

Noreen Simplicio - Zuni Pueblo

My future as a potter began when I was a young child playing with mud...making mud pies and mud pots. My talents emerged as I had my first lesson in pottery-making in 1977 at Zuni High School. Classes were instructed by the late Jennie Laate, an Acoma woman. I learned as much as I could from Jennie because I knew I was fortunate to have this talented gift, and knew I could be a successful potter. After leaving high school, I wanted to venture into more of my talent. I met another Acoma woman by the name of Angelina Medina. Angelina inspired me to further develop my skills and venture into the increasingly competitive world of Pueblo pottery. While working with Angelina, it gave me an opportunity to market and sell my work.

In 1988, I entered my first competitive art show. There, I experienced the thrill of receiving an Award of Excellence for my work. In August, I was featured New Artist at the 67th Annual Indian Market in Santa Fe, NM. In May of 1989, six pieces that I entered in competition, four were awarded 1st Place, one received 2nd Place and one received 3rd Place ribbons. I have a growing list of Major Art Awards. In January of 1990, I instructed classes at the Zuni High School when my former instructor Jennie Laate was unable to teach because of medical reasons.

My unique pottery forms are characterized by distinctive designs that combine traditional Zuni pottery symbols with contemporary design elements of my own creation. I make great use of fine lines, birds and animal symbols. The scenes depicted on my work often stress the universal harmony that should be maintained among all living things.

I specialize in miniatures, bowls, seed bowls with lizards and vases. I also do pottery sculptured with scenes of ancient pueblo dwellings that are fully detailed with tiny figures of Pueblo inhabitants. Angelina Medina and Jennie Laate have been a great inspiration in my life. Being a full-time potter has been a rewarding experience and I am pleased to say that my work is in great demand.