

“I’NA SUIT YOU”:

**WHAT DO A
GROUP OF
LONDON YUTES
KNOW ABOUT
JAMAICAN
PATOIS?**



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BLEMME FATALE PRODUCTIONS

BLEMME FATALE PRODUCTIONS is a production company with a focus on weaving Black diasporic historical research throughout the creative process to create authentic and representative theatre and cultural events. We want to support the research and development process to inform the creative and production process.

Consequently, our mission is to:


To offer inclusive, progressive alternative routes of education

To demystify an elitist and hard to reach industry

To create local and community focused mechanisms to serve those who aren't normally included

To nurture and facilitate cross-generational and cross-disciplinary relationships

PAST WORK

- **CAPOEIRA 101 & CARNI PRELUDE** (April 2023, Battersea Arts Centre)
 - **THEE SUSTAINABLE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL** (June 2023, Royal Docks)
 - **GOD FORGIVE US, WE HAVE BURNT A SAINT** (July 2023, Riverside Studios)
 - **CARNIVAL + COSTUME MAKING WORKSHOP** (August 2023, Pop Brixton)
 - **BATTERSEA EXHIBITS // "LOOKUP+LOOKDOWN"** (August 2023, Battersea Power Station)
-  hello@blemme fatale.com



@FATALEBLEMME



@blemme fatale productions

Sometime in 2021 (the covid years), I was changing my instagram @ and thought of *blemme fatale* and have used it since. Like Black Femme Fatale.

“I’NA SUIT YOU” comes from feeling like Patois doesn’t suit you. An assessment on your character, your blackness and your connection to your home country from the decibels you evoke.

Fast forward to March 2023, I won the History Shaper Fund to do *I’NA SUIT YOU*, a historical research and theatre-making project to creatively engage and teach a group of young Caribbean teenagers empowering them to make a play and produce an e-book. The research centered around the origins, development, assimilation and appropriation of Jamaican Patois in the diaspora with a focus on London.

Since then, Blemme Fatale Productions has remained committed to transforming 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants relationships with Jamaican Patois and demonstrating the different avenues you can tap into this rich language. We hope to do more to validate the language.

**“we nedda need
certification fi validate
wi”**

We need a certificate to validate us.

CARIBBEAN LYRICISTS

“Fi wi language”

This section is to celebrate those who demonstrate the beauty of Patois in their writing and performances. Popularising Patois across the world and at home.

Our young collective have all done write-ups on lyricists of their choice.

Through their research and writing, they have highlighted how these artists have used Patois to not only express themselves but also to connect with their audience on a deeper level.

The popularity of Patois is growing, and it's important to recognise the role that these artists play in spreading awareness and understanding of this unique language. By making Patois accessible to a wider audience, these lyricists are helping to preserve and celebrate the rich cultural history of their communities.

We hope that through our collective efforts, we can continue to promote the beauty and importance of Patois.

Whether it's through music, literature, or other forms of art, we believe that Patois has the power to bring people together and create a stronger sense of community.

MISS LOUISE BENNETT- COVERELY

BY MIA
THOMPSON



The late Hon. Louise Bennett-Coverley (left), along with late former University of the West Indies Vice Chancellor, Ralston Milton "Rex" Nettleford.

Miss Louise Bennett-Coverley, more commonly known as "Miss Lou", was a Jamaican poet and folklorist. Born on September 7, 1919, in Kingston, Jamaica, she studied acting and drama, which laid the foundation for her remarkable career. Miss Lou's journey into poetry was deeply rooted in her exposure to Jamaica's vibrant culture from a young age, with her father encouraging her to embrace and celebrate the Jamaican language and heritage. Her first poem, "Bans O Killing," was penned at the age of 14, and she went on to create a substantial body of work, including her most famous piece, "Colonization in Reverse."

Her writings encompassed dialect poetry, humour, social and political commentary, as well as cultural and folk poetry, shaping her legacy as a literary pioneer and promoter of Jamaican Patois. Miss Lou received a British Council scholarship in 1945 to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London, England, which made her the first Black student to study at RADA.



Louise Bennett hosting JBC Television's children's programme 'Ring Ding' in 1979.

Miss Lou's performances resonated through radio, theatre, schools, and cultural festivals, establishing her as a cultural cornerstone. Her legacy, multifaceted and rich, includes her role as a cultural icon, literary pioneer, social commentator, educational influencer, and recipient of numerous awards and recognitions. Miss Lou's contributions are a source of enduring inspiration, and her name lives on in various places, such as the Louise Bennett Garden Theatre, Louise Bennett-Coverley All-Age School, and Louise Bennett-Coverley Square. She had a son named Fabian Coverley, born in 1950, and managed to balance her prolific career with the responsibilities of motherhood. Miss Lou's enduring legacy is celebrated as a symbol of cultural pride and a national treasure in Jamaica and the broader Caribbean.

