


Charles Ignatius Sancho: A Black British Man of Letters and His World

This conference, generously supported by the British Academy, will bring together international scholars and practitioners for the first time in over 25 years to interrogate the life, work, impact, and social contexts of the late-18th-century Black British polymath Charles Ignatius Sancho. Sancho is a foundational figure in Black British history; a recent upsurge in scholarly discoveries of his life has occurred in parallel with films and television shows like *Bridgerton* and *Harlots* which have sought to offer more diverse representations of the eighteenth-century and Regency worlds. Consequently, it is a highly apposite moment to convene a conversation amongst scholarly, community, and cultural organizations to analyze Sancho anew, from perspectives including print culture and literary genres, to historical, social, musical, and theatrical contexts. In so doing, the conference will address urgent questions about how Sancho's life and times force us to re-evaluate contemporary debates centred on race and national belonging in the United Kingdom.

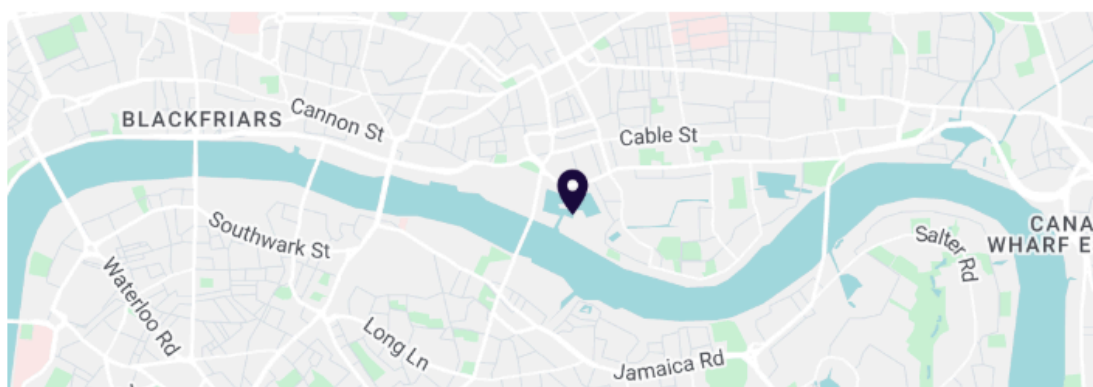
Date and time

 March 13 · 10am - March 14 · 5:30pm GMT

Location

 **Northeastern University London**
Devon House 58 Saint Katharine's Way, London, E1W 1LP

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DAY 1 **Friday 13th March 2026**

10:00-10:45 **Registration and Refreshments**

10.45-11:00 **Welcome**

Olly Ayers, Northeastern University London

Scott Wildman, Dean of Northeastern University London

11:00-11:30 **The Past, Present and Future of Sancho Studies [panel]**

Nicole N. Aljoe, Northeastern University Boston

Brycchan Carey, Northumbria University

Libby Collard, Northeastern University London

Odile Jordan, Northeastern University London

11:30-12:00 **Memorials to Eighteenth-Century Britons [talk]**

Chair: *Markman Ellis, Queen Mary University of London*

Arthur Torrington, The Equiano Society and Windrush Foundation

12:00-13:15 **Lunch**

13:15-14:45 **Books and Archives [panel]**

Chair: *Nicole N. Aljoe, Northeastern University Boston*

Crispin Powell, Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust

“Sancho and his Black Contemporaries in the Montagu Archives”

Brycchan Carey, Northumbria University

“Joseph Jekyll's Life of Ignatius Sancho Revisited”

Kristina Huang, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“Sancho and Diasporic Dialogues”

Emily Rohrback, Durham University

“Sancho by the Book”

14:45-15:00 **Coffee break**

15:00-16:30 **Letters and Literature [panel]**

Chair: *Kristina Huang, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Amit Yahav, University of Minnesota

"The Historicity of Sancho's Letters"

Adam Smith, *York St. John University*

"Breaking the Frame: Pedagogical Strategies for Recovering the Complexities of Sancho's Critical Voice"

Tiffany Cruz, *Northeastern University Boston*

"Understanding Suffering Through Divine Providence: A Dialogue Between Boethius and Ignatius Sancho"

Markman Ellis, *Queen Mary University of London*

"Sancho's library: What Did Sancho Read?"

16.45-17:30 **"Sancho's Songs" Musical Performance**

Arranged by Ben Park, *The Countertenor Project*

17:30 onwards **Caribbean Food & Reception**

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DAY 2 Saturday 14th March

10:30-11:00 **Registration and Refreshments**

11.00-12.30 **Social and Cultural Worlds [panel]**

Chair: Ryan Hanley, *University of Exeter*

Lara Taylor, *Northeastern University London*

"'The Honour of the Gout': Charles Ignatius Sancho's Negotiation of the Cultural Politics of Gout in Eighteenth-Century England"

Charlotte Grant, *Northeastern University London*

"Sancho and Visual Culture"

David Diamond, *University of Georgia*

"Sancho and Religion"

Atesede Makonnen, *Carnegie Mellon University*

"'A Defective and Incurable Articulation': Sancho, Race, and Vocal Performance."

12:30-13:30 **Lunch**

13:30-14:45 Digital Humanities [panel]

Chair: Olly Ayers, *Northeastern University London*

Odile Jordan, *Northeastern University London* and **Ellen Valente**, *Independent Scholar*

“Ignatius Sancho’s London: Digital Mapping Methods”

Libby Collard, *Northeastern University London* and **Henrique Borges**, *Northeastern University London*

“Sancho’s Circle: Reconstructing an Eighteenth-Century Black British Social Network”

Mel Williams, *Northeastern University Boston*

“Against and Within the Canon: Mapping Sancho’s Intertextual Strategies through Computational Text Analysis.”

14:45-15:00 Coffee Break

15:00-16:00 Teaching Sancho and Black British History [roundtable]

Chair: Mark Martin, *Northeastern University London*

16:00-17:30 Black Arts and Culture [roundtable]

Chair: Nicole N. Aljoe, *Northeastern University Boston*

S.I. Martin, *Independent Scholar*

Joanna Williams, *Royal Holloway University of London*

5.30pm onward: attendees are welcome to join for post-conference drinks at *The Dickens Inn, Saint Katharine Docks*

