Salute to the Parish of St. Thomas: Programmes Coordination Division showcasing artistic talents from Seaforth High School.

On December 6, 2024, the Institute of Jamaica proudly hosted its annual event, Salute to the Parish of St. Thomas. This celebration paid homage to a parish often referred to as the "forgotten parish" of Jamaica, yet it holds a rich cultural heritage and historical significance. Among its notable contributions is the site of the Morant Bay Rebellion, led by one of Jamaica's national heroes, Paul Bogle. This rebellion marked a pivotal moment in the island's history, highlighting the resilience and spirit of its people.

While there is much to say about St. Thomas, this article focuses on the impactful presence of the Programmes Coordination Division (PCD) at this year's event. Although we are not a museum despite housing an exhibition on Simon Bolivar at the Simon Bolivar Cultural Centre we aimed to take a different approach in showcasing our work.

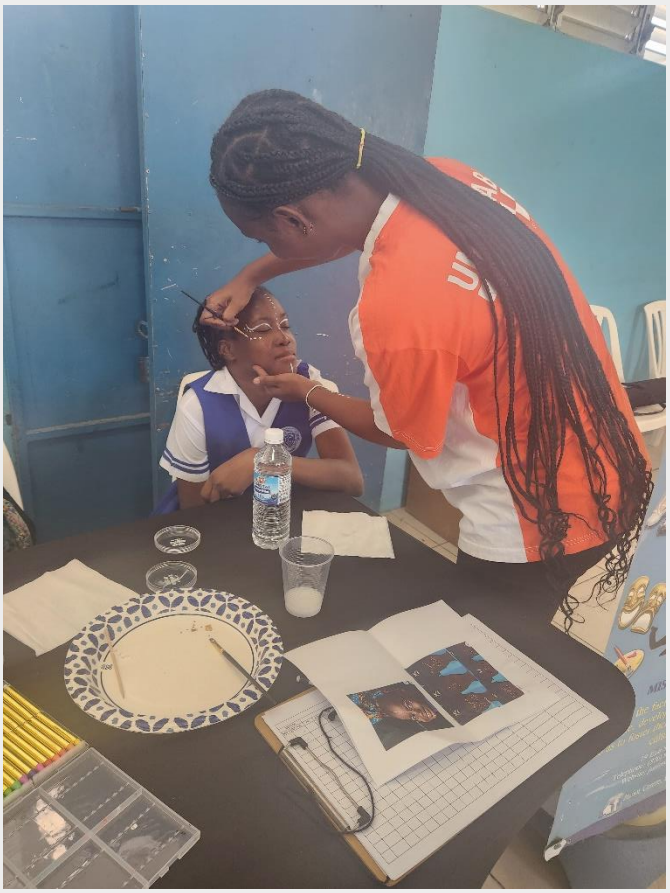
Our team proudly displayed the remarkable artworks from Seaforth High School, submitted for our annual Art in School Competition. This competition is designed to recognize and reward students who excel in the arts, providing them with an opportunity to showcase their talent and creativity. The pieces we showcased were not only beautiful but also well-received by patrons who attended this annual event.

The Programmes Coordination Division made a significant impact at the event, representing both our division and the Institute of Jamaica with distinction. In addition to displaying stunning prints, paper mache art, paintings, and sketches, we offered complimentary

face painting services. This engaging activity was provided by our talented colleague Ms. Geneva Walcott, who brought joy and creativity to many attendees.

Mr. Dante Rose, a top student in the Caribbean for Visual Arts in the CSEC examinations from St. Thomas Technical High School, was also invited to showcase his artwork alongside ours. This collaboration highlights the power of art and its profound impact on youth. The Programmes Coordination Division serves as an umbrella for the Junior Centres of East Street and Greater Portmore, where students are actively engaged in visual and performing arts. These programs not only foster artistic expression but also enhance various aspects of their lives, enabling them to shine brightly in their academics and other areas.

Mr. Dante Rose (top students in the Caribbean for Visual Arts in CSEC from St Thomas Technical High School) and Mrs. Michele Creed-Nelson (Executive Director of the Institute of Jamaica).



Ms. Geneva Walcott (Library Assistant)

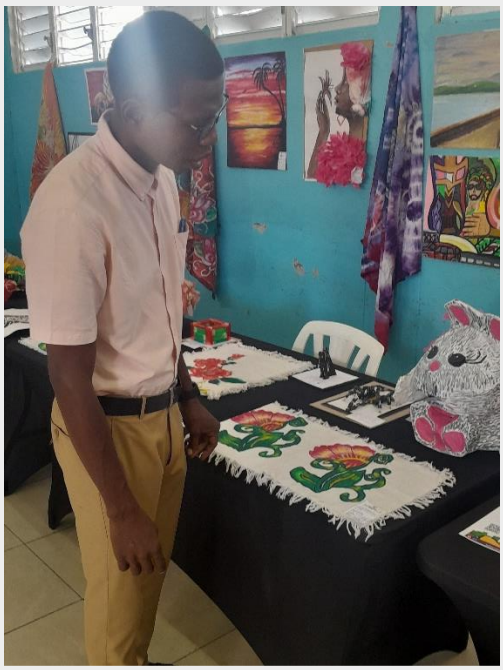
The success of our booth was a collaborative effort involving several dedicated team members: Denise Lloyd (Research Officer), Rojean Cowan (Librarian), Kerri-Ann Palmer (Acting Director of the Programmes Coordination Division), and Shea Walker (Programmes Manager and mastermind behind this initiative). Together, we ensured that our booth was well-manned and that visitors received a comprehensive overview of the PCD's offerings.

From left to right: Kerri-Ann Palmer (Acting Director of the Programmes Coordination Division), Denise Lloyd (Research Officer), Rojean Cowan (Librarian), Geneva Walcott (Library Assistant), and Shea Walker (Programmes Manager and mastermind behind this initiative).

Mr. Rojean Cowan (Librarian)

Ms. Denise Lloyd (Research Officer) guiding patrons through the exhibition.

The Salute to the Parish of St. Thomas was not just an event; it was a celebration of culture, history, and artistic expression. The Programmes Coordination Division is proud to have played a role in honouring this vibrant parish while fostering creativity among young artists in Jamaica.



Students from Yallahs High School and patron admiring the art work.

Mrs. Shea Walker (Programmes Manager)

Written by: Denise Lloyd

Research Officer

Programmes Coordination Division

Institute of Jamaica.