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# Star Smiles News

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## Liza's Story

*An Unexpected Journey of  
an Extraordinary Mom,  
Wife and Professional.*

STORY BY ANNE TSCHIDA | PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CEREJIDO

# Liza's Story

*An Unexpected Journey of an Extraordinary Mom, Wife and Professional*

BY ANNE TSCHIDA

Life's path, as most of us know, is never straight, and never predictable. As much as we try to diligently and optimistically plot the future, it always seems to throw a wrench in all the best laid plans. That fickleness can bring unexpected joys and seemingly unbearable sorrows, simple times and trying times, and yet it's what makes life a great journey rather than a scientific grid. Liza Mosquera's journey has included a mix of all of the above -- it's brought happiness and incredible success, trials and sadness, and sometimes just plain pleasurable ordinariness.

A native of El Salvador and the daughter of an agricultural engineer, Liza had first moved to the United States with her family while her father, Saul Contreras, studied entomology. It would be the beginning of a trail-blazing career for him, and immense pride for his daughter. He had won a scholarship to study in a master's degree program in entomology at Texas A&M University, and later a scholarship for a doctorate program, also in entomology, at the University of Florida. On both occasions, the family traveled with him while he was completing his studies. "Upon our return to El Salvador, my father became the first entomologist with a doctorate degree in my country," Liza says with obvious pride.

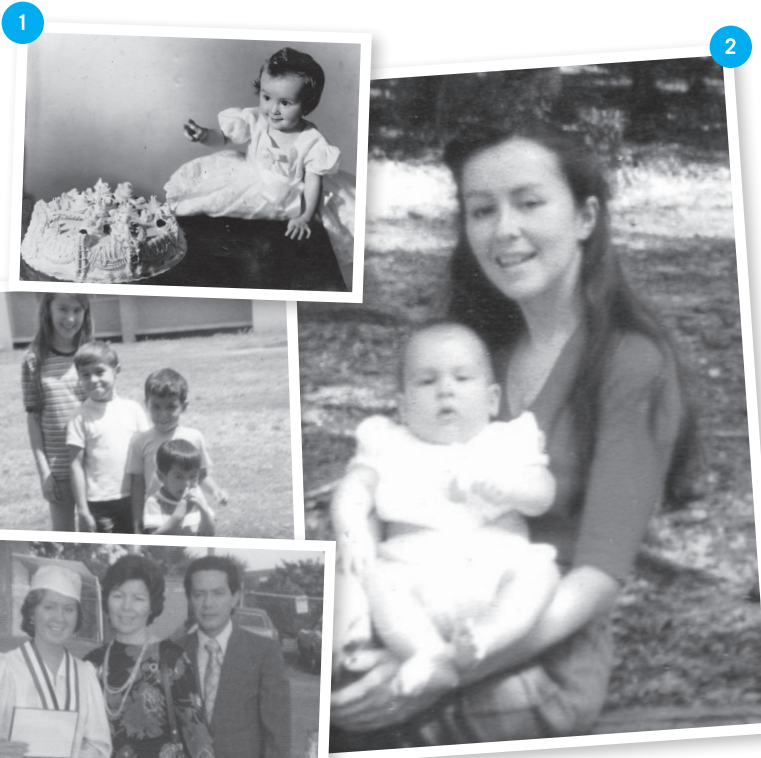
Liza met her husband Arturo at the University of Florida, while he was at dental school. They got married in El Salvador, where her family had returned, and daughter Carolina was born in Gainesville. They moved on to Memphis, where Arturo finished his Master of Science in Orthodontics, and it was during this time that son Arturo Jr. was born. Eventually the family returned to Miami, the city that Arturo had moved to, in exile from Cuba, with his family when he was the age of 9.

While Arturo set up his orthodontic practice, Liza obtained an Associate in Arts in Dental Hygiene, and started to work in her husband's office. Liza found herself juggling worlds, as both a working professional and mother. She has maintained a current license in dental hygiene, even though her practice has been related to orthodontics.

As the office celebrated their silver anniversary, Liza took pride in having played a major role in its development. She has been its office manager for over 25 years, has trained new staff members, and manages its budget and accounting as well as the organizational needs of the office. She is in charge of the office internal marketing program, and also has an Orthodontic Expanded Duties of Dental Auxiliary Personnel certificate, working in the clinic on patients whenever required. "I have to say that working in the office has given me a great opportunity to make lasting relationships with our patients, our referring doctors and our talented staff. They have all played a role in the solid foundation of the practice."

