

## **Interviewing Alex Loza, Peruvian Fine Artist**

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By: Gerardo Rehuel Sanchez

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### **01 – When and where was Alex Loza born? And who are his parents and family?**

He was born on January 26, 1978 in Lima Peru and enjoyed his childhood in San Juan de Miraflores. My parents are unfortunately divorce so I do not know much about my father. My mother is Amalia Villafranca, she married Luis Villafranca, who I consider my father and friend and I have a younger brother, Jose Luis Loza.

### **02 – Where did you study and who were your favorite teachers and friends?**

Though I graduated from the Academy of Art in Chicago, IL., I am proud to say that Harry Ahn, who was my professor at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI., was more than my professor, I consider him a great friend and role-model. I cannot forget my high school art teacher, Ms. Stepash from Perth Amboy HS in New Jersey, she encourage me to pursue a career in art. Also I am grateful with the faculty and staff at the Academy, because they all helped in different ways my art career. Some would give me their college notes from their art classes or I would stay after class and chat with them and learn more. I am very appreciative with all those who took their time, talent and trust in me to grow as an artist.

### **03 – Do you have any memorable memorize of your childhood that you would like to share?**

I like to remember often my class of Social Studies in Lima, Peru. In this class they would tell us to draw the map of Peru from Tawantinsuyo, the picture of the Independence Heroes. I must admit at that age I really didn't enjoy drawing and the person who would draw my maps was my mother. Not sure what I would have done without her, they probably would have laughed at me in class.

The other memory was when I was 3 y.o., I was curious so I grabbed a crayon and started drawing on the wall. My biological father saw me and smacked me on the hand. I think about what Diego Rivera's parents did, they took a different approach when he did this. They covered Rivera's bedroom walls with paper. I am not sure but I assume this is why it took me so long to rediscover my passion for art.

### **04 - Is God in your life? How do you know?**

God places a major role in my life. I recognize that He gave me this talent, if you can say, created. Something that I always keep in mind is when God takes me to heaven, I will be able to take art classes with Him, its incredible. If you look at the sunset or the simple details of a flower, I am amazed on what He can do.

### **05 – Has Love come to you, are you married, do you have any children?**

I believe in Love, I know that God has my better half hidden away somewhere. Everything at its, don't you agree? No children yet.

### **06- When and how did Alex Loza know he wanted to be a painter?**

When I graduated from high school in 1996 and attended Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI. The university offered electives in art besides the elective I took for my major. I started with taking a piano class because always captured my attention. But I realized that piano wasn't for me, I love to hear it but it wasn't me. Then I took a few classes in ceramics which I liked but that meant that I had to purchase the costly materias. It was just too expensive for a college student. Then I took voice classes, I enjoyed it and took two semesters and I was getting A's. I was part of a singing group called, "Los Chusmas" an

expression we used among the group. There were two guitarists, two singers and here and there others would take a spoon or sticks to use as instruments. We weren't the big thing but they would invite us to sing and give serenades for birthdays.

Finally I took art classes, once I took the brush into my hand it felt like it was an extension of my hand and mind. I felt that I could spend the time just painting and not feel tired. This is where I met my friend, Arnold, who came to paint of mural for the university and ask me to help him. I took this decision of making art my career in 1997 when I took classes with Harry Ahn.

**07 – Are you a self-taught painter or did you went to school for to be trained, who was your teacher? What is your painting style?**

My professor was Harry Ahn. I am very grateful with him for taking the time to train me. He was the person who prepared and trained me to get admitted at the Academy of Art in Chicago, IL.

Style? Truly my first art piece I used realism but since 2005 I am in the process in creating my own style which I haven't seen any other art use but if you find an artist using that technique please let me know. But for now I will be searching for a name for my style.

**08 – How an artist gets inspired? In what or whom?**

It all depends on the artist. For example, I love to hear Peruvian music. I listen to each word specifically, I take notes form the words or phrases that capture my attention and then I go for a walk around downtown Chicago or get on the train (L). Then I come home, listen to the song again, review my notes and specifically listen to the singer's tone of voice, emotions. I try to image how the singer feels and make that song my own. Reading also inspires me, I love to read. When I read I try to envision what I read, I try to personalize the character, and take notes. I also like to do research on what I'm going to paint. I try to look for pictures or histories that will help me complete my message in that painting. I am also inspired by the human body, especially a women's figure. The women's figure is an artist gift since her body requires attention and details in order to project her beauty, her softness and her curves that make a figure unique compared to the rest of creation. One of my professor's would say, "If you can draw a women's figure then there's no impossible things for an artist." I agree.

