

Maroon Odyssey

An exhibition of recent paintings by Bryan McFarlane opens at Chelsea Galleries on Thursday, April 15. Sponsored by Jamaica Unit Trust Services Ltd., the opening reception will be at 7 pm with music by Maroon "talking" drummers and will be addressed by Alvaro Casserly, Chairman and Chief Executive, Jamaica Unit Trust Services Ltd.

Bryan McFarlane is a unique Jamaican artist, one whose artistic theme parallels that of Nobel Laureate, Derek Walcott. McFarlane's current exhibition entitled "Maroon Odyssey", is a return to the artist's origins in Maroon

Town, one of the last remaining strongholds of Maroon culture. The artist has for many years been a resident of Boston, Massachusetts, teaching, exhibiting and participating in the cultural life of that city of learning. For the past ten years he

has been actively involved in the American Art scene with exhibitions in such prestigious venues at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Institute of Contemporary Art of Boston, the Du Sable Museum in Chicago, and Harvard University, as well as having been a recipient of a Ford Foundation grant. His teaching experience encompasses Assistant Professor at Andrew's University in Michigan, and the College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts. He is currently teaching at the Boston Museum School.

Bryan McFarlane's high sophisticated and contemporary painting style has previously focused on themes that are both international and universal. In this current exhibition he returns to his mother culture, that of the maroons of Jamaica. The maroons (short for Cimaroons-meaning wild or untam-

able) were runaway African slaves who refused to be subjugated by either the English or the Spanish.

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They hid in the mountain fastness of Jamaica and were known to be fierce fighters. As the English were unable to track and root them out, the Maroons were eventually granted political autonomy; which they maintain to this day.

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A man of regal bearing, McFarlane sails through his life and his art as if no obstacles exist. His



artistic wanderings have taken him through many cultures - African, Asian, European.

South American - yet he has always remained firmly in the spiritual realm, and has brought his Odyssey full circle to his origins with this latest exhibitions. According to McFarlane, the Maroons, "believed that things exist continuously in the present, and in the magic that is life". This may account for the kaliedescoping of time and cultures, that is reflected in McFarlane's canvases.

Before embarking on his distinguished painting career, Bryan McFarlane was a recipient of the Karl Parboosingh Scholarship, having graduated from the Jamaica School of Art in 1976 with the distinction of being the most outstanding graduate in the field of painting. He went on to do a Master's of Fine Arts course at the Massachusetts College of Art.

Bryan McFarlane's exceptional talent has been the subject of much critical acclaim. The Boston Herald's Nancy Stopen called McFarlane, "a dynamic draftsman with an excellent command of structure". He was also referred to by the Bay Star Banner as "A messenger", and described in "Art New England" as obtaining "oneness of the painter's action with the image painted".

Bryan McFarlane's exhibition at Chelsea Galleries, Kingston, Jamaica, continues for three weeks. Drinks at the opening reception will be provided by the Daniel Finzi Co