



HAITIAN ART SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY ED GESSEN

Welcome to the latest edition of VEVE, the Haitian Art Society newsletter. I would like to share our latest news and bring you up to date on several of our recent initiatives.

- **Annual Conference Cancelled for 2021.** Our planned Annual Conference in San Diego had to be cancelled due to the current health situation. A lot of work and planning went into this event, but we felt like we needed to take this action for the benefit of all. We intend to resume this extremely popular conference next year.
- **ART TALKS.** The HAS Event Committee is launching a new program called HAS "Art Talks". These will be a one-hour presentations (virtual conferences) by experts about a specific Haitian Art topic of interest to the group. These talks will be streamed LIVE via YouTube and Facebook. This video functionality features Live Streaming. Just "click" on the link in our announcement/flyer and you will be directed there. Our first Art Talk, Indigenous Styles of Haitian Art, was held on October 28th at 7:00PM EST and featured Gerald Alexis on Hector Hyppolite, and Mark Taylor on the artists of Saint Soleil. Questions for the panelists followed the talks. This program was free to all and is intended to educate, engage, and entertain our members and guests. It was a huge success for our first effort! We wish to thank DMS Studios, our producer, and The Fritz Racine Foundation, our sponsor.

(continued on next page)

IN THIS ISSUE

Rodman Legacy
Endures by Sydney
Jenkins - Page 4

Haiti's Art of the
Earthquake: A 2021
Reflection by Kyras
Malika Daniels -
Page 6

This Evening, I Will
Not Cry For My Dead
by Jean-Davy
Joachim - Page 8

Why so Many Films
About Artists? by
Arnold Antonin -
Page 9

Interview with Dr.
LeGrace Benson by
Larry Kent - Page 12

Where to See
Haitian Art by Ed
Gessen - Page 15

Diversity of Artists
in Museums - Page
17

VEVE Credits
Page 18

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from previous page)

- **Website Expansion.** Our [website](#) continues to be updated with new information on a regular basis and has become a widely used and highly acclaimed research tool for scholars, museum professionals, gallerists, and collectors. You will be able to view lots of public and private collections, many never before seen by the general public. Be sure to visit often!
- **New Organizational Structure.** The Haitian Art Society has been “under the sponsorship” of the Waterloo Center for the Arts since our inception in 2003. The WCA has graciously provided its 501c3 non-profit status to us, as well as administrative support and financial management responsibilities. And we thank WCA for its continued support. Our Board of Directors has embarked on the process of incorporating our own legal entity and have filed for our own 501c3 status. This will give us more autonomy and visibility in the world of non-profit organizations. As a condition of this reorganization, we will be establishing additional internal controls, create bylaws, write an administrative handbook, and put financial controls in place. We will also create an expanded Board of Directors including new Officers. We are extremely excited about these changes and hope you will be as well. I am pleased to announce that we have submitted our application and are waiting for our official approval very soon.
- **Opportunities for New Board Members.** HAS will be expanding its Board of Directors. We are looking to recruit a few additional Board members to help direct our future and would welcome additional participation by members. If you are interested in volunteering your time, please let us know. We especially need someone with finance or accounting or bookkeeping skills to serve as our treasurer. Please contact Ed Gessen at edgessen@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.
- **New Board Members Elected.** I am extremely pleased to announce that we have two newly elected members of our Board of Directors. Our first is Joanna Robotham, currently the curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the [Tampa Museum of Art](#). She is an acclaimed museum professional and recently organized a groundbreaking exhibition entitled Ordinary/Extraordinary: Assemblage in Three Acts. This presentation featured work by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Purvis Young, and a selection of almost 70 Haitian Vodou Flags. The Flag exhibit was entitled “Sacred Diagrams: Haitian Vodou Flags from the Gessen Collection”. This exhibit was co-curated by Joanna along with renowned artist and Haitian art scholar, Edouard Duval-Carrie. Joanna is also involved in a project to expand the Tampa Museum’s collection and focus on Haitian and Caribbean Art. Our second new Board member is Sydney O. Jenkins. Sydney is a long-time member of HAS and has joined the group on many of our Annual Conferences. Sydney is currently the Museum Director at the Ramapo College of New Jersey at Mahwah, NJ. The Ramapo houses the third largest collection of Haitian Art in the US, with a special focus on the Selden Rodman (and his clients) collections. Sydney has curated over 100 exhibitions and has been a museum professional for over 15 years. We welcome our two newest Board Members!

