

TEACHERS' PACKET

an educational guide for instructors

2016



NATIONAL ART GALLERY

OF THE BAHAMAS



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Every child loves to draw. The desire to try to reproduce or understand the world through images is a fundamental human compulsion that, unfortunately, we often become disengaged with as we grow into adulthood.

At The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas, we aim to maintain this innate interest in the arts not only through the installation of shows but through an educational outreach that helps you, the teachers, to inspire our community to stay connected with creativity and culture.

The production, support, appreciation and respect for art and culture is a seminal standard by which every society and nation is judged. We are therefore honoured to be assisting the teachers of The Bahamas to expand their knowledge of and interest in the visual arts. With this information packet, we hope to make current and future generations aware of some of The Bahamas' foremost artists and art movements.

Through workshops, talks, exhibitions and events, the gallery aims to create an environment where future Bahamian artists are incubated and brought out into the world. Helping them reach their goals both locally and abroad is a key aspect of our mandate, as well as enlightening a general audience toward the acknowledgment, acceptance, appreciation and acclamation of the wide variety of talents to be found in our homeland.

As an expatriate who lived abroad for many years, supporting Bahamian artists on the broader international spectrum in Germany, the U.K. and the U.S., I have been both delighted and saddened to see the acclaim with which our talented compatriots are embraced overseas yet still struggle for recognition in our Bahamian backyard.

It is our goal at The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas to generate the national feeling that art is not only a normal, but a necessary aspect of life. A young child grasping for his/her crayons knows this instinctively and it is up to both us and you, the teachers, to keep this spark of creative compulsion alive.

Amanda Coulson, Director
The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas



EDUCATIONAL FOREWORD

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB) has a strong commitment to bridging the gap between fine arts and the Bahamian educational system. Our students need to understand the importance of Bahamian art as it is legitimizing its presence throughout the art world.

The NAGB Education Department wants to encourage artistic development within the school system to foster new generations of established and professional Bahamian artists. However, this endeavour cannot be accomplished without the guidance of you, the teachers. The gallery is committed to providing educators with credible information that can be shared with students to grow awareness of Bahamian artists and influence creativity, critical thinking and development of skill. The gallery is also committed to developing and implementing educational programs, events and workshops that will serve as useful learning resources outside of the classroom.

In this teachers' packet, you will find an historical overview of Bahamian art and culture, along with the patrons of the art, artist biographies and lesson plans.

The NAGB only asks that you, the teachers, continue to encourage our students to create, imagine and achieve their artistic dreams.

With sincerest wishes,

The NAGB Education Department
The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas



CONTENTS

NAGB INFORMATION	P4
NAGB GROUNDS SCUPLTURE GUIDE	P6
BAHAMIAN ARTISTS	P8
LESSON PLANS	P41
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAHAMIAN VISUAL ARTS SCENE: AS ADAPTED FROM “BAHAMIAN MODERNISM”, BY DR. ERICA M. JAMES	P51
ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES	P69
NAGB THANK YOU	P85



NAGB INFORMATION

History of Villa Doyle

Established by an act of Parliament, The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas is the first institution of its kind in the history of The Bahamas. In 1996, Prime Minister Hubert A. Ingraham first announced the establishment of The National Art Gallery as part of an expanded system of museums. The government's initiative to support a national art gallery reflected an understanding of how such institutions assist in nation building. Its commitment demonstrated a vision that a national art gallery could be a place for Bahamians to view an important aspect of their culture. It also anticipated that The National Art Gallery would become a showpiece for tourism – a place where visitors from abroad could view the finest Bahamian artwork.

After considering a list of potential locations, it was decided that the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas should occupy Villa Doyle, a period building dating back to the 1860s.

Completed in the 1860s, the building's original owner, Sir William Doyle, was chief justice of The Bahamas and the first Bahamian to be knighted. After the addition of a ballroom in the 1920s, it became one of Nassau's most stately homes and a prized location for local entertainment. Positioned on the rise overlooking the top of West Street, Villa Doyle is typical of great houses of earlier centuries with balconies that offer a commanding view of the city and the sea. It is located in the heart of Historic Charles Towne and is within easy walking distance of Downtown Nassau's main commercial district.

In the 90s, Villa Doyle's restoration took almost seven years to complete involving a dedicated team of professionals and consultants under the supervision of architect Anthony Jervis and the National Art Gallery's Committee, which was then chaired by Dr. Gail Saunders. Because of the time taken to complete the restoration and transformation of Villa Doyle, the National Art Gallery now boasts museum-grade lighting and climate, fire and security controls, which are on par with international gallery standards.

Mission

The NAGB's mission is to collect, preserve, document and promote a National Collection of art for the benefit and education of Bahamians and the wider international audience. The NAGB assists in defining the Bahamian art movement that has to this point developed informally. The National Art Gallery



supports the artistic community by extending its audiences, helping to define its standards and practices and broadening its impact.

Governance: The National Art Gallery is a non-profit organization governed by a board of directors appointed to serve three-year terms.

Visiting hours: Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays noon to 5 p.m.; closed Mondays and public holidays

Admission fees:

International visitors: \$10

Local/residential adults: \$7

Students and senior citizens (65+): \$5

Children under 12: Free

General rules

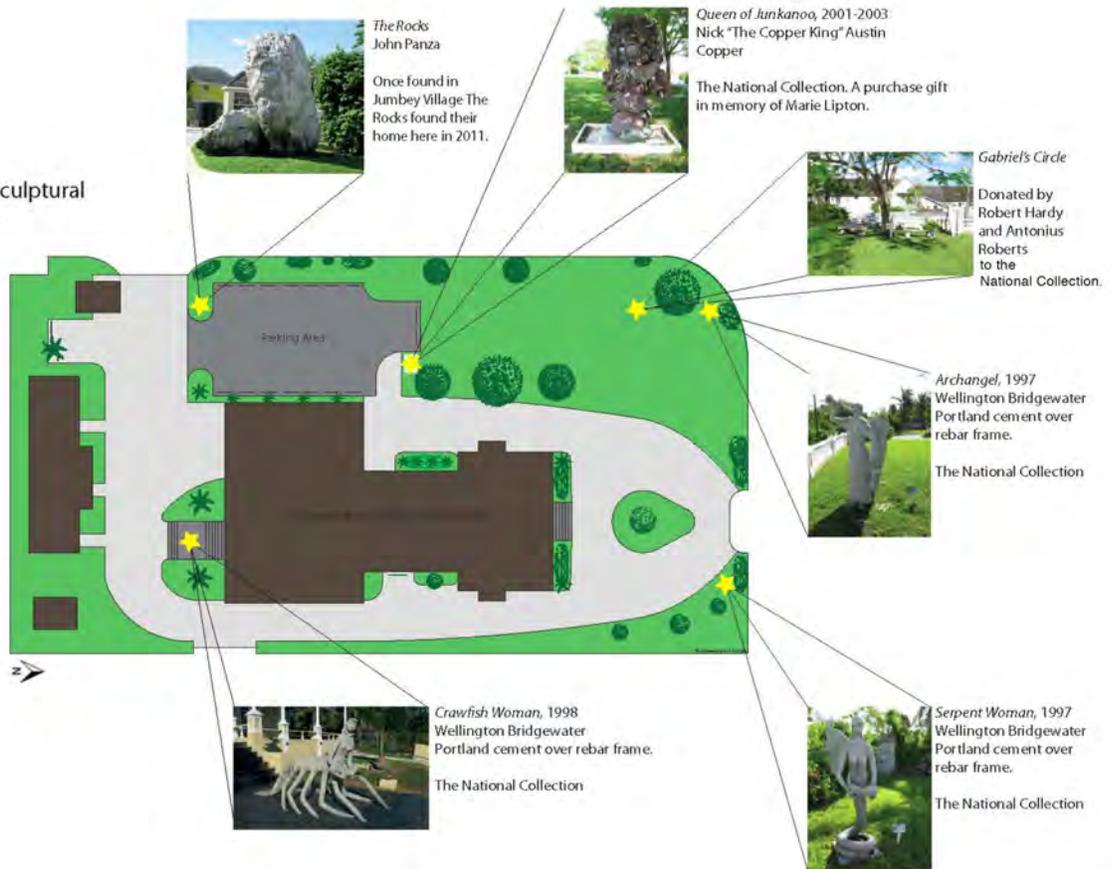
- Large bags, umbrellas and bulky items must be checked in at the security desk.
- All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Unless otherwise indicated, absolutely no artwork should be touched.
- We do not allow any photography of individual artworks inside the gallery. Images may be taken of general gallery spaces and of visitors inside.
- Food and drinks in open containers are not allowed in the gallery. Bottled water is fine.
- No music should be played in the exhibition spaces.
- Visitors should utilize handrails on staircases and/or the elevator.
- Animals are not permitted inside the gallery.
- The gallery reserves the right to ask visitors demonstrating inappropriate behaviour to leave the grounds.

General guidelines for group tours

- The group leader is responsible for the behaviour of his/her group during the visit. Please provide at least one chaperone for every 10 students. Chaperones must remain with their students for the entire visit.
- Running is not permitted inside the gallery or on the verandahs.
- Shouting is not permitted inside the gallery or on the verandahs.
- Visitors should feel free to walk the grounds and view the outdoor sculpture works.

NAGB GROUNDS AND SCULPTURE MAP

Exterior Sculptural Art Guide





How to book a school tour

- Call the NAGB and request the education department or explain your request to another staff member who can transfer you to the appropriate person.
- The gallery can be reached at 328-5800/1 (Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Schools should try to book tours at least one week in advance
- If a school group cannot make the tour, the teacher responsible should contact the gallery 24 hours in advance to notify.
- Some exhibitions contain nudity. It is advised that you express potential concerns about this to your tour leader when booking.
- Teachers should specify the age and size of the tour group.
- Group tours can accommodate up to 30 persons in total. It is recommended that groups of small children be divided into groups of 15.
- The tour charge for schools is \$35 **per group** plus the cost of individual admission. In instances of financial hardship, speak to the education department to inquire about discounted rates.
- Payment must be made in advance or upon arrival of the group.

School tours

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas school tours are designed to expose students to “Bahamian” art – this doesn’t just mean pretty beach scenes! Bahamian artists, like their international counterparts, are skilled in a variety of media. Students can see ceramics, sketches, paintings and sculpture. Tour guides will explain to them significant pieces in the exhibition, the use of different media and provide background information on represented artists.

SOME OF OUR OWN: AN OVERVIEW OF BAHAMIAN MASTER AND CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS



Jackson Burnside III

Biography
(1949-2011)

Jackson Burnside was born and raised on New Providence, The Bahamas. For much of his life, Burnside was a noted Bahamian architect and painter. He is also remembered as an educator, Junkanoo advocate and entrepreneur.

Education and training

Burnside graduated from Lincoln University (Pennsylvania) and the Graduate School of Fine Arts of The University of Pennsylvania. He studied and worked with the world-renowned Architect Louis I. Kahn and with Arup Associates, a division of the world-acclaimed Ove Arup Partnership (London England). While with those firms he worked on industrial and institutional projects in the United States, Bangladesh, Iran, Israel and England.

Career

Burnside was the first Bahamian senior architect for the Bahamas Ministry of Works. He also spent time as a lecturer at the College of The Bahamas and outside the country as a visiting professor at the School of



Architecture, University of Miami. Through his educational work, he encouraged his students to examine their architectural heritage for its “common sense”. He shared his belief in the importance of understanding appropriateness of material, climatic conditions, natural light, structure and client requirements in developing designs that would fit in with their natural environments. At the time of his death Jackson Burnside was appointed chairman of the Board of the Caribbean School of Architecture Course Advisory Board on April 6, 2011. The appointment was made for three years with effect from June 30, 2011 to June 29, 2013.

Entrepreneurship

In addition to establishing his own firm, Jackson Burnside Limited, he was the founder of Doongalik Design Studio, a concept that centered its architectural, furniture and design principles on Bahamian design innovation for this climate and Junkanoo aesthetics. He and his wife Pam were also spearheading a project to get Nassau recognized as a City of Design as part of UNESCO’s Global Alliance’s Creative Cities Network. Jackson believed when he said that someday soon (the year 2020) “more people would come to The Bahamas for arts and culture than for sun, sand and sea”. Pam Burnside still managed Doongalik Studios and carries this mission forward today.

Junkanoo and culture

Burnside was a co-founder and co-leader of the One Family Junkanoo group. A cultural advocate, he was the recipient of numerous awards and honours, including the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Citizens Award for the Creative and Performing Arts and the 2008 Bahamas Home and Builders Lifetime Achievement Award. Throughout his career, he was actively involved in community and cultural affairs and he was chairman emeritus and a designer of the One Family Junkanoo and Community Organization Group.

“His enthusiasm for life itself and for the cultural diversity and richness of The Bahamas was infectious,” Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said. “His spirit and great enthusiasm will live on in our hearts. Moreover, his legacy in many fields of endeavour from his professional success in architecture to his artistic craft to Junkanoo will endure.”

He added: “Over the many days, and weeks and months and years ahead, a grateful nation will mourn the passage of a native son who made us proud of him, and also made us proud to be Bahamians.”

Remembering Jackson Burnside:



Jackson Burnside suffered a brain aneurysm while with close friends and colleagues at a local book signing on April 14, 2011. He was airlifted to hospital in Florida, where he remained until his death on May 11.

Doongalik Design Studio

“What I learned from him was the value of your story, how important it is for you to share your life and the things that happened to you with others. Also the value of family and passion and courage. He was a man of passion, conviction and courage and he wasn’t afraid to tell anybody what needed to be said. He and I always sort of connected on that. He also taught me the importance of always needing to continue to feed yourself, to be a life long learner, and to not to be afraid to be excellent.”

- Dr. Erica James, former director of The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas

“Jackson taught me that I should explore the entire world, exhausting every faculty and opportunity that I have in order to achieve a greater awareness of myself and the world I live in. Jackson taught me how to communicate to people, not through traditional classes but through his interactions with others and myself. Jackson acted as a sponge; he soaked up inspiration and knowledge from far flung places and from times I could never experience or imagine, and he emptied it out into our pool of resources for more to be rejuvenated. He showed me how to share.”

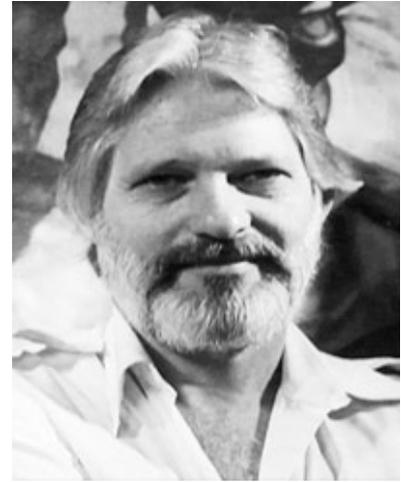


Jackson Burnside, Stanley Burnside and John Beadle
“Enigmatick Funktification” (Detail) (1996)

Acrylic on canvas

52.75” x 151”

The National Collection



Brent Malone

Biography
(1941-2004)

Brent Malone was born and raised on New Providence, The Bahamas. A prolific artist, Malone became known for his versatility with media and subject matter.

Education

Malone attended Queen's College for primary and high school. At the age of 12, he commenced afterschool lessons at The Tribune under the tutelage of Gilbert Dupuch. Between the ages of 14 and 16, he attended classes at Don Russell's Academy of Fine Art, where he was taught to paint and draw the human figure from a life model. It was during these years that he decided he wanted to become an artist.

