



Guyodo

A manifesting energy

The name on Guyodo's birth certificate is Frantz Jacques.

Born on December 7, 1973, he spent his formative years in the vibrant district of Granri, located in the heart of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He creates drawings, paintings, and sculptures as a medium to share the vivid images that are dancing in his mind. Guyodo is his artist's name.

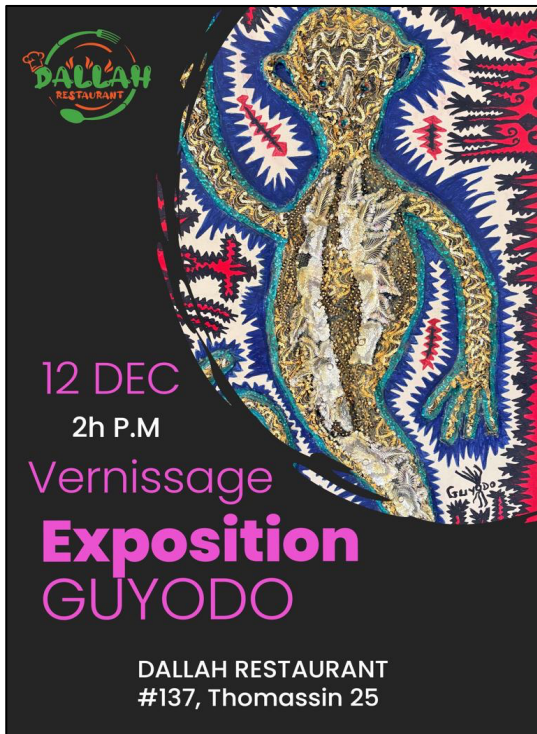
In October 2024, I encountered Guyodo at Quisqueya University in Port-au-Prince. I had met him before, but this time, he seemed different. He was filled with anger.

Because of the gang violence, he had lost his art studio in Granri. He not only suffered a financial setback, but also lost the place that sparked his creativity, leading to the creation of stunning works of art. That gave him a feeling of disgust.

From October 22 to 26, 2024, the Virtual Museum of the Haitian Revolution (VMHR) held a training seminar in partnership with the Cultural Conservation Center at Quisqueya University (CCC-UniQ). The seminar gathered 20 artists from Port-au-Prince who had been victims of insecurity. It provided an opportunity to listen to their stories and discuss their experiences, which helped us better understand their situation. The objective was to identify the actions that we could take to protect the artwork and improve the living conditions of artists.

After the training seminar, with the support of ALIPH (www.aliph-foundation.org), we helped the artists to relocate endangered artworks. We provided them with resources so they can keep creating. These included paints, paintbrushes, canvas, pliers, drills, batteries, metal sheets, and air compressors.

Guyodo was one of the artists who was determined to get back on his feet so he could continue to impart his knowledge to the children in his neighborhood.





He told us bluntly that the modest assistance we could offer would not be enough to compensate for his losses. However, he appreciated it as a gesture of encouragement to get back to work.

In fact, Guyodo has never stopped working. During the training seminar, he didn't use the notebook we gave him to take notes. He spent most of his time drawing. He understood everything we explained, but he had an overwhelming desire to draw out the dancing images in his mind.

One year later, I was very happy to see the poster announcing the opening of his exhibition. I had a conversation with him to express my congratulations. I also asked him to send me some photos of the paintings that will be displayed.

When I inquired whether he had new paintings for this exhibition, he replied, "*Everything is new.*" He shared photos of these three paintings along with videos of many others.



For those familiar with elements of Vodou visual culture, such as vèvè, bizango images, and representations of Legba or Bawon Samdi, these paintings are striking. They convey messages of hope and strength to overcome the fear of death and despair. The power and vibrations emanating from Guyodo's paintings give them unparalleled originality.

I sent him this message: "*The paintings are powerful, Guyodo. What do these images represent?*"

Here is his reply. "*For me, it's just energy. An energy that is set free. Many people will see it for what it is. But some people told me that this painting depicts a particular spiritual entity or a particular object. I don't go there. All I can see is a manifesting energy.*"

During the final session of the training seminar, Guyodo shared that he creates art because he wants Haiti to move forward. Through his latest creations, he conveys that his beloved Haiti still has the strength and energy to free itself from its current dire situation.

Let's go see the Guyodo exhibition!

Olsen Jean-Julien, PhD
December 10, 2025