

# HAITIAN ART NOW

One of five exhibits the Art Gallery hosted during the academic year, **Haitian Art Now** featured a range of works by local Haitian artists.

**T**onight I feel at home,” Jean-Dany Joachim told the *Boston Haitian Reporter*, a newspaper serving Boston’s large Haitian community. Joachim, a member of the BHCC staff, was one of several poets who read their works to an enthusiastic crowd of students, staff and visitors celebrating the opening of the Gallery’s *Haitian Art Now* exhibit.

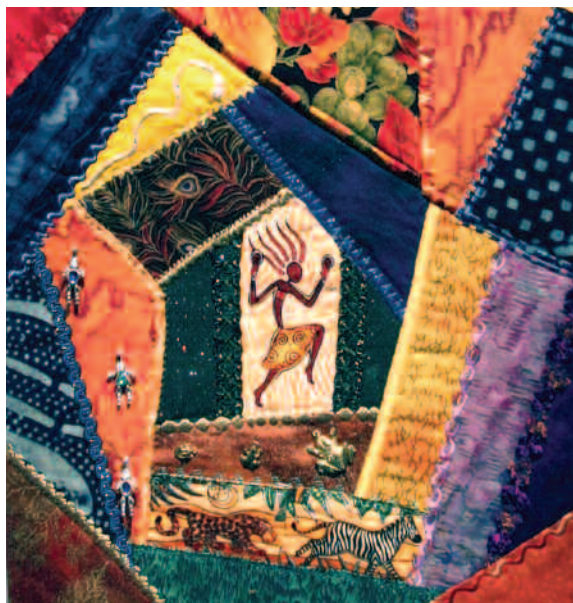
Indeed, the event had the flavor of a home-coming to many Haitians in the audience—and provided a true taste of Haitian culture to others, as traditional Haitian food, music and poetry enlivened the occasion, reflecting the bright colors and high energy of the paintings, photographs, sculptures and fabrics displayed in the Gallery.

Haiti may be the poorest of Western countries, as students learned through reading *Mountains Beyond Mountains* in this year’s college-wide reading project (see story, page 15), but Haitian art is recognized as among the richest in the world. The art of this small Caribbean nation dates back to pre-Columbian times, and the art of the diaspora—members of the Haitian community now living beyond the borders of their island-home—is burgeoning.

The Boston Haitian community’s contributions to the flowering of contemporary Haitian art was clearly evident in the Gallery’s juried exhibit, which brought in dozens of submissions. And the response of the Haitian community to BHCC’s celebration of Haitian art was highlighted in news reports of the exhibit’s opening.



*Jean-Dany Joachim, a poet born in Haiti, read from his work at the opening of **Haitian Art Now**. Joachim works as a technical assistant in BHCC’s Student Activities office.*



“For the last two and a half years [since its founding], the BHCC Art Gallery has been committed to supporting and nurturing artists and making the gallery a place that expresses and supports diversity in race, culture and religion,” wrote Martine Louis under the headline “Bunker Hill Opens Doors to Artists” in the *Boston Haitian Reporter*.

“The College’s commitment to diversity is deepened,” Gallery Director Laura Montgomery said, “by the sharing of similar feelings across different cultures.” She referred to the themes of alienation and redemption embodied not only in the art works, but also in the poems read on the occasion. “This is the sort of experience that really brings us together,” she said. ■

*“The Dancer,” by Michele David, a Haitian-born fiber artist and physician specializing in women’s health. Dr. David creates work that explore her cultural interests as well as her personal love of pattern and color.*

# DIASPORA


De Port-au-Prince  
à Cambridge,  
from my city  
to my city  
je deviens l'étranger

For leaving  
I was stripped of my right of birth  
for arriving too late  
I was denied full status

De ma ville  
à ma ville  
I become the ambassador

From one place to the other  
I carry the tale  
of my unfinished journey

Jean-Dany Joachim



*"Rejoicing with the Gedes," by Patrick Sylvain, a Haitian-American writer, educator, lecturer and photographer.*

Patrick Sylvain  
Rejoicing with the Gedes  
1998