

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I embarked on this project about eight years ago, but preparations for my career as a scholar and teacher started many years prior. I pursued my undergraduate education at Brooklyn College, City University of New York, and it will always be a part of my scholarly DNA. Professor William T. Williams's art classes propelled me to interrogate art philosophically and still influence me to this day. I took my very first art history course with Mona Hadler, who showed me a new way of viewing art. The Honors Academy is a breeding ground for academic excellence at Brooklyn College and I could never thank the following people enough for recognizing my potential and for encouraging me to take the road less traveled: Tucker Farley, Robert Scott, Roni Natov, Margarita Fernandes-Olmos, and Paul Montagna.

At Duke University, my adviser, Richard J. Powell, supported the unconventional and interdisciplinary nature of my work and never ceased in pushing me to think more creatively and critically. Kristine Stiles has been a dedicated mentor, and I will always be grateful for her commitment to my scholarly and personal development. Sheila Dillon encouraged me to think outside the box when writing about women and performance. Finally, Michaeline Crichlow not only was a compassionate mentor but also demonstrates how Caribbean scholars can contribute to the region even when not living there. I am grateful to two other individuals who aided me in formulating ideas for the early stages of my research. Deborah Thomas was selfless and dedicated in her efforts to help me create a compelling critical stance. I am also thankful for the invaluable conversations I had with the late, great Pat Bishop, an iconic artist, art historian, musical director, and, more important, a true national treasure of Trinidad and Tobago.

I am deeply appreciative of the institutional support I received from Wayne State University. I would like to thank the vice president for research, Stephen Laneir, and the dean of the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts, Matthew Seeger, for their assistance in this regard. I am also grateful for the support that the chair of the James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History, Sheryl Oring, provided while

preparing this book. I am fortunate to have the encouragement of great colleagues at Wayne State University who have championed the development of this book through its many stages: Dora Apel, Jeffery Abt, Judith Moldenhauer, Danielle Aubert, Siobhan Gregory, Brian Kritzman, Derek Coté, Adrian Hatfield, Evan Larson-Voltz, Jennifer Olmsted, Brian Madigan, Melba Boyd, and Simone Chess. I also owe a special thank you to Amy Hays and Ted Duenas, whose assistance has been unmatched.

The two years I spent at the University of Notre Dame thanks to the Moreau Postdoctoral Fellowship provided a means for me to grapple with ideas that set the foundation for this book. I am particularly thankful for the support, encouragement, and counsel of Julia Douthwaite during that period. I continued to develop these ideas while holding a visiting position in the art department at Davidson College, and my exchanges with C. Shaw Smith proved to be fruitful in unpacking many theoretical entanglements. My research strengthened with opportunities to present at symposia held at Davidson College, the University of Notre Dame, and Wayne State University. I am also indebted to the Dark Room forums and the Exposure Symposia founded and organized by Kimberly Juanita Brown, a fellow comrade in academia. My arguments in chapters 1 and 2 appeared in an earlier form in *Art Journal*. When I submitted the article to be considered for publication in this journal, I received a generous amount of constructive feedback from its former editor Rebecca Brown. Her careful reading of the text, along with those of the reviewers, was instrumental in my critical elucidating of crucial ideas for this book. Also, an earlier version of chapter 3 appeared in *Small Axe*.

This research project benefited immensely from numerous libraries and archives around the world. I am indebted to the staff members at the following institutions: Wayne State University Libraries; New York Public Libraries, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; National Library of Trinidad and Tobago; National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago; Bibliothèque Nationale de France; SDO Wifredo Lam Archive in Paris, France; Stuart Hall Library, Institute of International Visual Arts in London, England; the British Library in London, England; the Special Collections and Archives at Franklin Library, Fisk University, Nashville; Wolfsonian Library and Museum, Florida International University; and the Davidson College Library.

It is every writer's dream to have a committed and compassionate editor. I am beyond thankful to Ken Wissoker for his enthusiasm for my book at its early stages and for his patience and support when I needed them

most. I would also like to thank his editorial associate, Kate Herman, for her immeasurable efforts. I immensely valued the keen and meticulous responses of the reviewers. E. Patrick Johnson has been a long-standing locus of support and encouragement throughout my career, and I am grateful for the support of Eddie Chambers. I owe a special thank you to Tanya Shields, who offered unparalleled feedback on portions of this book.

Despite the fact that the majority of my friends are based throughout the United States, Europe, and the Caribbean, they are my community without whom I am unable to thrive. I met Uraline Septembre and Martina Scimeca in college and graduate school, respectively, and I am grateful for the ways in which my friendships with them has helped sustain me. Chera Reid and I met during a college summer program many moons ago, but my years in Detroit would have been burdensome without her unwavering and loyal friendship. Another friend, Valerie Mercer, has been a warm and supportive presence as a fellow black art historian here in Detroit. I am also thankful for my high school friends Candace Jarrette and Chantelle Cobham, with whom I am always connected and who are always sources of encouragement. Although we lived only five minutes apart in Trinidad, Marissa Archibald and I did not meet and become friends until we were pursuing our tertiary education in North Carolina. Another Trini, Ria-Ann Borel, has been a loyal friend for decades, and we are always able to reconnect during our travels or virtually despite living on different continents. I met Simone Walker my first year in this country and she continues to be my close friend and confidante.

Finally, and certainly not least, I would not have made it this far were it not for my family. My great uncle Ashton Charles, who passed on only months before the publication of this book, had always been a pillar of love and support throughout the years. Words cannot express how thankful I am for the undying love and support of my mother, Roslyn Noël. Thank you for always being there no matter the issue or time of day. To my brother, Peter Noël II, your boundless dedication to your music has always inspired me. Thanks for your words of encouragement. Daddy, although you have passed on, your presence in my life is always felt.