

THE ARTS



**ART
SCENE**
By Marcia
Morse

From the Earth: Terra-cotta sculpture and ceramic pottery by Mirta Toledo at BAKKUS Gallery of Fine Arts and Fashions, 928 Nuuanu Ave., through Aug. 18. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. week days and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

ARGENTINE-born Mirta Toledo says, "Clay is my bond with the earth. Direct contact with this medium allows an emotional experience to develop which reflects this relation. The finished visual form also expresses the tranquility I feel when working with clay."

Toledo's current exhibition includes both figurative ceramic sculpture and vessel-oriented raku pottery, the latter embellished with designs inspired by the indigenous cultures of her homeland. Both kinds of work attest to an affinity with her materials.

The figurative work allows Toledo more range in developing the metaphorical potential. Bust portraits of Pachamama (Mother Earth), Coquena (god of the vicunas, llamas, alpacas) and Anahi and Sisa-Huinaj, who in Guarani legend were transformed into rare



"The Tree of Life," far left, is a chrome terra-cotta sculpture by Mirta Toledo. The integration of male and female figures, the Argentine-born Toledo suggests, "is the perfect stem from which new life is created."
"Pachamama," left, is Toledo's chrome terra-cotta portrait of Mother Earth.

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blossoms, are appealing personifications of deities linked to various aspects of Earth's rhythms.

Toledo is best with full-figure sculptures, such as the terra-cotta "Tree of Life" and "Kolla," and "Latino-America," a work in cast bronze. The integration of male and female figures in "Tree of Life" is, as Toledo suggests, "the perfect stem from which new life is created." A similar kind of rhythmic rootedness is evident in "Kolla," an Andean mother and child.