

A black and white close-up portrait of Pat Bishop, an African American woman with short hair, wearing round glasses and large hoop earrings. She has a serious, contemplative expression, looking slightly to the right. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on her face and deep shadows in the background.

**“Until all have
crossed...”**

*“Until all have crossed, none have
crossed and some we have to carry”*

PAT BISHOP

her own works, her LEGACY

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago
in association with The PALM Foundation

SHE SELLS, SEA SHELLS BY THE SEASHORE

AN EXHIBITION OF
PAT BISHOP'S FINAL SERIES
OF PAINTINGS

Stollmeyer's Castle Killarney
TRINIDAD
MAY 2018

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by Mary-Ann Brailey

Copy Editors
Gillian Bishop
Barbara Jenkins
Valerie Taylor

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NATIONAL HEROES PROJECT

- The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

As a state entity NGC has always supported the preservation of our national identity and heritage, built a strong cultural identity and impacted many communities through varying initiatives, with a view to building value for the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

We acknowledge our greatest wealth is our people. To know our heroes is to know ourselves: our values, our collective history, who we are, and what makes us as Trinbagonians, great. A hero is someone who inspires, who is a role model, who has achieved something great, whose behaviour we endeavour to emulate.

However, there is the national hero – a different category of individual who goes above and beyond; an individual who has made significant positive contributions to the growth and development of society, and represents all of us. Recognising our heroes is an acknowledgement of who we are as a people. We are not waiting for the rest of the world to validate our heroes. This is the reason for the NGC National Heroes Project.

The National Heroes Project provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the contribution which our national heroes have made to Trinidad and Tobago. It is

important to recognize the impact of their life achievements on our national landscape. Trinidad and Tobago's social fabric has been influenced by exemplars in the field of sport; education; arts and culture, who have increased the visibility and prestige of the country at both the national and international levels. They sometimes remain largely unrecognized, and in other cases, where their accomplishments are noted, the details of their accomplishments and challenges remain relatively unknown.

Today, there is a lack of positive role models to inspire the youth of our nation. NGC, as a leader and innovator in the field of corporate social responsibility, is honoured to spearhead a sustainable programme of social

intervention that celebrates our national heroes and highlights positive role models for our youth. Our younger generation will know of our national heroes' achievements and they will have models whom they can emulate. The Project's ultimate goal is to preserve and honour our national legacy, disseminate positive attributes and messages of our heroes and thereby encourage pride in our accomplishment, national unity and social cohesion.

NGC has committed to make this an annual project which will seek to recognise other great national icons, to ensure that our people are knowledgeable and proud of the contribution made by these individuals. The project involves a curation of the lives

and accomplishments of our indigenous heroes, chronicled and preserved, and from which we can produce biographies of their lives and contributions to our society. The legacies of these national heroes will live on and be filtered into our schools and libraries so that future generations will have access to our heroes' stories.

In 2017, Mr. Hasely Crawford was identified by NGC as the inaugural honouree, being Trinidad and Tobago's first Olympic Gold Medallist. Mr. Crawford has made a significant contribution to the society given his Olympic triumph and subsequent pursuits in national track and field development during his tenure as Head of Community Relations at NGC.

The late Pat Bishop—Trinity Cross-holder, historian, educator, artist and musician— has been identified as the upcoming honouree for 2018. Pat Bishop was Musical Director of the Lydian Singers, which was sponsored by NGC from 1991 to 2014, as a result of which lasting relationships were forged among NGC, Pat and the choir. The 2018 programme will seek to preserve, promote and sustain the legacy of Pat Bishop for future generations in the spheres of art, literature and music through public education, art and musical appreciation.



THE

P.A.L.M.

FOUNDATION

preserving, promoting and sustaining the legacy of PAT BISHOP in ART, LITERATURE, MUSIC

ABOUT P.A.L.M.

I would never have known that my acquaintance with Gillian Bishop, both of us growing up in Woodford Street, Newtown would lead to my being chairman of the Pat Bishop Foundation, known as the PALM Foundation, Pat's Art, Literature, and Music.

In addition to this singular honour it is a joy to be invited to be part of a group whose objectives are so perfectly aligned with my own view of the role of arts and culture in our fractured society.

The broad statement of the objective of the PALM Foundation is: "Preserving, promoting and sustaining the legacy of Pat Bishop in Art, Literature and Music". I also invite your attention to one of the more specific objectives that refers to the encouragement of self-

realization and self-awareness through the medium of art and culture.

For many years I have repeatedly put the case for funding the performing arts in the context of a policy that recognizes that participation in the arts can change the lives of young people by diluting the dysfunctional conditions under which they live, by raising their self esteem and awakening ambition.

Each honorary member of the PALM Foundation is honoured by virtue of "a long and fruitful creative and intellectual relationship with Pat Bishop" they are Pat's group of trees located in a desert as an oasis to provide sustenance as we go forward with Pat's work. A resource of accomplishment and experience upon which the PALM can call.

You already know the healing value of art and culture. I cannot even paint a door let alone do a painting but I have learnt of the healing value by my time spent in the panyards and ramleelas and theatres of dance.

I know that when our youth work together on any artistic project they not only learn a skill but they form bonds of affection between themselves and the teachers and project directors. It is these bonds of affection that provide the common humanity otherwise lacking in their young lives. It is these bonds that dilute the dysfunctional conditions surrounding our youngsters.

Many groups in our society do this work. It is done here, in the region and further abroad. In Jamaica Sheila Graham draws youths from

across gang and garrison lines to participate in producing their own music videos.

Several years ago a group of seventy youngsters, put forward by Vision on Mission, were divided into three groups, each group directed by a dancer - choreographer from the Battery Dance Company of New York. At the end of one week each group put on its own dance performance before an audience at the Little Carib Theatre. The youngsters not only formed bonds with each other but with the three teachers whom they did not want to leave Trinidad.

The PALM Foundation is committed to doing this healing work. We do not believe that we will do it better than anyone else but we will try to follow Pat Bishop's constant exhortation "to

do the work". Where necessary we will make alliances with other groups in the field and we want to work with all to set the agenda for funding of the arts. We rely on distinguished persons amongst us to be our guiding resource of expertise and experience.

In determining Patricia Alison Bishop as their National Icon 2018, The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago has taken the laudable step of restoring Pat Bishop, to the consciousness of our people and, through that association, position The National Gas Company itself as philanthropist to the development and sustainable future of national artistic, cultural and intellectual life.

We at the PALM are particularly pleased that to signal the year of celebration, Pat's last

collection of paintings, *She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore*, is being made available for public viewing and appreciation.

Pat Bishop was a visionary. She saw our future as a people as a light on a hill, a guide to others as what could be done when people are encouraged and supported to be the best they could be, and more than they could have imagined.

Doing the work is urgent. Join us in the work. Love for our youthful fellow citizens demands it of us.

*Martin G. Daly S.C.
The Palm Foundation Chairman*



Baby Pat Bishop

PATRICIA ALISON BISHOP

Patricia Alison Bishop, always simply called Pat, was the first child of Ena and Sonny Bishop, born in Newtown, Port of Spain Trinidad on the 7th May 1941, a few years before her sister and only sibling Gillian.

Ena was an exceptionally talented woman, creative and innovative in the needle and culinary arts; her Carnival queen gowns and costumes, bespoke dresses and hats and general design ability being renowned. Sonny had a polymath's interest in the wide world around him, was particularly knowledgeable in all things Trinidadian, and hugely passionate about music and sport. Her parents were clearly Pat's earliest influences and the genesis of her amazingly creative and productive life.

Pat's education began at Tranquillity Girls Government School, which she entered in 1947, staying there until she won a Government Exhibition to Bishop Anstey High School in 1954. Her exposure to music began literally at her father's knee, she says she 'was taught to read music as an infant'. Her formal music education however began with private piano tuition from Millicent Roberts at the age of five; she continued with Miss Roberts until she completed her secondary education in 1962. Later, she would also receive piano tuition from Daphne Clifford.

During this early period, the young Pat also received private art tuition from Cecily Forde and voice tuition from Jean Penner.

At Bishop Anstey High School, Pat was a diligent student who was very active musically and in the Girl Guide Movement, among her many other extra-curricular interests. She sang in the choir and accompanied the school on the piano at Assembly throughout her school career. She was 'garlanded and given a silver trophy for work exhibited in the Shankar's Children's Art Competition, held in India in 1958' and 'while still at school she exhibited with Peter Minshall and Jackie Hinkson at the Old Market, Port of Spain in 1960'. As a school girl she also designed three consecutive winning Carnival Queen gowns which her mother made.

Pat was made Head girl at 'Bishops' and awarded a Trinidad and Tobago Additional

Island Scholarship to University of Durham, King's College in the United Kingdom in 1961. This was on the basis of her Cambridge Higher School Certificate results in Art, General Paper, History of Art, History and Geography. She studied at Durham between 1962 and 1965 graduating with an Honours Degree in Fine Art, having offered a thesis on English Neo-Classical Sculpture. While in the United Kingdom however, alongside work for her degree, Pat privately pursued studies in voice, piano, orchestra and History of Music, with Elsie Taub.

In 1968, on her return from Durham, Pat received a UWI Post Graduate Award and completed a M.A West Indian History thesis on 'Runaway Slaves in Jamaica 1807-1823,' at UWI, Mona, Jamaica. Between 1973 and

1976, she began research for a History PhD thesis on the 'Social History of Carnival' at UWI St. Augustine, but this was never completed. However in 1994 the University of the West Indies awarded the Honorary Doctor of Letters degree to Patricia Alison Bishop.

