



WHEN  
YO'  
TINK  
IS  
BUSH  
IS PEOPLE

Stelia interrupted her musing to adjust the scarf wound around her brown hair and face to protect her from the salty humidity and rising sun. World weary, intelligent brown eyes gazed out of a gaunt face which once hinted at the potential for roundness, to stare across the aquamarine water coiled at her feet. There still lingered a slight smell of wet dirt from last night's rain but this would fade soon as the sun climbed. Her mother had shown her past photos of this island. Where she now sat and fished used to be the perimeter wall of an Anglican church. Many a wedding party had posed for photos on the lawn - a green carpet spread against a backdrop of pink and orange bougainvillea flowers. Now, the church bell lay silent, choked by seawater and sargassum seaweed in high tide. The bell's clapper was heavily disfigured by the barnacles which had made it their home after its fall from the grace that was the tower, compliments of time's ravages. Nearby, nothing about the water marked the spot where the well, from which residents had collected water, had stood for generations.



**OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATIONS**

ARTIST

Maya Cross-Lovelace  
*Night Beach*  
Acrylic on Paper  
11.7 x 16.5 inches  
2023

WRITER

Kathy Badenock  
*"When yo' tink is bush  
is people"*

