# Submission for a Thematic Issue

## About the Prospective Guest Editors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Frédéric Lefrançois</th>
<th>Name: D. Amy-Rose Forbes-Erickson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:frederic.lefrancois@univ-antilles.fr">frederic.lefrancois@univ-antilles.fr</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:forbeda@bgsu.edu">forbeda@bgsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or <a href="mailto:frederic.lefrancois.scholar@gmail.com">frederic.lefrancois.scholar@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>or <a href="mailto:forbes.erickson.1@gmail.com">forbes.erickson.1@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affiliations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Affiliations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Université des Antilles</td>
<td>Bowling Green State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre de Recherche Interdisciplinaire en Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines (CRILLASH) – UR6_2</td>
<td>International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) (African and Caribbean Performance Working Group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Société des Anglicistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur (SAES)</td>
<td>Caribbean Studies Association (CSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Association for the Studies of Theatre and Performance (EASTAP)</td>
<td>Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Short Bio

Frédéric Lefrançois is lecturer of English and Art Studies at the Université des Antilles. His research focuses on diasporic cultural identities. This is why he is engaged in three inter-connected fields of research dealing with identity and aesthetics in the Americas, Afro-Diasporic Britain, and the Commonwealth Caribbean. His approach, which is interdisciplinary, often confronts representational data with investigation techniques borrowed from Psychoanalysis and Cultural Studies.

He has published two books, *L’autre scène du désir: Strange Fruit de Caryl Phillips, and Trinité de Stan Musquer, lectures croisées d’une œuvre caribéenne* (Presses Universitaires des Antilles, 2021), and diverse journal articles.

D. Amy-Rose Forbes-Erickson is an Assistant Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies in the Department of Theatre and Film, BGSU. Her research has been published in areas of African, African American, Latin American, and Caribbean theatres and performances. Her research focusses on race, gender, coloniality/decoloniality, Black feminisms, and sacred queer spaces in masquerades.

Her book (in progress), *Caribbean Masquerades as Palimpsests: A Chronological Survey from the 16th Century to the early 21st Century* (Edwin Mellen Press), traces the emergence of masquerade figures in carnivals, balls, and parades from the point of contact between European conquest, and Indigenous and African peoples in the Caribbean from the 16th century to the early 21st century. Her 2nd book project, *A Sacred Queer Treatise on Masquerade*...
His CV, publications, projects and works can be consulted at:
-  https://cv.hal.science/frederic-lefrancois
-  https://univ-antilles.academia.edu/Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ricLefran%C3%A7ois
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Frederic-Lefrancois

*Devils in Caribbean Dramatic Literature, Mid-20th century to the 1970s,* analyzes post-colonial dramatic literature derived from masquerade devils in carnivals and folk life in Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Other projects include performance historiographies on popular Caribbean women’s masquerades of *La Mulata, Dougla,* and *Ship-yit-(t)diam* in Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

D. Amy-Rose Forbes-Erickson’s Academic Profiles:
HTTPS://BGSU.ACADEMIA.EDU/DARFORBESERICKSON
HTTPS://WWW.RESEARCHGATE.NET/PROFILE/D-FORBES-ERICKSON
THE PIONEERS OF TRANSAMERICAN ART:
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A CARIBBEAN DIASPORA AESTHETIC

Colin Garland, *In the Beautiful Caribbean*

Do not go where the path may lead;
go instead where there is no path
and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Visual surprise is natural in the
Caribbean; it comes with the
landscape, and faced with its
beauty, the sigh of History
dissolves.

Derek Walcott

The artistic space of the Greater Anglophone Caribbean is being built every day thanks to the
pioneering acts of artists leaving their comfort zone to venture into unknown territories. According to Curdella Forbes, “The meta-archipelago, like Chaos, is a repeating island, without
centre or limits, and this becomes its centre and its limit. The Caribbean exists in no one island
nor in the sum of the islands; it is a diaspora in all possible dimensions. The Caribbean then, is
as much an idea as it is a cultural confluence” (2000, 76). Like scouts on a reconnaissance
mission, the surveyors of TransAmerican art take their first steps into the field of radical
otherness in response to the call of the city: to return with a mental map of Elsewhere that is
transmissible to the Diaspora.