In her 2006 CV, having listed the prestigious institutions where she received her education Pat added "Also...the panyards, mas camps and rural communities of Trinidad...a continuing process'

In her own words her real interest in music began at university in England, and on her return to Trinidad 'gave rise to vast amounts of work with choirs, steelbands, folk groups ...calypso research as well as

musical compositions'. Pat was the first to sing accompanied by a steelband (Esso Tripoli in 1967, the result of a bet 'that steelbands could play softly enough to accompany an unamplified female voice'); arranged for Fonclaire, Birdsong, Skiffle Bunch, Pandemonium and Desperadoes Steel Orchestras; conducted Exodus, All Stars, Phase II, Renegades among many others and contributed to their outstanding performances in Panorama Championships and Steelband Festivals, while also providing critical commentary over the years for broadcasts of these events.

Pat made eight major tours with Desperadoes that remain the stuff of legend, including two famous Carnegie Hall Concerts, seasons at the Apollo Theatre and the combined steel



*Pat with Desperadoes Steel Orchestra, back
Stage Carnegie Hall*

and symphony performance of Borodin's Polvtisian Dances with the New York Pops Orchestra which she conducted.

Pat worked extensively with the Southernares Choir in San Fernando, directed music for the Morne Diablo Folk Performing Company, did work with Daisy Voisin's La Davina Pastora Parang Group, the Mwasi Experience, Malick Folk Performers and, in her words 'a host of Best Village groups from Morvant to Santa Flora'. Her signature contribution in music and her legacy, however, has been her work, directing the Lydian Singers, formed in 1980, and her later establishment of Lydian Steel, 'a completely literate steel ensemble', which has become the orchestra of the Lydian Singers. The Lydians give at least thirty

performances a year and have in their impressive repertoire, the Verdi Requiem, the Missa Criolla, Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, among many others and operas by Coleridge Taylor, Puccini, Delius and Donizetti.

Pat devoted much time to coaching individual singers including the prize winning Edward Cumberbatch, Glenis Yearwood, Jenny Archer and Joanne Pyle; she worked closely with calypsonians David Rudder and Ella Andall and won Cacique Awards for her musical compositions, and trophies for every single class she prepared entrants for in the Trinidad and Tobago Music Festival. She enjoyed a long standing creative relationship with many performing groups, including the Astor Johnson Repertory Dance Company,

the Caribbean School of Dance and the Little Carib Theatre.

The little monster Charlie and the famous tag line "Chase Charlie away" was Pat's creation for the Solid Waste Management Company, along with its Community Education Programme, NAG, Neighbourhood Action Groups. Following on Charlie's success in Trinidad and Tobago, Pat set up a NAG pilot project for 45 villages near New Delhi in India and collaborated extensively on community environment education with colleagues in the Caribbean and as far away as Iran. In her last years she began work with CEPEP which excited her tremendously at the potential she saw for it in several spheres of development.

Following a hiatus in the nineteen-eighties, Pat returned to full time painting in 1993, producing a collection of miniatures which explored the secret flaws in gemstones, the *Verborgenheit* Miniatures; later that year she produced another series of wooden bas reliefs and objects on the subject of the *Journey of the Maji*, which she described as 'a series of studies on the pursuit of wisdom and its consequences'. She thereafter continued painting in series and held regular exhibitions. Her paintings are held by many corporations, including the Central Bank and Republic Bank in Trinidad and Tobago; the National Art Galleries of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and are in private collections internationally.

Pat at various times worked as a secondary school teacher, (at her alma mater); as a lecturer at the Jamaica School of Art and at the UWI, St. Augustine; as the Curator of Trinidad and Tobago's National Museum and Art Gallery; Manager, Environmental Education at Solid Waste Management Company Limited, Director of Signature

Collection, Adviser to Trinidad and Tobago Government Ministries of Finance and of the Economy; as an Associate at Res Consulting and as Director of the Carnival Institute of Trinidad and Tobago.

*Valerie Taylor,
May 2018*





Pat painting.

REFLECTIONS

on She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore

"One should ask of a work of art,
not "What does it mean?"
but "How does it work?"
(Gilles Deleuze)

The artist, Patricia Alison Bishop wrote her own 'Artist's statement', if you like, though it was a trend she never approved of. In this way, her 'Artist statement' may possibly be found in the titles she gave to her 20 works of fine art in her last collection titled *She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore* - created in 2011:

She and her shell and the letter S...which adds up to "She sells sea shells on the sea shore". She finds her shells on the sea shore, that's where they usually are.

Shells at rest on the sea shore, they do sleep you know. Shells have amazing interior architecture. Doesn't he sell sea shells on the sea shore. Whoever told her that the sea shore

is a good market for shells? Portrait of a pink shell in blue water. This one got caught in a fishing net. Only fragments escape the net. She listens to the music of the sea before she sells her shells. A fragment and its gilded reflection. A scallop shell with eleven corners. The conch shell sings a love song... The sibilant sound of the letter "S". Listen to a sea shell and you'll hear the music of the sea.

She tried her best to sell her shells but she only made eleven (T&T) cents, poor thing. Had she been lucky enough to find a pearl, she'd have made much more money! Never mind. She has shells enough to make a big headpiece and play mas. Don't be sorry for HER!

Venus emerged from the sea upon a shell...

Unfinished.

Patricia Alison Bishop,
2011



Pat in studio.

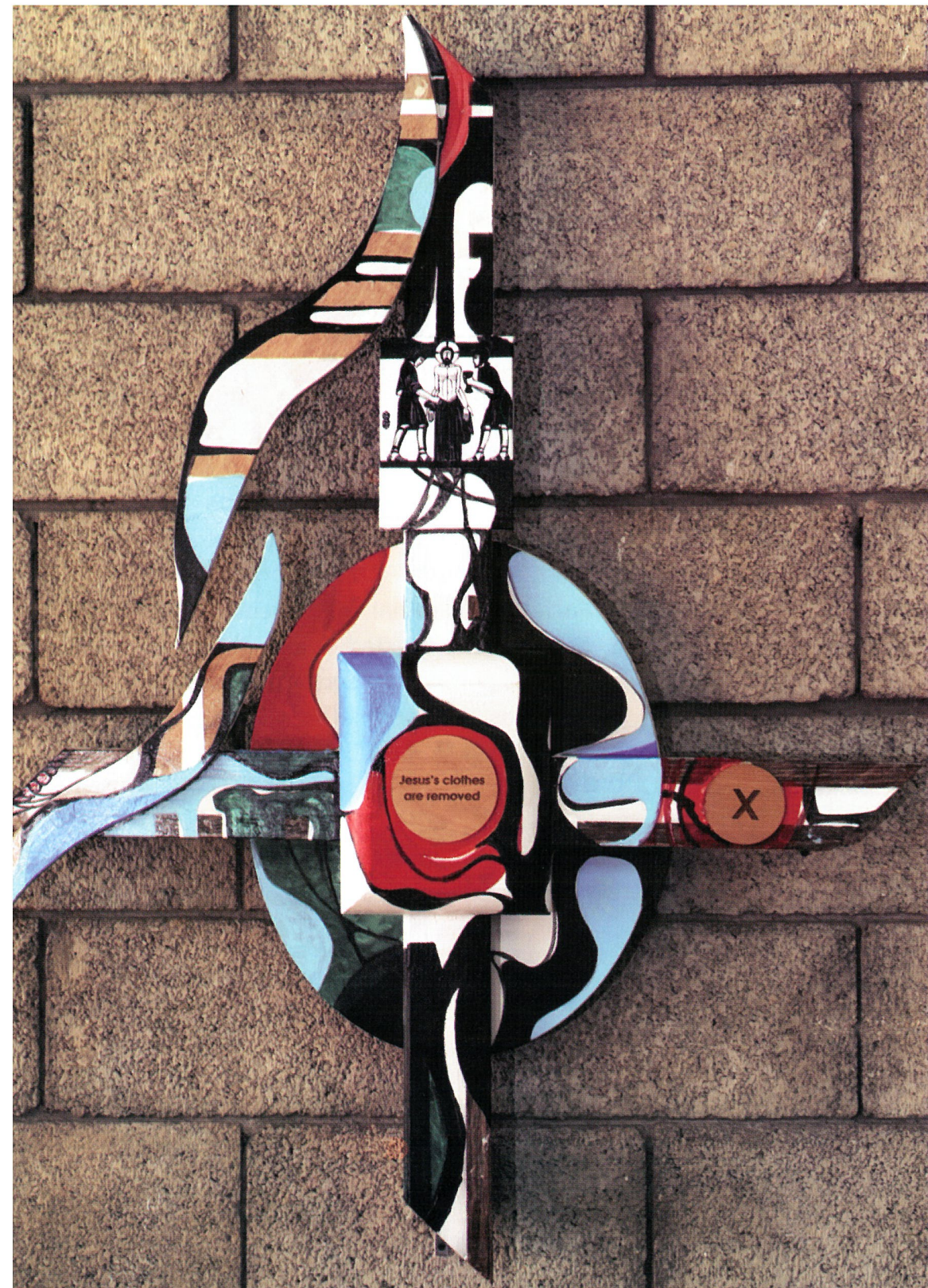
The following starting points were considered for the appraisal and valuation of this *Special Art Collection*:

The historical value, heritage preservation, intrinsic value, the term - replacement value, condition, provenance, and the material value: paint, wood, canvas and framing.

I have also factored in that the small art market in Trinidad is not highly supplied with works by Patricia Alison Bishop. As we know, works of art appreciate in value, and given the rarity of Bishop's works in the existing market, it will be an asset that appreciates over time.

In this way, this appraisal and valuation was grounded in the art historical and heritage value of this *Special Art Collection*. Additionally, I am recommending that the *P.A.L.M. Foundation* consider having this listed in the *UNESCO Memory of the World Register*. A Special Art Collection like this should be protected under the remit of national heritage preservation and also, this work has the potential to attract academic scholarship, thus adding to its value.

Kwynn Johnson, PhD.
Visual artist, cultural studies scholar,
May 2018



No. 10 Jesus's clothes are removed.
Pat Bishop's Stations of the Cross installation at the St Michael's Church in Diego Martin, Trinidad. Installed in 2011.

