

REPRESENTING ARTISTS RA

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As a result of our recent trip to the Carib Art Exhibition in Curacao, Ras Ishi Butcher, Gayle Hermick and I have been able to increase awareness of RA and of Barbadian art throughout the Caribbean. Being a part of the Carib Art Project (CAP), including seeing the exhibition, participating in the art education workshop and attending the seminars was a valuable and inspiring experience.

My first reaction was a positive one in that the CAP organizers were able to pull it all together. It was wonderful to meet people that have been quietly doing their research, struggling to record and write about our art history and keep up with contemporary developments. Despite the different languages, Yolande Wood has managed to collect information and has published (in Spanish only) her book titled, DE LA PLASTICA CUBANA Y CARIBENA. Yolande Wood is presently compiling another book that talks about contemporary art of the Caribbean. She presented an excerpt of this book, and it was the first time that I had ever heard anyone talk about collective Caribbean art history as eloquently, using the region for our own reference points.

Upon critically viewing the Carib Art Exhibition, I soon realized that the standard of works presented were very inconsistent. I was especially disappointed in Jamaica's, Trinidad's and to a lesser extent, the Dominican Republic's entries. Jamaica gave more of an historical survey even though the organizers clearly wanted contemporary works. Trinidad did not show its best work - what was the selection process in that country, I wonder? The Dominican Republic seemed somewhat disappointing simply because their work in the recently held Santo Domingo Biennial was extremely powerful and by comparison this selection was weaker.

As an artist, I am aware of the dynamic work being produced by contemporary artists in these countries - their absence is noteworthy because it explains much about the selection process. The chosen representatives for each country should have chosen their very best and CAP organizers could have selected a jury comprised of the top critics in the

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Talk!

region to ensure consistent standards of excellence. We are all aware of the traditions in the Caribbean that promote unprofessional behaviour within the selection processes. We need to ensure that qualified, non-partisan, art experts select art works, versus the often political and insular processes which defend mediocrity.

It was however, a wonderful experience to have met some of the expert critics, historians and artists of the region. Together, we are part of an exciting region and it was made abundantly clear that our future success lies in the strength of our union. There still are individuals that think in terms of separate countries - big egos - but the overriding sentiment was unification. Clearly, the isolation cripples our development; we are drowning in our separateness. I believe that

we must look at weaknesses evident in Carib Art as a challenge to question and then further develop avenues for art education, current art information, and infrastructure made accessible throughout the region. It is important to support the established regional art institutions such as Jamaica and Cuba. We must function regionally.

While in Curacao, we organized an informal get-together for artists to meet and show their slides. It was refreshing, challenging and invigorating to witness the richness and diversity of the Caribbean region. We questioned our trend to often look north when we should really be exploring what's south as well as within ourselves. Maybe we should forget New York and remember Sao Paolo.

In our attempt to offer a more regional newsletter, this issue will present ideas from around the region. We have asked experts from around the Caribbean, who were present at the CAP to submit articles. This prestigious list includes Art Critic from the Dominican Republic - Marianna de Tolentino, two Art Historians; Dominique Brebion of Martinique and Alison Thompson of Barbados; and finally, Stan Kuiperi, artist and writer from Aruba. RA welcomes your views and feedback and hopes you enjoy getting to know yourselves more intimately.

...Annalee Davis

CARIBBEAN..... COUNTRIES OR REGION?

*Dominique
Brebion*

From the Persian Gulf to the end of the South American Continent, the Caribbean archipelago is a patchwork of different economic, linguistic, institutional and cultural experiences. Yet, the recent emergence of a Caribbean space cannot be denied, subtly declining some common features.

From independence to departments, (some are dependents, some are *departments*) the fact that they belonged to different countries - (France, England, Holland, Spain) with heterogeneous political evolution - emphasized the effects of geographic fragmentation, even worsened by poor inter-caribbean transportation and language barriers.

There is little general information on Caribbean art. Each country knows more about history and artistic events of Europe than art creation in the very area or its vicinities. It is this gap that CARIB ART wants to fill. This Federal project - main event 1993 - was introduced by the UNESCO's National Committee for the Netherlands Antilles and M. Frank Elstak. It was efficiently implemented by coordinator, Mrs. Ruby Figaroa Eckmeyer.

CARIB ART was the name chosen as it relates to everyone living in the Caribbean area, whatever language is spoken.

Five artists from each of the 35 countries of the archipelago - 175 artworks altogether - represented Caribbean art at the International Trade Center of Curacao on July 31st, 1993.

Comments and artwork reproductions were collected in a catalogue recording this outstanding challenge - gathering artists throughout the Caribbean area in spite of communication problems-. The catalogue will also be a good documentary tool on Caribbean art events until a more detailed work on the history of the art of the archipelago is published.

There is no doubt that these publications will stand out in the long process of achieving the metamorphosis of the Caribbean countries into the Caribbean area.

There were many cultural activities for this ambitious event:

- Issue of a stamp by participating countries;
- Exhibition of all posters designed by artists during the CARIB ART poster contest;
- Folk dance and music festival;
- Caribbean culinary festival;
- Caribbean book fair; workshops on literature, contemporary art and art history.

These show the scope and effects of CARIB ART... First, the indisputable educational impact on an area where there is no big heritage of art criticism and art education. CARIB ART also gave these territories, which are both close and foreign, the opportunity to meet, to exchange, to define what they have in common:

- A**t the beginning, Amerindian populations were soon chased away and decimated, but their pottery and basketwork tradition remain;
- The 'Discovery' by Europeans and the first visual representations from artists who travelled;
 - Likewise, the importation of African slaves who expressed themselves through dance and music as they could not practice their sacred art;
 - The slaves fight for freedom;
 - Colonization as well as the almighty foreign pattern imposed to the detriment of local creation;
 - The new trend of identity quest;
 - The attempt to blend all cultural contributions: Amerindian, African, European, Asian, Indian;
 - And today, the will for integration into the international art market.

But, the evolution of art depends on the involvement of authorities and the establishment of structures for training, preservation and exhibition. Thus some countries are better equipped and better structured. Circumstances are different, in Cuba for instance an important Biennial has been held since 1984. The 3 continents are represented in this event organized by the Wifredo Lam Center - created in 1983 to promote visual arts in Third World Countries -. This is also true for Santo Domingo which experienced its first art exhibition in 1890; its first national Biennial in 1942, and soon after, the opening of the National Fine Art School... and also in the lesser Antilles such as St. Lucia or Dominica.

After CARIB ART the cultural actors can assess if there is a specific Caribbean aesthetic resulting from common history and environment. Upon seeing the exhibition it is apparent that this is not evident.