After high school, he joined the Bahamian branch of The Chelsea Pottery, which was originally established in London (as The Chelsea Pottery of London). David Rawnsley was the instructor and he led young Malone, Max Taylor, Kendal Hanna and Eddie Minnis.

He left to study at the Beckenham School of Art in London (it later changed to the Ravensbourne College of Art and Design). Though conflicted over whether he wanted to come back home, he returned to Nassau in 1964 to reopen and manage the Chelsea Pottery (as the Bahamian Pottery). It closed a year later and Malone struggled with the idea of staying in The Bahamas until he saw a Junkanoo parade, which inspired him to put down roots.



Career

Malone is remembered as an entrepreneur and institution builder. He opened several galleries and stores in his lifetime, including:

- The Loft Gallery 1965-1970;
- The Matinee Art Gallery 1977-1980;
- The Temple Gallery 1981-1987;
- Marlborough Antiques and Temple merged in 1987 and remained functional until 2004;
- He also helped established The Ladder Gallery at New Providence Community Centre.

Malone's contributions to Bahamian culture and art were not limited to the mere provision of physical locations to display art. He worked instrumentally with cultural and educational institutions to create and enhance awareness for the visual arts. In 1978, he worked with Eddie Minnis to call for the reduction of import duty rates on art supplies and served as the chairman of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce Cultural Committee. In 1979, he also worked with Eddie Minnis to develop and initiate the FINCO Summer Workshop, which is one of the country's longest running arts education programs. He was a major component of B-CAUSE (Bahamas Creative Artists United for Serious Expression), which was established in 1991.

Junkanoo

Malone believed that Junkanoo was the first sign of a national art form and a reservoir of creative energy waiting to be tapped by all the arts. Junkanoo was Malone's muse for the better part of his early career. His compositions changed over the years using a full range of techniques from neorealism to abstract expression but consistently relied on the elements true to Junkanoo to emphasize form and motion: vibrant colours, patterns, ribbons and other rudimentary items of the costume.

Malone would also capture the warm pre-dawn lighting from streetlights to depict mood in his paintings. He explored the euphoric atmosphere evident during the parade but also included studies in the post-parade where participants appeared tired, sweaty and still hypnotized by the remnants of music and dancing.

Malone's "Metamorphosis" (1979) is evidence of Malone's endeavour to depart from the previous style of a more realistic interpretation of his Junkanoo motivated compositions.

The painting is of a single Junkanoo figure frontally composed holding cowbells in a static pose. There is an implied movement and rhythm reminiscent of Junkanoo in the brush strokes. The composition is fundamentally arranged in an organized design that produces symmetry in the image. The figure stares out in a sincerely confrontational way, the emotive



power of his face says that he is 'ready'. Using the technique of pointillism, white flecks layered over a vibrant palette of colours lead the viewer throughout the picture plane - almost signifying the dance itself. Pattern starts to describe the music that will accompany the dance.

Malone painted the piece after emerging from a period of depression, during which he stopped painting totally. He made his return with the "Reincarnation" series of works, of which "Metamorphosis" was a part.

The title "Metamorphosis" is an appropriate description for the work, which shows a Junkanooer dressed in a butterfly costume. To achieve their glory, butterflies must first undergo a transformation from caterpillar to the winged colorful things we enjoy seeing in gardens. There is more significance to be found in the work, though. The painting speaks to the process a Junkanooer experiences, transforming from man into the creation — his costume. Malone, himself, came out of his depression a new kind of person.

Malone on Junkanoo:

"To me, Junkanoo is the very essence of the Bahamian spirit and I feel very humble in deriving my inspiration from this source..."

"It took me 13 years of painting to find an epic subject matter of personal meaning to me—and that subject is Junkanoo. Any free spirit who has experienced Junkanoo will understand my excitement, and hopefully, if my craft has matured over the last 13 years, will understand my new art as well."

Honours

Malone was rewarded with honours and distinctions for his contributions, namely:

- Distinguished Citizens Award for The Visual Arts (Bahamas Chamber of Commerce);
- Clement Bethel Award for Excellence in the Visual Arts (College of the Bahamas);
- Member of the British Empire (M.B.E) Queen's Honours;
- Silver Jubilee Award The Government of the Bahamas.

His work has been collected extensively in The Bahamas and internationally in the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Republic of China and South Africa.

Remembering R. Brent Malone

R. Brent Malone passed away in 2004 leaving an indisputable influence on the birth of Bahamian art. He is remembered not just for his Junkanoo



likenesses, but for his talent and interest in painting a spectrum of subjects and experimenting with a variety of media. His seascapes, Junkanoo works, floral paintings and studies of the human form live on in many homes throughout The Bahamas and overseas.

Studio

Have students compare and contrast Malone's use of light in the paintings. Discuss the effects of light and illumination by:
Having students compose a traditional Junkanoo costume concentrating on breaking the original image down using fundamental elements of the Cubist style.

Layer the same image with pointillism technique bearing in mind an implied movement in the image that could be generated by using this method.

Have students illustrate an object going through a metamorphosis transformation. Each frame should show a gradual change from the original object as it grows into the final image. Use the example of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly, etc.

Vocabulary

Symmetry - The correspondence in size, form and arrangement of parts on opposite sides of a plane, line or point; regularity of form or arrangement in terms of like, reciprocal or corresponding parts.

Pointillism - A theory and technique developed by the neo-impressionists, based on the principle that juxtaposed dots of pure colour, as blue and yellow, are optically mixed into the resulting hue, as green, by the viewer.

Stippling - The production of continuous gradations of light and shade through the use of small, discrete dots or strokes.

Chiaroscuro - The distribution and arrangement of light and shade in a picture. Chiaroscuro refers to the use of deep variations in and subtle gradations of light and shade, especially to enhance the delineation of character and for general dramatic effect. It is an Italian word literally meaning, "light dark", used to describe the skillful balance of light and dark in a painting, with strong contrasts to create dramatic effect.

Cropping - To trim an image of unwanted outer area (a photograph or picture, for example).



Realism – The treatment of forms, colours, space, etc., in such a manner as to emphasize their correspondence to actuality or to ordinary visual experience.

DISCUSSION

- Does the use of symmetrical design limit or enhance the subject?
- Is the white dotted layer in *Metamorphosis* pointillism, stippling, a combination or neither? Explain.
- How does the layer of flat, white flecks super-imposed on the vibrant colours affect the image?
- How does Malone's use of the similar technique employ the same idea as Signac? Consider rhythm and movement of the dots.
- How does Malone employ chiaroscuro?
- Which artist of the 16th century championed the technique of chiaroscuro? (Caravaggio)
- How does the work differ or associate?
- Does cropping the image make the composition more abstract?
- Discuss the elements of this piece that exemplify Malone's exit from realism.
- Is the Junkanooer's head rendered in proper scale or proportion to the rest of his body.
- What is the significance of the title, "Metamorphosis"? Consider the importance of the narrative intended by the artist.



“Metamorphosis” (1979)
Oil on canvas
60” x 36”
The National Collection



Amos Ferguson

Biography
(1920 – 2009)

Amos Ferguson was born in the settlement of The Forest on the island of Exuma. He was the son of a preacher and farmer.

Training/education

He received his primary school education at Roker's Point School in Exuma, and religion was a large part of his upbringing. Ferguson came to Nassau in 1937 to learn a trade. He dabbled in various enterprises such as upholstery and furniture finishing. He went into house painting and did that fulltime until he became inspired by a dream his nephew had about Ferguson being given a gift from God. He then began to paint pictures from his imagination on a part-time basis.

Career

His works would be completed on cardboard, poster board and pieces of wood, using house paints. His first artworks were sold in the straw market, where his wife worked. He later sold his work from his home on Exuma Street (now Amos Ferguson Street). He held shows in the 80s, and word spread about his talents at home. In 1985, he was featured in an exhibition at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, in Hartford, Connecticut, titled *Paint By Mr. Amos Ferguson* – this was also his signature on his paintings. He is remembered as the country's best-known intuitive artist.

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas acquired over 20 of his works shortly after opening in 2003. Formerly exhibited at the Pompey Museum, they now represent a major holding in the National Collection.



Philosophy

Amos Ferguson believed that painting is from God and all of the works he has created came to his mind through divine instruction from God. He did not paint images as one may see them in the natural world, but as he envisioned them. In this painting, Jesus is the central large figure with outstretched arms symbolizing his willingness to give himself to God's will. At the base of the white-clothed Jesus is a small dish containing "too" (two) small fish and five round objects representative of the "balley" (Barley) loaves. Contrasting the large white figure are seven rows of small, and one row of large pink-faced heads in black clothes and white collars: priests. Ferguson managed to produce a very distinct composition by contrasting a white foreground against a black background. The perfect round eyes of the "desiple" (disciples) were created by Ferguson's technique of using nail heads to produce round dots. His shapes were distinctively created by single colors; there is no mixing of colour or paint to make tonal differences. Shapes end where new ones start, suggesting a puzzle-like structure to the work. However, Ferguson's use of colour, his mindfulness toward elements of rhythm and balance, and his complete rejection (implies knowledge of) of one-point perspective, allowed for a unified vision and a signature composition.

STUDIO

Project A

Many people look at Amos Ferguson's work and say "I can do that!" But it is not as easy as it looks.

Create a narrative painting based on a religious parable or a Bahamian folktale, using cardboard and a selection of five colours. Paint the name of the parable or folktale on the work, spelling the words phonetically.

Project B

Amos Ferguson often painted on everyday objects such as glasses, plates, lamps and vases. Bring in a utilitarian object from home and paint it with key symbols of Bahamian culture in the narrative and formal style of Amos Ferguson. Ferguson often boasted that he hadn't attended Junkanoo since the 1940s. Everything he painted was from memory. The symbols and narrative used by students must also come from memory.

Project C

Looking carefully at this painting, recreate it using one point perspective. Consider how this changes one's impression of the work.



AESTHETICS

Space is created in or defines a two-dimensional surface in many ways.

Q. Describe the spaces in Amos Ferguson painting and the techniques used to create these spaces. What role does his treatment of space play in communicating a narrative or feeling to the viewer?

Discuss ways in which to change one's reading of space in a composition by exploring various approaches to perspective.

Pace/rhythm. How the eye moves through a work and how animated an artist makes a surface is important in how the work is experienced by the viewer but also in communicating meaning.

What are some techniques used by the artist to suggest movement and animation?

Colour is not simply a means by which artists reflect the world but an avenue through which certain emotions, beliefs and even politics can be communicated. The class should create a reproduction of the painting using a different colour scheme. Students should also feel free to change the colour of the central Christ figure. When the project is completed discuss changes in colour effect the reading of the composition.

DISCUSSION

How many colours are used? What are they?

- What is the painting about? Can anyone recall this story in the Bible?
- Where is Christ feeding the people?
- What effect do all the eyes of the figures have?
- Where would you exhibit this work and why?
- Why do you think Amos Ferguson signs his pieces so largely?
- What is/are the effects of Ferguson including the name of the painting in the painting?
- He is not spelling words using standard English but phonetically, or how the words sound as he speaks. Does this impact the way you view the work or the artist?
- Why is Amos Ferguson considered intuitive?



“The Busset and the Monkey” (1990)
House paint on board
36” x 30”
The National Collection



Maxwell “Max” Taylor

Biography

(b. 1939)

Maxwell “Max” Taylor was born in Grant’s Town, New Providence, The Bahamas.

Education

He attended the Western Junior School and Western Senior School and graduated from St. Francis Senior High School. Like Malone, he took art lessons led by Don Russell. Taylor, along with Brent Malone and Kendal Hanna, was one of the first apprentices of the Chelsea Pottery in Nassau. Taylor studied at the Art Students League of New York from 1968 to 1972. He then took further studies in photo silkscreen at The Pratt Graphic Center in 1972 and printmaking at Bob Blackburn’s Printmaking Workshop from 1969 to 1977.

Career

His time in New York lasted 20 years before he moved south to the Carolinas, and traveled extensively in Europe, taking in the social, economic and political dynamics of many cultures. Taylor has long admired the works of Daumier, Braque and Picasso.

His work has been exhibited at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico, at The International Printmaking Exhibition, 1971 in Santiago, Chile, and in 1977 as part of the exhibition Bahamian Art Today at Brent Malone’s Matinee Gallery. He held a one-man show in 1979 in Nassau and in 1983 was part of the group of 10 artists selected to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Bahamian independence. In 1991, he co-founded B.-C.A.U.S.E. (Bahamian Creative Artists United for Serious Expression), with Brent Malone, Antonius Roberts, Stan Burnside, Jackson Burnside and John Beadle.

On Thursday, October 6, 2011, The United States of America,



Ambassador Nicole Avant announced the launch of the Master Artists of The Bahamas exhibition, which ran from October 14, 2011 through January 2012 at the Waterloo Centre for the Arts (WCA) in Iowa. The exhibition featured over 40 pieces of artwork by a diverse group of Bahamian artists, including Amos Ferguson, Brent Malone and Jackson Burnside, as well as contemporary artists Antonius Roberts, Dave Smith, Eddie Minnis, John Beadle, John Cox, Kendal Hanna, Max Taylor and Stan Burnside.

Taylor has participated in numerous solo exhibitions and his work is among the collections of the late Nat King Cole and Sir Harold Christie. Taylor has also received many scholarships and awards such as the Southern Arts Federation Fellowship award for works on paper by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Artist's statement: "Many years ago growing up in The Bahamas, we did not have an art school. Mr. Horace Wright was the only art teacher. He had the responsibility of teaching drawing to most of the schools. The lessons did not last that long. In school, we had our own competition..."

"Then came the Nassau Academy of Fine Arts, under Mr. Don Russell, where I continued to learn drawing. Then the Chelsea Pottery was started, where I met the young Brent Malone, Kendal Hanna, and Vernon Cambridge. We all had that strong desire to paint and draw. Mr. David Rawnsley was instrumental in instructing and encouraging us always. Mr. Brian Arthur, who was also a potter, used to hire a model for us to draw, but I still had a strong desire to paint. Mr. Arthur, Kendal and I, experimented in many different styles, abstract, expressionism, cubism and impressionism. I remembered Clement Bethell saying to me, 'Max, I can see that you really want to be a painter'. Mr. Donald Cartwright encouraged us and bought many of our paintings."

"By experimenting as a young artist, even before going to the Arts Student League of New York, my development was already ingrained. This is why I continue to work in various expressions."

– Maxwell Taylor



“Ain’t I A Good Mother” (2003)

Woodcut

40” x 53”

National Collection

“Ain’t I A Good Mother’ is inspired by the struggle of women in general. There is a diasporic link in the work to African American culture because I have lived there (United States) all these years but I’m fascinated by their culture, especially during the slavery period, 1800s, 1700s. It always intrigued me in the sense of how people had to struggle with little or nothing. And I always like drama – drama in the sense that you’re looking at people who had to hide, they had to struggle, they faced all kinds of hardships. It gets me angry.

“The drama to me consists of the slave trade, and especially in the Underground Railroad and how they had to bind themselves, because if they were caught, they’d be whipped or killed. In cutting the wood or drawing the figures I can even think of myself sometimes being a part of them, being in



there, struggling and running myself.”

– Maxwell Taylor

Discussion

“I have the privilege of two cultures, Afro-Bahamian and Afro-American. They are different in some aspects of our social struggles. Many of us share the same traditions coming from the African background. I have long been fascinated with the use of extraordinary colors. I am learning to use colour more with every painting and I enjoy the challenge. As a result of my love for creative combinations, it’s very difficult for me to stay within one style of the painting process. My belief is that every theme should fit the atmosphere of that particular idea or the technique related to that atmosphere.”