HOW PAT BISHOP challenged the fictions of art

In the final months of her life, Pat Bishop painting from the studio that doubled as her bedroom delivered the most consequential body of paintings in her oeuvre. Her *Stations of the Cross* for the St Michael's Church in Diego Martin followed by *She Sells Sea Shells* created from a diverse range of things brought together in unifying gestures of painting owes much to our tradition, explicit in the carnival processes of making art from various pieces of nothing. The values of which question the role visual art performs in contemporary scholarship and culture. Over the years, she lamented too many of our artists and designers, the creators of our visual culture, were seeking either economic relief in iterations of previous forms or the security of imitation as a way of projecting form over the function of art. In one of her opening addresses to graduates in the visual arts programme of the then Creative Arts Centre at the UWI, she challenged us to employ "first principles" as the strategy for thinking and to generate original solutions to the problems of art and design in our society.

The first principles method of reasoning from fundamental concepts, rather than from the "ah feel and ah find" syndrome, she argued offered an escape from the fictions of likeness, and sentiment increasingly influential in our visual culture. The first principles method presented strategies for mastering the devil in the details of what is needed to make that difference between originality and the shibboleths/conventions that stultify visual culture. Accordingly, the best way to see Pat's take on these ideas is to look for the ways she broke the stuff of art down to the fundamentals as a way of moving beyond small improvements, simulacra, and adjustments to the creation of the next new thing/combination. In this collection, she hoped to advance the cause of visual art practice for those who have eyes to see the significance of this place during her time.

*Ken Crichlow,
May 2018*

she

sells

sea

shells by the

sea

shore

new paintings
by
Pat Bishop

P A T B I S H O P

NEW PAINTINGS | OCTOBER 4 - 13, 2011

Gillian Bishop
and The Palm Foundation

present

The Final Collection of
Paintings by Patricia Alison
Bishop, TC

SHE SELLS SEA
SHELLS BY THE
SEASHORE

Give me my scallop shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon
My scrip of joy, immortal diet
My bottle of salvation
My gown of glory, hope's true gauge
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage
from *The Pilgrimage* – Sir Walter Raleigh.
This verse is the title of the last painting in the
She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore collection.

Pat Bishop must've sensed she did not have much longer in this life when she was creating her final work, a collection of paintings she called *She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore*. *The Pilgrimage* by Sir Walter Raleigh from which the verse above is taken, was written when he was in prison, awaiting execution.

Although the allusions in the excerpt are to the necessities of an actual pilgrimage, it is but a metaphor for his anticipated journey to the afterlife. In this series of paintings, the artist has signalled very clearly that the work is a reflection on her long productive life, her place in her island home and in her country's history. She makes unequivocal statements in her choice of theme, the titles of the pieces and the stories that connect them to her, to us, and to this space.

The title, *She Sells Sea Shells by the Seashore*, is first of all, a tongue twister, a phrase that is difficult to articulate properly and almost impossible to say quickly. Pat used this as a vocal exercise with The Lydian Singers, the choir of which she was musical director for the

quarter century before her death. A singer must concentrate intently to get it right at increasing speed of delivery, to avoid a train wreck of sibilant 's'es to which she draws attention in the title of one of the paintings. This attention to thoughtful detail, the fine artist's craft, is in evidence throughout the collection. Is there too an underlying lesson? That those who do not speak with straight honest intention are likely to find themselves twisted up by their own words?

Then, who is the *She* who sells? At first glance it is Mary Anning who lived on the coast of Dorset, England in the early nineteenth century. Mary collected and sold fossils, shells and bones, which tumbled down in landslides when winter storms undercut the cliffs where they were embedded, before they could be swept out to sea and lost. A dangerous occupation, and one

which barely supported herself, her widowed mother and her siblings so that her life was one of struggle and hardship. An unschooled but self-educated geologist, her fossils and her opinions on them were much sought after by eminent scientists of her time. Yet, poor and female, credit for her finds was often appropriated by those distinguished gentlemen and she was debarred from membership of The Geological Society of London where her fossils were displayed and discussed.

One of The Lydian Singers signature a *capella* songs is *I've been 'buked and I've been scorned*. Pat conducted it, often with her eyes closed, deep in concentrated introspection, drawing out a different interpretation, a different emphasis, a different feeling each time as if each rendering of the song was speaking to a new slight, a new rebuke, a new dismissal.

Like Mary Anning, Pat Bishop found treasure in risky places, doing work that lifted others up for acclaim. Her work with steelbandsmen, in her pioneering of scholarly analysis of musical performance, in her teaching training and guiding others, attest to this. Like Mary, Pat made a precarious living from her finds – shells for the one, original ideas in the case of the other, culminating with this collection of shells paintings. As to the seashore, it does not stretch the comparison too far to note that Wrightson Road, fifty feet south of here is on land reclaimed from mangrove swamp that once fringed the Gulf of Paria at this location. And, as a twin island nation, the sea and its treasure surrounds us.

But a shell is not an empty thing, Pat titled one painting. No. It is not. It is the home, the safe haven for the soft bodied, the vulnerable living

thing who built it by absorbing then secreting minerals from the environment, building, as another painting declares, ...*amazing interior architecture* – a solid lasting structure from invisible materials.

And what of the soft bodies? Buried under layers of sand and mud, crushed by pressure and heat for eons, they are transformed into oil and gas. Oil and gas, the basis of the economy of her island home. Offshore oil & gas, won from the ocean floor. The shells are as connected to oil and gas as surely as the thighbone is connected to the hipbone in one of Mary Anning's pterosaurs fossils. But there is more. And it points to what could only be an intention, deliberate or subliminal, of the artist, to link the collection with her country at another level. The author of *The Pilgrimage*, the explorer, Sir Walter Raleigh, on his way to South

“that my countrymen may find their place in the sun...though that seems now, to be so remote as to be impossible.”

She continued however, “to be able to believe more fully with Julian of Norwich that

“All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.”

America in search of El Dorado, stopped off at La Brea in Trinidad where the Amerindians helped him caulk his ships with asphalt from the Pitch Lake. Asphalt is of course like oil and gas, a hydrocarbon. It is semi-solid having lost its lighter elements by exposure to air, leaving the heavier tar as a surface deposit.

At the end of the poem, the poet is reconciled to his impending fate as he looks forward to a release from earthly injustice.

From thence to Heaven's bribeless halls,
Where no corrupted voices brawl;
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold,
No cause deferred, no vain-spent journey,
For there, Christ is the King's Attorney.

And it is here that I believe that Pat Bishop departs from Raleigh for, in this, her final statement in art, there is no rancour; she rebukes no one. The collection is threaded through with the joy that music brings, the music of the sea, a love song. There are references to light, colour, images of palm fringed shores, pink shells, blue water, a pearl, Venus, a mas' headpiece, the golden mean. Pat Bishop finished this collection with faith in the journey of her life, hope in The Pilgrimage to come, and with love for her country and her people, to whom she devoted her life, confident that, in the words of Julian of Norwich, that 'All shall be well and All manner of thing shall be well'.

*Barbara Jenkins,
August 2015*

“INAUGURAL MEETING OF
THE P.A.L.M. FOUNDATION”
JUBILEE HALL, BISHOP ANSTEY HIGH
SCHOOL
PORT OF SPAIN

OCTOBER 4, 2014

RESPONSE BY HON. MEMBER
PROFESSOR TREVOR MUNROE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL
INTEGRITY ACTION;
HONOURARY VISITING PROFESSOR, SIR ARTHUR LEWIS
INSTITUTE (SALISES). UWI, MONA

Let me first of all thank the Chairman and Board of the Pat Bishop Art, Literature and Music Foundation for their kind invitation to share this very special occasion with you. When Gillian called me a few weeks ago, invited me to the launch and to become an honorary member of the P.A.L.M Foundation, I had no hesitation in accepting. Pat was my dear sister in so many ways. Like all of us here and so many others, I had the deepest admiration, respect and love for her. Thereafter, when Gillian asked me to respond on behalf of the Honorary Members of the PALM Foundation, I felt the moreso privileged and humbled to speak on behalf of such a distinguished group.

Dear Hon. Members, ladies and gentlemen, I hope you will forgive me if take as my departure in this response, a word of advice

from one who is undoubtedly here with us in spirit this evening Dr. the Honourable Rex Nettleford, another outstanding Caribbean icon who had the highest regard for Pat, one whom Pat and I greatly admired, one whose life and work was mirrored by Pat's in its depth, breadth and influence; one who preceded me as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, who supervised my Master's Thesis and under whose leadership at the University of the West Indies I received the Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence What was Rex's word of advice? A word spoken on February 24th, 2009, just a year short of his own passing, in receiving the award of the Chancellor's medal at UWI St. Augustine; a ceremony at which Pat was very much in attendance, directing The Lydian Singers, who are here with us tonight. So what was Rex's advice, "Life is long distance running,



*Pat with Professor Rex
Nettleford.*

not sprinting." And I add, do not expect to see, to hit the tape as if it were a sprint; pace yourself, expect to be weary, but prepare not to tire in this long-distance run. Is this not a simple but profound and relevant observation, especially because we Caribbean people are renowned sprinters, from Hasley Crawford to Richard Thompson here in Trinidad, from Don Quarrie to Usain Bolt in Jamaica. In contrast, can you name one Caribbean athlete who has medaled in any meet at the global level in the 1500 meters - much less the marathon? Is this not a metaphor for our People's approach to life - as a sprint; Does it not make Rex's observation well worth our contemplation particularly for our young people? If I may be so bold, I would add this to Professor Nettleford's advice - Life is indeed long distance running, but that long distance run is itself but a leg in a long distance relay. A long distance run at

the conclusion of which there is no tape, but rather another runner, an entity like the PALM Foundation to whom the baton is passed. The long distance run is therefore not the end but marks a new beginning.

