

Colucci

LITTLE Men



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May 15, 2006 - May 26, 2006 / Grand Gallery
The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York City



The National Arts Club

www.NationalArtsClub.org

What are the Little Men?

They're my muses, eight-inch tall muses in gabardine or corduroy or felt. But unlike the muses the poets wait for, I summon them by drawing them and in so doing, draw power into my soul... or at least that soulful part of me that shares the One Mind with the planet.

They are my practice. My meditation. My yoga. They have no fear. They smile like the Buddha and generate the energy of a whirling dervish.

These little men remind me to let the comings and goings of life come and go...but that I am here...now. They never fail to bring me back to the present where life happens.



The Concept Behind The Little Man and Little Woman

There's a line in *The Fantastics* that sums up Steven Colucci. The Girl looks up and pleads, "Oh God, please don't let me be normal"

The little men and women in this book are anything but normal. They're flamboyant. Loud. Gaudy. Brazen. Passionate. Animated. And Fervent. Abnormally fervent.

They're based on real living, breathing, yelling, dancing, drinking people. Hispanic. Black. Mulatto. Indian. Chinese. People Colucci hangs out with at three in the morning in Spanish Harlem. Because they stir him. Intrigue him. Move him to tears as well as gales of laughter.

Like Hector. A tall, strong, chiseled man with a slick pony-tail. And Jessie, who Hector remembers as a kid. He had an affair with her as a grown woman. And he forgave her after she cheated on him.

There's Maggie, the bartender. They say her two kids have IQs that are off the charts. And then there's Columbia dates Colombia, an Irish guy named Brian and his even smarter Latina girlfriend, Ruth.

And there's Raoul...you look up the word, loyalty, and you should see his picture. And Raymond. He might joke, "I don't got a pot to piss in," but he buys gifts for Colucci and lots of other people. Because Raymond measures his wealth, not in cash, but in friends.

And there's Denise with the wild, frizzy hair who "ain't afraid of no one." And Mo, whose hair is even more slicked back than Hector's and no one better talk crap about him. And he likes Marisol from across the room, but she hangs with Raoul. And on and on...

The people in this book are real. They have names and histories. Some of them have rap sheets. And they all have their own style. Whether it's Salvation Army or Haute Couture...or more likely a *mélange* of both. But the thing that ties them all together...the thing that draws Colucci to them and turned them into the body of work on the following pages is they're all outrageous. No one's normal. And they'd sooner shuffle off this mortal coil than dance to the beat of the hum-drum.

So Colucci drinks with them. Laughs with them. Cries with them. Exchanges secrets and lies. And Raoul will call his cell phone until 4:30 to make sure the taxi cab got him back home safely. No wonder Colucci loves them all.

It's good when an artist loves his subject matter. As the following pages will show.

Bob Zaslow

ABOUT COLUCCI

Steven Colucci was born to an Italian family in the South Bronx, next to the now defunct Yankee Stadium. His father owned and operated the dry cleaning service used by New York Giants. Colucci remembers sharing dinners with legendary athletes like Tucker Frederickson, Rosey Grier, Jim Brown and Frank Gifford. At 12 years old, Colucci was diagnosed with severe dyslexia and forced to enroll at New York University Reading Institute, a small-private school in the East Village. During his years at NYU Reading Institute, Colucci was encouraged to express himself through painting; he became particularly in representing movements through paint and carefully studied the works of John Marin, Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. Growing up in an Italian middle-class neighborhood and pursuing the arts was not easy feat, Colucci traveled to and from Manhattan with an extra outfit to avoid being bullied. He changed outfits at 161st street stop on the D train.

After finishing the program at NYU Reading Institute Colucci returned to William Taft high school in the Bronx, one of the most violent high schools in America during the 1960s. Colucci remained focused on painting and won a scholarship to the School of Visual Arts. After graduating with the B.A. in painting, Colucci moved to Paris to continue his studies in art and movement. It is in Paris that Colucci began to study pantomime and ballet under the tutelage of world-famous movement artist Etienne Decroux. Decroux worked with Colucci honing his talent, until he was discovered by Marcel Marceau in the late 70s. Marceau had few protégés, and Colucci quickly became one of them. For the next decade under Marceau's instruction, Colucci developed his own artistic voice and style.

In the 1980s, Colucci moved back to New York where he developed a dance and mime program, which offered one-on-one workshops with the world-renowned dancers and musicians like Martin VanHamel, Kevin McKenzie, Dennis Koster, Gerald Busby and more. He brought his workshop to numerous colleges across the United States including Barr College, nationally recognized for its prestigious arts program. Ronal Wilford, President of Columbia Artists Management, recognized Colucci's work as high art.

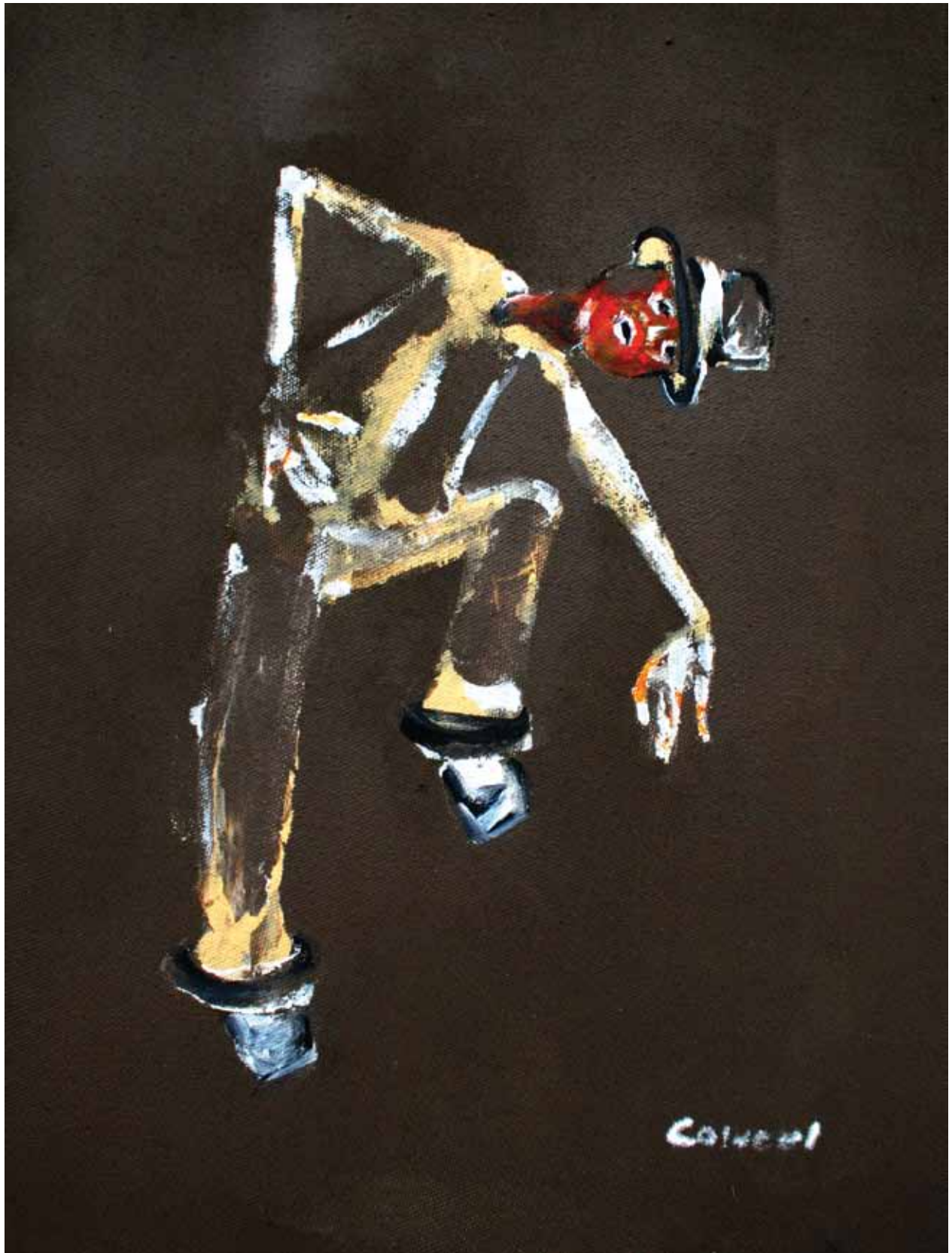
Between 1980s and 1990s Colucci was asked to collaborate with various dancers and artists including Alvin Ailey, Melba Moore, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Julio Iglesias and Etienne Decroux to name a few.

By the late 1990s Colucci refocused on painting once again and retreated to his studio in the Dunes, Westhampton, L.I. His artwork has been exhibited at National Arts Club in Gramercy Park, the Grant Gallery and the Belenky Gallery in SoHo. Colucci's work is part of the permanent collection of the Mark Hachem Gallery in New York and Paris. The artist is a recipient of the prestigious Sam Flax memorial Award and the Orestes S. Lapolla Memorial Award from The School Art League of New York City and has been featured as a guest artist at the Museum of Modern Art.

Steven Colucci's paintings and Haut Couture exhibition at the Mark Hachem Gallery, Madison Avenue, New York marked Colucci's debut as an haute couture designer. Colucci feels fashion is a rendezvous of all the art forms making it a natural step for his career.





