

LIVING LANDSCAPES: JOHN DUNKLEY AND THE CULTURAL
LANDSCAPE OF COLONIAL JAMAICA

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University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2019

ABSTRACT

To many Jamaicans nature itself was spiritual and alive, and while John Dunkley's landscapes seek to mystify audiences, this thesis seeks to discern the complex symbolism within his paintings. Although only moderately successful in his lifetime, this Jamaican, self-taught artist is now known as a master of Intuitive art. Intuitivism is highly regarded in Jamaica as a form of creation outside of mainstream styles and formal training. Working in the 1930s and 1940s, Dunkley's work reflects the Afro-Jamaican experience of the late colonial era, as Jamaica was slowly negotiating independence while forming a national cultural identity separate from Great Britain. This thesis thus examines Dunkley's artwork through a decolonial lens, as clear resistance symbols are evident throughout his body of work. Of these symbols, this paper will primarily address the phallic and yonic symbols evident apparent in the majority of Dunkley's paintings. By hiding erotic symbolism within the landscape, Dunkley anthropomorphizes the natural world, allowing nature to become a narrative in Dunkley's decolonial image. In doing so, Dunkley subverts the exoticized projections of the Caribbean in order to both reveal the colonial reality of Jamaica and reclaim lost power. The art of John Dunkley utilizes the erotic landscape to undermine

colonial structures. Calling his Jamaican peers to decolonial action, Dunkley embeds a wide range of symbolism into these living landscapes.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, have examined a thesis titled “Living Landscapes: John Dunkley and the Cultural Landscape of Colonial Jamaica,” presented by Rebecca Lawder, candidate for the Master of Arts degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Objects in the night become strange and unnerving. The paintings of John Dunkley, too, blur reality through the cloak of darkness. Each of John Dunkley's nocturnes upsets the established order. A muted palette subverts the colorful and touristic scenes of Caribbean beauty, revealing a dark underbelly in paradise. While each painting initially appears to be a quiet reflection of Jamaican life at night, the elements of the composition become uncanny through the viewers' sustained gaze. Creatures, plants, and objects form a clear set of personal, yet universal, symbols of contemplation within the disquiet of melancholy.

Historian and philosopher, Oswald Spengler stated in *The Decline of the West*, “no "Nature" is pure — there is always something of history in it.”¹ And this is true of John Dunkley's mystifying landscapes, which reveal decolonial meaning hidden within his sophisticated symbolic code and articulated anthropomorphization of the landscape. Through his paintings, Dunkley reflects the Jamaican relationship with the landscape by humanizing nature through both phallic and yonic symbolism as a decolonial tactic. As Dunkley subverts the expected in Caribbean painting, especially for the foreign consumers, he brings nature to life in order to introduce decolonial themes into the minds of his peers. This paper will examine Dunkley's use of erotic imagery to reclaim power through poetic and symbolic means in colonial Jamaica.

The use of the landscape as an artistic subject is common in the Caribbean, as outlined by art historian Veerle Poupeye:

¹ Oswald Spengler and Charles Francis Atkinson, *The Decline of the West* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1926), 289.

The natural beauty of the Caribbean region has been a source of inspiration to artists, native and foreign, since pre-Hispanic times and a source of metaphorical and formal possibilities for many modern Caribbean artists. As the most predictable subject matter of Caribbean art, however, run-of-the-mill depictions of the natural environment tend often to be conventional in style and format and usually present an idealized, even stereotypical view of the Caribbean.²

Dunkley's use of the landscape, however, is anything but stereotypical. Looking at *Banana Plantation* (Figure 1), Dunkley fills the panel with black, grey, brown, and deep blue shadows, incorporating only a handful of white and yellow highlights to illuminate the flora and fauna of the scene. There are no stereotypical Caribbean visual references, like beaches or sunny skies. There is only a dark plantation scene. However, Dunkley's attraction to the landscape is evident, as this is the primary subject matter of his paintings. This fascination with nature mesmerizes the viewer and effectively incites wonder.

Dunkley's unique treatment of the Jamaican landscape scene is likely rooted in the island's deep relationship with nature that is rife with both spiritual and healing power. According to Poupeye, "unless an artists' intentions are purely documentary, landscape painting [in the Caribbean] usually stems from a deep personal identification with nature and the land."³ This is the case with many of the Intuitive artists, including Dunkley. Many Jamaicans believed that nature had a hidden knowledge to share.⁴ Over thirty-one plants are

² Veerle Poupeye, *Caribbean Art* (New York, N.Y: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 143.

³ Veerle Poupeye, *Caribbean Art*, 144.

⁴ Waugh, "Two Streams of Jamaican Art," 26.

linked to spirits on the island.⁵ Additionally, duppies – or malevolent Jamaican spirits of those who have passed – reside in the cottonwood trees, and some believe that these duppies can transform themselves into animals.⁶ For many Jamaicans, the spirit world was very much present on this corporeal plane, allowing the living to communicate with the spirits of deceased loved ones.⁷ Consequently, in the forests and wilderness of the island, the “plant life is alive with spirit power.”⁸

John Dunkley’s artwork was both influential and extraordinary. Despite never rising to financial success, he was well-regarded during his lifetime.⁹ The *Daily Gleaner* wrote:

Dunkley had the important addition, apart from the imaginative vision, of considerable natural talent for the medium. . . . Perhaps in many ways – particularly in the completeness of his pictures (with a few exceptions), their self-contained-ness and their power – Dunkley might be regarded as the most outstanding Jamaican painter produced since the art upsurge in the late thirties.¹⁰

Dunkley had a personal repertoire of recurrent symbols in his work, although he never revealed their meaning. While much of the scenery may at first appear arbitrary, each element is carefully depicted and unnervingly deliberate.¹¹ Dunkley often worked on his

⁵ John Rashford, “Plants, Spirits, and the Meaning of ‘John’ in Jamaica,” *Jamaica Journal* 17, no. 2 (May 1984): 68.

⁶ Martha Warren Beckwith, *Black Roadways: A Study of Jamaican Folk Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1929), 89, 104.

⁷ MacEdward Leach, “Jamaican Duppy Lore,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 74, no. 293 (1961): 207.

⁸ Rashford, “Plants, Spirits, and the Meaning of ‘John’ in Jamaica,” 68.

⁹ Cassie Dunkley, “The Life of John Dunkley,” reprinted in *Jamaica Journal* 11, no. 1–2 (August 1977): 82.

¹⁰ Norman Rae, “John Dunkley, Henry Daley Retrospective Show: A Legacy,” *The Daily Gleaner*, April 30, 1960.

¹¹ Hugh Dunphy quoted in David Boxer, ed., *John Dunkley* (Kingston, Jamaica: National Gallery of Jamaica, 1976), 17.

paintings over several months or years.¹² Dunkley told historian Philip Sherlock, “sometimes I start a painting, and when I paint I just take a walk.”¹³ When he was unhappy, he left the shop and walked around the streets of Kingston to ruminate over the painting, much like the flaneurs of Paris, who famously walked the streets to gain artistic inspiration from their picturesque environment.¹⁴ Dunkley covered areas of the composition with white paint when he felt that they were not in harmony with his vision.¹⁵ Although never explained by the artist, each component of his paintings was meaningful, especially in light of the history of Jamaica, the Afro-Caribbean experience, and John Dunkley's own life and work.

Spider's Web (Jerboa) displays one of Dunkley's most complex and intriguing uses of symbolism. In this narrow painting, Dunkley creates a vignette with the foregrounded trees, framing a winding path filled with strange creatures. Three small spiders on their vertical silk strings are illuminated in the scene, one of which sits atop a spiraled web, as a tiny jerboa crouches behind the tree. Bright leaves are illuminated as rest of the landscape is submerged in darkness. *Spider's Web (Jerboa)* (Figure 2) is clearly filled with elements and symbols waiting to be deciphered. The most intriguing and complicated of these is the phallus. On the right side of the canvas, a phallus-shaped branch interrupts the scene. Protruding from the small truncated tree, the symbol is conspicuous yet natural within the composition.

Dunkley incorporated this phallic symbol within almost all of his work. In *Frog Among Rocks* (Figure 3), a path narrowly winds around a ravine until interrupted by a

¹² David Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” in *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*, (Miami, FL: Prestel, 2017), 22.

¹³ Philip Sherlock quoted in David Boxer, ed., *John Dunkley*, 3.

¹⁴ Boxer, ed., *John Dunkley*, 3.

¹⁵ Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 22.

massive truncated tree growing horizontally from an adjacent mound; the tree protrudes into the center of the scene, interrupting the quiet, still countryside. Here, not only is the cylindrical log massive, but it is also bright white and grey, illuminating the phallus through contrast. Thus, the large phallic symbol becomes the center of the landscape and, as the animals appear motionless and the river immobile, the phallus energizes this stagnant scene. In *Spider's Web* (Figure 4) – another of Dunkley's many paintings incorporating the spider and its web – the double web at the left side of the painting is held together by two branches. One web, that loops around from its roots, ending in a massive bloom at the end, has a branch sprouting off of it, again referencing male genitalia, however much more subtly. Across this scene, another phallus is attached to a bushy tree, as if a branch had been lobbed off. Again, in *Scene with Path* (Figure 5), Dunkley employs the use of the tree metaphor, as a pruned branch juts out of the top of the tree.

Dunkley balances his use of phallic symbols with yonic symbols. The vaginal symbol is typically depicted as a deep ravine between two rocks or cliffs. In *Mountain Edge* (Figure 6), the innuendo is apparent as two rocky overhangs fill the majority of the canvas. Their shadows both cast inward creating a deep gorge that implies a yonic form. This imagery is repeated in *The Waterfall* (Figure 7), where again the gorge is intended to reference the female genitalia, as the two cliffs reference a woman's thighs. The yonic symbolism again appears in *House and Ravine* (Figure 8) as a pathway splits in two towards the bottom of the canvas revealing a deep angled crevasse. Although less pronounced and less recurrent than the phallus, it is unmistakable that the vaginal symbolism is purposeful and meaningful.

Both the yonic and phallic symbols can be found in some manner in almost all of Dunkley's paintings, however, he left no clues to their meaning. As such, this paper will

continue to decode Dunkley's personal symbolic web, focusing on his humanization of the landscape through sexualized elements. In doing so, I will analyze these symbols through a decolonial lens in relation to Dunkley's socio-political interests.

In order to execute this, the following chapter will examine Dunkley's life. I will address Dunkley's biography in order to shed light on his artwork and political interests. This self-taught artist was relatively well-known during his time in Kingston, however he never gained significant recognition internationally or achieved financial success. Thus, Dunkley's biography is fairly unknown outside of Jamaica; Chapter 2 will remedy this. Additionally, I will introduce the broader artistic framework that Dunkley is working within: the Intuitives. Within this group of independent artists, Dunkley was able to paint the Afro-Jamaican experience through their own voices.

