

Andrea Fisher

Fine Pottery

Robert Patricio

Acoma



Robert Patricio was born to Doris and Patrick Patricio Sr. of Acoma Pueblo in June, 1976. He says he was about nine years old when he began learning the traditional methods of creating hand coiled pottery. At first he learned by watching his great-grandmother Marie Z. Chino, then he got his hands dirty working with his mother. Today he counts his mother, great-grandmother and aunt Grace Chino as his main inspirations.

Now, more than 30 years after he began, Robert specializes in producing hand coiled and hand painted pottery. After collecting the various clays, slips, and natural vegetation, Robert begins the traditional process. First, he prepares the clay by sifting for impurities and then hand mixing with water. Next, he constructs his vessels with snake-like coils. Then these are set out to dry and later scraped to a smooth finish. While the pottery is drying he boils and strains all the natural vegetation and creates his colors from plants such as wild spinach (bee-weed) and wildflowers. The process is completed by laying out the designs, painting the designs with his clay slips and then firing the pots.

The designs on his pottery are usually interpreted from ancient pottery shards found on the lands of Acoma Pueblo. His polychrome and his black and white designs include geometric, fertility, Tularosa spirals, parrots, and kiva step patterns. Robert has participated in shows at the New Mexico State Fair (winning 1st Place, 2nd Place and Honorable Mention ribbons), Heard Museum in Phoenix (earning a 2nd Place ribbon), Eight Northern Pueblos Arts and Crafts Show in Espanola, and the Santa Fe Indian Market where he has taken home 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place ribbons. In 2010 he also earned the "Best in Pottery" ribbon at the Santa Fe Indian Market.

His favorite shapes to make are tall jars and his favorite designs to paint are black-and-white rainbirds. Robert signs his pottery as: R.M. Patricio, Acoma, NM or R. & M. Patricio, Acoma, NM. - the "M" being his wife, Melanie.

Robert is exceedingly proud of his six beautiful daughters. Three of them (Kylie, Felisha and Juana) have already begun to follow in their father's footsteps by creating and selling their own pots and by earning ribbons on their own.