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# THSG Tapestry Interpretations

— Downtown Tucson Mural by  
To-Reé-Neé Wolf —

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# Mural Downtown Tucson



# Artist - To-Reé-Neé Wolf



# November 2021 Tapestry meeting with Artist

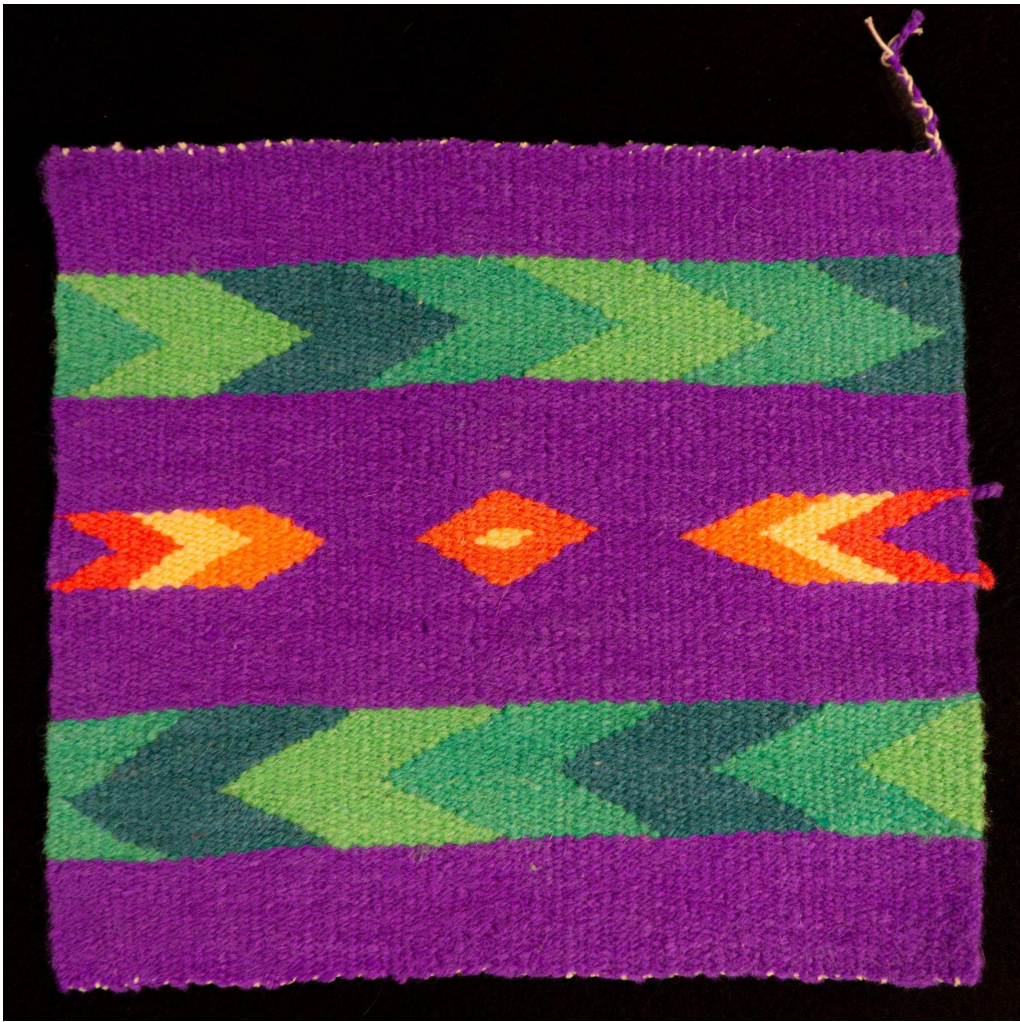


# Creation Story, Chaos Theory and Quantum Memory



# Barbro Drott Huth

Simplified  
Imagery of  
corn



# Barbro Drott Huth

The mural is filled with symbols of many kinds, from peace to fertility to inclusion.

I chose corn - a symbol of fertility, of sustenance, of abundance. Corn represents so much of what is available and good and rich around us, not least among indigenous people.



