

Luis E. Perez

Artist Statement

In my work I explore the theme of intimacy and spirituality and their ephemerality. Intimacy is a term that is most often related to love and sexuality in our current cultural and social conversations, but it is much more than that; it is the act of opening ourselves to another human being, both physically but also emotionally. In a society that has moved to a highly individualistic focus, we are robbed of the benefits of community and support that come from being vulnerable with others. This, coupled with a constant over sexualization of interpersonal relationships leads us to overlook the importance of non-romantic intimacy. It is in those intimate non-romantic everyday moments, in the instances of connection, that we share with the important people in our lives that we are truly ourselves and the moments in which we can be authentically seen.

As I analyzed moments of intimacy in others, it became clear that their own identity played a big role into how they experienced intimacy. This led me to look inward and discover the important place of spirituality in my own experiences. I also began to consider who I am and how does my heritage and culture affect the way I see myself and others. This process of discovery manifested in deep research into the ancient cultures I thought myself a part of, and a personal intimacy in rediscovering their language.

Through my paintings, I attempt to capture such instances of intimate connections that can often be overlooked. These intimate moments are often private and difficult, but I am also interested the public and joyful moments that are all the same intimate. The scenes I capture can perhaps be considered everyday life but in each, the viewer can see much more than a simple familiar occurrence, a powerful emotional depth stems from the vulnerability of the subjects. These instances of connection are fascinating in that they are both unique and universal at the same time. The viewer may relate to their familiarity but also recognize that they happened to unique individuals at a singular time, evoking in them a sense of nostalgia and reflection leading to yet another unique moment of intimacy. This time between the viewer and the artwork.