

PARK PLAZAS

Community Connections

Introducing PATRICIA MARIN MIRANDA and Her Fine-Feathered Artwork

By Jane Morris

This is a story about hidden treasure and bird feathers. It centers around our neighbor Patricia Marin Miranda

(Esmeralda) and her new Canyon Road gallery. How Patty got from her native Costa Rica to Santa Fe is an adventure tale in its own right. She jokingly suggests we plan a weekend together so she can regale me with stories about growing up in San José, the Costa Rican capital city.

Believe it or not, the inspiration for Patty's gallery happened in the Joe's Dining parking lot last fall. She and her significant other, Paul Andrus, were leaving the restaurant with a couple of friends when a big black raven flew just over their heads. The woman friend said she'd love to have one of those feathers—and sure enough, before they reached their vehicle, Patty spotted a pristine black feather.

Initially, Patty was simply going to give her friend the feather. But she was inspired by the artwork called "arteplumaria," which she knew from Central America as one of the most elegant artforms of the pre-Hispanic and colonial

periods. The feathers, from the most sacred birds of the Aztecs, were gathered from the ground during the natural molting season. Patty decided she would give feather painting a try—and soon, her first piece of feather art was a reality.

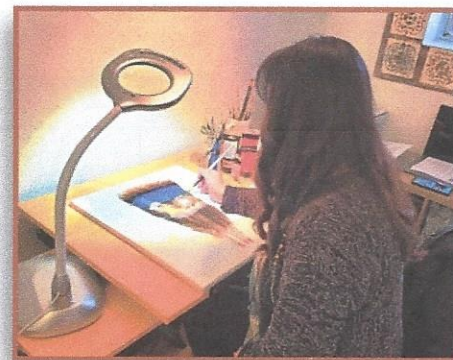
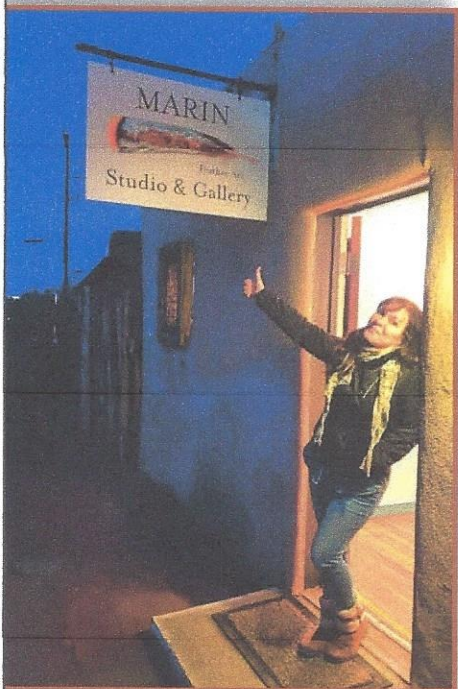
Paul emphasizes that Patty is completely self-taught. Unlike the earlier arteplumaria methods, which used a mosaic technique, Patty carefully paints directly on the feathers with acrylics. She has come to use wild turkey feathers from two suppliers—and makes it clear that no birds are killed for their plumage.

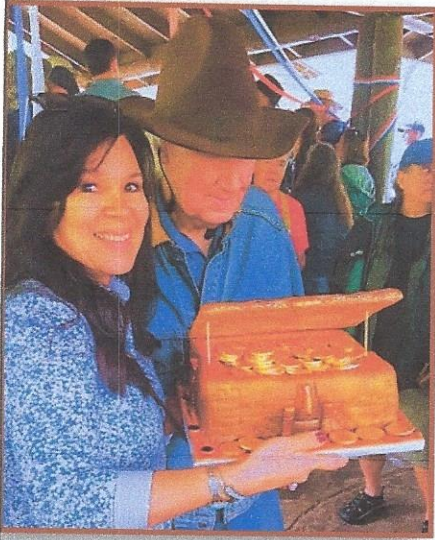
Quickly, the idea for Marin Feather Art was born. Patty's initial creation, on that black feather, depicted a hummingbird, but she soon found that Santa Fe's blend of Spanish and Native American cultures provides an endless supply of Southwestern imagery. Patty has continued to experiment with her natural feather paintings, doing landscapes steeped in local history and culture.

By January, Patty and Paul had found gallery space on Canyon Road and were planning a grand opening for March 27. As you've probably guessed, the celebration they had in mind for Marin Feather Art became one more casualty of the coronavirus pandemic. Today, Santa Fe is slowly reopening for business and Patty's unique gallery—at 618 Canyon Road—stands ready to welcome visitors. If you require further temptation, follow this link to the Marin Feather Art website.

<http://www.marinfeatherart.com/index.html>.

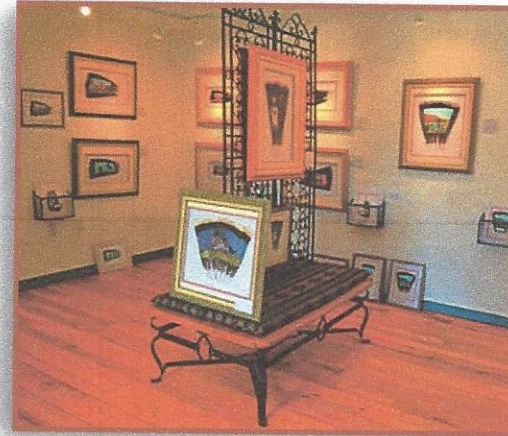
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Now, we turn to hidden treasure. Again, there's a "believe it or not" component to the story. Patty explains that she and Paul really are treasure hunters—and that they first came to Santa Fe in mid-2018 while they were searching for that famous little chest Forrest Fenn claimed to have filled with precious gems and hidden. No, Patty and Paul didn't find the treasure—but they did meet Forrest Fenn and they also fell in love with Santa Fe. "We enjoyed exploring the New Mexico mountains," Paul says. "It was an easy decision to move here."

In addition to creating feather art, Patty is a multi-talented chef and baker. She even made a magnificent golden birthday cake for Fenn in 2019—almost as special as the treasure chest itself. "I love to make people happy," Patty says with a radiant smile.



Her path from Costa Rica to New Mexico ran through Colorado, Minnesota and North Dakota, where Paul has a horse ranch that he describes as being "in the middle of nowhere—not exactly an ideal home for a beautiful big-city girl with deep indigenous roots." Today, he notes, they both like living in the Estates, where "we love our neighbors as well as the mature landscaping."

Patty raised five children on her own, including her youngest daughter Vanessa, now 22, who lives with Patty and Paul in Park Plazas. Patty is also a proud grandmother who is eager to tell me about her six wonderful grandkids. Maybe we should all plan a weekend of storytelling by Patty. I can well imagine how much fun we'd have!