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from previous page)

- **Regional Chapters.** Since our members are widely dispersed, we are re-establishing geographically based satellite groups to help keep our members connected. The idea is to have local members get together for local activities. We plan to have regional groups in the following areas. If you would like to join a regional satellite, please contact your local Chairperson.
 - North-Eastern region (NY, NJ, PA, MA) Chair TBD
 - Mid-Atlantic region (DC, VA, MD) Magdalah Racine-Silva, Washington, -Chair (magdalah.silva@dmsinetwork.com)
 - Southern region (FL, GA, LA) Ed Gessen-St Petersburg, Chair (edgessen@gmail.com)
 - Western region (CA) Larry Kent-San Diego, Chair (larryknt@yahoo.com)
 - Mid-West region (Mid-westerns states) Chair TBD
- **Membership Growth.** The Haitian Art Society has welcomed many new paid supporting members to our official HAS group and has grown our Facebook group to over 5800 total members, with 2800 active members. We are extremely excited to have expanded our reach to so many new art aficionados! Thank you for your continued interest in HAS. Please support our Society with your paid membership by joining at: <https://haitianartsociety.org/how-To-Join>



Autoportrait, n.d. by Edouard Duval-Carrié

RODMAN LEGACY ENDURES AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

BY SYDNEY O. JENKINS

For almost 20 years, I've had the privilege of stewardship for the Selden Rodman Gallery of Popular Arts at Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah. It's a unique responsibility. As the only New York City area institution devoted to continuously presenting museum-quality Haitian art, it is not uncommon to introduce prominent art world figures to the art of Haiti. As one major museum curator exclaimed about Haitian art, "Why in the world don't I know this amazing story?"

The collection history at Ramapo began in the 1980s with significant gifts from the Rodman family. Their donations continued for many years. In addition, other donors of Haitian and related non-Haitian works of self-taught and Popular Arts have contributed to the Rodman Collection or associated collections – artists often written about and promoted by Rodman. These donors included Matthew Morris and Frank Svehla, Otis and Maurice Thompson, Larry Kent, Janet Feldman, Tyler Cowen, Randall Morris and Shari Cavin, Steven Fromer, Jonathan Demme and others.

The art is used in a variegated roster of classes from art history to world civilizations to psychology. Campus study resources have grown with the recent gift of Jonathan Demme's significant collection of books about Haiti and Haitian art, which is to be housed in the new Learning Commons. Ramapo's art collection was also part of the first graduate seminar in Haitian art taught at Yale University. Increasingly, we are seeing international scholars investigating other aspects of Selden Rodman's weighty and sometimes controversial contributions to 20th century cultural life. As traditional canons blur, cross-pollination between disciplines is percolating and our collection is in the thick of it.

When the treasure that is the intimate Rodman Gallery first opened, the future course and potential audience was not fully known. As Ramapo's facilities and programs expanded...

(continued on next page)



Vodou tableaux, n.d. by Jacques-Enguerrand Gourgue

AS ONE MAJOR
MUSEUM CURATOR
EXCLAIMED ABOUT
HAITIAN ART, "WHY
IN THE WORLD
DON'T I KNOW THIS
AMAZING STORY?"

RODMAN LEGACY ENDURES AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

(continued from previous page)

collection art and loaned works were featured in numerous innovative exhibitions in various spaces and for diverse public programs. In the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts, these inventive endeavors included Haitian Art Excerpts: From Renaissance to Diaspora co-curated with Andre Juste, and a number of exciting projects with Jonathan Demme. Haitian works were frequently presented in contemporary exhibitions “on equal footing” with other types of work. Most recently, collection works were a key part of Mawewi: A Place Where Paths Meet, an installation by Cooper Union professor Camille Hoffman that directly involved the Ramapough Lenape Nation. Renowned lecturers who have participated in our programs range from Robert Farris Thompson and Edwidge Danticat to Peter Haffner, Gerald Alexis, and Jerry Philogene. Collection art and gallery tours are sometimes part of other symposia and conferences on campus. While there is a devoted local community audience, we are currently advancing initiatives to further involve disenfranchised communities, and also exploring how to make the large Haitian diaspora population nearby feel more comfortable on campus.

We have loaned Haitian works to substantial exhibitions elsewhere, such as the multi-museum blockbuster Caribbean: Crossroads of the World. However, we haven’t been able to meet all requests for institutional collaborations. Like many peer institutions, if we had more funding for staff, programs and facilities, we could do more. And we still have artist gaps in the collection to fill!

Ramapo College continues to be one of the few public spaces where Haitian art can be experienced in the flesh. For decades, so much of the work has been in private hands or only brought out from museum storage once in a blue moon, if at all. When I came to Ramapo fresh from a curatorial think tank with a background in self-taught art and museology theory, I wasn’t sure how I was going to educate myself about the fascinating art of Haiti. The Haitian Art Society has provided golden access for me to experience the art in person. To eyeball it. To love it. Growing up in the Virginia countryside, who knew that one day – while participating in an art conference -- I would be riding a pony up to the Citadel in Haiti?



SYDNEY JENKINS AT THE
CITADELLE LAFERRIÈRE,
VASEUX, HAITI

HAITI'S ART OF THE EARTHQUAKE: A 2021 REFLECTION

BY KYRAH MALIKA DANIELS, BOSTON COLLEGE

On August 14, 2021—11 years after the 2010 earthquake—Haiti's earth split open again. Seismologists describe the earth's recent quaking between Les Cayes and Jeremie as a 7.2 magnitude earthquake. Port-au-Prince's earthquake on January 12th, 2010 was categorized as 7.0 magnitude. These numbers cannot begin to render the heart-wrenching reality of 2,100 (+ counting) and 300,000 peoples' lives lost respectively in 2021 and 2010. With so many loved ones missing, communities have been devastated in Haiti, the diaspora, and beyond.

