

Haiti

A Nation of Artists

History of Haitian Art

In the 1940s, a watercolor painter from the United States, [DeWitt Peters](#), moved to Port-au-Prince, Haiti. When he arrived, he observed the sprawling amounts of local art—adorning everything from walls and sidewalks to the local taxi buses called "tap-taps." The [Indigenist movement](#) was in full swing in Haiti; local artists were making both a name for themselves in the country and helping establish the nation's identity as separate from the United States' occupation through the art they created.

Presents the work of the artists of Haiti as encouraged by the Centre d'Art, founded by DeWitt Peters. Discusses the life of the natives as it influences their art, and shows Hector Hyppolite and other artists at work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EigFncL4Sh0> Haiti as a nation of artists (2:34)

<https://gailpellettproductions.com/haitian-art/>

(use this)

<https://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/record/an-introduction-to-kafou-haiti-art-and-vodou/> (4:30 very good)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8VXjpA7nC4>

[\(27 minutes—voodoo in art\)](#)

https://media.dlib.indiana.edu/media_objects/1c18dk54w (old)

- DeWitt Peters school of art
- <https://www.pinterest.ie/pin/333547916131951425/> (old—good background)



Hector Hyppolite (1894-1948)

Hector Hyppolite was a Haitian painter. Considered as the "Grand Maître of Haitian Art" Hyppolite was born in Saint-Marc, Hyppolite was a third generation Vodou priest, or houngan. He also made shoes and painted houses before taking up fine art painting, which he did untrained.

Hector Hyppolite is a legendary artist of Haiti, known for his complex, intuitive paintings. He used chicken feathers, his fingers and brushes to create his masterpieces, which have a free and bold style. He did most of his work during the last three years of his life, where at the Centre D'Art in Port-au-Prince he produced between 250 and 600 paintings. Only about 100 of these have been located today.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10157580911802281> (use this)

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=163600051259281>





Jasmin Joseph (1923-2005)

Haitian sculptor and painter, Jasmin Joseph was born in 1923 in Grande Riviere, and died in 2005, in Haiti. He began his career as a sculptor, his most striking figures were animals. Upset because his works were being copied Joseph turned to paint. His use of animal tales to point to a moral relates to the traditions of Haitian folklore. "While art should no doubt not be moralizing, an exception should be made for the lessons given by Jasmin Joseph", says Gerald Alexis in his book *Peintres Haitiens*.



- <https://gailpellettproductions.com/haitian-master-artists-jasmin-joseph/>





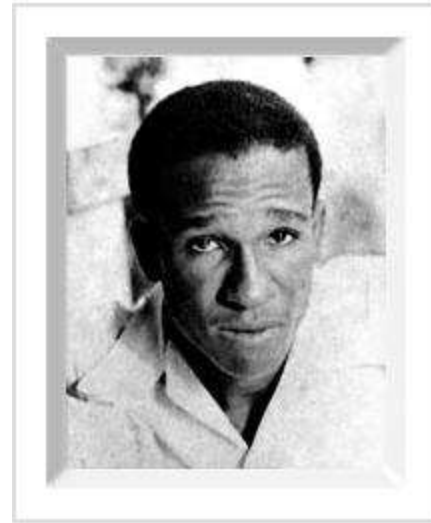
Wilson Bigaud (1931-2010)

Wilson Bigaud was a Haitian painter. Born in Port-au-Prince, Bigaud first worked with clay before becoming a painter. At the International Exhibit in Washington, D.C., in 1950 Bigaud won second place for a painting entitled "Paradise."

He also painted a mural in the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Port-au-Prince which depicts the Marriage at Cana. He was a member of the artist group founded by Hector Hyppolite.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVOT16VyXsw&t=77s> (short but good)

<https://www.sellingantiques.co.uk/727641/masterpiece-the-garden-of-eden-huge-sumptuous-colourful-exuberant-paradise-by-haitian-master-wilson-bigaud/>







Philomé Obin (1892-1986)

Philomé Obin was a [Haitian](#) painter. He produced his first painting in 1908 at the age of 16, and was an active artist for 75 years. Obin is considered one of the greatest Haitian artists of the 20th century.

<http://thedreamvariation.blogspot.com/2020/11/philome-obin.html> (en Francais)

<https://alchetron.com/Philom%C3%A9-Obin> (en Francais)



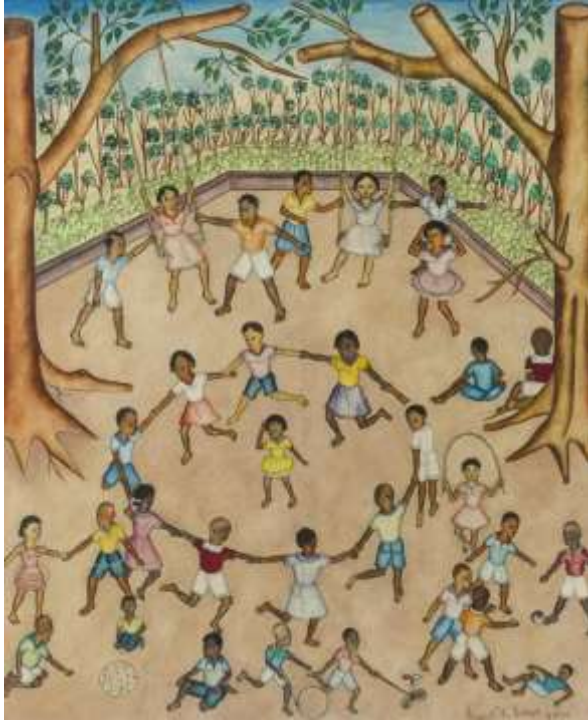




Rigaud Benoit (1911-1986)

A native of [Port-au-Prince](#), Benoit had been a [shoemaker](#), musician, and taxi driver before making his living as a painter. He had also supplemented his income by painting pottery pieces he rarely signed or acknowledged.





Prefete Duffaut (1923-2012)

Prefete Duffaut, Born in Jacmel on January 1st, 1923, was an unhappy child who took to drawing at an early age. He joined the Centre D'Art in 1948 giving up assisting his sailboat-building father. Renowned for his mountainous landscapes with serpentine roads, Prefete Duffaut is often called a "primitive" painter; others refer to him as "naive". His mural at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-au-prince is a vivid testimony of his enormous talent. Jackie Kennedy Onassis was a collector of Duffaut's paintings. His work is part of several major museums' permanent collections all over the world including THE Museum Of Modern Art in New York and The Museum of Modern Art in Brooklyn. Prefete Duffaut is a "must have" to any serious Haitian art collector.

