

# Quebec artists to protest Alberta oil and gas industry

## Group plans to hand out traffic tickets for socially unacceptable transportation

AMY STEELE

A performance artist and activist group from Quebec will be inviting Calgarians to hand out tickets to owners of SUVs and Hummers for driving environmentally unfriendly vehicles on January 18-20 as part of its participation in One Yellow Rabbit's High Performance Rodeo.

The group, called Action Terroriste Socialement Acceptable (ATSA), will also stage an art installation outside the Epcor Centre on January 18 that will feature a blown-up SUV with a "video manifesto" being screened inside it.

Annie Roy, one of the co-founders of the ATSA, says the goal is simple.

"We want people to think about the hyper-dependency on oil. It's a reflection on the destruction we're doing — pollution and war," she says.

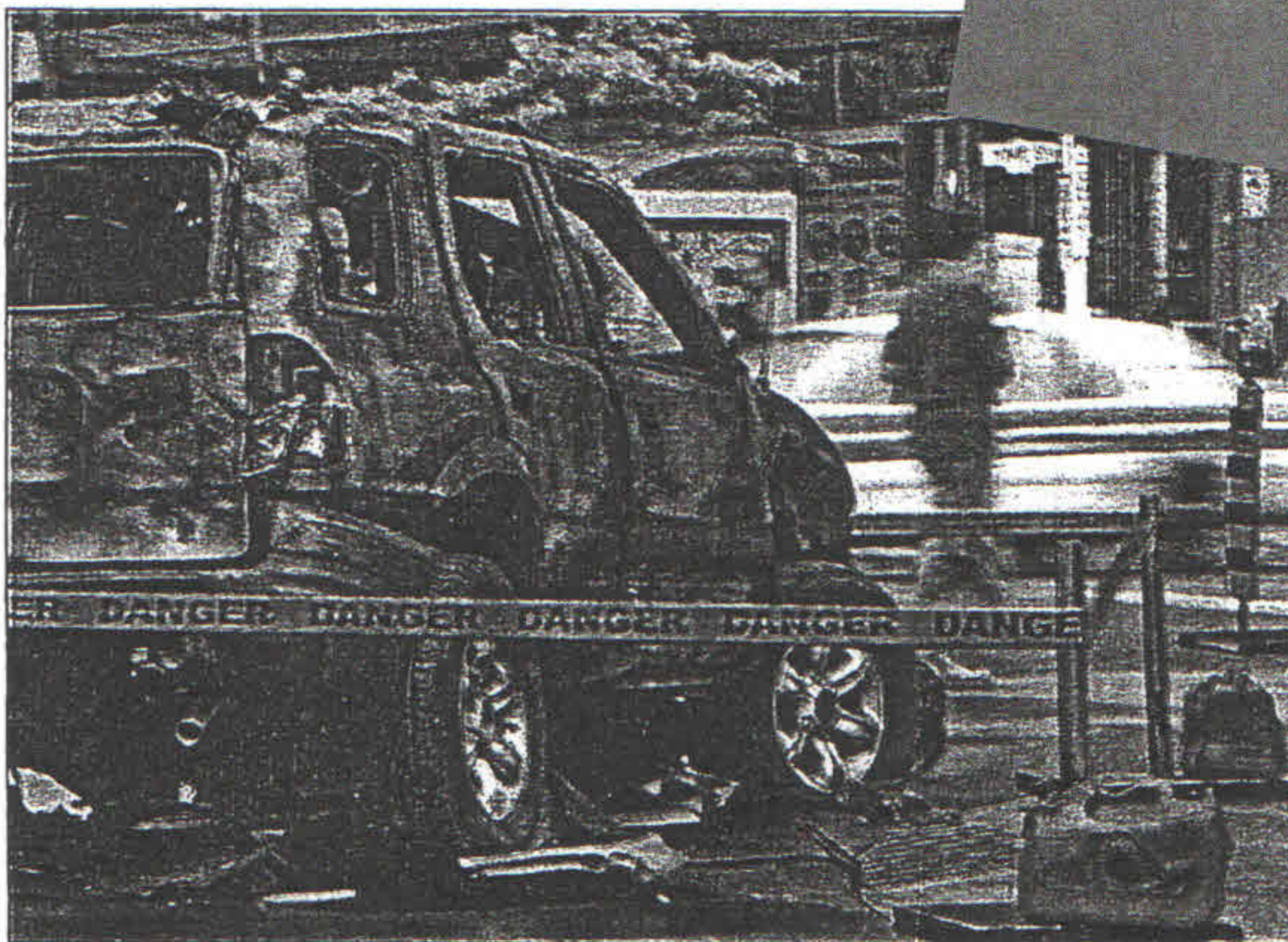
"It's an action with no vandalism. We don't break anything. It's just a matter of saying the authority isn't playing its role so maybe citizens should take action. And maybe if you have the right to buy a Hummer and idle right in front of me and nobody's doing anything maybe I have the right to give you a citizen's statement of offence, because I have to breathe to live. I want my kids to live properly and stop asthma. For all these reasons we have to put out the alarm," she says.

Roy says ATSA has handed out "citizen statements of offence" and staged the art installation in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver, but this is the first time it has come to Calgary. She's excited about bringing the group's activism and performance art to the epicentre of the oil and gas industry in Canada.

"It's the most relevant city in Canada to do it. We were very excited to come here. It's very courageous. We know we're going to shock a lot of people because you live from oil," she says.

Roy points out Alberta's rapid oilsands expansion is leading to increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the same time as Canada is supposed to be reducing GHGs in order to meet Kyoto targets.

"We all know (Prime Minister Stephen Harper) is protecting the oil industry and that's why Kyoto is not going anywhere right now. It's really a shame and I would have to say we're getting criminal towards the planet. It's very important to be in Calgary. It's the most important city for us in Canada," she says.



**Gas guzzlers beware — artist activist group brings its charred climate change protest to Canada's oil and gas epicentre**

ATSA will be handing out "citizen statements of offence" to encourage "socially acceptable transport" at Broken City from 5 to 7 p.m. on January 18. The tickets are for vehicles that have a fuel efficiency of less than 15 litres per 100 kilometres, as well as idling vehicles. The group is also offering a screening of the film *Refugees of the Blue Planet*, which is about environmental refugees, on January 19 at 5 p.m. in the Engineered Air Theatre. The film includes footage of Alberta landowners who have had to leave their land due to oil and gas activity. There will be a panel discussion afterwards with Chris

Severson-Baker, of the Pembina Institute and ATSA members. Roy says Suncor Energy and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers were invited to the panel, but declined the invitation.

"Our art is there for discussion and to provoke people a little bit in their habits and to try to think a little bit more ahead," she says. "We like to put it right downtown, right at the middle of our rich cities... and see how people can make the links between what we live here and how it affects others in the world."

For more information on ATSA events go to [www.atsa.qc.ca](http://www.atsa.qc.ca).