

'FAHIVE'



# NATIVE SONS

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National Gallery  
of the Cayman Islands

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NATIVE SONS  
CAYMANIAN ART

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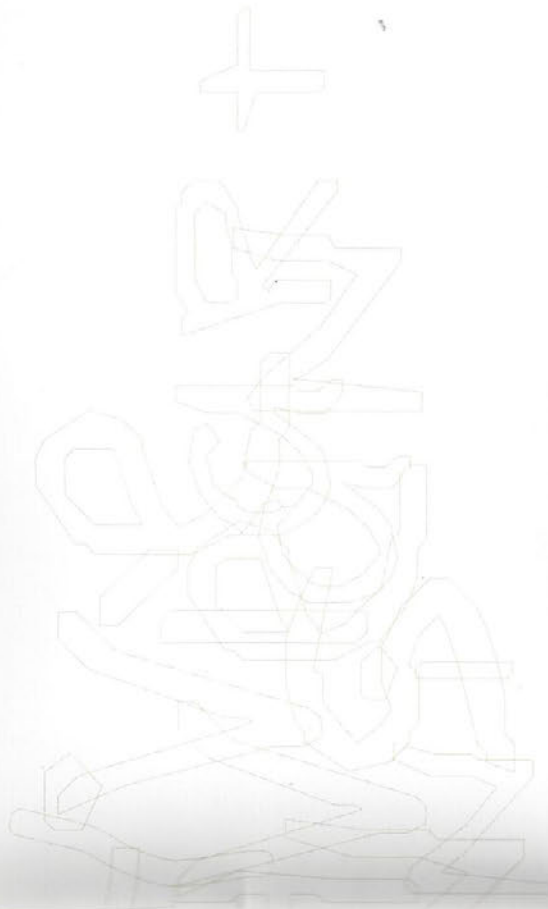


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## Sponsor's Welcome

*Bank Austria Cayman Islands Ltd. would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting these very talented artists by coming to this exhibition. The Bank has a long standing history of supporting the arts in Austria and we are pleased to be able to support the National Gallery here in the Cayman Islands in its efforts to ensure a continued growth and interest in the arts, and to preserve important artwork for current and future generations. We strongly believe, that a country's true heart and spirit is reflected in its culture and art, and we try as best as we can to support these efforts in this country, we call our home.*

**James E. O'Neill**  
Managing Director





## Native Sons

Formed in 1996, the Native Sons are a group of Caymanian artists now recognised as among the most respected and prolific in the Cayman Islands. Committed to inspire, foster, define, promote and encourage Caymanian art through education and exhibitions, their goal is to continually raise the standard of work created in our community.

Native Sons was the initiative of founding members Wray Banker, Al Ebanks, Anthony Ramoon and Miguel Powery who first exhibited collectively at the Harquail Theatre in February of 1996. The success of this show soon spurred another later that year providing a much-needed injection of new energy in the local art scene and, more importantly, cementing a knowledge and appreciation of a purely Caymanian aesthetic.

In the years following the group has since doubled in size and members have continued to exhibit both collectively and through a series of solo exhibitions and wide variety of art and cultural projects, on the island and abroad. Following their mandate they continue to encourage new members to raise the standard of art and the way in which it is presented.

The artwork selected for this exhibition illustrates a survey of work since the inauguration of the Native Sons. It includes a diverse selection of themes and mediums, executed through a wide variety of genres - ranging from realist and impressionist to abstract and conceptual - signifying that while these artists share a collective ideal their artistic vision remains truly unique.

The National Gallery is delighted to support the work of the Native Sons through 'Fahive', their fifth exhibition and first group show in over three years.

**Natalie Coleman**  
Curator



**National Gallery**  
of the Cayman Islands

## NATIVE SONS

\* Native Sons was born out of the necessity to give Caymanian born artists an opportunity to develop skills, gain exposure and fulfil artistic goals in a nurturing and non-discriminate environment, effectively creating an arena in which its artists can attempt to define a Caymanian aesthetic while standing firm against the outside factions that seek to keep us in the box.

Our pledge is to be blaringly honest in our works. We are heading towards a future where equal opportunities for all artists are readily available, where Caymanian artists will produce the most

provocative titillating artwork, where we will be free to create art from our souls without the confinement of being bound by foreign aesthetics.

