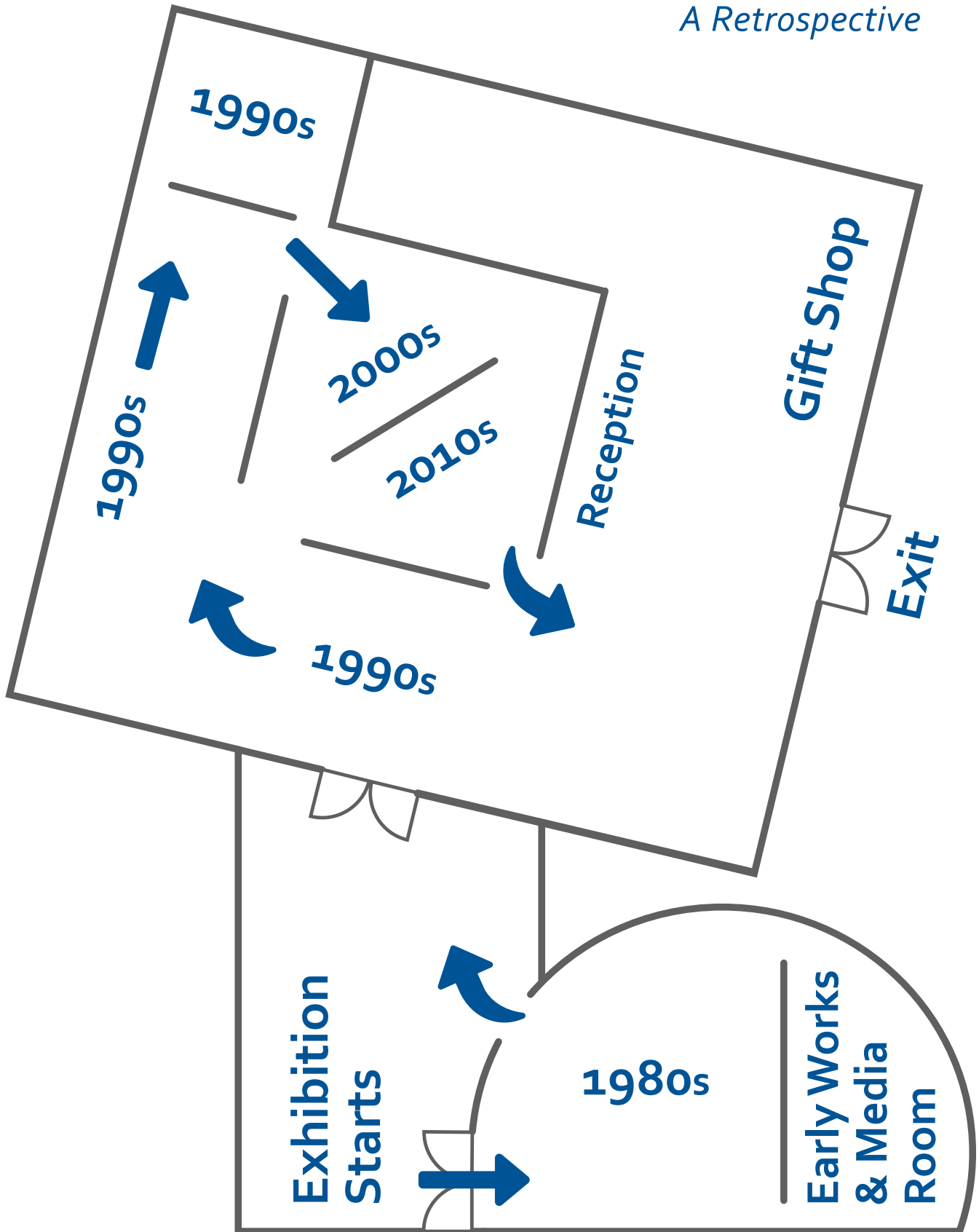


# BENDEL HYDES

*A Retrospective*



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## *A Retrospective*

This retrospective offers an unprecedented survey of the life and work of Bendel Hydes - who is widely regarded as the founding father of Caymanian art. Drawing on the largest assembly of the artist's work to date - with 70 artworks on exhibit, and 200 more in the accompanying catalogue - the exhibition charts the evolution of his studio practice across half a century of creativity: from early depictions of traditional Caymanian scenes, through experimentation with Surrealism and Expressionism, and ultimately to the purely abstract visual language that Hydes refers to as 'luminescent abstraction'. We conclude with his career-defining series *Circumnavigating the Globe* (2008-2010), remarkable paintings that are distilled to their essential elements and that reflect an exceptionally talented artist pushing the very limits of his artistic expression.

Seen together for the first time, this collection provides audiences with an appreciation of the scale and thematic variety of the artist's production. Critically, it also provides an understanding of Caymanian art. The artist's preoccupations with form and colour accelerated artistic debate in our islands as he advocated for an official cultural infrastructure, and eventually co-founded the Cayman National Cultural Foundation and the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands. Our aim therefore is not merely to bring together multiple works into a coherent body, but to recognise their importance for our collective understanding of our wider creative history.

Through the artworks, film footage, archival displays and photographs we are now able to step into the life of this creative pioneer and celebrate his relentless search for truth and beauty. We invite you to voyage with us into Hydes' captivating world of colour and beauty – a formative journey that has finally come full circle and brought the artist home.