

Encountering Children of Empire

Symposium



Second Eulogy: Mind the Gap (Venice Biennale 2019) film still @ courtesy of Billy Gerard Frank

14 and 15 September 2023



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Welcome

Thank you for joining our *Encountering Children of Empire* symposium, jointly organised by the National Trust for Scotland and the Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, University of Glasgow. This is a welcome opportunity for us to meet at one of the Trust's most visited properties: Robert Adam's magnificent Culzean Castle. Culzean is an appropriate place to gather to explore the histories of children of Empire. It became the home of 'Scipio' (c1694–1774), an African boy who was captured and enslaved. He later joined the Kennedy household through the marriage of his enslaver's daughter, Jean Douglas, to Sir John Kennedy, 2nd Baronet of Culzean in 1705.

We are delighted to welcome Dr Caroline Palmer, a descendant of Scipio, who has researched his life and legacies. We don't have a record of Scipio's perspective on the events that shaped his life, but we are grateful that Caroline is here to share her research and her unique perspective. Connecting with the past through family history is one way that many of us can explore questions of identity and belonging.

Uncovering Scipio's life story and his legacies has been challenging – reconstructing the lives of marginalised minorities is always difficult, even more so in the case of children. But this important work also offers us significant ways to enrich our understanding of the legacies of empire. This symposium brings the opportunity to think about and reflect on the children who moved, worked, played and slept in grand houses like these, as well as the children whose labour generated the wealth that built these country houses. What kind of childhood did children have under slavery and in empires? What role did race play in the invention of childhood? And what light can these insights shed on the lives and experiences of children like Scipio?

Our symposium coincides with the residency at Culzean of artist-filmmaker Billy Gerard Frank. Grenada-born Frank is the founder of the Nova Frontier Film Festival LAB in Brooklyn, New York, which develops and showcases films and art from and about the global African diaspora, the Middle East and Latin America. He is also a lecturer in Design and Directing at the David Geffen School of Drama in Yale University. Frank is our keynote speaker and will be discussing his work, including his art film *Palimpsest: Tales Spun from Sea and Memories*, with which he represented Grenada at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022.

We have an international group of speakers, and their papers will be supplemented with breakout sessions where community engagement will be at the fore. We'll explore how we can make narratives around Children of Empire accessible, meaningful and relevant to today's audiences. The castle, gardens, grounds, landscape and seascape of Culzean will also be an intrinsic part of our programme.

We are looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible, and encourage you all to connect with as many delegates as you can over the two days.

