



**DIAMONDWAVE**

presents

# THEY FRIEND

## NONBINARY PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL



FEATURING

**EDGAR FABÍAN FRÍAS**

**LOTUS BOY**

**PEEKABOO**

WITH WORK BY

**CASSILS**

**DORIAN WOOD**

**BILLY DEAN THOMAS**

**+ MORE !**

# NOV. 18 & 19

**BRAVA**  
for Women in the Arts

# Message from our Artistic Director



Hello theyfriend!

A huge thank you for coming out for the inaugural THEYFRIEND festival. This is Diamond Wave's first in-person event since the beginning of the COVID pandemic and it means so much to us that you're here to support nonbinary performance. We can't wait for you to experience the amazing artists participating in this year's THEYFRIEND!

Although there are a number of festivals supporting trans and queer performance, we are delighted that THEYFRIEND is the first nonbinary performance festival in the world! Our vision is to create a space of trust and growth for nonbinary artists to connect and present their work. We also want to support the artistic and economic development of Bay Area-based nonbinary artists as nonbinary movements gain more visibility nationally

As a person who finally accepted my own nonbinary gender identity last year, I have been hungry for community spaces that gather and support nonbinary people. I want to connect with others like myself, discuss our intersectional identities and be immersed in nonbinary cultural experiences. It is in this spirit that Diamond Wave offers THEYFRIEND, as a physical and virtual destination for nonbinary culture.

This year, I was thrilled to work nonbinary visionaries Dorian Wood and KB Boyce to select our featured artists Edgar Fabían Frias, LOTUS BOY and Peekaboo. Together Wood, Boyce and I have provided support and guidance to the featured artists as they developed the new work you will experience tonight. This lineup is rounded out with contributions from local and national nonbinary artists that I am deeply fortunate to be able to include in the program.

I couldn't be more pleased to share THEYFRIEND with you! Enjoy the show!

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## THANK YOU

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This work would not be possible without the amazing community in which it resides. Thank you all for your passion, dedication, and support, and thank you for joining us this evening!

A special thank you to all those people who supported Diamond Wave and our amazing artists as they continue to provide empowering queer programming including: Derek Schmidt, Naomi Devore, Dorian Wood, KB Boyce, Honey Mahogany, Sarah Guerra, James Rouse Iñiguez, Baurch Porrás-Hernandez, Shannon Amitin, Peter-Astrid Kane, San Francisco Pride, CASSILS STUDIO, Broken Seal Buttons, Pacific Felt Factory, and the hard-working staff at Brava.



**DIAMONDWAVE**

*presents*

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# **THEYFRIEND 2021**

## **NONBINARY PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL**

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Hosted by Kevin Seaman

*Featuring*

**Edgar Fabían Frías**

**LOTUS BOY**

**Peekaboo**

*With*

**Dorian Wood**

**Cassils**

**Billy Dean Thomas**

**Kanyon Sayers-Roods**

**KB Boyce**

**Stuart Getty**

*Sound/Lighting Technician*

Jaime Dos Santos

**The performance runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission**

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Diamond Wave is a fiscally sponsored project of Intersection for the Arts

THEYFRIEND is presented in partnership with Brava! for Women in the Arts and Intersection for the Arts through funding from San Francisco Grants for the Arts, The Horizons Foundation, and The California Arts Council.

**BRAVA**  
for Women in the Arts

  
**CALIFORNIA**  
**ARTS COUNCIL**  
A STATE AGENCY

**INTERSECTION**  
FOR THE ARTS

  
**HORIZONS**  
our LGBTQ+ foundation

**GRANTS**  
FOR  
THE **ARTS**

## Featured Artists – Peekaboo

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**Peekaboo** has been a cellist since the age of 11. Today, they are an aspiring Ethnomusicologist researching the diaspora of ancestral filipin(o/a/x)/latinx lineages, soundscoring memories of love and heartbreak while simultaneously activating forms of healing. Through the lens of being a non-binary QPoC, they explore “movement research”, learning the somatic practices of breath and dance from Queer, Trans Black Indigenous and People of color healers, brujxs, activists and two-spirit folx. To reach ancestral cosmic ethers and find solace within heart and mind, Peekaboo shuffles tarot decks, gives love to their altar and opens up the bonds between past, present and future Queer ancestors. They have recorded, performed live and composed scores in collaboration with artists such as Tyler Holmes, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, ABD Skywatchers and jose e abad.



