



Press Release

The John Beadle Project



The John Beadle Project detail (1).

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas
West & West Hill Streets
Nassau, New Providence
The Bahamas

April 25th, 2012 - June 30th, 2013

Opening Hours:
Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sundays: Noon – 4 p.m.

Admission: \$5 Adults; \$3 Students/Seniors
Free for children under 12.

Free admission for all Bahamians
on third Sunday of every month.

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas is extremely excited to unveil a series of new works by Nassau-born artist, John Beadle.

While Beadle is known as an accomplished painter, in recent years his range has broadened to include sculpture and large-scale installation. As an artist who is finely attuned to the issues in our society, he is known for works that quietly yet deeply observe and raise unsettling questions about our human condition and how we see and treat each other. Born to a Bahamian mother and Jamaican father, Beadle has himself felt the sting of xenophobia and many of his pieces judiciously critique our relationship to our own émigré community and delves into issues – both personal, psychological and societal—that are a result of both migration and immigration.

Immigration is an act of the outside coming in, though this “outside” is usually somewhere distant, somewhere perhaps unfamiliar or scary. In his new body of work, however, Beadle turns his gaze closer to home, further inward, and addresses issues of fear and security within our homeland, treating the “outside” as that perceived through the car or house window.



The John Beadle Project detail (2).



The John Beadle Project detail (3).

A myriad of figures – not dissimilar to those that appear on the paper shooting targets – are arranged in the Grand Ballroom of Villa Doyle, each one wrought out of some kind of screen or security measure. These ominous human silhouettes are constructed from colonial-style metal curlicue gates, mosquito netting, or chain link. The result is unsettling: are the figures looming outside of our window or are they, in another scenario, our own reflection...the person hiding behind the bars?

The installation raises the issue of gating in our communities: What message does this send to our neighbors? What does it do to our own psyches, to lock ourselves behind



The John Beadle Project detail (4).

bars every night in order to sleep? Some of the silhouetted figures appear in the patterns of metal grating but are, in fact, made out of cardboard—a much less “secure” material—which suggests that we lull ourselves into this false sense of security, that perhaps these gates are only figments that give us psychological peace but refuses to address the real issue.

This in turn asks us to consider the other mental barriers: those we construct between “us” and “them” – do these lead to a more human understanding of one another, to a society where we could, in fact, live without bars or do they, rather, escalate the problems we currently face?

John Beadle has a long and accomplished a career. Having studied at COB under the painter and current NAGB Chair, Mr. Stanley Burnside, he then completed his BFA in painting at Rhode Island School of Design and subsequently his MFA at Tyler School of Art, Temple University. Returning to The Bahamas, he became a fixture on the contemporary art scene and become a member of various prominent artists’ collectives, including B-C.A.U.S.E., Opus 5 and Burnside.Beadle.Burnside. His works have been accepted into every iteration of the National Exhibition since it’s instigation in 2003 through 2012; into the Sao Paulo Biennial; the Biennial of Painting in the Caribbean in Santo Domingo; the Liverpool Biennial, among others.

Amanda Coulson
Director, National Art Gallery of The Bahamas