

PRiDE JA
MAGAZINE
Issue 5

PRIDE
X
JAMDUNG

**Centring LGBT People
In Jamaica's Future:
2018 and Beyond.**

Editor's Note

For the past four years, Pride celebrations in Jamaica have ignited very important conversations and have engineered a shift in the local LGBT movement. In 2015, Pride celebrations were audaciously held in the colloquially described “Emancipence” week, running concurrently with annual commemorations of the emancipation of enslaved Africans in Jamaica and the birth of this nation. Since then, the Jamaican LGBT movement has become increasingly centered around the citizenship and nationhood of LGBT Jamaicans and this trajectory led to the development of the Gay Agenda, a manifesto for the Jamaican LGBT community to stake their claim on their birthright. We must never forget however that PrideJA has been central to driving this conversation forward.

Many persons do not see the parallels between PrideJA and Emancipence, however PrideJA continues the project of Emancipence and widens its ambit. In 1834, black people became actual people under the law. In 1962, we became Jamaicans: a unique but yet undefined identity. In 2015, PrideJA asked us whether we could be Jamaicans and be LGBT at the same time and the answer was a resounding yes. Since the watershed moment of the first public pride in Jamaica, we have deepened the conversation around being an LGBT Jamaican.

PrideJA in 2016 and 2017 saw more events being added to the roster of Pride that were diverse in nature but reflected a cultural experience that was unmistakably Jamaican. Sports Days are some of our fondest memories in primary and secondary school and PrideJA took that and made it inclusive and gender neutral. Beach Trips are usually grandiose affairs for families, communities or church groups and PrideJA brought busloads of people together for an afternoon of revelry. Breakfast Parties have developed as a newer way for Jamaicans to enjoy food, music and “dash out” at the same time and PrideJA had its own infamous but glorious edition.

Jamaica as a post-colonial society that has ironclad class-based hierarchies and unevenly distributed wealth has always been a space of struggle for equality. Sam Sharpe led a rebellion against slavery in 1832; Paul Bogle led another rebellion in 1865 to protest poor living conditions; The 1938 Labour Riots saw political giants and founding fathers such as Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley emerge. Even after Independence, women fought for inclusion, equal pay and maternity leave in the 1970s. Political violence in the 1980s and 1990s meant that struggle was the experience of many poor Jamaicans, particularly from inner-city communities. Struggle and resilience have been a constant throughout our history as each group in society seeks to carve out a space for itself. Rastafarians who survived and now commemorate the Coral Gardens Massacre understand this all too well.

PrideJA does not exist outside of these struggles, but exists because of these struggles and present a new frontier to the struggle for citizenship and the claim to Jamaicanness. PrideJA showcases the resilience and undeniable Jamaicanness of the local LGBT community and has emboldened a community to be proud, to be visible and to stake their claim on an island to which they have a rightful share.

PrideJA continues to reaffirm us, empower us, embolden us, heal us and makes us laugh. It is now preparing us to play our part in creating a better tomorrow. The shockwaves of PrideJA celebrations will be felt for years to come as more and more LGBT Jamaicans take their rightful place as equals beside their cisgender and heterosexual brothers and sisters.

My only grievance is that Pride isn't all year round.



Suelle Anglin
Editor in Chief

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A Message From Equality Youth PRiDE

In the last decade there has been social changes taking place in Jamaica, more spaces for the expression of LGBT and queer youth have become possible, A new generation of advocates and activists has continued to work of pushing for progress Centering LGBT Jamaicans into the future. For this to be sustained the energies and involvement of a coalition of youth both LGBTQ and Ally is necessary to see these small social gains to manifest into big wins for the respect of the rights of all citizens. Equality Youth Jamaica looks towards the future with optimism believing that through the collective efforts of every well thinking Jamaican youth we can achieve what some see as impossible. In the words of Minister of health Christopher Tufton “as long as there’s a single child in Jamaica that’s afraid they won’t be accepted for who they are, we’ve got more work to do.”

PRiDE Jamaica helps us push back against this fear of not being accepted that affects our young people. PRiDE offers visibility, community and liberation for LGBT youth giving them hope that they too can share in the prosperity of Jamaica and that hope is alive. Equality youth salutes the organizers and the volunteers that makes PRiDE Jamaica Possible.

Kevon Martin
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I LOVE SWEETNESS

Coffee Scrubs



Our coffee scrubs are designed to include all skin types and the people that wear them.

Happy #PrideJa2018 Jamaica



A Message From WE-Change for PRiDE

As PRiDEJA moves to observe its 4th year of celebrations, WE-Change marks this occasion by celebrating with the team. This accomplishment is a reflection of not only your hard work, but it also heralds the community's growing confidence and will to carve out their own zones of entertainment, safety, celebration and reflection in a country that they have historically struggled to enjoy full and quality citizenship.

WE have enjoyed watching your growth, which has in many ways paralleled our own over the past four years – experiences and milestones that belie the short time since our inception. Not only do the PRiDEJA events cater to the multiplicity of personalities and needs that exist within the community, but the quality of the offered activities improve annually along with the community's outlook. Laudably notable is the space afforded to queer (and ally) women performers annually to recognise and include them in PRiDE, through affording them a performing arts platform, in the week of events – WE hope for this continued inclusion and support for years to come.

Thanks for leading Jamaica's PRiDE celebration in its truest form - as an act of resistance. While you continue "Centring LGBT people in Jamaica's Future," WE pledge continued support for your efforts.

[#HappyPRiDE,](#)

Nicolette Bryan | Executive Director

 WEChangeJa

 WEChangeJa

 WEChangeJa



Financial Resolutions

“There is no good excuse you can give a surviving spouse and children as to why you didn’t buy life insurance”

Life insurance is the cornerstone of any sound financial plan. This is what keeps your family (and yourself from falling victim to the many “what ifs” in life. We all envision and hope for a smooth road but the truth is that more often than not, this will not be the case. As such it’s is only good sense to prepare for the many eventualities of life.

For many persons, the word “insurance” isn’t heard kindly, there are many misconceptions about life products and the majority of persons have little idea of just how useful life insurance can be. I will attempt to correct some of these and also to spread some knowledge of exactly why you should make owning life insurance a key part of your financial life (and all lives are financial if you think about it).

PROTECTION is the main purpose of life insurance, at its most basic, it is income replacement. When a breadwinner dies or becomes unable to earn (disability etc), life insurance is what will keep their family from becoming destitute. Life insurance will keep a roof over their heads and food on their table.

INVESTMENT PROTECTION in the form of critical illness coverage is another area that insurance helps us to maintain the standard of living we are used in the event that we ever are given a untoward medical diagnosis. My question to you is this, if tomorrow you got an adverse diagnosis (cancer etc), would you have the cash reserves needed to give yourself a fighting chance? Or would you have to borrow money or perhaps sell off your assets in order to have cash to keep yourself alive. Did you know that the 3 leading causes of sway in Jamaica are cancer, heart attack and stroke? Not gunman, car accident & badmind as one might think. Did you know that on average a person will spend over 7M dollars to deal with a cancer diagnosis? Do you have 7 millions dollars cash laying around? And even if you did, would you want to have to spend it? This is where insurance comes in, having critical illness coverage means that you will have the cash needed when you need it most

INVESTMENT Simply put, life insurance companies have some of the BEST rates of return on investments in Jamaica. Far better than banks and comparable to (or better than) any investment house with far less hassle.

COLLATERAL There are some life insurance plans that would can act as collateral for aloan (believe it or not), as well as there’s the fact that most loans will require you having life insurance. On that note, let’s segue into another unknown use for life insurance, that’s is mortgage acquisition.

MORTGAGE Legally, one has to have life insurance in order to access a mortgage. Are you planning on acquiring your own home? Then now is the perfect time to get some life insurance coverage in place because you will need it for that purpose.

