



visions on canvas

story by Renee Fajardo photo by Todd Pierson

Chicano artist Stevon Lucero awakens universal consciousness

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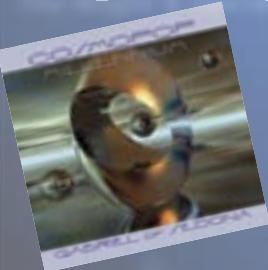
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"Heaven is before you, but you can not see it. It is obscured by your vision of hell," says Stevon Lucero, whose paintings are fresh, relevant and hauntingly symbolic. Lucero has been painting what he sees, hears and experiences for nearly 40 years.

Five hundred years ago, when the Spanish Conquistadors brought their priests to what is now Mexico, the land of Lucero's ancestors, those like Lucero would have been embraced with an open pit of fire. That's what they did to heretics. When folks in Denver refer to him as a visionary Chicano artist, they aren't just whistling "De Colores."

Lucero grew up in Laramie, Wyoming, amidst Wild West cowboys and Mexican railroad workers. He lived on the wrong side of the tracks, where life was marked by poverty, violence and alcoholism. "We were just poor Mexican kids living in a redneck town," says Lucero with a laugh. "I didn't even know I was a Chicano. I was just trying to survive."

He would soon experience self-discovery in an unusual way. In first grade, Lucero showed up to class four hours late one day. His teacher thought he was playing hooky. Lucero, for the life of him, couldn't remember where he'd been. This was the first in a life-long series of inexplicable, other-worldly experiences.

A couple of years later, Lucero had the first of many full-fledged visions. He recounts that he could feel his head being unscrewed as his soul split into two parts: the liquid part that was pouring into his head and the solid part that was part of his body. He was transported to a crowded room where he witnessed himself as an old man being shot. He watched several past lives flash before him. When he realized the conflicts from each life kept being repeated until they were resolved, he found himself in what he calls "God's mind."

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"It was the luminous grid. Years later I would read about the grid in the *Power of Silence* by Carlos Casteneda," says Lucero. "I remember thinking this is God's consciousness. At nine years old, I did not know what I was supposed to do about it, but I knew there was definitely a God."

After his 13th birthday, Lucero began experiencing lucid, reoccurring, sequential dreams. In these dreams, he was transported by a UFO to a place of extreme light. It was in this dream-time that Lucero began a series of long conversations with the "Master."

"These dreams lasted for years," recalls Lucero. "It was explained to me that I would not remember everything I had been told, but as long as I held the Creator in my heart, I would know what to do and when to do it. My calling was to help others awaken through my art." After the dreams ended, Lucero began having visions of spirits and beings that have continued to this day.

Admittedly, Lucero seems eccentric. But his profound sense of spirituality has enabled him to create a prolific body of work that goes beyond addressing only Chicano issues. It speaks to all races and cultures.

It was at the University of Wyoming that he started painting what he calls Metaphysical Fantastic Realism. His work later evolved into Metarealism, where the conscious and subconscious merge together. "In essence, what we think is manifested physically," Lucero says of his style, which combines bold colors and lively organic forms.



Lucero's Blue Quetzalcoatl

Lucero's "re-visions" of ancient Mexico, have been hoarded by collectors for years.

Internationally revered Mexican *curandero* (medicine man) Tlacaclael, who is best known for deciphering pre-Columbian knowledge, says Lucero is one of the "few artists on this planet that paints with true spirit vision."

Also a renowned muralist and speaker, Lucero has lectured at Harvard, Yale and Columbia. His paintings have been exhibited throughout the United States, and even though he has some famous fans – Edward James Olmos, Daniel Valdez, Al Pacino – and many private collectors buy his work, wealth and fame have eluded him. He, instead, has preferred to keep his paintings affordable and accessible to the general public.

Arlette, his wife, says her husband has never had any interest in marketing himself or his art and she has never pushed him to seek commercial success. "I only hope that his amazing legacy will be appreciated some day," she says.

Lucero is pragmatic about the fame he has received. "I have never painted for any other reason than to carry out my destiny. My work is for people of all cultures. My goal is to enlighten and awaken all I can while I am here."

Many who know him believe Lucero is living on borrowed time and wonder how long the visionary artist can continue to paint. He has suffered three major heart attacks in the past decade.

"I will paint until it is time to move on," says Lucero with a smile. "Heaven is right before our eyes. I want to help all those I can to realize this before I leave." [▼ stevonlucero.com](http://stevonlucero.com)



After college, Lucero moved to Colorado and became involved in *La Raza*, a Latino civil rights and advocacy group. He helped found the Chicano Humanities and Arts Council, one of the foremost respected Chicano art institutes in Denver. In 1979, Lucero met Tony Shearer, another visionary artist, who inspired him to create Neo-PreColumbian art. These works, which

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