

# LIFE IN BOLD COLORS HAITIAN ART

*from the Collection of Patrick Jamieson*

March 12 – April 27, 2007

Gallery Hours:

Monday – Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm

Saturday & Sunday Noon – 5:00pm



University Library Art Gallery  
Jean and Charles Schultz Information Center  
1801 East Cotati Avenue  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

<http://library.sonoma.edu>

1.



***The Lost Lamb***  
 Toussaint Auguste  
 Dated August 1955  
 20 x 24 inches  
 Oil on Masonite

**Toussaint Auguste**, born in Leogane, Haiti in 1925, is said to have been active in the Episcopal Diocese as a lay reader and a teacher before becoming a painter in the late 1940s. He was among the early painters working at the Centre d'Art in Port-au-Prince. Considered one of the First Generation Masters, examples of his work can be found in many museums—including the permanent collections of the Musee d'Art Haitien du College Saint Pierre in Port-au-Prince, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Milwaukee Museum of Art—and in most books on Haitian art.

Toussaint Auguste is represented in the Cathedral of Sainte Trinite in Port-au-Prince with the murals *Flight into Egypt* and *The Temptation of Adam and Eve*. In 1966, his *Nativity* was featured on a UNICEF Christmas card. He moved to the United States in 1967, first settling in Brooklyn, New York, and then in Queens, New York in 1972.

2.



***Mariage Forcé***  
 A.M. Maurice  
 c. 1999  
 24 x 20 inches  
 Acrylic on Canvas

**A.M. Maurice**—a painter who was also the director of a school and a businessman—was born in the 1950s. He lived with his large family in his native Petite-Riviere de l'Artibonite, Haiti. Due to his many other responsibilities, Maurice's painting time was limited. He was meticulous in his work, and spent a good deal of time on each painting. An example of his work can be found in Jonathan Demme's book *Island on Fire*.

In 2000, A.M. Maurice became sick. His condition deteriorated rapidly, and he died.

3.



***Wedding Ceremony***  
 A.M. Maurice  
 c. 1998  
 24 x 20 inches  
 Acrylic on Canvas

4.



### ***Haiti Crucifixe***

A.M. Maurice

c. 1985

24 x 28 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

The setting here is dictator François "Papa Doc" Duvalier's sacrificial altar outside the National Palace in Port-au-Prince. Papa Doc—shown wearing his customary dark glasses—"practiced magic"; the flame in the lower left represents his religion. The blue and red body nailed to the cross—those being the colors of the traditional Haitian flag—represents the people of Haiti. (Papa Doc replaced the blue and red flag with a black and red one, as seen in the upper left.) Papa Doc's son and successor, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, stands behind him. The two snakes represent how the Duvalliers treated the people of Haiti. Papa Doc's snake squeezes the Haitian people and sucks their blood; Baby Doc's snake in turn sucks that blood from his father's cup. The skeletal figures behind the Duvalliers represent the members of their regime; lacking their own strength, they are already dead.

Papa Doc's black and red flag flies from a palm tree—a symbol of freedom and liberty—suggesting that freedom and liberty will grow again in Haiti. Maurice has also added a slogan and a bird sitting on a "lanbi" (conch shell) to the flag. The lanbi is the symbol of the Haitian Revolution, which Maurice shows as being "put on the bottom" by the Duvalliers. The bird sitting on the lanbi—a "pentad" (guinea fowl)—is a passive breed without a sense of responsibility; it will fly away, abandoning its newly hatched young. The slogan added to the flag essentially calls for freedom fighters to rise up and battle the Duvalier regime.

5.



### ***Untitled***

Frantz Zephirin

c. 2000

24 x 24 inches

Oil on Masonite

This painting is about "the Lavalas situation" from its beginnings in the late 1980s. The image of Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide on the left illustrates how he presents himself as a dignified statesman and an open-armed champion of his people. The image on the right represents the suspicion some felt about Aristide, the priest who was perhaps "too good to be true." The duo-toned face suggests he's half-man, half-god, but his right hand is "a bird who eats the meat of dead people." The moon over his shoulder signifies that his time has come, while the fact that we cannot see the end of his tail suggests "we can't tell what may happen with him."

The dominant figure in the center of the painting symbolizes the countries that have controlled Haitian politics, as represented by the five flags at the bottom. "Our suffering comes from them; they push us to something, but it's not good for us." The small, round photo just above the top button of the dominant figure's shirt is of the face of Lieutenant General Prosper Avril, the dictator who took power in a September 1988 military coup. It is significant that Avril is very small compared to the flags and to Aristide. The people wanted Aristide, and they elected him President in 1990 in Haiti's first free elections.