# Barbro Drott Huth

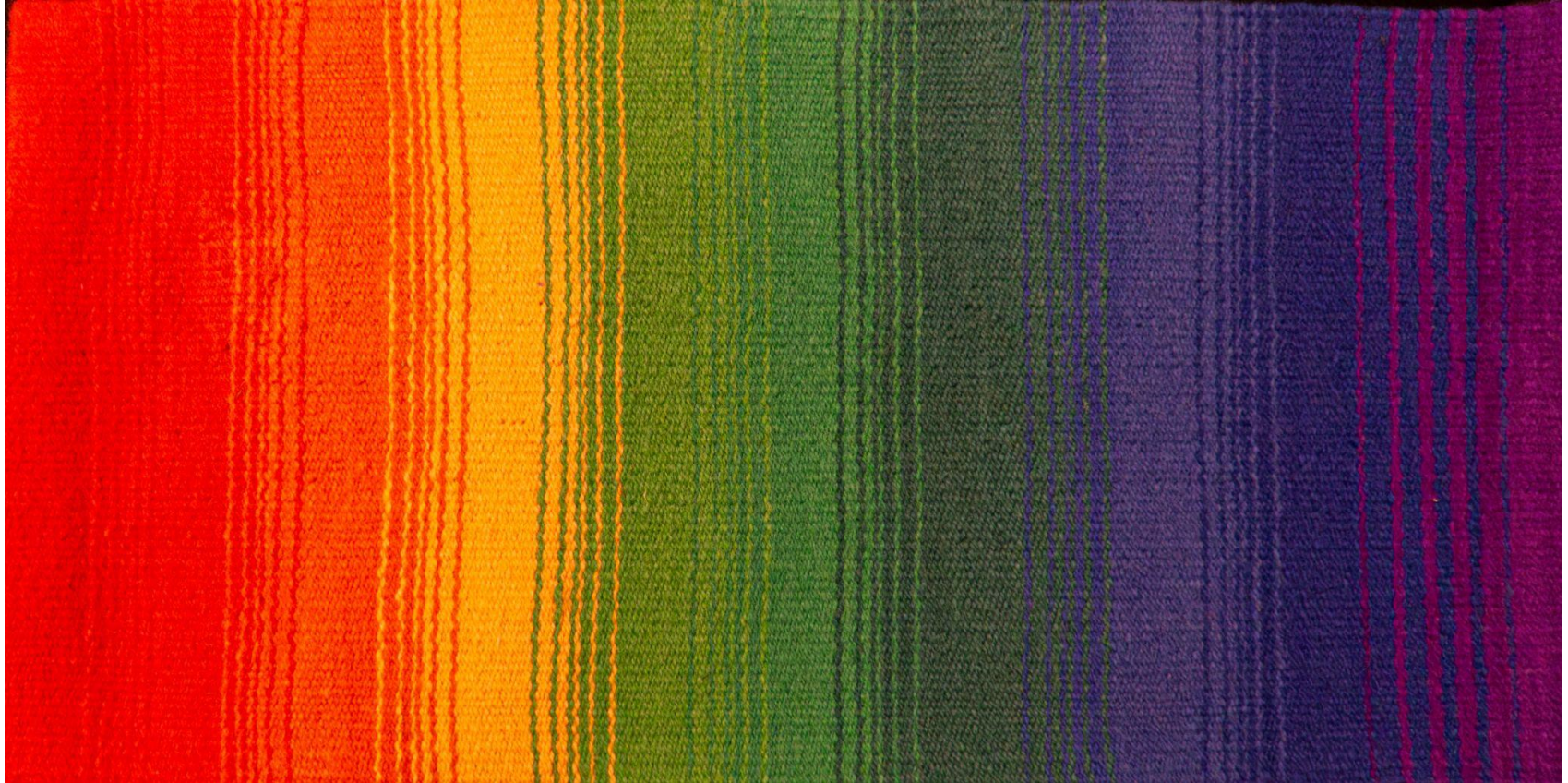


The Zapotec have long used a simplified image of corn in their weavings. Their ways inspired me to further streamline the design of rows of corn and the corn kernel itself in the center. Their use of color varies greatly from tapestry to tapestry. The colors I chose to weave this small piece have no symbolic meaning, they are just colors I like.

Tapestry W 9 inches, H 8 inches, woven with wool weft on cotton warp.