Native Sons is seeking to move beyond these shores to garnish international acclaim. This is an important movement because without Native Sons many Caymanian artists would be quietly painting at home instead of exhibiting in the highest and most prestigious establishments in Cayman. Together we have power. We stand together against adversity and support each individual's personal efforts. We do art because we have to.

Our philosophy is that Caymanian people and our heritage are as rich and varied as the coral in our seas. We have a heat burning just beneath the surface of our artistic skin. Native Sons is here to blaze the fire.

**Nasaria Suckoo-Chollette**  
Native Sons Artist

'WE FRUM YA & WE DO ART'



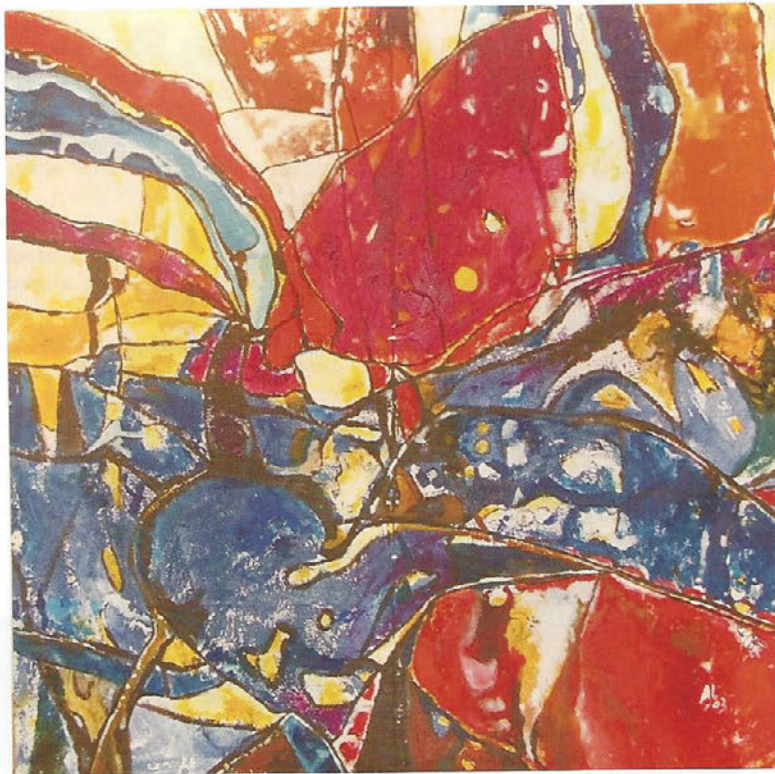


Al Ebanks

Al Ebanks was one of the founding members of the Native Sons and he has exhibited both with the group and in several solo shows since its inauguration. As a self-employed Caymanian artist, who studied art at the Cayman Islands High School, he has developed a style of his own which is best described as a fresh twist of Abstract and Impressionist art. In addition to his wide range of paintings Al is also a talented sculptor in stone and ceramics. As an artist he is dedicated to refining his abilities and is always eager to learn more.

In 1995 Al was fortunate to receive a scholarship from the Cayman National Cultural Foundation to study stone and clay sculpting. This added to his already mature style, using charcoal, acrylic and oil canvas. Later that year he was asked to design and sculpt the 'Radley Gourzong Award', which is presented to a person who has made extraordinary contributions to the arts and Caymanian culture.

The artist's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Cayman Islands National Museum, National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, the Griffin Gallery in Chicago, the Sherry Frontenac Hotel in Miami and many private collections. Al also travelled to Miami last year for a solo show at the Jackie Gleason Theatre in South Beach. Recently his work was chosen to grace the homes depicted in the new movie Haven which was directed by Caymanian filmmaker, Frankie Flowers.