– Maxwell Taylor

“I love to draw. I am constantly drawing. I make hundreds of drawings to develop my ideas.”

– Maxwell Taylor

“As one of the first Bahamian artists, Maxwell is perhaps our most advanced. He is a stubbornly individualist artist that has followed his own vision, disregarding the commercial aspects of art that could have made his life so comfortable.”

– Brent Malone, at the opening of a one-man exhibition at Matinee Gallery, on December 12, 1978

“Max Taylor might be the greatest Bahamian artist who ever lived.”

– Stan Burnside

Thanks to the Weekender Exclusive, The Nassau Guardian, Maxwell Taylor’s website and the D’Aguilar Art Foundation for information.

STUDIO

Media

Acrylic paints have been available since the 1950s. Taylor has been working with them for decades. Acrylic paints are a favourite form of paint for many artists because of their ability to dry quickly.

Woodcuts have been used since the sixth century, and are created by using an artistic technique in which an image is carved into the surface of a block of wood. Then a print is made from the relief of black and white or colour.

Taylor creates stunning sculptures from plywood by working through a process of laminating, grinding and sanding.



Lillian Blades

Biography (b. 1973)

Lillian Blades was born on New Providence, The Bahamas.

Education

She began her art education at The College of The Bahamas, receiving The Chris Blackwell Junkanoo Scholarship. Blades received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1996 from the Savannah College of Art and Design and a Master's of Fine Arts from Georgia State University in 2000. She completed a residency at the Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers in KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa. She also studied at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine and Caversham in KwaZulu Natal South Africa.

Career

Her artwork has appeared in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States, The Bahamas, Trinidad, Germany and South Africa. Her fine art has been commissioned for Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and The East Atlanta Library and is in the collection of the Birmingham Museum of Art and the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas.

Artist's statement: "I found it more challenging and thought provoking to find items from everyday life to use as a medium to work with rather than implying with paint. The implications and associations of meaning I feel are stronger with actual objects and their juxtapositions with/on another. The process of gathering objects that carry connotations stimulates my creative process. I take note of the relationship formed and use it as the theme of the quilted assemblage. The process of assembling celebrated the beauty of how



our mothers used utilitarian and decorative objects throughout the home as shrines or altars of every day living. I love the sincere 'make do' quality of assembling."

STUDIO

"Mixed-media" versus "multimedia"

There is an important distinction between "mixed-media" artworks and "multimedia art". Mixed-media, in visual art, refers to an artwork in the making of which more than one medium has been employed. In mixed-media works, there is often a combination of various traditionally distinct visual art media. For example, a work on canvas that combines paint, ink and collage could properly be called a "mixed-media work, but not a work of "multimedia art. The term "multimedia" implies a broader scope than mixed-media, combining visual art with non-visual elements (such as recorded sound, for example) or with elements of the other arts (such as literature, drama, dance, motion graphics, music or interactivity).

Sculpture

Sculpture is the art or practice of shaping figures or designs in the round or in relief, as by chiseling marble, modeling clay or casting in metal. Sculpture as an art form goes back to prehistoric times. Most Stone Age statuettes were made of ivory or soft stone, however some clay human and animal figures have been found. Small female statues known as Venus figurines have been found mainly in central Europe. The Venus of Willendorf (24,000-22,000 BC), from the area of Willendorf, Austria, is a well-known example.

DISCUSSION

Symbolism is often present in Blades' work. Symbolism in art is when an artist uses an object to represent another person, idea, place or thing. Blades' use of frames with her work signifies the existence of memory or the loss of memory. Another example is the use of the quilting and cloth that remains her of her mother, a seamstress.

What objects remind you of a past experience, individuals, family, love ones or other objects that provoke emotions or memories? For example, a seashell can remind you of your experience in learning how to swim. Have the students collect normal objects that they can add in their artwork that have metaphoric meaning.

Thanks to the Sandler Hudson website.



“Things to come” (2003)
Mixed assemblage
78” x 78” x 3”
The National Collection



Blue Curry

Biography

(b. 1974)

Blue Curry was born on New Providence, The Bahamas.

Education

Curry completed primary and secondary education in The Bahamas and graduated from Skidmore College, New York, in 1995 with degrees in business and Spanish literature and language. He holds an MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London.

Career

Curry is an interdisciplinary artist who works primarily in sculpture and installation. His work uses common objects and found materials to explore themes of the 'exotic' tourism and cultural authenticity. He also works with digital media and sometimes pairs digital imagery with his installation works. He is based in London and has exhibited extensively in the U.K., Caribbean region, the U.S. and on the European continent.

An interview with Curry:

Blue Curry spoke to Melanie Archer about the "misuse" of objects in his installations, and avoiding easy definitions.

See the whole interview [here](#).

Melanie Archer: *Your themes seem based on tropical imagery, but your materials mix the organic with technology, or with sleek or manmade materials (starfish/steel drum, shark jaw/tape). Could you talk a bit about the symbolism of this mix?*

Blue Curry: *I can say that direct symbolism doesn't interest me. I'm really looking at image, and the way objects are used to create and reinforce an image. The starfish and the shark jaw are natural objects, which have come to*



represent the image of the tropical, the exotic, and the native. They tie most people into fantasies of escaping to locations of leisure, warmth and beauty. They sit at odds with manufactured materials that are functional, connected to productivity and associated with modernity. More than just putting these two classes of objects together, I consciously “misuse” them. The natural objects have already been turned into kitsch ornaments, and I likewise strip the manufactured objects of their use value. So, in the works you mentioned, an old oil drum becomes a mirror-topped display table, and the innards of audiocassette tapes are used to create a flowing gown.

MA: *The Bahamas and the Caribbean are evident in your work. As your practice develops, do you feel that the influence of where you come from pushes you further along, or does the weight of it become increasingly uncomfortable?*

BC: *I can only feel the weight of it when I know I’m being considered a novelty or asked to address politics, which are of no interest to me. I hate being saddled with all of the superficial associations of the tourist destination just because the Caribbean can’t be understood in terms of critical thinking or contemporary art. I can’t tell you how many conversations I thought I was having about work which have ended as nothing more than fond recollections of sipping piña coladas while watching the sunset on a beach.*

Further, when you can be identified closely with a place on the periphery of the bigger art world, you’re considered an “international artist”, a pejorative term which is a ghetto to be avoided. If it’s not all of that to contend with, then there will be someone haranguing you about colonialism or the Diaspora and expecting that you take a position, because that is still the tired theory which is pulled out of the bag to interpret art production in the region. Identity politics are of no interest to me, and I don’t have to answer to them. I’m a visual artist born in the Caribbean who works with the image of that place, but I don’t claim to be making work representative of it, nor would I want it to be the main thing to define my practice.

MA: *Your work seems to have a humourous, playful element to it — a sort of joking that belies a serious message. I mean, you took a ton of sand on vacation! Could you comment a bit about the place humour has in your work, whether conscious or not?*

BC: *There definitely has to be a place for humour and lightheartedness in art. You can address serious issues in a non-confrontational way using humour. A conch shell with a strobe light flashing in it can be taken as serious conceptual minimalist stuff when you see it sitting there on a stark white gallery floor, but it’s really an absurd comical combination if you think of it in any other context. Because it is positioned in a rarified fine art way you might not know whether to laugh at my work or not — but you can.*



Read an essay on Blue Curry's work by Dr. Marsha Pearce: [Re-Tailed Narrative and Everyday Objects Remembered](#)

AESTHETICS

Installation Art

Installation art is a genre of three-dimensional works that are often site-specific and designed to transform the perception of a space. Generally, the term is applied to interior spaces, whereas exterior interventions are often called land art; however, the boundaries between these terms overlap.

Sculpture

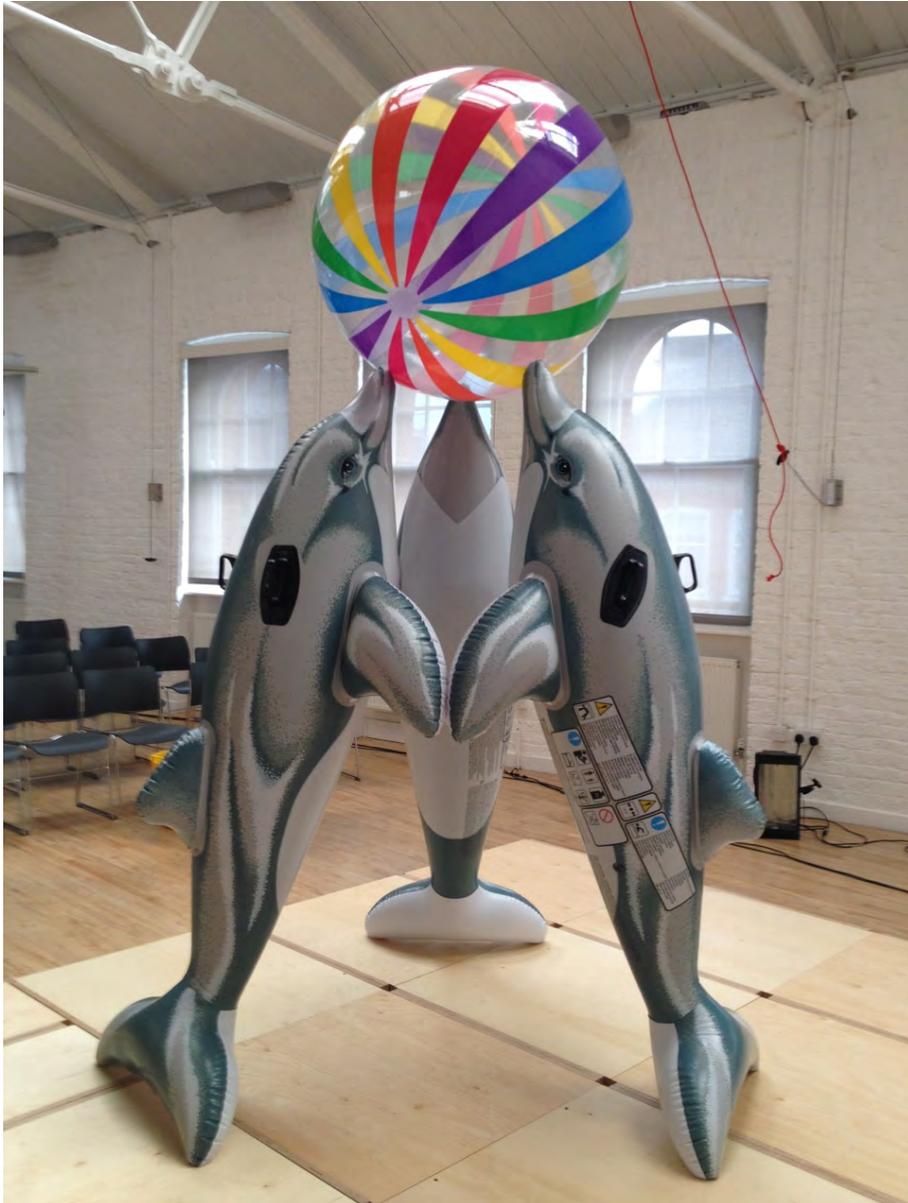
Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials – typically stone such as marble – or metal, glass or wood. Softer (“plastic”) materials can also be used, such as clay, textiles, plastics, polymers and softer metals. The term has been extended to works including sound, text and light.

Found objects may be presented as sculptures. Materials may be worked by removal such as carving; or they may be assembled such as by welding, hardened such as by firing, or molded or cast. Surface decoration such as paint may be applied. Sculpture has been described as one of the plastic arts because it can involve the use of materials that can be moulded or modulated.

Sculpture is an important form of public art. A collection of sculpture in a garden setting may be referred to as a sculpture garden.

DISCUSSION

Upon reading the article in Caribbean Books Review, do you get a clearer sense of the meaning of his installation and the objects chosen? What is the artistic relation between Curry's work and Lillian Blades' work? In what ways they are similar? Note that both artists' works are heavily loaded with symbolic meaning.



Untitled (2014)
Inflatable dolphins, beach ball



Toby Lunn

Biography (b. 1972)

Toby Lunn was born on New Providence, The Bahamas. He completed high school at Queen’s College and received an associate degree in art from the College of The Bahamas. He completed a fine arts degree in painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Over the years, Lunn’s artwork has revolved around loose realist styles as well as more fluid abstract painting.

Artist’s statement: “I would describe my body of work as scattered. Throughout university, I was always experimenting with different media and techniques, jumping around with different imagery. Lately my work has become softer and earthy. Nature inspires. In my current paintings, I am feeling the earth, using warm tones and light abstract shades. My current body of work is ‘abstract earth’. It’s certainly different for the Bahamian context.

“I would prefer to think on a universal level and I want my art to do the same. I think Bahamian art is still growing. I would like to see more people talking risks within art and just keep on developing with The National Art Gallery.”

Aesthetics

Abstract expressionism was an American post–World War II art movement. It was the first specifically American movement to achieve worldwide influence and put New York City at the center of the western art world, a role formerly filled by Paris. The term “abstract expressionism” was applied to American art in 1946 by the art critic Robert Coates, it had been first used in Germany in 1919 in the magazine *Der Sturm*, regarding German expressionism. In the USA, Alfred Barr was the first to use this term in 1929 in relation to works by Wassily Kandinsky.

The movement's name is derived from the combination of the emotional intensity and self-denial of the German expressionists with the anti-figurative aesthetic of the European abstract schools such as futurism, the Bauhaus and synthetic cubism. Additionally, it has an image of being rebellious, anarchic, highly idiosyncratic and, some feel, nihilistic.



Abstract work
Toby Lunn
Presented at Interni Designs
Nassau, The Bahamas



Kishan Munroe

Biography

(b. 1980)

Kishan Munroe was born on New Providence, The Bahamas.

Education

As a young and aspiring artist, he was accepted into one of The Bahamas' most successful programs for young artists, the annual FINCO Art Workshop. The FINCO Workshop is sponsored in part by the Finance Corporation of The Bahamas and is geared toward the refinement of the talents and skills of the country's most promising young artists.

Munroe holds a BFA and MFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Career

Kishan's work has been exhibited abroad throughout the region and the United States. He has received grants and recognition from: The National Endowment for the Performing Arts (Bahamas), the Governor's Choice Award (Bahamas) and the Combined Merit Fellowship at the Savannah College of Art and design. Kishan Munroe presently lives and works in Nassau, The Bahamas.

Artist's statement

"Inherent to my process is the devotion toward recreating realistic portrayals of individuals close to me while capturing their respective presences and unique physical characteristics/lineaments. They are intimate and sentimental perceptions of those I thought I knew. In response to this new awareness, I use this cognizant energy to express my interpretation of their lives' struggle.

"Born within a West Indian cultural tradition by way of African heritage, I express my ideas through its complexities: a world affected by the plight of



human history and highly influenced by Western European customs. My art borrows from each unique qualities and ideas born out of this exodus. From the classical masters throughout the centuries, I adopt their earthy palette and technical style. This overwhelming influence of European traditions on my region allows me to lay claim to it as integral to my expression. I have brought these worlds together, Africa and Europe into dialogue, to invariably develop content and composition, to tell the story not only of Caribbean Diaspora but also of the human experience.”

STUDIO

Kishan Munroe uses both photography and painting to document cultural events in society.

“Photography” is derived from the Greek words “photos” (light) and “graphein” (to draw). The word was first used by the scientist Sir John F.W. Herschel in 1839. It is a method of recording images by the action of light, or related radiation, on a sensitive material.

