



# Kalevala

*A collection of paintings*

*by*

*Alvaro Ibañez*

*based on the Finnish creation myth*

*\$47,500. (14 paintings)*

# ***Alvaro Ibañez Muñoz***

## **ARTIST'S STATEMENT**

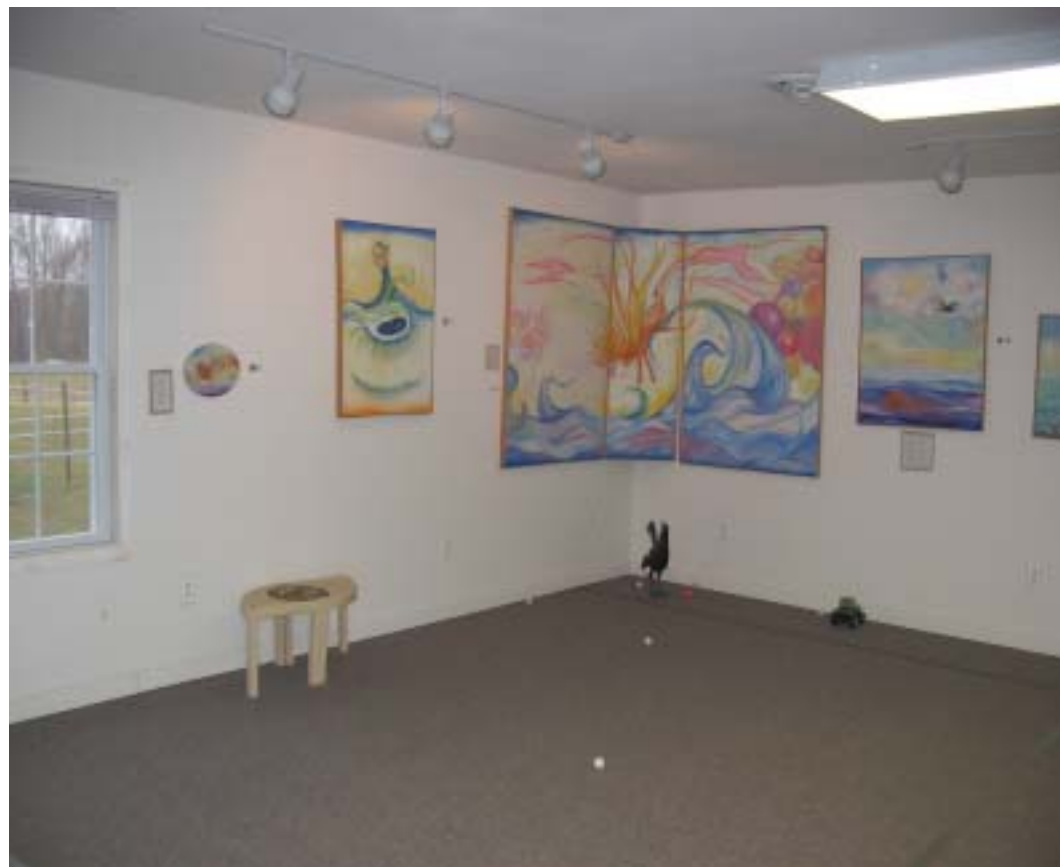
*When I was a child, I was fond of listening to my father's narratives. He loved to read, teach, and share his knowledge and experience with us and with others. Every time I read, I imagine all of the characters in the story. Upon reading Kalevala, I was captured by the beauty of the accounts. I felt that I was surrounded with the magic of the Virgin, Ilmatar.*

*As an artist, I attempt many projects that reflect beauty, fantasy, and the spiritual realm. When I finished the first piece, "In the Beginning was God," I knew it was the birth of Kalevala. To date, I have completed twelve paintings in the collection.*

*My favorite moment was when I was painting the oceans and the waves. It released in me a fury of energy – I was able to move my brush freely, creating the water and the waves on the canvas.*

*I am motivated by the simplicity and beauty of this poem. I hope you will enjoy seeing the pieces as much as I enjoyed creating them.*











*Quotations are taken from  
“Kalevala, The Land of  
Heroes,” translated by  
W.F. Kirby, originally  
published in 1907.*







*Kalevala*, the compilation of Elia Lonnrot, has come to represent the quintessence of Finnish traditional culture. The 1849 edition has been translated into more than 30 languages and remains the best-known work of Finnish literature outside Finland. Its meter, reproduced in a German translation by Schiefner, influenced Longfellow's verse form in *The Song of Hiawatha*.

## ***I. Birth of Vainamoinen***

Prelude: The Virgin of the Air descends into the sea, where she is fertilized by the winds and waves and becomes the Water-Mother.

