

# Flex This

How strongman Teddy Kalidas already won

June 1, 1994 By Richard Perez-Feria

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Teddy Kalidas is that perfect example of erotic icons: The homosexual bodybuilder. To talk about Kalidas and not describe his all-too-obvious physical attributes would be ridiculous, for those same attributes are the reason Kalidas will be competing for the bodybuilding title in Gay Games IV to be held later this month in New York City. This icon, however, is a defiant one because Kalidas has AIDS, and his body is generously covered with Kaposi's sarcoma (KS) lesions. For those who view physical perfection as synonymous with no hair, no scars, no blemishes (you know who you are), Kalidas fiercely challenges those criteria. How can a sexy, desirable man have AIDS and KS? Ask him.

"I'll tell you why relationships so often don't work out for gay men," says Kalidas, who himself is romantically involved. "A lot of gay men are out there looking for bodies, not people."

Kalidas credits motivational workshops conducted by Sally Fisher, the co-director of the Actor's Institute in New York City, as well as Eastern religions as the principal reasons why he is still alive.

Ask this 34-year-old who lives in a Florida ashram if he believes in God, and you hear that cynical mysticism in full bloom. "I believe in many gods. I have all of my bases covered."

But his credo seems to flow directly out of Fisher's Northern Light workshops. "I realized that life is truly amazing," says Kalidas. "I realized that the quality of my life is determined by how I choose to live it. In Northern Lights we say that 'as long as your heart is beating, you're alive and you have choices.' That is the simplest of truths."

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