Jennifer Melville
National Trust for Scotland



Christine Whyte
University of Glasgow

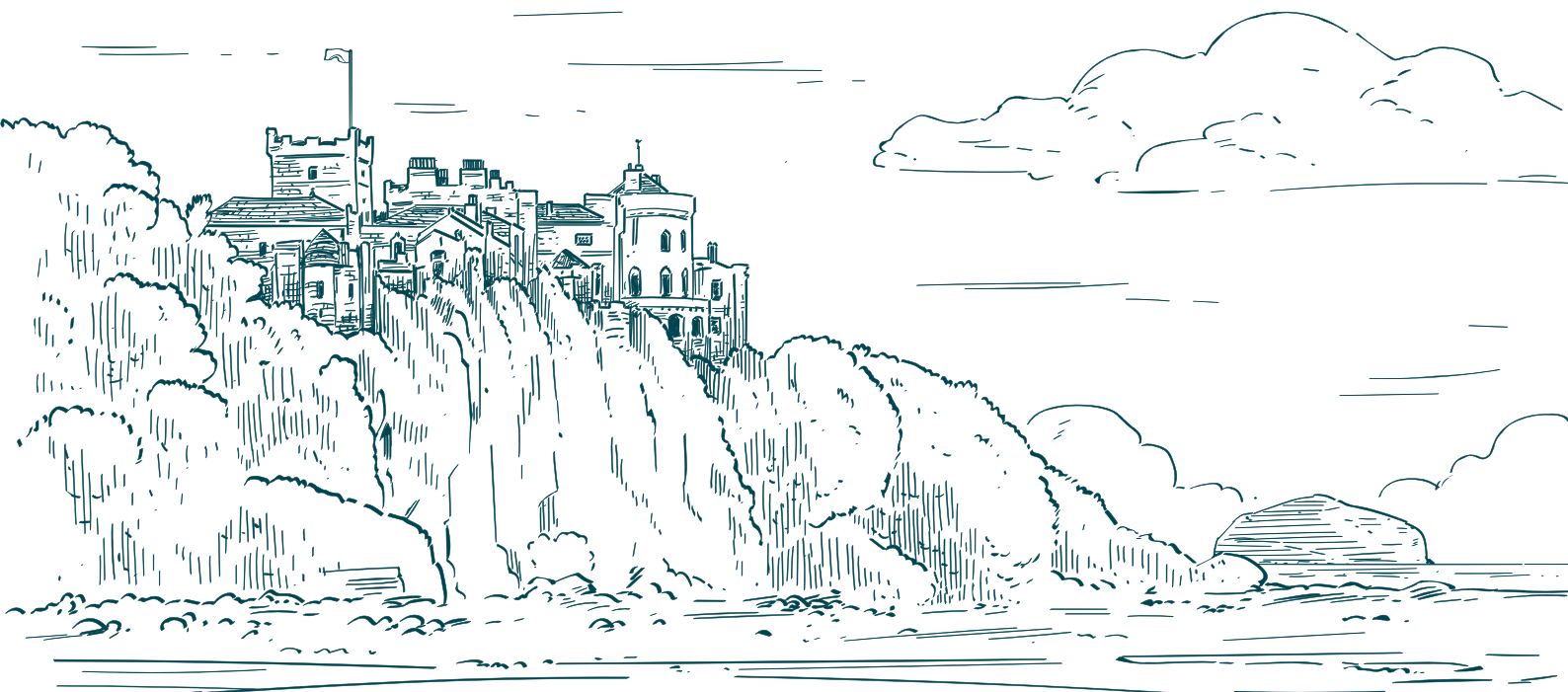


The National Trust for Scotland's 10-year strategy – *Nature, Beauty and Heritage for Everyone* – sets out a way for us to protect the places that we love and tell the stories of Scotland's rich heritage. This symposium will help us delve deeper into shared histories, to contribute ideas and learn from each other. Continuing the theme of co-creation, our programme has been shaped collaboratively and in partnership with the team at Culzean Castle & Country Park who are keen to welcome you here. We are all working to build the thriving, sustainable and relevant charity that we want to see in the future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Long'.

Philip Long, Chief Executive of the National Trust for Scotland



Dates and times

Thursday 14 September: 9am–5pm

Friday 15 September: 9am–4.45pm

Travelling to the conference



Culzean Castle & Country Park is off the A719, 12 miles south of Ayr and 4 miles west of Maybole.



The closest train station is Maybole.



Stagecoach bus route #60 (Ayr–Girvan, calling at Maybole) stops at the road entrance to Culzean – it is approximately a 15-minute walk to the Home Farm Courtyard from the bus stop.

Planning

Culzean Castle & Country Park
Maybole, South Ayrshire KA19 8LE

your visit

What to do when you arrive

When you arrive at Culzean Country Park, please show your tickets to staff at the ticket booth. They will direct you to the main car park.

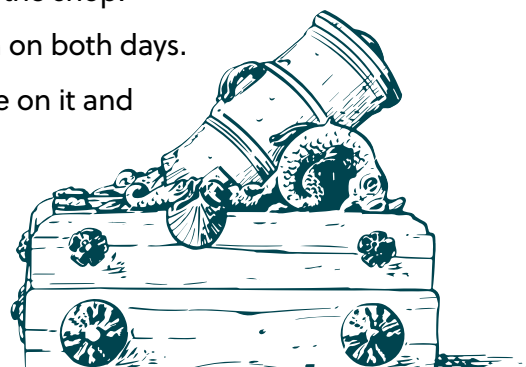
From the main car park, please come to the registration desk situated in the courtyard of Home Farm. If it is raining, the registration desk will be in the shop.

The registration desk will be open from 8.45am until 9.45am on both days.

All attendees will be given a sticker – please write your name on it and wear this throughout the conference.

The team will direct you to sign up for the breakout sessions. These sessions are limited to 20 people and will be operating on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please see the programme for more information.



Programme

Day one (Thursday 14 September)

