

Picasso at the Royal Palm: a cult venue for some magnificent works of art

The first Picasso exhibition ever organised in the Indian Ocean was held at the Blue Penny Museum in Port Louis, ending in January this year. To prolong this unprecedented adventure, the Beachcomber group, one of the exhibition's sponsors, has now invited the Andalusian master to the Royal Palm Beachcomber Luxury.

A tête-à-tête with Picasso

Initiated by the Blue Penny Museum and the art dealer Steve Sowamy, the hugely successful exhibition is continuing for a further six months at the Royal Palm Beachcomber Luxury: ten art works – ceramics, drawings and sculptures – have been selected and are now on display in showcases in the reception hall. 'In welcoming these works, the Royal Palm is not only hosting an amazing exhibition (and yes, the works are for sale!), but we're also offering guests the privilege of being able to actually *live with* them, to admire them at any time of day. It is a priceless gift,' says Steve Sowamy.

Paving the way

Although born in the island, the art dealer has always lived in Europe where he has built up a solid reputation. It was not until 2008 that he discovered the island of his birth. Shortly after that, he met Emmanuel Richon, director of the Blue Penny Museum, and together they set out to organise a Picasso exhibition. 'We opened a doorway through this initiative. Mauritians are very curious to discover new cultures. There are existing financial and consulting structures to insure, transport and keep the works safe. Also, the island enjoys a select type of tourism and there are plenty of local enthusiasts. We have all we need to ramp up the island's cultural scene.'

A cultural hotspot

To prolong the dream, and also to raise the island to the rank of 'cultural pearl,' Beachcomber stepped right into the adventure by offering to partner the exhibition. 'We supported the project right from the start. Steve Sowamy is after all a client of the Royal Palm and the Trou aux Biches Beachcomber. We got to know each other and it was therefore quite natural that we should go along with the idea of prolonging the exhibition in our hotels. Picasso's works are a perfect match for our iconic hotel, the Royal Palm,' says Koogen Vythelingum, PR & Promotion Manager of the hotel group. This unique collaboration is a first for a Mauritian hotel, and we are already considering other exhibitions of other great art masters of the 20th century.

Press contact:

Communication Committee – Julie Hardy Koenig - jhkoenig@beachcomber.com

T (230) 601 9315

Beachcomber House, Botanical Garden Street, Curepipe 74213, Mauritius

About Beachcomber

Beachcomber Resorts & Hotels is the pioneer and leader of the Mauritian tourism industry. Since the creation of Park Hotel in 1952, a collection of 9 resorts have emerged over the years, including the mythical Royal Palm Beachcomber Luxury Mauritius in 1985, considered by everyone as the reference in hospitality for luxury holidays in Mauritius.

The Group recently expanded its collection, with the integration of the Beachcomber French Riviera, situated on the Côte d'Azur, in France.

The collection of 9 resorts affords a choice of accommodation options ranging from rooms and apartments to suites and villas. Each hotel is imbued with a particular history and cachet, embodying an image of discrete luxury.

Social responsibility – Fondation Espoir Développement (FED), by Beachcomber

Set up and financed by Beachcomber since 1999, with the participation of hotels and employees, this foundation takes care of these main projects:

- Projet Employabilité Jeunes (PEJ): professional insertion of school drop-outs through a training programme and industrial attachments.
- Collaboration with NGOs, schools and associations
- Regional projects – youth mentoring: the “Amour et Espoir” NGO; IT initiation; youth monitoring via the “Duke of Edinburgh International Award” programme, participation of regional sports clubs in the organisation of the Beachcomber UTRB Trail 2015

Social responsibility – Local Hands

Programme launched in 2006 to support small local artisans by providing them with training and guidance as they embark upon the process of creation, production, marketing and sales.

Sustainable development – our environmental actions – EarthCheck label

Sustainable development and environmental protection constitute real considerations within the Group, which has set up, amongst other initiatives, practices that ensure energy savings and favour renewable energy sources. These initiatives in favour of sustainable development have been recognised and rewarded, with two of our hotels recently obtaining the EarthCheck Benchmarked Silver accreditation for their ongoing commitment to environmentally responsible practices.