

AUTHOR BIOS

Ana María Belique

Ana María Belique (she/her) is a founding member and a leader of Reconoci.do, a movement that mobilizes and empowers Dominicans of Haitian descent, campaigns for equality and their citizenship rights, and supports those who need legal support to access their documents. With partners, Reconoci.do has litigated and advocated before dozens of domestic and international bodies. Ana María has a bachelor 's degree in sociology. Her undergraduate thesis provided a historical analysis of the methods of resistance by Haitian sugar-cane workers in the Dominican Republic. She has coordinated the publication of two books: Nos Cambió La Vida (Our Lives Changed) and Somos Quien Somos (We Are Who We Are), which document the stories of members of the Reconoci.do movement who have been denied Dominican citizenship. Ana María also leads the Black Dolls initiative, which seeks to empower black women from the bateyes, poor villages on sugar plantations with limited or no access to electricity and government services like schools and health centers, to highlight the values of Afro identity and to create economic opportunities.

Ana María Belique (ella/ella) es miembro fundadora y líder de Reconoci.do, un movimiento que moviliza y empodera a los dominicanos de ascendencia haitiana, hace campaña por la igualdad y sus derechos de ciudadanía, y apoya a quienes necesitan apoyo legal para acceder a sus documentos. Reconoci.do ha litigado y defendido ante decenas de organismos nacionales e internacionales. Ana María tiene una licenciatura en sociología. Su tesis de pregrado proporcionó un análisis

histórico sobre los métodos de resistencia de los trabajadores haitianos de la caña de azúcar en la República Dominicana. Ha coordinado la publicación de dos libros, Nos Cambió La Vida y Somos Quien Somos, que documentan las historias de miembros del movimiento Reconoci.do a quienes se les ha negado la ciudadanía dominicana. Ana María también lidera la iniciativa Black Dolls, que busca empoderar a las mujeres negras de los bateyes, pueblos pobres en plantaciones de azúcar con acceso limitado o nulo a la electricidad y servicios gubernamentales como escuelas y centros de salud, para resaltar los valores de la identidad afro y crear oportunidades económicas.

Mauri Balanta Jaramillo

Activista, investigadora, edu-comunicadora, realizadora audiovisual y gestora cultural Negra-Trans-Popular. Coordinadora de Interseccionalidad en la Alianza Pacífico Task Force, programa de la Universidad Icesi (Cali/Colombia) orientado al fortalecimiento organizativo y salvaguardia integral de los territorios étnicos en la Región Pacífica de Colombia. Representante para América Latina de la Lesben- und Schwulenverband in Deutschland (LSVD), la mayor Asociación de autoayuda LGBTIQA+ en Alemania y con estatus consultivo por las Naciones Unidas. Durante 10 años fue Coordinadora de comunicación y gestión informativa en la Asociación Casa Cultural “El Chontaduro”, organización de base comunitaria que se ha convertido en un referente continental en la lucha por la justicia racial-espacial y la autonomía política de las mujeres y la juventud negra en el territorio del Oriente de Cali/Colombia. Es integrante de “Interseccionalidades”, un grupo de investigación activista vinculado al Centro de

Estudios Afrodiáspóricos de la Universidad Icesi (Cali/Colombia), que está enfocado en las dinámicas de opresión espacial a partir de la raza, el género y la sexualidad, licenciada en Educación Popular (Universidad del Valle / Colombia) y Master en Medios y Cultura (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen/Alemania). Co-editó el Libro Entre la Dignidad y la Muerte: Mujeres Negras, Dominación Patriarcal y Estrategias Espaciales de Resistencia en el Oriente de Cali (Grupo de Investigadoras Populares /Asociación Casa Cultural “El Chontaduro”, 2021). Su artículo “El cerco racial en la escuela” hace parte del Volumen de Estudios Afrocolombianos: lecturas esenciales (Harvard University – Universidad Icesi, 2022).

