

Tranny-Dance

Provocative cabaret serves up fresh cuts

BY RACHEL HOWARD
Of The Examiner Staff

Here in the Bay Area where gay culture is part of everyday life, it was still possible to attend the mildly titled San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Dance Festival and be shocked by the explicitly sexual content.

But with Fresh Meat, a "transgressive cabaret" of dance and performance art running today and Wednesday at ODC Theater, you know what you're getting.

"It's definitely an in-your-face statement to those who would exploit our bodies," says lead producer Sean Dorsey. "The phrase 'fresh meat' has been used to

objectify women's bodies, queer bodies, transgendered bodies, bodies of color. This is about reclaiming power over our bodies, and it's also meant to celebrate our sauciness and sassiness and reflect that this is a fun event."

Dorsey, a transgendered choreographer who performs solos of striking lyricism, leaped into action when he learned both the Lesbian and Gay Dance Festival and TrannyFest were on hiatus this year (TrannyFest is now a Fresh Meat co-sponsor, along with the National Queer Arts Festival).

But Fresh Meat will have its own, er, flavor.

"The Lesbian and Gay Dance Festival carved out a lot of space for this project to happen, and we're thankful to them for bringing together the queer, transgendered and dance communities," says Dorsey, who performed in the festival last year. "But some of us felt there was a lack of true

representation in terms of work by artists of color and transgendered artists. The dancers tended to be white and traditionally gendered."

Expect a full spectrum at this new showcase, which Dorsey already is planning to make an annual event. The lineup includes not only familiar fixtures on the modern dance scene like dance theater duo Hagen and Simone and the always outrageous troupe STEAMROLLER, but also all-female breakdance company Sisterz of the Underground, "homo-hop" musicians Deep Dickollective, and East Bay vogue stylists House of Vogue, along with 11 other com-

Fresh Meat

is at 8 p.m. today and Wednesday at ODC Theater, 3153 17th St., San Francisco. Tickets are \$12-\$15. Call (415) 863-9834.



Come to the cabaret: From left, Shanna Virago, Tina D'Elia, Jesse Bie and Sean Dorsey are among the Fresh Meat performers.

panies and performers.

Dorsey's work is also on the program. "It almost feels riskier to perform my work for queer and transgendered audiences, because bodies read as butch aren't supposed to articulate themselves in ways that aren't purely athletic, in ways that include softness," he says.

He generally choreographs solos because he has a hard time finding "gender variant and con-

sciously gendered" dancers to set his work on. He says that in teaching occasional classes for queer and transgendered dancers he's found that "it's a very vulnerable thing for them to express their bodies in this way."

"We make identity-based art not because it's all we have to talk about, but because we still don't see anything like us in the dance world," he says.

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