RETIREMENT Make hay while the sun shines is an often repeated adage that we often ignore. Have you started preparing for that day when you will no longer be working for your money? Have you put in place the systems to have you money work for you? Planning for your retire is something that one should ideally start to do the very first day one starts to work. Alas very few people really thing about retirement until late in late. Your life insurance agent can help you prepare for retire with various instruments that will ensure that your standard of living does not fall in your retirement years.

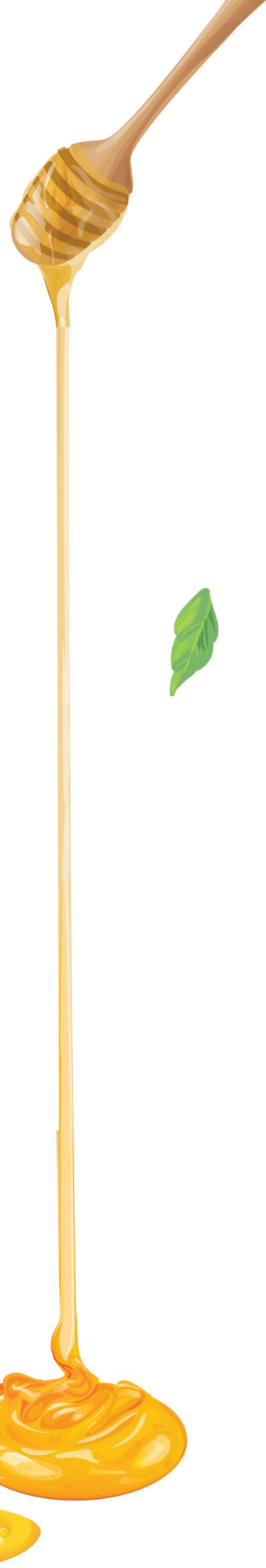
These are just some of the areas in which life insurance and insurance companies can assist you. My advice to you? Take some time and go over your portfolio with your Financial Advisor / Life Agent and make the necessary adjustments. A stitch in time saves nine, after all, why wait until it’s raining to purchase the umbrella?

Feel free to reach out to me via call, text, WhatsApp, email for consultation.



Marlon Campbell
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Struggle time done, a time fi we flourish!

As we work to center LGBT persons in Jamaica's future it's important that LGBT Jamaicans center their emotional, spiritual, and physical wholeness in their everyday lives. At Honey and Lime Ja. we recognize that the deeper the emotional wounds the greater the need for self-love, self-care, and self-healing. And there isn't a single one among us who hasn't been wounded or who doesn't deserve to heal. So, let's do it. We have the products and services to support you and some are tailored to the specific needs of our rainbow family. Because who deserves love and healing more than you? Nobody. Equality in joy and fullness. Celebrate yourself every single day, the way PRiDE gives us an opportunity to live in our truths and affirm our right to be here. My PRiDE wish for this year is that Jamaica comes to recognize that our LGBT family is just family. The whole a we a one. Come all the way through my darlings. Happy #PRiDEJa2018 Jamaica.



A Message From Transwave Jamaica

Congratulations on your fourth staging of Pride! We are very pleased to support the PrideJa team and commend them on their efforts in creating uplifting activities and spaces for our community to celebrate.

Pride continues to be a monumental week that showcases gender diversity, inclusion and the vibrancy of our community. The team at TransWave Jamaica is heartened to see the increased visibility and meaningful engagement of trans and gender non-conforming Jamaicans. PrideJa resonates with our community. The message is clear. Pride is a celebration of resilience. We celebrate in order to reclaim and lay claim to our Jamaica while taking a moment to reflect on our journey while looking ahead to the challenges yet to overcome.

We continue to support the efforts of all who are involved in acknowledging the success of our local movement and to use our pride celebrations as a call to continue to create a Jamaica that respects our humanity.

We take this opportunity to wish the PrideJa team an amazing week of activities and hope that everyone will enjoy the exciting events planned. We will be there – with our trans flags ready!

Happy PRIDE!



Neish McLean
Co-Founder and Executive Director
TransWave Jamaica



CHILITOS

J MEXICAN FOOD

Chilling @ Chillitos!

Recently we sat down with the awesome team behind the cheese filling, margarita swinging very inviting, chilltos. Check out our fun interview!

We definitely stamp them #PrideJa2018 Approved!

Where did the inspiration for a Jamexican fusion restaurant come from?

The inspiration came from the desire of three half Mexican, half Jamaican siblings who established and ran Chilitos before returning to Mexico. The core values of the restaurant and the inspiration for the food came directly from their family beliefs and recipe book.

How did you establish the team behind Chilitos?

Recruitment of our staff is guided by our company values. We have also incorporated these values into all aspects of running the business from our HR policies to our supplier relations. Our values run throughout the business, truthfully, we don't know any other way to be.

What is your organisation's core philosophy?

We are welcoming, empathetic, adaptable and always improving.

Chilitos has become a space that fosters inclusivity and a safe space for all people, what are your thoughts on this?

One of the greatest things we can hear about our space,

is when someone comments on seeing such a diverse combination of people from varied backgrounds, across all spectrums, in one happy space. Being a safe space has always been a large part of who we are, and we are proud about that. We have a saying internally that the only thing we don't tolerate is intolerance.

How has this affected business, especially operating in Jamaica?

Jamaica has a large segment of the population that is young, creative and self-aware. We find that so much of what we represent resonates with a large part of the market. It is important for us to show that a business with our values can not just survive, but thrive here in Jamaica.

What advice would you give to other small businesses to ensure that their spaces are inclusive, in order to capitalise on the untapped market that is often overlooked in Jamaica?

It is important that all businesses look to the future and understand that history can be unforgiving to a business that isn't willing to adapt. People will always be willing to support and spend at establishments in which they feel comfortable and is ethically responsible. Training a team on what you stand for and how to deliver your core values reflects the service you provide and the how patrons view your business.

Last year you were awarded the Prime minister's youth award for excellence, in your view, how important is it for the government to have sustainable programs that facilitate the growth of young entrepreneurs in Jamaica?

It's essential. Jamaica has close to fifty percent of it's current population under the age of 25. These young people are vibrant and creative with an eagerness to prove for themselves and make their mark. They need to be engaged and activated. That being said, we are a small country, it doesn't take much to achieve change, private sector organisations, churches and community leaders can also play their part in ensuring that the youth are represented. If we all spent a little time, a few hours a month interacting with the youth of today, it could make a huge impact in their lives having large benefit to us, as a country

What has been the biggest challenge since operating your business?

It's been a learning curve at every step of the way. New challenges arise as soon as you overcome one, and so the biggest one tends to always be around the bend. On the



bright side, we are always growing and improving. It's bittersweet, but most things worth having are!

Where do you see the business in the next five years?

Although our restaurant is Mexican inspired we are still a Jamaican brand that will take on the region and the world!

What are your views on pride in Jamaica?

We love a celebration of any kind, especially one that encourages people to be their authentic selves. We are all for tolerance and inclusivity. Any platform that holds those values will get our respect.

If you have never been to Chilitos, what are four reasons why you should definitely visit?

As far as we know, we are the only JaMexican restaurant in the world, and therefore the best! Visit for the food and the drinks, but stay for the love and the likes!



#PrideJa2018 Big Up!

Fetish Secretz

Being LGBTQ business owners of Fetish Secretz Ltd, we constantly strive to make Fetish a better workplace and space for all people. Our first priority is creating a more inclusive workplace and reaching a diversity representation. In order to achieve this, we take care to hire diverse employees and in the process we have cultivated an inclusive culture which we work everyday to protect. We make individuals feel supported, included and respected. We have created and are proud of our welcoming and inclusive environment that treats all individuals equally.

