



# GLOBAL CITIZEN

With more passions and passport stamps than most can count, Johnlee S. Curtis has created his own brand of personal and professional success with a style that is uniquely his.

Text by JORGE ARAUZ  
Photo by KATE BENSON

**J**ohnlee S. Curtis's life is filled with the sounds of violins, the whizzing of globetrotting, the fluidity of artistic brushstrokes, the compassion of philanthropy and the serenity of the classic Mediterranean aerie he says keeps him grounded on Hibiscus Island. "The ancient Greek translation for 'paradise' equates it with an enclosed garden," he says. "Driving over the bridges onto Hibiscus Island, I feel as if I'm entering a peaceful, secluded garden emerging out of azure waters."

Reared as the son of musicians turned missionaries, Curtis had an affinity as a child for sleeping outside in hammocks under the stars, dreaming of what the future held for him. He was educated at home by tutors until he commenced his university studies, spending the majority of his childhood living in Belgium, Haiti and Canada. "These early experiences fed my love of languages and cultures and my choices to later travel and study throughout Eastern and Western Europe as well as Russia," he says. Among his many adventures throughout the world, Curtis witnessed the day when 'Baby Doc' Duvalier fled Port-Au-Prince for France and the Easter morning Pope John Paul II delivered his final Mass at the Vatican.

Curtis' first job was as a professional violinist in Manhattan, an experience he says taught him a lot about humanity. "I learned the astonishing truth that people actually hear with their eyes — that is, we place an overwhelming importance on visual cues," he says. That attention to aesthetics is a quality he incorporates into his work at Moore & Company, a boutique law firm specializing in issues arising from the acquisition and ownership of mega-yachts, art collections and private aircraft. "While the focus of the practice is narrow, the legal tools and experience needed to solve problems is broad," he says. "Many of the disputes and transactions are international, and we count some of the world's wealthiest among our client base."

In his spare time, besides attending events for the International Red Cross and charities supporting the visual and performing arts, Curtis watches the sun setting behind sailboat masts at Monty's and enjoys quiet evening picnics on the beach with goodies from Epicure and Joe's. He also stays fit by playing tennis on Palm Island's waterfront courts as well as partaking in equestrian activities and polo events. "I also like reading The New York Times on my balcony and painting, writing and relaxing with only the strains of whispering palms and lapping water to distract me," he says.

So where does this international globetrotter plan to land next? "If 'home is where the heart is,' my homes are spread around the world in the flats, yachts and estates of my friends," he says. "I try to cherish every moment, because no one gets out of this life alive!" 🍷