

**ANCESTORS / DESCENDANTS**

**‘After all, what makes any event important, unless by its observation we become better and wiser, and learn.’**

– Equiano from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*



This year's theme for Black History Month – **Ancestors and Descendants** – invites you to look back as a way of considering our present and future. What is the importance of knowing what went before us and uncovering the unknown and forgotten? How does that help us to understand, to reconcile, and to grow?

Equiano – **who purchased his way out of slavery to become a free Black British person in 1766** – reminds us of our own hopes for this month and the time that follows: **to become better, wiser and learn.**

Ms N Whittington  
Head of Wellbeing  
**Diversity and Inclusion Alliance**

At a time of confected culture wars, last year's theme for Black History Month (BHM) – **'Adding to History'** – proved most welcome. If much public debate focussed on aspects of British history being 'cancelled', and agonised over iconic statues being toppled, we were reminded that BHM promises to build and to enrich; as a cultural, commemorative, and political project, it leaves us with a fuller sense of who 'we' as a community are, by asking **where 'we', in all our manifold differences, have come from.**

This year's theme – **'Ancestors and Descendants'** – helps us to frame those questions in an even sharper, historically-minded way. I have recently been reading Catherine Fletcher's *The Black Prince of Florence: the spectacular life and treacherous world of Alessandro de'Medici* (2016), and reflecting on the ways in which historians ask hard questions of whitewashed narratives, finding truths that can unsettle and liberate. BHM prompts all of us to critical reflection. And as we discover new or neglected aspects of black history, we can all be inspired to ask two simple questions: **what do I know of my ancestry? and how do I know it?** In doing so, we might find new ways of reckoning with our pasts and enriching our common life.

Mr C Ó Siochrú

## ANCESTORS / DESCENDANTS

### SPEAKERS

#### Emmanuel Jal

From his start in life as a child soldier in the war-torn region of Southern Sudan in the early 1980s, Emmanuel Jal has come through a huge number of struggles during his life to become a successful and acclaimed recording artist and peace ambassador. Drawing on his personal experiences and background, he speaks and performs with a strong message of reconciliation and peace, and has addressed the UN, US Congress, the Carter Centre and the very highest level of several governments. Emmanuel has released six award nominated studio albums. His live appearances have included Live 8, and Nelson Mandela's 90th Birthday Concert. He has collaborated and performed alongside artists such as Lauryn Hill, Xavier Rudd, Peter Gabriel, Nelly Furtado, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Joss Stone, Ed Sheeran, Nile Rodgers and Alicia Keys. Emmanuel's message of peace has resonated particularly amongst young people, allowing them to connect to larger social and political issues through emotional empathy.



**Emmanuel will be visiting the College on Friday 1 October. He will be leading music, leadership and writing workshops during his visit to the College.**

#### Sam Hepburn

Sam read modern languages at Cambridge University and, after a brief spell in advertising, she joined the BBC as a General Trainee. She worked as a documentary maker for twenty years and was one of the commissioners for the launch of BBC Four.

Quicksilver, her first novel for children, was published in 2010. Since then she has published a sequel to Quicksilver, two crime thrillers for teenagers and her debut psychological thriller for adults 'Her Perfect Life' (Harper Collins 2017). Sam has been shortlisted for several prestigious prizes and nominated for the Cilip Carnegie Medal for her YA thrillers.



**Sam will be visiting the College on Tuesday 12 October. She will be leading talks and workshops around ancestry, and empathy and character writing.**

#### Alex Renton

Alex is a campaigning journalist working on poverty, development, the environment, food culture and food policy. He has won awards for investigative journalism, war reporting and food writing. His most recent book Blood Legacy: Reckoning With a Family's Story of Slavery has been longlisted for the 2021 Baillie Gifford prize for non-fiction. The book uses archive and reporting to tell the story of his family and other Scots' investments and involvement in transatlantic slavery and Caribbean

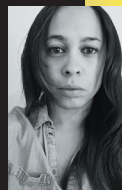


plantations - and examines the legacy of that in Britain and the Caribbean today. As one reviewer of the book, Professor Diane Paton stated, *Blood Legacy* sets the ordinariness of slaveholding in the eighteenth-century world alongside accounts of the extraordinary lives of those they owned. This is a book that asks Britons to look hard at our past and its consequences in the present.