Why do all Caribbean people feel at home in the world of novelists such as Gabriel Garcia Marques from Colombia or Jorge Amado from Brazil? Is there a 'creolity' concept in painting as there is in literature?

The exhibition is unified by recurring sets of themes and practices. CARIB ART might have to separate those who claim the Caribbean label from those who claim to be visual artists first, from specificity to universality.

This exhibition might prove that creation has no limit, that it is irrelevant to add a geographical objective to it; or, on the contrary, it might prove that Caribbean art exists just like African, Japanese or American art.

Therefore, with the Negro Caribbean School, some visual artists, like Louis Laouchez, and Serge Helenon (Martinique) want to assert their identity and analyze what is left of the black soul in the Caribbean. In search of the same values that have greatly influenced the development of European painting at the beginning of the 20th century, Martinique...France...Africa...following the triangular trade route, but the opposite way. All this in order to show clearly what still belongs to Africa in the Caribbean.

The FWOMAJE group (Martinique) carries a common reflection to support the emergence of a Caribbean aesthetic from the various cultural roots: Victor Anicet examines precolombian art, Rene Louis investigates Voodoo mysteries, Bertin Nivor explores Saramaca or French Guiana Indian art....

As opposed to this voluntary identity search, other artists such as Vincente Pimentel (Santo-Domingo) by Kenneth Alfred (Trinidad) live in major art cities, immersed in European culture.

Nevertheless, their artwork is focused on memory. 'Underground Memory' of Santo Domingo from Pimentel; Memory of masks from carnival in Trinidad from Kenneth Alfred.

This is the very dilemma of artists of the area. Should the Caribbean artist survive on the spot or emigrate? What is his art? Is it Caribbean art, Folk art, is it African-West Indian art? Hispanic-american, mixed, naive, exceptional, alienated, or is it just art?

Is he striving for integration into the international art market and recognition from international institutions? Or, does he prefer increasing inter-Caribbean exchanges as well as the regional art market?

- Will the Caribbean succeed in going into modernity, especially economic modernity and resisting cultural internationalization at the same time?

- It will also be possible to better define the role performed by new technologies in Caribbean contemporary creation. Do artists produce hybrid genres,

typical of art nowadays, introducing video, photography, conceptual, installations or do they stick to a traditional conception of painting?

- Is there a strong influence of Anglo-American art? Is African or Amerindian tradition noticeable in the contemporary creation?

- Finally, since art examines new questions raised by human beings what are the questions of the Caribbean people today?

Part of the CARIB ART exhibition reveals a diversity of techniques and pictorial genres, quite formal and far from American or European contemporary 'avant-garde'.

The most traditional paintings relate to the human face and body. In these painting, artists explore social issues;

- political or penal imprisonment in 'Women cry' from Kevin Tatem (St. Kitts, 1991)...

- immigration and the desire to return in 'Back Home' from Nick Malay (Antigua and Barbuda, 1998). In this piece, shaded figures and coconut trees from the beloved country are outlined behind 2 close-up portraits.

If the 'Matriach' from Stan Burnside (Bahamas, 1992) suggests a matriarchal society through a kaleidoscope of feminine figures, the expressionist way of dealing with color adds a new value to his work. This was already prominent at the last Santo Domingo Biennial for Central American and Caribbean paintings. 'Dingolay' of Shatri Maharaj (Trinidad, 1992), introduces a more shimmering whim and takes the mind off the lack of artists really representing Caribbean culture in the Trinidadian delegation; painters such as Leroy, Clarke, Crichlow, Eddie Bowen. But this piece remains frontal and more decorative than Lucia Engels (Curaçao 1992) expressionist oil on canvas or Roy Lawaetz artwork, entitled 'The artist tantalized by his muse' (Virgin Islands, 1992).

Eli of Haiti shows a more stylized and enigmatic work — even extra-terrestrial — with 'Yon Nonm Yon Fanm' in his acrylic on canvas 'Fin de journee d'un couple' (1992).

In the landscapes, the same whimsical and colorful fragmentation is echoed in 'Kite' from Alison Chapman Andrews (Barbados, 1992) and in Mahary's work (Trinidad). But, the technical perfection of the super-realistic piece 'Deterrioro' (1988) from Alberto Bass (Dominica) catches the eye.

Dominique Brebion ...Art Historian / Interregional Visual Arts Advisor, Martinique.

PARADISE FOUND?

The Curacao Carib Art Exhibition.

AN ARTICLE FROM STAN KUIPERI

With the opening of the much anticipated CARIB ART Inaugural Exhibition last month in Curacao, the organizing Netherlands Antilles National UNESCO Commission, headed by Project Manager Frank Elstak and Project Coordinator Ruby Eckmeyer, completed the first two parts of the second phase of the so called CARIB ART PROJECT, after the initial preparatory conference held in November 1991.

The next part of this second phase will be the actual travelling and international exhibition of this collection of Caribbean art until 1996, while the final phase will consist of the publication of the Carib Art Handbook of Caribbean Art History, due 1996.

One of the most important factors of the Carib Art exhibition has been the organizers' insistence on uniting the Caribbean region through all available means, to finally create, as it were, the much talked about Caribbean Nation through the means of its own cultural expression.

To do this the organizers first divided the entire region into four language zones, (English, Spanish, French and Dutch), only to unite it again through the end products of its contemporary artistic expression: works of art, whose visual language speaks of the true Caribbean.

One notable aspect of this division along language zones is its consequence for the role of the native, thoroughly Caribbean language of the host island Curacao, Papiamentu. Spoken on the so-called "Dutch" Caribbean Islands including Aruba, Papiamentu was nowhere to be found in official proceedings and in the publications issued by the organization. This includes the catalogue where, next to the four colonizing languages, the translation of "Vita Brevis, Ars Longa" should have featured the Papiamentu "Bida ta cortico, arte ta eterno"!

But there is also the more serious, visual, non-verbal artistic expression to consider here.

A show such as the Carib Art Exhibition, of course, can be reviewed in many different ways. For a publication such as RA, rapidly gaining importance in the Caribbean art world, it will not suffice to merely describe the exhibited collection. Carib Art, or any regional art even, should

be dealt with in the broad terms of a general cross-Caribbean art development. Later on in the article, the objectives set by the organizers will also be reviewed according to the space allowed.

THE EXHIBITION

For those who missed the inaugural exhibition in Curacao it would be best to describe the site as a giant space(ship) taking the visitor on a journey through the islands of the Caribbean, the entire ceiling consisting of two huge, white cloth forms taking on the shape of sails bulged by those same tradewinds that brought, perhaps much too soon, those so fortunate to discover our existence. Eight large interlocking sets of panels showed all the works, endlessly conveying the undulating stream of visitors along each island group, this time allowing us, as new conquistadores of art, to discover ourselves as seen and visualized by ourselves. Although by using dreary, grayish colours the site designers unfortunately lost a great opportunity to experiment with a more contemporary, colourful concept for an international art exhibition (what better chance than Carib Art?), the ITC hall proved more than suitable for this project.

