

## EXHIBITION

# Clara's exotic silk art

By ANGELA PIDDUCK

**TRINIDAD-BORN** artist Clara Applewhaite Mitchell will formally open her third local exhibition, 'Nature Rhythms', at Soft Box Gallery, No 9 Alcazar Street, St Clair, today from 6 p.m to 8.30 p.m. The exhibition of her recent paintings on silk fabric, both wearable and decorative, continues daily until July 13, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mitchell was trained in textile design and printmaking at Howard University in Washington DC and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

The graduate of Bishop Anstey's High School and the Valsayn Teachers' College has worked in the home fashion industry for more than eight years as a textile stylist and fabric designer. She has exhibited annually in New Jersey, and for the past two years at High Square Gallery in Port-of-Spain. She conducts an annual summer workshop in silk painting at schools in Trinidad.

The resident of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, explained: "My presentation of "Nature



TEXTILE artist Clara Applewhaite Mitchell. "Nature Rhythms" has been done on natural fibres; i.e. silk Habotai, crepe de chine, satin, chiffon, cotton gauze and rayon. As a textile designer/printmaker, I am always experimenting.

"Even though the results are not sometimes what I envision, they always lead me in a new direction... and that learning process is worth its weight in gold. I initially chose silk because of its natural lumi-

nous quality, durability and soft 'hand'. Once the technique is mastered, silk has a natural economy and ease of manipulation."

The artist's journey with silk painting began because of a yearning to create something West Indian amidst the cold temperature greys of the north.

"Having been born, and lived most of my life, in the seaside country district of Carenage, the themes are rooted in the flora, fauna and the myriad cultures of my Trinidadian home which has always been a source of inspiration from the throbbing rhythms of the bongo drums, the tassa and steel drums that drive me to create, and respond to design." Says Applewhaite Mitchell: "The desire to have a show in Trinidad was my next step and with the success of the first solo exhibition at High Square Gallery, I sought to make it an annual event, which included workshops in silk painting and design basics.

"Although no formal workshops are planned, anyone who wishes to discuss the art with me will be welcome to ask for an appointment during the current exhibition."



THIS beautiful design was on invitations sent out for the exhibition.