



SUGAR CANE

Recycling Sweetness & Power
in Modern Jamaica



ABOUT THE Project



The idea for this film project emerged out of an initiative entitled “Fifty-Fifty: Critical Reflections in a Time of Uncertainty,” implemented by the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies Mona, to celebrate 50 years of independence in 2012, (being marked in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago) and to anticipate the challenges and opportunities for the next 50 years.

Guided by the leader of the sustainable rural and agricultural development research cluster at SALISES Dr. Patricia Northover, and the vision of a pro-active Permanent Secretary, Mr Donovan Stanberry, this sugar heritage film project was facilitated by a Grant Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding signed in November 2012 between The University of the West Indies (UWI) and the then Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF), now the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, (MICAF).

The Project Concept

The film - *Sugar Cane: Recycling Sweetness and Power in Modern Jamaica*, was made to mark the impact of sugar on the society, politics and economy of Jamaica, from colonial rule to independence. This story is told with special emphasis on the struggles of the workers and the Jamaican state for freedom, development and justice given their entanglement with major sugar industry players.

The objective of the film series is not just public education on the history of sugar in Jamaica but also a re-imagining of the sugar industry. The series promotes a discussion that emphasizes the industry's future. For example, they highlight the industry's technological frontiers based on its value added products, such as 'green energy' through co-generation of electricity from sugarcane biomass (bagasse), and the production of ethanol from its sucrose base.





The significance of the history of 'King Sugar' is more than its role in underpinning Britain's industrial revolution and the rise of a powerful planter class of Sugar Barons in the Caribbean, whose innovation and ambitions were founded on slave economies and societies, that propelled Jamaica to the world stage as the "jewel of the crown" of Imperial power. Its significance to Caribbean people is indeed more than the story of profits, power and productivity.

The story of King Sugar is significant because it also bears testimony to the indomitable spirit and creative agency of those ripped from their African homelands by force and fraud to enter into slave labour. In the inhospitable space of Plantation systems, the agency of the enslaved was marked by their power to make new beginnings- inventing creole languages, music, food, dance and more. In this way, by drawing on memory and mixed traditions, they provided the bedrock of new social formations - creole society. But perhaps their greatest creative genius was in their unrelenting resistance, as by this act they were able to carve out new possibilities for freedom against the violence, violations and inherent contradictions, of a system founded on brutal oppression.

The underlying story behind King Sugar, both during and after slavery, was thus the miraculous agency of the enslaved, then later ex-slaves, indentured labour, and a nascent post-colonial independent state, in 'raising cane' for justice, progress and freedom. In short, the story of "Sugar Cane" is an epic one speaking of the struggle for a society and political economy capable of supporting sustainable profits and innovative production processes; and for a truly new world worth fighting and living for.



ABOUT THE Series



The history of sugar cultivation in Jamaica, on a large export oriented scale, dates back to the 17th Century under the British Empire when sugar cane cultivation became the main agricultural produce of the island. Historically linked to slavery and dispossession, the sugar industry carries strong cultural memories, especially among rural workers, that significantly impact upon narratives of progress and imaginaries of development, not only in Jamaica, but also within the entire Caribbean region.

In the past 400 years, but especially in the last century the sugar industry has undergone many changes. In seeking to tell the story of "sugar cane", we wish to therefore structure the narrative for this documentary around the epic struggles seeking to reconfigure the history of "sweetness and power" in the quest for rights, freedom and development. Flash points in this history will be used to explore the intersections of issues articulated by the geo-politics and economics of the sugar industry which were important in the making of modern Jamaica. The narrative begins with the flashpoint of 1938, and the role of the labour struggles emanating from Frome, and from there, we explore the story of "recycling sweetness and power" from the vantage point of that epic moment catapulting Jamaica into the future.



EPISODE 1 FLAMES OF PROTEST -

The modernization of the sugar industry in Jamaica is synonymous with the name, Tate and Lyle. In 1938 as they began construction of the largest and most sophisticated sugar factory in the Caribbean region, scores of people took the long voyage across the island with one thing on their mind: to share in the promised wealth. The joy that came with being hired slowly disappeared as attention was focused on the meager wages offered. Protests, demonstrations and cries of injustice lead to the burning of cane fields, riots and deaths. When the dust settles, the political landscape of Jamaica is changed forever.





EPISODE 2 POWER PLAY

The rise of the sugar industry in Jamaica, mainly due to the labour of the enslaved, allowed England to develop as a world economic force; but life and the working conditions of the enslaved were unbearable leading to rebellions, large and small across the island. The bid to maintain the power of the Sugar Barons came through schemes of apprenticeship and indentured immigrants but the surge for freedom that the workers yearned for could not be undone.



