



September Newsletter

The Art and Artists of St. Martin

Artists find their inspiration in many ways and certainly for those working on the Caribbean Island of St. Martin the azure seas, clear skies and verdant landscape result in works of extraordinary beauty. But artists also reflect their times and offer social commentary on the many issues impacting our world are also there in the art they produce – environmental concerns, work and economic issues and social and cultural matters. When we are finally able to travel and make our way to St. Martin it will be important to visit the artists' studios on the island to see the way that the current isolation and the impact of the pandemic are reflected in the work they produce now.

Here is a sampling of some of the St. Martin artists that inspire and bring us joy:

Dame Ruby Bute



Photo Courtesy of My Island Art, Artist: Ruby Bute

For over 50 years, self-taught Ruby Bute has produced paintings that document historical aspects of St. Martin's life and culture. In addition to her paintings, Ruby exhibits her

creative spirit as a writer, poet, teacher, and storyteller. Ruby Bute, renowned as St. Martin's national treasure, is also a mentor and tutor to many emerging artists.

Her strong images capture the joyousness of such scenes as Carnival and Emancipation Day, as well as the serenity of old island homes and ancestral landscapes. Ruby paints every day in her gallery that doubles as a studio and classroom. According to Ruby, "Painting is like taking your vitamins or brushing your teeth." Today she is one of St. Martin's leading painters, acclaimed poets, and a dedicated instructor. Visit her studio, feel at home, and enjoy her recitals, while getting to know the artist in her element. And if you do select one of her paintings be sure to ask her for the story that inspired it.

Sir Roland Richardson



Sir Roland Richardson, courtesy of Roland Richardson Art Gallery, St. Martin

Born on St. Martin to a family whose French Caribbean heritage dates back to the 1700's, Sir Roland Richardson has recorded his culture over the past fifty years with his paintbrush and palette. He reveals his exotic, luminescent subjects by painting pictures exclusively "en Plein Air", in an impressionistic style. He works exclusively in the local fields and always from a living subject. Sir Roland has been characterized as the "Father of Caribbean Impressionism."

He is a master of multiple mediums including oil, water, pastel drawing in charcoal and extensive fine print making. Recognized by scholars around the world, Sir Roland has been profiled in publications that include the New York Times, the Washington Post, Elle, American Airlines Latitudes, Robb Report, Caribbean Travel & Life and Island Magazine. He is much sought after by collectors from around the world. His patrons include the late Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Romare Bearden, Marth Graham, Harry Belafonte, Susan Lucci, former Massachusetts Senator Edward Brooke and the Getty Family.

Of his muse, Sir Roland has said, "The entire region of the Caribbean is blessed with a warm, glorious light manifesting in myriad, vibrant color. This environment enchants, envelops, nourishes and transforms all who are bathed in it. Here colour reveals qualities

of its interior self that elsewhere are subtle and only hinted at. No wonder that Paradise is still thought to be in this part of the world.”

Paul Elliott Thuleau



Photo Courtesy of thuleau.com

Located in Grand Case, the culinary heart of St. Martin, Tropismes Gallery is owned and operated by Caribbean artist Paul Elliott Thuleau. The moment you step inside, you become aware that this is not a tourist gift shop. Opened in 2005, the gallery features his vibrant minimalist paintings of Creole architecture. The individuals that people his work are subtle and speak to the rich variety of life on St. Martin. Through a creative use of colour and shadow, he brings the streetscapes of his beloved island to life. His work is universal and speaks of a nourishing beauty found in this Caribbean gem.

Other artists showcased in the gallery include Antoine Chapon whose fine watercolours depict St. Martin bays and seaviews. No meander through Grand Case is complete without a visit to this very special gallery.

Norma and Corinna Trimborn



Nocoart Guest House, St. Martin

The German-born international artist Norma Trimborn moved to St. Martin in 2001, settling in Terres Basses, she opened NOCO Art Studio in 2003. Today she works here alongside her equally talented sister, Corinna. In this quiet part of the French lowlands, they produce

paintings that reflect the vivid colours of the Caribbean. The majority of their work features people - exploring their feelings – the inner conflicts and emotional tensions that reveal themselves in their faces. In this sense the paintings act as a point of access to the psychology of both the painters and their subjects.

Self-taught, Norma describes herself as an abstract expressionist. “I try to let the work develop on its own. I utilize the energy of the moment in order to match the colours with the movement of the brush strokes or knife.”

