

LOU PERALTA

Visual Artist

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Comalli Series, 2020.

*Portraits of contemporary
Mexicans with
hand-applied references to
domestic legacies.*



FOTOFEST

Meeting Place 2023 Virtual

COVER

Comalli #3, 2020.

Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag paper with hand-constructed amate paper attached with archival glue.

YOUTUBE LOU PERALTA CHANNEL

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwChQDqsEFk>



PROJECT STATEMENT

Comalli Series, 2020.

The word "comalli" comes from the Aztec Nahuatl for griddle or comal.

As the fourth generation of a family of Mexico City-based portrait photographers, my work seeks to find new meanings in portraiture.

I became interested in looking back to the time of the Spanish conquest in America (16th century), to see how Mexicas or Aztecs portrayed themselves during this critical period in our history.

This mixed media Series is inspired by the Mendocino Codex (housed at the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford), which references of the use of a *comalli* (griddle in nahuatl), a household tool that has been used for the same purposes in Mexican homes since that time.

Working with several used *comalli* and portraits of contemporary Mexicans, I intent to represent contemporary women and men from my country and make the analogy that as the wrinkles on a person's face bear witness to the passage of time, the stains on the comal are a sign of its years of use.

The Production of the art works in this Series begins by printing the portraits utilizing Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper and Epson archival pigment inks with protective spray. I then embed into the prints physical elements that have been used in Mexico since pre-Hispanic times, together with objects from Mexican daily life which are hand-constructed, such as tissue paper, sack cloth, cardboard, plastic fabric, hammered brass, luffa vegetable sponge, metal fiber, jerga cloth, amate paper, agave thread, corn husks and feathers. Materials are attached with archival glue and tape.

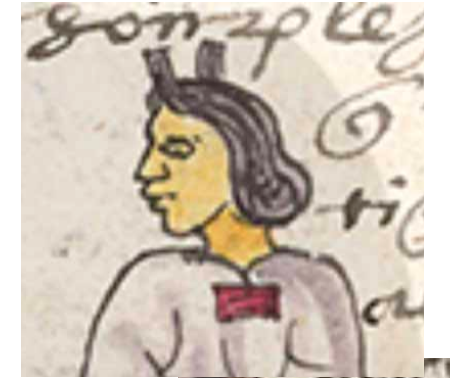
14x11x.4", edition of 5 + 1 AP

24x20x.4", edition of 5 + 1 AP for a total edition of 12.

All works are three dimensional, hand-constructed by the artist (variants).



The Mendocino Codex made by the "Tlacuilos" (painters in nahuatl) in the 16 Century.



The "tlacuilos" who draw the pictograms of the Mendocino Codex do not show any particular features in their faces, because the idea was to represent "Mexica women and men." This inspired me to photograph my subjects with their bodies facing forward and their faces in profile, in an effort to highlight not their personality but the intention—similar to the codex—of representing "contemporary Mexican men and women" in my portraits.



The portraits in my Comallil series are in black and white, inspired in folio 2 of the Mendocino codex, where the only distinctive face-painted grey-is that of the "Tlatoani" (Speaker) "Tenuch" (Fruit of the Stone Cactus).

We have been using this object to heat our tortillas for over 500 years in the same way!

Photo: © Bodleian Library.



Use of a comal by a Mexica, referenced in the Medicino Codex (16th Century).

Photo: © Colección Guillermo Tovar y de Teresa/Museo Soumaya - México.



Use of comal in Mexico (19th Century).

Photo: Thomas F. Aletto.



A woman using a comal in Mexico (21st Century).

The FINAL pieces



Comalli #1, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with cloth used to make sacks for market goods attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #2, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with zacate from henequen agave plant attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #3, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with amate paper attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #11, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with gold tissue paper attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #6, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with jerga cloth attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #7, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with feathers attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #10, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with hand-constructed hammered brass attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #14, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with plastic market bag attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #15, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with metal fiber attached with archival glue and tape.



Comalli #8, Comalli Series. Archival pigment print on Hahnemuehle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper with hand -constructed ixtle weave from chalqueño agave plant attached with archival glue and tape.

