The Southbank Centre presents an outdoor exhibition celebrating Britain's Black female professors

Fewer than 1% of professors in the UK are Black despite increases in overall levels of academic staff

Phenomenal Women: Portraits of UK Black Female Professors, a celebration of Black British academics will be brought to the public in a unique free outdoor exhibition.

Commissioned and curated by Dr Nicola Rollock, and photographed by Bill Knight, it features portraits of 45 professors across a broad range of subjects including law, medicine, creative writing and sociology. The exhibition runs from 10 October - 8 November 2020, timed to coincide with Black History Month, and is presented along the Southbank Centre’s very popular public riverside promenade The Queen’s Walk.

The coronavirus pandemic forced a rethinking of the exhibition which was due to open at the Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer at the Southbank Centre. It will now have a much more prominent public platform giving many more people the opportunity to ‘stumble’ across these portraits and to learn about the racial inequality within British academia.
Amongst the 45 women being celebrated in the first-ever public exhibition to honour Britain's Black female professors are award-winning author Bernadine Evaristo, poet and playwright Joan Anim-Addo and the first woman ever to be appointed head of a UK dental school, Cynthia Pine.

The exhibition results from the work of Dr Rollock who undertook academic research examining the career experiences and strategies of Black female professors at UK universities over the past three years. The portraits were taken by photographer Bill Knight, who travelled across England, Scotland and Wales to capture the images.

Dr Rollock's 2019 research showed the barriers faced by Black women as they worked to navigate their way through higher education and the strategies they used to help them reach professorship.

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Black women represent the smallest group when both race and gender are considered together. They are three times less likely to be professors than their White female counterparts and half as likely as Black men.

There are 19,285* professors in UK universities in total according to a 2019 report by AdvanceHE. 12,795 are White males, 4,560 are White women. There are 90 Black men and 35 Black women.

These stunning portraits and the respective professors' biographies are now being presented outdoors, in a series of weatherproof structures that are specially designed with social distancing guidelines in mind.

Dr Rollock, who recently featured in Channel 4 documentary The School That Tried to End Racism said: “I am thrilled to be working with the Southbank Centre on this exhibition. As one of London’s leading arts’ venues, it is a fitting space in which to help draw attention to just how few Black female professors there are in the UK and to highlight their achievements.”

Cedar Lewisohn, Site Curator, Southbank Centre: “It is an honour for the Southbank Centre to be presenting this important exhibition in our public spaces on the beautiful setting next to the River Thames. Due to COVID-19, we have had to move this exhibition from our indoor spaces, to an outside setting. This means that thousands more people will see the project than might have originally. Access to education and culture is everybody’s right, and the need for culture and education to reflect the society we live in is also a subject that still needs to be fully addressed. This project goes some way into shining a light on these ever more urgent issues.”

Phenomenal Women: Portraits of UK Black Female Professors, aims to highlight the presence and excellence of all the women included and provide a platform for debate about what it takes to reach this highest level of academic scholarship. The 45 women have all been professors at some point over the past three years.

The exhibition is sponsored by Paul Hastings, UCU, Pearn Kandola and Baker McKenzie and supported by Wellcome Trust, Runnymede and the Mayor for London.

Dr. Rollock will be taking part in an event which will be broadcast as part of the Southbank Centre’s Inside Out programme, more details of the event will be announced on 29 September 2020.

- Ends -

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For professor case studies, interviews, images, quotes or further enquiries, contact: Press@southbankcentre.co.uk or Eva Simpson of ESPR: eva.simpson@es-pr.co.uk / 07801184016
NOTES TO EDITORS:

Listings information:

**Phenomenal Women: Portraits of UK Black Female Professors**

10 October - 8 November 2020
The Southbank Centre’s The Queen’s Walk
Free

The Black female professors featured in the exhibition are:

