

# miamiartzine

## Artist Spotlight: A Q&A with Noel Suarez

*By Michelle F. Solomon*



**"MUJERES & VITRALES II" ©2019 by Noel Suarez**

*"My need to create, I didn't have any choice in the matter. Painting, dancing, the theater, these are all components in my life," says Noel Suarez.*

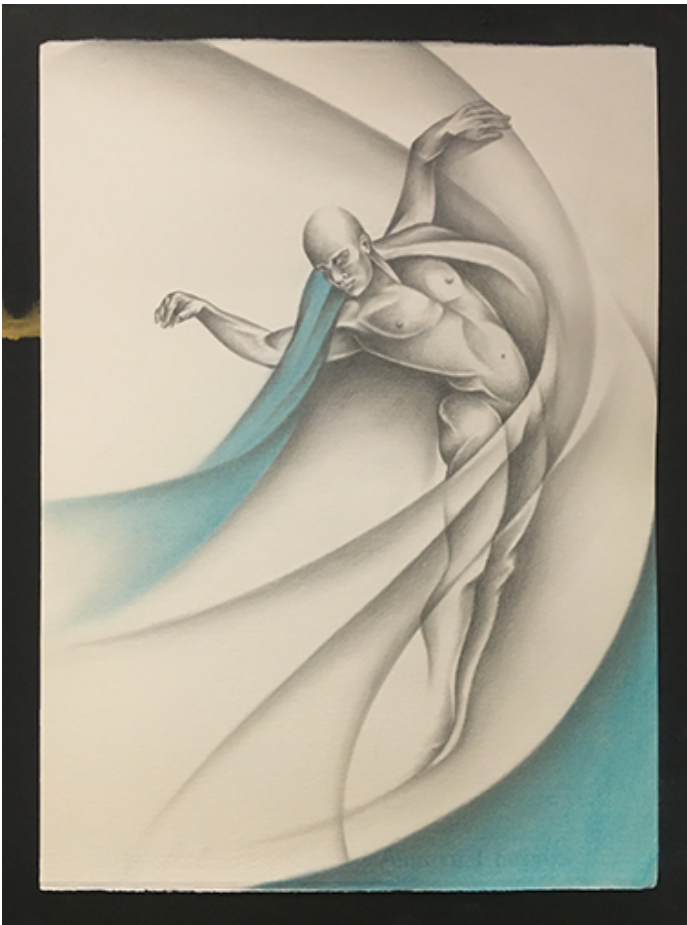
Suarez, who now lives in Miami, was born in Havana, Cuba. He was surrounded by arts growing up. His mother was a dancer and she had a ballet studio inside their home. His grandmother's musical conservatory had students that went on to be stars of Cuba's National Opera. The visual arts came from his father who was a photographer and a painter. His father had a studio in their home, too. Suarez says he was surrounded by so many kinds of arts.

He became a dancer, a career that spanned 25 years. He danced professionally with the Havana Opera Ballet and Alberto Alonso's Company. Then there was the seven-month stint with the Costa Rica National Company, and finally in the United States with Ballet Concerto, Dance Miami, Boston Ballet and the New England Dance Company. "I was 30 when I retired from ballet after I dislocated my right knee," he says.

He left his homeland of Cuba in December 1980 "...Three months after the Mariel Boat Lift ended. My brother was already in Miami and he sent me a visa to Costa Rica where I lived in San Jose for seven months." It was there that Suarez worked with the National Dance Company as the company teacher and soloist and taught ballet at the San Jose National Dance School.

**Miamiartzine.com:** *Well, I know we had our interview set up a while ago, but here we are talking in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. How is your art helping you cope during this unprecedented time?*

**Noel Suarez:** *Actually my art has been a major positive in this horrific nightmare we are living. I can't remember the last time I was able to spend this much time in the studio just painting without keeping up with meetings and the business part of my work, not to mention my hectic travel exhibit schedule. It never seems to amaze me that regardless the intensity and negativity of the situation thrown into our path, there are always positives that contribute to the evolution of the next chapter. The new body of work will show, more than ever before, the importance of love, unity, harmony, and universal beauty.*



**"MOVING EMOTIONS"** ©2020 by Noel Suarez  
Work in Progress



**"URBAN METAMORPHOSIS"** ©2020 by Noel Suarez

**maz:** **Who or what are your influences?**

**NS:** *There are many. My family, the theater and the opportunities to create sets and costumes for some of the ballet productions. My grandmother was an art lover and friends with most of the Cuban Artists of the time, known worldwide now as Masters of Cuban Art. Other influences are the Classical and Modern Masters, Art Deco, Surrealism, Modernism and Cubism.*

**maz:** **What inspires your work?**

**NS:** *For me inspiration is always present, it is part of Life. Most of the time it comes from within and other times I can be inspired by a movie, a ballet, a book, music, a photograph or even another painting. Traveling the world as much as I do is an amazing source of inspiration for me, actually the best one of all.*



**maz:** How does Miami/South Florida influence your work?

**NS:** *The colors, the water, the open spaces, its people and the architecture; especially the Art Deco and mid-century Modern. Although my art career started in Boston it was when the amazing Barbara Baer Capitman and Matti Bower invited me to my first Art Deco Festival in 1987 and my first exhibit at the Cardozo Hotel, that it became very clear to me that Miami was where I needed to be.*

**maz:** How would you describe your work?

**NS:** *Imagine taking figurative classical art, realism, surrealism, cubism, modernism, movement, the theatre and my Cuban heritage and putting them all in a food processor. With that said the best way to make people identify with my style of work is, Figurative Cubism.*



*"MYKONOS' MADONNA" ©2020 by Noel Suarez*

**maz:** What was your "aha" moment where you knew that you had "arrived" as an artist?

**NS:** *Actually I had two "aha" moments. The first in 1979 when the Grand Maestro and Choreographer Alberto Alonso asked me, an 18 year old dancer in his company, to design the costumes and sets for the production he was premiering. The second in 1987 when I had my first exhibit in Provincetown, Mass., where all the paintings were sold on opening night!*

**maz:** What has been the most unusual reaction to your work from the public?

**NS:** *One that luckily I still get often. When people connect and fall in love with my work and feel the need to have it, especially while I am working on them and they are far from being completed.*

**maz:** What would you like to achieve as an artist?

**NS:** *To continue this wonderful path that I was fortunate to be placed upon, and to leave a legacy that will benefit and inspire others as the many that inspired me.*



*Noel at a painting Demonstrations on his latest 2020 Oceania's Riviera Artist in Residences*

**maz:** Where can we see your work?

**NS:** My work can be seen on my website, <http://www.noelsuarezart.com/> also at <https://torosiete.museum/> the gallery and museum that represents my work, and on my Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/noelsuarezart/> Facebook <https://business.facebook.com/NoelSuarezArt/> Twitter <https://www.twitter.com/StudioDnoel> and YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCAu6G3NDV9M5GiH5pH5MYa-6hFnglew->