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Santa Ysabel Gallery
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RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

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Santa Ysabel, CA. - Catherine L. Nelson-Rodriguez, a California Painter, will exhibit "A Hiding Place" - Oil Paintings - at the Santa Ysabel Gallery beginning Saturday, January 13, 1996.

Rodriguez, who lives and is enrolled on the La Jolla Indian Reservation, at the base of Palomar Mountain in North San Diego County, and is a member of the Luiseno Band, is a self-taught artist, having had no formal instruction.

Her work has been shown in a group exhibit at the Robert Freeman Gallery on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego; the American Indian Contemporary Arts gallery in San Francisco, and the Centro Cultural De La Raza at Balboa Park in San Diego. She has been a guest speaker at Calif. State University in San Marcos, and received a grant from the Lassen County, Ca. Arts Council.

Catherine L. Nelson-Rodriguez work is intensely personal, telling through painting a personal story of a journey from family alcoholism, poverty, spousal abuse, and mental illness (Bipolar and Personality Disorders) 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 primarily of her emotional reaction to her personal experience and lifestyle. They are in a rich folkloric and primitive style. Some use bold color blocks and high

contrast; some have minute detail. The work is not only psychologically interesting but extremely beautiful.

A major emphasis of the artist's work revolves around the effects of mental and physical abuse - "the effects radiate throughout all areas of ones life affecting not only ourselves" - and the related victimization of women and children. Rodriguez has created several pieces on the general subject, as well, in print techniques - one in reaction to the O.J. Simpson trial verdict, others on Native American woman, which show great graphic power and skill.

Rodriguez writes "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. We denounce and criticize other countries for their neglect of basic human rights and all the while here 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. Every one deserves a life without fear. Obviously, our judicial system has failed, so let's change it."

This exhibit will be the largest exhibition of Rodriguez' work to date. It should be of interest to collectors, and the caring public and practitioners in the fields of psychology and women's health. This is a deeply affecting body of work.

The exhibit opens with a reception for the artist Saturday, January 13 from 4 to 8 p.m. The public is invited. The exhibit continues through February 11, 1996.

The Santa Ysabel Gallery is located at 30352 Highway 78, Santa Ysabel. Hours are 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Wednesday through Monday - closed Tuesday. Call 765-1676 for more information.