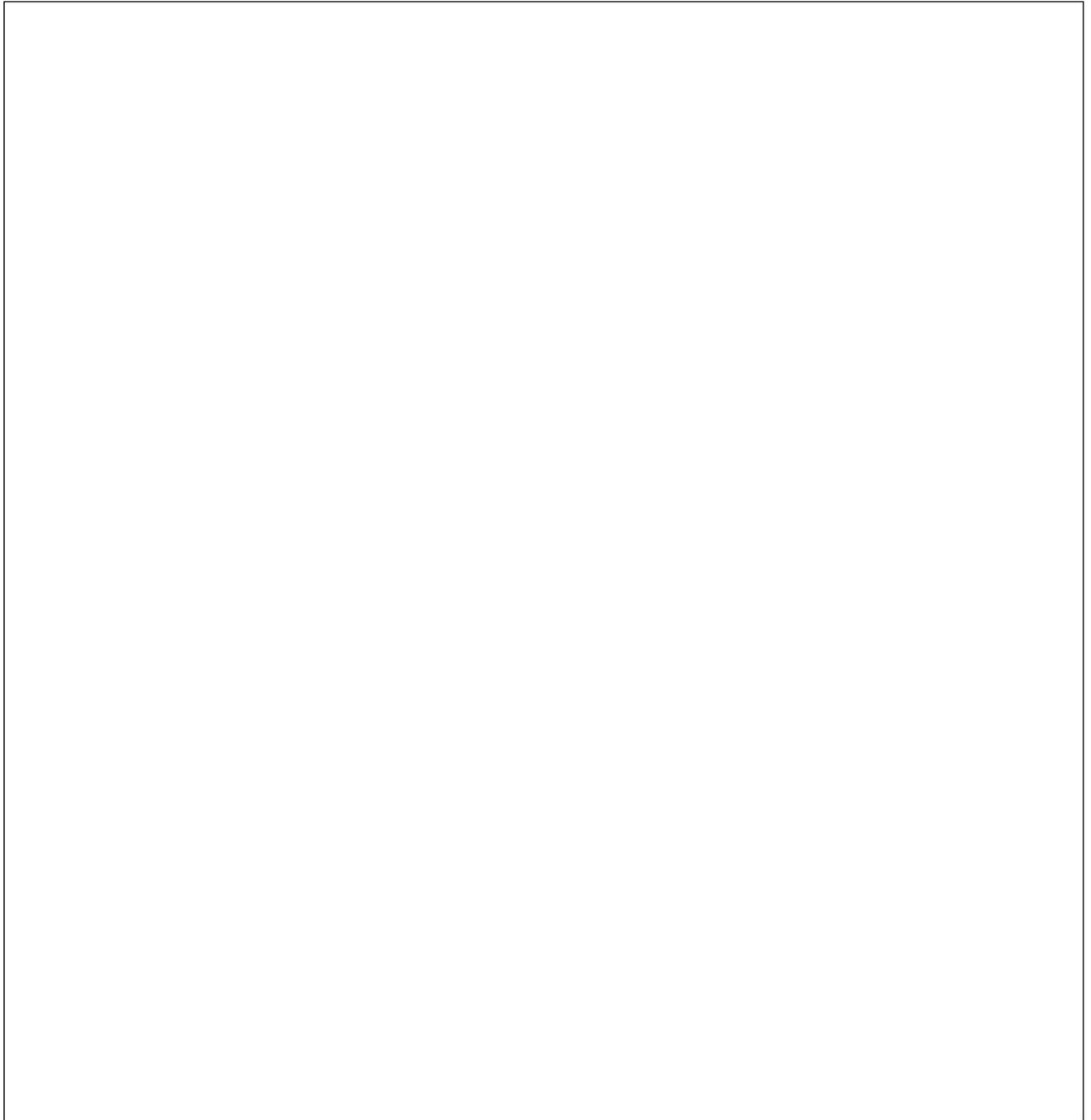
Drawing on inspiration from folklore familiar to you, create a new narrative with contemporary characters and settings. How does your character from the folklore you have selected interact in this new contemporary universe?

