

Pride Month



Ilona Verley

Ilona Verley made history when she sashayed her way onto *Canada's Drag Race* – not because of her fiery entrance or fierce monochromatic, pastel drag looks, but by bringing Indigenous and Two Spirit representation to the show. The Nlaka'pamux drag queen identifies as Two Spirit and trans and non-binary. She was eliminated in the 7th episode of the show but was invited with all other contestants to appear in the season finale. She used the platform to draw attention to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women with a look that blended a First Nations jingle dress hands painted red (red handprints are used to symbolize missing and murdered Indigenous women).

“Being on the show helped me connect with my inner self that I was always trying to ignore,” Verley was quoted as saying in a profile in *Vogue* in August 2020. “I went in there being very open about viewing myself as non-binary, and by the end of it, I walked away feeling confident and understanding of myself. I was able to come home, have a conversation with my mom, and say, ‘I’m trans.’”



References

Nast, C. (2020, August 31). Indigenous Queen Ilona Verley On Bringing Two-Spirit Representation to Canada's Drag Race. *Vogue*. <https://www.vogue.com/article/ilona-verley-canadas-drag-race-indigenous-queen>