After her father's unexpected and untimely death, her mother and siblings settled in Miami. "My mother, Martha López de Contreras, is an exceptional human being. She was very supportive of my father's decision to study abroad, even though it brought many challenges to our family. She is an energetic person, always lending a hand to everyone. My mother's also a devout Catholic. She participates in many prayer groups and volunteers with the needy, which has been a source of inspiration to me since I was a child."

Those are the basic milestones, the outlines of a life. In between them, the subtle and quiet, and also the traumatic and melancholy, happen. Very few



1) Liza as a baby. 2) Liza with daughter Carolina in Gainesville, FL. 3) Liza with her three brothers Edgardo, Mauricio and Eric. 4) Liza and her parents, Dr. Saul Contreras and Martha Lopez de Contreras at high school graduation in Gainesville, FL.

mothers can understand what happened to Liza in June of 2008. While on vacation with her husband and son Javier in a remote part of Chile, they were told that something had gone wrong with the heart valve that had been placed in their son Arturo five years before. They were on an adventurous trip, Liza recalls, when they found out that Arturo would have to have an operation at a New England hospital. They made their way through flights and cities to Boston, in time for his heart surgery. Finally, the operation was completed and a doctor said to us "he's fine, go and get some rest."

But all was not fine. An early morning phone call informed them that Arturo was not responding, he had had a brain injury. He had gone into a coma. From then on, it was almost a daze. Having no real home in Boston, and with her husband eventually having to return to work in Miami, Liza was on her own, moving from hotel to hotel. "What difficult moments," she recalls of that lonely time. But in dark days, small miracles often show themselves. Liza had gravitated to a local church near the hospital, where the priest and parishioners became a font of support. "I joined their prayer groups, and that gave me hope," she says.

Arturo did eventually start to respond. And in the meantime, a member of the church befriended Liza, so that those impersonal hotels became a thing of the past as the woman, Katie Harris, let her stay with her. "She took me in. She went with me to the doctors. She was an angel," remembers Liza, who stays in contact now with these angels of mercy in Roxbury, Mass.

She remembers those trying days in Boston, simply going to church, coming back to the hospital. "It was just him and me in Boston. I would read prayers to him out loud....later he told me, 'I could hear your voice.' Then in August, another miraculous happening: Arturo was flown home to Miami, to the head injury unit at Jackson Memorial. Arturo has been ever since on a remarkable road to recovery. But the recovery has been long

and painful, with starts and then setbacks. He was released -- in an incredible Christmas present -- from the trauma center on Dec. 23rd, 2008. But rehabilitation and out-patient therapy, the basic 24-hour care, have changed Liza's journey irrevocably. With such an experience, she reflects, "everything in life just slows down. You have to form a different way of looking at life, at what's really important."