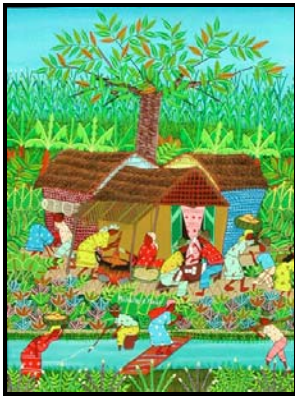
The round face seen peering from between the teeth of the dominant countries represents the Haitian people and how they suffer. "We are their chewing gum; they eat us."

**Frantz Zephirin** was born in Cap Haitien, Haiti in 1968. As a toddler he sat and watched his uncle, the Haitian painter Antoine Obin, as he worked. He began painting at the age of 7 and within a year he was selling paintings to the tourists from cruise ships that docked in Le Cap in those days. By age thirteen, lying about his age, he was selling work to galleries. Eventually he moved to Port-au-Prince and became associated

with the Galerie Monnin. Zephirin is entirely self-taught, and his style is unique among the painters of the Northern School.

Zephirin's work is shown internationally. In October 1996 he was awarded the Gold medal in the Third Bienal of Caribbean and Central American Painting sponsored by The Museum of Modern Art of the Dominican Republic. He was one of 5 Haitians to be included in the V Bienal in Cuenca, Ecuador, also in 1996. One of his paintings illustrates the dust jacket of the book *The Immaculate Invasion* by Bob Shacochis (New York: Viking, 1999).

6.



***Village Scene***

Michelle St. Fleur

c. 1993

12 x 16 inches

Oil on Masonite

According to Boris Kravitz—owner of the Haitian Art Company in Key West, Florida—**Michelle St. Fleur** is from Haiti's Artibonite region. (This painting was purchased from the Haitian Art Company.) Kravitz was nearly certain that Michelle St. Fleur was a student of Saincilus Ismael, and the attention to detail seen in this painting—one of the hallmarks of Ismael's style and teachings—would seem to confirm that.

7.



***Untitled***

Saincilus Ismael

c. 1990

20 x 24 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

**Saincilus Ismael**, born in 1940 in Petite Riviere de L'Artibonite, Haiti, began to paint in 1956 after visiting the Centre d'Art and the Foyer des Arts Plastiques. In 1967 he led a group of artists who were commissioned to paint the community exposition hall at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Deschapelles. He later became the director of the Ceramic Centre there.

For political reasons, Ismael spent a total of seven years in prison at different times during the regimes of the Duvaliers. Considered the progenitor of the "Artibonite" style of painting, Ismael's students included numerous well-known artists.

Ismael's paintings, rendered with the intricacy of a Byzantine icon, are instantly recognizable. He painted scenes of Haitian peasant life, as well as religious-themed paintings that often mixed or combined Christianity and Vaudou.

Saincilus Ismael died suddenly in February 2000.



8.



***Pandao Manbo Marie***

Fritzner Obin

c. 1998

12 x 16 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

**Fritzner Obin** was born in 1967 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He is the father of two daughters and a son. Originally inspired by the artist Voltaire Hector, he has been painting since the mid-1990s. His paintings usually depict Haitian daily life or vodou scenes. His work can be described as creative, whimsical, humorous, and impulsive.

In addition to being a painter, Fritzner Obin writes for a Port-au-Prince newspaper, and is involved with the radio production *Radio Magic in Magic*.

9.



***Boat People***

Julien Valery

c. 1993

36 x 24 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

**Julien Valery** was born in 1958 in the small village of Coteau, Haiti, and was considered one of the most promising of the younger generation of Haitian artists. His paintings are anecdotal in subject, depicting such events as joyful weddings, magical ceremonies with mermaids, esoteric voodoo rituals and celebratory feasts. Both thoughtful and original, his work is also often humorous and startling, with hidden touches that might be missed at first glance.

Sadly, Julien Valery died in July 2001.

10.



***The Lovers***

Agathe Aladin

c. 1996

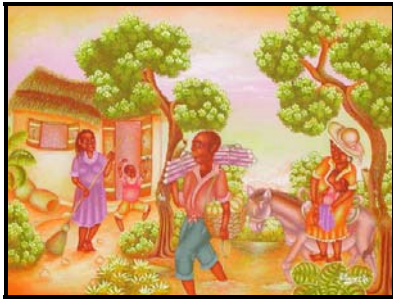
16 x 20 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

**Agathe Aladin** was born in Jacmel, Haiti on May 25, 1967. She is one of nine children of the Haitian artist Theard Aladin. Agathe learned to paint by watching her father, and she later studied with Maurice Vital. By the age of sixteen she was working on her father's paintings, but not until after his death in 1993 did she begin to paint her own. Similar to the painting style of her father, Agathe is seen as surpassing him in context and creativity. Her compositions are both playful and esoteric. She describes her painting style as "*imaginary free*."