**Alex will be visiting the College on Friday 15 October to discuss his book and answer questions.**

### **Diane Page**

Diane Page is a theatre director and Birkbeck alumna. She is the recipient of this year's James Menzies-Kitchin Trust Award. The JMK Award recognises the talent of young directors across the country who demonstrate promise, vision and inspiration. Diane was awarded the prize for her production of *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act* by Athol Fugard. The play is a love story set in apartheid South Africa that follows two lovers, a black man and a white woman as they navigate the colour bar politics of the time. The play has been staged at The Orange Tree theatre.



**Diane will be visiting the College on Monday 4 October to discuss Athol Fugard's play 'Statements', theatre directing and answering questions.**

## **EVENTS AROUND COLLEGE**

### **SENIOR SCHOOL**

#### **Launch Assembly Monday 4 October**

Hear from members of our Dulwich College community speaking about the theme of ancestors and descendants, exploring the College's Archives, and sharing the importance of celebrating Black History Month as part of our collective history.

#### **Celebrating Black British History Through Our Displays**

We will work collaboratively to add to our displays and the physical environment of the College as a way of celebrating a range of achievements and diversity. Consider researching the achievements made by individuals - across the different subjects that you study - who are very much rooted in black history. Create a poster or an image of this person, along with a brief biography about them and share these to be put up around the College.

#### **Postcard Passing On History**

Portraits of Black British people that have made outstanding contributions will be created by pupils across the College. These will then be reprinted as postcards. Send one of these postcards to family and friends - a way to not only keep in contact with one another but also to pass on and share the history of some lesser known but nonetheless phenomenal figures in our collective history.

### Jewellery Project

Our Year 12 pupils are working on a brief to make a collection of jewellery that will be sold in a local jewellery store during the run up to Christmas. The students have taken inspiration from the creative work, culture, heritage and experiences of refugees from a range of countries in East Africa including DRC, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Congo. All profits from this initiative will go directly to creative educational learning and enterprise in Kakuma refugee camp through our collaboration with the charity MyStart project. [www.mystartproject.co.uk](http://www.mystartproject.co.uk)

The project requires the pupils to design, prototype and manufacture a run of four identical pieces of jewellery, this builds their fine and accurate motor skills as they are working to a very high level of detail. To help them achieve this goal they take part in two day long masterclasses from award winning jewellery makers who ensure the quality of the end product.

## DC BHM SPOTIFY PLAYLIST

A playlist to celebrate a range of incredible artists from the African continent with a mix of traditional music fusion, and contemporary sounds.

LISTEN HERE..... [open.spotify.com/playlist](https://open.spotify.com/playlist)



# THE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

Visit the Library to see the BHM displays and reading lists around the theme of **Ancestors and Descendants** for you to gain inspiration from.

Here are some suggestions for what is available from the Libraries across the College:

Junior School

<https://sway.office.com/Yxp1tHau1KDgVkJSE>

Lower School

<https://sway.office.com/mgHfZhye4zJbHZbu>

Teens and Adults

<https://sway.office.com/T1KHPMayQPgUKAch>

## ACADEMIC AND SOCIETY EVENTS

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### Science

Science will be hosting several Black History Month events and initiatives during October, including BioMedSoc (Y9-11, Tue 5 Oct, 1:50pm, BY04), Biology Breakfast Club (Y12-13, Thurs 7 October, 8am Christison Hall upstairs), ChemClub (Y11, Mon 11 Oct, 1:50pm, CH05) and ChemSoc (Y9-10, Thurs 14 Oct, 1:50pm, CH04). The Physics Team will also be featuring a prominent Black scientist each day. Please look out for more details on each of these events and initiatives in the Upper and Middle School Notices and in the various departmental Enrichment Teams.

