GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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HM Prison Celebrates Success of Arts Rehabilitation Programme with Exhibition and Merchandise Launch

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His Majesty’s Prison recently celebrated the successful completion of its twelve-week Arts Rehabilitation Programme with an exhibition and merchandise launch, showcasing the creativity, growth and resilience of inmates who participated in the initiative.

The programme was delivered at His Majesty’s Prison, Balsam Ghut through a collaborative partnership with Creative Waves and Ogier as part of the prison's ongoing commitment to rehabilitation and successful reintegration.

The exhibition featured a collection of artworks created by programme participants, highlighting their creativity while providing a powerful glimpse into their emotions, experiences, culture and personal journeys. Guests also had the opportunity to view and purchase merchandise featuring selected pieces of the inmates' artwork, further recognising their talents and supporting the programme's rehabilitative goals.

Minister for Health and Social Development, **Honourable Vincent O. Wheatley**, praised the initiative as an example of the transformative impact that rehabilitation programmes can have on individuals.

"Rehabilitation is about more than serving a sentence. It is about creating opportunities for personal transformation and equipping individuals with the tools they need to make positive choices when they return to our communities," said Honourable Wheatley. "This Arts Rehabilitation Programme demonstrates the power of creativity to inspire hope, build confidence and encourage self-expression. The remarkable artwork produced over the past twelve weeks is a testament to the talent that exists within our prison population and the positive outcomes that can be achieved through collaboration and investment in rehabilitation."

Assistant Superintendent of Prison Mrs Evena Simmons Ogunsakin described the initiative as an important component of the prison's broader rehabilitation strategy.

"This is an excellent initiative. It gives inmates an opportunity to express themselves," she said. "The artwork displayed today is a clear indication that they are expressing not only themselves, but also their culture, emotions, feelings,

imagination and thoughts. It reflects what some of them are experiencing behind bars and provides a healthy outlet for self-expression. As part of our rehabilitative efforts, this programme has been extremely valuable."

Mrs Simmons Ogunsakin explained that rehabilitation remains at the heart of the prison's mission and that the Arts Rehabilitation Programme is one of several initiatives designed to equip inmates with positive coping mechanisms, practical skills and opportunities for personal growth.

She noted that the Department continues to expand its rehabilitation offerings, with additional educational and skills-based programmes planned in collaboration with community partners.

"We have a number of programmes coming on stream," she said. "Alongside continuing the arts programme, we have educational classes and other collaborative initiatives that will further support inmates as they prepare for successful reintegration into society."

The Department of HM Prison expressed its appreciation to Creative Waves and Ogier for their partnership and commitment to advancing rehabilitation through the arts. Their support has provided inmates with a meaningful platform to develop new skills, build confidence and discover creative talents that may contribute to their future success.

The Arts Rehabilitation Programme reflects the Department's belief that rehabilitation extends beyond confinement. By providing opportunities for education, creativity and personal development, the prison continues to foster positive transformation and encourage inmates to build productive lives upon their release.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to improving the health and social well-being of the people of the Virgin Islands.

For Additional Information Contact:

Fitsroy Randall

Information Officer I

Ministry of Health and Social Development

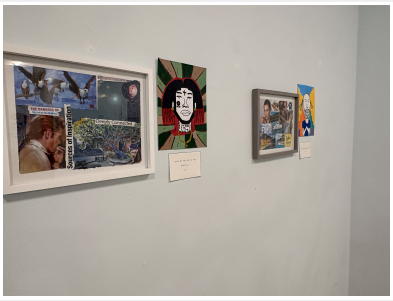
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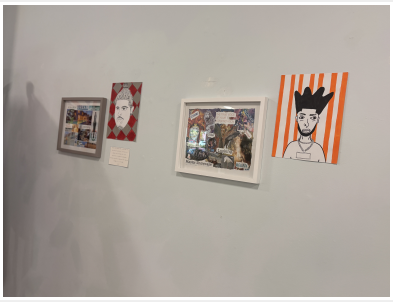
Tortola, British Virgin Islands

Telephone: (284) 468-4138

E-mail Address: FRandall@gov.vg

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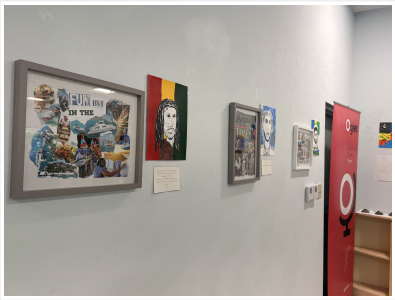


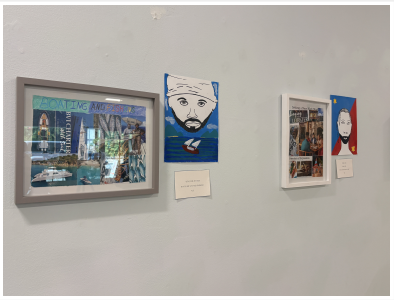





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Additional Documents or Media

- 20260701_press_release_hm_prison_celebrate_art_rehabilitation.pdf