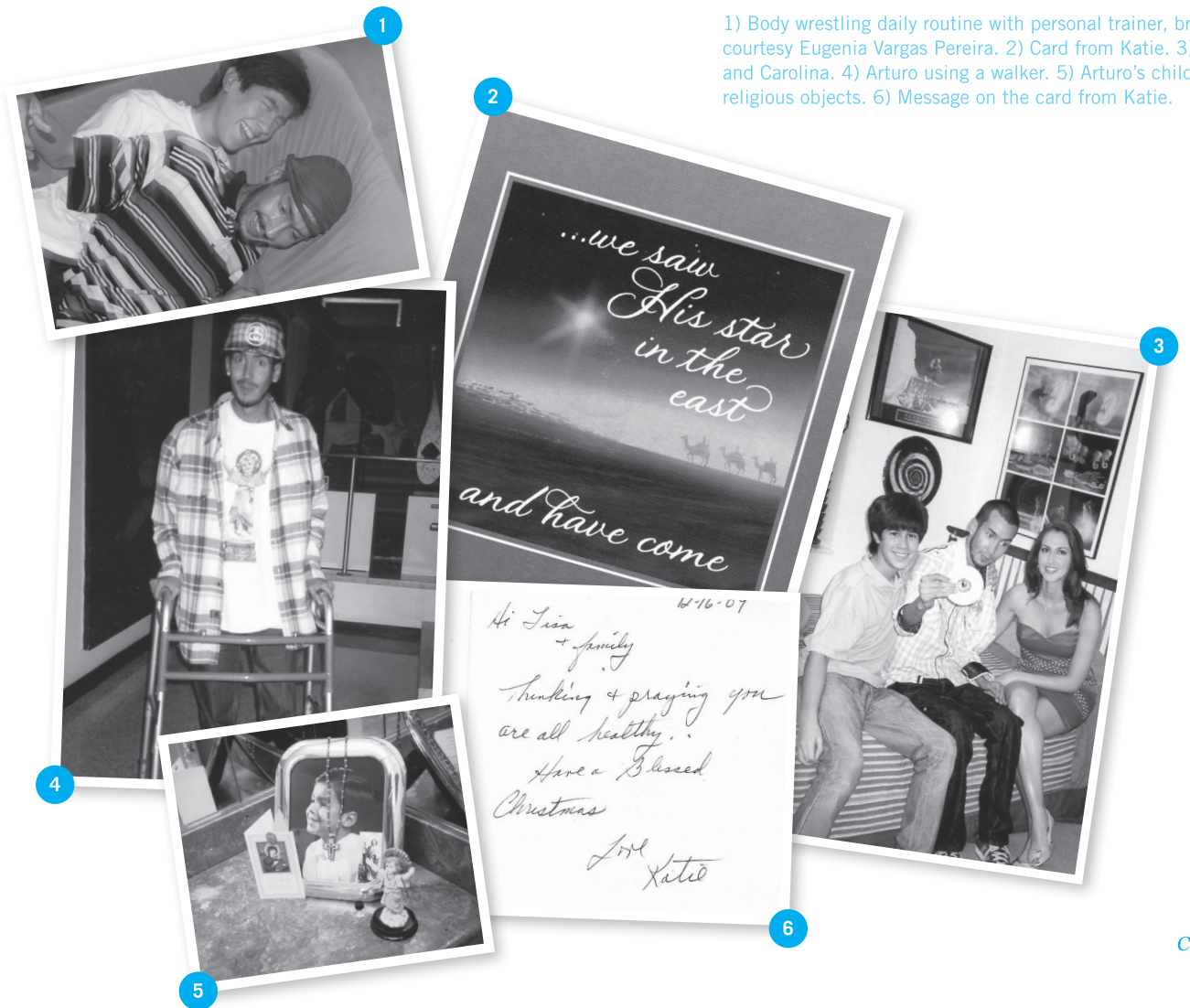
"Taking care of him all day," she says quite frankly, "sometimes he would get so depressed and would cry -- sometimes it got a little overwhelming and I found myself upset. But I've learned to accept things. This happened for a reason and God has a plan for him and for me. Arturo is a miracle, and I know now it's been a blessing."

While traumatic and dramatic moments can serve to reinforce a faith in God and life's real meaning, it doesn't take away from other defining moments. For anyone who knows Liza, her daughter's graduation from dental school in Detroit last May, and her marriage to her high school sweetheart, Salvador (Sal) Cuadra, were such defining moments. In fact, the whole family, including Arturo, were able to fly up for the graduation. And of her youngest son, Javier, Liza will also call him something of a miracle. In 1995, 15 years after Carolina was born and 13 after Arturo, the family welcomed Javier into the world.

"It was an incredible gift from God," says the proud mother, "as I had lost my father to a heart attack just 10 months earlier. We were blessed with a new son...Javier has always said he has two mothers, his sister and myself; and he and his brother have shared a very close bond."



1) Liza, Dr. Mosquera, their three children and Liza's Mom at her 70th birthday celebration. 2) Liza and family Christmas 2007. 3) Skiing black slopes in Park City, UT. 4) Liza on the slopes in Utah with her son Javier.



1) Body wrestling daily routine with personal trainer, brother Javier. Photo courtesy Eugenia Vargas Pereira. 2) Card from Katie. 3) Javier, Arturo and Carolina. 4) Arturo using a walker. 5) Arturo's childhood photo with religious objects. 6) Message on the card from Katie.

Continued from page 3



1) Juan Carlos and Liz Cerejido the artist of cover portrait, Arturito, Liza, Anne Tschida and Mia Leonin at Carol Jazzar's Contemporary Art opening reception. 2) Anne Tschida, the author of Liza's article, with Liza and friend, Carol Jazzar eating arepas at Art@Work reception 2007.