She passed away on July 26, 2006, in Toronto, Canada, leaving a significant impact on the preservation of Jamaican language and culture, the promotion of Jamaican identity, social commentary, and education.

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YASUS AFARI

BY TARAH
JOHNSON



Yasus Afari performing at a poetry festival

Yasus Afari, originally known as John Sinclair, is a prominent figure in Jamaican poetry, music, and cultural activism. He was born in 1962 in Saint Elizabeth Parish, Jamaica. Yasus Afari is renowned for his powerful and thought-provoking spoken word performances, which are rooted in the tradition of dub poetry, a genre that fuses poetry, reggae, and social commentary.

Yasus Afari first studied at St. Elizabeth Technical High School, followed by the College of Arts, Science, and Technology. During his time in school, he became politically engaged and began nurturing his creative expression. He published his debut work, "Anti-Litter Law," in 1986. While the initial release wasn't successful, his career began to turn around after he teamed up with Garnet Silk. Silk, a childhood friend of Afari, collaborated with him on their first release, a version of Johnny Nash's "I Can See Clearly Now."

Afari embarked on international tours, making appearances in the United Kingdom and the Pacific Islands during the mid-1990s, often sharing the limelight with the esteemed reggae ensemble, Black Uhuru. In 1996, he undertook a tour of Ethiopia, accompanied by notable peers, including Tony Rebel, Uton Green, and Mutabaruka. In 2006, he held a prominent position as a co-headliner at the Cayman Music Festival, alongside celebrated artists such as Freddie McGregor and Maxi Priest.



From Bunny Wailer Irie FM Lifetime Achievement Award gallery
Credit: Steve James

In addition to his artistic pursuits, Yasus Afari displayed an unwavering commitment to education and the promotion of Rastafarian ideology. Yasus Afari's work as a cultural ambassador has taken him to various international stages, where he has shared the richness of Jamaican culture and the universal messages of his poetry and music.

Notably, the University of Birmingham served as the venue for the launch of his book, "Overstanding Rastafari," in the United Kingdom. This labor of love, cultivated over a period of five years, received acclaim from Professor Barry Chavannes of the University of the West Indies for its interpretation of Rastafarianism aimed at a broader audience, offering a unique perspective on Jamaica and the global landscape.

Yasus Afari's profound contributions to literature and cultural awareness have left an indelible mark on society.

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JOAN ANDREA HUTCHINSON

BY KAILA GORDON



Joan as Dat Bumpy Head Gyal

Joan Andrea Hutchinson born in Jamaica in 1963, is a writer, poet, performer and cultural educator committed to the preservation of Jamaican culture, particularly through spoken word. Her poetry, stories, and dramatic monologues vividly depict the vibrant culture of Jamaica and its people. Her unique style of blending education with entertainment, known as "edutainment," provides audiences and readers with an opportunity to learn while enjoying themselves.

Since her early years, creativity has been an integral part of her life influenced by her mother, Miss Emma, who was a creative force herself. Hutchinson's upbringing included exposure to various forms of art, including poetry, plays, and concerts along with her three siblings. Her artistic style combines wit and humour to convey essential themes and aspects of Jamaican culture, making her a compelling performer on both stage and television. She uses humor to portray Jamaican culture and communicates effectively in any setting. Her mother's influence instilled confidence and a drive to explore new avenues in her work.

Hutchinson is renowned for her commanding stage presence, featuring clear diction and effortless shifts between Jamaican accents. She passionately preserves Jamaican culture, specifically through spoken word 'edutainment'—a fusion of education and entertainment. Her works, including poems, stories, and dramatic monologues, vividly depict Jamaica and its people, endearing her to Jamaican Diaspora audiences.



Miss Lou and Joan Andrea
Hutchinson

Hutchinson's poetry reflects daily Jamaican life and proverbs in authentic Jamaican creole. She cherishes the dynamic Jamaican language, finding it rich and ever-changing. Her work often centers on events like Secretaries Day, Teacher's Day, and Common Entrance results, akin to Miss Lou's iconic pieces.

Hutchinson sees her work as a way to capture history, meticulously chronicling society for the future, whether writing about the Reggae Boys, Usain Bolt, Merlene Ottey, or her own TV show experience, using humor and wit to freeze-frame moments in time.

Her first book, Meck Mi Tell Yuh, in which there are two poems in tribute to Miss Lou, was endorsed by the icon herself. Joan's meteoric rise to fame occurred in 1996 when she faced criticism for wearing afrocentric Nubian knots, locally known as 'chiney bumps,' while hosting a television program. Embracing the name 'Dat Bumpy Head Gyal,' she began performing at major Caribbean comedy shows in the US, the UK, Canada, and the Caribbean. She also became a sought-after motivational speaker.