This evening marks the formal passing of Pat's baton to the P.A.L.M. Foundation and we the Honorary Members are appreciative to be designated, are thankful to share in this handover and absolutely confident that, with our modest contributions, that this foundation shall fulfill its mission with much success - consolidating, extending and disseminating such a formidable legacy from which so many thousands have already benefitted. And what a legacy this has been and is! Far be it for me to repeat the wonderful account of Pat's Life and Legacy presented by Valerie and Alyssa.

However, permit me to recall one of my very first encounters with Pat Bishop. It was on the field of academic scholarship. It was in late 1969, the year I returned from Oxford; Pat asked me and I readily agreed, to co-supervise her MA thesis "Runaway Slaves in Jamaica 1704-1807." It was completed in July, 1970. From that early stage in Pat's long distance run, some of her exceptional, one might even say unique, qualities became apparent:

- Her prodigious creative energy combing through hundreds of items of newspapers, records, journals of the Assembly of Jamaica, Vestry minutes in the Archives of Jamaica, attempting to ascertain the characteristics of each of the 200 runaway slaves;
- Her exceptional capacity to utilize art to serve other disciplines - in this case

to serve history - to make it alive - in the extraordinarily skillful and graphic illustrations of many of these runaway slaves, drawn exclusively from what others saw and used only as dry archival data;

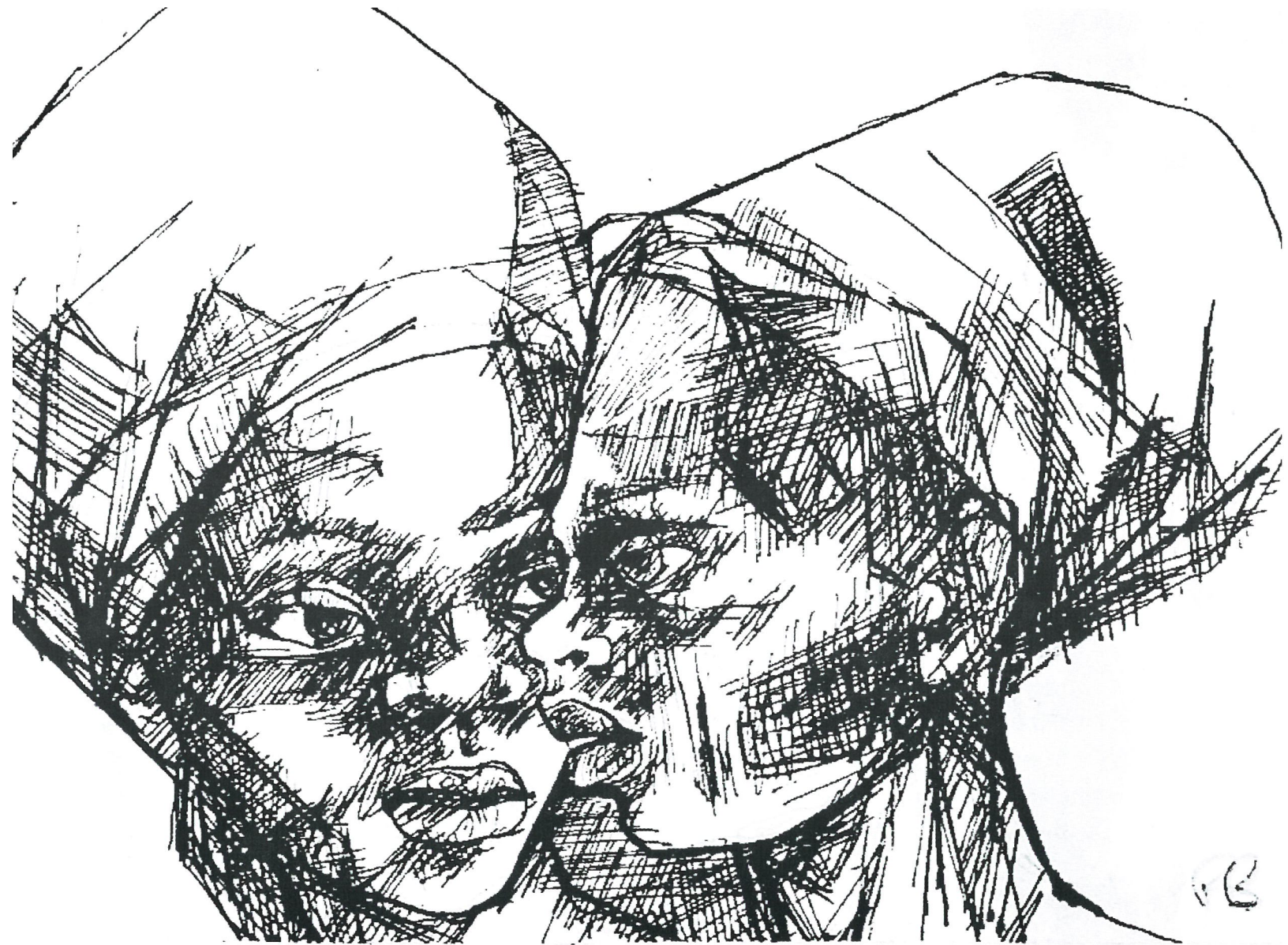
- Her extraordinary ability to discern the human element in otherwise abstract generalities, in this case to draw human faces and images from lifeless statistics as she interrogated the record to discover and to depict the names of each slave, his skills if any, the clothing he wore, his personality, what the slave had been doing when he escaped.
- Perhaps most of all her profound understanding and presentation of reality as seamless, that in reality

disciplines such as psychology, sociology, geography, law, politics and music were joined up in the lives of the runaways and indeed in our own lives and separated only artificially by academics, very often with unsatisfactory results, fragmenting that which is in fact a whole into separate parts - thereby misrepresenting the texture of the whole;

- Finally Pat's life-long determination to subject dogma and orthodoxy to critical scrutiny, to open up received wisdom to new evaluation and assessment, largely through her unique, artistic imagination. In this work, forty-four (44) years ago, Pat questioned and extended the thesis that the runaway slave was exclusively

engaged in resistance to slavery. She brought to light that a plurality (47%) of her sample were going from one plantation to another. But she doesn't take this data further than it can go. She simply says with characteristic, self-effacing humility, "the main weakness of this study, lies in the fact that it can make no definitive, conclusive statements." With her characteristic appreciation of the paradoxes of life, she wrote in a sense, thesis "has no thesis!" (pg 150.)

May I take the liberty, since you took the risk of naming me an honorary member, to suggest that one of the long term tasks of this P.A.L.M. Foundation should be to interest the UWI to publish this early work of Pat Bishop's ,



VENUS AND MATESJUBA

Pat's drawing from her thesis.

“Runaway Slaves in Jamaica 1740-1807.”

One reason is that this work set the pace for the long distance running over the next forty-one (41) years. In every sphere, as a musicologist, teacher, vocal coach, conductor of choirs and steel bands and orchestras, artist, accompanist and the list goes on... this icon challenged old orthodoxy, existing authorities without substituting new dogma, drew on the positives of grassroots culture and sought to use art as an instrument of empowerment of our people and of transformation of Trinidad and indeed the wider Caribbean. She challenged herself and all of us in her words to “do the work!”

She was not, of course, alone in this endeavour to transform. In this regard it is appropriate to recall on a special occasion such as this, public scholars and social revolutionaries who marched alongside her, who did their long

distance running in areas other than art and culture, and many of whom would qualify for Hon Membership of this Foundation were they still here with us – a Walter Rodney, who passed in 1980; a Maurice Bishop, who passed in 1983; a George Beckford, who passed in 1990; a Lloyd Best in 2007; a Norman Girvan, just earlier this year. As I reflect on the running each of these did, the journey which each undertook parallel with Pat, a common element appears to be that none ran on a smooth Olympic track, none with stadium lanes clearly marked and none with progress regularly measured. No, it was more like a marathon in the bush, rough tracks, advances and setbacks, facing much danger and many perils, tangible gains only after long campaigns.

I reflect on my own experience in Jamaica in the long distance run, in one aspect of

advocacy of critical changes. In the Senate for example in 2002, advocating and having the Upper Chamber accept my resolution that it was unjust to give a youngster a criminal record for smoking a ganja spliff, while no such stigma nor punishment was attached to the smoking of tobacco nor the imbibing of alcohol - each proven more deleterious to the individual and national health. That resolution was accepted in 2002. It was only four days ago, in 2014 that the law decriminalizing the possession of small quantities of ganja for personal use was passed - 12 years after! Similarly, the campaign to regulate money in politics so that neither criminal money nor self-interested commercial money would subvert the people's vote in election campaigns and in public policy outcomes. That resolution was moved by me and passed in Jamaica's Senate in 2002. Only now, 12 years later is the

Jamaican Parliament debating and expected to pass the necessary legislation within the next few weeks. And so it is easy to become weary and tired with the slow pace of advance. But sometimes imperceptibly, unseen to the naked eye, when we "do the work" the seed for advance is being planted and often the fruit emerges posthumously. In this regard, I was interested to read the report of a committee established by the government of Trinidad and Tobago, chaired by Professor Selwyn Ryan, including Dr. Indira Rampersad, Dr. Lennox Bernard, Professor Patricia Mohammed and Dr. Marjorie Thorpe. Their report was published in March 2001 last year, 18 months after Pat's passing. In that report "No Time to Quit" we read the following "Recommendations: (1) cultural literacy should be a major component of the syllabus at the primary and secondary level... (3) The Pan in School Coordinating

Council should be encouraged to pursue the use of pan yards as extensions of schools and community-based centers of learning of the music of the pan, especially in disadvantaged communities... (6) programmes modeled on the highly successful Venezuelan Mentors in Music Initiative and already piloted in a few secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago and at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, should be expanded..." Are these not some of Pat Bishop's recommendations, do these not overlap with some of the projects being projected by the P.A.L.M. Foundation for immediate action? May I be forthright enough to urge the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, which gave assurances at Pat's passing that things would be put in place to recognise Pat's contribution for posterity, to convert words into deeds, to adopt and vigorously implement these recommendations of the

Ryan Committee. Such would be a measure of progress and an acknowledgement that Pat's long distance running and her skepticism at the end of the race, her doubt that anything would come of all this talk, would not have been fully founded.

