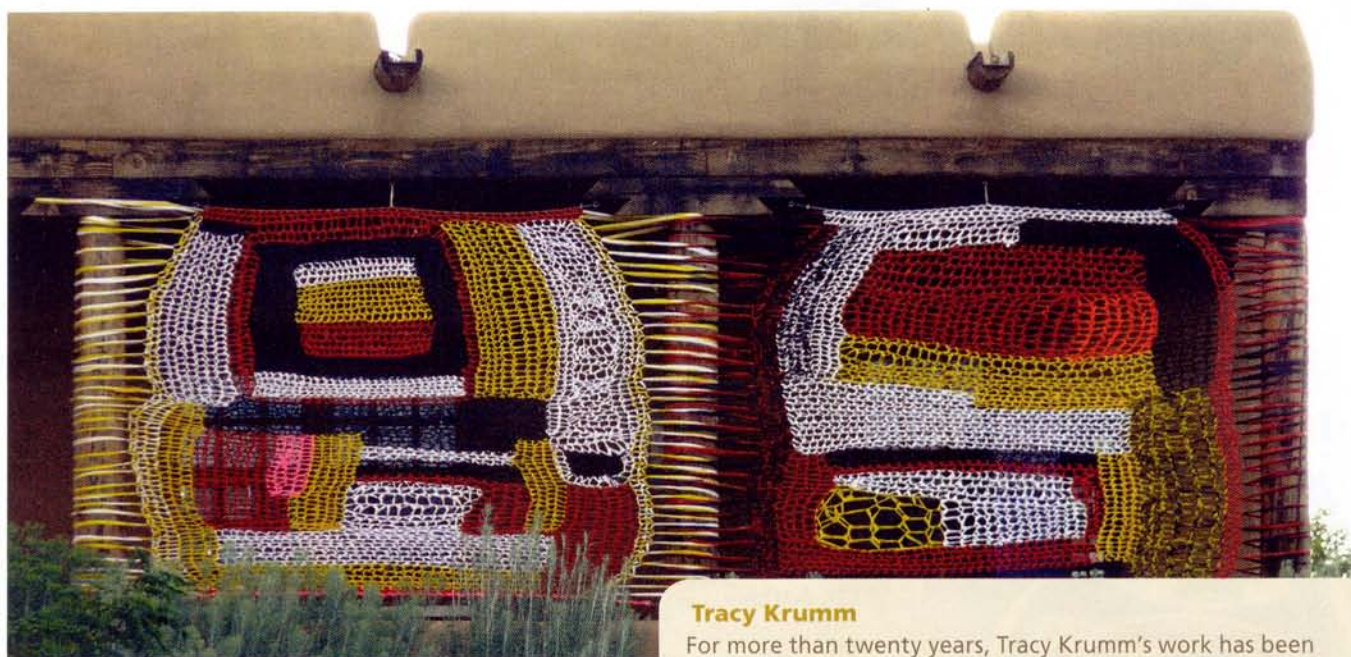


Big Fiber: Human Tools



Part of *Big Fiber/Human Tools I*, installed on Museum Hill, viewed from the parking lot. Photo courtesy the Museum of International Folk Art, DCA, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Tracy Krumm

For more than twenty years, Tracy Krumm's work has been exhibited internationally at numerous venues. She is currently a special assistant professor at the Kansas City Art Institute in Kansas City, Missouri. Several summers ago, she completed two large-scale textile-based installations, *Hand/Crochet* and *Finger/Knit* as part of *Big Fiber: Human Tools* for the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Aurelia Gomez

When artist Tracy Krumm developed a site-specific collaborative artwork with the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, Aurelia Gomez, the museum's director of education, interviewed her for *SchoolArts*.

Aurelia Gomez: How can you summarize your work?

Tracy Krumm: My work incorporates the histories of both sculpture and craft. It includes the traditions of women's work and the history of metal arts. It is a juxtaposition of gender identified processes, crochet, blacksmithing, and a synthesis of process, technique, and materials.

AG: What are your inspirations?

TK: Environment, always. Particularly the natural environment; and because I work with found objects, my work

always has an association with place. There's always a reference to history and place and use, in both the materials I use, and the pieces when they are finished.

AG: What is the *Big Fiber/Human Tools II* project?

TK: This was a project that taught the public to use textile techniques to create giant, site-specific public art pieces that were installed on Milner Plaza, at Museum Hill in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in conjunction with the exhibition *Needles and Pins: Textiles and Tools* at the Museum of International Folk Art. We created two installations using flagging tape to finger crochet, and a rubberized plastic lacing to finger knit structures that were suspended from and tied to architectural structures on Milner Plaza.

The next year, we made interlacing and knotting structures out of flagging tape that were wrapped around

and attached to more architectural elements. The main thrust of the project was to demonstrate how textile production is reliant on the physical use of the human body. Creating large-scale textiles helps people to understand the elements and process of textile construction in a dramatic way.

Getting people to use their hands as the primary tools of the creative project is a major goal. On another level, the pieces were a metaphor for the interlacing of cultures and histories and are a highly visible part of the global community here in Santa Fe. Participants made a visible contribution to a community-based project that symbolizes human interaction and creative spirit. ☺

Aurelia Gomez is the director of education at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico. aurelia.gomez@state.nm.us

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