
MEDIA ADVISORY/ PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 29, 2013

Traditional Folktales Launch Black History Month at Vaughan Public Libraries
Sandra Whiting Shares Legends of West Africa and the Caribbean with Students

WHAT: This Black History Month, join Vaughan Public Libraries (VPL) at Dufferin Clark Library as storyteller **Sandra Whiting** shares folktales and legends from the rich, oral traditions of West Africa and the Caribbean. On Feb. 5 at 1 p.m., Whiting will use authentic patois and assorted dialects from her native Jamaica to engage and educate guests, who include Grade 8 students from **Glen Shields Public School**.

Additional author visits and programs, as well as art exhibits that explore Black culture, will occur throughout the month of February at various library locations.

WHEN: Tuesday, February 5, 1 - 2 p.m.

WHERE: Dufferin Clark Library - 1441 Clark Avenue West
[Click here for map](#)

WHY: To provide destinations where the citizens of Vaughan can celebrate and share the historical and present contributions of Black Canadians.

ATTACHMENTS:

- VPL's Black Heritage Collection
- Sandra Whiting
- Art Exhibits (Celia Wilson)
- Program listings for Black History Month
- Horane Smith
- Partial list of recommended books, music, and movies

VAUGHAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES' BLACK HERITAGE COLLECTION

VPL's Black Heritage Collection focuses on Black Canadian and Caribbean literature, history and culture. Other materials in the collection examine, describe, or depict the experience of Black people in general, including African literature and Afro-American materials. A growing collection featuring materials for all ages, the

Black Heritage Collection offers a variety of resources for recreational reading, study and research purposes. Visit www.vaughanpl.info for additional information on a variety of Black Heritage topics, including links to websites evaluated by librarians, Black heritage information and library guides prepared by VPL librarians.

SANDRA WHITING

Sandra Whiting uses storytelling as a vehicle for positive social change. She enthusiastically shares folktales and legends from the rich oral traditions of West Africa and the Caribbean with authentic patois and assorted dialects from her native Jamaica. Whiting has worked with the Ontario Black History Society, was awarded the Harry Jerome Award for Community Leadership in 2002, and has been at the epicenter of activity and change in Toronto's Caribbean Canadian community for over twenty years.

ART EXHIBITS

Art exhibits by Celia Wilson and Samar Smith explore Black culture and identity around the world. Their work will be on display at select VPL locations throughout February.

Celia Wilson

Celia Wilson is a Canadian-Caribbean artist whose work is inspired by the cityscapes of the GTA. Her exhibit, *Fragmented Habitat of a Cultural Landscape*, includes textured paintings and explores the question of identity in multi-cultural aspects beyond the stereotypical representations of Black culture around the world. It is commonly understood that the architectural design of human environments can influence mood and behavior. How does this constant interchange with our surroundings affect our social behaviour? To continue this concept exploration, Wilson incorporates prominent architectural elements into her work. Wilson is inspired by factors that promote or inhibit local social interaction and group formation.

PROGRAM LISTINGS FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

African & Caribbean Storytime

In celebration of Black History Month, join us for stories that explore African and Caribbean history and culture. Fun for the whole family!

Dufferin Clark Library	Feb. 19 7 p.m.
Pierre Berton Resource Library	Feb. 4 7 p.m.
Woodbridge Library	Feb. 28 10:30 a.m.

Art Exhibit

Celebrate Black History Month by viewing artworks from local black heritage artists Celia Wilson and Samar Smith during library hours.

Dufferin Clark Library	Feb. 1 - 28
Maple Library	Feb. 1 - 28
Pierre Berton Resource Library	Feb. 1 - 16

Black Foundation of Community Networks

Learn more about this local organization and their annual scholarship to a Canadian post-secondary institution. A representative will be available to provide information.

Pierre Berton Resource Library Feb. 7 2 p.m.

Book Chat and Author Visit

Join the Woodbridge Book Club as they welcome Horane Smith, author of *Reggae Silver*.

Woodbridge Library Feb. 25 7 p.m.

Sandra Whiting Author Visit

Sandra Whiting uses storytelling as a vehicle for positive social change as she shares folktales and legends from the oral traditions of West Africa and the Caribbean.

Dufferin Clark Library Feb. 5 1 p.m.
Maple Library Feb. 5 10 a.m.

HORANE SMITH

Horane Smith is the author of ten published novels that cover areas such as the Underground Railroad, the 1796 arrival of the Jamaican Maroons in Nova Scotia, tourism adventure, slave legends, lynchings in America, and Caribbean Pirates. He's best known for the popular novel *Lover's Leap: Based on the Jamaican Legend*, and its sequel *Dawn at Lover's Leap*, which was a finalist in the USA Booknews Bestbook Award for Historical Fiction. His just released novel is entitled *By the Rivers of Babylon*. Smith is the first recipient of the BURLA Award (Burke's Literary Award) for Outstanding Contribution to African-Canadian and Caribbean Literature. He has also been recognized by the Jamaican Diaspora Canada Foundation for his contribution to Jamaican literature.

