

WRESTLING WITH THE IMAGE

CARIBBEAN INTERVENTIONS



CURATED BY CHRISTOPHER COZIER AND TATIANA FLORES



THE WORLD BANK



Art Museum of the Americas
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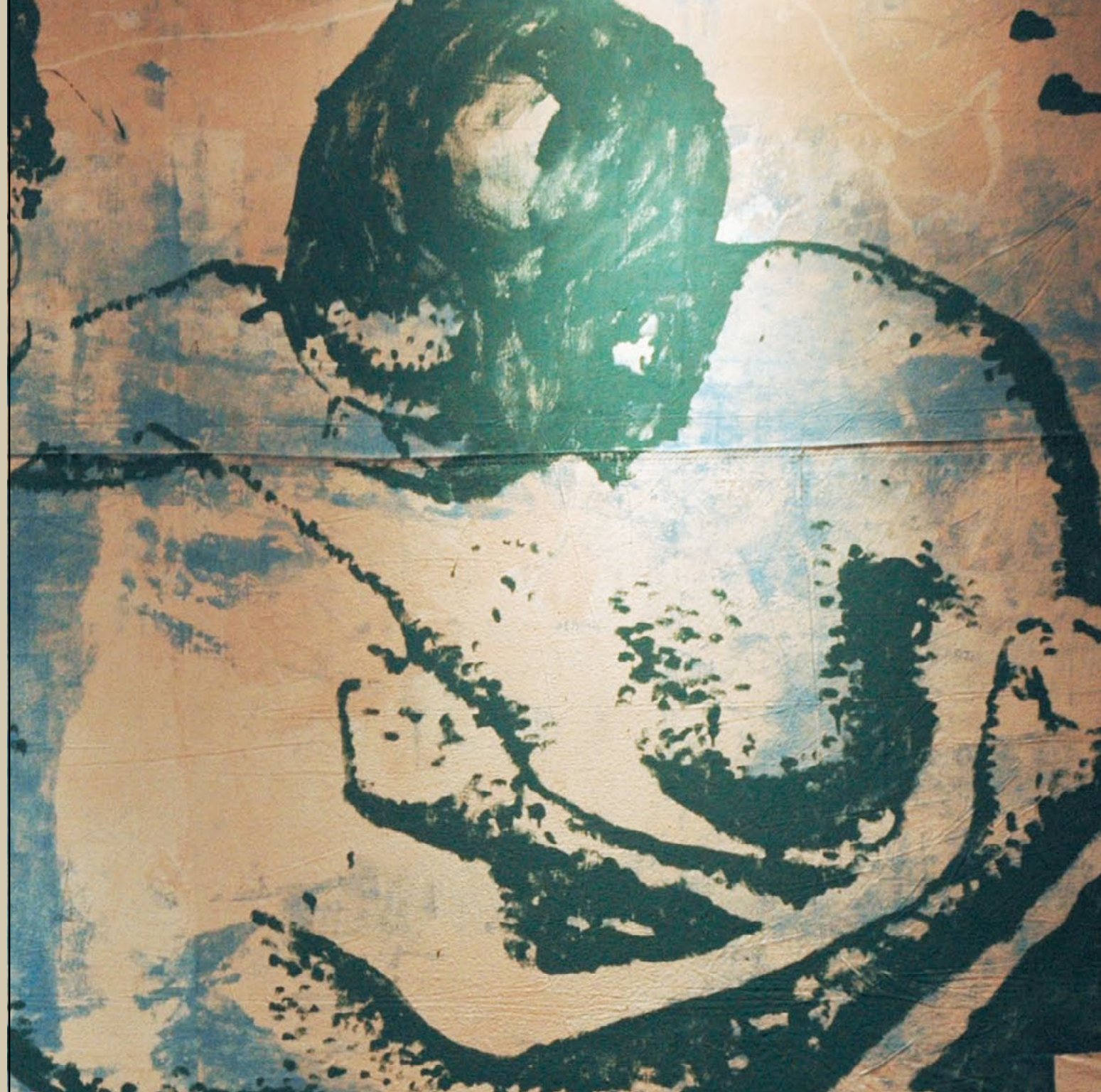
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NOTES ON WRESTLING WITH THE IMAGE

CHRISTOPHER COZIER

1: Where is this Caribbean?

Being an artist within, of or from the Caribbean requires dexterity and wit. The definition often feels illogical or ill-fated, perhaps because it cannot fully describe the expanse of ocean and the archipelago of islands, nation-states, colonial territories, departments, and unions with diverse populations, languages, geography, cultures and histories. When one is on a metropolitan subway train or in an airport looking at an advertisement with hammocks, palm trees and blue skies with available bodies and smiling faces — or looking at the abject “silhouettes” cramped

in sloops on a CNN report, or moving in the background of historical photographs — these become troubling and anxious questions.

The Caribbean region was traditionally narrated as Spanish, English, French and Dutch, with their respective traditional and creole forms, but many other languages also shape the Caribbean experience: indigenous languages from the northern Amazonian region in the Guyanas, those of the various Maroon ethnicities derived from Africa and the Garifuna who reach into Central America, Bhojpuri, Cantonese and creoles like Papiamentu. The Caribbean continues to expand and shift. In this manifold space, experiences produced through the visual create meeting-points breaking through a multiplicity of barriers.

The Caribbean is a site of investigation for the artists in *Wrestling with the Image: Caribbean Interventions*. This is a constantly expanding space shaped by wherever they may travel, reside or imagine. It is articulated by individual acts of visual inquiry seeking to transgress the usual and fixed cultural, political or geographic parameters. The works of art on display are often in contest with a much longer history of distorted representations that continue to be internally and externally manufactured. *Wrestling with the Image* is not a survey or inventory of linguistic, ethnic, cultural or national modes. Even though similarly engaged artists from many countries or language groups may not be represented in this exhibition, their works remain in dialogue.

As part of the wider *About Change* project, *Wrestling with the Image* investigates contemporary Caribbean visual thinking and its trajectories: our experiences or ways of understanding

and moving through the world. Some of these artists were born in one island and live and work in another. Some are born in the “Caribbean diaspora” and continue to investigate how that shapes their ways of thinking. For them, the Caribbean is also a site of memory, where they process family histories or the vast archives of former colonial powers. They may live in places like Japan, Austria or Germany, not traditionally located in diasporic mappings. Much of their work is inspired by one location, produced in another and presented yet elsewhere. It reflects the way Caribbean people have always been on the move.

Heino Schmid’s performance-derived video *Temporary Horizons*, for example, was inspired by experiences in Port of Spain during a residency at Alice Yard, but produced in Blue Curry’s studio in London and first presented in Liverpool. La Vaughn Belle, who was born in Tobago and now lives in St Croix, shot and developed her video work in Havana. *Porcelain Diaries* suggests empathy with and curiosity about a vernacular living-room space, where decorative figurines and keepsakes tell *telenovela*-like microcosmic yet epic stories of love, mixed-race desire and emigration in Cuba — but perhaps also anywhere in the region?

Abigail Hadeed’s photographs of elderly people with their UNIA and Black Star Line certificates were shot in Costa Rica. These images of Afro-Caribbean populations on the Central American coast discuss the movement of people and ideas in the region, knitting together communities often unknown to each other. Sheena Rose’s videos are about Cape Town. Marlon Griffith’s images of school girls with “powder on their chest” in “bling” patterns were shot by Gerard Gaskin, a Trinidadian photographer living in New York, while he was visiting Port of Spain. Many of these works are collaborative enterprises between artists, derived from shared observations and interests.

2: Looking and contending

I got the idea for the name of this exhibition while looking at a series of images by John Cox, with titles such as *I am not afraid to fight a perfect stranger*. We see the artist rendering himself in training, at the starting block, as a runner, as a boxer or sometimes as a wrestler. He presents himself, in various combative postures and sequences, as a contender, but with an image of himself. This entanglement or engagement of the other-self, a shadow or mirror image, is an ongoing story. Will these selves ever merge and find cohesion, or will one be split asunder in the search for “true” self-consciousness and awareness? The Caribbean artist is always in competition with a long history of expedient labelling of their world and their very selves — externally and also internally.

In Nikolai Noel's *Toussaint et George*, iconic portraits of two American revolutionary liberators and “founding fathers” face off and mirror each other, highlighting the unanswered questions of our varied histories and dreams. If we shifted to very traditional historical art world imagery, they could be replaced by portraits of Wifredo Lam and Pablo Picasso. There is something intriguing about the miniature scale of these images — visual commentaries which function like discrete interpersonal notes placed in the public domain. These works recall Noel's earlier miniscule public works, with images not much larger than postage stamps, placed on gates, walls and lampposts in Port of Spain.

Ebony G. Patterson's *Entourage* is a constructed studio group portrait of friends and family — many of them fellow artists — dressed and made up to look like stylish dancehall characterizations, complete with ironic bleached faces and

ABIGAIL HADEED, TREES WITHOUT ROOTS, 1995

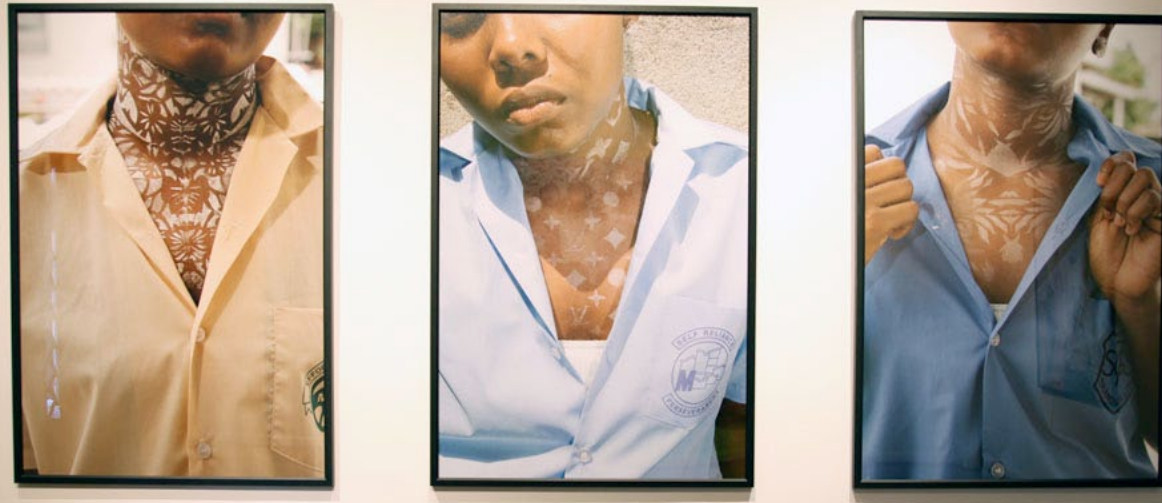


androgynous attire. This is real transnational culture, initially driven by a social underclass, which has become a viral vernacular reaction to ideas of high and low culture within the class warfare of urban Kingston. The engagement of this language infers the “carnavalesque” — not as folk spectacle co-opted by nationalist regimes, but as social contestation in the urban space, satirical and virile.

Marlon James's *Mark and Giselle* look back at us from within the frame, but not as generic nameless silhouettes. They are fellow artists and friends living in Kingston, and co-conspirators in this declared moment. Their clothes and expression defy our expectations, along with the empty background. They could be young people anywhere — Toronto, Port of Spain, Johannesburg? Perhaps only a sense of time or the “now” is conveyed when we encounter these images.

