PORTLAND'S PREMIER DRAG CLOWN

ATHONY HUDSON

CARLA ROSSI

PORTLAND'S PREMIER DRAG CLOWN
ANTHONY HUDSON (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Siletz) is an artist and writer perhaps best known as Portland, Oregon’s premier drag clown CARLA ROSSI, an immortal trickster whose attempts at realness almost always result in fantastic failure. Together they have been featured at the New York Theatre Workshop, La Mama (NYC), Portland and Seattle Art Museums, the Vancouver Queer Film Festival, the 2019 Portland Biennial, the Risk/Reward Festival, PICA’s TBA Festival, Melbourne’s Yirramboi Festival, and more, in addition to regularly hosting and programming QUEER HORROR - the only LGBTQ+ horror film screening series in the United States - at the historic Hollywood Theatre. Anthony was named a 2018 National Artist Fellow from the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, a 2018 Western Arts Alliance Native Launchpad Artist, a 2019 Oregon Arts Commission Fellow, a 2021 First Peoples Fund Fellow, a 2021 Nia Tero Pacific NW Artist Fellow, a 2022 Grand Ronde Indigenous Place Keeping Artist Fellow, and has received project support and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Performance Network, USArtists International, the Oregon Community Foundation, the Regional Arts and Culture Council, the Portland Art Museum & NW Film Center, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Ucross Foundation, Caldera Arts Center, and more. Anthony also co-hosts the weekly queer feminist horror podcast GAYLORDS OF DARKNESS with writer Stacie Ponder. Anthony is currently adapting their award-winning solo show Looking for Tiger Lily into book.
Queer Horror: The Ifs, Ands, and Butts

Description: Anthony Hudson walks you through the co-evolution of queerness and the horror genre to share that “queer horror” isn’t just a subgenre, it is the genre.

Purpose: to educate about the intrinsic relationship between queerness and horror films

Space Required: any class or lecture space

Additional Requirements: mics, audio visual, etc.: HDMI MacBook connection, projection, speakers/sound, mic

On Art, Camp, and Human Sacrifice: A Lecture

Description: Carla Rossi walks you through the intertwined history of camp aesthetics and human sacrifice as studied by her crack team of cat scientists in this farcical lecture that turns into a sincere artist talk by Anthony Hudson.

Purpose: to deliver a joyful drag-based lecture that contains an earnest look at how we make art and why

Space Required: any class or lecture space

Additional Requirements: mics, audio visual, etc.: HDMI MacBook connection, projection, speakers/sound, mic
My performance work confronts white supremacy, complacency, and the confusion of "mixed" identities - of living in-between, particularly sexually and racially. I'm interested in the edge - that line between satire and sincerity, between critique and reification - as a site where transgression and transformation occur. That's why I'm drawn to drag as artwork. Drag often reinforces heterosexist projections of what makes a "woman," but - as theorist Judith Butler argues - it can also expose the cracks in binary sexism by blurring (or queering) gender. Queer drag exposes gender as a performed historical construction - a set of appropriated cues, images, or gestures that culturally signify masculine and feminine - rather than as a biological reality.

The character I play, Carla Rossi, started as an art project in 2010 and has since turned into a full-fledged persona, body of work, and occupation. I prefer the term "drag clown" over "drag queen" because I'm not trying to emulate women. I'm more interested in Coyote-style trickery similar to the clown’s objective - a clown says one thing while doing the opposite. In that same way I use Carla as a tool for critique - Carla is my Coyote. When I perform as her I wear whiteface in direct allusion to whiteness, clowning, and as a critical inversion of blackface. I call her the ghost of white privilege (and, as she would say, that's funny because white privilege will never die). She's living whiteness.

Carla Rossi is my way of confronting whiteness within myself. She’s the intersection of my "mixed" half-Grand Ronde, half-German heritage - an awkward ancestral collision leading to the joke that I’ve got genocide down both bloodlines, but it varies as to who’s on which side of it. As a queer performer, Carla is also an avenue for publicly and politically negotiating gender in a heterosexist binary. I refer to her as a she, and she sees herself as a she, but I don’t think she has a sex. She is an ancient creature, a sexless, non human entity from mythologies past that has forgotten its origin. Like Dorothy in Oz, Carla comes to in contemporary America. But unlike Oz, Carla finds herself in a racist, heterosexist, misogynist, transphobic, body-phobic, ableist, sizeist, classist, capitalist, celebrity-driven society, and she wants in on the action. She thinks the best way to make it in this world is to become a famous white woman, an object for consumption. So far it's working for her.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Honor Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2022 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Indigenous Place Keeping Artist Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2022 PCC Carolyn Moore House Writing Residency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Portland Art Museum &amp; NW Film Center Re:Imagine Fund Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Ucross Foundation Native American Visual Artist Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>National Endowment for the Arts: Art Works - Theatre Grant for Looking for Tiger Lily at Artists Repertory Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Gay &amp; Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest Queer Hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Oregon Arts Commission Individual Artist Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Caldera Arts Center Artist in Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>APAP Artist Institute Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>USAArtists International Travel Grant (for Looking for Tiger Lily, Solo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Oregon Community Foundation Creative Heights Grantee (for Looking for Tiger Lily) Western Arts Alliance Native Launchpad Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>RACC Artist Focus Project Grant (for Clown Down: Failed to Mount)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Native Arts and Cultures Foundation National Artist Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Willamette Week’s Best of Portland - Third Best Local Celebrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>RACC Artist Focus Project Grant (for Looking for Tiger Lily, Solo)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anthony Hudson / Carla Rossi has five works currently available to tour, with each showcasing Anthony’s different skills and faces (and wigs) as a performer and theatre-maker: Looking for Tiger Lily unites Indigenous history and pop culture with a critical perspective; Carla Rossi Does Drag introduces audiences to Carla Rossi’s singular weirdness and the world she lives in; Queer Horror: Gravest Hits offers an offbeat glimpse at DIY horror filmmaking and queer community building; Clown Down 2: Clown Out of Water is a heartfelt puppet show and drag play about love, grief, and climate change; and Carla Rossi and Pepper Pepper are GLOOP is a gauntlet of psychedelic drag numbers like you’ve never seen before.

