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March 2, 1992

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Nora Naranjo-Morse: It's not usual for me to stand up and talk in front of people. When I'm at home, I'm just at home. When the kids are hungry I feed them. You know, that sort of thing. So this is a new role for me today. I brought some images from home that I wanted to share with you. That got me really excited. I started looking at these images that I basically take for granted that I wanted to share with you. Because they really represent how it is that I grew up, and how I was influenced by these very simple images that make me feel creative, that fill me inside with something really special.

One night I was asleep and I woke up and the only thing that I could think of was this: why is it that of all the books written about Pueblo pottery, why is it that they were written by someone who did not do work with clay? Why were they not written by us? And that idea kept going through my head all night long after that. There have been very skillful and very informative books written about our work in clay. But there was nothing that identified how it feels when you see the clay vein. Or what it's like to be with a clay form for maybe four or five months, and then offer it to someone and have them say, "This doesn't fit into our standard of what we think Pueblo pottery should be." All those emotions I wanted to write about because I think they're important. I think they're happening to people

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right now in the villages because there are so many changes going on. That's basically what I wanted to talk about in Mud Woman and today, too.

I come from northern New Mexico. There are eight pueblos: Taos, Picuris, San Juan, Santa Clara, Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, Tesuque. They sort of end right around Santa Fe. All these pueblos follow the Rio Grande. They're usually about between twenty and thirty miles from one another. They're situated along the Rio Grande.

The people are called Towa. The people in Taos Pueblo are called Tewa, and they speak a different language than the Towa. It was interesting, when I was working on this book I went over to Tesuque, which is about twenty miles away. I was talking to this woman, and I was telling her about this concept in Santa Clara and Towa about kweeda, you know. That's basically to flirt, to flirt with a man or a woman, kweeda. And she said that there was nothing in Tesuque like that. I don't know if that meant there were not flirts or what she was trying to say, but there was no word in Tesuque for kweeda or flirt. That was only twenty miles away. In that short distance in the same language, basically, there was this real difference between concepts and ideas. But now because of travel and cars and things like that we're a whole lot closer.

In the springtime, around now, and in the late fall,

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what happens is that my mother and I go to get clay. This becomes almost a celebration--pack the lunches, the kids. Everybody wants to go. It becomes a community sort of thing. And it has been for a long time. Historically, the people would make their bowls together, because their bowls were made primarily for utilitarian and ceremonial purposes. So the tradition of working in a community to build one pot--maybe three or four women would work on a storage bowl together. So it's not uncommon for families to take the day off and go to get the clay. And it's beautiful! It's so beautiful, because when we drive up to the mountains there is an unmarked road, a forest road. And you can tell when you're getting close to the vein. The veins come in maybe four feet high. They just run along the hillsides. Or they come in pits. So that when you get close, the road just becomes that color of clay. It's just so beautiful to be driving along, and then all of a sudden see this clay. It's a welcoming for you. You almost think it's just for you. My mother gets excited, and she starts telling us where to go to get closer to the pure vein. The grey is the top layer of soil. The brown is what you dig for. And when you first come to it, it's like chocolate. It comes in big chocolate chunks. And you start taking it out. Always only what you need, no more. Only what you need.

There's another vein that runs across the hillside.

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It's called chutniya. It's white volcanic powder. You mix that white powder with this clay. It's so beautiful because it's like baby powder. I don't know why, but it comes in grades. The powder, the chutniya, that is the purest is the hardest to get to. So, from the very, very beginning it's a very physical task to make pottery. It's very demanding.

I'm always amazed that when I do a demonstration there will be clay out here and people will want to touch it. That kid part of them, that innocent part that wants to touch it. But the part of them that says, "No, that's dirty," gets a little afraid. In the way we are brought up the clay is everywhere. The mud is everywhere. You build your houses from it. You make your ovens from it. You're covered in it. So when I write the poem about going into the J.C. Penney's and seeing mud between my fingertips, that reminds me of essential things about who I am, about belonging to this idea of the earth. When you're kneeling in front of a clay pit and you're pulling this clay out, it's very sensual. It's like a birthing act in a sense. Because you're taking this very precious material from what the people say is Clay Mother, Nan chu Kweejo. So all of that starts entering inside you just when you're a little kid. It's not foreign. It's a given.

When I come home, I lay the clay out and I let it dry.

