La MaMa’s Squirts 2023: Generations of Queer Performance

Curated by Paris Alexander
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Starring:
Members of the Haus of Quench: Klondyke, Polyester, Vague Static, and Spawn
Once Members of The Blacklips Performance Cult: Flloyd and Michael Cavadias
Glenn Marla, Egyptt Labeija, Untitled Queen, Voxigma Lo, Xaddy Addy, Brenda, Linda Simpson, Julie J, Kevin Aviance

Production Manager/Creative Producer: Buffy
Stage Manager/ TD: Gineiris Garcia
Production Assistant: Gabe Gomez
Sound Supervisor: Diego Las Heras
Lighting Supervisor: Izzy Olgaard
Lighting Designer: Zach Zwart

Original Poster Image Shot and Edited by MTHR TRSA. Poster Modeled, Conceived and Designed by Paris
Each year, *La MaMa’s Squirts* gathers the most exciting voices from New York City’s queer performance world, across the generations.

A note from the curator: A few months ago, I got into a lengthy argument with a friend and curator who claimed that drag is not art, which happened right around the same time as the drag ban took effect in Tennessee, and continuous legislation has been pushed that criminalizes drag artists and trans and gnc people. As a drag and nightlife artist myself, who has incorporated drag into my performance and life long before I started doing drag shows, I have often found the lack of institutional/art world support for drag to be baffling, especially when drag encompasses so many different forms of art into one.

Also around this time, I got the opportunity to see a retrospective exhibition at Participant Inc. of 29 plays by Blacklips Performance Cult, and was blown away. The plays were raw, visceral, witty and grotesque; deep, sometimes under-rehearsed, but always captivating. Only one group today could make me think of the world that Blacklips crafted, and that is the Haus of Quench—a collective of queer artists in Brooklyn who are constantly throwing their work in new and unexpected directions, full of life, originality, talent and camp, and just as raw (and sometimes messy) as the performances I saw in the exhibition. While I was at the show, I learned that many of the former Blacklips members are present and still making art to this day; so an attempt at connecting the two worlds of Quench and Blacklips was inevitable, especially when I found out 500 million years old Squirts alumnus Claywoman was a member!

*Squirts* this year is about the persistence of queer nightlife, and drag performers of varied generations who have forged communities and beautiful art in spite of the oppressive forces that bind. This year is also the beginning of a greater attempt towards uplifting drag as fine art, and towards putting the puzzle pieces together that connect us—the queer artists in The Bushwick scene of today with the East Village scene of yesterday. Today is very different from yesterday, but history repeats itself in peculiar ways, and so does art.”
FRIDAY, JUNE 9: BLACKLIPS QUENCHED


SATURDAY, JUNE 10: GENERATIONS OF DRAG
Long form drag performances from artists of varied ages, styles, and expressions, featuring performances by Glenn Marla, Voxigma Lo and Untitled Queen, Egyptt Labeija, Xaddy Addy, Paris, and a surprise guest. Hosted by Brenda and Linda Simpson.

SUNDAY, JUNE 11: SUNDAY TEA & SYMPATHY
Performances and conversation between legendary queer staple Kevin Aviance, and up-and-coming legend in the making Julie J.
Paris Alexander is a multidisciplinary visual performance artist who acts, writes plays, does drag, conceptual standup, and whatever they want. Paris' work often has many aspects of reference and reverence for the past, as a way to look into the future. Their unofficial secret drag name is Nostalgia. With Voxigma Lo and Julie J, they host and produce Sylvester, a monthly black experimental drag review presented at Purgatory in Brooklyn. Their work has been presented for Ars Nova, JACK, Carnegie Hall, The Park Avenue Armory, and Grace Exhibition Space, among other places.