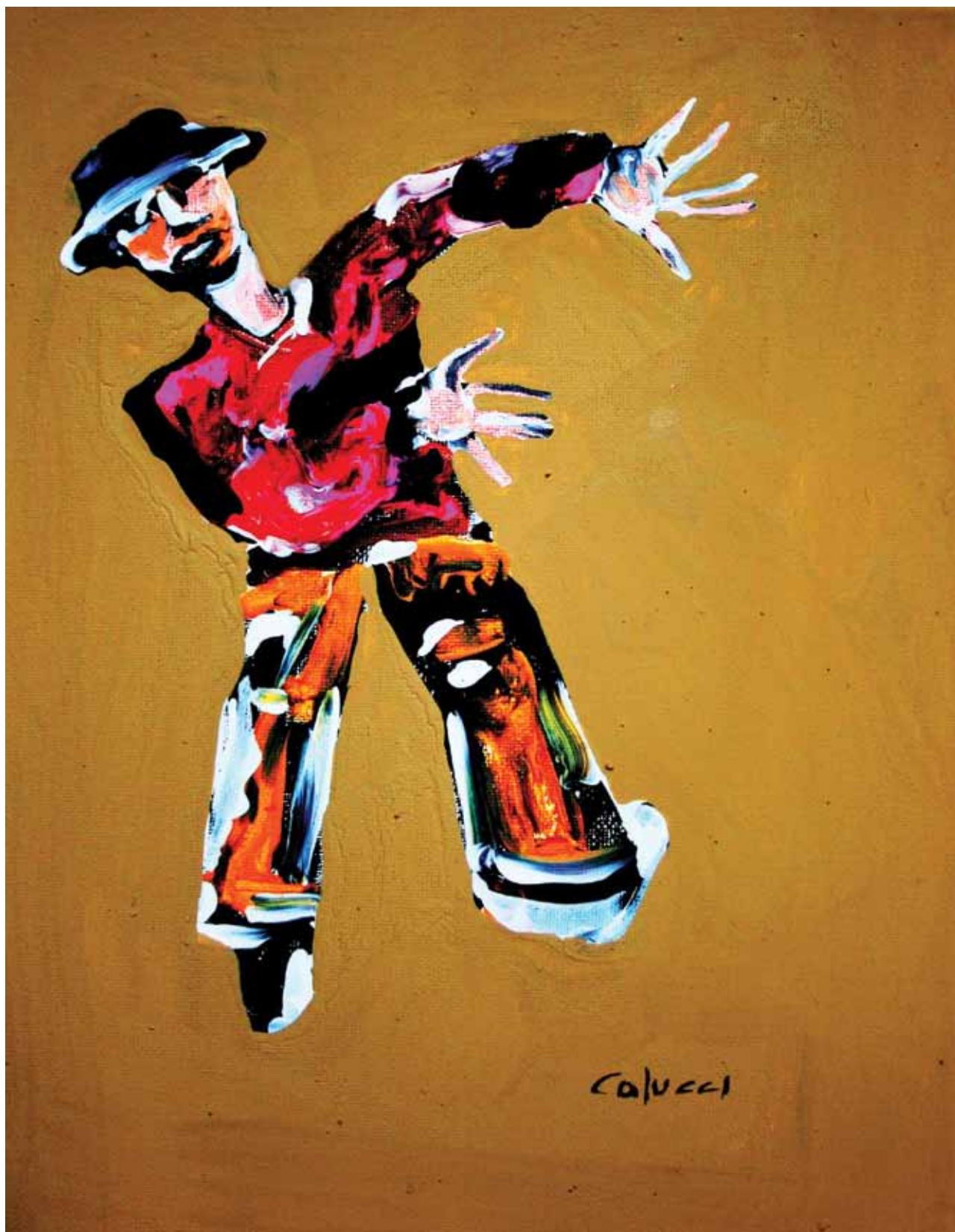






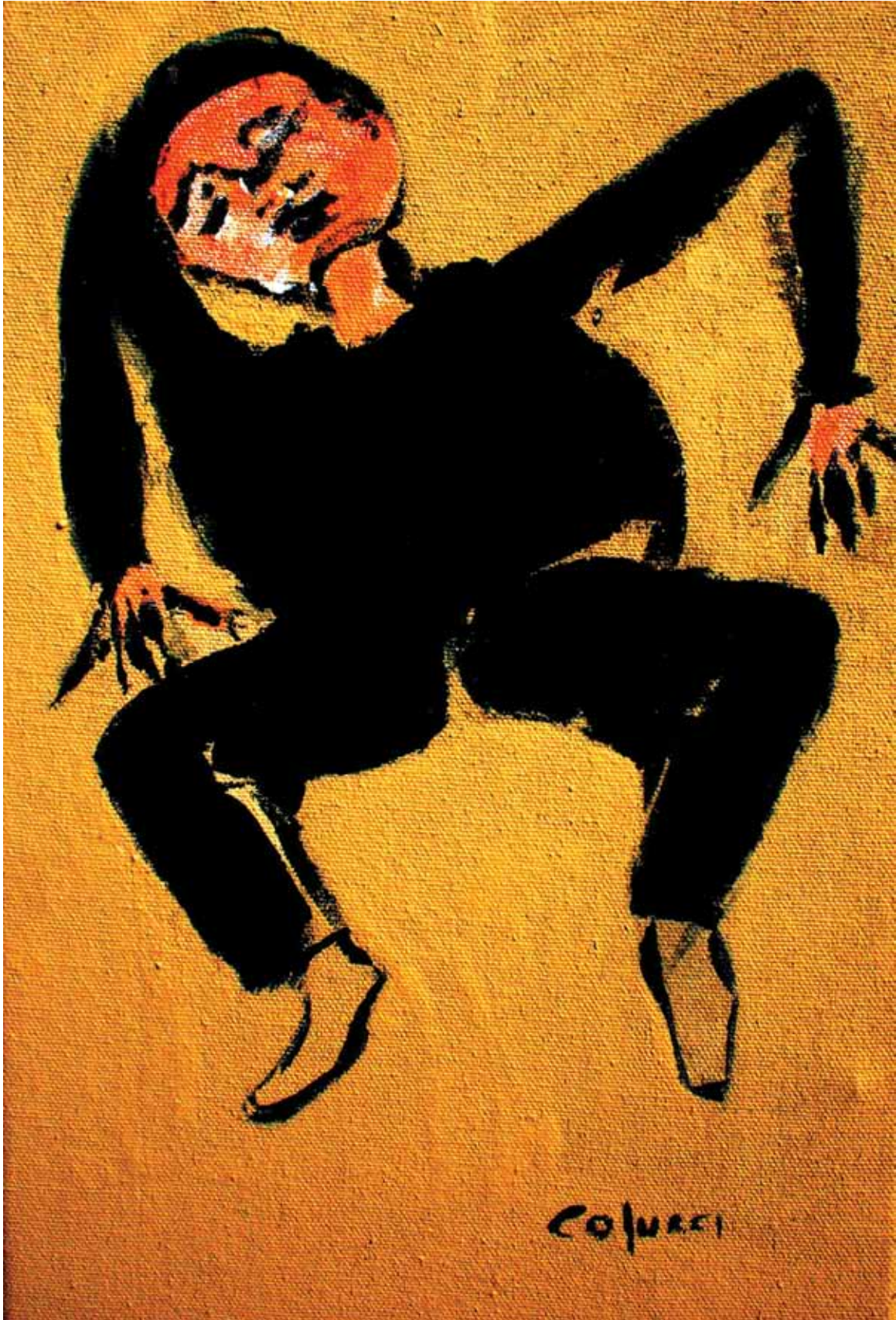




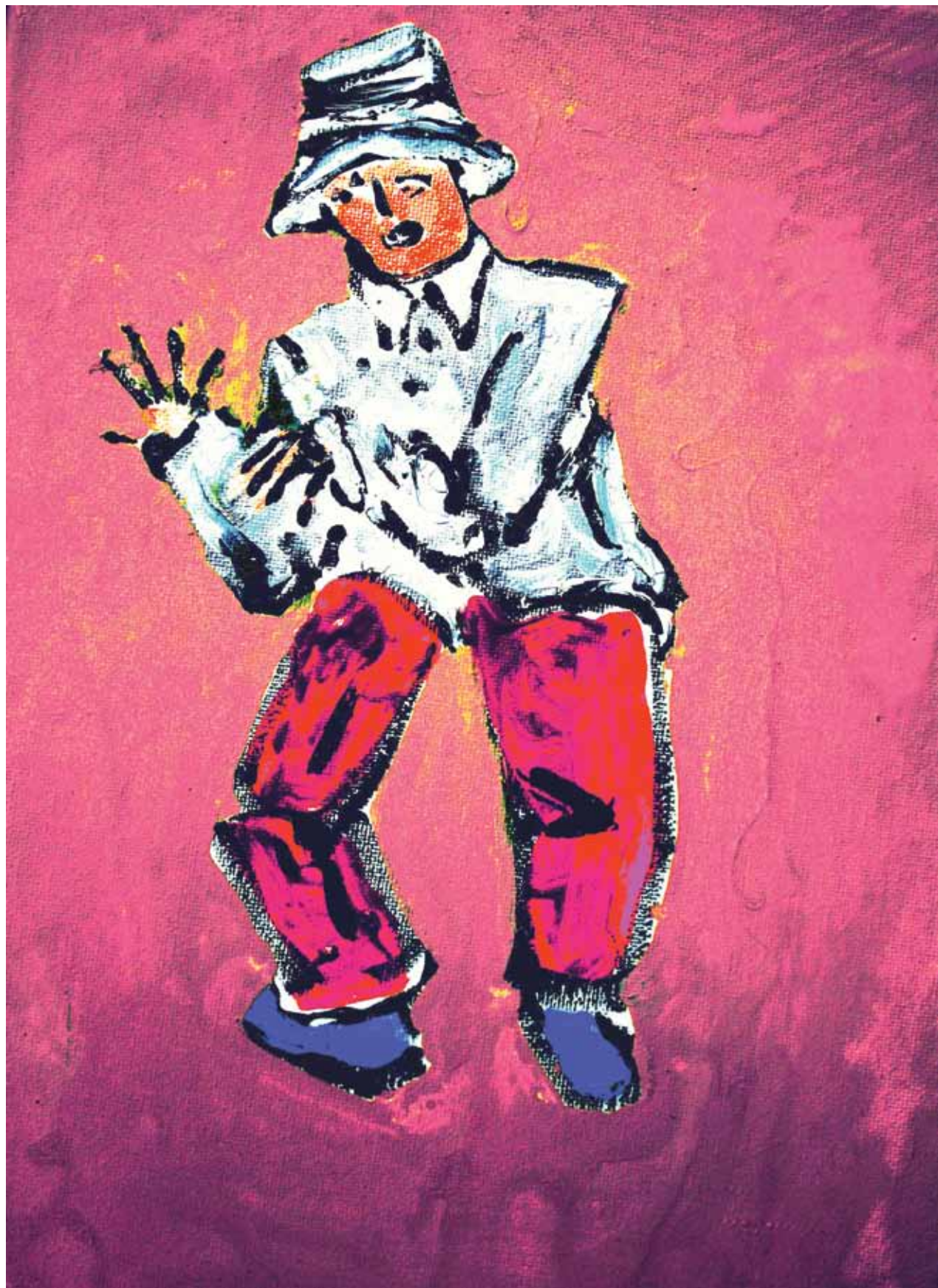