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### Art

#### The Lower School House Art Competition

The Lower School House Art Competition *Ancestors and Descendants* - we are using The Missing Chapter portfolio which looks into the Black lives and migrant experiences in Britain during the 19th and early 20th Century before the arrival of the empire Windrush steam ship in 1948.

The SS Empire Windrush steamship arrival in 1948 is traditionally cited as the key moment in the emergence of a multicultural British society where nearly 500 Caribbean migrants disembarked, hopeful of a new life in Britain.

The Missing Chapter portfolio gently readjusts this historical narrative by revealing a unique visual insight into the diversity of Black lives and migrant experiences in Britain before its arrival. The photographs represent a diverse range of people: from visiting performers, politicians, dignitaries, servicemen and women, royalty and missionaries, to society personalities and many unidentified individuals living and working in Britain at the time. Their collective presence bears direct witness to the nation's colonial and imperial history and the expansion of the British Empire during the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Students have been given until 8th November to respond to the brief and present their own research and artwork. There will be a display of some of the elements of the Missing Chapter in the butterfly and after the competition we will also be displaying the student outcomes.

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### **Year 9 Pottery and Year 12 Liberal Studies**

Both Year 12 Liberal Studies classes and the Year 9 Pottery Club are investigating the ceramic work of Magdalene Odundo. Kenyan-born Magdalene Odundo OBE is one of the world's most esteemed ceramic artists. Responding to her recent exhibition at the Hayward we will be watching her film from the exhibition 'A Journey of Things'. It acknowledges the fact that museums have played a very big part in her education and thinking. History has also played an important role, enabling Odundo to discover her own cultural heritage.

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### **Year 10 and Year 12 Half Term Research Projects**

Students will be given a series of artists to research and explore during half term responding to the theme of Ancestors and Descendants. Looking at artwork's like Yinka Shonibare's, Theaster Gates and Arthur Jafa.

Shonibare questions the meaning of cultural and national definitions. His trademark material is the brightly coloured "African" batik fabric he buys in London. This type of fabric was inspired by Indonesian design, mass-produced by the Dutch and eventually sold to the colonies in West Africa. In the 1960s the material became a new sign of African identity and independence.

Jafa's work 'Love is the Message, the Message is Death' is a seven-minute video made up of clips collaged from original and found footage. Distressing scenes of historic and contemporary violence inflicted on Black Americans by individuals and institutions are woven with scenes of religious ecstasy, athletic prowess, poetic and musical performance – what Jafa has called 'a Black display of Black excellence.'

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### **Look Listen Watch: Throughout October**

The art department have put together a rich bank of videos, podcasts and articles which explore and celebrate the significant role of Black artists in the British art scene. These will feature throughout lessons across all year groups throughout the entirety of Black History Month.

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### **RT**

Year 10 students will be considering the Philosophical works of Olaudah Equiano and Frederick Douglass in their study of Human Rights. A freed slave himself, Equiano was one of the first to establish a philosophical basis for the rights and dignities of black slaves. Douglass later built upon these foundations, in particular championing the role of literacy and education in restoring black slaves' humanity.

The RS Gym (lower/middle school RT society) will also be having an talk on black, feminist-Marxist philosopher Angela Davis. Discussion will focus upon her theses about the prison system and the role it plays in oppressing the marginalised.'

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### **LitSoc**

LitSoc presents In Conversation with Diane Page, Ms Whittington and Arjaan Miah. We will be discussing Athol Fugard's play 'Statements After An Arrest Under the Immorality Act', Diane's theatrical direction of the play, and exploring some creative responses to the play using Fugard's approaches.

**Monday 4 October**

**4pm**

**N202**



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### **Art Soc**

Art Soc presents a discussion exploring the controversial art work by Marie-Guillemine Benoist 'Portrait of Madeline' (formerly known as Portrait of a black woman). Today it hangs in the Louvre but this was not always the case... In the summer of 2018, Beyoncé and Jay-Z released the video for their song "APESH\*T," filmed almost entirely in the galleries of the Louvre. The video explores ways in which Beyoncé and a troupe of professional mostly Black female dancers perform the museum to disrupt long standing, colonialist notions of power.

