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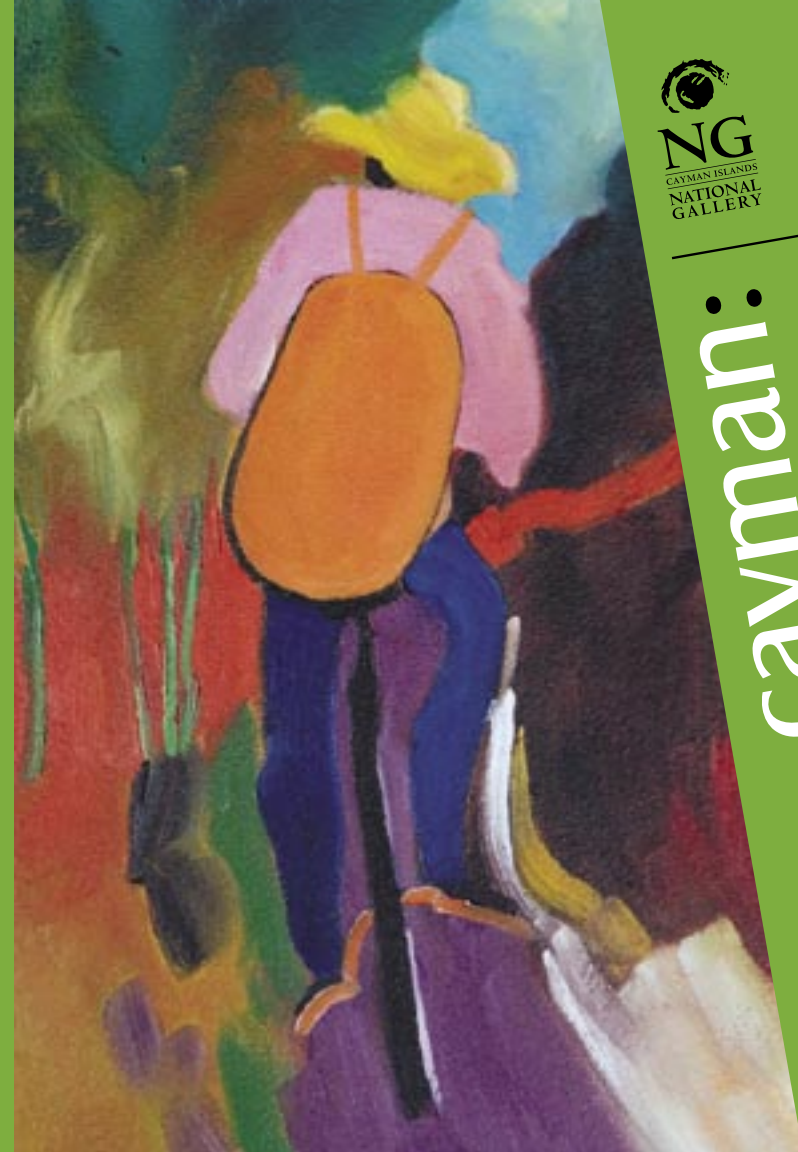


Butterfield Bank

Image photography by Patrick Broderick
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The National Gallery would like to thank the following:

Butterfield Bank
Cayman Island National Museum
Cayman National Cultural Foundation
Debra Barnes Tabora
Volunteers: Michelle Murray and Lynda Parson



cayman: an ever-changing landscape

An exhibition of past and present works from the National Collection

May 31st until August 24th, 2007

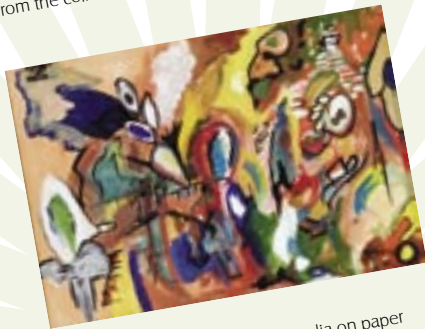
Room 3



Seafront
Charles Long 2003 Acrylic on masonite
From the collection of the National Museum



