

Sustainable art communities



Manchester University Press



Sustainable art communities

Contemporary creativity and
policy in the transnational Caribbean

Edited by

LEON WAINWRIGHT and KITTY ZIJLMANS

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Notes on contributors

Trinidad-born **Marielle Barrow** is a Fulbright scholar, visual artist and social entrepreneur. After completing a degree in Hospitality Management in 2002, Barrow became a full-time artist and researcher, earning a postgraduate Diploma in Arts and Cultural Enterprise Management and an MPhil in Cultural Studies at the University of the West Indies, before completing her doctorate at George Mason University in 2016. Her research focuses on the policy implications of counter-memory and cultural capital within Caribbean arts practice, especially in Haiti, The Bahamas, and Trinidad and Tobago. Barrow is the founder of *Caribbean InTransit*, a project involving thirty-three scholars and artists across the Caribbean, US and Europe, which produces a biannually published journal, symposia and festivals, as well as workshops for at-risk groups.

Annalee Davis is a Barbadian visual artist and cultural activist. She received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and MFA from Rutgers, State University of New Jersey. Davis teaches part-time at the Barbados Community College, and is the founding director of The Fresh Milk Art Platform Inc., a socially engaged art platform. She was recently appointed as the Caribbean Arts Manager for the British Council.

Therese Hadchity is an independent art critic, curator and teacher of art history based in Barbados. She was the owner and lead-curator of the Zemicon Gallery in Bridgetown from 2000 to 2010. She has authored numerous essays on Barbadian art and artists including Ras Akyem Ramsay, Ras Ishi Butcher, Nick Whittle, Winston Kellman, Ewan Atkinson, Alison Chapman-Andrews and Sheena Rose. The focus of her doctoral dissertation was on generational dynamics in the visual arts of the Anglophone Caribbean.

Erica Moiah James is Assistant Professor jointly appointed in the Departments of the History of Art and African American Studies, Yale University. Before arriving at Yale, she served as the founding Director and Chief Curator of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas.

Winston Kellman was born in Barbados in 1952. He studied at Gloucestershire College of Art and Design, Cheltenham, and Chelsea College of Art and Design, gaining a BA Fine Art (Hons) in 1981 and a postgraduate Diploma in

History and Theory of Modern Art in 1990, respectively. After two decades as a London-based artist, he returned to Barbados in 1992. He is a practising painter and tutor of Studio Art and Art History at the Barbados Community College and has had several solo exhibitions, as well as representing Barbados on a number of occasions at international exhibitions. He recently completed an MA in Cultural Studies at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.

Charl Landvreugd studied fine art and history of art (joint hon.) at Goldsmiths, University of London. As a Fulbright Fellow, he obtained an MA in Modern Art: Critical and Curatorial Studies at Columbia University, New York. He is the recipient of several scholarships and grants, and is currently a doctoral student at London's Royal College of Art, in the field of curating contemporary art. He uses sculpture, performance, installation, video, curating and writing to develop his research into African diaspora aesthetics in continental Europe and specifically the Netherlands.

Tirzo Martha is a visual artist and co-founder of the Instituto Buena Bista, Curacao Center for Contemporary Art. As a socially and politically engaged artist, he seeks to turn his artworks into tangible actions that may contribute to the development and growth of Curaçao and the wider Caribbean.

Nicholas Morris was born in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1967. Having spent his early life in Jamaica and Barbados, he received a BA in Visual Studies from Dartmouth College, USA, in 1989, a Postgraduate Diploma in Visual Art from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Scotland in 1990 and an MFA from Stanford University, USA, in 1994. A tutor for painting and installation at the Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts in Kingston from 1995 to 2001, and a teacher for art in Darmstadt, Germany, until 2016, he now lives with his grandchildren while working and studying in Manchester, UK.

