




The RA journey over the last year and a half has been enigmatic. The trip, at times painful, is one that has forced many of us to more clearly define what it means to be an artist in a post-colonial island. With “sustainable development” being the buzz words in Barbados as we prepare to host the global conference on Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States, artists are also thinking about the sustainability of creators of culture.

What does it mean to be an artist in a post-colonial island? Figuratively speaking, an island is a detached or isolated thing. A contemporary artist trying to create an indigenous, visual language in a post-colonial, island society is a bit like performing acrobatics at high anglican mass - tricky, to say the least! The acrobat is not in an environment that is interested in, or supportive of his/her seemingly absurd or extravagant conduct. To continually question the faith in a system which is so comfortable in its isolation, can be perceived as a wicked act.

 Linked with the question of the sustainability of creators of culture, is the question of the sustainability of RA. As island artists, as with RA, our very survival depends on our ability to integrate regionally, unless we are content to cater to the fancies of the tourist market. Were we to truly integrate, the petty politics and personal problems that plague our isolated development would disappear. Those artists motivated by and committed to the creation and development of a Caribbean visual language will, in the process of integration find the niche to which they surprisingly belong. I have, on several occasions, experienced an odd sense of comfort combined with excited surprise, on seeing a number of artists from around this region, create work that speaks directly to my experience as a Caribbean person. Even though I may never have witnessed that particular manifestation, there was a strong sense of familiarity. There are a number of Caribbean artists that are committed to the creation of a contemporary visual language. They are lonely islands, their very existence a miracle.

RA started off with a bang in August 1992, but the journey has been both exhilarating and overwhelming. As we cling to this sometimes shakey ship, issues continue to pour on deck. We come up for breath, only to see another wave of mismanaged and unfair policies that must be addressed. The strong instinct to survive, shocks our barely breathing selves into action. We all realize the need to continue fighting and we continue to sail, if not always in the most orthodox fashion.

Surprisingly, the personality problems inside RA, have been the most difficult to battle. Factions of difference have formed and individuals’ personal agendas and social baggage have been problematic. Instead of getting involved and empowering themselves, insecurities got the better of some. People wanted work done for them and relinquished their own real responsibility. Of course, not everyone can be equally involved. What is crucial to the continued success of RA is a few committed persons that are willing to share the burden. Trying to get artists to realize that they must battle for their rights has been a real challenge. But this battle demands “change”, and change tends to make waves, even in our social lives. Instead of change, some voted to keep things the same so as to preserve their lifestyle.

From its inception, RA promised to represent the common interests of visual artists working in Barbados, and thereafter, regionally. RA remains committed to its original mandate. RA decided that the sometimes difficult role as watch dog in the art community, would deal with issues of policy that directly affect the development of artists’ careers. RA is not an exhibiting organization and is not here to kiss and make better the scars of post-colonial societies. Necessary though exhibiting and healing may be, those needs call for different types of organizations.

RA’s sustainability as an arts organization was recently discussed, and even though some felt that our success and, even continued existence, was related to securing a larger number of members, others were comfortable with a smaller core of more committed individuals. Afterall, the job is not glamorous, and scores of people

are not going to rush and get involved. RA remains committed to lobbying for a 1% policy, working on professional issues such as the copyright issue, and creating opportunities for our members through projects, such as developing relationships with architects that may lead to jobs for artists. As well, the newsletter crew have begun a new subscription campaign to increase subscribers and ensure its growth.

If our few members remain loyal to the original mandate of this organization, instead of suddenly diverging into personal agendas, we will accomplish a lot more. Were we more focussed collectively on our goals, our journey would not be so stormy. Here's to smoother sailing with a committed crew on board.

Annalee Davis

GIVING RA IS A CREATIVE ACT!

Please mail this gift subscription beginning with issue # ___ to:

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This creative gift is from:

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Please send your subscription form with a cheque made payable to Representing Artists to:

Annalee Davis,
"Prendoma", Walkers,
St. George, Barbados

EXHIBITION INFORMATION

The Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC) is planning to coordinate an art exhibition which will take place in Boston from October 30 to November 11, 1994.