<https://gailpellettproductions.com/prefete-duffaut-haitian-artist/>

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4gyay> (en Francais only. Show very beginning)



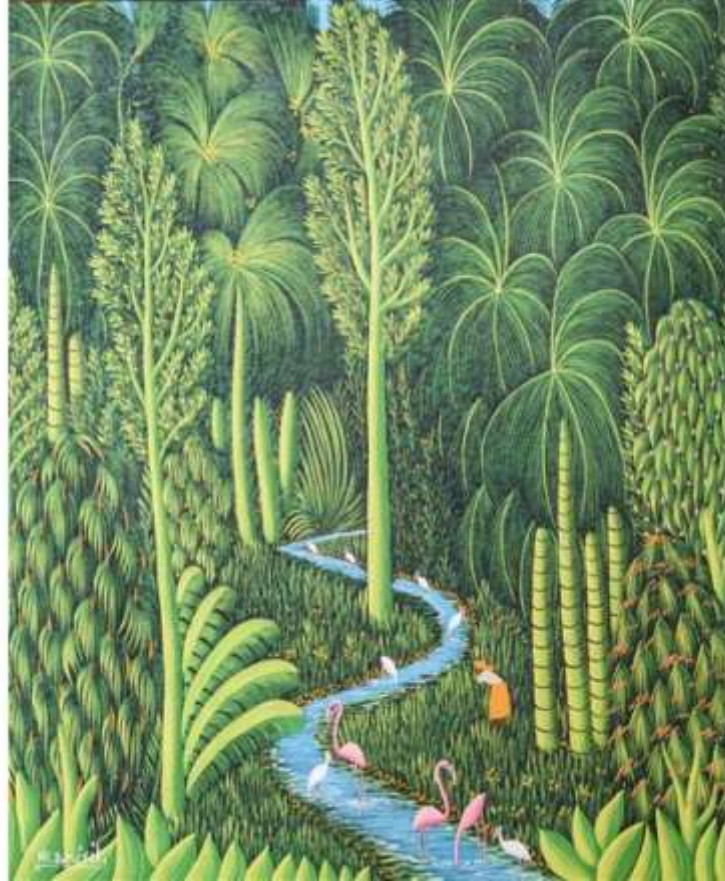


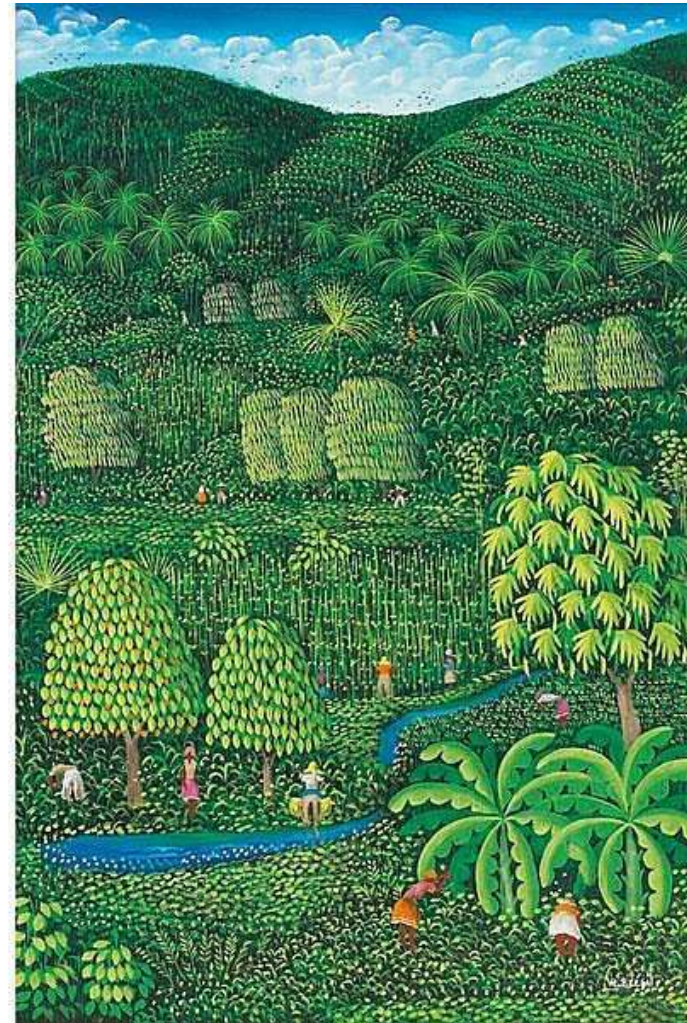


Henry-Robert Brésil (1952-1999)

Henry-Robert Brésil was a Haitian painter. Hailing from Gonaïves, Brésil typically painted landscapes. His work has been exhibited in the United States, Puerto Rico, France, Italy, and Switzerland and has received recognition from the New York Times and the Miami Herald.





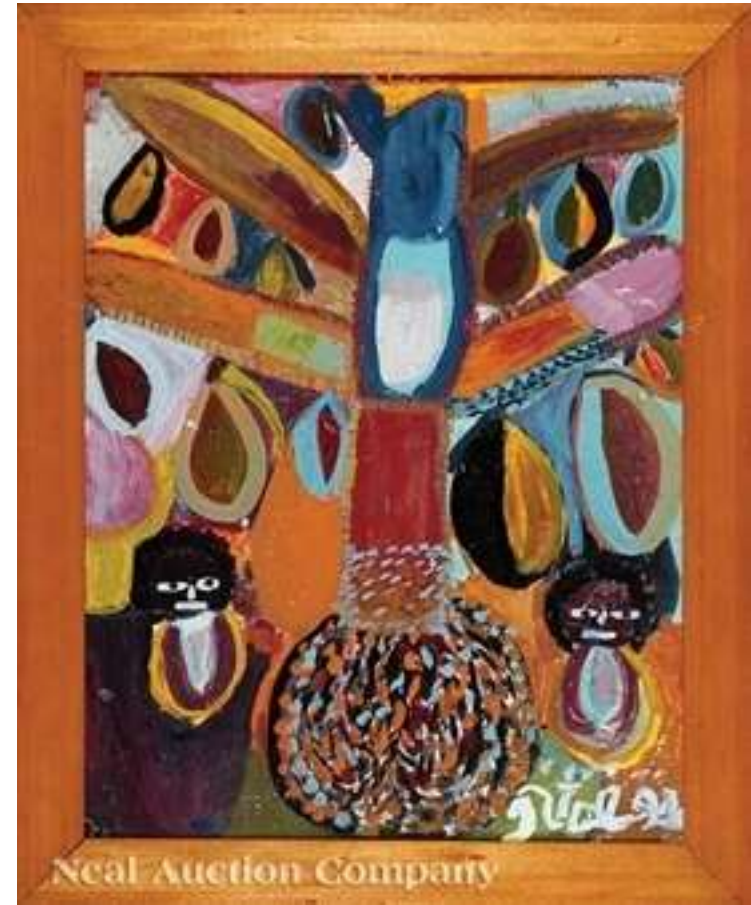


Robert St. Brice



St. Brice was born in Petionville, Haiti in the 1890's and was raised by a prominent Episcopalian, Maitre Turnbull, but eventually became a voodoo priest. He did not begin to paint until he was over 50 years old when an American painter, Alex Johnes, or John, introduced him to the work of the French Impressionists. St. Brice joined the Centre d'Art in 1949. He was illiterate for his entire life and the dealer Issa el Saieh talked of spending hours teaching St. Brice how to sign his name on his paintings. Jean-Marie Drot, the Haitian art historian, places St. Brice second only to the legendary Hyppolite in the pantheon of Haitian artists who received their inspiration directly from the vodou spirits. St. Brice received his while dreaming. He was an original. Drot describes him as a stylish man who wore red scarves, a favored accessory of the houngan, had a beautiful smile and voice and was friendly and sociable. His work is prized. He died in 1973.





Georges Liautaud (1899-1991)



A metal worker from an early age, Georges LIAUTAUD was creating iron crosses for the cemetery when DeWitt Peters (founder of the Centre d'art) discovered him in 1953 and encouraged him to dedicate himself to sculpture. Thus, it was Georges Liautaud who gave birth to a new movement of metal sculpture in Haiti. celebrated by famous art critics such as André Malraux, Selden Rodman, and Jean-Marie Drot, Georges Liautaud died at the age of 92 in 1992.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INiyWKYhUrc> (steel drum art)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sZ-JO7ns0k> (making the steel drum art 6 mins)







Contemporary Haitian Art

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyhig4pBi4s> (very good)
- <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/interviews/int-ranquilities-a-portrait-of-how-contemporary-haitian-artists/>

Serge Jolimeau

Serge Jolimeau is a Haitian metal sculptor born in Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti in 1952. Renowned artists such as Georges Liautaud, Murat Brierre, the Louis-Juste brothers, and Gabriel Bien-Aimé were also from this same village.

<https://gailpellettproductions.com/serge-jolimeau-haitian-sculptor/>







Papier-Mache (Carnival)

Jacmel. On a small square at the end of the Rue Sainte Anne, a woman with locks down to her shoulders holds a paper mache bull's head in her left hand and a brush in her right. This is Charlotte, one of the most popular artists of the city.

The paper mâché technique, she explains, is very old. It comes from Asia. 'With the carnival tradition inherited from Europeans, we have found the perfect pretext to improve this ancestral art, to make it a representation of the Haitian culture already rich in color.'

A few steps from where we are stands a fresco of glass of all colors. We can read the words "Fanm se pote mitan". The artist to whom we owe this work? Charlotte. In her studio, two plaques of honor and merit salute her work. The walls and shelves are adorned with mâché roosters, oxen, cows, and objects of everyday life: a jewelry box next to a trivet, in front of a painting.

'Haitian culture,' Charlotte continues, 'that's what we artists put into it. It is not static and it is this dynamism from which it draws all its charm.'

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNAW2nzJ5UM> (short good)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMVHT5b7Q_g (rubble art)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cvc3vL3zLgs> (West Elm)
- <https://thirdeyemom.com/2015/06/22/the-art-of-making-papier-mache-in-jacmel/> (Macy's)





Voodoo Flags

- <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/317644579938657209/>

Haitian artisan Jean Baptiste Jean Joseph, one of the finest beaders working in Haiti today, provides viewers a tour of his workshop and explains the tradition.

A number of recent exhibitions have revived a fascination for Haitian Vodou flags. These wonderful artifacts, far from serving a purely aesthetic purpose, can only be fully understood in the light of the Vodou religion itself. Two major Haitian flag-makers, Antoine Oleyant and Jean Baptiste Jean Joseph are discussed here.

Myrlande Constant

Myrlande Constant is a Haitian textile artist who specializes in Vodou themed flags, or drapo Vodou. Since she began making Vodou flags in the 1990s, she has transformed and surpassed this medium, preferring to make large-scale tableau, she describes her work as "painting with beads."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9iQEldfK_Y