Mimi Sheller, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology; founding Director of the Center for Mobilities Research and Policy at Drexel University in Philadelphia; and President of the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility. She is author or co-editor of nine books, including: *Aluminum Dreams: The Making of Light Modernity* (MIT Press, 2014); *Mobility and Locative Media* (2014); *Citizenship from Below* (Duke University Press, 2012); and *Consuming the Caribbean* (Routledge, 2003). She has published extensively in Caribbean Studies and helped to establish the new interdisciplinary field of mobilities research. She was awarded the Doctor Honoris Causa from Roskilde University, Denmark (2015) and has held Visiting Fellowships at the Davis Center for Historical Studies, Princeton University (2008); Media@McGill, Canada (2009); Center for Mobility and Urban Studies at Aalborg University, Denmark (2009); and Penn Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania (2010). She has received research funding from the National

Science Foundation, the British Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and the Macarthur Foundation.

Leon Wainwright is Reader in Art History at The Open University (UK) and the author of *Phenomenal Difference: A Philosophy of Black British Art* (Liverpool University Press, 2017), *Timed Out: Art and the Transnational Caribbean* (Manchester University Press, 2011), and editor or co-editor of numerous books and collections on modern and contemporary art, museology and anthropology. A former long-standing member of the editorial board of the journal *Third Text*, and founding editor of the *Open Arts Journal*, he is a recipient of the Philip Leverhulme Prize in the History of Art.

Kitty Zijlmans is Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory/World Art Studies at Leiden University and member of LUCAS, Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. In 2010, she was accepted as a member of the KNAW, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. Her fields of interest are contemporary art, art theory and methodology. She is especially interested in the ongoing intercultural processes and globalisation of the (art) world, and increasingly collaborates and exchanges with artists in the context of the field of artistic research. Together with Wilfried van Damme, she has edited *World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches* (Valiz, 2008).

Introduction



Sustainable art communities: creativity and policy in the transnational Caribbean

Leon Wainwright

Sun, sand and sea, happy faces, music, dance, rum and entertainment. All that helps to conceal and forget our daily reality.

Tirzo Martha, *'Kolonialismo di nanzi: Anansi colonialism'*

Perhaps one of the most lively and yet troubled cultural landscapes today anywhere in the world is the contemporary Caribbean. The region underwent dramatic changes in the later part of the twentieth century with which it is still coming to terms with today. It has suffered severe economic and political crises since the decades of independence of the 1960s and 1970s, and weathered an array of globalising currents that are putting particular pressures on small islands and territories in this interstitial zone of the Americas. In a climate of mounting national debt and instability, countries such as Suriname saw many years of civil war while other nations, including Jamaica, Guyana, Grenada, and Trinidad and Tobago, have suffered numerous episodes of political violence and social unrest. The neoliberal aspirations that shape tourism-oriented economies – Barbados, Curaçao, Aruba – are carried on stormy waves of volatile commercial return. Whether voluntary or forced, Caribbean migration has continued apace, to a point where the identities of Caribbean people can no longer be easily associated with a single, regional geography. The challenges to a Caribbean community – fractured by distance and threatened with uncertainty – are being faced by a transnational, global diaspora of people who live on all the shores of the Atlantic. In a sort of counter movement, the community is engaging more deeply than ever in re-establishing and maintaining a sense of connection by undertaking travel, countering their displacement by building networks, and exchanging ideas and information.

The Caribbean community is also, of course, making art. And, as we will show in this book, it is the arts in particular that hold a crucial role in enhancing the Caribbean's networks by creating a shared ground of experience, enjoyment and understanding. Global change may have serious, even seismic implications for a sense of Caribbean community. But the contributors to this volume share the view that a genuinely meaningful response can issue from an inclusive, open and dynamic sphere of activity such as the arts. Indeed, the arts have remarkably

porous borders, a wide appeal and a purchase on everyday life that runs both ways. They draw in participants, while engaging arts audiences, and reach out and shape cultural policy, education and public institutions. The arts exemplify the dynamic and far-reaching influence of culture in maintaining a sense of identity and in giving meaning to quotidian social relations. At root, the arts in their cognitive capacity reflect on the bonds of community by combining their imaginatively critical and affective force to assert a lasting historical agency. They help to extend the reach of the Caribbean community and provide a common framework in which its members invest in novel, complex and often very individual and localised ways.

