

Annalee Davis: Speaking a new language in art

Annalee Davis, a Barbadian artist, is committed to making her views known, and she is creating a new visual language to achieve this.

Davis' work explores and challenges perceptions concerning race, class and gender. Many of her themes are universal - sexual harassment, segregation, alienation, prejudice and stereotyping. But she places these within a Caribbean context.

One of her works, *My friend said I was too white*, reflects the anguish of the commonly held stereotype, that Barbadian whites have nothing to contribute outside of economics. But this is not true, Davis insists.

Perhaps the most controversial in her work is her treatment of nude figures, the ex-



posed genitalia. She examines the woman as part virgin, part whore, the Queen of Heaven and the downfall of man, divided and condemned by her own sexuality. Man on the other hand is identified and glorified by his sexuality.

Davis believes she has a message to deliver, and explains that she is trying to develop a language.

"It's important that we don't always borrow a language

from somewhere else. We need to have enough faith in ourselves to create a language that can define who we are and set trends outside of Barbados, and the Caribbean, that we don't always have people coming in to define who we are for us," she said.

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