# Barbro Drott Huth

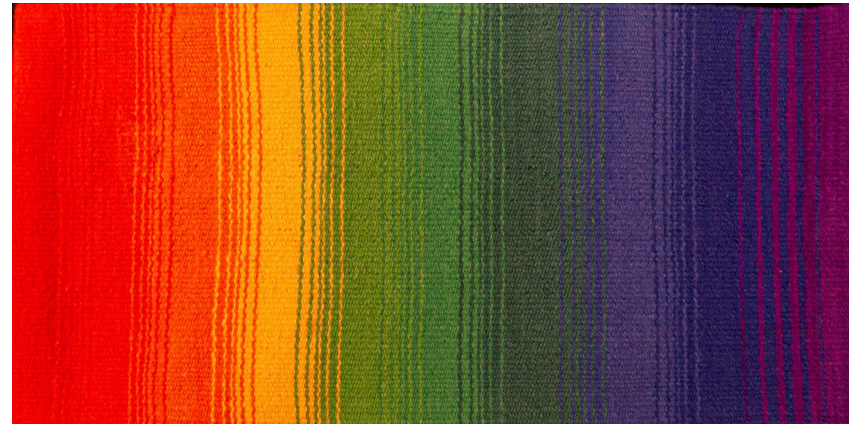


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# Barbro Drott Huth

Chaos theory, one of the ideas To Reé-Neé mentions as inspiration for her mural, captivated my imagination. The theory seeks order and harmony from chaos, from disorder, from instability and from randomness. So does the mural. It portrays patterns within chaotic systems, displays order and beauty where chaos might reign.

Tapestry W 20 inches, H 10 inches,  
woven with wool weft on cotton  
warp.



My road to harmony where disorder appears often leads to stripes, regular parallel stripes. The colors were already given in the mural - all the colors of the rainbow.



# Betty Headrick

Hands and  
Rainbow

Healing,  
Helping, and  
Connections

# Betty Headrick

## HUMANITY AND HEALING HANDS AND RAINBOW



Mike and I visited the mural in early December 2021 just before I was scheduled to have my first knee replacement surgery. That day we also visited the January 8th memorial near the old courthouse. I found both the mural and the memorial focused on healing and inclusiveness with Native American and Tucson symbols.

## Betty Headrick

In trying to decide how I would interpret the mural I chose two symbols – hands and the rainbow. Both these parts of the mural represent healing, helping and humanity and connections between individuals, communities, and ancestral spirits.

Hands are familiar symbols of Native art found on Petroglyphs from many cultures. The rainbow has always been a symbol of hope for the future. On one visit to TMC prior to my surgery I noticed a painting of a rainbow with the colors spreading across the painting. The painting inspired me to do the wide rainbow.



# Betty Headrick

When you visit the January 8th memorial the pathways and walls are filled with symbols. Some represent the people who died, some represent the survivors and some the culture of Tucson. I chose to include a few of those symbols in my circles.



Both the mural and memorial offer a portal for people needing hope and beauty in our chaotic world.

# Betty Headrick



The weaving is 12 ½ inches wide & 10 inches tall. The warp is cotton – 10 EPI. The weft is generally 3 strands of blended Paternay or Colonial Persian yarn. It was woven “horizontally” beginning with the green. The January 8th symbols were embroidered after the weaving was off the loom.



# Donna Andersen

Mother  
Earth with  
various  
peace and  
femininity  
symbols





# Donna Andersen

## EARTH MOTHER – MURAL INSPIRATION – DONNA ANDERSEN



At my first view of the mural, I was immediately drawn to the amazing color, symbols and shapes. However, as I studied the mural more closely, I noticed many different details in the mural and was curious to understand their meaning. Hearing To-Reé-Neé's explanation of the various elements of her mural, I found so much more inspiration that it was difficult to choose a single idea. I had to let ideas bounce around for a while to see what came up most often.

# Donna Andersen

I found myself admiring the very powerful Mother Earth figure in the mural. I decided to weave a more serene “Earth Mother” and researched symbols that focused on Peace and Femininity:

- Pleiades (Seven Sisters) constellation – for indigenous peoples, very important to begin the planting of seeds in spring
- Crescent moon – representing powerful feminine energy, influence, and intuition
- Pomegranate – as a symbol of life, fertility, and beauty



# Donna Andersen

- White dove and an olive branch - to connote peace
- A nod to Mother Nature - a wreath of leaves on her head

Other design decisions included:

- Light from the crescent moon intended to radiate, against the dark sky, down on the figure.
- Framing the tapestry with a border in response to the vibrant color in To-Reé-Neé's mural.