Multiple perspectives

This collection sets out a range of perspectives on such processes, identifying the crucial need to foster a sustainable *arts* community to support and nurture the broader Caribbean culture and society. Equally, it attests forcefully to the view that visual art in particular has a specific contribution to make in forging a more sustainable community. We grant considerable international and comparative attention to a little-studied topic that spans the scholarly, creative and professional fields of art and heritage. Our contributors are artists, policy makers, curators and art historians drawn from the Caribbean (Jamaica, The Bahamas, Barbados, Curaçao and so on) and the several locations of its global diaspora (the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany and the United States). They have found instructive comparisons between key linguistic regions of the Caribbean and its diaspora – namely the Anglophone and the Dutch – as a means to negotiate this complex geography, tracing how it crosses national lines and encompasses countries in Europe and North America.

The various parts of this diverse landscape have little knowledge of one another, despite their shared colonial history within the Caribbean and similar patterns of subsequent outward migration to the former imperial metropolises. There is a need for greater awareness of these matters of spatial scale and place, connection and disconnection, and global-local tensions, asking how they bear on making the arts a revealing and contested horizon for envisioning community. As such, this volume underscores the necessity for multi-sited accounts of the breadth of Caribbean art communities, and for greater mindfulness of the contemporary difficulties and opportunities presented in this distinctive cultural zone.

This collection also outlines the continuing reverberations felt from the developments and outlooks that characterise the Caribbean's recent history of art. During the immediate years of independence, visual practitioners were expected to take the lead over other areas of the arts, such as music or performance, in

assuming the social responsibility for representing the nation or the Caribbean region as a whole. Today, artists often try to level this ground, seeking pathways toward wellbeing, and employing visual imagery in tandem with more popular forms of culture, such as time-based, participatory instances of public spectacle and performance. They have exercised art's growing capacity to represent an ostensibly shared cultural experience, and as an instrument for conserving a Caribbean heritage, and have explored the inherent difficulties of understanding the changing nature of heritage in relation to the contingencies of everyday life. Artists occupy a transnational terrain where migration and movement may become the very focus for artistic investigation, with the result of broadening definitions of Caribbean heritage in relation to issues of sustainability.

Infrastructure and artists' voices

Caribbean artists have been historically underrepresented in the centres of the metropolitan 'global North' and they face a still precarious future. In response they have placed increasing emphasis on the need to share their perspectives on their contemporary conditions, with both one another *and* with the wider world. In the effort to demonstrate the background of such motivations, and to come to appreciate how they are coping, we have outlined the salutary lessons to be drawn from individual experiences that will illuminate this broader milieu. A widely debated issue in relation to the sustainability of Caribbean culture and community is the infrastructure for artists and art. Offering critically illuminating scholarly, creative and policy-oriented understandings of sustainable community, our contributors propose a range of analyses and models for a lasting and efficient infrastructure of art production, circulation, reception and memorialisation.

The sources for such models are themselves temporally and spatially diverse. Some hail from countries of the Atlantic region beyond the Caribbean, which the Caribbean refers to, learning from certain elements and adapting others to its local needs. Conversely, as this collection suggests, the issue of sustainability is something that a transnational diasporic community such as the Caribbean is also addressing in its own unique ways, searching intra-regionally for instruction and initiative. All authors agree that the resources for exploring the full range of options and conceptualisations of sustainability in the arts have yet to be found. Our claims and polemics attend to the matter of what adequate infrastructural support exists in the Caribbean region itself, how to influence the arrangements for that provision, and why Caribbean people are seeking to transcend such circumstances by striking up viable alternatives. The role of cultural institutions in Europe and the Caribbean deserve direct scrutiny, with attention on how they

could grant more support and understanding to the practices and lives of Caribbean artists. As we argue in multiple ways, their help in building a sustainable arts community that centres on the needs and voices of artists is vital. Many of the chapters here focus on the setting up not only of institutions generally, but of networks of various kinds, comprising a mix of formal and informal arts infrastructure. Such findings thereby contribute to contemporary debates in the wider humanities and social sciences about engaged scholarship, while demonstrating modes of collaboration between diverse stakeholders.

