

WORLDwrite presents...

the documentary feature film

Every Cook Can Govern: The life, impact & works of C.L.R. James

A historical tour de force with hitherto unseen archive footage of the Trinidad born revolutionary who died in Brixton 1989.

Order the DVD, screen the film and visit the knowledge portal at www.clrjames.uk

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Charity reg no 1060869

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World's first crowd-funded, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed documentary on the life of C.L.R. James to be launched in Central London

WORLDwrite, known for its unique School of Citizen TV and myth busting documentaries, is launching *Every Cook Can Govern: the life, impact & works of C.L.R. James* at King's College London on March 31st at 7.30pm.

The ideas and works of Trinidad-born revolutionary and writer C.L.R. James come to life as exclusive never-before-seen footage of the man himself is interwoven with testimony from those who knew him along with leading scholars providing astute contextual and political analysis of his life and works. The result is a historical tour-de-force which grapples with James' thoughts on culture, cricket and society and above all his politics, in particular his outspoken opposition to: colonialism, abolitionist myths, the Second World War and Stalinism and his belief in the capacity of us all to change the world.

Ceri Dingle, WORLDwrite's Director says: *"The film provides a great insight into the life of a 24/7 revolutionary in the 20th century, what it means to stand by your principles to the very end and to fearlessly question received wisdom and tirelessly campaign for a better world."*

Having been trained from scratch by WORLDwrite and its Citizen TV station WORLDbytes to shoot, research and present, over 200 volunteers have been the backbone of this world-first production which, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed, does credit to James' conviction that every cook can govern.

Grant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Trust for London has assisted this ambitious project alongside many generous individuals. Project partners who have provided archive workshops, archive material and filming opportunities include the Museum of London Docklands, the British Library, the George Padmore Institute, Nelson Library and Manchester People's History Museum. The charity is most grateful too, to Banyan Archives and the University of the West Indies.

For more information and interviews contact:

Ceri Dingle at world.write@btconnect.com Tel: +44 (0)20 8985 5435

The charity's project portal is available at www.clrjames.uk

Notes to editors:

WORLDwrite is a registered charity, no. 1060869. The charity has an open door policy and encourages all-comers to get involved and recognise there are no limits to what's possible. WORLDwrite runs the award winning online Citizen TV channel WORLDbytes that champions quality citizen reporting and provides free film training to make this possible.

For more general information, please visit www.worldbytes.org

Synopses

Short Synopsis (50 words)

This historical tour-de-force interweaves never-before-seen footage of C.L.R. James himself with personal contributions from those who knew him and astute historical and political analysis from leading scholars of his work.

Crowd-funded, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed, this unique production lifts the lid on the life of a tireless, fearless and uncompromising revolutionary.

Medium Synopsis (100 words)

This historical tour-de-force interweaves never-before-seen footage of C.L.R. James himself with personal contributions from those who knew him and astute historical and political analysis from leading scholars of his work.

The result is an epic feature-length documentary which grapples with issues from colonialism to cricket, from slavery to Shakespeare, from Marxism to the movies and from reading to revolution.

The film's unique production history – crowd-funded, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed with over 200 volunteer camera operators, presenters and researchers – does credit to James' conviction that every cook can govern.

Long Synopsis (500 words)

Every Cook Can Govern: Documenting the life, impact & works of C.L.R. James is the first feature length documentary to explore the life, writings and politics of the great Trinidadian born revolutionary C.L.R. James, who died in Brixton in 1989. The film interweaves exclusive, never-before-seen footage of C.L.R. James with unique testimony from those he knew and the world's most eminent scholars of James' life, works and politics.

In tracing James' life in its historical context, the film grapples with a range of topics as wide and expansive as James' writing. From colonialism to cricket, from Marxism to movies, from slavery to Shakespeare, James' thought is formed through a voracious love of reading, an acute understanding of the period and a profound belief in humanity's capacity to change the world. As the film follows the evolution of James' politics, we learn uncompromisingly anti-imperialist and anti-Stalinist, unafraid to criticize the concessions made by his own mentees, including Eric Williams, the first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, and Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first Prime Minister. James was also a rare voice in opposition to World War II, rejecting the common conception of it as a simple moral tale of good versus evil. James we learn, was ahead of the game in understanding the truth. Followed by the security services in Britain and in the USA, he is eventually imprisoned on Ellis Island where he crafts his lesser known masterpiece *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways*, which we learn caused consternation among his contemporaries for its chapter on his own experience as a detainee.

Explored in even greater detail are some of his best known and most celebrated works *The Black Jacobins* (1938) and *Beyond A Boundary* (1963). *Black Jacobins* was essential to debunking the myth that British aristocrats were responsible for the abolition of slavery. Through its account of the successful San Domingo slave revolution, it reveals the real role played by the slaves themselves and is today considered a masterpiece of historical scholarship, of political analysis and narrative force. *Beyond A Boundary* is also covered for its rich and complex interweaving of a celebration of

cricket and aesthetics with an indictment of colonialism.

