

## Bendel Hydes & Expressionism



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1911



Bendel Hydes, *Woman*, 1985



Wassily Kandinsky, *Landscape with Factory Chimney*, 1910



Bendel Hydes, *To Miss Issie*, 1984

***“As an artist today, I am as much informed by the what I have rejected from the ashes of Modernism as by what I have accepted” (Bendel Hydes)***

## The Artist

Bendel Hydes is known as Cayman's foremost contemporary artist. He was born in West Bay, Grand Cayman in 1952. Hydes studied art at Liverpool College of Art and Canterbury College in the UK and finished his studies at Clark University in the US, where he completed a degree in philosophy and political science.

Hydes has lived and worked in New York City since 1982 and participated in several important exhibitions there and in France, Brazil, London and Washington, D.C. His art is found in the collection of HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh and several other public and private collections, including the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands and the Cayman Islands National Archive.

Whilst he began his career working in a realist or representational style, since the 1980s Hydes has worked with abstraction, creating paintings that are inspired by his Caymanian heritage, as well as European modern art movements such as Expressionism.

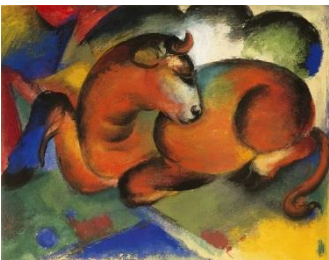


Wassily Kandinsky, *Study for Improvisation V*, 1910

## Expressionism

Abstract art refers to the non-representational style of visual depiction that is less concerned with accurate rendering of visual reality and more so with colour and composition in their own right. Expressionism refers to an artistic style rooted in the subjective experiences of the artist. Expressionist art typically prioritises the emotions of the artist over the specific subject that is being depicted. In the visual arts, Expressionism refers more specifically to a German art movement that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century.

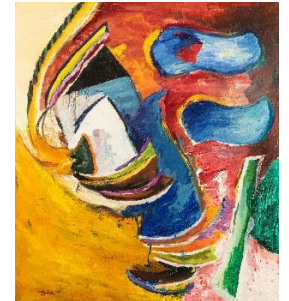
Artists associated with the movement include Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc and Paul Klee. As a style, Expressionism can be characterised by its use of bold, expressive colours, which are often used to invoke a particular mood. Expressionist artists were also drawn to tribal and folk art, which often depart from traditional means of representation, such as naturalism and realism.



Franz Marc, *Red Bull*, 1912

## The Artwork

Bendel Hydes began exploring ideas and techniques associated with Expressionism after he moved to New York in the early 1980s. There he encountered many examples of expressionist and abstract paintings in the city's famous museums, having previously studied these same art movements during his time at college in England. Hydes uses bright colours and expressive brushwork to capture a sense of energy and movement, while also conveying feelings inspired by his upbringing in Cayman, as in the case of the painting *To Miss Izzie*, which refers to the artist's primary school teacher Miss Izzie Powell.



Bendel Hydes, *The Harbour*, 1986

Kandinsky, *The Cow*, 1910

## Discussion

- What do Bendel Hydes' paintings make you feel? Do his choice of colours and his compositions convey certain emotions or give a clue as to what the artist's state of mind was when he painted them?
- Do you think it's easier to convey feelings by being spontaneous and painting in an expressive style, or do you think realism is more effective than abstract art at achieving this?

## Making Comparisons

- Look at the work of other Expressionist painters such as Wassily Kandinsky and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. How is their work similar to, and different from, the work of Bendel Hydes?

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/e/expressionism>

[https://www.moma.org/s/ge/collection\\_ge/artist/artist\\_id-3115\\_thumbs.html](https://www.moma.org/s/ge/collection_ge/artist/artist_id-3115_thumbs.html)

## Follow Up Activities

- Visit the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands and view the Bendel Hydes paintings from the 1980s that are on display. What is it about them that makes them Expressionist in style?
- What is your greatest source of inspiration when you create your art? Try and think about this when you paint and channel the feelings you have about this idea or subject through your painting. Can you imitate an expressionist style in your artwork?