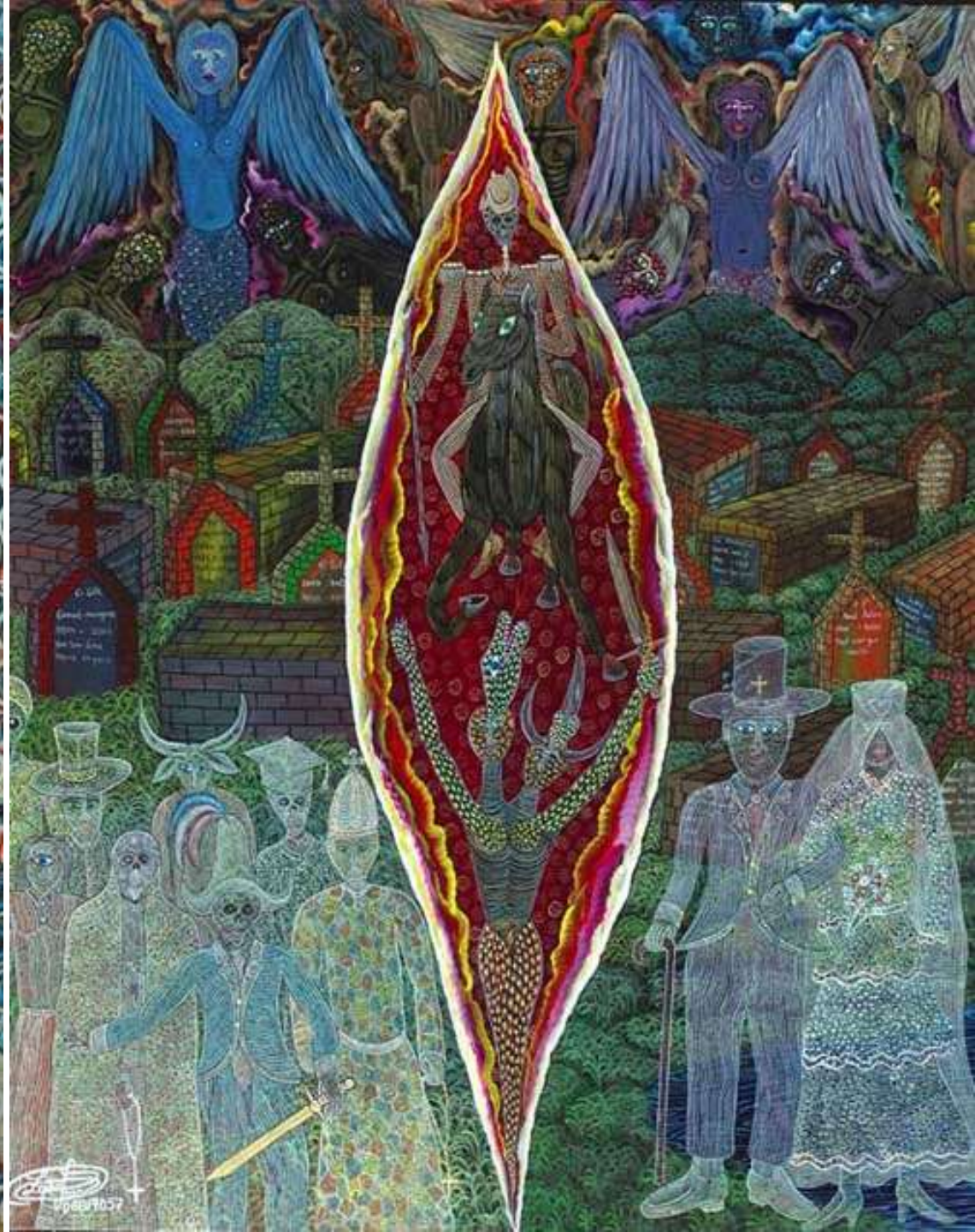


Frantz Zephirin

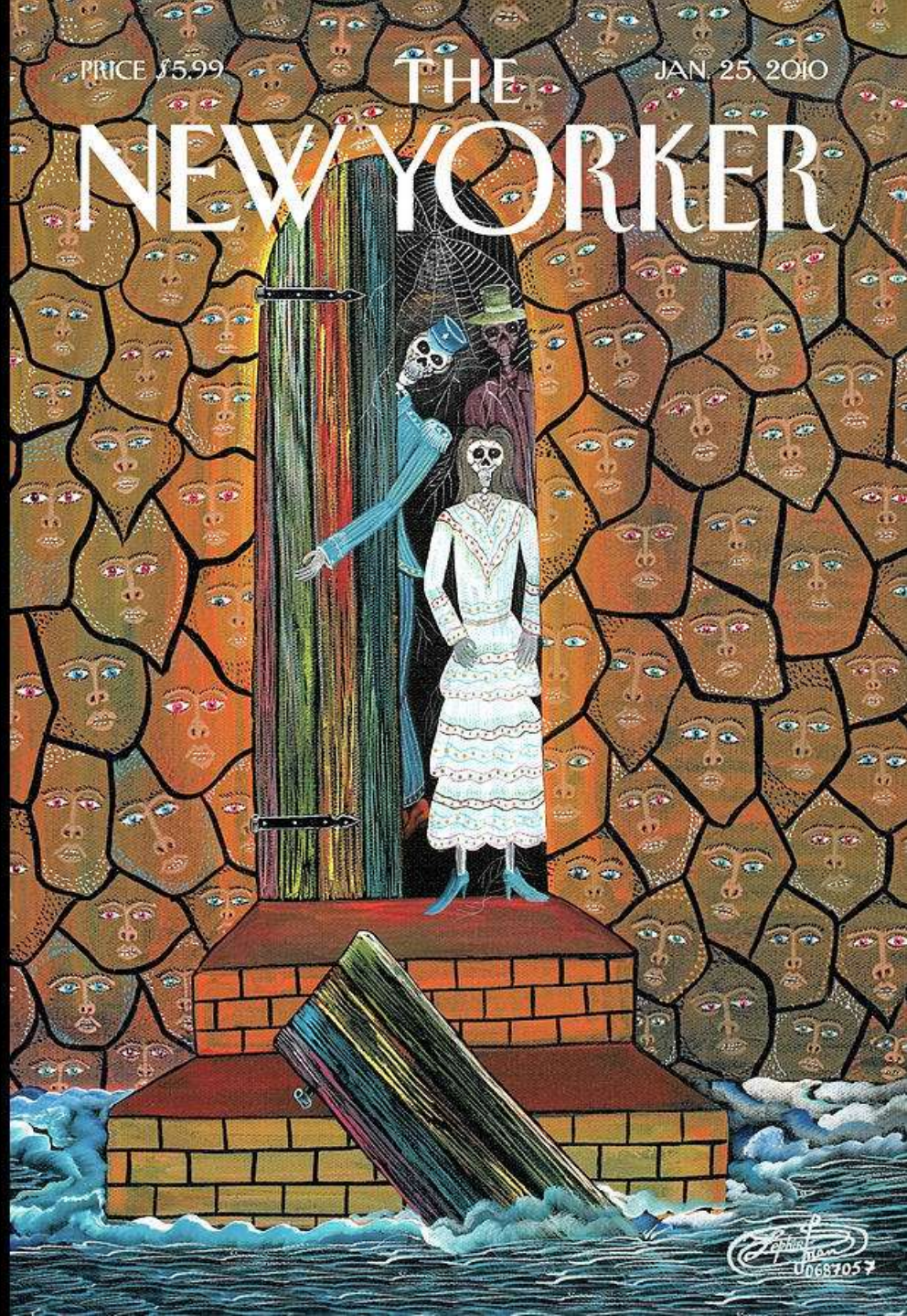
Frantz Zephirin is one of the **leading contemporary artists working in Haiti** today. A self-taught artist born in Cap Haitien in 1968, Zephirin has variously been described as a visionary, a surrealist, a visual satirist and an “historic animalist”. His work has been featured in museums and galleries around the world.