A friend and scholar of Louise Bennett (Miss Lou), Joan produced Miss Lou's final CD, "Lawd Di Riddim Sweet." In recognition of her significant contributions to Jamaican culture, she was awarded the Order of Distinction by the Jamaican Government in 2018. She was also honoured with the Language Ambassador Award by the City College of Birmingham, the Sir Shridath Ramphall Award for Cultural Excellence, and the Caribbean Hall of Fame Award for Excellence. Both scholars and academics frequently review her work, recognizing its significance in the study of Jamaican and Caribbean culture.

Hutchinson's legacy extends to preserving Jamaican culture, using technology to make it accessible to young people and Jamaicans in the Diaspora. She continues to document and celebrate Jamaica's rich heritage.

She's received accolades like the Caribbean Hall of Fame Award for Excellence in Performing Arts and the Jamaica Music Industry (JAMI) Award for Dub Poetry, carrying on the legacies of figures like Miss Lou and other cultural trailblazers.

Joan Andrea Hutchinson on her peers and the value of their work:



Joan Andrea Hutchinson

"I applaud the work of people like Mutabaruka, Blakka Ellis, Amina Blackwood Meeks, Yasus Afari, Vivienne Morris Brown, all the primary school teachers who prepare children for the annual JCDC Festival, and all the children who perform Jamaican-language pieces in the festival. They are the heirs and successors to Miss Lou's legacy."

"I also use my work to erode stereotypical notions of Jamaica and Jamaicans, so I spend a lot of time painting Jamaicans as wonderful, witty, creative, resourceful and resilient people who 'kin teet kibba heart bun' and work their way through any and everything."

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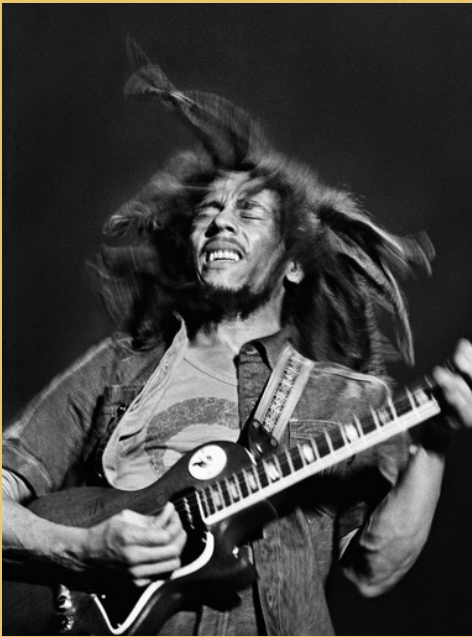
BOB MARLEY

BY KOBI WATSON

Bob Marley, born on February 6, 1945, in Nine Mile, Jamaica, is an iconic figure in the history of reggae music and a global symbol of peace and unity. Rising from humble beginnings, Marley's journey to becoming a musical legend is as remarkable as his impact on the world.

Marley's musical career began in the late 1960s when he formed the Wailers with Peter Tosh and Bunny Livingston. Their early music was deeply rooted in ska and rocksteady, but it was the evolution of their sound into reggae that set Marley and the Wailers apart. Songs like "Stir It Up" and "No Woman, No Cry" gained international attention, but it was the album "Exodus" (1977) that solidified Marley's status as a global superstar.

Beyond his musical prowess, Marley was a powerful advocate for social justice and equality. His lyrics often addressed themes of poverty, oppression, and the struggles faced by the disenfranchised. The reggae anthem "Get Up, Stand Up" became an anthem for those fighting against injustice.



Bob Marley playing at London Hammersmith Odeon in 1979.
Credit: Dennis Morris.



Bob Marley backstage in Bournemouth on his first tour.
Credit: Dennis Morris.

Bob Marley's influence extended beyond the realm of music. His Rastafarian faith, with its emphasis on peace, love, and unity, became a central part of his public image. The iconic image of Marley with his distinctive dreadlocks and charismatic stage presence made him a cultural icon.

Unfortunately, Marley's life was cut short when he succumbed to cancer on May 11, 1981, at the age of 36. Despite his untimely death, his legacy endures. His compilation album "Legend" is one of the best-selling reggae albums of all time, and Marley was posthumously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001.

Bob Marley's enduring impact on music, culture, and social consciousness makes him not only a musical legend but also a symbol of resilience and a voice for the voiceless.

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JOHN AGARD

BY FREYA
SHURY-SMITH



John Agard is a renowned Guyanese-British poet, playwright, and children's writer known for his powerful works that explore themes of identity, colonialism, and cultural heritage. Born in 1949 in British Guiana (now Guyana), Agard moved to the United Kingdom in the 1970s, which greatly influenced his perspective and writing style. His background as an Afro-Guyanese immigrant in Britain often informs his poetic exploration of cultural displacement and racial issues.

Agard's poetry reflects a distinctive blend of Caribbean and British influences, incorporating elements of Creole language and a rhythmic, oral tradition. Notable works like "Half-Caste" challenge the concept of racial purity, urging readers to embrace multiculturalism. His collection "Alternative Anthem: Selected Poems" offers a poignant examination of historical and contemporary issues through a prism of wit and linguistic innovation. Agard's writing often employs humor and satire to confront societal injustices, inviting readers to reconsider their perceptions of identity and belonging.