**09 – Do you enjoy the Criolla Peruvian music? Does the music help you to get inspired?**

I love Peruvian music. I must say that Peruvian music is the best. At this moment I am in the process of creating a painting titled, "The Potato Flower", "The Cinnamon Flower", "Jose Antonio" and "Eva Ayllon: In love with my Peru." Also I am planning on starting on a project which includes traditional instruments from our music. The series "Peru in blood" is recently beginning. If you have any pictures or ideas that may help me, please email me at [artist@alexloza.com](mailto:artist@alexloza.com).

**10 – Who do you admire and who do you despise and why?**

Who do I admire? My mother. If I tell all the things she endured in order for me to get a proper education. Strong and valiant women, women who gives me strength to go forward with my hopes and dreams. Only if they can put her name next to mine on my diplomas. I am very grateful for her continuance support. I don't despise anyone; I only dislike attitudes that people have. But then again who is perfect?

**11 – What if your best virtue and your worse dilemma?**

My best virtue is that I don't give up. I fight for what I want and I won't surrender even if the obstacle is too big. My worse dilemma is that I am somewhat stubborn, but I know when to accept and recognize my mistakes and ask for forgiveness if I have offended someone.

**12 – Who is Alex Loza? Can you describe yourself?**

Who is Alex Loza? I would say I am a young guy with plenty of goals and dreams. Who will not surrender until I have reached that goal. Like Tulio Loza would say, "A Cholo made of an un-rusted metal" (A person that never gives up) I look at days as a period of hours that I can improve and create as a professional and spiritual person a better community.

**13 – In your artwork, you have titles like, "Sol Incaico: Incaico Sun", "Caballo de Paso: Paso Horse", "Flor Cantuta y Colibri: Cantuta and Colibri Flower", "Nicky", "Fabiola", ect., Who are they? Are there you inspirational muses?**

"**Sol Incaico: Incaico Sun**", is a collage of images. Besides the sun you can observe seven figures from the Nazca lines. You can also find the Peruvian map (gold color, represents the Inca Emperor, the sculptures, and the gold jewelry that they would use to honor Inti.) Finally, you can see the colors from the Pacific Ocean as well as the colors of the flags from the South American countries.

"**Caballo de Paso: Paso Horse**", what can I say. One of the techniques I used when painting was the layering of the colors. What can I say, I was applying the brown color as a base when I put it to dry in a few days, I look to find an image of a horse. The funny thing was that I was going to paint a horse anyways. I only retouched and perfected some edges.

"**Flor Cantuta y Colibri: Cantuta and Colibri Flower**", is another collage. I used the Cantuta flower since it's Peru's national flower and also since behind every flower there is a Colibri. What better image than the Colibri from the Nazca lines.

"**Nicky**", is a portrait of my co-workers daughter.

"**Fabiola**", is another portrait of a friend, who was Miss Illinois Latina in 2005 and also was the Queen of the Mexican Central Civic of Chicago. I was taking her picture for this painting, and this pose captures my eye because it detained her beauty, personality, elegance and delicacy.

Each painting that I create, I consider it like a photo album because the time, dedication, effort and experience I put in each painting doesn't repeat itself. But when looking at them it feels me with happiness to see what I accomplished. Each painting shows me my creation as an artist and at the same time a challenge I have to conquer.

**14 – Can anyone paint, what do you need something else special? At what age can you start to paint?**

Art is something we all carry within, from nature we are created. The only thing is with time we forget and do not develop this area. We all draw even when we are on the phone on hold or talking or when we are sitting waiting in a doctor's, dentist's office, etc. Even in the art classes especially when the classes are longer than an hour.

**15 – Within all your paintings, which one do you like the most and brings you satisfaction?**

I like all of them since with all of them I have learned something new. All my pieces carry several hours of studying, research, planning, learning, and growing as an artist; besides the image and the message that each painting contains.