THE WORKS

The Carib Art collection is perhaps the strongest proof of the fact that art theory and art practice are two completely different matters. The organizers concept of a completely democratic approach (i.e. fixed quota per country), and the free selection options offered to each country did not result in the overall artistic, contemporary, renewing, cross Caribbean aesthetic and forceful quality that the organizers had undoubtedly hoped for.

But this is a matter of principles, politics and long-term planning and - for the time being - it would be good to assume that the right decisions have been made for the present ends.

Over a hundred and thirty works of art as diverse as those exhibited are not easily described. Neither should they be seen as prod-

ucts to be described individually. Carib Art's significance lies in the collective showing of the works, in the combined effort by Caribbean artists to surmount their centuries-old imposed cultural-artistic isolation. Apart from individual works that stand out strongly through their original assimilation of Caribbean and contemporary images and concepts, it is this very visible collective effort that strikes the visitor most.

In general terms one can mention the obvious differences in development between the many islands due to a number of internal factors. One could logically presume that national selections that have made a solid and strong showing in terms of the above mentioned quality aspects, presumably come from a community with critical and strongly developed artistic development or contemporary art movements. Clear examples of these where Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Barbados, Martinique and the Virgin Islands.

But one also strongly senses that national selection methods have had far too much influence on both the selections and the final exhibition. For example it was widely agreed upon that stronger, more complete and more representative selections by countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Aruba, Curacao and Puerto Rico would have significantly contributed to a higher quality Carib Art exhibition. These countries' artists are known to be able to compete at top international level. Yet for a variety of reasons many were not included.

The lack of clear directions as to the criteria for selection, combined with the fact of islands sometimes simply not having enough artistic production to select from, has obviously become the Carib Art Achilles heel. This has very much been the case of a large group of smaller islands of the English, Dutch and French speaking Caribbean. These selections showed a clear concept of the interpretation of the term Carib Art: traditional Caribbean art based on traditional western art. Without the socio-political-economical-cultural question marks, the renewing technical, conceptual and self-critical aspects, and the international, integrative cross-cultural references clearly

present in other selections, especially in the first group named above.

OBJECTIVES

As this article deals with the exhibition in terms of a general framework rather than in detailed descriptions, it would seem appropriate here to stress the need for a thorough evaluation of the many aspects involved in the making of Carib Art by all those actively involved.

This can effectively be done by an assessment of objectives, eight of which have clearly been defined in one of the introductory articles of the excellent, pricey yet very creditable Carib Art catalogue.

Of the eight objectives, the first four basically aimed at providing and exchanging information in a broad sense about art in general in the Caribbean. In a somewhat contradictory sense, however, the imposed quota restricts a more than limited overview of each country's actual artistic output. At the same time, valuable exchange in terms of grass roots contact was left to the often spontaneous events organized by groups and individual artists, notably slide presentations such as those by Barbados artists and other groups. Nonetheless, in general terms a great deal of information has been exchanged and, judging from many reactions, it has definitely been a revealing experience for all those willing to share.

Another praiseworthy but also contradictory objective was to present high-quality contemporary art and to break through the traditional view of Caribbean art. This would seem very difficult to achieve under the present circumstances in which each country made up its own selection rules, thus making it impossible for the organizers to guarantee or present any form of coherence in the final collection.

THE VOYAGE

One of the most revealing aspects of Carib Art was its people, all those individuals and groups converged on the island that, for a brief period, could rightfully boast to be the art centre

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CARIB ART

CARIB SEARCH

Allison Thompson -
Art Historian
Barbados

Carib Art, which opened in Curacao July 31, brings together Contemporary Art from the Dutch, English, French and Spanish Caribbean countries. Since its inception, the organizers were committed to a democratic approach in their attempts to include all of the 36 countries and avoid any tendency for the larger ones to dominate. Hence, each country was asked to select a maximum of five pieces to represent the last fifty years of artistic development. 137 artists from 32 countries were included in the final show - a unique feat accomplished through perseverance and dedication.

Artists, historians and admirers have long been frustrated by the isolation in which the arts in each island exists. And in many cases the isolation extends to individual artists within their own country. Carib Art brings the art of the Caribbean region together. Unfortunately, its not always the best art.

Firstly, the development of the art scene varies from country to country. Some countries can boast of infrastructures which support the arts including art schools and galleries with permanent collections. Others have none of these things. Secondly, each country was responsible for selection of the five works and this was done in a variety of fashions. The result is a somewhat uneven show.

Artists ranged from well-established professionals to a sixteen year old student. The approach to subject and medium was not so wide ranging, and in many cases was narrow or conservative in nature. Interestingly, almost one quarter of the artists describe themselves as 'self-

Trying to get to Curacao is a little like trying to study the art of the Caribbean - you have to go to ridiculous lengths to reach something which should really be quite accessible. But if you make the effort, three planes and twelve hours later, you can see both.

taught'. Like 'naive' or 'primitive', the term in itself is insufficient, and usually inaccurate since it negates the importance of any developmental influences other than those provided by formal academic institutions.

Although represented by only three countries, the Spanish Caribbean held a commanding presence in the exhibition. A stronger support of the arts within these countries undoubtedly has aided this development. Cuba presented an exciting and diverse selection of work. Lazaro Garcia appropriates Renaissance and Baroque images and presents them with a new haunting vision.

The Dominican Republic was also well-represented. Tony Capellan's Mitos del Caribe (Myths of the Caribbean) uses gritty, earthy colours and textures to present pictographs which seem both personal and ancient. Less ambiguous is the text below which forces viewers out of any lulling admiration and demands that they question the very essence of Caribbean Art. This is not just another pretty picture.

From the French Caribbean, Haiti's selection was varied and impressive. Philippe Dodard's Spirits of my Blue draws the view into a maze of mystical intricacies, while the bold forms of Eli's Fin de Journee D'un Couple (Yon Nonm, Yon Fanm) are both humorous and tragic.

A number of the Martiniquan works stood out for their originality, notably Philippe Beaunol's fetish objects and Ernest Breleur's coloured x-ray photographs.

The Dutch Caribbean was represented by seven countries. Rinaldo Klas of Surinam presented one the few prints in the exhibition, a lyrical monoprint of grainy graphic images washed with pastel colour. The dreamy nostalgia achieved through layering is also evoked in Stan Kuiperi's E Casamento di Kibaima (Kibaima's Wedding), but where Klas is ethereal, Kuiperi is dense and controlled.

