

The Miami Herald

35 CENTS
105TH YEAR, NO. 241 ©2008

MiamiHerald.com 

MONDAY, MAY 12, 2008
FINAL EDITION

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The Miami Herald 

TROPICAL LIFE

PEOPLE
SECTION E

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

UNBUTTONED

Cosmetic surgeon mixes arts and sciences

Jhonny Salomon isn't the first physician to see left-brain creativity in his work. But in South Florida, he's one of a few who puts his money where his mouth is.

The Haitian-born plastic surgeon is also a collector of fine art and an amateur art critic. And if you believe genetics guide our actions, even a little, then surely there's no coincidence that back in Haiti a number of Salomon's relatives are artists and even art curators.

This week Dr. Jhonny Salomon gets Unbuttoned with James H. Burnett III.

JB: First, tell me about your work.

JS: I'm a plastic surgeon, a cosmetic surgeon. I deal with art and beauty and medicine on a daily basis. My specialty is the face — neck lifts, forehead lifts. Still, 30 percent of my practice is breast and body contouring.

JB: I've met some surgeons who are reluctant to acknowledge the correlation between their work and classic art. You embrace the analogy. Why?

JS: I do. It's simply because I consider myself an artist. I sculpt bodies.

JB: I've heard that most surgeons perform to music that comforts them or helps them focus. A man's tunes can say a lot about his personality. What do you listen to while operating?

JS: That is true. Ninety-five percent of surgeons listen to music during surgery. It depends. If I'm doing a face-lift and a surgery with a lot of details, I'll listen to Fleetwood Mac, David Bowie or The Pretenders. For something like lipo, it calls for a lot higher energy, so I let the surgical assistants set the pace with the music selection. There is one stereotype — classical music. I don't listen to classical. It's just not my

personality.

JB: *I understand your family has a museum in Haiti.*

JS: My uncle George

Nader runs a museum (the Musée d'Art Nader) that features a lot of work from the beginning of the Haitian art

movement. He has operated art galleries in Haiti since the 1960s. But the museum was a dream come true for him,

because he has been able to help train and develop new artists.

JB: *Keeping up the theme, do you see parallels in the physical skills required for classic art work and surgery?*

JS: I don't know exactly, but there is a connection, I believe. My family growing up in Haiti, a number of them were doctors, and those who were doctors were also good artists.

JB: *The crown jewels of your personal art collection are paintings by Bernard Sojourne. Why?*

JS: He was a great Haitian artist. I love his work, and it makes me proud. I've been collecting art for a long time . . . I like to be surrounded by beautiful things. Sojourne died in the late '80s. I didn't start purchasing him 'til five or six years ago. The Sojournes I have in my house now, I want to transfer to my new office.

JB: *But tell me about Sojourne's style. What impresses or attracts you most?*

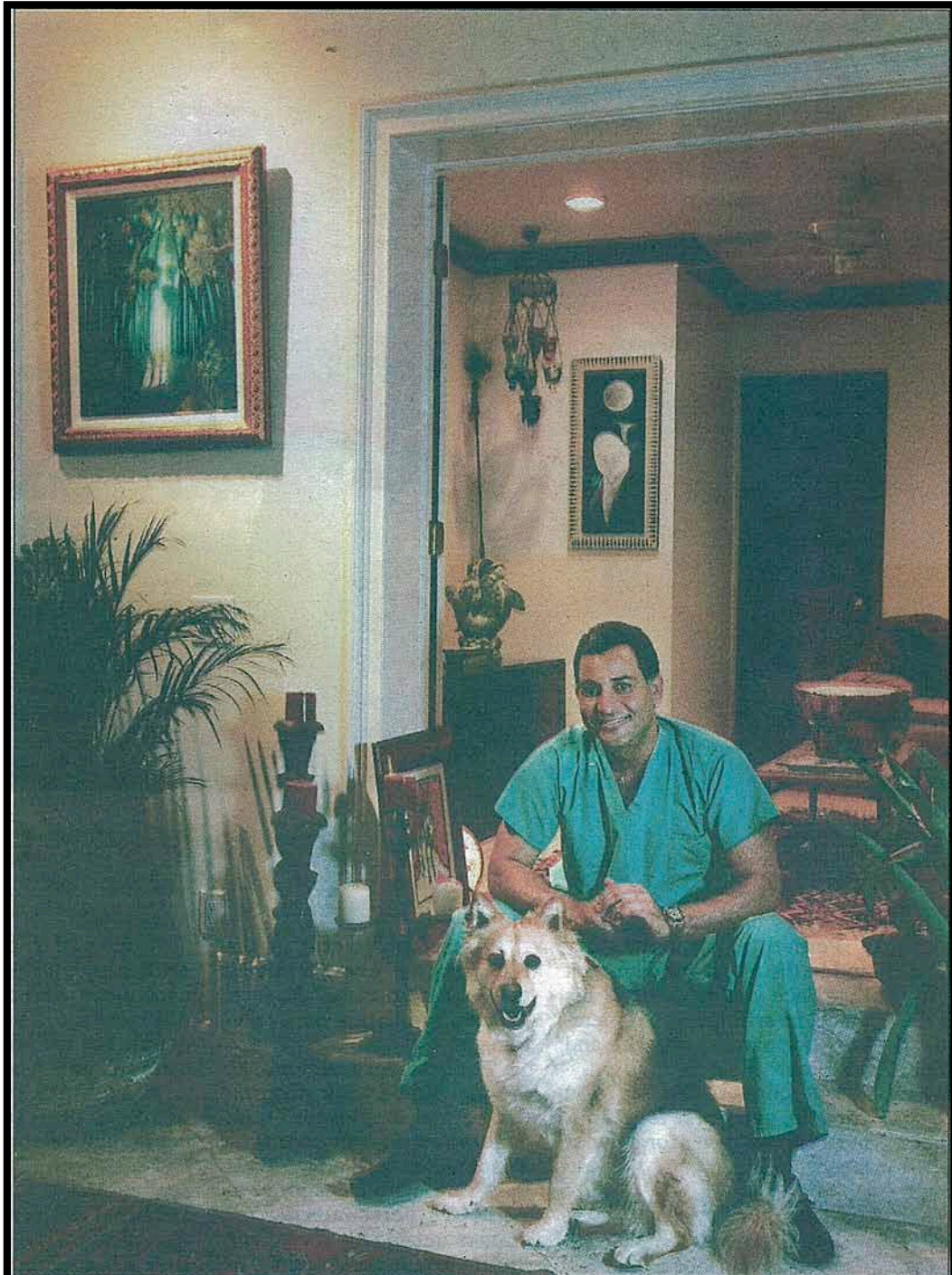
JS: Ninety percent-plus of his paintings are of the female form. The movement he started is called the "school of beauty."

JB: *How do you relax, or do you need to?*

JS: I love to travel — all forms, adventure travel, African safaris, you name it. But I don't have enough time. And I love photography. That's another passion of mine that is a little artistic. I participate in a lot of events.

JB: *Do misconceptions about your profession bother you?*

JS: No, I have a clear vision of what I do. I'm most disappointed though when I meet people, patients, who come in with misconceptions about themselves, and if I can help them fix that, I will.



CARL JUSTE/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

A MAN AND HIS DOG: Jhonny Salomon poses with part of his art collection and good friend Pepe.