The Caribbean and 'the global'

The setting up of networks for those whose professional interests are in the area of visual art has disclosed the specific needs, aspirations and obstacles that are associated with the aim of inaugurating and maintaining a sense of Caribbean community. Such networks are contending both with the distributed nature of contemporary art communities at large (the 'global art-world'), and the archipelagic scattering of Caribbean territories, together with the 'submarine' connections between the geographical Caribbean and its diasporas. New lines of support and communication are being found that intersect and fuse Caribbean interests with those of the globalising art market, with its new spaces of display and forums for debate. As we reveal, however, there are also tensions and frictions between them: disconnections between the micro- and macro-markets for art, and rifts and differentiations among regimes of representation that become palpable through attempts to problematise the contemporary master narrative of a unified and inclusive, postcolonial art community.

With these differences in view, we highlight certain visual practices that respond creatively to the task of building sustainable connections for communities that in part are seeking to circumvent the economies and discursive categories of 'the global'. While Caribbean people are asking how to see the way toward alternative, longer-term prospects for understanding and supporting themselves, this widely felt desire to sustain a robust and vibrant community has inspired a plethora of critical responses from the arts. Not without irony have such questions led to a critical look at how the Caribbean's celebrated diversity and transnationalism is mirrored in the vocabulary used to effusively promote art's globalising currents.

But extolling the alleged benefits for all of contemporary cultural exchange in an expanding field may give little heed to the lived experience of individual artists in relation to globalising processes. For many Caribbean artists, the 'milk and honey' myth of globalisation has covered over their actual struggles to negotiate a livelihood in conditions of inequity. Much of the elaborate theorising

about the cultural virtues of global cross-fertilisation and transnational mobility seems unaware of Caribbean experience on the flipside of globalisation. This is an adverse outcome of commodifying the imagined geography of interaction, cultural intermixing and global movement that has long been identified with the Caribbean among cultural analysts. At the same time, the theory machines of 'global contemporary art' (metropolitan curatorial mission statements and interpretative texts, art criticism, advocacy arguments for the charitable funding of art in the 'global South' etc.) are intrigued by accounts of the arts that make a virtue of 'dissensus' among its participants. That authoritative commentators are diverted by the thought of a resistive underside of life in the arts may be a sign of their remove from sites of struggle. It is a paradox that the very same struggles become alienated when their principles and narratives are mediated under the conditions of taste peculiar to the metropolitan 'global North'. Art of the 'global contemporary' has latterly come to be portrayed as a pedagogical place of productive disagreement, fractious yet bountiful social critique, and redemptive if spectacular culture clash. Yet the means, let alone the will, to take part in such a scene of encounters are not roundly shared by art communities of the Caribbean, nor is the sense of hope that this is a battle that the Caribbean can win on its own terms.

Linguistic vectors

These issues, which bear on the future prospect of sustainable art communities, are especially pertinent across the linguistic divisions of the Caribbean. The more common channels for comparing Caribbean experiences cross-linguistically have tended toward Anglophone, Francophone and Hispanic contexts, and the spectrum of creolisations among them. However, this has not only overlooked English and Dutch interactions, it has also hidden the losses of dismembering the Caribbean region according to its language units. Since comparativism needs to be undertaken without generalising differences, we suggest that reviewing these notionally separate contexts in the same scholarly space can help to focus on how and for whom linguistic differences bear on the arts.

Meanwhile, as we have looked at the challenges of building a sustainable community for the transnational and diasporic Caribbean according to the means offered by the arts, we have paused to reflect on the burden of expectations being placed on the arts to serve such a role. The English and Dutch contexts of the Caribbean, and their diasporas, show an overlap in their manner of debating this issue of how to unpack the values that are laid upon the arts. In particular, how may a normative term such as community in each context share parallels with the normativity of received notions about art, aesthetics