Guyodo (Frantz Jacques)

Frantz Jacques (aka Guyodo), born in 1973, is an artist of the "Gran Street", one of the poorest areas of Port-au-Prince (Haiti). He works in an old wrecking yard with a community of artists, the "Atis Resistanz" who make art from the junk that clutters their industrial neighborhood.

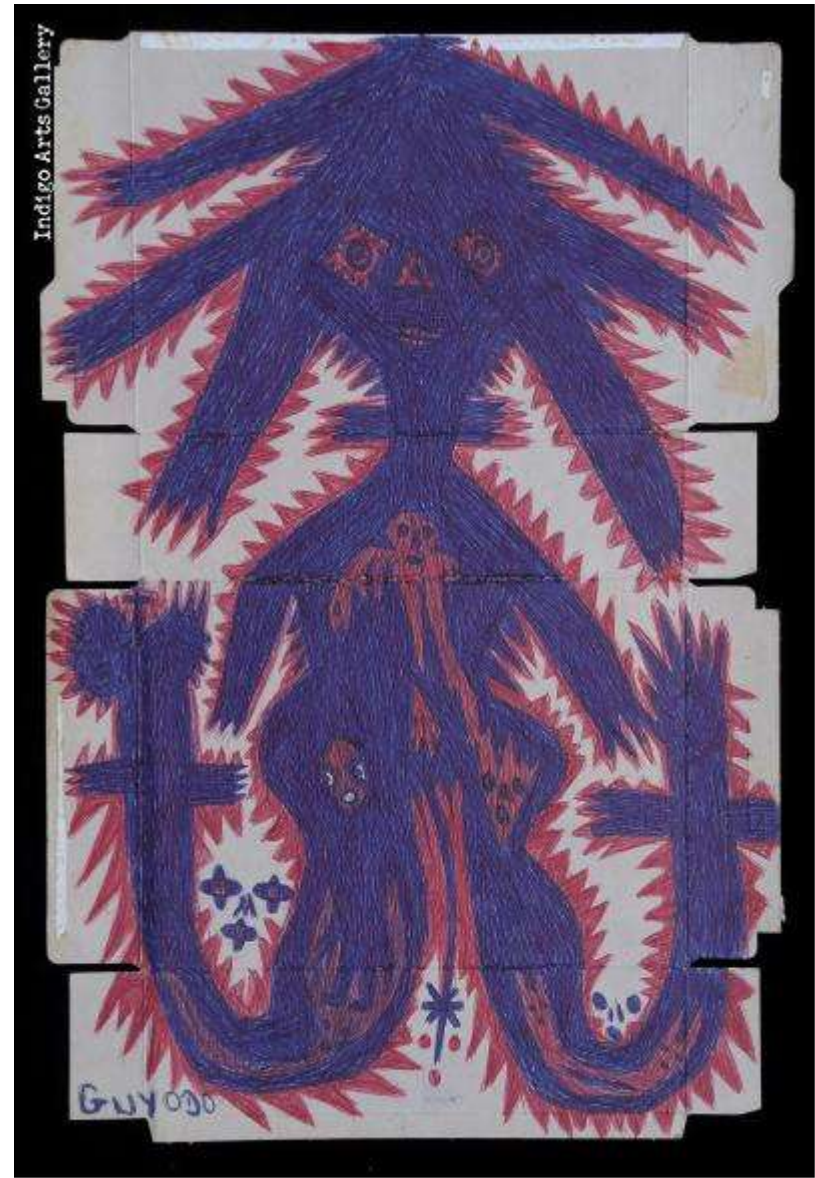
Guyodo transforms the leftovers of our compulsive consumerism in works of art : sculptures, drawings, paintings... His practice provides him with a means of rebellion against his environment and the misery in which people live around him, with no hope for a better life.

In 2006, commissioned by the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, he produced together with 3 other artists "Freedom sculpture", a giant piece commemorating 200 years from the abolition of slavery. In 2014, he was selected to produce a large-format sculpture for the "Haiti" exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris.

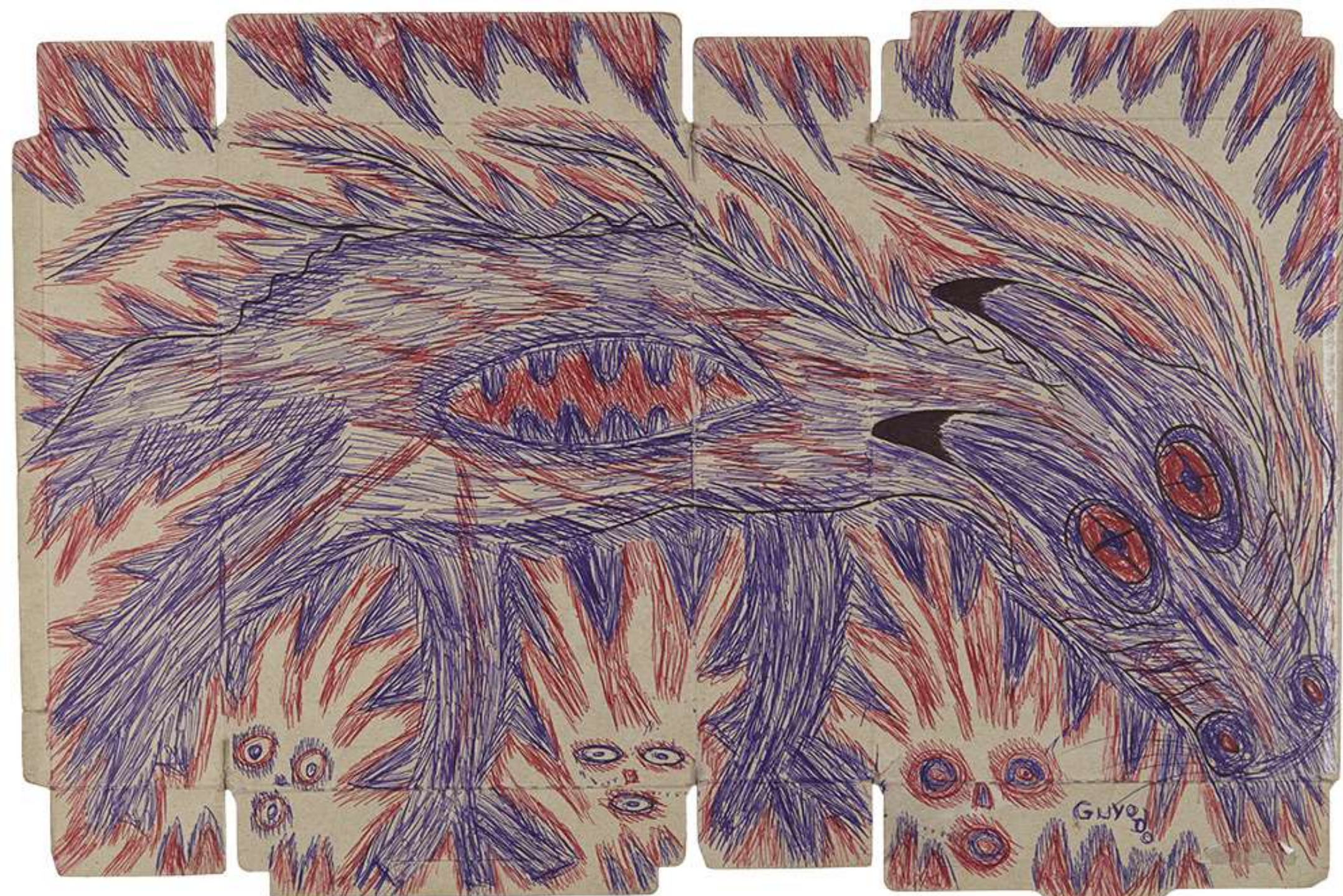
Besides his sculptures, he also produces drawings on corn flakes boxes and various types of packaging.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6Qe9DhgMVU&t=97s> (en francais but you get the idea)