“Oil painting” The beginnings of oil painting are recorded as early as the 12th century in Northern Europe. But it was the virtuoso handling of the medium on panel by early Netherlandish painters such as Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden in the 15th century that represented a turning point in its eventual adoption as the major painting medium in Europe in the 16th century. By then, Jan van Eyck had been incorrectly credited with the “invention” of oil painting.

Oil paint is highly flexible in that it admits application both in thick impasto and fine detail: countless types of descriptive brushstroke are possible in oil. Since it is slow drying, it can be carefully blended to make soft, seamless shadows essential for the suggestion of three-dimensional form, as well as worked while still wet. All these properties make it especially suitable to communicate the reflective properties of different surfaces, from polished marble to dazzling jewels, from soft velvet to luminous highlights on hard metal plate.

DISCUSSION

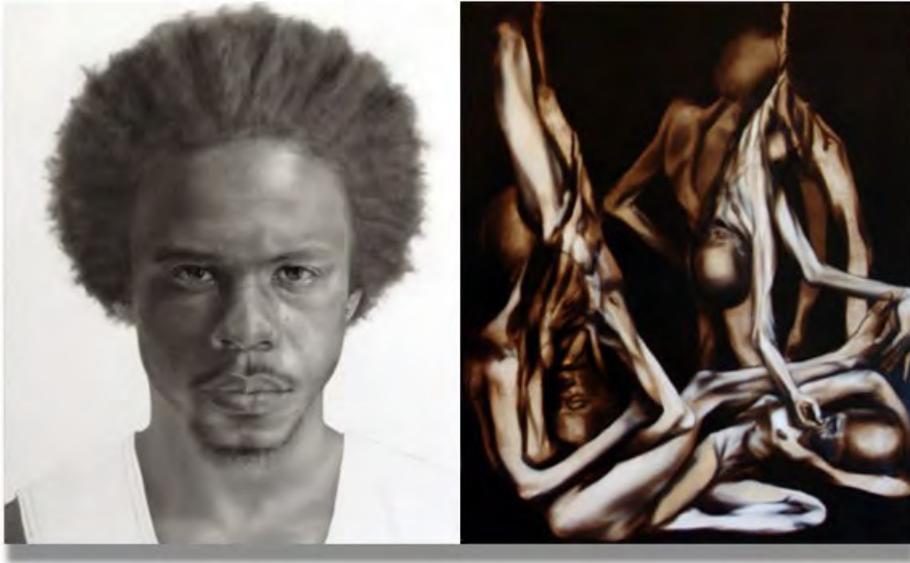
Project A

Students should photograph an action event, relative to Munroe’s documentative pictures of the cultures he has travelled to. This documentation can take place at school during a lunch break or after school time. Teachers should get a camera or smartphone and take the students out of the classroom or to other classrooms, so each student can use the camera.

Gather all pictures and upload them to show in a Powerpoint slideshow. Let the students figure out what the subject matter is about the picture before the photographer explains what is going on.

Project B

Based on the pictures taken, the student must create a drawing or painting to attach along with the photographed image, similar in Munroe's "If Ever I Rise". Students will be combining two styles and media to create one whole piece. Have the students explain the media's connection and relationship.



"If Ever I Rise" (2005)
Oil on canvas
72"x 120"
National Collection



Dave Smith

Biography (b. 1944)

Dave Smith was born in Derbyshire, England.

Education

Smith studied painting at the Derby College of Art. After graduating he expanded his knowledge at the Hornsey College of Art.

Career

Smith co-founded the London-based design group Electric Colour Company, which specialized in design projects on the London fashion scene. His work included furniture, interior and store-front design. He left to teach at a College in North England. He moved to The Bahamas in 1973 to teach art, first on Eleuthera, and then on New Providence a year later. He moved to the U.S. in 1990 and began working as a scenic artist in the motion picture industry.

In the mid 70s, he began a series of drawings focused on juxtapositions, which had been motivated by seeing American films projected in The Bahamas as Nassau's drive-in theaters.

Smith has become known as a pop artist. His work is easily recognized for its vibrant colours and contrasting visual imagery. His work is known for juxtaposing imagery of The Bahamas as paradise – an idea promoted by the tourism industry – and the real life struggles many Bahamians face.

Studio

“Pop art” – Pop art is mostly associated with the work of New York artists of the 60s, like Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. However, the term encompasses artists who draw on popular and commercial imagery and everyday life. Smith can be seen doing this through his use of large, American vehicles, storefront clothed mannequins and even ‘weave’.



“Juxtaposition” – Juxtaposition refers to the fact of two contrasting things being placed next to each other for comparison.

Project

Have students find and clip images from tourist promotion materials as well as local newspapers. Have them create collages from the contrasting material. Encourage the use of other material to serve as a barrier in the way Smith uses curtains, window bars, walls and fences in his paintings.

Alternatively, students can paint contrasting symbols and imagery using bright colours.



“Crosses to Bear” (2014)
Acrylic on canvas

LESSON PLANS

ART BY CHANCE

Grade level: Pre-school to primary levels

Objective: The students will demonstrate an understanding that there is a subconscious part in all of us, and that many artists choose to work on this level. Additionally, students will create a symmetrical inkblot and an asymmetrical background.

Resources: Inkblot examples

Materials: Black paint, white paper, black markers, coloured pencils if desired

Vocabulary: symmetrical, asymmetrical, subconscious, Rorschach, ink-blotting

Procedures: The teacher will explain that each artist has his or her private world inside his or her imagination and some of them use this imagination to create dreamlike art.

Ask the students to think about their dreams. How do their dreams make them feel? Do we have control over dreams? Can we decide what we will dream about or do our dreams just happen?

Explain that ink blotting is a technique that Rorschach invented to study people's personalities and emotions to try to find out what they were really thinking on the inside. (Kendal Hanna also uses this technique in some of his work).

- Fold paper in half vertically or horizontally.
- Place a glob of paint on one side of the fold
- Fold the paper and press or rub gently to transfer paint to the opposite side of the paper.
- Open the paper and try to decide what the blot might be by turning it around and looking at it from all angles.
- Allow the blot to dry completely.
- After deciding what the blot could be, create a background using lines.
- Colour if desired.

Literacy tie-in: Write a sentence or paragraph describing what is seen in the blot.

Assessment: Composition creativity, neatness and good craftsmanship



BUTTERFLY INKBLOT

Grade level: Pre-school

Materials: White paper, scissors, paint in different colours

Objectives: Students will demonstrate an understanding of symmetry

Vocabulary: Symmetry

Process: The teacher will explain that when two sides of an object are exactly the same, this is called symmetry.

- Cut out a butterfly shape on white paper, the shape should be symmetrical.
- Fold the paper in half, and ask the child to paint half of the butterfly.
- When the child is finished, ask him/her to press the paper halves together, so that both sides will look the same.
- Have the child rub the folded paper. Open the paper and you have a butterfly with matching wings.

The teacher will have the students examine each side of the butterfly and say whether or not they match.

For homework, students can look for pictures of other objects that show symmetry and bring them in to share with the class.



FANTASY ANIMALS

Grade Level: Primary school or high school

Objective: The students will use their imaginations to draw fantasy animals by combining two or more life forms into one mythical being referencing work by Lavar Munroe.

Resources: Examples of myths and legends like centaurs, sphinx, (or local chiccharney), visual resources of real animals, biography of Lavar Munroe and examples of his work.

Materials: Crayons or oil pastels, paper and pencils.

Vocabulary: Imaginary, fantasy, composition, foreground, background, unity and details.

Procedures:

- Teacher will give an overview of fantasy creatures found in myths and legends.
- The teacher will discuss how and why a particular artist incorporates these kinds of symbols in his work.
- Each student will add any fantasy animals he or she knows to the discussion and how they make the student feel.
- The teacher will demonstrate how to combine parts from different animals into a fantasy animal, and discuss what kind of environment it would need in its background and foreground.
- Students will draw and color a fantasy animal emphasizing their favorite part, create a foreground and background for it to live in.

Literacy tie-in: Students will name their fantasy island and write an essay about its characteristics.

Assessment: Composition and creativity

Personal statement by Lavar Munroe:

“My work is an examination of human existence; past, present and future. ... Through the use of metaphoric symbolism and iconography within each piece, I use images to communicate layered messages. Besides my subconscious, I draw inspiration from literature, fables and images of old. I am particularly inspired by the religious controversy triggered by earthquake in Haiti and borrowing the famous opera ‘Porgy and Bess’ by George Gershwin;



my researches, ideas, ideologies and subconscious have fostered my work towards the artistry of life, survival, religion, death and the afterlife in a contemporary world.”

PICTURE PERFECT

Grade Level: High school students

Objective: The students will understand how photographs play a role in documenting history and see how photographer Roland Rose has been doing this in The Bahamas for decades.

Resources: Biography and a selection of photographs by Roland Rose

Materials: Camera, scrapbook, glue, markers, printer

Vocabulary: Content, subject, intention, representational, theme, focus, frame, setting

Procedures: Practice using the vocabulary by asking the following questions:
What appears clearest or sharpest in each photograph?
Can you tell what time of day the photograph was taken?
Is the light natural or artificial? Is it harsh or soft?
Discuss the background images: Are the images balanced? Is the photograph symmetrical?

Extension: As a project, have each student identify and photograph five things that in his or her opinion deserves to be documented. It may be an historic building, medicinal plants, a pristine beach or anything of the student's choosing. The photos should be printed and placed in a scrapbook to be presented to the class during another lesson. The student should explain why the subject of each photograph was selected.

On Roland Rose (By Diane Phillips, originally printed in The Tribune on August 1, 2010)

Roland Rose was 13 when he got his first camera, an Ansco Clipper he traded his harmonica for with a buddy at school. Today, at 72, Mr. Rose is the dean of photography in The Bahamas, his exhaustive body of work as rich in texture and emotion as it is important historically for capturing fleeting magic moments, a portrait of more than half a century of an emerging country's life and of the soul of its people.

Through his eyes, those who grew up in the Bahamas and visitors from around the world can experience a life of simpler times but often greater pain,



of joy and sorrow and hope. They can feel the explosion of energy of the drummer in a photograph so powerful you can almost hear the cymbals and percussion. They can shrink at a wall of water slapping at the lighthouse as 10-foot waves crash and nearly topple the little 14- foot boat the photographer was in. They can see the breathtaking beauty of deep purple bougainvillea and brilliant Royal Poinciana in bloom in a garden lit by the sun with the blues of the harbor just beyond.

If an ordinary picture is worth a thousand words, they will see the photography that is worth encyclopedic volumes, a virtual Wikipedia of visual wonder.

Roland Rose was born in Italy in 1937 to English parents.

“Six weeks before war broke out, we were driving across France trying to get back to England,” he says, crediting his parents’ decision to flee as the pivotal point that would determine his life and career. His father’s position, overseeing an Italian garden, led to the offer from the Hog Island, now Paradise Island. As a child, Roland and his three brothers roamed free on the beaches where later Club Med would be built and today Atlantis dominates the horizon. But then, it was just endless beach where young boys could fish, swim, snorkel, dive, many days never encountering another footprint in the sand beside their own.

But there was work to do, too, and Roland, being the oldest, got the paying job of ferrying workers.

“I used to go over at 7.30 in the morning every day in the boat to get the laborers for the Killam Estate where my father was working,” he said. He dropped them off, took the boat with his brothers back over to the island of Nassau where they would then climb on their bikes and ride the rest of the few miles journey to school. In the afternoon, the pattern was repeated in reverse. “I earned 10 shillings a week (\$2.50) and spent it all on a new camera, a Kodak Retinette I got from (the late) Stanley Toogood. It was one of those products Kodak made in Germany and it cost 14 pounds. Paying that off was an eternity,” he says, laughing at it now. And he still had to buy film. Kodak Kodachrome had just been introduced and Rose’s fascination with colour intensified with a film that began to do it justice.

Trading up before he even got paid for a photograph – his first commission came later, photographing a woman’s rugs for insurance records – was an early indication of his determination to keep abreast of equipment and technology.

“I’m not an antique collector,” he says. “Every time something new came out, I tried it. I have tried to stay on the cutting edge of photography.” What he does collect is classical music. He admits to “over 4,000” records and at least as many CDs, much to his good-natured and lively wife Barbara’s chagrin when he buys more. What he would like to be if he hadn’t devoted his



life to photography is a grand master of chess. He used to play on a street corner every afternoon, but the game fell apart when he was the only one who maintained a steady interest after so many years.

Mr. Rose is the epitome of a person who has perfected his craft but manages to keep it fresh, always searching for the touch that will make an image memorable rather than a celluloid or digital record. He pours boundless energy into getting the light just right, moving a floor flash to swallow a shadow, re-arranging flowers or furniture to set the stage, reflecting on colour of apparel or backdrop, never taking the easy way out and justifying it with a flippant “This will do”.

Roland Rose spent 32 years working for the Bahamas Development Board. When he left in 1982, he left a collection of work that told the story of the country, its march through Independence, its natural disasters and hurricanes, its celebrities and secrets. Tragically, thousands of his photos were later destroyed in a clean-out, set afire, images never to be recaptured.

Fortunately, Rose had some of the negatives and a handful of prints. Friends and associates who had come by his work over the years have given him back photos. With scanning technology, he can re-create some from those originals. One of his most famous, a Junkanoo shot with a former Miss Bahamas in the photo, became an album cover and one just sold on e-Bay for thousands of dollars.

If there is a thread of continuity throughout the work still in existence that spans six decades, it is the astounding beauty of the Bahamian landscape and sea. If there is a distinguishing factor between the ‘then’ and the ‘now’, it is that change has brought a new level of stress and strain to faces. Nowhere is the change more apparent than in a 1960s-era photo when Sean Connery arrived in Nassau for the shooting of Thunderball. It wasn’t the Pan Am tote bag that was such a startling reminder of how times had changed, but the outright broad smiles on faces of the entire group – children, adults, the police and the actor himself even as his limbs and attention were being sought by the crowd around him. Every face was relaxed. The times, they were a-friending and without fear. Celebrities didn’t have bodyguards. Police weren’t donned in bulletproof vests. Trust reined.

In each of Rose’s photographs, a story unfolds, a slice of life too rich to be ignored. In black and white, they tell of passion – a drummer of burning drive, a child filled with wonder, an old man’s hands worn and crinkled from honest labour. In colour, they paint a landscape bursting with brilliance. Black and white shots require simplicity, he explains: “If you are shooting in black and white, you have to keep your images very simple, clean images. Messy images don’t work in black and white but they work in colour because of the colour.”

Colour is his preference, but that, he says, is because of where he lives. “The colour of The Bahamas is the most wonderful thing in the world.”



Thanks to <http://tasteofgrandbahama.blogspot.com/2010/08/roland-roses-photos-have-put-bahamians.html>



WHO AM I

Overview: This is a combination of art and writing activities designed to help students answer this important question. Students will study self-portraits by an artist of the teacher's choosing and respond to questions. (Kendal Hanna produced a number of self-portraits that are found in the Happy Birthday to Me catalogue from pages 13 to 25).

The students will also make a variety of self-portraits and write a letter about themselves—to be placed in their self-portrait portfolio.

“Who am I?” Is not a simple question. In fact, it leads to a list of related questions such as:

- What are the distinctive things that make me, me?
- How do I want people to see me?
- How can I express my many different sides?
- How can I reinvent myself for various purposes or times in my life?
- How am I changing from day to day or year to year?
- Who do I want to become?

Students look in the mirror, compare themselves to their peers and to other images around them, and try to form ideas about their identity. They are experiencing changes in physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth. Exploring their sense of self through self-portraiture, speaking, and autobiographical writing—will help them master these changes.

