

B/N - Nettleford Rex



Prof. Rex Nettleford receiving his certificate from Sir Phillip Sherlock on the occasion when he was installed as a Fellow of the Institute of Jamaica. Sir Phillip was guest speaker at the function.

Nettleford installed a fellow of the Institute of Jamaica

THE Honourable Ralston Milton (Rex) Nettleford has had yet another honour conferred on him. He has been installed as a Fellow of the Institute of Jamaica.

The ceremony took place at the Little Theatre in Kingston on Monday, November 27, 1989.

The Council of the Institute of Jamaica conferred the honour on Professor Nettleford "in recognition of his pre-eminence in the fields of culture and the arts and in recognition of his outstanding and lasting contribution to the enrichment and definition of a Caribbean aesthetic, particularly in the field of dance." "It is seldom that a country can boast one individual in whom are combined so many outstanding and diverse talents — talents which have been used throughout a lifetime for the service and betterment of a people, and which have been sought by governments and institutions of most countries in the world," his citation reads.

Professor Nettleford was lauded for his academic and literary achievements and his contribution to adult education, government and politics.

In his reply, Professor Nettleford said that he was sure the Institute was up to the challenge of the vision he had which was the quest for "that voice which will be distinctly and distinctively ours, serving to enrich the already textured sphere of human reality which to many is cacaphony and chaos.

"Without that vision much of our

work — past, present and especially that which is possible in the future — will be in vain," Professor Nettleford said.

He paid tribute to the University of the West Indies which "...must take full credit for facilitating the work of people like myself" and the National Dance Theatre company "for it is they who have provided me with a laboratory for sustained exploration — a prime source of energy first for discovering the power of the arts and the creative process in this whole matter of self determination."

Tributes to Professor Nettleford on his installation have been pouring in from all over the world. From the Inter-American Foundation Julie Wechsler, Senior Foundation Representative writes: "Rex's dance with the limits of reality has been far more graceful and elegant than the awkward attempts of most of us."

From the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Ivan Heads writes: "You are a renaissance man who understood the fundamental reasons for the existence of IDRC...your brilliant intellect inspired us to go beyond what we imagined possible."

Tributes have also come from the Commonwealth Institute, UNESCO, the NDC and the Caribbean Community Secretariat among others.

Prior to the installation of Prof. Nettleford, only three Fellows have been accorded this honour. They are C.L.R. James, Hon. Edna Manley, O.M. both of whom are deceased and Hon. Sir Phillip Sherlock, O.M., K.B.E.

In a tribute to its Artistic Director, the National Dance Theatre Company performed one of Prof. Nettleford's works, "The Crossing", and the Company's singers performed a special arrangement of African songs.

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