Celebrating PRIDE in Jamaica is an opportunity to live as you are. When amongst the LGBTQ community, we realize we are in friendly company and space; seeing individuals you may have gone through the social struggles and issues of life with, questioned who you are, who you can be and what you're meant to achieve. It is the most rewarding feeling and what we have been fighting for over the years.

Our wish for Jamaica is stop the hatred and the discrimination and instead we wish for peace and unity

Happy #PrideJa2018 Jamaica

Jamaica Association for the Deaf

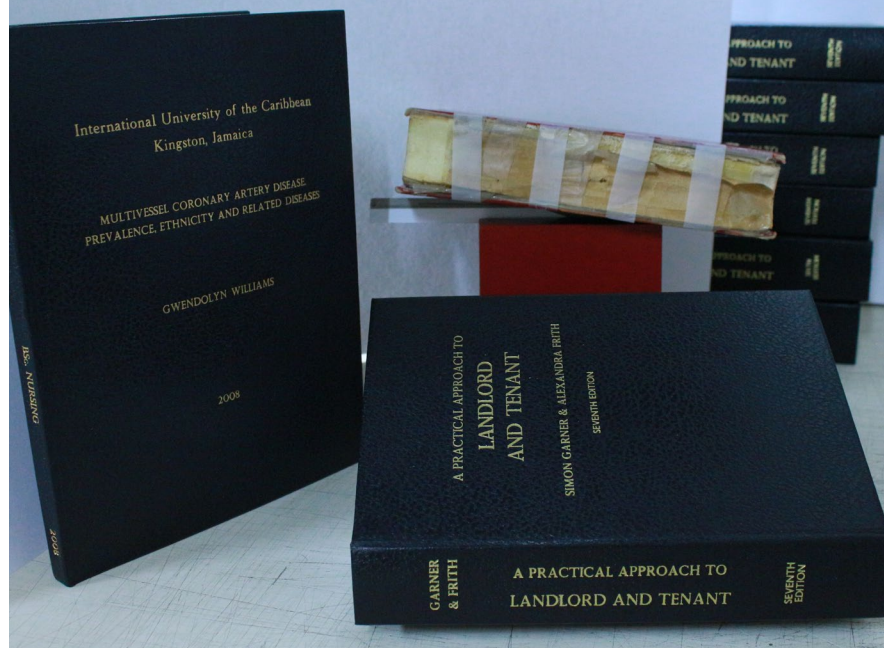
Bindings of Excellence

The ability to create an astonishing impact on the world, even in a small way is not defined by the limitations of physiological abilities. The Jamaica Association for the Deaf (J.A.D.), is a non-profit organization that was established in 1983. The aforementioned belief is seemingly engrained in the minds of the employees and volunteers with whom I met at J.A.D. in the way they radiate within their respective work spaces. The Jamaican Association for the Deaf provides services such as education with their eight schools located island wide, hearing rehabilitation, a wide range of screening and diagnostic services, interpretation, Jamaican sign language training, a bindery, school to work transitions and other social services which all aim to increase the quality of life for the deaf and hearing-impaired community.

The organization's vision is to have a fully empowered deaf community which actively contributes to the nation's development. The bindery, whose recent workshop was aptly named 'Bindings of Excellence' is located across from the school in Papine and has been instrumental in achieving this vision. Jamaica Association for the Deaf Binders is a social enterprise that was established to provide employment



for the deaf and hearing-impaired, and also generate income to support the overall management and execution of the various J.A.D. offerings under education and training and social services. J.A.D. Binders leverages the visual acuity of deaf and hearing-impaired individuals through fine hand binding, conservation and restoration of books and the production of bespoke gifts. The school-to-work transition programme is also in partnership with the Lister Mair Gilby High School for the Deaf. This work experience assists students in acquiring professional and



social skills that will enable them to live independently, be actively involved in their community and be able to seek and attain employment.

The success of the J.A.D. is a great representation of the excellence that can be produced when we remove our own construct of ableism and provide an equal opportunity for all people to be able to actively participate in their own social, economic and overall development.



Beauty

Take PRiDE in Your Skin

Summer is here again and what a time it is to be alive!

While we're busy having fun with short shorts, long beach days and ice cold drinks, we often forget to pay attention to one very important thing; our skin. Next to cold temperatures, summertime is the most critical time to give your skin some love so it can stay healthy. Temperatures have been increasing so much that last year Kingston recorded its highest temperature in 24 years at 36.9C. This year, the heat is back with a vengeance. Countries around the world have registered some of the highest temperatures of all time and the summer heat has even melted the roof of a science building in Glasgow, Scotland! If this heat can melt a roof, can you imagine what it's doing to our Black Girl and Black Boy Magic?

Here are 3 skin care products you will need to get and maintain a healthy summertime glow.



1 . Sunscreen – Sunscreen is a VERY big deal, especially with temperatures fluctuating every day. As people of colour, we sometimes believe that we don't need sunscreen because 'we were built for this'. That is completely false. Everybody needs sunscreen. Be sure to get a sunscreen that has SPF 30 and above. The higher the SPF, the better and longer it protects your

skin. My personal favourite is Hawaiian Tropic Sheer Touch Lotion Sunscreen (Ultra Radiance). It provides protection from the sun's rays, it's not greasy AND it's water resistant. It also has mango and shea butters, vitamins C and E and a little touch of shimmer, giving a tropical glow while protecting the skin. It also smells great! This is available in major supermarkets and pharmacies across the island.

2 . Aloe Vera Gel – Aloe Vera Gel is a great moisturizer but unfortunately it doesn't protect you from the sun's rays. What it does, however, is help to bring your skin back to life if you went outside unprotected. Aloe Vera soothes sunburns and irritation from extreme heat or cold,

making it the perfect evening moisturizer. When you get home from a long day, wash your face with a gentle face wash, towel dry (with a separate towel than the one you use on your body) and add your Aloe Vera Gel. As an option, you can also add it as a moisturizer under your sunscreen for better results. My personal favourite is the Aloe Vera Gel from local organic store Earth Elements, which cost about JMD\$550.

3 . Lip balm – It's so easy to forget our lips with everything else that's going on but our lips need love too. Summertime heat can leave your lips dry, cracking and chapped. Good old fashioned Vaseline can be used on your lips but the problem with this product is that it can get sticky in the heat (so I'd suggest using it more at night just before bed). Lip protection is very important so I usually go for a simple Blistex balm or Dr. Bronner's Magic Organic Lip Balm which has both avocado and jojoba oils. Blistex you can get at any pharmacy while Dr. Bronner's is available at Earth Elements.



Summer Fashion Trend Report

This summer is all about brights crayola colors , beautiful pastels, chic resort beach wear , lots of prints and transparency. The summer heat is not one to play with So Of Course all the trends I've selected are definitely weather appropriate for us living in the Caribbean island.

I've studied the spring/summer 2018 runway shows of all the designers and round up a comprehensive guide to the hottest fashion and accessory trends for summer 2018.

Power Suits

2018 SPRING/ SUMMER TREND GUIDE White Suiting



White Suiting

If fall suiting belonged to **gray plaid**, then spring is all about a clean slate. The white suit isn't just for prim and proper **presidential events** either, but was cut as an oversized tux at Adam Lippes, styled with a bra at Tom Ford, and went *Saturday Night Fever* with Acne Studios.

pastel attack



Delicate sugared almond shades have shaken off their Hyacinth Bucket connotations and turned themselves into a fashion statement. Preen's standout show, inspired by saris and womens' rights movements, was a masterclass in how to do pretty *and* powerful – with one-shouldered dresses and draped shapes in delicate shades of palest pink and green. The big news: lilac, that most

palm beach glamour



Marc Jacobs said it best, with his mad mash-up of swirly prints, rainbow colours and turbans. Imagine the splashy, sun-drenched style of a 1960s Palm Beach socialite – Lilly Pulitzer, say – and then take it up a notch or three. Gucci's Hawaiian-tropic print two-piece teamed with glittery gloves and a pile of necklaces is a case in point.

