



#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Artist Betsy Arvelo carries the Caribbean in her soul and on her canvas. Her watercolor paintings reflect her Dominican heritage with a vibrant use of light and color to bring everyday objects and elements of nature to life. "The Caribbean taught me to love and not fear color. Caribbean people use color boldly and without apology on their homes, clothes, everything that touches their lives," she reveals.

As a young girl in the Dominican Republic, Betsy found some tempera paints in her mother's closet. "I loved the colors, the smell, the paint, the brush, the magic. My life then was very scary and unpredictable. I could paint for hours and not have to think about it," she says. She has been painting ever since, exhibiting at art shows throughout Dominican Republic and the U.S.

Whether it is an old, rusty license plate or a blooming magnolia, the shapes seem to come alive in her paintings. "My artistic style is like a marriage of classic representational painting with a 20th-century modern approach of wet on wet free flowing paint which is then captured and refined by layer upon layer of color to reach the depth and color desired", she explains.

Betsy's paintings focus on the reality of everyday things and nature. There is no hidden symbolism, no secret message. Her goal is to go beyond the object and show the minute details zoomed in and alive, the way that nature intended them to be, blemishes and all.

*Toni Foster*

*Featured in the OH&L magazine, May 2009 issue.*

BETSY ARVELO  
[www.betsyarvelo.com](http://www.betsyarvelo.com)



Betsy Arvelo  
THE MAGNOLIA SERIES



## THE MAGNOLIA SERIES



All paintings © 2008 and 2009 Betsy Arvelo. Watercolor on paper.

## Betsy Arvelo

### THE PAINTINGS

In the Summer of 2008, the Southern Magnolias around my house were in full bloom. I had been attracted to the flowers for years, but had never really studied them. I became both mesmerized and obsessed by the majestic beauty and citrus smell, as well as, the various “metamorphic” stages of the flower—from the bud to the full bloom, to the decay of the flower, the formation of the pineapple looking pod with bright red seeds that finally falls to the ground and hardens like pine cones. Oh... and the leaves—they are as green and shiny, on one side, as nature can produce, while on the other, a deep shade of rust velvet.

I took countless photos of the flowers, the seed pods, the trees. I could not get enough of this beauty. After the season was over, I realized that I was so inspired by these plants that I would like to paint them. I am now totally absorbed in this series and will be exploring the Magnolias to see how far they take me.

I work in watercolors because of the organic quality of the medium and the mobility it allows me. The paper is handmade of 100% cotton and the colors are organic. In order to achieve the radiance, I don't mix colors. They are layered one-at-a-time to achieve a pure, unadulterated, radiant color.

### EDUCATION

**1975-1978:** Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**1970-1973:** Escuela de Artes de IES, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

#### Other Studies:

**1992:** Computers and Publications, Precision Graphics, Huntsville, Alabama

**1991:** Multimedia Presentation, Marshall Space Flight Center, Alabama

**1987:** Basic Computer Graphics, Ringling School of Art, Sarasota, Florida

**1988:** Computer Workshop, Ringling School of Art, Sarasota, Florida

**2007:** Silent Meditation Certification: Sivananda Yoga Center in Paradise Island, Bahamas

**1989:** Solo Exhibit, Graficas Art & Design, Mount Dora, Florida

**1983:** Instituto de Investigación Visual, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**1983:** Altos de Chavón, studio exhibit

**1983:** “Detalles”, Solo Exhibition, Casa de Teatro, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**1981:** Maitland Art Festival, Maitland, Florida Memorable Mention

**1981:** Mount Dora Art Festival, Mount Dora, Florida

**1980:** “Works on Paper”, Academy of the Arts, Easton, Maryland

**1979:** Bienal de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**1979:** Solo Exhibit, Casa de Teatro, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

### EXHIBITIONS

**2009:** Watercolor Masters Expose, Mount Dora Center for the Arts, Mount Dora, Florida

**1992:** Bodegones y Mercados, El Super Marchante, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**1990:** Small Works Exhibition, Valencia Community College, Orlando, Florida

**1989:** Studio Exhibit, Mount Dora, Florida

### JURYING/JUDGING

**1984-86, 2004:** *Mount Dora Art Festival*, Mount Dora, Florida—juror and art consultant

**1988:** *Eustis State Fair*, Eustis, Florida

**1986:** *Lake Mary/Heathrow Art Festival*—juror and art consultant