Ceri Dingle, the director, adds: *"Out of the sweeping and expansive range of topics covered in James' writing, what emerges in this film through a detailed overview of his life is an understanding of the evolution and unity of his thought and what it meant to lead the life of an uncompromising revolutionary in the 20th century."*

The film is the product of a collective effort by over 200 volunteer researchers, transcribers, presenters and camera operators alongside the expertise of contributors. This unique production history – crowd-funded, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed – does credit to James' conviction that every cook can govern.

The film marks the culmination of a five year multimedia project, including a C.L.R. James online knowledge portal at www.clrjames.uk, featuring filmed conferences and lectures, a timeline of James' life, summaries of his works and recommended reading.

Production Information

Title: Every Cook Can Govern: the life, impact & works of C.L.R. James

Format: Shot in HD 1080p + SD DVCam (Available as MPEG4 and DVD)

Aspect ratio: 16:9 with 4:3 archive

Editing: AVID Media Composer 8.5

Completion: March 2016

Country of production: UK

Classification: E

For full copyright information on all footage, imagery and archive, licensed to the charity WORLDwrite for use in the film, email **world.write@btconnect.com**

This film was produced by and belongs to the UK based education charity WORLDwrite

Charity Registration Number: 1060869

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CREDITS

In the spirit of C.L.R. James' belief that "*every cook can govern*", the making of this film was a truly collective effort – crowd-funded, crowd-featured and crowd-filmed.

Produced, directed and edited by

Ceri Dingle and Rob Harris

Assistant producers

Marisa Pereira

Fraser Myers

Vivita Sequeira

Contributors

In order of appearance:

Dr Christian Høgsbjerg

Author *C.L.R. James in Imperial Britain*

Selwyn R. Cudjoe

Professor Africana Studies, Wellesley College

Dr Roy McCree

Sociologist of Sport, UWI

Darcus Howe

Nephew of C.L.R. James, civil liberties campaigner & broadcaster

Ozzy Warwick

Education and research officer, Oilfields Workers' Trade Union

Andrew Smith

Author *C.L.R. James and the Study of Culture*

Paul Buhle

Authorized Biographer

Robert A. Hill

C.L.R. James Literary Executor

Dr Barrie Collins

Researcher African politics, author *Rwanda 1994*

Alan Hudson

University of Oxford, grew up in Nelson

Derek Metcalfe

Local historian Nelson Cricket Club

James Heartfield

Author and lecturer

Dr Rachel Douglas

University of Glasgow

Robin D. G. Kelley

Professor of History UCLA

Dr Tom Wareham

Historian

Selma James

Activist, former partner of C.L.R. James

Dr Philip Hatfield

Curator for Canadian and Caribbean Studies British Library

Mike Brearley

Former England cricket captain

Scott McLemee

Cultural critic and James scholar

Kent Worcester

C.L.R. James biographer

Presenters

In order of appearance:

Eden Bokrezion
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Fisayo Fadahunsi
Lauren Minto-Simpson
Hina Fathima
Paul Smith
Vivita Sequeira
Marisa Pereira
David Lyston

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Amran Ahmed

Amy-Jo Lynch

Ana Norman Bermudez

Anastasia Zarkogianni

Andrew Cox

Andy Hirst

Anna Bromwich

Anna Rudkevych

Annette Nkwocha

Annie May Byrne

Anthony Fernandes

Arek Susik

Arturas Liutostanskis

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Partners & Sponsors

WORLDwrite's CLR James project and film would not have been possible without the support and sponsorship by numerous individuals and grant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Trust for London and The Vibe Bar.



With special thanks to the following project partners who provided archive material and workshops especially: Museum of London Docklands, British Library, Manchester People's History Museum, Nelson Library, George Padmore Institute and Banyan Archives.



Publicity stills



C.L.R James from never-before-seen Banyan archives interviewed in 1980



Director Ceri Dingle

Some of the C.L.R. James volunteer crew



Co-Director Rob Harris



Volunteers Fisayo Fadahunsi, Eden Bokrezian & Vivita Sequeira interviewing Professor Selwyn Cudjoe at the WORLDwrite centre, East London



Interview with historian Dr Tom Wareham by volunteer Vivita Sequeira at the London, Sugar and Slavery Exhibition at the Museum of Docklands in London



Volunteer crew in a filmed discussion with lecturer Alan Hudson over a picnic, at Clarion House in the Pendle Hills, Lancashire



Andrew Smith author of *C.L.R. James and the Study of Culture*, being interviewed at Lord's Cricket Ground



Volunteer crew outside the People's History Museum in Manchester



C.L.R. James multimedia project launch at The Kia Oval Cricket Ground



A Film training session at the WORLDwrite centre in East London



Volunteer crew filming at the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool



Volunteer crew at the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool