

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL OF SEYCHELLES NEWSLETTER

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Msye John Wirtz

Ti en plezir pour lekip NAC annan en pti konversasyon
avek Msye John Wirtz, mizisyen e gayan Lifetime
Achievement Award .dan Seychelles Arts Award 2017



Dir nou ki ou pe fer resaman?

Mon pe byen pas mon retret lakaz e pe donn koudmen
madanm kot lakour. Dan bomaten, mon ede netway laka-
z, met enpe lord partou e answit mon al regard mon
plantasyon bannann e detanzantan mon zwe zwe mon
vyolon, gitar e keyboard. Pandan mon letan lib mon
souvan al koule e tir zourit Bovalon.

Msye John Wirtz, ti osi fer nou konpran ki son lanmizik
prefere i lanmizik Western prezizeman “ Western Café”, ki
I ekoute lo radio am SBC.

I dir nou ki in resaman partisip lo kopilasyon artis Msye
Joseph Sinon avek son sanson “ Tou sa ki mon fer pa byen”.

Nou ti tre kirye pour konnen si I annan plan pour prodwi en
nouvo album e I ti dir nou ki napa vreman lavant CD Sesel e I
pa pou rantab, “Piblik pa sirport artis par aste kopi orizinal.
Artis I vreman perdi bokou larzan mon swe toudmenm I pou
en zour sant bann sanson ki monn ekrir me pann zanmen
sante”.

Lo kote lokal Msye Wirtz I kontan ekout artis tel ki Sandra
Esparon, Joseph Louise e lezot ankore.

NAC I swet li bonn sans e bonn sante.

COVID STRIKES. WHAT NEXT?



We met with well known visual artist Egbert Marday,
winner of the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award, and
have his views on the current landscape of Arts especially
visual arts and its impact on him.

“Everyone - be it locally or abroad - is presently feeling the
pinch, and the visual artists in Seychelles are no exception.
We artists have been hit very hard indeed.

The big question is, does anyone have a solution to the current problems?

Personally, I prefer to refer to the old slogan ‘Man Creates Art
Creates Man’, as this itself seems to provide me with the
strength to go through every day. I must confess that I’m
presently quite comfortable and am feeling redeemed by
staying active in my studio, constantly creating with anything
I can lay my hands on.

Yes, COVID has struck and is here to be with us for some
years at least. Could we, fellow artists, manage to use this sit-
uation as an opportunity, a blessing perhaps? Certainly, we
need a positive attitude if we want to beat the odds stacked
against us.



Firstly, it is important to continue to live, to enjoy life, to enjoy making (which is what we do best), and to perfect our techniques as much as possible. Of course this should create positive energy which can help our metabolism physically as well as our mental and spiritual well-being. However one of the primary human needs is food, which we need to bring to the table, especially for those of us with young dependent children. We also need to pay the bills to ensure our continued supply of electricity, communication systems and, in some cases loans, as well as meet other domestic and social needs.

I have been advocating the creation of a permanent exhibition of our National Art collection in a purpose-built Art Museum since the late 1990s. I envisage a cultural centre, with a commercial art gallery, souvenir shops, and cafeteria.

The aim would be to showcase the cream of local art, however over the years much has left the country through purchases by foreign visitors. We need to act quickly to preserve what remains. We also need to increase public awareness and educate citizens about our important heritage – something which we so dearly need to preserve for future generations.

Such a centre would attract local individuals and families and could be part of the solution to our many social ills. It would also complement our tourism industry. A society which is visually literate and intellectually aware is likely to become more successful in its social, educational and economic progress”.



“To me art is simply a vehicle for self-expression”.

Meet Maria Vidot, a 37 years old mother of two girls. Maria says that she has always loved art but just never seemed to find the time and confidence to pursue it. The Council discovered her via her well-known Instagram and Facebook pages ‘Doli Ou’ & ‘Rock Art Seychelles’.

“Rock Art Seychelles and Doli Ou are two small businesses that I work on during my free time or after hours.”