Chapter 3 will further examine Dunkley's paintings in light of his decolonial interests. Dunkley was an acolyte of Pan-Africanism. While there are many different manifestations of Pan-Africanism, the teachings of Marcus Garvey in particular resonated with Dunkley and his fellow Jamaicans. Chapter 3 will explore how this interest is manifested in his artwork. Additionally, it will explore themes of decolonialism and the manner in which Dunkley calls his peers to decolonial action.

As Dunkley's decolonial interests are evident, Chapter 4 will evaluate the sexualized symbolism consistent in Dunkley's paintings, in particular, Dunkley's use of the vaginal symbol as valleys between two cliffs, or deep ravines with streams, and the phallic symbol as branches and tree trunks, which connects these elements to nature. Thus, his mystical landscapes are also living landscapes, full of sexual energy. Chapter 4 will explore these symbols as a decolonial tactic that reclaimed power and instilled hope for the future.

Finally, Chapter 5 will explore Dunkley's work in the broader context of Jamaican culture. It will first do this by examining how Dunkley and the Intuitive movement are both significant to Jamaican nationalism. Then it will scrutinize Dunkley's use of landscape in relation to contemporary concerns. As Dunkley subverts the expected in Caribbean art, he manipulates the landscape to reveal its darker side.

CHAPTER 2
JOHN DUNKLEY:
THE LIFE OF AN INTUITIVE ARTIST

As little has been written on John Dunkley, the biographical research primarily builds off of the scholarship of a handful of individuals and primary sources. Cassie Dunkley (formerly Cassie Fraser) wrote a one-page biography, “The Life of John Dunkley,” published in the catalog of a retrospective at the National Gallery of Jamaica in 1948 for her husband.¹ This short passage provides much of the factual information known of Dunkley’s life. Additionally, the Jamaican newspaper, the *Daily Gleaner*, provides insight into how often Dunkley formally exhibited his work, as well as the political and cultural events of concern to Jamaicans at this time. Additionally, several exhibition catalogs, including *The Jamaica Artists Exhibition* (1945), *All-Island Exhibition of Paintings* (1946), and *Memorial Anniversary Exhibition of the late John Dunkley, Artist, and Sculptor* (1948), are all invaluable primary sources.

The foremost academic authority on Dunkley is David Boxer, the director and curator of the National Gallery of Jamaica from 1975 to 2013. Boxer exhibited Dunkley’s work in a retrospective in 1975, as well as in a group exhibition titled *The Intuitive Eye* in 1979.² Additionally, Boxer published several books including *Jamaican Art, 1922-1982*, that places Dunkley at the heart of Jamaican Modernism because he was the first of the Intuitive artists.³

¹ Dunkley, “The Life of John Dunkley,” 82.

² David Boxer, “A Jamaican National Treasure,” *Blouin Art and Auction* 40, no. 9 (May 2017): 85.

³ David Boxer, *Jamaican Art, 1922-1982* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution and the National Gallery of Jamaica, 1983).

Recently, Boxer worked with curator Diana Nawi on the 2017 exhibition *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night* at the Pérez Art Museum Miami, which provided key facts on the artist, as well as contemporary insights.⁴ Although there is minimal and contradictory information among these academic and primary sources, most of the basic facts of Dunkley's life are agreed upon.

Dunkley was born in 1891 in Savanna-la-Mar, a small port town in rural southwest Jamaica.⁵ Like many Jamaicans at the time, Dunkley left school at a young age, possibly due to an eye injury.⁶ He fathered two sons with two different women before setting off on his travels to find work.⁷ During the period between 1912 and 1929, Dunkley traveled around Central America and the Caribbean. Circular migration in search of work was common in the early twentieth century between countries in the Caribbean and Central America, and Dunkley likely returned to Jamaica between jobs.⁸ There is much discrepancy on exactly where else Dunkley traveled during this time. Cassie Dunkley claims that he traveled extensively, including to Scotland, England, and North America.⁹ However, according to Boxer, there is no documentary evidence of his travels, except one record that proves he worked for the Chiriquí Land Company in Panama at the end of the 1920s.¹⁰ While on his

⁴ Diana Nawi et al., *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night* (Miami, FL: Prestel, 2017).

⁵ David Ebony, "Caribbean Twilight," *Magazine Antiques* 185, no. 4 (August 7, 2018): 88.

⁶ Dunkley, "The Life of John Dunkley," 82.

⁷ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 19.

⁸ Olive Senior, "On the Edge of the Abyss: John Dunkley as a Diasporic Subject," in *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*, (Miami, FL: Prestel, 2017) 71. Often, Jamaicans would migrate to Central America to find work and return home occasionally, which is likely the case with Dunkley as evidence has shown that Cassie Fraser gave birth to a son in 1926, and he is believed to be John Dunkley's son.

⁹ Dunkley, "The Life of John Dunkley," 82.

¹⁰ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 19.

travels, he likely learned photographic techniques as an apprentice for a short time in Panama or Costa Rica.¹¹

Around 1931, Dunkley moved back to Kingston, where he married Cassie, who bore him two more children.¹² He then opened up a barbershop on Princess Street in an Afro-Jamaican populated neighborhood in Kingston.¹³ This one-story wooden building served as his salon, studio, and at times, family home, as the economy declined in Jamaica during the Great Depression. Behind the building, he kept a small garden where he planted vegetables and raised small animals, so the family always had food during hard times.¹⁴

This barbershop had an ornately decorated interior space. Dunkley adorned his shop with brightly colored paint, images from magazines, and a few of his own artworks. Edna Manley, the “mother of Jamaican art” and wife to politician and activist Norman Manley, describes the overwhelming aesthetic of the barbershop in the *Jamaica Journal*:¹⁵

As I stepped through the door of the shop I literally gasped. There was nothing in his sombre paintings to prepare me to expect this. Around the doors and windows of the little room he had painted in gay brilliant colours in enamel, the most lovely designs of flowers and leaves and fruits - the furniture too, each piece a gem of design and colour, was decorated. But the masterpiece in the centre of it all was the BARBER'S CHAIR. Never in all the world, I think could there be another barber's chair like this.

¹¹ Dunkley, “The Life of John Dunkley,” 82.

¹² Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 20.

¹³ Dunkley, “The Life of John Dunkley,” 82.

¹⁴ Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 20.

¹⁵ Betty Laduke, “Edna Manley: The Mother of Modern Jamaican Art,” *Woman's Art Journal* 7, no. 2 (1986): 36–40.

It was covered with designs - the back, the sides, the base, everything except the seat.

The whole room was aglow with colour.¹⁶

At this polychromatic shop, when he was not with customers, Dunkley worked on paintings in the back rooms.¹⁷ His customers and neighbors took pride in and ownership of this local artist.¹⁸ People congregated around the shop to see the latest painting.¹⁹

It was here that Dunkley's aptitude for art was "discovered." As legend tells it, in 1937, H. Delves Molesworth, then secretary of the Institute of Jamaica, walked into Dunkley's shop and was delighted by what he found.²⁰ Molesworth, excited to have discovered this "unknown" artist, introduced him to Edna Manley, who encouraged him to continue painting and to exhibit his work.²¹ Manley and Molesworth offered Dunkley a place to study and perfect his skills at the Institute of Jamaica; however, he declined the invitation for formal training, as he claimed he "saw things differently."²² However, he did begin showing his work regularly at the Institute of Jamaica and won a bronze medal at the 1939 New York World's Fair.²³

¹⁶ Edna Manley et al., "The Development of Jamaica Art: Five Perspectives," *Jamaica Journal* 15, no. 46 (1982): 43.

¹⁷ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 22.

¹⁸ Manley et al., "The Development of Jamaica Art: Five Perspectives," 44.

¹⁹ Boxer, ed., *John Dunkley*, 6.

²⁰ Boxer, *Jamaican Art, 1922-1982*, 16.

²¹ Dunkley, "The Life of John Dunkley," 82.

²² Boxer, *Jamaican Art, 1922-1982*, 16.

²³ "Dunkley Memorial Exhibition to Be Opened by Lady Huggins," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 9, 1948, 9.

Although Dunkley had no followers, and no direct stylistic trend emerged from his influence, his legacy is profound.²⁴ Dunkley is considered the first Intuitive painter. The term “Intuitive” refers to a group of artists who were self-taught, and who typically created work outside of the mainstream styles that reflected European trends. Intuitivism avoids mass production and kitsch, and cannot be labeled as “tourist art,” because these artists are often working independently outside of the mainstream and tourist art market.²⁵ Intuitives – including Dunkley, and such artists as Macilla “Kapo” Reynolds, Henry Daley, Ras Dizzy, David Miller Sr, David Miller Jr, and Everal “Brother” Brown – created art for themselves and their peers without the intention of becoming the influential artmakers of Jamaican history. David Boxer defines Intuitives as:

artists [who] paint or sculpt, intuitively. They are not guided by fashion. Their vision is pure and sincere, untarnished by art theories and philosophies, principles and movements. They are, for the most part, self-taught. Their visions (and many are true visionaries) as released through paint or wood, are unmediated expressions of their individual relationships with the world around them – and the worlds within.²⁶

No single style delimits the Intuitive artists; therefore, the criteria for this label are producing art outside of the mainstream trends, working without formal training, and creating autonomously from one another.²⁷ The Intuitives created art from their own individual vision,

²⁴ Edmund B. Gaither, *Jamaican Art Since the Thirties* (Atlanta, GA: Contemporary Jamaican Artists' Association/Spelman College, 1969), unpagued.

²⁵ Petrine Archer-Straw and Kim Robinson, *Jamaican Art: Then and Now* (Kingston, Jamaica: LMH Pub. Ltd., 2011), 127.

²⁶ Liz Waugh, “Two Streams of Jamaican Art,” *Circa*, no. 23 (1985): 24.

²⁷ David Boxer, *Fifteen Intuitives* (Kingston, Jamaica: The National Gallery of Jamaica, 1987), 3.

as they – particularly the early Intuitives – worked primarily without influence from one another. This autonomy is apparent when comparing the artwork of John Dunkley with that of his fellow Intuitive painters. The stark difference is evident when examining *Orange Grove* (Figure 9) by the most successful Jamaican Intuitive artist, Kapo, in contrast to Dunkley's *Banana Plantation*. Both images depict a fruit plantation. However, Kapo fills his canvas with bright colors against a blue sky, while Dunkley's nocturne is almost monochromatic blue. Although both works are stylized, Kapo uses flat color, whereas Dunkley employs an almost Impressionist style of applying paint by intermixing color on the canvas to create depth. Additionally, Kapo's painting has people marching back and forth on a lively road as they carry jugs and oranges. Dunkley, however, rarely depicts figures in his landscapes. His plantation is empty, save for a couple of quiet animals. The dissimilarity between these two paintings demonstrates the full range of styles and techniques that Intuitives employ.