and creativity? In answer, our starting point has been to try to defamiliarise all such terms, paying attention to the specificity and contingency of art as a discursive practice, and draw out synchronic and often localised patterns, observing linguistic vectors. Through this book's political economy of art, we sketch how various stakeholders in the contemporary art scenes of the Caribbean and its global diasporas (international art agencies, regional art organisers and local bureaucrats) are positioned vis-à-vis international capital, foreign, regional or national cultural policy priorities, and flows of funding. The language of such policies can be teased apart also along linguistic lines in Dutch and English, and their negotiation and resistance can be identified with Caribbean modes of linguistic invention and transculturation. Accordingly, adopting a self-reflexive mode of debate, we raise the important issue of how claims for a sustainable future for art of the transnational Caribbean across several linguistic zones and national borders have come to shape and direct such policies, how they have been used to justify the operations of institutions and organisations for the arts, and moulded the morphology and the movement of money.

Interventions and contestations

Through this collection, above all, we hope to provide an intellectual intervention for the arts, uncovering the myriad ways that artists and arts organisers envision and 'frame' sustainable community in the local and global art environment. Our discussion of this field has highlighted the historical and current shifts in such framing on the part of organising bodies, policy makers and artists, especially the competing claims over what constitutes artistic 'success', 'creativity' or 'innovation'.

One such shift which has implications for cultural production, is when resources and opportunities are scarce. Competition, whether market or interpersonal competition, is likely to remain among the main challenges to the notion of sustainable community for the Caribbean, not to mention in the contemporary art-world more widely. Here is a space where a sense of community and the principle of social cohesion may be unsteady, riven or evacuated from creative practices altogether. For example, certain individual artists may be celebrated as a 'success', such as in promotional literature, or else they may celebrate and invent their own success by orchestrating an image of status and achievement, such as through social media. But the yield of these declarations of success for the Caribbean art community at large has yet to be substantiated. A role model or star system that elevates a compact set of Caribbean artists is not the same as a shared transformation through a 'trickle down' effect that brings a broader cultural development.

Other modes of framing the issues of a sustainable art community may be detected through attention to generational differences. There may be generation 'gaps' that complicate viewpoints on the arts and seem to distribute competitive roles over the meaning and value of the arts. Here it is worth digging beneath the professed claims among artists, organisers, curators and bureaucrats about how generational background orients their personal motivations for taking part in the arts. It must be noted that generational differences offer more of a guide than they do the rules for understanding the range of approaches being taken to life on the artistic stage, notably a way of seeing art as a platform for the demonstration of cultural altruism (national) community building, group-consciousness raising etc., or else, polarised to the other extreme, taking art as a launching pad for individualism – a means to gain personal prestige by accruing cultural capital and converting it to material profit. These options can also on occasion become fused. An artist who garners a degree of public support and acclaim may also view sustainability as a matter of trying to fit simultaneously within a number of markets for art – from local tourism-related or everyday commercial sites, to commissions and sales from the financial sector or private collectors, whether at home or abroad.

While the policy frameworks designed to deliver a greater economic impact from the arts may employ buzzwords such as creativity, innovation and sustainability, these can be at odds with existing conceptualisations of the arts. For instance, members of communities that have long demanded clearer official objectives and support for the arts may have imagined rather less 'instrumental' outcomes. Mindful of such disappointment or outspoken disapproval, several government manifestos in the Caribbean have lately sharpened their rhetoric. They have argued hard about the necessity in straitened times for the state to roll back its official involvement, ostensibly to avoid stifling private investment and a diversity of views and participants. In some case, culture and tourism are arranged under joint economic targets, such as when art is regarded as having the potential to become a significant 'industry' for the Caribbean. In response, these measures have met with alarm in some quarters of the arts community, with a doubling of efforts to draw a bold line between popular and high art. Confusion lies in the imperative to reinforce those categories as if to protect visual art from industry, even in the face of new examples of art practice (expanding performance work through carnival, for instance) that seem set to dissolve them.