EPISODE 4 THE DREAM. THE PROMISE. THE FUTURE

As the global trade winds ushered in the end of the long standing Sugar Protocol agreement between Europe and its former colonies, there emerges a new urgency to fix the sugar industry. The Jamaican government adopts a master plan for the industry's transformation, the Jamaica Country Strategy for the Adaptation of Sugar. Lands are once again leased and factories sold to multiple business interests, both local and international. The relevant authorities focus on equipping the industry with new infrastructure, such as field development as well as worker housing. Goals are set for the expansion and diversification of the industry.



EPISODE 3 SHIFTING TIDES, CHANGING FORTUNES

August 6, 1962- Jamaica, cloaked in her black, green and gold flag of hope, bid farewell to Mother England. The new national leaders embrace independence and set their sights on making sugar play its role in nation building. 1965 saw sugar production at its highest level. Soon after, amidst growing struggles with national leaders and workers, Tate and Lyle makes their retreat and Jamaica is left to pick up the pieces and devise a strategy to put sugar on a more profitable and sustainable ground.



ABOUT THE Lead Research Team



PATRICK E. BRYAN is Professor Emeritus of History, University of the West Indies. His research interests include the social and economic history of the British and Spanish Caribbean. Among his publications are: *Philanthropy and Social Welfare in Jamaica* (1990); *The Jamaican People: Race Class and Social Control* (2000); *Inside Out and Outside In: Factors in the Creation of contemporary Jamaica* (2000); and *Aviation: The Jamaican Story* (2003). He co-edited *Garvey: His Work and Impact* (1991) with Rupert Lewis, and *Not for Wages Alone: Eyewitness accounts of the labour rebellion in Jamaica* (2003) with Karl Watson.

He translated into English from the original Spanish Francisco Morales Padrón's *Jamaica Española* (Spanish Jamaica). Among his Awards are two Fulbright Fellowships. He has also served as Head of the History Department and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Education at Mona, and as Chief Examiner in Caribbean History (CXC-CSEC). He served on the Board of Directors of the Jamaica National Heritage Trust and on the Council of the Institute of Jamaica, and as Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Museums Division of the Institute of Jamaica. Patrick Earle Bryan, was honoured with the Order of Distinction, Commander Class (CD) for excellence in academia. One of his latest publications is *Edward Seaga and the Challenges of Modern Jamaica* (2011).



Michaeline A. Crichlow, is Professor in the Departments of African and African American Studies and Sociology at Duke University and a Senior Research Fellow at Duke's Kenan Institute for Ethics. Her research projects are related to citizenship, nationalism and development mainly in the Atlantic and Pacific regions. Her current project: "Governing the Present: Vistas, Violence and the Politics of Place" examines the quests for place and freedoms among populations in the Caribbean, Pacific and South Africa. She is the author (with Patricia Northover) of *Globalization and the Post-Creole Imagination: Notes on Fleeing the Plantation* (2009) and *Negotiating Caribbean Freedom: Peasants and the State in Development* (2005).

She is the author of numerous articles and edited volumes, including *Global Affirmative Action in a Neoliberal Age*, and *Human Traffic: Past and Present*. She is the editor of the journal: *Cultural Dynamics* and leads the initiative, *Race, Space, Place: The Making and Unmaking of Freedom in the Atlantic and Beyond* <https://racespaceplace.com/>





Daive A. Dunkley is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Black Studies, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of History, University of Missouri. A former Historian at The University of the West Indies, his research focuses on the history and culture of the Caribbean and the wider Black Atlantic, and the history and culture of the Rastafari movement.

His publications have explored slavery, colonialism, resistance, Black Nationalism, and Pan Africanism. In 2011, Dunkley collaborated with several other authors to write *Readings in Caribbean History and Culture: Breaking Ground*. His first book is *Agency of the Enslaved: Jamaica and the Culture of Freedom in the Atlantic World* (2013). In this volume he suggests historians have not paid enough attention to how enslaved people in the Caribbean thought about the concept of freedom, and sets out to analyze how those who were enslaved defined what it meant to be free. In 2015, Dunkley again collaborated with other authors to write *Leonard Percival Howell and the Genesis of Rastafari*.



Patricia M. Northover is a Senior Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, at The University of the West Indies, Mona. (SALISES, UWI) who specializes in economic philosophy and critical development studies. She is the author and co-author of several articles and book chapters on the philosophy of economics, cultural dynamics, the politics of racial power, blackness and freedom, the political economy of sugar in the Caribbean, economic growth, rural development and vulnerability and the dynamics of Caribbean development.

