

## **Blanche Brillon Macdonald (1931-1985)**

Blanche was a Métis woman born in Faust, Alberta of French and Cree heritage. She launched her modeling career as the winner of Miss English Bay in 1949 before becoming involved in the support of the rights and culture of Aboriginal peoples as well as numerous women's organizations.

Blanche was a business woman at a time and place in history when the climate for women in business was not favourable. She became involved in the First Nations women's movement, eventually initiating a journalism program for Native students as well as a newspaper catering towards First Nation communities across British Columbia.

For her work, she was honored with a Women of Distinction Award from the YWCA for business and entrepreneurship as well as for her role as the Chief Executive Officer of the Native Communications Society of BC. She was a board member for the Better Business Bureau (BBB), the Modeling Association of America, the New Play Centre, and the Lakeside Advisory Board for Women.

Blanche developed the Blanche Macdonald Institute, a modeling agency and school of fashion in Vancouver, BC. Her career and self-development programs were founded on the philosophy of encouraging people to aspire to their highest potential through personal development. After her death in 1985, the institute was purchased by Lillian Lim who further developed the school and eventually renamed the institute the Blanche Macdonald Centre in the late 1980s. Blanche is included in the History of Metropolitan Vancouver's Hall of Fame.



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