The very same buzzwords – sustainability, community etc. – may also be wielded by bureaucrats trying to justify the spending of public money on projects with no proven or obvious public benefit. These are cases of unrealised or uneven arts policy, when government resources are squandered, most alarmingly through unchecked personal expenditure. What makes such cases remarkable is that individuals engaged in such practices will explain their actions by

recourse to arguments about sustainability. The goal of fostering a sense of community through travel and networking with arts and heritage bureaucrats, art curators, gallerists, artists and scholars from outside the Caribbean, seems innocuous by itself. What has made it seem questionable is the concomitant aim in concrete cases where those networks set their centre of balance outside the Caribbean region and its infrastructural needs, and at a clear remove from local cultural interests. In such circumstances what tends to be *sustained* are the career paths and prestige of advocates for the arts (not confined to public servants in the arts and in arts education) and their global itineraries of cultural tourism.

Whether reassuringly or not, quite rarely do the visual arts seem to yield such plainly pecuniary rewards, however. In both the formal and informal infrastructure for the arts, substantial long-term, in-kind support often comes from a community of perennially committed volunteers and enthusiasts. Some of these unpaid culture workers will explain that their purpose is to become 'professionalised' in the arts, that their efforts are galvanised by trying to achieve 'blue chip' standards. For a region of the world where there are very few such individuals or benchmarks that identity is all the more esteemed and taking on its mantle can feel like an end in itself. Such participants in the arts may lend their labour in the hope that one day art and artists of the transnational Caribbean will gain 'recognition' and 'visibility'. But these too are pliantly abstract terms, with the result that objectives and concerns for the future of the arts can clash with or diverge from one another, regardless of their apparently shared rubric.

Morality and sustainability

What seems to be held in common, across all such arguments about needing to get involved with the arts – in particular, advocating 'sustainable art communities' – are some distinctly *moral* imperatives. In general, both English- and Dutch-speaking contexts of the Caribbean show evidence of impassioned opinion about how the arts carry civic worth or should be a matter of local pride, how culture can restore a sense of place deemed missing or misrepresented. There is impassioned, somewhat historically received argument about how art may become a vehicle for cultural 'autonomy' and 'freedom' by countermanding its colonial uses and the subtraction of the Caribbean from canonical narratives of artistic achievement. A more sustainable art community can restore a sense of self, helping to make amends for years of foreign geo-political dominance over the arbiters of cultural value. It is easy to appreciate then how such depth of feeling can animate the debate about Caribbean societies themselves being indifferent or even hostile toward the arts, and engender polemics against local

authority figures, 'philistines', and sometimes generalisable straw men who all seem blind to how culture 'improves' society.

All of this becomes moral territory when the political solutions seem beyond an 'easy fix'. Take for instance the line of argument that the Caribbean's art communities are indeed so obviously distanced, if not actively detached, from the wider Caribbean community/society. That hardly seems to favour greater public support. The same difficulty attends a morally calibrated economic case made for the arts. How to level the ground between a conception of the arts as a 'value-added' activity that 'enriches' society and thereby demands state investment, given the contemporary Caribbean's deeper social and economic challenges? Wider struggles dwarf the art policy and infrastructural ones, and drown out or relativise complaint about art and artists being overlooked and the inadequacy of its public funding.

Changing the argument slightly in favour of a '*sustainable art community*' seems to lend assistance, but even here there are no guarantees of garnering wide political agreement. In part, what propels the moral case for the Caribbean to aim for sustainability is the ability of that word to conjure up associations with a more established and urgent discourse: the global environmental movement, with its warnings about the human-animal misery and world disasters of pollution, the extraction industries, climate change, species collapse, ecological degradation. In other words, there is a persuasive energy that comes from general awareness of the plight and terminology of environmentalism. The scalar sizing-up of the Caribbean moral case in support of the arts exploits its association with an expanded field of ethical engagement. That relies in part on such a discourse being able to blur the distinctions between these two loci of rhetoric. Here the extant (local) moral economy of Caribbean community is articulated to the codes of a more global-facing morality: a simultaneously spatial and ethical aggrandisement of aims and objectives – planetary sustainability, interspecies community – which are mutual responsibilities transcending cultural contexts and political frontiers.