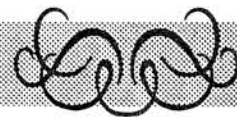
Artists wishing to participate must submit to the Export Promotion Division of the BIDC no later than July 01, 1994, four (4) to six (6) slides of work to be exhibited. The work must have been produced within the last five (5) years, and artists must be Barbadian nationals or residents of Barbados for at least five (5) years.

Each slide must have the following accompanying information:

1. Artist's name
2. Title of painting
3. Dimensions of painting (vertical x horizontal)
4. Date of execution
5. Price of art work in US dollars
6. Medium
7. An arrow to indicate top of slide

Pre-selection of artworks will be done by a juror committee selected by the BIDC and will include one representative from each of the following organizations:

1. The Barbados Museum & Historical Society
2. The Barbados Community College
3. The National Cultural Foundation
4. The Art Collection Foundation
5. The Barbados Arts Council
6. A BIDC Representative from the Design Centre



The Artist

By Geoffrey MacLean

Christopher Cozier has always been conscious of two things in his life - his need to be creative and his difficulty in coming to terms with the Caribbean society with its subtle prejudices and social nuances. His work reflects these forces, always carefully structured and expressed in biting commentary.

Cozier was born in 1959. From the time he was six years old his parents, recognizing his interest, allowed him to explore his creative instincts through art lessons at the Royal Victoria Institute. His first teachers were Alphus Charles and M.P. Alladin. Through this experience he was able at an early age to appreciate the idiosyncracies of Trinidad's artistic community. The artists he met were often older than he was, encouraging in him a philosophical precociousness and inquisitiveness which formed the foundation for his later interest in art criticism.

Schooling at Belmont Boys R.C. School, St. Mary's and Trinity Colleges, sharpened Cozier's sensitivity to Trinidad's strict social structure. The period of the 1970's was a turbulent one in Trinidad's social and political development and Cozier could easily identify with the revolutionary rhetoric of the day.

From 1977 to 1980, he attended the John Donaldson Institute where he studied Graphic Design. During this time, Carlisle Harris was both mentor and leading influence to Cozier and his work.

Cozier was active in several fringe shows and groups in Trinidad, including The Workshop Group in 1978; the Network Group in 1979; and We in 1981. Artists Norris Iton, William Gordon, Noel Going, Garvin Pierre and Kenneth Alfred were some of the personalities associated with these groups. In 1981, recognizing his potential, Nina Squires arranged a show for his work at the USIS. A second show at Nina's Gallery followed in 1983 immediately before Cozier left to study in the United States at the Maryland Institute, College of Art.

Always concerned about the devastation of Port of Spain, Cozier was disturbed by the pace at which old buildings were being torn down and replaced. He expressed this concern at a show at Nina's Gallery in 1984 by assembling pieces from building sites: fretwork, jalousies, bits of wood, into abstract forms. "I wanted to bring actual things into the viewing space, not

renderings in watercolour like some of the other artists."

In 1985 Cozier came to the attention of the Italian Baroque paintings and the work of the Italian film giants Fellini and Visconti. This combination of influences determined the structure for Cozier's Carnival Series begun in 1985 and first exhibited in 1987. Trinidad's

Carnival was to him what the circus was to Fellini and the opera to Visconti. Fellini's use of colour and form to determine the viewers response; Visconti's visual perspective - similar to the view of the street from a Port of Spain verandah - became part of Cozier's expression. He could readily identify Trinidad's society in the depiction of the intellectual struggle between classical and modern forms and the potential for development and scandalous waste.

