

ARD Play Back to perform in the Netherlands

#### PRESS RELEASE

Some members of the original Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) Community Caravan 'Play Back' Theatre group will perform at an international festival and a cultural conference in the Netherlands in September.

Actors Robert Whyte, Deleon Walters and Wayne Bubb will travel to the Netherlands with ARD Play Back Theatre Director Tracie Rogers, who lectures at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine campus. St. Lucian actress Anthea Octave will also join the ARD Play Back performers. None of the 'Play Back' actresses from Grenada were able to travel to the Netherlands.

The Treaty of Utrecht and Utrecht Cultural Sundays invited the ARD 'Play Back' group to give two performances at the "Who Cares" conference on September 20, which will examine the relationship between art and current social topics, such as migration, peace, safety and relations among communities.

"We will show how we used Caribbean culture to make this form of theatre useful and relevant as a social intervention tool in recovery from trauma," Ms. Rogers explained.

The ARD 'Play Back' group will also perform at the Community Art Festival, which takes place on September 22 and 23, Ms. Roger said. 'Play Back' is a form of improvisational theatre in which members of the audience recount life experiences and watch those experiences immediately played back. The ARD introduced 'Play Back' to Grenada in 2005 through the Community Caravan. As the Caravan moved through the parishes between April and August of 2005, Grenadians told their experiences of Hurricane Ivan. Through improvisation, the performers used drama and music elements to enact the 'Ivan' stories.

The Peace Treaty of Utrecht is a long-term international cultural event leading up to the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013 of the signing of the Treaty. The Treaty marked the beginning of a period of social and cultural progress. Partners of the Treaty of Utrecht include the Province of Utrecht; the City of Utrecht; the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the University of Utrecht; the Utrecht School of the Arts; and the Chamber of Commerce, among other sponsors.

This is the third international invitation for the ARD 'Play Back' theatre group. They performed at the 2005 UNESCO conference on "The Practice and Prospects of Arts Education for Societies in Crisis" at UWI St. Augustine, during which Ms. Rogers also presented a paper on the Caravan 'Play Back' entitled 'De Day We See Wind - Community Storytelling and Healing in the Aftermath of Hurricane Ivan'. In 2006 Ms. Rogers presented a paper on the ARD 'Play Back' experience to the UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon, Portugal.

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