In a place like the Caribbean, we cannot take the agency of portraiture for granted, in the aftermath of a much longer history of topographical and anthropological representations. The subject position — or the role of the subject — within the frame or field of pictorial representation is highly contested. Standard regional historical narratives of the Caribbean recount or register developmental shifts from persons being privately owned property — indentured workers and colonial subjects — to being citizens — of a republic, for example. But in the pictorial domain, we are still anthropological, cultural, national, ethnic or electoral commodities and signifiers. We remain labelled but nameless images. The moment of encounter and of exchange is what is at stake. The question is whether the purpose for taking the image shifts to real portraiture and not simply image-capture, in the worst sense of the term, leaving us as subjected signs of ourselves, in a kind of cultural *doppelgänger*-ing that

MARLON GRIFFITH, LOUIS, TRIBAL, BLOSSOM, 2009





disturbingly reminds us of our traditional role within a visual territory not exclusively of our own making, or coyly performed.

3: Space vs place

In viewing this work, we are asked to understand the Caribbean as a space rather than a place: a space that is shaped by wherever Caribbean people find themselves, whether in the Americas at large, Europe, Africa or Asia. It is a conversation about movement in the Atlantic world — a dialogue about dispersal, rather than just displacement.

Charles Campbell's *Bagasse Cycle* is a graphic codification of the things we know on a daily basis about our work and

our experiences, but transformed into patterns and signs. His investigation of over-familiar Dutch slave ship designs transforming into DNA or atom-like forms transforming into flocks of migrating birds convey the story of the “migrations”, as he sometimes calls them, in which our experiences are taken back —made into aesthetic forms, seeking out the dissonance between what the forms mean and or feel like when manipulated or reclaimed.

Blue Curry uses elements associated with the tropical and tourism to bring our attention to the status of the Caribbean island as a contemporary industrial site. His work engages these signs mischievously to conceptually alter our awareness of history and the current social space. In a recent installation in Liverpool, he placed gallons of sun-tan lotion into a perpetually oscillating cement mixer. Many of his “untitled” works reveal their intent through Curry's listing of the materials, which read like alternative titles. It is a deeply ironic commentary on formalist language. His video *Discovery of the Palm Tree Phone Mast* — one of his few works with a declared title — makes fun of the language of “discovery” in its scrutiny of a cellular tower designed to look like a palm tree, so as not to spoil the view of tourists. The work refers to the ongoing development of the tropical as an artificial construction with roots in the 19th-century post-sugar era.

For artists like Roshini Kempadoo and Joscelyn Gardener, the archive becomes an archeological site for reconstructing memory to rethink historical or received knowledge and mythologies — to tell new stories. Heino Schmid's pursuit of balance or a fleeting order in *Temporary Horizons* infers something about the artist and his society. His act of balancing bottles looks like a sleight of hand — a performative feat

like a street hustler's to gain critical attention and to discuss predicaments in a postcolonial world. Each time the bottle falls, one flinches.

The idea of “living history” — history in the perpetual present tense — is conveyed through re-telling or re-enactment, but through newer markers more related to contemporary signs, in a process of visual reconstruction via the imaginary. This is not a form of escapism, but a distortion aimed at “re-seeing”. The ooze of Nicole Awai's *Specimen From Local Ephemera: Mix More Media!* is a fluid potent form in motion — organic and free-flowing, but having no specific form or shape as it adapts to new spaces and new relationships in its altered state. Like the topsyturvy dolls of the colonial era in which the artist splits herself, sometimes another self becomes the inverted other or someone else altogether. This chameleon-like form is alarming to a world that requires fixed and readable signs and boundaries.

These artists display a defiance against being pinned down to a single location, and the expectations ascribed to being here or there. Defying these territorial boundaries brings up questions of license and approval, and indeed images of passports, certificates, and associated coats of arms and official insignias move through many of the works, underscoring the way that bodies and land are constantly commodified and licensed. So much of Caribbean reality has to do with stamps and certificates and “papers”, and the visual vocabulary of these images is another way in which these works are in dialogue with each other, from Hew Locke's appropriation of obsolete bonds and certificates, to the passport stamps on Jean Ulrick Désert's colour-by-number diagrams, the royal insignia that becomes a mark of identity in Holly Bynoe's *Imperial*, or the *Natives on the Side* of the coat of arms in Nikolai Noel's image. Tonya Wiles



VIRTUAL EXILES: THE COLOUR MUSEUM (2) – ROSHINI KEMPADOO (2000)

THESE ARTISTS DISPLAY A DEFIANCE AGAINST BEING PINNED DOWN TO A SINGLE LOCATION, AND THE EXPECTATIONS ASCRIBED TO BEING HERE OR THERE.

sticks her tongue out at us through a china bowl “certified” by the British crown. This record of her playful, performative act of transforming colonial-era crockery into a mask provokes traditional readings of “whiteness” or “blackness” in the Caribbean space. Around her wrist we see a coloured string, placing the gesture within contemporary life in the islands.

4: Digital natives

In the recent Caribbean past, the relationship between home and away or onboard and abroad was always one of tension or competition around discussions of authenticity and access. Over the last ten or fifteen years, the Internet, cheaper travel and digital media have facilitated new ways of working and of collaboratively creating critical dialogues that defy traditional boundaries (national, cultural and even linguistic). Perhaps the Caribbean may be redefined by these exchanges across this new “critical space”?

Online media allow individual artists in various locations to share ideas and images and to think more expansively. New relationships or new conditions are in the process of being produced for how Caribbean people can relate not just to each other, but also to wider audiences. For some, the Internet is a site of memory and historical investigation. For others, it is an

actual site of daily experience. For all, it becomes a dialogue about visual vocabularies, sensibility and even a particular social awareness.

The digital world so far has no overly determined and owned history in the field of representation, so these artists are not burdened by the baggage of, for example, the history of painting or the status of the black body within the frame or field of representation. It is open season. And access to digital equipment allows a new generation of artists to create images and to disseminate them in ways that break down traditional hierarchies of skills and specialized knowledge as means to define value — for example, in video and photography.

JEAN-ULRICK DÉSSERT, THE SEVENTH SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE U.N., 2009.





THEY ARE NOT WAITING TO BE THE SUBJECT OF DISCOVERY, BUT DARING THEMSELVES TO TRANSGRESS BOUNDARIES AND NEW EXPERIENCE.

Rodell Warner's *Worker* photographs tackle the idea of the labourer in a long history of social documentation. But these individuals' work attire has the feeling of costumes, and their place within the landscape takes on the look of 19th-century topographical images of people and places — images of slaves and peasants. The artificiality of the light creates a slightly absurd quality, rendering both the subject and the place unfamiliar.

The powdered neck and bosom, long a confusing sign in the class warfare of the Caribbean, is embraced and asserted in Marlon Griffith's *Powdered Girls*, his take on street-level glamour and pride. Griffith creates templates for the application of the powder from the logos of high-fashion houses — a whole new reading of bling and self. The talcum powder often refers to freshness, as in just-having-bathed — being cool in the hot

sun and not sweaty. Did it originate from the powdered hair and bosoms of the European courts that once colonized these islands?

A sense of place of origin may shape these artists' interests, but they are not satisfied to represent a fixed site or territory. They are not waiting to be the subject of discovery, but daring themselves to transgress boundaries and new experience. As curator, I have tried my best not to do a "Caribbean" show. In shifting back and forth between my visual and curatorial forms of enquiry, I feel a tremendous empathy with the ambitions and concerns of these artists within the current moment. For them, the region remains an ongoing work in progress.



IN DEFENSE OF PALM TREES

TATIANA FLORES

In a recent article, the Venezuelan artist Alessandro Balteo Yazbeck is quoted as saying, “If the grid is the new palm tree of Latin American art, we are making progress.”¹

This bold statement is striking because in the Western hemisphere, the area that is most characterized by palm trees is the Caribbean. Nowhere else is the palm tree a defining motif—certainly not in Mexico or the Southern Cone, two major centers of Latin American art. So in this artist’s assessment the landscape of the Caribbean is what is wrong with “Latin

American art.” Yet, the Caribbean encompasses much more than parts of Latin America. Historically colonized by Holland, Denmark, England, the United States, and France, in addition to Spain, the Caribbean spans a region of astounding diversity and syncretism with the common threads of colonialism and slavery. It is a place of rich complexity that is more than the sum of its parts. How unfair to imply that this locus of staggering beauty, tragic history, and uncertain future is synonymous with lack of progress, as though the Caribbean should be held responsible for the consequences of its colonial past. What does progress even mean, and why use it as a model from which to judge art? The solution implied by the quotation is that artists should reject their surroundings and opt for a rationally-based abstract visual language. It is clear from the works in this exhibition, however, that the grid is not the answer for artists from the Anglophone, francophone, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. Neither are palm trees, for that matter, but what we do find are works laden with content. Photographs, videos, paintings, prints, sculptures, and installations allow us a glimpse into the multifaceted contemporary experience of the Caribbean.

Wrestling with the Image is an apt title for this exhibition because it conjures up the sheer difficulty of making pictures. Perhaps the task of image production is not so hard in other contexts, but the quandary formulated by Dominican intellectual Silvio Torres-Saillant applies here: “What literature and thought can come from a civilization that is aware of its catastrophic

beginning?”² Furthermore, present-day experience in the region is full of challenges, with staggering poverty rates and limited opportunities for employment. Haiti alone is both a tragedy of epic proportions and a global model of hope. As a result of the precarious economies of the Caribbean, migration is a part of life, and diasporic communities abound in the United States and Europe. Under these conditions, being an artist is not an easy choice, whether one stays or goes. To remain in the Caribbean and survive as an artist implies both a level of relative economic privilege and the constant judgment in the eyes of others that one is not a productive member of society. To leave involves facing the often painful experience of the immigrant, being subjected to stereotype and prejudice, and needing to address topics that are intelligible to a global public. Becoming an artist is a difficult decision in any context; in the Caribbean, it is almost an existential question.