In 1986 Cozier received his B.F.A. from Maryland and began his M.F.A. programme at Rutgers University where he studied art criticism with Leon Golub. In 1988 he briefly attended the University of New York at Stonybrook. Later in New York, although his work in criticism was well received as a student, he decided, perhaps because he was homesick, to return to Trinidad. At home, Cozier publicly expressed his anger against and concern for the Trinidad and Tobago Review. But this commentary also continued through the medium of his art. Social injustice, crime, political intrigue, middle-class mediocrity, all are subjects of his expression. The debate rages: conservatism versus liberalism, classics versus modern, apollonian versus dionysian. But the debate is also intensely personal in his effort to place himself, a mongrel Trinidadian, in a universal perspective.

In his recent work, Cozier views the present state of Trinidad's society with great cynicism, portraying the relics of the simple but secure life-style of the 1960's as museum pieces and creating his own new symbols of



"Fragment"



Untitled

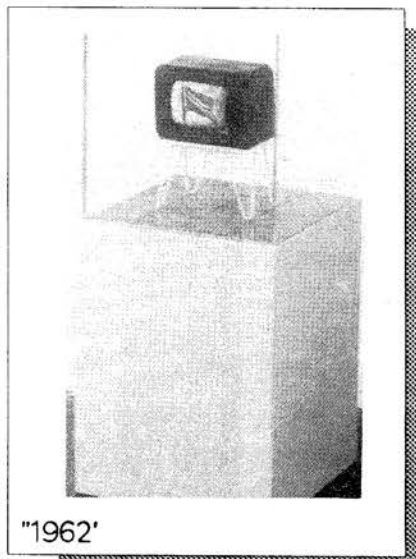
"Christopher Cozier
The Artist

Cozier says:
 "I work conceptually,
 I see myself as an
 artist. I may paint,
 draw, make videos, build
 things. I will never be
 imprisoned by my
 medium. I dislike being
 called a painter or any
 terms that refers to
 craft. I am a
 contemporary artist
 that simply makes
 visual things."

national identity - burglar bars, debris from Queen's Street collected after the July 27, 1990 coup attempt and the shirt-jac suit - references to the violence and frustration on the one hand and complacency on the other that has become the Trinidadian way of life.

Cozier is versatile in his style and his understanding of different media. He works mainly in acrylics, but has produced several series of linoprints. His assemblages and constructions are in a variety of materials. His work is punctuated by personal motifs and icons: the TV set; burglar bars; school children; the hand of God; the snatching hand of the politician; the beach; the red flag; Dr. Eric Williams in cap and gown; Clint Eastwood, hero of his youth; the man with the crown/Jab jab. His images of his linoprints creates a searing commentary on local and Caribbean/American politics and the shortcomings and excesses of the Trinidadian society.

Cozier has been invited to show his work at the Havana Biennial in May 1994 and for this he has produced his first video. Blue Soap deals with suppression of individual expression by a society controlled by superstition and old colonial values. In this context, it identified the common neuroses of Trinidadian life: ethnicity, male-female relations, violence in education, adult-child relations, responsibility versus creativity. The blue soap symbolizes society's ambiguous attitudes, its use as a purge, punishment, a medium for obeah rituals and for cleansing or 'making things white'.



"1962"

Christopher Cozier is represented by Aquarela Galleries, 1A Dere Street, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.
 Telephone: (809) 625-5982 Fax: (809) 624-5217

Geoffrey MacLean is an art collector & owner of Aquarela Galleries. He lives and works in Trinidad.

During the time I was conducting research on art and craft in Barbados, I interviewed tourists in the departure lounge of Grantley Adams International Airport. In those interviews I asked people a variety of questions about art and craft they expected to see, saw and ultimately purchased. I also asked them if there were art and craft items that they wanted to purchase but did not get.

In probing further, I asked where these visitors had seen art and craft. I was also interested in how they defined "Barbadian" art and craft in order to get a better sense of what they were looking to buy but didn't see.