Before you write, brainstorming ideas around characters, plot and setting with the following questions:

- Who are your characters and why did you pick them?
- What might be interesting about putting these folklore characters into a contemporary setting?
- What would you like your characters to do and why? Would they need to change or adapt in any way?
- What do you think this character might have to offer the contemporary world?
- Will your character be “summoned” into this time period to do something new or will your story be an adaptation?
- Where will your story be set? Why is it a good setting for your characters?



Write your story featuring the characters and setting that you have brainstormed. Is there a single image that represents your story? Make a sketch of it below:



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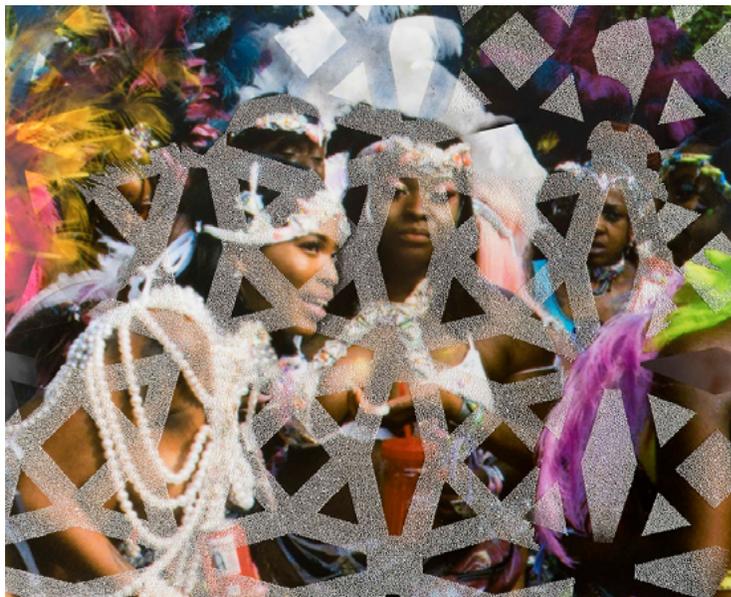


COMPARE AND CONTRAST: OBJECT ANALYSIS



Unknown, *Jamaican Women*, ca. 1900. Gelatin silver print, 2019/2210.

- Describe the visual elements of each artwork. How are they similar? How are they different?
- How are the settings similar? How are they different?
- Which similarities do you think are most important between the two works?

