

# Andrea Fisher

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Fine Pottery

## Barbara Gonzales

San Ildefonso



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Born in 1947, Barbara Gonzales is the great-granddaughter of Maria Martinez and granddaughter of Adam and Santana Martinez. She credits her great-grandmother with changing the making of pottery from a craft to a fine art, and then credits her with being a major force in the shaping and evolution of that fine art.

Barbara lived in Maria's home from the time she was five until she was ten. That is when she learned the basics of the traditional way of making pottery from her great-grandmother. Barbara says pottery making was such an integral part of Maria's family life that she organically assimilated the skills simply from being in the presence. She also traveled with Maria to sell pots to tourists under the portal at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe and at the train depot in Albuquerque. Her own first pieces were simple animal sculptures, then she progressed into small pots, then bowls and spheres. Slowly Barbara developed her style of small sculptures, polychrome pottery and stone-inlaid, sgraffito-etched red and black ware. Along with Popovi Da she was one of the early adopters of the two-tone technique (involving two firings to produce sienna effects on otherwise black pots). She also used inlaid turquoise, heishi beads and gemstones. Around 1973 she originated "the Spider" and "the webbing technique" in sgraffito on black pottery. That shortly became her trademark.

Barbara participated in the SWAIA Santa Fe Indian Market for many years, earning 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place ribbons often. She was included in the *Maria Martinez: Five Generations of Potters* exhibition at the Renwick Gallery in 1978 and the *Masters of Indian Market* exhibition at the SWAIA Santa Fe Indian Market in 1996.

Barbara was chosen as a representative of Maria's "craft lineage" in the 1997-8 *Pottery by American Indian Women, The Legacy of Generations* exhibition of the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

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