# Donna Andersen



Tapestry techniques used –

include color blending in bundles, meet & separate, eccentric weaving, french knots, hatching, soumak, vertical joins. Facial features were embroidered.

Tapestry dimensions – 12" W x 13 ½" H

Materials used –

Cotton seine warp at 8epi

Wool, cotton embroidery floss, and rayon weft materials.

Gary Terlisner

Feathered Being



# Gary Terlisner

Being a beginner tapestry weaver, I decided to weave the small person with feathers. He seemed to jump out to me plus it looked like it would be easy to weave. After the third time of retro weaving and several months looking at it I finally came up with a reasonable facsimile.

The feathers are real. I shaved them down to fit the weave.

It is 5" X 5", cotton warp, wool weft and 8 epi.



**Janet Frost**

The Raven



# Janet Frost



I have always been fascinated with mural art and was thrilled to see what a vibrant mural art culture exists in Tucson. It was especially wonderful to hear To-Reé-Neé Wolf share her inspiration and process with our Tapestry group.

The mural itself is frenetic with symbolism and stories. At the time of this project I was a very new tapestry weaver and knew I had to distill all those visual stories into something I could actually accomplish in my piece. So I looked for just a couple of her subjects





## Janet Frost

We had recently made a couple of trips that also played into my decisions about which motifs to focus on. A trip to the UA telescopes on Mt Lemmon had introduced me to the Pleiades constellation and in a trip to Arches NP I had encountered extraordinary ravens.

With those two subjects I then experimented with some challenging techniques to reflect the colors and patterns in To-Reé-Neé's mural. This was an extremely inspirational project and I thank both the THSG Tapestry Group and To-Reé-Neé for the opportunity. I feel that this project continues to inform much of my tapestry work.

12" wide, 12" high

# Karen Yackell

Navajo  
Creation  
Story

Spider Rock



# Karen Yackell



After doing some research on the creation story, chaos theory and quantum memory I decided to do a variation of the creation story based on the Navajo belief in the “Spirit of Spider Woman”.

The following Navajo creation story is from the Nizhoni Ranch News. The legend says that Spider Woman lives at Spider Rock in Canyon De Chelly:

“In the Navajo creation story, the first world was small and pitch black. There were four seas and an island. In the very middle of the island was a single pine tree. Ants, dragonflies, locust and beetles lived there and made up the Air-Spirit People of the first world.

# Karen Yackell

The second world was known as blue, where life was given to Spider Woman & Spider Man. Only their inner spirits or souls were made. Their physical bodies were made later to contain their spirits when they evolved into future worlds.

In the third world the holy ones advised Spider Woman that she had the capabilities of weaving a map of the universe and geometrical patterns of the spirit being in the night sky. At first she did not know what they meant, and was not told how it could be done.

Curiosity became her energy and driving force to learn to weave as the holy ones instructed.



# Karen Yackell



On a beautiful day when she was out on the land, exploring and gathering food, she came upon a small young tree. She touched it with her right hand and wrapped her fingers around one of its branches. As she was letting go a string streamed out the center of her palm and wrapped around the tree branch. She was not quite sure what the string was. At first she shook the hand to release the string, but it would not break free. She thought if she kept wrapping the string around the branch it might let go.

# Karen Yackell



Spider Woman started maneuvering and manipulating the string into various shapes. At this particular moment, she knew this was the weaving the holy people instructed her to do. Immediately she broke the string with her left hand without hesitation. She sat and thought carefully about how to use her new gift. For the rest of the day she sat close to the tree and wrapped the string into various patterns on other branches of the small tree.

The holy ones heard about Spider Woman's new talent and came to visit her. During the visit the holy ones instructed Spider Man to construct a weaving loom and also create the tools used in the various process of weaving. At this time Spider Woman began to sing the weaving songs, given to her by the holy ones. The songs empower the weavings and the weaving tools.

# Karen Yackell



Dine (Navajo) of today live in the fourth world, known as the “Glittering World”. Young weavers are instructed to find a spider web in the early morning, glistening with sunlight and sparkles. They are told to place the palm of their right hand upon the spider’s webbing without destroying or damaging the web. At the moment Spider Woman’s gift of weaving enters the young weaver’s spirit, where it lives forever.”.....

# Karen Yackell



I did two weavings and both are 5"x 7". I used wool for weft on 12/6 cotton seine warp at 9 EPI. One weaving is completely done in tapestry. However, the spider web is embroidered in an outline stitch with brown thread.