Begin with a brainstorming session. Ask the students: “Why do artists make self-portraits? Give me every possible reason you can think of.” Remind them that in brainstorming, all answers are acceptable. Write all answers on a large piece of chart paper that you can keep posted.

After the class has completed the activities, ask the same questions again. List the students' responses on a new chart and compare the “before and after” lists. What new observations were made? What did they learn?

Background Information: Why do artists make self-portraits?

Since the Renaissance, artists have used self-portraits to explore the question ‘*Who am I?*’ While a mirror or a photograph can tell a person what he or she looks like, that physical image does not reflect the whole self. Self-portraiture insists the artist embark on a journey of self-exploration to make decisions about how to represent him/herself authentically. The artist must ask: ‘What expression, posture, clothing, background, colours, texture and style best express the real me? Might those answers be different at any given time?’

Self-portraits may also represent an artist's quest for immortality as a way to leave behind an image that will outlive the artist. Additionally, a self-



portrait can preserve a memory, serve as a gift, and even help an artist further understand him/herself.

Time: Two 45-minute class periods

Level: Primary and high school

Learning Connections: Language arts, visual arts

Objectives: Students will examine Kendal Hanna's self-portraits and biography to learn about the artist;
Consider how self-portraits and letters (diaries) aid the process of self-discovery;
Produce a self-portrait and write a letter describing it.

Resources and Materials: Student photograph, photocopier, scissors, backing paper or cardboard, glue, tempera, poster, or oil paint or oil pastels. Biography of the artist each student intends to study.

Lesson Implementation: Tell students several days before the lesson begins that they will need to bring in a photo of themselves.

Class period one

- Instruct students to read the biography of Kendal Hanna or whichever artist you have chosen to study;
- Have students read and respond to questions about this particular artist;
- Discuss the self-portraits of the artist in class, what message each self-portrait conveys;
- Remind students to bring a photo of themselves to the next class.

Class period two

Have students make their self-portraits using a photocopy that was brought in. Have them write a letter to a friend about their self-portrait and why they included each element.

Assessment

To evaluate students' self-portraits, ask:

- Did the student complete the self-portrait as instructed?
- Does the self-portrait answer some aspect of the question, "Who am I?"
- If the student made two self-portraits, do the two works address the question, "How am I changing from day to day?"
- The letter to a friend, attached to the self-portrait(s), should explain what the self-portrait communicates and should be supported by evidence in



the work of art.

*Thanks to www.nga.gov/education/classroom/self-portraits/index.shtm
Adapted from NGA classroom, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D*



Curator's essay on the Bahamian Modernism exhibition at The National Art
Gallery of The Bahamas
(an abridged version)

*By Dr. Erica James, Former director
The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas*

I
Overture

If one were to look at art only in the traditional sense of painting and sculpture and define “Bahamian Art” according to strict geo-political borders, notions of nationhood and citizenship, then Bahamian Art would be a post 1973 phenomenon. However, such parameters do not consider the complexity of Bahamian cultural history, to which Bahamian visual history and art history are intimately tied.

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas seeks to examine the whole and reveal the intimate connections between what is present and what is past, what is understood as “native” and how that has been informed by what is commonly understood locally as foreign.

Some Bahamian art is intended to question the limits and insist on the complexity of Bahamianness and Bahamian art in a way in that considers The Bahamas as an historic space that has been impacted and shaped by monumental forces of conquest, genocide, slavery, colonial expansion, war, plantation economies, capitalism, tourism, independence and globalism.

The Bahamas is a nation with a living, moving culture. Like the art representing it and coming out of it, it does not exist apart from the world but in dialogue with and sometimes in opposition to it.

II
Encounters

The earliest evidence of creative endeavours in The Bahamas has been found on islands and sites occupied by the Lucayans (Also known as the Tainos and Arawaks) – the people Columbus found in these islands during his first voyage in 1492. Material artefacts that mark their presence indicate a high level of skill in their production of expressive forms. These forms were inseparable from the cosmology, creation mythology, belief systems, daily life and social structure of this people. Scholars have pieced together meanings in the patterns, abstract and animal forms employed by Lucayans in an effort to understand their world-view, but in many ways they



remain a mystery.

There is evidence of many Lucayan sites in The Bahamas. It is said that along the shore in Delectable Bay, Acklins one can still walk and discover shards of pottery and other items of Lucayan settlement. At the Clifton Heritage Park in western New Providence, evidence of two settlements of native peoples dating from AD 1240-1300 and AD 1275-1440 have been found.

One of the most significant archeological finds in The Bahamas occurred in 1989 on Long Island. Three wooden duhos (ceremonial stools) were discovered in Cartwright's Cave and brought to Nassau by a team from the National Archives. In Lucayan and Taino societies, duhos were used by the leader of the community (known as a cacique) during ritual ceremonies and were symbols of the leader's prestige, power and his/her alliances with neighboring peoples. A duho could be carved from stone or wood, but as one might expect after 500 years, wooden duhos like the ones found in Long Island, are quite rare. Duhos are articulated by strong individualistic patterns and complex imagery.

There is material evidence of formal fusions between the Spanish, African and Lucayan cultures in the years following Columbus' arrival to these shores. But the encounter between the Spanish and the Lucayans was a culture clash in the extreme. Though the Spanish admired the lifestyle of the Lucayans, and the fact that they exhibited no malice toward them, the Spanish did not demonstrate the same humanity toward the Lucayans. Many Lucayans were enslaved and sent to work in Hispaniola where they died from exhaustion, new diseases brought to the region by the Europeans and in some cases suicide. Within 25 years of Columbus' arrival to these shores, the Lucayan population in The Bahamas and the rest of the Caribbean had mostly been wiped out. As a result, they had little, if any, lasting influence on the formal development of the arts of the region.

Description of The Lucayans from Christopher Columbus' log (1492):

"They are a well built people, with handsome bodies and very fine faces, though their appearance is marred somewhat by very broad heads and foreheads, more so than I have seen in any other race. Their eyes are large and very pretty, and their skin the colour of Canary Islanders or sunburned peasants, not at all black... these are tall people and their legs, with no exceptions, are quite straight, and none of them has a paunch. Their hair is not kinky, but straight, and coarse like horsehair. They wear it short over the eyebrows, but they have a long hank in the back that they never cut."

III
RE-MAPPING and RE-MAKING



In addition to the people he encountered in these islands, Columbus also described the land he encountered. Of Guanahani Island (which he promptly renamed San Salvador) he stated:

“The island is fairly large and very flat. It is green, with many trees and several bodies of water. There is a very large lagoon in the middle of the island and there are no mountains. It is a pleasure to gaze upon this place because it is all so green and the weather is delightful.”

Visual representations of the flora and fauna of the islands supported this written description. For the next several hundred years, representations of The Bahamas were dominated by botanical drawings by individuals such as Mark Catesby. The acquisition of knowledge through the cataloguing and re-presentation of these ‘new’ lands supported the language of conquest. It is however curious that detailed visual studies of the original inhabitants of these islands have not been found.

One can propose that the absence of Lucayans in such representations reflects their very real ‘disappearance’, however the ‘scientific’ focus on the flora and fauna also helped to create the illusion of the Americas and The Bahamas in particular as a place of untapped abundance, ripe for colonisation.

Permanent settlements did not develop in The Bahamas until the 17th century. Those trying to survive in this new environment had little time for aesthetic pursuits and rode the wave as The Bahamas suffered through years of conquest, slavery and piracy, changing flags with dizzying frequency. It was not until the 19th century, when the islands became more firmly possessed by the British Crown that the social and economic stability conducive to artistic production and development was experienced.

Still, representations of The Bahamas and Bahamians did not come from the new natives of these islands, but from European and later American travelers.

Some believed that the reason for the lack of native artistic production in the islands was because the first settlers were Protestant rather than Catholic and British rather than French or Spanish. They argue that because Protestants focused more on texts rather than images, and tended to utilise imported images when necessary rather than commission locals to complete the work, the economic support of the church for the arts (which simulated artistic production in other parts of the Caribbean such as Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica) was absent in The Bahamas. This, along with a lack of art education, museums and galleries would present enormous obstacles in the development of indigenous art forms in The Bahamas for many years.

IV Foreign Eyes, Touristic Visions



As The Bahamas began to stabilize and prosper in the early 19th century, marketing itself as a therapeutic tourist destination, artists occasionally traveled to these islands as patients and tourists, but also as military officers stationed at various forts in Nassau. These artists were often expected to be visual reporters, “documenting” The Bahamas for print and promotion in the United States and Europe or to assist in the development of military strategies devised by the Crown. The work produced by these artists tended to follow the growing popularity of landscape, marine and genre painting, but had very different histories and purposes in terms of content. Some of the earliest known works of Nassau and its environs were by British marine painter Thomas Luny (1759-1837) and military officer Colonel John Irving.

The British military officer and artist Gaspard Le Marchand Tupper completed a suite of images of Nassau and New Providence in the 1850s. Though The Bahamas was reeling from a cholera epidemic, still unsettled social unrest due to the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807 and a weak economy when he arrived, Tupper’s paintings record Nassau and its environs in a pristine manner, as if it were a New Jerusalem rather than the small, sparsely populated, run-down outpost it actually was. However, having been trained in watercolour painting during the height of British Romantic period, he decided to capture vistas of New Providence as a green fertile place, ripe with possibilities.

Perhaps the most well-known artist to paint in The Bahamas during the 19th century was the American Winslow Homer. Homer came to The Bahamas for the first time in 1884-85, returning in 1898-99. However, a decade before Homer first arrived, the even more well-known artist (for that time) the Prussian born American Albert Bierstadt, began making sojourns to The Bahamas to visit his ailing wife Rosalie who spent winters here. Bierstadt is the first artist on record to have an exhibition of his work in Nassau at the Royal Victoria Hotel.

These artists were the first in a long line of painters who worked in The Bahamas from the late 19th into the mid-20th century. Paintings from notable artists from this period exhibited in this gallery include William Henry, Stephen Etnier, E. J Read, Frederich Solwedel and Armin Buchterkirch. Many were American and European by birth or training and painted in styles greatly influenced by 19th century French Realism and Impressionism, and in the case of Etnier, the Ashcan School and Edward Hopper.

While art historians continue to look beyond the formal beauty of these works to their social, scientific and sometimes political context and content, in many ways the works produced by these artists began to have a cumulative effect. Through a foreign eye, these paintings provided a narrative for The Bahamas that reflected an essence of the space. However, views of the country were always from a distance; people were part of the artwork’s landscape.



A. Buchterkich
“Street Scene, Market Street, Nassau” (c. 1910)
Watercolor
10” x 14”
National Collection

V Photography

The merit of photography as an artistic medium was hotly debated throughout the late 19th century and well into the 20th century. But for The Bahamas, photography was recognized early as an escort into the modern age.

One of the earliest photographers to work in Nassau was the American Jacob Frank Coonley. Coonley became adept at recording subjects that would become iconographic in Bahamian visual history, creating images that supported The Bahamas’ reinvention of itself as a tourist destination. Through his lens, The Bahamas was imaged as clean, safe and productive. It was an exotic site for his intended audience.

One of his contemporaries was the American William Henry Jackson. Jackson had been part of several U.S. Geographical Survey expeditions



intended to document the American frontier and encourage the settlement of the West. Jackson traveled to The Bahamas in the winter of 1900-1901.

Capitalizing on the increase in tourism on a global scale during this period, his primary purpose was to take photographs that would later be marketed and purchased as postcards by those dreaming of travel or those who desired mementos of past travels. His images are in a studied conversation with Coonley's but far more specific in content and narrative.

The Bahamas would also be viewed through the lens of well-known botanist and explorer Sir Harry Hamilton Johnston who traveled to the islands around 1900. Johnston relied heavily on photography to support his theories in the text "The Negro in the New World" (1910). It wasn't until Coonley sold his studio to James "Doc" Sands that The Bahamas would have a native Bahamian composing images of The Bahamas. However, having absorbed Coonley's vision for so long, the differences one might expect or hope for between Coonley and Sands' work might be difficult to ascertain.

VI

Owning Traditions

The work of the "tourist artist" dominated art production in The Bahamas well into the 20th century. Besides Bierstadt, their art was rarely exhibited or sold in The Bahamas. Therefore native subjects never saw themselves represented in art and there are few examples of these artists interacting with the people in a lasting way. Only in cases such as the paintings at St. Francis Xavier Church, the murals at Old Fort Bay, and the murals at the Ranfurly Home for Children (now destroyed) did these visiting artists leave work for locals to view and enjoy.

Unlike other Caribbean nations such as Cuba, Barbados, Jamaica and Haiti, where the children of wealthier individuals left to study art in England, France and Spain in the early 20th century, the fragility of the Bahamian economy and the lack of institutions to generate artistic interest (much less encourage and hone it) proved to be impossible obstacles to overcome. It would not be until the post World War II years that the tide began to shift. This occurred because of the improved economic circumstances of mass tourism, expanded political enfranchisement for the Bahamian majority and women, the racial integration of Bahamian society and improved opportunities for art instruction.

Bahamians interested in art in the 1950s and 60s sought instruction where they could find it. There were three forces of change that provided just enough influence on young Bahamians. They were Horace Wright working in The Bahamas Public Schools, David Rawnsley at Chelsea Pottery and Don Russell at Don Russell's Academy of Fine Art.

Born in the United States of Jamaican parentage and migrating with his parents from Chicago to The Bahamas as a small boy, Horace Wright was



the only art teacher in the public schools in the 1950s. Wright taught a generation of artists and cultural pioneers including Kendal Hanna, Hervis Bain, Stanley Burnside, Jackson Burnside, James O. Rolle and Dr. Gail Saunders.

Don Russell was perhaps the first formally trained Bahamian artist to open an art school, Don Russell's Academy of Fine Art in 1951. He would soon have young Bahamians such as Kendal Hanna, Max Taylor, Brent Malone, Meta Davis Cumberbatch and later Jackson Burnside flocking to him for instruction. Cleveland Eneas' 3than 60 years later, that church, as well as the Church of the Holy Spirit in Chippingham, St. Anselm's Catholic Church in Fox Hill and The Church of the End Time in Bain Town are some of the few with works by local artists.

An eccentric figure, David Rawnsley came to The Bahamas from Britain to manage the Chelsea Pottery, a commercial workshop started by Harold Christie and Sir Francis Peek in 1957. He was assisted by a small group of dedicated artists who hoped to develop the skills of a generation that would go on to become some of this country's most well-known artists including Kendal Hanna, Max Taylor, Malone and a very young Eddie Minnis.

Rawnsley, Russell, Wright and a few other key figures teaching in the private high schools encouraged young people that being an artist was more than a hobby. For the first time Bahamians in significant numbers began to explore various genres of painting, making them their own.

VII Higher Heights

Many of the artists who got their start with Don Russell and at the Chelsea Pottery were a part of the first generation of Bahamians who also were afforded opportunities to study abroad. The 1950s, 60s and 70s represented a sobering age for art in The Bahamas. It was a period when the steps being taken by some would have a lasting impact on the lives of others.

In 1953, Brent Malone announced to his family that he intended to become an artist. He was 12 years old. His talent for fine art had been recognised early and his parents supported his artistic dreams and development. Malone would go on to become the first Bahamian to earn distinctions in art at both the ordinary and advanced levels in the Cambridge exams.

After graduating from Queen's College in 1957, he joined the apprenticeship program at the Chelsea Pottery. Malone became lifelong friends with the artists he met there, including Taylor, Hanna, Crofton Peddie and J. Carl Rahming. After the pottery closed, Malone enrolled at the Beckenham School of Art in Kent England, which later became the Ravensbourne School of Art.