9am	Registration and networking
9.45am	Welcome to Culzean – Dr Jennifer Melville (National Trust for Scotland)
10am	Keynote address – Billy Gerard Frank (artist and filmmaker) and Lisa Williams (Edinburgh Caribbean Association) <i>How We Look At It: Lost Times and Refracted Memories</i> Grenada-born artist and filmmaker Billy Gerard Frank presents <i>Palimpsest: Tales Spun from Sea and Memories</i> , inspired by the life and work of Quobna Ottobah Cugoana, presented at Venice Biennale 2022 in the Grenada National Pavilion. Followed by a conversation with Lisa Williams, founder of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association.
10.55am	Short break
11am	Panel 1 – chaired by Dr Christine Whyte (Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, University of Glasgow) Dr Tara Inniss (University of the West Indies) <i>Children, Slavery and Freedom in the British Caribbean, 1790–1838: Finding Voices and Representing Lives</i> Dr Gordon Gill <i>The Experience of Enslaved Children in Guyana, 1781–1834</i>
12pm	Lunch
1.30pm	Panel 2 – chaired by Dr Peggy Brunache (Director, Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, University of Glasgow) Dr Jenny Shaw (University of Alabama) <i>The Mingo Children in the City: Autonomy and Survival in London's Society with Slaves</i> Dr Alicia Hughes (British Museum) <i>Looking Back to Build Future Shared Collections Project at the British Museum</i>
2.30pm	Refreshment break
3pm	Panel 3 – chaired by Antonia Laurence-Allen (National Trust for Scotland) Dr Anthony Lewis (Glasgow Life), Victoria Hepburn (Yale University) and Dr David Alston (author and historian)
4pm	Breakout sessions (<i>please sign up at registration</i>) Symposium attendees will join one of the five breakout options happening at the same time. Please see the session descriptions on the following pages.
5pm	End of first day

Programme

Day two (Friday 15 September)

- 9am Arrival
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- 9.30am Welcome – Dr Christine Whyte (Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, University of Glasgow)
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- 10am Panel 4 – chaired by Dr Shantel George (Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, University of Glasgow)
- Dr Erin Millions (University of Winnipeg)
Trans-Atlantic Education of Métis Fur Trade Children and Imperial Kin Networks, 1830s–1870s
- Dr Kate Ekama (Stellenbosch University)
Family and Freedom in Cape Town: A View from the Manumission Registers
-
- 11.15am Refreshment break
-
- 11.45am Panel 5 – chaired by Dr Jennifer Melville (National Trust for Scotland)
- Dr Caroline Palmer (MA, DPhil [Oxon]) and Hannah Lawrence (University of Oxford)
Scipio Kennedy: Looking Into Our Past
- Dr Désha Osborne (University of Edinburgh)
My Two Lassies: Enslavement and the Creation of Family Narratives in Scotland and the Americas
-
- 12.30pm Lunch
-
- 1.30pm Breakout sessions (*please sign up at registration*)
- Symposium attendees will join one of the five breakout options happening at the same time. Please see the session descriptions on the following pages.
-
- 2.30pm Breakout sessions (*please sign up at registration*)
- Symposium attendees will join one of the five breakout options happening at the same time. Please see the session descriptions on the following pages.
-
- 3.30pm Roundtable – chaired by Professor Corinne Fowler (University of Leicester)
-
- 4.45pm End of second day





Breakout sessions

During the conference attendees will join breakout sessions focusing on different themes and topics. These sessions give the opportunity to share ideas and to network.

Day one

Using the Slave Registers to Learn about Enslaved Children

Dr Kristy Warren (University of Lincoln)

In this workshop, participants will learn about the use of slave registers as a source for researching enslaved children in the Caribbean. Beginning with an overview of her research on enslaved children in St Kitts, Dr Warren will then open discussion on how to use slave registers in your own research. This will include guidance on the different formatting found across registers that are hosted freely online, as well as using registers to follow the lives of specific children.

Children for Sale/Children as Bred: Life for Children on the Rozelle Plantation, Jamaica in the last 18th Century

Alex Renton (FRHistS) and **Pat Lorimer** (FRIAS)

This session will be led by Alex Renton, author of *Blood Legacy: Reckoning with a Family's Story of Slavery* in which Renton examines the activities of two Ayrshire families – the Fergussons and the Hunter-Blairs – as plantation owners in Jamaica between 1760 and 1875.

A descendant of the Fergusson family, Renton is a co-founder of the Heirs of Slavery group and also a member of the Belleisle Legacy and Slavery Trust (BLaST) Working Group. Alex will be accompanied by the chair of the BLaST Working Group, Pat Lorimer, who will give the background to the proposal for Belleisle and outline their progress to date. BLaST is campaigning for a Museum of Slavery in the ruins of Belleisle House in Ayr, which was built with the proceeds of plantation slavery by the Hamilton family.

Reparative Justice and the British Country House

Dr Christine Whyte and students from the University of Glasgow

This session will be led by students who are conducting research into slavery, empire and reparative justice. Following an introduction from Dr Christine Whyte, the students will cultivate discussion on the future of British country houses and the slavery reparations movement, drawing on case studies of campaigns for reparative justice in other global contexts.

Day one (cont)

Culzean Castle tour

National Trust for Scotland team

Robert Adam's cliff-top masterpiece rises above woods, beaches, secret follies and play parks. This estate was once the playground of David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassillis – a man keen to impress with his wealth and status. The castle is filled with treasures that tell the stories of people who lived here. On this 45-minute tour, you'll be guided around the Adam castle and see how the Kennedy family fared through changing times.

