

V Jay Theatre Productions

www.vjaytheatre.net
Tel 07786 853232

www.youtube.com/user/vjaytheatre
email: victorrichards@btinternet.com

Black History Month special all year round, Drama, Poetry and Workshop

Profile Victor Richards

Actor, Writer, Director and Spoken Word Artist. Born in London. Touring in the U.K. and overseas. His drama workshop for children is very unique and highly in demand.

For more information please view this 90 seconds Youtube video clip. www.youtube.com/user/vjaytheatre



Aims of Black History Month

- To promote knowledge of black history and experience.
- To disseminate information on positive black contributions.
- To heighten confidence and awareness of black people in their cultural heritage.



'Windrush' is an important British history

The Empire Windrush was a ship that has played an important part in the history of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom. The Empire Windrush arrived at Tilbury on the 22nd June 1948, carrying 492 passengers from Jamaica wishing to start a new life in the United Kingdom. The passengers were the first large group of West Indian immigrants to the UK after the Second World War. For more information please go to the You Tube links below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZf0HnnT6ZE> (2 minutes 40 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh8SeGmzai4>

Windrush Generation 1948 -

Between 1948 and 1964 thousands of people left their homelands in the Caribbean to come to England, having been disillusioned and pushed out by the unfortunate economic circumstances, while at the same time being encouraged and swayed by advertisements for jobs in Britain placed by London Transport and NHS. These people left their homes and travelled to the unknown in search of opportunity and a brighter future for themselves and their children.

One Man Play 'Streets Paved with Gold'

Written, directed and performed by Victor Richards

"Streets Paved with Gold" is a short play written and performed by Victor Richards. The play is set in the present, but explores recent history from the 1950's onwards. In his one

man show, Victor Richards explores African-Caribbean migration, and themes of hope, identity and change. The story line of "Streets Paved with Gold" weaves together a thrilling and informative picture of the collective experiences of Black British Citizens resulting from their new surroundings. This show has been specially put together for schools, colleges and organisations throughout the world for conferences, group discussion and workshops. This play works well in intimate spaces.

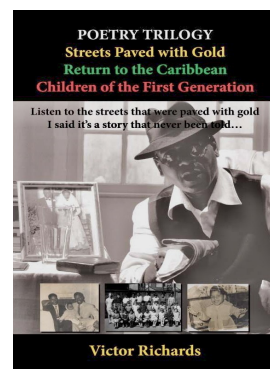
Running Time

Full Play 60 minutes

Half play 30 minutes

Poems from book 'Poetry Trilogy'

Acclaimed performance artist and writer, **Victor Richards**, released his first **poetry trilogy: Streets Paved with Gold, Return to the Caribbean & Children of the First Generation**. The trilogy is based closely on his three similarly titled, and widely acclaimed, one-man plays. Victor recites some poems from the book.



Duration (Flexible)

- 20 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes

** Book, Talking Book (Audio CD), Poetry CD and Play DVD are available from Website.

<http://www.vjaytheatre.net/shop.html>

Drama / Poetry Workshops

Drama and Poetry as a vehicle tool to build self empowerment and develop a sense of direction and self purpose

The skills gained will be useful both academically as well as in daily life styles. Building the individuals confidence and enabling self-growth.

Themes are various...

- British History related to Windrush
- British Identity
- Multicultural Society
- Bullying and Racism
- Community /Social / World issues
- Self value
- Environment
- Relationships
- How you see yourself in the future

Areas covered:

- Memory techniques
- Association mapping
- Building moral
- Creativity & Innovation
- Integrity & Trust

Workshop duration:

between 2 - 4 hours and 30 mins-1 hour break

(e.g. short story / discussion / workshop / performance and feed back)

Preparation for teachers and students

Streets Paved With Gold

The following are some preparatory activities to generate some prior knowledge for the Streets Paved with Gold performance.

Streets Paved with Gold is an account of the character's (Augustus Cleveland Johnson) experience as a Caribbean migrant making his way in post-war Britain.

Starting Point: The Second World War

Key points:

- a) numbers of British casualties - almost half a million deaths, a similar number of casualties
- b) These consisted of the young and the healthy - hence shortage of workers in Britain to rebuild after the war
- c) Caribbean colonies were British territories therefore their inhabitants were British subjects, with British passports who saw Britain as 'the mother country'.

Resource Materials:

- You tube clip: The Caribbean arrivals on the Windrush
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZf0HnnT6ZE>
- You tube clip: THE WINDRUSH YEARS
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh8SeGmzai4>

Immediately after the Second World War

Key Points

- a) Shortage of labour in Britain

- b) Infrastructure needed rebuilding and developing e.g. roads, railway, health services
- c) The creation of the NHS by Nye Bevin in 1948
- d) Recruitment offices were established in Caribbean territories to recruit for the NHS, British Rail, London Transport, heavy industries in the midlands.
- e) Caribbean ex-servicemen were among those who responded to the recruitment campaign
- f) High levels of unemployment in the Caribbean - better health care - improved survival rates - increase in young population

Activities

Imagine that you are a British government minister write an advertisement to a Caribbean newspaper seeking recruits for British Rail and London Transport.

Resource Materials:

- You tube clip on , post-war labour shortage, the anti-racist movement of the 1960s <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ur1etScYZ8U>
 - Who is Johnny Dankworth and Cleo Lane?
 - Who was ER Brathwaite?
 - Activity:
 - Complete a Biography Chart on one of these personalities including date and place of birth, education, achievements, quotations, picture and other key pieces of information.
 - Discuss the arguments put forward by the White Defence League and Mr Brathwaites support of their right to freedom
- London Transport Museum book on LTs recruitment of Caribbean workers - first hand accounts from LT Caribbean staff
<http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/assets/downloads/Generations.pdf>

Language

The language of the play includes the use of Caribbean patois (patwah), I have included a sample of some these words in the form of a glossary

| Word | Meaning |
|-------------|----------------|
| Grip | Suitcase |
| Pardner | Savings scheme |
| Mariner | Vest |
| Ban | Belt |
| Box | Slap |

Other Productions

Running time approx 60 minutes each

"Return to the Caribbean"

Explores Caribbean elders in the 20th century. This show introduces you again to Augustus Cleveland Johnson, who arrives home in Barbados after 40 years of living in England. The stage setting and script provide a realistic and thrilling account of the experiences faced by returning nationals, splashed with humour and light wit.

The story captures the spirit of African Caribbean senior citizens, and their need to return home, back to the land of birth and origin.

"Children of the First Generation"

Looks at the experiences of the first generation born in England. This show recaptures the spirit of growing up in England in the late 60's and early 70's. The story line centres around Granville, the son of Augustus Cleveland Johnson. Through Granville's 40th birthday, he begins to reminisce down memory lane recapturing the music, fashion, school days, adolescence and the realization of the impact of racism. Following the legacy of which we have inherited as we continue to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions made by our parents.

New Performance Poetry in Motion

"I spy through the world's eye"

This is a performance about connecting people around the world. It is also a story reflective of today's society and future generations, we open the door and focus on modern day lives and current affairs, and we will also be drawing references from other cultures.

Life in the 21st Century, 'I Spy through the World's Eye' challenges the boundaries of performance poetry. We open the doors on modern day lives and current affairs, drawing references from diverse cultures and traditions. As you reach your own conclusions the world around you may start to look a little different.