

**Report on Poetry Performance by Dr Angelique V. Nixon for the
Australian Association for Caribbean Studies Conference 2017
9-11 February 2017
CIW building, ANU**

Organisers

Dr Consuelo Martinez Reyes, School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics
Dr Laurence Brown, Australian National Internship Program
Professor Emeritus Dr Barry Higman, School of History

Overview

The Australian Association for Caribbean Studies (<https://aacs2017.wordpress.com/about/>) held its 12th biannual conference here at the ANU for a second time. Our institution hadn't hosted the conference since 2001 so we were thrilled to have Caribbean scholars here once again. Both postgraduate students and faculty members came to attend from various Caribbean islands, the USA, New Zealand, and of course, from other parts of Australia as well. In total, we were a group of about 40 people and held 10 sessions on varied topics including economy, cinema, geography, and certainly gender. We gladly hosted Bahamas-born artist, scholar, and activist Dr Angelique V. Nixon, who currently teaches at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. Her visit was partly funded by the Gender Institute and we couldn't be happier about it. Her performance, entitled *Saltwater Trouble*, consisted of three parts. Her film "Troubling Identities" opened the sequence. Angelique's film presented the complexities of being black and female in the Caribbean through a composite of the life stories of her grandmothers and great-grandmothers. This was followed by a reading of her 'collage poetry' from her collection, "Saltwater Healing". Here, Nixon shared collages built with homey Caribbean images while reading her poems. These were charged with the hostility confronted by the narrative voice as a Caribbean woman in a highly sexualized and male-oriented environment. Lastly, Angelique invited conference guests to join her on stage to share their ideas of what their "earthseed version of the future" was in her performance-piece, "Cosmic Vision." Thus, Dr Nixon's performance allowed the audience to think of gender throughout time in her reconsideration of past, present, and future generations.



Dr Angelique V. Nixon reading her poetry



The stage is ready for Dr Nixon's "Cosmic Evolution" piece



Some of the AACS 2017 Conference attendees



The organisers: (left to right) Laurence Brown, Consuelo Martinez Reyes and Barry Higman