Of course there is much basis, reason for skepticism - we Caribbeans, particularly, leaders in all spheres talk a lot but do far less, diagnose and prescribe but rarely take the full medication.

Take the justice system - a key pillar of governance across the region. A UNDP study published in 2012, looking at perceptions of Corruption across 7 Caribbean territories had interesting findings - 57% of Jamaican people and 69% of people of Trinidad and Tobago believed the justice system is corrupt; 53%

of Jamaicans and 61% of people of Trinidad and Tobago at "powerful criminals go free." Whether these perceptions are fully borne out by reality is another matter, but the fact of such a perception is serious. At the minimum, it requires more effort to ensure that the force of law is not only applied to the youth on the corner but to the big man in the office; it requires that more, not less, resources be allocated to transform the justice system. Yet what do we find - in Jamaica over many years, 0.9% budget to the Ministry of Justice; in Trinidad and Tobago - to the line item "development of a modernized governance and organized structure for the judiciary" - zero allocation. Yet Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago mark (2.3) 125 and (2.5) 114 if 144 countries assessed by the GCR 2014/15 in terms of wastefulness of government spending

Let no one believe that I am suggesting that all is negative in our Caribbean; we Hon Members would not want to be who we are if we believed this nor would Pat have been who she was if she accepted that there was no hope. There is much that is positive, providing a firm foundation for transforming what exists and erecting suitable structures. For example, there are not many regions in the world, especially in these troubled times, where the citizenry can remove unacceptable governments and choose alternatives through constitutional means, through relatively free and fair elections and not be compelled to resort to civil war or military coup. Freedom of the Press, with all its limitations in many territories in our region, is often ahead of mature democracies like the United States and Canada; and believe it or not, the social progress index of 2014 shows Trinidad and Tobago ahead of the United

Continued on page 67.

Listing of the Collection

SHE SELLS SEA SHELLS BY THE SEASHORE

paintings
by Pat Bishop

1. She and her shell and the letter S...which adds up to "She sells sea shells on the sea shore"

11.75in x 8.5in

Acrylic, non-tarnishing brass, 23ct gold leaf on a double canvas

2. She finds her shells on the sea shore, that's where they usually are

8" x 10"

Shell fragment and acrylic on 3 canvases

3. Shells at rest on the sea shore, they DO sleep you know

8" x 10"

Acrylic on a double canvas

4. Shells have amazing interior architecture

12"square

Acrylic on 6 canvases

5. Doesn't HE sell sea shells on the sea shore?

10" x 8"

Acrylic, 23ct gold leaf, non tarnishing brass on 3 canvases

6. Whoever told her that the sea shore is a good market for shells?

10" x 8"

Acrylic on 4 canvases

7. Portrait of a pink shell in blue water showing the mollusc and the architecture which it built.

10"x8"

Acrylic on two canvases

8. This one got caught in a fishing net.

Nets of whatever kind, are hard to avoid as indeed, to escape!

14"x11"

fishing net and acrylic upon a double canvas

9. Only fragments escape the net. Isn't that what life is?

12" square

23 ct gold leaf, fragments of shells, fishing net and acrylic on a double canvas

10. She listens to the music of the sea before she sells her shells

11.75"x 8.5"

23ct gold leaf and acrylic on a double canvas

11. A fragment and its gilded reflection

12"x12"

Fragment of a shell, 23ct gold leaf, acrylic
on a single canvas

12. A scallop shell with eleven corners and
informed by absolute serenity. Just like my
cat Billy

10"x8"

Acrylic on 3 canvases

13. The conch shell sings a love song...
but only to the person who can blow that
special tune on it

12" square

Acrylic on two canvases

14. The sibilant sound of the letter "S" which
we rehearse in vocal exercises

10"x8"

23 ct gold leaf and acrylic upon a double
canvas.

15. Listen to a sea shell and you'll hear the
music of the sea. Listen hard, because the
sound of the sea is wonderfully complex!

16" x20"

23 ct gold leaf and acrylic upon a double
canvas.

16. She tried her best to sell her shells but
she only made eleven (T&T) cents poor
thing....

10"x10"

Trinidad copper coins, 23ct gold leaf and
acrylic upon a double canvas.

17. Had she been lucky enough to find a
pearl, she'd have made much more money!

10"square

Wood and acrylic on canvas

18. Never mind. She has shells enough to
make a big headpiece and play mas. Don't
be sorry for HER!

14"x11"

Oyster shells, 23ct gold leaf and acrylic on 2
canvases

19. Venus emerged from the sea upon a
shell...But this lady is no Venus and we
would need Botticelli to paint her image...at
least!

11.75"x8"

Acrylic on double canvas

20. Untitled. Unfinished

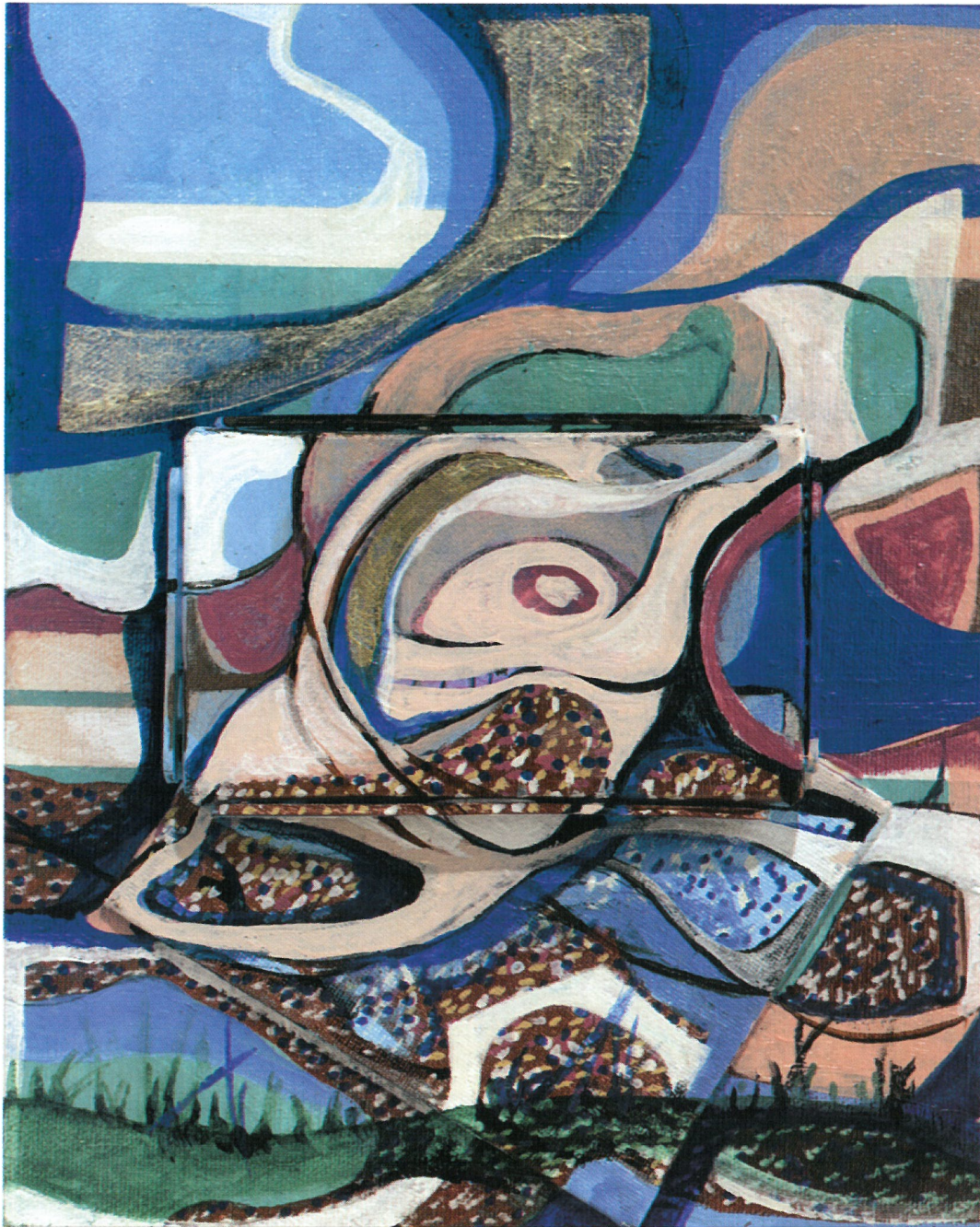
12"x14"



*She and her shell and the letter
S...which adds up to "She sells
sea shells on the sea shore"
11.75in x 8.5in
Acrylic, non-tarnishing brass,
23ct gold leaf on a double
canvas*



*She finds her shells on the sea
shore, that's where they usually are
8" x 10"
Shell fragment and acrylic on 3
canvases*



*Shells at rest on
the sea shore,
they DO sleep
you know
8" x 10"
Acrylic on a
double canvas*



Shells have amazing interior architecture
12"square
Acrylic on 6 canvases



*Doesn't HE sell
sea shells on the
sea shore?
10" x 8"
Acrylic, 23ct
gold leaf, non
tarnishing brass
on 3 canvases*



*Whoever told her
that the sea shore
is a good market
for shells?
10" x 8"
Acrylic on 4
canvases*



*Portrait of a pink
shell in blue water
showing the
mollusc and the
architecture which
it built.
10"x8"
Acrylic on two
canvases*



