

JOHN COX



Biography

John Cox (1973) is a Bahamian artist whose mixed-media paintings and assemblages use familiar and ordinary objects to reference distant places and ideas. In addition to his art practice, Cox is also a major part of the Bahamian art scene whose works as an educator, curator, cultural activist. He founded Popopstudios International Center for the Visual Arts in 1999 and has helped grow and redefine art in The Bahamas.

Inspired somewhat by the 'curious space' of his childhood home built by Ray Nathaniels, Cox pursued his interest in space and function as an architecture student at the Rhode Island School of Design in the early 1990s. However, inspired by his teachers Al DeCredico and Jack Massey, as well as his RISD peers, Cox found his niche in illustration. After earning his BFA in Illustration in 1995, he also completed a Master's in Art Education in 1996.

The imaginarium of John Cox, who was born the year of independence, is a kaleidoscope of ideas resident mostly on mixed-media paintings and assemblages, and in the fecund imagination of an artist, curator, educator and mentor, whose artistry and cultural activism continue to dynamize the arts in the Bahamas.

Cox's life and work parallel the development of a post-independent sovereign country, which has gained tremendous confidence in our cultural and artistic treasures, happily expressing these on a global stage.

Cox's large format paintings, found object assemblages, collages and experimental prints were featured in the groundbreaking 2008 *Artists of The Bahamas* documentary and global traveling exhibition, formally cementing him as an important practicing artist in Bahamian art history. Besides exhibiting his work at home in such exhibitions as *Kimono* (Central Bank of The Bahamas, 1997); *I Am Not Afraid of a Perfect Stranger* (New Providence Art and Antiques, 2009); and *Negative Space* (Popopstudios ICVA, 2011), Cox has exhibited and participated in exchanges in France, Italy, Germany, Hong Kong, the United States and the Caribbean. He has also been a part of many international exhibitions including Art Basel in Miami in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2013; the *IpaseProject* in Italy in 2006; *Funky Nassau* in Weisbaden Germany in 2006; *Wrestling With the Image* in Washington, DC, in

2011; *Master Artists of The Bahamas* in Waterloo, Iowa, in 2011; and the *Volta* NY Art Fair in 2014 and 2018.

Among the more striking elements of Cox's character are his humility, his willingness to share credit, his delight in the gifts of others and his ardent commitment to collaboration and teamwork, especially evident in numerous exhibitions and his work as the Executive Director of Arts and Culture at Baha Mar.

THIS IS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU!

The Original Idea:

This I How Much I Love You! is a conceptual text-based work created by Bahamian artist John Cox. The piece has continued to be reincarnated in various forms over the years in many galleries and countries.

Early Process:

How Much Do You Love Me? / This I How Much I Love You!

Originally the work created for a group exhibition themed 'LOVE' at Popopstudios. Cox's first iteration of 'This Is How Much I Love You!' was a double sided 15 x 5-foot-long scroll silkscreened one phrase at a time.

Conceptual Currency:

Cox's goal was to have the intentionally tattered lettering become a recognizable visual texture that even glimpses of would spark the concept of Love and Eternity in the minds and hearts of the viewer without having to be literally read. The context of 'Love' here is broadly defined and extends into an emotional construct that connects humankind to each other as well as our environments.

Progress:

Cox was determined to persevere and continue to reinvent this concept over and over for now more than 15 years making each iteration more epic and more accessible both physically and conceptually to its growing audience. The most recent addition to the Love series sees the concept manifested as active and meditative text-based abstractions that for the most part remove color and play on nuances black and white.