This exhibition includes work in various mediums and by artists of Caribbean origins, regardless of their current place of residence. They demonstrate an astounding wealth of creativity, but what most unites them thematically is the ways in which they point out the opacity of images. Artists and art historians know that pictures are constructs, never transparent, but too often representations are taken at face value. Images of white sandy beaches, palm trees, and sunsets have molded contemporary perceptions of the Caribbean; the tourism industry promotes these locales as though they were devoid

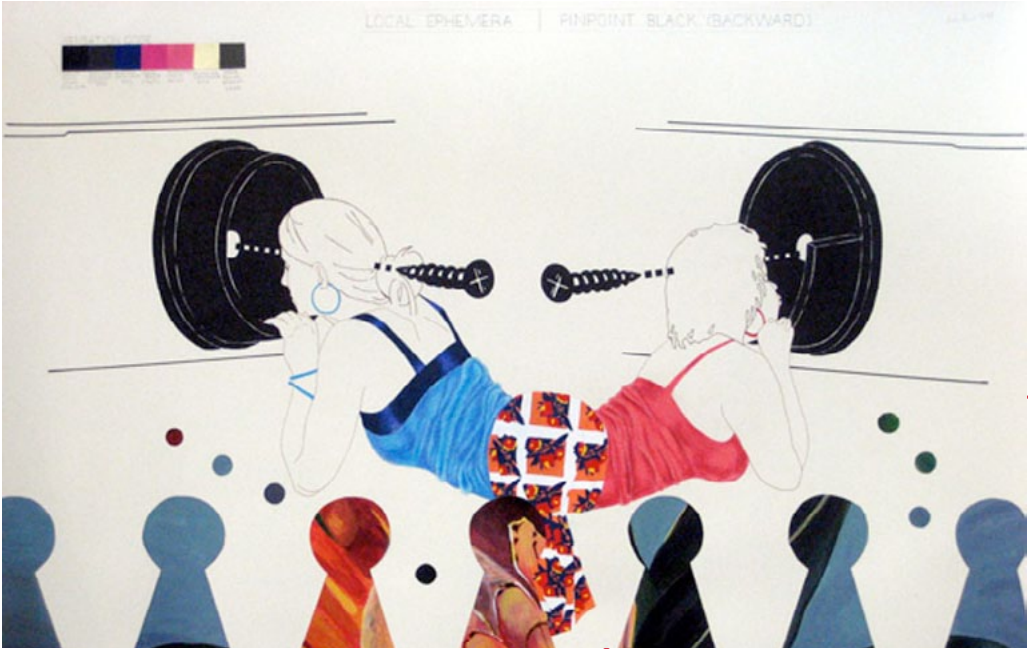
of history and culture. As a result, the region’s artists are particularly sensitive to stereotype, and much of their work calls attention to images as illusory and insufficient.

Taking the theme of the exhibition at its most literal, specific works engage the theme of fight and struggle. John Cox’s representations of boxers often feature a black man who seems to be sparring against his doppelgänger. In one instance, the man is hitting his own face while his partner stands back. These paintings tend to be deeply textured, with multiple layers or various shades of colors, and they give the impression that the image did not come easily, appearing worked and reworked.

The final products themselves create uncomfortable tensions, both within the composition and for the viewers. They seem to allude to a process of self-examination that is never fully resolved. Ultimately, they succumb to a kind of powerlessness, ironic for representations of fighters, and somehow the spectator becomes implicated in their defeat. The photographs of Nadia Huggins problematize the image in similar ways. In *The Quiet Fight* is a striking scene of two men wrestling under the clouds. Executed in high contrast black and white, the men’s faces are obscured by shadows while the clouds gleam in the upper register. As in Cox’s boxing scenes, they would almost appear to be the same bald, dark-skinned man, except for the fact that they are captured in a photograph. Black masculinity here is examined through the stereotype of the African-descended male as strong, violent, and interchangeable (i.e.

lacking a distinct identity). Another image *Black Hole* probes the theme further, focusing here on the adolescent body of a boy as seen from above his head. The title refers to his black hair, forming the almost perfect shape of an oval; his face remains invisible. There is a certain sadness pervasive to Nadia Huggins’ images, whether these be empty or peopled. Regardless of her working with color or in black and white, she uses dark tones in very expressive ways, evoking melancholy and desolation. Though her images of black men play up to stereotype as a way of examining preconceptions, her landscapes challenge the picturesque views of the Caribbean.

The idea of the double is also an integral part of the work of Nicole Awai. In *Specimen from Local Ephemera: Mix More Media!*, Awai depicts herself in a double self-portrait wearing a light colored camisole and a green skirt with a batik print of sea turtles. Lying on a surface covered with discarded materials, the version of herself on the left looks out at the viewer confrontationally, making a gesture of resistance. Her other self seems relaxed, and her attitude is more receptive. With a downcast gaze and her hand held out in salutation, she acknowledges the viewer in an apparently friendly manner. The image is complicated and puzzling, with references to the artistic trade interspersed with a map legend made up of nail polish colors and their names, abstract colorful shapes, three water towers, and a collaged landscape of a deteriorating house in split perspective. Deliberately unresolved, it plays



SPECIMEN FROM LOCAL
EPHEMERA: PINPOINT BLACK
(BACKWARD) GRAPHITE, ACRYLIC
PAINT AND NAIL POLISH ON
PAPER, 2007

with illusion and representation to call attention to the lack of transparency of visual language.

Richard Fung points out how illusion is created cinematically in his video *Islands*. Here, he deconstructs the Hollywood film *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison* (1956), directed by John Huston and starring Robert Mitchum and Deborah Kerr. The movie tells the story of an American marine stranded in the South Pacific during World War II but was filmed in Tobago using locals of Chinese descent as extras playing Japanese soldiers. The artist’s uncle Clive had such a role, and Fung’s video intersperses clips from the film with suggestive commentary, such as “Uncle Clive

has never seen a Japanese person in his life” and later, when recounting the uncle’s experience of viewing the film, “He strains to see himself.” The video calls attention to how, in the hands of Hollywood, the Caribbean becomes a blank slate on which to project fantasy and desire. In juxtaposing close-ups of the actors with shots of the masses of extras running across the beach, it exposes how difference is created and perpetuated. *Islands* begins and ends with a shot panning over clusters of palm trees, revealing how, in the popular imaginary, the tropics are interchangeable.

The work of Blue Curry also plays up stereotypes of tropical islands, employing motifs associated with the tourist industry, such as palm trees, conch shells, and sunscreen. In the video *Discovery of the Palm Tree: Phone Mast*, he shoots a landscape, focusing on a lone, scrawny palm tree in the distance. As the camera closes in, it is revealed that it is not a tree at all but, rather, a phone tower that has been camouflaged to blend in with the landscape. Employing a defining trope of the Caribbean, the video humorously shows us that appearances are not always what they seem. Heino Schmid's video *Temporary Horizon* shows a different take on the production of images. In it, we see two glass bottles precariously balancing each

other on an angle. A few moments later, the bottles fall, and a man appears to put them back in place. As he balances the bottles, the viewer is only able to see his arms and waist. The process continues endlessly, a Sisyphean task. The piece carries a resistance to meaning reminiscent of the work of Marcel Duchamp, yet the introduction of the producer makes the point that it is a construction, not a readymade. Refusing to stay put for posterity, the two bottles must become images rather than objects in order to function as an artwork. Furthermore, the transparency of the bottles belies the ethnicity of the piece's producer. It is only when they fall and he puts them back together that we become aware of his tanned arms. In hinting



HEINO SCHMID
Installation views:
Temporary Horizon,
2010, Alice Yard

at his racial identity, the artist plays with the notions of visibility and invisibility. The clear bottles appear to be empty receptacles for multiple meanings; when the artist reveals himself, their range of interpretive possibilities becomes more limited, as viewers project their own assumptions onto the image. Whereas Schmid uses the trope of transparency to obscure meaning, opacity is another tactic that this group of artists employs to great success. Patricia Kaersenhout's *Invisible Men* project takes Ralph Ellison's classic novel as a point of departure. She blacks out the text and draws multi-layered images on the book's pages in order to render it useless as a vehicle of written information. Nevertheless, her intervention evokes the book's theme: the plight of an African-American man completely overlooked by society. Dhiradj Ramsamoedj's constructions embody the very notion of opacity. They consist of life-sized figures completely covered in colorful squares of cloth, as intensely visual as they are menacing. Actively posed, they bring to mind African traditions of masquerade and aesthetics of excess; nevertheless, to a Western audience, they are impenetrable and exotic, mysterious and unknowable. Charles Campbell's painting *Bagasse* negates the traditional association of a painting as a window onto the world and as a beautiful object to offer instead a bleak vision of an anti-landscape. In a stark palette of black and white, the artist portrays a bird's-eye view of crushed stalks of sugar cane on the

ground. The title is the French-word for the fibrous byproduct of the sugar cane after all the juice has been extracted. The image suggests chaos and destruction; instead of the scenic view of the tropics, we witness the traces of suffering that remain, stark reminders of the legacy of slavery. The trope of opacity is an effective way with which to deal with the region's legacy of slavery and subsequent racial oppression. To represent atrocity and injustice iconically runs the risk of trivialization; therefore, several of the artists in the exhibition seek oblique ways to visualize what is essentially unrepresentable. In her series of stone lithograph prints, *Creole Portraits III*, Joscelyn Garner recovers the history of slave women in hauntingly beautiful images each depicting a typical hairstyle of an African woman that is juxtaposed to an iron collar and a sprig of flowers. Rendered in a meticulous, detailed manner, the prints belie the horror of their subjects. They refer to the abortion practices of slave women in the Caribbean, who would ingest the herbs pictured in order to end unwanted pregnancies and resist the perpetuation of slavery. In punishment for these actions, their masters would force them into the types of collars depicted. Gardner's suite of images renders homage to countless unnamed victims. Terry Boddie also tackles the subject of slavery throughout much of his mixed-media work. The artist transfers photographic images to canvas or paper and intervenes these to produce multilayered compositions that reflect on the processes of history and memory. In the series



NIKOLAI NOEL
Detail: Toussaint et George,
2010

that he contributes to this exhibition, he juxtaposes mechanically reproduced images depicting coins and a gun with paintings of objects evocative of farming, ritual, or the slave trade. The resulting small-scale images appear fragile and unassuming. Deliberately difficult to interpret, they evoke the past but in a way that underscores its fragmentary and incoherent nature. The work of Nikolai Noel also engages with the construction of history, challenging traditional expectations of the depiction of “great men.” His drawing *Toussaint et George* juxtaposes the hero of Haitian independence Toussaint L’Ouverture with George Washington in a thoroughly unconventional manner. The two portraits appear as mirror images, with each character similarly posed and gazing at the other. While Washington’s features are drawn in pencil and his skin rendered with a light gray wash, L’Ouverture’s face is painted in a thick black acrylic, and his eyes, nose, and mouth are etched into the paint, giving him a gruesome mask-like appearance. Like Nicole Awai and John Cox, Noel here explores the notion of the double in an interesting way. Clearly,

L’Ouverture is Washington’s Haitian counterpart, but the picture is structured so as to make him appear as the American’s other, his dark side. Serving as a reminder of George Washington’s background as a slave owner, the work deconstructs the notion of the hero and intertwines the histories of the United States and the Caribbean.

Through numerous visual tropes, the artists in the exhibition insistently remind us that appearances are deceiving. One group of artists applies techniques of formal layering to call attention to the fact that images are complicated things. Lilian Blades’ collages and sculptures employ a maximalist aesthetic; through different textures and patterns, she creates objects that offer a visual overload. Marcel Pinas’ installation *Fragment kbi wi kani* consists of thousands of bottles all covered in colorful pieces of cloth. The patterns identify specific Maroon villages—historically, the communities of runaway slaves in Suriname—and thereby celebrate local traditions. Sri Irodikromo presents a monumental batik cloth with multiple patterns and perforated with tree vines. The cloth combines the artist’s Indonesian heritage—through the use of the wax-based method of batik dyeing—with the symbols and traditions of the African and indigenous inhabitants of Suriname. Through formal layering, she calls attention to the cultural complexities of her native country. Pauline Marcelle too is inspired by textiles in her paintings from the series *Bend Down Boutique*, but her approach is also informed by photography and installation.

