

Artist Statement - Napi and the rock/ Buffalo Herder

The banner works I have created are in response to my Blackfoot History & Culture in the area of Calgary. There is a Blackfoot story of Old man Napi and the spirit of Rock who got into a dispute and rock chased Napi down the mountain. I remember this story as a child and my mother would tell me of this large Boulder chasing a Blackfoot Man down the hill. The story was such a funny story and made me think about respect. Especially respect for the land and things around us that have given their way to allow our peoples to thrive and live on this land we occupy as Alberta, Canada. I created an image that I felt was a reflection of this story but in a more contemporary Idea using HO Scale Train Models. Creating diorama of a contemporary Napi with a suitcase and tight pants and jacket meandering home from work with the unexpected "Rock" behind him. The work takes the humour of the story and allows a play on the Idea of Napi and the Rock, as he is oblivious to its impact while walking on lush green soil that looks like a downtown park. I guess in this I would leave it to the viewer or audience to make a decision on what will happen and why?

Buffalo Herder Banner was taken from my Blackfoot Name of *liniiwahkiimah* (Buffalo Herder), which comes from the men who would ride Buffalo off the Jumps in southern Alberta. I created another model depicting Buffalo frolicking through some nice pruned hedges that reflect a sense of City landscape. The image juxtaposes, the City landscape of nice urban design with these massive creatures that once roamed the North American prairies and were the main food source of the Blackfoot people. As a Contemporary Blackfoot Artist I wanted to show the respect I have as an Artist to the First Nations of this area but also pay homage to our culture and its Contemporary life.

- Terrance Houle