The English Caribbean predominated in number with representation from 17 countries but some of the works were disappointing in their conservative, unchallenging, even cliché presentations.

While the submission by Jamaica was generally strong and sound, it was a more historical and predictable presentation including work by Edna

Manley, Mallica Reynolds (Kapo), Carl Abrahams, Milton George and Osmond Watson. In an exhibition of contemporary art, none of the artists represented were born later than 1939. The most recent of the dated works is the 1986 sculpture by 'pioneer artist' Edna Manley. In fact, much of the best sculpture presented in the exhibition came from the older artists. This included Manley and Kapo from Jamaica, and Barbados' Karl Broodhagen. There were only a few exceptions including Haitian Sacha Tebo's bronze figure incised with delicate, meandering images.


Barbados was represented by a strong and coherent group of works. Ishi's Hill and Valleys II was particularly impressive in the exhibition space; its large format and formidable handling of colour created an exhilarating visual impact.

Doris Rogers' Medicine Man from Guyana exuded great strength of form and feeling. And the vivid, expressionist painting of Roy Lawaetz of the Virgin Islands was exciting.

It is fascinating to observe the relationships between the works, both within and between the various countries. And this excitement of interaction took on life through the meeting of artists, historians and others during the opening of Carib Art and subsequent workshop in Curacao. Both of these events were part of this empowering process of uniting the art of the Caribbean. This exhibition will continue to do so as it travels throughout the Caribbean and later throughout North America and Europe.

Given the scope of the Carib Art project and the fine quality of the catalogue, it is unfortunate that the very best Caribbean art is not reflected throughout the entire show. The organizers state in the catalogue that this is meant to be beginning of a process. And it is a very impressive and significant step. Additional aspects of the Carib Art project include the production of an Art Historical Handbook and a video. Both of these will greatly widen and enrich our knowledge of and access to Caribbean art.

Tony Capellan questions us about the very nature and essence of Caribbean art. Carib Art places us a little closer to finding some answers.



'ART ICLE' from Page 5

of the Caribbean. Artists, organizers, critics, art historians, writers, art lovers, and so on. The general feeling shared was that of satisfaction, be it partial or complete, and of course modest pride. But most important there was the feeling of joy of being there and sharing, of having participated in this collective effort and having seen and met hitherto unknown Caribbean colleagues, of having discovered others and ourselves perhaps even unexpectedly.


A great deal of credit must be given to the Curacao organizers. A great deal of thought must also be given to the proper continuation of not only this Carib Art project, but also to other new projects to be conceived as a result of this August 1993 Exhibition in Curacao. One example is the proposal of the Barbados artists to curate an exhibition that gives a clear and strong image of Caribbean Art as a truly contemporary and mature means of expression.

But we must also be aware of those among us who, acting as new colonizers and art plantation owners, still strive to divide and rule and use art as a mere product for personal and political benefit. Instead, we must strengthen the ties and friendships found. We must continue and intensify contacts made. We should take care not to lose the business cards we saved and, most important of all, we must continue producing quality work and..... communicate!

A recent INSEA Art Education World Congress in Canada had as its main theme those famous questions posed by Gauguin and visualized by his 1897 (!) Tahitian painting entitled *Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?*. Although the Caribbean was notably absent at this world event, local artists as well as art educators should take up these questions and embark on the quest to find at least those answers that apply to each of us.

The discovery, it seems, is still far from over.

Stan Kuiperi is an Aruban artist and Art Education teacher



C · A · R · I · B · B · E · A · N · A · R · T

F U T U R E

English & French translation by Dr. Karl Watson

T..... Today, it is still very difficult to clearly analyze Caribbean art, using a global approach. One finds a mix of geographic, historical and political elements complicated by the absence of integrated research and a bibliography. Also influencing this situation is limited communication between the Caribbean islands, the so called Dutch speaking, French speaking, English speaking and Spanish speaking islands. Moreover, within one linguistic nucleus, meaningful communication, directed towards the study of artistic characteristics, for example between Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, is a recent development.

We believe that Carib-art. not only through the medium of exhibitions, but through its planned publications, is going to contribute decisively to us getting to know each other better.

After this brief overview of the existing situation in the Caribbean, let us examine specific characteristics of the Spanish speaking area or the Hispanic Caribbean, going back through the centuries. We can affirm that the principal unit is to be found in the prehistoric period, that is before the discovery and colonization, when the islands belonged to and were inhabited by, aboriginal peoples. Art then, constituted an essential part of Taino society and manifested itself in various activity zones. There existed a well developed expertise in sculpture, using stone, wood, bone and clay. Painting was practically nonexistent. In both cases, the artists and craftsmen were anonymous.

This flowering of art was brutally interrupted by the conquest. In the sixteenth century, creativity, controlled by the Spanish colonists, was restricted to architecture. The growth of towns and the related field of stone working. In the following two centuries, evolution in the visual arts is poor and unequal, with the Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo) being relegated to a subordinate position in respect of Puerto Rico and Cuba. It is evident that varying socio-economical conditions cause these differences.

In visual arts, one cannot yet speak about an African contribution, though the syncretisms present in Voduz point to its potential emergence. The different rates of artistic development in the Spanish speaking islands previously alluded to, continue on into the nineteenth century. One can observe the beginnings of an art movement, first in Cuba, and then in Puerto Rico, accompanied by the emergence of a few important masters, such as the Puerto Rican, Francisco Oller.

However, in the three countries, unlike the rest of the Caribbean, there emerged a style of painting, still completely European in its formal aspects, but created by native

artists using local themes - landscapes, portraits, allegorical works, historical works - with the movement becoming more pronounced at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The need to establish a national identity through art became more pressing in Cuba and Puerto Rico, as well as in the Dominican Republic. Using a very superficial analysis, we can attempt to identify key periods and dates in what we consider to be the recent past that is, the twentieth century up to 1940 and the decades of the forties and fifties. Even though developments in the plastic and graphic arts, did not go outside their respective countries - with exceptions, such as the case of Wilfred Lam, who lived in Paris - this half century was fundamental for the creation of an artistic language, which was both local and modern.

Each country had its dominant and preferred artistic expression, with two well defined orientations: the first more vernacular, the second more open to the exterior. This was evident in the case of the Dominican Republic. Puerto Rico worked hard in the graphic arts. Santo Domingo excelled in painting. Cuba made advances through its national Institute of Plastic Arts, which encouraged experimentation.