While Brent was in England, his friend and colleague Maxwell Taylor



also decided to leave The Bahamas. Taylor first intended to study in England as well, but the experience of racial prejudice during his visit, soured him on the idea and after traveling in Europe for a while, he returned home. Without economic support and encouragement from his family Taylor's options were few: Join the U.S. Army, fight in Vietnam (and hope you make it) or attempt to get admitted into art school. Taylor was accepted into the U.S. Army one week after his admission to the Arts Students League in New York had been confirmed. He went to New York.

Taylor arrived in New York City during the late 60s, but by that time Abaco-born and raised artist Alton Lowe had already arrived in that city, received his training and moved on. Drawn to art at an early age while watching his father sketch, Lowe's talents gained the attention of several expatriates who resided part of the year in Abaco. They encouraged his talents and facilitated his training. In 1961 Lowe moved to Florida for further training and later entered the Frank J. Reilly School of Art in New York City. He studied there for two years developing his high realist style to perfection.

Other artists that might be included in this wave of artists seeking higher education, though a half-generation behind are Eddie Minnis and Stanley Burnside. In the late 1960s Minnis travelled to Canada to study architecture at McGill University and Burnside enrolled in the prestigious University of Pennsylvania. Burnside would become the first Bahamian to earn a Master of Fine Arts in painting.

Though these examples are few, they are transformative in terms of the tremendous effect these artists had on the future development of arts in The Bahamas. Their emergence paralleled the national movement for The Bahamas' independence from Great Britain, a movement that culminated on July 10, 1973 when The Bahamas became a new nation.

VIII

Jumbey Village

Horace Wright's complete dedication to his profession as an itinerant art teacher in the public school system brought him to Her Majesty's Prison as an art instructor. There he met Milton Homer Williams, a gifted self taught artist, who had painted the 14 stations of the Cross in the prison's chapel.

While in prison, Williams was visited by the American illustrator Norman Rockwell on the recommendation of Liam "Bill" Wasile, owner of Nassau Art Gallery. Impressed by Williams, Rockwell paid for Williams to complete an art correspondence course offered by The Famous Artists School Inc.

Upon his release, Williams continued his development as an artist. He also became a key figure in the promotion of Bahamian art as a member of the National Art and Craft Exhibition Committee. This committee was responsible for organizing visual arts exhibitions celebrating the



Independence of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas in 1973.

Edmund Moxey, MP and Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Sports and Community Affairs at that time, was responsible for coordinating the Bahamian Independence activities of the Ministry of Education and Culture. In 1969, in his Coconut Grove Constituency, Moxey had instituted a festival named Jumbey. He got the name from a common Bahamian plant used to feed goats and possessing medicinal qualities. With the coming of independence, the government felt that aspects of indigenous Bahamian culture should be preserved and promoted, hence Moxey's idea of setting up the Jumbey Village Cultural Complex.

Construction of the village began in 1970 on the land bordering Tucker and Baillou Hill Roads, and filling in part of the Big Pond Swamp. By 1973, Jumbey Village was near completion. It was designed according to principles of architecture and social interaction found in Family Island settlements. It contained a kitchen, pigpen, barn, etc. but also an art gallery and museum complex, craft shops, a restaurant, theatre, sculpture garden and a market.

Jumbey Village became a significant part of Homer Williams' development as an artist. In addition to government commissions, he painted pictures such as "The Bottom" that showed Sir Milo Butler, governor general, visiting Bain Town; a portrait of the wife of Earl Thompson; and "The Black Madonna". "The Black Madonna" (1973) was a revolutionary concept for that time. It portrays the Virgin Mary and the baby Jesus as black Bahamians. The model was 15-year-old Betty Major.

Jumbey Village was a major step in the cultural movement of The Bahamas. However, after Moxey was relieved of his governmental duties in 1974, it gradually retreated in importance to the government. In 1987 amidst protest, it was completely demolished and replaced by the National Insurance Building, now the Clifford Darling Complex. The NAGB recently obtained permission to relocate the last monumental head carved in limestone for Jumbey Village from the Darling Complex to its grounds.

Homer Williams survived the decline and destruction of the village and became an instructor at CC Sweeting High School, where he mentored artists such as Ricardo Knowles, Dorman Stubbs and Dajineau Burns.



Sterling Miller
“Goombay” (1973)
Oil on canvas
30” x 24”
National Collection

IX Ceramics

Though the place of the Chelsea Pottery in Bahamian art history is a significant one, it should be noted that the majority of the artists who got their start there did not become potters, but painters and printmakers. Nevertheless the ceramic arts have become a strong aspect of Bahamian art production partly due to the length of time it has been taught continuously at the tertiary level at The College of The Bahamas (COB). When Denis Knight came to The Bahamas in the late 1950s he became familiar with the Chelsea Pottery, visited the space and participated in events held there, but never worked there. Over the years as an artist and teacher at COB, Knight would pore over the Bahamian landscape looking for clays that could be used in pottery. In the 80s his search led him to pockets of red clays in Blue Hills. It was this careful consideration of the material landscape of The Bahamas that perhaps impacted his students most. Many of them became prolific painters, but others such as Sabrina Glinton-Enzinga followed in his footsteps and



became ceramic artists.

Knight's intimate relationship with the environment is a feature that has been central to his work as a ceramic artist. The works featured in this case are odes to Bahamian independence and Knight's love of the sea.

The works of Joanne Behagg and Jessica Colebrooke (nee Maycock) take ceramics in different directions. Behagg's early, simple, evocative pots gave way to small figural sculptures that embrace and some may say also caricature a widely recognized classically Bahamian female form. Like Behagg, Colebrooke has begun to use ceramic as a sculptural medium, but in the work acquired for the National Collection, she has abandoned the body and has chosen more abstract forms and mixed.

X

Modernity in The Bahamas Subjectivity and the Junkanoo Aesthetic

Having absorbed traditions of fine art at home and abroad, many Bahamian artists sought with a new intensity to represent an authentic cultural self, and turned to Junkanoo as subject...

Brent Malone was particularly visionary in this respect because he had a strong awareness of the interconnectivity of Bahamian creative power during this time. One of the most powerful manifestations of music genius was Tony "The Obeah Man" McKay. Malone, a great admirer of McKay's work, acknowledged a spiritual kinship with this cultural phenomenon by referencing McKay's "Exuma's Reincarnation" album cover in the painting "Metamorphosis".

By the 1980s Brent Malone had become known as the quintessential artist of Junkanoo

XI

Seeing ourselves anew: Simultaneous modernities

When one engages Maxwell Taylor's "Junkanoo Boy", there is a movement away from the recognized pageantry of Junkanoo, the rich colour and over-the-top nature of the experience. The vision is from within. Taylor, became interested not only in representing the surface of life in these islands, but exploring the psyche of the Bahamian people and their experience "Over Da Hill".

In art in the country, form became used for a deeper message and the work was to be admired not only because of its formal beauty, but also on a consideration of its content. Edison Rolle's brilliant painting "The Fifth Drink" indicated that with the rise of new native aesthetics was a desire to make art that was self-reflexive, introspective yet public, complicated yet able to touch the soul. "The Fifth Drink" marked the beginning of a mostly one-sided conversation artists have tried to have with their audiences for a number of



years.

Powerful self-portraits by Edison Rolle and James Rolle and a young Antonius Roberts also used their work to announce subjective visions.

XII

Passages

The trend of Bahamians seeking further training abroad continued in the late 70s and early 80s with Antonius Roberts, Dorman Stubbs and Ricardo Knowles. The 1960s and 70s saw noted expatriates and naturalized Bahamians such as Denis Knight, Dave Smith, Sue Bennett Williams, Margaret Oscroft and Sandra Illingsworth making significant contributions to Bahamian arts education. During that time, artists such as Brent Malone, Maxwell Taylor, Stan Burnside and Antonius Roberts, returned to The Bahamas and worked as art teachers and/or mentors to successive generations of Bahamian artists.

Taylor, Roberts, Stubbs, and Knowles shepherded generations of young artists with the RBC FINCO Summer Arts Workshop. The work of Stan Burnside and Denis Knight at the College of The Bahamas (COB) in the 1980s nurtured a group of artists that included John Beadle, Eric Ellis, Dajineau Burns, Jolyon Smith, Clive Stuart, Monique Rolle, Erica James and Dionne Benjamin-Smith.

Antonius Roberts took the helm at COB after Burnside's departure in the late 1980s; he, along with Sue Bennett Williams, Joann Behagg and later John Cox, would mentor a prolific group of artists that included Michael Edwards, Lillian Blades, Jessica Maycock, Heino Schmid, Allan Wallace and Tavares Strachan. Art in The Bahamas was showing maturity through its ability to birth new generations of artists, with diverse views of what Bahamian art was and could be.

Members of each successive generation have brought new dimensions to the aesthetic vision of Bahamian art. Immersed in international art trends, new technologies and grounded in a more global sense of art history, each post-war generation has in individual ways managed to merge the forces of Bahamian culture with the pulse and imagery of global movements in art. As a result, the fine and folk arts of The Bahamas have become quite diverse.

In the mid to late 1980s, students of Burnside and Knight, at the College of The Bahamas formed a collective exhibiting group called OPUS-5 (Consisting of John Beadle, Dajineau Burns, Clive Stuart, David Ernest and Sabrina Glinton-Enzinga and later Jolyon Smith in a renamed Opus-5 plus 1). Philosophical organizations such as B-CAUSE (Bahamian Creative Artists United for Serious Expression), and creative synergies such as the Jammin' movements (both initiatives spearheaded by Stanley Burnside), worked in ways that cut across individual styles and generations and exploded



perceptions of Bahamian art.

During the late 1980s, and independent of the COB matrix, artists such as Janine Antoni had begun to gain international attention by producing work that were meditations on traditional medias but more in keeping with conceptual and performance art processes, ideas and forms.

XIV

Bahamian Neo-Realism and Neo-Impressionism

It is important to note that Impressionism and Realism are specific movements within specific time periods and cultures, namely 19th century France. There are no “Impressionist” painters today, only painters utilizing the techniques or effects made famous by men and women such as Claude Monet, Mary Cassat and Edouard Manet.

In art history, it is almost impossible to separate artistic styles from the cultures from which they arose. With this in mind, while much of the art made in The Bahamas today has an impressionistic feel to it, the art itself is a technical transcription of this movement. It is an appropriation of historically recognised painting techniques, used to represent a new subject and place (hence the use of the prefix ‘neo’).

However, the mere use of technique does not necessarily imply mimesis. Through the transformation of subject, Bahamian Neo-Realism and Neo-Impressionism have developed their very own narratives and characters that distinguish them from the past in ways not often acknowledged by viewers or even the artists themselves.

Out of all genres of art making in The Bahamas, these are the styles that are commonly understood, promoted and defended as representative of “Bahamian art”. Though this work has a very important place in the narrative of Bahamian art history, one should recognise that it is only one language in the multi-lingual art culture of The Bahamas.

XV

Narrative and Spirit

Narrative is a strong element in Bahamian art. In most cases, the artists who produce this type of work have been self-taught and tend to make art steeped in the spiritual, but as you will see that is not always the case. Amos Ferguson and Wellington Bridgewater both claim to produce work from visions given to them by God. They positioned themselves as artist apostles and filled their work with a narrative power equal to that of the gospels.

In contrast, one may first assume that the work of Rev. Mervyn Thompson would be spiritual. On first appearance, it seems formally childlike, in the manner of Amos Ferguson. However on closer inspection one



sees that the works provide a visual vignette that employs parody even as it alludes to uncomfortable and often unspeakable issues of race and class in the country.

Rembrandt Taylor's imagery is drawn from Rastafarian ideologies and his painting exhibits an almost manic formal precision in terms of execution and technique. While "The Coronation" references the ascent of Haile Selassie to the throne of Ethiopia and his significance in Rastafarianism, the work of Tony McKay is decidedly more secular. McKay was a multitalented artist who had painted for years before his first solo exhibition in the early 90s, contributing works to his album cover designs and concepts. Like Ferguson, Thompson and others, he was not a formally trained visual artist, yet his work, limited in number and quite rare, communicates poignancy, grace and humor.

The notion of 'intuition' is not classed in Bahamian art and is not specific to a particular genre or notion of the spiritual. Genres do not imply purity or singularity. The diversity in style, mastery of technical skill and power of expression evidenced by these artists makes one realize that traditional rubrics of understanding and defining art often times dissolve and soon appear irrelevant, or at least warrant questioning within the context of The Bahamas.

XVI

Unmasking self and nation: Everything subject

In the Bahamian art movement, Maxwell Taylor and Dave Smith have been pioneers in producing art that is coated in beauty but still carries powerful social commentary. In recent years, this layered approach to art making has been central to the work of artists such as John Beadle, Heino Schmid, Dionne Benjamin-Smith and Blue Curry. Beadle and Lavar Munroe offer provocative images that engage aspects of migration, the icon of the boat, the insatiability of the ocean and the ironies of present day experience such as Beadle's "Emancipation Boat Cruise" in relation to history.

Utilizing non-traditional art media, and sometimes employing biting humour and a carnivalesque quality in their imagery, Curry, Benjamin-Smith and AJ Watson have taken social commentary and criticism in a more contemporary direction; they are known for using image texts as modern day epistles.

Generations have grown up with "Mikey". Only known by their first name, figures such as Michael and Mikey were featured in a joint show conceived and produced by Ward Minnis and Jace McKinney in 2004 called Famous Faces of Nassau and exhibited at the Central Bank of The Bahamas. McKinney and Minnis wanted to deconstruct notions of fame in the country and used the medium of portraiture to monumentalize both "official" famous figures such as politicians, preachers etc., right along with "unofficial" figures



- beggars, prostitutes, street urchins, baseheads and others going through their individual struggles.

Two years prior to this McKinney had completed a series of works featuring Andre Chappelle, a white Bahamian drug addict (now clean) who had frequented the Thompson Boulevard Wendy's fast food eatery for years. McKinney's series of collages represented Chappelle involved in his daily activities, but the artist abstracted Chappelle's body into an unarticulated red human form. McKinney invited Chappelle to attend the opening of the show at the College of The Bahamas Pro Gallery dressed in a red jumpsuit, hoping that the audience would make the connection. Few did, but it offered a powerful commentary on who and what is taken for granted in our society.