Along the way, the Mosqueras have crafted something else unique: an art collection and gallery spaces (in the orthodontic office and house next door) where numerous remarkable shows have been exhibited over the years -- the Art@Work project and Farside Gallery. Recalls Liza about the beginnings of this venture: "We reacquainted ourselves with a former high school friend of Arturo's, Ricardo Pau-Llosa, who is an art critic and poet. He introduced us to local artists and that is how we began to develop our art collection, which grew from artists in the community to collecting art from international artists."

Liza has also enjoyed forming friendships with the artists that have participated in Art@Work and Farside projects. "Being able to share with them has given me a different insight into their work."

Besides raising a family and working in the office, Liza has always taken pleasure in cooking, reading and hiking. But as life rarely goes as planned, Arturo's illness and rehabilitation have superseded most hobbies recently. "I don't have too much time for extra reading or cooking these days," she says, although she does make time -- and take solace -- in reading the Bible, and making a simple meal. "A simple dinner, we all enjoy that together, it's a special time for us."

Since she was a teenager, Liza has always enjoyed cooking and finds it a very relaxing task. "My children have developed incredible taste buds with my continual culinary experiments, even though more often they have complained about the different dishes I make them eat."

She also recalls with excitement her memory of the most incredible hiking expedition -- trekking for five days on the Inca Trail in Peru, to arrive at the Puerta del Sol above the archeological site of Machu Pichu.

Back in Miami, her son Arturo has become active in swimming therapy, golf, horseback riding, Tae Kwon Do, art classes, and in group therapy for brain injury survivors. They are even able to poke fun a little at all that has happened -- "we even laugh sometimes at the things [Arturo] said when coming out of a coma." Life has settled down just a bit. But it will never be the same. Although the last couple of years have included hardship, it also has brought good, Liza says. She remembers the woman who took her in up in Boston, the family, friends and doctors who have helped pull the family through, and knows now there was a broader meaning to it all. "God did not abandon us in the end. Now I know it has been a blessing."

1) Arturito lighting up a cigar with help from cousin Michael. 2) Photo at the family reunion celebrating Michael's return from the US Navy. 3) Arrival in Orlando to Welcome Home family celebration for cousin Lt. Michael Giesecking. 4) Michael father's, Tom, celebrating with cigars and whiskey.



1) Arturito riding Cody at Good Hope Ranch. 2) Arturo practicing at Better Families Through Tae Kwan Do during his recovery -- photo courtesy Gastón de Cárdenas. 3) Arturito walking Clue on his own.



## A Beautiful Red Rose

BY DR. ARTURO F. MOSQUERA

It seems like only yesterday when our family and office staff was excited about the celebration of our Silver Anniversary in 2007-2008, after 25 years of my orthodontic practice. We had a lot of plans in what was to be many events and a couple of highlight articles featuring staff members that were part of the practice from the beginning. One of these articles is the cover story for this issue of my wife Liza, who is the office manager. The other of Diana Cruz, who is our clinical supervisor, will be published in a subsequent issue.

Some of our plans were postponed while others were canceled due to the brain injury my son Arturo suffered nearly two years ago whilst in the midst of our office and practice celebration. Our immediate family has been committed to Arturo's recovery, with Liza being on an extended leave of absence so she can personally take him to every therapy and all of his doctors' appointments. Thus, the original idea of an article on Liza has now taken on a new meaning.

Liza is, as Arturito refers to her, a "beautiful red rose". One day, after he was home from the hospital, we were playing around with words and he did not like that I said she was a Petunia, thinking of "Flower" (a reference to one of the Walt Disney's films)...and he came back with a definite stand that she was a beautiful red rose! Another day during his recovery, he told his mother that "Dad made the right choice in choosing you for my mother". This was a testimony to her dedication as a mother. I have been lucky to have her for a wife and the mother of our children.

PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CEREJIDO



## Dr. Andrés and Rosie Cendán

*A dedication to dear friends*

BY RAISSA SOLER

This issue of Star Smiles News is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Mosquera's dear friends, Dr. Andrés and Rosie Cendán. Dr. Mosquera first met them at a social function during a dental congress in Miami while he was still attending the specialty orthodontic program at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. Dr. Mosquera knew Dr. Cendán had been a member of the charter class at the University of Florida College of Dentistry where Dr. Mosquera also attended dental school beginning in 1976, just after Andrés had graduated. Andrés and Rosie and Arturo and Liza established the beginning of what would become a very close friendship over the years.

Andrés and Arturo were members of several dental associations and study clubs and would frequently see each other. Eventually, Dr. Cendán invited Dr. Mosquera to practice his specialty of orthodontics in the large group practice that Andrés owned. Before Dr. Cendán purchased the group practice, there had been an orthodontist who had worked seeing orthodontic patients for the group. Dr. Mosquera already had an established practice in Hialeah and welcomed the opportunity to see patients in the Kendall area. Eventually, Dr. Mosquera purchased the building where he currently exclusively maintains his orthodontic practice and merged both the Hialeah and Kendall offices.

During the time that Dr. Mosquera worked in Dr. Cendán's office in Kendall, he thoroughly enjoyed Dr. Cendán's professionalism and expertise. He was a very hard working dentist with outstanding knowledge, experience and a great 'bedside manner' with his patients. His wife, Rosie, worked at the office as well and was part of the dental team in administration. Both couples socialized quite frequently, going out to many events in which they shared an interest in common. One of the funniest memories is when they went to a Spanish restaurant and the waiter got so upset at the questions he was being asked about the Crema Catalana that he lost his temper in typical Spanish demeanor, asking them if they wanted the dessert imprinted on their forehead.

Andrés was an talented piano player and frequently delighted everyone with his interpretations at dental parties, at his home, at the Mosqueras' home, or wherever he found a piano available. Although Dr. Mosquera does not play the piano, he enjoys tremendously listening to his favorite instrument. The Mosqueras and Cendáns went to many classical concerts and operas together.

The couples' children, Andy, Arlene, Carolina and Arturito became friends as they frequently went out to dinner with their parents. They especially enjoyed Thai food at their favorite restaurant, Royal Thai. Additionally, Arlene and Carolina both took piano lessons from the same teacher, Lolita Martínez, who not only taught them music, but also everything else they could learn from a great lady.

The families also went on vacation together, sharing many trips to Jupiter Beach and Disneyworld. Andrés and Rosie and Arturo and Liza had been to Europe together with a group of dentists and had many fond memories. They were planning to take their entire families on a long anticipated trip to Italy and were very enthusiastic. Unfortunately, during the trip Andrés died unexpectedly. Rosie proved to be a very strong woman and was exemplary in continuing to raise their children, both of whom are the pride of all that know them. Sadly, Our Lord called Rosie to Andrés' side a few years later.

Andrés and Rosie were loved by an extraordinary number of friends, one of the real treasures of this world. Both of their families were blessings during the difficult times.

Andrés was a distinguished member of our dental community having served in many positions of leadership in the dental profession and obtaining many honors. He was deeply respected by his patients who loved him profoundly for his dedication.

The loving couple also served at their parish, St. Kevin Catholic Church, with volunteer work and devoted countless hours to premarital counseling to brides and grooms.

Dr. Mosquera thought of Andrés as the brother he never had. They were incredibly compatible and their common interests went beyond the profession to their passion for traveling, skiing, music and food. Rosie was like a sister, also sharing all of these special interests.

The loss of this remarkable couple was felt profoundly by all who knew them. Dr. Mosquera would frequently ask himself why. He had difficulty understanding why the Lord took Andrés and Rosie. Eventually, through his experience with his own son, Dr. Mosquera has come to accept and understand 'Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven'. Even though Andrés and Rosie have not been with us for so many years, their memory never fades for how special they were. Dr. Mosquera knows they are watching over us from heaven.