Some favorite projects from the last year include Bullshit (May 2022) Designed by Paris, and written and performed in collaboration with Hannah Kallenbach at Ars Nova, curated by Machel Ross, and a liminal performance for Karen Finley’s Kitty Kaleidoscope Disco at The Park Avenue Armory. A favorite piece to perform is Ancestral Invocation, where they lip sync and sing along to tracks from their late grandmother’s New Age album “Ceremony” that includes a song with a plea for Papa Legba to open the gates to the spirit world.

This is their 3rd time curating Squirts and they are honored to be at it again. IG: @parishiltonals

BUFFY (Production Manager, Associate and Creative Producer, Liason) Buffy is an artist and writer producing and researching performance and digital media. She reads and writes about sex, production, science, fiction, dance, music, and language. She composes and assembles music, dance, video, image, and installation. Her performance work examines embodied experiences of movement, light, and sound in procedural settings, horror, and medical technology, usually with a spatter or a gush or transsexual glamour and gore. buffytheslut.com

GI GI (Stage Manager/TD) Gineiris Garcia is a Bronx-born-and-based creative freelancer. She is currently one of the Artistic Producers of the Dominican Artists Collective and the Programs Associate for The Latiné Musical Theatre Lab. To learn more about her projects, visit www.gineiris.com.

Klondyke is an alien tragg*t superstar!!! Child of a black hole and a supernova, raised by a 4th dimensional rockstar. They hail from a small T4T queer punk planet from the galaxy in between Chromatica and Star Wars. They were traipsing through star systems when they crashed landed on Earth, in a bodega freezer, destroying their ship. But! Since their here they shall give SHOWS, and without the ugly human binaries and norms you Earth-dwellers have. So gender, sex, class, race, beauty, horror, filth, etc. are all just silly little spectrums to play with. This experimental musical theatre composer, Haus of Quench member, and the first winner of Cakeboys 2021 Takes the Cake Competition they are here to terrorize norms out of existence through the great unifier: MUUUUSIIIIIC!

Fflloyd pushes the limits of art and drag performance. Part of the original Atlanta drag mafia, which includes Lady Bunny and RuPaul. He has been an integral part of the East Village drag scene since the 80s, shaping the goth punk drag aesthetic birthed at the Pyramid club. A core member of Blacklips Performance Cult. Fflloyd
directed, produced and stars in Jack the Ripper by fellow cult member Love Forever. a.k.a Marty Wilkerson. Beyond performance, Flloyd is a filmmaker, electronic music producer and painter. Flloyd's paintings practice utilizes divisionism. Modulating arresting images digitally before translating the work to a sequence wave of dots on paper, canvas, wood and metal.

**POLYESTER** 100% synthetic and completely man-made, Poly ester is a Brooklyn based drag performer and the illegitimate traggot son of David Cronenberg. With a background in experimental theater, Poly creates performances that explore the exquisite horrors and tragic comedies of their trans experience. He's Mx. Nobody's current reigning Mx. Congeniality and placed in the Top 6 at The Cake Boys' competition Takes the Cake. He aims to explore the queer horror tradition of monstrosity as liberation, the grotesque as beauty, and repression as a doomsday clock through the lens of my trans masc fag identity. They can be found slinking around Brooklyn stages, stalking Prospect Park after dark, and on Instagram @p0lyesterrrrrr. Thank you to Mother and Paris Alexander for the opportunity.

**Spawn** is a shapeshifting entity sent by the ancestors. They perform across NYC, seeking to remind Black audiences of the importance of feeling the breadth of their emotions. That their anger is just as radical as their joy.

**Claywoman** is a 500 year old extra-terrestrial from the Mirillion Galaxy. She frequently visits Earth, her favorite planet, giving lectures at various events and engaging in public conversation with prominent human artists and intellectuals.