**16 – Do you teach or do you just paint to sell?**

Of course, teaching is something I enjoy. I believe that teaching one can also grow as a person and one can also re-learn.

**17 – If someone wants to commission a piece, or wants to take classes, where can they find you? Address, telephone number, email, etc.?**

I live in Chicago, IL, they can reach me via email me, [artist@alexloza.com](mailto:artist@alexloza.com). I also have a website, [www.alexloza.com](http://www.alexloza.com), where they can find more information about my art work. At the moment I'm trying to create a calendar where you can find Peruvian events around Chicago.

**18 – How much are your pieces?**

It all depends on the sizes and the subject (like time, research). My prices vary from \$300-\$5,000 more or less. The pricing for a mural start from \$3,500 (5'x6').

**19 – Have you created yourself as an artist and as a person? Are you missing something? What is it?**

At the moment I believe that God has blessed me in my career. Of course like any other career, I believe that we will never be complete and there will always be something new for us to learn and forget. All I ask is support from the public like recommendations or new business (I also offer copies of my work, Giclee of my artwork. Giclee is a modern method to reproduce in a high quality and professional).

**20 – What advice can you give to someone that wants to follow your footsteps in learning of to paint and be an artist?**

I would tell them that nothing is impossible. If the field of art is what they believe in their hearts they want to pursue then listen to your heart and fight to be original in their work. This career isn't only to sell and make money, if you see this way then you won't success and you won't improve your style. This field is difficult and but not impossible. The biggest reward that you will see in this career is seeing life in a different way. You will be able to learn the details of the littlest things. You will also enjoy life better because you will be able to see the colors and details that most ignore. Most of those who ignore will see what you see when you paint it for them. You will only enjoy in the process of creating and you will see the rewards.

**21 – This is your opportunity to say what you like and no questions, go ahead:**

Don't let anyone influence your dreams and goals. When I was at Andrews University one of my professors in my Basic 100 class (course where you learn basically what you want to do with your life) told me that, "You have no talent. You are wasting your time and money. If I were you, I would leave this class." When I heard these words from a professor, I was speechless. I stood up and took my drawing and headed to the dean of the department of art.

I was exploring different fields for a 1 ½ yr but nothing fulfilled me. I did succeed in other fields but I wasn't happy. Mid 1997, I met Arnold, a painter who graduated from the University of Montemorelos in Mexico, who was my neighbor in the dorms. One day he invited me to help him with a mural; I thought I was only going to help him by passing him the brushes/materials so he had complete the mural faster. Though it was like this the first few days until he asked me to help him paint the mural. I didn't want to

help him but he insisted. As I was mixing the colors with passion and with ease guiding the brush, he said, "I see your good at this, have you thought in making art your career?" I looked at him and just laughed. The conversation I had with him left me thinking and I marched to the dean's office wanting to take art classes again. For me it was luck because all the Basic 100 classes were full and there was only an advance drawing class with professor, Harry Ahn. The dean advised me to speak to Harry to see if he can accept me so I can start. I spoke to Harry and he accepted me. What happened next is history. We became good friends, my classes with him were from 6p to 9p then I would stay to take more classes from 9p to midnight and Sundays from 10a to 11p. He truly dedicated his time so I can develop as an artist. In 1999, he took me to the Academy of Art in Chicago, IL there they gave me a deadline of a month to bring a portfolio of my work which they were going to review in order to get accepted. In less than a year I obtain my Associates in Fine Art and in 2002 I graduated with my Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. Though I graduated in 2002, I started painting for clients in 1998.

A brainless comment can influence your life greatly and can impact it in a wrong way your life. Don't listen to those comments and if you do listen, use it to obtain strength. But overall don't hold grudges to those who criticize you, everyone has a right to criticize unfortunately. You just keep walking with your head held high towards those goals.

Atte. Gerardo Rehuel Sanchez:

Well friend and grand Peruvian artist, Alex Loza. Grand, not because I'm interviewing you but grand because you are grand.

I don't like to praise the people I interview but in this case, I wish you the best, you desire it. I know you will succeed with your artwork, your family and your friends as well as your Peruvian countrymen who are proud of you because in truth, Alex Loza, "YOU ARE THE BEST OF OURS."

Thank you for this interview and my God bless you.