### **Artist Statement**

**Now, while we're in the house** is a cello soundscape that transcribes ancestral messages answering the question, What is a home? And how do we “show up”, as queer non binary people of color, when we are commanded by our ancestors to shape these spaces. Using multiple instruments to engage with the audiences' ears, Peekaboo approaches this work using instruments from the Philippines, the cello, ankle rattles, boombox radio and violin. Featuring collaborators Tyler Holmes and Shamu Azizam on the track 'Vaporous Inbetween' and cassette by Captain Captain 'dropped call', this work is a collaborative function that strengthens the bonds of Queer, Nonbinary communities of Color and our Queer ancestors.

## Featured Artists – LOTUS BOY

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**LOTUS BOY** is a gender-deconstructing, binary-defying, disabled Chinese-American drag king. Ze was born in April 2018 as a way to explore dysphoria; soon after, ze felt empowered to finally come out as non-binary/transgender. LOTUS BOY honors that drag is inherently political and is unapologetic in his values. Zir work explores ancestral healing, systemic oppression, binaries, sustainability, and accessibility; often through an educational and/or comedic lens. LOTUS BOY was named “Best Newcomer” at the 2018 SF Drag King Competition, and he was an Artist Mentor at the 2018 Queer & Asian Performing Artist Residency at San Jose State University. In 2020 and 2021, LOTUS BOY was selected to perform at OAKLASH, and produce and moderate their own panel, “Drag + Disability: A Dialogue and Showcase.” In July 2021, they co-produced #STOPLINE3: A Drag Action for Indigenous Sovereignty” part teach-in, part drag show, part fundraiser, in solidarity with water protectors everywhere.



### **Artist Statement**

#### ***strength; Unexpected***

I experience my disabilities, my race/ethnicity, and my gender as liminal spaces. Liminal space; noun; the time between the ‘what was’ and the ‘what’s next’; a place of transition, of waiting, of not knowing. The dichotomy of being invisibly and hypervisibly disabled—depending on the day. The moment after the infamous “what are you?” that mixed race people know well. The inevitable misgendering when my expression is perpetually fluctuating, expanding, and fluid. The constant waiting for the next question, next assumption, next projection of who/what you think I am in any given moment. In “strength; Unexpected” I incorporate drag, ancestral movement (qigong), and spoken word in defiant exploration of my existence in these liminal spaces. Simultaneously, this is an invitation for you to explore and question your own.

## Featured Artists – Edgar Fabián Frías

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**Edgar Fabián Frías** is a nonbinary, queer, indigenous (Wixárika), and Latinx, multidisciplinary artist, curator, educator, and psychotherapist. They work in photography, video art, sound, sculpture, printed textiles, GIFs, performance, social practice, and community organizing, among other forms. Born in East Los Angeles in 1983, Frías received dual BA degrees in Psychology and Studio Art from the UC, Riverside. In 2013, they received an MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon, with an emphasis on Interpersonal Neurobiology and Somatic Psychotherapy. Frías is a 2022 candidate for an MFA in Art Practice at UC Berkeley. They are also a recipient of the 2021 Summer Research Fellowship, the Sayavong Award, and the LGBTQ+ Fellowship Cluster Award at UC Berkeley, the 2019 and 2020 Tulsa Artist Fellowship, a 2019–2020 Public Research Fellow through the Oklahoma Center for Humanities, and a 2017–2018 Artist in Residence Grant through the City of Los Angeles' Department of Cultural Affairs. Their work has been exhibited internationally, including the Vincent Price Art Museum, SOMArts, Oregon Contemporary, MOCA Jacksonville, Performance is Alive, Project Space Festival Juárez, and ArtBo, among others. Their work has appeared in Cosmopolitan, Taschen, Bustle, Mashable, Slate, CVLT Nation, Terremoto, Hyperallergic, and other publications.



