

Maxwell “Max” Taylor

Printmaker, Painter, Sculptor



- Born in 1939 in Grant’s Town, Nassau, The Bahamas
- Attended the Western Junior School and Western Senior School and graduated from St. Francis Senior High School
- Studied at the Art Students League of New York from 1968 to 1972 and took further studies in photo silkscreen at The Pratt Graphic Center in 1972 and printmaking at Bob Blackburn’s Printmaking Workshop from 1969 to 1977

Artist Statement

“Many years ago growing up in The Bahamas, we did not have an art school. Mr. Horace Wright was the only art teacher. He had the responsibility of teaching drawing to most of the schools. The lessons did not last that long. In school, we had our own competition...Then came the Nassau Academy of Fine Arts, under Mr. Don Russell, where I continued to learn drawing. Then the Chelsea Pottery was started, where I met the young Brent Malone, Kendal Hanna, and Vernon Cambridge. We all had that strong desire to paint and draw. Mr. David Rawnsley was instrumental in instructing and encouraging us always. Mr. Brian Arthur, who was also a potter, used to hire a model for us to draw, but I still had a strong desire to paint. Mr. Arthur, Kendal and I, experimented in many different styles, abstract, expressionism, cubism and impressionism. I remembered Clement Bethell saying to me, ‘Max, I can see that you really want to be a painter.’ By experimenting as a young artist, even before going to the Arts Student League of New York, my development was already ingrained. This is why I continue to work in various expressions.”

From the Collection: Maxwell Taylor's *The Immigrants No.3* (c1990)

October 9, 2017

by Natalie Willis



The Immigrants No.3 (c1990), Maxwell Taylor, artist's proof woodcut print on paper, 32 x 48. Part of the National Collection.

Maxwell Taylor's woodcut prints are truly a thing of beauty in more ways than the obvious. The stark contrast and drama of a black and white printed image is something to behold in itself, but the way that he incorporates black bodies and the struggles they go through adds a poignant beauty of a different kind. He doesn't make the struggle pretty, he shows people with the nobility they deserve, migrants included. Using the traditional practice of woodcut printmaking, Taylor's



Installation view of *The Immigrants No.3* (c1990) by Maxwell Taylor, part of the National Collection as seen in the current Permanent Exhibition, “Revisiting An Eye For The Tropics”.

The Immigrants No.3 (c.1990) holds just as much meaning now as it did when it was first shown. Taylor is primarily a 2D artist and although he shows a vested interest in certain traditional media (painting, drawing, printmaking) and traditional genres (Cubism in particular), the roots of his practice are not quite so conventional as one might think. Having grown up Over-The-Hill, not far from the Villa Doyle, the home of the NAGB, Taylor came of age in a time when considering a career as an artist was seen as unthinkable. We still struggle with that today, but it was seen as pure folly “back in the day.”

There was one art teacher who serviced all the schools in Nassau at that time, Mr. Horace Wright, and they had a few short lessons and that was that, until came the “Nassau Academy of Fine Arts” under Don Russell. Things gained momentum after that and the catalytic moment for arts in The Bahamas came at the inception of the Chelsea Pottery, where Taylor met the (also) young Brent

Malone and Kendal Hanna - the three of whom later became leading figures in our first generation of true Bahamian artists “Grandfathers,” as it were. Though Malone was often hailed as the “father of Bahamian art,” he himself had stated that the real “father” was Taylor.

[Click here to read more: From the Collection: Maxwell Taylor's The Immigrants no. 3 c.1990](#)

Artwork of the Month: *Nassau Boy* (1973) by Maxwell Taylor

March 20, 2017

by Natalie Willis



Nassau Boy (1973) by Maxwell Taylor is a patterned, shifting mass of humanoid parts set against a lightly textured background, with a hint of houses and civilisation in the distance. This work is most certainly not what one expects of Taylor's practice, but it is one of the more rebellious and unexpected pieces in the National Collection, a bit of a misfit, and our March Artwork of the Month.

Initially, the work appears to be an abstract, expressionist, surrealist imagining of a gaunt, winged man – some haunted angel

perhaps – and is unmistakably European in influence. This comes as no surprise, as Taylor and all of the Chelsea Pottery apprentices were deeply influenced by the art books they could get a hold of, and that of course would be the better known European and Western movements in art history.

The Chelsea Pottery and subsequent Bahamian Pottery served as a safe haven for the burgeoning creativity of Taylor and his contemporaries of the time. Together with Brent Malone and Kendal Hanna, the young men looked to texts and found works they visually resonated with.



[Click here to read more: Artwork of the Month: Nassau Boy by Maxwell Taylor](#)

