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Kevin McDermott

Kevin McDermott's faithful renderings of historic Indian pottery are stirring reminders that from the most utilitarian of man-made creations can emerge immense beauty. The evolution of "ollas", food storage jars, dough bowls & ceremonial & effigy pots from pre-Columbian necessities to contemporary works of art is a source of intellectual curiosity for



McDermott & emotional fodder for his adept brush.

McDermott first encountered Native American pottery in 1972 during a brief stay in Taos. Since then his study of the origins, uses & design motifs of American & Mexican Indian coil-wrapped clay vessels has been ongoing. "In the early '80s while living in Santa Barbara I made a trip back to Taos & bought my first piece of Pueblo pottery," McDermott recalls. "When I got home a friend liked it so much that he wanted me to get him one on my next trip. Before I knew it I was in the business."

It wasn't until attending his thirtieth high school reunion in Dallas in 1989 that McDermott began thinking of art as a profession. "I was visiting an artist's studio & watched him create a painting of a Santo Domingo dough bowl. The image was striking & the idea of recreating what I considered to be an under appreciated art form intrigued



me. I felt an immediate urge to learn to paint so I could share my own feelings for this historic pottery."

The Dallas artist showed McDermott some of his painting techniques, enough to get him started. "I returned to Santa Barbara, bought some supplies, locked the door & began teaching myself to paint. After tearing up countless pictures over several months I emerged one day & showed a friend my most recent effort. He said it looked like a photograph. I've been painting ever since."

The Mimbres, Anasazi, Casas Grandes & Pueblo



civilizations provide most of the inspiration for McDermott's paintings. After exhausting his own small pottery collection for subject matter he began visiting museums & taking

photographs of their Indian vessel collections.

"Native American pottery was elevated to a new level with the arrival of the railroad in the Southwest in the late 1880s," McDermott says. "Once Pueblo potters realized Eastern tourists would pay for their utilitarian pots they began creating more ornate designs. This historical era & the meticulous workmanship that accompanied it are what I currently portray. Through my paintings I want others to appreciate this pottery as art as much as I do."

Kevin McDermott