

POINTILLISM

In painting, pointillism is the practice of applying small strokes or dots of contrasting colour to a surface so that from a distance they blend together.

Local artist, Gordon Solomon, employs pointillism in some of his work.

Gordon Solomon

Gordon Solomon is an artist and musician born in George Town, Grand Cayman.

In February 1999 Gordon had his first exhibition with the now well known group of Caymanian artist's, "Native Sons" where he demonstrated his talents with a collection of mixed media of oils and pastels.

Since then Gordon has exhibited locally and internationally, as his talents continue to reach ever wider audiences around the world.

Our Story of Art

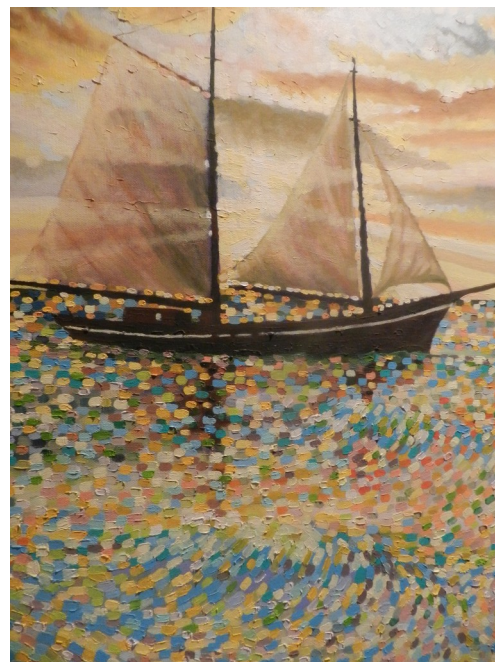
POINTILLISM ACTIVITY-USING PAINT

MATERIALS:

- Pencil & eraser
- Q-Tips
- Paint
- Small canvas or paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Draw the outline of an object.
eg: Flower, Bird or Butterfly.
2. Use the Q-Tips to make dots that will fill the object.
3. Remember you don't have to colour the object exactly as it is, you can experiment with different.



Artist Gordon Solomon

LINDSEY TURNBULL

In the second of a six-part series, Weekender continues to learn more about Cayman's popular and prolific artists. In this article we chat with Gordon Solomon, who never takes his talent for granted.

How do you begin your day?

I usually begin the day by rising early at about 4 a.m. and then I like to do some kind of morning exercise, such as a bike ride. Exercise - enough to make your body sweat - makes you feel like you are awake. I like to stretch out my body properly before I begin to paint. Also, cycling at 5 a.m. gives me the chance to study the stars, get outside and appreciate nature. Once I'm back home, I prepare breakfast for my children before they go to school. I also never go a day without thanking God for my talent. Once I became a man, I knew I couldn't buy what I have (my talent), and so I'm constantly expressing my gratitude quietly.

Tell me how you organize your studio.

My studio is at the back of my home, and I share it with the laundry! It's currently under construction as I'm busy painting walls and rearranging furniture. The heart of my studio is my desk, where I arrange my materials. My oil paints are next to the desk, and I have a large space for painting both large and small paintings. My guitar is also close by in case musical inspiration hits.

How do you approach a new piece of work?

It really depends upon the content of the painting I'll be working on. Sometimes I paint directly onto the canvas, such as with the piece I'm currently working on called "Avoiding



Artist Gordon Solomon works on his current project, 'Avoiding the Storm' at his home studio. This large oil on canvas primarily uses spots of light, a pointillism technique.

the Storm," but sometimes I approach the work differently and I may first sketch an idea on canvas. I might apply a black wash in acrylic and then put on sand to give texture, such as with my painting called "Spinners in Pease Bay." I always complete my artwork in oil. With whatever I'm working on, the subject matter has to move me in some way.

Where do you draw your inspiration from?

I get inspiration from all different places: sceneries, subject matter, life happenings. I am currently inspired by boats and Cayman's tradition of shipbuilding and the idea behind the fact that we as a nation used to have a busy shipbuilding industry. I need to break from this topic sometimes as it takes a lot to prepare myself mentally to focus on the subject. I get saturated in all aspects of our culture, heritage and traditions. A trip to New York compelled me to paint from the experiences I had there, and I know the trips abroad are important for my art as I feel there is only so much I can do in Cayman.

What are you working on right now?



'My Talent's Voice: Inspiration from New York,' by Gordon Solomon.

"Avoiding the Storm" is my current main project. It's a large piece of work that primarily uses "spots of light," a pointillism technique I use to convey the image I'm painting. I never work just on one piece, however, as oils need time to dry, so I like to have a good number of paintings in the making. I'm also working to replenish my stock of large paintings as four large pieces were sold this year. An exhibition in New York early next year is also keeping me busy as I am working on a series of paintings to exhibit there called "Thatcher"

"Spinners in Pease Bay" is part of that series. Scenes of Silver Thatch trees that also include the hanging out of beef freshly butchered in time for Christmas, a longtime Caymanian tradition. I'm constrained by the fact that I'm exhibiting with other artists at the New York exhibit, so space is limited, and I will only be taking three paintings with me, but I could create many more paintings on the subject.

How long do you spend on your artwork?

Paintings can take weeks or months to complete. Two

pieces from the Thatcher series, for example, will take about three weeks in total as I alternate between painting the two. I like to see a painting through from start to finish without breaks because it's important for me to live in the moment, artistically. It's hard to go back to a painting that I began months ago as the momentum can be lost. During the day, I tend to work in one-and-a-half-hour stretches. Sometimes I can spend a total of around nine or more hours painting in one day. I make time for my other respon-

sibilities as well, such as yard work and family.

Where do you see your artwork progressing?

I'm looking forward to exhibiting at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman, at their new exhibition that starts in November called "Essence of Cayman," for which I'm exhibiting a piece called "Red Sky at Night." This is what I term a "community piece" because I have painted this work at various public events, such as at the Cayman Islands Cultural Foundation, and encouraged the public to make their own mark on the painting, which is always very popular.

In addition, the art exhibition in New York will take place from April 2-4, 2014, and is called the New York Art Expo, located at Pier 94. This is an event for which I'm busy preparing. People really seem to appreciate my art when they come to view it, but most people who buy my art don't come from Cayman, so this is an important way for me to connect with buyers. I'm looking to promote Cayman while I'm there, and I'm going to give art lessons in the public and private schools. I'm also training to be a teacher here in Cayman and currently give private tuition for students in their homes. People are appreciating the visual arts of Cayman more, I feel. There is a high value in my works and it's been established by my following and collectors. It's humbling.

How do you close down your day?

I take a step away from my work, my paintings. If my family were not around, I would probably continue to paint until I was tired as I get so absorbed in my work. It's a good thing I don't have a bed in my studio. Otherwise I would probably sleep there!

Read the article about Gordon Solomon and answer the questions below:

1. What type of paint does Solomon use for most of his work?
2. Solomon says whatever he is working on has to 'move me in some way.' Describe what kinds of images move you and why.
3. List three of the things that Solomon says inspire his work
4. Describe the Pointillism technique that Solomon uses.
5. How long does it usually take for him to complete a painting?
6. Explain two ways that living in the Cayman Islands has played a role in the type of art Solomon produces.