“This is about confrontation.”.... “This is about discomfort. This is inspired by my ancestors. I want to be unabashedly Native, unabashedly queer, unabashedly me.”

Anthony Hudson,
As genderqueer as it is white-appropriative, ‘Peter Pan’ is a film Hudson still strives to justify his love for, exalting it to a canon of queer classics like ‘Hedwig’ and ‘Rocky Horror.’ Why did a young Hudson learn by heart the musical number ‘Ugg-A-Wugg,’ which parodies Native American languages as funny-sounding gibberish? Who knows. Why does a young Hedwig enjoy singing to himself with his head in the oven?”

- A.L. Adams, Oregon ArtsWatch

Starring Anthony Hudson — the human vessel for Portland’s premiere drag clown Carla Rossi — LOOKING FOR TIGER LILY utilizes song, dance, drag, and video to put a queer spin on the ancestral tradition of storytelling. Asking what it means for a queer mixed Native person to experience their heritage through white normative culture as they recount growing up watching the 1960 production of “Peter Pan” featuring Sondra Lee’s blonde, blue-eyed “Indian Princess” Tiger Lily, Anthony (and Carla) draw from a songbook stretching across Disney’s “Pocahontas” to Cher’s “Half-Breed.” Not just autobiography, LOOKING FOR TIGER LILY is a coming-of-age story that’s more than cowboys versus Indians.

LOOKING FOR TIGER LILY’s 2016 Portland premiere was featured on OPB and individually profiled by the Portland Mercury, Portland Monthly, Willamette Week, the Portland Tribune, and Oregon ArtsWatch. LOOKING FOR TIGER LILY has been featured at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College, at the Talking Stick and Vancouver Queer Film Festivals in Vancouver, BC, at the Yirramboi Festival in Melbourne, at the Las Vegas Library District, and at PICA’s Time-Based Art Festival in Portland, OR.

LOOKING FOR TIGER LILY was originally funded in part by the Regional Arts & Culture Council and developed in partnership with the 2016 Risk/Reward Festival of New Performance.
Palikū Theatre, Kaneohe, HI  
Maui Arts & Cultural Center, Kahului, HI  
University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, HI  
UNO Fest, Intrepid Theatre, Victoria, BC (Virtual)  
Reflections of Native Voices Festival, La Mama, NYC (Virtual)  
Looking for Tiger Lily, UNO Fest, Intrepid Theatre, Victoria, BC (Virtual)  
Washington Center for the Performing Arts, Olympia, WA  
Clark County Library, Las Vegas, NV  
West Charleston Library, Las Vegas, NV

West Charleston Library, Las Vegas, NV  
Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR  
Vancouver Queer Film Festival, Vancouver, BC  
Yirramboi Festival at the Meat Market, Melbourne, VIC, AU  
Talking Stick Festival, Roundhouse Community Center, Vancouver, BC  
Taylor-Meade Performing Arts Center, Pacific University (OR)  
Hopkins Center for the Arts, Dartmouth College (NH)  
The Hollywood Theatre, Portland, OR  
2016 Risk/Reward Festival, Artists Repertory Theatre, Portland, OR

Touching on Disney’s Peter Pan, mid-century cigar-box Indian depictions, the absurdity of racial classification, and poignant family memories, Looking for Tiger Lily promises to be one of those rare identity-oriented shows that might actually appeal to audiences much broader than those directly implicated.

- Brett Campbell, Oregon Arts Watch
GLOOP is a lifestyle. GLOOP is a brand. GLOOP is a modality. GLOOP is Glamorous Ladies of Opulent Persuasion. GLOOP is Carla Rossi and Pepper Pepper—Portland, Oregon’s premier avant-garde drag duo—bringing you a 90-minute, partially improvised drag explosion sending up whiteness and wellness culture. In GLOOP, Carla and Pepper are slated to lead a psychedelic wellness seminar in Sedona until their party bus runs out of gas at [your venue here], where they’re left with no choice but to teach homodalities and hole-istic healing practices — and all before the mushrooms kick in. Tackling art therapy, micro-dosing, land acknowledgments, and demonstrating what it looks like when a drag queen has a meltdown while lipsyncing on an actively-inflating airbed, GLOOP will teach you how to overcome (and monetize) your limiting beliefs through a gauntlet of spectacularly unhinged drag from two of Portland’s most beloved grifters.
“GLOOP’s two queens sing, smoke, and strip their way through campy cabaret hits as they pair off and ride into the decrepit sunset with their rubber chicken baby, leaving in their wake a harsh mirror held up to their audience.”

–Kate Bredeson, Theatre Historian, Reed College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrepid Theater, Victoria, B.C.</td>
<td>2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APAP, New York, New York</td>
<td>2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Whiteside Theatre, Corvallis, OR</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Center Stage</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clown Down 2: Clown Out of Water finds Portland's premiere drag clown, Carla Rossi, trapped on a rock in the middle of the ocean while the sea level rises from melting ice caps. Alone with a seagull afflicted with IBS, Carla encounters the world's last surviving polar bear, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a death metal moon, and Liberace and Liza Minnelli (David Saffert and Jillian Snow Harris) in this multimedia drag farce that utilizes puppetry by Matthew Leavitt, interactive video, death metal by Jacob Summers, and kinetic sculpture by David Eckard—all as Carla navigates climate disaster and the terror and joy of living on an increasingly distressed planet.

"CD2[Clown Down 2] is Jim Hensen Apocalyptic Cult."
-Suzette Smith
Portland Mercury
Until now, much of Anthony Hudson's comedy could be described as dense, reference-heavy absurdism. That's still in CD[Clown Down: Clown Out of Water], but there's also a new layer of deft timing work—many gags repeated five to 15 times, with increasing audience antagonism. That's true clowning, with laughter pulled from a variety of emotion—from discomfort and revulsion as much as joy.

-Suzette Smith, Portland Mercury
Queer Horror isn’t just the United States’ only LGBTQ feature-length horror screening series—it started as a short film festival incorporating live drag and burlesque acts in a riotous multimedia program asking what it means to identify with the monster. Queer Horror: Gravest Hits presents the silliest and most ghoulish DIY international horror shorts by, starring, and about queers culled from four years of Queer Horror’s short film nights. Hosted by Portland’s premiere drag clown (and Queer Horror programmer) Carla Rossi and co-starring Portland drag and dance maven Pepper Pepper, Queer Horror: Gravest Hits will leave the audience shook, slain, and screaming for more. Queer Horror: Gravest Hits runs approximately 90 minutes, opens with a live one-act drag skit performed by Carla and Pepper, and features four video-backed drag numbers from the two between the films.

"Queer Horror...is a goddamn Portland treasure, featuring scary flicks with an LGBT bent." - Wm. Stephen Humphrey, The Portland Mercury
"Actively unites the horror genre with the LGBTQ community."

- Sam Pape, Willamette Week
QUEER HORROR is the only LGBTQ+ horror film screening series in the United States, since 2015. Hosted and programmed by Portland’s premier drag clown Carla Rossi (Anthony Hudson) and featuring a marketplace by artist Jason Edward Davis, QUEER HORROR screens bimonthly at the historic Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Oregon, and tours nationally at theatrical venues while also representing at horror conventions.

Consistently selling out a century-old moviehouse full of nearly 400 queers and allies for rowdy screenings of films containing queerness in front of and behind the lens, and opening with staged preshow one-acts starring Portland drag and burlesque All-Stars, QUEER HORROR celebrates horror as a queer genre — not a subgenre — and asks what it means to identify with the monster.

Maybe it's the fact that queer people are so often relegated to shadows of otherness that horror is more immediately relatable for us. We grew up with boogeymen. We've lived with boogeymen. Goblins and ghosts are a welcome escape from real-life monstrosities. (We are the monsters, mister.)

Or maybe it's the fact that horror has always been intrinsically queer. From the early work of the Gothicists to F.W. Murnau, James Whale, and Daphne Du Maurier to Patricia Highsmith, Clive Barker, Elvira, Don Mancini, and so many more, horror is shaped by queer creators who first formed the collective cultural imagery with which we dream.

“Watching Carla Rossi perform is like watching a chameleon change colors... a testament to her prodigious theatrical and vocal skill... largely satirical, taking jabs at pervasive institutional problems with a deceptively cheery tone.”

- Sofia Gonzalez, Rodriguez, Stanford Daily
“Anthony’s work as Carla Rossi is dazzling and important because together they fearlessly claw at white supremacy and gnaw at this city and country’s devotion to capitalism, gender roles, and racism.”

- Kate Bredeson, Theater Historian, Reed College