

DAVID BRIDGEMAN **Biography**

David was born in Oxford, England in 1959. Any creative inclinations have been passed on to him by his Italian grandfather who was always drawing, playing the cello or classical guitar. As a child, trips to the big London galleries forty miles away were quite frequent and helped to nurture an artistic awareness from a young age. His earliest recollection of such a visit was to see the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II by Pietro Annigoni in 1969, which had just been unveiled at the National Portrait Gallery. Other memorable and influential school trips include a Frank Stella exhibition, where his art teacher bought him the catalogue for the show.

David's other main interest at school was science and he went on to study biology as part of his degree in education at the University of Worcester in England. It was here that he was dissuaded from taking art as a secondary subject as it was believed this would impede his employability. After working in Chatham, Kent and Liverpool as a science teacher, David arrived in the Cayman Islands in 1987 to take up a teaching post at the George Hicks High School. It was here that he came into contact with other artists and felt inspired to begin painting. Over the years, he has been trained by artists such as Bendel Hydes, the New York-based Caymanian artist; Jerry Craig from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica; James Isaiah Boodhoo from Trinidad and Lys Hansen from Scotland. Each artist has helped to influence David's approach to painting.

His paintings have been described as austere and aggressive. One artist commented that they were distinctive not so much by what was put in as by what was left out. Most paintings have strong emotional ties to the landscape and the figure. Symbols are often used to convey a thought or a feeling, together with strong gestural strokes and colours. He works mainly in oils and often incorporates printing and collage to produce large and expressive works.

David has exhibited throughout the Caribbean, Canada, Scotland and France. His works form part of the collections in Grand Cayman's National Gallery, National Museum, Cultural Foundation and Government House as well as in local financial institutions and restaurants. He has illustrated a book of children's stories and has produced book covers for the Caribbean Writers Series, published by Heinemann Press.

David also enjoys working with young children both in school and in the community. In the past he has organised students to paint large, interactive murals using mops as paint brushes; to weave on bicycle wheels and to paint tiles for school bathrooms! He has also been involved in the making of children's costumes for the Batabano parades.

Living and working from home with his wife Lindsay and children Eilidh and Cameron in Coral Gables, West Bay, David paints from his studio which he built with family and friends. Although small and known as The Cube it has proven to withstand winds in excess of 150 mph!