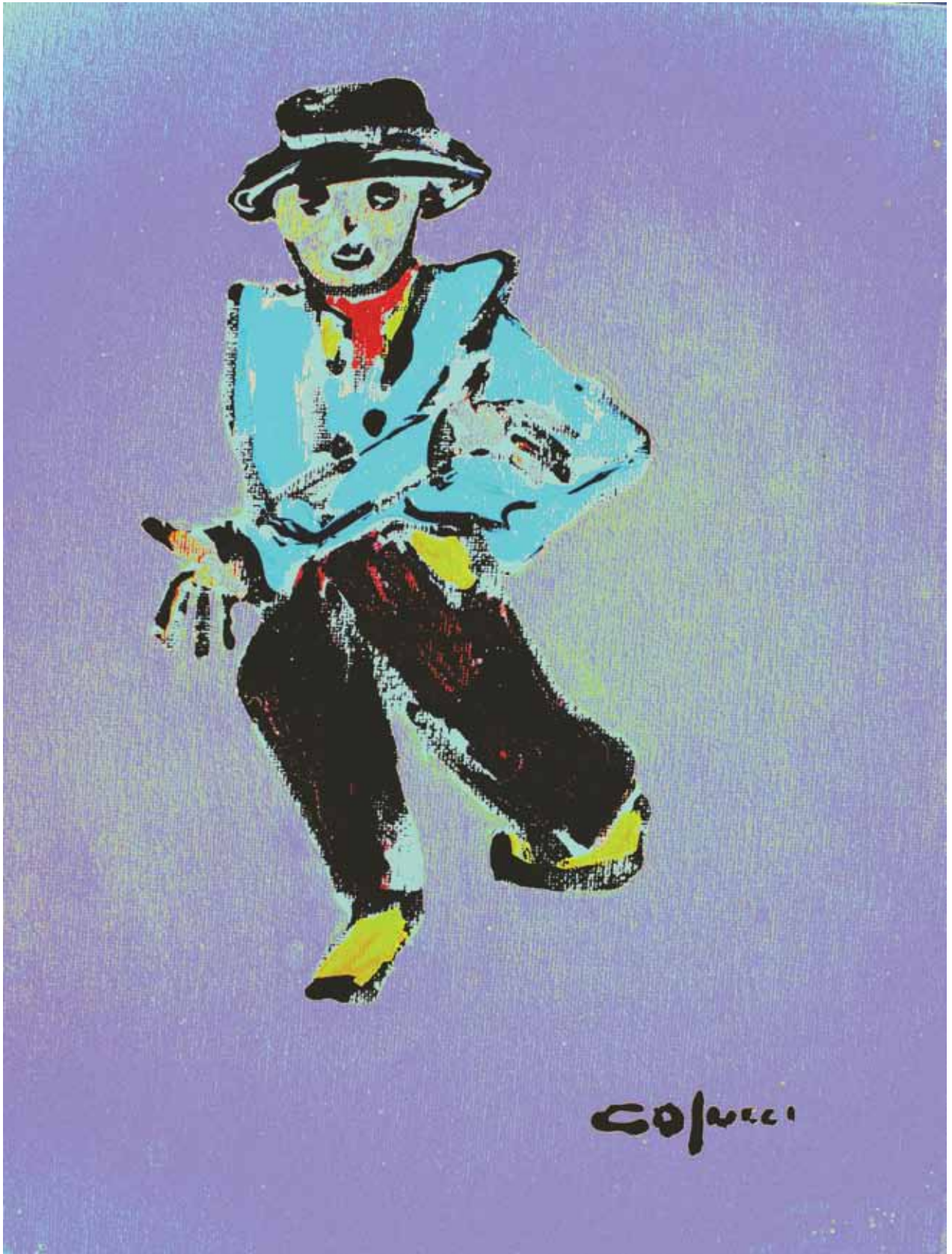




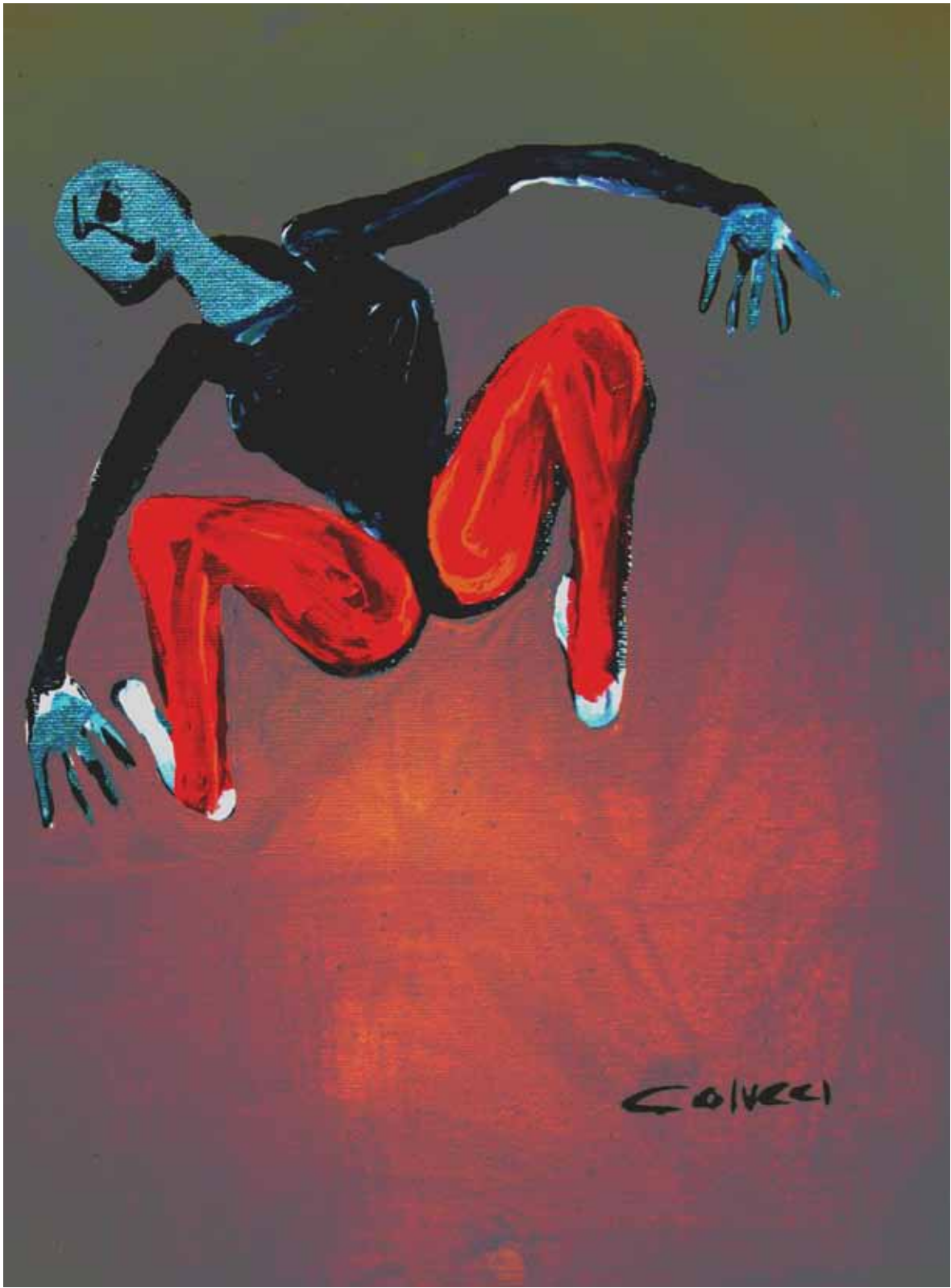










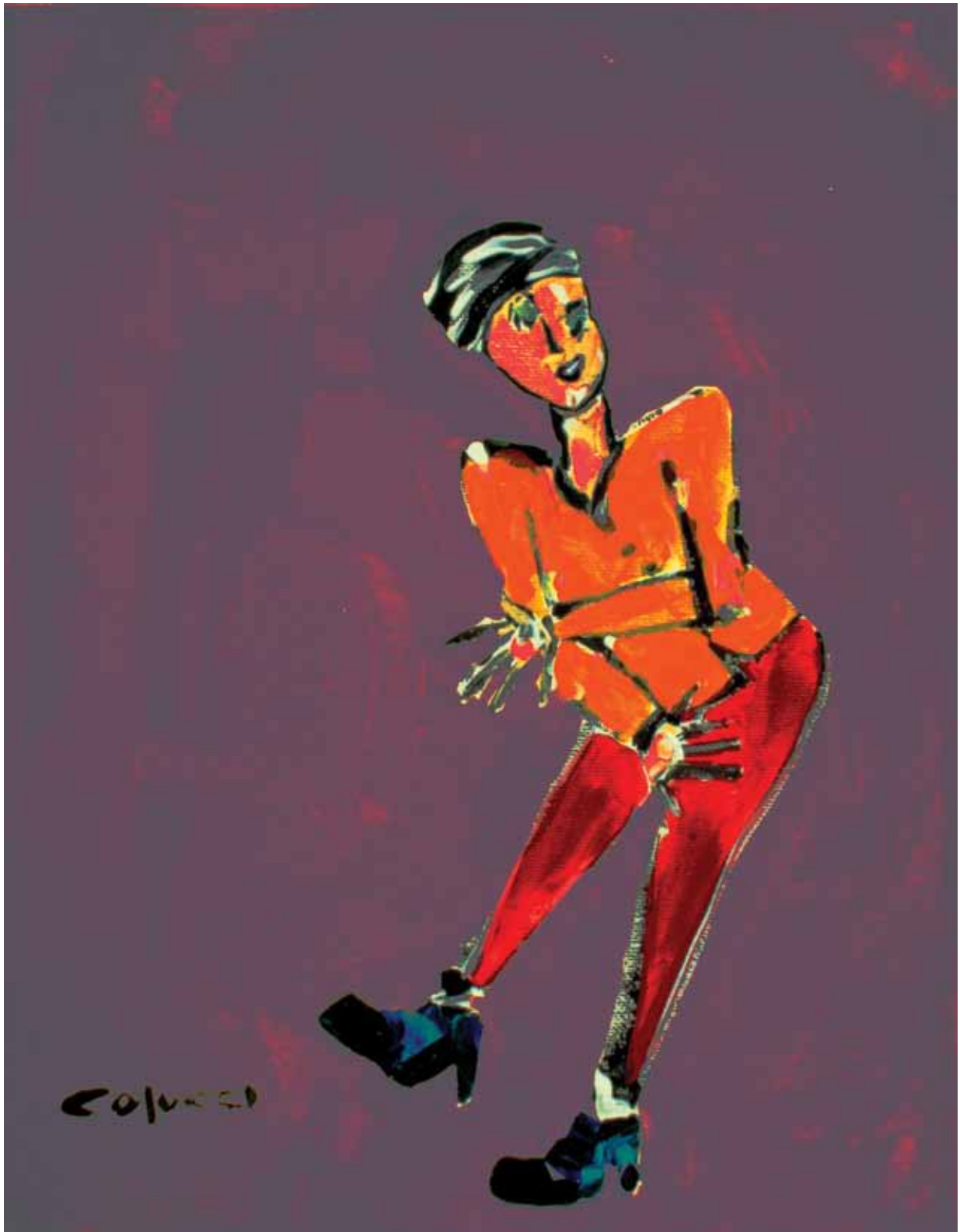


