

WILLIAM “WOODY” JOSPEH (1919-1998)

William “Woody” Jospeh was born in Castleton, St Mary. At some point in his life, he moved to Stony Hill, St Andrew, where he lived for a while until he built his house in Castleton. He began carving around 1963. One narrative states that he was inspired to carve when he went to a river to heal an injured leg and saw a stick floating in it. He took it as a sign that if he carved the stick, it would assist the healing. From then on, Woody viewed carving as a spiritual service or in his words “capture the heart of justice.” His anthropomorphic and zoomorphic wooden forms were reminiscent of similar forms in African and Taino traditions and demonstrate an imagination that was deeply tied to nature and the spiritual realm. Woody began exhibiting his sculptures sometime around the late 1970s. Notable local and international exhibitions include the National Gallery of Jamaica’s Intuitives series and Redemption Songs: The Self-Taught Artists of Jamaica (1997) organized by the Diggs Gallery, USA. He was awarded a Bronze Musgrave Medal by the Institute of Jamaica in 1988.