



*Pop & the Popular*

21 October 2022-10 February 2023

As a critical term, 'Pop' is closely associated with the namesake art movement that emerged in the early 1960s, producing some of the best-known works of twentieth century art defined by the mundane copying and ironic appropriation of the subjects, materials, and everyday imagery of popular culture. Today, Pop art has become part of the mainstream, with its initial shock value and once radical impact at risk of giving way to well-worn clichés and superficial pastiche. What place then does 'Pop' occupy in the digital age, and how do we differentiate 'Pop' from simply 'Popular'?

With these questions in mind, *Pop & the Popular* examines recent developments in contemporary Caymanian art, identifying thematic and stylistic affinities among a selection of artists engaging with, and responding to Pop art's aesthetic legacy. In drawing out these points of connection, the exhibition seeks to map a distinctly Caymanian expression of 'Pop' rooted in the use of vibrant colours and repurposed materials; the elevation of everyday subject matter; the whimsical treatment of familiar cultural icons, and a critical commentary on globalisation and the homogenising influence of consumer culture.

Exemplifying the ongoing relevance of these pervasive tendencies, the featured artworks reveal the continued proximity between art and popular culture, highlighting the ways in which our individual and collective identities are ultimately mediated and shaped by broader, transcultural trends.

William Helfrecht, Curator