

Pacific Daily News, Thursday, August 3, 2000



Victor Consaga/For Pacific Daily News

Exhibit to showcase artist's work inspired by her new island home



Photos by Victor Consaga/For Pacific Daily News

Above: "Legend of the Flame Tree," oil on canvas by Dawn Lees Reyes.

Above: From her Inarajan home, Dawn Lees Reyes takes a look at the ocean that inspires her work.

Left: "Soul Birds," oil on canvas by Dawn Lees Reyes

A new Dawn is rising

She was born in California, took bronze-casting classes in Holland, gazed upon famous paintings in France and sculpted marble in Italy. But Dawn Lees Reyes says she never really felt at home until she came to Guam. The 43-year-old artist, now a resident of a beachside home in Inarajan, says when she landed on Guam, she knew it was where she wanted to hang her hat for the last time.

"I've been traveling for the last 18 years," Reyes says. "But since coming here, there was a sigh of relief when I realized this is where I feel comfortable."

About 75 of her paintings, drawings and sculptures will be shown in her debut exhibit "Finally Home," which opens at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 4 at the Nissan Infinity showroom in Upper Tumon. The exhibit runs for two weeks.

Reyes' artwork takes many forms, from sculptures and oil paintings to pastels and silk paintings. She says she has no favorite medium, instead lets the subject matter dictate how it will be presented.

Her work has many themes, among them nature, the female form and current events.

Reyes says she got her "real education" from her travels through Europe.

"It's not just stuff you see in a book," she says. "There it is, right in front of you."

Since moving to Guam about two and a half years ago, Reyes has done many pieces with Guam motifs, like local legends or the



Pacific ocean. Reyes puts her own twists on the legends, however. For example, one of her paintings combined the legend of "The Maiden Who Saved Guam" with the Roman goddess Diana the Huntress, complete with a Roman arch in the background.

Besides painting, Reyes teaches eighth-grade art at Inarajan Middle School. She says she wants to play a more active role in Guam's art community and expand art education on the island by opening her own art school in the southern part of the island.

Reyes seems to have found her niche here. "When I hung (my work) up in my new home," she says. "It seemed like I had been doing it all along just to put it there." *

— Connor Murphy
For Pacific Daily News

IF YOU GO

"Finally Home," a debut exhibit featuring about 75 drawings, paintings and sculptures by Dawn Lees Reyes.

▲ **Opening night:** 6:30 p.m. Aug. 4. The exhibit runs for two weeks.

▲ **Where:** Nissan Infinity showroom, Upper Tumon. Musical entertainment provided by members of the group Marianas Homegrown.

Raffle tickets will also be sold. Benefits will go to art supplies for Reyes' eighth-grade art class at Inarajan Middle School. Prizes include 25 pounds of fish and a golden cowrie shell.