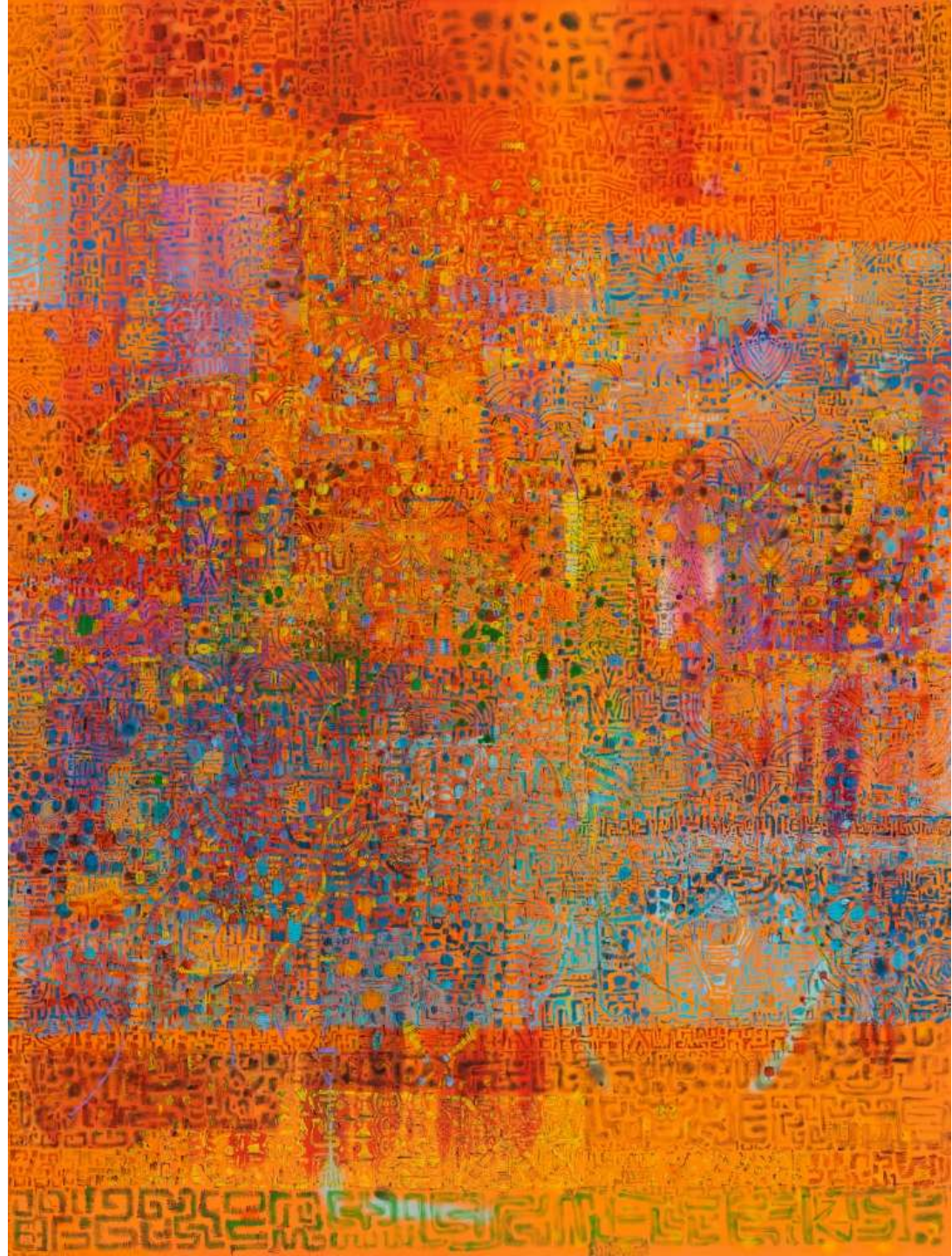


Tomm El-Saieh

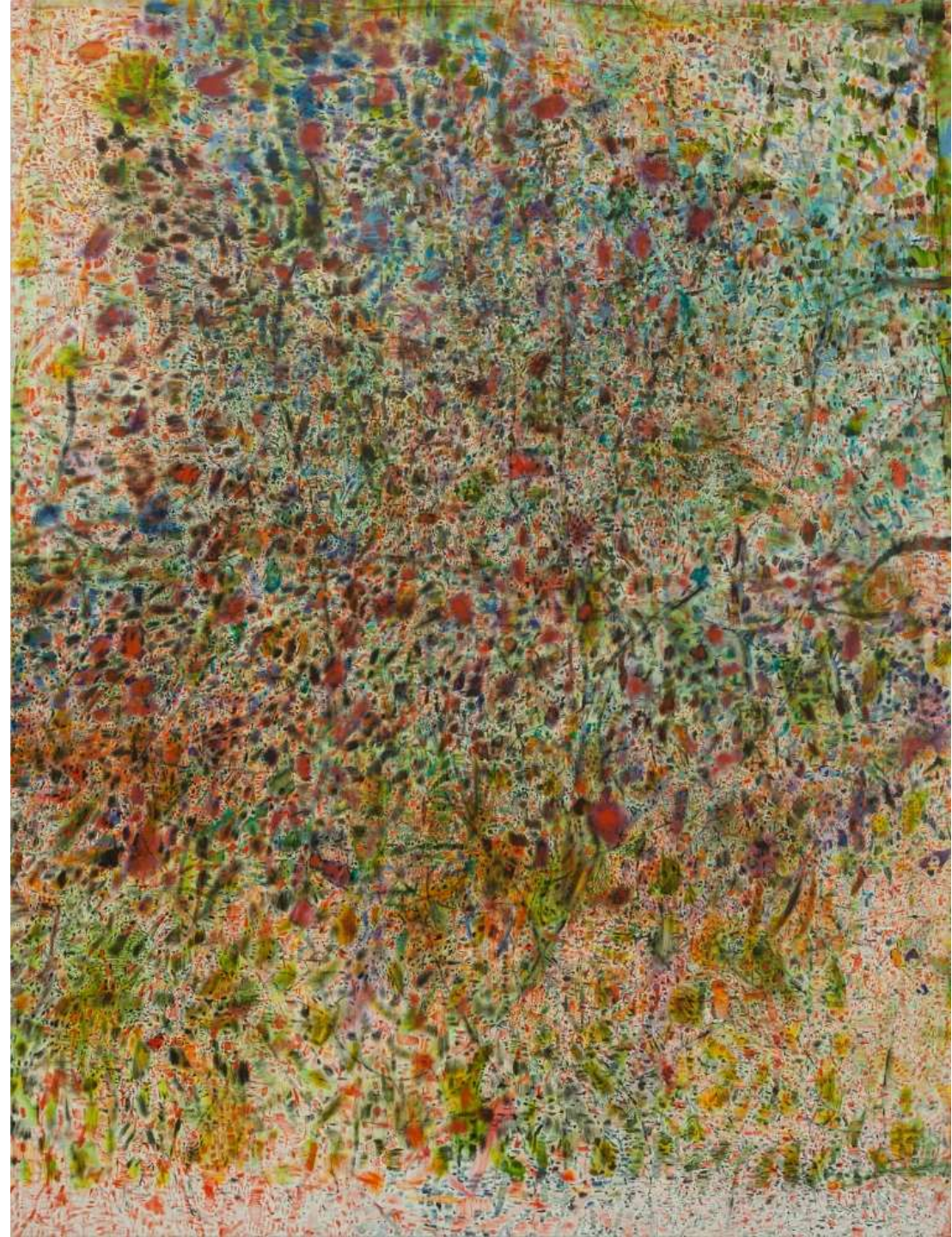
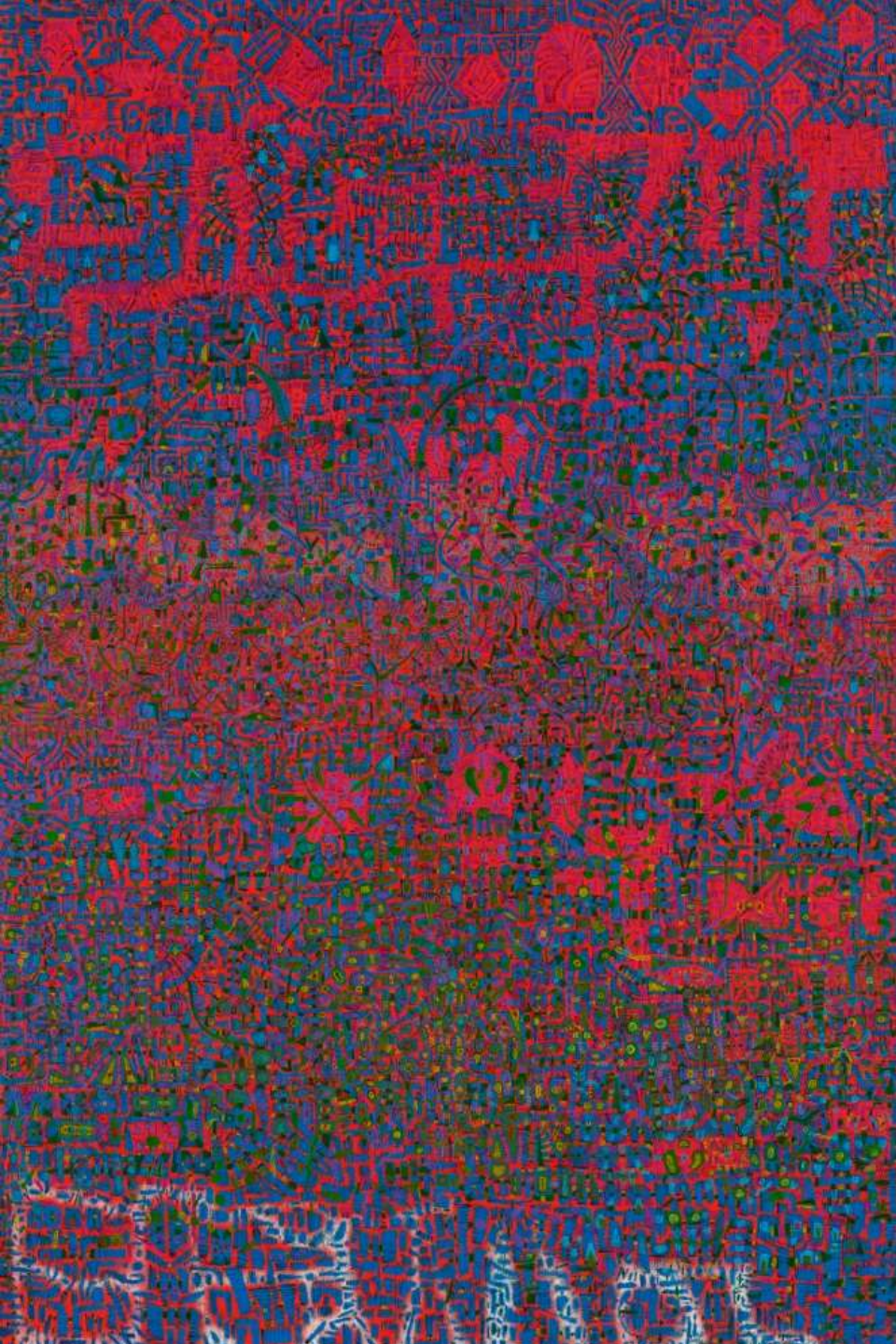
El-Saieh was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 1984 and is of Haitian, Palestinian, and Israeli descent. He grew up in Miami, FL, where he continues to live and work, while maintaining close personal and artistic ties to his native country. In January 2022, El-Saieh's work will be featured in a year-long exhibition at the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, curated by Robert Wiesenberger, Associate Curator of Contemporary Projects. In 2018 his work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) Miami, curated by Alex Gartenfeld and Stephanie Seidel. The same year El-Saieh was included in the New Museum's 2018 *Triennial: Songs for Sabotage* in New York. Additional noteworthy exhibitions include solo presentations in 2015 and 2019 at CENTRAL FINE, Miami. Parallel to his artistic practice are El-Saieh's curatorial endeavors that focus on historical and contemporary Haitian art. He has organized robust and illuminating exhibitions at numerous international venues, as well as through his family's intergenerational and eponymous gallery in Port-au-Prince. El Saieh's work is part of the permanent collection of the ICA Miami; Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin; de la Cruz Collection, Miami; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, among many others.