The artist photographs bundles of second-hand clothing that she seeks out in Africa, where the trade in used garments forms an important part of local economies. Coloring over mechanically reproduced images, she creates intriguing compositions and makes a singular contribution to the visual language of abstract painting. Holly Bynoe approaches the act of image-making through digital means. Her collages question the ability of photographs to capture “truth” through techniques of decomposition and fragmentation. She arranges her subjects into new configurations that both argue that all images are constructions and challenge traditional assumptions about gender, place, and history. An eloquent writer, Bynoe’s pieces are often accompanied with poetic text that further precludes a straightforward reading of the image. In her view, reality is unknowable, and the production of meaning is inherently a fictitious process.

Just as place, history, and process are made complicated in the hands of these artists, so are subjectivities. Those who engage the human figure—Sheena Rose, Marlon James, Ebony G. Patterson, Marlon Griffith, Rodell Warner, Phillip Thomas, Oneika Russell, Ewan Atkinson, Natalie Wood, and Tonya Wiles—offer numerous visions on contemporary experience. Rose, James, Patterson, and Griffith focus on urban youth, portraying their subjects as strong and confident. Wiles and Warner turn historical tropes on their head by engaging with colonial subject matter in insubordinate ways. Thomas, Atkinson, Russell, and



MARLON JAMES
Stef 2, 2010

Wood delve into worlds of fantasy and fiction Objects as well are endowed with new meanings through the eyes of certain of these artists. Jamie Lee Loy deconstructs the traditional still life through her pictures of flower petals that are pinned down or bundled together, clam shells arranged around upright nails, and utensils transformed to look like weapons. Her compositions confound expectations, recasting Surrealist experiments from a twenty-first century perspective. La Vaughn Belle’s video *Porcelain Diaries* brings decorative objects to life, humorously exposing middle class sensibilities in a sympathetic and playful manner. Santiago Cal’s grouping of wooden hammers transform a mundane tool into a sculptural object. The pieces are hand carved with numerous variations ranging from the whimsical to

the absurd. Despite their toy-like nature, they have a serious subtext, considering that timber was the main export of the artist’s native Belize during the colonial era. In this light, the hammers function as emblems of futility; they call attention to the predicament of colonized peoples.

The Caribbean has been referred to by scholars as the “laboratory of globalization.” It is one of the first places in the world where so many cultures came together and learned, for better or for worse, to coexist. Thus, Caribbean artists are by nature global citizens, and their works call attention to the porosity of borders and the multifaceted nature of contemporary experience. Kishan Munroe has traveled the world, seeking to

connect with peoples of different cultures and locate the ties that bind all of humanity together. Hew Locke and Jean-Ulrick Désert take a more cynical view of globalization, offering bodies of work that challenge and ridicule colonial and neo-colonial power structures. Abigail Hadeed and Roshini Kempadoo reflect on the experience of migration through the filter of nostalgia. Hadeed sought out the Afro-Caribbean peoples who migrated to Costa Rica and documented their continuing connection to the Pan-African movement of Marcus Garvey. Kempadoo turned her attention to the experience of diasporic communities in England and created a series of digitally altered prints that reflected on the solitude and isolation that accompanies the immigrant. Though this essay began by evoking the most jaded tropical image, I hope it has been clear that my intention has not been to advocate for more beachscapes but rather to identify the common threads that bind the dizzyingly dynamic visual production of contemporary Caribbean artists. For too long, the region has been subjected to stereotype, but it is encouraging that artists nevertheless choose to engage local subject matter—broadly understood—instead of retreating into a hermeticist visual language that would have them deny their surroundings and backgrounds altogether.

The production of content, however problematized by the artists themselves, allows us to reflect on our own assumptions and preconceptions on the nature of images, the meaning of place, the articulation of difference, and the construction of the past and present. Whether these images delight, frustrate, or disgust, they provoke a reaction, thereby challenging us to a wrestling match.

With infinite gratitude to Maria Leyva and Christopher Cozier for their support and wisdom.

1. Kaira M. Cabañas, “If the Grid Is the New Palm Tree of Latin American Art,” *Oxford Art Journal* 33-3 (2010): 367.
2. Silvio Torres Saillant, *An Intellectual History of the Caribbean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7

ARTISTS

Ewan Atkinson Nicole Awai LaVaughn Belle Lillian Blades Terry Boddie
Holly Bynoe Santiago Cal Charles Campbell Keisha Castello John Cox
Blue Curry Jean-Ulrick Desert Richard Fung Joscelyn Gardner Marlon
Griffith Abigail Hadeed Nadia Huggins Sri Irodikromo Marlon James
Patricia Kaersenhout Roshini Kempadoo Jaime Lee Loy Hew Locke
Pauline Marcelle Kishan Munroe Nikolai Noel Ebony G. Patterson Marcel
Pinas Dhiradj Ramsamoedj Sheena Rose Oneika Russell Heino Schmid
Philip Thomas Rodell Warner Tonya Wiles Natalie Wood



Art Museum of the Americas
Organization of American States

WRESTLING WITH THE IMAGE
CARIBBEAN INTERVENTIONS

ARTIST WORKS



Ewan
ATKINSON
BARBADOS

STARMAN SERIES, 2009. DIGITAL PRINTS, 20.3 x 25.4

**WHEN I WAS A CHILD
I WOULD REGULARLY
INTERRUPT MY FATHER
TO ASK HIM WHAT HE
WAS DOING. HE WOULD
REPLY THAT HE WAS
“BUILDING A WIGWAM TO
WIND-UP THE MOON.” THIS
CONFOUNDING PHRASE
BECAME THE KEY TO
STARMAN’S MISSION. HE
WAS TO SEARCH FOR
A PLACE TO BUILD HIS
OWN WIGWAM TO WIND-
UP THE MOON. HIS QUEST
INVESTIGATES THE ROLE
OF THE “OUTSIDER” IN A
TIGHT-KNIT COMMUNITY
AND QUESTIONS THE
PURPOSE OF STRUCTURE
AS MONUMENT OR A
SYMBOL OF BELONGING.**

Nicole
AWAI

TRINIDAD

SPECIMEN FROM LOCAL EPHEMERA:
MIX MORE MEDIA!, 2009. GRAPHITE, ACRYLIC PAINT AND NAIL
POLISH ON PAPER, 96.5 x 127 CM.

I RESPOND TO PEOPLES' INTERACTION WITH ME AS AN ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN BODY LIVING AN AMERICAN LIFE. THERE IS A CONSTANT AND INHERENT STATE OF DUALITY IN THIS EXISTENCE. NOT A STATE OF CONFUSION OR A CRISIS OF IDENTITY BUT AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, ACCEPTANCE - AN OWNING OF SIMULTANEOUS MULTIPLE REALITIES. I HAVE AN IMPULSE TO "MIRROR" AND PLAY WITH VISUAL LANGUAGES IN A WAY THAT FORESTALLS QUICK READINGS. THE VIEWER IS SUSPENDED IN "LOCAL EPHEMERA" - THE WORLD OF IN-BETWEEN - ALWAYS IN BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND ANOTHER. (IN BETWEEN LAYERS, IN BETWEEN MEANING, IN BETWEEN DEFINITIONS)

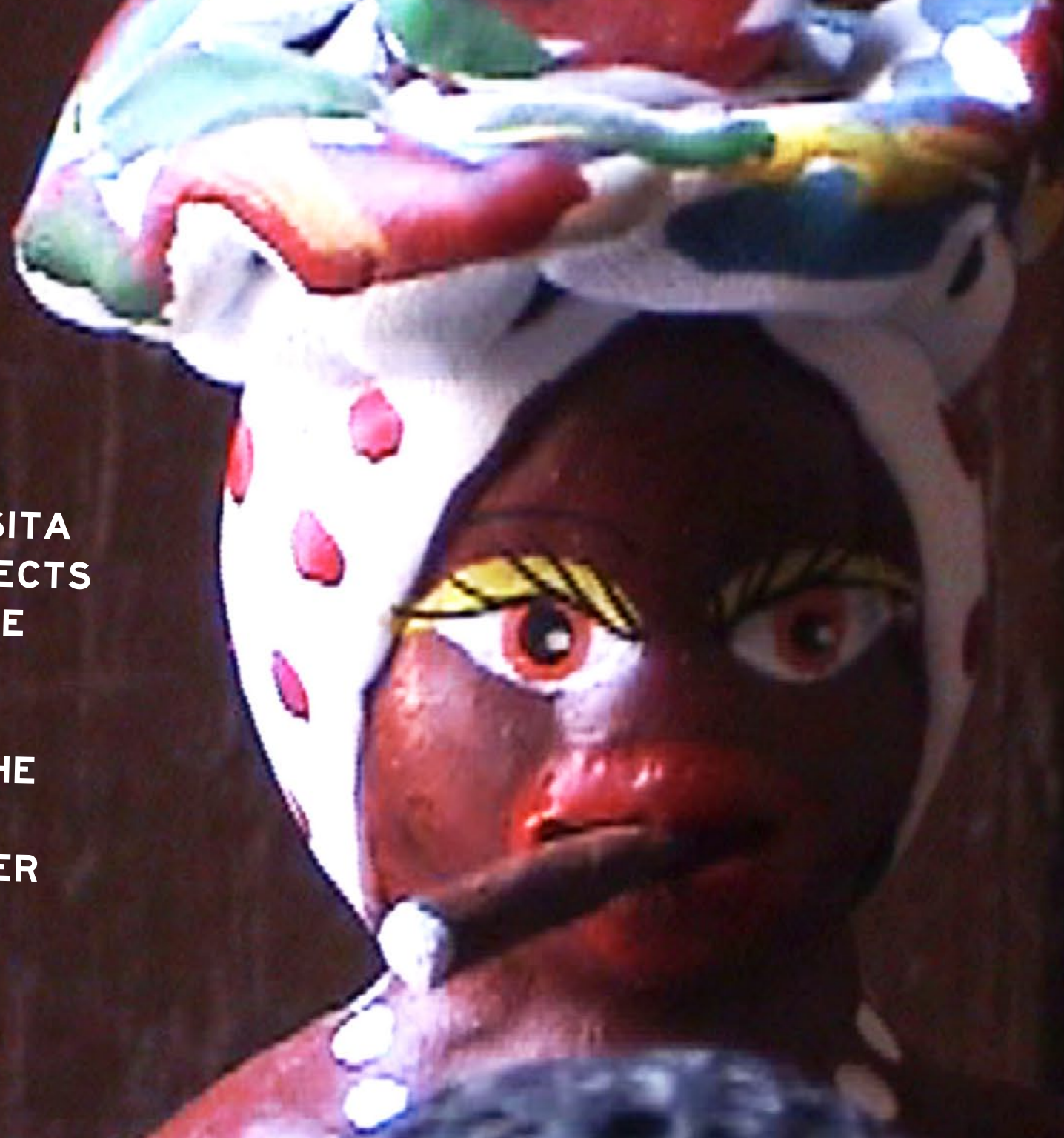


La Vaughn
BELLE

TOBAGO

PORCELAIN DIARIES, 2003. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:10:51.

THIS PROJECT CAME OUT OF AN INTEREST IN THE AESTHETICS OF CARIBBEAN INTERIOR DÉCOR AND IN PARTICULAR THE COMMONLY FEATURED COFFEE TABLE OR MESITA DE SALA. I FOUND THAT THE OBJECTS AND FIGURINES COLLECTED ON THE TABLES REVEALED A PECULIAR DISCOURSE BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. DIFFERENT FROM THE RELIGIOUS ALTARS, I SAW THESE “DECORATIVE ALTARS” AS ANOTHER TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SACRED, THE INTIMATE AND THE RITUAL.