Although the Intuitive artists worked independently from one another, that does not mean that they worked outside of their cultural contexts. Kapo and Dunkley, as well as all Intuitives, are often connected through themes, such as everyday life, nature, and the Jamaican experience.²⁸ Many Intuitives were extremely involved with, and aware of, current affairs, contemporary political movements, Western and non-Western history, and even past and present artistic trends. John Dunkley was the perfect example of this. Although he left school at age 14, Dunkley read both the daily newspaper and *Life* magazine, and engaged in dialogue with his peers regarding contemporary events, movements, and

²⁸ David Boxer, ed., *The Intuitive Eye* (Kingston, Jamaica: National Gallery of Jamaica, 1979), 5.

ideas.²⁹ Moreover, although Dunkley was never formally trained as an artist, not only did he exemplify skill in composition, brushwork, and imagination, but he was also interested in popular visual culture. Magazine pages filled Dunkley's studio. And he spent a great deal of time in the library of the Institute of Jamaica examining the artwork of the European painters, most likely that of Henri Rousseau, William Blake, Samuel Palmer, and Salvador Dalí.³⁰ Dunkley exemplifies Intuitive painters as a whole. Although not formally or traditionally educated, Dunkley was deeply aware of global affairs, international art trends, and domestic realities.

Unfortunately, Dunkley was not given the title of Intuitive artist during his lifetime, as the identification of this movement did not occur until the late 1970s. "Primitive," "naïve," or "outsider" art failed to encapsulate the Intuitive art movement. Primitivism, as William Rubin famously defines it, is typically a Western phenomenon, as European artists were influenced by the artwork of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, and incorporated their forms.³¹ Accordingly, Boxer believed "the term "primitives" offers at best an irritating ambiguity especially for people in the developing world."³² Also, the term "outsider" suggests an artist who is not in tune with contemporary events or mainstream culture. However, as previously stated, Jamaican Intuitives are often considered the "ultimate cultural

²⁹ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 44.

³⁰ Ibid., 21, 35, 36, 42. David Boxer compares Dunkley's work to these artists individually throughout *Neither Day Nor Night*. However, there is no concrete evidence that Dunkley was aware of and influenced by these artists. Upon discussion with Monique Barnett-Davidson and Dwayne Lyttle of the National Gallery of Jamaica, these possible influences may not be significant.

³¹ William Rubin, ed., *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern, in Two Volumes* (New York: Boston: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1984).

³² Boxer, ed., *The Intuitive Eye*, 5.

insiders.”³³ In response to this inadequacy, David Boxer coined the term “Intuitive” in the *Intuitive Eye* exhibition at the National Gallery of Jamaica in 1979.³⁴

In so doing, Boxer enabled the Intuitive artists to be taken seriously. The new title of Intuitive recognizes that these artists have equal – if not more – historical significance to the course of Jamaican and global art history than their formally-trained peers. Additionally, by naming this group of artists, Boxer creates a Jamaican artistic phenomenon that can be described outside of European terminology. Intuitivism, to the degree it is respected and revered in Jamaican culture, is unlike anything in the West (European and United States, primarily White, culture). Although modern and contemporary trends like *art brut*, outsider art, naïve art, and folk art have become increasingly popular in the West, the Intuitives in Jamaica are held in a remarkable amount of esteem primarily in Jamaican national culture.

As they worked outside of mainstream styles and influences, many of the Intuitives displayed a remarkable ability to access both their own subconscious minds and the collective subconscious.³⁵ Boxer suggested that there was a connection between the Intuitive painters, their African pasts, and their Jamaican realities.³⁶ Boxer claims that the Intuitive masters were in tune with the collective consciousness of the Black experience in the Caribbean. The contemporary Black experience is key to the success of the Intuitives, as they were able to create artwork that reflected the daily hardships, racism, colonial rule, and disenfranchisement of the collective diasporic experience.

³³ Anne Walmsley, Christopher Cozier, and Stanley Greaves, *Art in the Caribbean: An Introduction* (London: New Beacon Books Ltd, 2010), 78.

³⁴ Boxer, ed., *The Intuitive Eye*.

³⁵ Shirley Mayneir Burke, “The Intuitive Eye: A Heritage Recalled,” *Jamaica Journal* 13, no. 44 (June 1980): 19.

³⁶ David Boxer, “A Jamaican National Treasure,” 84.

The access to the Caribbean collective experience is exemplified in Dunkley's *Springboard* (Figure 10). Dunkley paints a diving board that peers out over a treacherous stream filled with unknown shrubs, rocks, and debris. The diving board does not fit in this threatening environment, forcing the viewer to wonder who is using this stream to swim. This image is likely a comment on racial segregation. The diving board is a reference to the Bournemouth Bath of Kingston, an elite swimming pool for white patrons only, as the diving board is stark white surrounded by dark hues.³⁷ In contrast, the swimming "pool" that Dunkley creates is in a public space and is therefore open to all. However not only does it fail to reflect the glamor of Kingston's "whites-only" pool, but it also is dangerous to those who choose to use it, as the murky water shows no indication of its depth. This unfinished painting is likely Dunkley's reflection on race relations and discrimination in Jamaica in the early twentieth century.³⁸ This frustration with segregation would have resonated with all Jamaicans and Afro-Caribbeans. Racism and oppression were a shared experience throughout the African Diaspora.

The Intuitives reflected the Afro-Caribbean experience, and thus helped define the national culture. Indeed, many were able to reflect their shared experiences through symbolism. The Intuitives worked outside of previously established symbolic codes and often relied on personal and collective experiences to create icons and meaning in their work.³⁹ This often stemmed from religious and folkloric beliefs that were common among rural Jamaicans, like the practice of interpreting signs in nature.

³⁷ Boxer, et al., "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 63.

³⁸ Ibid., 63.

³⁹ Waugh, "Two Streams of Jamaican Art," 26.

As a true Intuitive, Dunkley formulated his symbolic codes within landscape and nature, bringing each component to a hidden meaning. Not much is known about the significance each icon had for Dunkley, however, through interpretation of the work and historical context, it is possible to read the elements of the landscape in terms of Jamaica's cultural geography. The next chapter will further explore Dunkley's artwork in relation to his decolonial interests and Jamaican political movements.

CHAPTER 3

ART AND DECOLONIAL RESISTANCE

Dunkley's life was filled with struggles and hardships. As was outlined in the previous chapter, Dunkley travelled extensively to find work, worked vigorously during the Great Depression, and cared for a family of six, while only gaining minimal financial success from his artwork. Therefore, Pan-Africanism and decolonial themes recur in Dunkley's work and resonate with his fellow working-class Jamaicans.

It all started in his barber shop. Dunkley's colorful and lively salon acted as both his studio and a public space of ritual and debate. According to Olive Senior, a barbershop in Kingston was akin to an African American barbershop in Harlem. That is, it would have been a central public space where Black men could meet, groom, and converse.¹ The barbershop was a public space away from white men that allowed for "racial autonomy and cultural practices" that united Black men.² The Afro-Jamaican man would have felt at ease discussing politics and current affairs because, as Melissa Harris-Perry, in *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought*, has stated, "Black people in these spaces believe themselves to be free to talk to one another beyond the gaze of racial others."³ Dunkley purchased a copy of the *Daily Gleaner* every day and made a collection of literary materials available to customers in his shop, thus cultivating this culture of lively discussion.⁴

¹ Senior, "On the Edge of the Abyss: John Dunkley as a Diasporic Subject," 75.

² Quincy T. Mills, *Cutting along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 7.

³ Melissa Victoria Harris-Lacewell, *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.; Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2006), 9.

⁴ Senior, "On the Edge of the Abyss: John Dunkley as a Diasporic Subject," 75.

And there was much to discuss. Early twentieth-century Jamaica was rife with political movements, religious developments, and social change, due to the difficulties caused by the Great Depression, the ongoing colonial structure, and World War II. One of the significant developments in the political landscape of Jamaica in the 1930s and 1940s was the rise of socio-political movements that called for equality, pride, and resistance to assimilation among the Caribbean.

Notably, Pan-Africanism focused on the unification of descendants of African peoples throughout the diaspora and in Africa itself, through shared experiences of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, racial discrimination, and colonial oppression.⁵ Because of the common circular migration in the Caribbean and Central America, those who returned to Jamaica after traveling related strongly to the ideas of Pan-Africanism. Travel reinforced a broader sense of unity among African descendants around the globe, and instilled in them a sense their own power.⁶ While Pan-Africanism has no definite beginnings, emerging in the fifteenth century and developing over time, much of the modern understanding of Pan-Africanism stems from the teaching of Marcus Garvey.⁷

Garvey, the Jamaican-born activist, was known for forming the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, as well as the Black Star Line.⁸ Through these projects, Garvey intended to improve the condition of Black people

⁵ “Pan-African Cultural Manifesto,” *Présence Africaine*, no. 71 (1969): 124–32.

⁶ Senior, “On the Edge of the Abyss: John Dunkley as a Diasporic Subject,” 75.

⁷ John Henrik Clarke, “Pan-Africanism: A Brief History of An Idea in the African World,” *Présence Africaine*, no. 145 (1988): 28-9.

⁸ Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 61.

worldwide, focusing on the unification of African-American peoples throughout the diaspora and Africa, and forming a universal Black consciousness.⁹ Garvey believed that some African descendants of the Diaspora should return to their homeland in Africa and form an all-Black nation, thus promoting the Back-to-Africa movement.¹⁰ Garvey is considered a Jamaican national hero and was significant in inspiring future movements and actions. The *Jamaica Journal* reflected his influence thirty years after his death:

What [Aimé] Césaire was in the intellectual and cultural field, Marcus Garvey of Jamaica was in the political agitational field. His great organization based in the United States and the massive plan for a physical return to Africa comprised the corollary of the spiritual and intellectual return of the Negritude movement. While the movement failed, it has shaken up the fantasy and stirred the imagination of millions of black 'folk' in the United States and the Caribbean. His movement awakened an awareness of Africa, a revaluation of Africa, and a sense of pride in the past, whose myth had been used to keep black people in servitude and self-contempt. This started the process which has led in a direct line to the present Black Power movement.¹¹

Garvey was influential all over the world, and as a Jamaican native, his teachings were extremely popular on the island. In fact, the *Daily Gleaner* reported that “no denser crowd has ever been witnessed in Kingston” than when Garvey returned home in 1927.¹²

⁹ Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 248.

¹⁰ Claudius Fergus, “From Prophecy to Policy: Marcus Garvey and the Evolution of Pan-African Citizenship,” *The Global South* 4, no. 2 (2010): 37.

¹¹ Sylvia Wynter, “Jonkkonnu in Jamaica: Towards the Interpretation of Folk Dance as a Cultural Process,” *Jamaica Journal* 4, no. 2 (June 1970): 34.

¹² Erna Brodber, “Marcus Garvey and the Politicisation of Some Afro-Jamaicans in the 1920s and 1930s,” *Jamaica Journal* 20, no. 3 (October 1987): 66.