- Gloria Agyemang: Professor of Accounting
- Joan Anim-Addo: Professor of Caribbean Literature and Culture
- Bugewa Apampa: Professor of Pharmacy Education
- Uduak Archibong: Professor of Diversity
- Diamond Ashiagbor: Professor of Law
- Florence Ayisi: Professor of International Documentary Film
- Fareda Banda: Professor of Law
- Claudia Bernard: Professor of Social Work
- Sonia Boyce: Professor of Black Art & Design
- Enitan Carrol: Professor of Paediatric Infection
- Donna Chambers: Professor of Tourism
- Nelarine Cornelius: Professor of Organisation Studies
- Patricia Daley: Professor of the Human Geography of Africa
- Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent: Chief Midwifery Officer, NHS England and Visiting Professor of Midwifery
- Dawn Edge: Professor of Mental Health and Inclusivity
- Akwugo Emejulu: Professor of Sociology
- Engobo Emeseh: Professor of Law
- Bernardine Evaristo: Professor of Creative Writing
- Lynette Goddard: Professor of Black Theatre and Performance
- Stephani Hatch: Professor of Sociology and Epidemiology
- Gina Higginbottom: Emeritus Professor Ethnicity & Health
- Marilyn Holness: Professor of Education Engagement and Practice
- Adele Jones: Professor of Social Work
- Tessa McWatt: Professor of Creative Writing
- Heidi Mirza: Emeritus Professor of Equalities Studies
- Dorothy Monekosso: Professor of Computer Science
- Franciska Mutapi: Professor in Global Health Infection and Immunity
- Bertha Ochieng: Professor of Integrated Health & Social Care
- Phoebe Okowa: Professor of Public International Law
- Funmi Olonisakin: Professor of Security, Leadership and Development
- Olivette Otele: Professor of History of Slavery & Memory
- Ann Phoenix: Professor of Psychosocial Research
- Cynthia Pine: Professor of Dental Public Health
- Tracey Reynolds: Professor of Sociology
- Laura Serrant: Professor of Community & Public Health Nursing
- Maria Stokes: Professor of Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation
- Iyiola Solanke: Professor in EU Law and Social Justice
- Shirley Anne Tate: Professor of Sociology
- Patricia Tuit: Professor of Law
- Carol Tulloch: Professor of Dress, Diaspora and Transnationalism
Biographies:

Dr Nicola Rollock:

Dr Nicola Rollock is an academic, consultant and public speaker specialising in racial justice in education and the workplace. She is Specialist Adviser to the Home Affairs’ Select Committee’s ‘Macpherson 21 Years On’ Inquiry, a member of the Wellcome Trust’s Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group and the British Science Association’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Group.

Her most recent research examines the career experiences and strategies of UK Black female Professors, the findings of which were widely covered in the press including WonkHE, The Guardian, Stylist magazine and British Vogue.

Dr Rollock is a judge for the JP Morgan sponsored ‘Stories of Black Leadership’ series which showcases successful Black female leaders and for the Powerlist of Britain’s most influential people of African and African Caribbean heritage.

Dr Rollock appeared as an expert contributor in the two-part Channel 4 documentary ‘The school that tried to end racism’ which aired in summer 2020. She was selected by Times Higher Education journalists as one of 11 scholars globally to have influenced debate in higher education during 2019.

Bill Knight OBE:

Bill started in professional photography when he was 18, as a beach photographer at Margate. After a long career break in the law he started again some 18 years ago and now specialises in portraits, opera, theatre and dance.

Bill’s exhibition *The Refugee’s Gift* at St Martin in the Fields in London’s Trafalgar Square showed refugees who have made a contribution to the United Kingdom. His portraits of photographer Elsbeth Juda and scientist Gustav Born from the exhibition are now in the permanent collection at the National Portrait Gallery. His work has included portraits to celebrate 40 years of women at Brasenose College, Oxford and images for Christ’s College Cambridge. His exhibition *Where I come from*, about graduates from migrant families, has been shown in London and Windsor. Bill has been twice a winner in the *Portait of Britain* competition.

In a former life Bill was senior partner at international law firm Simmons & Simmons, President of the City of London Law Society, Deputy Chairman of Council at Lloyd’s of London and Chairman of the Financial Reporting Review Panel. In 2012 he was awarded the OBE for services to financial regulation.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK’s largest arts centre and one of the UK’s top five visitor attractions, occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London’s most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work.
and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day.

The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).