The metaphor of sustainability has to be handled with care, therefore, since it may easily be co-opted, such as by those seeking to stave off opposition to cutting state provision for the arts – with the argument that 'the former high level of investment just wasn't sustainable', 'we need a more sustainable model of funding that doesn't depend on government' etc. While the transnational Caribbean shows plenty of instances in which appropriated terminologies reverberate productively and inventively in the cultural field, the currently operative terms – sustainability and community – seem especially prone to subversion. Without concerted critical inquiry of the moral arguments that are arranged in the name of sustainability, the otherwise ameliorating potential of art for Caribbean communities may be lost to more abstractly stated, short-term, self-serving

ends. Lip service seems to have been paid to the objectives of sustainability and community-building since these enjoy consensus, even though they can be set to a starkly contrary or recalcitrant purpose.

This is why, through the following commentaries, we have counselled vigilance toward the uptake of any such language and the temptation to prescribe 'what art of the Caribbean needs.' Instead, we sound a cautionary note that the very notion of a sustainable art community is at its most ideological when it comes to seem uncontroversial, and subject to moral discourse without critical evaluation. In response we have placed that notion and every corollary of it under sober and extended scrutiny.

Greater nuance can be felt by asking *why* participation in the arts does indeed open the door so often to moral arguments about sustainability. They are arguments that circulate locally and over considerable geographical distance, projected outward across and beyond the Caribbean. Whatever the scale of such circulation, the moral duty to expose and tackle the obstacles of community building remains at the centre of attention. Through our project of knowledge exchange, at our public meetings and in the written papers that emerged, we recognised the existing means of networking for this community and sought ways to extend them. It was clear that this would help to deepen the process of self-identification for members of an arts community and that the matter and means of how that community can be sustained is most productively explored at the level of the individual subjects that comprise it. The entire process has immersed our work in a moral economy that we should hesitate before denoting as simply another political field.

An exchange of knowledge

By drawing the parameters around the Caribbean for such a discussion about the future of both art and community, the editors of this volume have aimed for a particular viewpoint onto a wider expanse of transdisciplinary discourse. Through a range of examples and cultural settings, we have tried to establish a clearer sense of how diverse stakeholders have come to frame issues of cultural development and sustainability in ways that may work around, against or with one another. The difficulty of how best to describe and explain the contestations taking place in the Caribbean – over what should count as mutual and collective benefit in the arts – is maximally felt. As we will show, what is happening in the transnational Caribbean calls for a sharpening of the current intellectual means to demystify the arts, especially to ground its practices in a critical cultural geography. That the evidence we offer will problematise the initiatives that have issued from art history (after taking its 'global turn'), is second only to

our central interest in pursuing social justice for the arts without dissipating our energies through academic in-fighting.

In closing, this volume gestures toward the need to hone our attention to how globalising processes may have uneven (and often detrimental) consequences for the arts community in the Caribbean, and for the wider expanse of transnational and diasporic Caribbean people. It shows up the many challenges in the way of influencing cultural policy and curatorial practice, and the institutional and public reception for Caribbean artists. Our concerted symptomology of this field tries to increase collaboration across all of the boundaries that have separated these areas of activity and interest. At its core is the concern to improve the apparatus for exchanging knowledge and experience within and across national and linguistic spaces, envisioning a better register of results. We hope that readers will appreciate our shared effort to convey the importance of the Caribbean's art for cultural constituencies that identify with the Caribbean. Of course we are also seeking to reach those who are concerned more generally about how ideas about art and community come to intersect in the social imaginary. On an unprecedented geography of participation, this book has been designed to channel the global transmission of perspectives offered by artists, curators, arts organisers, and by including such stakeholders and through a published format for an international readership. It therefore brings Caribbean communities together with readers that have hitherto paid little attention to the Caribbean. The results expose the deeper foundations and style of practices of community-building through a robust exchange of knowledge.

Ultimately, we hope that this book reinforces the belief in contemporary art's role and potential to win through, and to remain sovereign, despite the present uncertainties about the sustainability of art's communities, and the impediments to a clearer sense of belonging and togetherness. Above all, we have aimed to show how holding up the Caribbean for discussion can help to furnish the way for the arts to become an emancipated space of convergence – discursive, social, ethical, material, imaginative and emotional. In the final analysis, that convergence would be at least as much a collaborative venture as was compiling this volume.

