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The Voice of the Rest

#REFRESH YOURSELF WHEN THE 2020 FRESH MEAT FESTIVAL GOES ONLINE

by [Peter Wong](#) on June 16, 2020



House of Energi

Like this year's Frameline Film Festival, Coronavirus lockdown has pushed Fresh Meat Festival Artistic Director Sean Dorsey to take his annual live queer art performance celebration online. The change of "venue" is just one of the differences with this 19th edition of Dorsey's festival. It's expanded from a frantic weekend of activity into an event running from June 18-27. Tickets to the

festival's shows will be free. Instead of going to a performance space, festival attendees will catch the Fresh Meat shows on Vimeo.

But the biggest change will be what this year's #reFRESH programs entail. The five #reFRESH programs present highlights from past festivals, material previously unavailable to general audiences. The really dedicated Fresh Meat attendee who watches all the #reFRESH programs will see the work of 31 different artists and troupes on display. Closed captioning will be provided for deaf and hard-of-hearing attendees.

Whether live or on video, the Fresh Meat Festival offers far more than the reductive phrase "transgender and queer variety show" suggests. The event provides a large creative tent for gender non-conforming artists from across the U.S. to publicly ply a variety of artistic disciplines. The festival's existence also delivers a cultural bird flip to the otherdom-pushing transphobes and homophobes working to roll back queer rights. Two prominent examples of such enemies of queerness are President Bunker Boy and writer J.K. Rowling.

The viewing schedule for this year's Fresh Meat Festival matches attendees' level of interest in the event. For those who just want to see highlights from the 2019 festival, two programs of those performances will run from June 18-27, aka the duration of this year's festival. For those interested in getting a taste of the pre-2019 festivals, the material for the June 18-20 #reFRESH compilations come from those earlier events. Unlike the 2019 compilations, these pre-2019 festival highlights programs are available for one day only. But whichever #reFRESH show is caught online, an opportunity to win a door prize will be available for viewers. Also, DJ La Frida on Soundcloud provides a music mix that viewers can groove to before or after a #reFRESH show.

Veteran festival attendees can look forward to getting reacquainted with such talents as the dance and disability challenging AXIS Dance Company, the Washington D.C.-based Vogue dance group House Of Energi, and Xicanx trans singer-songwriter StormMiguel Florez. Those previously interested in the festival but unwilling to make the trek out to such venues as Z Space or the Brava Theatre Center now lack an excuse to procrastinate indulging their curiosity. In the comfort of their homes, attendees can see jaw-dropping vogue, transgender opera, and queer bomba dance and music. Hopefully, the gravity-defying trapeze acts will still impress on the small screen.

If you're ready to watch a Fresh Meat Festival #reFRESH show, the place to get tickets is www.freshmeatproductions.org. Pick the show(s) you want to attend and order your ticket(s). Each registrant can order only one ticket per show. Once you've registered, you'll be sent a screener link(s) on the day of the show(s) you're attending. Except for the 2019 #reFRESH shows, the link(s) will work for only that day's show.

Yes, the tickets to this year's Fresh Meat Festival are free. But given that this festival exists to challenge anti-trans backlash, donations to the TGI Justice project will definitely be appreciated.

(For further information about the individual 2020 #reFRESH programs and background information regarding the performing artists, go to <http://freshmeatproductions.org/fresh-meat-festival-2020/> .)