## Paoli Rudman

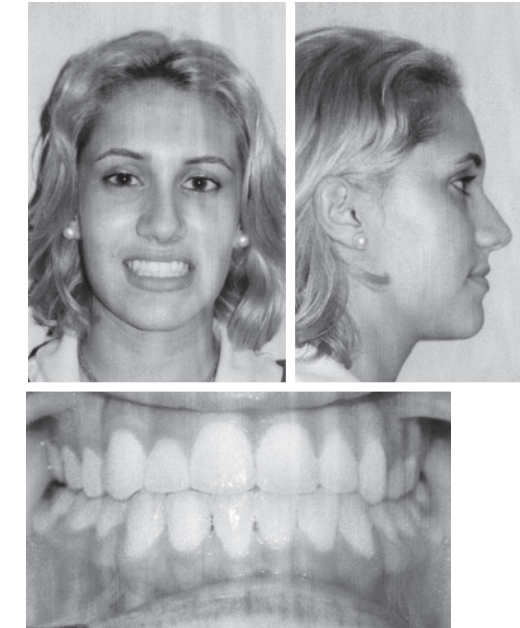
*Orthodontic and Dentofacial Orthopedic Treatment of a Compromised Adolescent Malocclusion*

BY DR. ARTURO F. MOSQUERA

Pre Treatment Photos



Post Treatment Photos



Headgear Photos



This 13 year old female patient presented to my office with previous extractions of four first premolars. Unfortunately, the decision by the previous dentist or orthodontist (patient and mother could not be certain) to remove the missing teeth due to crowding was not the correct choice. The patient's profile and lip support was adversely affected. In the pre-treatment photographs, the upper lip does not have adequate support and the nasolabial angle is obtuse, which does not make the face as attractive as it should be. If you compare this profile with that of the post-treatment photographs, you will note the positive change.

The patient's treatment was more complex, required a greater degree of cooperation and took longer than would have been necessary otherwise.

Paoli had full braces placed and following alignment of the dentition, she initiated simultaneous use of two types of headgears 12 hours daily. One of the headgears placed backward and upward pressure on the lower teeth while the other protracted (pulled forward) the upper teeth, using a type of face mask with osseous support from the forehead and chin. Eventually,

the patient was also requested to utilize intra-oral elastics between the upper and lower arch wires.

The treatment was completed in three years and, due to the patient's excellent cooperation, she avoided the need for surgical correction of her bone imbalance. Additionally, she obtained a beautiful facial result, an aesthetically pleasing smile and an adequate bite.

Her retention will include the use of a tooth positioner (instead of standard retainers) until she is 23 years old at which time the probability of a relapse of her underbite will be unlikely. She could then have regular retainers made and use them one night per week lifetime to maintain her outstanding result.

We are pleased to highlight Paoli Rudman's case as an example that could help other patients. We remain grateful to her mother for her unwavering support and discipline during Paoli's therapy.



1) Patient Zeida Llanes' thank you card. 2) Cake brought by Zeida Llanes to her brace removal appointment.



We congratulate our patient, Charles Benfield, on the birth of his lovely daughter, Ella Jae Benfield, on March 5th, 2010.

## Continuing Education

Recent Continuing Education Courses Taken by Dr. Mosquera

Local Anesthesia in Pedodontics offered by Asociación Dental CEOLA-HELO (2 credit hours)

Bonding Composite-Its Application in Dentistry offered by Asociación Dental CEOLA-HELO (2 credit hours)

Adult, child and infant CPR course certification (2 credit hours)

Qi Revolution-Qigong Healing & Breathing Applications, Levels 1,2,3 offered by the Supreme Science Qigong Foundation (32 credit hours)

Office Christmas Lunch, December 2009 at La Porteña Restaurant



## Graduates with a Star Smile

We apologize for having omitted these patients from a previous issue of Star Smiles News