### **Artist Statement**

This piece is about celebrating queer magick, ancestral connections, and embodied joy! My nonbinary identity is a huge part of my creative practice. It is an orientation and a location from which I organize and see the world. It is a way I claim space and affirm my sovereignty. It allows me to embrace both my fluid and uncertain process and my continual and conscious emergence.

I have created these songs and their accompanying videos from visions received during moments of ancestral communion. I am Wixárika and see my work as an act of indigenous futurism. Envisioning myself, my body, my being, my joy, and the joy, bodies, and beings of other queer, trans, and gender-expansive people existing, thriving, and rejoicing in the present, past, and future!

I am opening myself up to be a medium, a conduit, a portal for the ancestors to speak through. I use my voice, music, sound, performative gestures, & sacred elements to explore what it means to be alive today as a fat, indigenous, Latinx, nonbinary person and what it means to share my love & passion for ancestral communion, dance, video art, and ceremony.

## Additional Contributors

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**Cassils** (Artist) is a transgender artist who makes their own body the material and protagonist of their performances. Cassils's art contemplates the history(s) of LGBTQI+ violence, representation, struggle and survival. For Cassils, performance is a form of social sculpture: Drawing from the idea that bodies are formed in relation to forces of power and social expectations, Cassils's work investigates historical contexts to examine the present moment. Cassils has had recent solo exhibitions at the HOME Manchester, Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Perth Institute for Contemporary Arts, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, NYC; Institute for Contemporary Art, AU; Bemis Center for Contemporary Art; Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts; School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston; Bemis Center, Omaha; MU Eindhoven, Netherlands. They are the recipient of a 2020 Fleck Residency from the Banff Center for the Arts, a Princeton Lewis Artist Fellowship finalist (2020), a Villa Bellagio Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (2019), a United States Artist Fellowship (2018), a Guggenheim Fellowship and a COLA Grant (2017) and a Creative Capital Award (2015). They have received the inaugural ANTI Festival International Prize for Live Art, California Community Foundation Grant, MOTHA (Museum of Transgender History) award, and numerous Visual Artist Fellowships from the Canada Council of the Arts. Their work has been featured in New York Times, Boston Globe, Artfourm, Hyperallergic, Wired, The Guardian, TDR, Performance Research, Art Journal and was the subject of the monograph Cassils published by MU Eindhoven (2015) and their new catalogue Solutions, is published by the Station Museum of Contemporary Art, TX (2020).

*Photo by Robin Black*



**Dorian Wood** (THEYFRIEND Advisor & Contributing Artist) (they/them) seeks to glorify both the sanctity and irreverence of intimacy. Through the use of their corpulent body and booming voice, Wood revels in challenging the artist-audience separation, using subject matter informed by their own perspective as a non-binary brown person and an autodidact. Their work has been showcased in concert halls and performance spaces around the world, including at institutions like The Broad, REDCAT, Museo Nacional Del Prado, the City Hall of Madrid and Teatro de la Ciudad Esperanza Iris in Mexico City. From 2019 to 2020, Wood completed several successful tours throughout Europe, Mexico and the U.S. with their chamber orchestra tribute to Chavela Vargas, XAVELA LUX AETERNA. Most recently, Wood became a 2020 Creative Capital Award recipient. Wood has released over a dozen recordings, among them the albums BOLKA (2007); Brutus (2010); Rattle Rattle (Atonal Industries, 2013); Down, The Dirty Roof (Atonal Industries, 2013), XALÁ (Atonal Industries, 2017) and two back-to-back albums recorded in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, ARDOR and REACTOR.