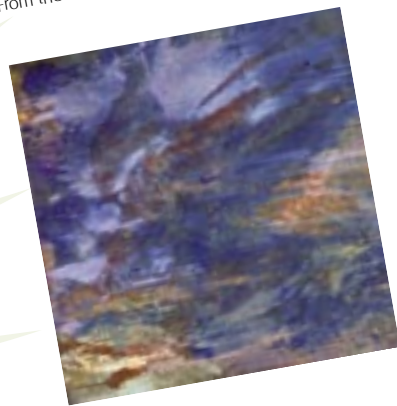
Rain Gauge
David Bridgeman 2007 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Gallery



Untitled
Nickola McCoy 2005 Mixed media on paper
From the collection of the National Gallery



Codex Caribbean
Chris Mann c. 2000 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Untitled
Bendel Hydes 1997 Oil on board
From the collection of the National Gallery



Director's Welcome

It is a pleasure to be partnering with the Cayman National Cultural Foundation and the National Museum on this important exhibition. The National Collection, gathered and subsequently disseminated by the three organisations, is an important tangible slice of our heritage (with the older works

of art), and culture (with the contemporary works). Exhibitions such as this one bring these exquisite works out of storage and by so doing release the wealth of the National Collection to its owners: the Caymanian people.

Nancy Barnard

Sponsor's Message

2007 marks the 40th Anniversary of Butterfield Bank (Cayman) Ltd. During these past 40 years the Bank has been working with the Cayman community supporting the development of its education, sports, health, arts and culture. As part of our ongoing support of the Arts and continued work with the National Gallery and the Cayman National Cultural Foundation we are proud to have the opportunity to sponsor Cayman: An Ever-changing Landscape and hope you enjoy viewing it.

At Butterfield we strive to be a model corporate citizen, often taking the lead in community projects. We are delighted this year to support the National Gallery's new building which will facilitate new exhibitions and educational programmes and allow the gallery to provide greater service and benefit to the

community. Over the last 40 years our Islands have seen a great deal of physical growth and cultural change and today, in particular, Cayman is experiencing a period of rapid development. The Bank itself is taking part in the changing landscape with the opening of our new building, Butterfield Place, in George Town later this year. This is a good time to reflect on our past and we hope that the changing artistic representations of Cayman over the decades which are on show in this exhibition will both inspire you to participate and support Cayman's arts.

Sheree Ebanks

Director & Head of Wealth Management
Butterfield Bank (Cayman) Ltd.

Curator's Statement



The beauty of the Caymanian environment has provided an endless source of inspiration for artists over the decades whether seeking to capture the idyllic aspects of our islands or using nature as a point of departure through which to address a variety of ideological issues.

Drawing on works from the collections of the National Gallery, National Museum and the Cayman National Cultural Foundation, never before displayed collectively, this exhibition explores the 'ever-changing' representations of our islands as depicted through a wide variety of styles and mediums.

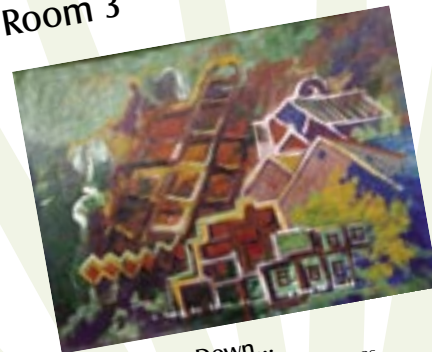
Early works range from the softer palettes of the realists through to the vivid hues of lush tropical foliage favoured by those working in expressionism. Many of these works are born out of the artist's deep personal affiliation with nature and the desire to capture the true character of "the islands time forgot".

Challenging these traditional notions of landscape other of the featured artists have ventured beyond idealised representations, using nature as a vehicle for wider social commentary. Explorations of the islands' rapid urban development and increasingly frail ecology become central to these works, as do themes of transformation and cultural assimilation in an increasingly globalised arena.

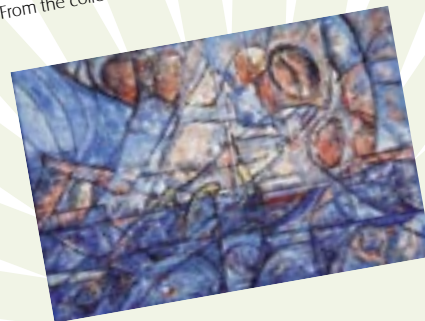
Through this series of stylistic and ideological dichotomies we are left contemplating a landscape, and a culture, that is in a state of flux and ultimately are reminded of the fragile balance that must be maintained.