We consider the present to approximate the contemporary epoch in terms of time, beginning in that fundamental decade of the sixties, which saw the evolution of art being influenced by political events. Puerto Rico for example, with its Free State Association and ideological fervour; the Dominican Republic characterized by the trial of Trujillo and a return to democracy, and Cuba marked by the triumph of the Revolution and the installation of a revolutionary regime. The three countries developed a militant and committed art consolidating collective positions, which placed great value, in terms of cultural identity, on figurative and abstract expression, beyond mere aesthetic considerations.

Despite differing ideologies and systems of government, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic have continued to reinforce their common denominators. Between the sixties and the eighties, costumbrismo and jibarismo had definitely lost interest and appeal. Following international trends in Western Art, though at a less accelerated rate, the three islands opted for plural approaches. At the same time, each school of "advanced art" had its preferences, linked to a strong nationalist sentiment: pop-art in Cuba, abstract art in Puerto Rico and expressionist art in Snto Domingo,- certainly a very strong movement in all Latin America and the Caribbean - in Santo Domingo. Of course, individual temperaments created flourishing variations, or at least, a mix of tendencies. With reason, one can speak of a mestizo and plural art.

..... This flowering of art was brutally interrupted by the conquest.

The Cuban art historian, Yolanda Wood, offers the following interpretation: "This Caribbean cosmic vision/world view, would seem in many cases, to be identified with the tropical exuberance or the magic found in our religious tradition and the presence of the Negro or ancestral African elements which profoundly influence this style of painting.

Cultural roots, entwined in their triple heritage, are almost never lost in languages constantly being enriched by international information.

If pictorial art continues to dominate, especially in the Dominican Republic, there nevertheless exists a growing concern, fueled by experimentation, to create/integrate two and three dimensional forms, evidenced by the vogue for installations as presently observed at Biennials and (courses) exhibitions.

Concepts, emotions and technique mix freely, reaching outrageous levels in Cuba. At the same time, open art is being developed, multi thematic, requiring reading and participants (performance art). This of course, is difficult to market.

In the nineties - where we find four generations hard at work, though not always with the same vision - this creative fervour is progressing, wanting to project itself, with once again, Cuba in the lead. But this need to overflow territorial borders must at the end turn inwards to the same Caribbean. Even now the Dutch, English, French and Spanish speaking islands are trying to break down these "invisible" barriers. Albeit slowly, a movement promoting the sharing of ideas and exchange of information, is starting. The Havana Biennial for all categories and the San Juan Biennial for prints/etchings, have been and continue to be, a partial link between our islands, but undoubtedly, the major collection, shown in Paris and four Caribbean islands entitled 'A New Look at the Caribbean, 1492 - 1992' in which twelve countries from the area participated, followed by the First Biennial of Caribbean and Central American Painting, which was held in Santo Domingo in 1992, have established meaningful precedents for mutual understanding and artistic union (togetherness).

It is necessary to point out in the context of the Caribbean, that the five hundred year anniversary of the discovery of America, has served more to promote an examination/analysis of the collective consciousness, then a mere commemoration. The year 1992 has been a decisive one.

From a general and regional point of view, the immense exhibition of the Biennial, with more than 470 works, has given many of us unsuspecting Caribbean people the chance to discover the richness of an extremely diversified painting, which nevertheless shares solutions to problems generated by the plastic arts and an aesthetic sensibility common to this "magic bow" of islands.

The symphony of colours, the controlled baroque of form, integration of energy and *livismo* in graphic language. The vehemency of treatment, an undeniable mixture of tendencies and personalities, all appear in a large percentage of entries, be they predominantly figurative, it is in terms of its own reality or surreal qualities and can be deemed 'magic reality' or "marvellous reality".

Another notable feature of the Biennial is the ending of the myth of 'naive' Caribbean painting, which was greatly appreciated in commercial terms, but was in reality, a contin-

uation of hypothetical 'noble savage' syndrome with implications for a poorly understood primitivism.

We have demonstrated, that in the present state of Caribbean art, there are profound and multiple avenues being explored, be they in graphic or plastic arts.

The academies assimilated, and later set free, knowledge of contemporary Latin American and universal art, Research oriented towards personal formation and temperament, ideology and beliefs, combined with the heritage of three dominant cultures:

- The Amerindian and pre Columbian, considered the main trunk and provided a common ethnogeographic origin.

- The African, or Afro West Indian -emphasized and consciously preserved in the painting of all the islands without exception.

- The European - Dutch, English, French and Spanish. and to these we need to add influences from Middle Eastern and Asiatic immigrants.

Today in Carib-art, individual creativity and regional features surpass purely nationalistic limitations. Personally, we believe that this is an essential factor to promote the longed for integration now within our grasp.

We are sure that this integrating/unifying impulse will continue in the future. Thanks to Carib-art, the movement has changed to strategy. The Caribbean - under the aegis of Curacao and its incredible, praiseworthy initiative previously ignored, marginalized and conquered - now in its turn, sets out to conquer the world, using UNESCO to channel the most appropriate support.

The concept of the Caribbean has changed somewhat, being limited to the insular part and Guyana, this achieving the astonishing number of 32 participants, offering equal opportunities and conditions to all, even the smallest - though that has been a point of debate.

We have focused part of this essay on the Hispanic Caribbean, because with ever increasing contacts and exchanges, our understanding of this part of the Caribbean has deepened. However with the introduction of Carib-art, even if we maintain national analysis and study, even if we continue to passionately follow artistic developments in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, dialogue between artists and artistic productivity through the Caribbean will continue to greatly stimulate and motivate us.

Carib-art points the Caribbean towards the future, confirming the old proverb "la union hace la fuerza - strength through unity." Caribbean art won't stop its quest for mutual understanding and support, in organizing its resources, in its continental and global mission. The future is already here, with Carib-art, the pending workshops in Martinique and university conferences like those of Cartagena and Mexico.

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L'ART DE LA CARAÏBE: SON PASSÉ, SON PRÉSENT, SON AVENIR

Marianne de Tolentino, Santo Domingo

Il est très difficile même de nos jours de faire une analyse bien précise de l'art de la Caraïbe et d'en présenter une vue générale. C'est un art caractérisé par une profusion d'éléments géographiques, historiques et politiques dont l'examen se complique du fait de l'absence d'un mode reconnu d'investigation et d'une bibliographie. Un autre phénomène, celui des relations très limitées qui existent entre les îles de la Caraïbe qu'elles soient hollandaises, francophones, anglophones ou hispanophones, n'est pas sans importance quant à cette difficulté. De plus, au sein même de l'un ou l'autre de ces groupements linguistiques, entre Cuba, Porto Rico et la République Dominicaine par exemple, l'existence d'une forme de communication qui vise l'étude de l'art est un phénomène assez récent. Aussi sommes-nous persuadés que Carib Art est un forum qui permettra à nous autres Antillais de nous connaître mieux, non seulement grâce à ces expositions mais aussi par moyen des ouvrages qu'ils ont proposé de publier sous son égide.

