

Town of Oak Island  
Business Bulletin's

# MEET THE OWNERS

## Pescado y Amor Studio & Gallery

Meet Missy Tripp Ronquillo! She is the owner and artist behind Pescado Y Amor Studio/Gallery, located at 6018 E Oak Island Dr. Her artistic education includes stints at prestigious institutions such as The Corcoran School of Art, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Savannah College of Art and Design. These experiences not only honed her artistic skills but also deepened her passion for creativity.

Since launching her freelance career in 1996, Ronquillo has specialized in personalized paintings. In 2009, she and her husband Ron established Pescado Y Amor. This studio/gallery soon became a nexus for creativity, where Ronquillo could conduct workshops, cultivate her brand, and further develop her artistic voice. "This studio is a sanctuary of good vibes, inspiring art, and community," Ronquillo states.



Previously, in May 2009, the couple opened a studio in Sayulita, Mexico, where they spent nearly a year teaching art classes on the beach and creating designer t-shirts. Eventually, they relocated to Oak Island, North Carolina—a place Ronquillo calls her original home. "Although we moved when I was six, I always found my way back here throughout my life and always knew I would return," she explains. They began by selling artwork at local markets and hosting outdoor workshops, which led to the opening of their studio on East Oak Island Drive.

Ronquillo's work now adorns various establishments worldwide, including restaurants, cafés, and private residences. Her studio, Pescado Y Amor, may often appear closed, as she finds solitude to be crucial for her creativity. However, she opens the gallery to the public on Fridays and Saturdays, and appointments can be made for other days or to participate in one of the many workshops she hosts.

Beyond painting, Ronquillo has ventured into writing poetry and is working on publishing a poetry book and a book/workbook titled "READY SET CREATE: Unleashing Your Inner Artist: Embracing Self-Concept and Stepping into Your Authentic Self," slated for release later this year. She has also designed her own swim and yoga clothing line, available on her

website and in her gallery. During 2020, DIY art kits became a significant part of her business, continuing to be popular among customers.

Looking ahead, Ronquillo is excited to focus more on her art, anticipating more exhibitions and showcases. With over 27 years of teaching experience, she currently conducts workshops and retreats in inspiring locations like the mountains of North Carolina, Costa Rica, and Mexico, with planned trips to Italy and Santa Fe, New Mexico. "The goal of each workshop and retreat is for students to leave with new skills, creativity nourished, and spirits refreshed," she shares.

Ronquillo also hosts other artists in artisan markets and gallery exhibitions, currently featuring an exhibition called "Summer" with ten local artists. She believes in the power of art to foster community cohesion and reduce isolation, stating, "Art makes us aware of the world around us and how we influence and react to each other."

While Ronquillo cherishes all aspects of art, painting remains her deepest passion. Her work, often vibrant mixed-media abstract compositions, explores the intersection of emotion, perception, and lived experience. Recently, she has been captivated by encaustic art, an ancient technique of painting with molten beeswax infused with pigments, which allows her to explore new creative boundaries.

To aspiring artists, Ronquillo offers encouragement: "Dream big and believe you can make it happen. When we started our business, we had no idea what we were doing, but we learned along the way, guided by love and a dream. I would not change any lesson I have learned; they make me and my art what it is today."



*This series is an initiative of the Town of Oak Island Business Advisory Board. Please visit [OakIslandNC.gov/BAB](http://OakIslandNC.gov/BAB) to learn more.*

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