

art

Charlie Smith portrait by Duke Wells



Chet Wells portrait by Duke Wells



Beverly Wallace-Whitfield portrait by Nowe Harris-Smith



Banking on local talent

The Central Bank presents... “Bright Lights & Raw Gems”

Assistant Curator Jodi Minnis highlights current exhibitions at the Central Bank of the Bahamas Art Gallery. This week, the focus is on the latest showing by the Bahamian Project.

Under the umbrella of the Bahamian Project, “Bright Lights & Raw Gems” is a grand collaborative effort of notable Bahamian photographers.

Participating photographers are Melissa Alcena Dante Carrer, Vado Culmer, Chris Day, Demetrius Francis, Guilden Gilbert, Torrell Ginton, Rosemary Hanna, Paul Harding, Nowé Harris-Smith, Ben Jamieson, Donald Knowles, Scharad Lightbourne, Rashad Penn, Alessandro Sarno, Andre Sheppard, Duke Wells, Ana-Lisa Wells, Lyndah Wells, and Sofia Whitehead.

They came together under the leadership of founders Duke and Lisa Wells to produce more than 30 portraits of Bahamians from all walks of life, from cultural giants like the late Cleophas Adderley Jr to everyday Bahamian icons like Locksley “Potcake” Thompson.

Photographer Nowé Harris-Smith, who photographed Cliffie Humes, Locksley Thompson and Beverley Wallace-Whitfield, said: “Participating in the project has been memora-

ble for me. This was the first time I got to rely on my traditional photography skills instead of my creative aesthetic with previous images.”

Mrs Harris-Smith also said that sharing in the experience of the project gave her a level of access to the country’s icons that she may not have gained before or on her own.

As photography is becoming an increasingly accessible medium, “Bright Lights & Raw Gems” reinforces the fine artistry of photography. Directing a camera lens at a subject and capturing that subject differs from simply “photographing” the subject. One can see this engagement of photographer and subject clearly throughout the entire exhibition. This was most evident in the portrait of Bahamian entertainer, producer and songwriter Kirkland “KB” Bodie done by Lyndah Wells.

Ms Wells captures Mr Bodie sitting with his keyboard on what appears to be a bus stop. The presence of lines throughout the composition and how they frame the singer sets this portrait apart.

Co-founder and Project Manager Lisa Wells noted: “The Bahamian

Project is making a significant impact on photography in the Bahamas by bringing together key members of the photo community to help raise the standards of the craft and show the importance of photography to the art and cultural communities. This exhibition at the Central Bank, which we’d like to see become an annual event, is validation that photography should be taken seriously as a fine art in the Bahamas.”

Duke Wells, Bahamian Project founder and creative director, added: “It’s a real honour to hold an exhibition at the Central Bank of the Bahamas Art Gallery, where the public art movement started decades ago. And it is wonderful to work with Antonius Roberts and Keith Thompson. Antonius has a long history of using his creativity and talent to put art at the forefront of the public’s consciousness. His support of the Bahamian Project has been important to its continued success.”

The exhibition runs until Friday, July 28.