Garvey's activism and the Back-to-Africa movement contributed to the founding of Rastafari, an Afrocentric religion and political movement that emerged in Jamaica in the 1930s. This Abrahamic religion focuses on the oppression of those of the African Diaspora and refers to Africa as the Promised Land.¹³ The Ethiopian Emperor, Haile Selassie, is regarded as the second coming of Christ in the Rastafarian belief system.¹⁴ By placing such emphasis on this African ruler and the Promised Land, Rastafari is not only a religion but also a Black nationalist movement. John Dunkley was aware of Rastafari and its Afrocentric motivations, although he was not a Rastafarian.¹⁵ Despite not being an active participant in this religious movement, he knew of the principles behind the movement. Dunkley was inspired by the message of Rastafari, the symbolism it carried, and its ability to excite and inspire young Jamaicans at the time.¹⁶ Dunkley's barbershop was a center for conversation, and he stayed abreast with each of these contemporary movements, discussing them with his clients at great length.¹⁷

That Dunkley was conscious of Pan-Africanism, Marcus Garvey, and the Rastafarian movement, is exemplified in *Mountain Edge*. In this painting, a precarious bridge of wooden planks crosses a deep gorge that takes up the bottom two-thirds of the painting. This minimalist composition does not include the lush wilderness or forest creatures that is typical of most of Dunkley's works. However, even in the absence of signs of life, Dunkley crafted

¹³ Barry Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology*, Utopianism and Communitarianism (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 1994), 1.

¹⁴ Delano Vincent Palmer, *Messianic "I" and Rastafari in New Testament Dialogue: Bio-Narratives, the Apocalypse, and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 20-23.

¹⁵ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 32.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁷ Senior, "On the Edge of the Abyss: John Dunkley as a Diasporic Subject," 75.

symbolical meaning through dramatic compositional elements. The bridge in *Mountain Edge* succumbs to its own weight and bows in the middle as it is held up by two logs on either side, all of which looks like it will fall into the gorge underneath. This massive gorge beneath it is almost entirely black, save for a small grey sliver at the bottom, that could either represent land or a stream, that trails backward into the abyss. With this massive void between the two cliffs, and the gap between the bridge and the ground, emptiness takes up the center of the piece, thus dominating the composition. The blue-grey sky peers over a misty mountain range in the distance. The painting is still and quiet, but full of subtle angst.

The bridge is barely being held up. Underneath the logs sits a thin board that supports the beams, curving toward the ravine under its own weight. This piece of wood is made up of a thin layer of red, yellow, and green in the dull palette typical of Dunkley's panels. In the catalog for *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*, David Boxer suggests an allegorical interpretation of Dunkley's mysterious bridge:

I propose that what Dunkley presents in *Mountain Edge* is an elaborate metaphor: the bridge, fragile and on the verge of collapsing, is held aloft and viable by an *idea*, the idea of Pan-Africanism symbolized by the Ethiopian and Rastafarian tricolor. The bridge links Africa to the new world of Garvey and Rastafarianism, each represented through a mirrored bluff. But the link is fragile.¹⁸

The Ethiopian and Rastafarian flags are red, yellow, and green. Dunkley represented these movements as metaphorically connected, reflecting his allegiance to Marcus Garvey and his interest in Pan-Africanism. Additionally, this painting was likely completed around 1940,

¹⁸ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 39.

the year Marcus Garvey died.¹⁹ As the sky appears to be approaching dusk, Boxer suggests that Dunkley created this painting as a homage to Garvey by replacing the setting sun with blackness.²⁰ The Pan-African flag created by the Universal Negro Improvement Association is comprised of red, green, and black, rather than the yellow of the Ethiopian flag. In this tricolor, black represents “Black people whose existence as a nation, though not a nation-state, is affirmed by the existence of the flag.”²¹ Boxer proposes that the black setting sun represents Garvey himself and his legacy for all African descendants.²²

The bridge in *Mountain Edge* unites Ethiopia and Rastafarianism in Pan-Africanism, as its logs are supported by the same political and religious movements. Pan-Africanism lifts up the oppressed people, protecting and uniting them. Although Dunkley paints this bridge as a dangerous combination of wooden logs ready to collapse, it does not cave. Dunkley strongly supported Garvey, and this allegory of the spirit bridge points to his sincere belief in Pan-Africanism as a mode of resistance.

The viewers’ eyes wander from contemplation of Dunkley’s gravity-defying bridge to the massive empty void in the center of *Mountain Edge*. Many of Dunkley's paintings trail off into an everlasting vanishing point and often lead to a dark sky in the distance without any apparent end to the landscape; *Horror vacui* envelops every inch of the panel. *Mountain Edge* is different in that regard. Rather than placing the black void at the horizon line in the distance, Dunkley makes it the focal point of the composition. The choice to include this

¹⁹ Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 1.

²⁰ Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 39.

²¹ “History -Red - Black - Green,” The Official Website of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, accessed February 11, 2019, <http://www.theunia-acl.com/index.php/history-red-black-green>.

²² Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 39.

large, emptiness was indeed deliberate and rife with meaning. This empty abyss is the space between the two cliffs, the bridge, and the ground. The vacant space covers the majority of the canvas. The chasm, a liminal space, likewise invokes a metaphorical relationship to decolonialism.

Decolonialism, or decoloniality, according to Walter D. Mignolo, “means decolonial options confronting and delinking from coloniality, or the colonial matrix of power.”²³ Thus, decolonialism follows – or in the case of Jamaica, exists during – colonial occupation, and attempts to break down the colonial systems of power that benefit the white communities and oppress people of color. In 1492, Christopher Columbus claimed Jamaica in the name of Spain.²⁴ In 1655, the island was conquered by the English, who retained rule until 1962.²⁵ Great Britain exploited the country for labor, resources, and bodies, almost eradicating the indigenous population.²⁶ In doing so, Great Britain, and other Western nations, benefit to this day from the established system of oppression and exploitation. As Mignolo states in *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, “‘modernity’ is a complex narrative whose point of origination was Europe; a narrative that builds Western civilization by celebrating its achievements while hiding at the same time its darker side, ‘coloniality.’”²⁷ Thus, the reality

²³ Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, 1 edition (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2011), xxviii.

²⁴ W. J. Gardner, *A History of Jamaica from Its Discovery by Christopher Columbus to the Year 1872*, Cass Library of West Indian Studies, no. 17 (London: F. Cass, 1971), 2.

²⁵ Gardner, *A History of Jamaica from Its Discovery by Christopher Columbus to the Year 1872*, 27.

²⁶ Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica*, The Early Modern Americas (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc, 2016), 1-49.

²⁷ Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, 2-3.

of the repercussions of colonialism are hidden from the narrative, and decoloniality seeks to rectify that and to resist the colonial imposition.

“The process of decolonization,” according to Martiniquais writer, Frantz Fanon, “therefore, implies the urgent need to thoroughly challenge the colonial situation.”²⁸ John Dunkley’s artwork exemplifies a contribution to this process. Returning to the deep chasm in *Mountain Edge*, a clear allegory of decolonization is at play. The chasm exists in a transitional state, just as colonial Jamaica was in a transitional state as it moved between being truly British to being completely Jamaican. The chasm reflected this transitional moment and the possibility of cultural change.²⁹ According to Homi K. Bhabha, the “interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy”³⁰ In light of this, Dunkley’s art opened up a space for change. With his use of Pan-African symbolism, Dunkley called the Afro-Jamaicans to action.

Similarly, Dunkley’s most famous work, *Banana Plantation*, engaged in decolonial tactics. The painting is balanced by a stalky banana tree on the right and a brightly lit path of distant treetops on the left. A rabbit sits burrowed under a mound of raised earth that appears to trail off and meet the curving line of faraway banana trees. As they fade together into the dark background, patterned trees, leaves, and fruit fill the plane. A faintly glowing crescent moon in the top left corner appears to watch over the scene. The focal point of this painting is the small, grey rabbit sitting in profile. The artist depicts this creature as burrowed

²⁸ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, Reprint edition (New York: Grove Press, 2005), 2.

²⁹ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), 117.

³⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), 4.

underground; however, its hole sits next to the vegetation as if they are on the same plane. Dunkley manipulated the composition so that viewers see both under and above ground. Consequently, the rabbit is neither above nor below ground; it is burrowed underneath the earth, although it remains on the same plane as the rest of the image components. Therefore, the rabbit is neither hidden nor seen. Viewers can see the rabbit, while it is buried from the rest of the composition. The rabbit is hidden in plain sight.

As Dunkley plays with the visibility of the rabbit in this work, he addresses decolonial concerns. Dunkley, through the placement of the rabbit, references the Afro-Jamaican in this context. They are there and have always been there; however, their presence has been stifled by underrepresentation, marginalization, and political control. The rabbit is unseen because due to the colonial system, the Afro-Jamaican presence – although the racial majority – was considered unimportant to the colonial rulers. According to postcolonial theorist, Robert J.C. Young, “the postcolonial has always been concerned with a politics of invisibility: it makes the invisible visible. This is entirely paradoxical to the extent that its object was never, in fact, invisible, but rather the ‘invisible visible’: it was not seen by those in power who determine the fault lines between the visible and the invisible.”³¹

Furthermore, as the rabbit hides deep in its burrow, its head slumps downward, ears drooping behind him, rather than raised in excitement. The rabbit’s facial expression anthropomorphizes him. The one eye in view appears to convey a message of sorrow, exhaustion, and wariness. The creature peers down at his one tiny banana, while the composition is filled with banana trees bearing plentiful fruit. Dunkley worked for the Chiriquí Land Company in Panama, a division of the United Fruit Company owned by the

³¹ Robert J.C. Young, “Postcolonial Remains,” *New Literary History* 43, no. 1 (2012): 23.

United States.³² Thus, the banana trees are a metaphor for his own experience on the plantation. As a janitor, he likely worked long and hard hours, while earning low wages.³³ Dunkley was creating an allegory of the plantation system, displaying both the scarcity and abundance.

Finally, to the right of the rabbit sits a small crab, which unlike the hare, contains no human-like characteristics: no facial expressions and no gesture. Rather than a character, like the rabbit, this crab is exclusively symbolic. Boxer suggests that the crab, which appears in several of Dunkley's works, including *Road to Church* (Figure 11) and *Spider's Web*, is a reference to illness and death.³⁴ When painting this work, Dunkley was near the end of his life and knew of his terminal illness. Thus, he incorporated the zodiac symbol "Cancer" within these works.³⁵ As the scene represents the plantation system, the Cancer symbol could reference both the "work-until-you-die" system at play during the Great Depression and the plantation system's continuous destruction of the land and Afro-Caribbean bodies. Dunkley employs the crab to create a psychoanalytic scene of his own illness and the broader history of death in the cultural geography of Jamaica.

Garvey stated, "liberate the minds of men and ultimately you will liberate the bodies of men."³⁶ Dunkley's artwork exemplifies this by calling decolonial ideas to the attention of

³² James W. Martin, *Banana Cowboys: The United Fruit Company and the Culture of Corporate Colonialism* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018), 3, 120.

³³ Martin, *Banana Cowboys*, 41.