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MUTA BARUKA

BY LAMESHA
RUDDOCK



Mutabaruka performing at
Karibu centre in Brixton on
4th November 2016
C credit: Thabo
Jaiyesimi/Alamy Live News

Allan Hope, more commonly known as Mutabaruka, was born on December 26, 1952, in Rae Town, Kingston, Jamaica. He is recognized as a prominent poet and musician who has made significant contributions to the creation of the dub poetry genre. In the Rwandan language, his stage name translates to "one who is always victorious," reflecting his resilience and tenacity in addressing social and political issues through his work.

Mutabaruka's academic journey began at Kingston Technical High School in Jamaica, where he studied electronics at the College of Arts, Science, and Technology (CAST), now known as the University of Technology, Jamaica. After school, he worked as an apprentice electrician for the Jamaican Telephone Company. Concurrently, Mutabaruka began to explore the resilience associated with Jamaican Patois in his artistic expression in the 1960s. Inspired by the Black Power movement and the principles of Rastafarianism, he developed his passion for using poetry as a powerful medium for conveying social and political commentary.

In 1971, Mutabaruka left his job and began to get consistently published by *Swing* magazine. From 1973, Mutabaruka adopted his name, fully embraced Rastafarianism, and started his band Truth to explore how his words could work with music. Mutabaruka found more success as a solo artist, especially following the publication of his poetry collection "Outcry" in the same year, as people resonated with his unapologetic and thought-provoking nature.

In the 1970s and 80s, Mutabaruka began publishing his highly controversial poems, igniting discussions and debates on issues ranging from racial discrimination to political corruption. He also released albums, including "Check It," "Work Sound 'Ave Power: Dub Poets and Dub," and "Woman Talk: Caribbean Dub." Mutabaruka gained widespread recognition with the version of "Outcry" recorded with Light of Saba in 1977, which led to his signing with Earl "Chinna" Smith's label, High Times.

He has performed on stages in Jamaica, the United States, the United Kingdom, Africa, and the Caribbean and continues to be a notable figure in various cultural events, festivals, and gatherings worldwide, participating in notable events such as Reggae Splash '82, Lollapalooza '93, and the Tibetan Freedom Festival '98.

His delivery maintains a rhythmic and musical quality, remaining faithful to the traditions of dub poetry. Mutabaruka's most impactful work is arguably "Dis Poem" from his seminal album "The Mystery Unfolds" (1986), which details the realities of slavery and apartheid and is now included in the Routledge Reader in Caribbean Literature.

Mutabaruka still resides in Jamaica, where his work remains deeply influential. Through his creativity, Mutabaruka has played a vital role in preserving Jamaican and African cultural heritage, leaving an enduring imprint on the realms of spoken word and reggae music.



Mutabaruka performing at Reggae Sunsplash in 1981

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I'NA SUIT YOU

written by the collective

BLEMME FATALE PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS



I'NA SUIT YOU

7th- 9th September 2023 @ Streatham Space Project

What do a group of London yutes know about Jamaican Patois?"

A group of young Black Londoners are tasked with rebooting Miss Lou Bennett's iconic television programme - Ring Ding. A pilot episode about Jamaica, about London, and the 7556km long cultural knowledge gap the diaspora knows too well.

Producer Note

The concept of I'NA SUIT YOU comes from Diaspora wars on Twitter; that moment when you clock yourself code switching; and all the discouragement you get to speak or even learn Jamaica patois because I'NA SUIT YOU. Patois is a language. It is not English. It has its own rules and rhythm and unique body of vocabulary. We wanted this play to combat how stigmatised Jamaican Patois is and the how that impacted 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants engaging with Patois and their culture.

Young Collective Note

I think that this opportunity is perfect for me as I will continue to find ways of expressing my Caribbean culture and heritage in my art and creations and will find it very exciting to work with other like-minded individuals during the project. I would also love to be learning more about my heritage in this free and collaborative environment through the research and hope to have more experience relating to the organisation and construction of the final products. To me, this course is a chance to reignite my love for drama in a forum which I feel comfortable.

Creative and Production Team

Director	Nubia Assata
Dramaturg	Curmiah St Catherine
Designer	Lamesha Ruddock
Sound Designer	Sharif Khalid
Lighting Designer	Olamatu Jabbie
Vocal Coach	Rayon Johnson
Stage Manager	Niquelle LaTouche
Assistant Stage Manager	Davinia Isaac
Operator	Liam Narrie
Producer	Blemme Fatale Productions



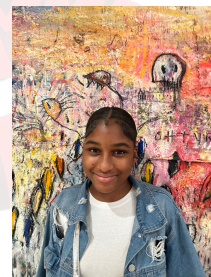
Kaila
Gordon



Freya
Shury-Smith



Kobi
Watson



Tarah
Johnson



Mia
Thompson

THANKS TO

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Kelis Graham
Tali Clarke
Black Cultural Archives
Tamera Heron

“Ode to Patois” video plays as intro to the play.