The FINAL 15 pieces



LP_COMALLI-15



LP_COMALLI-2



LP_COMALLI-3



LP_COMALLI-5



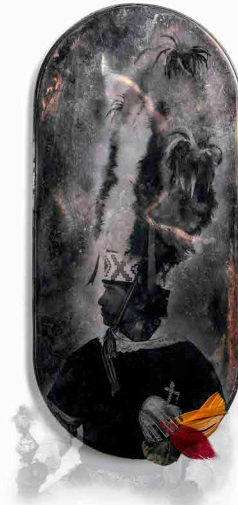
LP_COMALLI-1



LP_COMALLI-11



LP_COMALLI-12



LP_COMALLI-7



LP_COMALLI-9



LP_COMALLI-6



LP_COMALLI-8



LP_COMALLI-13



LP_COMALLI-14



LP_COMALLI-4



LP_COMALLI-10



A collection of 15 vintage comales in my studio.

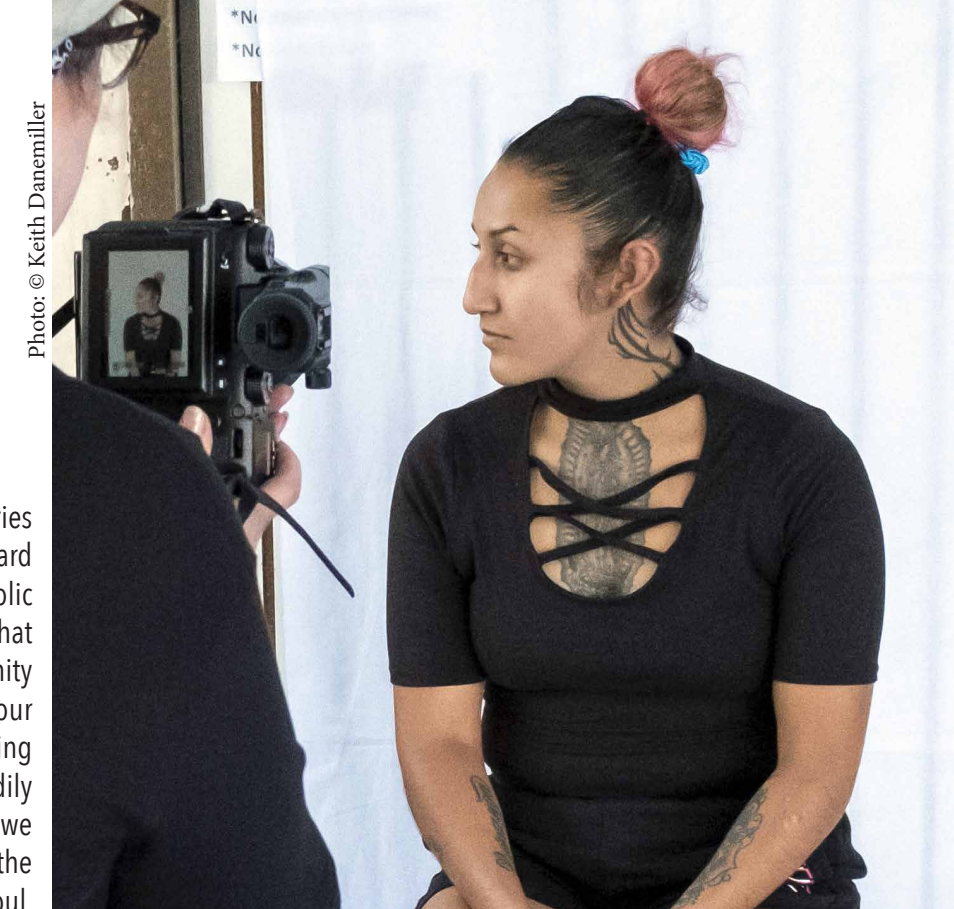


Photo: © Keith Danemiller

The faces in my Comalli series are turned in profile toward the left, which is a symbolic reference to the belief that we connect with our divinity through the left side of our bodies. Also, when creating a portrait, if we look steadily at the person's left eye we can see more deeply into the light of their soul.

Portrait session, downtown Mexico City.



To choose the people I would portray for my Comalli series, I think that when you're clear about your intent and your concept, it's like antenna—all the people that should appear in an artwork find themselves in your path.

Portrait session in Oaxaca City.

Process and materials

I try to lay a bridge between the pre-Hispanic age and our time, through materials that have been in use since those early times and on into daily life in what we now call Mexico.

I juxtaposed portrait over comal, inspired on the juxtaposition of iconography and words in Spanish that we find in the Mendoza Codex, which "is not the sole expression of two opposed systems of thought: the codex was painted by Mexican scribes on Spanish paper, instead of indigenous amate bark paper or deerskin. Also, it was bound as Spanish books were" (Berdan & Anawalt 1997: xii).