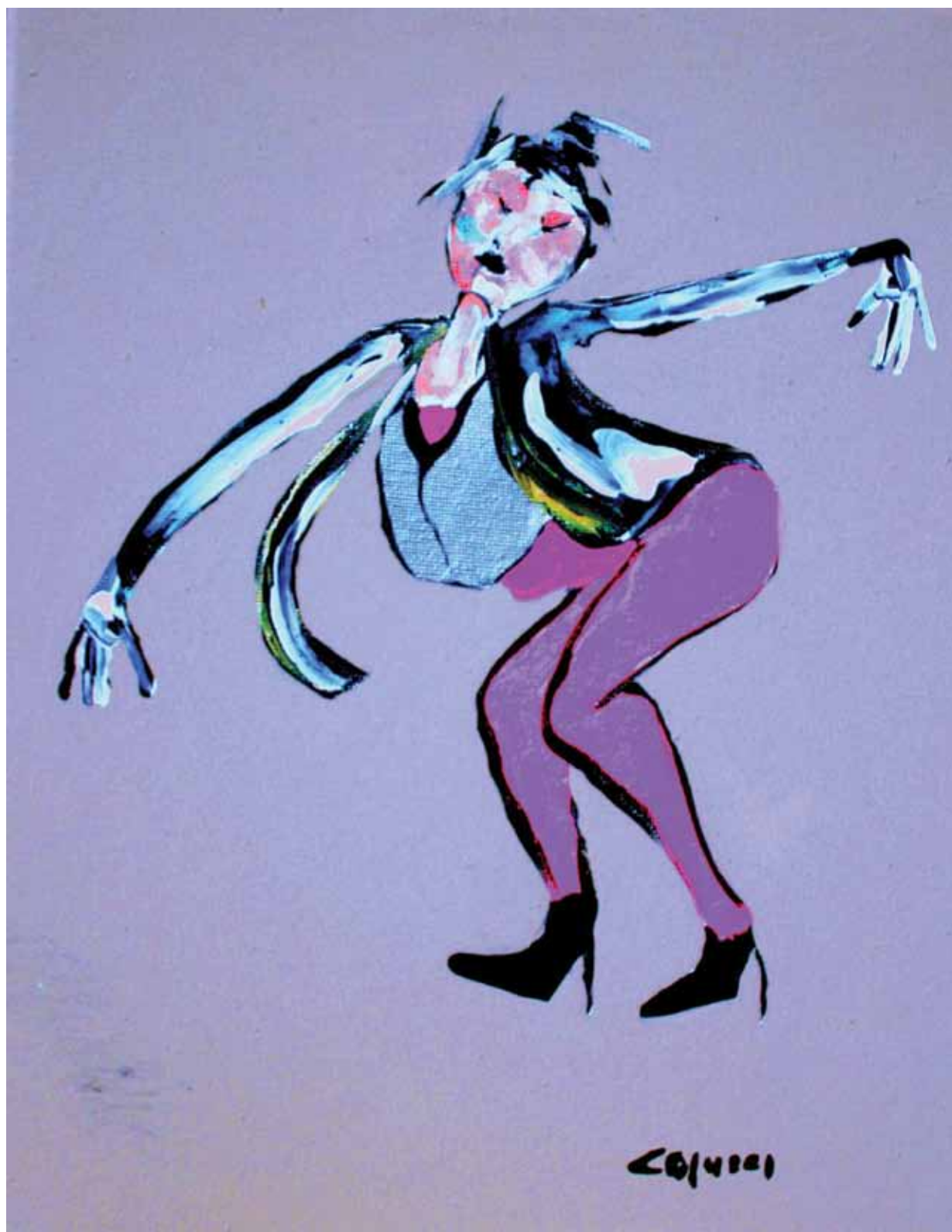




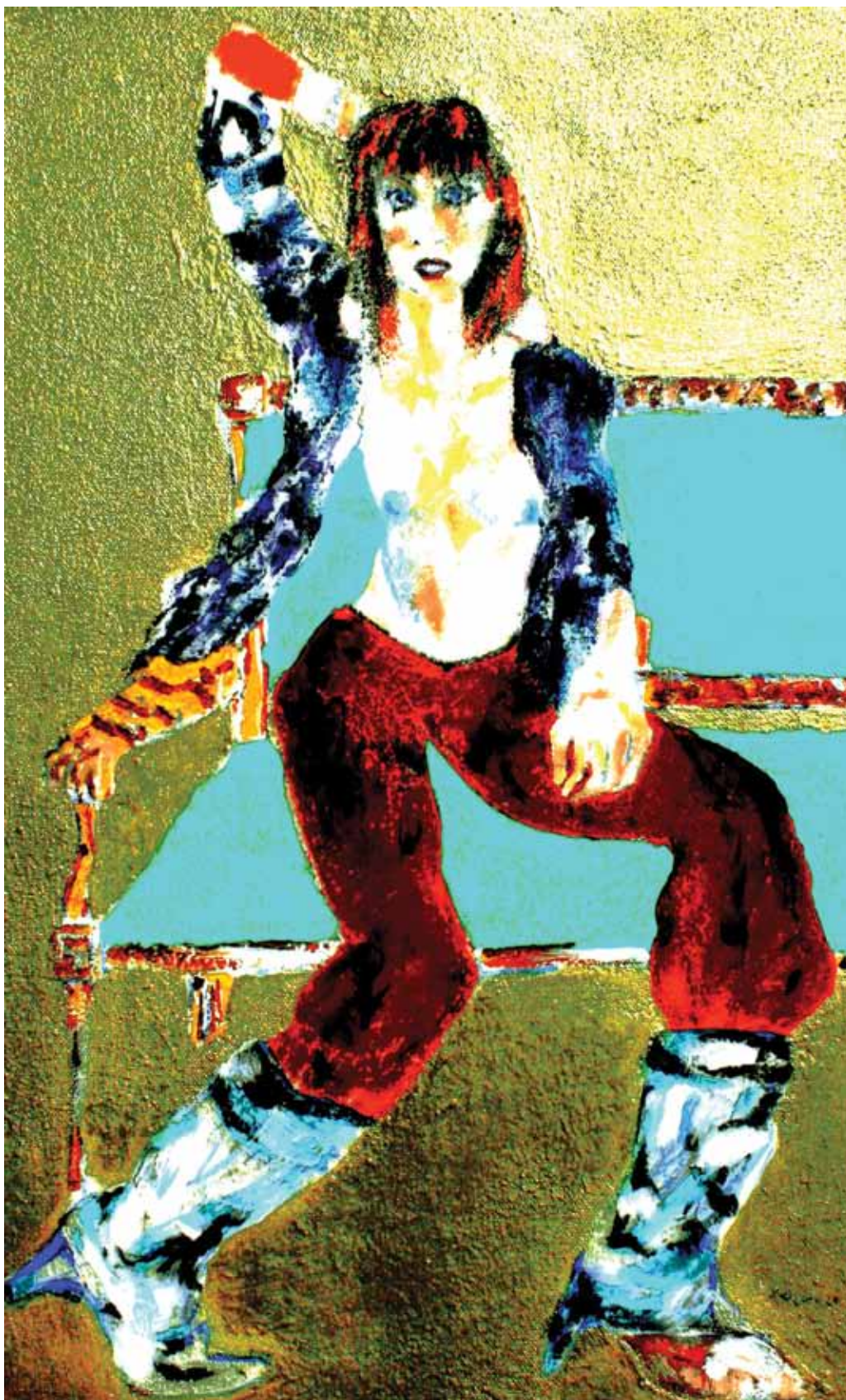






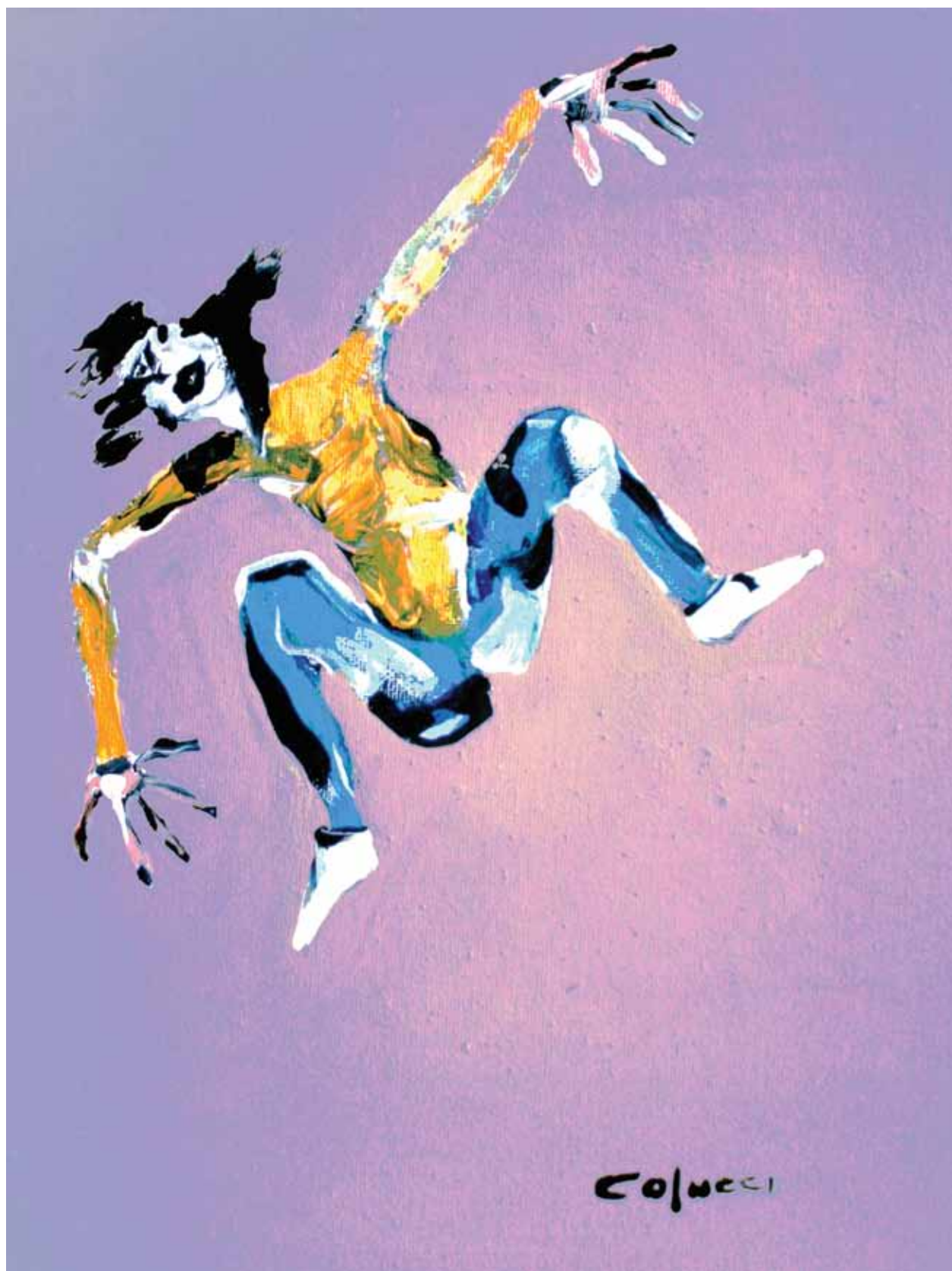