Al Ebanks  
**The Float Parade**  
2003  
Acrylic on Canvas





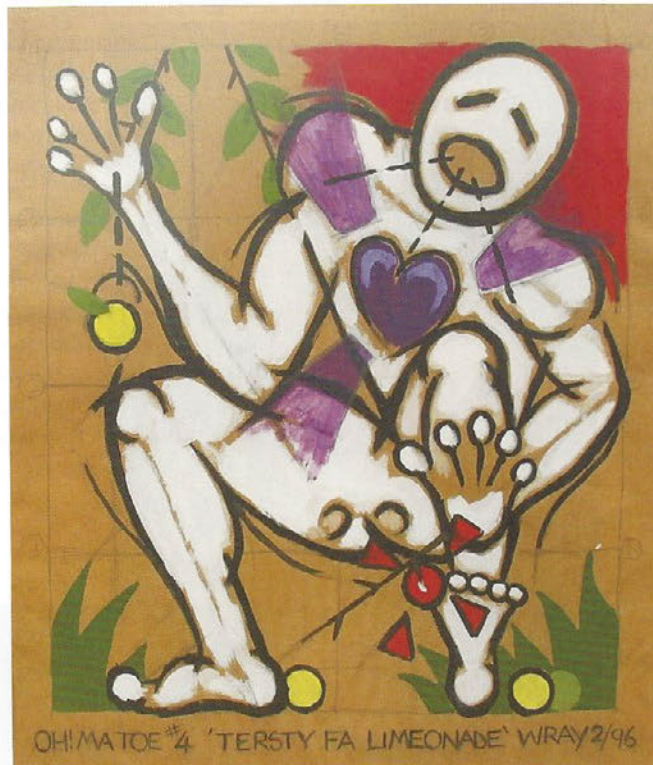
## Wray Banker

During his early years in high school art, Van Gogh and Picasso were big influences on Wray. Later, years of studying as a Graphic Designer in Houston Texas broadened his horizons, expanded his exposure and artists such as Keith Haring and Andy Warhol became important influences as the artist embraced the Neo-Pop Movement.

His first solo exhibition entitled 'Serious 'bout Makin Fun' described the artist in a nutshell. All of his works to date have an element of humour in them. They satirise elements of life in the Caribbean, causing us to see them in a new light. The humour, Wray feels, helps people to relate to his work. "Having humour is important because it makes your work approachable to a wide variety of people," he explains. "It takes the elitism away and helps them to feel at ease. There is a misconception that if something is funny then it can't be serious, but I disagree. I make fun of many things but all my work has an underlying seriousness to it. I try to use humour to raise issues, and hope to make people question what lies behind a painting and have them approach a subject in a different way."

Wray has received critical acclaim as both a graphic and fine artist. His CI Olympic Committee pin designs for the '96 Olympics and '03 PanAm Games were voted 'Best out of Countries'. He has designed numerous logos, The National Gallery, The McCoy Prize and Native Sons to name a few. His projects are as diverse as painting murals for Pedro St James, to designing entire exhibits for the CI National Museum and The National Gallery. Several of his pieces hang in private homes and galleries throughout the island and to date five of his paintings some from his 'Oh Ma Toe!' and Warholesque 'Ode to Milo' series, reside in the permanent collection of the Cayman Islands National Museum. Some of his more recent notables would be exhibiting at Art Miami 2003, being selected to represent Cayman in the Caribbean Biennial in Santo Domingo and exhibiting in Chicago at the Griffin Gallery.

As a Founding member he exhibits his work publicly with the 'Native Sons' and group shows throughout the island. Most recently he has had a solo exhibit '221 A.I.' at the Brasserie restaurant of this 'Big Eye Guys' paintings series and in the 2005 McCoy Prize was awarded Second Commendation in a new medium for him, photography. During the 2003 quincennial celebrations he was awarded a 'Lifetime Achievement Award' in Arts by the Cayman Islands Government.



Wray Banker  
**Tersty Fa Limeonade**  
['Oh! Ma Toe' series]  
1996  
Acrylic on paper



## Nasaria Suckoo-Chollette



Nasaria was always the dramatic child who spent her time reading and exploring new worlds through her imagination and as time went on, by writing poetry, short stories and songs. It was not until college that she took a real interest in painting, beginning with painting pictures on jean pants for her college friends and the occasional canvas piece for others.

From there Nasaria honed and developed her skills, joining the acclaimed 'Native Sons' and showing her works at local venues. She took several art classes at New York University in 1999, while pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Theatre. Upon her return to Cayman, she entered the McCoy Prize art competition and showed her works at the Kensington Lott exhibition, 'Blu'. The National Gallery and the National Museum have both invited Nasaria for showings most recently at The National Gallery's 'Emergence' exhibition.

