



## Call for Paper Proposals

### Liberia: Performing Symbols of the Past, Reinventing Symbols for the Future

#### Liberian Studies Association 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (LSA39)

Friday, March 23rd to Sunday, March 25th, 2007  
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

A myriad of symbols—visual, spoken, sung, and enacted—continue to engender a rich communicative pallet for Liberia.

- Lone Star
- Matilda Newport Day
- “*The love of liberty brought us here*”
- Child Soldiers
- Blue Helmets
- Rice
- Cassava
- Palm Wine
- “*The time is now*” (taxi motto)
- English
- Drums
- Elephant Horns
- Poro Masks
- Masked Performers
- Stilt Dancers

Some are indices rich with historic and political meaning; others are associated with a broad range of cultural and aesthetic responses.

Liberians, whether as a nation, as ethnic groups, voluntary associations or individuals, have always employed symbols to interpret their past in light of the present and to envision their future, often drawing upon the past. The Deshield Commission Report (1978) gave serious consideration to possible changes in the national motto, seal, anthem and constitution. Others have addressed the need to revisit Liberia's symbols and find ways to re-fashion them to reflect the true national identity, unity, brotherhood, oneness and reconciliation among all Liberians.

**Questions** to be addressed include but are not limited to:

- (1) How have the symbols on which your discipline focuses been interpreted in the past?
- (2) What symbols are emerging in the post-conflict period and how are they being enacted?
- (3) What symbols might be adopted for the future and how could they be employed?
- (4) What symbols have implications for education, curriculum, rehabilitation, reintegration?

**Submission of Abstracts:** (To be submitted no later than **December 1, 2006**):

We invite your participation in the following ways:

- (1) Submit a 200 word proposal for a 20-minute paper (with 10 minutes of discussion to follow).
- (2) Submit a 200 word proposal for a thematically organized panel; include proposals for each paper to be included on the panel.
- (3) Students may submit a 200 word proposal for a poster presentation on any Liberian topic.

Send your proposals as an e-mail or an attachment to [liberia@indiana.edu](mailto:liberia@indiana.edu) or mail to:

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More detailed conference information on LSA39 at the web site: [http://www.onliberia.org/lisa\\_lsa39.htm](http://www.onliberia.org/lisa_lsa39.htm).