Curator
Natalie Coleman

Room 3



Time to Tear Down...
Miguel Powery 2006 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Sea Elos
Randy Chollette 2003 Oil on canvas
From the McCoy Prize collection



That Morning
Karoly Zsucs 2004 Mixed media
From the collection of the National Gallery



Untitled I
Wally Warren 1997 Mixed media
From the collection of the National Gallery



Red Mangroves I
Chris Mann 2005 Watercolour on paper
From the collection of the National Gallery
Sponsored by Caribbean Utilities Company



Ode to Milo (with vertical squares)
Wray Banker 1999 Oil on wood
From the collection of the National Museum

Room 2



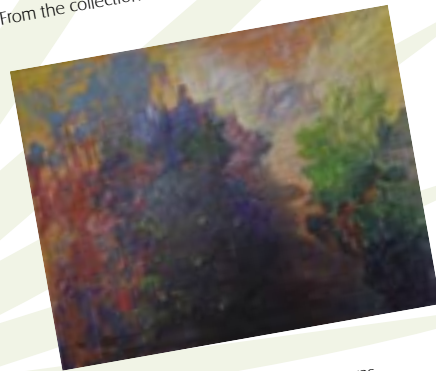
Yellow Leaves
Bendel Hydes 1988 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



World Praying for Peace
Miss Lassie
From the collection of the National Gallery



Balam, the Ass
Gladwyn Bush c. 1997
From the collection of the National Gallery



The Path
Miguel Powery 1997 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Gallery



Elijah and the Mantel
Miss Lassie
From the collection of the National Gallery



Pedro's Bluff, Charles Long, c.1998.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands

Nature in Caymanian Art by Natalie Coleman

The Cayman Islands National Collection, housed at the National Gallery, National Museum and the Cayman National Cultural Foundation, spans a period of approximately 40 years¹ and includes works by over 120 artists. Viewed collectively, in any number of thematic combinations, they offer a pictorial history of our islands and invoke dialogue pertaining to this history. Inevitably, owing to the spectacular nature of our surroundings, landscape is the dominant thread weaving through much of the collection and it is through key works in this genre that this exhibition examines the many changing faces of our islands.

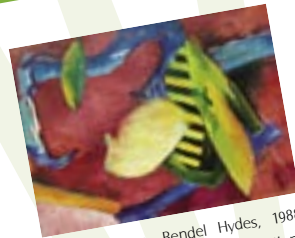
Unless an artist's intentions are purely documentary, landscape painting usually stems from a deep personal identification with nature² or, as historian Sir Kenneth Clark noted, "the appreciation of natural beauty and the painting of landscape (as an) enduring part of spiritual activity"³. The lush tropical foliage and aquamarine seas of the Caribbean have long provided a source of inspiration for such artists, offering unique perceptions of light, space and colour unlike anywhere else in the western hemisphere.

In the history of Caymanian art nature served as the pre-eminent

subject for the first three decades. Early depictions tend to be in a conventional style, often in oil or watercolour, and usually present idealised scenes of the 'islands time forgot'. Examples of this ilk have been collected in Room 1 where realistic depictions of significant local landmarks, notably Fort George and Pedro's Castle, share quarters with vernacular Caymanian architecture, abundant flora and picturesque beachscapes. These works, by noted artists Maureen Andersen, Faith Ross and Peter Markcroft⁴, capture a very different landscape than the one we inhabit in the 21st century. They offer a nostalgic view of the islands where a simpler way of life reigned and are noticeably devoid of socio-political content.

Following on from these early works are those by neo-traditionalists Gordon Solomon (Room 1), Randy Chollette and Miguel Powery (Room 2), which draw on images from the National Archives and childhood memories, and ultimately represent a similar wistfulness for past Cayman and the pace of life that is rapidly disappearing.

¹ With the exception of early works by Aarona Kohlman at the National Museum that date back to the 1920s.
² Poupeye, Veerie, Caribbean Art, 1998: pg 144.
³ Clark, Sir Kenneth, Landscape into Art, 1949 - the Slade Lectures.
⁴ We have purposefully excluded traditional watercolour from this exhibition so as not to have too bewildering a selection of mediums, however watercolour must be recognised as one of the most prolific genres of early Cayman Islands art, with numerous excellent examples in the National Collection. Champions of this genre in Cayman include Janet Walker, Joanne Sibley, Jeremy Sibley, Debbie Van der Bol, Penny Clifford, Lois Brezinski and Lorna Griggs. Photography also does not feature in this exhibition.



