

Catherine L. Nelson-Rodriguez

Catherine L. Nelson-Rodriguez is a member of the Luiseno Band of Native American Indians, enrolled and residing on the La Jolla Indian Reservation, located near Palomar Mountain in North San Diego County.

She is a self-taught artist, having received no formal instruction. She works in oil, acrylic, and print media.

Rodriguez has participated in group shows at the Centro Cultural de la Raza in Balboa Park, San Diego; Unisys Corp. in Rancho Bernardo, receiving 2nd place awards; American Indian Contemporary Arts in San Francisco; and the Robert Freeman Gallery at the Rincon Indian Reservation, San Diego County.

Her work is spotlighted as the featured show at the Santa Ysabel Gallery, January 13 - February 11, 1996, in Santa Ysabel, San Diego County.

She has been a guest speaker at Calif. State University, San Marcos, awarded a Fellowship Grant by the Lassen County Arts Council, Susanville, Ca., and featured in articles in the San Diego Union both for her work in the Centro Cultural show, and about her work as a self-taught artist along with her identical twin sister, Susan Calac, a song writer.

Rodriguez' work is intensely personal, telling through painting a personal story of a journey from family alcoholism, poverty, spousal abuse, and mental illness into the light of healing and return. Many of her paintings are accompanied by an autobiographical written text: a telling of the paintings, touching in their personal honesty and simplicity. Her paintings are of memories of family life and events. The images in her paintings are of her emotional reaction to her personal experience and lifestyle. They are in a rich folkloric, primitive style. They are psychologically interesting and extremely beautiful.

"My work evolves from painful events in my past. Substance abuse, death, physical abuse and mental illness are very real issues that should concern all human beings...in America the battery and murder of innocent women occurs every 11 minutes. My hope is that somewhere a woman will see my work, relate to it, and realize that she is not alone. Everyone deserves a life without fear."

One can not view her work and remain unmoved.