“Rock Art Seychelles’ firstly came into existence on 21st April 2020. Back then I had started painting on rocks as a past time, and I decided to create an Instagram and Facebook page to showcase my creations, initially only to some of my close friends. After that I slowly gained a few followers, and eventually people were requesting to purchase customised rock paintings.

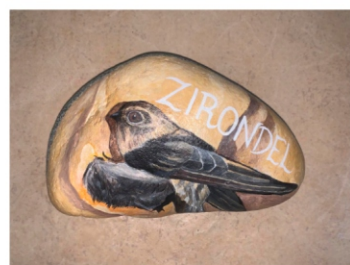
As I gained more confidence in myself and the value of this process, I finally accepted custom orders and, impressively, it just took off from there!

In April 2021 I took another step and launched ‘Doli Ou’ - a jewelry line of hand painted wooden earrings”.

Why Doli ou as a name/brand?

Maria tells us that the Seychellois ladies seem to love her ‘Doli Ou’ earrings, as they unquestionably offer a different and quite unique look. ‘Doli Ou’s slogan is ***Because different is beautiful***, which is a concept that she firmly believes in and tries to instill in her daughters.

“Honestly speaking, I did not intend to make custom pieces for ‘Doli Ou’”, she says; “initially the plan was to create my own personal designs. But due to the demand from our beautiful Seychellois ladies - who know exactly what they want - I found myself making pieces to order.”



What inspires you to do what you do?

“I love art and this is what has inspired me to do what I do. I can still remember the drawings I did as a little girl and the pleasure and peace it brought me.

It gives me great pleasure when I create something that my customers are happy with. I love the fact that I can bring joy and color in someone’s life through my art.

I have a full time job and along with that I am raising two little girls, so doing what I do is not easy, and without this passion for creativity I would be unable to do it”.

What satisfaction do you get from your work?

“Creating a piece is very therapeutic for me. When I am painting, I zone out from reality and inhabit my happy place. My work brings me huge satisfaction, especially when a client is happy with it. I always have a bit of anxiety whenever I send them the final work but am relieved and thrilled when they are pleased.

My biggest project to date has been my participation in an exhibition ‘Made by a Seychelloise’ held in November 2020. This event showcased items created by myself and several other Seychellois artists”.

To conclude, Maria said that here is huge support out there for small businesses, especially those who are creating handmade or hand painted items. *“I salute and thank those people who recognise the importance of supporting creative businesses. I encourage other people who have a passion and love for art to pursue their dreams”.*

Inspiring & mentoring the upcoming artists of Seychelles

It is our pleasure to introduce you to Mr. Daren Bonnelame producer, studio owner, musician and music instructor.



Daren begins with a powerful statement:

“Music is the blood pumping in my veins. At a very young age one of my uncles would always bring huge speakers with him when he came for a visit. I used to be obsessed with the sound that they made. Back then my musical favourites were Lionel Richie, Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson. I would listen to the beat of the music and just enjoy the sound. I believe this is when my passion for music started.

Fast forward, and I have now been producing music professionally for 25 years. I own the ‘Maudio Wave Studio’ at Grand Anse Mahe, and have worked with many artists, including Ragga Blastaz and many others across a wide range of musical genres.

Before the pandemic hit I used to perform in tourism establishments with my group, the ‘Cool Shell Band’. I really miss that.”

Despite the ongoing pandemic Daren is doing great things for our upcoming aspiring artists. Every Tuesday and Thursday from 4.30pm to 6pm he teaches a music class at his studio with participants aged from six to forty-nine years old. He began teaching music in 2019, since when it has been something that is very close to his heart.

“My wish is to one day form an orchestra comprised of vulnerable children. I want to mentor them, teach them how to play musical instruments and take their performances out on the street”.

Do You Know?

In Seychelles, there are Eleven Arts Associations

ParFe – Praslin Arts Federation



SEYMAS – Seychelles Music Association



SEYLAR - Seychelles Visual Arts Federation



Lardwarz – Literature Association



SON248 – DJ Association



DANSEY – Dance Association



Bling Bling – Poetry Association



Seychelles Fashion Association



Arterial Network Seychelles



Seychelles Arts Foundation



Fondasyon Kiltirel Seselwa