

An artist at the top of his craft

Bryan McFarlane, whose latest collection of 29 paintings — "Baths, Interior and Light" are currently being displayed and were the inaugural offering at the recent opening of the gallery, in Kingston, is an artist whose work defies easy categorization.

Critics and commentators have observed impressionistic, expressionist, and surrealist influences in his work. What is undoubted, is that his perspective and inspiration are un-nervingly brilliant and that in the confidence and maturity of his technique — his bold use of colours, metaphors, and symbols, McFarlane is an artist at the top of his craft.

Moreover, from the exposure being given to his work internationally, especially in the United States of America, he is fast becoming the most acclaimed Jamaican artist of his generation. Certainly, his technique and inspiration are probably the most sophisticated by a Jamaican artist over the past 35 years.

Maroon roots

McFarlane, who happily acknowledges his Maroon roots, grew up in the Whitehall area of Kingston. He is a 1977 graduate of the Jamaica School of Art, and

obtained his Master of Fine Arts from the Massachusetts College of Art. Over the past 15 years, he has held various faculty positions as a teacher of art at several top US colleges — among them Tufts University, Holy Cross, and Brown. He is currently a tenured professor of fine arts at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth.

McFarlane has received innumerable commendation for his work and his paintings are part of the collection of such eminent institutions as the Federal Bank of Boston, Museum of the National Centre of Afro-American Artists, National Gallery of Jamaica, Le Meridien Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, and the University of Ireland among other institutions. Recently, his work was honoured by the Miller Brewing Company when his rendition of 12 top African-American journalists was selected for a nation wide tour of the United States.

McFarlane advises young artists to stay devoted to their art despite the many frustrations, and that while money is fundamental, it is their art that expresses the truth inside.

McFarlane's "Bath, Interior and Light" runs at the new Mutual Life Gallery until Saturday, December 6.



AN ATTENTIVE EAR: Bryan McFarlane (left) artist; Dr Simon Clarke, chairman of the function and deputy chairman of Mutual Life; Gilo Bauer, gallery curator, listen attentively to Joseph A Matalon, guest speaker, at the recent opening of Bryan McFarlane's exhibition which runs at the Mutual Life Gallery until December 6.