

'Fresh Meat' offers plenty to chew on

by Zak Szymanski

It's back. Renowned for its rhythmic and impassioned debut last year, the Bay Area's queer multimedia and multidisciplinary variety show, "Fresh Meat," returns to the ODC Theater this Friday through Sunday to showcase its "sexy smorgasbord of talent," according to organizers.

Part of the National Queer Arts Festival, Fresh Meat made news in 2002 for not only offering one of the most diverse lineups of any LGBT production around, but for redefining the artistic standards of what one might expect from such an inclusive, grassroots effort.

Many local activists will appear on stage to showcase their performance sides; several artists hold day jobs at agencies such as Community United Against Violence and Proyecto ContraSIDA Por Vida.

Homo hip-hop, tranny glam rock, trailblazing modern dance, all-girl breakdance, steamy tango, power femme spoken word, and the world's first transgender gospel choir will all be featured.

"For me, Fresh Meat is a new-school revolutionary trans and queer variety show," said Shawna Virago, a CUAUV advocate by day and rock star by night. "It's rewriting the rules of what kind of artists should share a bill."

Sean Dorsey, Fresh Meat's founder and producer, concurred.

"Queer and trans performance companies and projects tend to isolate disciplines," said Dorsey, an acclaimed modern dancer. "I



"Fresh Meat" founder Sean Dorsey

wanted to create something that would bring breakdance together with modern dance, gospel together with hip-hop, and tango side by side with rock and roll."

Fresh Meat headliners include Dorsey; the rock band Shawna Virago and the Deadly Nightshade Family; the women of color troupe Harlem Shake Burlesque; tango duo Jose Navarrete and Debby Kajayama; JenRO; trans-rapper Katastrophe, the trans-masculine troupe Other Brothers; the dance company Steamroller; breakdancers Sisterz of the Underground; and the gospel choir Transcendence. Emcees are Veronica Combs of Liquid Fire and hip-hop spoken word artist Marcus Van, who will also be performing together for the first time. DJ Trinity will spin tunes.

Tickets to Fresh Meat are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door, and are available by calling (415) 863-9834 or visiting www.ticketweb.com. Fresh Meat runs June 20-22 at 8 p.m. at the ODC Theater, 3153 17th Street, at Shotwell. The production also needs volunteers; e-mail freshmeatperformance@hotmail.com for more information. ▼