

ON THE COVER

The Long Wait by Lisa Jacobs

This article is based on a video interview on July 26, 2023, with the artist.

We have all spent time waiting in lines. Queuing up may involve eager anticipation or simple necessity. The length of the line, the comfort of the environment, and the time spent waiting vary widely, along with our thoughts and emotions as we anticipate our turn. The cover of this issue of *American Psychologist* shows a sculpture by Lisa Jacobs, PhD, entitled *The Long Wait*. The sculpture features a row of six figures who are waiting. They were created to represent dancers awaiting news of whether they would be selected to perform. This scenario suggests emotions associated with uncertainty, anxiety, performance, camaraderie, and competitiveness.

Jacobs is a psychologist who has been in private practice in Summit, New Jersey, for 26 years. She has no formal education in art but was always intrigued by, and drawn to, it. Growing up in a family with three sisters, she attended a yeshiva in Providence, Rhode Island, which did not offer art. She played piano and loved it and pursued a more secular postsecondary education and also one in which she gravitated toward helping people. Jacobs completed her undergraduate degree as a psychology major at Boston University and received a master of education specializing in human development from the Harvard University School of Education. After several years working in day treatment programs and related service organizations, she relocated with her husband to the Los Angeles, California area, and matriculated at the California School of Professional Psychology (now Alliant International University), where she received her doctorate in clinical psychology.

About a dozen years ago, Jacobs, realizing that she missed art, took a sculpture class. She immediately knew

this was something she was passionate about and would pursue. She enjoys expressing herself without words and immerses herself in a zone as she worked, totally focused on her art, impervious to the world outside that creative space. Like most of her work, *The Long Wait* is created in white clay and molded by hand (rarely using any tools), with the addition of copper piping and wood purchased at a hardware store. The clay is white when it goes into the kiln, but the final color of the glaze after it is fired is unpredictable.

The figures in *The Long Wait* are inspired by recalling Jacobs' daughter's participation in dance and the human experiences of wondering if one will be selected and of being an individual among a group with shared expectations and purpose. Jacobs wishes to convey the strengths and positivity of these waits and moments, as well as the anxieties. There is hope for equal opportunity; everyone who is waiting has a chance! Her vision is that the figures are healthy and happy people, striking various poses and interactions among the group members.

Yet, the figures have no faces. This is true for most of Jacobs' sculptures. She keeps her sculptures clean, peaceful, and simple in that regard. She wishes them to have universality and be recognizable in any language or culture. Furthermore, her expectation is that art should not lead the viewer to any particular conclusion but maintain neutrality and encourage observers to interpret art and its meaning for themselves.

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