Lillian
BLADES

BAHAMAS LUKASA BOX, 2009. MIXED MEDIA, 20.3 x 25.4 x 25.4 CM.

THE AESTHETIC OF MY WORK IS INFLUENCED BY SEVERAL ANCESTRAL CRAFTS: MEMORY JARS (THAT WERE PLACED ON AFRICAN AMERICAN GRAVES IN THE SOUTH), MEMORY BOARDS ('LUKASA' BY THE LUBA PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA), AND QUILTS BY AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE SOUTH. THESE BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED OBJECTS WERE ASSEMBLED TO CELEBRATE AND INTERPRET OUR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE.

Terry
BODDIE

ST. KITTS /USA

UNTITLED (WEAPONS OF CHOICE), 2009. PHOTO EMULSION,
TONER, DIGITAL IMAGE TRANSFER, 38.1 X 55.9 CM.

**I WISH TO INVESTIGATE
AND ILLUSTRATE
THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN TWO KINDS
OF MEMORY: THE KIND
THAT IS DOCUMENTED
BY MECHANICAL
RECORDING DEVICES,
SUCH AS THE CAMERA,
OR PRESERVED
THROUGH HISTORICAL
MATERIALS SUCH
AS MAPS, BIRTH
CERTIFICATES,
LEDGERS, AND THE
KIND OF MEMORY
WHICH RESIDES IN THE
RECESSES OF THE MIND.**



Holly
BYNOE

ST. VINCENT IMPERIAL, 2010. COLLAGE ON ARCHIVAL DUROTONE NEWSPRINT AGED, 84 x 106 CM.

I SEEK WITHIN
STRUCTURE AND
COMPOSITION TO
CONSIDER THE
COLONIZATION OF
LANGUAGE AND THE
IMPLICATIONS OF
PAST AND PRESENT
PASSAGES.
THE SEA IS HISTORY
AND WITHIN THAT
HISTORY THERE IS
ONLY FICTION.





**Santiago
CAL**

BELIZE SOME KIND, 2011. WOOD, METAL AND PAINT, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS.

**FIRST, I LIKE
THE HAMMER AS
A SYMBOL FOR
LABOR, PROGRESS
AND POWER; THESE
ARE ASSOCIATIONS
FAMILIAR TO
EVERYONE.**

**SECOND, ALL THE
HAMMERS HAVE TO
FIT MY HAND.**

**THIRD AND FINAL:
THEY ALL HAVE TO
BE NON-FUNCTIONAL.
EVEN THE ONES THAT
LOOK BEEFY WILL
BREAK IF PUT TO THE
TEST.**



BAGASSE, THE TRASH LEFT OVER AFTER SUGAR CANE CULTIVATION, IS USED AS A METAPHOR FOR AN ECONOMIC SYSTEM THAT VIEWS SOCIETY AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS AS BY-PRODUCTS. ULTIMATELY, THE WORK ATTEMPTS TO RE-IMAGE THE PAST IN A WAY THAT LIBERATES THE FUTURE.

Charles
CAMPBELL

JAMAICA

BAGASSE CYCLE 1 (BAGASSE), 2009. ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 550 X 220 CM.



Keisha
CASTELLO

JAMAICA CHAIR, 2010. DIGITAL PRINT, 106.7 X 160 CM.

MY REFLECTION ON THESE LATEST WORKS
PRESENTS ME WITH THOUGHTS ABOUT
THE EARLIEST RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
MOTHER AND BABY AND THE SYMBOLIC
FORMATION OF LANGUAGE FORMED
BETWEEN THEM THROUGH UNCONSCIOUS
COMMUNICATION....DESPITE ITS CAPACITY
FOR DARK DEEDS, THE SHADOW OF
THE UNCONSCIOUS IS THE SEAT OF
CREATIVITY THAT INFORMS MY WORK.

I FIND MY WORK
CHALLENGING
TO CREATE AND
CHALLENGING TO
THE VIEWER AS
WELL. ONE THING I'VE
COME TO REALIZE
IS THAT PEOPLE
DON'T LIKE TO BE
CHALLENGED. THEY
FIND IT INTIMIDATING,
A STRAIN TO
ACTUALLY HAVE
TO THINK ABOUT
THE WORK AND
TO QUESTION
SOMETHING.

John
COX
BAHAMAS

I AM NOT AFRAID TO FIGHT A PERFECT STRANGER, 2009. ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 167.6 X 274.3 CM.





Blue
CURRY

BAHAMAS DISCOVERY OF THE PALM TREE: PHONE MAST, 2008. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:02:17.

BLUE CURRY'S WORK CONJURES ALLURING FANTASIES OF THE NATIVE, THE TROPICAL AND THE EXOTIC WHILE SLYLY DISRUPTING THE MYTHIC COMPONENTS INTRINSIC TO THESE FAMILIAR NARRATIVES. HIS MINIMALIST OBJECTS, FILMS AND INSTALLATIONS FLOAT AMBIGUOUSLY BETWEEN THE MODES OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC, THE SOUVENIRISTIC AND THE CONTEMPORARY.

Jean ULRICK-DESERT

HAITI
 GENERALSEKRETERARENS HUSTRU, 2009. INK AND RAG ON PAPER, 120 x 90 CM.
 THE SEVENTH SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE U.N., 2009. INK AND RAG ON PAPER, 120 x 90 CM.

FOR TEN YEARS GENERAL SECRETARY KOFI ANNAN WAS THE FIGURE-HEAD OF THE UN, FUNCTIONING AS A BORDERLESS DIPLOMAT. HIS TENURE SUGGESTS THAT A BRANDED-ICON IS OFTEN A SIGN OF COLLECTIVE CONSENSUS CREATED BY MULTIPLE MEANS INCLUDING EDUCATION, AWARDS, INVESTITURES AND TROPHIES. THE "TROPHIES" SERIES PRESENTS SEVERAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE FOR THE VIEWER: A) THE FAMILIAR PAINTINGS. B) A CONFIDENCE TO INTERACT WITH ART. C) IMAGINATIVE ANALYZED. D) MODEL DIPLOMACY FOR HOPE AND CHANGE IS OFTEN REWARDED.



Richard
FUNG

TRINIDAD ISLANDS, 2002. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:09:00.

I HAD LONG MULLED OVER A LARGER PROJECT ABOUT MY FAMILY'S ENLISTMENT AS MOVIE EXTRAS BECAUSE THEY WERE CHINESE IN FUNNY PLACES-MY BROTHER WAS AN EXTRA IN A FU MANCHU FILM WHEN HE WAS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT IN IRELAND IN THE 1960S.... PART OF THE NARRATIVE IN ISLANDS IS THE WAY THAT THE AWKWARD MASCULINITY OF THE MITCHUM CHARACTER PARALLELED MY UNCLE'S. HE WAS A VERY MANLY MAN AND HIS PASSION WAS HUNTING. HE HAD HIS BUDDIES, BUT TO MY KNOWLEDGE AND ACCORDING TO MY MOTHER HE NEVER HAD A ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP-WITH EITHER GENDER.



Joscelyn
GARDNER

BARBADOS

(L) *MIMOSA PUDICA* (YABBA), 2009.
HAND PAINTED STONE LITHOGRAPH ON
FROSTED MYLAR, 91.4 X 61 CM.

(R) *ARISTOLOCHIA BILOBALA* (NIMINE), 2009.
HAND PAINTED STONE LITHOGRAPH
ON FROSTED MYLAR, 91.4 X 61 CM.

**WORKING
WITH STONE
LITHOGRAPHY,
SHE RUPTURES
PATRIARCHAL
OR COLONIAL
VERSIONS OF
HISTORY BY
RE-INSERTING
IMAGES OF
THE WOMEN
OMITTED FROM
THIS HISTORY.**





Marlon
GRIFFITH

TRINIDAD LOUIS, TRIBAL, BLOSSOM 2009. DIGITAL PRINT, 121.3 X 80.6 CM.



MARLON GRIFFITH IS AN ARTIST WHOSE PRACTICE IS BASED UPON A RECIPROCAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN MAS (THE ARTISTIC COMPONENT OF THE TRINIDAD CARNIVAL) AND ART AS A MEANS OF INVESTIGATING THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ASPECT OF THE EMBODIED EXPERIENCE: IT IS SITUATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE VISUAL AND PUBLIC PERFORMANCE.



Abigail
HADEED
TRINIDAD

IRIS MORGAN, FROM THE SERIES TREES WITHOUT ROOTS, 1995.
DIGITAL PRINT, 27.9 x 43.2 CM.

**TREES WITHOUT
ROOTS WAS MADE
POSSIBLE THROUGH
THE KINDNESS AND
SUPPORT OF VIRGINIA
PÉREZ RATTON. SHE
WAS A CHARISMATIC
AND WONDERFUL
WOMAN WHO ADVANCED
THE WORK OF MANY
CARIBBEAN AND LATIN
AMERICAN WOMEN
ARTISTS. THIS WORK
IS DEDICATED TO HER
MEMORY.**



Nadia
HUGGINS

ST. LUCIA

THE QUIET FIGHT, 2006. DIGITAL PRINT, 29.8 x 39.4 CM.

**HER WORK TAKES APART THE
EVERYDAY AND EVERYDAY-NESS. THE
JUXTAPOSITIONS SHE EMPLOYS ALONG
WITH HER ATTENTION TO COMPOSITION,
LIGHT AND PRESENCE INFUSE THE FORM
AND CONTENT, THEREBY ADDRESSING
IDEAS OF VEILED BEAUTY.**



Sri
IRODIKROMO

SURINAME FREKTI KON NA WAN, 2010. BATIK AND MIXED MEDIA, 267 x 147 CM.

IN MY FASCINATION FOR
SURINAMESE CULTURES I TRAVEL
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY TO
WITNESS AND EXPERIENCE THEIR
LIFESTYLES AND TRADITIONS. MY
LATEST WORKS ARE LARGE MULTI
MEDIA BATIK PIECES IN WHICH
I EXPLORE THAT PART OF THE
MAROON TRIBES FROM SURINAMESE
DESCENT, WHICH CONTAINS CLEAR
INFLUENCES FROM INDIGENOUS
AMERINDIAN CULTURE.

Marlon
JAMES
JAMAICA

JABARI, 2007. DIGITAL PRINT, 101.6 x 76.2.

**CAPTURING THE
SOUL OF SOMEONE
WAS NEVER MY
INITIAL OBJECTIVE.
I JUST WANTED MY
SUBJECTS TO BE
RELAXED IN FRONT OF
MY CAMERA. I DON'T
LIKE TO IMPOSE ANY
DIRECTIONS ON THEM,
I JUST LET THEM BE
AND THE RESULTS HAVE
BEEN FASCINATING,
ESPECIALLY TO ME, AS
THESE PEOPLE UNVEIL
IN FRONT OF MY LENS.**



Patricia
KAERSENHOUT
SURINAME

INVISIBLE MEN, 2009. PRINTED BOOK, 26.7 x 19 x 1 CM.

IN MY EARLIER
PAINTINGS I WAS
BUSY MAKING BLACK
PEOPLE VISIBLE BY
PAINTING THEM VERY
EMPHATICALLY,
WITHOUT A
BACKDROP, EMOTION,
A PAINTERLY TOUCH
OR SIGNATURE.