Oscar Abrales, Juan Carlos Aguilar, Takeshi Aida, Carla Alaimo, Mariagracia Alaimo, Vanessa Albalat, Marcos Alfaro, David Alfonso, Maria Alfonso, Regla Alfonso, Lorena Alvarez, Maribel Alvarez, Michael Alvarez, Brittany Alvarez, Javier Andrial, Jonathan Azcarretazabal, Ashlee Benet, Ralph Bonne, Emilia Boulton, Heriberto Cabada, Daniel Cabrera, Bianca Canals, Michelle Caracciolo, Lazaro Castro, Anne Marie Charur, Emilie Collongette, Elizabeth Cotto-Perez, Denis Cruz, Alicia Diaz, Eduardo Diaz, Geraldine Diaz, Odalys Diaz, Melissa Diego, Jose Echeverria, Michael Echeverria, Enrique Esclusa, Andrew Falls, Jorge Farah, Erika Fernandez, Manuel Fernandez, Rodrigo Ferrando, Andrea Ferreira, Carl Fuentes, Betsy Garcia, Alexi Gavidia, Alejandra Gaviria, Daniel Gonzalez, Reinaldo Guerra, Carolina Guerrero, Cynthia Haddad, Adonis Hernandez, Camila Hernandez, Jonathan Hernandez, Adriana Huet, Yousy Jimenez, Diego Perez-Klock, Anthony Lopez, Elizabeth Lopez, Leanne Lopez, Yisel Lopez, Eva Maria Madariaga, Ismael Mazza, Ana Luis Menendez, Adrian Menendez, Cesar Molina, John Montes, Alejandra Montiel, Enrique Muñoz, David Paredes, Edwin Peña, Evelyn Pereda, Joshua Pereira, Roberta Peres, Javier Perez, Michael Perez, Juan Piza, Mindi Pritchett, Ricardo Puig, Kathleen Pujadas, Veronica Quintanilla, Andrea Rabassa, Celines Rivera, Natasha Rivera, Melanie Roca, Alejandro Rodriguez, Brandon Rodriguez, Christopher Rodriguez, Ignacio Rodriguez, Jose Andres Rodriguez, Elena Rosello, Robert Rubio, Raimundo Rueda, Rubi Ruiz, Janelle Salinas, Jessica Salum, Cynthia Sanchez, Carla Santos, Joaquin Serrapio, Alex Sotto, Nancy Suarez, Vivian Suarez, Jessica Telleria, Arleti Tirado, Daniel Valenzuela, Addys Vasquez, Katherine Vergel-Giscard.



*Son No 2, Acrylic, metallic powder on paper, 30 x 22 inches*

## Christian Duran

*A reception for the artist will take place at our office on Saturday, July 18, 2009 from 7 to 9 p.m. You and your family are cordially invited to attend.*

Christian Duran is a Cuban-American artist who presently lives and works in Miami, Florida. He received his Bachelor of Fine Art from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1998. Through this body of recent work on exhibit at Art@ Work, Christian Duran explores the beauty and power of two passions: religious iconography and the natural world. Regarding religion, Duran remembers the sense of awe he experienced as a youth in the Catholic Church. In particular, he recalls the inspiring images of saints and biblical events permanently documented in paint, glass and stone. In contrast, Duran also has a passion for science and nature. Specifically, he is amazed by the human form, its systems and physiology, as well as botanical structures. In essence these paintings are of Christianity inspired figures and silhouettes, vascular systems and plant structures seamlessly merging, striving to create and find connections beyond sight. By blurring the lines between science and faith, Duran appropriates past experiences in hope of achieving transcendence of his own.

Duran's solo and two person exhibitions include *You Take Me There* (2009) at Art@Work, Miami, FL; *Bringing Up the Dead* (2009) at the Art and Cultural Center of Hollywood, Hollywood, FL; *Path of Least Resistance* (2007) at Ingalls & Associates, Miami, FL; *Views from Within: Christian Duran and Vickie Pierre* (2006) at the Polk Museum of Art in Lakeland, FL; *Apparitions* (2005) at Ingalls & Associates, Miami, FL; *Nerve* (2004) at Edge Zones, Miami, FL; and *Equinox* (2003-4) at the Capitol building in Tallahassee, FL.

Notable group exhibitions include *MIAMI The Edge of a Nation* (2009) at Melissa Morgan Fine Arts, Palm Desert, CA; 25

Florida Fellowships (2007-9) a traveling exhibition, FL; *Artists of Cuban Ancestry* from the Permanent Collection (2007) at the Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, FL; *Pregon: Call and Response Series #1* (2006) at the Miami Dade County Public Library, Miami, FL; *Aesthetics & Values* (2006) at the Florida International University in Miami, FL; *Sensory World* (2005) at Ambrosino Gallery, North Miami, FL; *The Last Show* (2004) at The House, Miami, FL; *Art Basel Miami Beach* (2003) at the Free Spirits Lounge, Miami Beach, FL; *Made In Miami* (2003) at The Fredrick Snitzer Gallery, Miami, FL; *Science Friction* (2001) at The Dorsch Gallery, Miami, FL; and *The House Presents: Eight Solo Shows* (2001) at Carlos Betancourt Studio, Miami, FL.

### ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Through this body of work I explore the beauty and power of two passions: religious iconography and the natural world. Regarding religion, I remember the sense of awe I experienced in my youth in the Catholic Church. In particular, I recall the inspiring images of saints and biblical events permanently documented in paint, glass and stone. In contrast, I also have a passion for science and nature. Specifically, I am amazed by the human form, its systems and physiology, as well as botanical structures. In essence these paintings are of Christianity inspired figures and silhouettes, vascular systems and plant structures seamlessly merging, striving to create and find connections beyond sight. By blurring the lines between science and faith, I appropriate past experiences in hope of achieving transcendence of my own.



*Harumi3 + X'mas, 2006, oil on canvas, 40 x 40 inches*

## Harumi Abe

*A reception for the artist will take place at our office on Saturday, October 17, 2009 from 7 to 9 p.m. You and your family are cordially invited to attend.*

Harumi Abe's inspiration is in everyday life. Her interests are personal and emotional. The main issues of her art are not formally convoluted but rather simple observations of ordinary life. She paints about being Japanese and living in America, about being married to an American, living next to his American family and away from her home in Japan. In a strange, roundabout way, her work is about being an American. She is also interested in the phenomenon of day dreaming within a comfortable environment: inside the house, while driving to work, or in the backyard while looking at the plants. She creates scenery similar to the magical realism of novels to portrait her daydreams.

At the age of nineteen, Harumi Abe relocated to Miami from Japan on her own to pursue her dream of studying art in the United States. Harumi attended Ai Miami International University of Arts and Design, formerly International Fine Arts College, where she met many of her painting mentors. After her graduation in 2003, she continued her studies at Florida International University and received a MFA in 2008.

Abe is a recipient of the 2008 South Florida Cultural Consortium for Visual and Media Artists and also received the Women in the Visual Artists Scholarship in 2007. Harumi has been a Juried Member artist in residence at the Art Center of South Florida. She has shown her work extensively in South Florida including *Optic Nerve X* at MOCA North Miami Museum of Contemporary Art, FL, *Art and Culture Center of Hollywood*, FL, *Farside Gallery*, Miami, FL, and the *Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum*, Florida

International University, Miami, FL. She is scheduled in an upcoming exhibition, together with Peggy Nolan, at the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Center, Ontario, Canada in 2010.

Harumi Abe is currently the gallery director of Fine Arts Gallery, Broward College Central Campus and an adjunct professor at both Broward College and Florida International University. Abe also volunteers and teaches art classes at Lotus House Shelter in Overtown and finds rewarding to communicate with distressed women through art making. The exhibit at Art@Work marks the first individual exhibit of this emerging artist and this body of work.

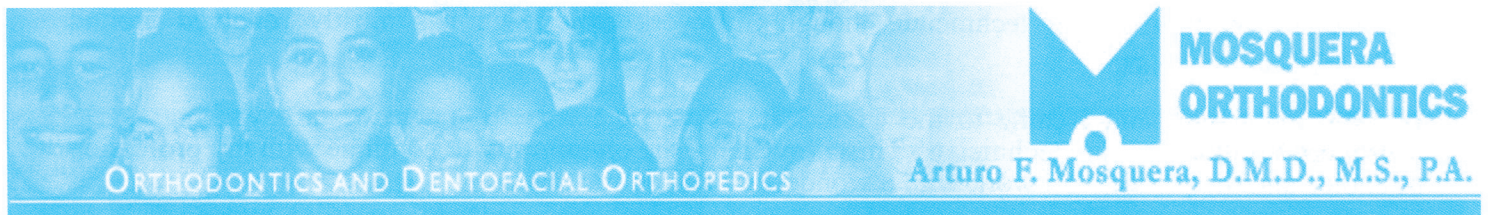
### ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Art exists right under the nose. It resides in my everyday experiences: swimming in the ocean of my bed sheets, soft from many washings, in my husband's sleepy smile, in the greetings from my cat at the door under the moonlight. This series of work addresses a reverie of the ordinary; self-portraits reflecting my most tranquil and sublime state of mind.

It is through the garments that I depict characters that mirror real life. My work is often accompanied with stories or expressions that point out vulnerabilities. The series titled "Road-Kill" I take an iconic dress form that represents innocence, and crush it, as if flattened under the weight of heavier forces. The goal was to be inspirational and intellectual, yet aesthetic as well.



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