Pastel

2018 SPRING / SUMMER TREND GUIDE X-Girl Sunglasses



2018 SPRING / SUMMER TREND GUIDE Transparent



X-Girl Sunglasses

We've touched upon it before, and it seems that Louis Vuitton and Prada have taken notice: this '90s sunglass shape is back. It comes in the form of razor edges, Oakley-esque touches, and a fearless experimentation with color.

Transparent

Go clear this season with all your favorite designers. Chanel convinced us we need an OTK rain boot, Tibi's has us considering over a plastic corset, and Off-White's plastic-wrapped collab with Jimmy Choo already man a fan out of [Rihanna](#).

X-Girl Sunglasses And All Things Transparent

Resort Beach Wear



PRiDE
Breakfast
PARTY

AUGUST 6 | 6AM - 1PM

SUNKEN GARDENS, HOPE GARDENS

EARLY BIRD : \$6,000

PRE-SOLD : \$7,000



#PRiDEJa2018

MUST BE 18 YEARS OR OLDER TO DRINK. DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

Art

Mikhail Williams



Who is Mikhail?

I am a digital media content developer with a passion for the arts and arts administration. I identify as an artist first, with a background in painting and mixed media, sculpture and film/graphic design. I'm also passionate about human rights and social justice and by extension, my work in this field is especially important to me.

What inspired you to pursue art?

In 3rd form when we were choosing subjects, I realized at the end of the year I had great grades for Visual Arts, but I had already chosen my eight subjects for my CSEC programme. A few days before the deadline, I switched out Information Technology on my subject selection sheet and added Visual Arts to my programme (it's interesting to note that my parents didn't know). So, I ended up doing visual arts for the next two years and I loved it. I really wanted to create things at the time. I needed an outlet that was less theoretical and more practical. I wanted to be a physiotherapist then, but art opened doors for me.

What art do you most identify with?

I enjoy doing sculpture the most, however I haven't done much sculpture as I would like to because it takes a lot of resources. However, I like the process as it relates to sculpture – I can do anything, I can use any material, and I can experiment more.

Where does your inspiration most often come from?

My inspiration comes from my everyday experiences and just observing persons, and the issues around me. I believe that art should tell stories and so my body of work is a collection of stories I think.

What is your artistic process?

I don't have a set artistic process. One minute I'm dreaming about an idea, the next minute I'm writing and an idea to develop work around my writing emerges and the next minute I'm just staring into space and something hits me. From there, I go into thinking about how I can create.



How important do you think it is for school to encourage students to pursue non-traditional careers?

I think it's very important. Art should be an area that persons should seek avenues to thrive and find their niche. Digital media is also another emerging subject and persons are needed in that field. I honestly think schools should face the reality that the market for lawyers, doctors and other traditional professions are oversaturated. Encourage students to pursue these other areas, trust me, they will thrive. We need to escape the mentality that art is a hard career to make money in. I mean, what job doesn't have difficulties?

What is the current climate in the artistic community as it relates to funding/scholarships for higher educational opportunities?

There are a lot of scholarships out there for the arts, are they enough? No. Most of the scholarships offered are by corporate entities and little offered by art institutions.

What role does the artist have in the society?

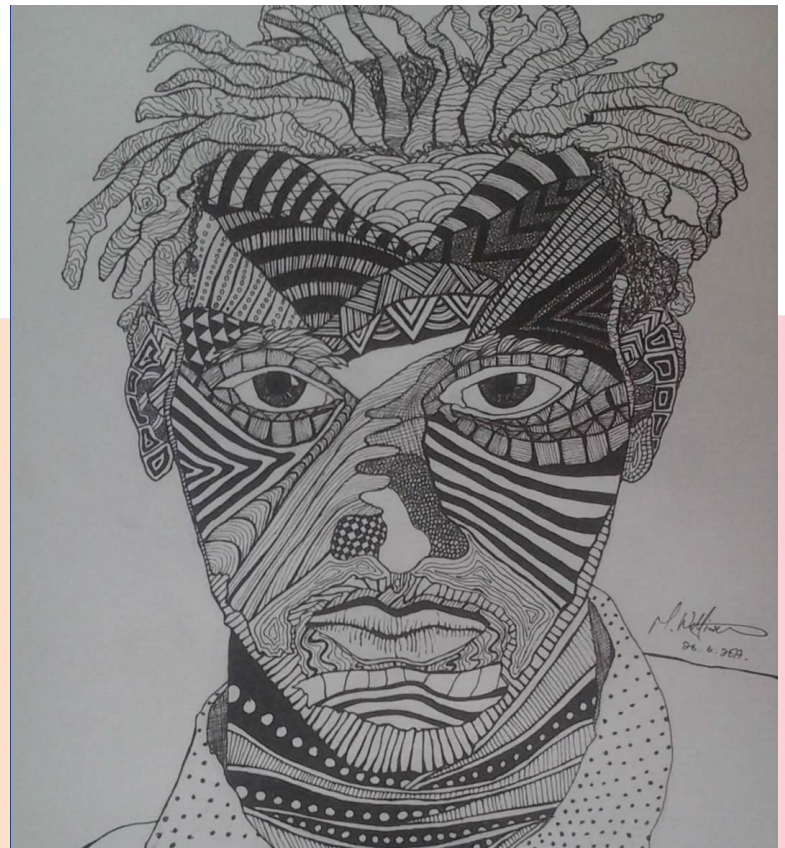
The artist must tell a story. The artist must be present and at the forefront of all the issues that are happening around them and respond accordingly with their creations.

What advice would you give to together young artists such as yourself?

Be in tune with what is happening around you and get involved in shaping a narrative around different issues through your work. Now is not the time to be idle. As artists, we have an important role. Aside from that, practice and keep journal to document your ideas.

We know you are currently a student at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, where do you see your career and yourself in the next 10 years?

I think by then I'll have my Masters Degree in Digital Media and freelancing, working on different projects as an activist on several issues that affect youth.



Centring LGBT People In Jamaica's Future: 2018 and Beyond



THE **gay** agenda



Unlike previous years where the theme was about celebrating our resilience, our communities and our diaspora, this year's theme, Centering LGBT People in Jamaica's Future, asks us to look forward to the kind of Jamaica we want to see. To be clear, PrideJA is and will always be a colorful and vibrant celebration of the diversity and undeniable beauty of the Jamaican LGBT community. PrideJA is a statement that we have made three times over that we are not ashamed to be here and queer and that we are not going anywhere. Having made this bold statement, time has come for the movement to clearly articulate where they see Jamaica going with an integrated LGBT community.

The very first articulation came in the form of a manifesto called "The Gay Agenda". This document gave a clear picture of the multilayered challenges that are being faced by LGBT Jamaicans and made 68 recommendations on how to fix them. The document asked that the Government of Jamaica and the wider society look at the areas of Security & Justice, Youth, Health, Family Life, Culture, Sports & Entertainment and Employment, among others. It outlined a vision for Jamaica that did not present LGBT Jamaicans as a group on the fringes begging for scraps from the table, but as equal citizens making decisions and contributing to national development. The Gay Agenda has already begun to shift how we talk about the LGBT community and LGBT movement in Jamaica both internally and externally.

Another articulation was the staging of the 6th Annual Larry Chang Symposium. The symposium sought to give prominence to the issue of poverty and homelessness facing the most vulnerable communities as a way of centering those persons when we talk about national development. It forced us to think about the work that needs to be done to ensure that all of us are provided for. This is a necessary component of centering the community given that the community is marked by the diversity of its members who each have varying needs, desires and hopes according to their socio-economic status, belief system and cultural background.