Agathe Aladin has shown her work in galleries such as Issa, Boris, and Galerie Monnin—which are located in Port-au-Prince—and is represented in the US. by the Haitian Art Company of Key West, Florida. She lives with her husband and three children in Carrefour, Haiti.

11.



***En Route (The Journey)***

Marie Carmel Jean

c. 1997

16 x 12 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

According to Boris Kravitz—owner of the Haitian Art Company in Key West, Florida— **Marie Carmel Jean** was born in the mid-1960s. (These two painting were purchased from the Haitian Art Company.) She was living in Carrefour, Haiti until her house burned down in the late 1990s. Boris has not seen her since.

12.



***Mother and Daughter***

Marie Carmel Jean

c. 1997

16 x 12 inches

Oil on Masonite

13.



***Marchandes  
(Market Women)***

Wilmino Domond

c. 1971

16 x 20 inches

Oil on Masonite

**Wilmino Domond**, born in Jacmel, Haiti in 1925, was a coffee farmer before becoming inspired to paint by his cousin, the first generation master Castera Bazile. While never abandoning agriculture, he joined the Centre d'Art in 1948 and launched a highly successful career as a painter. Seldon Rodman, in his book *Where Art is Joy: Haitian Art - The First Forty Years*, describes Andre Pierre, Gerard Valcin and Wilmino Domond as “the dominant figures of the second generation.”

Wilmino Domond's typical subject matter are scenes from everyday life and sometimes Christian or vodou scenes. In contrast with most Haitian artists, he is not interested in symbolism, narration, or the representation of a personal philosophy. His main concern is the exploration of the decorative.

In recent years, his output has significantly decreased and he once again devotes most of his energy to his farm outside Jacmel. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Davenport Museum of Art in Iowa and the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut.

14.



***Masons' Procession***

Jean-Baptiste Jean

c. 1978

36 x 24 inches

Oil on Masonite

**Jean-Baptiste Jean** was born in 1953 in Cap-Haitien and began to paint in 1972 as a student of Philome Obin. He also studied at the Centre d'Art in Port-au-Prince, formally joining the Centre in 1973. He is known as a Third Generation Master of the Northern School. His works have been shown in the United States and Europe. Examples can be found in many books, including *Island on Fire* by Jonathan Demme and *An Encounter between Two Worlds as Seen by Haiti's Artists* by Jean-Marie Drot.

Jean-Baptiste Jean died in 2002.

15.



***Visite de Monseigneur Makarios Chez Jn B. Jean***

Jean-Baptiste Jean

c. 1973

30 x 24 inches

Oil on Masonite

On the left side of his painting *Visite de Monseigneur Makarios...*, Jean-Baptiste Jean portrays himself seated and working at an easel with Philome Obin standing next to him, providing guidance. (We know who each person in the painting is because the artist has labeled them.)

16.



***Fille de Mer***

Harry Jacques

1991

16 x 20 inches

Encaustic on Canvas

In June 2004, *Fille de Mer* was exhibited at the Centre d'Art in Port-au-Prince in a show called *Women Painters and the Representation of Women in Haitian Painting*. This exhibition was in celebration of the Centre's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and featured works spanning the Centre's 60 years by 60 different artists. Harry Jacques was one of several male artists "who honor women through their art" who had works selected for inclusion in this show.

**Harry Jacques** (dit Arijac) was born on August 11, 1937 in Gonaïves, Haiti. After completing high school, Arijac took international correspondence courses in architecture and worked as a draftsman from 1962-63 for the noted artist Sacha Thèbaud's (dit Tebo) architecture firm. Thèbaud taught Arijac to paint in the 2000 year old encaustic method, which involves using an iron with a mixture of beeswax, turpentine and pigment to create images.

Considered one of Haiti's finest painters, Arijac has exhibited work at the American Institute, the French Institute, the Sao Paulo Biennial and in New York.



17.



***Marche Bruyant  
(Busy Market)***  
Ezene Domond  
c. 1997  
46 x 26 inches  
Acrylic on Canvas

**Ezene Domond** was born October 16, 1956 in Jacmel, Haiti. He attended Pinchinat High School along with his brother Urie Domond. Ezene studied painting with his uncle Wilmino Domond, as well as with the world famous Haitian artist Celestine Faustin.

