VIRTUAL PROGRAMME

DAY ONE

OPENING SESSION

9:00 – 9:10
African Drum Call
Dr. Kefentse Chike
Instructor, Department of African American Studies
Wayne State University

9:10 – 9:20
Libation & Poetry
Dr. Liseli A. Fitzpatrick
Visiting Lecturer, Africana Studies
Wellesley College

9:20 – 9:27
The National HBCU Concert Choir
Black National Anthem
“Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” & Selection(s)

9:30 – 9:40
Reflection from Baldwin Contemporary & Friend
Poet Nikki Giovanni
Author & University Distinguished Professor
Virginia Tech University
9:40 – 9:47
Welcome & Introduction of VSU President & First Lady
Dr. Donald E. Palm III
Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs
Virginia State University

9:47 – 9:55
President & First Lady’s Message
Dr. Makola M. Abdullah & Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah

9:55 – 10:00
HBCU Affirmation
Dr. Cheryl E. Mango
Virginia State University
Assistant Professor of History & Framer of HBCU Studies Model

10:00 – 10:30
Tribute to Dr. Kariamu Welsh, Ancestor
9.22.49 – 10.12.21
Temple University, Professor Emerita of Dance
Author, Dance Scholar, & Choreographer
Creator of Umfundalai Dance Technique &
Founding Artistic Director, National Dance Company of Zimbabwe

10:00 – 10:05
Introductory Reflection
Dr. C. Kemal Nance
Assistant Professor, African American Studies
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
DAY ONE

10:05 – 10:12
Master Class Flashback
“The Umfundalai Technique of Contemporary African Dance”
Dr. Kariamu Welsh, Choreographer
By Dr. C. Kemal Nance
Umfundalai Dance Master

10:12 – 10:13
Flashback :: “Shade” Excerpt (2018)
Mama Kariamu’s Retirement Celebration Concert
Temple University Boyer School of Music and Dance
Dr. C. Kemal Nance, Choreographer
Former Principal Dancer and Associate Artistic Director
Kariamu & Company: Traditions

10:13 – 10:23
Reflections from Umfundalai Scholars
Dr. Glendola Xlyhema Mills
Associate Professor of Dance &
Director of Dance Company
Morgan State University

Shawnta Smith-Taylor, M.Ed.,
Umfundalai “Dance Daughter”
Former Principal Dancer,
Kariamu and Company: Traditions

Elgie Gaynell Sherrod, Ed.D.
Associate Professor, Dance + Choreography
Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

10:23 – 10:26
A Pictorial Tribute
By Dr. Pamela D. Reed

10:26 – 10:29
Modern Dance Solo –
“The Fight Isn’t Over”
Mrs. LaWanda Raines
Virginia State University &
William & Mary
Instructor of Dance
10:29 – 10:30
A Moment of Silence

10:30 – 10:40
BREAK
Musical Interlude
“I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free”
By Dr. Billy Taylor, VSU Alumnus

Jazz Duo
Mr. James “Saxsmo” Gates

Dr. W. Weldon Hill
Associate Professor & Chair
Department of Music
Virginia State University

10:40 – 11:20
Opening Plenary
“A Kawaida Rereading and Reflection on James Baldwin:
Rethinking Racism, Reaffirmation, Resistance, and America”
Dr. Maulana Ndabezitha Karenga
Professor & Chair
Department of Africana Studies
Cal State Long Beach

10:30 – 10:40
BREAK
A James Baldwin Reflection
Interview Excerpt
DAY ONE

11:45 – 12:45
PANEL
“For Our God Is a Consuming Fire’ – Baldwin as Eternal Witness to the Peculiarity of American Race Relations”

Interview Excerpt

Moderator
Dr. William Ashanti Hobbs
Associate Professor, Languages & Literature
Virginia State University

“Baldwin at the Movies: Envisioning Black Film Criticism for the 21st Century”
Mr. D’Ondre J. Swails, ABD
Brown University

“If Beale Street Could Sell: Publishing Strategies for Baldwin Translations in a World Literary Context”
Mr. Remo Verdickt, ABD
University of Leuven, Belgium

“The Workings of Affect in James Baldwin’s The Fire Next Time”
Dr. Dominika Ferens
Associate Professor
Institute of English Studies
University of Wroclaw, Poland

“Building a Cathedral for Love: James Baldwin’s If Beale Street Could Talk”
Mr. Thom Addington, ABD
English, Howard University & Director of Student Success
Richard Bland College of William & Mary

12:45 – 1:00
Questions & Answers

1:00 – 3:00
LUNCH
1:00 – 1:15
BREAK
A James Baldwin Reflection Interview Excerpt

1:15 – 2:45
Special Lunchtime Screening
James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket

2:45 – 3:00
BREAK
Musical Interlude
"Work Song"
By Cannonball Adderly

Jazz Duo
Mr. James "Saxsmo" Gates

Dr. Weldon Hill
Associate Professor & Chair
Department of Music
Virginia State University

