



Emanuel School

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Monday 3rd - Friday 28th October

MONDAY



John Blanke: Henry VIII's highly favoured trumpeter

Emma Renton - Lower Sixth

John Blanke was a royal trumpeter in the courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII and is the only black Tudor who has an identified image.

Although nothing is known of the early life of Blanke, historians think that he may have arrived in England as part of Catherine of Aragon's entourage when she came to England in 1501 to marry Prince Arthur, then heir to the throne.

The first record of John Blanke is a payment made to him by Henry VII in December 1507, which records his wages at 8d. per day, equivalent to that of a skilled craftsman. He later successfully petitioned Henry VIII for a wage increase to 16d. per day.

As a trumpeter, Blanke took part in the funeral and procession for King Henry VII when he died in April 1509, as well as taking part in the procession from the Tower of London to Westminster Great Hall following the coronation of Henry VIII.

Following the birth of Henry VIII's first son, who died at just 52 days old, a jousting tournament was held at Westminster where John Blanke, alongside his fellow trumpeters, provided the music. It is on the 1511 Westminster Tournament Roll, a 60-foot painted manuscript created to record the tournament, where Blanke is pictured twice, as one of the six trumpeters on horseback.

In 1512 Blanke got married, although it is not known who he married, and Henry VIII gifted him a new wedding outfit which included velvet gown and a hat, indicating that he held royal favour and a high status within the court.

Henry VIII's wedding gift is the last surviving reference to John Blanke, with the list of royal trumpeters in 1514 not including his name. It is not known what happened to him.



The untold story of the British Black Power Movement

Sophia Heinsius - Upper Sixth

The movement to Black liberation is one that has been told largely through the Civil Rights Movement in America with mention of leading figures such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. What has not been as showcased is the fact these leaders visited the UK in support of the British Black Power Movement that was of influence within the country at the time. In 1967, the Universal Coloured People's Association (UCPA) was formed and helped kickstart the Black Power movement in the UK. From this many other groups formed such as the RAAS (Racial Adjustment Action Society) and the BLF (Black Liberation Front). These groups were known for their localised support of communities of colour through the establishment of what were known as supplementary schools. This followed revelations of mass discrimination in the education system against Black children. They had been disproportionately sent to schools for children with learning difficulties despite many not needing this extra assistance. These groups were also known to run bookshops and spread information regarding Black liberation via pamphlets and leaflets to local communities.

Several key cases made the news regarding the movement, such as the case of the Mangrove Nine in 1970. A group of Black British activists were tried for inciting a riot at a protest. This protest was against the Metropolitan police due to their targeting of a Caribbean restaurant in Notting Hill: the Mangrove. They were all acquitted of the most serious charges after some chose to defend themselves in court. The trial became the first judicial acknowledgement of behaviour motivated by racial hatred within the Met Police.



Elizabeth Alexander

Elizabeth Alexander was born in Harlem, New York, but grew up in Washington, DC, the daughter of former United States Secretary of the Army and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission chairman, Clifford Alexander Jr. She earned degrees from Yale, Boston University, and the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned her PhD. She is a founding member of Cave Canem, an organization dedicated to promoting African American poets and poetry.

Alexander's book *American Sublime* (2005) was shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize, and in 2005 she was awarded the Jackson Poetry Prize. She is often recognized as a pivotal figure in African American poetry. When Barack Obama asked her to compose and read a poem for his Presidential inauguration, she joined the ranks of Robert Frost, Maya Angelou and Miller Williams; her poem, "Praise Song for the Day," below acknowledges the historic significance of this moment in the election of America's first black president.

The first inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States took place on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, at the West Front of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. This 56th

inauguration, set a record attendance for any event held in the city. Based on combined attendance numbers, television viewership, and Internet traffic, it was one of the most-observed events ever by the global audience.

"A New Birth of Freedom," a phrase from the Gettysburg Address, was the inaugural theme to commemorate the 200-year anniversary of the birth year of President Abraham Lincoln. In his speeches to the crowds, Obama referred to ideals expressed by Lincoln about renewal, continuity, and national unity. Obama mentioned these ideals in his speech to stress the need for shared sacrifice and a new sense of responsibility to answer America's challenges at home and abroad.

Praise Song for the Day

A Poem for Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration

Each day we go about our business,
walking past each other, catching each other's
eyes or not, about to speak or speaking.

All about us is noise. All about us is
noise and bramble, thorn and din, each
one of our ancestors on our tongues.

Someone is stitching up a hem, darning
a hole in a uniform, patching a tire,
repairing the things in need of repair.

Someone is trying to make music somewhere,
with a pair of wooden spoons on an oil drum,
with cello, boom box, harmonica, voice.

A woman and her son wait for the bus.
A farmer considers the changing sky.
A teacher says, Take out your pencils. Begin.

We encounter each other in words, words
spiny or smooth, whispered or declaimed,
words to consider, reconsider.



We cross dirt roads and highways that mark
the will of some one and then others, who said
I need to see what's on the other side.

I know there's something better down the road.
We need to find a place where we are safe.
We walk into that which we cannot yet see.

Say it plain: that many have died for this day.
Sing the names of the dead who brought us here,
who laid the train tracks, raised the bridges,

picked the cotton and the lettuce, built
brick by brick the glittering edifices
they would then keep clean and work inside of.

Praise song for struggle, praise song for the day.
Praise song for every hand-lettered sign,
the figuring-it-out at kitchen tables.

Some live by love thy neighbor as thyself,
others by first do no harm or take no more
than you need. What if the mightiest word is love?

Love beyond marital, filial, national,
love that casts a widening pool of light,
love with no need to pre-empt grievance.

In today's sharp sparkle, this winter air,
anything can be made, any sentence begun.
On the brink, on the brim, on the cusp,
praise song for walking forward in that light.



Elizabeth Alexander

