

Lori Blondeau is a performance artist and is based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and is a member of George Gordon First Nation. She is a PhD candidate at the University of Saskatchewan. She lectures at the U of S in the Art History Department. In 1994 Blondeau co-founded with Bradlee LaRocque Tribe, A Centre for Evolving Aboriginal Media, Visual and Performing Arts. One of the first Artist Run Centres in Canada.

Lori's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. She remounted her performance "We Want to be Just Like Barbie That Bitch has Everything" for the group exhibition, *The People's Plastic Princess*, at The Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff, Canada (1998). She has collaborated with artists James Luna on a series of installations and a performance titled *Dead Fall Revue* (2000). Her current work is a series of performance based on memory and home, displacement and decolonization. In 2006 Blondeau had a solo exhibition *Grace* at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon and 2007 at the Venice Biennale she was part of the Requickening project with Shelley Niro.

Artist Statement

The images of the Indian Princess and Squaw have had a significant impact on societies' perception of Indian women and serve as inspirations for most of my work. Surprisingly, we still see popularized images of the Indian Princess being created by both native and non-native people. You can find these products being sold in Indian Museums and souvenir shops across North America. These are testament to the general public's idealized perception of beautiful Native women as being exotic and hard to find – virtually non-existent. The other side of the Indian Princess is, of course, the squaw – another of societies' iconic scapegoats meant to desensitize both the general public's view of Indian women (their political, historical and social issues as well), and the self perception among Native women themselves.

My work explores the influence of popular media and culture (contemporary and historical) on Aboriginal self-identity, self-image, and self-definition. I am currently exploring the impact of colonization on traditional and contemporary roles and lifestyles of aboriginal women. I deconstruct the images of the Indian Princess and the Squaw and reconstruct an image of absurdity and insert these hybrids into the mainstream. The performance personas I have created refer to the damage of colonialism and to the ironic pleasures of displacement and resistance.