**Michael Cavadias** is an actor/writer and performer. Film and TV credits include Wonder Boys, All We Had, I Remember Nothing, Girls, and Difficult People. Theatre credits include Ahohni’s “She Who Saw Beautiful Things” at The Kitchen and “Star Odessey - The Pilot” at MoMA PS1. Claywoman was originally created at Blackips Performance Cult in the 90s and developed at Mabou Mines with Ruth Maleczech. More recently, The Mystery of Claywoman was presented at The New Museum, The Wild Project, Town Hall, Abrons Art Center and Howl Festival. Conversations with Claywoman was featured at The Meltdown Festival in London and continues regularly at Pangea in New York City. Michael co-wrote with John Cameron Mitchell the forthcoming scripted podcast “Cancellation Island” to be released fall 2023.

**Glenn Marla’s** performance work focuses on themes of body liberation, gender, fat, excavating our families and histories, and shifting cycles of trauma. It is Glenn’s goal that their work amplifies a voice in the world that is most often quieted, dampened, or disregarded. Amplified through performance and puppets, Glenn's is a voice that attempts honesty, humor, and vulnerability. Mx Marla is thrilled to be performing in this years Squirts! The Portland Phoenix calls Glenn Marla's work, “Performance art that pushes the envelope without pushing the audience away.” Artforum calls Glenn Marla's work “savage.” Time Out New York calls Glenn a, “Downtown Prophet.” And finally The New York Times refers to Mx. Marla as “An obese transvestite in tights.” Glenn's solo work has toured festivals, community centers, galleries, theaters, clubs and universities across the country. When not performing their own original visual and theatrical daring, you may have seen them collaborating with queer art legends like Justin Vivan Bond or Taylor Mac. Most recently Mx. Marla developed their
original puppet theater piece The Wild Unwanted with St. Annes Warehouse Puppet Lab.

**Egyptt Labeija** I have been performing for over 35yrs. In and out of the country. I’m the overall Godmother of the house of LaBeija. I have multiple crown holding titles in the pageantry system. I have been in several books and TV shows like pose and law and order. I have just finished a documentary with HBO. Also book called Ledges of drag. I am a manager at a hand crafted store in the Bronx called Zambo Aroma.

**Untitled Queen** I am a queer Filipinx / Boricua artist based on the stolen land of Lenape Hoking (so-called Brooklyn). I am a storyteller creating deeply emotional and visceral performances while exploring what it means to be a queer millennial working artist in New York. Through an interplay of drag, installation, and drawing my work explores the growing pains and joys of queer adolescence into adulthood. I challenge and dissolve colonial notions of culture and belonging to redefine my personal engagement with success, life, happiness, and love. The language of this lived experience is an ever-growing folklore of magic wands, my Mother's flower garden, Filipinx vampires, and sad rainbow witches. I am deeply inspired and vitalized by my given and chosen families. My Father who emigrated from the Phillipines and my Boricua Mother created a life without precedent. They made opportunities out of nothing for themselves and their children. In my DIY aesthetics and process-oriented work I pay homage to their life of the self-made and hand-crafted. My chosen family is an invigorating part of my practice and growth. My place in the Brooklyn nightlife community exemplifies how the dive bar is one of most meaningful radical sites of queer politics, intimacy, and joy.

**Voxigma Lo** is a Staten Island native, based in Brooklyn. Voxigma Lo (they/them) is drafting, creating and conceptualizing works that break the fourth wall, works that are shiny and cheap and works that are organic and easily digestible. They are a drag artist, producer, curator, writer, photographer and videographer who strives to introduce each medium to one another to create something innovative and thoughtful for their audience. Her works can be found on Instagram (@voxigma.lo) and bars all around Brooklyn.

**Xaddy Addy** (they/them) is a gender-bending Black non binary trans drag “kingthing” born and raised in NYC. Xaddy is the winner of The Cakeboys’ Takes The Cake season 2, a competition that highlights the artistry of drag kings and things all throughout the city. Xaddy has performed all over the five boroughs, blending the mediums of drag, burlesque, dance, theatre, sideshow, and visual storytelling within their artistry to create showstopping work. Xaddy is thrilled to be making their La Mama debut with Squirts with the hopes to capture your minds and your hearts!