Nasaria's early works were primarily acrylic on canvas, but she has recently started using oils and branching out into new and exciting mediums. Her subject matter varies from religious themes to childbirth to festive costumed pieces. Her most recent forage into new artistic areas has resulted in a much talked about expressionistic piece for the 2004 McCoy Prize competition, entitled 'Middle Passage'.

When viewing her works, Nasaria says that she hopes that the viewer walks away with a strong reaction to her work, whether it be positive or negative. 'Art that stirs nothing in a person is not art at all.'



Nasaria Suckoo-Chollette  
**The Women Have Become the Truth  
[for Mandela]**  
2005  
Acrylic on Cloth





Gordon Solomon

Gordon declares that *"the love of art and the desire to create has ever been present"* in his life, from his first taste of the arts using markers and pens, through school and further education at the Community College and The University of Superior Art in Cuba, and now as an established artist.

Gordon's creative talent was first recognized publicly in 1999 when he exhibited with Native Sons at the National Museum. In the years since Gordon has become an important member of the artistic community through the continued development and exhibition of his art and the many community projects that he is involved in.

Diverse public art projects include a collaboration with The National Gallery to design the exterior of a vehicle during the annual Cayfest art exhibition; the monumental task of illustrating the 'past and present' history of our Islands on the walls of The Cayman Islands Marine Institute; the creation of an 'ART IS SMART' mural in the central George Town area with students from The National Gallery's Art Magnet youth development program for which he was an instructor; and several large commissions such as painting a mural of Mr Arthur Martin at the Arthur Martins Creative Empowerment Youth Centre, The Mango Tree Restaurant, The Globe Bar, The Macro Matrix, and The SDA church in Newlands.

In 2001 Gordon participated in The National Gallery's first *Artist Away* programme. Here he gained knowledge of lithography and collography print making techniques along side several of Cuba's most esteemed artists, receiving his completion certificate at the Taller Experimental de Grafica in Havana Cuba. He soon represented Cayman again in the Social Justice Forum at The Commonwealth Youth Exchange, which was hosted in Mandeville, Jamaica, and has been named recipient of Cayman National Cultural Foundation's award for Artistic Endeavor.

From exhibitions at The National Museum, the Visual Arts Society, Art@Governors, the McCoy Prize and various galleries, and recently at an international art exhibition in London, to being featured in the local media Gordon has undoubtedly made an impressive move into the world of fine art and established his artistic roots in the art community.



Gordon Solomon  
**The Crown Prince**  
2004  
Acrylic on Canvas





## Randy Chollette

Artist and musician, Rastafarian Randy Chollette's talents are God given and spiritually driven. He gives all praises to Jah for the gift of artistic expression and gives credit for the development of his abilities to his personal relationship with Almighty God.

Randy's work is a blend of realism and abstract art with subject matters ranging from landscape to cultural artifacts to political statements. When it comes to opinions about Cayman and preserving its culture, Randy is uncompromising and outspoken. Having little tolerance for timidity, those convictions are evident throughout his work. Also evident is his love for Caymans' natural surrounding, honour for his African heritage and observance of brotherhood and humanity.

In 2000, Randy received the 'Best in Show' award from the Kensington Lott Gallery show, 'Blu'. He has also garnered a 'Special Commendation' award for second place in The National Gallery's annual McCoy Prize art competition, 2003. He won the 'Peoples Choice' award for the same show. Randy was the featured artist for the Cayman National Gallery's *Art@Governors* exhibition 2004. The Cayman National Cultural Foundation and The Cayman National Museum have all purchased his works as a part of their mandate to preserve Cayman's cultural heritage for future generations.

In the spirit of true humility, Randy feels that he is simply the vessel through which Jah works, and strives to live in love with all humanity.



Randy Chollette  
**Mai**  
2003  
Oil on Canvas



# Thank You!

The National Gallery has become synonymous with the energy and growth of the embryonic visual arts scene in the Cayman Islands. By offering an average of eight local and international exhibitions per year, in addition to numerous outreach programmes, artists workshops, lectures and annual community events, the Gallery continues to set the stage for the development and success of artists within the Cayman Islands.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank exhibition sponsor **Bank Austria Cayman Islands** for their ongoing support of the National Gallery and its programmes.

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# THANKS!

Native Sons would like to thank  
**The National Gallery and all our Sponsors**

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*And anyone whom we may have forgotten and who knows their name should be here... "Thanks!"*

