

101 Art Gallery

The ASTT Bids a Fond Adieu to the 101 Art Gallery

The 101 Art Gallery is moving on from the ASTT Gallery to its new location. The ASTT appreciates the collaboration over the years and the mutual benefits of this association. We wish Mark Pereira and the 101 Art Gallery continued success, and longevity of its impressive legacy to developments in the visual arts of Trinidad and Tobago.

The original location of the 101 Art Gallery was at 101 Tragarete Road, Port of Spain. After several successful exhibitions there, Mark Pereira sold that building and contemplated his next move.

At about that time, Mark attended the ASTT's November Members Group show at the ASTT Headquarters and was alarmed at the poor facility for displaying valuable art. The premises needed serious attention and the lighting was inadequate. The 101 Art Gallery was already assisting the ASTT by helping with cataloguing and organizing the exhibitions. Previously, the ASTT Annual Exhibitions were very prestigious events that were held at The National Museum and Art Gallery and the Central Bank. It was for a time, the highlight of the Art Season.



Pereira approached Courtenay Williams, the sitting President of The Board of Directors of the Society with an offer to upgrade the facility, at his own expense, in exchange for three months rent-free occupation of the gallery from September to November. With the support of the Board, the project moved forward with the sealing of the windows and doorways and the installation of an air conditioning system and professional lighting in return for his occupation from September to November.

Mark and the 101 Art Gallery also brought awareness to this renewed space and updated the logo with the tag line, "Putting the Art Society on the Map". This approach was extremely successful as many more individuals were able to identify the location of the ASTT and visitors to the venue increased.



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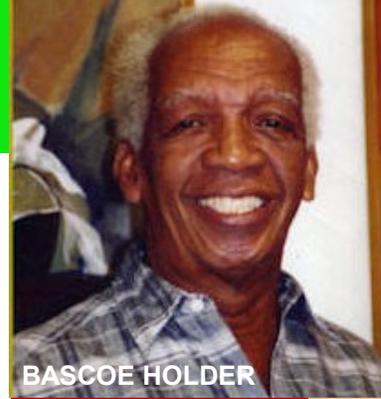
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Over the years, Mark Pereira and the 101 Art Gallery mounted many extremely successful exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, jewelry, private collections and other special events. In the period outside of Pereira's rental, the ASTT became a very desirable rental venue for artists and other individuals. Mark believes that the space has enormous versatility and can be used not only for art exhibitions but also lectures, film nights, studio sessions, reading nights, yoga, weddings and parties etc.

Pereira has expressed the view that the ASTT facility could be improved by mirroring the existing building with another and a 12' common space between them. He sees this as the most cost effective measure in the short-term which would both double the available rental space and increase the ability to host more than one event at a time. Storage space is also another need that this approach would address.

Mark has identified two regrets in his collaboration with the Society. The first concerns his offer to have one or two students at a time attached to the 101 Gallery to gain experience in the work leading up to exhibitions which involve receiving the work, cataloguing, hanging, sales and delivery to the buyer. He thought that this offer would be invaluable to those desiring a career in art administration. It is a source of considerable regret that this offer was never taken up by the Society. The second concerns the 101 Gallery's annual "Precious Paintings Exhibition" which has the potential for students and lovers of art to learn about the work of those who have gone before. These exhibitions have been an invaluable resource for students and art lovers and the Mark recommends this as an area of research for the ASTT, in association with relevant other agencies for its reference library.



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As the ASTT moves forward, it must be cautious of the standard of the shows held at its facility to avoid another stigma of poor shows just to earn some rental dollars. In the new 101 Gallery the space will be for the exclusive use of the gallery and the pool of artists who produce high-caliber work. If there is not control over what is put on the walls, it will soon be said that the ASTT has poor exhibitions and interest in its exhibitions will be lost all-together. The ASTT must be engaged and selective in what is being shown or taught in its space.

As the 101 Gallery is currently hosting its last exhibition before moving into its spanking new gallery space later this year, it is with enormous gratitude that we salute Mark Pereira for his vision and generosity over the years which have contributed to the further development of the ASTT gallery as a successful space for promoting the Visual Arts.

By Peter Sheppard

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