



## The story of Guadalupe Velazquez

We are comfortably past the second millennium and the idea of tales from far away corners of the world have surpassed the pages of history to myth. At the same time, we have not only become more sceptical, but also stopped dreaming altogether. We are neither wanting nor hungry. The notion of breaking free and following our own path, to create our destiny, sounds downright lame. The road to success has been mapped, charted and filed into categories for us. It seems like all we need to do is to get in the right lane and follow the signs to our destination. The distance to our goals could be measured in miles and is as unadventurous as driving on the M25. With some right I might add, as we keep being told that all has been tried and tested. No matter, as we are the generation that have to free our society from this postmodernistise paradox that seems never ending. It's time for us to dream again and lay our own roads to our own destinations. This is the story of Guadalupe Velazquez.

Less than 30 years ago in Coahuilco, which is an Aztec village some eight hours by road from Mexico City (the biggest city in the world with around 18 million inhabitants) with its name being Aztec and translating to 'snake on stone', a boy was born. This healthy little boy that was delivered in a straw hut that had no water supply or electricity, not to mention a midwife or any medical facilities during birth, was named Guadalupe Velazquez.

With a father of Spanish descent and a pure native Aztec mother, born in the middle of nowhere, his future looked uncertain at best. The huge difference between the Spanish and Aztec cultures didn't help as the father went lengths over the line to repress the Aztec side of the family. Economics was another factor that swung Guadalupe into the realities of life. They had to make do with what ever they had for the day. As I trace back the cause and effect of his life, this could be the spark that lit the creativity that was to follow. Clay articles, straw baskets and chairs are just a few of the things that they had to make and sell to make a living, growing vegetables for exchange was another one. Everybody had to help, even Guadalupe, who was only six at that time. In my eyes, this is the most natural way of getting introduced to art, even if for Guadalupe and his family, it was only a matter of getting food on the table. The dyes they used were homemade, mostly from roots but also from plants that they had to recognize. They also made shoes, both for personal use and for sale. Nothing went to waste. The leather used was anything from deer and rabbit hide to squirrels. Needles were made from chicken bones filed down for sharpness; the eye was made by penetrating the bone with a hot wire. They also made bracelets, necklaces and other decorations from bones. Let me remind you that this is the way of life only a few hours journey from the roar of the biggest city in the world. >>>