Après cette appréciation très sommaire il est vrai de l'art de la Caraïbe écartière, remontons les siècles afin d'examiner les traits particuliers de la partie hispanophone de cette région. On peut prétendre, que la plus grande étape de l'art de la préhistoire, c'est à dire la période avant la découverte et la colonisation, époque où laquelle les îles étaient peuplées par les autochtones, qui en étaient les propriétaires. L'art constituait alors une partie essentielle de la société Taïno et se faisait voir dans les différentes aires d'activité. L'art de la sculpture était bien développé, les sculpteurs travaillant la pierre, le bois, l'os et la céramique, alors que la peinture était peu pratiquée. Les artistes, eux, étaient des artisans anonymes.

La conquête par les Européens va interrompre brutalement cette floraison artistique de sorte que dans le seizième siècle et entre les mains des colonisateurs espagnols, l'art se limite aux seuls domaines de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme et concurrentement, à celui de la taille de la pierre. Au cours des siècles qui vont suivre, les arts visuels évoluent lentement et de façon irrégulière la République Dominicaine étant en retard par rapport à Porto Rico et à Cuba. Bien sûr des facteurs socio-économiques, étaient à l'origine de cette disparité.

En ce qui concerne les arts visuels, il n'est pas encore question d'un apport africain à cette époque, même si le syncrétisme du vaudou paraît être l'indice de l'émergence d'un tel apport. Les différentes formes de développement artistique citées plus haut se maintinrent jusqu'au dix-neuvième siècle.

On assista à la naissance d'un mouvement artistique à Cuba d'abord puis à Porto Rico avec la montée de artistes peintres comme Francisco Oller de Porto Rico. Pourtant dans ces 3 pays, contrairement au reste des Caraïbes un style de peinture émerge, bien que très Européens dans ces aspects formels, mais réalisée par des artistes locaux exploitant des thèmes locaux: paysages, portraits, allégories, des thèmes, d'histoire, dans le cadre d'un mouvement artistique qui prit son essor pendant les premières années du vingtième siècle.

Mais la nécessité de créer une identité nationale à partir de l'art devint de plus en plus urgente aussi bien à Cuba qu'à Porto Rico et en République Dominicaine. Il est possible à partir d'une analyse plutôt superficielle de déterminer les périodes et les dates clés, de ce que nous considérons donc être le passé récent de l'art des trois îles, c'est à dire le vingtième siècle jusqu'à 1940 et les deux décennies des années quarante et des années cinquante. Bien entendu, les effets des créations artistiques de ce demi-siècle ne se firent pas sentir à l'extérieur des pays en question, exception faite des œuvres de quelques artistes, celles de Wilfredo Lam, par exemple, installé à Paris.

Cette période n'en reste pas moins importante dans la mesure où elle donna naissance à un langage artistique local et moderne à la fois. En effet, chacun des pays avait un mode d'expression artistique à deux tendances spécifiques qui lui était particulier: une expression vernaculaire propre au pays et une autre plus ou verte vers l'extérieur. C'était bien le cas en République Dominicaine. Les artistes de Porto Rico se distinguèrent dans les arts graphiques, ceux de Saint-Dominique préférèrent la peinture alors que Cuba fit

des progrès impressionnants sous l'égide de son Institut National des Arts Plastiques, berceau de l'expérimentation artistique de ce pays.

Pour nous, le présent en matière de l'art des pays dont il est question ici et qui englobe l'époque contemporaine en général, commença pendant les années soixante, époque importante pendant laquelle des événements politiques influèrent sur l'évolution de l'art: l'accession de Porto Rico au statut d'Etat libre associé aux Etats-Unis et la ferveur des débats idéologiques qui s'ensuivent, le procès Trujillo en République Dominicaine et le retour à la démocratie dans ce pays, le triomphe de la révolution cubaine et l'établissement d'un régime révolutionnaire. Dans les trois pays se créa un art militant et engagé qui, au lieu de se limiter aux aspects esthétiques de l'art, faisait valoir, l'identité culturelle et l'expression de l'abstrait et du figure.

Malgré les différences d'idéologie et bien que leurs systèmes de gouvernement différent, Cuba, Porto Rico et la République Dominicaine ne cessent pas de renforcer les traits qui les unissent. Entre les années soixante et les années quatre-vingts, les us et coutumes avaient perdu définitivement tout intérêt. Suivant les tendances globales de l'art occidental, bien que à un rythme moins accéléré, les trois îles ont mis l'accent sur le pluralisme en matière d'art. Cependant, chaque école "d'art avancé" avait ses préférences liées à un sentiment nationaliste très profond: l'art populaire à Cuba, l'art abstrait à Porto Rico et l'expressionnisme - un mouvement très développé partout en Amérique latine et dans la Caraïbe - à Saint-Domingue. Bien sûr, grâce aux tempéraments et à l'individualisme, on a vu naître sinon des variétés florissantes de ces expressions, du moins un mélange des tendances. On peut donc parler avec raison d'un art métissé et pluraliste.

Une historienne spécialiste de l'art, la Cubaine Yolanda Wood, nous en donne cette interprétation: "Cette vision universelle de l'art chez les Antillais est liée sensiblement dans bien des cas à l'exubérance de la vie sous les tropiques ou à la magie de nos traditions religieuses, à la présence du Noir ou à des traits africains ancestraux qui laissent des traces profondes sur le style de peinture de la région". Les racines culturelles imbriquées dans un triple héritage ne s'étiolaient presque jamais, nourries par des expressions artistiques constamment enrichies par des apports internationaux.

Si c'est l'art pictural qui prédomine toujours surtout en République Dominicaine, il existe ce pendant ce souci de plus en plus grandissant, alimenté par le goût de l'expérimentation, de créer des formes à deux ou à trois dimensions. Le style des œuvres présentées lors des expositions biennales et des concours témoigne de cette tendance. De plus, les idées, les émotions et les techniques s'entremêlent librement, et cela jusqu'à un point vertigineux à Cuba. Simultanément l'art "libre", l'art polysémique, se développe dans ces pays. Sa présentation nécessitant de nombreux interprètes, cet art n'est pas très commercialisable.

Au cours des années 90, quatre générations d'artistes s'exercent à l'expression artistique mais pas forcément sous la même optique. Il s'agit d'une ardeur artistique qui progresse, rapidement, qui cherche à élargir ses horizons.