SCENE 1

Five friends are hanging out in one of their living rooms. The set is reminiscent of a typical Caribbean living room. There are cabinets with untouched china, chair backs on the sofa and a picture of white Jesus on the wall. The friends have been eating chicken and chips/pizza. There are empty boxes and cans of fizzy drink on the center table and around the living room.

Tarah: finishing a text to her mum and then looking up God, this woman is stressing me... praying to the picture of Jesus on the wall Dear white Jesus, I need you to have words with God please. I dunno what I did to annoy him in the family lottery but I swear down he gave me a bad hand

Mia: (side eyeing) ...are you talking to the picture of Jesus?

Tarah: yeah I'm praying for patience to deal with this woman

Mia: Who's 'this woman'?

Tarah: My mum. She's onto me cause she heard me cussin my little sister. That lil b-

All the young people gasp to stop her from not saying the b word)

Tarah: ... keep wearing my clothes...

Mia: You didn't actually call your sister that, did you?

Tarah: Of course I did. She's a little sh- (cast interrupt her by shushing)

Mia: ... Maybe if you didn't go around mis-using your mother tongue to cuss your mum's child she wouldn't be onto you so much

Kaila: Have you seen this?

Tarah: (under her breath) How did I misuse it? (turns back to the picture of Jesus to end her prayer)

Mia: (turning away from Tarah too exasperated to stay in conversation with her) Seen what?

Kaila: This post from the Jamaican government, Ministry of Education & Youth? They're doing a competition. Maybe we should enter...

Freya: (slowly peeling away from her device.) What are you on about? Why would I follow the Jamaican government? What competition?

Kaila: They're looking for pitches for a reboot of Ring Ding. That children's programme Ms Lou Bennett hosted in the late 60s.

Kobi: Well, they already did one of those and called it Ring Ding Again. But, (slips off into his own world already thinking about their submission) maybe we should call it Ring Ding Again Again or change the name to Ting-a-ling-a-ling.

Tarah: (Sings) Ting-a-ling-a-ling, school bell ah ring, knife and fork ah fight fi dumplin! Booyaka! That would be sick, you know.

The friends laugh/kiss their teeth/roll their eyes in response to Tarah

Kaila: My mum used to play Ring Ding to me all the time. I'm sure she's got the episodes on videotapes somewhere.

Freya: Well what are you waiting for? Look for them then!

Kaila goes to find the videotape and puts it into the TV. Projector shows behind the scenes of Ring Ding.

SCENE 2

Ring ding bell.

Freya leads with ipsyncing Ring Ding Again with the other 4 with their backs to the audience swaying like children in the video, Freya playing imaginary piano imitating Ms Lou. concert time Intro "There's a concert here for all ah wi, there's a concert here today..."

Freya: Cut. this isn't working. Let's try another way.

Mia: (breaking formation) We can't replicate Miss Lou or be a copy of a copy.

Kobi: Bun diluting ourselves. Let's put our own spin on it.

Freya: You're actually from Jamaica. But you were born here like me so I'm sure they'll want to know what about Jamaica still makes you claim it as home, even if you've never been. What do you love about Jamaica? I think, if you talk about all the things you love, we'll find our angle. Gwan den.

Each person getting increasingly excited and moving toward Freya

Kaila: the food

Tarah: the music - dancehall, reggae, soca

Kobi: soundclash, bashment...and ska

Mia: the different communities. The people. Their arts and expression

Kaila: the diversity

Tarah: the drinks. Oh my gosh, and carnival. the street parties!

Mia: our language and our history. Our respect for different religions

Kobi: Nature! The beach, boat rides, THE SUN

Kaila: all our colours, all our stories

Tarah: KFC...and c'mon...Bob Marley

Kaila: we're united

Mia: and our people dominate the global stage

Freya : Ok, ok, do any of you speak patois fluently?

Everyone looks at Freya in silence and sit back down

Kobi: not really

Freya: speak patois? How can we do a show about Jamaica without speaking Jamaican patois?

Tarah: ok, but what will we say in patois?

Kaila: let's not focus on that - let's focus on the show

Mia: Well what was the structure of Ring Ding? What makes a good TV show?

Kobi: Well, it's got to be entertaining. They need to want to watch it again

Kaila: How do we make them do that?

Freya: We'll need some songs.

Tarah: Teach them some language.

Mia: What's our age range? Some history too

Kaila: Some storytelling...

Kobi: and a likkle drama

Freya: muss av likkle drama

Voiceover narration as the cast re-enact historical events as if flashbacks/flicking through channels or swiping - Tacky's revolt (1760s); transition to Baptist war (1831); transition into Caribbean migration to the UK (Windrush 1948); transition to Jamaica independence story (1962).