Yellow Leaves, Bendel Hydes, 1988.
Courtesy of the Cayman Islands National Museum.



Balam, the Ass, Gladwyn Bush, c.1997.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands.

Room 2

Nature has been a point of departure for many abstract painters⁵ and the works collected in Room 2 show the beginning of a period of stylistic development that heralded a move away from realistic depictions of nature to heavily stylised and later, abstracted imagery. 'Red Birch' by Charles Long and 'Picking Breadfruit' by Jan Barwick for example though realist in essence, have a highly stylised, and deceptively child-like quality. Here, the purposefully flattened, frieze-like landscapes in bright colours, transform the environment into a myriad of patterns that capture the often patchwork-like quality of natural foliage. Equally decorative is Joanne Sibley's 'Cyclist with Ground Basket' whose vibrant rhythmic-like patterns are a marked departure from her realistic depictions in watercolour.

'Yellow Leaves' by renowned artist Bendel Hydes is early work of what has become a life-long love affair with Cayman's landscape and aesthetic beauty, despite being resident abroad. Here the artist depicts opulent local vegetation in a quasi-realistic style. Although he has made a conscious effort to move past the semi-figurative nature of this work in more recent years and into looser, more abstract work, Cayman remains a theme that routinely manifests itself in Bendel's paintings. Miguel Power's 'The Path' is another example of

a conscious move towards abstraction even though the title's subject is still partially viewable in the centre of the painting.

Traditionally in Caribbean art, landscape has also been a popular format through which to present mystical visions as is often the case in the work of the late Gladwyn 'Miss Lassie' Bush. Her visions, which were based on the religious insights that came to her "in the state between sleeping and awakening" are often anchored in boldly coloured landscapes, part imagery, part real.

Room 3

More recently artists have begun to replicate nature in more reflective, allegorical ways, often forming visual links between landscape and wider social issues effecting both artist and their surroundings. Prevalent in Room 3 are works that explore a variety of dichotomies echoed in the rural / urban, natural/manmade, vacant/constructed, along with pressing environmental issues, that while easily accessible to a wide audience demand deeper contemplation than their predecessors.

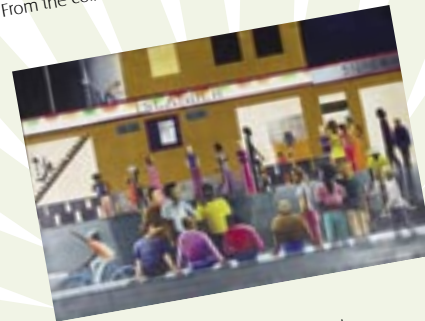
In contrast to the earlier semi-figurative 'Yellow Leaves', 'Untitled I' is an example of Bendel Hydes' mature work which, by and large is "characterised by a fascination

⁵ Poupeye, Veerle, Caribbean Art, 1998: 151.

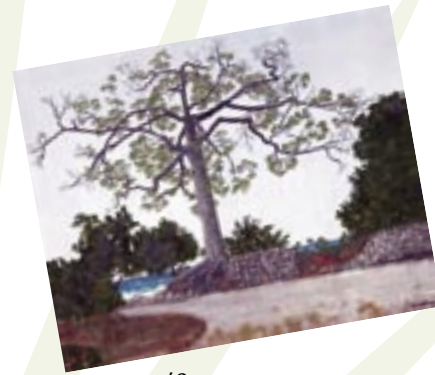
Room 1



Hope Town
Gordon Solomon 2006 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Islander
Charles Long 1975 Acrylic on board
From the collection of the National Museum

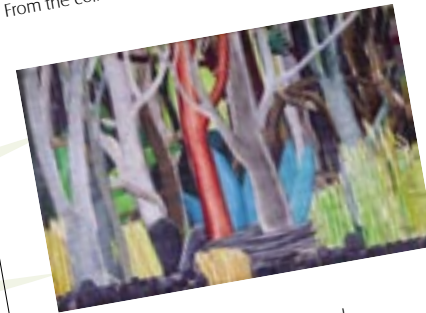


Fort George
Faith Ross 1963 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum

Room 2



Cyclist
Joanne Sibley 1993 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Red Birch
Charles Long 1974 Acrylic on wood
From the collection of the National Museum

Room 1



Pretty Blue
Randy Chollette 2004 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



