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## Bennington College Welcomes St. Clair Detrick-Jules, Author of *My Beautiful Black Hair*

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Bennington College Media Relations <mediarelations@bennington.edu>

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*CONTACT: Jeffrey Perkins, Vice President for Communications and Marketing,*  
[jeffreyperkins@bennington.edu](mailto:jeffreyperkins@bennington.edu)

**Photos:**

[St. Clair Detrick-Jules](#)

[My Beautiful Black Hair: 101 Natural Hair Stories from the Sisterhood](#)

**Bennington College Welcomes St. Clair Detrick-Jules, Author of *My Beautiful Black Hair***

*Presentation to address storytelling as a form of social activism on April 16, 2024*

**Bennington, VT:** Author, filmmaker, photographer, and activist St. Clair Detrick-Jules will present *Black Hair + Storytelling as a Form of Social Activism* at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, April 16 at CAPA Symposium on the Bennington College campus. It is open to the public.

“Black students are disproportionately disciplined for wearing Afrocentric hairstyles, and Black employees are 1.5 times more likely to be sent home from work for their hair,” said Detrick-Jules. “The demonization of Black hair as a marker of anti-Blackness has forced the Black community into a complex and often traumatic relationship with our hair.”

The author will discuss what she has learned through her years-long journey photographing and interviewing Black women with natural hair for her photojournalism book, *My Beautiful Black Hair: 101 Natural Hair Stories from the Sisterhood*, a large-scale visual anthropology exploring the deep, complex relationships across generations between Black women and their hair. *Kirkus Reviews* called the book “compelling and inspirational ... a powerful celebration of self-acceptance and sisterhood.”

From the impact of historical anti-Blackness in the Dominican Republic to discussions about the politicization of the afro and its relationship to the Black Lives Matter movement, the presentation challenges attendees to think about the ways in which they can use hair as an entry-point into conversations about self-love, anti-Blackness, healing from racial trauma, feminism, and community relationships. The talk provides an opportunity for students and others to engage in thought-provoking discussions about beauty standards, gender, race, and identity.

In addition, the author offers a blueprint for using storytelling—whether by speaking up themselves or passing the mic to others—as a form of social activism.

“There is a long history of racism and microaggressions relative to policing, demonizing, and vilifying people of the African diaspora for how they choose to unapologetically express and celebrate their hair,” said Alfredo Medina, Jr., the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. “We are so fortunate to have St.

Clair join us and share what she has learned throughout her work, and I am excited for students to learn more about how they can share their stories and the positive impact storytelling can have.”

Detrick-Jules is a graduate of Brown University and an award-winning documentarian and photographer with features in news sites like *The Washington Post*, *NewsWeek*, and NPR’s *Strange Fruit*. She has presented talks at dozens of colleges and universities, including Dartmouth College, Princeton University, and Vanderbilt University, to name a few.

A question-and-answer session will follow the talk, which is sponsored by Bennington College’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

## **BENNINGTON COLLEGE**

Bennington College is a liberal arts college in southwestern Vermont that has distinguished itself as a vanguard institution within American higher education. It was the first to include the visual and performing arts in a liberal arts education. Bennington students work intensively with faculty to forge individual educational paths around their driving questions and interests.

Rooted in an abiding faith in the talent, imagination, and responsibility of the individual, Bennington invites students to pursue and shape their own intellectual inquiries and, in doing so, to discover the profound interconnection of things. Learn more at [bennington.edu](https://bennington.edu).

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Media Relations  
Bennington College  
802.440.4399  
[mediarelation@bennington.edu](mailto:mediarelation@bennington.edu)

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