

Delonix Regia, the flamboyán tree, is a species of flowering plant from the Fabaceae family originating from Madagascar; dating back to the 17th century and deemed royal poinciana, the tree was named after a French colonizer. It survives in tropical and subtropical climates, especially in the Caribbean and Central/ South America, and is filled with vibrant tropical flowers atop a tangle of trunks, limbs, roots and leaves. The flowers range from deep red to yellow and are responsible for the tree's many nicknames: the flamboyant tree, the flame of the forest, the flame tree, etc. A flower with a colonized name, it is found in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Miami, three places I consider home. I have had two mature flamboyanes in my yard for as long as I can remember, and this flower is representative of my Caribbean origins and the beauty and history that comes with those origins.





A framed photo of my family and I at Fairchild Tropical Gardens when I was 6. For me, family is everything. My family is my ultimate support system, and since I understand what a blessing and a privilege it is to have two parents, two siblings, and a grandmother who love and protect me, I will never take it for granted. My family has taught me strong values and morals, which have ultimately led me to becoming an abolitionist and aspiring organizer (even though my

parents aren't necessarily abolitionists themselves). This photo also doesn't include my many family members in Puerto Rico, Boston, and other places away from Miami, as well as my ancestors who watch over me spiritually. I love and value all of my family and am grateful for their rich, guiding presence in my life.



'I am Caribbeing' patch. My dad was born in Puerto Rico, my mom was born in Cuba, and my siblings and I are the first generation to be born in the US on both sides of my family. I grew up neglecting my Caribbean heritage from both sides, but as I matured I began to feel both pride and frustration when it came to my origins. While I loved my heritage and growing up in a Caribbean home, I also felt disconnected from my two islands of origin because I am a daughter of the diaspora. While I still contend with this disconnection, I've also learned to better proudly identify as a member of the diaspora of Cuba and Puerto Rico. I got this patch, which says 'I am Caribbeing', at a pop-up shop centered around Caribbeing islands and cultures. The patch was sewn by a woman named Lucien in a Haitian Women's Collective. I keep it in a frame at my altar where I can be reminded of the power and beauty of coming from a Caribbean lineage.