Corinna Trimborn’s work is immediately recognizable for arresting water treatments. She also offers art classes in the large white-walled studio with sunlight pouring in. She advises students to explore colour freely – without rules. Corina studied fashion design and came to oil painting later. She also studied photography and digital image post-production, both of which inform her creative expression.

Francis Eck



Photo Courtesy of Francis Eck Exhibitions

Francis Eck is a French Postwar & Contemporary artist who was born in 1949 in Dannemarie in Alsace. Enraptured by nature from an early childhood then moved to the Caribbean eventually settling in St. Martin. Inspired by nature sun and turquoise waters that surround him, his style evolved gradually.

Today his work which continues to be inspired by nature and the sea, is revealed through bright abstract oils of Caribbean seascapes as well as snowscapes produced from his memories of his boyhood home. His work includes detailed paintings of musicians and other figurative subjects that capture his attention. As he describes it, Eck’s art advances slowly toward the very essence of his subject. As he refines the work, reality and abstraction merge until the subject nurtured by exterior elements no longer exists in reality. His work can be found in various locations throughout Marigot and Grand Case or by appointment at his home Les Jardins de Orient Bay.

Christiane Ladéon



Christiane Ladéon

Christiane Ladéon discovered her artistic talent in 2015 as an escape. She describes the discovery of watercolour as a real therapy that has given new meaning to her life. “It lets me forget my pain and leaves the door open to the expression of all my emotions, my thoughts as well as my personal growth.” Moving to St. Martin 20 years ago, Ladéon draws inspiration from the sea, the morning light and breathtaking power of nature. The bright colours of her work – lemon yellow, Prussian blue, emerald green and sepia shadows reflect the beauty of her beloved St. Martin. She captures the rough beauty, its multiculturalism and unique charm in paintings taken from life around her.

Ladéon’s work can be found in the main hall of the West Indies Shopping Center in Marigot or seen by appointment at her Mont-Vernon home by emailing: christiane.ladeon@gmail.com

Alexandre Minguet



Minguet Art Galley, St. Martin

Born in Beziers, late French painter Alexandre Minguet was a renowned Colourist Expressionist, painter of L'Ecole de Paris, Ecole du Louvre. Thousands of his paintings can be found in private collections and museums around the world. They reflect his life long passion for expressing himself with oil paintings, water colors, lithographs and pastels that explore his life in France and later on St. Maarten.

Many of his brightly coloured paintings and handmade lithographs can be found in his bright airy studio/gallery located in Rambaud Hill just east of Marigot. The collection includes many of Minguet's early works which reveal the French countryside of his youth. Minguet's daughter, Catherine is the custodian and fondly remembers her father painting the bays, flowers and scenes from his beloved St. Martin. On display are many of Minguet's watercolours as well as lithographs, reproductions, post cards and posters depicting the colourful landscapes, marine scenes, local villages and tropical flowers found in and around the island.

Studio Tours

Several groups do studio tours around the island that provide you with a unique opportunity to meet and talk to the artists. Check out Seagrape

tours: <https://seagrapetours.com/st-martin-art-tour/>

To ensure a truly local flavour: <https://www.toursbylocals.com/StMartinArtists-PrivateTour>

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About St. Martin

St. Martin is a charming, scenically beautiful island. It's the smallest territory to be shared between two nations (France and The Netherlands), and home to over a hundred different nationalities and cultures. Surrounded by both the Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea, this small 88 square kilometre island is a paradise for beach lovers. Being the undisputed capital of gastronomy, St. Martin not only offers a blend of traditional French cuisine, but as well innovative gourmet cuisine from around the world. With its lavish, unspoiled landscapes and idyllic beaches, St. Martin embodies the true spirit of vacation. This "Friendly Island", as it's often referred to, is bursting with treasures for gourmets, hikers, adventurers and dreamers alike.

From hotels to resorts to boutique properties to beautiful villas, St. Martin's hilly topography ensures beautiful views from the hills as well as on its beautiful shores.

It's vibrant setting and tropical climate pleasantly cooled by trade winds year-round makes this island your ideal destination, whether you wish to relax, explore or get active, alone, with a loved one, family or friends. Here, you'll find all the right ingredients for an unforgettable stay on one of the most enchanting islands of the Caribbean.

Website: <http://www.stmartinisland.org/>

Facebook: Destination Saint Martin – The Friendly Island

Twitter: @iledesaintmartin

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