## Additional Contributors

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**Billy Dean Thomas** (Contributing Artist), AKA “The Queer B.I.G” is a Hip-hop recording artist and producer born and raised in Harlem, but currently residing in Boston. Billy Dean challenges the music industry with quick witted punchlines that highlight intersectional feminism, social justice and growing up in a gentrified city. Recently named one of NPR’s 2020 Slingshot Artists to Watch, Billy Dean Thomas has been described as a blend between “The Roots and Rage against the Machine” and is known to pack messages as potent as a James Baldwin speech. After sharing their story on ABC’s the View they were nominated for four Boston Music awards and were recently featured as a songwriter for a grammy nominated album titled “The Love” by the Alphabet Rockers. Currently an artist fellow of the City of Boston, a recipient of the Brother Thomas Fellowship as well as the first Hip Hop Artist to be invited as a resident at MASS MOCA studios. They have been featured in the Boston Globe, WBUR, WGBH, and have performed at venues such as The House of Blues, Grand Point North Festival, The Brooklyn Museum, and Spotify.



**Kanyon Sayers-Roods** (Contributing Artist) is Costanoan Ohlone and Chumash; she also goes by her given Native name, Hahashkani, which in Chumash means “Coyote Woman”. She is proud of her heritage and her native name (though it comes with its own back story), and is very active in the Native Community. She is an Artist, Poet, Published Author, Activist, Student and Teacher. The daughter of Ann-Marie Sayers, she was raised in Indian Canyon, trust land of her family, which currently is available for anyone in need of ceremony. Kanyon’s art has been featured at the De Young Museum, The Somarts Gallery, Snag Magazine, and numerous school projects. She is a recent graduate of the Art Institute of California, Sunnyvale, obtaining her Associate and Bachelor of Science degrees in Web Design and Interactive Media. She is motivated to learn, teach, and to continue doing what she loves, Art.



**Stuart Getty** (Contributing Artist) (they/them) is an artist, a writer and a filmmaker, and overarchingly, just someone who has to make things. By day, they work as a consultant at global design company IDEO, where they are a brand strategist, sr. design lead, and workshop facilitator. Their main focuses are designing for: inclusion, play, and purpose. On the side, they write books (first one How to They/Them, 2020, Sasquatch books) and make films (thegettybrothers.com) (Sundance “Oregon Room,”





## Additional Contributors

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2016, Portland Film Fest, Translations Film Fest) and also do speaking engagements about gender, identity, and all things they (Creative Mornings, SXSW, Pecha Kucha). But pretty much, Stu is on this planet to have a good time finding the authentic stories in all of us. Everywhere.

**Kevin Seaman** (THEYFRIEND Advisor & Host) is a San Francisco-based artist whose interdisciplinary practice explores queer identity and drag culture. Their videos exploring queer history, symbolism and intersectionality were presented on SalesForce Tower in June 2021 in collaboration with Jim Campbell's Studio. Their work has also been presented at The Stud, Brava, CounterPulse, YBCA, Frameline, the Tank NYC, the Austin International Drag Festival, SATTELITE ART SHOW Miami, the National Queer Arts Festival, Stockholm's Stolt Scenkonst, Atlantic Center for the Arts, and Yale School of the Arts.



**Kali KB Boyce** (THEYFRIEND Advisor & Contributing Artist) (they/them, he/him) is a trans masculine/nonbinary multi-instrumentalist and digital media artist whose adventures have brought them from teenage punk band appearances at CBGBs in NY, to B-grade horror movies in LA, and on to solo \*cross-dressing\* blues performance as The Drag King of the Blues in San Francisco. Boyce composes and performs music that pays homage to African-American and Indigenous legacies of resistance through art. They conjure the spirit of cross-dressing Blues performers – reflecting the history, creativity, and aesthetics of the ancestors. KB is the ensemble bassist for The Red Shades, a Trans Super Hero Rock Opera and is the drummer for The Homobiles, a Bay Area Trans centered music act. KB is the Co-Founder and Co-Director of Queer Rebel Productions (2009 to present), a Bay Area based Queer People of Color (QTPoC) arts organization that connects generations & genres and honors our queer legacies with visionary art for the future.