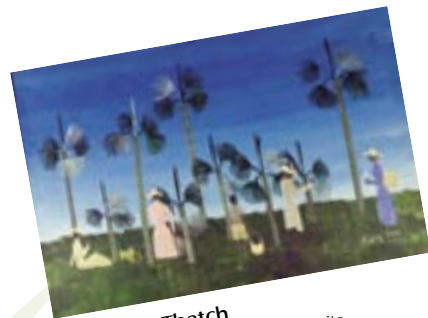
Street Scene
Charles Long c.1980 Oil on wood
From the collection of the National Gallery



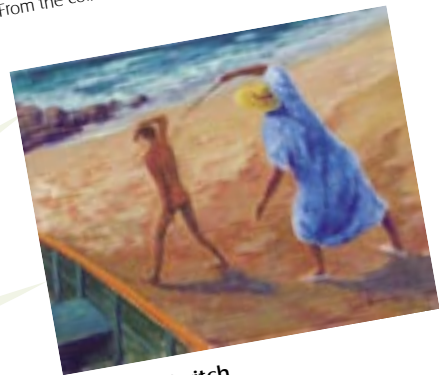
Catboat Duel
Miguel Powery 2006 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Fishermans Wharf
Peter Markcroft 1989 Acrylic on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Gathering Thatch
Charles Long 2001 Oil on masonite
From the collection of the National Museum



Tamarind Switch
Miguel Powery 1998 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Red Mangrove I, Chris Mann, 2005.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of
the Cayman Islands & sponsored by
Caribbean Utility Company

with water and light in landscape, by an absence of brush marks and by a masterful control of tonal gradations⁶. This style, which the artist calls biomorphic abstraction, is still indebted to the Caymanian landscape but beyond all degree of physical recognition, rather it is evocative of the atmosphere and space that Hydes associates with home.

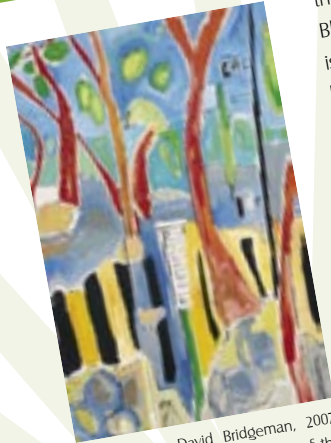
Keeping within the tradition of the Caribbean artist and national, Chris Mann's work is an ongoing process of cultural assimilation reflected through the variety of recurring symbols. The marine character of the Caymanian landscape features heavily for example in 'Caribbean Codex' but so too do symbols of international origin, alluding to the complex and diverse social make-up of our island, our history and our people. Executed in a style reminiscent of early 20th Century expressionism the artist seeks to depict not an objective reality but rather the subjective emotions and responses that objects and events arouse. Another of Mann's recurring motifs is the red mangrove which in this case calls our attention to the fragility of the landscape and the threat posed by both human degradation and the power of nature itself in the form of natural disasters.

An alternative vision of the modern seascape is offered by

Randy Chollette. 'Sea Elos', winner of the People's Choice Award at the 2003 McCoy Prize, draws heavily on the fragmentation of Cubism. Here the artist depicts the seascape from a multitude of viewpoints to represent the subject in a greater context. The multi viewpoints capture the movement of the sea, sail and boat, which are the central subject of the picture, by breaking up them up, analyzing, and re-assembling them in an abstracted form. The surfaces intersect at seemingly random angles presenting no coherent sense of depth. This movement is also echoed in Miguel Powery's 'Time to Tear Down....', a reference to the 'Ivanised' landscape and to urban development, where the cubist style not only creates a bold patchwork-like composition but cleverly captures the 'tumble down' quality expressed in the subject's title.

Challenging the traditional notions of landscape David Bridgeman has ventured beyond idealised representations of nature and combined images drawn from his present reality and those from vivid childhood memories. Like Mann, explorations of cultural identity are central to Bridgeman's work, as are themes of nationality and transformation in an increasingly globalised environment. In 'Rain Gauge' he makes connections with various places he has lived, which have influenced his identity. An abandoned weather instrument and

⁶ Muttoo, Henry, Soundings: 2003.



Rain Gauge, David Bridgeman, 2007.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands.

the barren landscape of the iron shore are Cayman and the Blue Bells, England. A similar search for identity and belonging is reflected in Nickola McCoy's abstracted work 'Untitled', part of her larger 'Black Hat' series.