³⁴ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 62-3.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁶ Marcus Garvey, "Made in Harlem, New York, 1924," Marcus Garvey Tribute, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://marcusgarvey.com/?p=830>.

his peers. Dunkley kept the majority of his works in his barber shop, transforming it into a makeshift gallery.³⁷ His intended audience was his fellow working-class Jamaicans. Within his hidden symbolic code, Dunkley encrypts symbolism that would be readable by his peers and would likely be incomprehensible to non-Jamaican outsiders.

Demonstrative of this is the symbol of the spider that is repeated in several of Dunkley's works. In *Spider Web*, as Dunkley manipulates the perspectives on this elaborate painting of a roadway, two spider webs fill the left side of the horizontal panel. One silky thread shoots diagonally across the foreground of the composition, connecting the spider webs to a rock opposite the river. Spiders crawl across the river on their string, safely arriving at their destination. The spider appears again in *Road to Church*. The visual elements in this tall and narrow painting form a vignette around a church off in the distance. A young woman rests on a stone fence along the long pathway. She does not gaze up at the distant chapel, but instead turns her attention to a spider in a tree. And again, in *Spider's Web (Jerboa)*, three small spiders on their vertical silk strings are illuminated in the scene, one of which sits atop a spiraled web. Jamaicans would have immediately recognized all of these spiders and their webs as the legendary Anancy.³⁸

Anancy (or Anansi) was a spider character from the folklore of the Ashanti people of Ghana. The tale survived the middle passage of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.³⁹ Anancy narratives became especially popular through oral tradition in Jamaica and are still known by almost all Jamaicans today, through storytelling, cartoons, and pantomime. In the hundreds

³⁷ Manley et al., "The Development of Jamaica Art: Five Perspectives," 43.

³⁸ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 40.

³⁹ Philip M. Peek and Kwesi Yankah, *African Folklore: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7.

of tales about Anancy, the character is known as a trickster who often, but not always, outsmarts larger, stronger animals, through deception and wit.⁴⁰ The stories are typically humorous; however, they are filled with deception, manipulation and, occasionally, violence. Anancy is praised for his ability to survive.⁴¹

Anancy tales had a strong influence on Jamaican culture during Jamaica's plantation era. Before emancipation, Africans and their descendants found that the folkloric spider represented their own experiences. According to Emily Zobel Marshall, slaves and maroons, or escaped slaves, found that Anancy “challenged the system of their oppression and kept alive faith in the possibility of freedom.”⁴² Thus telling Anancy stories not only encouraged unity but also became a teaching tool that encouraged methods of resistance and rebellion against the plantation system. Marshall states that "Anansi tales were defiant ‘hidden transcripts’ aimed at undermining the imperial powers, psychologically, culturally, and practically.”⁴³ Maroons and slaves took Anancy stories to heart and began rebelling against their masters and oppressors, resulting in several slave rebellions in Jamaica from 1760 to 1831, as well as more subtle forms of challenge to the system, such as working and walking slowly, vandalizing machinery, stealing, flattering, and feigning stupidity or confusion.⁴⁴ Anancy and his usual tactics of trickery and deception became a symbol of resistance and

⁴⁰ Peek et al., *African Folklore*, 269.

⁴¹ Daryl Cumber Dance, *Folklore from Contemporary Jamaicans* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992) 11.

⁴² Emily Zobel Marshall, *Anansi's Journey: A Story of Jamaican Cultural Resistance* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2012) 94.

⁴³ Marshall, *Anansi's Journey*, 180.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 120.

survival during this era. Anancy, being a witty and cunning character, found ways to survive when the odds were against him.⁴⁵

Following emancipation, Anancy remained a symbol for cultural resistance. Still a popular figure in Jamaican literature and theater today, Anancy persisted into the twentieth century as a metaphor for the disempowered Black Jamaican.⁴⁶ As the spider is victorious over other animals, the Anancy tales can be interpreted as stories of the triumph of the Black man over his oppressors.⁴⁷ Dunkley's repeated use of the spider symbol is purposeful. He utilized the spider trickster as a decolonial gesture. Anancy evoked a range of hidden meanings for Jamaicans, as well as many other West African and Caribbean peoples. Thus, Dunkley's decolonial tactic was clearly pointed toward his fellow Afro-Caribbeans, calling them to action.

Finally, Dunkley's use of light displays a unique form of decolonial resistance. Dunkley chooses to employ dark, cool colors, quite opposite of the outsider ideal of the Caribbean. The colonizers fetishized the Caribbean as a land that would provide wealth and prosperity. From Christopher Columbus setting foot on Jamaica to the present-day dream vacation, the Caribbean is seen as an exotic, sensual paradise.⁴⁸ Dunkley subverts these projected beliefs through his unusual color palette.

Tourism in Jamaica began in the 1860s and quickly became a significant economic industry for the island. As such, Jamaica, and much of the Caribbean, is often viewed from

⁴⁵ Emily Zobel Marshall, "Liminal Anansi: Symbol of Order and Chaos an Exploration of Anansi's Roots Amongst the Asante of Ghana," *Caribbean Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (2007): 40.

⁴⁶ Marshall, *Anansi's Journey*, 179.

⁴⁷ Dance, *Folklore from Contemporary Jamaicans*, 12.

⁴⁸ Karen Wilkes, *Whiteness, Weddings, and Tourism in the Caribbean: Paradise for Sale* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2016), 54.

an outsider perspective as an Eden-like fantasy.⁴⁹ The cultural construct of the Caribbean in the imagination of the West not only idealizes the Caribbean, but also engenders and sexualizes it. The lust for its people, exports, wealth, and beauty combines into a sensual imaginary belief. Kamala Kempadoo describes the sexual objectification of the Caribbean in *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race, and Sexual Labor*:

Its perceived feral nature once evoked images of wild and savage men who ate human flesh (Cannibals) and sexually precocious women (Amazons) who were to be tamed and controlled in the name of God and the Crown in order that Europe could secure its cornucopia of riches. To many, the Caribbean continues to be an unruly and promiscuous place. Territories that once served as sex havens for the colonial elite are today frequented by sex tourists, and several of the island economies now depend upon the region's racialized, sexualized image.⁵⁰

Returning to the comparison of Dunkley's *Banana Plantation* and Kapo's *Orange Grove* the overall tone of these paintings is set though their use of light. Kapo's painting is well lit by the daylight, introducing the light-heartedness of the workers on the plantation. This aligns with the projected ideal of an island paradise, one filled with warmth, beauty, and color.⁵¹ However the lack of light in Dunkley's work brings the opposite effect. *Banana Plantation* does not reflect a tropical Eden. The darkness that fills the page implies something more sinister in the Caribbean and reflects the greater history of exploitation.

⁴⁹ Frank Taylor, *To Hell with Paradise: A History of the Jamaican Tourist Industry*, Pitt Latin American Series (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), 8.

⁵⁰ Kamala Kempadoo, *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race, and Sexual Labor* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 2.

⁵¹ Although this may not have been Kapo's personal intention.

Dunkley's subversion of the idealized, picturesque landscape diverges from the Western projection of the Caribbean. As he paints these Jamaican scenes, Dunkley subverts the outsider expectation of a tropical paradise. Dunkley forgoes bright colors and tranquil sunsets for the grim reality reflected in the grey and blue monotone. In doing so, he moves away from the imagined ideal of Jamaican paradise, in favor of a decolonial commentary on the Caribbean reality. By disrupting what is expected by foreign audiences, Dunkley brings the reality to life.

John Dunkley was clearly interested in the political movements of the 1930s and 1940s. Inspired by Marcus Garvey, Dunkley's barber shop acted as a safe space for his clients and friends to converse and discuss Pan-Africanism. Through his artwork, Dunkley's interest in this wide-spread movement and the process of decolonialism is evident. Additionally, through his use of insular symbolism, it is clear that he believes the beginnings of decolonialism come from the colonized themselves, rather than appealing to the colonizers. Thus, Dunkley's audience is intended to read decolonial meaning within his symbolism, which may be lost on Western or contemporary audiences. The following chapter will further explore Dunkley's use of symbolism as a decolonial process and will focus on his sexualization of the landscape as a metaphor for the destruction and reclaiming of Jamaica.

CHAPTER 4
RECLAIMING POWER THROUGH
THE EROTIC LANDSCAPE

As outlined in the previous chapter, Dunkley's interest in decolonialism is revealed through his artwork. Many of the hidden symbols in his landscape speak to his Caribbean peers and call for decolonial action. This theme is carried on through Dunkley's sexualized symbolism. Dunkley's work, although primarily nature scenes, is highly erotic. Dunkley incorporates both female and male genitalia within the landscape, forcing nature to come alive and tell its own story. The concept of anthropomorphizing the landscape has a particular resonance in the Caribbean, because, as stated in Chapter 1, for many of Dunkley's Jamaican contemporaries, nature was supernatural.¹ Stemming from their African beliefs, Jamaicans believed that spirits lived in the forests and plant life had healing powers.²

The Jamaican living landscape itself may have inspired this anthropomorphizing of nature through sexual imagery. David Boxer proposes that Dunkley was inspired by the famous "Pum Pum Rock," or "Pym Rock," at the Rio Cobre, which was on the route to Kingston and thus well known to Jamaicans who had traveled past it.³ Pum Pum Rock (Figure 12) is famous to this day in Jamaica as an explicitly sexual natural rock formation, resembling female genitalia. As "Pum Pum" is a Jamaican slang term for vagina, this crevice

¹ Rashford, "Plants, Spirits, and the Meaning of 'John' in Jamaica," 68.

² Barry Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology, Utopianism and Communitarianism* (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 1994) 26-7.

³ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 29.

in the side of a gorge likely contributed to Dunkley's sexualization of the landscape.⁴

Dunkley would have certainly been familiar with this natural topography, not only because it was – and still is – quite notorious in Kingston, but also because he painted a scene of the Rio Cobre in *Flat Bridge* (Figure 13), a site only a mile south of Pum Pum Rock.⁵ This famous rock was likely the inspiration for the yonic rocks seen in *The Waterfall* and *Mountain Edge*, which contain rock formations and ravines that resemble vaginas.

Boxer claims that this strange rock formation “occupies a special place in [the Jamaican] spiritual imagination,” especially considering that there was once a phallic rock that stood perpendicular across from Pum Pum rock.⁶ Although removed in the 1950s, this erect rock illustrated a metaphor of sexual intercourse within the natural world. This coincidental juxtaposition of erotic imagery inspired Dunkley’s sexualization of the landscape. As Boxer further states: “nature’s metaphors, made so by the imagination of man, Pym Rock, and the phallic rock, . . . became principal triggers for Dunkley, giving rise to his anthropomorphizing of the landscape and a visual encoding of sexual fantasy, and perhaps memory, as well.”⁷

This erotic and energetic rock formation is likely referenced in Dunkley's *Feeding the Fishes* (Figure 14). This painting depicts a woman hunched over a river, fishing. However, a

⁴ “Pum Pum | Patois Definition on Jamaican Patwah,” Jamaican Patwah, accessed March 16, 2019, <http://jamaicanpatwah.com/term/pum-pum/1065>.

