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Out and About



Pride Toronto announces Parade Grand Marshal, Honoured Group and Youth Ambassador



Pride Toronto has announced its Honoured Positions for 2017, with the selections reflecting the importance of indigenous and two-spirit voices within the LGBTQ+ community, and honouring the tireless work done by groups based on their contribution to fighting discrimination and equality; violence, torture and abuse. As well as, criminalization of LGBTQ+ people, identities, and activities on a national and/or international level. The Grand Marshal, Honoured Group and Youth Ambassador lead the Pride Parade with distinction and act as an ambassador to represent their communities throughout the Pride festival.



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Kent Monkman – Photo Credit: RyanVanDerHout

The 2017 Grand Marshal will be **Kent Monkman**, a Canadian First Nations artist of Cree/Irish ancestry who identifies as both queer and a two-spirit. Kent is an established multimedia visual and performance artist (under the guise of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle) who uses conventional contemporary art to challenge colonial national myths about First Nations and traditional gender roles. Currently residing in Toronto, Kent has been touring his newest exhibition Shame & Prejudice: A Story of Resilience across Canada. Miss Chief can be seen in Toronto during Pride Month at Chateau Miss Chief: Pride Edition on June 20.



Rainbow Railroad is the 2017 Honoured Group. This Toronto-based charity founded in 2006 provides an escape for LGBTQ+ people who live in countries where they are persecuted for their sexual orientation. The charity's founders were inspired by the Underground Railroad, used in the 1800s by African Americans to escape slavery. Four staff and over 30 volunteers – including social workers, lawyers and partner organizations – help LGBTQ+ people around the world who are facing physical violence or an imminent threat of violence, imprisonment, or death. The group has received international attention through their efforts in 2017 to help save LGBTQ+ individuals from death camps in Chechnya.



Kiley May

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Youth Ambassador **Kiley May** is a Hotinonshón:ni Mohawk and Cayuga storyteller, actor and artist from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, and now lives in Toronto. Kiley is a two-spirit person, who also identifies as trans, queer and genderqueer and with the pronoun “they”. They became a facilitator and part of Supporting our Youth’s Human Rights Equity Access Team and The 519’s Trans Sex Workers Empowerment Project. They’ve also worked with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network and speaks to children on reserves. Kiley is a student at the Centre for Indigenous Theatre, training in acting, singing and dancing. They also enjoy creative arty things like writing, fashion, film and photography. And transitioning, which is an art form; their greatest art work to date.

A full listing of events can be found in the [Pride Month Calendar](#) and [Pride Guide](#).

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About the Author

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist with a focus on travel, lifestyle, entertainment and hospitality. He has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities. He enjoys discovering delicious eats, tasting spirited treats, and being mesmerized by musical beats.

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