*This one got caught
in a fishing net.
Nets of whatever
kind, are hard to
avoid as indeed, to
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14"x11"
Fishing net and
acrylic upon a
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Only fragments escape the net. Isn't that what life is?
12" square
23 ct gold leaf, fragments of shells, fishing net and acrylic on a double canvas



*She listens to the music of the sea before she sells
her shells
11.75"x 8.5"
23ct gold leaf and acrylic on a double canvas*



A fragment and its gilded reflection
12"x12"
Fragment of a shell, 23ct gold leaf, acrylic
on a single canvas



*A scallop shell
with eleven
corners and
informed by
absolute serenity.
Just like my cat
Billy
10"x8"
Acrylic on 3
canvases*



*The conch shell sings a love song...but
only to the person who can blow that
special tune on it
12" square
Acrylic on two canvases*



*The sibilant sound of the letter
"S" which we rehearse in vocal
exercises
10"x8"
23 ct gold leaf and acrylic upon a
double canvas*



*Listen to a sea shell and you'll hear the music of the sea. Listen hard, because the sound of the sea is wonderfully complex!
16" x20"
23 ct gold leaf and acrylic upon a double canvas.*



*She tried her best to sell her shells but she only made eleven (T&T) cents poor thing...
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Trinidad copper coins, 23ct gold leaf and acrylic upon a double canvas.*



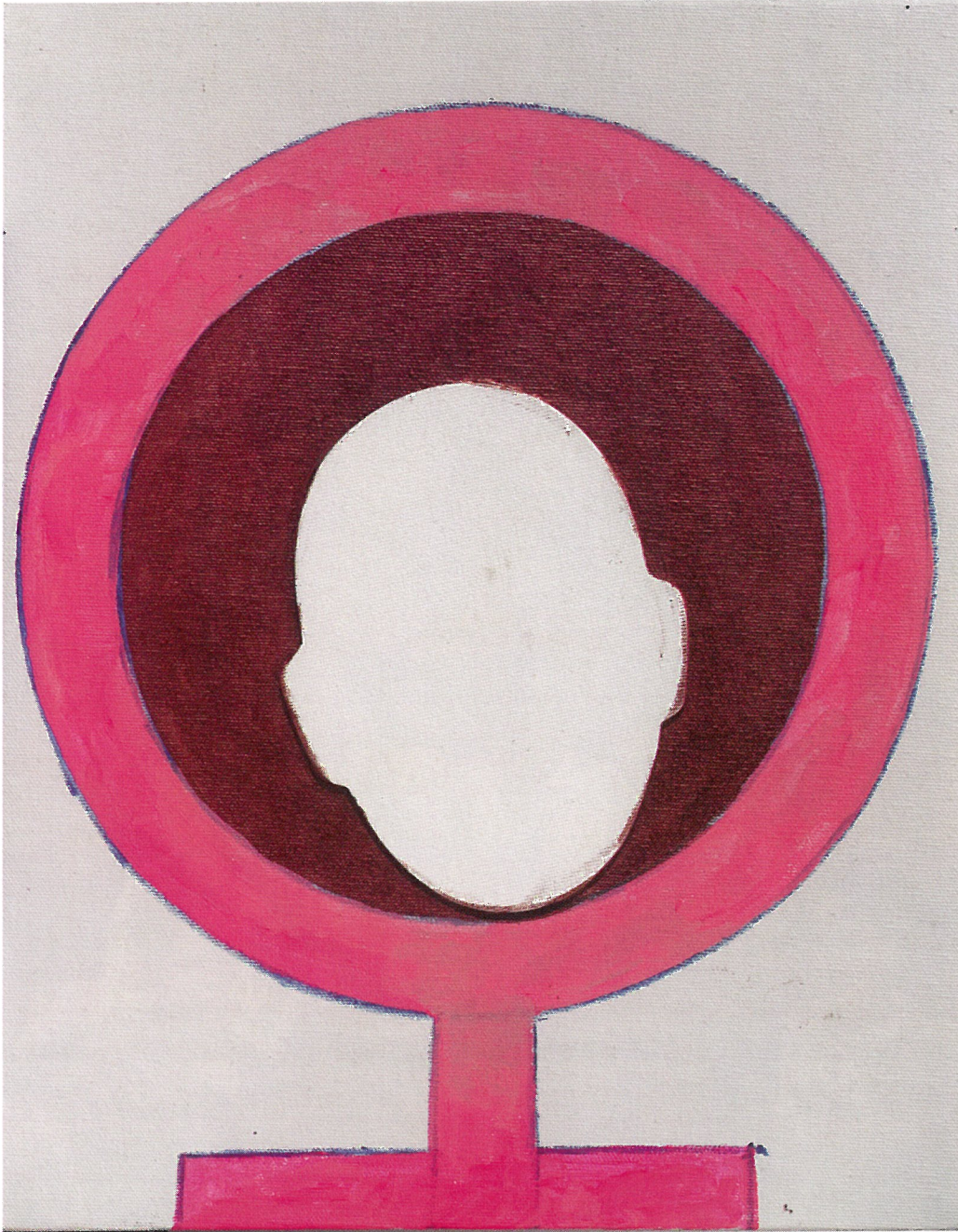
*Had she been lucky enough to find a pearl, she'd
have made much more money!
10"square
Wood and acrylic on canvas*



*Never mind. She has shells enough to make
a big headpiece and play mas. Don't be
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Oyster shells, 23ct gold leaf and acrylic on 2
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*Venus emerged from the sea upon a shell...
But this lady is no Venus and we would
need Botticelli to paint her image...at least!
11.75"x8"
Acrylic on double canvas*



Untitled. Unfinished
12"x14"

Pat's logo from her
personalised stationery.
Designed by Ian Campbell

Pat
Bishop

Continued from page 42.

States in 'Access to Basic Knowledge'; so all is far from lost. In dancehall, the lyrics of which in too many cases causes justifiable concern, in Trinidad, in Jamaica and elsewhere, there is a new crop of conscious artistes gaining much favour - Kabaka Pyramid, Chronixx, Protégé and Tarrus Riley to name a few; while others whose lyrics are very often violent, homophobic and sexist, regrettably mirroring aspects of their own life like Vybz Kartel or Zebra, have been investigated, tried, convicted and are now serving justifiable time behind bars.

No doubt the P.A.L.M. Foundation has its work cut out for it, but there is a strong base amongst the people of Trinidad and Tobago, in Jamaica at the Edna Manley School of the Visual and Performing Arts and on the Mona Campus among those who remember and benefitted from Pat's teaching, there is a strong base for your work in preserving, sustaining

and promoting Pat's legacy. The projects you have identified for immediate action are of unquestionable merit. The leadership of the foundation, chaired by Martin Daly S.C. and including her dear sister Gillian and so many other energetic and talented directors is in excellent hands. You can be fully assured of the support of all of us honorary members.

Those not amongst us with means, those who have expressed genuine admiration for Pat's life and work, I encourage you with no disrespect to "put your money where your mouth is." The P.A.L.M. Foundation needs time, talent but also treasure to fulfill its mission. This inaugural meeting is an outstanding beginning. I congratulate each and every one of its organizers. From this evening onward, let us resume the long distance running. As Pat would say "Do the work!"



THE GORDION KNOT ...REVISITED

I suppose that I have lived with the idea of Art -the Arts -and their possible purposes all my life. I practise music and painting and I have usually been teaching somebody something, whether it is down in the Mome Diablo Community Centre, up Desperadoes Hill, at the Lydians, in the University's History Department or more recently, in the University's Creative Arts Centre. So I'm cool with Arts practise and Arts education. Some might assert that I haven't been able to deliver Quality in either respect, but I'm cool with that too. Let me also say that what I'm trying to say today draws upon my West Indian -specifically Trinidadian - experience. I just don't KNOW enough about the wider world.

"Societies in Crisis" is another matter altogether and I must understand the term, since its meaning informs my attempt today

to revisit the Gordion Knot. First of all a little history .

And perhaps this history is coloured by myth and legend, but real history must always include these human centred considerations. It is believed that the ancient city of Gordia, located in what is now north west Turkey, was founded by a peasant named Gordius. It is also believed that he contrived a Knot and, according to the story , anybody who could untie or unravel this Knot would rule Asia.

Enter Alexander III, the greatest known military leader of European antiquity. Between BCE 336 and 334, he was crossing into Persia, having brought all the Greek States to heel. In 333 he encountered the Knot –the Gordion Knot. And what Alexander does is fundamental to what I'm thinking at this time.

He doesn't try to untie the Knot or to unravel it. Instead, he takes out his sword and he cuts it! In other words he solves the problem by abolishing it. He doesn't engage the intricacies and complexities of the problem. He is not interested in its significance, save and except that it is a challenge which he is not prepared to address in terms other than his own.

It is instructive to know that Alexander, a Greek, embraced Persian absolutism, even dressing himself up in Persian costume and enforcing Persian court customs. By the time that he died at the age of 33, after a night of long feasting and drinking, he had created an empire, the greatest that had existed to that time, which extended from Thrace to Egypt and from Greece to the Indus Valley.

But he was not a popular young man. His empire could only exist if the many and varied societies which he conquered were in agreement with him and each other. Alexander understood this perfectly well and he had tried to achieve it by promoting a Persian-Macedonian master race and a hugely unpopular policy of racial fusion.

It is difficult in this context, not to remember that Eric Williams regarded the words of Jose Marti -the Cuban patriot as being relevant to the Trinidadian situation. Marti had said :

“Man in the West Indies is more than White, more than mulatto, more than Negro, more than Indian, more than Chinese. He is West Indian.”

And indeed, Williams himself had advocated in Woodford Square, as early as 1955, the development of a West Indian nationalist consciousness as 'the only salvation' for a community divided on the basis of race, colour and religion.

