



Montreal Pride shows its true colours

From RuPaul's Drag Race alumni to the big parade, this year's celebrations are billed as the largest LGBTQ Pride in Canada with good reason.

RICHARD BURNETT, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE Updated: August 9, 2018

A traditional moment of silence has been observed annually at Montreal Pride parades since 1993. When thousands of marchers and onlookers raise their fists high in the air to honour LGBTQ pioneers and those the community has lost to violence and AIDS, it becomes so quiet you can hear a pin drop.

Then, just as dramatically, the cocktail party begins again. You can hear the Dykes on Bikes and semi-trucks fire up their engines as loud music pumps from parade floats with dancing muscle boys and drag queens.

Indeed, the celebration has become so popular that an estimated 2.7 million people attended Montreal Pride's historic Canada Pride edition last year.

This summer, Montreal Pride is being billed as the largest LGBTQ Pride in Canada and will be centred at Parc des Faubourgs from Aug. 9 to 19.

"I think overall attendance will be close to last year," said founding president Éric Pinault. "For the first time in our history, we had to close registration for the parade because there were so many entries."

Over at Cinéma du Parc, the **Quebec Gay Archives** displays 15 classic AIDS posters in the lobby from noon to 8:30 p.m. daily through Aug. 31. Also at the cinema, Aug. 15 at 7 p.m., the Quebec Gay Archives hosts a lecture in French by sociologist Gabriel Girard titled HIV/AIDS in Francophone Contexts: Challenges of Memory, Challenges of Knowledge. It will be followed by the world première of the documentary John Banks: une vie d'engagement, about the legendary Montreal gay activist who in 1979 organized Montreal's first Pride march, which drew all of 52 people. Banks will be present for the screening.

Montreal Pride runs from Thursday, Aug. 9 to Sunday, Aug. 19. For more information, see fiertemontrealpride.com.

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