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## LIFE &amp; ARTS

Austin American-Statesman

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## Gallery watch

## A 'Retrospectiva' of Mirta Toledo's path

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American-Statesman Arts Critic

Mirta Toledo, originally from Argentina but now a Texan, has developed a visual vocabulary meriting a full "Retrospectiva" from **La Peña Gallery**. In the narrow, light-grazed rooms at La Peña, Toledo displays three principal techniques attached to three distinct styles of expression. Her prints take a linear path, with clarified spaces embracing hard-edged figures. Her serigraph "Renacimiento," for instance, depicts a wide-eyed woman in red against red, relieved by blue-lined angel wings.

Toledo's larger-scale paintings slather bright acrylics on various surfaces, with brush strokes creating the motion missing from the compositions. "Mis Grisoles" plants an off-center vase of flowers on a sketchy table, but renders the petals in hypnotically gyrating hues. "Latina," the show's signature image, frames a gesturing woman with looser spirals of pure color.

Toledo's most complicated art adheres fabric, paper, stamps, newsprint and the tools of artistic trade to multilevel paintings that contain references to social or political conditions. "Da Miedo el Regreso" incorporates printings of a poem with post-marked mailings, framed in black, then blue, then brilliant orange. "Retrospectiva" does what a retrospective should — it guides us through the phases of an artist's career.

("Retrospectiva" continues through Oct. 20 at La Peña Gallery, 221 Congress Ave., 477-6007.)



They join forces for "Collier & Sons" at **Gallery Shoal Creek**.

The elder Collier, a gifted illustrator, has contributed mostly standard landscapes — leafy scenes rendered in soft colors, coolly considered glimpses of New England and New Orleans. Several stand out: "Autumn in Maine" erupts with yellow, almost to the point of hurting the viewer's eyes, while "Young Man Reading" conveys a Hopperesque interiority and sense of open space. We see the back of a reclining figure, while shadows deepen

'Retrospectiva' at La Peña follows the turns of Mirta Toledo's career, from prints and serigraphs to large-scale acrylic paintings such as 'Latina.'

eo, offers quirky portraits without overstating his subjects' singularities. Against shady backgrounds, sitters allow us to consider their ambiguous expressions. Persistently absorbing is "Alan," which pictures a young man in sleeveless T-shirt, his hair tousled, his eyes closed, a goofy smile creeping across his face. Here lies the personality other Collier paintings miss.

("Collier & Sons" continues through Oct. 21 at Gallery Shoal Creek, 1500 W. 34th St., 454-6671.)

The term "mixed media" assumes new meaning with Cynthia Fusillo's painted plaster hangings at **Sloane Jordan Gallery**. The Santa Fe, N.M., artist floats vegetation, pottery and architectural details, along with words and numerals, on surfaces both raised and inscribed. The watery feel matches Fusillo's stated inspiration — dives to ruins off the coast of Spain.

The softness of the pigments, the laxity of the lines remind one of batik, as if a Fusillo had dyed some detailed stone artifacts. "Arbor en el Mar" makes a fine example, with hatched purples stretched below leafy branches and shells that rise in greens, reds and sands.

While her monotypes seem blocky and inexact, Fusillo's mixed media passes a basic test of art — they invite the viewer to spend more time with them.

("Cynthia Fusillo" continues through Oct. 21 at Sloane Jordan Gallery, 10,000 Research Blvd., 797-0000.)

John, primarily a sculptor, delivers mostly intimate looks at models, as he plays with drapery, postures and family scenes. "Annunciation Wedding of a Dancer" uneasily fixes a bewildered woman in dance togs facing a hanging wedding dress, patterned after traditional annunciations to the Virgin Mary. A more comprehensive "Swimmer Above the Lake" positions a pigtailed young woman before muted greens and blues. She raises her smock as a swallow flies overhead, suggesting a loss of innocence.

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