



*Tony Monsanto*

ARTIST STATEMENT



## Cover for Volume 1, Number 1

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THE PAINTING WORKS AS A METAPHOR FOR THE UNBALANCED RELATIONSHIP between the power-centers of the first world and the often marginalized third world nations of the Caribbean. The flying pigs, aggressively sucking the juices and energy from the fruit tree before the iguanas have a chance to nourish from the plants, symbolize the continuous domination of the western [art] centers over the visual representations of the inhabitants of the Caribbean. The painting is entitled “La combate de coholes y iguana” and the iguanas appear in ancient dinosaur-like visualization to accentuate the physical endurance and the continuity of the struggle against colonization and neo-imperialism.

The painting was part of the series “La decadencia europa” which was inspired by what I was seeing around me in Europe where I was living in 1994. In the Netherlands the exaggerated tolerance of sex, drugs and euthanasia is propagated as positive, while at the same time there exists a deeply rooted fear of marginalized colored people. This paradox of psychological dynamics in European society in leading to a decay of social structures and, at the same time, towards the re-emergence of a repressive set of rules that indicate the desire for a clean, conservative and immigrant-free society.

The series was first shown in the one-man show, “Sueños de un Pintor Biajante” in the Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo in June 1994. Since then my work has evolved toward installations that usually include large paintings. These paintings continue my interest in the multiracial ancestry of the Caribbean and the intersection of Catholic rites on the African religions and realities of the region.