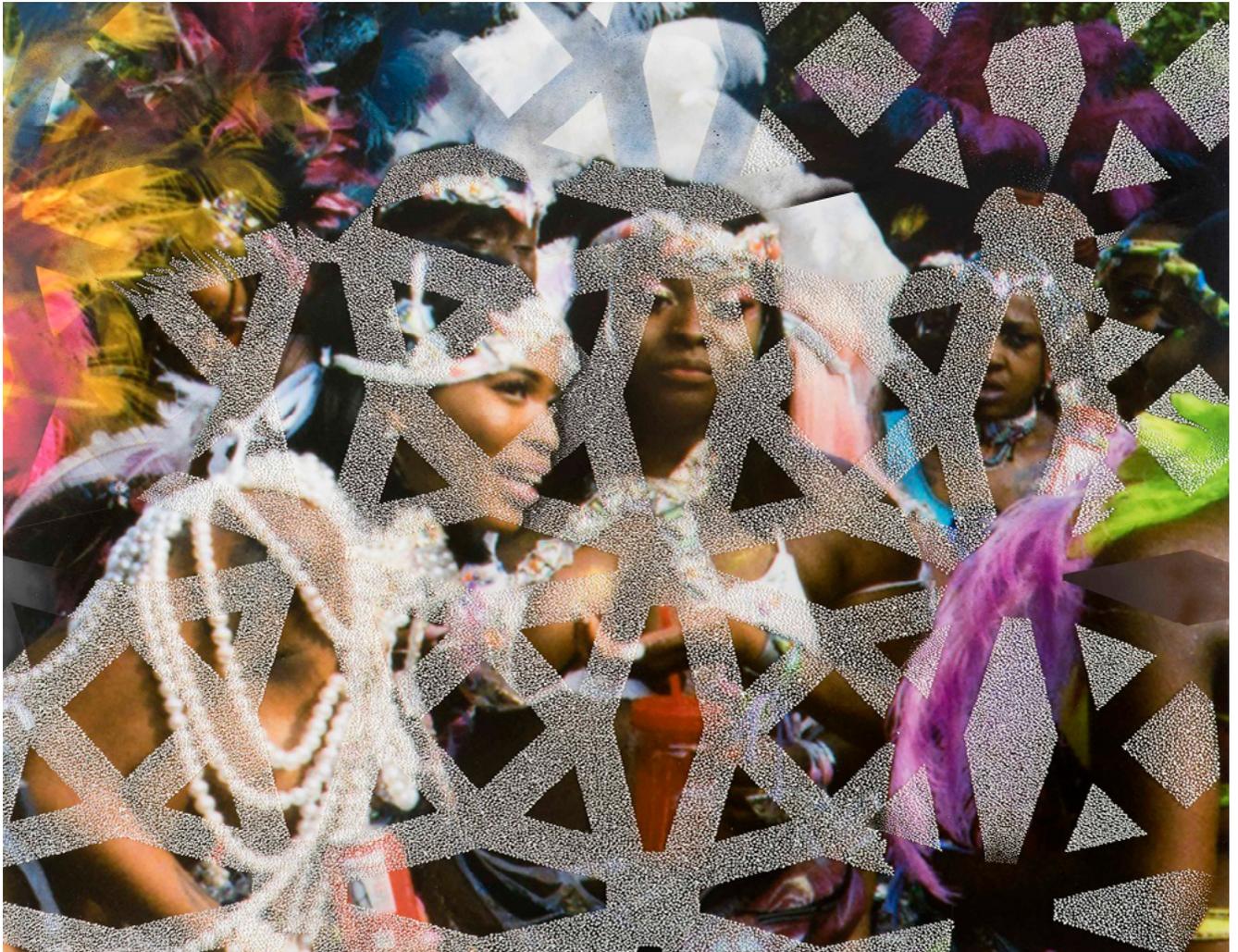


Paul Anthony Smith, *Untitled, 7 Women*, 2019. Unique picotage on inkjet print, coloured pencil, spray paint on museum board, 101.6 x 127 cm. The Hott Collection, New York. © Paul Anthony Smith. Image courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.



SPOTLIGHT 2:

PAUL ANTHONY SMITH, *UNTITLED, 7 WOMEN* 2019



Paul Anthony Smith, *Untitled, 7 Women*, 2019. Unique picotage on inkjet print, coloured pencil, spray paint on museum board, 101.6 x 127 cm. The Hott Collection, New York. © Paul Anthony Smith. Image courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

GUIDED OBSERVATION:

- Take 30 seconds to look at this work. List three elements that stand out to you.
- How would you describe this work to someone who has not seen it?
- How would you describe the moment this artwork captures?



CONTEXT:

Paul Anthony Smith is a photo-based artist born in St. Ann’s Bay, Jamaica, and currently living in Brooklyn, NY. His family left Jamaica when he was nine, in search of new opportunities in Miami. His initial interest in art began with ceramics and he later incorporates a technique he dubs “picotage”.

With this technique, Smith picks and partially removes the emulsion of the print using a specialized wooden tool to create a dotted, disappearing effect. This subtractive technique allows the artist to simultaneously reveal and obscure layers on his print while adding geometric patterns and ornate architectural elements including the Caribbean **breeze block*** design.

Consider this technique in the context of the narrative of his work — What does the artist allow the viewer to see? What does he obscure? How does his technique inform the narrative?

With a particular emphasis on the Caribbean diaspora, Smith’s work focuses on themes of migration, memory and culture. By often obscuring the personal identities of his subjects, he draws attention to the broader social commentary on cultural practises and understanding. In this work, he highlights the retention of carnival tradition in the diaspora, underscoring its subversive history with a focus on the joy and celebration of the performance.

*A **breeze block** is a lightweight building or cinder block. Often, these blocks were used in hot climates to allow a breeze through, hence the name “breeze blocks.” They also became the top choice for screen and fencing material in coastal areas prone to hurricanes. Breeze blocks are often made from ashes of coal.