**Tuesday 5 October**

**1.45pm**

**Studio 4**

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### **African and Caribbean Soc**

Come and join the interactive gallery on display to discover a greater knowledge of unique aspects of the African and Caribbean Diaspora.

**Thursday 14 October**

**1:45pm**

**N202**



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### **Classics Soc**

Classics Soc presents a talk on Ancient Egypt. We will focus on the kingdoms of Egypt before the coming of the Persians, and on how Egypt influenced Greek (and so European) culture and society centuries later. In particular we will look at Ramesses the Great, known to the Ancient Greeks and to Shelley as Ozymandias, King of Kings.

**Friday 15 October**

**1:45pm**

**C001**

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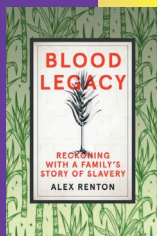
### **History Society**

History Society is delighted to welcome author and journalist Alex Renton to hold a discussion around his recent book Blood Legacy: Reckoning With a Family's History of Slavery. Alex will share his journey of discovery into his own ancestors and family history and consider the relevance to the present day.

**Friday 15 October**

**4pm**

**The Masters's Library**





# JUNIOR SCHOOL

## ACADEMIC EVENTS

A number of subjects will be celebrating the contribution of Black thinkers, designers, musicians, authors, entrepreneurs, inventors – and beyond – and also engaging pupils in some of the social, cultural, historical, literary debates that impact all of us.

**Year 3** will be investigating exceptional men and women with the help of fascinating books by Vashti Harrison. We will explore the hidden stories of some of the lesser-known influential figures of both past and present and celebrate their achievements.

**Year 4** will be celebrating the achievements of extraordinary Black men and women throughout history, right up to the present day. Inspired by the text of *Young, Gifted and Black* by Jamia Wilson, the students will discuss the achievements of the many incredible people in the book, looking at how they have encouraged and empowered others, and made positive changes to society.

**Year 5** will learn about the life and work of Mary Seacole, linked to our History topic on the Victorians. We will also spend time in English lessons studying and analysing the work of poets including John Agard and Grace Nichols and discuss the impact such literary works have made on our society.

**Year 6** will be learning about one of the most famous athletes of all time: Jesse Owens. Linking this to our topics on World War II, we will be exploring the major events in Jesse's life and analysing how his incredible win at the 1936 Berlin Olympics helped to advance the Civil Rights movement

## EVENTS

**Break time Screenings** – throughout October, students will have the opportunity to watch and listen to a range of programmes and podcasts discussing points of interest.

**Local Heroes** – through Wellbeing lessons and a House Competition, students will be invited to research and create artwork portraying a local hero.

## DUCKS

This term has seen DUCKS embark on their journey as a UNICEF Rights Respecting School. The RRS Award programme will further develop DUCKS' focus on empowering and enabling children. As a school where children's rights are respected and championed, the principles of inclusivity and equality are woven into all we do.

During October, the school community will be focusing on Article 2 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The article that states that all children have rights and that no child should ever be treated unfairly.



NO DISCRIMINATION



# Beyond DC Black History Month

– Events to get involved in over Half Term... and beyond

In the words of Equiano, continue to find ways to become wiser and to learn... beyond October's Black History Month. Here are a few suggestions:

## **Migration Museum, Lewisham**

The Migration Museum explores how the movement of people to and from Britain across the ages has made us who we are – as individuals and as a nation.

[www.migrationmuseum.org/lewisham/](http://www.migrationmuseum.org/lewisham/)

## **Black Cultural Archives Centre, Brixton**

Since 1981 Black Cultural Archives (BCA) has embarked on the journey to collect and preserve materials which redress the historical balance and representation of people of African and Caribbean descent in Britain. The archive collection is now one of the most comprehensive collections that document the history and cultural heritage of Black Britain.

[blackculturalarchives.org](http://blackculturalarchives.org)

## **Events Taking Place around Southwark**

Southwark has a series of events taking place during October: Black History Month 2021 - Southwark Council

[southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage/search?c=262&page=1](http://southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage/search?c=262&page=1)

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**DULWICH COLLEGE BLACK HISTORY MONTH**