**Nick Ishimaru** (Production Manager) is a co-founder of Kunoichi Productions. Prior to working with Kunoichi, he served as the Artistic Director of Theatre of Yugen from 2016 to 2020. He holds a BA in Performing Arts from Colorado State University, where he directed a kabuki adaptation of Macbeth, a Masters in Drama from San Francisco State University, and did additional doctorate work at the University of Hawaii. He has trained in noh and kyōgen for over 10 years with Theatre of Yugen, and



## Additional Contributors

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Theatre Nohgaku and the Kita school noh master Oshima Teruhisa in Tokyo. Ishimaru has also studied kabuki, jingju (Beijing Opera), and nihon buyo (traditional Japanese dance). He also has led master classes for all levels from elementary school through university, and has presented work at conferences and university lectures both in the Bay Area and internationally. As Artistic Director of Theatre of Yugen, he directed several productions including *The Red Demon* (2016), *A Noh Christmas Carol* (2017, 2018, 2019), and *Seen/By Everyone* (2018). He was most recently on stage in *Puppets & Poe* (2019), *A Noh Christmas Carol* (2019), and in the digital streaming production of *The True Tale of Princess Kaguya* (2020).

## Diamond Wave Staff

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**Kevin Seaman** is a San Francisco-based interdisciplinary artist and the Artistic Director of Diamond Wave. They have presented on queer arts at APAP|NYC, Grantmakers in the Arts, Americans for the Arts, National Performance Network and San Francisco State University's Center for Research and Education on Gender and Sexuality, and are continuing to work with the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Inc to create additional safety for queer and gender nonconforming people using Lyft after they were denied a ride home in 2017. Kevin was an inaugural Association for Performing Arts Professionals Leadership Fellow, and received the 2017 Americans for the Arts Emerging Leader Award and the 2019 Theatre Bay Area Legacy Award (for their role as community organizer for 2018's Yes on Prop E campaign). As artistic director for Diamond Wave, they are part of the leadership team of the Artists Adaptability Circles (a new, collaborative seed funding and leadership development program) and lead the THEYFRIEND nonbinary performance festival as well as the MASCellaneous creative queer masculinities workshop series.



**Stephan McLeroy** (he/him) is a queer, multi-ethnic writer, creative and consultant whose purpose is to contribute to and support the growth of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC voices in the arts. He brings over a decade of experience in software project management for multi-million dollar projects to his approach in operating creative businesses, with a specialty in systems creations and operations. He also founded Prism Book Productions, a hybrid boutique publishing company which supported creatives, visionaries



# Diamond Wave Staff

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and other knowledge experts in writing and publishing their original works. Today as the managing director of Diamond Wave, he oversees the day-to-day operations of the queer arts/artist-led organization. As a writer, Stephan has contributed to online queer publications and specializes in thrilling science fiction and fantasy stories that authentically embody the experiences of queer, mixed race people like himself. In his spare time, he also acts as consultant for artists looking to improve their professional acumen, facilitating both one-on-one and group workshops regarding pricing and process implementation. He also has aspirations of taking a dance class sometime in the future to once again draw from his 15 years of experience immersed in the South Bay's tap dance community.

**Sydney Franz** is a graphic designer / dancer / drag king whose work emphasizes collaboration and creative play. While originally from Houston, they earned degrees in graphic design and dance from Loyola Marymount University in LA and now work bicoastally between San Francisco and Brooklyn. They work with artists, nonprofits, and small businesses across the US, including Diamond Wave, to create custom logos, marketing materials, and websites with intention and care.



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## Diamond Wave

**Diamond Wave** is a San Francisco and Seattle based queer arts organization that produces diverse, queer-centered artistic and cultural events that bring together disparate segments of the LGBTQ+ community. We also offer community-based consulting that authentically supports the growth and stability of our artists, arts workers, and community.

## Advisors

Honey Mahogany, Sarah Guerra, James Rouse Iñiguez, Baurch Porras-Hernandez, Shannon Amitin, Nick Ishimaru

## Connect

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# Brava! for Women in the Arts

**Brava! for Women in the Arts** celebrates over 35 years as a professional arts organization dedicated to cultivating the artistic expression of women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, youth, and other underrepresented voices. Brava owns and operates Brava Theater Center, producing and presenting traditional and contemporary music festivals, a variety of film festivals, contemporary and experimental theatrical productions, international comedy shows, lectures, and professional dance productions—making Brava one of the most eclectic and multifaceted arts venues in the Bay Area.

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## Support

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