

NEWS

The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington 98505
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"My work is a contemporary expression of what I think and feel would have been the natural progression of Northwest Indian art from traditional to modern times had the culture evolved and expanded in an uninterrupted way."

Those are the words of Colville Indian Lawney Reyes of Seattle, who recently completed a special commission to design and sculpture the exterior of the large doors which open into the art gallery at The Evergreen State College, Olympia. The gallery is located on the fourth floor of the Daniel J. Evans Library.

The doors were installed to coincide with the first major exhibit in the gallery, the 1972 Governor's Invitational Exhibition of Washington Artists, which opens February 6 at both the college and at the State Capitol Museum.

Reyes was chosen for the commission last summer after the college received a \$1,000 gift from Mrs. Ethel Kindtschly of Olympia (3876 Hoadly Street) in memory of her late husband Robert. Mr. Kindtschly, a longtime teacher in the Olympia School District, was an instructor at Washington Junior High School prior to his retirement in 1964.

Mrs. Kindtschly first inquired about the possibility of establishing a memorial to her husband last April and later consented to using the funds for the art gallery door sculpturing, a project suggested by and later coordinated by faculty member Sid White. Reyes' choice as designer was made following interviews with White and fellow faculty member Mary Hillaire and with the approval of Mrs. Kindtschly.

"This project nicely fits Mrs. Kindtschly's idea for a memorial to her husband,"

Evergreen President Charles J. McGann said. "Mr. Kindtschly was an educator and a man

with much interest in both art and Northwest Indian culture. We're happy that he can

Dick Nichols, Director

Information Services

be memorialized in this fashion and that the college can also pay tribute to the Northwest's Indian heritage."

After discussions with McCann, White and members of Evergreen's facilities planning staff, Reyes went to work. Mrs. Kindschy had selected owls as the surface motif for the gallery's white oak doors, which are seven feet high and six feet wide. The doors were fabricated as part of the library construction project, fitted in place, delivered to Reyes for attachment of the sculptured pieces, then returned to the contractor for installation.

The knobs of the doors form the eyes of the large sculptured owl, with the design radiating as feathers from them. The sculpture, which Reyes calls an "abstract Indian design" is stained to match the color of the doors to which it is attached.

Reyes, who is employed as an interior designer by Seattle First National Bank, worked on the Evergreen commission during his off hours. He started with wood the same size as the square footage of the doors and reduced the finished product to 85 per cent of the total area. Forms for the sculpture were cut on a band saw so that all the pieces would interlock when mounted on the doors. Detailed finish work was done by hand-whittling, carving and chiseling.

The Evergreen Commission is one of several which Reyes has undertaken in recent years; other of his sculptures are housed in the U.S. Department of Interior Museum in Washington, D.C.; Seattle First National Bank building in Seattle; Lynnwood Security Bank, Lynnwood, Washington; and the Philbrook Art Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma. One of his most easily-recognized works is a free-standing, three-dimensional owl which is displayed at Frederick and Nelson's store at Southcenter, near Seattle.

Reyes has won numerous painting, sculpturing and design awards in Arizona, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C. His sculpture work also was selected by the Washington State Arts Commission for display at the Osaka, Japan World's Fair in 1970.

He grew up on the Colville Indian Reservation in Eastern Washington and received his early art training at Chemawa Indian School in Oregon. Reyes is a 1959 graduate of the University of Washington's School of Interior Design and Fine Arts.

"I've dabbled in design work all my life," he explains. "But I've only been doing this kind of sculpturing work seriously since about 1967."

Reyes recently explained his design ideas in an article entitled "New Expressions In Indian Art", published by the Northwest Indian News. He observed in part: "Time has its own dimension among Indians. Past, Present and Future, although a progression, are nothing more than a continuous, harmonious circle, where Indian awareness of all three hold equal importance. There has to be a new and current means of expression in the graphic and plastic arts that is in step with the oral, written and physical expressions being made today. This current expression need not be bound by the rules of tradition although a sound knowledge of tradition could make these current expressions more precise and meaningful. Certain symbols, techniques, and patterns could be retained and yet applied with innovations created by the artist."