*I am driven by my longing,  
And my understanding urges  
That I should commence my singing,  
And begin my recitation.  
I will sing the people's legends,  
And the ballads of the nation.  
To my mouth the words are flowing,  
And the words are gently falling,  
Quickly as my tongue can shape them,  
And between my teeth emerging.*



1. (433) "In the Beginning was God," Oil on Canvas, 36' x 36'



*Dearest friend, and much-loved brother,  
Best beloved of all companions!  
Come and let us sing together,  
Let us now begin our converse,  
Since at length we meet together,  
From two widely sundered regions.  
Rarely can we meet together,  
Rarely one can meet the other,  
In these dismal Northern regions,  
In the dreary land of Pohja...*

*... I have often heard related,  
And have heard the song recited,  
How the nights closed ever lonely,  
And the days were shining lonely.  
Only born was Vainamoinen,  
And revealed the bard immortal,  
Sprung from the divine Creatrix,  
Born of Ilmatar, his mother.*

2. (434) "Come and Listen, My Friends!" Oil on Canvas, 48"x60"

Planned for 36" x 36" size



3. (435) "Virgin of Creation" Oil on Canvas 9"x12"

*Air's young daughter was a virgin,  
Fairest daughter of Creation.  
Long did she abide a virgin,  
All the long days of her girlhood,  
In the Air's own spacious mansions,  
In those far extending regions...*



4. (436) "The Wave," a male personification, Oil on Canvas 26" x 36"

*After this the maid descending,  
Sank upon the tossing billows,  
On the open ocean's surface,  
On the wide expanse of water.*

*Then a storm arose in fury,  
From the East a mighty tempest,  
And the sea was wildly foaming,  
And the waves dashed ever higher.*

*Thus the tempest rocked the virgin,  
And the billows drove the maiden,  
O'er the ocean's azure surface,  
On the crest of foaming billows,  
Till the wind that blew around her,  
And the sea woke life within her.*



5 (437) "The Conception" Triptych Oil on Canvas 56" x 40"



6 (441) "Abandoned Virgin with Flying Teal" Oil on Canvas  
30" x 36"

*Then she bore her heavy burden,  
And the pain it brought upon her,  
Seven long centuries together,  
Nine times longer than a lifetime.  
Yet no child was fashioned from her,  
And no offspring was perfected...*

*Better were it had I tarried,  
Virgin in aerial regions,  
Then I should not drift for ever,  
As the Mother of the Waters...  
Short the time that passed thereafter,  
Scarce a moment had passed over,  
Ere a beauteous teal came flying  
Lightly hovering o'er the water,  
Seeking for a spot to rest in,  
Searching for a home to dwell in.*

*Eastward flew she, westward flew she,  
Flew to north-west and to southward,  
But the place she sought she found not,  
Not a spot, however barren,  
Where her nest she could establish,  
Or a resting-place could light on...*

*Then the Mother of the Waters,  
Water-Mother, maid aerial,  
From the waves her knee uplifted,  
Raised her shoulder from the billows,  
That the teal her next might 'stablish,  
And might find a peaceful dwelling...*

*And her nest she there established,  
And she laid her eggs all golden,  
Six gold eggs she laid within it,  
And a seventh she laid of iron.*

*O'er her eggs the teal sat brooding,  
And the knee grew warm beneath her;  
And she sat one day, a second,  
Brooded also on the third day;*



7 (442) "Compassion" Oil on Canvas 24"x 30"





7 (442) "The Scald" Oil on Canvas, 30" x 36"

*Then the Mother of the Waters,  
Water-Mother, maid aerial,  
Felt it hot and felt it hotter,  
And she felt her skin was heated,  
Till she thought her knee was burning,  
And that all her veins were melting,*

*Then she jerked her knee with quickness,  
And her limbs convulsive shaking,  
Rolled the eggs into the water,  
Down amid the waves of ocean;  
And to splinters they were broken,  
And to fragments they were shattered.*

(“Sun, Moon, and Stars,” next page)

*In the ooze they were not wasted,  
Nor the fragments in the water,  
But a wondrous change came o'er them,  
And the fragments all grew lovely.  
From the cracked egg's lower fragment,  
Now the solid earth was fashioned,  
From the cracked egg's lower fragment,  
Rose the lofty arch of heaven,  
From the yolk, the upper portion,  
Now became the sun's bright luster;  
From the white, the upper portion,  
Rose the moon that shines so brightly;  
Whatso in the egg was mottled,  
Now became the stars in heaven,  
Whatso in the egg was blackish,  
In the air as cloudlets floated.*





9 (444) "Sun, Moon, and Stars" Oil on Canvas 40" x 52"

*When the ninth year had passed over,  
And the summer tenth was passing,  
From the sea her head she lifted,  
And her forehead she uplifted,  
And she then began Creation,  
And she brought the world to order,  
On the open ocean's surface,  
On the far extending waters...*

*Wheresoe'er her hand she pointed,  
There she formed the jutting headlands;  
Wheresoe'er her feet she rested,  
There she formed the caves for fishes;  
When she dived beneath the water,  
There she formed the depths of ocean;  
When towards the land she turned her,  
There the level shores extended...*

