

## Featured Artist - Joan Cox: Scooters

Written by Cara Mae McGuire

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*“Scooters are freedom. Riding my scooter makes me forget about the bills I have to pay and all the things on my to-do list. Riding is just plain fun, like folding my arms in tight and rolling down a grassy hill when I was a kid.”*

The “SCOOTERS” collection began in the summer of 2008, after Joan Cox unknowingly fell head over heels with the two-wheel machine. Often riding her scooter to work and spending time painting in her garage, it occurred to Joan that scooters - with their curves, style and different colors - are actually a lot like people. They have a personality all their own. They appear to be social when grouped together. And they have the same humanistic ability to become your best pal. It seemed only natural to express these qualities through art. Joan’s scooter, her retro black and white TNG 50cc Venice, would serve as her first inspiration in a creation called “Tuxedo Scooter on Red Swirls.” Simple but bold, her special relationship now sealed on canvas.

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Purchased in 2006 as a quick and easy way to get around New Orleans, Joan's Venice soon became so much more than a means of transportation. It was a combination of the open air and the ease of zipping in and out of parking places and small spaces around the French Quarter (a special bonus during Mardi Gras) that had her hooked. A scooterista was born!

The scooter life wasn't the only thing Joan experienced in New Orleans. Joan and her partner, Mare McCall, opened up MOXY Studios, an art gallery to showcase their affection for this unique city and to become a part of the art culture that surrounded them. Joan was drawn to the



diverse people, the tropical foliage, the street performers, the architectural structure, and the city's music: Jazz. An artistic expressionist's dream come true.

Then the unthinkable happened. It was just six weeks after they opened up shop that Hurricane Katrina hit. Joan and Mare packed their dog, the laptop and a suitcase with a few days of clothes and headed to Houston, mostly to avoid power outages and the inevitable heat. Once they learned of the levees breaking, they headed back to the northeast to Pennsylvania and Maryland, where they spent a few months living with friends while the city got put back together. Luckily, they had predrilled boards for their gallery windows and damage to the studio was minimal. With their hopes up, they returned to run the gallery as part of the city's revitalization. Joan recalls it was an interesting time to live there, filled with both success and failure. The gallery was supported by the locals, who did their best to help carry the emerging artist community. The art featuring New Orleans was a source of comfort to the residents who still remained. But tourism numbers were just too slim to keep the business going, so in early 2007,

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the studio closed. They returned once again to the northeast to Alexandria, VA just outside DC, to start again, scooter and all.



Though the time spent in New Orleans was short, the impact of the city itself before and after the hurricane made a lasting impression on Joan. “Since Hurricane Katrina, I still find myself trying to capture some of the beauty, mysticism, character, and even some of the destruction of the unique metropolis” she says.

Joan’s use of color with an edgy vitality and delivery, both captures the spirit of the scooter and the essence of a city. Her brush strokes evoke a natural, simplistic approach, bringing charisma to each subject. From a beautiful flower, or a noble piece of architecture, to a campy persona, and even, yes...a zippy retro scooter.

The SCOOTERS collection is currently on tour until February 28, 2010 at [Donna’s](#) in Baltimore, Maryland. For this and more artwork go to [www.JoanCoxArt.com](http://www.JoanCoxArt.com)

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