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And then I put it back in tubs and I start soaking it so it'll become a mud. Then I start sifting it. Usually by the time I'm ready to build something it's maybe from three to five weeks after getting the clay, bringing it down off the mountain. It's very taxing physically, again. When you're sitting there you have only yourself. You are dealing with you. Because time is not of any importance. A bell will not ring and you get up and do something else. There's just that continuous sound of the "drip, drip" of the mud getting purified through the screen, one drip at a time. And that really does do something to your idea of self and place. This is something that my mother, her mother, her mother have been doing for a long time.

The Pueblo perspective has this beautiful flow where you drift in and out of making clay. Working with clay, and then making bread. There's no stop, or no compartmentalization of things. There's just this even, beautiful flow that you go through on a daily basis. That's what I prefer to have in my life. I've made that be a choice. I wanted that because I think that's what feeds you. Those little ordinary things, these little ordinary things. This one day that this happened doesn't get erased for me. It stays forever and eventually feeds me in that creative process that I keep talking about.

Even if we're talking about bread dough, cookie dough,

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it's not that much different. It's happening around a table. And it's having community with these people that you know. And it's about telling stories about the dough. There's always an exchange going on. So that you know your daughter, you know your mother because you're always exchanging these stories.

When I get home, I'm going to plaster my buntesy, or oven they're called. What happens is that you build a fire in there and when it's just at the right time--I can't tell you when because there are no instructions--you pull the fire out and you mop it and you put the bread in there and it sort of steams it. It doesn't seem like a difficult thing, but I have to go get my mother to teach me how to do this because she knows just exactly. And then after a while you start learning. And then you can teach your daughter so that there's this continuation happening. I think the cookies go about ten minutes. (Laughter.) Something like that.

Taos Pueblo is a good example of the mud, you know. I'm not sure--I think this was built around 1400. I can't imagine the thousands of adobe bricks that they must have made to build this four or five-story apartment building. I don't know how simple I should get, but adobe brick is made out of mud, straw and some sand and put in a form, a wooden form, and it's sun-baked. So that when you lift up the form

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you've got an eleven-by-six-inch brick. And it weighs anywhere from thirty-five to forty pounds. Again, we're talking about mud.

I was driving to Albuquerque to catch the plane. And on the way there's a church that's very interesting. It almost looks like a McDonald's building. It's very red and white and has steeples. It sort of says, "Notice me." And I see the contrast between that and our kiva, which has only two sticks coming up and a very subtle adobe wall that goes up maybe three or four feet. Those sticks coming up are a ladder that takes you down into the kiva. That is the contrast. The church that I pass by in Albuquerque that is red and white is so different than what this church for us is. You would not notice ours was there. How subtle it is. It's the act of going in, down, back to important things about who we are, who you are.

We are people of mud. That's why it was so appropriate that this book is called Mud Woman, because we are people of mud. Like the picture of my nephew just sitting there covered in mud. You know, that's where it begins and it's a given. And after a while, I miss this mud. I become very conscious when I'm on just carpet or concrete. I start missing that give that the earth has on my feet.

Our house is about two thousand square feet. It's got five thousand adobe bricks, and we layered them. Just for a

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whole two or three months, just one on top of another. The walls are seventeen feet high. And what you can see if you look closely, the lines are real wavering. They're all sorts of angles. Sometimes when I leave the windows open and it rains, you can smell that smell of mud when it rains. It's so pure and beautiful. That's the vessel I want to live in. That's the vessel I want my children to live in. The way you lay adobes is a very coiled method. One layer after another.

When I was plastering the inside of our house I had an idea about what I wanted. So I went down to Cochiti, which is a pueblo further south, and I got the red slip. It's a reddish, oily clay that you layer over the pottery after you've made the pot. You layer this slip over the pottery. And then you polish it with a stone. And then it adheres and becomes part of the pot. It takes on a real shiny form. Santa Clara people are real famous for it. It's shiny and black sometimes. I wanted that slip to be on my wall. So one Christmas I decided to plaster. I plastered a whole room with that red slip. When you walk in there you can see the red that you also put on the pot. Usually you use a rock for the pottery, I used a spoon so that I could actually polish the room. Now that I'm thinking, it seems I must have been nuts. To polish a bowl is one thing, but to try and polish a room with a spoon doesn't make sense. But

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when I finished it, I was just so happy because it made so much sense that I had to write about it. I had to come and tell a story about it. That's an important thing for me. That's the storytelling that I think comes from the Pueblo people. Always telling stories.