She has published in the *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Cultural Dynamics*, *Global South*, *Caribbean Dialogue*, *Small States Digest* and *Social and Economic Studies*. She chairs the Sustainable Rural and Agricultural Development research cluster at SALISES, see website: <http://salises-srad.com/>, is co-founder of the Race, Space Place initiative and co-author (with Michaeline Crichlow) of *Globalization and the Post-Creole Imagination: Notes on Fleeing the Plantation* (2009).



Core Film Production Team



Director
FRANKLYN ST. JUSTE, OD

Executive Producers
**Government of Jamaica
(GOJ)
The Ministry of Industry,
Commerce, Agriculture &
Fisheries (MICAF)**

**The University of
the West Indies (UWI)
Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for
Social & Economic Studies
(SALISES)**

Producers
PATRICIA NORTHOVER
UWI - SALISES, Mona

MICHAELINE CRICHLAW
Duke University

FRANKLYN ST. JUSTE, OD

Historical Advisor
**Professor Emeritus
PATRICK BRYAN, CD**

Legal Counsel
Loreen Walker

Production Manager
Joan Belfon

Narrators
**Leonie Forbes, OD
Alwyn Scott**

Musical Director & Composer
Peter Ashbourne

Scriptwriter
Fabian Thomas

Script Treatment
Bertha McLaren

Dramatic Writing
Franklyn St. Juste

Dramatization and
Lead Voice of Workers
Randy McLaren

Overseer
Peter Haley

Slave
Desmond Denis

Sugar Workers
**Randy McLaren
Tesfa Edwards
Rashai Graham
Khadeeja Davis
Nicholas Amore
Marlon Walker**

Lady Eyewitness
Leonie Forbes, OD

Cinematographer
Jeremy Rogers

UK Photography
Philip Chavannes

Graphics & Logo Design
Chavar Chippy

Supervising Editor
Twain Richardson

Editors
**Neil Colley
Hopeton Fullwood
Kerry Ann Lowe
O'Neil 'Ras Shac' Harris**

Production Assistant
Alethea Forgie

Art Director
Nicole Marsh

Sound
**David Osbourne
Sheldon Turnbull
Orville Morrison**

Folk Music
Marie McMarrow
The Jamaican Folksingers

Production Co-ordination
& Facilities
Timecode Productions Ltd.





ABOUT THE Executive Producers



The University of the West Indies - The UWI

Established in 1948, The University of the West Indies is the largest and longest standing higher education provider in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Though leading as an innovative, internationally competitive, contemporary university deeply rooted in the Caribbean, The UWI is also an international university, in every respect, with links extending beyond the Caribbean to well over 100 universities worldwide.

Our Mission

To be an excellent global university rooted in the Caribbean.

Our Vision

To advance learning, create knowledge and foster innovation for the positive transformation of the Caribbean and the wider world.

Website: <http://www.uwi.edu/about.asp>

UWI: Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies - SALISES

The mandate of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies is to conduct training and research of a regional, multidisciplinary and policy-oriented nature to serve the needs of small developing countries like those in the Caribbean. It has been designated as one of the principal units at the core of the university's School of Graduate Studies and Research.

The vision of SALISES is to be an internationally renowned institution for development policy analysis, as well as a leader for graduate teaching and research in development studies.

Website: <http://www.uwi.edu/salises/>

The Ministry of Industry Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries - MICAFA

Vision

By 2030, Jamaica has innovative, inclusive, sustainable and internationally competitive industries in agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing and service sectors.

Mission

To create an enabling environment which grows and sustains industries in agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing and service sectors; strengthen national quality infrastructure; and ensure food & nutrition security, food safety and consumer protection.

Website: <http://www.moa.gov.jm/AboutUs/index.php>







SPECIAL THANKS

Sugar Advisory Committee

Brazilian Sugar Cane Industry Association , UNICA Brazil

Sugar Heritage Film Project- Research Assistants

For further information, please contact:

Dr Patricia Northover

Senior Fellow SALISES, Mona

Project Director/ Principal Investigator: UWI-GOJ Sugar Heritage Film Project.

Phone: 927 1020 or 927 1234.

Email: patricia.northover@uwimona.edu.jm

Or

Mr Donovan Stanberry

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Industry Commerce Agriculture and Fisheries

Phone: 927.1731 • Fax: 927.1904

Email: psecoffice@micaf.gov.jm

Copyright © 2017



The University of the West Indies



The Government of Jamaica