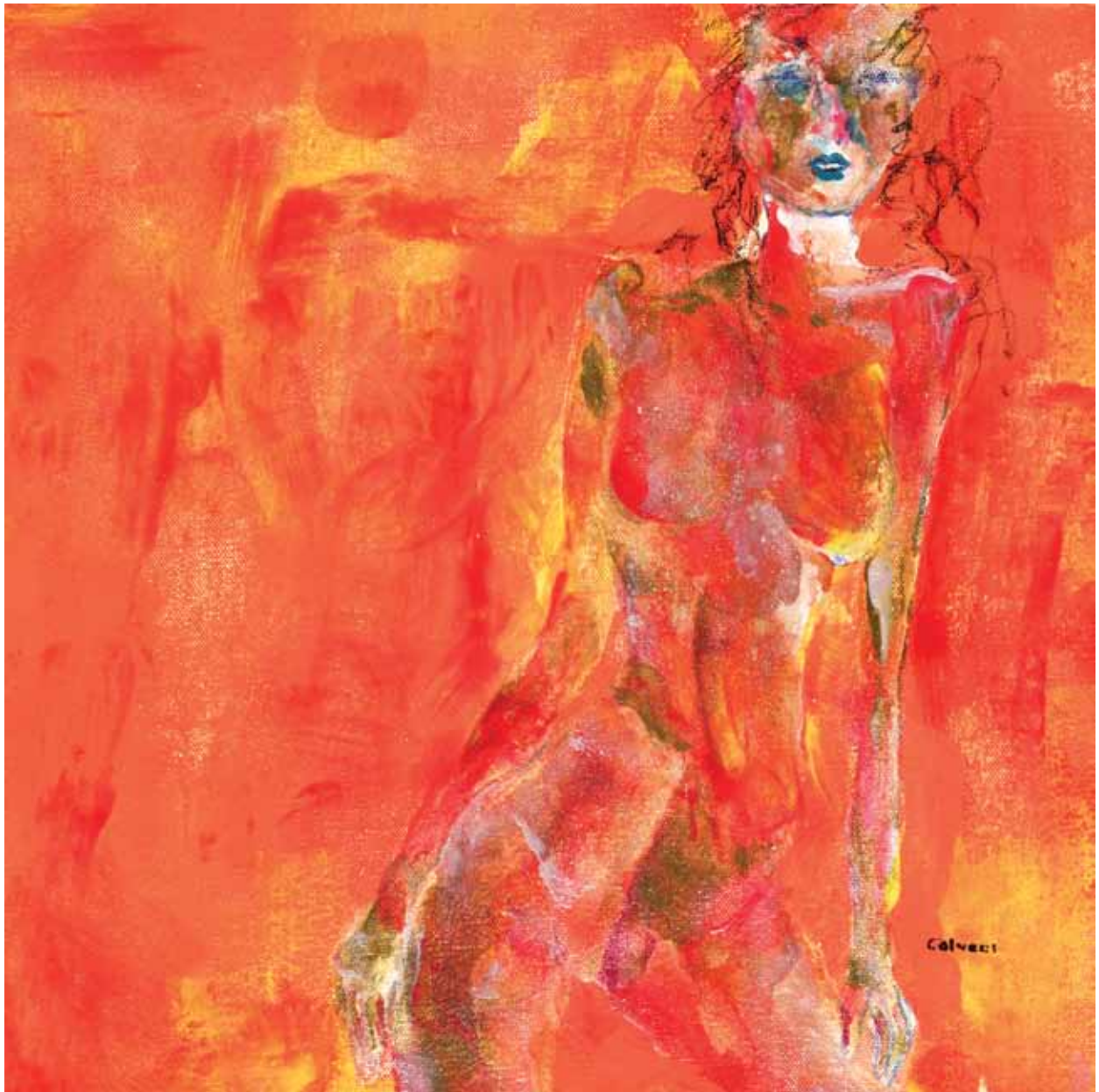










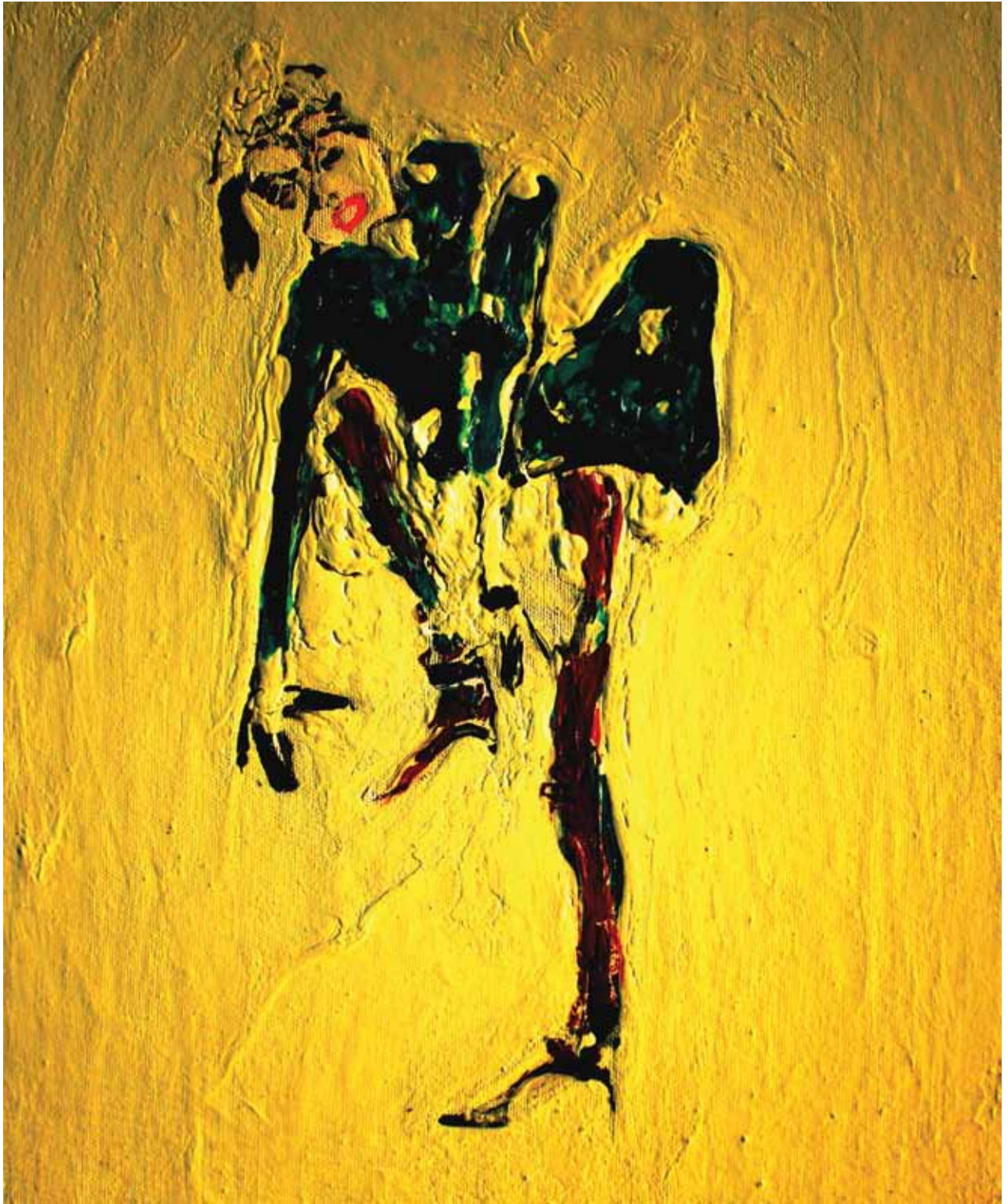






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