

# The Miami Times

## Blacks represent with pride under The Fusion MIA banner

[D. Kevin McNeir](#) | 12/17/2013, 1:42 p.m.



Miles Regis

Black artists from across the Diaspora are finally getting their just due as part of the now internationally acclaimed event known as Art Basel. And as Miami continues to make its name in the global art world, one of the reasons these artists are getting noticed is due to the efforts of Fusion MIA — a local group whose mission is to bring greater awareness, attention and business opportunities to the African and Caribbean Diaspora's modern and contemporary

Miles Regis artwork





emerging artists. The two curators for Fusion MIA, Wil Phearson III of LA-based Artist Muse and Jumaane N’Namdi of Miami-based N’Namdi Contemporary, combined to bring some of the most exciting art by Blacks that has ever been seen in Miami — particularly in one singular venue — including Bettye Saar, Hugo McCloud, Nanette Carter, Toni Scott, Cole James and this writer’s favorite, Miles Regis.

### **Trinidadian’s art is colorful and bold**

Phearson says the work of Regis, 46, “is the perfect expression of who he is — courageous, powerful and multicolored — gathering us all in an artistic endeavor that values human spirit, connectedness and levity in the face of adversity.”

The child of a judge and a school principal, Regis wanted for very little during his formative years. But there were few excesses, he says, except for travel.

“My parents saw traveling as a real learning experience and with them having siblings in several countries, we got to see parts of the Caribbean, Europe, Canada and the U.S.,” he said. “The first time I visited LA, I knew it would one day be my home. Eventually I got there and studied at USC, majoring in creative writing.”

Regis could have chosen any number of careers. He was a teen sensation with Fireflight, one of Trinidad’s most popular singing groups whom he describes as “the Earth, Wind and Fire of the Caribbean.” And while he still sings and writes when the spirit leads him, Regis says he was always drawn to painting — and by the time he was 19 he began to see a profit from his work.

“At some point the art just took over and I began to gift friends, then some made purchases, celebrities commissioned me and it got to a point that I could not ignore the calling,” he said. “A few of my collectors kicked me off the cliff into the lovely experience of being a full time artist. I call myself a business artist because I had 20 years of corporate experience under my belt. So I bring the business of art to the table.”

### **A serious work ethic**

A husband and father of two, Regis says one of the things he first discovered when moving to the U.S. was the stereotypes people had about young Black men.

“I was only 21 then but I knew that the way people wanted to peg me was not my reality,” he said. “The images they had for who I was supposed to be were things with which I could relate. I refused to accept those labels or boxes. I speak to that in my work and tend to become inspired because of conversations. I visualize the work and then I begin to create it. I paint everyday and have done so for the past six years so the volume of work I have produced is pretty amazing. Art Basel has been a great experience and while I can’t discuss the pending deals, it’s going to do wonders for my future.”

One of his paintings that this writer found to be especially captivating because of his use of color, text and his signature montage motif is “Zoo Capitalism” — which Regis says addresses the need for humans to be more connected, caring and community driven and less like animals. Watch out for more from Miles Regis.