CREATIVE RESPONSE:

Smith’s work is personal to him, while at the same time it explores larger themes of memory of place. In this activity, students create a picotage-inspired work that is personal to them.

This creative response can also be modified as a digital response.

MATERIALS:

- Printed photograph of your choice.
- Coloured paper – the same size as your photograph
- Glue
- Marker
- Scissors



ACTIVITY:

- Find a personal photograph that is special to you and print it out. Think about what makes the photograph special. Take another piece of paper the same size as your photograph and strategically cut out geometric or organic shapes. Consider these questions while you are cutting:
 - What inspires you to select the shapes you did?
 - What connections do those shapes have to your personal photo?
 - Where might the cut-out areas land when overlaid on your photograph?
- Arrange your shapes on your photograph. What can you see? What do you obscure? What story does it tell? Take a few moments to rearrange the shapes, remove or add different shapes.
- Glue your cut pieces to the photograph. Using markers, you can embellish the collaged areas.

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SPOTLIGHT 3:

KELLY SINNAPAH MARY, *NOTEBOOK OF NO RETURN*

2017



Kelly Sinnapah Mary, *Notebook of No Return*, 2017. Acrylic painting on paper, 43.2 x 50.8 cm. Private Collection. © Kelly Sinnapah Mary.

GUIDED OBSERVATIONS:

- What strikes you about this painting? What about it caught your attention?
- Why might this person have spikes on their skin? What might they represent?
- How does this portrait make you feel? What do you think the subject is thinking as they gaze out to the viewer?

CONTEXT:

Kelly Sinnapah Mary is a multimedia artist born and raised in Guadeloupe. She studied in Martinique and France. *Notebook of No Return* is a reflection on identity formation, and the way that the conditions of indentured labour impacted the francophone Indo-Caribbean community of Guadeloupe. Reflecting on a key element to indentured servitude, the artist considers the complexities of

identities through the creation of new communities in the Caribbean from the memories of former homelands. The women in this series have braided hair — metaphors for weaving new identities — and spiky skin, akin to the quills of sea-urchins. These characteristics represent the creation of new identities as well as the need to change and transform themselves in order to navigate the colonial world.

Sinnapah Mary is often inspired by literary works, but keeps herself open to many inspirations. She begins her artmaking process by creating collages or photo-editing an idea, testing it out before she begins a project in earnest. Her series of paintings, from which this work comes from, is a result of such a practice, in which she worked out many ideas inspired both by her own community, history and current events, storytelling and political ideas.



CREATIVE RESPONSE:

In this activity, students will create a hybrid mixed-media self-portrait that connects their identities to social, environmental or political issues that are important to them.

This creative response can also be modified as a digital response.

MATERIALS:

- Pencil
- Paper
- Oil pastels
- Fluorescent markers
- Pencils
- Tooth picks
- Scissors
- Glue
- Magazines/printouts/collage materials that reflect social, environmental or political issues

ACTIVITY:

- Using a pencil very lightly, draw a self-portrait. Don't worry about exact likeness, and feel free to take creative liberties. Be sure to include elements that identify yourself — for example, your curly hair, or glasses.
- Overlay your portrait with elements (cuttings, quotes, drawings) that you have selected for your social, environmental or political issue.
- Once your drawing is ready, colour it in with oil pastels. Experiment with different colour combinations as you fill in your image, leaving few areas of paper that show through the pastel.
- Apply contrasting colours of fluorescent marker. This will create a dynamic effect paired with your oil pastel. Using a toothpick, scratch into the oil pastel to create interesting designs and textures.
- Share your work with a classmate reflecting on this process and meaning-making of your work.

Share your final artworks at #AGOSCHOOLS



SPOTLIGHT 4:

UNKNOWN, *MARTINIQUE WOMAN*

CA. 1890



Unknown, *Martinique Woman*, ca. 1890. 2019/2208.

to light, where it forms an image on the paper. Because of the phenomenon known as light scattering, prints during this period appear brown, red or even yellow.