Une fois encore c'est Cuba qui prend le devant. Mais malgré ce désir, les artistes sont contraints de puiser dans la Caraïbe elle-même. Dans les îles hollandaises, anglophones, francophones et espagnoles on essaie de briser les barrières invisibles qui existent entre les artistes. Tout hésitants qu'ils soient, les premiers pas vers l'échange et le partage des idées et de l'information ont déjà commencé. La Biennale de la Havane, ouverte à toutes les catégories d'œuvres et celle de la Havane destinée aux gravures ont servi et serviront toujours d'une sorte de lien entre nos îles. Mais sans aucun doute, deux grandes expositions ont établi la base et le précédent d'une compréhension mutuelle et de l'union artistique chez les habitants de la Caraïbe. Il s'agit, d'un côté, de la collection "Nouveau Regard Vers, La Caraïbe, 1492 - 1992" exposée à Paris et dans quatre îles de la Caraïbe, et de la Première Biennale de la Peinture de la Caraïbe et de l'Amérique Centrale qui s'est déroulée à Saint-Dominique en 1992. Il faut signaler aussi que du point de

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vue de la Caraïbe, le cinq centenaire de la découverte de l'Amérique est très significatif dans la mesure où il nous a incités à analyser la conscience collective, fonction plus importante que sa simple commémoration. En effet, l'an 1992 a été très décisif pour cette région.

D'un point de vue général et régional, l'immense exposition de la Biennale, composée de plus de 470 oeuvres a permis à nous autres Antillais de découvrir la richesse d'une peinture très variée que beaucoup d'entre nous ignoraient, une peinture qui à l'exemple des arts plastiques, a ses réponses à donner aux problèmes de nos sociétés et sa part de la sensibilité esthétique qui caractérise la vie des habitants de l'arc des Antilles. Une symphonie de couleurs, le baroque modéré des formes, l'énergie et le lyrisme harmonisés des peintures, la véhémence de la façon de traiter les effets, un mélange très certain de tendances artistiques et de personnalités, se voient dans un nombre impressionnant des oeuvres exposées. Celles-ci sont tantôt figurées, tantôt abstraites, à supposer qu'elles n'incarnent pas les deux styles à la fois, et si c'est le figuré qui prédomine, c'est à partir de sa propre réalité ou ses qualités surréelles qu'on peut traiter de "réalité magique" ou de "réalité merveilleuse".

Autre aspect remarquable de la Biennale, elle met fin au mythe de la peinture antillaise naïve, peinture très appréciée du point de vue de sa commercialisation mais qui ne faisant que propager la syndrome du sauvage noble, idée derrière la quelle celle d'un primitivisme mal compris était à peine dissimulée.

Nous avons démontré donc que dans son état actuel, l'art de la Caraïbe est caractérisé par l'exploration approfondie de plusieurs modes d'expression, qu'il s'agisse des arts graphiques ou des arts plastiques. Les chercheurs, eux, ont acquis des connaissances de l'art universel et de l'art contemporain qu'ils ont disseminées par la suite. Il s'agit de recherches relatives à la formation et aux tempéraments des artistes, de recherches portant sur les croyances et les idéologies sur les conséquences de l'héritage de trois cultures majeures: la culture amérindienne et pré-colombienne qu'on considère être le point d'appui de la culture des pays de la région puis qu'elle constitue leur origine ethnographique commune; la culture africaine, ou afroantillaise, très valorisée et conservée à dessein dans la peinture des îles sans exception; la culture européenne, qui peut être anglaise, hollandaise, française ou espagnole. A ces grandes tendances s'ajoutent des influences venant de la culture des immigrés asiatique et du Moyen Orient.

Actuellement, la créativité individuelle et les traits régionaux emportent sur les questions purement nationalistes. Pour nous, cette tendance est essentielle à la recherche de cette intégration tant souhaitée qui semble enfin être à la portée des Antillais. Nous sommes persuadés que ce mouvement vers l'intégration continuera. Il est devenu une stratégie à cause de Carib Art.

Grâce à Curaçao et à sa grande initiative très louable, la Caraïbe, cette région marginalisée antérieurement, cette région de conquête dont on tenait peu de compte, part à son tour à la conquête du monde par le véhicule, l'intermédiaire le plus approprié, l'UNESCO. La définition de ce qui est la Caraïbe s'étant transformée en quelque sorte, cette désignation englobe les pays insulaires et les Guyanes. A cause de cette définition le nombre, des participants à Carib Art s'élève merveilleusement à 32. Les mêmes opportunités et conditions sont offertes à tous les groupes exposants y compris les plus petits, même si la question de la parité a été très contestée.

Il a été question dans cet article de l'art de la Caraïbe hispanophone parce que, avec la multiplicité des échanges et des prises de contact entre les pays de ce groupe, notre compréhension de leur milieu s'est approfondie. Pointant, avec la création de Carib Art, rien ne nous empêche de créer des dialogues entre les artistes de toute la Caraïbe, et de promouvoir la productivité artistique, activité qui ne manquera jamais de nous motiver et de nous stimuler, tout en faisant des analyses et des recherches à l'échelon national et en suivant de près l'évolution de l'art à Cuba, Porto Rico et en République Dominicaine.

Hoy en día resulta todavía muy difícil analizar claramente el arte del Caribe, presentando una visión de conjunto. En esa complejidad se mezclan elementos geográficos, históricos, políticos, la falta de una investigación global y de una bibliografía. Ha influido en esa carencia la poca comunicación entre las islas caribenias, llamadas holandoparlantes, francoparlantes. Mas aun, e un mismo nucleo lingüístico, una verdadera comunicación, encaminada hacia el estudio de las características artísticas, por ejemplo entre Cuba, Puerto Rico y República Dominicana, es reciente. Creemos que Carib-art, no solo con la exposición, sino con su proyecto de publicación, va con tribuir decisivamente a conocernos mejor.

Después de un breve perfil caribeno integral, examinaremos las características del área hispanoparlante ~ Hispano, remontando el curso de los siglos. Podríamos afirmar que la mayor unidad se encuentra en el período prehistórico, o sea antes del Descubrimiento y la colonización, cuando las islas estaban pobladas por los aborígenes y les pertenecían. El arte constituía una manifestación esencial en la sociedad taína y sus diferentes esferas de actividades. Había un arte escultórico desarrollado en piedra, en madera, en hueso, en cerámica, siendo la pintura casi insignificante, siendo anónimos artistas y artesanos.