The other weaving has a background of my silk fusion wrapped around foam core. It has a 1/12" x 4" weaving of spider rock. Also, it has silver beads and a real tree branch with a spider web out of clear thread. All are glued on top of the silk fusion.

A reference to Wolf's mural is a raven, the pleiades, leaves, branches and background colors.



CHAOS

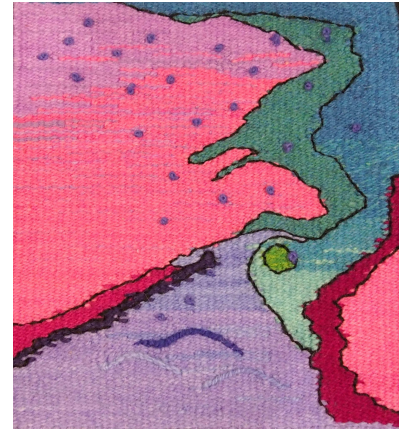


**Lynn  
Breckenridge**

8.5" wide, 9.5" high

# Lynn Breckenridge

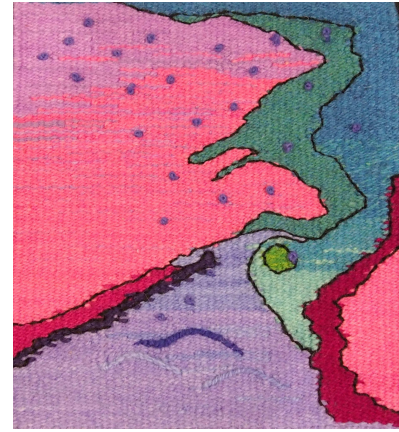
This weaving “Chaos” was inspired by the “Chaos Theory” section of Toh-Reé-Neé’s mural “Creation Story, Chaos Theory, and Quantum Memory.” While the entire mural is a wonderful sight to behold, the vivid colors and the curving lines of the “Chaos Theory” section instantly appealed to me. The weaving has a suggestion of a butterfly wing in the bottom part and then chaos depicted by the French Knots billowing upward.



This little “Chaos” weaving is woven at 8 epi (Ends Per Inch) from 2 ply wool. Manual blending of yarn colors was done for some sections. This blending was done by unplying/replying single strands of wool.

# Lynn Breckenridge

The weaver, Lynn Breckenridge, is a somewhat new member of the THSG, and the Tapestry Study Group. Prior to moving to Tucson, AZ in 2022, Lynn lived in Las Cruces, NM. In Las Cruces, Lynn was a member of a local fiber guild. and has had work displayed at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum, the Branigan Cultural Museum, and the Tombaugh Gallery.





**Lynn Ruggles**

Color Brings Me Joy



## Lynn Ruggles

My husband is an avid bird photographer, so birds are of great interest to both of us. The large colorful bird reminded me of the Elegant Trogon, also large and colorful which migrates north from Mexico to breed in Arizona between April and November. This is the only location in the US where these birds have been found. We have seen and photographed one of these birds in Madera Canyon. It is one of the most sought after birds by bird watchers in the US.



## Lynn Ruggles

I wanted the challenge of weaving the coloring in the bird, specifically the gradient colors – where one color fades into another. Reproducing this color transition in fiber was an interesting exercise especially at a small size. Too quick a transition gives stripes, too slow means all the color changes won't fit in the small space. I chose to transition a few of the color changes, but there wasn't enough space to do them all.



## Lynn Ruggles

Deciding which components of the mural to include in my tapestry was a challenge. I left out most of the smaller details, adjusted some of the color transitions into spots rather than blending, and used beads to add details that were too small for me to weave.

In To Reé Neé's description of the mural she talked about the meaning of the hand above the bird and in particular the spiral that she used to embellish it. I included this in the tapestry for a different reason than hers.



## Lynn Ruggles

In our travels around Arizona, my husband and I have visited a number of native American sites in the southwest where there are spirals carved into rocks. These carvings are actually calendars. On a particular day such as the equinox, the shadow cast on the spiral indicates where the year is on a cycle of 19 years. Adding this to the tapestry provides a connection to of all the creative work done by those who have gone before us.

