

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Art of Assemblage at The National Gallery

An exhibition of assemblage art - contemporary art made from found objects and recycled materials – will open on Friday, May 10th at The National Gallery, featuring work by eighteen artists. Assemblage involves the transformation of found objects and materials into art by combining or constructing techniques such as gluing or welding. In its origin it was a radically new way of making sculpture that turned its back on established carving and casting practices, along with the accepted culture of the time.

Assemblage art traces its origin to Pablo Picasso who created his first “assemblage”, *Guitar*, out of sheet-metal in 1913, although the term was coined later, in 1953, by French artist Jean Dubuffet. It came into common use when Peter Selz and William Seitz, curators at the Museum of Modern Art, created their “The Art of Assemblage” exhibition in 1961. The exhibition showcased the work of early 20th century European artists such as George Braque, Dubuffet, Marcel Duchamp, Picasso, and Kurt Schwitters alongside Americans Man Ray, Joseph Cornell, Robert Mallery and Robert Rauschenberg.

Assemblage is a technique not a style and materials used to create it can be literally anything organic or man-made, new or recycled. Scraps of wood, stones, old shoes, parts of machines, brewery pallets, plastic bags and soda cans are some of the many items being used by artists in *Art of Assemblage*.

“The artists featured here in have sought to champion the often neglected beauty of simple day-to-day objects,” says curator Natalie Urquhart. “What might be disregarded as junk by some has been salvaged and transformed. The sculptures and collages - which are not sculpted in the traditional sense but constructed and weaved – are curious and unpredictable, repetitive and sometimes compulsive. They blur the boundaries between painting and sculpture, value and junk, art and life.”

The exhibition, which has been generously supported by Butterfield has been curated by Urquhart with assistance from Giovanna Stafford. It features local artists Wray Banker, Deal Ebanks, Aston Ebanks, Greg Lipton, Karoly Szucs, Rasitha Sanjeewa, Amar Sheow, Peter Polack, John Broad, David Bridgeman, Kaitlyn Elphinstone, Chris Mann and Darlene Young along with international artists Frederico Uribe and Wally Warren and guests of Pirates Point Resort. Many of the pieces have been created for the exhibition while others have been sourced from local collections and previous National Gallery exhibitions including *FRESH!* (2003) and *Emergence* (2004).

The exhibition opens May 10th and runs until July 26th at the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands on the Esterley Tibbetts Hwy. For more information or to book a school tour email education@nationalgallery.org.ky or call Ivanna on 945 8111.

PHOTO: Rasitha Sanjeeva's Fish Skeleton arriving on site at the National Gallery



Photo: Aston Ebanks setting up his installation 'House of Cards'