Angie Melissa González Chaverra

I am a resilient black woman and, through art, I found my voice to speak out against social injustice and the struggle of being black in Colombia. I was born and raised in Chocó, a department well known for its large Afro population. In 2012, I moved to Bogotá to complete my graduate studies in Physical Education. My commitment to becoming a leader in my community started with my participation in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. program, a U.S. Department of State English Language scholarship that provides opportunities for Afro-Colombian and Indigenous university students to study English and leadership. Presently, I conduct workshops on empowerment with the Centro Colombo Americano, tutor other students from other US State Department programs. I have co-founded the alumni group with several former students that offers leadership sessions for the new MLK participants, created COMPANTERA, a Black art troupe, and co-founded ‘Nzingha Akanforá,’ an Afro-women collective

in Bogotá. I am the first Afro-Colombian person to win a Fulbright scholarship in the arts, and received the Community Engagement Exchange scholarship to participate in a 6-month leadership training experience with other community leaders from around the world. “I am the dream of my ancestors.”

Raquel Almeida

Raquel Almeida is a poet, writer and cultural producer. Founder of the literary collective Elo da Corrente, a group that has been active in the Pirituba neighborhood since 2007. Raquel’s work is a reference in the black literature movement, holding a weekly gathering and maintaining a community library in her community. She started her artistic work in 2005 singing in the rap group Alerta Ao Sistema and she worked in the community radio Urbanos FM in 2006/2007. She has been doing literature workshops in schools, prisons, cultural centers, among other spaces. In 2008, Elo da Corrente Editions, printing and releasing books related to their community work. Most of her publications came out through her own publishing company. Her individual publications include: Contos de Yōnu (Short Stories), 2019 - Elo da Corrente Editions; Sagrado Sopro – do solo que renasço (Poetry), 2014 - Elo da Corrente Editions; Duas Gerações Sobrevivendo no Gueto (short story, poetry, and chronicles), 2008, co-author, Soninha MAZO – Elo da Corrente Editions. She participated in several anthologies such as: Cadernos Negros 30 and 41, Negrafias I and II, Pelas Periferias do Brasil II and Antologia Poesia na Brasa I, II, III and IV, Antologia Sarau dos Mesquiteiros - Pode Pá que é Nós que Ta 2012 – Org. Rodrigo Ciriaco, Antologia Sarau Perifatividade II 2012 – Org. Peritividade Collective, Peri-

feminas Women In Hip Hop: Our History I 2013 – Org. Lunna Rabetti; Black Women Pretexts – October 2014- Org. Elizandra Sousa and Carmen Faustino, among others.

María Elvira Solís Segura

Nacida el 25 de agosto de 1963 en el municipio de Tumaco (costa pacífica colombiana), es cantora, actriz, poeta y decimera. Desde hace 16 años hace parte de la Casa Cultural el Chontaduro (Cali, Colombia) como integrante del Grupo de Mujeres, la Escuela Sociopolítica de Mujeres y la Junta Directiva, además de dirigir el grupo de mujeres Vencedoras, en su territorio Manuela Beltrán. De su trayectoria, destacamos su obra como coautora del libro Ecos: Palabras de mujeres (2014) e investigadora popular en el estudio Entre la dignidad y la muerte: Mujeres negras dominación patriarcal y estrategias espaciales de resistencia en Cali (2018).

En el ámbito teatral, ha hecho parte de las obras Cantando y contando (2014), Re-existencia (2014), Re-existencia Colectiva (2015), Horizonta (2016), Saberes curativos en voces de mujeres cimarronas (2016), Amor en río (2017), Del pacífico a las mansiones y los cuartos invisibles (2017), Memoria ancestral (2018), Todo lo que está a mi lado (2018), Rostros del río (2018), Todo lo que está a mi lado (2018). También participó como actriz en la película colombiana “Los Hongos” (2013) del director Óscar Navia. Fue integrante del grupo de cantadoras “Integración Pacífica.” Ha participado en escenarios nacionales e internacionales con ponencias y presentaciones artísticas entre las que figuran el XXII Festival Internacional de Poesía de La Habana (Cuba, 2018) y la Cátedra de Estudios Afroandinos en la Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar (2015).

En 2019 participó en el Congreso Internacional de la Asociación de Estudios Latinoamericanos LASA en Boston, y en el taller Tejidxs Radicales en la Universidad de Harvard (2019). También ha participado en la Verbena salsera los años 2022 y 2023. En la actualidad está vinculada al programa radial “Equidad de Género” en la emisora Oriente Estéreo 96.0. Libros en los que María Elvira Solís Segura ha sido parte: Historia del siglo pasado, Ecos palabras de mujeres, Sobre tinta, Con los pelos de punta, Cimarronas del verbo, Cucuruchando en la memoria, arte en común: proceso artístico en ciudad, Satélite, Urdimbres antología: Mujeres narran su territorio, Entre la dignidad y la muerte: mujeres negras, dominación patriarcal, y estrategias espaciales. María Elvira, hace parte de “Las Mayoras,” las cuales hacen el comadreo por la paz y la vida del Pacífico colombiano desde el 2018 hasta ahora.