*Now the isles were formed already,  
In the sea the rocks were planted;  
Pillars of the sky established,  
Lands and continents created;  
Rocks engraved as though with figures,  
And the hills were cleft with fissures.*

**Planned for 5' x 6' size**



11 (445) "The Creation" (oval study) Oil on Canvas 9" x 12"

*Still unborn was Vainomoinen;  
Still unborn, the bard immortal.*

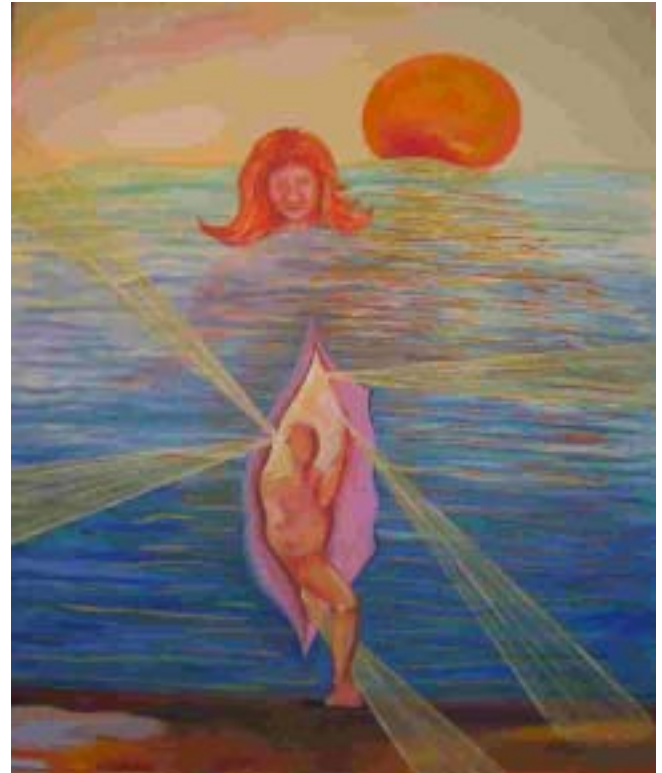
*Vainomoinen, old and steadfast,  
Rested in his mother's body  
For the space of thirty summers,  
And the sum of thirty winters,  
Ever on the placid waters,  
And upon the foaming billows.*

*So he pondered and reflected  
How he could continue living  
In a resting-place so gloomy,  
In a dwelling far too narrow,  
Where he could not see the moonlight,  
Neither could behold the sunlight.*

*Then he spoke the words which follow,  
And expressed his thoughts in this wise:  
“Aid me Moon, and Sun release me...”*

*When the Moon no freedom gave him,  
Neither did the sun release him,  
Then he wearied of existence,  
And his life became a burden.  
Thereupon he moved the portal,  
With his finger, fourth in number,  
Opened quick the bony gateway,  
With the toes upon his left foot,  
With his nails beyond the threshold,  
With his knees beyond the gateway.*

*Headlong in the water falling,  
With his hands the waves repelling,  
Thus the man remained in ocean,  
And the hero on the billows...*



11 (446) “The Birth” Oil on Canvas 36” x 48”



A teal builds its nest on the Water-Mother's knee and lays eggs. The eggs fall from the nest and break, but the fragments form the earth, sky, sun, moon, and clouds. Vainomoinen is born from the Water-Mother, and is tossed about by the waves for a long time until he reaches the shore.

12 (447) "Sunset of Life" (Oval) 16" x 20"

## **Biography of Alvaro Ibañez**

Alvaro Ibañez was born in Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia on January 18, 1951. He has worked as a designer and draftsman since his mid-twenties, specializing in graphic arts, patent design, and trademark illustrations. His biographical profile has been included in “Who’s Who in the World,” “Who’s Who in America,” and “Who’s Who in the South and Southwest” since 1994. His personal collection of his own original work contains over 500 pieces in media such as pastel, oils, water color, ink, and even markers.

Inspired by his teacher David Manzur and by Da Vinci, Dali, and Van Gogh, Alvaro expresses his love of life and beauty through a broad range of styles ranging from realism to surrealism. Within his collection are pieces ranging in size from a few inches to many feet, with themes running the gamut of human experience and going beyond into the realm of myth.

Alvaro immigrated to the United States in August of 1981, leaving behind a large body of work. His current collection dates from his arrival in Virginia and tells the story of his struggles as a new immigrant supporting a family and learning a new language.

Alvaro’s work tells of his dreams and the sources of his inspiration. Images of women dominate much of his work; “I love Woman,” he says, “beginning with my mother. I mold my feelings easily on canvas.” Another group of paintings depicts the powerful, mythical unicorn. This image was the primary inspiration for Alvaro’s dream of building a retreat center for artists, Sunrise Retreat Center for the Arts.

**To learn more about the art of Alvaro Ibañez  
and the Sunrise Retreat Center for the Arts,  
see [www.a-ibanez.org](http://www.a-ibanez.org).**