

ARTURO GARCIA FINE ART

PRESENTS

TATANKA: *The Spirit of the Land*



Thundering across the plains, the sound of **bison** can be heard from miles as they run in the thousands... two hundred years ago there were millions of them. They walked incessantly searching for new valleys of tender grass... It's indomitable **spirit** imposing as the sound of its hooves claim **power** and reign... to the *Native Americans*, sharing the lands with *Tatanka* was a sacred and respected habitat, but human greed put an end to that, as it does with most things he runs across with...

An estimated 20 to 30 million bison once dominated the North American landscape from the Appalachians to the Rockies, from the Gulf Coast to Alaska. Habitat loss and unregulated shooting reduced the population to just 1,091 by 1889. Today, approximately 500,000 bison live across North America. Historically, the American bison played an essential role in shaping the ecology of the Great Plains. They graze heavily on native grasses and disturb the soil with their hooves, allowing many plant and animal species to flourish.

Though **bison** once roamed across much of North America, today they are **“ecologically extinct”** as a wild species throughout most of their historic range, except for a few national parks and other small wildlife areas.

Ta·tan·ka--*tatanka* is a Lakota word that literally means “Bull Buffalo.”

I started painting **bison** in 2014 and had a **powerful experience** doing so. I could feel their enormous spirit meet mine so I decided to learn more about the largest land mammal of North America, and embarked on a journey that led me to follow the steps of *Tatanka* through its sad history. As of the beginning of 2016 I have painted nothing but **bison** for several meaningful reasons: **One**, as a tribute to this country's spirit animal whose strong feet roamed the glorious prairies of the North American landscape; **Two**, because I'm against all forms of animal annihilation. In recorded history, mankind has been the dominant species over animals; we've eaten them, hunted them for fun, locked them up and mistreated them. As result many species have gone extinct as it almost happened to the **American Buffalo** (*bison bison*). **Three**, because they inspire me to revive their soul through art, and **Four**, because it gives me an opportunity to thank the spirit of this land for being a host in this journey we call *life*. I hope you enjoy it.



**AMERICAS LATINO
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