Alas, alas, the nationalists of the time had forgotten the story of the Gordian Knot. The West Indians today remain divided, not only by insularity , but also by ethnicity , class, religion and all those other strands which, together, constitute the Gordian Knot -which cannot be **abolished**, however hard we try. And the task of unraveling it is long, hard and fraught.

It is my contention that Caribbean History is a sequence of Gordian Knots which people -manifestly less imaginative and visionary

than Alexander -have cut, time and time again. None of our Knots have been unraveled with care and a sensitivity to their material and intellectual properties. In other words, our problems, circumstances have typically been addressed by the sword -literally and figuratively. Our problems have been "abolished" but they have not been solved. And it is perhaps in this kind of situation that the notion of "societies in crisis" arises.

May we agree that a society can be acceptably described as being all of the people thinking and behaving as a whole? We can develop this definition to include the 'idea of consensus among the people in respect of shared culture, shared organizing principles and methods and indeed, a common way of life. If these words, descriptive of the concept of society can hold, then I ask you



*Reflections on Carnival 2006
seminar and exhibition.*

to agree that a crisis is a time or a situation that is difficult or dangerous. Even the idea of urgent importance will help to define the word "crisis". It is interesting to note that the word has a Greek language root which means "decision": so by association, a crisis is a time which requires a decision. Taking these two concepts together, I think that we can agree that Alexander may well have created social crisis when he cut the Gordian Knot in 333. By it he was, according to legend, destined to rule all Asia. And indeed, the empire over which he held temporary, titular power was very very large. It contained not ONE society but instead a great many cultural and societal knots. And NO amount of cutting could truly destroy them. But of the consequent injury caused by the cutting, the loss, the hurt and the disruption, there can be no doubt. That **always** happens when Gordian knots are cut.

How do we relate Arts education to these metaphorical/historical knots? What are the arts for in situations such as these? Because concern with Arts education must lead us to concern for the arts themselves. This brings us to the thorniest issue of all. What do we mean when we say "Art". Artistic **outcome** may be recognized in many forms. Certain manifestations of architecture, sculpture, painting, Ram Leela observances, pottery from Central Trinidad, the fourths and fifths pan which Tony Williams invented or a Mozart Symphony, or Michael Angelo's Last Judgement on the end wall of the Sistine Chapel, or the great mosque at Timbuktu or the Benin Bronzes, Minshall's Mancrab -all these may qualify. Art may be perceived in the way that Nureyev partnered Margot Fonteyn, or the way that Ravi Shankar makes a sitar sing or in the way that Astor Johnson

choreographed 'Kyo' -the seminal piece which he devised for the Repertory Dance Company just before his death.

But the recognition of art in these manifestations is not always immediate and may never be perceived by everybody. The appreciation and understanding of art has never been available to all of the people all of the time. Those who accepted Duchamp's toilet bowl as art were, and are not, in the majority .And everybody knows that Van Gogh was unable to sell a single painting in his lifetime. Mozart, the tortured genius, died at 36 which may have been too soon. ..Bertie Marshall and Tony Williams are still with us but they have had to give up on the development of their innovations. They stopped experimenting long before the tasks implicit in the process of drum transformation

into musical instrument could be said to have been successfully completed. But that has always been one of the strands in the Gordian Knot of Caribbean possibility which we have routinely continued to cut -routinely failed to examine as substance, material, intelligence and skill. This morning we revisit the Gordian Knot to inquire **whether the education processes can attempt to untie them instead of schooling us simply to draw our collective swords as lesser versions of Alexander the Great.**

There is another consideration which I must put on the table and that relates to art in a world whose technologies have apparently made information much more readily and speedily available. But information from the Information Super Highway or the Internet is in no way delivered equally. It is mediated

and curated in such a way that it will act in precisely the same way as did Alexander's sword. Moreover, that information comes to us, devoid of context, interpretation, authentication or validation of any kind. And so it becomes another Alexandrian-type attempt to create a Macedonian-Persian Master Race with all our **specialness** as people, cancelled out and abolished. But people need their specialness. People have long known, for example, that significant punishment is delivered when people are herded together in prisons, asylums, concentration camps and now, Guantanamo Bay -compelled by imposed regimes and deprived of all aspects of "specialness".

Can the Arts play any role in circumstances such as ours? **Do** they? **Should** they? -People like ourselves who have historically existed

on the margins of the affairs of **real** people -like the Europeans or the Americans - are paradoxically challenged BY the very fact of our claim to being, in some ways, unique. One of the reasons for this is a remarkably unhelpful interpretation of the concept of "authenticity" which continues to bedevil us. In effect, we are required to preserve ourselves as "correct" culture bearers. If we are black people we are supposed to paint pictures which "look" black -whatever that might be. Or "tropical". Or whatever. ..

First of all, I think that we can agree that culture is not fixed nor immutable. Times change, people change, culture changes. What in such circumstances is an "authentic" bele dance? What is the "correct" way to make a fancy sailor costume? And pray tell what is an "authentic" tenor pan? -The kind that

we seem now to wish to patent -long after the instrument with all its flaws has entered the public domain? I ask these questions because authenticity necessarily speaks to time, place and people. It really has far, far less to do with form. And indeed, if we want to understand who an artist is, we find him (or indeed her) using established forms as a point of departure and, significantly, being able to "think out of .the box".

But ever since the expansion of Europe into "heathen lands afar" there has arisen a taste for the exotic. In emphasizing our specialness, therefore, we often become **locked out of the international discourse** because it pays to be an "ethnic" -an authentic ethnic -whether it's the "Indian" in the cowboy movies, or whether it is some kind of latter-day African or Indian, remaking

a diaspora identity through fashion, re-engineered religion and the extension of this reinvented identity into life. This is what the claim to specialness can involve. Alas! There is sometimes good money to be made out of the process. The tourist dollar, for example, is entrapped by promises of "authentic folk" and all the rest of the rubbish which is part of touristic promotion. ..Tourism is SUCH a worrying business!

A very wise person once observed that:

"The soul of a country is in its folk music. The country that has abandoned its folk music to commerce deserves a Coca Cola wake."

(Dr Maya V:Patel)

What all of this means is that we need our Arts to tell us who we have been and who

we can become. But we also want our Arts to connect us in a real way to the rest of the world. There can therefore be no fixed or immutable systems in which the teaching /learning /creative processes can be embedded. At least, not now. Not yet. What therefore is to be done about Art education?

I am always heartened when I remember Ananda Coomaraswamy's definition of art as "the well making of what needs making". And that idea of making the thing that is necessary and making it well, seems to address our problems of Art education for societies in crisis, with a certain authority and focus.

The strands of our Gordian Knot have to be recovered. Whether we are going to Knot them back again is not for me to predict.

But they have to be retrieved, examined, analysed and reconsidered. Above all, we have to recognize the ways in which these broken strands may be resurrected to serve our present purposes. Coomaraswamy talks of "well making" and that is a truly thorny issue in a time when the hands have been reduced to wagging fingers upon a species of keyboard which animates a small and flickering screen! Thorny also in a world which increasingly disregards the work of the hands in relation to eye, ear, mind and, in general, the human element in the process.

I was talking recently about music literacy and I observed that by the time we learn to read and write music, the computer will have phased us out of the process. We shall be net consumers of "**their**" software, **their** thinking, **their** ways of doing and being, and we may



Pat drilling Exodus. Photo by Ronnie Joseph

never really be able to devise a programme which can **accurately** write out a piece of syncopation created by Boogie Woogie. But THEY will continue to grow a critical mass of people who know how to write music using BOTH the pen and the computer. People who devise circuitry and programmes for music, for example, are ALSO themselves musicians. Never before has the ancient expression 'caveat emptor' been more relevant.

So that in the recovery and reconfiguration of our Gordian Knots, we have to be exceedingly diligent about insisting on mastery of all skills, ancient and modern -local and foreign. Is that an ambitious requirement? Of course it is. But people are not made by fiat, a flag of sorts, an appalling anthem and that pair of uninspiring birds -or indeed by the sword of Alexander the Great. Building people is very

hard work and my submission is that we have hardly embarked upon the task -not in the school system and certainly not here in UW One. Not yet.

One of our real and fundamental problems is that we cling to inherited "systems", "strategic plans" which we purchase -few of which can deliver anything real or of consequence. By so doing, we become the slaves of the systems themselves. Anybody who deals with the Civil -oops I mean "public" service will know what I mean. Filling in a form may once have been intended to be a means to an end. But in today's world, that form has become an end in itself. Instead, it is the imaginative mind, committed to the process of doing well, what needs to be done, is what Arts education is for! At least in part.

If I may go out on a limb about systems, I would, for instance, point to our choked roads, locked down with cars which imprison the population for hours at particular times. Why do we **all** have to get to work at 8 and leave at 4 ? Why are we **all** asleep at night? I shall move on! ! ! Appropriate Art education is about finding solutions for all these problems. Out traffic is an indicator of a society in crisis. It is a contemporary Gordian Knot. But nobody is prepared to do the patient "out of the box" imaginative, **creative thinking which alone may unravel it. And that kind of creative imaginative development is needed -not only by those who are "artistic" but perhaps, more urgently, BY THOSE WHO ARE NOT!**

Interestingly, Umberto Eco has noted the desperate need to introduce "a critical

dimension where media and messages are concerned because it is far more important to focus on the point of reception. ..than on the point of transmission." It is a point with which I obdurately, and intransigently agree. Curricula, philosophy, measurement, testing and all that kind of activity focuses on the transmission rather than on the point of reception. **We are substituting systems for people.** We are disregarding the KNOT. We are trying to slice through it with a sword made up of systems and we are, consequently, part of the phenomenon which generates "societies in crisis". And Eco absolutely warms my heart when he prays "To the anonymous divinity of Technological Communication, that our answer could be: 'Not Thy, but **our** will be done.' "

Education for the Arts has to start all over again. From first principles, guided by the

simple idea of making what needs making as well as we can -on a continuing basis -never being afraid to be wrong -never abandoning process -never prejudging the issues -and never planning for them in such a way that safeguarding the plan becomes more important than the production of worthwhile outcome.