Manuel Mathieu



Manuel Mathieu is a contemporary visual artist best known as a painter of abstract works that often evoke figurative shapes in nondescript environments. Mathieu draws from Haitian visual cultures and from Western art movements such as expressionism and existentialism.

Mathieu has entered into with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The MMFA purchased a painting by Mathieu in the months leading up to [his solo exhibition at the museum](#), but when Mathieu realized it was the first painting by a Haitian-born artist ever to enter the museum's permanent collection, he was shocked. In an effort to correct this situation, he decided to donate the proceeds from the sale of the painting back to the museum to start a fund for the acquisition of other works by under represented artists. Mathieu named it the [Marie-Solange Apollon Fund](#), after his grandmother.

<https://kavigupta.com/exhibitions/193-manuel-mathieu-survivance-montreal-museum-of-fine-arts-montreal-qc/>









Edouard Duval-Carrié

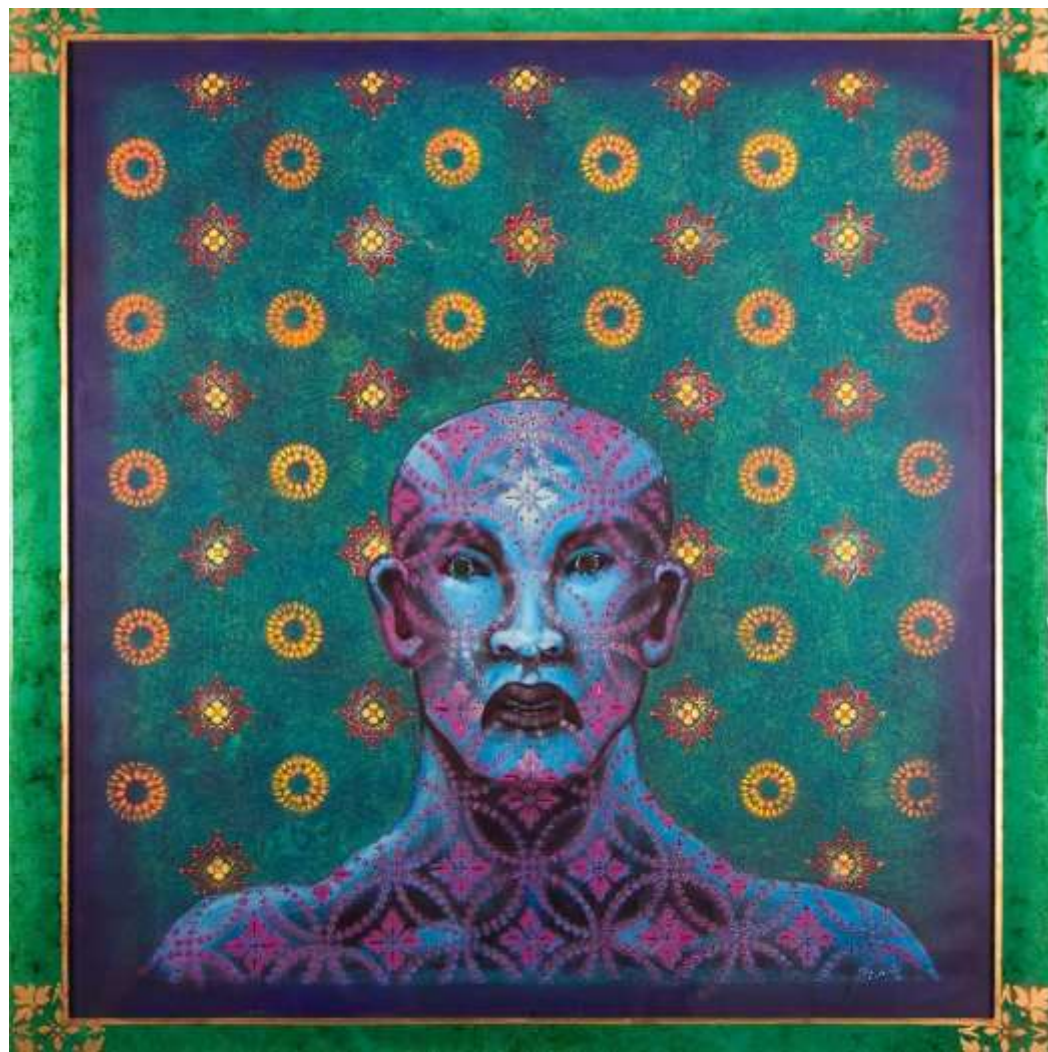
Edouard Duval Carrié is a contemporary artist and curator based in Miami, Florida. Born and raised in Haiti, Duval Carrié fled the regime of “Papa Doc”

- <https://www.pamm.org/guide/carrie/video>











Assignment Suggestions...

- Do a green painting (with analogous colors and a pop of contrast)
- Create an artwork using flattened metal.
- Create an artwork with silhouettes inspired by metal drum art.
- Create an allegorical painting.
- Create an artwork inspired by Voodoo flags (it doesn't have to be voodoo but consider cloth and sequins :)
- Use cereal boxes in an artwork.