⁵ “The Pum Pum Rock,” *Jamaica in a Thousand Words* (blog), May 12, 2016, <https://jamaicainathousandwords.wordpress.com/2016/05/12/the-pum-pum-rock/>.

⁶ Boxer, “The Life and Art of John Dunkley,” 29. In this section of *Neither Day nor Night*, Boxer provides an in-depth psychoanalysis of the phallic symbol, focusing on Dunkley’s possible sexual frustration and fear of impotency.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

large trunk penetrates the foreground of the composition, pointing towards a crevice in the flat rock across the stream. Here, Dunkley created a similar motif to the natural formation of the Pum Pum Rock and its adjacent phallic rock. Dunkley not only overtly eroticizes the composition but also creates a scene of sexual intercourse between the natural elements of the landscape.⁸ The theme of sexual geography is pronounced in *Frog Among Rocks*, where the massive trunk extends over a yonic gorge; and again, in *House and Ravine*, a painting of similar composition and metaphor. By depicting sexual intercourse through rocks, trees, and other non-human components of the landscape, the artist morphs these natural features of the environment into characters within the composition.

Clearly, to personify the landscape, Dunkley adds human characteristics to the natural world, in this case genitalia. This was an instinctive stylistic decision, inspired by the cultural landscape. “Endowing artifacts with human forms or characteristics,” according to Caroline van Eck, “is an almost universal feature of creating and understanding art.”⁹ Creating the personifying inanimate or inhuman objects is common throughout all of art history and colloquially projecting human characteristics onto landscape is commonplace and expressive of the subconscious.¹⁰ As Susan Donahue Kuretsky states:

A landscape may be thought of as the external countenance of nature whose varied topography, alive in its capacity to express mood, covers a deeper underlying core that remains hidden. Moreover, as Susan Stewart has discussed, the terminology used to describe landscape has often projected notions of an enormous human body upon

⁸ Ibid., 29.

⁹ Elizabeth King et al., “Notes from the Field: Anthropomorphism,” *The Art Bulletin* 94, no. 1 (2012): 16.

¹⁰ Susan Donahue Kuretsky, “The Face in the Landscape: A Puzzling Print by Matthäus Merian, the Elder,” in *In His Milieu*, ed. A. Golahny, M.M. Mochizuki, and L. Vergara (Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 227.

nature, as when one speaks of the mouth of a river, foothills, or finger lakes, or when stories in folklore attribute landscape formations to the acts of giants in the earth.¹¹

Clearly, the idea of bringing the landscape to life was already an intuitive decision for Dunkley. By making that decision and humanizing the earth, Dunkley added another layer of decolonial symbolism to his work. Dunkley made the land itself a character in his narrative. In doing so, Dunkley symbolized the exploitation of the land by referencing the sexual exploitation of the eroticized body. And by choosing the genitalia, rather than a less fetishized human aspect, Dunkley engenders the landscape, thus introducing the power struggles associated with colonialism.

Dunkley employs the erotic symbols to expose the exploitation and exoticism of the Caribbean by the colonizing West. As Kempadoo explains, the Jamaican and Caribbean people themselves were eroticized alongside the Caribbean fantasy. She goes on to explain:

The notion of exoticism captures the simultaneous romanticization and domination of the racial, ethnic, or cultural Other that has occurred through colonial and imperialist projects. As an approach to the non-Western world, it is associated with the legitimation of European conquest, control, and domination, as well as for eighteenth century escapist fantasies and vicarious enjoyment of sex and violence by European literary intellectuals and artists.¹²

Colonizers were fascinated with the non-Western Other, and thus sexualized them as means of domination.¹³ French writer, Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, famous for validating racist

¹¹ Kuretsky, "The Face in the Landscape," 227.

¹² Kempadoo, *Sexing the Caribbean*, 35.

¹³ Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1995), 172.

thought, reflects the colonial perception of the non-Western Other. In his infamous essays, *The Moral and Intellectual Diversity of Races* and *The Inequality of Human Races*, Gobineau categorizes different races as being “male” and “female,” claiming that the majority of non-European races were feminine, and thus inferior.¹⁴ Thus, the white man establishes hierarchy of race through the already established European hierarchy of gender: “just as the white male rules at home, so he also lords it abroad.”¹⁵ This system, therefore, feminizes both Black males and females alike. The colonizers emasculate non-Western men, as well as exploit their bodies for labor, thus in many ways, stripping the Black man of power.

Although Dunkley is incorporating phallic and yonic symbols, in light of the racist engendering of the Caribbean, I argue that Dunkley does this not solely as an *erotic* reference, but also a means of taking back power. Similar to Dunkley’s use of dark colors and unsettling scenes as a decolonial tactic, Dunkley’s use of sex organs helps disrupts this subservient stereotype of the Caribbean. In *Feeding the Fishes*, a large phallic trunk interrupts the scene, overpowering the feminine symbols in the background, and the imposed masculine energy conquers the scene, reclaiming power. By anthropomorphizing the landscape, the landscape is broken down into fetishized and engendered parts, and thus Dunkley is able to use the colonizer’s own language to reverse this emasculation.

As Dunkley asserts the masculine icons in the canvas, he symbolizes reclaimed power. In *Feeding the Fishes*, the phallic symbol penetrates the composition, both taking the central focus away from the figure and energizing the scene. In *Feeding the Fishes*, the phallus is prominent, however the phallic symbol is incorporated more subtly in the majority

¹⁴ Arthur Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races* (London : William Heinemann, 1915), 92-3.

¹⁵ Young, *Colonial Desire*, 104.

of John Dunkley's paintings. For example, in *Going to the Market* (Figure 15), the phallus is almost hidden beneath the patterned bush on the right, where sits a tiny cluster of branches that resemble Dunkley's familiar phallic motif. In this subtle incorporation of the phallus, Dunkley continues to reclaim both his own and the Afro-Jamaican masculinity. And in doing so, he destroys the prevalent hierarchical system of races in relation to gender to take back power.

Through the incorporation of the phallic symbol, Dunkley reinforces Jamaican masculinity, and defies the subordinate and passive role appointed to Jamaican men by their oppressors. As Dunkley's phallic symbols are incorporated to reclaim their power, I also argue that the yonic symbol still carries heavy significance in Dunkley's paintings. In Jamaica, women are regarded as the backbone of society. Nearly half of all households are matriarchal and many women work while domestically caring for their family.¹⁶ Former Prime Minister of Jamaica and cultural essayist, Edward Seaga, noted that "women [are] symbols of achievement in Jamaican folk society. ... As such, they are more than women or mothers; they are a resource base of cultural identity."¹⁷ Women are especially respected for their fertility, and therefore Dunkley's repeated use of the yonic symbol carries strong meaning.¹⁸

In *Decline of the West* – an influential text, popular in Latin America in the early twentieth century – Oswald Spengler claims the formation of culture is rooted in the

¹⁶ Edward Seaga, "The Folk Roots of Jamaican Cultural Identity," *Caribbean Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2005): 90.

¹⁷ Seaga, "The Folk Roots of Jamaican Cultural Identity," 90.

¹⁸ Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology*, 28.

landscape, and that the landscape symbolizes the mother of all culture.¹⁹ The symbol of the mother references the origins of culture and life, as he compares the act of birth with the creation of culture “out of its mother-landscape, and the act is repeated by every one of its individual souls throughout its life-course.”²⁰ Additionally, the mother-landscape symbol reflects the future, as the cycle of birth reflects a continuum of fertility and life. The idea of the earth-mother is an ancient metaphor for the life-giving resources the land provides. This, along with the status of women and mothers in the Jamaican working-class, strengthens the mother-landscape metaphor used by Dunkley in his work.

Dunkley uses this metaphor again as a subversion of colonialism. By painting the landscape as a fertile giver of life, the land is salvaged from the colonial destruction. Despite the introduction of new flora and fauna, and the deforestation conducted on the island, Jamaica still thrives. The life cycle continues. Spengler states, “the symbol of the mother-womb [is] the origin of all life.”²¹ This idea is exemplified in *Banana Plantation*, as the rabbit hides underground in a burrow. This hollow subterranean home resembles a womb. The rabbit is safe and hidden from the outside dangers and nourished with its fruit. The Jamaican land will take care of its people. They can rely on their home for nourishment and protection, even while all around them, colonialism attempts to destroy their home. By

¹⁹ Ben A. Heller, “Landscape, Femininity, and Caribbean Discourse,” *MLN* 111, no. 2 (March 1, 1996): 393-4.

²⁰ Spengler and Atkinson, *The Decline of the West* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1926), 174.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

referencing the mother in the landscape, Dunkley provides hope for the future of Jamaica. This scene is complete, as a full moon watches over the *Banana Plantation*, a symbol of fertility in Jamaican folklore.²²

This theme of fertility continues throughout many of Dunkley's works, as the metaphor of sexual intercourse between the elements of nature is prevalent. Dunkley's *Feeding the Fishes* exemplifies this. In the painting, a phallic tree trunk points towards a vaginal rock formation. The land itself appears engaged in sexual activity; however, this act takes on a different meaning when further examined.²³ Through the combination of both male and female energy, themes of natural procreation emerge, thus painting the Jamaican landscape as literally fruitful and fertile. A metaphor for reproduction is created within this painting.

In this artwork, behind these personified objects, stands a woman, who leans over the edge of the cliff. She is attempting to fish but, presumably, the attempt is futile, and she is merely "feeding the fishes." Dunkley uses wordplay by referencing the outmoded, colloquial idiom "feeding the fishes," which in Jamaica referred to morning sickness.²⁴ Dunkley rarely depicts figures within his landscape paintings, however he chooses to symbolize the beginnings of new life through this expectant mother. With this knowledge, not only does the figure of the hunched over woman take on a new meaning, but also the environment around her appears to be given new purpose. As the rocky ground around her is mostly barren, new vegetation sprouts all around the impregnated woman. The only plant life in the painting is

²² Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology*, 26.

²³ Boxer, "The Life and Art of John Dunkley," 29.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

around the woman's feet and beneath the phallic tree trunk. Thus, these elements that may have at once appeared solely erotic are now the bearers of new life.

Dunkley's *Feeding the Fishes* is one of the most sexually explicit and engendered of Dunkley's paintings. The background implies a subtle femininity through the crevice in the rock and the implicit pregnancy of the figure. The theme of fertility is clear through the sexually explicit use of the phallic tree and yonic rock formation, the plant life emerging from the barren land, and the title of the painting that directly refers to reproduction. This fertility symbolizes the future. As procreation creates generations to come and crops to nourish them, the future of Jamaica is present in this painting. The phallic rock interrupts this scene to reclaim their power and assert their dominance once more.

