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Artist Mirta Toledo at home with a work in progress

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*Latina
artist's
work
envisions
a society
that is*

Equal

FORT WORTH — Mirta Toledo left Argentina more than 10 years ago, and although she was never persecuted politically by the regime of that time, her artistic work is full of dreams and hopes of creating a society of equality.

The Fort Worth resident could be considered a complete artist. She has worked sculptures and drawings and currently, her artistic expression is focusing on what she calls "Pure Diversity."

"They tell me that I am an idealist, that I dream and have hopes for a better society. I always say that it is my answer to the vision of a submissive Latin America and the assurance of seeing a diverse evolving world without

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Toledo

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racism," she said.

A four-year resident of Fort Worth, Toledo says that her search for her identity grew in the United States, but now, her objective has broadened.

"When I lived in Argentina, they wanted to teach me to ignore our Indian heritage, they taught me to look up to Europe. When I came to the U.S., I found a new society that classified me as Hispanic and forced me to re-define myself, that is what I call true diversity," the artist said.

She recently finished work in two paintings that will be a part of this expression: *Jeroglificos y Diversidad Pura* (Hieroglyphics and Pure Diversity.)

Even though she is classified as *Hispanic* in the United States, Toledo says she feels more comfortable with the term *Latina*.

"In Argentina they used to say that I was European, I would consider myself Guaraní Indian; in the U.S. they call me Hispanic, and I consider myself Latina; but the



Artist Mirta Toledo says writing has become her nearest venture.

Hispanics call me Argentinian, and I consider myself Guaraní," Toledo said.

Such is the diversity that she is trying to represent in her artistic work.

Toledo has seen great acceptance of her work in the United States. She has participated in 68 expositions in Argentina, Brazil, Hawaii and in the continental United States.

Some of her work has been displayed at Texas Christian University and at the Ballet Folklorico Azteca's Cultural Center.

"There are those that have told me that racism is growing, not only

here but in Europe. That is why I have found people that oppose the term *diversity*. For example, a man told me that he did not agree because he thought that African-Americans should be portrayed only as African-Americans. That's ridiculous," Toledo said.

The nostalgia of living in a culture different than her own has inspired Toledo to venture into writing literature. She now has several works including *La semilla elemental*, which means *The Elemental Seed*, and several other stories that have been published in various publications.

"In certain instances, literature is a more accesible means than painting. My books have opened many doors for me in a fast way," she said.