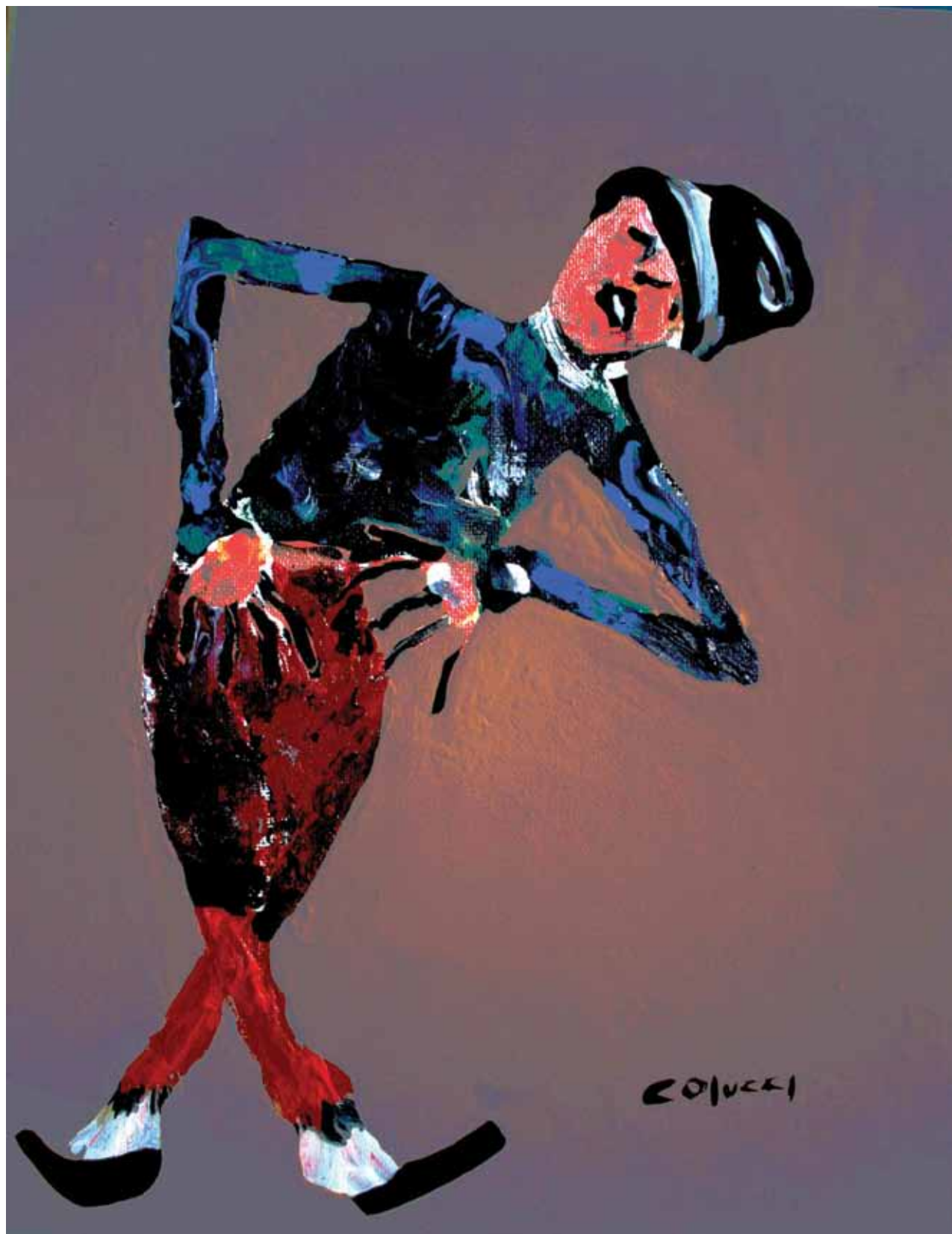








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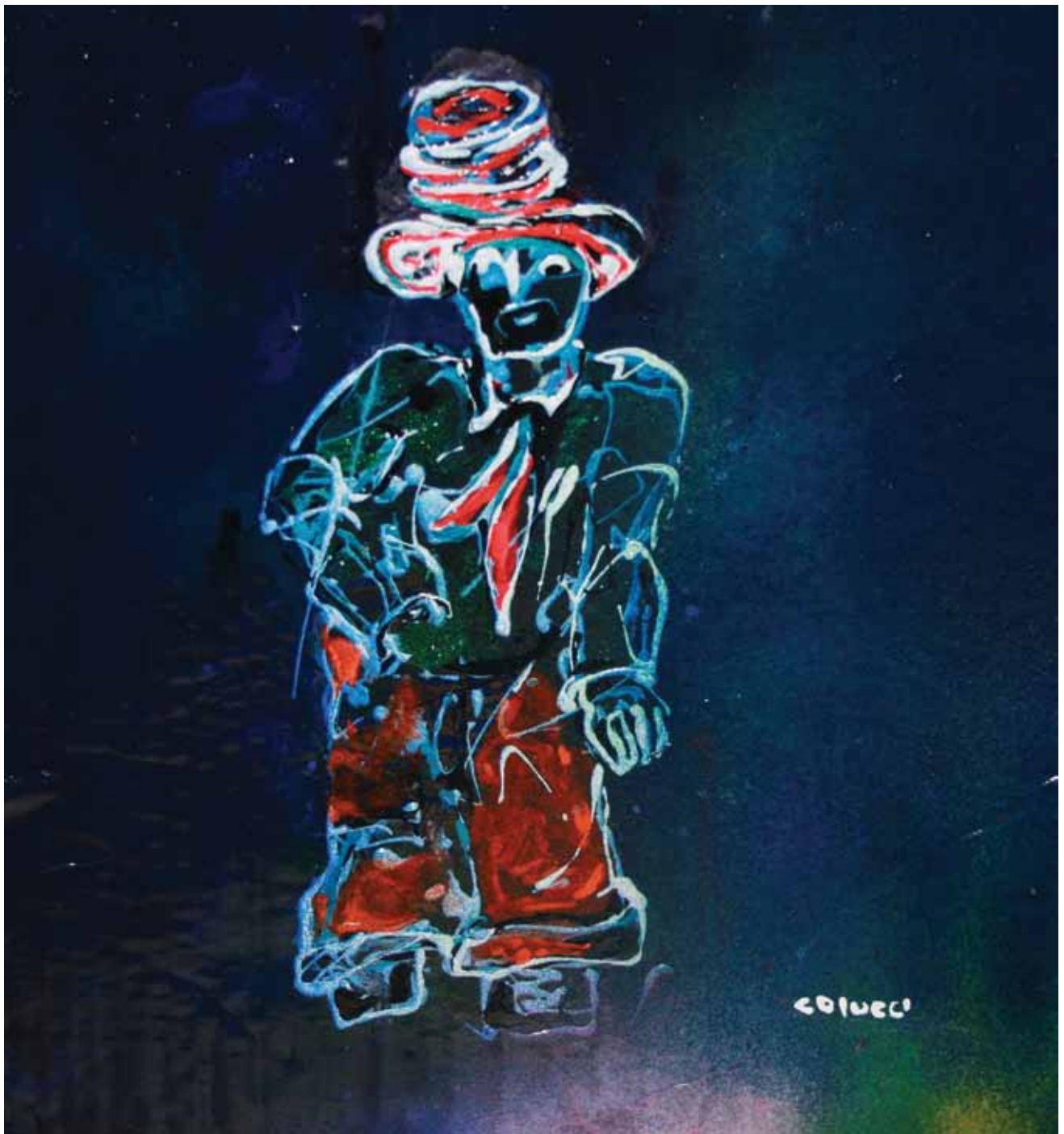