My mother and I went to a museum vault once where they store all the pottery from years and years past. And we were sitting there. They bring out these bowls, and you have to put on gloves. You have to treat them with special care like you're afraid to touch them or something. And my mother started laughing because everything was so sterile around us. It was very sterile. She started telling me, reminding me that these bowls were made for cooking. When they broke, they broke. And you let them go back. You let them go back into the earth.

Because when my mother works on something, she has her own way of working which is very traditional. When I take this clay and I do whatever it is I do to it, there are many things that are being poured into this thing. The idea of coming on a plane at six o'clock in the morning and in two hours being ten hours away. That idea of mobility. When I go to New York and I see something. Or when I remember the way this woman looks at me and the way her brow goes. Those things are mine. They are what I am interpreting this world to be. I am putting them in my work.

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But sometimes it is just like my mother was saying. You know, this is our bodies. Once I was asking her, "What is this shape? Look at that shape." I said, "Where does that come from?" And she started laughing at me and she says, "Don't you recognize our bodies?" See the hips and waist. And she said, "A long time ago these women were so involved, it was so much a part of who they were that went into this bowl that it only makes sense that it would be so, shaped that way." To me that was just perfect. This is also what I'm seeing. This is how I'm interpreting things. So that when I go to Las Vegas, Nevada--God knows how I was there--and I see and experience those things, I have to come home. And I have to write about them. And I have to make them. Because if I refuse those things then a part of me would be aching. A part of me would be not fulfilled.

There are all sorts of levels of thinking about this, but always, always when I finish a piece, there's always the last coil. There's always a space at the top of the head. You know, when you're a little kid there's a soft spot? There's always a soft spot with these. And it makes them so real for me. When I cover up this soft spot, I know that he's finished. I know now that he has his own life, that all that I have been at that period of time is in there for always.

I use enamel. I've tried coffee, old coffee, left over

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coffee. You know how it can stain things. I've tried that. I experiment a lot. Every day. Everything I do is an experiment. So my work, it's all sorts of materials. And now as I'm speaking I'm thinking that that's the way the people I come from were a long time ago. Because they would basically look around their environment and see this chutniya or this clay and put it together. Through trial and error, they were survivors. They had to be, you know. And basically I'm that in this time frame. I look around and I see whatever it is that is there, and I use it. I think that really comes from the people. I remember when I was little, if we were driving down the road and my mother saw a log that we could use for firewood, we would stop and get it. Or if there was some wild asparagus, we'd stop and get it. You become really aware of what is going on around you, even the tiny things. What other people would think would be not important or too ordinary, those are the things that I am geared to look at and find what it is they have to offer for me. That's my form of surviving.

Sharon Harrow: Just before class we were all pointing out which was our favorite sculpture, and we came to Pearlene.

Nora Naranjo-Morse: One day, I think it was maybe five years ago, my husband gave me this credit card. It just came in the mail or something happened. It just appeared. I'm sure he did something to get it. But I remember that

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day. He handed it to me. And until then I never thought about it. If you needed something and you had money, you got it. What that did was it put me through many things about value systems, about the value system that I grew up with and the value system this card represented. It was almost like somebody was handing me this weapon. I didn't know, really, how to deal with it. Now I'm real comfortable with it. (Laughter.) But before I had to work it out in myself. Did this mean that I was becoming too much of a Mericana? Was I taking on too much of somebody else's value systems? You know, it made me think. And in order to process all that, I had to make Pearlene. And that's basically Pearlene's purpose for me. When she first came on my table, she really represented to me all these questions I had, all these confusions I had. They were more easy for me to think about if I had a voice other than myself. You know what I mean? If there was something looking at me that I could walk away from and it was addressing an issue, then I could step back and think about it and look at it and leave it if I wanted to and come back and see it in a different way. That's what Pearlene did for me.

And she came onto the table just all the time for a period of about two or three years. She dealt with issues about men and women. She dealt about issues of going to Hawaii. She dealt with all sorts of things that I was

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doing. And then from her I started also working with questions I had about what happens when Indian kids watch too much TV. You're talking to your kids, and they're just staring at this box. And what happens, do they start growing antennas? (Laughter.) You know? Instead of getting angry, we got rid of the TV: I didn't know how to deal with it. I went to the studio and I started making things. It really helps me. This clay is so absorbent. It really draws out things from me. It just sort of magically shows me what it is that is happening to me. Yeah. I think I'm dealing with it from a Native American perspective, but I'm sure, if you are mothers, even if you're not, you know that the kids get that way. That TV is a very influential box.

