

Fresh Meat Well Done

The Fresh Meat Fest Celebrates 5 Years

By Petra Voorman

If you're one of the three San Francisco queers who doesn't know about Fresh Meat, here's a little primer: Fresh Meat is a big annual festival of transgender and queer performance goodness. And I do mean goodness. Homo hip hop, transgender modern dance, gender-defying trapeze, thundering taiko drumming, queer burlesque, tranny glam-rock and more talent than you've seen on the queer stage for a long, long time.

And if you haven't yet treated yourself to a slice of this ... er, meat, then this is the year. Next week, Fresh Meat celebrates its fifth anniversary with a bang—with special guests including the internationally acclaimed transsexual author Kate Bornstein, in a rare Bay Area appearance..

"I wanted to celebrate our fifth year with some major fireworks" says Fresh Meat Productions' Artistic Director Sean Dorsey, "...it's a dream come true to present Kate Bornstein—she is a total hero to so many of us and an absolute legend.."

Bornstein is the author of the wildly successful books *Gender Outlaw* and *My Gender Workbook* and is widely credited with bringing transgender issues to the world stage. At Fresh Meat 2006, Bornstein will perform the world premiere of *XX: Reflections On My 20th Birthday*.

Bornstein calls the work "a new spoken word piece I've written especially for attendees of the 5th



Anniversary of the Fresh Meat Festival. It was written on the 20th anniversary of my waking up girl back in 1986." Bornstein will reflect on what it means to no longer be a teenager, and on her observations coming out and growing older in the trans-world over the past two decades.

And the list goes on and only gets juicier. Wanna feast your eyes on a trapeze dancer / contortionist (Miguel Chernus-Goldstein) who takes gender bending to a whole new level? How 'bout a sword-wielding black-belt Goth tranny dyke addressing the tensions between 'transsexual' and 'lesbian'? L.A.'s Ryka Aoki de la Cruz delivers the goods.

Wanna know what it's like to come out as trans to Grandma (in her hospital bed, no less)? Check out New York's Imani Henry, a massively talented actor/storyteller.

And then there's the nation's first all-queer, Asian American youth hip

hop dance troupe (DowneFX). Or an all-girl breakdance crew that will literally make your jaw drop (kids, don't try this at home—leave it to the Extra Credit Crew)..

Fall in love with Shawna Virago, tranny rock icon, all over again. Or the trans community's other heart-throb, hip hop king Katastrophe.

And lest we forget Fresh Meat's head honcho, Sean Dorsey. At Fresh Meat, Dorsey performs a wickedly funny dance theater solo that turns the very serious phenomenon of childhood

'gender correction therapy' on its head. Dorsey plays a self-assured transgendered 13-year-old artfully dodging his guidance counselor's attempts to 'redirect' his gender expression.

I would be remiss to leave unmentioned the positively unparalleled cruising opportunities at Fresh Meat: dressed to the nines or dressed down, this audience is packed, diverse and hot—trannies, gay boys, dykes, queers, artists, dancers. Nosh with the performers at receptions after the shows on Thursday and Friday..

The Fresh Meat Festival promises an unforgettable time and is not to be missed—but get your tickets in advance: these shows sell out.

Fresh Meat 2006 takes place June 15 and June 16, 8pm and June 17, 7pm and 10pm at ODC Theater (3153 17th Street @ Shotwell). Tickets: \$15 (415-863-9834 / www.odctheater.org) Info: www.freshmeatproductions.org ▼