The majority of tourists aren't interested in spending a lot of money on art but there are plenty that went home with money in their pockets that was budgeted for art and craft. There were several who planned to spend between \$200 - \$300US on a painting and left without purchasing one. While this doesn't represent the "average" tourist, there are enough to make a significant impact on the annual incomes for several artists. That they had planned to spend on art raised questions about how visitors find out about local arts. Most visitors are introduced to Barbados by "culture brokers" involved in the tourism industry including travel agents, tour reps, hotel personnel, cruise ship personnel, taxi drivers, "the man on the street" and beach vendors. For most visitors, impressions of Barbadian culture and society will be formed in part by information provided by tourism professionals with little idea about what is going on in the arts.

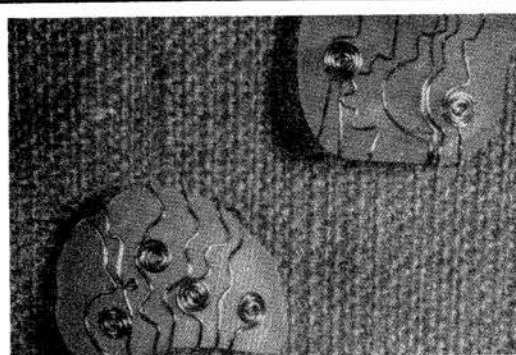
Artists might want to ask themselves "if a potential collector walked into Barbados today, how would he or she find out about my work?".

TOURIST IMPRESSIONS & ART SALES

BY ELIZABETH BARNUM

Visitors get a snapshot impression of the cultures they visit and in the arts that snapshot varies seasonally. For example, around the Crop Over festival more departing visitors mentioned that they had seen

paintings, not because they were looking for paintings but they happened to see them at Bridgetown Market on Spring Garden Highway. Guests at the Casuarina Hotel will see Bonnie Coles-Wilson's collection of contemporary Caribbean art and are among the few that will have ready access to a selection of high quality art. Others will see such a range of art only by luck or chance.



A selection of jewellery by Andrea Wells

Periodically I would analyze what was available to see in any two week period. Sometimes a gallery was closed or a show being hung, or a special non-art exhibit at the Museum or Queens Park gallery. Obviously a visitor's snapshot impression of Barbadian art varies greatly according to what happens to

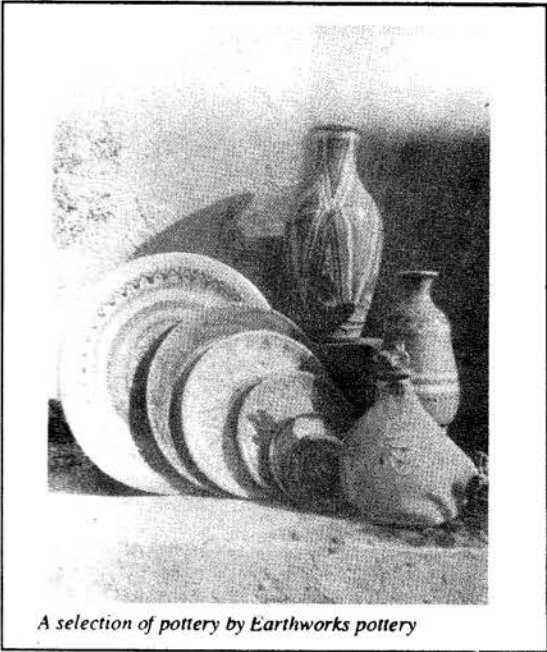
be on show during their two week visit. On a given day, a visitor is unlikely to find the array of art work available in the country. Unless a special effort is made, the visitor is likely to see only those items on the "frontlines" sold by beach vendors and tourist oriented shops. This leads visitors to believe that what they have seen is the extent of local arts.

I often imagined the course of a visitor's stay, and who would have been available to ask where to find local art and artists. I then went to taxi drivers, hotel personnel and other "front line" tourism workers and asked them where they would send people looking to buy a painting. They were as likely to direct visitors to a Cave Shepherd department store as they were to any gallery. Part of this stems from confusion over what a "painting" is, and partly due to the changing nature of gallery shows

and the need for constantly updated information. "Culture brokers" over time formulate impressions of what tourists typically want and they are likely to send people to places that have been popular recommendations in the past. They are hesitant to send visitors to anyplace that has ever been inconsistent in its offerings.