This is called "Indian Women Aren't Easy." (Laughter.) Except if you notice, she doesn't have any clothes on. (Laughter.) That's what really makes me confused. This is the last Pearlene I made. And at that point Pearlene was becoming very popular. People wanted to hear about her. When I went to a poetry reading they wanted to hear poems about Pearlene. Pearlene, Pearlene, Pearlene. And the last straw was this businessman from California came to me and asked if we could make a mold of Pearlene. And it just--uh--uh, no. You know when you know in here, somewhere here, that it's not right? That's immediately what I felt. I

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didn't know what I was doing when I went down to make her. But after I thought about it, and I would step away and look at her, I knew that this was the last one. There was never going to be any more of Pearlene. And in fact I was giving her a partner for some reason. Because there was this chapter closing for me. It was really hard for me because, like I said in Mud Woman, it was like realizing that your daughter was moving away, or that your child was now having its own life, and that was the end. So I made sure she had a boyfriend. You know, there will always be that sexual tension between them because she's saying yes and no at the same time. And he's, you know, he's ready for some romance, it looks like. (Laughter.) He's vulnerable. And she's trying to decide: "Wait a minute. I don't know." So there's always going to be that excitement of sexual tension there. This piece is about three feet long--the whole thing, the couch, everything, is about three feet long--by about two and a half, almost three feet.

Vicki Broach: Can I ask how that's presented? Is the wallpaper backdrop part of it? And is it like a diorama or something?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: No. I took this picture and I got the sheet off the bed and I put a backdrop. So I sort of started adding these things for the picture. Because what happens in my creative process is I see something and my

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mind--I have no control really at this point. My mind starts moving to the next thing, the next thing and the next thing that would add to make a whole picture. You see? So I ran to my sister-in-law's house and I borrowed that. You can't tell. The left-hand side is a real old style looking radio. And then I threw a rug under her pink slippers. And I found that stand which is--I don 't really know what that stand is. And I found a small lampshade that just fit perfectly. So I made a whole scene for this. And that's usually how it works, is that I start looking at things as a total picture.

These are Pearlenes. You know, you can just tell by the way they look. (Laughter.) And these ladies were at a feast and I saw them and I thought, "This is where it comes from. This is where it begins for me."

These are the women I write about. These are the little girls I see in the village, selling their pottery and drinking pop. Waiting for someone to come and buy their things. The look in their eyes. Just little things that I see, that I take home with me. The way my mother's hand moves over a piece of pottery when she's sanding it. The image of my sisters and my father sitting under the tree. You know, talking about just all sorts of things. Gossiping, gossiping. Making pottery. Those images are real important for me because what happens is there is a rhythm

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that happens in the kind of people . . . .

Larry Evers: You have linked clay work and work with bread and the writing. In the case of working with clay and pottery forms there's a long tradition that you're connected with. And certainly that's true of the bread as well. How do you think about connections that the words have? Do you think about connections at the pueblo?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Well, ever since I remember there have always been stories being told. Stories that connect me to why it is I should be a good person, maybe why it is the stars were the way they were. Or why it is there were people who were evil. You know, just all sorts of everyday things were worked into the evening discussion. My mother's voice would get really low and she'd pause every now and then to make sure I was awake. She had this real drama about the way she spoke. She'd know when to be quiet and then to go on. So there was always this storytelling.

I think that's basically what Pearlene is, a storyteller. She's not different than what the Pueblo people call o-sa. O-sa are these men that are black and white striped, and they come out on feast days for dances. They look like they should come from another planet or something. They only have a G-string on, and they have this wild thing in their hair of straw. On a certain feast day, September 30, in the afternoon, seven of these men who are

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dressed black and white, these o-sa, will stand at the top of the Pueblo apartment building. They just start screaming and jumping down from one story to the other. It's just so dramatic. It's wonderful to see. They go around and they make fun of people. They are clowns, the equivalent of our clowns. But what they really are, they really are used for medicine, you know. They're considered as equal to medicine men. Because laughter and humor play such an important part in who we are, too. You know, it all balances when you laugh. It makes you feel good. So these men were basically developed for that reason. They play an important part. And I think that's what Pearlene has become in her own way.

