

Andrea Fisher

Fine Pottery

Rachel Concho

Acoma



A member of the Roadrunner clan, Rachel Concho was born to parents George and Santana Cerno in 1936 at Acoma Pueblo. She is the sister of Joseph Cerno and the mother in law of Carolyn Concho, both acclaimed potters. Rachel has been making pottery since 1958.

Rachel follows her family's tradition by obtaining clay and pigments from sacred areas around Acoma Pueblo. She hand-coils her pots, shaping the form with gourds and polishing with a stone passed down to her from her grandmother. She applies intricate geometric and animal motifs based on prehistoric Mimbres designs with a homemade yucca brush.

Rachel has no regrets about honoring her ancestors' path. "When I first started, everybody said I was crazy," she recalls. "I said I'd be more crazy if I didn't do what I really wanted to do." She feels grateful to be able to do something that connects her with others, particularly loved ones. "I've had a lot of heartache, a lot of deaths in my family," she says. "When I do my pottery, I don't think about it. To me, pottery-making is like therapy. Making pottery comes from my heart."

Rachel has shown her work at Santa Fe Indian Market and at the Heard and the Pueblo Grande Museums in Phoenix. Her favorite pieces to make are seedpots and her favorite designs are based on ancient Mimbres designs and contemporary fine line and snowflake designs.

Rachel has received numerous awards at the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Arts & Crafts Shows (including winning Best of Show in 1992) as well as several ribbons from the SWAIA Santa Fe Indian Market beginning in 2000.

Rachel says she still gets her inspiration from the potter who taught her: her mother. She wants the world to know how happy she is to know people enjoy her art. She was especially happy to learn that the some of her work is on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. She signs her pots: "Rachel Concho, Acoma, N.M."