

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

Free seminar for young writers in October

Port-of-Spain, September 23, 2010: Three internationally published authors will be the featured speakers at a free seminar for teenage writers from Trinidad & Tobago. The Allen Prize for Young Writers, a new non-profit organisation, will host the seminar from noon-3 pm on October 8, 2010, at the Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre, McBean, Couva.

Poet Roger Bonair-Agard, novelist Roslyn Carrington and playwright Dr Paloma Mohamed have signed on to speak at the seminar, which will be specially targeted at schools in North and East Trinidad. This is the first of three seminars The Allen Prize intends to hold in this school year; others are planned for the following terms for South/Central and Tobago schools. There will be no charge to participants but registration will be done on a first come, first served basis, as spaces are limited.

The Allen Prize was founded in 2009 to give prizes, training and publication to writers aged 12-19 years. On September 1, 2010, it opened its inaugural prize competition in the genres of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction and drama. Part of the organisation's mandate is to provide free training to youths who are interested in writing, with a view to increasing the appeal of writing as a profession. The organisation and its programmes have been endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

“We believe the youth of Trinidad & Tobago deserve the very best and this is our way of ensuring they have access to excellent literary education and training,” said Allen Prize founder and chairman Lisa Allen-Agostini. “Each of these speakers has made a sterling contribution to the Caribbean’s literary heritage. We are thrilled that they are sharing their technical know-how with youth through The Allen Prize for Young Writers.” She thanked Caribbean Airlines, part sponsor of this seminar. “Caribbean Airlines has demonstrated its commitment to the same goal of youth and literary development and we look forward to a continued good relationship with them.”

Information about The Allen Prize for Young Writers, as well as competition submissions guidelines and entry forms, is available on the web site <http://allenprize.org>.

Board of Directors:

Lisa Allen-Agostini (*Chairman*), Peter Gomez (*Secretary/Treasurer*), Rhoda Bharath, Charlotte Elias, Nicholas Laughlin, Georgia Popplewell, Anthony Smart,
Ex-officio: Gina Ottley (legal counsel)

THE SPEAKERS

Roger Bonair-Agard is the author of two books of poetry, *tarnish and masquerade* (Cypher Books, 2006) and *GULLY* (Cypher Books, Peepal Tree Press, 2010). An MFA candidate at the Stonecoast program at the University of Southern Maine, Roger is also a two-time National Poetry Slam Champion and founder and Artistic Director of the LouderARTS Project in New York City. He is Poet-in-Residence at Young Chicago Authors and teaches at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center.



ROGER BONAIR-AGARD



Roslyn Carrington is the author of 12 books, nine of them written under the pen name Simona Taylor. Her literary novels are *A Thirst for Rain* (Kensington, 1999), *Every Bitter Thing Sweet* (Kensington, 2001) and *Candy Don't Come in Gray* (Kensington, 2002). Simona Taylor's romance novels include *Meet Me in Paris* (Harlequin Kimani, 2009), *Dear Rita* (Harlequin Kimani, 2008) and *May Summer Never End* (Harlequin Kimani, 2006). A former public relations executive, since 2008 she has run her own company The Scribble Pad as an editor, writer and proof-reader.

ROSLYN CARRINGTON

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Dr Paloma Mohamed is an award-winning poet, essayist, playwright and director. She has written several books, including *Condoned by Our Silence: Issues Impacting the Abuse of Children in Guyana*, (UNICEF, 2000); *Listen Up– A Source Book on Environmental Issues for Secondary Schools* (IDB, 2004), and *Caribbean Mythology and Modern Life: 5 One Act Plays for Young People* (The Majority Press and UNESCO, 2004). She is Director of the Centre for Communication Studies at the University of Guyana where she teaches Communication Research, Ethics and Social Psychology. She is also the current Chair of the Theatre Guild of Guyana.



DR PALOMA MOHAMED

Photos courtesy Roger Bonair-Agard, Roslyn Carrington and Dr Paloma Mohammed.

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