Events such as Prism and activities such as the Building Bridges series (where members of the community have dialogue with people in their communities about human rights issues) highlight the importance of centering the community. Prism showcased the unbridled talent that exists within the community and gave us a snapshot of the artistic future of Jamaica, were it to find sufficient space and economic support for a thriving creative industry. Building Bridges underlines the possibility of connectivity and peaceful coexistence that our future holds if we are willing to listen to each other, regardless of our different identities, statuses or peculiarities.

PrideJA 2018 will exemplify the vision for an inclusive of Jamaica. The Conference will consider what the worlds of art, business and governance could look like if they were



more inclusive. National inclusivity, accurate and improved media representation, creative strategies to remedy unemployment in the LGBT community and the underlying challenges which manifests at the intersection of queerness and poverty are discussions to be highlighted at this year's conference. The Concert and Open Mic will once again put our talent on display and the Day of Service will highlight the increased efforts and commitment made by the community over the years to national development and altruism. It also showcases the impact that the LGBT community could have if Jamaica was more welcoming of all its members. PrideJA2018 gives us a glimpse of the future; a space where there is a participatory space for everyone. This Side of Paradise which will be headlined by award winning author, Nicole Dennis-Benn is book reading, geared toward literary lovers, a breakfast party for the music fans, a family fun day for those who just want a day of relaxation with the kids, a health fair, tradeshow,

river bash and cooler fete, sports day and for the first time, an evening of praise for the religious among us. Importantly, PrideJA2018 is open to all who struggle to find a place to be themselves and be free.

Jamaica's future is a bright one if PrideJA is the example of what it will be like and our advocacy around laws, policies, systems and culture will keep PrideJA as its inspiration.

Happy Pride 2018!

Glenroy Murray
Associate Director of Programmes and Advocacy



The Other Side of the Fence - A Canadian Reflection

In our world, perception is key to how we represent a people and its country. It is influenced by the information provided to us by the media, discourse between other people in our social circles and families and what we are taught in our education. As well, it is shaped by what we see with our own eyes, hear with our own ears and feel with our hearts. My perception of homophobia and transphobia in Jamaica has been constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed by my experiences coming here to volunteer over the past decade. I feel guilty about how my perceptions have often led to me talking about and labeling this country as homophobic and transphobic without seeing the bigger picture of what it is truly like to live as part of the LGBTQ community in Jamaica, what influences discrimination against LGBTQ people, what work is being done to improve the lives of LGBTQ Jamaicans and what Jamaicans truly think about LGBTQ people in their own words. I even feel guilty writing this article, wondering why I should have the right to discuss these issues as a non-Jamaican coming from Canada. However, I hope that this article will encourage foreigners to challenge their assumptions about Jamaica; as well, to challenge us to always be ready confront and change the assumptions that prevent us from seeing life and this world in its full complexity.

I visited Jamaica for the first time in 2009 when I did a month long teaching internship at an all-boys school in Kingston. As a gay man, I was fearful for my safety as my friends told me repeatedly that Jamaican society is extremely homophobic. As well, I read articles in the news about homophobia in Jamaica and they were overwhelmingly negative, citing stories of mob murders of LGBTQ people, LGBTQ people fleeing to other countries, LGBTQ people being disowned by family and living on the streets, etc. Probably the most famous of these articles that I read, and that has influenced many people's perceptions of Jamaica, was an item written in Times magazine in 2009 that labelled Jamaica as "The Most Homophobic Place on Earth". The article painted a negative picture of Jamaica, citing its "thuggish" reggae scene and the homophobic lyrics of music artist Buju Banton, the country's "increasingly rampant violence against gays and lesbians" and its anti-sodomy laws.

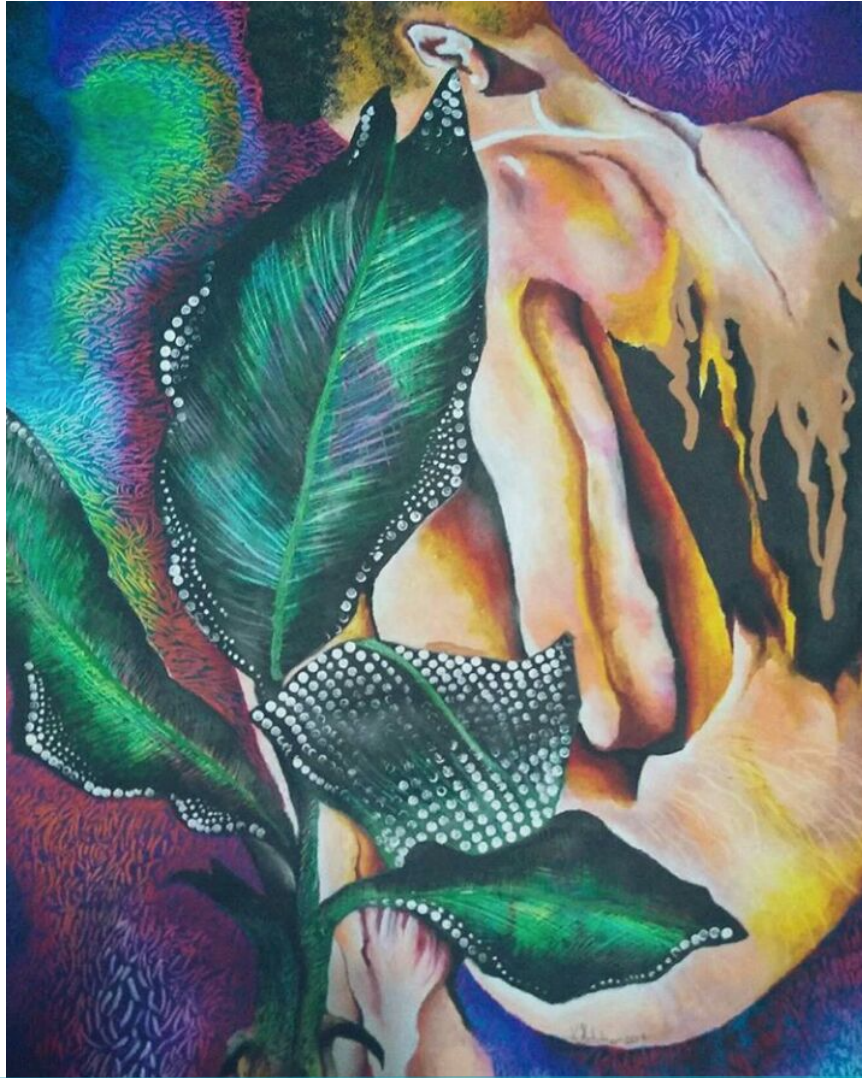
I felt that fears were confirmed by a couple of frightening incidences that happened while I was teaching at the school. One time, I was tutoring a boy and he told me that if he could, he would stand at the top of a building with a machine gun and shoot all the gay people. I experienced more homophobia a couple days later when another boy wrote on the board asking me if I was a "homo" and then wrote that "we kill the batty boy in Jamaica". These two situations were enough to convince me that all people in Jamaica were homophobic and that it was impossible to live here as a member of the LGBTQ community. When I returned home, I repeated these stories to friends and family reinforcing their preconceptions of homophobia in Jamaica. They and I took my experiences at face value, as evidence of the correctness of widespread discourse on Jamaica. However, we did not think critically about the fact that I had not met any members of the LGBTQ community during that month and that these experiences I spoke about were my own and not those of Jamaicans themselves.