PARTIAL LIST OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS, MUSIC and MOVIES

Looking for something to read, watch or listen to during Black History Month? Librarians at Vaughan Public Libraries have selected popular titles related to African and Caribbean culture just for you. Use the list below to find recommended items at VPL branches, or contact a librarian for more information.

Junior Picture Books

Catching the Wild Waiyuuzee by Rita Williams Garcia

BH JP Willi/JP Willi

As she tries to escape her mother's efforts to "plait-a-plait" and "string-a-bead" her hair, a young girl imagines herself running away into a jungle.

Available at Bathurst Clark, Dufferin Clark, Pierre Berton and Woodbridge Libraries

Chocolate Me by Taye Diggs

BH JP Diggs/ JP Diggs

Relates the experiences of a dark-skinned, curly-haired child who wishes he could look more like the lighter-skinned children in his community until his mother helps him realize how wonderful he is inside and out.

Available at Bathurst Clark, Dufferin Clark, Maple and Pierre Berton Libraries

Junior Fiction**A Mighty Big Imagining** by Lynne Kositsky

J-PB Kosit, J-PB Our Series, J-PB Our Historical Fiction Series

Rachel's new freedom in Nova Scotia is marred by the cold weather and barren land.

Available at Ansley Grove, Bathurst Clark, Kleinburg, Maple and Woodbridge Libraries

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor

BH YA FIC Taylo/YA-PB Taylo Classic

Newbery Award winning story about a Black girl growing up in the Depression era rural south.

Available at Dufferin Clark, Maple and Woodbridge Libraries

Adult Fiction**The Coldest Winter Ever: A Novel** by Sister Souljah

BH FIC Soulja/PB Souljah

The oldest daughter of a successful drug dealer, young Winter Santiago's life begins to fall apart after her father moves her family from the projects to a mansion on Long Island.

Available at Dufferin Clark, Maple Libraries

The Lynching Stream by Horane Smith

BH FIC Smith

When he learns that his father was lynched, a man leaves his Canadian home to travel to Mississippi to learn why.

Available at Dufferin Clark Library

Fictional DVDs**Dreamgirls** by Dreamworks Pictures and Paramount Pictures, 2006

DVD FIC Dream

A trio of black female soul singers cross over to the pop charts in the early 1960s.

Available at Ansley Grove, Bathurst Clark, Dufferin Clark, Maple and Woodbridge Libraries

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, by Columbia Pictures, 2008

DVD FIC Guess

Academy Award winning actor Sidney Poitier stars in a film about interracial marriage in the 1960s.

Available at Ansley Grove, Bathurst Clark, Dufferin Clark, Maple, Pierre Berton and Woodbridge Libraries

The Help by DreamWorks Pictures and Reliance Entertainment, 2011

DVD FIC Help

In Mississippi during the 1960s Skeeter, a southern society girl, returns from college determined to become a writer, but turns her friends' lives, and a small Mississippi town, upside down when she decides to interview the black women who have spent their lives taking care of prominent southern families.

Available at Ansley Grove, Bathurst Clark, Dufferin Clark, Kleinburg, Pierre Berton and Woodbridge Libraries

CDs

The id by Macy Gray

CD Popular Gray

Available at Dufferin Clark Library

Ladies Sing the Blues by various artists

BH CD Jazz/Blues Lad/CD Jazz/Blues Lad

Available at Bathurst Clark and Dufferin Clark Libraries

NOTES TO EDITORS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

Members from VPL's marketing and communications team will be on-site to assist media at *Dufferin Clark Library* on Feb. 5 at 1 p.m., and Grade 8 students from Glen Shields Public School will be photo permissioned. Media representatives interested in attending and taking photographs of any Black History Month programs at the branches are asked to contact Elaine Barr or Annesha Hutchinson-Cozier in advance in order for us to inform the branch. VPL does not require participants in these programs to complete or sign photo permission forms prior to attending. However, some children may be accompanied by a parent or caregiver who would be responsible for granting permission.

VAUGHAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Vaughan Public Libraries offers welcoming destinations that educate, excite and empower the community. Annually, VPL welcomes over two million visitors making it one of the top leisure and information destinations within the City of Vaughan. Connect with VPL: Find us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or subscribe to our eNewsletter, *The Buzz!* VPL has many programs and special events each month. To find out what's new, call 905-653-READ (7323), visit www.vaughanpl.info/programs, or pick up a copy of our printed program guide, *What's On*, at any VPL branch.

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