CREATIVE RESPONSE:

Writing Prompt — From a first person point of view, write a letter as the sitter in this photograph to their closest friend. What will they share? How do they feel? What are they most looking forward to? What are they most thankful for?

GUIDED OBSERVATION:

- What are five words you would use to describe the sitter?
- What do you think the photographer wanted to communicate about the subject?
- Why do you think this photograph was taken? For whom do you think it was made?

CONTEXT: ALBUMEN PRINTING

The unique printing process called albumen is an early type of analogue photography invented in 1850. It was popular in the late 19th century because it produced a very sharp image. Albumen prints are photographs that are made on paper coated with albumen (egg white). A photographer would coat a sheet of paper with the albumen, giving it a glossy and smooth surface, and then coat again with silver nitrate. The albumen and the silver nitrate together create light-sensitive silver salts on the paper. A glass negative is then placed directly on the paper and exposed



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean is a group of islands and countries that stretch around the Caribbean Sea. The region's bodies of water include the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. Countries include: Cuba, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, to Aruba, Curaçao, and Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana and more. The Circum-Caribbean includes parts of the American mainland that have historical, migratory, and cultural connection to the Caribbean, including the Florida Keys, Louisiana, Columbia, Venezuela, and the land from the Mexican peninsula to Panama.

You may be familiar with the Caribbean through family and direct personal connections, travel or images you have seen.

Although there is a lot of complexity to the region, and we are only able to share a small part of the narrative, the photographs from the Montgomery Collection, and the exhibition *Fragments of Epic Memory* as a whole, will offer several entry points for further research.

As new research and learnings continue, let's explore the complex layers of history that inform and inspired the photographs and the artworks in the exhibition.

First, we begin by talking about the inhabitants and earliest evidence of human life in the Caribbean, which dates to 5000/4000BCE.¹ The Taíno and Kalinago people lived on the Caribbean islands hundreds of years before the arrival of Europeans and continue to live there today. When Christopher Columbus and those after him arrived in 1492, Taíno, Kalinago and other indigenous Caribbean people were killed, displaced from their land, and enslaved to mine the land for gold and minerals. They resisted by moving to various parts of the Caribbean and by making alliances amongst each other to fight for their freedom and autonomy.

When arriving to the Caribbean, Europeans labelled the people they met as 'Caribs' (Kalinago people) and 'Arawaks' (Taíno people), ascribing these people with separate 'traits': Taínos were labelled as 'war-like' and 'cannibals,' while Kalinagos were said to be 'peaceful.'²

Treaties between Europeans and indigenous Caribbean peoples were made throughout the 1500s and 1600s, with some communities living autonomously into the 1700s.³ Today, there are self-identifying indigenous Caribbean communities throughout the region, including in Jamaica, Cuba, Belize, Guyana, Suriname, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Trinidad.⁴

SLAVERY IN THE CARIBBEAN

Slavery in the Caribbean began almost immediately after the arrival of Europeans. The earliest enslaved people used for their labour, knowledge and skill were indigenous Caribbean people. The Spanish used this group and Indigenous people from the American mainland to mine for gold in the



larger, northern Caribbean islands. Soon after it was realized that gold reserves were minimal, sugar, which had already begun to be cultivated in the Canary Islands (located off the coast north-west of Africa) and was a highly valued product, was introduced to the region.

In 1501, the Spanish Crown authorized the trade of African people to the Caribbean, thus beginning the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, which would last until 1867. Between 1501 and 1867, over 12.5 million African men, women, and children were forcibly taken from their communities and transported across the Atlantic Ocean as an enslaved labour force in the Americas. Of the five million African people who were sent to the Caribbean, the majority laboured on plantations, growing sugar and coffee.⁵ Others laboured inside the homes of plantation owners and colonial officials. Of the 12.5 million, at least two million people did not survive the journey across the Atlantic.

With the rise of sugar production in the Spanish-Caribbean, other European powers began to try and establish colonies and sugar plantations in the Caribbean. The English, French, Dutch, Swedish and Danish powers all too eventually had colonies in the Caribbean. With these varying powers in the region, different societies with their own unique histories emerged in the Caribbean.

