



Image description: Watercolor painting of a buffalo on the plains of Alberta,
in the buffalo has a cut out of a male and female figure and stars

Art work by **Carly Nabess**

Welcoming people who are blind or have low vision to our show:

Where Have All The Buffalo Gone?

(<https://www.axistheatre.com/where-have-all-the-buffalo-gone>)

By Tai Amy Grauman

May 27 - 30

The Waterfront Theatre
(Granville Island)



Where Have All The Buffalo Gone? is a love story through the ages. Two star people and a Buffalo, fall to earth and continue to reconnect throughout history. Each scene is about one of seven different periods of Métis history. We bear witness to the emergence of the Métis nations across the plains, the robust colonization that arises from the fur trade, the disappearance of the buffalo and the political uprising of the Métis Association of Alberta. The story begins during creation amongst the stars and ends in the present day (2025).

The show specifically shares scenarios and scenes from the Callihoo family's stories, incorporating fiddle music, jigging and a life-like buffalo puppet. Inspired by historical events of the Métis people of Canada, this original play for young audiences explores the loves, the losses and the fight of Treaty 6's Métis people – and their love and kinship to the buffalo.

Why is it low vision friendly?

Because the show is based on storytelling, it will be easy to follow by just listening. At the beginning of each scene, the female performer will tell us what time period we are in now. There are some visual things, like shadows, or dancing but they support the story.

What is on the stage?

There is not much on the stage.

In the middle of the stage is a little platform with 2 steps on each side and a dome shaped screen, on that screen we project a background, usually a grassland and sometimes it is used for shadows, like a man with a gun when a character goes to war or a woman with a veil who is about to get married.

On either side are two small plants that sometimes have an Alberta Rose popping up from it.

Who is on the stage?

There are three performers

Lynny Bonin plays all the female roles, they are all descendants from the first characters. She is tall, with long dark hair with bangs, a sparkle in her big brown eyes and a bounce in her step. She could be mistaken for white but the performer and all the characters she plays are Métis.

Izzy Bull Bear belongs to the Siksika nation and plays all the male roles. He has light brown skin, brown eyes that often gaze off contemplating the possibilities and a gentle smile. His long dark wavy hair cascades over his strong, slender build and his movements show both his strength and his tenderness.

The third performer is a puppeteer, Danica Charlie is a mixed Nuu-chah-nulth/settler, she will be inside the buffalo puppet. The buffalo is almost life size with a large brown body and see through skin and patches of dark fur. Sometimes little lights go on inside its body, that is when the buffalo is actually in the stars.

These are all the scenes with some more descriptions

Scene One:

- We are in the stars (the Star World or Creation World). Bright stars fill the stage
- Buffalo (a person inside a large puppet) enters and explores the stage
- Iskwewo (Woman) enters, she is dressed in a simple blue dress.
- Her partner Napew (Man) enters; he is dressed in a simple white shirt and light brown pants.
- He asks her to marry him, she says yes, as he ties a traditional (red) Métis sash around her waist. There is a big colourful explosion/earthquake as Iskwewo falls to earth with her Buffalo; Napew promises to find her on earth.

Scene Two:

- Marie in the year 1830 (Alberta). She is wearing a long brown skirt and the Métis sash.
- She meets Louis Callihoo the famous Suntraveller from out east (Montreal). He is wearing a long brown coat with beads that hang off his sleeves and a long red scarf around his neck.
- They hunt for Buffalo, he asks her to go to the dance at the fort with him.
- They fall in love while dancing and he asks her to marry him, she says yes.

Scene Three:

- The year is 1850 (Fort Edmonton, Alberta) Marie, the daughter of Louis and Marie Callihoo enters with her Buffalo, she is wearing a colorful red (Kokum) shawl and the long brown skirt.
- Louis, her husband, fights in the Battle of Batoche and the same year Louis Riel is hanged for treason. He is in the ½ circle-screen shadow fighting in the battle poised with a rifle.

Scene Four:

- Marie Rose the great granddaughter of Marie Callihoo enters she is 16 years old. It is 1915 the Great War (WW I). She is wearing a bright yellow work apron.
- Jean, her fiancé, enters with a letter from the Canadian Government. He tells her that he must fight war to become a Canadian citizen. He is wearing a button up blue and white striped shirt and wears a cap.
- The buffalo puppet lights up with tiny light on the inside.

Scene Five:

- Marie Rose Beauregard is 12 years old and the great, great, great granddaughter of Marie Callihoo and Louis Callihoo. The year is 1925. She is wearing a simple grey dress.
- She and her boyfriend, Louis, are attending the Sacred Heart Residential School. He is wearing a short grey coat and grey wool knitted hat.
- A spirit Buffalo enters and guides them to the Star World when they die; it lights up from within.

Scene Six:

- Marie Rose Beauregard enters; her great, great grandmother, her great grandmother, her grandmother and her mother were all Maries. However, she goes by the name Rose. She is wearing a simple blue dress and the colourful red (Kokum) shawl.
- John, her boyfriend, enters; he is wearing a brown sports jacket, a cap and a blue scarf around his neck.
- He teaches her how to write, then asks her to marry him, she says yes, they dance and celebrate but he is pulled away from her to fight for their people's rights.

Scene Seven:

- Rose Marie Callihoo, the great, great, great granddaughter of Marie Callihoo and Louis Callihoo (The Suntraveller). It is 2025 and Marie is 16 years old and a student at Ardrossan High School in Alberta. She is wearing a jean jacket, beaded earrings and a simple blue dress.
- She meets Jean, another student, for the first time. They become friends and make plans to spend time together. He is wearing brown pants, a green hoodie, a yellow baseball cap (he wears it backwards) and bounces a basketball.
- At the end of the play, the spirit Buffalo enters (lit up) as it returns to the Star World.