

# Art Expressions by A Mexican American Military Man

Oct. 26 – November 16, 2008

ICAD Art Gallery & Studio

Historic Savage Mill

Written by Minju Zukowski

Caesar Alvarado Jr. is a man who represents a Mexican origin, a love for his art, and a commitment to the United States Air Force as a full time Non Commissioned Officer. His pursuance of a degree in Art at the University of Maryland University College continues to help him advance in his desire to become an even better artist. Caesar grew up in Reynosa, and Tamaulipas, Mexico, and later moved to Hidalgo, Texas where he graduated from Valley View high School. Shortly after graduating, he enlisted with the United States Air Force.

While in the Middle East, during two tours of duty in Irag, Mr. Alvarado created works on paper in pastels expressing his feelings about life in Irag. His artwork focuses on the life of warfare while symbolizing the life and experiences of U.S soldiers incorporating his individual touch in the art. "Hurry Up and Wait" shows a soldier in front of a classroom door with his bags in military clothing, with a hat placed on top of the invisible head. The unknown head of the soldier shows that his commitment has led to his individuality being traded for the team he is going to support, a sacrifice he accepts when fighting for his country.

"Airman in His Dorm" is a painting that shows a self-portrait of Mr. Alvarado in his dorm, displaying his heritage in the Mexican flag along with the American flag. The displaying of both flags shows what he fights for in his cultural everyday life, and his commitment to fight for his country America.

A painting that represents what Mr. Alvarado believed to be necessary for the cause of war, but saddening was the destruction of a beautifully constructed one thousand year old palace. The ancient design appealed to his senses as an artist, the time it had been standing, which shows how valuable the image of the palace could be to one's eyes along with the rare materials such as marble that kept the wonderful structure standing. The picture reveals Alvarado's gas mask reflecting the soldier's entrance into what were remains of the great palace.

Another beautiful painting of Mr. Alvarado was "Boots", which symbolized the past and future in one, showing the feet marks of his boots, the same feet marks that will fade in time as so many other soldier's feet marks have faded with time. The soldier walks the same path as so many other fallen soldiers have walked, which represents every soldier's fear and doubt about returning home. The soldier continues to walk, holding fear and hope together, as their path and future is unclear.

Mr. Alvarado leaves at the end of the month for his third tour of duty in Iraq, already serving ten years in the Air Force and for the United States.