3:00 – 4:00
CLOSING PLENARY PANEL
“James Baldwin: Bold, Authentic, Iconic, & Multi-Generational Artivist for Social Justice”

Moderator
Dr. Pamela D. Reed
Convenor, The James Arthur Baldwin International Symposium & Associate Professor of English & Africana Literature
Virginia State University
“James Baldwin and Toni Morrison: Literary Crusaders for Social Justice”
Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems
Ida Beam Distinguished Professor | University of Iowa – 2021-2022
Professor of English, University of Missouri – Columbia

“I Am Not Your Negro’: Empowering Black Parents to Disrupt the Mis-Education of Our Children”
Dr. S. Renee Mitchell
Two-Time Pulitzer Prize-Nominated Journalist &
Founder/Principal, I Am M.O.R.E. (Making Ourselves Resilient Everyday)
Portland, Oregon

“The Unsettled, Unsilent Witness of James Baldwin: A Poetic Meditation”
Dr. Lasana D. Kazembe
Assistant Professor, Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis &
Executive Director, Third World Press

4:00 – 4:15
Questions & Answers

4:15 – 4:25
Baldwin & The African Diaspora
Dr. C. Nana Derby
Professor & Chair | Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice
Founding Associate Editor | Forthcoming JABAI Journal

4:25 – 4:40
BREAK
Musical Interlude
The VSU Gospel Chorale
9:00 – 9:10
African Drum Call
Dr. Kefentse Chike
Instructor, Department of African American Studies
Wayne State University

9:10 – 9:20
Libation & Poetry
Mwalimu Melodye Micère Van Putten, MA
Africalogist, Author, Educator, Lecturer, Poet
Author, May the Ancestors Be Pleased: Libations for Liberation
Founder, Ashay University Bermuda

9:20 – 9:23
Black National Anthem
Kirk Franklin & The Kirk Franklin Choir
“Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”

9:33 – 10:15
Opening Plenary
“Poetry and Plain Talk: Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, BAM, Independent Black Institutions & Me”
Dr. Haki R. Madhubuti (BAM Poet Don L. Lee)
Founder & Publisher Emeritus | Third World Press

10:15 – 10:30
Questions & Answers
DAY TWO

10:30 – 10:45
BREAK

A James Baldwin Reflection
Interview Excerpt

10:45 – 11:45
PANEL

“‘God’s Black Revolutionary Mouth’: James Baldwin on the World Stage”

Moderator
Dr. Lenneal Henderson
Senior Fellow and Eminent Scholar
Virginia State University & Founding Board Member
Reginald Lewis Maryland Museum of African American History and Culture

“James Baldwin and the Algerian Immigrants in the City of Light”
Dr. Abdeldjalil Larbi Youcef
Faculty of Foreign Languages | Department of English | University Abd El Hamid Ibn Badis
Mostaganem, Algeria

“Retrospective on the 1965 Debate between James Baldwin & William F. Buckley at the Cambridge Union in England”
Dr. James W. Scow
Adjunct Associate Professor of Philosophy
Virginia State University

“The Gospel of James Baldwin: The Journey to God’s People”
Ms. Rebekah L. Pierce, AA, BA, MA
Instructor | Virginia Union University
"The Prophetic James Baldwin: From Pulpit to Public Intellectual"

Dr. McKinley E. Melton
Kermit & Renee Paxton Endowed Teaching Chair & Associate Professor of English
Gettysburg College

11:45 – 12:00
Questions & Answers

12:00 – 12:15
BREACK
Musical Interlude
“Dat Dare” By Bobby Timmons

12:15 – 12:20
Introduction
Dr. Daryl Cumber Dance, Folklorist
Professor Emerita
University of Richmond & Virginia Commonwealth University

12:20 – 1:40
Documentary Film Premiere
“Between Two Daughters of the American South: A Conversation with ‘The Voice of The Black Writer’”
Val Gray Ward
Founder | Kuumba Theatre, Chicago, Illinois

Dr. W. Weldon Hill
Associate Professor & Chair
Department of Music
Virginia State University

Dr. Pamela D. Reed
Baldwin Scholar
Virginia State University
DAY TWO

1:40 – 1:55
Questions & Answers

1:55 – 2:05
BREAK
Musical Interlude

CLOSING SESSION
2:05 – 3:15

CLOSING PLENARY PANEL
Furious Flower Poetry Center (FFPC)
“‘The Whirlwind Has One Voice’ – The Poetry of James Baldwin”

Moderator
Poet/Author Latorial Faison, ABD
Educational Administration and Supervision & Instructor, Languages & Literature
Virginia State University

“Staggerlee Grabs the Whirlwind by the Tail”
Dr. Joanne Gabbin
Founding Executive Director, FFPC
James Madison University

“On Becoming in Baldwin’s ‘Christmas carol’”
Dr. Hermine Pinson
Margaret Hamilton Professor of English & Africana Studies
William & Mary
DAY TWO

