

# Artist Transforms Rocks into Works of Art

For artist Andrea 'Ani' Lozano, her move to Santa Fe in July of 2012 has brought a few unexpected surprises. It didn't take her long to notice the unique high desert landscape. "Everywhere I turned there were all these wonderful rocks!" Born in Mexico City, Ani attended college in Michigan, her mother's birthplace. While raising her three boys in Michigan, she started painting on rocks as a hobby. After moving to Florida in 2006 she had to stop because there were no rocks to be found in the Florida Space Coast which was her home for two years. "At one point I even considered importing some," she said.



Now, Ani only has to walk down to a nearby arroyo to find what she needs, smooth or bumpy rocks of all sizes from pebbles to boulders that, once scrubbed and washed, become her canvases for imaginative and colorful paintings. "No-body wants to go hiking with me because they know they will be carrying rocks back," she laughed.

Ani calls herself the 'Rock Whisperer' because each rock she finds suggests to her a subject — from food to pueblo dwellings, domesticated to wild animals. "Once I see the image in my mind's eye, I have to see it through to a finished work of art, whether it's a hamburger, a Chihuahua or a cell phone." She recalled how she was surprised to see her first prairie dog poke its head out of a hole while walking at Frenchy's Park. She knew then she must paint them on rocks.

Ani started full production of her rock art after leaving a sales job on the Plaza. "I have been an artist ever since I can remember and I was ready to launch my career in Santa Fe, the town of my dreams. I let my imagination run wild and painted on rocks all winter. By March of 2013, I had painted over one hundred rocks and created my website. I registered my business with the city as *Ani Rocks Santa Fe*."

Her business name is tied to her childhood nickname Ani. "I feel like a child when I use my imagination to paint on rocks." It also works as an abbreviation for the animals she paints. "Everywhere I look, there is surprising subject matter I'd love to paint, so I am ready to rock Santa Fe with my art." Ani's art is not just limited to painting on rocks and canvas; She also paints murals and furniture, and she is an illustrator and graphic designer.

Ani's art premiered at Jackalope Market last summer, delighting locals and tourists

alike. "Painted rocks seem to bring out a childlike wonderment in people," she added.

Last fall, Ani painted eight custom animal portraits on rock of the American Humane Association's Hero Dog finalists, and was invited to attend the star-studded 2013 Hero Dog Awards, a Hollywood extravaganza held at the famous Beverly Hills Hilton. "I had the honor of meeting the participating service, police and military dog handlers. The Ani Rock portraits of their dogs were gifted to them and I'm still hearing how much they like them." The show was later televised on the Hallmark Channel.

Her Facebook page, Ani Rocks Santa Fe, has exploded ever since, resulting in her painting custom portraits for people from all over the U.S. and as far away as Afghanistan. "While I am now buying rocks by the truck-load, some orders really touch me, such as the miniature dog portraits sent to a deployed service man last Christmas," she said. She has also been receiving commissions from celebrities for pet portraits. "I recently painted actress Victoria Principal's horse on a rock. All I need are photos of the subject for me to capture its likeness."

Ani offers two- to three-day USPS shipping anywhere in the continental U.S., Puerto Rico and Hawaii for a reasonable price, as well as free shipping on certain sizes. While her company motto is 'Heartfully Painted Animals and More,' Ani says her motto could soon become 'Exporting Santa Fe One Rock at a Time!'

She is available to teach art workshops in rock painting, pastels, acrylic or oil painting on canvas. To purchase Ani Rocks, order a custom portrait or book a workshop, visit [www.anirockssantafe.com](http://www.anirockssantafe.com), or email her at [anirockssantafe@gmail.com](mailto:anirockssantafe@gmail.com). Ani also appreciates new 'likes' and comments on her Facebook page, Ani Rocks Santa Fe. You can reach her by mail at P.O. Box 8759, Santa Fe, NM 87504.



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