My perception of Jamaica has changed as I have continued visiting the island and experiences have challenged my previous thinking. Since 2009, I have visited Jamaica five more times and I have met members of the LGBTQ community either online, through my activities as a fashion photographer and through my volunteer work. I have often asked them how they live in this society and they tell me that although it is difficult to deal with discrimination and they wish things were different, they have learned over the years how to keep themselves safe while remaining true to their identity (for example, I have been told about how participants in a workshop for transwomen would dress in culturally considered feminine attire then switch back to masculine clothing once they left the safe space). I have also come out to a few of my heterosexual friends in Jamaica, even Christians, who accept me for who I am. They even have other LGBTQ friends who they interact with regularly and treat with dignity and respect. Volunteering at JFLAG has also educated me more on the work that human rights advocates are doing to improve the lives of LGBTQ people. I was recently surprised to learn that JFLAG even hosts its own Pride Week that people attend and that it happens here legally.

I now have a more open, educated and balanced viewpoint of Jamaica. I understand that the LGBT community is fighting against violence, oppression and discrimination and I believe the difficulty of this struggle must not be minimized. However, I also see that there is a positive side to LGBTQ life here in Jamaica, that there is change happening in the country that is improving the lives of LGBTQ people and that not every person in Jamaica has a negative attitude towards the LGBTQ community. I have learned over the years the importance of presenting a more accurate and detailed picture Jamaica when talking about homophobia and transphobia in the country to my friends and family. Likewise, I believe that the international media needs to represent Jamaica differently. The media constantly portrays LGBTQ people in Jamaica as victims and ignores the strength and resourcefulness LGBTQ Jamaicans have had in navigating social spaces safely, advocating for themselves and dealing with issues facing the community such as HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, by making overgeneralizations, such as labelling Jamaica as "The Most Homophobic Place on Earth", the media encourages people to see Jamaican people as inherently homophobic and transphobic while ignoring the various factors, such as socioeconomic circumstance, religion, patriarchy and the history of colonialism (ex. the anti-buggery laws are a vestige of British colonial exploitation of slaves on the island) that have shaped oppression. As a foreigner, I am grateful to all of my friends in Jamaica, those who are part of the LGBTQ community and those who are allies, who have broken down my misconceptions of life as an LGBTQ person here in country and educate me more everyday about Jamaican society and culture. I hope in the future that others like myself and the media will challenge our assumptions and the ways we contribute to the misrepresentation of the Jamaican LGBTQ community in the country in general. By doing this we can better honor the fight for self-determination the LGBTQ community is making and understand the complexity of LGBTQ life in Jamaica.

Art

Victoria Fletcher



PrideJa Magazine recently caught up the talented artist, Victoria Fletcher to learn more about her love for art and her plans for the future.

Check out our spotlight interview below!

Who is Victoria Fletcher ?

Answer: I am Inquisitive of the mind and I appreciate it's projections and it's creations. I am a communicator of emotions deep within, and the aggregate of emotions that hides in the subconscious of our society; therefore, the world calls me an artist.

What inspired you to pursue art?

It all came from a compulsive urge to create. In the same way that we are drawn to love or to the idea of a God- I just knew I had to.. Art evolved into a kind of therapy for me when my mental illness grew overbearing, and now I create as a kind of emotional activism.

What art do you most identify with ?

I identify most with surrealism which is art made up of things from the real world that have symbolic value mixed with things that don't exist. The final product often has a dream like quality because it makes sense and no sense at the same time.

Where does your inspiration often come from?

The internet! I search almost every day on Instagram and Google for art that speaks to me. But also my dreams and certain movies influence the exact images I choose to include in my work.

What is your artistic process?

While meditating or daydreaming I get distinct ideas of what I am to create. Then I go online for references and paint/draw until I feel my work is complete.

How important do you think it is for schools to encourage students to pursue non- traditional careers?

It is scary going against the grain of society. As a matter of fact, I have to constantly reassure myself of the validity of my artistic skills in the context of the working world. But, I believe that

we need people whose creativity is so charged that it energizes society into the next revolution. Society must change, it is necessary because people evolve, and our creatives are those we depend on to lead that change. So not only is it important, it's imperative that our strongest, most adaptable, and innovative students share their talents with the world.

What is the current climate in the artistic community as it relates to funding/scholarships for higher educational opportunities?

It's very low, sadly. Jamaica is hardly equipped to provide funding opportunities for the thousands of young people seeking educational advancements in the traditional fields that make up the foundation of the society's needs. Therefore, needless to say, while art is indeed a need, it is admittedly one not prioritized in our society.



What role does the artist have in the society?

To me the artist serves as a mirror to society. The artist is essentially a communicator, and what she has to say cannot be dissociated from her socialization. As such, the artist may illuminate great social ills and as such discuss radical ideas through her medium. She may discuss a better time in societies past, or show optimism for its future. Really, the topics are endless.

What advice would you give to together young artists such as yourself?

I would tell young artists to enjoy the process and kill perfectionism. Your standard should be improving upon

yourself, nothing else. It's also important to find your voice. This comes from trial and error so get to work! Keep at it, become friends with failure, and keep the passion alive. You got this!

Where do you see your career and yourself in the next 10 years?

By then, I would hope to have attained my degree in art therapy. I hope to use my skill set to bring art therapy to those mentally ill victims and perpetrators in the criminal justice system. As to where exactly I'll end up, only the Lord knows. For now I move on my convictions and my drive.

Congratulations **Tish and Neish**



Fluidity

A Fashion Story About Transgender Liberation In Jamaica



By Kadeem X Cleo

It was quite bleak, raining even, but that only fuelled Ashley's quest of escapism in her search for mental, social, and emotional freedom. She is found traipsing the verdant landscape of the Belcour Lodge estate – rainforest, river, and apiary — in wanderlust. The more she wanders, the more she blossoms into an expressive, no-holds-barred character.

From the way she smiles just before laughter -- an innate feminine characteristic that flickers like a lit bulb – to the way she enunciates words or rolls her eyes so gaily. It's all too poetic how she eases wisps of hair behind her ear; the dip of her waist as she poses; the arching of her instep as her toes point; demonstrating the elegance of the woman she's become. Beautiful Ashley, with a face so striking, commands a strong, undeniable presence. Her stature, bolstered with conviction.

She is woman.

Overview: A contrast between hard and genteel presented via the feminine aesthetic: ruffles, layers, and delicate designs, paired with gold, vintage, and mod statement jewellery in a St Andrew rainforest – to show just how styling can alter one's perception on femininity. As a gender nonconforming Jamaican man, who oftentimes suffers from anxiety and depression just from commuting, Kadeem felt the need to incorporate this

Shades: Miu Miu

Earrings: Stylist's

Outfit: Jacket - 20/20 Collections;

Dress - Forever21



burst of bold – in colours, clothes, accessories – to highlight the escapism and liberation through garments. This is for all my queer, misunderstood folks who are bold enough to go for it despite the critique and stares.

Written by @
TheStyleRedeemer

Styling: Tropical
rainforest chic

Team: Alexander Wong
(Photographer); Kadeem
Rodgers (Stylist/Creative
Director); Cleopatra
Powell (Creative
Director/Grooming);
Ashley Gordon (Model);
Jeremy Braham
(Assistant)

Location: Belcour
Lodge, St Andrew,
Jamaica

Shoot date: Wednesday,
April 25th 2018

1788

Shades:

Earrings: Stylist's

Outfit: Vintage shirt - Stylist's

Skirt - Mannequin Pieces



1870
Shades:
Earrings: Stylist's
Necklaces: Stylist's
Outfit: Jacket - Stylist's
Dress - Kimanda Misses



Outfit: FLIRT Boutique
Earrings: Stylist's

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COOLER
FETE

@TURTLE RIVER FALLS



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Promoters' Pree

Picture this: It's the 1970s and all over Kingston from Haining Road to Zinc Fence nightclub in Cross Roads and over to NS Nightclub, Downtown - Jamaica's LGBT entertainment scene is vibrant and visible, with a variety of exclusive party spaces to patronise. Fast-forward to the present and Kingston, Jamaica still presents this reality, though the country has grown to be characterised by its history of homophobic rhetoric, and the queer community has been relegated to hosting events in less visible ways. Despite this, the party calendar remains ticked, which is in large part due to the frequency of events staged by Thugz, Pixie, Chargie, Star Yute, King Lee, and Spongebob - collectively called "The Ugly 6," who control a major share of the party-pie. For them, jumping the logistic hurdles to host events is a worthwhile barter for being able to provide a safe space for the community and themselves, to enjoy Jamaica and Jamaican culture.