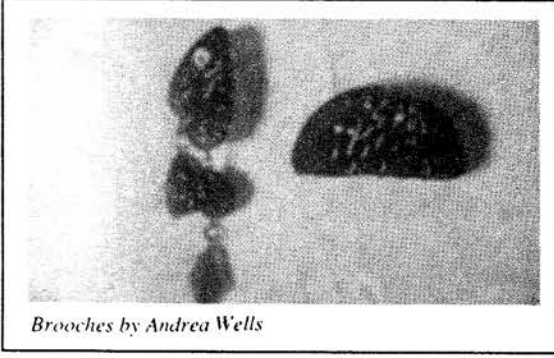
Stories about Barbadian arts are sometimes constructed to meet the needs of the sales situation. The obvious example of the cultural storyteller is the ubiquitous beach vendor with his briefcase of imported Southeast Asian shell jewelry. The beach vendor is a "smart man" in the tradition of the folk hero, Anansi. His sales pitch is the visual equivalent to the contortionist, fire-eater, and belly dancer found in hotel floor shows. Like the hotel floor shows, his wares are most often seen by tourists and equated with Caribbean arts. They are a layer of cultural presentations for the "outside" and described as "local culture" but rarely found in non-tourist settings.

The beach vendors stories are important to analyze since they have succeeded in meeting tourist requirements for arts purchases, which are: that items are made locally, from local materials, and that the skills are "traditional", passed down from generation to generation. In addition, the tourist has had the experience of meeting the artist, so the tourist has collected an object and authenticating story. The sales pitches are similar but the best salesmen have more convincing and often elaborate stories described



A selection of pottery by Earthworks pottery

TOURIST IMPRESSIONS & ART SALES



Brooches by Andrea Wells

responded to a question about what art or craft they expected to find in Barbados, 84 responded with ideas of items that they expected to see in the island, while 74 admitted that they hadn't had any idea of what type of art and craft to expect. The largest number expected to see woodcarving followed by basketry, jewelry and shells, pottery and paintings. Some prefaced their remarks with words like "African", "native", "primitive" or "island" art. Thirty-nine percent reported that they

as "we tell them what they want to hear".

The beach vendors sales pitches and willingness to bargain prices has led to other artists and craftspeople to engage in similar cultural storytelling and price negotiation. Contrary to ordinary Barbadian market practices, tourists indicated that "unless you bargain you will get ripped off". Because the beach vendor has sold himself as a "local artist", tourists learn from them to treat other "local artists" in similar ways. This has led to incidents where there

were extreme disagreements on rules for transacting business, particularly in relation to price negotiation.

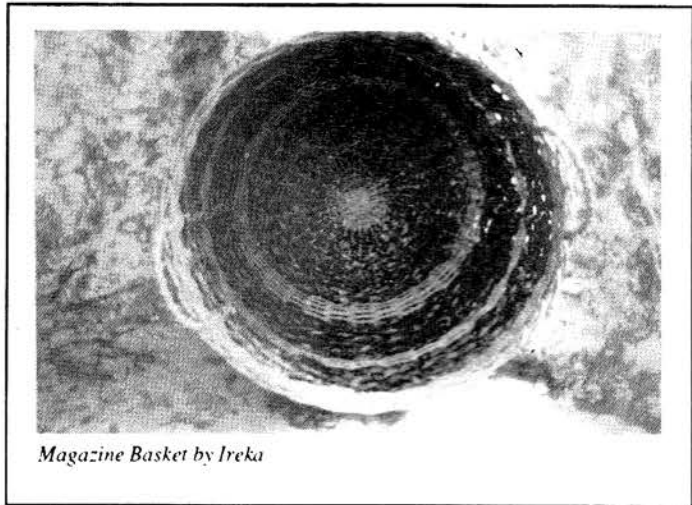
Local and imported arts are often indistinct for the tourist seeking out "authentic" Barbadian arts as long as what they see meets their expectations. Definitions of Barbadian art are being informed by work that is "non-abrasive" to visitors to the island.

