

BUFFALO BOY'S "DO NOT FEEL THE BUFFALO: MOVING CAMP"



On 7 June 2008, performance artist Adrian Stimson's alter-ego *Buffalo Boy*, in collaboration with curator Ryan Rice and Modern Fuel, rode tall on Modern Fuel's float in Kingston's gay pride parade, celebrating art and commemorating the struggle for equal rights and pride.

When: Saturday June 7th, 12pm - 2pm

Where: Parade begins at City Park, Bagot Street at West Street.

DO NOT FEEL THE BUFFALO: MOVING CAMP

Modern Fuel Float in the Kingston Pride Parade

Featuring artist **Adrian Stimson**

Curated by **Ryan Rice**

Everybody loves a parade, and like most parades, they function as communal celebrations, festivals and ceremony. On 7 June 2008, performance artist Adrian Stimson's alter-ego *Buffalo Boy*, in collaboration with curator Ryan Rice and Modern Fuel, will ride tall on Modern Fuel's float in Kingston's gay pride parade to celebrate art and commemorate the struggle for equal rights and pride. The Pride festivities will be a unique way to introduce Buffalo Boy to a marginal community who are bound to embrace his shape shifting ways. Buffalo Boy's drag - donned in pearls, a buffalo corset, fishnet stockings, cowboy boots, lasso - will introduce the multi-gendered persona who crosses many

boundaries (colonialism, racial superiority, hybridity, sexuality, nationality, politic) to emphasize difference to locate a kinder community in which everyone can exist / co-exist.

The parade will be a strategic lead in to Stimson's Buffalo Boy performance in the city of Kingston, and will be significant, as it will offer an opportunity for audiences from diverse communities (gay, art/cultural, aboriginal, Canadian) to engage with issues faced by the Indigenous communities in Canada, such as the impact of colonization, residential schools, and christianity as well as the effect of sexuality and conquest on traditional and contemporary aboriginal culture.

Background

Adrian Stimson is a Saskatoon-based artist: he is a creator of edgy performance personas, a painter known for his "tar and feathers" series, an installation artist, curator, educator, environmental activist and First Nations politician. Born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Stimson is part Irish and part Siksika.

The inspiration for Buffalo Boy came from Buffalo Bill (a.k.a. William Cody) and his touring Wild West shows, which in the late 19th century created "living pictures" of frontier life, including such spectacles as "The Indian Races," "Custer's Last Stand" and "The Buffalo Hunt." In a cultural replay of these staged spectacles, Stimson created a series of performance skits entitled Buffalo Boy's Wild West Peep Show. In one skit, we see Buffalo Boy dancing for three hours to the rhythms of traditional powwow music, the soundtrack from Dances with Wolves and techno-Aboriginal music, intermittently changing outfits and shifting among identities ranging from corporate Indian to traditional powwow dancer to shaman-exterminator. In these peep shows, Buffalo Boy camps up the conquest narratives of Buffalo Bill's shows, satirizing their entanglement with voyeurism and sexual tourism.

"I use the bison as a symbol representing the destruction of the Aboriginal way of life, but it also represents survival and cultural regeneration. The bison is central to Blackfoot being. And the bison as both icon and food source, as well as the whole history of its disappearance, is very much a part of my contemporary life."