Haitian artist Evelyn Alcide beaded this breath-taking drapo (sacred flag) to commemorate the 2010 earthquake, known as Goudougoudou. Today, the work gains relevance anew. Colorful homes and buildings are toppled, and people emerge from the wreckage in fragmented states. Goudougoudou was named for its onomatopoeic sound of the ground rumbling. In this portrait, the earth has spilled blood.

(continued on next page)



Les Anges Secourisme Lors du Séisme (The Angels' First Aid During the Earthquake) by Evelyn Alcide, 2010, Ed Gessen Collection

HAITI'S ART OF THE EARTHQUAKE: A 2021 REFLECTION

(continued from previous page)

But the lwa (spirits) always hear their children's cries. Then as now, they adopt wings to offer aid. The wise elder Papa Danbala, dressed in a Catholic bishop's green robe (center), is the first to arrive, rescuing a young boy in red from the ruins. Directly above in a flowing blue robe and lavender crown, Èzili Dantò hoists a young man onto Ogou/Sen Jak's white stallion, who steadies himself in the sky for transport. Below, the lwa Ayida Wèdo bends forward—drawing on all her powers as a rainbow serpent, she pulls a young man back into the light.

LaSirènn's pink mermaid scales glow (top left) as she searches for victims whose fate has not yet been determined. Both in purple, Bawon Samdi and his wife Grann Brijit appear upside down (far left). For those who have not survived, they will usher souls into the kingdom of the dead and ensure smooth passage to the spirit realm of Afrik-Ginen.

Alcide's captivating drapo indicates that lwa yo p ap janm lage pitit yo—the spirits will never abandon their children.

In solidarity with Ayiti chérie.



And Haiti Will Bloom Again, 2010 by Frantz Zéphirin

BUT THE LWA (SPIRITS)
ALWAYS HEAR THEIR
CHILDREN'S CRIES. THEN AS
NOW, THEY ADOPT WINGS TO
OFFER AID.

THIS EVENING, I WILL NOT CRY FOR MY DEAD

BY JEAN-DAVY JOACHIM

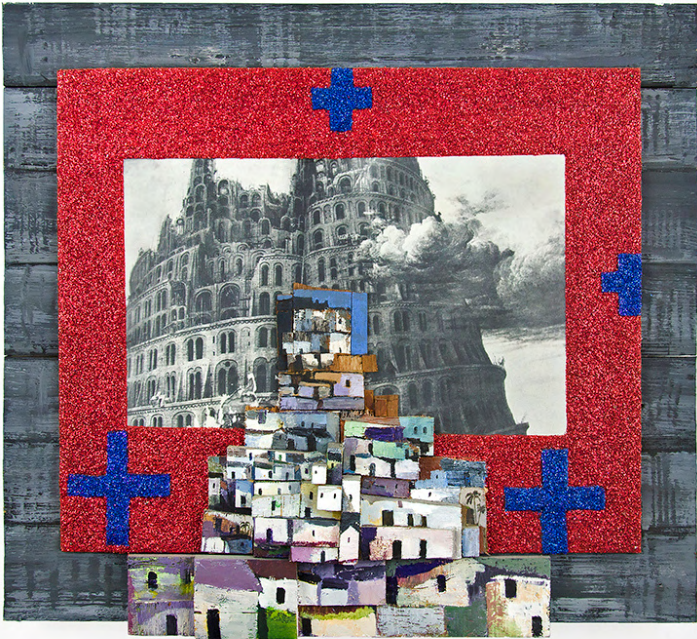
This evening, I will not cry for my dead
I'll instead launch their names into the sky
I'll tear off the stars one by one
And paste in their place the wide open eyes of the departed.

Let their gaze strike this earth
Gorged with bodies and sweat
And all it hides in its entrails.
Let these gazes become lightning, new suns and new moons

My dead will not see me cry this evening
I'll sing instead chants of Ibo, Yanvalou, Petwo Let the tomtoms wake up for the resurrection Of these
souls ripped from life so soon

I'll not write a single word of dead
I call instead for a powerful earthquake of life To shake the souls in pain
I call on the budding of hope

I give my tears in exchange for LIFE
I will not cry at all for my dead...



"Babel, Old and New", 2000, mixed media work by Paul Gardère

WHY SO MANY FILMS ABOUT ARTISTS?

BY ARNOLD ANTONIN

I made my first documentary focusing on artists in 1976 with "Naive Art and Repression in Haiti." "Haiti, the road to freedom", which I produced in 1973, was a summary of the struggles of the Haitian people against oppression, from the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492 to Jean Claude Duvalier in 1971. But I felt the need to go further, to understand, specifically, how this repression was exercised at the artistic level while Duvalier and his propagandists were presenting Haitian art as its best ambassadors.

