



Faces & Figures : Joanne Sibley

29 September – 30 November 2007

Many people equate Joanne Sibley with beautiful watercolour renderings of Caymanian land and seascapes. She brilliantly captures the breeze, the colours and the moment of island life. But it is her lesser known oeuvre, her portraiture, which receives focus in this exhibition. Through these series of portraits we gain an intimate and insightful view of her life and work as an artist.

Joanne Sibley was born in Canada where there was a strong artistic influence from an early age. Her father was a commercial artist who painted fine art on the weekends doing portrait and landscape commissions. "So art was always in my life," reflects Joanne. "Art books, paintings, artistic friends were close by. I started painting with my father when I was very young, and he patiently taught me the basics which I developed as the years went by."

She graduated from the University of Manitoba with an Interior Design degree where she met her future husband before moving to Jamaica in 1954. It was there that Joanne worked as an artist with an internationally recognised advertising agency. When her children started school, she joined her husband's architectural firm and created renderings and artistic interpretations of his buildings for client presentations.

On Jamaica's independence in 1962, she was appointed to design the interiors for Jamaica house, the Prime Minister's residence. This subsequently led to a number of portrait commissions including that of Jamaica's National Hero, George William Cordon for Headquarters' House. Joanne went on to obtain further commissions of portraits from directors and founding members of some of Jamaica's leading companies and this led to a number of art exhibitions.

In 1980 Joanne and Jeremy Sibley left Jamaica for the Cayman Islands. Joanne comments that, "Cayman was a fresh breeze of influence and I soon became involved in the Visual Arts Society exhibitions and workshops." As well as being inspired to capture scenes of Cayman life, Joanne accepted commissions to produce portraits for a number of Cayman's prominent organisations and families.

She has received awards from the festival of Art in Jamaica along with an honourable mention from *Artist Magazine* where she was runner-up in a competition of 10,000 entries. Joanne was also one of five artists representing the Cayman Islands in the regional travelling art show *Carib Art*. Her work is widely collected and forms part of many private and corporate art collections. Today, Joanne divides her time between Cayman and Canada where she continues to paint full-time.

David Bridgeman, Curator