



**FINE ART
LIAISONS**

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ABOUT RICHARD E VALQUI MAYORCA

"When I'm a better painter I can be a better friend, a better son, a better husband, a better human being."

"I'm Richard Valqui Mayorca and I was born in Lima on April 6, 1971. When I was a little boy, my grandmother had a number of books on art. But the one I always had on my bedside table was about the Italian painter, Michelangelo Buonarroti, whom I admire very much. I'd imitate his work with clay, and I'd copy his paintings. And so, my life continued amid paper and things from school.

"One day when I was 12, I decided to become a priest. They asked me to paint a mural of the Last Supper and it is still there in the dining room of a small seminary in Chosica, which is a great honor for me. It is an even greater achievement because it was one of my very first. Up to that moment, I wasn't aware of my true calling, and one of the priests counseled me and made me really think about whether my vocation was painting. I remembered that the person who had been my guide in art was my father, who taught me to draw and paint from the time I was very young. The priest himself gave me the address of an art school where I could study.

"And so, I returned to Lima to pursue my dream and in 1989, I was admitted to the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes. However, I had to drop out and go to work the following year and I took a job as an illustrator. During that time, I also took classes in ceramics. In 1993, I applied again and was accepted. I went back to Bellas Artes with the intention of staying but, due to illness, I didn't graduate until 2000. Finally, after so much sacrifice, my dream came true. In 1996, I was awarded a silver medal for drawing by Bellas Artes.

"For me, painting is my life and my way of life. A saying by a great Peruvian painter is now a part of my own thoughts. 'I paint therefore I exist.' My inspiration comes from observing people of the world's diverse cultures, everything that humans do to express ourselves, especially graphically. It has a nature of its own, that is, what man tries to decipher and interpret.

"I try to transmit the gesture understood as a symbol. This is what we express without words – simply a look, the way we write, etc. Each person, for each thing, creates a ritual; we are always trying to express ourselves and the life of every human being is filled with symbols.

"Life's greatest challenge for me has been my art career, **getting ahead in spite of all the obstacles I've had. I could be anything, but being a painter is most important for me. When I'm a better painter I can be a better friend, a better son, a better husband, a better human being. If I weren't an artist, I'd be a bitter man, one who goes through life without any meaning.**"