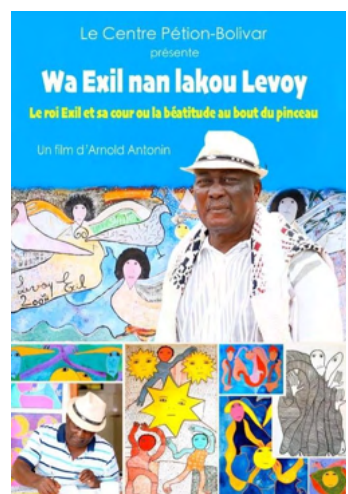
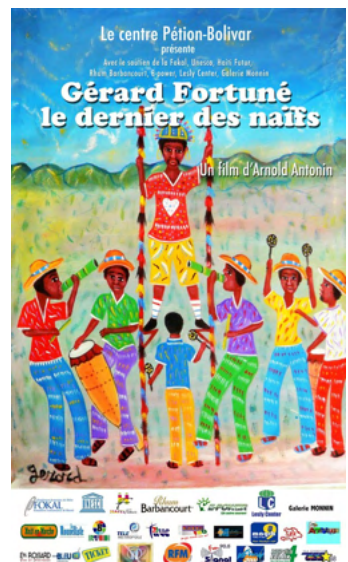
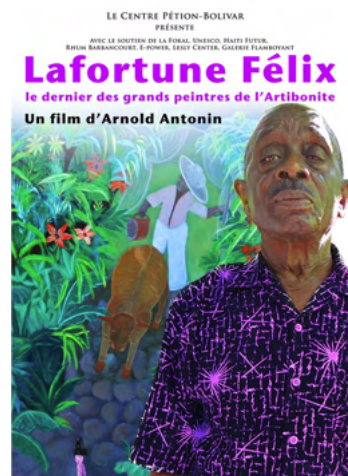
In the 1976 documentary, I tried to analyze the mechanisms of the Haitian naive art market. I tried to shed light on the manipulations and repressions that led to the controlled creation of the naive artistic current as the only possible art in Haiti: Fairy-tale scenes and exotic idylls to satisfy the foreign clientele and to represent a land of plenty while its population is dying of hunger and its intellectuals are persecuted.

In 1981 I wanted to do the same thing in terms of the literary creation with "Can a Tonton Macoute be a poet?" It was an indictment against the Duvalier regime and the overthrow of the aesthetic values it caused. These three films are in fact a triptych on the conditions of life and artistic production in Haiti.

It was upon my return from exile in 1986, after the fall of the Duvalier hereditary dictatorship, that I began to work on individual artists. This choice was based on general consideration but also on specific reasons linked to myself and to each of the artists whose portraits I would be doing.

In 2001 I did "Tiga: Haiti, dream, possession, creation, madness". Since then, I have kept going and I have not stopped. I have made about fifteen films about the masters of painting and sculpture, including "Beauty against poverty in Jalousie", where we see the sculptor Patrick Vilaire in action. In these films, I've asserted my belief that beauty can help fight material and spiritual misery.

These films revolved around painters and sculptors whose works and personalities appealed to me or with whom I had a close relationship Above all, because I believed that they would leave a mark on art history and because they deserved a museum. (continued on next page)



WHY SO MANY FILMS ABOUT ARTISTS?

(continued from previous page)

- Marithou, femme peintre d'Haïti (2001)
- Cédor ou l'Esthétique de la modestie, (2002)
- André Pierre, celui qui peint le bon (2003)
- Albert Mangonès, l'espace public (2002)
- Préfete Duffaut, Piety and Urban Imagination (2007)
- Can sculpture save the village of Noailles? (2009)
- The Blue Planet of Luckner Lazard (2010)
- Once upon a time Périclès (2010)
- Le miroir brisé de Valcin II (2013)
- Lafortune Félix, le dernier des grands peintres de l'Artibonite (2016)
- Jambes de bois ou Gérard Fortuné, le dernier des naïfs (2016)
- Le voyage de Hervé Télémaque (2017)
- Heureux sculpteurs des rues de Port-au-Prince (2020)
- Levoy Exil and his Court or Bliss at the Tip of the Paintbrush (2021)

All are in Haitian Creole & French and are often subtitled in English & Spanish.

Why these films?

Fundamentally, I think it's because I deeply love artistic creation. I am always amazed by the work of these miracle workers. I can even say that it was through painting, perhaps more than through books, that I became an activist for the cause of freedom.

I was 17 when I discovered Picasso, Braque, Léger, Matisse, and the Mexican muralists. At school I had seen reproductions of works by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo. But the freedom of these modern masters struck me as a revelation. It told me that we can do the same in all fields. Nothing should limit you.

More recently, I discovered two centers that captivated me as much as these masters of Western art.

- The Ceramics Museum directed by Tiga. Its terracottas have a surrealist style while still being rooted in the ancestral culture of Haiti and its original people.
- The Gallerie Brochette where I met Bernard Wah, Villard Denis, Dieudonné Cédor and Luckner Lazard. These friendships lasted until their deaths.