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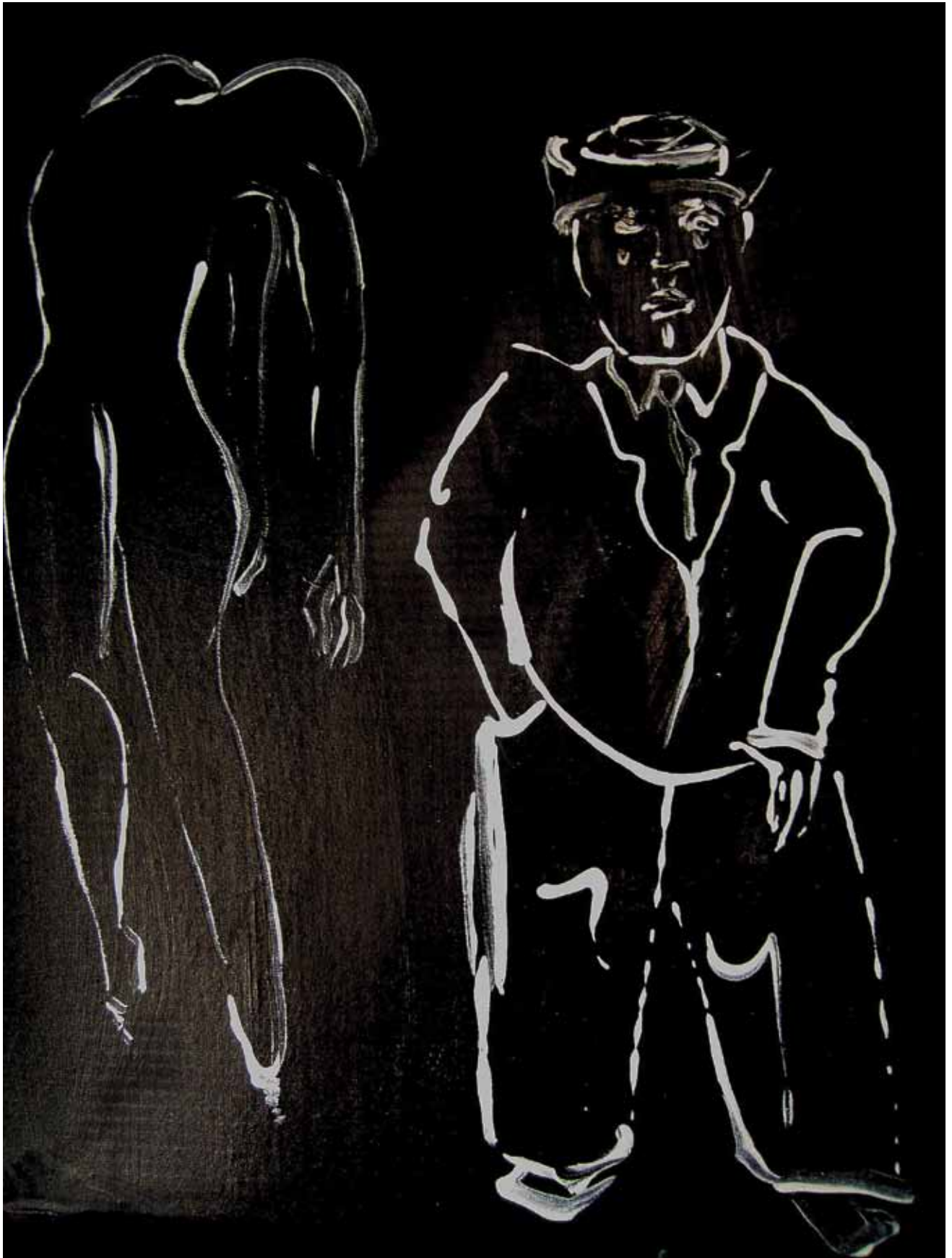