It was interesting for me because my mother was telling me that the last o-sa to be initiated into this clown clan was a woman. Since then there've been no more. So in my own way I think that Pearlene carries on this tradition of telling stories about where I'm at as a modern Pueblo woman. In her own way, she makes me laugh at who I am. Because that's what the o-sa do. I saw them do this crazy thing once. They jumped off the building. Then they took a beauty queen. Now the Pueblos are into having these beauty queens, you know. They dress them up in traditional style, but yet they put this crown on their head. So the o-sa went to this beauty queen. They knelt--they're so sacrilegious and they just do not care--they knelt in front of this

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beauty queen. They were bowing to her, bowing to her. And then one of them gets the crown, what are they called? The crown. And he wipes it on his butt. (Laughter.) And then puts it back. And I thought, "How perfect!" How perfect a statement about where we are going, and our value system about beauty and things like that. That's the kind of thing they do.

In one of my sculptures, you see Pearlene with this credit card. You know she's just making fun of somebody or something. That's what that connection for me is. So when I see Pearlene, I have to write about that. It pushes me on to think about other ideas. To think about writing about it. So that it can be shared.

Maureen Fern: Do you make the clay piece first and then think about the poem afterward? Or how does that work?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: It happens either way, you know. I'll see something, and I'll write about it. If I'm writing about it and it is so interesting to me, it stays inside me long enough that when I go into the work table, then it's very likely that the idea will come out in some kind of three-dimensional form.

In Mud Woman, there's this poem about being single in the village. It's a Pearlene poem. The women gossip about her because she doesn't know how to bake in her oven. They think of her as a loose woman. And then at night, the women

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that gossip about Pearlene, their husbands come and knock on Pearlene's door, wanting to take her out to the canyon or something. I was a single woman in the village at one point. And people talked about me because I wore purple tennis shoes and I wasn't a traditional Pueblo woman, you know. And their men would come and knock on my door, you know. That was an interesting thing that happened to me. And when I was writing about it, I thought that was it. But later on--it was like a year or two later--I had to make something in clay from it, you know. I didn't really have a choice. It just came out.

So it works both ways. And it really does become a volley. One thing passes to the other, passes to the other, passes to the other. It's too exciting. It really is very exciting for me. That's how I learn.

Nina Bjornsson: Your mother's a very traditional potter?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Yes.

Nina Bjornsson: What does she think of your work?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: I think at some points she doesn't understand. "What's she doing?" sort of thing. But she can see that all of the rest of my life--my children are happy, they're well fed, you know. My husband likes me, you know. (Laughter.) We built our own home, you know. She sees something is okay. What she doesn't understand she trusts by now. She's very protective of what we share, this common

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bond about going in to get clay. One day we were out together, and somebody made the comment, "Your things are so much different than your mother's." And she got taken back. And she told the lady--which to me said it all--that what she and I do is the same thing. I don't know if the lady understood, but what my mother was talking about is that bond, that beginning when you're on your knees. We both appreciate that taking out of the clay from the mother, from the true mother. She knows I share that with her. She's an accepting person.

Nina Bjornsson: Do you ever make more traditional kinds of pottery? I mean, for your own use, for instance?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: I do occasionally. Occasionally something will get inside me, and I'll go down and I'll do that. So, I do. They never look like my mother's though. (Laughter.) They're a little crooked.

Vicki Broach: It was interesting to me to hear you talk about the community aspects of what you do, because when I read the poems, you seemed alone a lot of the time in working. It seemed more an individual effort.

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Yes, it has become that way.

Vicki Broach: Could you talk about that balance?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Yes. I think around the turn of the century was when people came in from the outside, Western influence. The market, the attitudes about making something

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for utilitarian or religious purposes changed, because people were coming from outside and offering money for this thing that you spent time with. I think that started the change. More and more that community was eliminated because people needed the money for their family. They didn't need to make storage bowls anymore for the community. It's more a private thing. What I've done is, you know, I've gone off and made those things. They come completely from me. That's why it's so important for me to go get clay with my mother. To share that with her. To share those things with her that have that sense of community. Like at the table with my nieces and my cousins. That's important, and talking about it.

But yes, it's becoming more individualized, because the market demands that. I don't know if it will ever go back to anything else. Because now some times it even gets to the point where people, if they don't know you well enough or you're not in their family, they'll cover their stuff if they see you knocking on their door. And that's just from the turn of the century to now. They're afraid that maybe you'll harm their pots or that you'll get their ideas or whatever it is. That's how individualized it's becoming. But I still believe that there's that concept of community. I still see families driving out to get the clay. So I think those things are important for people still.