CHAPTER 5
THE DARKER SIDE OF THE LANDSCAPE

In John Dunkley's paintings, the land itself speaks. Each element in Dunkley's richly constructed topographies reflects the average Afro-Jamaican experience. Through his symbolic code, Dunkley makes the components of his paintings readable, able to convey meaning without verbal language, thus creating a more powerful language with the capacity to say more than mere words. In doing so, he invites his fellow Afro-Jamaicans to begin the process of decolonization. This resonated with the political climate of Jamaica in the 1930s and 1940s and with the contemporary global call for decolonization.

Dunkley together with the early Intuitive artists, emerged when the search for a national cultural identity became a significant interest of artists, politicians, and activists in Jamaica. Jamaica was a British colony until 1962.¹ Concurrently, other Caribbean colonies were gaining independence as early as 1804, and the Great Depression created economic hardships across the island. The Jamaican people, too, grew restless and frustrated as a Crown Colony and advocated for independence over several decades.² During this unrest, Jamaicans called for their own national identity separate from Great Britain. This interest in forming a national cultural identity was widespread throughout the Caribbean and Latin America and touched all aspects of Jamaican culture. Major political leaders of the day encouraged this accelerated cultural development. There was a call for their own national identity separate from Great Britain, spear-headed by Norman and Edna Manley. Dunkley's

¹ "The Countdown to Independence," *Jamaica Journal* 15, no. 46 (n.d.): 21–23.

² "The Countdown to Independence," 21-23.

life and work resonated with this mission. In Jamaica, the development of modern art dovetailed with the rise in political consciousness in the 1930s.³

The Intuitives were key to the development of a purely Jamaican modern art, because the Intuitives worked independently, outside of European or American influence. Thus, the Intuitive artists contributed to the national culture in a manner that resonated with the average working-class individual. Dunkley's work was created for an audience of his Jamaican peers, as evidenced by the insider symbol of the spider in *Spider's Web (Jerboa)* that related to Afro-Jamaican folklore. His work was rarely displayed outside of Jamaica, and he often chose to keep his works in his barber shop for the locals to enjoy. Dunkley is not asking the colonizers to bring down the colonial systems that oppress the Jamaicans. Instead, Dunkley is encouraging decolonial action among the Afro-Caribbeans themselves.

The modern art movement in Jamaica was certainly a nationalist movement. It was inspired by the desire to separate Jamaicans from their British oppressors by defining their own national culture. Dunkley, as the first Intuitive artist, is certainly an integral figure in this movement. By redefining what an artist could be for future Jamaican visual artists, Dunkley not only defined the national visual culture for his era, but for decades to come. Contemporarily, Dunkley's contribution to global modernism is profound. Although often overlooked in modernist canons, the power behind Dunkley's landscapes resonate with many today. Dunkley combines landscape and decolonialism, and contemporarily, this correlation can be further evaluated as part of a broader decolonial discourse.

³ Norman Manley, "National Culture and the Artist" reprinted in *Manley and the New Jamaica*, ed. Rex M. Nettleford (Kingston, Jamaica: Prentice Hall Press, 1971), 108. In this speech, influential politician, Norman Manley encourages the exploration of a new national culture that avoids European influence through the arts.

As Dunkley subverts the unexpected in Jamaican art-making, the land is given its own voice. Although the land itself is indisputably a significant component of colonialism, it can often be overlooked when examining the repercussions of European occupation. Not only were the original inhabitants of the island almost completely eradicated, but the environment itself was changed dramatically. The Jamaican forest was reduced to 34% of its original land area, and nearly all crops that are now significant exports and associated with the Caribbean were imported after European arrival.⁴ Many plants that are now thought of as typically Caribbean were introduced from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the South Pacific. This includes sugarcane, breadfruit, banana trees, palm trees, and coconut trees.⁵ Thus, much of the plant life, and subsequently the associated aesthetic of the tropical islands, was introduced to the Caribbean during the colonial period.⁶ Moreover, the European introduction of diseases and pests drastically changed the physical landscape of the New World, as outlined in Alfred W. Crosby's *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. Additionally, the implementation of the plantation system destroyed the land while dramatically benefiting the West.⁷ The landscape of Jamaica transformed entirely over a few centuries.

Thus, Dunkley's anthropomorphization of the landscape reflects the colonial destruction of Jamaica, calling attention to the literal destruction and alteration of the island.

⁴ Guy Symes, "The Jamaican Forests," *Jamaica Journal* 5, no. 4 (December 1971): 32.; and J.D. Woodley, "History of the Jamaican Fauna," *Jamaica Journal* 2, no. 3 (September 1968): 14.

⁵ Jill H. Casid, "Landscape Trouble," in *Landscape Theory*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 182.

⁶ Casid, "Landscape Trouble," 182.

⁷ Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, Contributions in American Studies, no. 2 (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Pub. Co, 1972), 52.

Furthermore, as the ecology and topology of Jamaica shifted, the cultural landscape in Dunkley's paintings reflected these changes, even if Dunkley was unaware of these ecological shifts. Thus, as Dunkley's landscapes are mysterious and sinister, they reveal the more despairing side of the landscape and colonialism as a whole. And, as climate change continues to destroy the Caribbean, Dunkley's landscapes and themes of destruction become ever more relevant.

"There is a 'dark side of the landscape' and that this dark side is not merely mythic, not merely a feature of the regressive, instinctual drives associated with nonhuman "nature" but a moral, ideological, and political darkness." according to W. J. T. Mitchell in *Landscape and Power*.⁸ Dunkley manipulates the landscape to convey his decolonial ideals and reveal this darkness, while simultaneously symbolically sexualizing the landscape to reclaim power and restore hope to the people of Jamaica. And while exposing the "darker side of the landscape," Dunkley also provides a glimmer of hope for the Jamaican people through the mother-landscape metaphor, which implies a fertile and fruitful future for the island.

⁸ Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power*, 5.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1: John Dunkley, *Banana Plantation*, ca. 1945, mixed media on plywood, 29.125 x 17.625 inches, National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, gift of Cassie Dunkley.



Figure 2: John Dunkley, *Spider's Web (Jerboa)*, also exhibited under the titles *Jerboa* and *Spider's Web*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 28 x 14 inches, National Gallery of Jamaica,

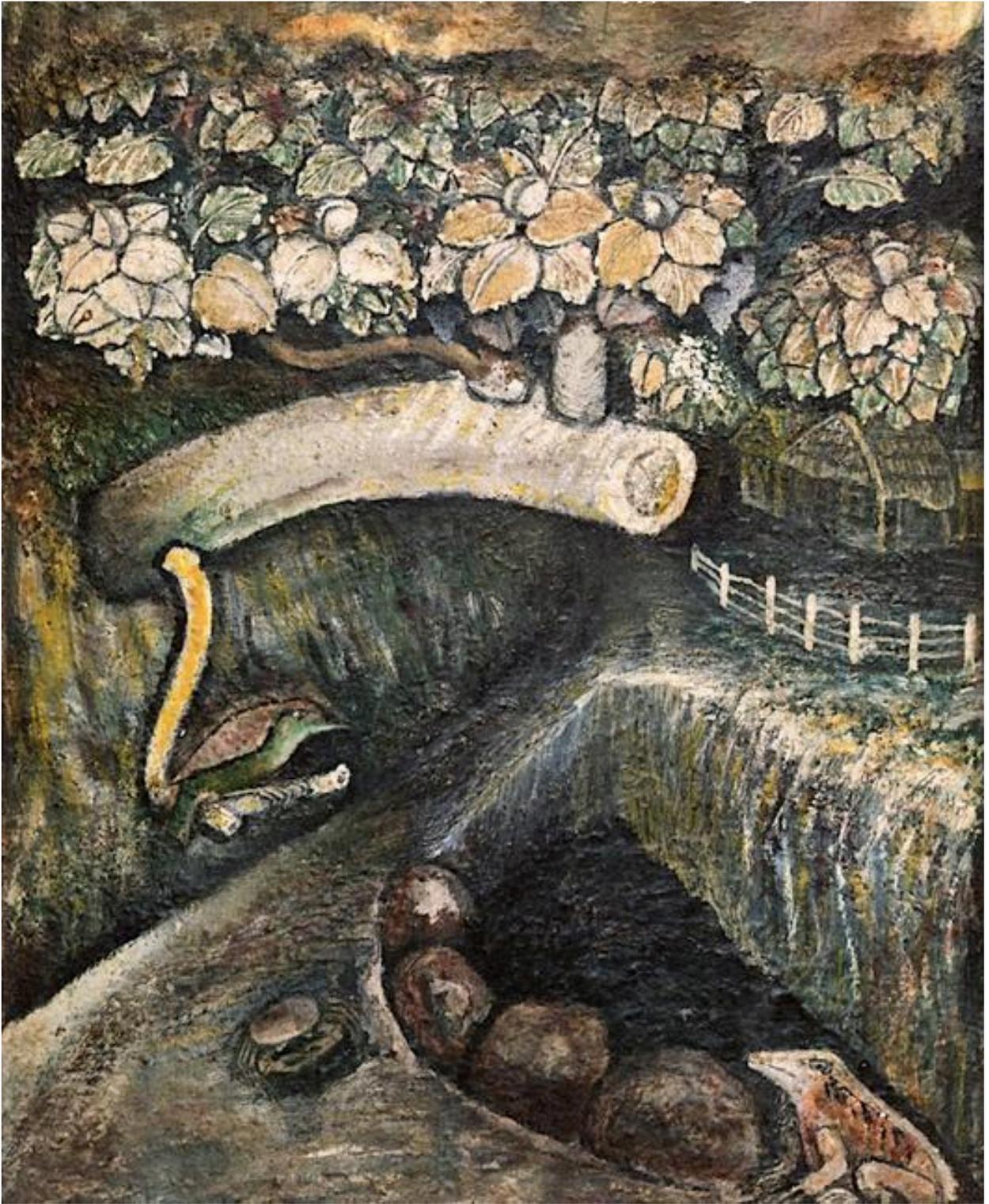


Figure 3: John Dunkley, *Frog Among Rocks*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 19.875 x 15.875 inches, the Wallace Campbell Collection Jamaica.



Figure 4: John Dunkley, *Spider's Web*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 17.125 x 38.75 inches, Collection of Ernest, Kenneth J., and Tina Dunkley.

