

## Identifying trends & new work

Dance

by Joe Landini



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One of the highlights of Pride Month is always the *Fresh Meat Festival*, an annual performance fest developed by local trans-choreographer Sean Dorsey. *Fresh Meat* is celebrating its sixth season and continues to capture a lot of what's new in both Bay Area and national contemporary performance. In recent years, there's been a real challenge to identify how contemporary performance is evolving, and projects like *Fresh Meat* are helping push the cultural envelope.



Na Lei Hulu I Ka Wekiu. Photo: Julie Mau

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This year's festival continues to feature underrepresented communities, creating a

cultural melting pot that includes spoken word, glam rock, aerial dance, hip hop, taiko, hula, and Afro-Colombian dance. Says *Fresh Meat* director Sean Dorsey, "This year's artists were all selected because each of them inspires me personally. There's going to be this amazing confluence of traditional and new performance."

Both the trans and queer performance communities have developed significantly in recent years, and the new work being produced is more sophisticated and skilled. Says Dorsey, "I am so excited to witness the burgeoning trans performance communities that are growing now across the country. There is an amazing confidence and dynamism there. Our community has endured and suffered so much, being able to celebrate ourselves now is a blessing."

The focus of the festival this year has been on world premieres, including new work by Na Lei Hulu I Ka Wekiu, Julia Serano, Colombian Soul, Freeplay Dance Crew and a new dance-theatre piece by Dorsey titled *Bully*. "The *Fresh Meat Festival* has really become recognized as a leader and on the cutting edge of what's hot in trans and queer performance. We scour the Bay Area and the nation, this year with an eye for trans and queer folks performing traditional and new forms," says Dorsey.

*June 14-15 (Thurs., Fri. at 8 p.m.):* Sean Dorsey (contemporary dance), Colombian Soul, Triple Threat Taiko, Freeplay Dance Crew, Shawna Virago (glam rock), Miguel Chernus-Goldstein (aerial dance), Julia Serano, Imani Henry and Ryka Aoki de la Cruz (spoken word).

*June 16 (Sat. at 7 & 10 p.m.):* Dorsey, Colombian Soul, Taiko Ren, Na Lei Hulu I Ka Wekiu, Virago, Chernus-Goldstein, Serano, Henry and Aoki de la Cruz.