But we also have to deal with the contemporary art world. These times constantly redefine art and its purposes. It is a world in which word and theory are very large. It is a world which seems to deify curatorial practice and mediation processes and the God of Technology looms large. It is a strange, forbidding and terrible world which may in fact, be the biggest and most complex Gordian Knot of all. But we are **absolutely** obliged to engage it, both on our

Caribbean terms, as well as those terms which are theirs. But we cannot deal unless we are confident in our own selfhood. We cannot participate unless we can engage the global world on every kind of first principle. Can we do it? Can we fashion processes of education which are part of the big picture? I believe that with courage, imagination and carefully interpreted information, we may not just catch up but we may actually be able to keep up !

The contemporary art world will not leave us alone. We are obliged to cope with syncretism, new issues of gender, multi-culturalism, post, post, post, post modernism and all the so-called critical thinking which informs and validates it. Let us not be left out of the loop, for the generations to come will never forgive us.



Lydians Concert Hiawatha.

A friend of mine brought me an article published in the Financial Times weekend paper which raises additional questions about contemporary art policy which I feel I should share. In an article titled "Arts Quality, Not Equality", Lesley Chamberlain makes some truly trenchant observations noting a "seismic shift in western cultural politics. ..from the end of the 1960's, (when) post war meritocratic socialism was engulfed by a quite different egalitarianism". The saddest event in the writer's life occurred when these two waves of concern with human aspiration collided. "Egalitarianism reversed the cultural flow. Instead of more people aspiring to culture, culture was redefined to attract higher numbers. Sensationalism and populism took over the cultural space." Well that's not news to us here in Trinidad and the article tells us that the rot is not uniquely Trinidadian!

But the article goes further, noting that "cultural difficulties faced by all post modern societies are finessed in Britain by well known national vices. Observing "a utilitarianism that reduces everything to money shapes our national psyche." More than that, the commentator observes that "Egalitarian governments' insistence that culture is for everyone has forced arts administrators into terrible contortions and left a legacy of malice and cynicism".

In a truly wrenching **cri de coeur** in defence of "high" art, the commentator makes the following observation:

"To accept that high art is self-sufficient- and to provide the funds for it to survive -is vital, because high art concerns the relation of individuals to the whole of tradition and of present-day societies to the incalculable sum of the past. Egalitarianism's fault is



Pat with Desperadoes 1989.

that it sees only people with immediate social needs, and nothing greater. Ideally, 'the people' are motivated to aspire, but to what? If there is nothing greater than their own social needs, then there is no culture and the artistic goal of ages, the refinement of mankind and the passing on of wisdom, has been lost."

But the whole world is in a dynamic state of change. Technology has seen to that in precisely the same way that technology created the "European Renaissance" and dispatched Columbus west in his search for the east. In addition, technology has also made information about what and who we are and what we are doing, available to us at speeds so swift that we hardly have time to understand -let alone assimilate and contemplate. Look at how long the world has been receiving "information" about Darfur!!

It seems therefore that dynamic changing societies, by their very nature, are bound to be societies in crisis. Ours is not singular and we must step up to the plate and deal. History and experience have shown us over and over again that problems are not solved when we try to circumvent or abolish them -when we cut the Gordian Knot we **are** in crisis -but which society in this world is not? Let us, therefore, "not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not".

*Pat Bishop
Port of Spain
June 2005*



Photo by Dr. Derek Gay

PAT BISHOP

Until all have crossed, none have crossed, and some we have to carry

You are standing there, maybe covered in cinders, tear-stained, maybe just low on energy or lacking in self-esteem, maybe bereft of vision or stripped of hope, maybe unloved, unwanted, abandoned or maybe your life has simply reached a road-block...

There appears a woman with attitude. 'What you crying for? Who tell you you can't, that you're not up to it? Who say you don't belong? Who say that's as far as you can go? Who say that's the only thing you can do? Well, that may be what *they* say. What do you say?'

You say, 'I don't know.'

She says, 'Let's find out.'

Next thing you know:

Your friends looking for you to lime, to party, go cinema. Where you? You sitting bolt upright, Monday-Wednesday-Friday evening in Bishop's hall learning music. And Sunday, yes, Big Sunday! You there too if a show is coming up.

You singing in Latin / Italian / Spanish / French / Portuguese / German / Hindi and oh, yes, English and Tringlish.

You singing folk, calypso, spirituals, opera, oratorio, classical, pop, hymns, jazz, anthems.

Is Handel, is Schubert, is Mozart, is Rudder, is Kitch, is Puccini, is traditional, is anonymous.

You holding a guitar, you playing a flute, a violin, a piano, an organ, a steel drum, an

African drum, a tassa, a dholak, a box bass, a cuatro.

You dancing parang, bele, Indian classical, modern, jazz, ballet, you moving. You wearing black jersey and skirt or pants, black dress, sailor suit, pretty costume.

You on stage, Queen's Hall, Naparima Bowl, Little Carib, President's House, small school hall and big national halls, Trinity Cathedral, All Saints Church, St Finbar's, Eddie's father's church, big church, small church, up and down T&T, you in some yard somewhere, on some pavement somewhere, up some hill, down some plain.

Is concert, party, wedding, funeral, christening, national celebration, national mourning, competition, exhibition, conference.

Is Carnival. Is Easter. Is Christmas. Is no good reason not to.

So you didn't know you could sing and dance and play music? You didn't know you could sew? Paint? Design? Plant food for your family? Carve wood? Cook? Weave fibre? Bend wire? Run? Study and pass exam?

And look at you now! You stay close or gone off on your own now, here or over there, singing, painting, playing music, dancing, holding concerts by yourself, preaching, teaching, giving speeches, dancing, studying, working at careers, working at relationships, raising children, forging bonds, enriching lives.

And you holding your head high, high. You walking tall. You smiling. You know that in you, in your real self, you are worthy. You

are worth something. You are somebody. Because you own something. You own your own self as a treasure store of gifts that you are beginning to open and explore and develop. You are rich. You are beautiful. You are big.

You are in the dance.

You who came, not in rags, not dispossessed, but well turned-out, self-assured, she made you bigger and better too, for how would you have known the alter ego, the other self, as friends, as equals, as co-dependents, otherwise? The same black outfits, the sitting next to one another, singing from the same page, the sharing of food, jokes, space on a maxi, help with words, notes, ah, in unison, in parts!

You are in the dance, too.

You, we, all walked into her house and into her realm and she said, 'welcome, have a seat. What can you do?' and if you didn't know, or thought you knew, man, she showed you what and how much more, beyond your wildest imaginings.

And, you know what? When the glass slipper challenge comes before you, you bend down, you pick it up, you put it on and you, you! stride on...

To us all she said, 'Love one another, because, *Until all have crossed, none have crossed, and some we have to carry.*'

*Barbara Jenkins, Lydian
August 26, 2011*



*Portrait of Mary Anning
by an unknown artist,
before 1842*

MARY ANNING

(1799 -1847)

*She sells seashells by the seashore
The shells she sells are seashells I'm sure
So if she sells seashells on the seashore
Then I'm sure she sells seashore shells*

The well-known tongue twister above is believed to be about a remarkable woman, Mary Anning, who lived in the seaside town of Lyme Regis in the first half of the nineteenth century. She was no mere collector of seashells though – Mary Anning was a renowned self-taught paleontologist.

The town of Lyme Regis is above a steep cliff. When waves undercut the cliff, huge boulders crash down to the beach below. In these smashed boulders and in the newly exposed cliff face, the shells and bones of long extinct

animals could be found. As a small child Mary often went with her father, Richard, down to the seashore to collect these fossils which people at the time collected and referred to as 'curiosities'.

Mary was only ten when her father died. The story is told that she went alone one day to look for fossils. She chipped away at the rock face with her hammer and came upon an ammonite. On her way home, a lady spotted the fossil and offered Mary half-a-crown for it. That started Mary's career as a 'seller of seashells'.

When she was just twelve, she and her brother uncovered the skull of an animal and thought



Scale One Inch to each Foot

Sir

I have endeavoured for a rough sketch to give some idea of what it is like. Sir you understood me right in saying that I said it was the supposed plesiosaurus, but its remarkable long neck and small head, shows that it does not in the least resemble it; in its analogy to the Ichthyosaurus, it is large and very different thing. I may venture to assure you it is the first one discovered in Europe. Colonel Burch offered me a hundred

Letter and drawing from Mary Anning announcing the discovery of a fossil animal now known as Plesiosaurus dolichodeirus, 26 December 1823.

it was an extinct crocodile. But upon further careful chipping away they revealed the first complete specimen of an ichthyosaur.

Mary, her brother, Joseph, and her dog, Tray, explored that part of the south coast of England for the remainder of her short life, patiently chipping away at rocks, uncovering the rock-hard bones of many species of animals of the Jurassic period that had never been seen before.

Among her many finds are the first pterosaur found in Britain, a fossil fish and a plesiosaur, animals that roamed the earth and sea between one hundred and fifty to two hundred million years ago. She found so many new creatures that artists were at last able to draw and paint pictures of what the Jurassic period would have been like, using her finds to help them imagine that world. Learned men from scientific and geological

societies all over Europe came to Mary's cottage, which was both her home and her fossil shop, to learn about paleontology and the fossils she collected. Yet, as a woman, she was not allowed to become a member of any of their societies. However, the members of the Geological Society collected money to help her during her final illness and to place in her memory six stained glass windows in St Michael's, her local parish church, 'in commemoration of her usefulness in furthering the science of geology, as also of her benevolence of heart and integrity of life'

Barbara Jenkins
April 2018

NGC National Heroes Project 2018
Launch May 9th 2018

