

JANICE SHINEBOURNE BIOGRAPHY3

Janice was born Janice Lowe on 23 June 1947. the second child of Charles and Marion Lowe. She grew up on a sugar estate, Rose Hall, in Berbice where she witnessed at first hand the colonial politics that dominated the lives of sugar estate workers in a rural setting. At the age of 19 she moved to the capital Georgetown where she worked as a reporter briefly with the Guyana Graphic newspapers and was a student at the University of Guyana, she did not finish her BA degree there but postponed her studies to get married to John Shinebourne and leave to live in London in 1970 where she completed her BA degree and started her MA degree. There she completed her first novel, Timepiece which was published in 1986 by Peepal Tree Press. She became the first woman to win the Guyana Prize in 1987 when Timepiece won the prize for a first novel. then she became a political activist in London, involved in anti racist campaigns and politics in a time when racism was at its peak in the UK. She reviewed books for the antiracist journal, Race Today and the feminist journal. Everywoman. In 1988, Peepal Tree Press published her second novel, The Last English Planation. This was followed by a collection of short stories. The Godmother and other Stories which was shortlisted for the Guyana Prize. This was followed by a third novel, Chinese Women. Her fourth novel, The Last Ship was published by Peepal Tree Press in 2004. She has completed a 5th novel, titled The Starapple Tree which awaits publication. Her early writing reveals a preoccupation with recording the lives of the people of rural communities in British Guiana before the coming of independence which brought with it a destructive racial division between the AfroGuyanese supporters of the People's National Congress and the IndoGuyanese supporters of the People's Progressive Party, a division that resulted in violent and destructive division between the two communities that became warlike, leading to a seemingly permanent political division. Her early writing reveals a nostalgia for a time before the destruction of a sense of community between Guyanese and her later writing reveals a desire to explore the roots of a racializing of politics in Guyana in its pre and post independence period. In her novels, Chinese women and The Last Ship, she attempts to highlight the roots of racial prejudice in how racial groups of Guyana became opposed to each other because of how the colonial conditions poisoned their relationships, especially in how it treated the colonial communities in British Guiana, she has explored in her later writings how the seeds of racial division were sown among the racial groups, divisions that made it easier for the colonial authorities to control the

different racial groups that consisted of the colonial communities of British Guiana. In her new forthcoming novel, *The Starapple Tree*, she examines how an English priest, arrives in Guyana in 1965, to serve as a vicar in a sugar estate community that is divided along racial lines and fails to unite them when he himself becomes the victim of the racial division that has poisoned British Guiana