At the core of their quest is a nagging question: what is beyond the border and how can their
journey leave its mark on posterity? Whether they were explorers or simple adventurers, the
action of their singular approach, or of their collective research, will leave in its wake a legacy
of traces, marks, and beacons that need to be seized. The intellectual dynamic on which this
collective volume capitalizes is precisely in line with such a perspective. It analyzes the
productive impact of this quest, starting from two hypotheses on the nature and scope of the
discoveries made in the field of TransAmerican art.
The first one is based on a diasporic conceptualization of the episteme. The challenge, here, as Fanon puts it, is to spot the right beacons and not be deluded by the sirens of coloniality that blur sight and deafen ears: “The basic confrontation which seemed to be colonialism versus anti-colonialism, [...] is already losing its importance [...] what matters today, the issue which blocks the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth” (*Wretched of the Earth*, 1968: 53) because “there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms; colonization and decolonization is simply a question of relative strength” (*Id.*, 61). In light of this, the very concept of TransAmerican awareness appears as an extended hand to deal with the issue of commitment. Consequently, the "discursive regularities" observable in the field of Caribbean art - or more broadly, that of TransAmerican art - show collusions of meanings and practices linking the artists of the Americas since the earliest pre-Columbian times where Indigenous cultures laid the foundations of transdisciplinary ekphrasis. The hypothesis that we intend to test here is that the plastic or aesthetic "discourse" of the Greater Anglophone Caribbean has the value of a space of intelligibility, of semiological or praxeological connivance apprehensible by the recurrence of signs, *topoi*, and ideals in the TransAmerican creations and their fields of reception.

The second hypothesis proposes that the resourcing of Caribbean ethno-aesthetics is based on the return to the first steps of the artists-pioneers of Transamerica. The term "pioneer" takes then the sense of "discoverer" but also of "innovator," like Ebony Patterson and Colin Garland (Jamaica), Lavar Munroe (Bahamas), or Horace Ové and Carol Boyce Davies (Trinidad & Tobago), John Lie A Fo (Surinam) or Mason Richards (Guyana). It embraces as well, on the pragmatic level, the historicity of an individual enterprise - in the sense that art historians understand it - as a broader range of meanings going from the itinerant creation/exhibition to the system of diasporic circulation of the schemas and motifs that found the singularity and originality of TransAmerican art.

Studying the diachronic processes of re-appropriation leads to welcome attempts at gains, risks, and losses as beacons on the paths of knowledge. The cosmopolitan aesthetics of the great TransAmerican Diaspora is, at its core, the diasporic repository of a millennial heritage, the bearer of a rich and complex civilization encoded in the *mangrovian* culture of the Greater Caribbean. Being part of a diasporic continuum, it is based on an oral, iconic, textual and performative literature which is itself a carrier of traditions. The fact that these symbolic, semiotic, mythological, teleological (inherent to Mesoamerican art), and experiential dimensions may have seemed abstruse to the eyes of the first Western chroniclers in no way obviates their intrinsic and primary quality, as the growing interest in native art studies attests today. The TransAmerican aesthetic that the peoples of the Americas have created, recreated, and transmitted for centuries aspires to discursive autonomy and generic authenticity. It supports the march of a civilization that has been progressing for millennia, despite all the obstacles that one would like to oppose it, as testified by recent connections between arts and reparation movements in the Americas. It founds the *raison d’être* and the daily heritage of the peoples of the Greater Anglophone Caribbean.

Contributors to this thematic issue of *Angles* are invited to underline the connection to these ancestral memories and explore their current resurgence in the visual and living arts. Contributions can bear on scientific, fictional, and secular literature, the genius of dance and music, and the visual, scenic, culinary, performing, visual and ritual arts. Themes of interest could include but are not limited to, decoloniality, body politics, representation, restorative justice, Caribbean indigenous thought and practices, and diasporic art spaces. In the spirit of collegiality that animates this publication project, we intend to create the same dynamic
between the communities of researchers and artists of the Greater Anglophone Caribbean. This dynamic is therefore open to all those who want to maintain a constructive dialogue to advance the knowledge and sharing of Caribbean aesthetics in the footsteps of the pioneers of TransAmerican art.

Please submit abstracts (250 words) and a brief bio (one paragraph) for your proposed papers and/or digital media, visual arts with artists' statements that cover a range of topics for "The Pioneers of TransAmerican Art: In the Footsteps of a Caribbean Diaspora Aesthetics" by **Monday, June 3, 2024 (Abstracts - 250 words)**

to:

Dr. Frédéric Lefrançois, Université des Antilles, Martinique
frederic.lefrancois@univ-antilles.fr or frederic.lefrancois.scholar@gmail.com

&

Dr. D. Amy-Rose Forbes-Erickson, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA
forbeda@bgsu.edu or forbes.erickson.1@gmail.com

Topics may include, but not limited to:
- Music
- Dance
- Art
- Film & Media
- Theatre and Performing Arts
- Popular culture
- Fashion
- Carnivals and Festivals
- Literary Arts
- Culinary Arts
- Arts Management, Public Policy,
- Race/Gender/Sexuality
- Feminism, Women's and Gender Studies
- Caribbean Transnationality & Diaspora
- Ancestral memory
- Syncretism, Spirituality, Religion, Ritual
- Postcolonial/Anti-colonial activism
- Reparations/Repatriation/Restorative justice