La Conquista interrumpe brutalmente ese florecimiento, y en el siglo XVI, la creación, en mano de los colonizadores españoles, se circunscribe a la arquitectura, el urbanismo, y corolariamente la talla en piedra. En los dos siglos siguientes, la evolución de artes visuales es pobre y desigual, quedando la República Dominicana rezagada en relación con Puerto Rico y Cuba. Es evidente que las condiciones socioeconómicas causaron las diferencias. En las artes visuales, no cabría hablar todavía de una impronta africana, sin embargo ya sensible en el sincretismo del vodu. Las diferencias se mantienen en el siglo XIX, observándose en Cuba, y después en Puerto Rico, donde se esbozaba un movimiento y emergían contados maestros, algunos importantes como el puertorriqueño Francisco Oller. Pero en los tres países, a diferencia del resto del Caribe. Surgió una pintura, todavía completamente europeizada en los aspectos formales, pero de autores y temas locales - pasajes, retratos, alegorías, historia -, acentuándose en los albores del siglo XX.

Tanto en Cuba y Puerto Rico como en la República Dominicana, creció la preocupación por establecer una identidad nacional en el arte. Podríamos, tratando de esbozar una síntesis muy somera, discernir períodos y fechas claves, en lo que consideraríamos el pasado reciente: el siglo XX hasta 1940 y las décadas 40-50 ese medio siglo, si no logro ni mucho menos proyectar las artes plásticas y gráficas fuera de sus respectivos países - salvo excepciones como el cubano Wifredo Lam, viviendo en París - es fundamental para la elaboración de un lenguaje artístico, a la vez local y moderno. Cada país tuvo su coyuntura, su expresión dominante y preferencial, ya con dos orientaciones definidas: una más vernácula, la segunda más abierta hacia el exterior. Ella fue patente en la República Dominicana. Puerto Rico trabajó arduamente en la gráfica. Santo Domingo destacó la pintura. Cuba se adelantó con Instituto Nacional de Artes Plásticas, van guardias y experimentación.

Consideramos que el presente, aproximadamente la época contemporánea en términos de tiempo, empezó en la fundamental década de los 60 por razones políticas que

— P. 11 rigen entonces la evolucion del arte. Puerto Rico, Estado Libre Asociado y efervescencia ideologica. Republica Dominicana, ajusticiamiento de Trujillo y retorno a la democracia. Cuba, triunfo de la Revolucion e instalacion del regimen revolucionario. Los tres paises desarrollan un arte comprometido y militante, consolidando posiciones colectivas, valorando la figuracion o la abstraccion, mas alla de una simple posicion estet;ca, en terminos de identidad cultural.

Pese a procesos y sistemas de Gobierno distintos, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Republica Dominicana hanido reforzando sus denominadores comunes. Entre el 60 y el 80, costumbrismo y jibarismo habian perdido definitivamente interes y vigencia. Se pluralizaron las tendencias, de acuerdo con la evolucion internacional occidental aunque en forma menos acelerada. Al mismo tiempo cada "arte de avanzada", tenia sus preferencias, aliadas a un fuerte sentir nacional; pop-art en Cuba, abstraccionismo en Puerto Rico, expresionismo - corriente por cierto muy fuerte en toda America Latina y el Caribe - en Santo Domingo. Luego, el individualismo de los temperamentos hize florecer var;antes, a menudo una mezcla de tendencias. Con razon, se habla de un arte mestizo y plural.

La historiadora del arte cubana, Yolanda Wood, propone la siguiente interpretacion: "Esa cosmovision caribena aparece identificada, en muchos casos con la exuberancia tropical o con la magia de nuestras tradiciones religiosas, la presencia del negro o de elementos ancestrales africanos que calan profundamente en esta pintura. "Las raices culturales, imbricadas con su triple herencia, casi nunca se pierden en lenguajes cada vez mas nutridos de la informacion internacional. Si lo pictorico sigue predominando, sobre todo en la Republica Dominicana, existe una inquietud creciente, como parte de la experimentacion, por integrar las expresiones bi-dimensionales y tridimensionales, conduciendo a la boga de las instalaciones en Bienales y Concursos. El concepto, la emocion y la tecnica se conjiugan libremente, con las mayores audacias en Cuba. Asimismo se desarrolla la "obra abierta", polisemica, sugiriendo lecturas variaas y participantes, por supuesto dificilmente comerciable.

En los 90 - donde encontramos cuatro generaciones en plena actividad, aun - que no siempre con la misma actualidad -, la efervescencia creadora progresa, quiere proyectarse nuevamente estando Cuba a la Cabeza -, pero esa necesidad de desbordar el marco fronterizo se vuelca finalmente hacia el mismo Caribe. Ya los holando, anglo, franco, hispanoparlantes aspiran a romper las barreras invisibilada y luego liberada, el conocimiento del arte contemporaneo latinoamericano y universal, la investigacion orientada a la vez por la formacion y el temperamento, la ideologia y las creencias, combinan con la herencia de tres cultura dominantes: la amerindia y precolombina - en fortalecimiento por percibirse como el tronco comun y el origen etnogeografico -, la africana o afroantillana - acentuada y conscientemente preservada, en la pintura de todas las islas sin excepcion - la europea - holandesa, inglesa, francesa y espanola - A estas, hemos de agregar aportes de las inmigraciones arabes y asiaticas. Hoy, en dia, en el arte Caribena, la creacion individual y los rasgos regionales superan las definiciones propiamente nacionales. Personalmente, creemos que es un factor esencial para la integracion, anhelada y cada vez mas encontrada.

Estamos seguros de que ese impulco integrador y mancomunador va a continuar en el futuro. Gracias a Carib Art el movimiento cambia para convertirse en estrategia. El Caribe - bajo la egida de Curazao y su increible, encomiable, alentadora, iniciative -, anteriormente ignorado, marginado, conquistado, pretende a su vez conquistar el mundo, utilizando el canal y el apoyo mas idoneo, la UNESCO... Tambien ha depurado la concepcion del Caribe, limitandolo a la parte insular y Guyana, consiguiendo la cantidad asombrosa de 32 participante, orreciendo iguales oprtunidades y condiciones a todos, hasta los mas pequenos - aunque ello ha sido un punto de discusion -.

Hemos enfocado parte de nuestra ponencia, centranndonos sobre el Caribe hispanico - donde, con un flujo de intercambios en constante aumento nos vamos compenetrando certeramente -, pero, a partir de Carib-art, si preservamos el analisis y el estudio nacionales, si nos siguen apasionando Cuba, Puerto Rico y Republica Dominicana, el dialogo entre los artistas y las producciones artisticas de — do el Caribe nos motiva especialmente. Carib-art es el encuentro del Caribe hacia el

futuro, confirmando el viejo adagio de que "la union hace la fuerza". El arte del Caribe no se detendra en su mutuo conocimiento y respaldo, en la organizacion de sus recursos, en su proyeccion continental y planetaria. El futuro ya emozo con Carib-art, con loo proximos Talleres del - en Martinica, con coloquios universitarios como el de Cartagena y el de Mexico.

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