“Love is the purpose of the human voice’: Intimacy and Interiority in Baldwin’s Jimmy’s Blues and Other Poems”

Lauren K. Alleyne, M.F.A.
Assistant Director, FFPC
James Madison University

3:15 – 3:30
Questions & Answers

3:30 – 3:40
BREAK

A James Baldwin Reflection
Interview Excerpt

3:40 – 3:50
Introduction of Keynote Speaker

MK Asante
Author, Filmmaker, Recording Artist, Poet | Associate Professor
Morgan State University

3:50 – 4:30
Keynote Address
"James Baldwin, For Love of Country: An Afrocentric Reckoning"

Dr. Molefi Kete Asante
Professor & Chair
Department of Africology & African American Studies
Temple University

4:30 – 4:45
Questions & Answers

4:45 – 4:55
Closing Remarks

Dr. Pamela D. Reed, Convenor
Virginia State University
September 10, 2021

Virginia State University
1 Hayden Drive
Petersburg, VA 23806

To whom it may concern:

As representative of the 63rd District, a Virginia State University alumna, and a long-time Petersburg resident, I’m elated to express my full support and excitement for the inaugural James Arthur Baldwin Symposium.

With all occurring in the world around us, the writings and teachings of James Arthur Baldwin are more critical than ever to scholars, students and all others. This inaugural event is representative of his intentional social messages and motivations that continue to appear throughout his work as a literary artist. More than that, this symposium provides the opportunity and framework for individuals inspired by the late Mr. Baldwin’s visionary pieces of work, to submit their own multidisciplinary perspectives. More than three decades later, James Arthur Baldwin and his beautiful literary brilliance stand as pertinent reminder of complex views and personal intricacies that were plaguing not only his time but the current and modern day as well.

It is my great honor and pleasure to be part of such an institution that sheds a spotlight on sometimes difficult but necessary conversations and discussions. Shared norms and values will continuously change, but one thing that can hold constant is this symposium’s ability to challenge difficult societal discussions and bring attention to James Arthur Baldwin’s overall motive and the challenge it sets for each of us as individuals.

Sincerely,

Delegate Lashrecse D. Aird
Member, Virginia House of Delegates
Greetings All,

On behalf of the Virginia State University College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), it is my great privilege to welcome you to the inaugural James Arthur Baldwin International Symposium (JABIS). For Baldwin’s pointed articulation of real-world dilemmas that still aggrieve our society reflect the critical work that our College is committed to investigating.

It is my sincere hope that the scholarship and dialogue offered during this forum will have long-term implications with regard to the positive transformation of our world. Furthermore, the JABIS is a testament to the vital role that Historically Black Colleges and Universities continue to play in providing a safe place for serious discussions regarding race and culture to freely transpire.

On this account, I am beyond honored that this historic event was conceived and convened by College of Humanities and Social Science faculty member, Dr. Pamela D. Reed, of the Department of Languages and Literature. She and the members of the JABIS Planning Committee worked through the summer and have continued unceasingly to bring this historic program to fruition.

Moreover, this event would not be possible without our supportive President, Dr. Makola Abdullah, and Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Donald E. Palm III. Additionally, our staff, students, and all members of the VSU family who are committed to our collective uplift have been instrumental in this process.

Thank you so much for your attendance and participation. Please engage, enjoy, and always remember, #Greater Happens Here at Virginia State University.

Sincerely,

Isis N. Walton, Ph.D.
Interim Dean
October 29, 2021

To the Global Virginia State University Community:

Greetings! I bid you the warmest possible welcome on the occasion of our Inaugural James Arthur Baldwin International Symposium (JABIS). The theme, “The Essential James Baldwin: The 21st Century and Beyond, At Home and Abroad,” conveys the importance of and the timelessness of the life and work of this American literary giant.

The caliber of scholars and artists paying tribute to Mr. Baldwin speaks to the magnitude of his legacy: Drs. Molefi Kete Asante, Maulana Karenga, Clenora Hudson-Weems, and Joanne Gabbin, trailblazers. As a native Chicagoan, I am particularly gratified to have onboard Chicago Black Arts Movement (BAM) living legends Dr. Haki Madhubuti and Val Gray Ward, who mentored my mother, Dr. Samella Abdullah, at her famed Kuumba Theatre. Additionally, former VSU Board of Visitors member, folklorist Dr. Daryl Cumber Dance, and Virginia’s own BAM icon, poet Nikki Giovanni will also bring special messages. I cannot thank you all enough!

As we celebrate Baldwin, Son of Harlem, and Citizen of the World, during this memorable weekend, filled with scholarly analysis and artistic offerings, I encourage our students, faculty, staff, and our community at large to fully participate and enjoy this historic event. Endless thanks to all participants for lending their expertise to this undertaking.

Lastly, and very importantly, I would like to formally recognize the contributions of the JABIS Planning Committee and the Office of Academic Affairs for bringing this meaningful program to fruition. You are living proof that, indeed, “Greater Happens Here” at VSU.

Very truly yours,

Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.
President