(continued on next page)

WHY SO MANY FILMS ABOUT ARTISTS?

(continued from previous page)

This mixture of realism, of popular and avant-garde art, as well as the atmosphere that existed, allowed me to break away from the traditional Catholic School teachings taught by the Pères du Saint-Esprit. They invited me to love freedom and aesthetic pleasure. I completed my education on the Haitian pictorial revolution by discovering the ideas of the Foyer des Arts Plastiques theorists, of Wilfredo Lam himself and of André Breton.

In “Haiti the road to freedom,” I was settling scores. My films on art are a cry from my heart, a cry of love and recognition for our artists and an effort to safeguard the heritage they leave us; a heritage that runs the great risk of being lost forever.

When I returned to Haiti, I realized that our country is dominated by a double madness: predators greedy for power and money and creators who have life projects and create beauty in the most dire of living conditions.

Today there is not a single museum worthy of the name in Haiti. The Mupanah is a historical museum. The Musée d’Art Haitien (du Collège St Pierre), whose collection includes work by the most important Haitian artists, has not reopened its doors since the January 2010 earthquake.

Each of my films is like a small personal museum dedicated to an artist or a group of artists such as those of Noailles. I try to reconstruct the physical and spiritual universe of the artist and keep him alive through his story and his creation, for myself and for future generations. Just as I do in my films about writers, I try to break the true conspiracy against memory and the false cult of history that exist in our country.

For more information about the films of Arnold Antonin: ArnoldAntoninFilms.com



But I Dreamt, 1975 by Ernst Prophete

INTERVIEW WITH DR. LEGRACE BENSON

BY LARRY KENT

How did Haiti enter your mainstream thought?

Studying English literature in college, once briefly there was a reference to Haiti in the paean to Toussaint Louverture by the poet, William Wordsworth, an Abolitionist. That was the only time in all my school and college education through a doctorate that anyone ever made reference to Haiti. That is a curiosity in itself because by the time I was 11 I had read every book about pirates written in English and available in the school libraries or the Olivia Raney Public Library. Spanish Main, Hispaniola and Windward Passage were familiar names and maps. Haiti was invisible. Later I would discover why that was so. When I had undergraduate students in my art history classes at Cornell, there were two who said they were from Haiti. I must confess that I thought they were from one of the French-speaking islands in the Pacific. One of them pointed out to me that there was some marvelous painting and sculpture in Haiti that I ought to see. He was persistent, and finally, with the very gracious invitation from his family I thought I should do that. When I went to the travel agent I was surprised to learn that Haiti was in the Caribbean: that it was the whole western third of the Hispaniola I knew from the adventures of Henry Morgan.

I begin with this long preamble because here in 2021 I have made inquiries of research librarians in university libraries about their possible holding on Haiti and discovered that the expert had also never heard of Haiti. The Haitian Art Society is a delight because all the participants know Haiti and admire the work of its creative artists. So, my student and his very gracious and well-informed family introduced me to Haitian art. I saw immediately that to go beyond the enjoyment of it I would have to learn two languages, read many history books and piles of documents. It meant integrating Haitian studies into my interdisciplinary studies in art, in history and in perception. The art and the artists I encountered on that first trip seemed worth the effort. The nation itself seemed worth the effort. After all these years that remains true.

What is unique about Haiti?

From the mid-eighteenth century to the Bois Caiman uprising in August of 1791 to winter of 1803 the Africans who had been wrenched from their homelands and brutally enslaved on the plantations of St. Domingue (continued on next page)



Bois Caiman, n.d. by Dieudon Cedor

I CONTINUE TO BE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
OF THE JOURNAL
OF HAITIAN
STUDIES.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. LEGRACE BENSON

(continued from previous page)

fought against a powerful nation and one of history's most successful armies. They won. In January of 1804 they pronounced Haiti a free nation. With all the attempts to re-enslave its citizens or to make them a dependency of a more powerful nation they are still the First Free Black Nation in the modern world. It would be decades later before the slave trade would be declared illegal, and that slavery would begin to be abolished in other Caribbean islands. It would be even later that those colonial possessions would become independent. The history is different. The art is different.

What are other Haitian organizations are you involved with?

The Haitian Studies Association was founded not long after my first trip to Haiti and I joined it at their first conference. I continue to be a member and have been grateful for the knowledge my colleagues share and for how the organization supports and encourages its participants. I also belong to KOSANBA, an organization for the scholarly study of Vodou, founded not long after Haitian Studies Association and including many of the same scholars. I also belong to Caribbean Studies Association and Latin American Studies Association. I have been on the boards of both HSA and KOSANBA and have served as Vice President and the President of both. I continue to be Associate Editor of the *Journal of Haitian Studies*.

Do you have an art collection? Who are some of your favorite artists?

