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Mural 'Together' must promote strength, cohesion and cultural pride

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SAMEN (DUTCH) - **TOGETHER** (ENGLISH)

Izia Lindsay working on the mural on the grounds of the Directorate of Culture.

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Perched on a ladder, sweating in the sun, stands Izia Lindsay, a *mixed media* artist from Trinidad and Tobago who works with both digital and traditional media. At the Directorate of Culture's grounds, he's put the finishing touches on a colorful mural featuring the word "Together." "It's hot, but I'm so glad I was able to finish this before I have to leave. It's been a wonderful time here," he tells *the Ware Tijd newspaper* .

Text Tascha Aveloo

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I zia Lindsay's artistic practice explores the symbolism of Caribbean iconography (the study of the meaning of images, symbols, and representations in artworks and other cultural expressions), rooted in tradition, yet reimagined from a contemporary perspective. "In my work, I grapple with questions of identity and class in postcolonial Caribbean societies, but draw on elements of material culture, indigenous traditions, and the changing Caribbean landscape," the artist explains.

"Art and language can bridge the gap between stories, people, and nations"

Geometric shapes, bold lines, and vibrant compositions serve as visual metaphors, each form interwoven in a way that reflects the complexity of Caribbean life. "I often describe my visual language as 'controlled naturalism,' where abstraction and realism converge to tell stories that are both personal and collective. My work ultimately becomes a cultural narrative, reflecting the

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Lindsay has been active in the creative industry for over fifteen years. He is an assistant professor of graphic design at Augustana University in South Dakota, USA. He has taught multimedia, illustration, and typography at the University of Miami and Florida International University.

Surinamese flag

Throughout his career, he has participated in numerous exhibitions, lectures, and workshops in the Caribbean and the United States. "There is a strong connection between my academic practice and the broader creative community. My work emphasizes the value of the cultural context of storytelling, and I often use my art as a tool for education, dialogue, and social reflection."

In addition to his studio work, he is known for his colorful, large-scale murals, many of which are located in prominent locations such as the Wynwood Arts District in Miami, the History Miami Museum, and public institutions in Barbados, and now also in Suriname. "This visit was a very enriching experience. I am grateful to Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator, Augustana University, and Readytex Art Gallery for this opportunity and for their support of this meaningful cultural exchange."

Lindsay is grateful for the hospitality and generosity of, among others, his mentor Rosie Gordon-Wallace and fellow artist Kurt Nahar. "One of the most impactful experiences during my time here was creating a mural at the Directorate of Culture."

According to him, this mural is inspired by the Surinamese people and the essence of community life. "Every interaction I had was filled with warmth and openness, and this genuine sense of connection influenced my artistic choices. I chose to use the Surinamese flag as the basis for the color palette: each color was carefully considered to evoke strength, connection, and cultural pride."

Sense of connection

Another highlight of his stay was visiting several Maroon and indigenous villages. "They were just snapshots, but these visits gave me profound insight into the cultural diversity and resilience of Surinamese communities."

Lindsay explored the city, met many people, and observed the everyday beauty in their fabric designs and clothing. "The patterns, textures, and color choices were incredibly inspiring and will undoubtedly influence my future works that explore the role of symbolism and color in Caribbean culture."

This website is part of the project 'Suriname: A Creative Journey' by Lindsay.

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pulse that connects us as Caribbean creatives. Our work often stems from the same source: history, memory, resilience, and pride."

Incidentally, Lindsay was previously in Suriname – in 2013 – with the Trinidad and Tobago delegation during Carifesta. "My greatest learning experience is the enormous importance of cultural exchange and the beauty that lies in our differences. Despite the linguistic, historical, and ethnic diversity in the Caribbean, there's an underlying sense of unity. Being here has reaffirmed that we can honor our individual cultures while living together in harmony."

This visit not only deepened his appreciation for Surinamese culture but also offered him new perspectives on his own art-making practice. "It reinforced my belief that art and language can bridge stories, people, and nations. We're all in this together! Together!"



Artist Izia Lindsay (r) and Cultural Director Dweight Warsodikromo at the Trinidadian's mural.

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