I SPECIFICALLY
WANT TO BE
AS MINIMAL A
PRESENCE AS
POSSIBLE IN MY
WORK.



Roshini
KEMPADOO
GUYANA

VIRTUAL EXILES: FRONTLINE, BACKYARDS, 2000. GICLÉE PRINT, 47.4 X 72 CM.

HER RESEARCH AND
ARTWORK RE-INTERPRETS
AND RE-IMAGINES
CONTEMPORARY AND
HISTORICAL EXPERIENCES
OF THE EVERYDAY.
SHE EXPLORES THE LINK
BETWEEN BRITISH AND
CARIBBEAN CULTURE
THROUGH THE USE OF
PHOTOGRAPHS, DIGITAL
MEDIA, AND NETWORKED
ENVIRONMENTS.

Jamie
LEE LOY
TRINIDAD

WAR IN THE HOME, 2008. DIGITAL PRINT, 142.2 x 106.7 CM

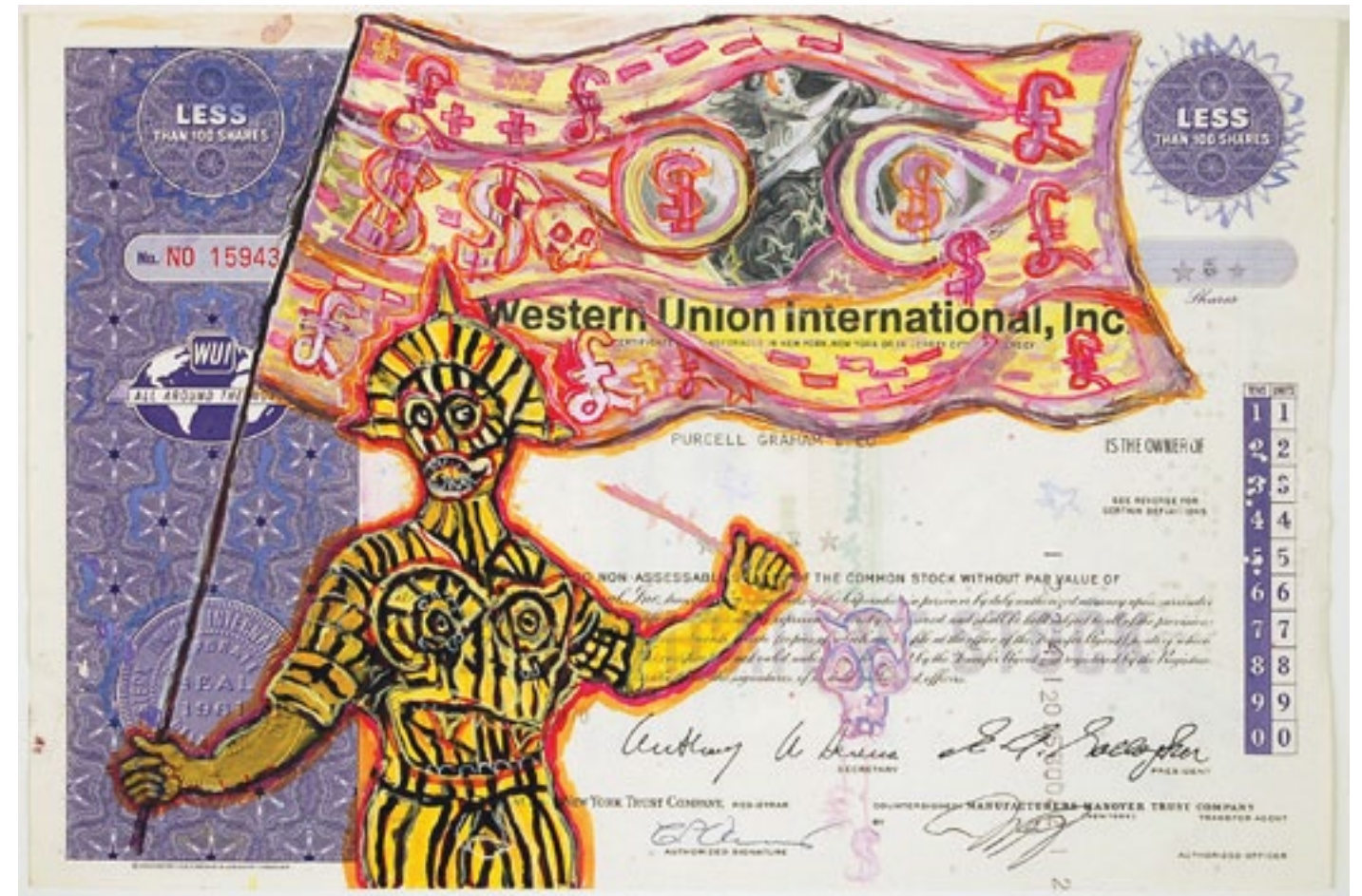
I INVESTIGATE CONCEPTS AND NARRATIVES SURROUNDING MORTALITY, THE FRAGILITY AND IMPERMANENCE OF FAMILIAR SPACES, GENDER DISCOURSE, AND SOCIAL POLITICS. I AM INTERESTED IN THE UNIVERSAL PHENOMENA OF LOSS, THE POLITICS OF SPACE, AND NEGOTIATIONS OF CONTROL.



Hew
LOCKE
GUYANA

WESTERN UNION INTERNATIONAL, 2009. ACRYLIC PAINT AND FELT PEN ON PAPER, 30.4 x 24.4 CM.

I HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH SHARE CERTIFICATES AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS OF COMMERCIAL COMPANIES WHICH NO LONGER EXIST OR HAVE UNDERGONE TRANSFORMATION THROUGH TAKEOVERS, BANKRUPTCY, NATIONALIZATION OR OTHER ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL CHANGES. I HAVE PAINTED AND DRAWN OVER THESE SOME CASES, THESE LAYERS OBSCURE THE UNDERLYING INFORMATION AND IN OTHERS, DRAW OUR ATTENTION TO IT, SOME TELL OF MORE RECENT GLOBAL EVENTS.





Pauline
MARCELLE

DOMINICA

BEND DOWN BOUTIQUE 25, 2008. OIL ON CANVAS, 160 x 120 CM.

**MY PAINTINGS DERIVE
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND
THE SERIES BEND DOWN
BOUTIQUE IS BASED ON
MY JOURNEY TO GHANA,
TAKING ME TO THE
COASTLINES WHERE PILES
OF T-SHIRTS, TROUSERS,
TEXTILES, FISHERMAN'S
NETS, SHOES, ROPES AND
CONTENTS OF THE OCEAN
FORMED SCULPTURAL
BODIES OF SEA WASHED
DEBRIS ON THE BEACH.**



Kishan
MUNROE
BAHAMAS

PRELUDE, 2010. ONLINE PROJECT.

MY ART INHABITS
LIMINAL SPACES
OF OUR HUMAN
EXPERIENCE.
ERAS WHEN WE MAKE
TRANSITIONS FROM
LIFE TO DEATH, FROM
JOY TO SADNESS,
IGNORANCE TO
UNDERSTANDING,
ECSTASY TO AGONY.
I AM NOT INTERESTED
IN REPRESENTING
SUPERFICIALITY,
BUT SEEK TO
SIMULTANEOUSLY
ENGAGE PARTS OF
US WE KEEP HIDDEN,
JOURNEYS WE TAKE
SUBLIMINALLY,
FEARS AND
FRAILTIES WE HOPE
NO ONE NOTICES,
UNCOVERING ALL
THOSE ASSUMPTIONS
AND PREJUDICES WE
HIDE AND SOMETIMES
RIGHTEOUSLY
DEFEND.

Nikolai
NOEL

TRINIDAD

TOUSSAINT ET GEORGE (TWO ROOMS), 2010. GRAPHITE LINSEED OIL MIXTURE ON PANEL, 25.4 x 20.3 CM.

THE PURPOSE OF MY
WORK IS TO QUESTION
THE WAY WE STRUCTURE
OUR CIVILIZATION. WHY
ARE THE INSTITUTIONS
THAT GOVERN THE
WORLD WE KNOW, THE
INSTITUTIONS THAT
GOVERN THE WORLD
WE KNOW? COULD WE
HAVE EVOLVED AN
ALTERNATIVE, MORE
EQUITABLE FORM OF
ORGANIZING OURSELVES?
IS IT TOO LATE TO DO IT?
DO WE HAVE THE WILL OR
DESIRE FOR THAT KIND
OF THING?
I AM INTERESTED IN THE
MILLIONS OF YEARS OF
OCCURRENCES THAT
BROUGHT US TO THIS
POINT.



Ebony G.
PATTERSON

JAMAICA

ENTOURAGE, 2010. DIGITAL PRINT, 204.5 x 306 CM.

**THE ONGOING BODY OF
WORK GANGSTAS, DISCIPLEZ
+ THE DOILEY BOYZ
EXPLORES FASHIONABLE
TRENDS WITHIN JAMAICAN
DANCEHALL CULTURE.
WHILE THE EARLIER WORKS
WITHIN THIS BODY FOCUSED
ON THE PRACTICE OF SKIN
BLEACHING, THE MOST
RECENT WORK EXAMINES SO-
CALLED "BLING CULTURE"
AND ITS RECONSTRUCTION OF
NOTIONS OF MACHISMO.**





Marcel
PINAS

SURINAME FRAGMENT KBI WI KANI, 2007. BOTTLES AND CLOTH, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS.

**WITH HIS ART MARCEL
PINAS AIMS TO CREATE
A LASTING RECORD OF
THE LIFESTYLE AND
TRADITIONS OF HIS
MAROON HERITAGE
AND HOPES TO
CREATE A WORLDWIDE
AWARENESS AND
APPRECIATION FOR THE
UNIQUE TRADITIONAL
COMMUNITIES IN
SURINAME.**

