

The Visual Arts...



Jorge Blanco

Sarasota resident Jorge Blanco (born March 21, 1945 in Caracas) was an artist from Venezuela before he emigrated into the United States in 1999. He has spent his professional career working as a sculptor, graphic designer and illustrator. His works are in public sites in the United States, Venezuela and Japan.

Blanco began painting in 1967 and sculpting in the early 1970s. In the eyes of Blanco, however, he has been an artist since childhood. "I have been an artist all my life because - in my opinion- every child is an artist. I never stopped drawing or coloring," said Blanco. His interest in three-dimensional work is always at the forefront of his career. Blanco won a scholarship at the Neumann Institute in Caracas, Venezuela graduating with a degree in Industrial Design. After graduation he worked as a graphic designer. His first solo exhibition was in 1974, where he showed sculpture and drawings. He lived in Rome, Italy (1975–1979) where he continued to work in sculpture, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts and drew political cartoons for the newspaper "L'Opinione". He participated in the Bordhigera Humor Salon (1978), winning the Dattero D'Argento and in the Monterotondo Sculpture Salon, where he was awarded the first prize for medium format sculpture.

In 1979 Blanco returned to Caracas, Venezuela where he exhibited his sculptures and drawings at the Sofía Imber Museum of Contemporary Art. Blanco continued working in sculpture and he also designed and illustrated a children's newspaper "El Cohete". In 1980 was hired as the Art Director for the Caracas Children's Museum (Art, Science and Technology, Museo de los Niños). During his 18 years at the Caracas Children's Museum, Jorge Blanco created his character (The Castaway) in 1981. "The Castaway" is comic about a man trapped on an island. There are no words in the comic, just images of the character living on the island. The comic was originally printed in the newspaper "El Diario de Caracas." The Comic has become the cover of notebooks, images of various models of phone cards, along with images of several t-shirts. After leaving the Caracas Children's Museum, Blanco moved to the United States where he is still living today. Jorge receives commissions for large sculpture pieces and exhibits his art work often. On December 26, 2010

...so rich in objective, imagination and inspiration, *SCENE* proudly recognizes the passion and talent of local artists. Featured artists are selected by an independent panel organized by the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County.

to January 4, 2011 Jorge showed his "Punta en Blanco" exhibit at the Gallery Espacio Tierra Negra.

Blanco's early works were influenced by his teachers Gertrude Stein (Gego) and Cornelis Zitman and by the work of artists such as Auguste Herbin, Paul Klee and Joan Miró. He worked with unconventional materials such as lycra, rope, wood, mirrors combined with bronze. Blanco's sculptures were and continue to be geometric studies, interpretations of his internal world. In 1992 Blanco began to explore color and metal as a primary material. According to Blanco, "If I was living in the desert in Africa, it might be impossible to do what I am doing. I am doing this because of my experience from the big city, my experience as a graphic designer and my studies in industrial design. It seems it was all put in a blender and my passion was developed."

Recently, Blanco's sculpture, "Zephyrus", was selected to be exhibited at Hilton Head, South Carolina. The inaugural Public Art Exhibition will be held late September through early December 2011 at the Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island. Regional, national and international artists were invited to submit pieces to be on display during the event.