Andrea Moreno Hurtado

Nació en Cali- Colombia el 19 de septiembre de 1980, tiene 42 años, es estudiante de último semestre de Licenciatura en Educación Popular de la Universidad del Valle, creció en el Oriente de la ciudad de Cali, la zona que agrupa la mayor población negra de esta ciudad y uno de los sectores más empobrecidos de la misma. Se reconoce como una mujer negra, una lideresa social que agencia estrategias para el cuidado de la vida en su territorio. Actualmente es coordinadora de la Asociación Casa Cultural el Chontaduro, un proceso comunitario que propende por la justicia racial, territorial y de género y que enfoca su trabajo con las comunidades negras del Oriente de Cali. En esta organización, acompaña el proceso afrojuvenil. A través de la escritura de relatos, crónicas y

cuentos, ha logrado narrar su visión frente a las vivencias del territorio donde creció, frente a las problemáticas que le sensibilizan, la indignan y la atraviesan, como lo son el racismo, el derecho a la ciudad, el asesinato de jóvenes negros habitantes de territorios empobrecidos, la injusticia espacial, el asesinato sistemático de líderes y líderes sociales, la desigualdad; las injusticias en todas sus esferas. Para ella, la escritura ha sido una búsqueda autónoma que le ha permitido reconocer su propia voz y reconocerse como una mujer negra, sensible, pero sobre todo, ha sido un proceso de sanación que le ha devuelto la voz.

Mesi Bakari Walton, Ph.D.

Dr. Bakari Walton is an Assistant Professor of Spanish and Afro-Latinx Cultures at Howard University. Her research intersects with Africana, Latin American, and Cultural Studies. Her work explores how Afro-diasporic cultures are employed as symbols of identity and tools of survival through cultural texts of music, song, dance, language, and other practices. Dr. Bakari Walton recently completed research as a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in Colombia titled, “Ancestral Identity - Afro-Colombian Cultural Traditions of the Atlantic Coast”. She recently published a book chapter, “Dance, Rhythm, and Ritual: Afro-Venezuelans in Resistance” and a peer-reviewed article, “Afro-Venezuelan Cultural Survival: Invoking Ancestral Memory”.

Ele Vergara

Ele Vergara nació en el año 2000 en Amaime, territorio palmirano. Participó del laboratorio internacional de poesía afro femenina “Cimarroneando el verbo,” con quienes participa como co autora en el

libro Cimarronas del Verbo (Amafrocol, 2022). Publicó de manera independiente su primer libro, un poemario conceptual titulado Ella: poemas cortos (ITA EDITORIAL, 2022).

Alicia Arrechea Alegria

Alicia Arrechea Alegria (Timbiquí, Cauca/1965) cantora y portadora de tradición, enseñando sobre la diáspora africana arraigada en América Latina. Representante Legal y directora de la Fundación Legado Ancestral del Pacífico (2017) hasta la fecha. Cantora de la agrupación Integración Pacífica, participante del Festival Internacional Petronio Álvarez (2014/2018). Hace participación activa del Comadreo por la Paz (2015). Vinculada a la escuela Sociopolítica para mujeres de la asociación Casa Cultural el Chontaduro. Participante del encuentro de mujeres poetas Colombianas en Roldanillo, Museo Rayo (2016, 2017, 2018), Festival de Tambores San Basilio de Palenque (2016), Festival internacional de poesía de la Habana (2018). Conformó el equipo de la Emisora Oriente estéreo Grabando una serie de 10 capítulos sobre la equidad de género (2019). Participante activa en el año (2021) comadreando y cantando con las Mayoras en el Paro Nacional. Consejera de paz en la feria de Cali para el mundo y sus renacientes (2021/2022). Ha escrito y participado en libros y performances junto con otras mujeres cantaoras residentes del Oriente de Cali. Ha publicado en Cucuruchando en la memoria (2018), Cimarroneando el verbo (20, Con los pelos de punta y Entre la dignidad y la muerte (2019).

