

Circle in the Round

By Stephan Deodolus

Glen Rogers is an attractive, friendly woman who has a ruling passion in her life, to paint. She has moved to Mazatlán to continue her quest to live a life committed to painting. She hopes to integrate into the local community, both artistically and socially. Given the friendliness and openness of the locals plus the fact that Glen has always been involved with community no matter where she finds herself, her hopes should easily be realized.

As a painter, Glen always had the romantic idea to have her own studio abroad. Then, in April of 2000, she came to Mazatlán for a "girl's weekend" with her friend (fellow Mazatlán resident and artist and teacher Erin Goodwin Guerrero) and quickly and excitedly became enamored with the architecture of the Centro Histórico, the leisurely pace of the ambulatory society, the resplendent ocean, the quality of light and the warmth of the people. Using her artistic intuition, she bought a little place built about 50 years ago on Venus Street within a week of her arrival. Her original idea was to live in the house part time and build a studio upstairs, which she has done. Originally she just wanted a place to come visit and paint. However, as time passed and she became accustomed to the ineluctable charm of Mazatlán, she now spends more time here than in Oakland, California, her adapted hometown.



FOTO: Miguel Angel Román

Born in the southern state of Mississippi, Glen moved out west to the San Francisco bay area, an artistic and politically liberal Mecca for art. She graduated from San Francisco State University, got her Master's Degree in Art (focusing on printmaking) from nearby San José State and then returned to San Francisco State to teach for a while. Fortuitously, her career has coincided with the personal goals she set for herself. She has had and still maintains an art studio in Oakland and has a liking for public art, which involves her in the community and also allows her to work on a large scale, using "big materials" (one of her sculptures in Stockton, California is made of steel girders of 18 feet in length and she has collaborated frequently with an architect and they worked with concrete slabs). As an artist, she has of course passed through many phases, mostly figurative work based on ancient symbolism.

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She believes in "art without boundaries" and cites the work of the renown Robert Rauschenberg as a major life influence, along with the work of strong women artists like Georgia O'Keefe, Louise Nevelson and Deborah Butterfield, but currently for the past 10 years she has fixated on a "feminine primal" style, a personal style that seems to embrace all Earth Mother archetypes, an archetype that has always been revered throughout history. The work is big and bold and fluid, featuring "nature's purest forms": interlocking circles, spirals and crescents that suggest renewal and regeneration. All are done in "the colors of antiquity", earth tones and hues of gold vigorously applied. The work is inspired by ancient archeology sights around the world such as the Navajo southwest of the United States, the Temple of Knossos on the island of Crete (ancient palace of the Minoan civilization, dating back centuries before Christ and linked to the famous legend of Daedalus and Icarus), the Neolithic burial sight of New Grange in Ireland and "La Labrada", the ancient nomadic Indian cave drawings here in Sinaloa, just north of Mazatlán.



FOTO: Miguel Angel Román

Glen also is a prolific sculptor and many of her sculptures form beautification projects under the auspices of public art. Like her paintings, the sculpture is flowing and features fluid geometric shape. It is meant to "connect the viewer to the spirit of nature". She has exhibited internationally in Tokyo, London and Singapore, among other places, and has her art as part of the permanent collection at the San José (California) Museum of Art, the famous Triton Museum and, of course, many private collections. As is expected, while she is working she feels "an affinity with those who have come before me."

Glen is happy in Mazatlán, happy to paint, walk around and appreciate the picturesque novelty atmosphere that the historic center offers. She has some plans to further integrate into the art scene here. She would love to be involved in organizing an open studio along with other local artists to help benefit those without the means to properly express themselves creatively. This would serve as an assembly place for all artists and would also foment creation among the less fortunate. She would also like to have a "studio soiree" in her own studio someday. As an artist, she is keenly aware of the value of communicating, so she is studying Spanish in order to broaden her communication ability.

Mazatlán welcomes people like Glen, vital, creative, pacific, selfless people. The arrival of people like her helps to shrink the cultural barrier between the cultures as well as helping to revitalize the beautiful historic center of town.

PS: to see more of Glen's art, visit her website at: www.glenrogersart.com