Of 158 travel groups interviewed in the departure lounge of Grantley Adams International Airport from 1991 - 1992, who

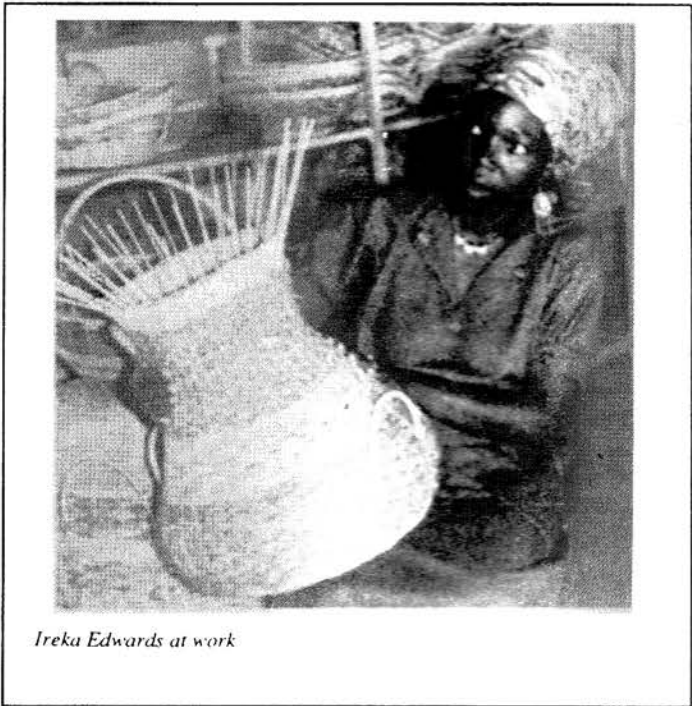
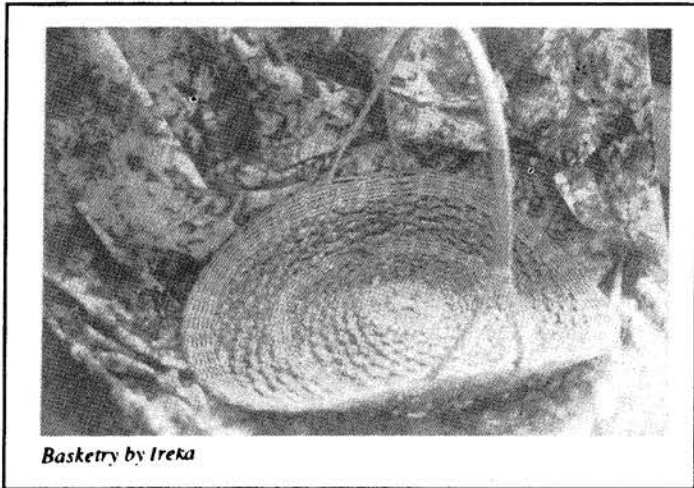
spent less money than they had budgeted for art, craft or other souvenir items. When asked if there was anything that they wanted to buy but didn't get, several indicated that they wanted to buy paintings, but either didn't see any or found the few that they saw to be unacceptable or overpriced.

The Art Collection Foundation's efforts at preparing an illustrated reference on Barbadian artists will go a long way toward making a wider range of artists' work available to potential buyers and collectors. When the ACF collection has been mounted in a permanent location, visitors will have the opportunity for a more comprehensive view of the diversity of local art - apart from the more readily available "tourist art".

There is obvious potential for increased sales of art by serious artists. With a concerted effort, those visitors without calcified ideas of how "Caribbean" or "Barbadian" art should look, might learn about the imaginative expressions of Barbadians through the arts. An information, education and advertising campaign will have to take place on many fronts and it will require support of all artists for a wide variety of efforts.



TOURIST IMPRESSIONS & ART SALES



Elizabeth Barnum is an anthropologist, living and working in New York. She is completing her doctoral thesis which is based on art and craft in Barbados.

