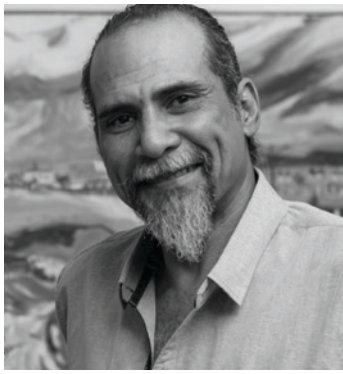


Horacio Esteban



Horacio Estaban, *Mother and Child II*, 2017. National Collection of the Cayman Islands.



The Artist

Born in Cuba and raised in Cayman Brac, Esteban is a sculptor and

jeweller known for his use of the local semi-precious stone Caymanite. A core member of the Native Sons artists collective, he was recognised by the Cayman National Cultural Foundation for Artistic Excellence in Sculpture (2002) and in 2017 received the Artistic Director's Visionary Award. In 2004 Esteban was the recipient of the NGCI's Artist Away Grant and in 2015 he was selected for residency in the inter-island artist lock-in project in Jersey, Channel Islands, produced by the Jersey Arts Trust in partnership with Jersey Heritage and Wild Works Theatre Company.

NGCI exhibitions include *Emergence* (2005), *Native Sons' Fahive* (2005), *All Access* (2015), *Saltwater in their Veins* (2017), a solo exhibition, *Horacio Esteban* (2017), *Revive: Contemporary Caymanian Craft* (2017), *Cross Currents - 1st Cayman Islands Biennial* (2019) and *Island of Women: Life at Home During our Maritime Years* (2020).

The Artwork

The iconic image of Mary and child Christ has been reproduced throughout art history in all manner of mediums, including paintings, carvings, stained glass, and sculpture. Here, Esteban's piece utilises Caymanite, a semi-precious stone unique to the Cayman Islands. The use of Caymanite provides a more personal interpretation of this universal iconography: the experience

of motherhood in a Caymanian context, undeniably shaped by the Christian heritage of the nation.

Caymanite is only found in the Cayman Islands, and local artisans use the rock to make beautiful jewellery and special gifts. Caymanite can be found in the eastern district of Grand Cayman and on the bluff in Cayman Brac.



Horacio Esteban, *Mother and Child*, 2017

One of two sculptures by Horacio Esteban that depicts the iconic image of Mary and Jesus, this particular version utilises a dark coloured piece of highly polished Caymanite. The colouring of the chosen material provides a visually striking effect, while also conveying a sense of reverence for this particular subject matter.

Stone carving is an activity where pieces of rough natural stone are shaped by the controlled working and chiseling away of

the material's surface. Some artists use the stone itself as inspiration; the Renaissance artist Michelangelo claimed that his job was to free the human form trapped inside.

Discussion

- Sculpture comprises various artistic techniques that can include stone carving, collage, installation art, land art, and assemblage. Which of these techniques would you use to describe Horacio Esteban's works? Can you think of any other terms?
- Caymanite is an uncommon variety of dolomite, also known as dolostone, originally reported from locations in the Miocene Cayman Formation in the Cayman Islands: the Bluff in Cayman Brac and the East End on Grand Cayman. Have you seen or touched Caymanite? What other things can Caymanite be used for?

Comparison

- Compare Renaissance sculptor Michelangelo Buonarroti's *Pieta*, one of Michelangelo's most famous works, to those created by Esteban.
- Visit <http://www.italianrenaissance.org/michelangelos-pieta/> to read about Michelangelo's process using Carrara Marble.
 - What are some similarities and differences that you notice?

- What draws your interest between the two sculptors? Explain why?

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI (1475 – 1564)



Michelangelo, Pieta, c. 1498-1500, marble

Follow up Activities

- Create your own sculpture of *Mary and Child*, similar to Esteban by carving a bar of soap.
- If you wish to branch out attempt to copy Michelangelo's carving of cloth in your bar of soap.
- Watch this video on how to make sculptures from rocks. Then make your own rock sculpture – given you have the appropriate tools.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6B0qvfY2n0>.