

ARTIST STATEMENT

“Cultural Fortitude” by Gerry Quotskuyva (approximately 11' 10"h x 3' 4" w x 3' 4"d)

Driving into Sedona along scenic State Route 179, I envision visitors and locals alike being welcomed into town by a Puebloan style Tower House monument that reflects the Native American, agricultural and spiritual aspects of an evolving culture that has become part of the personality of our community. “Cultural Fortitude” represents the strength and resilience of the Puebloan culture despite the influences of the modern world and emphasizes the importance of adapting to change. It also symbolizes the strength of their spiritual beliefs as they continue to hold hope for the future within their hearts.

This piece will be cast in bronze locally at Sedona Bronze and the ladder will be made from steel by a local company. It will be finished with a light bronze patina on the Tower House sides, a darker finish on the rock cliff part of the structure and a green patina on the corn stalk, which is the focal point of the design. The bronze would be placed in the roundabout next to the creek on State Route 179, with the focal point facing towards Interstate 17, the gateway to Sedona.

Corn is central to Puebloan cultures, both physically and spiritually, and to mankind overall as a food source throughout history. Here it also represents the agricultural significance of the Sedona/Oak Creek Canyon area to Native peoples, early pioneers, ranching families and current advocates of self-sustaining farming practices. The front face includes an area of rock wall or cliff like structure containing petroglyph symbols, and inset into the rock are stylized cloud symbols that float above the corn promising life giving rain. At the top of the cliff is a round kiva which reflects the inspirational and spiritual nature of the region. Kivas are commonly found in the alcove ruins located around the Southwest.

The back side of the structure depicts a style of architecture called a Tower House that is also seen in Puebloan ruins throughout the Southwest including the Verde Valley area. Tower Houses were thought to be part of a communications network between villages. In this design, it also represents the silent nature and strength of the Puebloan people.

Since many of our visitors are only passing through Sedona or spending a day or two in our beautiful region, they may not have the time to tour the local ruin sites. This representation would allow them to experience an example of what our historical Southwest Native American structures look like as they are driving into or leaving Sedona and hopefully create a connection resulting in continual visits to the area.