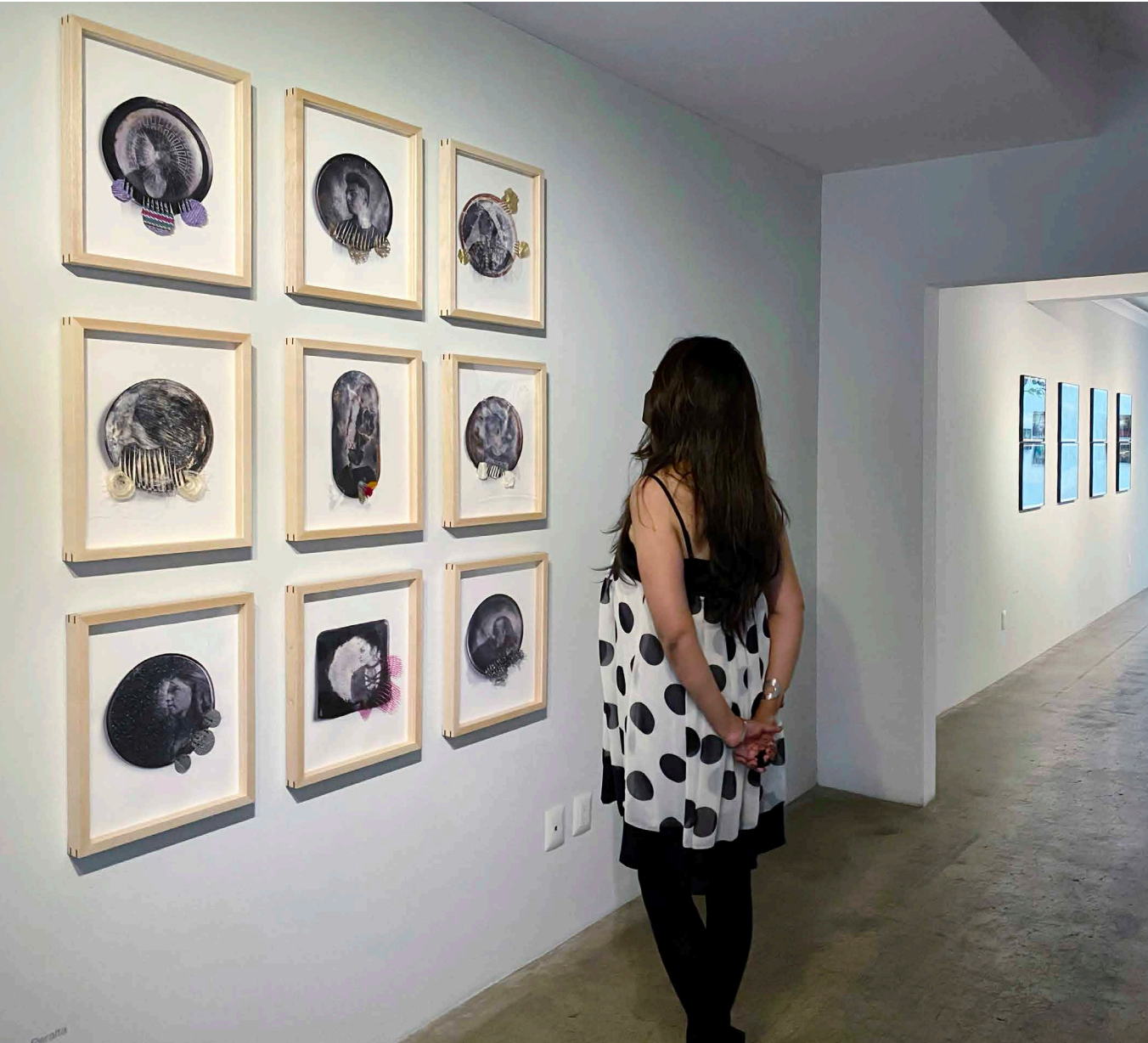
The artist hand-embedding elements with archival materials.

Fiber from the Henequen (Agave fourcroydes) plant, utilized domestically since pre-Columbian times.



Hand-woven cloth used to make sacks for shopping at markets.

