



Local artist gives *color* to Long Beach.

# A Trace of Art Lives in Long Beach

By Floyd Livingston  
Photos By Denise Favre

In the heart of Long Beach's ghetto located near Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 12th Street, where police sirens replace children's laughter, there is one peaceful secret tucked away called the Pacific Winds Arts Sculpture Garden, run by Long Beach native Trace Fukuhara, who also is the resident artist.

Dodging a butterfly upon entering, it was as if I walked into a world right out of my childhood imagination, and suddenly everything external to the garden was pacified. "Enjoying the garden?" asked the 60-year-old Fukuhara with a smile.

Not making eye contact, I still was mesmerized by the pieces of art. I gave a childlike grin to the friendly artisan. The garden was covered with nine years of colorful sculptures, ranging from familiar shapes to eccentric figures that illustrated a sight that lacked relevance to everything outside the garden's perimeters. While trying to watch my steps and simultaneously observing the garden, Fukuhara watched me with eyes of age and wisdom, but at the same time there was a constant expres-

sion of youthfulness on his face. Eagerly, I wanted to know more about the man and his work. "I wanted to create work that would be able to touch other people's souls, and I think that's the hardest thing an artist can do and be successful at," said Fukuhara, sitting on a bench.

Fukuhara graduated from Long Beach Poly High School and attended Cal State San Diego and Long Beach, achieving his BFA and MFA in Sculpture. "I seriously started studying art at 19 when I first got to Long Beach City College. Before that I wasn't very good at anything really, math or science or anything. I realized that doing art in a classroom environment and receiving assignments became really easy for me." Fukuhara explains. "As I grew older, I realized I was an artist all my life, I just never knew it."

"I would even starve myself because I would be drawing the anatomy of a fish that was filled, I would just draw the intestines, the eyes and everything and about three hours later I would have to stop because I would be