

Paradise (re)Visited
Lecture Series and Educational Programming

As with all NGCI exhibitions, an extensive education programme has been developed for Paradise (re)Visited that is targeted both at school students and the wider public. The NGCI 'teachers pack' contains educational activities that start in the gallery and end in the classroom with cross curricular follow up projects relating to both Jamaica and Cayman's culture and society during the early 19th century. These can be booked through the NGCI education department.

Additional programmes and screenings are as follows:

Screenings:

August 27th @ 6pm

The Wide Sargasso Sea - director, John Duigan's adaptation of Jean Rhys's memorable 1966 novel set in the West Indies of the mid-nineteenth century.

Lectures:

August 11th and 18th @ 6pm

Curator Natalie Coleman will lecture on the History of Jamaican art from the early colonial period to the present day (2-part series).

August 16th and 17th

Sister Islands exhibition lecture series. Call 945 8111 for times and locations.

August 26th and September 23rd @ 12.30pm

National Gallery curators will lead a lunchtime lecture, discussing various aspects of the current exhibition. Complimentary lunch served.

Educational Programmes and Workshops

August 22nd and September 19th, 11 – 4pm

Family Mornings at the National Gallery. Bring your family and enjoy art activities related to the current exhibition.

September 19th

Full day artist led landscape painting workshop. Space limited. Call the NGCI for details and reservations.



Paradise (re)Visited

19th Century Jamaican Landscapes
from the collection of Hugh and Pam Hart

The National Gallery of the Cayman Islands

August - October, 2009



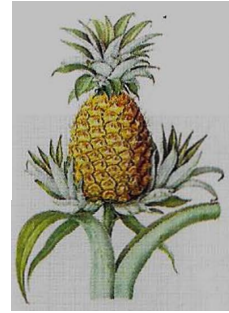


Thank You

The National Gallery would like to express their thanks to the following individuals and organisations whose support has made this exhibition possible:

Hugh and Pam Hart

- Brett Ashmeade-Hawkins
- Kennedy Gallery
- Tortuga Rum Co. Ltd.
- Mise en Place
- The Ministry of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports and Culture
- Jessica Wallace
- Kerri-Anne Chisholm
- Adam Stoner



Curator's statement:

In the course of developing exhibitions at the National Gallery it is unusual to come across a local collection that is as rare and historically significant as Hugh and Pam Hart's group of 19th century Jamaican landscape prints. Featuring works by renowned artist Joseph Bartholomew Kidd, and including supporting work by Belanger, Robertson, Hakewill, Whitty, Cartwright and Duperly, this collection represents some of the best known early pictorial representations of the Jamaican landscape and society at that time.

Capturing a vision of Jamaica as an exotic 'Paradise', these predominantly itinerant British artists provided the earliest popular understanding of the Caribbean region in the West, prefiguring the trend for romantic landscapes in the later 19th century.

Their subject matter ranges from idealised landscapes, to plantation houses, ships, and daily life, offering a unique portrait of Jamaican culture, and by association parts of our own, at a pivotal historical moment.

Gathered together these works are more than a survey of colonial art. They provide a vehicle through which to discuss our region's history, to address important political and social issues, and to question 'how' and 'why' the Caribbean has been depicted in certain ways, or through certain 'gazes'; questions which are as relevant to our lives today as they were in the 19th century.

Natalie Coleman
Curator

Exhibition Overview

A 'Picturesque Tour' was the title appropriated to any work intended to convey a general idea of the surfaces and external workings of a country without attempting to comment on its moral or political make up (Bohls and Duncan, 265.) As Hakewill writes in the introduction to his series of that name, "The Tour which is here submitted to the attention of the Public, was professedly and exclusively picturesque". It is this shared desire to capture the picturesque that unites the artists featured in this exhibition whether they were driven to the new world by scientific curiosity, commerce, colonization, diplomacy, or as early tourists on a 'Grand Tour'. Yet despite



George Robertson

the purely idyllic rendering of these scenes, they provide a valuable insight into the colonial period when most visual representation was tied to the planters interested and dominated by portraits of the plantocracy.

The earliest works in this extensive collection were painted by artist **George Robertson** who arrived in Jamaica in 1773 as a guest of the British plantation owner William Beckford. During his 13 years on the island, Robertson painted a self-portrait, a number of landscapes, and several views of Beckford's sugar plantations in Westmoreland. These landscape paintings were meant to form the basis for a series of engravings that Beckford planned to use to illustrate a book he was writing on the history of Jamaica. Robertson sent some of these paintings home to England to be exhibited at the Incorporated Society of Artists in London in 1775 and 1777, where they received high praise. In 1778 six of them, featured in this exhibition, were engraved by D. Lerpiniere, T. Vivares and J. Mason and published by John Boydell.