Exhibitions



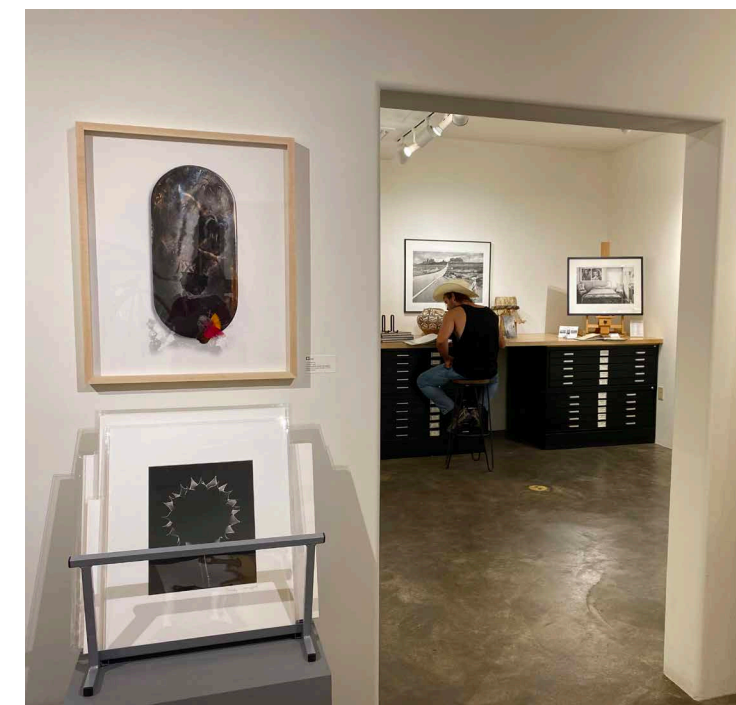
Nine final works from the Comalli Series were on view at the **Patricia Conde Gallery**, Mexico City. (2020).

Comalli Series (large size) pieces are on view at **Foto Relevance Gallery** in Houston.





Nine final works from the Comalli Series were on exhibited at my solo show in **Obscura Gallery** in Santa Fe, Nuevo Mexico in 2022.



June 12, Elizabeth Stone interviews Lou Peralta. Feature in Lenscratch Magazine.

LENSCRATCH
FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY DAILY

HOME PHOTOGRAPHERS > FEATURES > RESOURCES > SUBMIT > SHOP

PHOTOGRAPHY INTO SCULPTURE: LOU PERALTA

By Elizabeth Stone | June 12, 2023

©Lou Peralta, Disassemble Series II

mediumsandiego

A virtual seminar led by Mary Virginia Swanson with guest speakers Frances Jakubek and Gordon Stettinius. Guest artists Lou Peralta and Elizabeth Stone will share their portfolio review experiences with participants.

January 25, 2023, 3:30 - 6:30pm Pacific

During this three-hour seminar, moderated by Mary Virginia Swanson, participants will learn from artists and industry professionals to prepare themselves for attending a portfolio review. Participants will gain insight into conducting research prior to ranking meeting preferences, and hear from reviewers about what they look for and how they prepare before a meeting with artists.

Liked by the_herrera_studio_archives and 205 others

JANUARY 4

Add a comment... Post

January 25, Medium San Diego. Virtual seminar led by Mary Virginia Swanson with guest speakers Frances Jakubek and Gordon Stettinius. Guest artists Lou Peralta and Elizabeth Stone.

Cameracraftsmen of America
Keynote

March 27th, 2023
Mexico City

CAMERACRAFTSMEN OF AMERICA
MEXICO CITY MARCH 26-31 2023

Hyatt
"Show & Tell" & keynote speaker Lou Peralta

Host MARIAN B. BLAKE

March 27, Lou Peralta as a keynote speaker for Cameracraftsmen of America in Mexico City. And becomes International member elect by invitation.

Thinking About Photography
Dedicated to expanding our ideas about photography

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Photographers and Collage

Spring 2023
May 20th - June 21st

In this showcase we look at six photographers who are exploring imagery through the use of collage. Juxtaposition, layering, fragmentation and the use of paint, or other media, are all collage and assemblage techniques and are a way to think outside the box and create new metaphors. These can convey emotion and other dimensions, adding depth and meaning that reach the viewer's mind at a subconscious level, allowing them to create their own narrative.

Annalise Neil | Jessica Burko | Ricardo Miguel Hernández
Rebecca Sexton Larson | Lou Peralta | Diana Nicholette Jeon

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For updates on the next showcase - subscribe to my [youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

May 20th - June 21st, Lou Peralta is part of "Photographers and Collage" at Thinking About Photography (online show) curated by Amandine Nabarra.

