

ARTIST STATEMENT

DORRELE MORGAN – ‘VISIONS OF PARADISE/NATURE’S HAVEN’

This exhibition is the culmination of nearly three decades of work by Jamaican-born artist Dorrele Morgan. At the moment she is being educated at The University of Hertfordshire, where she is studying for a degree in Fine Art. Dorrele is hoping that her pending degree will be the tip of the iceberg, in order to be taken seriously as a successful artist in her own right. The artwork in ‘Visions of Paradise – Nature’s Haven’ evokes the fragrance and tranquility of one of the most beautiful places on earth, which happens to be Morgan’s birthplace.

It was Dorrele Morgan’s life from her early childhood in Jamaica that came to define the artist’s distinctive vision. There her keen instinct and interest for capturing her childhood imagination through play with nature, led her to later on in her life create artwork taken from this period. She offers an empathy and sentimental portrayal of the day-to-day life of her early childhood.

It aims to offer an original interpretation of her practice, with some previously barely seen work such as the ‘World War One’ series. Morgan recalls, “While working on the ‘World War One’ series I was not afraid of using colour, verve, wit, narrative, and memory. This theme originated from the desire to lighten up such a morbid subject matter, by celebrating life through the use of colour. Death is a natural progression to life and I wanted to enlighten it with hope through my use of colour, that it is not the end, for it may just be the beginning.”

Morgan’s fascination with faces integrated with nature and expressed as an icon in her work, stems from a spiritual experience she encountered as a young child in Jamaica. She recalls, “I was playing in the yard and enjoying nature as usual one day, when I was drawn to all these faces in the bushes and shrubs staring at me. I did not feel scared, just curious and wondered what they were doing there. From that experience faces has often appeared in my work entwined with nature.”

It was as a three year old that Morgan first had an affinity and connection to nature. Upon her first sighting of a tree, she was so excited that she twirled around in a circle beneath the tree until she was dizzy, then fell to the ground in fits of laughter. She says, “deep down in my soul those experiences were never forgotten.” These stories establishes her principle significance as a compassionate, witty, and humorous story teller of her childhood. Many of Morgan’s generation may also have witness some of what she saw, and may be able to relate to some of her childhood visions.

These discoveries was to have an impact on Morgan for the rest of her life. ‘Visions of Paradise – Nature’s Haven’ explores the story of Morgan’s life. It delights the senses with colours, textures and themes of her childhood through to adulthood. It brings together the ranges of styles, inspirations, and influences which celebrate the skills and imagination of Morgan. Each piece of work is alive with intimate feelings and emotions suffused with light. There is also a quirky connotation to many works Dorrele creates multi-layered, textural paintings, and collages, using natural and found materials, also drawings, prints photography, textiles, and sculptures.