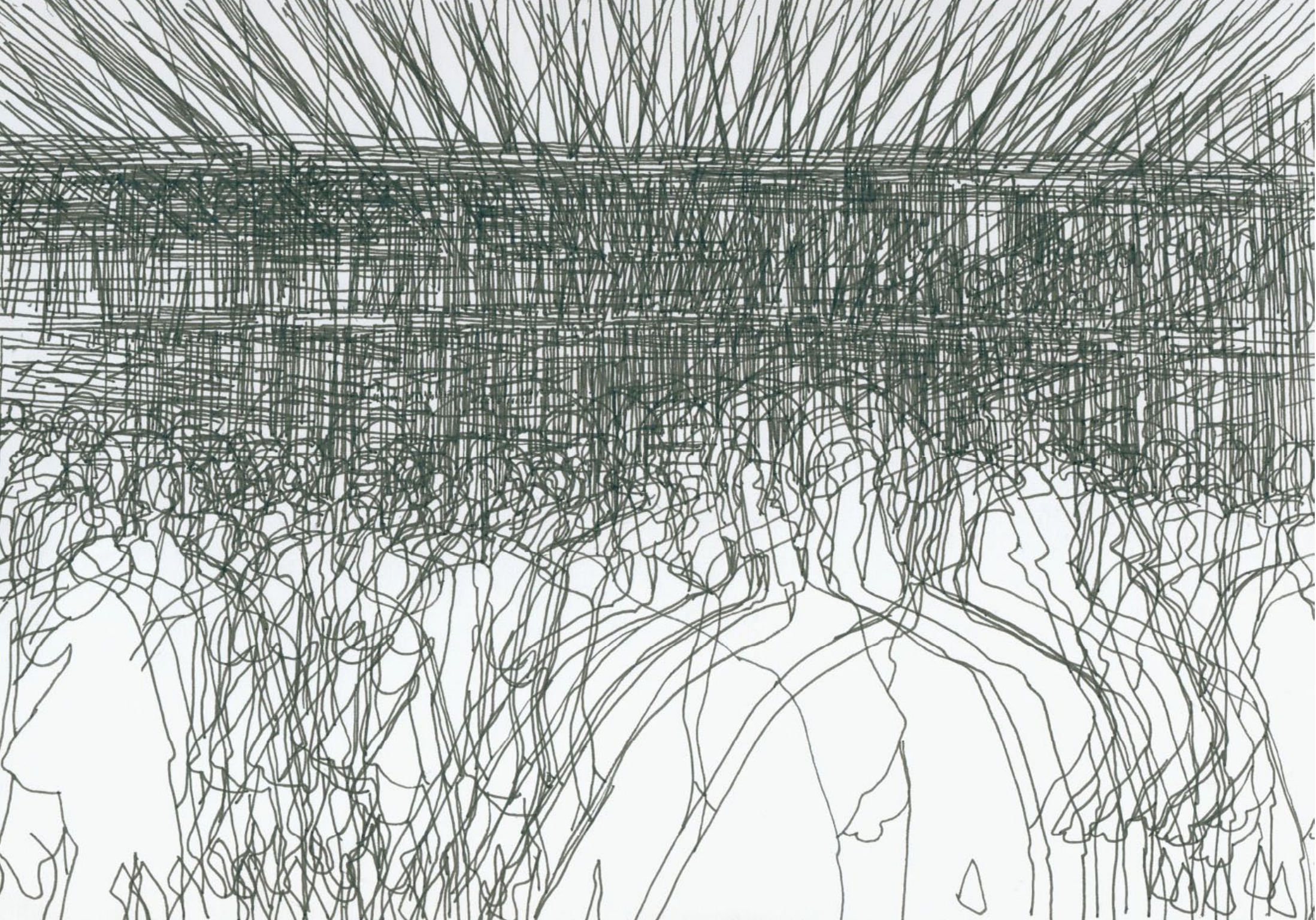
Dhiradj
RAMSAMOEDJ

SURINAME

CARIBBEAN WOMAN PROJECT, 2010. TEXTILE METAL AND CONCRETE, 185 x 75 x 80 CM

**AFTER THE
INDUSTRIAL
REVOLUTION,
MATERIALISM HAS
SIGNIFICANTLY
INCREASED AMONGST
MANKIND, AND
BEHAVIOR HAS
SUBSEQUENTLY
CHANGED GREATLY
ALSO. WE HAVE
ENTERED A TIME
WHERE HUMAN
BEHAVIOR
HAS BECOME
UNPREDICTABLE,
AND THUS REMAINS
LARGELY A MYSTERY.**





**Sheena
ROSE**

BARBADOS

TOWN, 2008. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:02:44.

THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF MY ANIMATION IS SOMETHING THAT I CAN ARGUABLY SAY EVERYONE STRUGGLES WITH, AND THAT IS CONSTANTLY THINKING ABOUT OUR DAILY PROBLEMS. THERE ARE NOT VERY MANY TIMES DURING THE DAY WHEN OUR MINDS ARE AT REST. WE ARE ALWAYS DWELLING ON SOMETHING THAT WE NEED TO DO; A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP, HOW WE ARE GOING TO MANAGE PAYING THE ELECTRICITY BILL AS WELL AS BUYING NEW SCHOOL UNIFORMS AT THE END OF THE MONTH...

Oneika
RUSSELL

JAMAICA

PORTHOLE, 2008. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:03:56.



**I SEEK TO CREATE A NEW NARRATIVE FROM OLD
STORIES, WHICH SAY SOMETHING ABOUT MY CULTURAL
EXPERIENCE AND CONTINUED UNDERSTANDING OF
MYSELF THROUGH THE MEDIA.**

Heino SCHMID

BAHAMAS TEMPORARY HORIZON, 2010. DIGITAL VIDEO, VARIABLE DIMENSIONS. DURATION: 00:05:03.

USING SELF-REFERENTIAL
EXPERIENCES AS AN AVENUE
TO ILLUMINATING COLLECTIVE
EXPERIENCES I HOPE TO REVEAL
THE SUBTLE SOCIAL DRAMAS
THAT INFORM OUR LIVES AND
ULTIMATELY BRING THOSE
REALITIES TO THE FOREFRONT
FOR DISCUSSION.





Phillip
THOMAS
JAMAICA

CAROUSEL, 2009. OIL ON CANVAS, 198.1 X 442 CM.

I INTEND TO MANUFACTURE CULTURAL RELIQUARIES, ARTIFACTS AND SOCIAL CURIOSITIES THAT REPRESENT THE CULTURAL TAPESTRY OF THE CARIBBEAN AND THE WIDER "NEW WORLD", USING MEDIUMS AND OTHER AGENTS OF THE OLD WORLD

Rodell
WARNER

TRINIDAD RELIEF SERIES, 2010. DIGITAL PRINT, 74.9 X 49.5 CM.

IN THE SUNRISE, THESE
COSTUMED CHARACTERS
PLAY OUT A STREET DRAMA
IN SLOW PROCESSION,
A DRAMA THAT HAS
AMAZINGLY LITTLE TO
DO WITH CHANGE AND
EVERYTHING TO DO WITH
MAINTENANCE OF
A STATUS QUO.





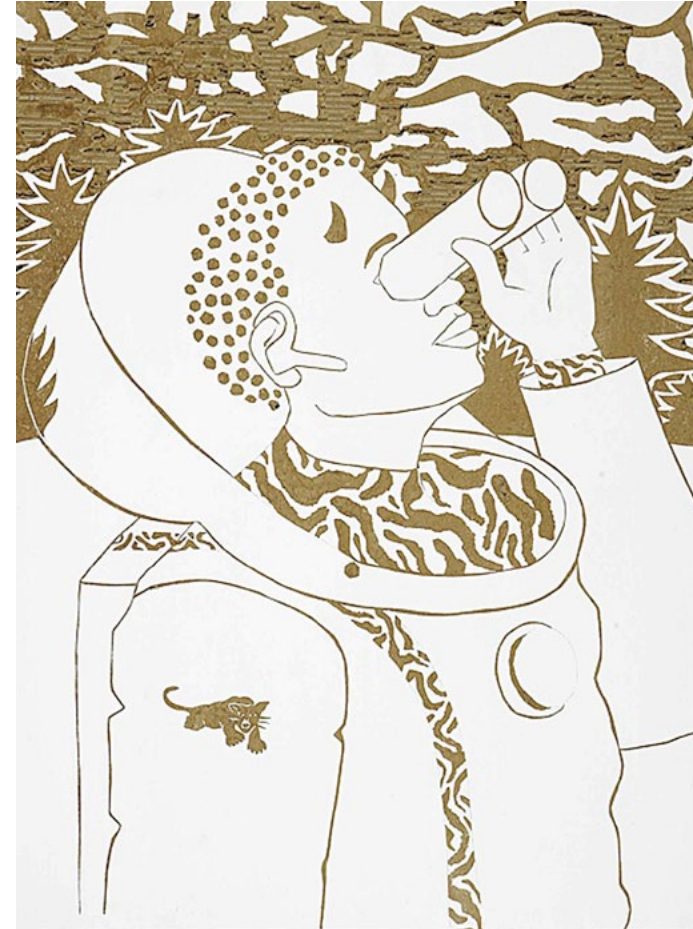
**Tonya
WILES**

BARBADOS TONGUE, 2008. PORCELAIN, LEATHER, 33 x 27 x 10 CM.

**THE OBJECTS PROVOKE
THE VIEWER TO INTERACT
WITH THEM. THE VIEWER
BEGINS TO EXPRESS A
POSTURE TOWARD THEM,
POSSIBLY TOUCHING THE
LEATHER, OR STICKING
HIS/HER TONGUE INTO
IT, OR POSSIBLY NOT
UNDERSTANDING THE
OBJECT'S INVITATION TO
PLAY AT ALL.**

Natalie
WOOD
BARBADOS

THE MATERIAL I AM PRESENTLY WORKING WITH IS CORRUGATED CARDBOARD, WHICH I FIND IS AN APT METAPHOR FOR MY BLENDED SUBJECTS. CARDBOARD OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH TRADE, TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT, IS ALSO KNOWN FOR ITS ADAPTABILITY, A CURIOUS MIXTURE OF STRENGTH AND FRAGILITY AND IS SEEN AS A LOW COST OPTION THAT IS EASILY DISCARDED AND OFTEN RECYCLED.



Wrestling with the Image: Caribbean Interventions forms part of the ***About Change*** emerging artists’ program, an initiative conceived and sponsored by the World Bank Art Program in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank, the OAS, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat. ***About Change*** is a series of juried exhibitions of contemporary art from Latin America and the Caribbean that will take place throughout 2011 and 2012 at different venues in Washington, D.C., including the World Bank, the Art Museum of the Americas, and the galleries of the Inter-American Development Bank. It has been organized by the World Bank Art Program under the auspices of the World Bank Vice Presidency for Latin America and the Caribbean Region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXHIBITION CURATORS

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Tatiana Flores - *Assistant Professor, Department of Art History and Latino and Caribbean Studies, Rutgers University*

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PUBLISHED BY

ARTZPUB/DRACONIAN SWITCH • www.artzpub.com

DESIGN BY

Richard Mark Rawlins

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Richard V. Sukhu - *Art Handling*
Amber Van De Genachte - *Volunteers Coordinator*

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Aura Graciela Andrade
Marielle Barrow
Caribbean InTransit
John Cox
Annalee Davis
Richard J. Demato
FRIENDS OF THE ART MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAS
Ifigenia Flores
Leonardo Flores
Michele Greet
Paul Hedge
Jay Koment
Nicholas Laughlin
O’Neil Lawrence
Bahamas Mission to the OAS
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THE WORLD BANK



Art Museum of the Americas
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American States





1.

Ewan Atkinson (Barbados), *Starman* series,2009. Digital prints, 20.3 x 25.4 cm/25.4 x 20.3 cm.
2.

Nicole Awai (Trinidad/U.S.A.), *Specimen from Local Ephemera: Mix More Media!*,2009. Graphite, acrylic paint and nail polish on paper, 96.5 x 127 cm.
3.

LaVaughn Belle (Tobago), *Porcelain Diaries*, 2003. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:10:51.
4.

Lillian Blades (The Bahamas/U.S.A.), *African-American* (diptych),2009. Mixed media assemblage, 40.6 x 53.3 x 7.6 cm.
5.

Lillian Blades (The Bahamas/U.S.A.), *Lukasa Box*, 2009. Mixed media, 20.3 x 25.4 x 25.4 cm.
6.

Terry Boddie (St. Kitts/U.S.A.), *Trade I*, 2009. Photo emulsion and acrylic on handmade paper, 27.9 x 22.9 cm.
7.

Terry Boddie (St. Kitts/U.S.A.), *Trade II*,
8.

Terry Boddie (St. Kitts/U.S.A.), *Smuggler*, 2009. Photo emulsion and acrylic on handmade paper, 27.9 x 22.9 cm.
9.

Terry Boddie (St. Kitts/U.S.A.), *Currency*, 2009. Photo emulsion and acrylic on handmade paper, 27.9 x 22.9 cm.
10.

Terry Boddie (St. Kitts/U.S.A.), *Untitled (Weapons of Choice)*, 2009. Photo emulsion, toner, digital image transfer, 38.1 x 55.9 cm.
11.

Holly Bynoe (Bequia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines/U.S.A.), *Imperial*, 2010. Collage on archival durotone newsprint aged, 84 x 106 cm.
12.

Holly Bynoe (Bequia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines/U.S.A.), *Brian*, 2010. Collage on archival durotone newsprint aged, 84 x 106 cm.
13.

Holly Bynoe (Bequia, Saint Vincent and
- the Grenadines/U.S.A.), *Inbred*, 2010. Collage on archival durotone newsprint aged, 84 x 106 cm.
14.

Santiago Cal (Belize/U.S.A.), *Some Kind*, 2011. Wood, metal and paint, variable dimensions.
15.

Charles Campbell (Jamaica/Canada), *Bagasse Cycle 1 (Bagasse)*, 2009. Acrylic on canvas, 550 x 220 cm.
16.

Keisha Castello (Jamaica/U.K.), *Chair*, 2010. Digital print, 106.7 x 160 cm.
17.

John Cox (The Bahamas),*I Am Not Afraid to Fight a Perfect Stranger*, 2009. Acrylic on canvas, 167.6 x 274.3 cm.
18.

Blue Curry (The Bahamas/U.K.), *Discovery of the Palm Tree: Phone Mast*, 2008. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:02:17.
19.

Blue Curry (The Bahamas/U.K.), *Untitled*, 2009. Conch shells, strobe light, 25 x 20 x 15 cm per piece.

20.

Jean-Ulrick Désert (Haiti/Germany), *Generalsekreterarens Hustru*,2009. Ink and rag on paper, 120 x 90 cm.
21.

Jean-Ulrick Désert (Haiti/Germany), *The Seventh Secretary General of the U.N.*, 2009. Ink and rag on paper, 120 x 90 cm.
22.

Richard Fung (Trinidad/Canada), *Islands*, 2002. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:09:00.
23.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Hibiscus esculentus (Sibyl)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
24.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Mimosa pudica (Yabba)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
25.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Aristolochia bilobala (Nimine)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
26.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Veronica frutescens (Mazerine)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
27.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Eryngium foetidum (Prue)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
28.

JoscelynGardner (Barbados/Canada), *Convolvulus jalapa (Yara)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 91.4 x 61 cm.
29.

Joscelyn Gardner (Barbados/Canada), *Poinciana pulcherrima (Lilith)*, 2009. Hand painted stone lithograph on frosted mylar, 127 x 76.2 cm.
30.

Marlon Griffith (Trinidad/Japan), *Louis*, 2009. Digital print, 121.3 x 80.6 cm.
31.

Marlon Griffith (Trinidad/Japan), *Blossom*, 2009. Digital print, 121.3 x 80.6 cm.
32.

Marlon Griffith (Trinidad/Japan), *Tribal*, 2009. Digital print, 121.3 x 80.6 cm.
33.

Abigail Hadeed (Trinidad), *Albertina Robertina*,from the series *Trees without Roots*,1995. Digital print, 27.9 x 43.2 cm.
34.

Abigail Hadeed (Trinidad), *Black Star Line Bonds*, from the series *Trees without Roots*,1995. Digital print, 27.9 x 43.2 cm.
35.

Abigail Hadeed (Trinidad), *UNIA Document*, from theseries *Trees without Roots*,1995. Digital print, 27.9 x 43.2 cm.
36.

Abigail Hadeed (Trinidad), *Iris Morgan*,from the series *Trees without Roots*,1995. Digital print, 27.9 x 43.2 cm.
37.

Nadia Huggins (St. Vincent/St. Lucia), *Passenger*, 2005. Digital print, 29.8 x 39.4 cm.
38.

Nadia Huggins (St. Vincent/St. Lucia), *The Garden*, 2005. Digital print, 29.8 x 39.4 cm.
39.

NadiaHuggins (St. Vincent/St. Lucia), *The Quiet Fight*, 2006. Digital print, 29.8 x 39.4 cm.
40.

Nadia Huggins (St. Vincent/St. Lucia), *Black Hole*, 2009. Digital print, 30.5 x 4 4.4 cm.
41.

Sri Irodikromo (Suriname), *Frekti kon na wan*, 2010. Batik and mixed media, 267 x 147 cm.
42.

Marlon James (Jamaica), *Jabari*, 2007. Digital print, 101.6 x 76.2.
43.

Marlon James (Jamaica), *Mark and Gisele*, 2007. Digital print, 101.6 x 76.2.
44.

Marlon James (Jamaica), *Stef2*, 2010. Digital print, 101.6 x 76.2.
45.

Patricia Kaersenhout (Suriname/ Holland), *Invisible Men*, 2009. Printed book, 26.7 x 19 x 1 cm.
46.

Roshini Kempadoo (Guyana/U.K.), *Virtual Exiles: Frontline, Backyards*, 2000. Giclée print, 47.4 x 72 cm.
47.

Roshini Kempadoo (Guyana/U.K.), *Virtual Exiles: The Color Museum*, 2000. Giclée print, 47.4 x 72 cm.
48.

Roshini Kempadoo (Guyana/U.K.), *Virtual Exiles: From the Edge*, 2000. Giclée print, 47.4 x 72 cm.
49.

Roshini Kempadoo (Guyana/U.K.), *Virtual Exiles: Going for Gold*, 2000. Giclée print, 47.4 x 72 cm.
50.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *Mexico National Packing Company*, 2009. Acrylic paint and marker pen on paper, 23.9 x 36.4 cm.
51.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *Kohinoor Mills Company*, 2009. Acrylic paint on paper, 24.4 x 30.5 cm.
52.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *Republique Chinoise*, 2009. Acrylic paint and felt pen on paper, 36.9 x 30.5 cm.
53.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *Tanganyika Concessions Limited*, 2009. Acrylic paint and felt pen on paper, 35 x 26 cm.
54.

HewLocke (Guyana/U.K.), *Western Union International*, 2009. Acrylic paint and felt pen on paper, 30.4 x 24.4 cm.
55.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *Barclays Bank Limited*, 2009. Acrylic paint on paper, 30.2 x 25.4 cm.
56.

Hew Locke (Guyana/U.K.), *West Indies Sugar Corporation*, 2009. Acrylic paint on paper, 30.7 x 22 cm.
57.

Jaime LeeLoy (Trinidad), *Talk to Me*, 2008. Digital print, 106.7 x 142.2 cm.
58.

Jaime LeeLoy (Trinidad), *War in the Home*, 2008. Digital print, 142.2 x 106.7 cm.
59.

Pauline Marcelle (Dominica/Austria), *Bend Down Boutique 05*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 120 x 160 cm.

60.

Pauline Marcelle (Dominica/Austria), *Bend Down Boutique 25*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 160 x 120 cm.
61.

Kishan Munroe (The Bahamas), *Prelude*, 2010. Online project.
62.

Nikolai Noel (Trinidad), *Toussaint et George (Two Rooms)*, 2010. Acrylic, graphite and linseed oil on panel, 25.4 x 20.3 cm.
63.

Nikolai Noel (Trinidad), *Toussaint on Horseback*, 2010. Graphite, linseed oil, and ballpoint on paper, 22.86 x 30.48 cm.
64.

Nikolai Noel (Trinidad), *Toussaint Greeting*, 2010. Graphite and linseed oil on panel, 20.3 x 25.40 cm.
65.

Nikolai Noel (Trinidad), *Natives on the Side*, 2010. Graphite, linseed oil and spray paint on panel, 61 x 61 cm.

73.

Heino Schmid (The Bahamas), *Temporary Horizon*, 2010. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:05:03.
74.

Philip Thomas (Jamaica), *Carousel*, 2009. Oil on canvas, 198.1 x 442 cm. Courtesy of Richard J. Demato Fine Arts Gallery
75.

Rodell Warner (Trinidad), *Relief* series, 2010. Digital print, 74.9 x 49.5 cm.
76.

Tonya Wiles (Barbados), *Nanny Nanny Boo Boo I*, 2009. Digital print, 151.1 x 101 cm.
77.

Natalie Wood (Trinidad/Canada), *Right On*, 2006. Deconstructed cardboard, 45.7 x 61 cm.
78.

Natalie Wood (Trinidad/Canada), *Satellite*, 2006. Deconstructed cardboard, 45.7 x 61 cm.

66.

Nikolai Noel (Trinidad), *A Record of Angels Passing* (polytych), 2010. Graphite, linseed oil and white charcoal on panel, 12.7 x 17.8 cm.
67.

Ebony G. Patterson (Jamaica/U.S.A.), *Entourage*, 2010. Digital print, 204.5 x 306 cm.
68.

Marcel Pinas (Suriname), *Fragment kbi wi kani*, 2007. Bottles and cloth, variable dimensions.
69.

Dhiradj Ramsamoedj (Suriname), *Caribbean Woman Project*, 2010. Textile metal and concrete, 185 x 75 x 80 cm.
70.

Sheena Rose (Barbados), *Town*, 2008. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:02:44.
71.

Sheena Rose (Barbados), *Cape Town*, 2009. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:01:10.
72.

Oneika Russell (Jamaica/Japan), *Porthole*, 2008. Digital video, variable dimensions. Duration: 00:03:56.

Ewan Atkinson:
<http://www.ewanatkinson.com/>

La Vaughn Belle:
<http://www.lavaughnbelle.com/>

Lillian Blades:
<http://www.lillianblades.com/>

Terry Boddie:
<http://www.terryboddie.com>

Holly Bynoe:
<http://hollybynoe.com/>

Santiago Cal:
<http://www.santiagocal.com/>

Charles Campbell:
<http://www.charlescampbellart.com/>

John Cox:
<http://www.iamjohncox.com/>

Blue Curry:
www.bluecurry.com/

Jean-Ulrick Désert:
<http://www.jeanulrickdesert.com/>

Richard Fung:
<http://www.richardfung.ca/>

Joscelyn Gardner:
<http://www.joscelyngardner.com/>

Marlon Griffith:
<http://marlongriffith.blogspot.com/>

Nadia Huggins:
<http://www.nadiahuggins.com/>

Marlon James:
<http://mjamestudio.com/>

Patricia Kaersenhout:
<http://www.kaersenhout.com/>

Roshini Kempadoo:
<http://www.roshinikempadoo.co.uk/>

Hew Locke:
<http://www.hewlocke.net/>

Jamie Lee Loy:
<http://jaimieleeloy.blogspot.com/>

Pauline Marcelle:
<http://www.paulinemarcelle.com/>

Kishan Munroe:
<http://www.kishanmunroe.com/>

Nikolai Noel:
<http://nikolainoelprojects.blogspot.com/>

Ebony G. Patterson:
<http://artitup.zoomshare.com/>

Oneika Russell:
<http://oneikarussell.net/>

Heino Schmid:
<http://heinoschmid.com/>

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

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