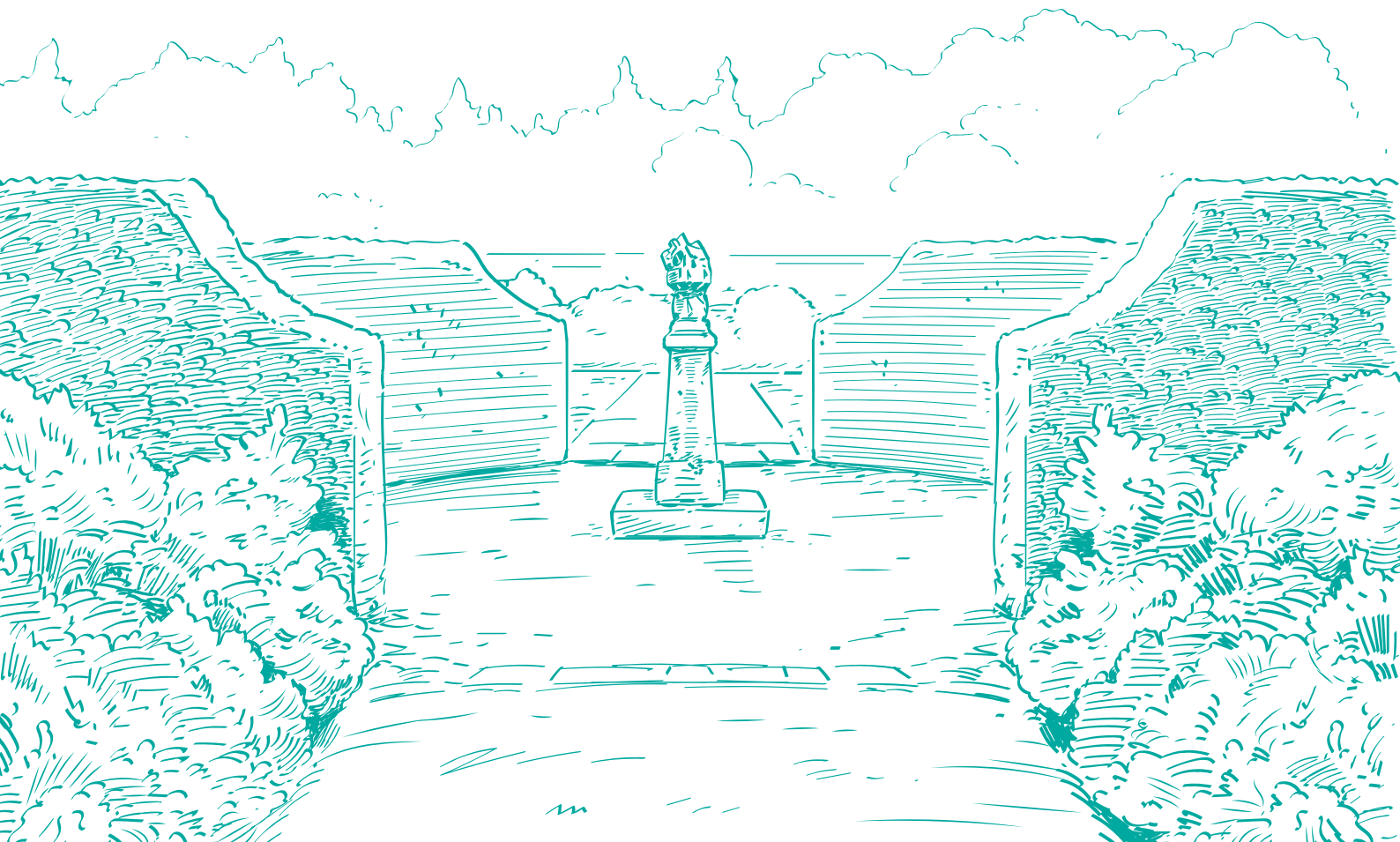
You can read more about the castle pre-Robert Adam on our website:

Culzean Country Park tour

Derek Alexander (Head of Archaeology, National Trust for Scotland)

Opulent to the extreme, the country park is planted with conifers and beech, sculpted around miles of sandy coastline dotted with caves, and finished off with a Swan Pond, flamboyant formal gardens and fruit-filled glasshouses. In this 45-minute tour, you'll be introduced to the expansive Culzean gardens and grounds. Focusing on the 18th-century archaeology, you'll explore the history of the caves, changes to the castle, the Fountain Court, walled garden, Camellia House and the site of Scipio's house.

