



BERMUDA NATIONAL GALLERY

For immediate release

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BNG, Bacardi present 2008 Biennial

Hamilton, Bermuda, April 22, 2008 — The Bermuda National Gallery and Bacardi Limited are proud to present the 2008 Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Bermuda Art.

The 8th Biennial, presented by Bacardi Limited in association with Royal Caribbean International, will run from April 25 to September 4 and features 86 works by 41 local artists, selected by an international jury from more than 250 submissions from 68 artists.

The Biennial comprises of work completed by Bermudian and resident artists between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2007. The exhibition was open to all Bermudian artists on the Island or overseas as well as foreign nationals who were resident in Bermuda for at least six months during the competition period.

The distinguished international jurors for this year's Biennial were Mark Krisko, Artist, Curator, and instructor, Art Institute of Chicago and Franklin Sirmans, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Menil Collection, Houston, Texas.

In a joint statement, they explained: "We have particularly focused on the artists that have not hesitated beyond comfortable boundaries; artists whose work has led them to a place outside comfortable boundaries – a place that may even seem "foreign" to them. It has been our experience that it is such artists who "go out on a limb" create art that comes from a place deeper within themselves. Far beyond competence and ego, it is a place that all viewers will relate to aesthetically and soulfully."

In addition to new works by established artists such as Sharon R. Wilson, Charman prize winner Katherine Harriott, Will Collieson, Vaughan and Amy Evans, Dana Cooper, Caroline Troncossi, Edwin M. E. Smith and Jill Amos Raine, this year's Biennial also features new talent such as Frank Chiappa, Miles Manders, Charles Godet Thomas, Kok

Wan Lee and Susan Pearson, who are exhibiting in the Biennial for the first time.

BNG Director Laura Gorham said: “Every two years, the Biennial presents a snapshot of our contemporary art scene and this year the picture is as diverse, thought provoking and innovative as ever. Indeed, we think is one of the strongest Biennials we have ever mounted.

“The Biennial is a subjective selection by experienced and knowledgeable international jurors who are not familiar with Bermuda’s artists. We believe this brings a fresh critical eye to Bermudian art that selects work based on its artistic merit and quality. We believe that by having the courage to submit to this process, local artists benefit enormously from the exposure, constructive criticism, prestige, and understanding of how their work is considered in an international context.”

She added: “We are once again extremely grateful to the generous sponsorship of Bacardi Limited as our title sponsor. This is the sixth Biennial to bear their name and we cannot overstate the value of this consistent support as it allows us to focus on presenting the best possible exhibition for our artists and our audience. We are also delighted to welcome “on board” Royal Caribbean International as our associate sponsors.”

Michael Brennan, Managing Director of Bacardi Limited, Bermuda, said: “Bacardi Limited regards its sponsorship of the Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Bermuda Art as an enormous honour. We are delighted once again to support the tradition of excellence in arts upheld by the Bermuda National Gallery. On behalf of Bacardi Limited, I would like to extend congratulations to the organisers of the Biennial on the vision for inspiring Bermuda’s contemporary artists with this well executed exhibition.”

Adam M. Goldstein, President and CEO of Royal Caribbean International, commented: “As strong advocates for the preservation and promotion of the arts and resident Bermudian artists, Royal Caribbean International is very pleased and excited to join Bacardi Limited as a sponsor to ensure the success of the 2008 Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Bermuda Art.

He added: “Our annual cruise passenger surveys have vividly captured our clients’ appreciation of Bermuda's unique culture and arts. More recently, our cruise passengers have discovered the art treasures positioned as the Sculpture Gardens within the Par-La-Ville Park (a project between the Bermuda National Gallery and the Corporation of Hamilton). We are delighted to learn that more than fifty percent of the visitors to the Bermuda National Gallery are cruise passengers.”

This year’s Biennial is accompanied by a 100-plus page catalogue that, for the first time, illustrates all works in the exhibitions, truly providing a complete record of the Biennial. It includes an essay by Bermudian scholar, Dr. Christina Storey, who received her PhD in Modern History from Oxford University, and her BA in History and Literature from Harvard, in which she examines the role of both collections and exhibitions in the development of the museum as an institution, and looks specifically at the special place

that a biennial has as a potent type of exhibition.

Another “first” for the Biennial is the production of a documentary film by Antoine Hunt in which BNG curator Sophie Cressall and Education Director Lisa Howie interview the artists; many in their studios, giving added context and understanding of the artists and the work being produced. The BNG’s website (www.bng.bm) will feature an excerpt from the film as well as individual pages for each of the Biennial artists.

The Biennial also features a complementary programme of lectures, educational events and panel discussions featuring many of the Biennial artists [see separate listing]

Note to editors

About the Bermuda National Gallery:

Opened in 1992 and located in the City Hall & Arts Centre in Hamilton, the Bermuda National Gallery is both the home of Bermuda’s national art collection and the centre of the Island’s thriving arts scene. It is the Island’s leading art museum with a richly diverse exhibition programme of past and present works by local and international artists that reflects Bermuda’s varied artistic heritage and multicultural community. The Bermuda National Gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. Admission free. For more details contact Director Laura Gorham on 441-295-9428, director@bng.bm or visit www.bng.bm.