

TRICIA CLINE: BIOGRAPHY/ ARTIST STATEMENT

I was born in 1956 and grew up in northern California. When I graduated from high school in 1974, my twin sister Lizzy and I moved to Juneau, Alaska. After my time in Juneau I pretty much moved around the country about every two years or so, doing odd jobs, mostly working in restaurants, usually in the kitchen.

At age 27 I was living in a small town in Iowa, where I worked as a cook in a pizza parlor. In the evening, I would walk with my dog, and as people passed by; they would look down at my dog and say, "Hi Zoie," and then look up at me and say, "Hi Pizza Girl." It became so common that it forced me to recognize, "I sure don't want to be Pizza Girl at 30."

But I didn't know what I wanted to do. The point wasn't to find a career it was to find my connection to "something" bigger than myself. When I first heard Joseph Campbell say, "Follow your bliss," I realized I didn't even know what my "bliss" was. So I locked myself up in my tiny rented room and made lists of things I "liked." They were simple silly lists. For instance, usually the first thing on a list was; "drinking coffee," since that was the first thing I did in the morning, and I liked it. Somewhere on the lists I wrote "clay figures," because I remembered feeling "thrilled" when I saw a tiny picture in the back of a magazine of a delicately sculptured porcelain female figure. So I bought a ball of clay for 5 bucks and sat in my room and made little people. The figures I made were very simple, crude, and quite funny, and they were mostly driven by "story."

About 5 years later I met Toc Fetch, and together we began to do what we call direct-observation work. Direct-observation of an inspiration is a careful love of it without mental interpretation. This approach was greatly influenced by the writings of psychologist James Hillman from whom we learned a great deal about the life of imagery. He describes in his book *Blue Fire*, a dream, where suddenly a great black snake shows up, if the dreamer, upon awakening, decides to interpret the meaning of the snake, he kills it. And thereby the relationship with the image is lost, because the vast Unknown has been limited to only what is Known. The image is a transcendent guest coming through you into form. But through interpretation you cut off its link to that transcendent Reality.

In the true work every iota of its space deserves total care and attention. Attention equals love. This approach towards detail is a kind of deliberate, very present meditation and allows a transcendent quality to enter through you.

Toc Fetch and I make (for lack of a more succinct label) a kind of tribal art – we don't really own anything – much less that which arrives from the transcendent. People have forgotten the transcendent power of art. Here in the west art has been glorified as a product of the ego, as personal revelation, this couldn't be less true, art comes from beyond the personal, from the transcendent whisper that is ever present to everyone (and every thing), and therefore there is really nothing personal about it. So the images that come to us are not based on ideas out of mind, the images that come are transcendent guests – friends – that we develop ongoing relationships with. The image is a friend that has come to teach you its life through the direct (non-interpretive) observation of it, to then be possessive of it is to "kill the snake." It is through respect that the relationships open outward into beauty, respect that allows the image to be who it is and not just a thing in relation to us.