The group's name, Thugz explains to PRiDEJA Magazine, came about when what was supposed to be an insult from someone was instead reclaimed and neutralized. By boldly adopting the moniker, they have done what many from the LGBT community have done - reclaim hateful rhetoric, and make it into something celebratory. While they all started

staging parties at different times, with Thugz being in it since 2012 and King Lee coming on board in 2018, the drive to do so was based on similar reasons: It was about finding somewhere where they could be themselves, dress how they want, and dance with their girlfriends without the stares - in other words creating safe spaces. One may wonder how the organisers and patrons navigate partying to dancehall songs, considering that so many are laden with homophobic content. To this, Thugz responds, that in mainstream dancehall settings, songs are loaded with different (hateful) meanings versus in a queer party where dancehall lyrics are repurposed, tailored and sometimes "mocked" for entertainment value. In this regard, space determines effect and impact. Imagine a group of lesbians passionately blaring Kartel's lyrics "Mi nuh love man, suh tek yuh eye offa mi" and this becomes quickly understandable.

In many ways The Ugly 6 consider their work as party promoters to be advocacy and often serve as community focal points for JFLAG, regarding many community-centred activities. Much of the community mobilisation done for activities during PRiDE Week in particular, is to their credit. By consistently hosting events such as round robins, pool





parties, treats - they create new spaces and curate new avenues for the community to gel, become involved or simply be entertained. In many regards, they are viewed as community leaders and have managed to infuse advocacy into their work and personas. Pointing to a party they held recently which required patrons to dress differently from their usual gender expression, with hopes of challenging internalised homophobia within the community, they demonstrate their willingness to use their social capital to advance critical conversations. Though humorous, the underlying purpose was not lost – which is that the community already vehemently fights being boxed in by gender norms so it is senseless to restrict one’s self to gender constructs within the LGBT community.

Switching the topic and tempo of the conversation, Pride Magazine had the opportunity to get the promoters’ general view on PRiDEJA Week. Star Yute opines that outside of the week’s celebrations, there is not much unity across socioeconomic lines and Pride is the only space where they have seen the cross sections of the community meld so seamlessly. For Chargeie, what stands out is Sports Day and how it offers a platform for everyone to demonstrate a talent, even those often noted as miscreants. Pixie echoes a similar sentiment – that it is heartening to see people at sports day, laughing and having fun, even those with differences. Thugz notes PRiDEJA Week helps to bring about personal pride in people, adding that the activities also provide indirect support for many people who recently came out and may feel isolated, especially if they do not have a prior connection to the community.

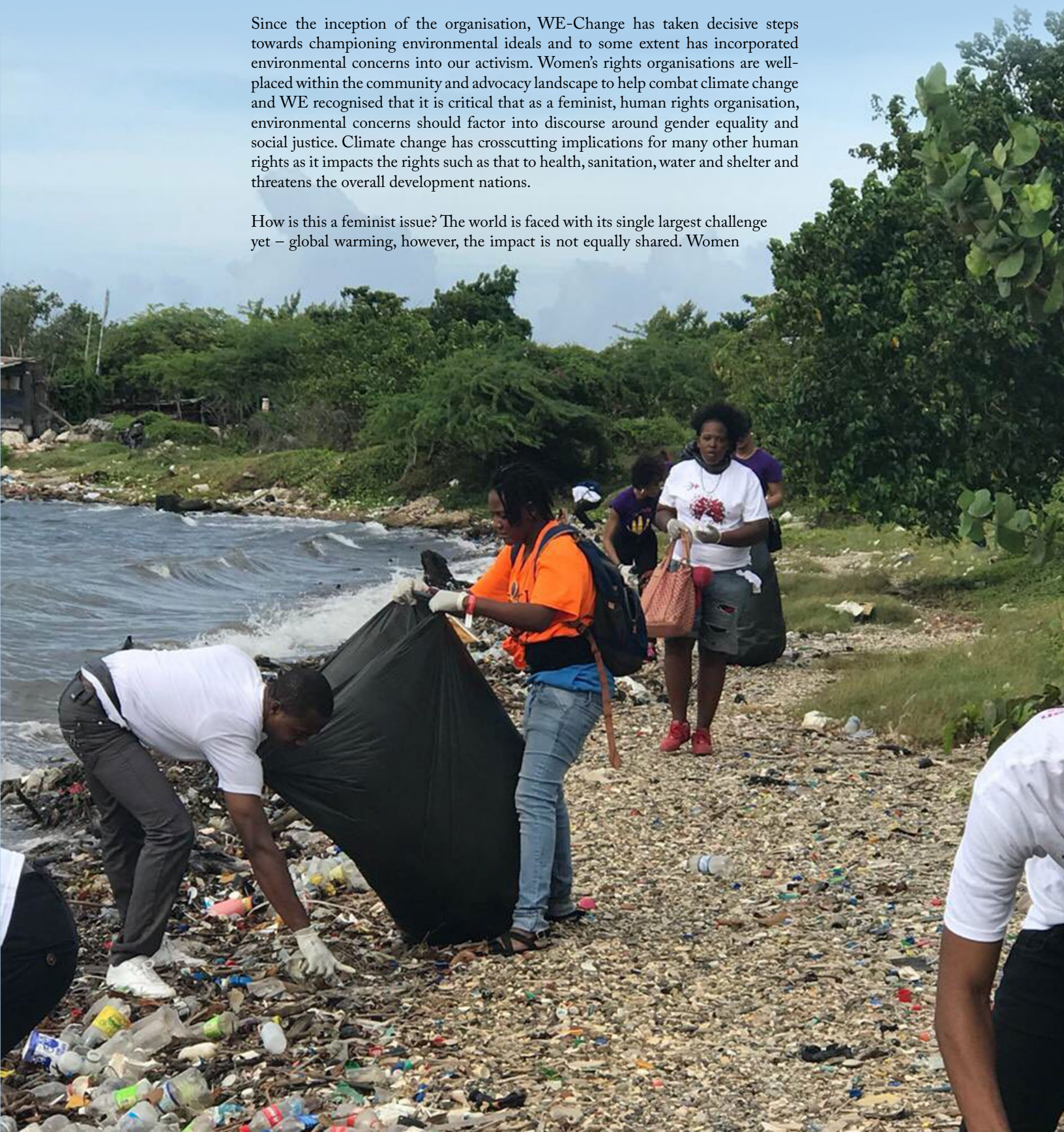
The Ugly 6 embody their own meaning and understanding of PRiDE and manage to serve as conduits to the community at large. They demonstrate how advocacy can be woven into one’s personhood without compromising on personality and they continue to exemplify how networking within the community can be beneficial in helping with sustainable livelihoods.



Taking Pride in the Environment: A WE-Change Perspective

Since the inception of the organisation, WE-Change has taken decisive steps towards championing environmental ideals and to some extent has incorporated environmental concerns into our activism. Women's rights organisations are well-placed within the community and advocacy landscape to help combat climate change and WE recognised that it is critical that as a feminist, human rights organisation, environmental concerns should factor into discourse around gender equality and social justice. Climate change has crosscutting implications for many other human rights as it impacts the rights such as that to health, sanitation, water and shelter and threatens the overall development nations.