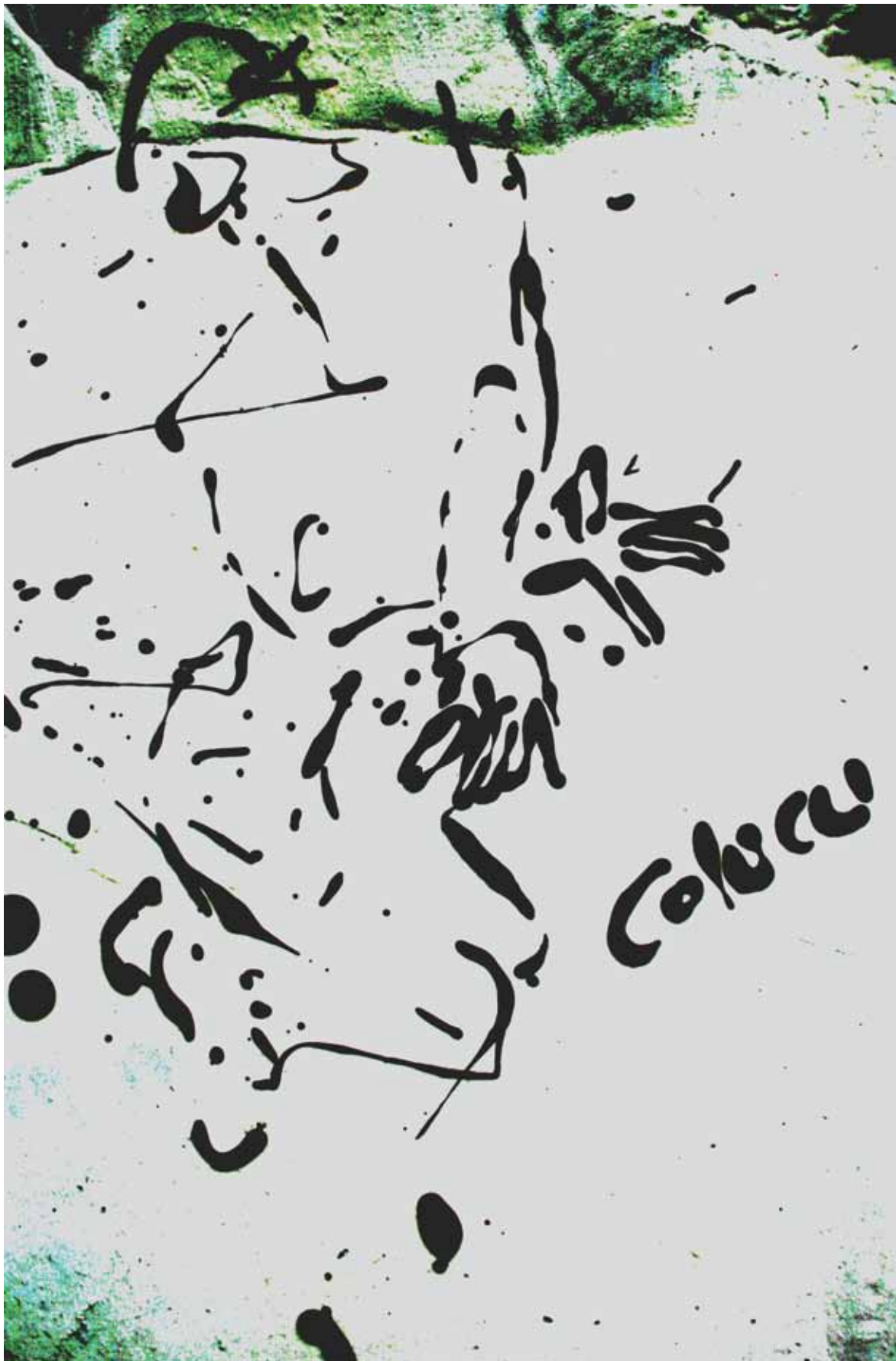






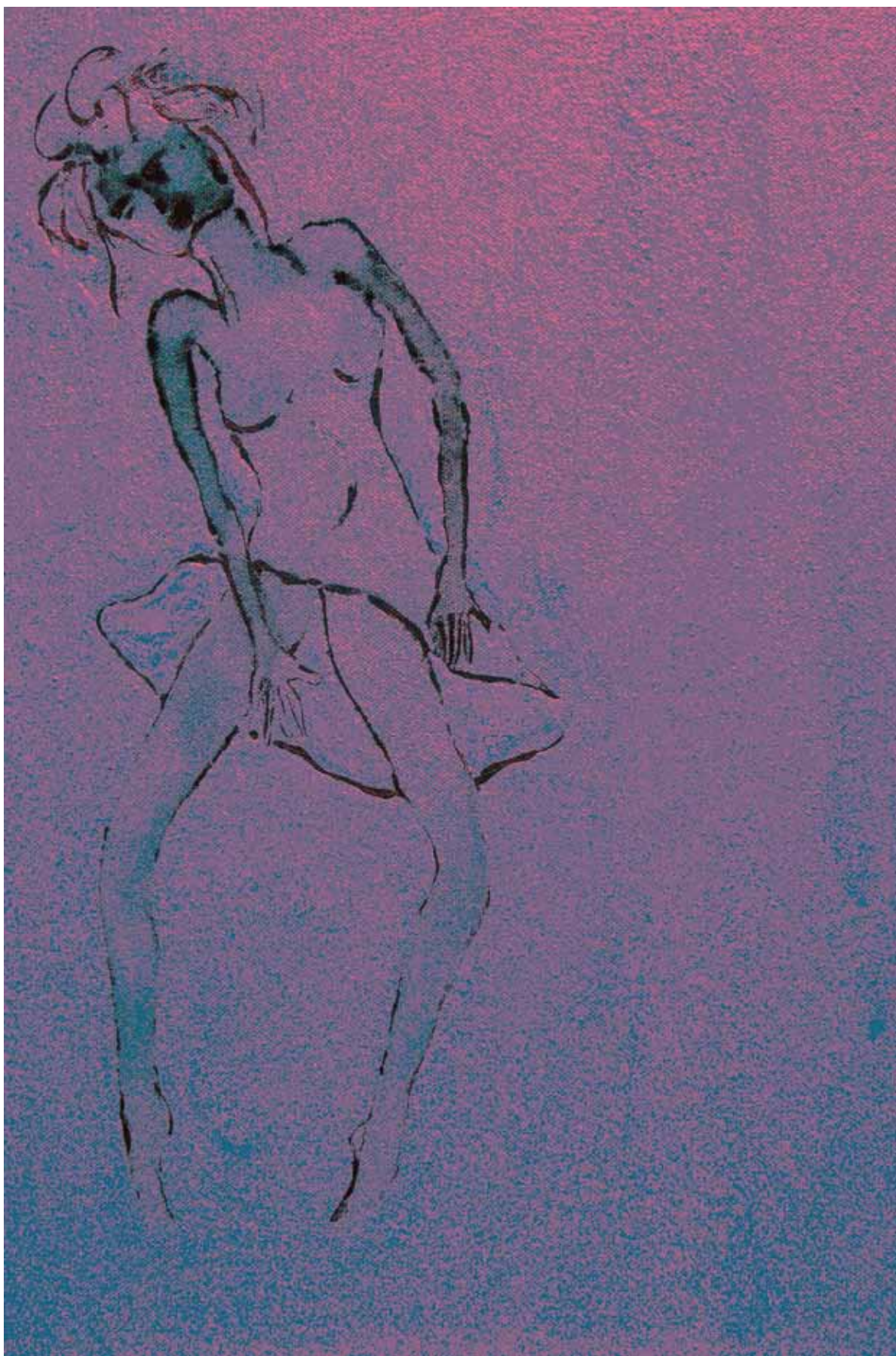


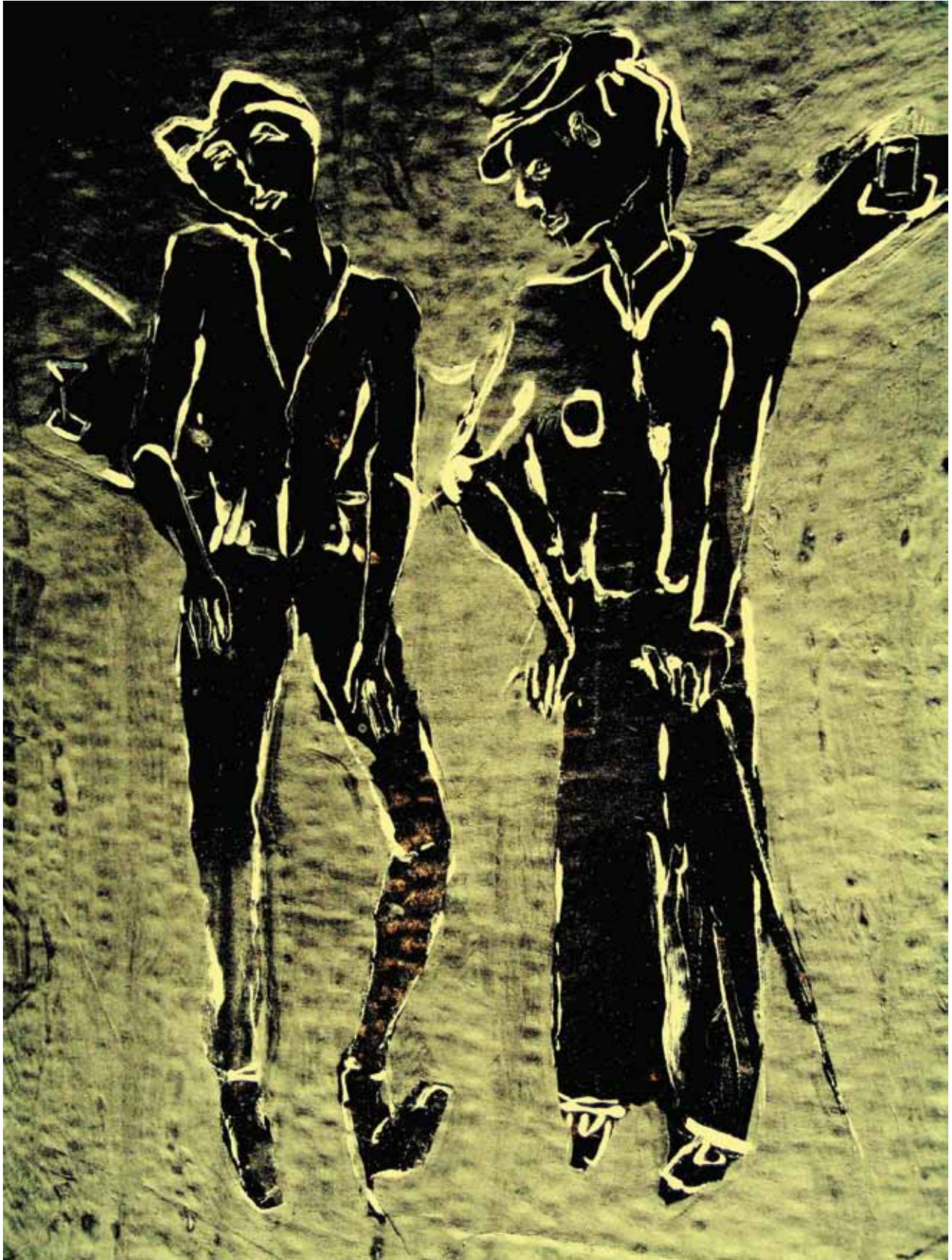
























An Inspiration

When I first met Steven Colucci, I was a young advertising copywriter who wanted to write a screenplay and Steven was a young mime and dancer who wanted to move the world. Or rather, make the world see that movement is perhaps the primal art form.

Now, seventeen years later, it's 2011, and Steven Colucci has turned his command over his body into his command over different mediums. Like a paint-brush transforming three yards of silk...or forty feet of mural wall.

He is an Italian kid from the Bronx. Practically the only non-Jew in neighborhoods that have streets with names like Morris and Jerome. And he still sounds like that kid from the Bronx. He reminds me of the first time I ever heard the author Henry Miller speak with a strong Brooklyn accent. It was totally different than what I would have expected. I couldn't connect this writer of beautiful, erotic prose to this guy who sounded like my uncle Marty from Flatbush.

Steven Colucci's like that. You can't believe such poetry on the canvas could come from such a hard-drinking, hard-partying, hard-living, boisterous diamond in the rough.

Seventeen years ago, he was, in the words of Reader's Digest, the most unforgettable character I've ever met. What was it about him that made women want to be with him and men just want to be him?

Maybe it was his passion. Like a Bronx Zorba the Greek, Colucci is passionate about greasy dives in Brooklyn, second floors of buildings in Manhattan, a bocce ball tournament in Bowling Green. He's crazy for light and space and the arc of a prima ballerina's arm. You should hear him wax poetic about the way a woman takes a sip of her martini at the Carlyle Hotel. It's as though everything's brand new to Steven. Like he's never seen it before. And he treats his friends that way. You get his full attention. I don't mean listening and nodding in all the right places. I mean FULL attention. And then, just as abruptly, he can turn and say, "OK, See ya." And not look back.

He worked with (or knew) everybody. From Julio Iglesias to Alvin Ailey to Charley Bird. If he knew how to write, he'd be a fabulous gossip columnist. But he's dyslexic. So he sometimes hires guys like me to put down ideas that need to come out in writing in order to get a foot in the door. Then, more times than not, those ideas get turned into gold by Colucci.

For example, Your Fifteen Minutes. That's an idea we have for a reality TV series with Steven as the host, which has the interest of the media world. It features Steven meeting all kinds of artists in bars and joints around the five boroughs chewing the fat about themselves and their art. If they're

passionate enough and their work backs up their talk, there's a big prize in it for them in the show's second stage.

Colucci has already shot some test video, teaming up with his friend, a brilliant cinematographer named Stephen DeVita, to create some gritty and beautiful footage of the underside of New York hipsters, hopefuls and visionaries. All with an eye to finding a diamond in the rough. Because maybe it takes one to know one. With Steven as the host, the show is guaranteed to move. He doesn't suffer fools or phonies gladly. All of which means you're pretty much guaranteed to have a good time without watching dumbed-down TV.

TV host and producer—that's the latest phase of Steven Colucci's wide-ranging career in the arts. From ballet to mime to painting to producing gala events on a grand scale. And it's been my true pleasure to be around him again, absorbing his energy, his ideas, his excitement. It must be contagious. Because although Steven and I are both mature men , I feel like a 25-year old working on a fun project who can't wait to see what happens next. Thanks for taking me along on the ride, Steven.

Bob Zaslav

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Marcel Marceau
Stars of New York City Ballet
Stars of Alvin Ailey
Cirque Du Soleil
Melba Moore
Opening Act – Poco, James Taylor, Livingston Taylor
Julio Iglesias – Choreographed the Tango tour
Jacques La Cork
Royal Ballet of Flanders
Gotto Bavriato – performed with this jazz musician
Julian Beck – The Living Theater
Sally Wilson – star of American Ballet Theater
Manhattan Festival of Ballet
Bonnie Kessel (guitarist)
Charlie Bird
Jackie Mason
Alan King
David Brenner
Mort Saul
Billy Daniels (that old black magic)
Eugene Fedora (guitarist)
Totality of Etienne DeCroux – Father and Creator of Modern Miming
Gene La Wee Baro (French actor)
Maximilion DeCroux
Polish Mime Ballet in Warsaw , Poland
Clairol show
Trivial Pursuit
Recipient of the Sam Flax Memorial Art Award
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15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY 10003 TEL 212.475.3424

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