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## PATRICIA MONTURE

### Kohkum would be Mad at me

kohkum would be mad at me  
 if she were still here.  
 for dying my hair  
 hiding the gray  
 (hey, I'm not 50 yet)  
 wearing make-up  
 and fancy clothes.  
 supposed to love who you are  
 and how the Creator made you.  
 not supposed to try and change that.

Kohkum would be mad at me  
 if she were still here.

kohkum never had to live with  
 white people  
 least not how I have live with white people.  
 i have them every day, all day,  
 at work.  
 (maybe I have it wrong, maybe they got me)  
 kohkum just had the indian agent  
 telling her what to do  
 every now and again  
 reserve used to be refuge  
 (maybe it still is)

but, see  
 I listened to what the white folk told  
 get an education  
 got me a job  
 in a fancy university

I hide my hair and the evidence  
 of gray injun wisdom.  
 I hide my face, behind a mask  
 of revlon "easy, breezy, beautiful"

I hide.  
 (Or maybe, I just like "war paint")

*Patricia Monture's poetry appears earlier in this volume.*