

Diana Nyad > Long-distance Swimmer

Diana Nyad: Record-setting long-distance swimmer, sports commentator, author [*Find a Way*, memoir], journalist, motivational speaker, linguist, national fitness icon

Nyad first gained national recognition in 1975 she swam around Manhattan, breaking the record, and again in 1979 when she swam from North Bimini, The Bahamas, to Juno Beach, Florida. On September 2, 2013, at the age of sixty-four, Diana Nyad became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without the aid of a shark cage, swimming 111 miles in fifty-three hours from Havana to Key West.

I was an other-abled swimmer [polio in 1948] in high school, unable to have my times to recorded and often even to denied to participate or compete due to my disability, but Nyad was my hero. I convinced my parents to subscribe to *Sports Illustrated* just to read about her. I even made a scrapbook.

My hanging accordion book documents her first four and failed tries at completing the Cuba to Florida swim, plus her final record-setting swim with embroidered routes and watercolor and colored pencil art.

She has three messages:

One is, we should never, ever give up.

Two is, you're never too old to chase your dreams.

And three is, it looks like a solitary sport, but it's a team.

> One of thirteen artists books for part of my one-woman show titled *At Right Angles to the World**: 13 Talented and Influential Lesbians. [*Pulitzer-Prize winning poet Elisabeth Bishop, Poems, Prose and Letters]

Colophon:

Accordion book - Arches Aquarelle hotpress, 140 lb.

Embroidery threadSilicone swim cap and strap

Watercolor

Colored pencil

24.75" x 5.25" x .75", 2020