You can read more about the attempts to find Scipio's house on our website:





Day two

Teaching the Histories of Empire

Lisa Williams (University of St Andrews and founder of Edinburgh Caribbean Association) and **Dr Christine Whyte** (University of Glasgow)

This session will provide a space and support for reflecting on the symposium presentations and insights. The facilitators will offer an introduction to teaching the histories of empire, providing guidance in thinking about language and context, and addressing difficult or traumatic topics with care and empathy. Participants will then have the opportunity to discuss their own reflections and how they might approach the symposium themes in their teaching. A round-up session will allow small groups to share their thoughts with the wider group and collaboratively decide on next steps in teaching the histories of empire in Scotland and beyond.

Glasgow's Greenbank Garden: A Case Study

Julie Gilliland (National Trust for Scotland)

Greenbank Garden is a historically significant mansion house and garden in Glasgow and is the only Trust site that has links to all aspects of the 'triangular trade'. The building was directly funded through the trade in enslaved people and tobacco. During this session you will have the opportunity to contribute directly to the future reinterpretation of the site. The existing offer is heavily centred on the garden, but our aim is to create a more comprehensive interpretive approach with a storytelling style, focusing on the past, present and future.

Day two (continued)

Searching for Scipio: Following the practice of artist Maud Sulter to examine the life of Scipio Kennedy

Alexis McCluskey

The eminent Scottish Ghanaian artist Maud Sulter (1960–2008) used meticulously researched collage to explore stories and emotions. In *Twa Blak Wimmin* (1997) she imagined the lives of two black women resident at the court of James IV of Scotland. Sulter believed that the process of cutting, selecting and composing a collage was a powerful way to meditate on the intellectual and emotional resonances of individual stories that history has hidden or ignored.

This session offers participants the chance to explore Scipio's life experiences using the same techniques. We will provide a range of carefully researched and interpreted text and image sources. Participants will build collages of their own, contemplating his life experiences in new ways.

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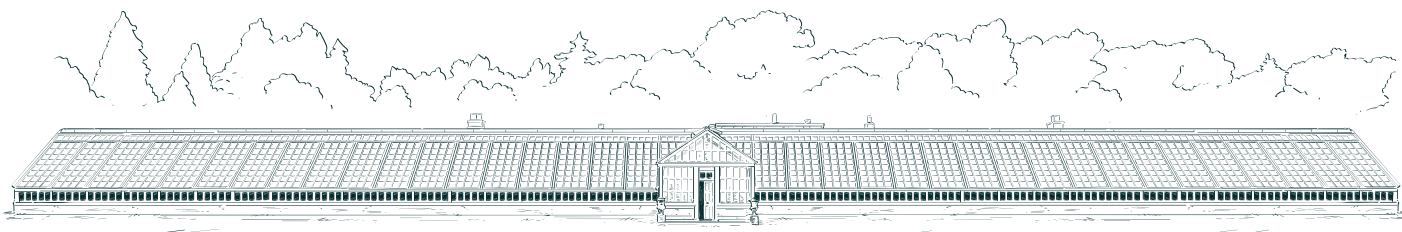
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FAQs

Who do I contact if I have any questions?

Please look at our FAQs to see if your query is answered here. If not, please contact the conference team on **FacingOurPast@nts.org.uk**

If you have a query on the day, please ask a member of the team wearing a 'Here to Help' lanyard.

Can I post about the symposium on social media?

We intend the symposium to be a safe space. Please feel free to share National Trust for Scotland posts. However, do check with relevant speakers and delegates before sharing discussions.

How do I register for the symposium?

You can register for tickets via our Eventbrite page:

What does my ticket include?

Your ticket includes access to the panels and breakout sessions over the course of the symposium. It also includes the standard entry to Culzean, as well as lunch and refreshments over the two days.

Can I take pictures on the day?

Of course! We encourage all attendees to take photos of the event. If you share them on social media, please tag us **@N_T_S** (Twitter) or **@nationaltrustforscotland** (Instagram).

Please do not take video recordings of the event.

Is Culzean Castle accessible?

Many parts of the castle and country park are accessible. Please see our accessibility guide for more information:

Is there Wi-Fi at Culzean Castle?

Yes, there is Wi-Fi available throughout various parts of the estate.

What if I arrive late?

The registration desk will remain open until 9.45am on both days. If you arrive after this time, please ask a member of staff wearing a 'Here to Help' lanyard to check you in.

The National Trust for Scotland is committed to exploring our links to enslavement and colonialism.



nts.org.uk

The National Trust for Scotland is a Scottish charity, SC007410