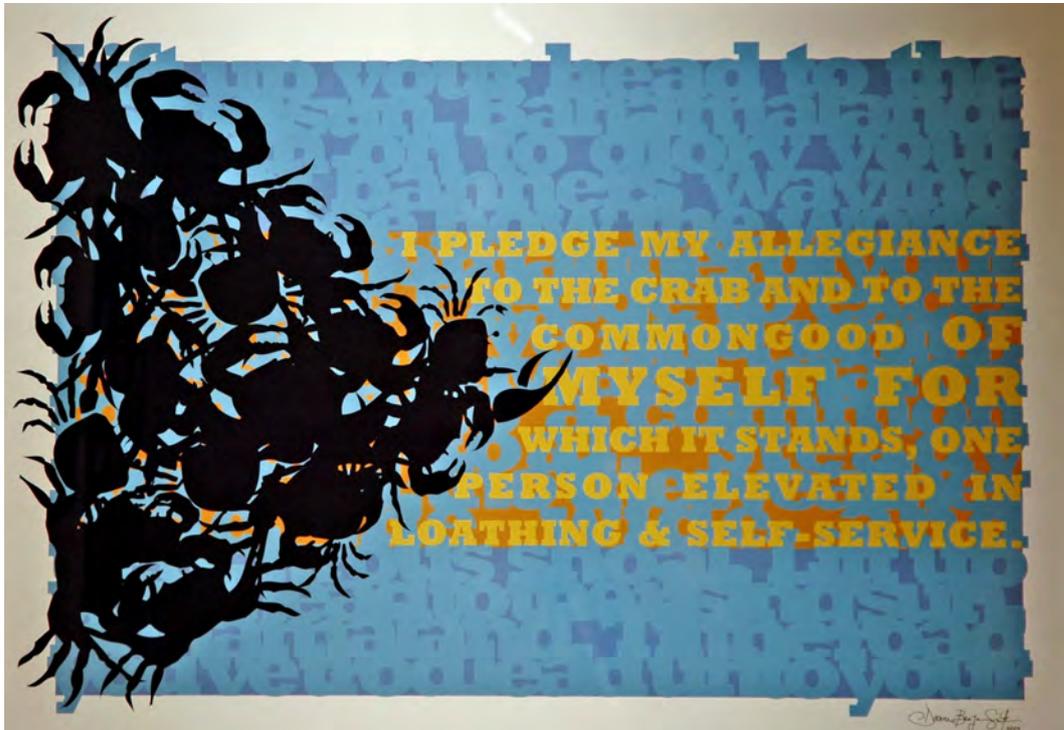
Blue Curry's "Repairwork" extends this reading by engaging the notion of "forgetfulness" within the context of Bahamian history itself, through the life story of the original bust of Alfred, the former Prince of Wales. Heino Schmid's recording of a walk around Nassau makes one realize in the work "North Star", the iconic place of the Atlantis Resort and tourism in The Bahamas. In previous eras, the church steeple was often the highest point in a town or parish. What meanings are implied when one considers that in The Bahamas it is now the hotel tower, and that from almost any point on the island, one can catch sight of Atlantis to orient you, like the omnipresent North star?

While Smith's, Minnis' and Curry's artworks are still firmly rooted in aspects of nation, the works of Allan Wallace, Holly Parotti and Kishan Munroe delve into very personal psychological journeys and self-critiques. In these works the nation is conceived as ideological housing for the evolution of "the self".

Community self-reflexivity, personal introspection, transformation and the process of re-invention, piecing and suturing of "the self", are themes that run through the work in this gallery, giving a simultaneous effect of outward power and inner vulnerability.



John Beadle
"Mass Transportation" (1998)
Acrylic on canvas
71" x 53"
National Collection



Dionne Benjamin-Smith
 “Black Crab Pledge of Allegiance” (2004)
 Digital print
 24” x 24”
 National Collection

XVII

Post modern baroque:

Expanding the discourse, re-imagining aesthetics, form and meaning

In The Bahamas today one frequently observes examples of “over the top expression” in the dress and hairstyles of young women and men who possess the streets with their presence. The hair and clothing styles are incredible in a way that is similar to the age of Marie Antoinette or the court of Louis XIV. In assessing these displays, one can argue that The Bahamas has entered a period that can be described as “post-modern baroque”.

This age is driven by technology. It is a generation that does not recall black and white television, vinyl records, or the Beta versus VHS controversy. “I Know What You Did Last Summer” is considered a classic film; fashion is expression and Internet sites like YouTube and Facebook are reshaping notions of privacy. The space between public and private has been blurred. Designer items are prized, but value is also placed on a fiercely worn fake. And while one may be skeptical, in this context, to see an individual gush



over the creation of a monumental weave is no laughing matter. Such costuming has a technical quality that should not be taken lightly, requiring a great deal of skill and moreover creative imagination. Could this be art?

XVIII

Futurewise

Members of each successive generation of artists working in The Bahamas have brought new dimensions to the aesthetic visions of Bahamian art. Immersed in international art trends and new technologies, as well as being grounded in a more global sense of art history, each post war generation has managed to merge the forces of Bahamian culture with the pulse and imagery of global movements in art. As a result, there has been a shift in contemporary art practices. In the process, one finds an emphasis on ideas and ideology, rather than material and form.

The work of many contemporary Bahamian artists suggests the beginning of an expansion in the native view toward art making. Traditional ways are not necessarily dying, but rather a deepening of understanding of what art could be is occurring. New materials in old and new hands generate new ideas, new conceptions of space and objecthood. Artists increasingly question the relationship of the artwork to its audiences and how content may shift according to context. They have become more self-reflexive about their intentions in their work, amidst a still relatively conservative art market.

Many established and emerging artists are moving through these ideas and producing challenging and innovative works. Some are socially critical, others embrace process and form as content, and still others attempt to challenge the audience's comfort zones by engaging issues such as race, gender, economics, sexuality and violence.

It is natural and healthy for younger artists in a society to question and position themselves in opposition to what has come before. While older generations have earned the right to question this work, they have not earned the right to censor it. There is space for all forms of expression and the freedom to applaud and to contest it, productively.

When one considers all that has happened in such a short period of time, and when one looks at the new paths younger artists are clearing and the routes seasoned artists are taking, "Bahamian art" has earned the right to be engaged seriously as a concept, an ideology, a discourse.



ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

A

Janine Antoni (b. 1964)

Antoni was born in Freeport, Grand Bahama. She received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College in New York and an MFA from The Rhode Island School of Design.

Antoni's work blurs the distinction between performance art and sculpture. Transforming everyday activities such as eating, bathing and sleeping into ways of making art, Antoni's primary tool for making sculpture has always been her own body. For the 1993 Venice Biennale, she exhibited her "Lick and Lather" series of sculptures. In this exhibition, she cast molds of her bust in chocolate and soap. She then "erased" them by either licking the chocolate sculpture or washing herself with the soap bust.

Antoni is represented by Luhring Augustine Gallery in Brooklyn, New York.

Her work has been exhibited around the world at venues such as the Venice, Kwangiu, and Africus Johannesburg Biennales, The Guggenheim, Whitney, Museum of Modern Art and Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1998, she received the MacArthur Foundation Genius Award. Her work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art and The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art.

<http://www.luhringaugustine.com/artists/janine-antoni>

B

Hervis Bain (1942-2015)

Hervis L. Bain, Jr. was a graduate of St. John's College on the island of New Providence, and Nova Scotia College of Art. He was also a graduate of the Art Administration Institute of Harvard University. Bain was an internationally recognized artist whose works have been exhibited in Canada, The United States of America, Mexico and The Caribbean. Bain designed the National Coat of Arms, which was approved by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II on December 7, 1971 for use by the Bahamian people and the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.



John Beadle
(b. 1964)

John Beadle was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He received his initial art training at the College of The Bahamas and went on to complete his BFA at the Rhode Island School of Design. Beadle also holds an MFA from the Tyler School of Art, Temple University.

Beadle is an interdisciplinary contemporary artist whose work involves sculpture and painting. Beadle's work is largely influenced by ideas of identity, migration and slavery. He is an active Junkanooer and is known for his costume design; his fine artistry is also informed by this practice.

Beadle has exhibited extensively.

Dionne Benjamin-Smith
(b. 1970)

Dionne Benjamin-Smith was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. She studied under Stan Burnside at the College of The Bahamas and in 1991 received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in Graphic Design. She owns Smith-Benjamin Design, a graphic design company, with her husband, Jolyon Smith. Her artwork incorporates digital prints and often addresses contentious issues like race, gender and politics.
www.smith-benjamin.com/

Jason Bennett
(b. 1974)

Jason Bennett was born in West Palm Beach, Florida. He is the son of Sue Bennett-Williams. He graduated from St. Augustine's College on New Providence before attending the Savannah College of Art and Design where he received his BFA in 1998.

His work is largely abstract and incorporates elements of photography and collage. Bennett is active in outdoor sports, which influences much of his work.

Bennett has exhibited internationally extensively. He lives in Washington State.

Sue Bennett-Williams
(b. 1947)

Sue Bennett-Williams was born in New Jersey, USA. She grew up in Virginia during the Civil Rights Movement and moved to The Bahamas in 1970 as an art teacher. She met her husband and had her son, Jason, on New Providence. Bennett-Williams is a naturalized Bahamian and a retired assistant professor of art at the College of The Bahamas.



Bennett-Williams and her husband opened a successful art and music school in their studios known as ASMAC Studios.

She is recognized as one of the country's foremost ceramicists and art educators.

Chantal Bethel

Chantal Bethel was born in Haiti and educated in Brussels, Belgium, from the age of 12. She later relocated to The Bahamas, where her father had settled.

She began a career in office management, and left to pursue her artistic practice. She studied under mentors like Antonius Roberts and continued her visual arts education at Haliburton School of the Arts in Canada.

Her work revolves around themes of emotion, spirituality, motherhood and heritage.

Her work has been exhibited throughout New Providence and on her resident island, Grand Bahama; as well as being shown internationally.
<http://www.chantalbethel.com/index.html>

April Bey

April Bey was raised in Nassau, The Bahamas. She received a BFA in drawing from Ball State University in 2009, and an MFA in painting from California State University in 2014. She had her first solo show at Liquid Courage Gallery, Nassau, The Bahamas, and has exhibited internationally with artist residencies in Italy and Spain. Her work is interdisciplinary and addresses with themes of racial ambiguity, self-identity and nontraditional racism. Her current work is an introspective and social critique of American and Bahamian culture. Bey is a published author on issues associated with the underrepresentation of black women in the feminist movement and social media communication.

Wellington Bridgewater (b. 1948)

Sculptor and painter Wellington Bridgewater was born in Nassau, The Bahamas, is an intuitive and entirely self-taught artist.

Bridgewater began painting in 1991. Being a very religious man, his work has been recognized for its biblical references. He attributes many of his paintings and sculptures to his prophetic visions.

One of his rest commissions was a sculpture of St. Joseph in 1994 for the St. Joseph's Catholic Church. His life-size concrete sculptures, "Angel Blowing His Trumpet", "The Serpent Lady" and "Craws Lady" were acquired by The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas in 2004 for permanent exhibition on its grounds. Also that year, his acrylic painting "The Rapture" was exhibited at the inaugural National Exhibition.



Bridgewater is the first Bahamian to have his work on display at the American Folk Art Museum, New York NY, with his painting titled “Saddam Hussein as the Nine Headed Serpent in Revelations”. In 2014, he traveled with art dealer Jay Comment to the folk art museum to attend the unveiling.

Danielle “Dede” Brown

(b. 1984)

Dede Brown is a Bahamian artist living and working in Nassau, The Bahamas. After completing her BFA at The Savannah College of Art and Design, she returned home to integrate her skills and passion across three disciplines – art, design and photography. Both her artwork and photography have been exhibited widely in The Bahamas; it has also been shown in England. Her installation of flamingoes in flight is a popular attraction at the Sir Lynden Spindling International Airport.

Taine Bullard

(b. 1978)

Taine Bullard completed high school at R.M. Bailey before attending the College of The Bahamas majoring in architectural technology. In 1996, Bullard began work with renowned Bahamian architect Jackson Burnside. In 2000, Bullard return to COB as a full time art major. Bullard’s work is distinguished by its use of color, line and texture.

C

John Cox

(b. 1973)

John Cox was born and raised in Nassau, The Bahamas. He received both his BFA in illustration and MAT in art education from the Rhode Island School of Design.

Cox is an interdisciplinary artist whose work focuses on the “everyday”. His work has been exhibited throughout The Bahamas and internationally.

He is the founder of PopopStudios International Center for the Visual Arts. He also served as chief curator of The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas, an art instructor at the College of The Bahamas and director of The Current, the former art team at Baha Mar *philosophical just as well as it could be physical. The challenge is integrating the mind with the body. Our perpetual self-realization and the push and pull of ideologies are what motivate my structures.*

D

Claudette Dean



Claudette Dean was born and educated in Canada where she obtained a BA in French literature. She continued her studies at the University of Nice in the south of France, where she discovered a fine art community.

In 1979, Dean relocated from Montreal, Canada, to Freeport, Grand Bahama, where she continues to reside as a naturalised Bahamian citizen. She spent several years teaching French and later owned and operated two local businesses.

In her quest for deeper meaning, she started painting in the early 1990s. Under the guidance of Antonius Roberts, and with additional instruction, she began to develop her practice.

Dean works primarily with oil paint. She has also included clay, encaustics, sculpture and other mixed-media works in her practice.

<http://claudettedean.com/>

E

Michael Edwards

(b. 1975)

Michael Edwards was born and raised on New Providence, Bahamas. He attended St. Augustine's College for high school. He received his associated degree in art from the College of The Bahamas in 1995 and his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2000.

Artist's statement: *"I draw inspiration from a lot of different places that do not necessarily have to be art related. I know that looking at other artists' ability to recreate themselves and at the same time show some sense of longevity in their careers definitely excites me. I have come to realize that my work is preoccupied with finding a sense of architecture in and through abstraction but not in the decorative way in which abstraction can be used. I aspire to achieve a level of sophistication in the work through in depth research and theoretical exploration to exploit the possibilities of new media technology and its impact on society. I'd like to see Bahamian art broadening beyond traditional concepts and practices, to see art that not only speaks to an art historical past but also to a progressive and blatant push to the future."*

Eric Ellis

(b.1964)

Eric Ellis was born in Steventon, Exuma. He was educated at AF Adderley and RM Bailey Senior High School on New Providence. In 1981, he received a Copper Award in the 11th International Children's Art Exhibition held in Japan and first and second place awards in successive National Arts Festival Exhibitions in The Bahamas.

He held his first solo show in 1983 at the Jumbey Village Art Gallery. He won honourable mention in the 1988 Central Bank Art Competition and



received a scholarship to study art. Ellis is a member of The Royal Bahamas Police Force and lives in Andros.

David Ernest
(b. 1964)

David Ernest attended high school at AF Adderley. He later received art education at The College of The Bahamas under Stan Burnside. He attended the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts and currently resides in that city.

F

Sonia Farmer
(b. 1987)

Sonia Farmer is a poet and book artist. She is the founder of Poinciana Paper Press, a small fine press that produces hand bound, limited-edition chapbooks of Caribbean writing, based out of The Bahamas. She holds a BFA in writing from Pratt Institute, and her poetry won the 2011 Small Axe Literary Competition in poetry and has appeared in various publications including Poui, Tongues of the Ocean, The Caribbean Writer and The WomanSpeak Journal. Her handmade books and paper have appeared in several exhibitions in the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas and as part of several Transforming Spaces iterations.

Tyrone Ferguson

Tyrone Ferguson was born on New Providence, Bahamas. He is formally trained in traditional welding and metal work, and is a self-taught artist. His commissioned works, which include doors, gates and railings, can be found in private homes and hotels locally and abroad. Ferguson is also known for his imaginative sculpture works, which often incorporate recycled and found materials. www.tyroneferguson.com

H

Kendal Hanna
(b. 1936)

Kendal Hanna was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He is one of the country's earliest and only abstract expressionists. He began his training at Chelsea Pottery and continued it abroad, mostly in New York. After he returned home to New Providence he was hospitalized for mental illness, and was later diagnosed as schizophrenic.

Hanna lives and works at Popopstudios. He has exhibited extensively and remains one of the country's foremost artists.

Artist's statement: *Art has always played a central role in the investigation of life and of nature itself. Art even questions itself—its purpose*



and meaning. We might even say that an image symbolizes a view conveyed through passion and emotion all linked together in the image.

J

Erica M. James
(b. 1969)

Dr. Erica Moiah James was born on New Providence, The Bahamas. She received her first education in visual arts at the College of The Bahamas, where she studied art under Stan Burnside. In 1989, she graduated from Vassar College with a degree in architecture and urban; two years later she enrolled in the master's programme at Yale University to study fine arts.