George Robertson

The son of an English decorator and artist, **James Hakewill** initially trained as an architect but became known early in his career for his illustrated publications of Windsor (UK) and various locations in Italy. From 1820-1 he visited Jamaica and subsequently published 'A Picturesque Tour of the Island of Jamaica,' in 1825. Interestingly, while claiming that the work was "exclusively picturesque", Hakewill published an accompanying essay offering "a few remarks on the moral condition of some parts of its inhabitants". This essay, as much as the charming images attached, provides great insight into the situation of slaves during the apprenticeship period, albeit from Hakewill's personal perspective.

French artist **Louis Belanger**, never actually visited Jamaica but, inspired by George Robertson's earlier work, created a series of views of Jamaica, published by Colnaghi, Sala and Co. in 1800. Similarities between the series is clearly apparent when comparing works such as 'View of the Bridge across the Cabaritta River' and the 'Rio Cobre'.

Lesser known artist **Captain I. S. Whitty's** sketches formed the basis of Views in the Vicinity of the City of Kingston published by J. B. Pyne and P. Gauci 1839.

French artist **Adolphe Duperly** established himself as a lithographer and printer in Kingston in the early 1820s and made a modest living by selling lithographs of local interest, including portraits of prominent colonists, views of plantations and various historical occurrences in the Island. From 1832 onwards Duperly began collaborating with the artist Isaac Mendes Belisario (1795-1849) on what was to become one of the most celebrated series of this period. "Sketches of Character...of the Negro Population in the Island of Jamaica", it was published in Kingston in 1837, depicted



Adolphe Duperly

characters from the Christmas Slave Festival of John Canoe and also well-known Kingston street characters. This joint venture between Duperly and Belisario was such a

success that Duperly decided to revive his ambitious plans to publish a series of '48 Lithographs of Jamaica'. Duperly took daguerrotype views of the Jamaican landscape and had these transformed into lithographs in Paris and published in Kingston sometime between 1844 and 1847. The original set of 24 views was titled "Daguerrian Excursions in Jamaica", and is a fascinating record of the buildings, people and culture of mid-19th century society.

The Baptist Chapel series was executed by **P Cartwright**, a well-known London-based lithographer, and Thomas Picken, a lesser known English landscape painter. They were created in the 1840s to commemorate the preachers and chapels that had a close association



P. Cartwright

with the abolitionist movement and as a result are the most politically driven works in the exhibition. Knibb's Chapel in Falmouth is of special note as it was destroyed by the militia in response to the radical sermons of the Baptist deacon.

By the time **Joseph Bartholomew Kidd** arrived in Jamaica 'Picturesque Views' from exotic locations had become recognised commercial ventures yet, writes Dr David Boxer, Director Emeritus and Chief Curator of the National Gallery of Jamaica, "nothing can quite prepare us for the magnitude of the pictorial essay of Jamaica undertaken by the Scottish painter". Inspired by both the "sensitive miniatures" of Hakewill and the "river-laced lush interiors" of Robertson, Kidd's series of 50 illustrations covered many different aspects of life in the early emancipation era. The breath of his work, and the sheer number of lithographs produced, makes it the most important art publishing project to come out of the West Indies to this day.



JB Kidd

A prominent member of the Scottish Academy of Art, Kidd

first visited Jamaica in 1835 inspired by descriptions of the island given to him by his brother Thomas who had settled in Falmouth, Trelawny. Determined to redress the imbalance of colonial "picture making" that had primarily focused on

India, China and Canada, he soon exhibited a small series of Scottish and Jamaican works which met with overnight success. Five of these plates made up Part One of Kidd's "Views of Jamaica," and led to the translation of a total of fifty drawings and paintings into lithographs over a four year period. All the lithographic



JB Kidd

drawings were done by Kidd himself and Dr Boxer notes that it likely that Kidd also carried out the hand-colouring required for each of the plates.

Despite the turbulent times, few of these artists used their work to draw attention to the visual and material culture of slavery. Kidd was no different. His aim was to translate the "superb and picturesque scenery" of the island which he felt was "comparatively unknown by in the land that peopled it." Like his contemporaries, he aestheticised slaves, picturing them in harmony with their surroundings, and thereby presenting slavery as a neutral and natural part of the Jamaican landscape. His subjects note Boxer, "are varied, giving us a comprehensive view of the Jamaican environment in the last days of the pre-emancipation era. From individual



JB Kidd

studies of plants and trees to vast vistas of townscapes and estates; from much admired 'beauty spots' to the unusual views of Kingston 'from the Commercial Rooms', we have been bequeathed a visual essay of our land of quite extraordinary breadth and beauty. In reality the winds of change which were already

sweeping the land but were not permitted to disturb the essential serenity of his vision" (Boxer, introduction to the republished 'Views of Jamaica').