Roxanne Swentzell
Santa Clara Pueblo, born 1962
Transformation
2000
ceramic, 23 in. high, dimensions variable
 Museum purchase, 2000.26-a-n

This immediate connection to the land led Swentzell to
develop her own creative style which includes full-length clay
figures representing the "human spirit" and a complex
web of emotions. She draws from the female figures in her way
of balancing the power between males and females found in her
culture, while maintaining a strong sense of Pueblo identity.

Transformation specifically creates works as the inner religion.
She works in Two Sheds of the Pojoaque, as a complex,
open form of spiritual belief. Rather than processing her
clay like the Pueblo women, she makes her own form and
bakes her clay to a very high level, making it a form of spiritual
and cultural beliefs. The title, "Transformation",
helps to explain the piece. As Pueblo people we believe that we can and do, at any time, transform or take on qualities of other entities such as animals, places, or spirit beings. One such time of transformation is during our dances or ceremonies in which we perform songs and songs of prayers to the entities of the cosmos, asking for life, but also acting as transmitters to give life. One of these such dances is our most common and well known dance, our corn or harvest dance. This is done in celebration of the year's harvest, but at a deeper level, it is about life...the coming together of all the forces around us that we hold and make the possibilities.

We live in a world of patterns and symbols. Everything has a meaning and a point in the story of life. At the point that a dancer has gathered in the different forces around and within him or her, which are comprised of the different pieces that exist in the world, and has transformed in a special being connected to the greater whole. At the point that much life force is flowing through this being, he or she becomes life itself. As this becomes more and more, and the created work has transformed from a blessing of life going out to the places and beings where it is placed.

I choose to create four pueblo (sic) women corn dancers. They will be in the different stages of the transformation. As they are the pieces of four dance clothes together, they are also transforming into com maidens (spirit beings of the female gender, bringers of corn, life, caretakers of the people). One figure is waving the transformation and corn harvest dance. The other three figures are in different stages of change, a simple but capturing moment of the essence of the pueblo (sic) world. I would love to have this piece done by the end of the month of September 2000. Thank you.

Power to Her Sculptures from How I Make My Sculptures by Roxanne Swentzell

Roxanne Swentzell has studied with Indian Hvanna artist, Michael Naranjo, as well as several other artists including Victor Hantsoo and Robert Yepez. She has also studied with the Huitze family in Oaxaca, Mexico. She has also received a BA in studio art from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Roxanne Swentzell has created sculptures for many prominent locations including the Santa Fe Indian Market, MoMA, and the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian. She has also received several awards including the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Council on the Arts.

Roxanne Swentzell's work has been featured in numerous exhibitions and has received critical acclaim. Her work has been described as a powerful representation of Pueblo culture and identity.

Roxanne Swentzell is a member of the Santa Clara Pueblo, born 1962, and is known for her sculptures that reflect the culture and traditions of her people. She has studied with artists such as Michael Naranjo and the Huitze family in Oaxaca, Mexico. She received a BA in studio art from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Roxanne Swentzell's sculptures are known for their powerful representation of Pueblo culture and identity. She has received several awards, including the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Council on the Arts, and her work has been featured in numerous exhibitions.
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SANTA CLARA PUEBLO, born 1962

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JOSLYN ART MUSEUM® OMAHA, NEBRASKA
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