Freya: so the Jamaica we know today, the culture, the music, the language comes from a melting pot of people who were labourers on the island?

Kaila: yup. Enslaved Africans, indentured Asians, Irish and of course the English dem never left. So patwah come from all tongue like Twi, Yoruba, Spanish, Scottish, English, combine...you see it?!

Kobi: rah. When i deep it, that's like people who grew up in london - when we're in ends we have our own way of talking

Tarah: *laughs* that's a mad comparison but when you deep it, all of us in London come from mad diverse backgrounds...and our parents all came here to hustle, to master de 'mother country' systems an do a likkle Colonizin' in Reverse ... like Miss Lou said

Tarah begins reciting Miss Lou's poem and is followed by Mia and Kobi for the second and third stanzas. They recite this as if performing to Freya

Tarah: Wat a joyful news, Miss Mattie,
I feel like me heart gwine burs
Jamaica people colonizin
Englan in Reverse

Mia: Be the hundred, be de tousan
Fro country and from town,
By de ship-load, be the plane load
Jamaica is Englan boun.

Kobi: Dem pour out a Jamaica,
Everybody future plan
Is fe get a big-time job
An settle in de mother lan.

Kaila:...and we bonded in youth clubs, Saturday school programs, estate parks, church and created our own safe spaces...

Mia: Don't forget carni

Kaila:...even Notting Hill carnival was our response to Babylon trying fi kill wi!

Tarah: *(proposing a suggestion)* Carni's on sunday

Kobi: (backing it) Yeah, that's family day

Kaila: Auntie Joyce's then? (Kaila's goes off)

Mia: Obviously. (Mia goes off)

Tarah: (to Freya) Mekase now (Tarah is off and Kobi follow)

Freya: ... still. it's wild?! Us Caribbean people are the originators of protest.

SCENE 3

Into Notting Hill carnival/caribbean party.

Mia: Did you know that the sound system culture in Notting Hill carnival came from yard?

Tarah: well duh, that makes sense...steel pan from Trinidad, soundclash from yard

Kobi: guys I've got our intro! Begins singing

#8 COUNTS OF INTRO

RHYTHM A

*Learn speak patois
fi we dis tongue yah
fi mek dem nah understand*

*Tek word from Ghana
and some from Asia
and blend in English pot*

RHYTHM B

*root in African pot
Tarah: ga lang
Kobi: pronoun nuh have gender
Tarah: ga lang bwoy*

*Kobi: Bruk dem 1 by 1
All: ga lang bwoy
Tarah: Bruk dem 2 by 2
All: ga lang gyal
Mia: Chop word like cow foot
All: ga lang gyal
Kaila: channel dem from root
All: ga lang gyal*

Tarah: dem try clamp we tongue
All: ga lang gyal
Freya: know say one muddaland
All: ga lang gyal

8 COUNTS OF MUSIC GAP

RHYTHM A

Kaila: Mi learn speak patois
Freya: Cah dem speak patois
Mia: Black girl from next school

Kobi: Turkish bwoy dem
And English bwoy dem
Irish man dem too

RHYTHM B

Nuh wan' be upstage
All: ga lang bwoy
Freya: Dem never set foot
All: Ga lang gyal
Tarah: Mi is seed from root
All: Ga lang gyal
Kaila: is mine fi reclaim
All: Ga lang gyal

Everyone is chuffed with themselves, laughing and hi-five each other

Freya: Nahh we need to watch that back!

SCENE 4

Mia: How long ago was this show again?

Kaila: (*ponders*) late 60s until about the 80s?

Tarah: So it came after Independence.

Kobi: yeah that mek sense don't. If the country was forming its identity, language woulda been necessary. Patwah bring everybody together as one...
(*stands and looks toward the audience*) Out of Many, One People...

Tarah: Let's not forget though, when the country gained independence, it was just after and around the time of mass migration to Englan'.

Mia: How'd you know that?

Tarah: There were so many Jamaicans leaving to come to de Mudda Lan',

Kaila: before ship set sail on de promise of citizenship an food to nyam from mama han'

Kobi: ... so much a dem condition with gold-tinted lens to swallow liturgy like holy communion and love thy neighbour

(with emphasis) even when dem call dem out dem name

Freya: I read some transcripts from the Windrush generation and some of them were saying for black and brown Jamaicans, before independence, dem never had no real sense of identity

Tarah: True say dem get pluck from foreign and nuff ah dem get teef from di continent

Mia: Well Jamaica and what it is to be Jamaican has definitely evolved since those times right?
How can we show all that?

Gets up and starts the idea tapping near the TV the rhythm for the song

#RHYTHM 12345ENA6N78N1 2N3N4 5N6N7- 1N23N45N67-----

Mia: Marcus Garvey
Nanny of the Maroons

Tarah stands

Mia & Tarah: Akala ,
Levi Roots

Kailia & Kobi: Bob Marley
Buju
Vybz Kartel

ALL 4 M,T,K,K: Shericka
Shelly-ann
Bolt

Freya: Koffee
Spice
Popcaan

Kailia & Kobi stand

M,T,K,K: Breadfruit
Dumplin
Patty

ALL 4 M,T,K,K: Escovitch

Jerk an' (*Gesture toward Freya prompting her to speak*)

Freya: Ackee?

