



PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

VIRGIN ISLANDS ART EXHIBIT AT GRAND GALLERIA

An exhibition of contemporary Virgin Islands art will take place at the Grand Galleria, the former Grand Hotel on St. Thomas, from Wednesday, April 18th through Thursday, April 26th. The exhibit will be open to the public daily from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding Sundays. There will be an opening reception at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 17th. The title of the exhibition is "*Africa in the heart of the U. S. Virgin Islands*" and the works of approximately 17 Virgin Islands artists will be on display.

A list of artists currently scheduled to take part in the exhibit include:

Jon Euwema, Edney Freeman, Afreekian Southwell, Janet Cook-Rutnik, Roy Lawaetz, Leba Ola-Niyi, Marcia Jameson, Maud Pierre-Charles, Karen Samuel, Marie-Therese Servant, Susan Edwards, Nii Ahené La Mettle-Nunoo, Myra Arin, Danica David, Elisa McKay, Gerville Larsen, La Vaughn Belle.

The 12th Triennial Symposium on African and Caribbean Art provides the context for the exhibition. ACASA (the Arts Council of the African Studies Association) is an international scholarly association whose membership includes eminent scholars from museums, galleries and universities. The ACASA-sponsored symposium will take place at Marriott's Frenchman's Reef on St. Thomas from April 25th through the 29th and is hosted by the University of the Virgin Islands. The art exhibition, featuring local artists, will share the vibrant contemporary art of the Virgin Islands with symposium participants and the general public.

The art exhibition is co-sponsored by the Virgin Islands Cultural Heritage Institute and is funded, in part, by a grant from the Virgin Islands Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The St. Thomas/St. John Arts Council also provided assistance for the exhibit.

The art exhibit is curated by Shira Sofer. Ms. Sofer, who interned at the Center of African Art, Manhattan, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, is a part-time instructor of art at UVI. H. E. Lockhart Management Inc. donated the use of the Grand Galleria as the exhibition site. The exhibit will travel to North Carolina and be on display during the Fall 2001 through Spring 2002 at the Mattye Reed African Heritage Center. The Mattye Reed Heritage Center has generously provided for shipment of the exhibit to North Carolina. The Heritage Center also provided major sponsorship for the art exhibit catalog.

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