

Suelin Low Chew Tung

STATEMENT FROM THE GRENADA ARTS COUNCIL

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The Grenada Arts Council (GAC) has for the last 40 years sought to promote the visual arts and artists of the state of Grenada, which includes Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. In July 1999, the GAC was incorporated as a non-profit organization, and in June of this year, we were accorded status as a Tax-Exempt non-profit Organization, from the Inland Revenue Department, for purposes of receiving tax-deductible financial support.

Caribbean art is often attributed to the countries of Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela, Belize, and Jamaica. But in Grenada, our artists are yet to be discovered. The GAC anticipates this event will present Grenada in a fresh new way and raise awareness of our visual arts community as we undertake this and future events of this nature as our own nation-building exercise.

The GAC's immediate goal is to get our artists back on track at their craft by supplementing the lack of upfront capital with material support, for free disbursement to about 200 working artists. With this in mind, we emailed several

US and UK manufacturers and wholesaler of artist supplies, putting forward our case, and seeking volume discounts and/or straight donations. In all but two instances, we received negative responses.

To supply our own artists, as well as to now assist in the re-supply of art and craft materials for the many schools which have been damaged by two storms in the last 10 months, requires a massive collective effort. The artworks of about 20 artists will represent Grenada visually at a fundraising exhibition at the Galerie d'art Nader, Coral Gables Florida, USA on August 05. This important fundraising initiative is on behalf of our beleaguered colleagues who lost supplies and works of art, representative of a substantial portion of their livelihood last September, and again during the recent passage of Hurricane Emily.

The funds raised from this Florida event, we anticipate will provide a 20ft container of supplies - student and artist grade paints, brushes, canvas, panels, papers, charcoal, pastels, etc etc adequate to supply our artists and the students.

We wish to make contact with any manufacturers and wholesalers who would be willing to work with us to make this a reality, plus anyone interested in the development of our artistic community to please contact the GAC co-coordinator Suelin Low Chew Tung at slct@caribsurf.com.

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Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

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