

FRANK WALTER

Francis Archibald Wentworth Walter - self-styled 7th Prince of the West Indies, Lord of Follies and the Ding-a-Ding Nook - was born in Antigua in 1926. His remarkable gifts were the product of a fertile but fragile mind: prodigiously talented as both a writer and artist, but flawed by delusions of aristocratic grandeur. Namely a belief that the white slave owners in his ancestry linked him to the noble houses of Europe, from Charles II to Franz Joseph of Austria and the Dukes of Buccleuch.

As a young man, aged just 22 in 1948, Walter tasted success as the first man of colour to manage an Antiguan sugar plantation, but although hugely revered on the island for his intellect and achievements he left it all behind to tour Europe in pursuit of new skills and his own increasingly convoluted genealogical meanderings. A visit to Scotland in the early 1950s marked the beginnings of a life-long affection for a country to which he repeatedly returned in his imagination and in his paintings. Walter's most intense period of creativity came towards the end of his life, the 25 years of which were spent without electricity or running water in an isolated shack on an Antiguan hillside. He wrote more than 25,000 closely typed pages of history, philosophy and autobiography, and made several hundred extraordinary paintings and carvings: always small in scale and always speaking with an unmistakable and visionary voice.

His subject ranges from miniature landscapes to abstract explorations of nuclear energy; to portraits, both real and imagined. Painted with rare immediacy, on whatever material came to hand, they announce the discovery of one of the most intriguing and individual Caribbean artists of the last 50 years. In 2017 Frank Walter represents Antigua and Barbuda at Venice Biennale, the inaugural pavilion for these islands.

Biography

1926 Born in Antigua

Frank Walter died in 2009.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2017 *The Last Universal Man*, Venice Biennale, Antigua and Barbuda Pavilion, Venice, Italy
Flamboyant Trees, Harewood House, Leeds, UK
- 2016 *Lonely Bird*, Hirschl and Adler Modern, New York, USA
- 2015 Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 2013 Solo presentation at Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, FL, USA
Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2018 *Jacob's Ladder*, Ingleby, Edinburgh, UK
TWENTY, Ingleby, Edinburgh, UK
- 2017 *and per se and: part XVII - Frank Walter & Alexander Calder*, Ingleby, Edinburgh, UK
and per se and: part XVI - Rose Wylie & Frank Walter, Ingleby, Edinburgh, UK
- 2013 *Songs of Innocence and Experience: Alfred Wallis, Forrest Bess & Frank, Walter*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK

Selected Publications

- 2017 *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man 1926 – 2009*, Barbara Paca Ph.D, Radius Books, Santa Fe, USA
- 2013 *Frank Walter*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK