

MICHELLE THRUSH

Michelle is from Cree, Iroquois, and English descent. She moved to Vancouver from Alberta in 1989 to pursue her career in film and television. She feels very strongly that thru the use of the media the sovereignty of First Nations people will be more readily recognized to those who are still not aware. She has numerous film credits including playing the female lead in the feature film "The Legend of Kootenai Brown". This film has been released in the United States, Europe, and Australia and a theatrical distribution in Canada. Some of her other credits include playing opposite Gary Farmer (Pow wow Highway) in "Day Glo Warrior" and a small role in the soon to be released "Dark Wind" which stars Lou Diamond Phillips.

Also very involved in theatre she was one of the founding members of Story-Teller Theatre Company in 1989. This is an all Native theatre troop that writes and performs plays that deal with the healing process that is taking place with indigenous peoples around the world. They are presently working on "The Strength of Indian Women" which will be mounted at the 1992 Aboriginal Healing Conference in Edmonton Alberta in July.

Before moving to Vancouver she was an original member of Red Thunder Native Dancers. In 1987 they organized a six week tour of New Zealand at which time they portrayed culture thru dance in a one hour show. After returning they continued their travels into the mid western States and then back to Alberta to tour the schools. In 1988 this group was asked to perform nightly for the medal presentations at the Calgary Winter Olympics.

Michelle has been a role model speaker in many different Native territories and gatherings as well as an advocate. It has always been one of her strengths to share her own stories of survival with young people.

Now in her most recent work she has written her first one woman performance piece titled RECLAIM. Reclaim is an intensive journey of monologues, dance and poetry. This portrayal is a celebration of the survival of First Nations truth and an exploration of the stereotypical rôles that are often played when facing oppression. This is a personal interpretation of learned racism in Canadian society and the transformation into personal empowerment. It is a twenty minute show that targets anger and answers with the message of searching within ourselves to change what is happening around us. There is an optional followup of sharing after the performance. Michelle has taken this piece back to Alberta as well as here in Vancouver where she first wrote it for the Mohawks Defence Fund Benefit in December 91. The message of Reclaim is to empower ones self is to empower ones nation.