Mia & Tarah: Rice and Peas

Kailia & Kobi: Bully Beef

ALL: *Bun and cheese*

ALL: *Jeezeeee (group laugh)*

SCENE 5

Projector plays clips of Jamaica. Now and then.

Freya: I'm really enjoying this. I'm learning so much. I feel proud of Jamaica too, even though I'm Guyanese.

Freya directs speech to audience

Freya: This one time at work, I was on the tills serving and this lady asked me where I was from. I just told her Jamaica. I couldn't be bothered, you know. You tell them Guyana and they look at you like, huh? Mimics a conversation with someone ignorant Ghana? No, it's in the Caribbean. Ohhh Jamaica...yes Jamaica. I just thought I'd save the long ting. I dunno why she even asked. It's not like anyone cares when you actually give them the answer. They just use it to judge how to continue the interaction with you. Like, what difference does it make?! I'm human!

Wray and Nephew

El Dorado

Indies

India

British

French

Dutch

Guyana

Union Jack in da corner,

watermarked den ripped away.

Spotlight switch to Kobi

Kobi: In rhythms lively, vibrant and true,

Jamaican stories come to view,

From island shores to skies so wide,

A culture's heart, its soul, its pride.

With reggae beats and sun-soaked days,
A spirit strong like Nephew and Wrays,
With laughter, music, and hearts aglow,
Jamaican passions freely flow.

So gather 'round, let's share the light,
In this rich tapestry, unite,
A celebration of life's array,
Jamaica's spirit, let's convey.

Mia: Are we ready to try again? (Ring ding bell) (As soon as the bell goes everyone is in storytime mode) Class in session. Gather round chil'ren!

Kobi: Mi nah guh call yuh pickney. Tru say di Amerikan dem might tek offense, although di word root in Portugal. (Acts as if saving herself from going into a ramble.) Everyting is context. Come chil'ren siddung, or asiz like de Lucians say, chita like de Haitians. Come, come. Come learn di history of your Caribbean islands.*

Long, long ago, it mussi ova wun millyan year ahgo

Freya: A million years ago!

Tarah: (Looks to Jesus picture) That's like before you my guy (chuckles)

Kobi: It have a string, or you could say a rope of mountain dat stretch from the gulf of Honduras right out into Atlantis.

Mia: Isn't Atlantis some mythical city?

Kaila: Exactly. Do you know what a myth is?

Kobi: Yes chil'ren, mi say Atlantis. Di famous lost city. When unu chant black girl magic, unu nuh really know what yuh chat 'bout. Mek mi tell yuh.

Kaila: So there was land connecting from Central America all the way to the Atlantic Ocean close to Portugal and the top of Africa? if there is an atlas as a prop, there is opportunity to spin/show this via projection

Kobi: Brilliant. Exactly dat. An' some wicked tyra earthquake, vengeful even, come an' bruk up de lan' so it drop dong an' guh sleep pon de ocean bed.

(collective amazement) - look at audience

Kobi: An' we get left with the tips of mountain tops...islands, dat we call the Caribbean. So it have a whole unity of the Caribbean already under water.

Mia: Like the Ameridians from Black Panther 2?

Kaila: Is that why they call us the Americas sometimes?

Freya: So...essentially history just keeps repeating itself? Sounds like what could happen in this climate crisis. The earth is warming up for another main act

Tarah: Chill out climate scout. I'm ready for my fins

Kobi: (sensing tension might be building up among them, wraps up storytime.) Amazing chi'ren, well done! We'll leave it here for today, we learn de history of de lan'. Come again tomorrow, to learn de history of we people! When we say 'out of many, one people', is truth. Mi guh teach unu how de indigenous peoples of de Caribbean, Europe, Africa an' Asia come togeda to make de whole ah we, Jamaica.

Mia: See, you have a bit of all of those in you and you're Guyanese. You're from the Caribbean. We're all one people.

Tarah: Is jus a different stop pon di shore or a likkle island hop fi escape.

Mia: It have more that connect us dan separate us. Jamaica jus one ah di larger islan'.

Freya: LORD KITCHENER

Lord Kitchener

Lord Kitchener

One gwan rip da colour from da islan I know

Jumbi man

Duppy

Lord Kitchener

My Lord Kitchener caresses my soul

It mek me da islan gal I know

Nelson sit a top Trafalgar Square

Patrollin my London town

What happen when da rollin Ingran hills cover da horizon?

Surely his Indian white armour can't protect 60 million?

Toussaint l'Ouverture

Dis name should spark embers in my soul

But nuttin

Not like Lord Kitchener

Not like Nelson

Should I dark-haired, brown-skinned girl

Call on the advice of blonde-haired, white-skinned girls

and embrace 23 & Me with all my might?

