

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Inspirations

Carrie Reece Curley, Apache

I am 26 years old, residing on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona. I have done art ever since I can remember. As a little girl I used to make drawings for my mom and family. I would make birthday cards for *Shi'maa* (my mom) instead of buying them; even then I knew I loved creating art for others, it brought me joy. In high school I was the cartoonist for the school paper and from there I was asked to do my first mural at Globe High School. After graduating, I knew I wanted to pursue art. I will be receiving my Associates of Arts (AA) degree in art this spring (2015) from Eastern Arizona College.

I have been an active artist for the last six years. Some of my highlights as an artist include:

“Apache Blue” my first ‘live art’ piece, which was purchased by and now hangs at our local college campus. My first solo art show in October, 2012 was at a small coffee shop called the Vide E Café in Globe which featured another art piece that was chosen as the poster for the annual Apache *Jii* festival in downtown Globe. Then in February 2013 I was one of the female artists at the Navajo Nation Museum & Ziindi all-female artists’ showcase, ‘Ch ikeeh baa hozho’. This year I was asked to assist in the Honor the Treaties, *Water is Life* campaign by helping artists Thomas Greyeyes and Vansler Nosie to create a mural on one of the water tanks on the San Carlos Apache reservation. I felt honored that I had been asked to be a part of this and to see it come alive was

a blessing. It has so much to say about our culture here in San Carlos and the importance of water and our sacred ways.

“Apache Blue”

I saw this as a black and white photo, but the way the girl was looking down was deep and blue. It was during a time when I was learning color scheme and I thought blue would have the greatest impact to show her mood.

‘Spirit of the Dresses’

I got inspiration from *Shimaa* who designs traditional and contemporary Apache and Navajo clothing. The two girls on the outside are my cousins who were modeling my mom's dresses. I love their stance and attitude. In the middle is a lady from the 1800s, so she is black and white representing the old ways, but the girls are in color representing that the culture is still alive today. The spirit of the dresses lives in them.

I view my art as honoring my ancestors, bringing out the beauty of my people. My work is mostly about women because I see the strength in a woman and I think all women should respect themselves. You hear a lot about the men as the warriors, but women are warriors too; we are fierce. It is a gift from the Creator to paint, I pray before I paint. I get inspired by the elders, the drums, my music, and that is who I am.