

Declaration of the 2nd Caribbean International Arts Education Symposium

The 2nd Caribbean International Arts Education Symposium was held from 26-30 June 2005 at the Centre for Creative & Festival Arts, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.

DECLARATION

WHEREAS

The 2nd Caribbean International Arts Education Symposium: The Practice & Prospects of Arts Education for Societies-in-Crisis was held in St. Augustine, Trinidad, from June 26th to 30th, 2005, under the auspices of The University of West Indies, Centre for Creative & Festival Arts. And

WHEREAS

The Symposium, in collaboration with U.N.E.S.C.O. and the Trinidad & Tobago Ministry of Education, brought together some eighty practitioners of arts education representative of the Caribbean region: Aruba, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, as well as from Europe, Canada, the United States, Central and South America, South East Asia and the Caribbean Diaspora; and with a participating audience of approximately 250 artists, teachers, students, policy makers and observers. And

WHEREAS

Cultural Dynamics, Social Praxis, Pedagogy, Policy: Practice and Prospects were the themes shared and discussed through papers, practical and interactive demonstrations and roundtable discussions. And

WHEREAS

Caribbean nations represent a confluence of cultures from the four corners of the earth: a unique combination of ethnicities, nationalities, languages and topography. This cultural complexity has spawned a creative energy and a natural ability through each of the creative and expressive arts: music, dance, visual arts, drama, film, and literature. And

WHEREAS

This cultural complexity has produced indigenous perspectives and practices in education that are specifically Caribbean and non-Western. And

WHEREAS

Despite the fact that most practising artists in the Caribbean have not been exposed to formal institutions of training many of the unique and innovative results: e.g. steel pan, reggae, rapso, calypso and carnival, have gained international recognition and are being replicated throughout the Caribbean Diaspora and the world. And

WHEREAS

Within the Caribbean and its Diasporic nations, there are crises as in other post-industrial societies, such as:

- increasing levels of crime and violence
- decreasing levels of literacy
- drug related issues
- communal & gang warfare
- gender inequalities and male under-achievement
- domestic violence
- child abuse and barrel children
- political corruption
- unemployment, and

- health and natural disasters

And

WHEREAS

The Caribbean Symposium participants were exposed to Caribbean-focussed techniques and strategies which have indicated that the arts are of value in the healing or the searching for solutions to the growing Caribbean and international problems AND THAT Furthermore, arts education (inside and outside of school) is a viable instrument which can prepare the Caribbean child to take his/her place in the globalised system without losing his/her identity. And

WHEREAS

It was also recognized at this Regional Caribbean Symposium that the problems and crises in society cannot be solved without the immediate global implementation of arts education and that while the arts are not a panacea for all ills, they are indispensable to the solutions. Therefore be it

RESOLVED

That the following recommendations be directed to the relevant authorities in the Region:

1. Arts education policy acknowledge and articulate the links between communities, educational and social institutions and the world of work;
2. The arts be implemented throughout the Caribbean school system, within the curriculum and as positive alternatives outside of the school environment;
3. Trained human resources, inside and outside of educational institutions, be made available in order to permit and foster the growth and promotion of Caribbean arts education;
4. Professional training for artists and teachers be made available to enhance the quality of arts education delivery in the Region;
5. Material resources necessary for the effective delivery of the arts: space, media, tools, books etc., be produced and made available to all Caribbean schools and libraries;
6. A complete databank of Caribbean human and material arts education resources be researched, documented and made available to all educational institutions and on the Internet;
7. The current oral culture of societies-in-crisis be documented;

Be it further

RESOLVED

That the following be internationally recognized as Caribbean Best Practices in Arts Education:

1. Area Youth Foundation (Jamaica)
2. Arts-in-Action (Trinidad)
3. Playback Theatre (Grenada)
4. I.C.T.A. (Invention & Creativity Through the Arts - Trinidad)
5. Carnival Legacy (Trinidad)
6. Mas Camp (Trinidad)
7. Carnival in the Diaspora (e.g. Luton Carnival Project, UK)
8. Forum Theatre for Prison rehabilitation
9. Steel Pan as a Pedagogic practice and crisis resolution
10. Reggae Studies (Jamaica)
11. Festival & Carnival Arts Studies (Trinidad & Tobago)Be it further

RESOLVED

That the following recommendations be directed to U.N.E.S.C.O.:

1. U.N.E.S.C.O. make provision in its upcoming budget to foster arts education in the Caribbean and to promote its inclusion in school curricula ;
2. U.N.E.S.C.O continue to include Arts Education in its International Programmes;

3. U.N.E.S.C.O acknowledge and include in its programme for the World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon, Portugal, March 2006:

- the above recommendations from the 2005 Caribbean Regional Arts Education Symposium; and
- Caribbean examples from the reports on Best Practices, Workshops and theoretical perspectives in arts education.

4. U.N.E.S.C.O promote research on arts education in the Caribbean (such as the impact of Best Practices listed above) in order to inform the development of future initiatives in this expanding field.