This internalisation of landscape, both physical and cultural, is central to Wray Banker's work which reflects childhood and other personal memories in often stylised 'graphic' environments. The 'Ode to Milo' series, which consists of several studies of a tin of Milo, represents this approach. Here the artist uses a recognisable motif, the popular Caribbean beverage, and places it in a variety of 'landscapes' that are personalised to those who have commissioned one of the series. These works have a humorous as well as a serious side, again depicting part of Caymanian culture that is under threat.

Embracing new media in addition to the more traditional medium of painting are sculptors Karoly Szucs and Wally Warren. Szucs' sculpture 'That Morning' reminds us that while the Caribbean landscape is bounteous and fertile it is also volatile and unpredictable'. The twisted metal spiral is symbolic of the violent nature of a hurricane while the material used - the metal, ceramic plate, and gas metre - are tactile reminders of the chaos caused by Hurricane Ivan. Also using recycled materials

and found objects, though to a different end, Wally Warren has created an 'island' of parts, and one that focuses on the increasingly industrialised nature of our surroundings.

The works included in this exhibition do not represent the entirety of landscape-inspired artwork in the national collection, several of which were under conservation at the time of writing⁷. Rather they represent a strong cross section of eras and styles that trace the development of nature in Caymanian art. Beyond this collection many artists are working in a variety of mediums to capture the luminous aesthetic qualities of Cayman's environment and, increasingly, to raise awareness of its fragility. Notable recent projects that have moved into a new genre of art in Cayman are Bendel Hydes' 'Star Path', an environmental installation, and Aston Ebanks' 'The Maze', which works with found materials to temporarily transform the natural environment itself. Regardless of medium, many of these artists will continue to explore landscape in their work, both for its inspiring visual imagery and as a vehicle for commentary, drawing our attention to our increasingly fragile surroundings and the ongoing threat of globalisation to our cultural heritage.

⁷ Poupeye, Veerle, Caribbean Art, 1998: 143.

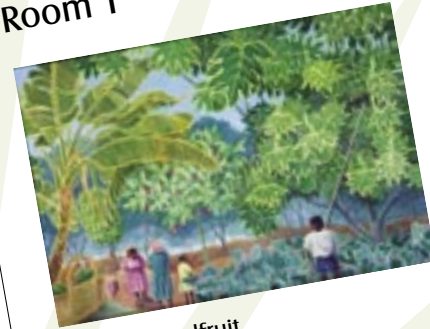
⁸ Including several key works by Gail Sibley, Teresa Grimes, Lena Reckola, Robert Farlow, Pertina Wright and Loretta Cummings. Other notable artists missing from this exhibition are Native Sons Al Ebanks, Nasaria Suckoo, Horacio Esteban and Chris Christian due to the fact while they each have significant work in the National Collection they are not suited to this current theme.

Foyer

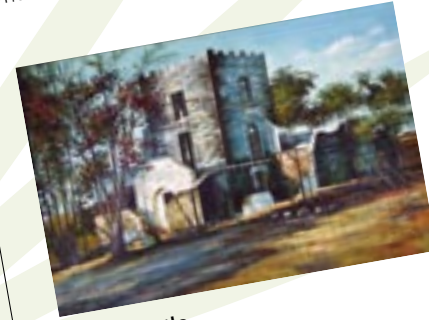


Pedro's Bluff
Charles Long c. 1996 Acrylic on masonite
From the collection of the National Gallery

Room 1



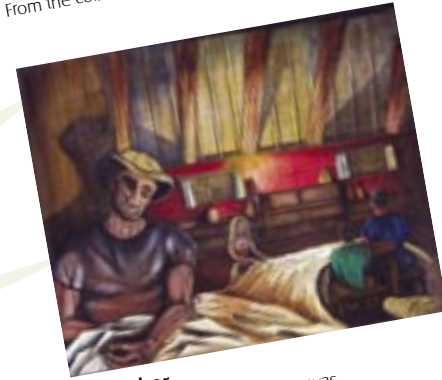
Picking Breadfruit
Jan Barwick c. 1980 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Gallery



Pedro Castle
W Suzi 1992 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



House and Rocks
Maureen Anderson c. 1995
Oil and felt pen on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum



Sailmaker
Kent Greene 1974 Oil on canvas
From the collection of the National Museum