Each colony/colonial territory had its own version of a slave code. That is, a set of laws that were instituted relating to slavery and enslaved people. One doctrine present throughout the Caribbean was the **partus sequitur ventrem**. This stated that a person's status of enslavement or freedom was dependent on their mother. If a person's mother was enslaved, they would be born enslaved. If a person's mother was free, they were born free. This connection between enslavement and freedom and women's bodies resulted in the widespread abuse of enslaved African women, and created a system that would have allowed a group of people and their descendants to be enslavable forever.

Slavery in the Caribbean resulted in complex social structures and connections between skin colour, class, and the status of free and enslaved that varied from island to island and which were unique to the region. In general, during the early period of slavery, those of European ancestry — white settlers — were at the top of the social structure. Of these, elite white men were at the very top. They were wealthy, they were lawmakers, they owned the largest plantations, and had the highest numbers of enslaved people. Below them were elite white women, and poor white settlers. At the very bottom of this social structure were enslaved men and women. Over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, and in some places during the early period of slavery, these social structures began to change with the emergence of populations of **free people of colour**.

Free people of colour were categorized as descendants of white settlers and Afro-Caribbean people, and were a diverse group who came from poor and wealthy families. Some came to inherit or own plantations and enslaved people, others worked for themselves or worked as traders, merchants, or in other professions. These people, while not socially 'equal' to elite whites because of their skin colour, were free and therefore higher in social status than enslaved people.



WHAT IS EMANCIPATION DAY?

Emancipation Day is a celebratory day that marks the end of slavery in the British Empire. From the very beginning, Africans and enslaved people resisted their enslavement. Resistance took many forms, such as the continued spiritual practice of Obeah (from West Africa, specifically Benin, Nigeria, and Congo), speaking of West African languages, passing of knowledge relating to food, medicine, and history, and preservation of styles of dress. On the plantation forms of resistance to slavery included, intentional slow work or idleness, theft, and sabotage.

From 1804 to 1886, slavery was abolished throughout the Caribbean: first in Haiti in 1804, then the British Caribbean from 1834-38, the Swedish empire in 1847, the French and Danish Caribbean colonies in 1848, the Dutch Caribbean in 1863, Puerto Rico in 1873, and Cuba in 1886. This period, known as the period of Emancipation, began on a large scale in the British Caribbean. In 1833, the British Emancipation Act was passed.⁶ The Act was enforced on August 1, 1834. The Act brought about the ending of slavery in the British Empire and initiated the 'Apprenticeship Period.' Under the Act, people under the age of six, as well as the elderly, those who were sick and the disabled, were freed. All formerly enslaved people above the age of six were required to become 'apprenticed labours,' and continue to remain on and work the land they had previously worked as enslaved people, for the people who had once enslaved them, for six to eight years. The Apprenticeship Period ended on August 1, 1838, resulting in the full emancipation of people in the British Caribbean.

In the wake of the British Emancipation Act and full emancipation, the newly free population sought to reunite with family who they had been separated from during enslavement, own their own homes, receive wages for the work they were now doing as free people, move freely, and in general, live as free individuals.⁷ In reality, free people were required to pay high rents for the homes they had lived in for years during the period of enslavement, they continued to be exploited for their work and received low wages. In response, those who could move off the plantations and away from their former enslavers, establishing their own free communities. For those who remained on the plantation, they fought for higher wages by striking, rioting, and rebelling against plantation owners. In response, plantation owners and colonial officials looked for others who could work on the plantations.

From 1835 and 1917, between 700,000 and over a million people were brought as **indentured labourers** to the Caribbean from what is today India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh: at the time known as the British Raj, or British India. An additional 150,000 people from China arrived (primarily) to Trinidad and Guyana, and approximately 50,000 people from what is today Indonesia (formerly the Dutch East Indies) went to Suriname.⁸ Life during indentureship was restrictive, harsh, and violent. Wages were low, and if people wanted to leave the estates, they were required to provide passes or proof that they were allowed to be off the plantation or risk being arrested. Indentured people would also advocate for themselves when possible. They protested their low wages and treatment by plantation owners, and created connections and lives for themselves in the Caribbean.

