

**African & African Diaspora Studies Humanities Afternoon  
PROGRAM**



**Haiti and Her Dyaspora  
The Politics of Aesthetics and the Aesthetics of Politics**

November 5, 2010

2:00pm – Discussion, Graham Center Ballroom

6:00pm – Reception, Graham Center Art Gallery

Florida International University  
Modesto Maidique Campus  
11200 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Miami, FL 33199

**Florida International University**  
**School of International and Public Affairs**  
**African and African Diaspora Studies**  
**African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Student Association**  
present

**The 1<sup>st</sup> African & African Diaspora Studies Humanities Afternoon**

Co-Sponsored by the Council of Student Organizations, the Department of Modern Languages, the Haitian Students Organization, The Latin American and Caribbean Center and the Department of English

The organization of such Humanities Afternoons, hopefully once a year, will bring about a critical appreciation and discussion of the Arts and the Humanities into the African & African Diaspora Studies Program (AADS), for the benefit of the university at large and of South Florida communities in general. The decision to inaugurate such afternoons was taken after the Program (formerly known as African-New World Studies) was incorporated into the newly formed School of International & Public Affairs (SIPA), along with a number of other units which are mostly social sciences oriented. This orientation is reflected somewhat in the disciplinary orientation of events that have been programmed by AADS.

We have decided to have the very first humanities afternoon focus on Haiti and her *Dyaspora*. It is our intention to insert a pause in the great many representations of Haiti as a victim in need of help and charity by discussing the work of two internationally acclaimed Haitian writers based respectively in Haiti and in her Diaspora. We want to open a space wherein the sophistication of Haitian literature and its humanistic dimensions are revealed and debated with the authors and local scholars.

In keeping with the interdisciplinary nature of the afternoon, we are showcasing a unique participatory photography project called FotoKonbit, which conducts photography workshops in Haiti and in the Diaspora in order to empower Haitians to tell their own stories through photography. Using cameras called Holgas, which were designed in 1980s' China to serve as an inexpensive and artistic *entrée* into photography for the masses, FotoKonbit partnered with three grassroots organizations to teach photography to fifteen adults in the Haitian countryside, children in the Peguyville tent city of Port-au-Prince, and recent immigrants in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood in May, August, and October of 2010. The images produced by the participants during these workshops will be presented as a slideshow during the symposium, as well as in prints in the very first public exhibition of the FotoKonbit photographs. Images will be available for purchase, and the funds collected will be used to support future workshops in Haiti and her Diaspora.

2:00pm Welcoming Remarks (5 min) Dr. John Stack, Director of SIPA  
Welcoming remarks (10 min) Dr. Jean Rahier, Director AADS

2:15pm **Session 1**  
Chair: Pascale Bécél, Florida International University

### *Traversées*

2:20pm **Marie-Célie Agnant**

*Il s'agit d'une présentation au cours de laquelle je retracerai mon itinéraire d'écrivaine, l'influence de la migration sur mon travail, un parcours qui permet au lecteur de saisir les raisons essentielles de l'acte d'écrire, et comment l'écriture, la création, la voix qui habite mes textes est intimement liée à une revendication, à la quête et à la conquête d'un espace.*

In this presentation I will re-trace my itinerary as a writer, emphasizing the influence of migration on my work. I will reveal a trajectory that will allow the reader to grasp the essential reasons that lead to the act of writing, to the creation, to the voice that inhabits my texts and that is intimately linked to a claiming, to the quest and a conquest of a space.

#### **Presentation in both English and French**



Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Marie-Célie Agnant has been living in Quebec since 1970, where for several years she taught French and worked as a translator-interpreter. She is also known as a very committed member of her community, an activist. She now spends most of her time writing. An author of poetry, novels, and short stories, she has also published children's literature, is a storyteller, and is deeply interested in theater. Her books have been published in Quebec, France and Haiti. Marie-Célie Agnant's works reflect her involvement in, and attention to the world around her: her texts are anchored in contemporary social realities, addressing themes such as exclusion, loneliness, racism, exile. She also explores the status of women, in respect to the past and memory. She now enjoys an international reputation, with frequent book tours and lecture invitations in Europe, South America, and the U.S. Translations of some of her books and texts have appeared in Spanish, English, Italian, German, Korean, and Danish.

