







PUERTO RICO

I love Caribbean people and their take on life. After approaching artist Carlos Betancourt for a feature on his native Puerto Rico for a piece entitled "Through Their Eyes," his humble response was, "Thanks for this opportunity!"

Carlos Betancourt definitely defies categorization in his work, but not as a person. Despite having artwork in the public collection at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C., The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and numerous other prestigious museums around the globe – as far afield as Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno in the Canary Islands – he certainly is defined by me as a beautiful soul.

Here is a snapshot of Puerto Rico through his eyes.





Are there any galleries or museums you recommend?

Museo de Arte de Porce, probably the most significant museum in Lata America, holding some masterpieces of the Pre-Raghaelites as well as from Puerlo Rican master Olles, not to be missed, specially the quaint ones. Also excling is their expanding contemporary collection. Established by the visionary Ferre family and currently directed by other visionaries like Chery's Hartip, Agustin Artesigs and Maria Luiss. Ferre, the museum building fusion processes and the content of the museum building distances and the content of the second of the content of the content of the processes and the content of the

Which city in Puerto Rico do you know best?

Cubuy in El Yunque rainforest; Cayey-Guahate in the heartfand; Carolina-Piñones and siempre San Juan-I also enjoy Vieques and Culebra. Last year we drave the perimeter of the island in a one day photographic adventure. Try It...

When friends want recommendations for their trips to the island, what advice do you give?

Lusually tell them they are gang to the "continent" of Puerto Rico. So diverse and vast it is. A warring This is not just snother island. It's rich in contrasting landscape; delicious food, influential music; and a land-for-match contemporary awareness and culture that has been able to retain and respect their unique traditions. A most important piece of advice is also to enjoy its people. They are full of joy and enthusiasem and readly to share it! If the to say that in a one-floor elevator rice in Puerto Rico, you get to know more people than in a year snywhere also in the arold. Puerto Rico, is enjoy people, are very social, and are very curious in a humble way. Simply put they are mostly very happy people.



If you had a weekend in Puerto Rico, only 48 hours, what would you do?

I will pick up some intends, head to Pfinness and eat some fresh atlaquarias and bacalarias and dirink an unital Fanta. Then head to a quiet lodge in El Yunque habitonal reinforest for a freend's house) surrounded by lush vegetation, "funcacia" flowers, waterfalls, coquisi (tree frogs) and infinite views of the Cambean Saa. Comers and friends on head of course, I sake the apportunity to do some artwork, something I have been doing in this same setting for should a decade now. On the way to the rainforest, however, we do a quick step in the Luquillo simbirabas (beachfront kindsc) for the best fried direken in the whole known world and to slack the car for a bay meal — yes in the rain forest (Puerto Rico is a lot about the ritual of eating as you can tell.) The rest of the hours will be spent in complete hiss, absorbing the surroundings in awe, being grateful and inspired.

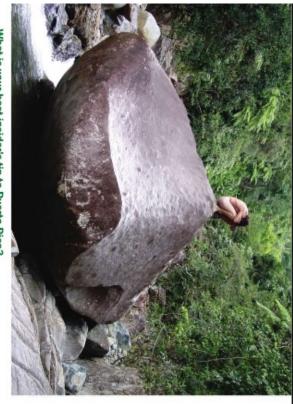
If you had only one night, where would you recommend that a visitor go, or what would you recommend they do?

A visit to the Bioluminescent Bay in Veques. Lifechanging. Or a coconut ice cream from a street vendor in old San Juan, Or an elevatir ride. Or people-welthing at night in the lobby of Hotel El San Juan.

Out of all the popular sites in Puerto Rico, which one do you call a "must-see?"

A hike in El Yunque rainforest, And I can tell you where to find some Taino petroglyphs.





What is your best insider's tip to Puerto Rico?

Have a conversation with a local and they will tell you what they think is the best...

Is there a section that inspires you?

My artwork deals mostly with memory, so growing up in Puerto Rico has been very influential I continue to be imprired by its natural surroundings, and as mentioned before, the rainforest more specifically, Besides thist, and more conceptually speaking. I am informed by the contemporary edge experience in Puerto Rico and the constant everlapping of cultures and images of the post and present, there is also an endemic sense of humor that transcends boundaries. I can see that in my sitivork for sure.

Is there a gallery that is a definite top for you whenever you go?

Of course, Walter Otero Contemporary, He represents my artwork and that of a small group of contemporary artists the Allore & Calzadilla, Budet, Arnaldo Roche and others, Lenjoy visiting the galleries in old San Juan that exhibit artesiana de Puerto Rico, sell local broks, and ANY antique shop.

If you spent the day outside and could not make it a beach day, where would you go and why?

A waterfall; the Cuevas del Rio Camuy; Museo de Arte de Ponce. Because they all have the possibility of inspiring.

When you think of Puerto Rico, what color comes to mind?

The color of the fireflies' light, or cuaubanos in Spanish.