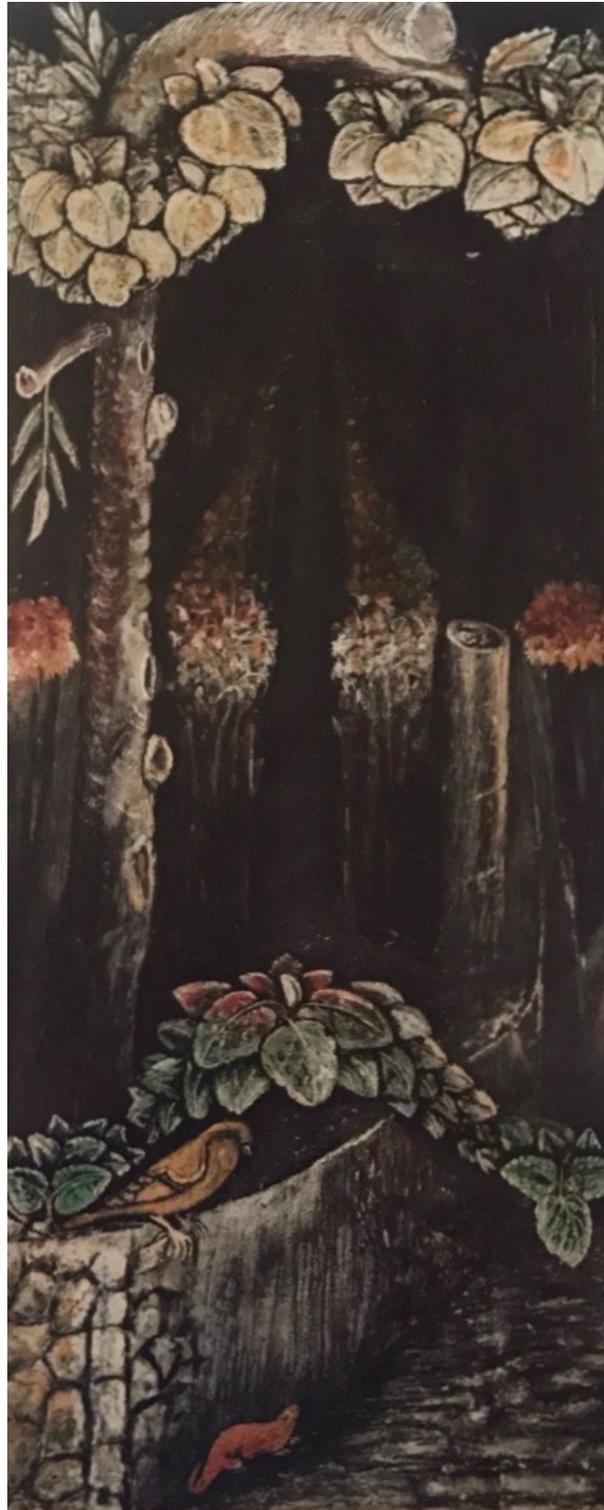


Figure 5: John Dunkley, *Scene with Path*, ca. 1943, mixed media on plywood, 34.5 x 14.625 inches, ONYX Foundation.

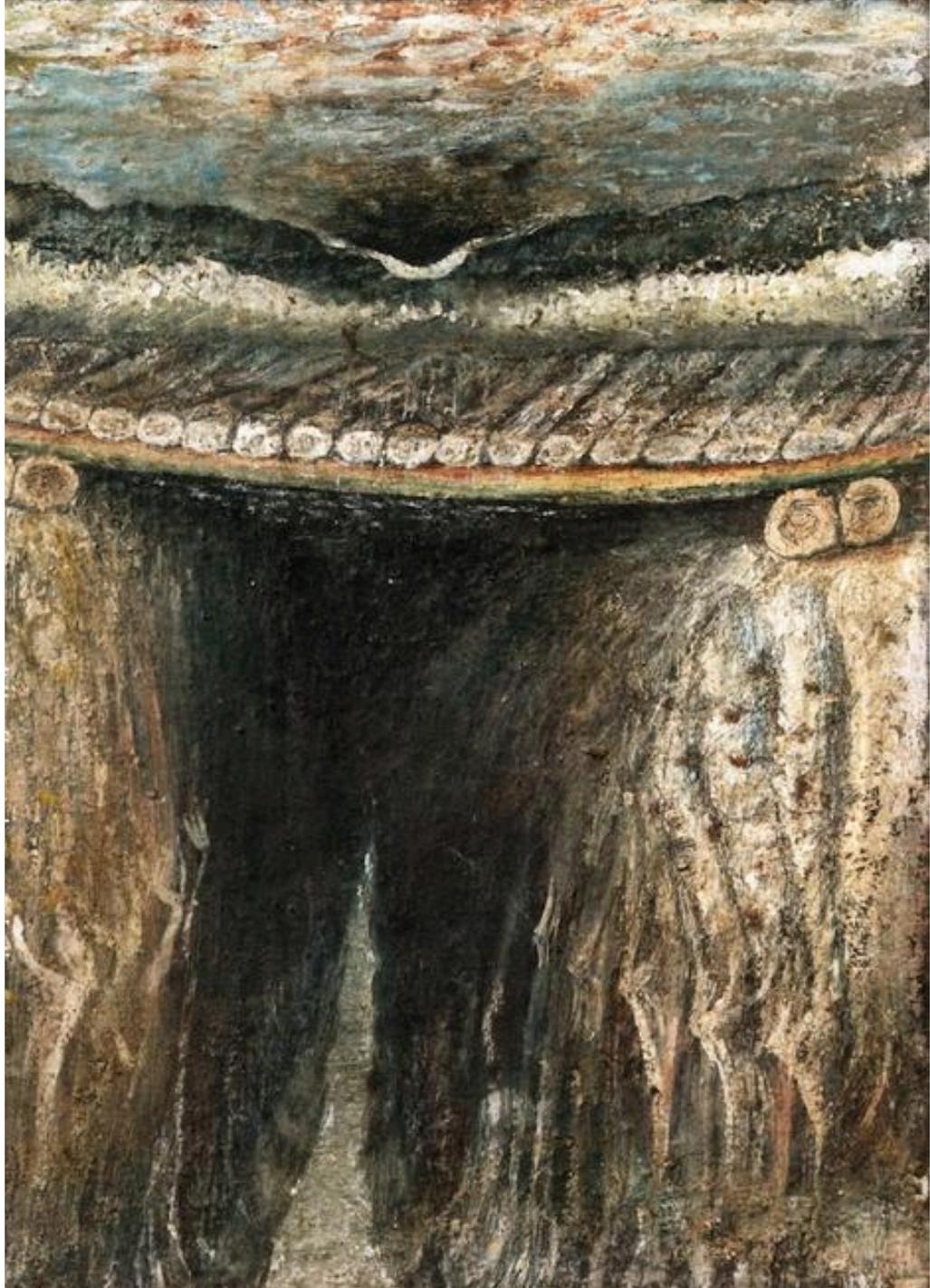


Figure 6: John Dunkley, *Mountain Edge*, ca. 1940, mixed media on plywood, 20.875 x 16.09 inches, ONYX Foundation.



Figure 7: John Dunkley, *The Waterfall*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 22 x 17.25 inches, The Wallace Campbell Collection Jamaica.

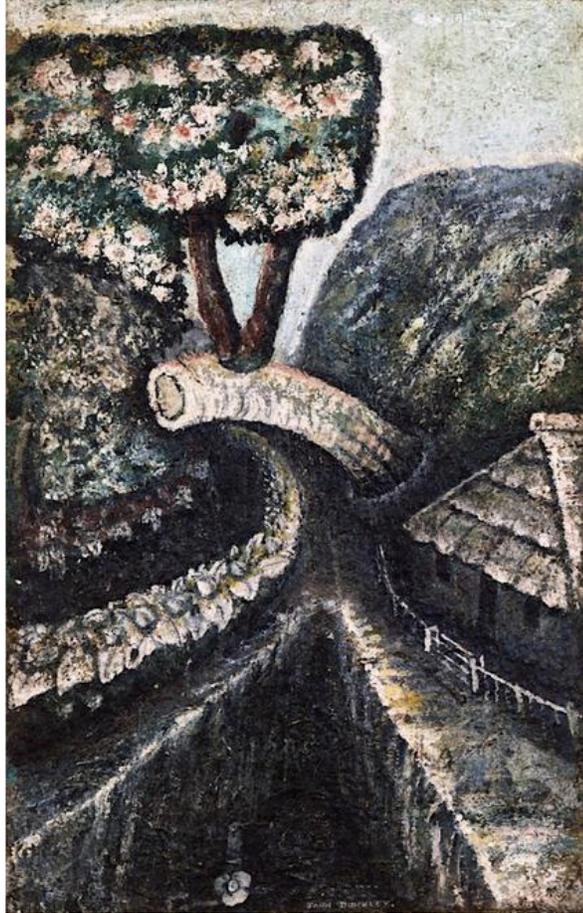


Figure 8: John Dunkley, *House and Ravine*, n.d., oil on board, 23 x 15 inches, private collection.



Figure 9: Macilla "Kapo" Reynolds, *Orange Grove*, ca. 1975, Annabella and Peter Proudlock Collection.



Figure 10: John Dunkley, *Springboard*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 14.125 x 18.5 inches, ONYX Foundation.



Figure 11: John Dunkley, *Road to Church*, n.d., mixed media on plywood, 37 x 14 inches, Collection of National Commercial Bank Jamaica Limited.



Figure 12: A. Duperly and Sons, *Pym Rock*, ca. 1895., photograph, reprinted in *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*. This image of “Pym” or “Pum Pum” rock would likely have been seen by Dunkley.

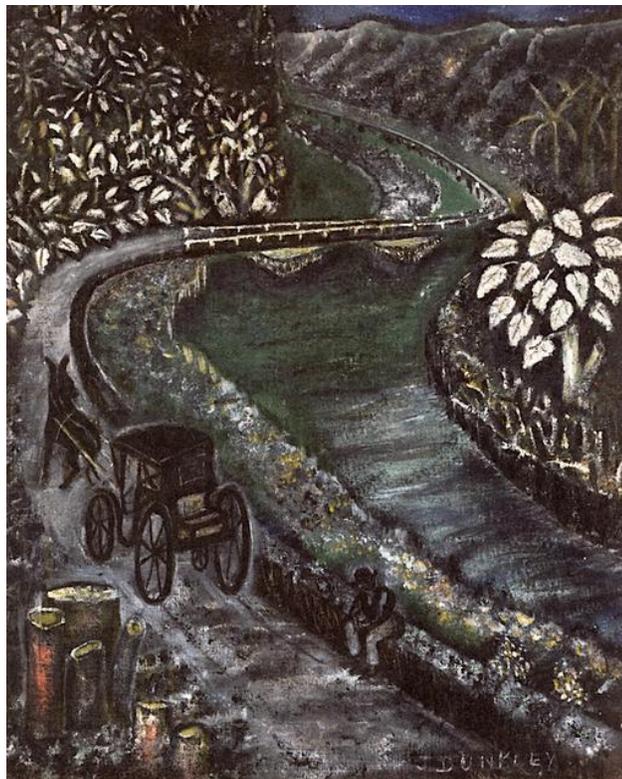


Figure 13: John Dunkley, *Flat Bridge*, ca. 1935, mixed media on canvas, 20.625 x 16.5 inches, The Michael Campbell Collection.



Figure 14: John Dunkley, *Feeding the Fishes*, ca. 1940, mixed media on plywood, 16.75 x 20.125 inches, ONYX Foundation.



Figure 15: John Dunkley, *Going to the Market* ca. 1943, mixed media on plywood, 34.75 x 14.875 inches, ONYX Foundation.

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