LOU PERALTA / Visual Artist

Artist Statement

In my work, I am interested in artistically exploring new meanings for the portrait. As the fourth generation of a family of studio photographers, I push the limits of the two dimensions of the photographic image, to reach an organic three-dimensionality.

With my practice and creative process, I merge pre-Hispanic influences with contemporary culture, intuitively referenced in the fabrics and structures that I make manually with materials such as thread, cloth, wire, among others. I capture the perception I have of the complexity of the human being and the energy that a person gives off, when I make a portrait in order to conclude in sculptural pieces.

Bio

Lou Peralta (Mexico City, 1964).

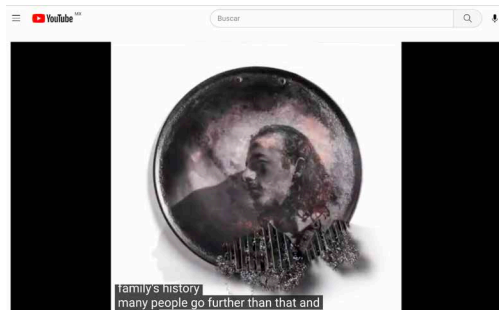
Her photographic practice spans a period of more than 30 years, in which she has focused on revealing different contemporary narratives with the portrait. She studied graphic design with specialization in editorial design at the Universidad Iberoamericana (1992), later she did a specialization Diploma in contemporary photography at the Node Center for Curatorial Studies (2017).

Her work has been presented in more than 20 exhibitions collectively and individually, mainly in the United States and Mexico. Since 2018, she is represented by Foto Relevance gallery <https://fotorelevance.com/> in Houston, TX. and in 2020 by Obscura Gallery in Santa Fe, NM. Her Comalli Series pieces are available in Mexico City through Patricia Conde Galería.

In addition to her Contemporary Photography practice, Peralta is producing with her father Héctor Herrera a book project celebrating the family photography business that spans four generations on its Centennial anniversary.

Since 2013 she is a brand ambassador of Fujifilm Mexico as part of the world group X-Photographers. And since March 2023, she is a Cameracraftsmen of America International Member elect.

Email: lou@louperalta.art



Comalli Series video in Youtube Channel
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVGUSKIIG7w&t=2s>

GALLERIES

In The United States:

Represented by **FOTO RELEVANCE** Gallery in Houston:

Email: info@fotorelevance.com

<https://fotorelevance.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/fotorelevance/>

Represented by **OBSCURA GALLERY** in Santa Fe, New Mexico:

info@obscuragallery.net

<https://www.obscuragallery.net>

<https://www.instagram.com/obscuragallerysf/>

In Mexico:

Comalli Series available through **PATRICIA CONDE GALLERY**:

Email: info@patriciacondegaleria.com <https://pcg.photo>

Artsy: https://www.artsy.net/search?artist_ids%5B0%5D=lou-peralta&term=patricia%20conde%20comalli

MOST RECENT EXHIBITIONS

2022 Deconstructed Portraits. Obscura Gallery in Santa Fe, Nuevo Mexico, USA.

2022 Amart Fair. Galería Plaza San Jerónimo Hotel. Mexico City, Mexico.

2022 Houston Center of Photography Auction 2022 exhibition. Houston, Tx, USA.

2021 3rd annual Art @ CityCentreHou. Weingarten Group + Foto Relevance Gallery. Houston, Texas, USA.

2021 Habitat. 1st León Spring Festival Public Art. Guanajuato, Mx.

2021 3rd annual Art @ CityCentreHou. Weingarten Group + Foto Relevance Gallery. Houston, Texas.

2020 Habitat. Arte and History Museum of Guanajuato. León, Guanajuato, Mx.

2020 Utopias femeninas. Patricia Conde Gallery. Mexico City, Mexico

2020 Restart: Limited Edition Collection. Foto Relevance Gallery. Online.

2020 Quarantine blues. Foto Relevance Gallery. Houston, Texas, USA.

2020 A Conversation between Women: Cecilia Villanueva/Lou Peralta. Mexican Consulate. Houston, Texas, USA.

2019 Disassemble Series. Foto Relevance Gallery. Houston, Texas, USA.

Thank you!

¡Gracias!



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Mexico City

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