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Dennis Selder: Even though you say the things come completely from you, don't they do something for your community, too?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: When this book Mud Woman came out, I was talking to this girl from Santa Clara who makes pottery. And she said, "How did you know that I go into J. C. Penney's, or the store, and I still have clay on me?" She just couldn't believe. She felt maybe isolated. And through this book she starts to realize that "hey, maybe somebody else has that same feeling too."

And this girl was doing a project for her school. She read the poem about my mother's song, "Gia's Song." She was doing some paper about geriatrics. And so she took this poem one step further. She asked my mother to come in to do this presentation. So that my mother--the woman read the poem, my mother sang the song in the poem, and then the woman presented her paper. That was a real important thing for me, because it's easy to feel isolated in any situation. But when you hear little simple works like "J. C. Penneys, dirt in your fingernails," and you have that same experience, I think that says something about who we are as a people. That experience connects me to other people in my village. And maybe that connection will end there or maybe it won't. I don't know what will happen.

There was an important woman in the village. She

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looked at Pearlene, who was on display at this craft and art show, and she just started laughing. She just started laughing. And if I can give that to her, then that's important to me. You know, she started laughing, walking away and saying, boy, are you crazy." (Laughter.) So, I guess it was better than her getting angry at me. Maybe she thought I had pushed too many boundaries or gone beyond good taste.

Susan Stevens: Is Pearlene supposed to be an Indian woman?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Yes, Pearlene is an Indian woman, but even more than that, she's a human being who happens to be Indian, who dresses the way she dresses, who happens to be in these interesting circumstances.

Susan Stevens: When I looked at those pictures in the book I didn't really think she looked Indian at all.

Nora Naranjo-Morse: I know. And that's why so many people who are not Indian come up to me and say, "You know, I can relate." You know. She has gone beyond what Indian art is expected to be, what Pueblo women should be making. She's gone beyond that and she's saying, "I can be the school teacher in Minnesota." Or "I can be the lady in New York who understands what I'm trying to say." And I really like that. I really like that.

Catherine Young: I was wondering if there's a change that takes place when you sell a piece of your work, because it's

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so personal. Is it hard for you to let it go? What you feel when you let a piece go?

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Well, this work is my life, you know. It's what I am. At some point, when I cover the top, then that piece is done. It's its own person. It's almost like when my daughter says she's going to spend the night with a friend who I don't know. I think, "Okay, what is the phone number? How do I get there if I have to?" You know, I become very protective of these pieces.

When I first started making these things I wanted to get them out. I wanted to make a living because I knew this was what I wanted to do. The poem "Mud Woman" really talks about how you have to make that transition. It's almost like moving from one side of your head to the other, you know. You have to become pragmatic as opposed to just being and creating. That's rough for me to do. Of everything that I do, business is the hardest.

Catherine Young: It just seems when you complete something, it's such a part of you, you know, "It's mine." It seems it would be so hard to let it go.

Nora Naranjo-Morse: Well, there have been times that I've bought my pieces back, which doesn't make sense. But that's what's happened. I'm in a very wonderful position now, after all this time, where I am able to actually find homes for these pieces. As opposed to selling them to a middle

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man who drives onto the reservation in a van, gives only a third of what it's worth, then drives into Santa Fe and sells it for another third more. And then the business turns around and sells it for the full price. You know, that's what usually happens.

But what I'm able to do now is find homes for them in a real relaxed, easy, for me, perfect way. People come to my studio. They're all kinds that come, you know. And what happens is really neat because instead of being represented by a gallery--they used to be curio shops, now they're galleries (laughter)--and having somebody talk for me, about me, I am allowing people to come in. They see the dogs. They see the plants that I'm growing. They see the children running around. They see me, who I am. And then they see the pieces. And then it becomes even more important to them.

I've traded with people. This woman bought a piece, and she sends me pictures of her grandkids every year. There is something important happening. There is a relationship. It's not just hard, cold cash. That makes it easier for me to let them go. Because then those people get an idea. They're not just getting one of many. They're getting one Pearlene who has one credit card and has one message. You know? So that makes it easier. I couldn't do it otherwise. And you know, I was telling Larry on the way over, what I'm doing, what I'm saying is only me. I don't

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pretend to represent all of Santa Clara Pueblo. Or Santa Clara women. You know, this is just happening to me. The way I want to find homes for my pieces--that's the way I go about it. Other people do it their own way. They sell in galleries and that's fine. That's them. But this is how I want to do it. And this is how I think I show respect to Nan chu Kweejo, the person that gives me the clay.