



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Roots Through Ruins

Oliver Benoit

Coreset International Residency Exhibition

Roots Through Ruins is a solo exhibition by Grenadian artist Oliver Benoit, whose work examines how histories of colonialism, revolution, and migration persist within material and built environments.

Working with pigment, text, and salvaged matter — including crushed brick — Benoit approaches material as both subject and method. His compositions operate as sites of excavation and reassembly, where surfaces hold the residual traces of labour, violence, endurance, and repair. In this context, brick functions not simply as a structural component but as an archival form: a carrier of transnational histories embedded in processes of making, circulation, and use.

The exhibition situates Grenada within a wider network of historical exchange between the Caribbean and Britain. Drawing on the architectural history of St George's — shaped in the late eighteenth century following successive fires and rebuilt through Palladian and Georgian idioms — Benoit foregrounds the role of imported brick as a material index of colonial trade and movement. This condition finds a parallel in British civic architecture, including the Georgian fabric of Newark Market Place and Town Hall, where brick similarly encodes histories of commerce, empire, and municipal identity.

Rather than presenting architecture as static heritage, *Roots Through Ruins* treats it as an active field of interpretation. Benoit's work proposes brick as both methodology and metaphor: a means of reading the material conditions through which national consciousness is formed, and a way of approaching how such consciousness is continually reconstituted. In doing so, the exhibition aligns visual art with critical modes of inquiry, positioning it as a site through which awareness of heritage is not only preserved but activated.



The exhibition marks the inaugural International Residency awarded by Coreset, an initiative that brings Caribbean artistic practice into dialogue with UK and international contexts. Benoit, widely regarded as one of the most significant contemporary artists working in the Caribbean, extends a materially grounded and conceptually rigorous engagement with the entangled legacies of slavery, colonialism, and their afterlives.

Roots Through Ruins offers a sustained reflection on how histories are sedimented within matter, and how acts of breaking and rebuilding might open space for their reconsideration.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- Oliver Benoit is a Grenadian contemporary artist whose practice engages material memory and the afterlives of colonialism. He began his career as a landscape and still life painter before turning to abstraction, where his work now operates through the reconfiguration of everyday and salvaged materials to interrogate systems of value, symbolism, and cultural meaning.

Benoit holds a PhD in Sociology and an MFA in Studio Art, and is Professor of Sociology in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at St. George's University, Grenada. His interdisciplinary approach informs a practice grounded in the social and historical complexities of Grenadian life, addressing questions of identity, inheritance, and structural tension.

His work has been exhibited internationally and is held in public and private collections across the UK, USA, and Canada. He has also presented work in the context of the 56th and 59th Venice Biennale.

- Coreset's International Residency supports cross-cultural exchange between Caribbean and international artists with the communities and resident artists of Newark and the East Midlands. Coreset is a cultural platform established by Of Many Circles, a creative practice working across the UK, China, the USA and the Middle East. Based in the East Midlands, it supports artists, ideas and communities through programmes that connect local contexts with global conversations.
- High-resolution images and interviews are available on request.

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Press images include works from *The Path of Fragments* series and studio process documentation. High-resolution images and interviews are available on request.