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'ANTILLANO' at 81C features works by Puerto Rican artist

By LORI ABBOTTS Daily News Staff
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Puerto Rican artist Juan Carlos Amador unpacks his paintings in preparation for his art exhibit “ANTILLANO” at 81C on St. Thomas on Saturday.

Photo by ZACK ZOOK

81C in historic downtown Charlotte Amalie will host a full gallery exhibition of works by artist Juan Carlos Amador on Saturday, with a reception from 7 p.m. to midnight. ANTILLANO features the colorful abstract paintings of this Puerto Rico-based talent.

Amador emphasizes color by using the Neo-impressionist painting method of divisionism, separating colors into individual dots or patches which interact optically.

“The viewer’s appreciation of the works is based on their individual and biological capacity to perceive color instantly and interpret introspectively,” said Puerto Rican art academic Christina Grace Roig. “Unburdened by a specific narrative or message, it depends on the intrinsic meaning and comprehension of each spectator.”

“Juan Carlos Amador is the son of archipelagos, island nations, former colonies and eternal colonies. An Antillean, he is a citizen of the Caribbean Sea. Amador grew up by the sea, a surfer, where changes in color, light, and movement are in constant evolution, said fellow

Puerto Rican artist Pedro Vélez.

He added, “Nature is his muse. But his end game is an abstraction. Amador employs color dabs, aerosol paint, pointillism, smudges from oil bars and rubbings, sometimes with charcoal lines visible. They delineate imaginary boundaries and points of convergence between color and movement. Amador keeps figurative concerns on lockdown, hidden in the background of his paintings. Oddly enough, his process begins with what seems to be graffiti calligraphy, lines and curves reminiscent of pathways in a map leading to a surfers’ beach. Once the underpainting has been resolved, he adds layers. Some painterly lines lay flat on the canvas while others protrude slightly from their surfaces like frosting on a cake.”

It has been the mission of Zack Zook, owner of the 81C event space, to establish relationships with artists from other islands.

“I want to create a connected thread with different art communities throughout the Caribbean,” he said. “It is my dream to have a solid balance between local and international artists. We have more in common than we do different.”

81C is located on Strand Gade between the waterfront and Market Square. COVID-19 capacity regulations will be observed. Visit www.81CVI.com for more information.