Expecting that I would be writing about Haitian art I decided that I should not collect the art and try to maintain a disinterested point of view open to whatever art I saw and whomsoever artists I might interview. It was easy for me to maintain that position because wise collecting is a highly developed skill and commitment that requires time, funds, and focus of attention that would necessarily compete with the academic endeavor. But yes, there came a time and special circumstances that led to my acquisition of a very small number of pieces that I either bought from the artists or commissioned. As a member of Haitian Art Society, where most members are collectors, I am confirmed in my original intuition that collecting is not simply a hobby, it is a special engagement that has some similarities with academic studies but also a different kind of focus. I also want to say that when I am around a collector of Haitian art I am unfailingly impressed with the knowledge and refined attention to details concerning the art they collect. I strongly believe that academic scholars of art should be attentive to the wisdom of collectors. As for favorite artists? What I am looking at any given moment. Do I think some are stronger than others? Yes, but with the reservation that I may just not "get it" for that particular work or artist. I have passed over works that I saw again later and realized I'd missed seeing all there was to see.

What was the impetus to write *Arts & Religions of Haiti*? What preparations did you make before writing book?

My first trip to Haiti resulted in an article for *Art International*. I had intended to do that article and then turn my attention back to studies in arts and perception. The editor of *Art International* at that time was Frank Malina who was also starting a new journal, *Leonardo*, that would combine arts and science. Malina recognized the interdisciplinary bent and invited me to write some articles for the new journal. I did, and in the process began to see Haitian art from that perspective. But it would be several years before I could really focus on that track. I became a college administrator, moved to a new position in an experimental division of State University of New York where my colleagues and I were working as many as 70 hours a week to invent and create and just push all the necessary bureaucratic buttons. Finally, I just decide I would take early retirement in order to do my work! It was then that I was able to begin the process of gathering all the studies I had been able to fit in up to that point, see what had to be done in further research, do that and then start writing. My colleague Dr. Claudine Michel at the University of California-Santa Barbara offered me a visiting faculty fellowship on that campus for a year, and the real writing began. Ian Randle Publishers, who produce scholarly works in Caribbean studies, offered a contract and I began to create the final manuscript.

(continued on next page)

INTERVIEW WITH DR. LEGRACE BENSON

(continued from previous page)

It took longer than I ever would have thought, but it is incredibly time consuming and often expensive to get permissions for publication of images. Prof. Leslie Desmangles at Trinity College holding the Edith Graham collection, Sydney Jenkins at Ramapo College which holds the Selden Rodman collection and the Waterloo Center for the Arts with their comprehensive collection arranged for permissions for a significant number of illustrations. Members of HAS also enabled the inclusion of several items. The Haitian Art Society in more ways than one enabled the publication of the book.

We share a love of gardens. Do you know of any public or private gardens in Haiti?

I wish I knew of other private gardens in Haiti. I do know about Martissant. I first saw that area before the fancy hotel was built, then when the hotel was there, the period of disuse again and now the lovely public space and educational site when and if things settle back down. I also saw the Mangonès garden across the road where Albert Mangonès had planted many endangered or rare plants. At the Citadelle, one of his concerns was to turn that whole area into a park where native species would be protected. In the book almost ready to be published now we call attention to that aspect of the Citadelle restoration project. We also include information about the gardens at Sans Souci and show how King Henry collaborated with botanical and agricultural experts from Great Britain, specially Sir Joseph Banks not only to increase the yield on the export crops, sugar and coffee, but also to have a pleasure garden with natives and imports from the whole world cultivated there. In 1980 Cuban architect assigned by OAS to assist with the restoration of the historic sites at Milot did garden plans that followed the original hardscape outlines but would have included items that I believe to be somewhat different plants from the original.

Do you have a bucket list of places to visit in Haiti?

Yes, starting with some of the caves where there are Taino carvings and designs and Jacmel in full Kaneval gear.



Adam and Eve, 1970s by Salnave Philippe Auguste

WHERE CAN YOU SEE HAITIAN ART IN THE UNITED STATES?

BY ED GESSEN

During my four decades of collecting Haitian Art, I have attempted to discover public as well as private places to see it. Through my association with The Haitian Art Society, I have met many collectors and gallerists, and have visited their homes, their galleries, and their collections. This art adventure was made possible by our HAS Annual Conference visits to cities around the globe. On each of these trips, the attendees were invited to visit the homes and private collections of fellow members or collectors. In addition, there are many museums in the US that have Haitian Art collections available for public viewing. Some have permanent exhibits always on view, while others have special exhibits periodically on display. A listing of these museum and university collections follows, below. They are ranked by the size of their Haitian Art holdings.

There are many museums around the country that have some Haitian pieces, but not many with large collections. I have contacted most all of the museums and institutions that have Haitian work and have attempted to rank them based on the size of their collections. Here is what I was able to learn from my museum research, and their corresponding ranking, with each of these institutions in the top 10 having at least 100 works of Haitian Art. If you have any updates to this list, please feel free to contact me at edgessen@gmail.com.

1 - Waterloo Center for The Arts, Waterloo, IA: The WCA has 1800 pieces including paintings, recycled oil drum sculptures, Vodou Flags, and mixed media pieces. They have several satellite locations in nearby surrounding areas, each with Haitian Art always on display. This is the largest collection in the US, ranked #1, as is their Vodou Flag collection. Kent Shankle is the Museum Director, and Chawne Paige is the Curator.