She earned her Ph.D. in art history from Duke University.

Her research interests center on the arts of the African Diaspora, particularly the Caribbean and the Americas. She was the director and chief curator of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas for eight years.

She is an acclaimed academic and curator. Her publications include "Communion", an essay on the artist Rotimi Fani Kayode and "The Pleasure of Disorientation", a catalogue essay for The Global Caribbean Exhibition held at the Haitian Cultural Centre, Miami as a part of Art Basel 2009.

In 2016, she curated R. Brent Malone: Reincarnation, an extensive retrospective exhibition at the NAGB.

K

Susan "Sue" Katz Lightbourn
(b. 1962)

Sue Katz Lightbourn was born in Boston, Massachusetts. She holds a BFA in illustration from the Rhode Island School of Design.

She has lived in The Bahamas in 1992.

Her practice includes sketches and paintings. In more recent years, she has become known for her bold collage work. She has exhibited locally and internationally.

Artist's statement: In order to grow as an artist, I believe that you have to step out of your comfort zone. Pushing yourself creatively is vital not only to your craft, but to your process as well. It's very easy to become stagnant. In order to combat slipping into that mindset, challenging one's creativity is the key to growing and taking your art to the next level.

<http://www.susankatzstudios.com/index.html>

Jordanna Kelly



(b. 1992)

Jordanna Kelly was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. She was the first recipient of the Astarita Nassuvian Art Scholarship for the College of The Bahamas.

She completed her associate degree in art at the college.

Kelly has become known for her mixed media works and experiments with unorthodox materials. She has exhibited throughout New Providence and was commissioned to complete two sculptures for the Baha Mar Resort.

Arnold J. Kemp

Arnold Joseph Kemp is an American artist of Bahamian descent. He holds a combined BA/BFA from Tufts University and an MFA from Stanford University. He is a published poet and visual artist. He is represented by PDX Contemporary Art Gallery, based in Portland, Oregon.

Kemp is the recipient of awards and fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, Artadia Fund for Art & Dialogue, Art Matters Grant and Printed Matter Award for Artists. He is also the recipient of awards from Tufts University and the American Academy of Poets. Kemp's family lives in Nassau and on Cat Island.

Dominique Knowles

(b. 1996)

Dominique Knowles is an emerging artist from Nassau, The Bahamas. He is affiliated with Popopstudios International Center for the Visual Arts and is currently studying for a Bachelor of Fine Arts in studio at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Select exhibitions include Transcendence; Transforming Spaces 2014: Water at Doongalikstudios and Popopstudios; Cygnus, curated by Heino Schmid; Dominique Knowles: CRIT at Liquid Courage Gallery, moderated by Tessa Whitehead; Future Memories and New Media, both curated by Holly Bynoe.

Ricardo Knowles

Ricardo Knowles was born on the island of San Salvador in The Bahamas.

Knowles began painting at the age of seven. He was later accepted into the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, where he completed a four-year programme. He was awarded the Charles Toppan Prize for painting. He later moved to Paris, France to continue his studies of classical art at Cité University.

For seven summers Ricardo worked with the FINCO Summer Arts Workshop as an instructor in painting and drawing from 1988 to 1995. He has exhibited extensively on New Providence.



He became known for designing an anniversary stamp issue after 25 years of independence. Knowles was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts for his contribution to the arts.

L

Alton Lowe

(b. 1945)

Alton Lowe was born on Green Turtle Cay, Abaco. He attended The Frank Reilly School of Art from 1963-1996. His work has joined many collections locally and abroad, notably by members of the British Royal Family. Lowe is also a museologist dedicated to the history and culture of his home community. He is the founder of the Albert Lowe Museum, New Plymouth, Green Turtle Cay, Abaco.

M

Tony “Exuma, The Obeah Man” McKay

(1942-1997)

Tony McKay was born on Cat Island, The Bahamas. He is primarily remembered as a musician whose distinctive style mixed carnival, Junkanoo, calypso and ballad. At 17, he moved to New York City to study architecture; he ended up starting a band called Tony McKay and the Islanders. During his career he played with greats like Nina Simone; the Neville Brothers; Peter, Paul and Mary; and Bob Dylan. With several musician friends, he launched the group Exuma and recorded great Bahamian classics on an album by the same name Exuma.

McKay was a self-taught painter whose work was known for its intensity. He began painting in 1965 and started to devote more time to that art form in the late 1980's. He exhibited his works in Nassau and Florida.

In 1978, he received a British Empire Medal Queen Elizabeth II for his contribution to Bahamian music and culture.

Jace McKinney

Jace McKinney was born and raised in Nassau, The Bahamas. He holds a BFA in sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and is a two-time winner of the prestigious Central Bank of the Bahamas Art Competition. McKinney's work has been published in children's books, international magazines, newspapers and literary journals. It has been exhibited in The Bahamas and the United States. He lives in Michigan, where he is enrolled in the Seminary program at Andrews University pursuing a master's degree in divinity.

Jeffrey Meris



(b. 1991)

Jeffrey Meris was born in Saint Louis du Nord, Haiti and moved to Nassau, The Bahamas as a baby. He attended the College of The Bahamas, where he received an associate degree in arts and crafts. He is the recipient of the 2010 Popopstudios Junior Residency Award. He was also the recipient of the 2012 Harry C. Moore Lyford Cay Foundation Art Scholarship and the Temple University 2012 Scholar Award. In 2013, he won the coveted Central Bank of The Bahamas Art Competition. Meris' work has been shown in Nassau, The U.S., Vienna and Haiti.

Eddie Minnis

(b. 1947)

Eddie Minnis was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He trained at the Chelsea Pottery obtaining a BS in architecture from McGill University. He is better known today as a distinctive oil painter. He began painting scenes in situ across Nassau in the 70s and 80s.

Minnis is also a noted cartoonist, having serialized his Pot Luck cartoon in The Tribune for many years, and a prolific songwriter and performer. Minnis is the writer and composer of Bahamian classics like "Naughty Johnny".

He may, however, be best known for his use of a palette knife in layering oil paint on a canvas, as well as his studies of Poinciana trees in bloom. He currently resides in Eleuthera where he and his wife nurture a Jehovah's Witness ministry.

Jodi Minnis

(b. 1995)

Jodi Minnis was born on New Providence, The Bahamas. Minnis holds an associate of art degree from the College of The Bahamas. She won the Popop Junior Residency prize in 2014. She worked as the gallery assistant of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas and the assistant curator at the Pro Gallery. She trained under Central Bank Chief Curator and artist Antonius Roberts and is now the bank's assistant curator.

Artist's statement: Society provides us with ideals and standards that we are pressured to live up to. It introduces us to social games that we are to play. Engrained with these fallacious and ridiculous rules, we instinctively play these games. As an artist, it is my responsibility to respond to these ideals, games and doctrines.

Ward Minnis

(b. 1977)



Edward Minnis, Jr. (also known as Ward Minnis) was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He attended Queen's College until his family moved to the island of Eleuthera in 1990. He graduated from Governor's Harbour High School

Kareem Mortimer
(b. 1980)

Kareem Mortimer is an award-winning Bahamian filmmaker. He owns and operates his production company, Mercury Rising Media, which he founded in 2002.

Mortimer is an alumnus of both Toronto International Film Festival Talent lab and Berlinale Talents.

Artist's statement: *I believe that, in our society, the topic of race is a very confrontational one. My experience of life in Nassau is that it remains a very segregated place. There are very few spaces that I have found that are truly racially integrated with people who are willing to speak honestly... As a filmmaker, my work has been written about as lush, colourful and scenic. Inspired by the work of Neil Curtis, I want to depart from that with my gallery work and explore concepts of various themes that are rooted in the idea of race.*

<http://mercuryrisingmedia.com>

Lavar Munroe
(b. 1982)

Lavar Munroe was born in Nassau, The Bahamas.

He holds a BFA in illustration from Savannah College of Art and Design and an MFA from Washington University.

Munroe has exhibited extensively both locally and internationally. His work was featured at the 2010 Liverpool Biennale. He was also featured in the main exhibition at the 2015 Venice Biennale. He has shown across the U.S.

Munroe was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painting and Sculpture Grant (2013) and Postdoctoral Award of Research Excellence (2015) at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

www.lavar-munroe.com/

P

Holly Parotti
(b. 1972)

Born in Nassau, The Bahamas, Holly Parotti received her BFA in painting and printmaking from Virginia Commonwealth University. Parotti was the former assistant director and chief curator at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas and former curator at the D'Aguiar Art Foundation. She now



works as an independent curator and multi-media artist whose work includes printmaking, painting, book making and film.
<http://www.hollyparotti.com>

Lynn Parotti
(b. 1968)

Lynn Parotti was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. She holds a BFA in painting from The State University of New York before completing her MFA in painting and printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University. She also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, ME. She has lived and worked in London where she was artist in residence for the Chelsea Children's Hospital School until 2006.

Her work has been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions in the United States, United Kingdom, Italy and The Bahamas.
<http://www.parotti.com/>

Livingstone Pratt
(b. 1959)

Livingston Pratt was born in Nassau, Bahamas. He is a designer, decorator and display artist, in addition to being a visual artist. He has painted since the age of 11 and religious iconography features heavily in his works.

R

Dylan Rapillard
(b. 1979)

Dylan Rapillard was born in Freeport, Grand Bahama. He holds a bachelor's degree in hospitality management from Ecole Hoteliere De Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland in 2002. His works include a mix of textile designs, photography, sketches works in progress, paintings, sculptures and screenprints. Rapillard is currently is the master printer and print designer at Bahama Hand Prints, Nassau, Bahamas.

Antonius Roberts
(b. 1958)

Antonius Roberts was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He received his BFA in painting from the Philadelphia College of Art (Now The University of the Arts).

Roberts has exhibited his work internationally in Italy, the United States and Japan. Although he was trained as a painter, Roberts is known for his sculptural works made from the salvaged wood of foreign trees.

Roberts has dedicated himself both to his craft and to the mentorship of younger artists. He owns and operates Hillside Gallery and is also the chief curator at the Central Bank of The Bahamas Art Gallery.



www.antoniusroberts.com

Angelo Roker
(b. 1929)

Angelo Roker was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. His father, Lorenzo Roker, was a notable self-taught artist and Angelo followed in his footsteps, becoming a self-taught historian commercial artist and printer. For many years he ran a museum, gallery and antique shop on Harrold Road, where Vincent D'Aguiar first became interested in art. Roker played an active role in the design of the Bahamian flag and is a notable designer of maps and an innovative fine artist. He moved to the U.S. in the 90s and continues to paint in his leisure time.

James O. Rolle
(b. 1943)

James Rolle was born in Nassau, Bahamas. He developed an interest in art from an early age. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, where he obtained a BFA in 1966. He ventured on to the University of British Columbia, where he earned a master's degree in education, and a diploma in art history in 1980. An objective realist, Rolle paints still lifes and landscapes in oil and watercolour, and drawings in pen and ink.

Rolle is also well known for his work as an educator and in the civil service. He founded the art department at St. Augustine's College on New Providence in 1968. He played an instrumental role in developing the national arts and craft curriculum for public secondary schools and coordinated Bahamian representation in a number of regional art festivals.

Don Russell
(1921-1962)

Don Russell was born in the U.S. to Bahamian parents. He was one of the few trained black artists in The Bahamas in the earlier half of the 20th century and the 50s. Russell owned his own art school, Don Russell's Academy of Fine Art. At his academy, Russell taught his students to draw the human figure from life models. It was also one of the few places in Nassau where black and white artists came together for social and educational purposes.

S
Heino Schmid



(b. 1976)

Heino Schmid was born in Nassau, The Bahamas to a German father and Bahamian mother. He earned his BFA in photography at the Savannah College of Art and Design and MFA at the Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design in the Netherlands. Schmid is a resident artist at Popopstudios. He is the former curator of the Central Bank Gallery.

Schmid has exhibited extensively. His work has been shown internationally at Volta NY (2013); Group Show, Camagüey, Cuba (2013); Into the Mix, Louisville, Kentucky (2012); and Wrestling with the Image: Caribbean Interventions, Washington D.C. (2011).

Artist's statement: *The context of much of my work is concerned with narrative and the reconsideration of personal stories in the public forum. Using a variety of media such as video, drawing, installation and photography, I investigate the often simple, sometimes irrelevant encounters and collisions between people and their environments. Although I strive for universal metaphors, I approach each body of work in a very personal way. Using self-referential experiences as an avenue to illuminating collective experiences, I hope to reveal the subtle dramas that inform our social dynamics and, ultimately, bring those realities to the forefront for discussion.*

<http://www.heinoschmid.com/>

Jolyon Smith

(b. 1964)

Jolyon Smith was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He attended The College of The Bahamas, where he acquired a certificate in art and an associate degree in painting. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design, obtaining a BFA in painting.

Together with his wife he owns and operates Smith-Benjamin Design. www.smith-benjamin.com/

Tavares Strachan

(b. 1979)

Tavares Strachan was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. Strachan studied at the College of The Bahamas before attending Brown University and then the Rhode Island School of Design, where he received his BFA.

Strachan is an interdisciplinary artist, and has exhibited locally and internationally.

Clive Stuart

(b. 1963)

Clive Stuart was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He attended A.F. Adderley High School with John Beadle and Jolyon Smith, studying under Sandra Illingworth. He received an associate degree in art from the College



of The Bahamas under Stanley Burnside and a BFA in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design. He is currently an art educator in the public school system.

Dorman Stubbs

(b. 1961)

Dorman Stubbs was born in Nassau, The Bahamas. He attended C.C. Sweeting High School. He received a BFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and has distinguished himself as a professional artist.

In the 80s, Stubbs began his professional career as an impressionist painter. He is known for his idyllic paintings of sailboats and old Bahamian homes.

Dorman established the Spectrum Fine Art Gallery in 1989, located on Charlotte Street and Bay Street; the Tropical Gallery, located in the International Bazaar, Bay Street in 1989; and the Artist Gallery, located on Marlborough Street, Nassau in 1991.

Edrin Symonette

(b. 1987)

Edrin Symonette was born and raised in Rock Sound Eleuthera, Bahamas. He graduated from the College of The Bahamas with an associate degree in art in June 2007. Through his work, he responds to the natural environment as well as cultural heritage in the Bahamas. He has explored indigenous and African influence, as well as racial blending, through his work.

Symonette is currently an art educator in the public school system.

Allan Wallace

(b. 1979)

Allan Wallace was born on New Providence, The Bahamas. He is largely a self-taught Bahamian artist. His talents have made him a Central Bank competition winner. Specializing in large-scale works, his colourful murals are easily recognized on walls around New Providence.

Hilton Woodside

(b. 1948)

Hilton Woodside was born on, Andros, The Bahamas. As a child he enjoyed drawing from found materials, using charred twigs. He attended secondary school on New Providence at Western Senior (now C.R. Walker). He entered the Royal Bahamas Police College and served as a police officer for more than six years before retiring from the force.

In 1979 while employed in the hotel industry, he met Elizabeth Weeks (deceased) a retired visual arts and design educator. Woodside began taking lessons from her.



Today he is known as a painter whose work is self-reflective and influenced by nature.



NAGB THANK YOU

The NAGB would like to thank Dr. Erica James for the use of her essay, “Bahamian Modernism”. The NAGB also wishes to thank its hard working staff and art educators around The Bahamas for continuing their commitment to developing the next generation of Bahamian artists.

We are forever grateful.