Today their descendants, **Indo-Caribbean peoples**, continue to live in the Caribbean.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Emancipation: To be free, or to free people, from enslavement. In the context of the Caribbean, ‘Emancipation’ refers to the Emancipation Proclamation and/or other laws or events that ended the enslavement of Afro-Caribbean people in a specific region or island in the Caribbean. The ‘post-Emancipation period’ refers to the period after Emancipation and the social, political, and cultural changes that took place as a result of Emancipation.

Free people of colour: People with European and African parentage who were either born legally free or were freed later in life. Populations of free people of colour emerged for a variety of reasons, including manumission (being freed by their enslaver) as a gift or due to old age, self-purchase, and purchase by free non-white family members. Free people of colour were a socially, culturally, economically, and politically diverse group. The language used to refer to this group varies depending on the island of study.

Indentureship: A form of labour whereby people enter either forcibly or voluntarily into a period of working without pay in exchange for debt repayment or eventual compensation. In the case of the Caribbean, the system of indentureship lasted from 1838 to 1917. The process of indentureship worked as follows: people from Europe, South and East Asia, and the African continent would enter into contracts with plantation owners living in the Caribbean. In exchange for paid passage to the Caribbean and the promise of eventual release from their contract, indentured labourers worked on plantations and for their hired contractors for a period of 5 – 10 years. After this period, the former indentured labourers would, in theory, be able to leave the plantations/spaces of work, buy property, work for themselves or others, leave the colony, or re-indenture themselves.⁹

Indo-Caribbean people(s): People of South-Asian ancestry who are from and live in the Caribbean, and/or are members of the Indo-Caribbean diaspora. The ‘(s)’ acknowledges the multiple members and groups of people who identify as Indo-Caribbean, including but not limited to, Indo-Guyanese, Indo-Jamaicans, Indo-Surinamese, Indo-Trinidadians and Tobagonians, and people of Indian or South Asian ancestry from Haiti, Barbados, Saint Lucia, and other parts of the Caribbean and Caribbean diaspora.

Partus sequitur ventrem: Depending on the source, there are slight differences in translation. Generally, it translates to “that which is brought/born follows the belly/womb” or “offspring follows the belly.”¹⁰ The resulting doctrine meant a child’s legal status at birth followed that of their mother. If a child’s mother was enslaved at the time of their birth, they were born enslaved. If a child’s mother was free at the time of their birth, they were born free. Variations of the partus sequitur ventrem doctrine were found in slave laws in the English, French, Spanish, and Dutch Caribbean.



ENDNOTES

- 1 Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano (eds.), *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011): 56.
- 2 Shenella Charles, “Caribe Sufferers?”: The Framing of Indigeneity in the Caribbean” (presentation, Study Day(s) for the Montgomery Collection of Caribbean Photographs, Toronto, Canada, July 10, 2020).
- 3 Tony Castanha, “Mythmaking in the Caribbean,” in *The Myth of Indigenous Caribbean Extinction: Continuity and Reclamation in Borikén (Puerto Rico)* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 39; Samuel M. Wilson, “Surviving European Conquest in the Caribbean,” *Revista De Arqueología Americana*, no. 12 (1997): 143. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27768388>.
- 4 Amy Strecker, “Indigenous Land Rights and Caribbean Reparations Discourse,” *Leiden Journal of International Law* 30, no. 3 (2017): 633. doi:10.1017/S0922156517000073.
- 5 For more information on the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, see: <https://slavevoyages.org/>. For more information in slaver in the British empire, see: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>.
- 6 Slavery Abolition Act 1833; Section LXIV” (http://www.pdavis.nl/Legis_07.htm).
- 7 Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano (eds.), *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011): 352.
- 8 Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano (eds.), *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011): 34.
- 9 Nalini Mohabir, “Picturing an Afterlife of Indenture,” *Small Axe* 21, no. 2 (July 2017): 81. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/07990537-4156798> ; Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano (eds.), *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011): 358.
- 10 Jennifer L. Morgan, “Partus sequitur ventrem: Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery,” *Small Axe* 22, no. 1 (2018): 4. muse.jhu.edu/article/689365.

FURTHER READING:

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