2 - Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA: The Fowler specializes in ceremonial art and sacred objects. As a result of their groundbreaking exhibition "Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou" in 1995, they were able to collect almost 1000 objects for that exhibit. These items, as well as other paintings and Vodou Flags, form the core of their holdings. Their Flag collection is ranked #2 in the country. Haitian Art is displayed only for special exhibitions. Overall Rank #2. Marla Berns recently retired as the Museum Director of 20 years. Patrick Polk is the Senior Curator, and Katherine Smith is the Curatorial and Research Associate of Haitian Arts.

3 - Ramapo College of New Jersey, Mahwah, NJ: Just outside of NYC, the Ramapo is home to the "Selden Rodman" collection with pieces mostly acquired from the Rodman family. It is on display full time in the Berrie Center Rodman Gallery, with over 400 objects in the collection. The art is rotated frequently with special events held periodically. Rank #3. Sydney Jenkins is the Museum Director.

(continued on next page)

WHERE CAN YOU SEE HAITIAN ART IN THE UNITED STATES?

(continued from previous page)

4 - Figge Museum, Davenport, IA: The Figge has a wonderful collection of Haitian work from the Masters to present day artists. Nearly 300 items. This includes paintings by Hyppolite and metal sculptures by Liautaud. The Figge also hosts special events as was recently seen in their “Haitian Masterworks” event. Rank #4. Michelle Hargrove is the Executive Director, and Andrew Wallace is the Director of Collections.

5 - Trinity College, Austin Arts Center, Hartford, CT. This museum has about 300 pieces, Rank #5. Jesse Riley is the Exhibits Manager.

6 - Huntington Museum, Huntington, WV: 235 pieces. Rank #6. John Spurlock is the Assistant Director.

7 - Duke University, Durham, NC: 165 pieces. Ranked #7. Marshall Price is the Curator.

8 - Milwaukee Museum of Art, Milwaukee, WI: 133 pieces. About 40+ pieces always on view. Rank #8. Rebekah Morin is the Curator.

9 - Spencer Museum (University of Kansas) Lawrence, KS: 107 pieces. Rank #9. Angela Watts is the Collections Manager.

10 - Frost Museum, Miami, FL: 102 pieces. Ranked #10. Amy Galpin is the Chief Curator.

11 - New Orleans Museum of Art (NOLA), New Orleans, LA: 80 pieces. Susan M Taylor is the Director.

12 - Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa FL: 60 pieces, with approximately 50 Haitian Vodou Flags. Their Flag collection is ranked #3 in the country. Michael Tomor is the Executive Director, and Joanna Robotham is the Curator of Contemporary Art. The TMA is making a concerted effort to grow its Haitian collection as a strategic initiative to focus on Caribbean Art. They recently held an exhibit on Vodou Flags entitled “Sacred Diagrams”.

13 - Haitian American Museum of Chicago (HAMOC), Chicago, IL: 50 pieces. Elsie Hernandez is the Founder and President.

14 - St Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts, St Petersburg, FL: 40 pieces. Kristen Shepherd is the Executive Director, Stanton Thomas is the Assistant Director, and Katherine Pill is the Curator of Contemporary Art.

15- Cornell University (Johnson Museum of Art), Ithaca NY: 40 pieces. Matt Conway is the Curator.