The background to this volume

This collection has its origins in a two-year international research project (2012–14) that explored how the understanding and formation of sustainable community for the Caribbean and its global diaspora may be supported by art practice, curating and museums. It was led by Principal Investigator Leon Wainwright (The Open University, UK) and Co-Investigator Kitty Zijlmans (Leiden University),

together with an organising team comprising Wayne Modest (Research Centre for Material Culture, the Netherlands' National Museum of World Cultures), Tessa Jackson OBE (Iniva, the Institute of International Visual Arts, London) and Rosemarijn Höfte (Leiden University). The project successfully fostered networks of exchange and collaboration among academics, artists, curators and policy makers from the UK and the Netherlands, as well as various countries in the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean and their diasporas. Two major two-day events in Amsterdam and London allowed the opportunity to address in detail the role of networking and exchange for a community focused on contemporary art of the Caribbean. Well-prepared and often vividly illustrated presentations were combined with round table and themed panel discussions, informal summaries of the discussions, and interaction with a wide public that attended both events. This enabled the project to encompass a considerable breadth of relevant issues through the sharing of diverse viewpoints. Additionally, we benefitted from the timely production and posting of video material following the first conference, which many speakers watched in considering their interventions to the second event. Continuity was also established through attendance at both events by every member of the project team, who served as panel chairs and delivered formal presentations from a background of original research.

We wish to thank all of those who took part in staging these events, including the staff at the two host arts organisations, and especially Heather Scott, Jim Hoyland, Peter Heatherington and Alice Sanger of The Open University. Conference 1 took place at the Tropenmuseum (Royal Tropical Institute), Amsterdam, on 5 and 6 February 2013. Speakers included: Petrina Dacres (Jamaica), Marlon Griffith (Japan/Trinidad), Rosemarijn Höfte (Netherlands), Tessa Jackson (UK), Erica James (US/Bahamas), Roshini Kempadoo (UK), Tirzo Martha (Curaçao), Wayne Modest (Netherlands), Nicholas Morris (Germany/Jamaica), Alex van Stipriaan (Netherlands), Leon Wainwright (UK) and Kitty Zijlmans (Netherlands). Our second conference took place at the Institute for International Visual Arts (Iniva), London, on 3 and 4 December 2013, with the speakers: Alessio Antonioli (UK), Marielle Barrow (Trinidad), Charles Campbell (Jamaica/UK), Annalee Davis (Barbados), Joy Gregory (UK), Therese Hadchity (Barbados), Glenda Heyliger (Aruba), Rosemarijn Höfte (Netherlands), Yudhishthir Raj Isar (France/India), Nancy Jouwe (Netherlands), Charl Landvreugd (Netherlands), Wayne Modest (Netherlands), Petrona Morrison (Jamaica), Jynell Osborne (Guyana), Leon Wainwright (UK) and Kitty Zijlmans (Netherlands). Dedicated project webpages may be read by going to The Open University website, where extensive digital resources, including video footage of all presentations, round table discussions and contributions from our international audiences, may be found: www.open.ac.uk/Arts/sac/

Finally, we would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and its Dutch counterpart, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO/Humanities) for the research networking and exchange funding that supported this project under the ‘Sustainable Communities in a Changing World’ joint initiative. Personal thanks from Leon Wainwright are due to the Leverhulme Trust for the Philip Leverhulme Prize in the History of Art that enabled the completion of this publication, and the research leave associated with the Kindler Chair in Global Contemporary Art that he held at Colgate, New York (2014–15). Kitty Zijlmans extends her gratitude to the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts of Leiden University who lent their financial support to the production of this volume. We are especially grateful to Mimi Sheller for her superb and insightful afterword, and to Simon Faulkner and our team of peer reviewers. For the opportunity and space to publish this collection in its first iteration, we thank the *Open Arts Journal* (The Open University) and Manchester University Press for the vision to take up this material and develop it for publication as a book anthology. Finally, our deepest thanks go to Tilo Reifenstein, without whose assiduous efforts and energies, and, moreover, crystal-clear thinking on the myriad challenges presented by production of a book of this scope, this volume would never have appeared.

