



California Dreaming

## Tierra del Sol Gallery exhibits impressions of California architecture by five artists

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The five artists currently exhibiting at Tierra del Sol Gallery depict California architecture with varying levels of abstraction. (Courtesy Tierra Del Sol Gallery)

Plagued with fires, mudslides and earthquakes, California is an architectural destination whose own natural environment threatens its existence on an almost daily basis. It is likely this sense of unknowability, coupled with its lack of American history relative to the midwest and east coast regions, that drew the likes of Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles and Ray Eames, Rudolph Schindler, John Lautner, and Frank Gehry to the Golden State to graft an image of modern perfectionism onto its smoldering hills and eroding coastlines.

Through sculpture, painting and drawing, the unique quality of California's architecture is reinterpreted through a group exhibition at Tierra del Sol, a gallery in the Chung King Court in Los Angeles' Chinatown that provides art studios and equipment for adults with developmental disabilities. The five California-based artists in Architecting California—Sylvia Fragoso, Dan Hamilton, Maria Kim, Michael LeVell and Evelyn Reyes—

were selected for their differing use of materials and techniques for representing the built environment through the visual arts. Each artist is represented by nonprofit art studio programs across the state: Creative Growth, Creativity Explored, Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF), National Institute of Art & Disabilities (NIAD), and the Tierra del Sol Foundation.

In the tradition of California artists before them, they expound on the state's fragile built environment with exaggerated forms. Evelyn Reyes, for instance, presents a series of abstracted geometric shapes that recall the tall and imposing gates of private communities throughout the state. Seeing them at once in the gallery, rendered in monochrome oil pastels, is like speeding through the rolling hills of Bel Air, where little beyond the vaulted gates is visible to the passerby.

Dan Hamilton, on the other hand, contrasts the hardline geometry of California's mid-century modern period with the vibrant coloration of its dingbats and shopping malls. And at the center of the gallery space are the glazed ceramics of Sylvia Fragoso that depict the cathedrals of Northern California as precarious lines of hardened clay. "[Fragoso] has honed her visual language over 30 years at NIAD," the exhibition statement reads, "concentrating on devotional structures including towers, domes and other objects with religious iconography that express her faith."

Though all five artists leaned toward different mediums and methods of representation, the works are all unmistakably Californian in their exuberance and raw expression.

*Architecting California* will be on view until September 4.