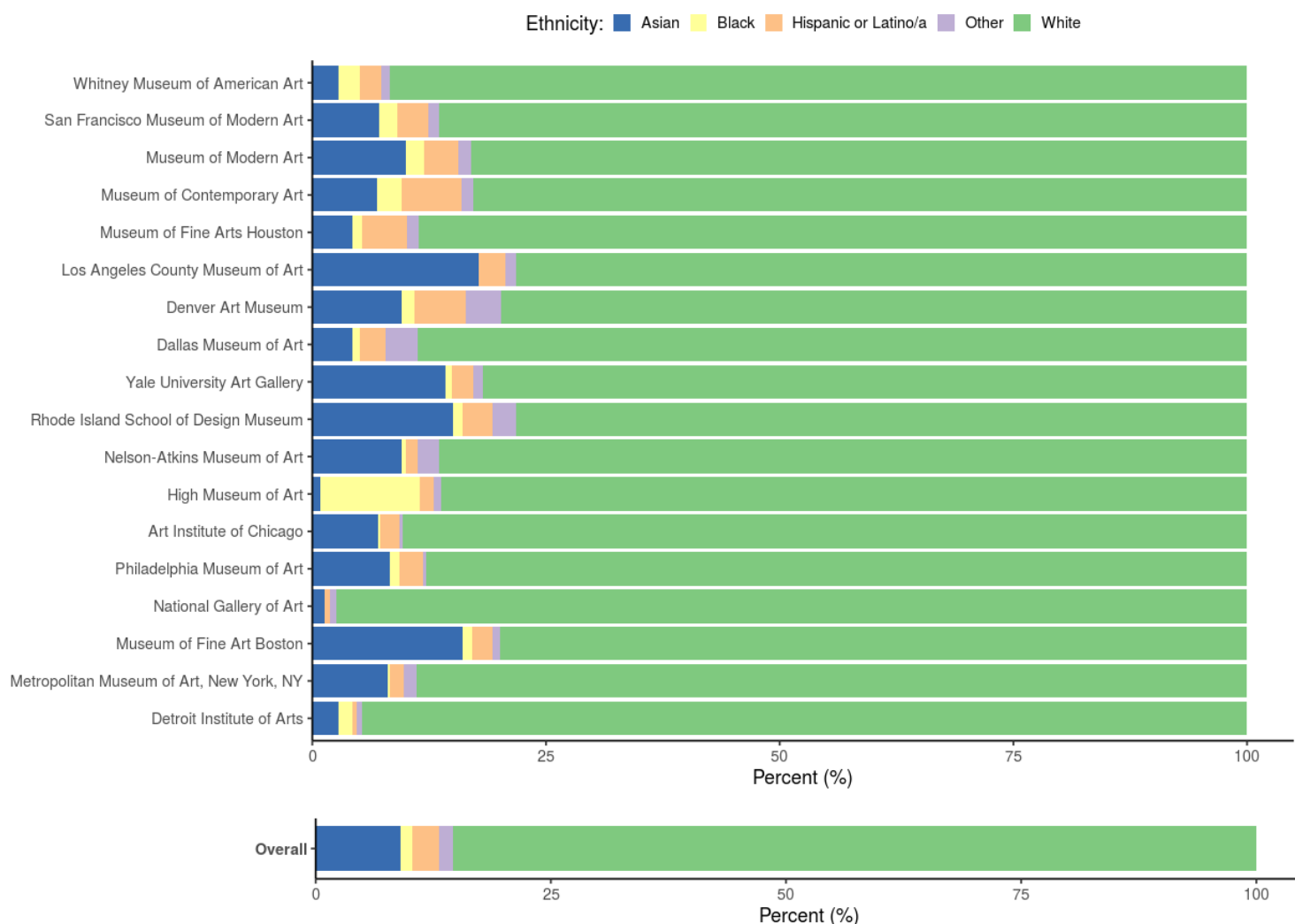
This rounds out the top 15 museums where Haitian Art is featured. Each institution ranked in the top 10 (above) has over 100 pieces in their collections. While the next 5 have at least 40 works of Haitian Art. Since most public institutions do not have large endowments with which to acquire additions to their collections, it falls upon the generosity of donors to help them grow their collections. If you have any works you may wish to donate, please contact your favorite institution to arrange for a tax advantaged donation, either now or in the future.

EDITORIAL: DIVERSITY OF ARTISTS IN MAJOR U.S. MUSEUMS

In recent years, museums in the United States have been moving toward diversifying their permanent collections to remediate the historical underrepresentation of non-male and non-white artists.

However, a [2019 study](#) shows that American museums still have a long way to go in diversifying their collections, as they remain overwhelmingly white and male. The study was conducted by a group of mathematicians, statisticians, and art historians at Williams College (Chad M. Topaz, Bernhard Klingenberg, Daniel Turek, Brianna Heggeseth, Pamela E. Harris, Julie C. Blackwood, C. Ondine Chavoya), together with Kevin M. Murphy, senior curator of American and European Art at Williams College Museum of Art, and Steven Nelson, professor of African and African American Art at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Explore the data interactively here: <https://artofstat.shinyapps.io/ArtistDiversity/>



VEVE CREDITS

VEVE is the newsletter of the Haitian Art Society. It is a benefit of membership and is published quarterly. It contains no advertising and features articles on Haitian Art, artists, collectors, members, current events, interviews, exhibitions and much more. Thank you to all our VEEVE contributors.

Matt Dunn - Editor-in-Chief

Ed Gessen - Editor

VEVE logo by Chawne Paige

Please send your article submissions for review and consideration to Matt Dunn at mattdunndc@gmail.com

To join and become a HAS member visit <https://haitianartsociety.org/how-to-join>

Mission Statement: The Haitian Art Society, formed in 2003, is an international, non-profit membership organization designed to strengthen and expand interest in, and understanding of, Haitian Art and Artists. The HAS is a thriving community comprised of art collectors, gallerists, museum professionals, scholars, and researchers all connected by a mutual appreciation and affection for Haitian Art. We also produce an Annual Conference for members with symposia, private home collection tours, special exhibitions, and social events. We are an all-volunteer organization. SUPPORT US BY JOINING TODAY!



Battle of Vertières, 1987-89 by Ulrick Jean-Pierre

THE BATTLE OF VERTIÈRES
WAS THE LAST MAJOR
BATTLE OF THE HAITIAN
REVOLUTION FOUGHT ON 18
NOVEMBER 1803.
J.J. DESSALINES IS ON THE
LEFT AND FRANÇOIS CAPOIS
(CAPOIS LA MORT) IS ON THE
RIGHT