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT & CULTURE

A LESSON IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

By now most of us in the Caribbean region have been made aware of the upcoming U.N. Global Conference on Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States; a mouthful of fancy words amounting to whether small islands will survive.

At the heart of the matter is development which is the process through which societies change so that they can meet their long-term needs, primarily through their own resources, in the context of their own values. Development is intertwined with whether the direction it takes can be sustained or be continuous and is a dynamic and evolutionary process.

How art fits in to the process of sustainable development may be seen from two distinct perspectives: whether artists can work together to promote art and the sustainability of artists, and whether art itself can make a contribution to the process of development.

Already much has been said about the inability of artists to come togetheras if saying it will make any difference! As an organisation, RA has experienced the agony and ecstasy of development. Efforts aimed at engaging and informing members in the process of development consisted of two workshops: 'Organisational Management' and 'Participation - Empowerment vs Oppression.'

Artists were also exposed to the areas of professional development with a workshop on 'How to Critique a Work of Art' and a public panel discussion on the 'Role of the Artist in Society'. The performance art of Dennis Tourbin from Canada and printmaking skills of Eileen Foti from New Jersey were also presented to artists.

The involvement of RA in coordinating the island's participation in Carib Art assured our representation in an historic event. The 'Copy Right' exhibition, a protest statement and the RA newsletter which became regional after Carib Art, gave artists a voice.

The list of activities for RAthe new kid on the block,* appears in itself impressive indeed, but for the question of sustainability which at the moment lays teetering in the balance. Is there a future for RA itself?

How has it been possible to achieve so much, yet the ride has been so tumultuous? The answer to the question has little to do with organisational management, but everything to do with

organisational culture.

Somehow in our zeal to get things going and make art manifest, an important process which was underscored by Dr. Voeth in her presentation on Organisational Management was deemphasized. This is consensus building. In any organisation which attempts to sustain development the process of communication and dialogue is critical. The lack of an open forum for views on the activities of the organisation blocks its sustainability. The result is a fall off in participation and membership, sabotage, and apathy. It can be argued that people were invited to voice their opinions, but the question remains as to whether they were invited to express themselves in their own style and manner or were they expected to conform to a particular form of expression. This can be better understood within the context of elitism, racism, sexism, intellectualism, professionalism, which were addressed in the workshop on 'Participation - Empowerment vs. Oppression.'

BY SHAREN CARMICHAEL

▶ ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT & CULTURE ◀

The statement that artists can't work together is just another problem to be solved like the problem of artists finding it difficult to make a living or the problem of toxicity in materials used by artists. The solutions to these problems lie in the culture of the organisation which holds the process or approach we apply to the problem at hand.

Moreover, in the establishment of a professional organisation for visual artists, the challenges are greater largely because stabilizing influences such as codes of ethics and rules of conduct are not in place. Similarly, can we equate the lifestyles of middle class business persons who are artists with Rastafarian counterparts? We are mixing chalk and cheese and it is exactly this mixture which makes the possibilities so exciting.

It was pointed out to me recently that had post mortems on each of our various activities been held, differences could have been addressed, and if they could not be resolved they could have been clearly identified. Perhaps.....

However, we have not yet fully grasped the words of Dom Helder Camara who said: 'If you disagree with me, you have something to give me. If those who are with you always agree with you they are but shadows. When disagreement is not a form of systematic blocking, when it rises from a different vision, it can only enrich us'.

paid to process as well as content.

Returning to the subject of the SIDS Conference, late last year members of the executive committee of RA dared to dream of a follow-up exhibition to Carib Art, inviting regional and international artists to create installation pieces to exhibit for the global conference. Despite the formulation of elaborate funding proposals, money was not forthcoming and humanpower was split on whether to participate. However, a small cadre of artists from RA have chosen to involve themselves in the conference and it is hoped that in the coming weeks more will wish to take part.

