

Workin' for  
the Yankee  
Dollar

Deanne Achong



*Pour mener  
yo*

*Port d'Espagne*



*Noen ke'  
baou*





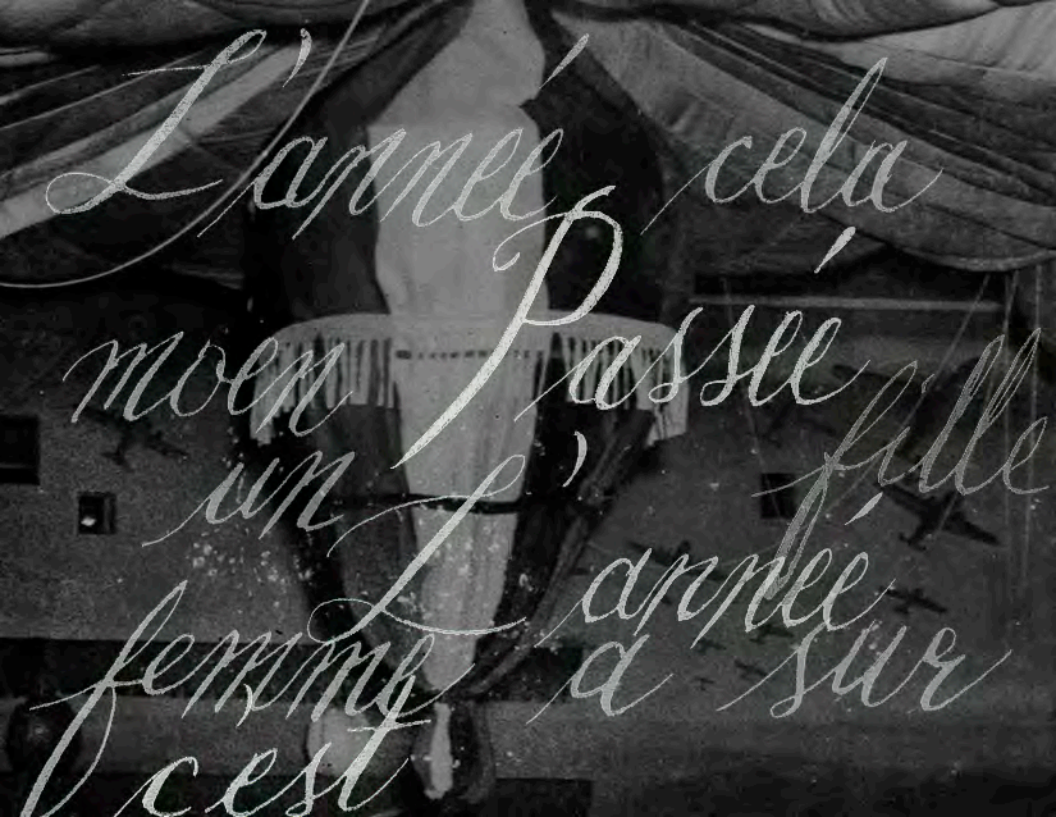
*Drinking*



*Rum* and



Coca-Cola  
Coca-Cola



L'année, cela  
moen Passee  
un L'année fille  
femme a sur  
cest




*Rum and Coca Cola* was a song composed by Calypsonian Lord Invader (Rupert Grant) in 1942. A social commentary on the “invasion” of Trinidad by the Americans – who opened a base in 1941 during WWII, it became a huge hit.

An American named Morey Amsterdam who was stationed in Trinidad, basically stole this song (which had been registered / copywritten in Trinidad) and recorded it with the Andrew Sisters in the US in 1945. It too became a huge hit. Lord Invader discovered this infringement of copyright, and successfully\* sued for damages. A wrinkle in this tale is that Lionel Belasco also sued – for the melody – claiming he wrote “*L’Année Passée*” in 1906. This was a popular patois folk song, based on a true story based about a young woman from a “good” family who runs away with a man, and eventually becomes a prostitute.

*Moen c'est un' femme a sur la rue [On the streets you will find me roam ]*

\*“Success” is debatable, as it’s unclear how much compensation he got, nor did he get royalties. The Lionel Belasco angle certainly split the compensation. At least one American descendant of a writer who did **not** write the lyrics continues to collect royalties.

The website [rumandcocacolareader.com](http://rumandcocacolareader.com), by Kevin Burke, is an amazing website that provides extensive and detailed research into this story.

A black and white photograph of a tropical scene. In the foreground, there are palm trees and other foliage. A large, solid black circle is superimposed over the center of the image. Inside this circle, the text "And when the yankees first went to Trinidad" is written in a white, elegant cursive script. The text is arranged in four lines, following the curve of the circle. The background of the photograph shows a bright sky and more distant trees.

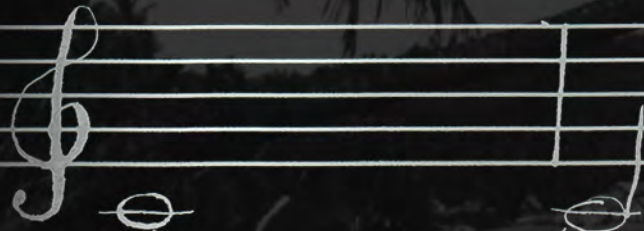
And when the  
yankees first  
went to  
Trinidad

moen c'est  
moen ké baou  
femme a sur  
la rue.

TRVI  
BUTI



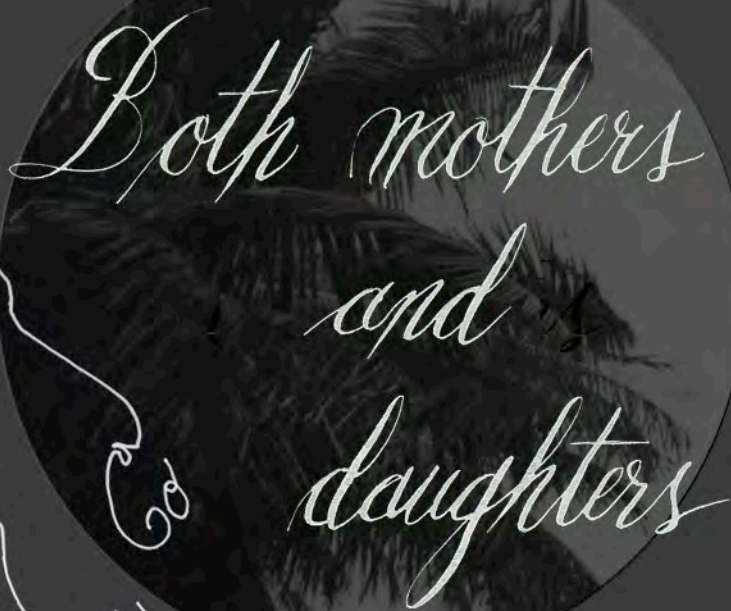
*Workin' for the Yankee Dollar*



TRVI  
BUTI



moen te  
Femme la se-coué corps  
yon fille



Both mothers  
and  
daughters



7211  
BUT1

*Workin' For the Yankee Dollar* was created by Deanne Achong, Vancouver, BC, Canada. Photographs are from the artist's family and friend's archives. This chapbook was designed & hand-lettered by Deanne Achong. Thank you to Lois Klassen for advice and guidance.

READING

THE

MIGRATION

LIBRARY

2017

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