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2014 Fresh Meat Festival Brings Award-Winning LGBT Performers to the Stage



Gender-bending ballroom, a gay vogue-off, transgender hip-hop, gravity-defying trapeze, thundering taiko and queer Bomba?

It must be the Fresh Meat Festival of transgender and queer performance—the only event of its kind in the US, and a sold-out success 13 years running.

Fresh? Very. Even after 13 years, the Fresh Meat Festival continues to be the most innovative and celebrated LGBT performance festival in the nation. Each year, the Festival re-invents itself with fresh talent, new genres and award-winning artists.

And tickets? Get them NOW, because these tickets will sell out fast.

This year, the outrageously popular Festival—already celebrated for its world-class artistry and sold-out crowds—literally provides the stage for Lana and Andy Wachowski's new Netflix series, *Sense8*.

The famed *Matrix* trilogy directors are filming a scene for their new TV series at this year's Fresh Meat Festival. Festival audiences will get to be a part of

television history as out transwoman Lana Wachowski pairs up with out transman Festival director Sean Dorsey to bring San Francisco's transgender and queer talent and community to the screen.

Director Lana Wachowski says, "I am thrilled to film at this year's Fresh Meat Festival — and to show the world the electric energy and talent of San Francisco's transgender and queer community."

Dorsey adds, "Dress to see and be seen! Our audiences have a lot of fun...and this year, they will be a part of an international television event!"

This year's Fresh Meat Festival is highlighted by national stars including hip hop artist/rapper Katastrophe (Brooklyn), stunning trapeze artist Cohdi Harrell (New Mexico) and International Same-Sex Ballroom Champions Ernesto Palma and Robbie Tristan (New York).



"You don't get this caliber of talent and diversity of genres anywhere else," says Festival director Sean Dorsey, "The Fresh Meat Festival is the only festival of its kind in the US."

Katastrophe, originally from the Bay Area, returns to Fresh Meat for his last public performance. The internationally-acclaimed transman rapper describes his songs for Fresh Meat as "high energy, funny and sexy. I'm so thrilled to be performing at Fresh Meat again! It's such an inspiring and eclectic group of artists."

The 2014 line-up also features Annie Danger, Las Bomberas de la Bahia, Sean Dorsey Dance, Shawna Virago, Jocquese Whitfield/Vogue & Tone, Star Amerasu, Saturn Rising, and Maikaze Daiko (with special guests Rachel Eborá and Kristy Oshiro).

San Francisco audiences know Shawna Virago well: she is a singer-songwriter whose songs are pieces of powerful, astute, sexy genius. Virago says, "The Fresh Meat Festival is like the LGBT community's Opera or Ballet. This is the event we look forward to all year long. This is the event we get dressed up for. This is the event that inspires us and makes us proud."

The female-power continues: Las Bomberas de la Bahia is one of the world's only all-female Bomba ensembles. Bomba, one of the traditional music and dance styles of Puerto Rico, originated amongst the slaves who worked the sugar cane fields. Longtime member Vanessa Camarena says, "It's incredible to share the stage with such talented performers from such a wide array of genres. And every year, everyone brings it at Fresh Meat!"

International Same-Sex Latin Ballroom Champions Ernesto Palma and Robbie Tristan fly in from New York to premiere two works, including a piece set to Eurovision Song Contest winner, Conchita Wurst.

"Ernesto and Robbie are FIERCE," says Dorsey. "They are so graceful and clean and sensual. It's powerful to see two men dancing Latin ballroom." Sean Dorsey Dance will perform a highly-anticipated excerpt from their upcoming show "The Missing Generation," which explores the impact of the loss of part of an entire generation of gay and transgender people to AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s. "The Missing Generation" is a poignant, necessary work full of heart, beauty, pain and wisdom.

While the Festival has attracted national acclaim for what happens onstage, what happens afterwards is also a big draw.

"We have after-parties in the lobby every night," explains Production Coordinator Eric Garcia, "DJ Miz Rowdy, go-go dancers, drinks, our legendary photo booth—it's a big celebration!"

With hip-hop, taiko, modern dance, ballroom, bomba, voguing, live music...there is something for everyone at this year's Fresh Meat Festival.

"Everyone is welcome!" says Dorsey, adding that ASL interpretation will be provided at the June 20 performance.

Everybody may be welcome, but only those with tickets will be let in! Get those tickets in advance: this event always sells out.

Fresh Meat Festival will happen June 19-21, 8pm @ Z Space (450 Florida, SF). For tickets and more information, please visit: www.freshmeatproductions.org