



The Central Bank of Barbados is Committed to Supporting the Arts

Remarks by **Governor Cleviston Haynes**
at the opening of the 2022 Crop Over Visual Arts Festival

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Good day, and welcome to the 2022 Crop Over Visual Arts Exhibition.

The Central Bank of Barbados is delighted to see the return of the exhibition after an unexpected two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are especially pleased that this return coincides with the celebration of our 50th anniversary, which is being held under the theme *Living the Legacy: Continuing the Journey*.

This is because our participation constitutes a significant part of our domestic outreach efforts, a key facet of which is our support for the arts.

From very early in our existence, the support and promotion of the arts and culture has been important to the Bank, and those of us who are old enough to remember will recall how our founding father, the late Sir Courtney Blackman, insisted on having a performing arts facility included as part of our headquarters.

He did so because he believed that “the soul requires nutriment both of religious experience and of the arts,” and that the Bank, as one of the premier institutions in Barbados, had an obligation to assist with the cultural upliftment of all Barbadians. In his view, the Bank could not successfully fulfil its mandate of promoting Barbados’ economic development without also contributing to its social development.

In the decades since then, successive Governors have similarly recognised the importance of the Bank being more than an economic advisor and financial regulator, and have built on Sir Courtney's legacy of the Bank being a reliable supporter of Barbadian culture, continuing the journey, as it were, by adding to it through endeavours like the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment, the Youth Pan Project, which we hope to see return next year, and our museum, the Exchange Interactive Centre. Our long-standing sponsorship of this event is another such initiative.

Over the years, we have enjoyed housing a part of the exhibition in our Courtney Blackman Grande Salle, but, while this will not be the case this year, our commitment to support this exhibition remains as strong as it has always been. I look forward to continuing to view the works of our emerging and experienced artists.

In addition to being pleased to see the exhibition back on Barbados' cultural calendar, we are intrigued and excited by the changes that have been announced.

The extension of the exhibition to encompass more of the season of emancipation is fitting as a nation's art is unquestionably influenced by its history. And of course, Barbadians and visitors to our island alike will have more time to visit the exhibitions and appreciate the work of our talented artists.

Likewise, the introduction of digital catalogues will increase the event's reach far beyond our shores.

Finally, the different sub-themes offer opportunities to explore multiple aspects of our history, culture and society, and to represent them through different media and forms of artistic expression.

It is clear to me that while we have regrettably lost two years of the festival, the organisers have not been idle. Kudos to the National Cultural Foundation and to all involved for coming back strong with a fresh approach to showcasing the best in Barbadian art.

I wish you and all our artists the very best, and I encourage everyone to avail themselves of this longer timeframe to visit the Queen's Park Gallery, attend one of the pop-ups, or go online to show their support.

Before I conclude, I wish to congratulate the NCF and all its stakeholders for the return of Crop Over, and to wish you a huge success in executing the biggest and most economically rewarding festival on our cultural calendar.

Enjoy the events safely.

I thank you.