**Kevin Aviance:** Towering, Black, and Bald, the drag icon who conquered the ‘90s gay dance scene. Inspired by the likes of Grace Jones and Boy George, Kevin Aviance quickly became a fixture in New York’s thriving gay scene. Affiliated with icons like Junior Vasquez, Aviance unleashed unforgettable tracks such as “Cunty” and “Rhythm Is My Bitch,” earning him a well-deserved reputation. Born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, Kevin honed his attention-grabbing skills in the basement of his house, mastering music, dance, and theater. Influenced by iconic avant-garde styles of
Grace Jones, Boy George, and David Bowie, Aviance's career soared after joining The House of Aviance in Washington, DC. He eventually took the nightlife capital, New York City, by storm, ruling clubs like Sound Factory, Arena, Twilo, and Roxy. Collaborating with renowned DJs and producers, Aviance delivered hits like “Alive” and “Give It Up,” earning two #1 dance hits. Sharing stages with legends such as Whitney Houston, Cher, and Madonna, Kevin's star continued to rise. His influence extended to the big screen, appearing in notable films and shedding light on hate crimes after becoming a victim himself. Recognized as a living legend, Aviance received the prestigious Living Legend award and released his third studio album mixtape, “RAW.” Kevin's music continues to influence mainstream as Beyoncé spotlighted Aviance's hit “Cunty” on her track PURE/HONEY which is a lead single on the award-winning Renaissance album. Honored with a knighthood by the Imperial Court, Kevin Aviance remains an indomitable force in the world of drag and music.

Julie J (she/her) is a Black trans, Brooklyn-based drag performer, activist, and interdisciplinary artist. Her created work focuses on cultural insertion, relationships between history and identity, and the tactics of escape utilized by marginalized bodies. She is currently developing work that combines drag performance, media, and experimental modes of storytelling.

She received her Bachelor of Liberal Arts with a concentration in Theater Performance and Direction from Sarah Lawrence College in 2018 and has studied at Upright Citizens Brigade and La MaMa Umbria’s Directors Symposium. In May 2019, Julie J was named one of La MaMa Theater’s Next Generation Artists and received a residency through the Centro Umbro Residenze Artistiche where she developed her premiere solo show If I Knew You Were Coming I Would Have Worn Eyeshadow. In 2021-2022 Julie toured with Teatro Vita throughout Italy in Andrea Adriatico’s production of EVE. In the winter of 2021, she premiered Faulty Defense Mechanisms, an episodic digital drag show exploring what it means to acknowledge our weak spots, claim our strengths, and find solace in the confusion of our times. In late 2021, she was named a 2021-2022 Performance Project Fellow at University Settlement.

She produces a monthly all-Black drag variety show called Sylvester with her drag siblings Paris Alexander and Voxigma Lo (@sylvesternyc on Instagram). Her new show series PROJECT premiered March 28th, 2023 at 3 Dollar Bill in Brooklyn. PROJECT TWO premieres on July 18th at 3 Dollar Bill. She can be found on Instagram @juliej.nyc and on Twitter @JulieJ_NYC.

Special Thanks To:
Dan Fishback, ANOHNI, every Black lips member- her life and her many many deaths, The Haus of Quench, the ghosts of the Pyramid, Dusty Childers, Mia Yoo, Ellen Stewart, Nicky Paraiso, Sweetie, Sylvester, Hattie Hathaway, Leigh Bowery, the funk, the entire La MaMa Staff, our queer ancestors, ourselves, and you.
A full program with information on this production can be found on the *La MaMa’s Squirts: Generations of Queer Performance* page of the La MaMa website.

In addition you can scan the QR code Poster located in the theatre lobby for access to the digital program.
La MaMa’s historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street is undergoing an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit www.lamama.org/remakeaworld
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