Ezene Domond lives and works in the remote rural community of La Fond. His love of nature and the county life is reflected in his work: wonderfully rendered landscapes and markets.

18.



***Woman with Bird***  
Roger François  
c. 2002  
24 x 30 inches  
Acrylic on Canvas

**Roger François** was born around 1928 in Petite Riviere, on the Artibonite plain of central Haiti. He began as a wood sculptor and still carves occasionally. He has been painting as well since the early sixties. He loves to paint and sculpt Haitian women, both nudes and market women with baskets and braids. Besides women, François paints animals: cats, dogs, horses and owls, and in the early 1990s, began painting sun and moon heads on human bodies. He also does an occasional surreal vodou painting. His style is robust, bold and always fresh and new.

A Roger François painting hangs in the National Museum in Brussels, Belgium, and another was exhibited in the May 1991 show of Geoffrey Holder's collection, *Spirits*, at the Katonah Museum of Art in Katonah, New York. Additionally, François's work has appeared in books and museum shows internationally.

19.



***Adam and Eve***  
Roger François  
c. 2002  
16 x 20 inches  
Acrylic on Canvas



20.



***Nude with Cat and Flowers***

Roger François

2002

40 x 30 inches

Acrylic on Canvas

21.



***Sister and Brother***

Carlo Jean-Jacques

Dated 1973

24 x 30 inches

Oil on Canvas

**Carlo Jean-Jacques** was born in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti on May 1, 1943. As a child, he completed a correspondence course in art from the Ecole ABC in Paris and in 1963 enrolled in the Atelier d'art of Joseph Jacob, where his instructors were Dieudonne Cedor, David LaFontant, and Bernard Wah. Shortly after, one of his paintings was chosen for the Esso Competition, a singular honor for such a young man.

By 1966, Carlo had left the Jacob atelier and gone searching for his soul, haunting the dives of Portail Leogane, La Saline, and Bel-Air. According to his longtime friend and dealer, Michel Monnin, Carlo was then "...looking at life through the bottom of a clairin bottle."

In 1969, Carlo surfaced at the Galerie Monnin with a small painting to begin an association that would last until the end of his life. Monnin describes his work: "Because his design is upheld by sober colors and good tone, his works escape strict stylization and give the impression of strength and grace. Profoundly moved by the misery around him, powerless to remedy it, he displays it for us to ponder with him. And we don't miss a nuance; neither the pretty nor the ugly, the shadow nor the light. With troubled soul but tender heart, Carlo is particularly sensitive to the powerlessness of children in the drama of their daily lives."

22.



***Bordello Scene***

Carlo Jean-Jacques

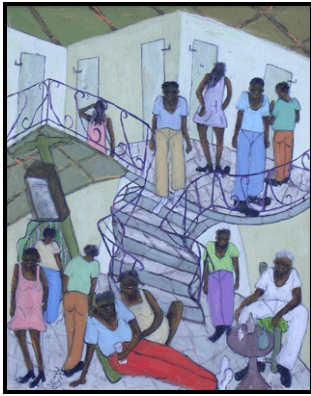
c. 1971

24 x 16 inches

Oil on Masonite

Carlo Jean-Jacques died of AIDs in 1990.

23.



***Bordel***

Reynald Joseph  
Dated 2002  
16 x 20 inches  
Oil on Canvas

**Reynald Joseph** was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on July 4, 1973. By the age of thirteen he was using his talent as an artist to earn money for school and books. He left school in 1986 and—along with 8 or 9 other students—studied painting with his "spiritual father," the Haitian artist Wilfrid Louis. Louis demanded that Reynald use only the 3 primary colors and mix all the other colors himself, and to this day Reynald adheres to this practice. At the age of sixteen Reynald participated in a collective exhibition in Mexico where the Mexican Vice President purchased one of his paintings.

Reynald Joseph paints to show daily life his country in a realistic way, but he is obviously more interest in mood and posture than he is in facial expressions. He has a strong desire to improve, and he continues to study and practicing new techniques. He has mastered oils as well as acrylics, and the palette knife as well as the brush.

24.



***Kap***

Reynald Joseph  
Dated 2002  
24 x 20 inches  
Oil on Canvas

With his obvious talent—he is often compared to Carlo Jean-Jacques—and his will to succeed, Reynald Joseph, is one of the stars of the new generation of Haitian artists.

25.



***Le Repas (The Meal)***

Reynald Joseph  
Dated 2003  
30 x 24 inches  
Oil on Canvas