#### Discussants:

2:55pm Dr. Jean Jonassaint, Syracuse University  
3:10pm Dr. Evelyn Cartright, Barry University  
3:25 pm Q&A

3:45 pm

## Session 2

Chair: Jean-Robert Cadély, Florida International University

### Haiti, an Everlasting Struggle Between "We" and "I"

3:50 pm

#### Lyonel Trouillot

My intervention will expose the absence of a sphere of communal citizenship, given the misappropriation of the revolution after independence, particularly after 1806, when state and society began functioning in such a way that it was impossible to identify positively with the nation, and when literature became the privileged space for the expression of such a contradiction and of its desirable overcoming.



**Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Lyonel Trouillot (1956) is a professor of literature, a novelist, journalist, and poet. His many works include *L'Amour avant que j'oublie*, *Le Livre de Marie*, *Rue des pas-perdus* [translated by Linda Coverdale as *Street of Lost Footsteps*], *Thérèse en mille morceaux*, and *Les Enfants des héros*. He recently received the prize Wepler-Fondation La Poste (2009) for *Yanvalou pour Charlie* and was awarded the title (2010) of *Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres de la France*.**

#### Discussants:

4:25 pm

Dr. Heather Russell, Florida International University

4:40 pm

Dr. Charles Asselin, Mount Olive College

4:55 pm

Q & A

5:15 pm

## Session 3

Chair: Mamyrah Prosper, Florida International University (5 min)

### FotoKonbit: Haiti through Haitian Eyes

### Photography and Aesthetics of Self Representation: Haiti through Haitian Eyes

5:20 pm

Noelle Theard and Ralph Dupoux, Fotokonbit

The politics of aesthetics becomes a salient topic when discussing the art making process of FotoKonbit, which is a movement created to engage and empower Haitians to tell their own stories and document their community through photography. Inspired by the Creole word "konbit" which can be defined as the coming together of similar talents in an effort towards a common goal, FotoKonbit produces and teaches photography workshops in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora.



Noelle Theard is a Miami-based photographer and educator born to a Haitian father and a French mother in the border town of El Paso, Texas. She studied photography at the Spéos photography Institute in Paris, received a BA in Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, and completed an MA in African Diaspora studies (AADS) at Florida International University. She is currently an Adjunct Professor for AADS. She teaches photography at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Miami and is the discipline coordinator for the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts 's YoungArts program. Noelle Theard is a founding member of FotoKonbit.



Ralph Dupoux is a creative director and designer who works in the realms of print and internet media design, including branding campaigns, websites, magazine design, alongside concepts for a variety of communications projects. He also worked as a photo editor for *The Miami Herald* and *Getty Images*. In Haiti, he has developed local talents and launched brands such as *Krezi Mizik*. He also designed the entertainment news publication *Spotlight* for the Haitian paper, *Le Matin*. His branding initiatives have included two non-profit organizations in Haiti, including *Prodev Haiti* and *Fondation Espoir*. Dupoux is a founding member of FotoKonbit

5:50 pm

Q&A

6:00pm

**Reception** – Graham Center Art Gallery

In part funded thanks to the generous donation from Dr. Yanick St. Jean, Professor of Behavioral Sciences, North West Arkansas Community College

### **FotoKonbit: Haiti through Haitian Eyes**

Photographs exhibit by Fotokonbit.

Light refreshments will be served.

This event is open to all FIU and non-FIU students and to the entire community.

For more information, please call 305-348-4264 or visit our website [africana.fiu.edu](http://africana.fiu.edu)

African & African Diaspora Studies

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