How is this a feminist issue? The world is faced with its single largest challenge yet – global warming, however, the impact is not equally shared. Women





are disproportionately affected by climate change, more-so women from Small Island Developing (SIDs) states like Jamaica and those countries classified as the Global South which form the world's poorest countries, in which women make up the poorer classes due to gender socialisation and expectations. In times of natural disasters such as hurricanes (exacerbated by climate change), the expectations of caregiving by women and their routine subjugation to sexual violence in shelters in the aftermath of natural disasters have increased their susceptibility to exploitation and have raised causes for concerns from victims and advocates alike. Sanitary facilities and provisions may also be hard to access and can have dire complications for health of women who may be pregnant or nursing.

There are also other dimensions of gender to consider - sexual orientation and gender identity; these too are accompanied by increased vulnerabilities in the progression of global warming. LGBT people, who are already subject to much social exclusion - will face morerisks in times of natural disasters. In a country where the religious rhetoric exists that gay people are the cause of natural disasters, and many emergency shelters are run by religious institutions, it is not inconceivable that the LGBT community may encounter added barriers in accessing these spaces at times of displacement and may experience amplified homophobia and transphobia.

WE-Change commits to increasing its environmental advocacy and soon will launch their green-policy which is being developed to govern the way in which the organisation's executive, volunteers and general constituents interact with the environment, particularly during activities under its auspices. It also pledges to continue raising awareness on social media, undertaking environmental clean-ups and establishing partnerships with entities seeking to operationalise a similar mandate. As WE take incremental steps towards reducing its collective carbon footprints, the organisation urges a similar contemplation among citizens.





Nicole Dennis-Benn

TAKES US

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**Author of Award winning novel,
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#PRiDEJa2018

A PRiDEJA Calendar Event

Entertainment Stones Throw



For people who have never been to Stone's throw, what is Stone's Throw?

Stones throw is a, I would say an urban musical space in the center of Kingston, hence the name that we coined for it. It's really close to everywhere in Kingston, it's pretty central. I Upon opening Stones Throw, building it out from scratch, I kinda wanted the place to organically grow. You know, instead of something being pretentious, or set a certain way in my mind moving forward. I had opened the bar space with a very rustic look, thatched roof, stone flooring- it kind of makes you feel like you're somewhere in Portland or in Negril, it's very Jamaican. We try to keep our food menu something that reflects 'very Jamaican'. We have a lot of different people that come through here, from the Airbnb type crowd, to the tourists, to the local artsy fartsy crowd, to the Jamaican 'hip people' so called, and musicians and artists as well. Being an artist myself, I knew I would attract that musical side of things. so, yeah, it is a space for you to come and chill, drink something, watch a live show – we have at least one per week, its pleased me in that it has grown up to be exactly that.

When you were creating the concept for this space, what were some key things that you took into consideration?

Some key things were definitely to have a space to facilitate musical growth, and growth in the arts in general. I am a graduate of Edna Manley and while I was there, I was very involved with the music school, the dance school and even the drama school, as I did a bit of acting. And with that in mind, I wanted to not just have a bar to stand on its own, I wanted the space to represent Jamaica in an artistic form- that's the beast way I can put it.

On visiting Stones throw, what can one expect?

On visiting Stones throw one can expect a chill vibe, you can dress up or you can dress down. You can wear your nice dress and clogs or you can wear your shorts and slippers. We have very different events happening through our calendar. So, you can expect a relax, kickback vibe it isn't as we say our CRU bar where we only have highend cocktails. We do specials from time to time, we do try to repeat that but you definitely can get a cold red stripe beer at a street side price you know we try to keep our prices reasonable and the theme 'very Jamaican' throughout.

What inspired the aesthetic and the vibe that is cultivated at Stones Throw?

Aesthetic? Well I rented the space here with just the bar so I extended

it with the fence and the bar, the pond with the fish and the stage being mostly made out of wood. The aesthetic really was important to me, so you know open stage is one thing which was really important. I made sure I had water in the mix, like I said open space gives the sunlight the passage through the place which is wind, sun, air which is part of the whole feng-shui thing which certain people may not undersand but that in itself was important to me and I think what the diamond of this place really is, is the fact that we have a garden that people can chillout in it's yeah, that people can relax, sit in there and have a smoke or drink and have a conversation with whoever they're hanging with, so like I said the aesthetic was totally leaning up on urban chill spot.

Stones Throw has been recognized as a space that is open and facilitates the inclusivity of all people, mostly through the use of entertainment and the art events held here, how do you feel about this?

I feel good about it. Why? because I see all different types and shapes coming through the door. Like i say when tourists visit Jamaica, especially when they visit Kingston which is I believe more tourist now than it was 10 years ago. I believe alot of this has to do with the advent of the internet but when people come to Kingston as a Tourist they would normally want to visit Devon House, they want to drink the coffee, they want to go Bob Marley Museum, they want to go Hellshire and I believe Stone's Throw is becoming one of their stops because of how we have placed

ourselves on the map and the kind of entertainment that we offer its really relaxed, chill stuff. It's inclusive it's alot, there's alot. We're really leaning to the Afro-beats and the Pan-African type of style as well as the urban Reggae, Dancehall and Dub scene. So I'm very happy how it's been rolling out, like I tell you it started small but the way in which we started small has expanded the very same way as we've grown.

Has this affected business, especially operating in Jamaica?

Well I tell you, let's just be frank. Jamaica has, I think based on the fact that Jamaica has grown up in a very very staunch christian society we have also unfortunately been a very homophobic society. So, that having been said there have not been many spots in Jamaica that are friendly to different audiences. I see alot of mixed race couples, alot of Rastafarians, I see gays, I see artiste, I see all walks a life coming through the door. Being international, I regard myself as an international person I'm a Jamaican, but the world is really my backyard. So, in that regard, I get slack from other groups as to why we don't chase them away, why is it that we encourage other sectors or other groups of people to come here.



What has been the biggest challenge since operating your business?

Wow, management. Management of, just managing people and trying to rework the mind of the Jamaican to be geared more towards the service. We're known for great tasting food and very friendly people, but our customer service has not been a very bright, shining thing about Jamaica, i'm trying to swing that, I'm trying to get the customer service, but it's been a challenge for me. Apart from that, this is my first attempt in owning and managing a bar, I've had a million parties before but running a bar is a very different skettle of fish. So, the challenges are definitely in management, adjusting systems and setting up a profittable bar and restaurant.

Where do you see the business in the next five years?

I would love to see myself not renting the spot but owning the spot and if not moving to a spot which is just as nice and 'feng-shuied out like this. But we definitely have plans for the next five years I'd like to continue to strengthen the musical aspect of Stone's Throw. Our calendar looks good so far because, we have like, I tell you we have different kinds of activities doing through the week and I would like to continue on that line. We have promoters here from different backgrounds, young people that are still at UWI and UTECH that do

many parties here, as well as people from overseas doing movie reviews, we standup comedy nights, we have SPEAK which is very unique where we have people that can express themselves through poetry or just speaking their minds.

If you have never been to Stones Throw Bar, what are three reasons why you should definitely visit?

Well you should definitely visit just because of our space. When you sit down in Stones Throw's bar whether you're having a glass of wine, or a redbull or beer or just a bottle of water, just the space in itself is 'very Island comforting' in the middle of Kingston. You certainly look forward to any evening of diverse musical selection because I think the events we have here on a weekly are related to what's going on but are still edgy at the same time. You will come here, see and hear something that you haven't heard before I believe. It's just not your regular street side bar, neither is it fiction or CRU. So young people gravitate to the place because they feel they can express themselves and everybody feels unique especially when they're going through not just adolescents but young people going through their teens, or their 20's through college life always have something to say and I believe if you have something to say you should say it so here's a spot that's definitely welcoming that.

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