Artist José Ortega was born in Ecuador and grew up in New York City. He has captured his couple in one of the many pauses that anticipate the defining steps of their dance. They’re momentarily apart, arms poised and bodies ready to reverse direction or execute a spin.

Brought to the Dominican Republic by French and Spanish colonists, merengue was adapted by the country’s peasant population, who incorporated the tambora drum and a more rhythmic approach.

As a young child, artist Sergio Baradat left Cuba with his parents and emigrated to the United States. The red he used in the woman’s dress offsets the nighttime purple and gold hues of the ambient light, while a drum-shaped moon seems to join the orchestra’s saxophone and timbales, key instruments to the mambo sound.

1-2, 1-2-3, cha-cha-cha. Perceived as more sophisticated and European, cha-cha-cha was slower and more constrained than the up-tempo moves of its sister, the mambo.

Cuban native Edel Rodriguez left his homeland in 1980 and settled in America. Rodriguez has effectively juxtaposed the warmth oozing from bronzed skin and the graceful line formed by the dancer’s body.

There is a vibrant beauty that emanates from the Let’s Dance/Bailemos stamps. And each artist did an excellent job using vivid colors and sinuous shapes to capture the energy radiating from these dances.