Valeria Angulo Caicedo

Mujer afrocolombiana, Asistente de investigación del Centro de Estudios Afrodispóricos de la Universidad Icesi. Magíster en Estudios Sociales y Políticos de la Universidad Icesi. Psicóloga, de la Universidad del Valle, con formación en Teatro en espacios no convencionales del Instituto Popular de Cultura, con más de tres años de experiencia conceptual y práctica en la atención a la primera infancia, conocimientos en procesos de intervención en el área educativa, a través del teatro, la literatura y la poesía; formulación y elaboración de proyectos de investigación e intervención con organizaciones afrodescendientes.

Javiela Evangelista

Javiela Evangelista (Ph.D., Anthropology - Graduate Center, CUNY; MA, Institute for Research in African American Studies - Columbia University), is an Assistant Professor in the African American Studies Department at New York City College of Technology of the City University of New York (CUNY). As a public anthropologist she engages in participatory research that counters inequalities, particularly at the intersections of citizenship and racialization in the Caribbean and the African Diaspora. Evangelista is developing her book manuscript, an ethnographic analysis of the largest case of mass statelessness in the western hemisphere, the contemporary denationalization of Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic. Her research has been supported by the Mahindra Humanities Center (Harvard University), Mellon Foundation, and SSRC. She has contributed to National Political Science Review and Interdisciplinary Team Teaching (Palgrave). Evangelista serves on the advisory board for Transformative Learning in the Humanities and the Fu-

tures Initiative. Recently, she has enjoyed developing the course The Heritage of Imperialism, and several Open Educational Resources with students.

Edna Carolina Gonzalez Barona

Edna Carolina Gonzalez Barona is a Historian from the Universidad del Valle - Cali, Colombia. Currently, she is completing a Master's in Social and Political Studies at the Universidad Icesi-Colombia. Among other things, she has participated as co-author of the book *Demando Mi Libertad* published in 2018. Her interests revolve around history of thought, black feminism, African Diasporic Spirituality, Black psychology, Gender and Racism, Black Existentialism, Black Queer Studies, Afrofuturism, and the East of Cali in Colombia.

Lydia Platón Lázaro is an independent professor in the English department at UPR Cayey. She has published two books: *Defiant Itineraries: Caribbean Paradigms in American Dance and Film* (2015) and *El cuarto acto* (2005) with visual artist Paloma Todd. In addition to her academic work, she is a translator, community arts promoter, and performer. She is one of the founding members of Taller Comunidad la Goyco, a cultural and community organization operating in the once abandoned school Pedro Goyco on Loíza Street. She has published two books: *Defiant Itineraries: Caribbean Paradigms in American Dance and Film* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) and *El cuarto acto* (Ediciones Callejón, 2005) with visual artist Paloma Todd. In 2019 she launched one season of the podcast "Itinerarios Sonoros" about Caribbean sound for Radio San Juan, and was awarded the Andy Warhol Curatorial Fel-

lowship in 2019 for the project Novenario, an exhibit and series of events about art and mourning, stemming from the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and María to be held in 2021 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Juan, PR. Between 2018-2020, she collaborated in the coordination of the first part of Northwestern University's Puerto Rico Arts Initiative. For more than twenty years, she has worked in independent performing and community arts initiatives as a performer, producer, and collaborator, as well as publishing performance related articles in various journals and anthologies.

Libia Diaz-Ulabares

Libia Diaz-Ulabares holds a bachelor's degree in teaching of Popular Education and a bachelor's degree in Teaching of Foreign Languages (English and French) at Universidad del Valle; and is graduating of master's degree in Social and Political Studies at Universidad Icesi. She is the manager of Vision Afro 2025 at the Center for the African Diaspora Studies at Icesi, Legal representative of the Community Council LA MINA in territory Peon (Law 70, 1993 Colombia); and co-founder and coordinator of research and strategic alliances at Escuela Audiovisual de Peon. She was fellow of Martin Luther King Jr. program 2017, delegate of Colombia at Ubuntu United Nations 2021, fellow of the Ethno-history workshop "Dispossessions in the Americas" at University of Pennsylvania 2022, mentor of Youth Ambassadors 2022 and currently, she is a fellow of Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative.

