



VSU  
VIRGINIA STATE  
Since 1882

Greater Happens Here

JAB  
The JAMES ARTHUR BALDWIN  
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

# THE INAUGURAL JAMES ARTHUR BALDWIN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Friday, November 5 – Saturday, November 6, 2021

9:00 ante meridiem – 4:30 post meridiem

## 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

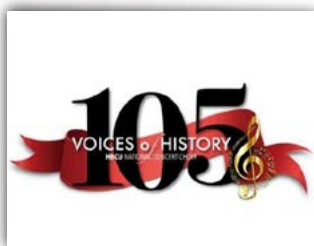


9:10 – 9:20

**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

# DAY ONE



**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**

**Drs. Makola M. Abdullah & Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah**



**9:55 - 10:00**

**HBCU Affirmation**

**Dr. Cheryl E. Mango**

Virginia State University  
Assistant Professor of History & Framers of HBCU Studies Model



**10:00 - 10:30**

**Tribute to Dr. Kariamuh 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 Xllyhema 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

# DAY ONE

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 Wrocław, 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

# DAY ONE



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. W. 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 Activist for Social Justice"

Moderator

**Dr. Pamela D. Reed**

Convenor, The James Arthur Baldwin International Symposium

& Associate Professor of English & Africana Literature

Virginia State University



# DAY ONE



## **“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**

## DAY TWO



**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 Micëre Van Putten, MA**

Africologist, 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"**



**9:23 - 9:33**

### **"Mister Baldwin" & "Colors"**

**Ms. Zahria Ford, Poet**

Eleventh Grade Student  
Rock Ridge High School  
Ashburn, VA



**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

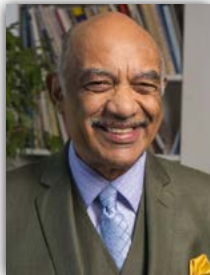
### BREAK

#### 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

## DAY TWO



### "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 - 1:45

**LUNCH**



12:00 - 12:15

**BREAK**

**Musical Interlude**

"Dat Dare" By Bobby Timmons



**Jazz Duo**

**Mr. James "Saxsmo" Gates**

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



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

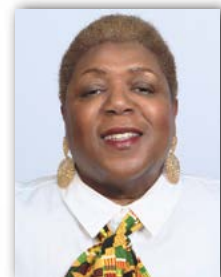
"The Voice of The Black Writer"

**Val Gray Ward**

Founder | Kuumba Theatre, Chicago, Illinois

**Dr. 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







COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

RICHMOND

**LASHRECSE D. AIRD**  
Post Office Box 3943  
Petersburg, Virginia 23805

SIXTY-THIRD DISTRICT



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:  
GENERAL LAWS  
APPROPRIATIONS  
HEALTH, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS

September 10, 2021

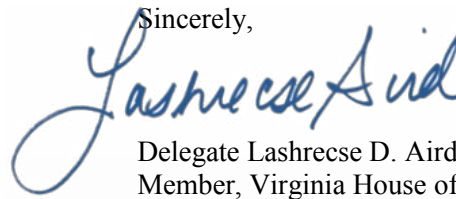
Virginia State University  
1 Hayden Drive  
Petersburg, VA 23806

To whom it may concern:

As representative of the 63<sup>rd</sup> 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



**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**OFFICE OF THE DEAN**  
OFFICE: 804-524-5930, FAX: 804-524-5406  
P.O. BOX 9401 VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY, VA 23806

November 3, 2021

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



Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.  
President

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY, VIRGINIA 23806  
P.O. Box 9001  
(804) 524-5070  
(804) 524-6506 FAX

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 21<sup>st</sup> 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



*The* **JAMES ARTHUR BALDWIN  
SYMPOSIUM** **JAB**