TO find my DNA is a coloniser's sight.

SCENE 6

The group are sat watching the pilot show they've put together to pitch (recording of 'ga lang gyal' song)

Mia: Who's judging this submission?

Kaila: Some government body, maybe the Governor General's team...It ah lie dormant inside of me, all dis untapped potential...imagine if our dream gets blocked by the Governor General....

News broadcast of Jamaican borders closed due to COVID-19.

Kobi: (*freaks*) wah di rass? Does this mean we can't go to Jamaica?

Tarah: We were never gonna win anyway

Mia: Oh my gosh guys, wait! Our submission will still be considered even if we're not there

Freya: I don't wanna be the pessimist but I know for sure you stand a much better chance if you're there

An onslaught of phone notifications on Kaila's phone. Jamaicans are protesting that they're not 'real' Jamaicans so they can't win and their submission gets pulled out of the competition.

Kaila: Seems like everyones got an opinion about us

Kobi: So we're not Jamican enough for them? (*chuckles*)

Everyone despondent

Kaila: According to the fashion police, red lipstick

Mia: According to my mum, white braids

Freya: According to my mama, my attitude

Tarah: According to my friends, a frown

Kobi: According to whoever's business

ALL: (*with exaggerated pauses between each word for emphasis*) it is not, patois.

Kaila: Nuttin nah go so

Freya: Dutty

Tarah: Duppy

ALL: Fenky fenky

ALL: Nyam

Kobi: Dem derive from Africa

Mia: likkle more

Kobi: Mi nah chat to foo-fool, yuh understan'?

Tarah: tink me ah speak English? collective kissing of their teeth,

ALL: dem can gwan!

Kaila: The table splinters slightly under the weight of polite conversation

A shift in silence, barely surviving

What he lacks in 'gwaan'

She emphasises going going going till it's gone

Gutural and grown, rid of its creole infancy

At the table, there are forks where fingers should be

Utter 'Mind the pickney' to clothed ears

Unprepared for an authentic delivery

still despondent

Freya: (*consoling Kaila and the group*) mek dem gwan. Nuh bodda yuhself. Nuh mek dat stop yuh. Giving up so easy, i'na suit you. You don't need them to bring this show back to life. You've already started your own version!

Mia: Oh my gosh, she's right

Kobi: Let's put it on YouTube

Kaila: Give it straight to the people

Tarah: That's not a bad idea still...that's all my sister watches. And she needs some home training. Our show can do that.

Everyone agrees and says their goodbyes feeling better about the idea of releasing their show themselves.

Spotlight on Tarah, who moves centre stage

Tarah: I like to watch the sunrise in the morning, the way it shines through my curtains. I like to see the tides come in. I like running on the beach with friends I haven't seen in a minute. The combination of nature and friendship is a beautiful thing, but beautiful things don't always last. I remember when I see the sunset in the evening, it reminds me that another day has passed. Looking to the future hoping that today won't be my last on this island...but we will never know. We can always feel...and we'll always fight for every second we can steal.

Fin.

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**CURMIAH
ST CATHERINE**

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**NUBIA
ASSATA**

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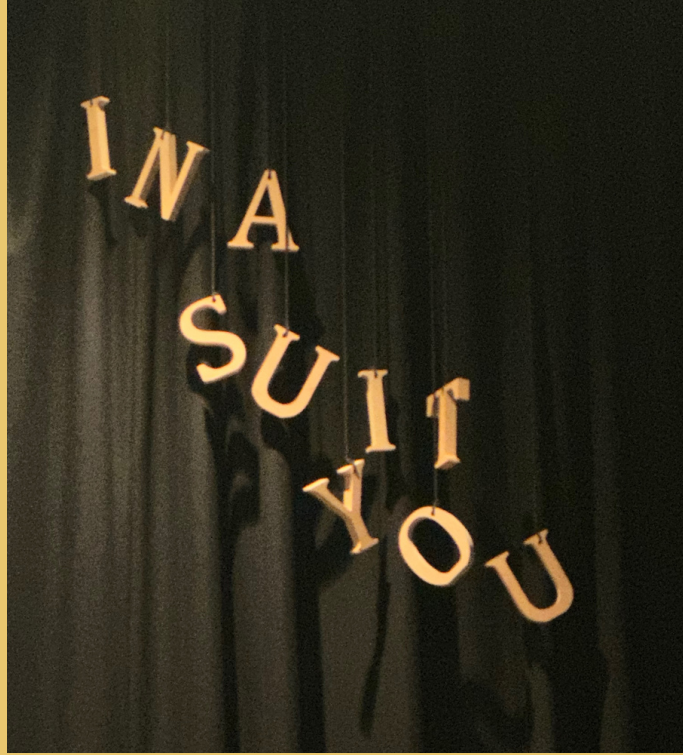
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