This takes us back to the other aspect of the role of art in sustainable development. The question lies in whether artists can not only reflect the paradigm of development for society, but whether they can or do create it.

In the words of Hans Haacke, "An artist is not an isolated system. In order to survive he has to continuously interact with the world around him.... Theoretically there are no limits to his involvement". Opportunity is staring you in the face to create a vision and to work collaborately to heal old wounds.

Don't miss it!

▶ A LESSON IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ◀

... AN
ARTIST IS
NOT AN
ISOLATED
STATE ...

Sharen Carmichael is a sociologist, and has been chairperson of Representing Artists since it's inception. She lives and works as a social therapist in Barbados.

 OPPORTUNITY FOR 
CONTEMPORARY CARIBBEAN ARTISTS

The 2/mw COMMUNICATIONS Gallery in Germany is interested in showing the work of Contemporary Caribbean artists. 2/mw has exhibited the work of 7 artists from Martinique.

The Manager of Creative Affairs, Gerd F. Michelis says that: "People believe that Caribbean Art is that sort of paintings you can buy as tourist in the streets of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, i.e. paintings which are naive, colourful and are good value for money, not to say cheap, the majority of those made for tourists. But this is not our gallery concept. Absolutely not....So, this is our main job: to make clear that Caribbean Art is a kind of serious art, a young art of course, but a very, very promising art. We are, as far as we know, the first gallery in Germany specialized on Caribbean Art, that means we have to have staying power to succeed on the market."

2/mw would like to receive slides of contemporary art work and background information on Caribbean artists.

Please send to the following address:

Gerd F. Michelis
2/mw COMMUNICATIONS
Ferdinand-Wallbrecht-Str. 10
D-3000 Hannover 1
Germany 30163
Telephone: (0511) 66 64 66
Fax: (0511) 39 30 07

If 2/mw is interested in your work, they make it clear that artists have to pay for transporting their work, and for transport insurance. They are willing to cooperate with any national institutions subsidizing the artists. If they agree to show your work, they guarantee a high standard of advertising, promotion and PR activities. Examples of their full colour catalogues of the recent exhibition of Martiniquan artists can be seen at the IDC. Please call Cora Clarke to set up a time to do this.



Arthur Atkinson, #2 Elizabeth Drive, Pine, St. Michael,
427-2096 or 431-0411.

Jean Blades, Paxamor, Atlantic Shores, Ch. Ch.,
428-7150.

Neville Kamau Crawford, Balls Land, Ch. Ch.,
428-5765.

Annalee Davis, Prendoma, Walkers, St. George,
435-1595.

Patrick Foster, 14a Pavilion Court, Hastings, Ch. Ch.,
429-3067.

Jean Goddard, Quendale, Marine Gardens, Ch. Ch.,
436-3362.

Winston Kellman, Inglewhyte, Belair, St. Philip,
423-7147.

Sharon Oran, Windemere, Halls Gap, Hastings, Ch. Ch.,
435-6745.

Martine & Adrel Pile, #4 Lashley Rd., Fitts Village,
St. James, 432-8173.

Wynslo Philips, Silver Hill, Ch. Ch.,
420-6567.

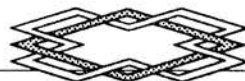
Jo Robinson, North Light Studio, Bamboo Ridge, Holders,
St. James, 421-7027.

Anne Rudder, Jubilance, Bedford Ave., St. Michael,
426-4989.

David Spieler, Earthworks Pottery, Shop Hill, St. Thomas,
425-0223.

Goldie Spieler, Shalom, Shop Hill, St. Thomas,
425-0223.

Darla Trotman, Coffee & Cream Gallery, St. Lawrence Gap,
428-2708.





REPRESENTING ARTISTS RAR

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Cliff Plantation, St. John, Barbados, W.I.

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My Bds. \$ 50 annual fee entitles me to four issues of the newsletter
and minutes from the general meetings and if an artist, to be listed in the directory.

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Barbados \$10.00, Caribbean US \$6.00. All other US \$10.00.

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