7.5" w x 7.5" h 12epi Wool, metal, plastic, glass



# Maddie Tsurusaki

## The Dove Is Never Free: My Conversation with the World

10" wide, 13" high



# Maddie Tsurusaki



Inspired by To-Reé-Neé's comment that her mural is her visual conversation with the world, I designed my tapestry to reflect my own conversation with the world. I used ancient symbols to represent the power of the feminine, the never-ending cycle of life, our universal yearning for peace and freedom, and our hope embodied by the olive branch.

10" wide, 13" high

Nellie  
Ziegler



Kindness

# Nellie Ziegler



Using To-Reé-Neé Wolf's mural as our inspiration, the tapestry group of THSG wove tapestries. To-Reé-Neé joined our zoom November 2021 meeting explaining her mural. What a beautiful and thought provoking mural. It is 12 feet high and 40 feet long, located at old Scrappy's, 213 E. Broadway Blvd in downtown Tucson. It is actually on the 5th Street side.

# Nellie Ziegler



I was inspired by each section of her mural. In the Creation Story section on the right To-Reé-Neé painted the Pleiades Star Cluster. This cluster is often called the Seven Sisters and is prominent in many stories of indigenous cultures. Here the Pleiades are impacting the evolution of planets. This is represented in the mural by the planets floating away from the ear of corn, the starting point of the mural. In my tapestry, I included stars in a night sky representing the Pleiades in the upper left corner.

# Nellie Ziegler



In the middle section of the mural a butterfly represents the Chaos Theory. As a butterfly in Brazil flaps its wings it causes a tornado in Texas, To-Reé-Neé explained. In other words a small change can lead to something larger.

To-Reé-Neé believes that people want to do better and that small kindnesses, love and respect will have a ripple effect on the world. I wanted to include a butterfly in my piece. I used the four ancient sacred colors to make the butterfly, black, red, yellow and white. In the mural the four sacred colors are shown in the circle near the shamanic figure. Above the butterfly I included a bird flying in the sky with a bell in its beak. I wanted to bring Ben's Bell's into my tapestry as it is a Tucson organization promoting kindness. I thought Ben's Bells are a good expression of the Chaos Theory.

# Nellie Ziegler



In the Quantum Memory section of the mural To-Reé-Neé included Watchers. They are beside the road at the top right of the mural. Watchers are angels mentioned in early biblical writings. They were angels sent to watch over humans. My Watchers are standing at the bottom right hand corner. I wanted them to have a more prominent place in my piece.

In addition to these elements I wanted to include in my tapestry the bright, flowing colors used by To-Reé-Neé. The mural seemed to be to be alive, inspiring and hopeful with the use of vibrant color. I used bright colors as well in much of the tapestry. However, behind the Pleiades Cluster is a dark blue night sky. The Watchers are standing on a mountain with subdued dawn sunrise glow.

# Nellie Ziegler



It was fun taking thoughts and ideas from this amazing mural and using them to make a small tapestry.

10" by 10", cotton warp, wool weft, 8 epi



# Rebecca Fabos

Feather of  
Hope



# Rebecca Fabos



My first impression of To-Reé-Neé's mural was the joy in the colors and the variety of figures and design. Looking at it more carefully, I saw symbolism expressed in various ways. I was unsure of the mural's meaning but was captured by the feeling of enjoyment I had in its viewing.

November of 2021, To-Reé-Neé spoke to our tapestry study group about the mural and the meaning of the various figures and symbols. The mural's meaning is quite a complex involving people groups and their stories. Viewing the mural from left to right To-Reé-Neé stated that it is a triptych beginning with the Creation Story moving to Chaos Theory and ending with Quantum Memory.

# Rebecca Fabos



After making countless cartoons for my tapestry and discounting them all, I looked at the mural again to break it down into its simplest meaning: hope and love. Hope for all mankind to live together and regard each other with respect...no matter their race, religion, or nationality.

Very visible in the mural is the rainbow. The rainbow symbolizes hope, that through all circumstances, there is hope. The raven is a bird that To-Reé-Neé uses a lot in her work. Rather than depict a Raven, I chose to show a falling Raven feather. The feather symbolizes many things but, foremost is the upcoming change and transformation a person will have in their life.

# Rebecca Fabos



It can also signify wisdom, healing powers or protection from harm.

My tapestry represents the hope of the rainbow and the change that the Raven's feather brings to us. It signifies that we can aspire to be the best that we can be by showing love and respect to others.

Tapestry: height 4 ½" x width 4 ¾"

10 epi with cotton seine twine warp and wool weft