

FRANK WALTER | MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

29 July – 25 September 2021

PRESS RELEASE:



For the 2021 Edinburgh Art Festival Ingleby will present the first ever exhibition devoted to Frank Walter's 'spools' – the small circular paintings which, in their consistency of scale and form, provide a kind of lens through which to witness the workings of Walter's inner eye.

Walter's work was unknown during his lifetime, but in the decade since his death he has emerged as one of the most distinctive and intriguing Caribbean voices of the last 50 years. Painted with a rare directness and immediacy, on whatever material came most readily to hand, his works describe a visionary artist – romantically and spiritually inclined in the manner of William Blake or Hilma af Klint – but rooted in the landscape of Antigua, the island of his birth.

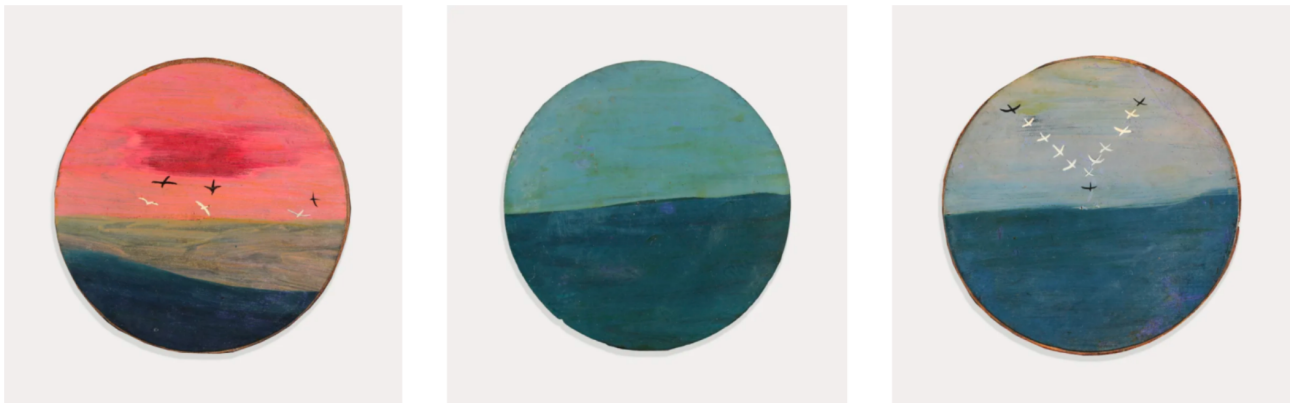
His work was the subject of Antigua and Barbuda's inaugural appearance at the Venice Biennale in 2017, in an exhibition titled *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man*, hailed by The New York Times as "*the most eye-opening*" of all 85 pavilions and which led Hans-Ulrich Obrist to describe him as "*a pioneer*" author of "*an unbelievable body of work, which has not been seen so far. He also wrote poems and worked in nearly all art disciplines. He was the Leonardo da Vinci of Antigua*".

A major retrospective of several hundred works was displayed at MMK Museum of Modern Art Frankfurt in 2020, accompanied by a 420-page monograph in which the art historian and chronicler of Walter's life Barbara Paca notes:

"In their completeness as a group, the spool series brings together all the elements of Walter's universe, with each painting fitting together in dynamic groupings to provide an investigation into the workings of Walter's mind... Walter's use of a round format is a distinct choice loaded with symbolism... circles represent the cyclical, infinite nature of existence.... To borrow Walter's words, 'variety comes with the never-ending music of the spheres'. Throughout his artistic practice, Walter, in effect, is striking the balance between the universe's larger patterns and the smaller details of lived experience."

(Barbara Paca Phd, OBE, "How I became European: Frank Walter in Retrospect" in *Frank Walter A Retrospective*, MMK Frankfurt, 2020, pp 398-400)

A new publication devoted to Walter's Spools will be published to coincide with the exhibition, with contributions by Barbara Paca, Professor Paget Henry, Kenneth Milton and Mary-Elisabeth Moore.



Images from top

Frank Walter, Untitled (Four persimmons) oil on biocomposite material backed with Masonite, 19.5 cm diameter

(from left to right) Frank Walter, Untitled (Red sky with birds in flight), oil on biocomposite material backed with Masonite, 21.9 cm diameter

Frank Walter, Untitled (Light green - grey sky and dark blue sea), oil on biocomposite material backed with Masonite, 21.8 cm diameter

Frank Walter, Untitled (Black and white birds in flight), oil on biocomposite material backed with Masonite, 21.5 cm diameter

All images (c) Courtesy Kenneth M. Milton Fine Arts. Photographs by Kenneth Milton.

Notes to Editors:

Frank Walter (1926 – 2009) was born Francis Archibald Wentworth Walter on Horsford Hill, Antigua in 1926. He spent much of the 1950s travelling in Scotland, England and West Germany. Whilst in Europe, Walter pursued a variety of creative and artistic outlets, including drawing and painting, as well as creative writing. Walter returned to the Caribbean in 1961, where he began his prolific output of painting, drawing, writing, sculptural work, photography and sound art.

Walter's work was first exhibited alongside paintings by Alfred Wallis and Forrest Bess in the exhibition *Songs of Innocence and Experience* at Ingleby Gallery in Spring 2013. A solo exhibition of his work was presented by The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin in Summer 2013 and later that year, Ingleby Gallery presented a solo display of Walter's paintings and his hillside home at Art Basel Miami Beach. A major solo exhibition followed at Ingleby Gallery in spring 2015. In 2017, Frank Walter represented Antigua and Barbuda at the Venice Biennale, in a show called *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man 1926–2009*. A solo presentation of Walter's work also took place at Harewood House, Leeds, UK in the summer of 2017. A major retrospective of the artist's work was displayed at both MMK Museum of Modern Art Frankfurt in 2020 and at David Zwirner, London in the spring of 2021.

For further information and press images please get in touch with Hannah Ustun at info@inglebygallery.com or telephone +44 (0)131 556 4441.

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