Guest Editors

Dr. Sarah Soanirina Ohmer is a polyglot, conspiradora afro-feminista diáspórica, literary critic focusing on trauma, healing, and spirituality (Ph.D. 2012, U Pittsburgh Hispanic Languages & Literatures, Fulbright Scholar Colombia 2021; Fulbright Brazil 2015). She is fluent in French, Spanish, Portuguese, and English, an Associate Professor of Latin American and Latino studies, Africana studies, Women and Gender Studies, and the Master of Liberal Studies, at CUNY Lehman College in the Bronx, NY. She was a visiting scholar-activist at the Center for African Diaspora Studies at ICESI University and the Casa Cultural Chontaduro in Cali, Colombia in 2021. Now, she co-coordinates the Writing Across the Curriculum Program at Lehman College. Her publications in the Journal of International Women's Studies, PALARA, InterFACES, among others, are available at <https://commons.gc.cuny.edu/members/sarahohmer/>. In 2021, she guest co-edited Solidão for the Women's Studies Quarterly journal (WSQ). Her first book, Keloids of Modernity, is forthcoming at U Illinois Press (2024). She currently serves as an editorial board member for WSQ, Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy (JITP), and PALARA.

Melissa Gómez Hernández (PhD en Políticas Públicas de la Universidad Internacional de la Florida, 2018), asumió la dirección del Centro de Estudios Afrodiaspóricos -CEAF- de la Universidad Icesi, en enero 2023. Es Politóloga de la Universidad del Cauca, Magíster en Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia (2010) y Doctora en Asuntos Públicos de la Universidad Internacional

de la Florida gracias a una beca Fulbright. Desde inicios de 2020, la profesora Gómez Hernández ha venido desempeñándose como Coordinadora de Proyectos del CEAf y profesora del Departamento de Estudios Políticos de la Universidad Icesi. Sus líneas de investigación incluyen valores del servicio público, política pública y justicia social, y ciudadanías subalternas y política pública.

Aurora Vergara Figueroa, who earned her doctoral degree in sociology from UMass Amherst in 2013, was appointed Minister of Education of Colombia on Feb. 28. A specialist in Diaspora Studies and Latino, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Vergara Figueroa was born in Cali on May 14, 1987 and grew up in Istmina (Chocó). The daughter of María Teresa Figueroa Rojas and Aristóbulo Vergara Montoya, she graduated in 2003 from the Escuela Normal Superior de las Mercedes de Istmina and obtained her bachelor's degree in sociology in 2008 from Universidad del Valle-Cali-Colombia. She was formerly a professor in the Department of Social Studies at Icesi University in Cali, Colombia, between 2012 and 2022, and the Director of the CEAf at Icesi University. She's published in numerous journals, including Meridians, and her book, Afrodescendant Resistance to Deracination in Colombia: Massacre at Bellavista-Bojayá-Chocó (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), has helped advance the field of forced migration/ deracination in Sociology and other disciplines.

Evgeni Bezzubikoff, guest copy-editor

Evgeni Bezzubikoff is a Peruvian poet and photographer who has made a name for himself in the literary and art worlds.

With five published books of poetry, he has been recognized with multiple awards for his poignant and moving verses. In addition to his literary pursuits, Evgeni has exhibited his photography in various cities, including New York City, Ossining, and Prague. Evgeni also shares his passion for literature as a professor of Spanish and Latin American literature at CUNY, teaching students of Latinx heritage. His journey to academia was not without obstacles, as he was undocumented for twelve years before pursuing a master's in Creative writing at NYU. Throughout his career, Evgeni has been recognized for his outstanding work. In 2015, he won the Provost Research award to write his thesis in Prague, Czech Republic. In 2013, he was selected as a Starworks fellow, where he taught creative writing to children at a Bronx hospital. And in 2022, he was a finalist in a prestigious Peruvian Poetry contest. Evgeni's creativity, dedication, and passion for his work continue to inspire and motivate others in the literary world.

Yaneth Blando, cover artist

Yaneth Blando se reconoce mujer negra lesbiana. Hace parte de la Escuela Sociopolítica entre Jóvenes Juventudes Populares y el del grupo Negras Maricas y Disidentes del Colectivo Matamba. Sueña con ser psicóloga para acompañar y empoderar a la Juventud Negra con diversidad sexual y de género.