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**NAKED EMPIRE BOUFFON COMPANY PRESENTS
HOW TO CATCH A KAREN
AT THE SAN FRANCISCO FRINGE FESTIVAL**

San Francisco, CA. (August, 2022). 2-time Best of Fringe Winners, Naked Empire Bouffon Company, return with their latest production, **HOW TO CATCH A KAREN**. This original and irreverent one-person comedy satirizes white fragility among progressives. **HOW TO CATCH A KAREN** performs at the San Francisco Fringe Festival from September 10th through the 17th.

HOW TO CATCH A KAREN begins in the EXIT Theatre where the immortal trickster witch, Baba Yaga, seems to have been expecting you. With equal parts cheeky sass and ominous ritual, she leads the audience through a fast-paced and interactive exorcism of “Karens”. But she’s not just looking for any generic Karen; Baba Yaga’s specialty is finding the most insidious, in-denial Karens of all: the progressive Karen. She whisks spectators to familiar worlds where progressive Karens thrive unchecked, like instagram feeds, kinky parties, immigrant households, college campuses, tech conferences, fringe theatre festivals, and even tear ducts themselves. **HOW TO CATCH A KAREN** is a tour de force of shapeshifting, charm, and savagery as Baba Yaga makes it clear that catching progressive Karens is dangerous, wildly fun, and crucial for a more just future.

This premiere is an adaptation of a live streaming production Naked Empire presented in 2021 with the same title. With several new scenes and audience interactions, this production offers a significantly different experience while preserving the original central character and social commentary that made the streaming version a hit.

Co-creator and performer, **Sabrina Wenske** says, “I am excited to complicate the popular stereotypes of a ‘Karen’. We’ve all seen the entitled tantrums, that iconic wedge haircut, and the weaponization of whiteness. Most of us believe we’d never behave like that. This show challenges that belief and looks at the potential for Karen-like tendencies inside all of us.”

HOW TO CATCH A KAREN runs for 4 performances over two weekends in the San Francisco Fringe Festival held at the EXIT Theatre, 156 Eddy Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. Performance run time is 60 minutes.

Performances Dates:

Sat/Sept 10: 9:30pm	Fri/Sept 16: 7:00pm	Tickets: \$18
Sun/Sept 11: 5:00pm	Sat/Sept 17: 8:00pm	Info & Tix: nakedempirebouffon.org/karen

Naked Empire Bouffon Company was founded in San Francisco in 2009 with an activist mission to devise hilarious, cutting, and visually-provocative satires to catalyze urgent discourse. Since then, Naked Empire has toured across the continent with award-winning new works and training intensives becoming North America’s premier bouffon company. Their productions have been awarded Best of the Fringe twice in San Francisco, the Talk of the Fringe Award in Vancouver, the Artist’s Choice Award in Edmonton, as well as Official Selections from the Toronto Festival of Clowns, Vancouver’s Dancing on the Edge Festival, Victoria’s UNOFest, Berkeley’s Blast Festival, and Xfest in Edwardsville, Illinois. The company uses bouffon, a rarely-seen form of highly physical and extremely irreverent comedic satire leading the Huffington Post to praise the work as “devilishly dangerous theatre.”

The creative team for **HOW TO CATCH A KAREN** features **Sabrina Wenske** (co-creator/performer), **Nathaniel Justiniano** (co-creator/director), **Lindsay A. Jenkins (L.J.)** (dramaturg), **Lena Sands** (costume designer), **Gordon Ghostway** (props designer), **Mikey Strider** (makeup designer).

Sabrina Wenske is a multi-award-winning theatre actor and deviser in the Bay Area. She is also a queer, first generation child of Polish refugees tapping into her cultural roots and personal experience in order to craft this fresh take on Baba Yaga, and the many characters she conjures up. As Naked Empire’s Program Director, she produced and performed in a two-year series of original monthly shows called TOO SOON. With Naked Empire in 2017, she co-created and performed in YOU FUCKING EARNED IT, winning best of SF Fringe and the Artists’ Choice Award at Edmonton Fringe. She has also performed in many devised ensemble works, including BEND THE RULES, EAT THE HEAD which won Best of the 2015 SF Fringe and Official Selection in Berkeley’s inaugural BLAST Festival.

Nathaniel Justiniano is a queer Cali-Rican actor, deviser, movement designer, educator, activist, and the founding Artistic Director of **Naked Empire Bouffon Company**. Recently, his arts-based racial justice work was featured in [Howlround](#) and [American Theatre Magazine](#). As an actor, he has worked with Shakespeare Orange County, Son of Semele Ensemble, Cornerstone Theater Company, The Dell’Arte Company, Thrillpeddlers, We Players, and Cutting Ball Theater. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor of Comedic Performance at Emerson College and he has served as the Director of Physical Comedy for the Sacramento Shakespeare Festival, Movement Designer at UC Berkeley, core faculty of the SF Clown Conservatory, and guest faculty at the Juilliard School.

Lindsay A. Jenkins (L.J.) is a dramaturg, producer, and educator based in Los Angeles by way of Dallas, TX. She is also the Founder and Executive Producer of Maroon Arts and Culture, an organization that creates both physical and virtual safe spaces where marginalized voices, artists and individuals, are free to express themselves, to tell their origin stories, and share their visions of the future. Currently, L.J. is developing a project that explores Afrocentric methods for putting research into the body. She has worked with organizations of various sizes including Critical Mass Performance Group, Cornerstone Theatre Company, Center Theatre Group, and the Playwrights Foundation. Her work in film and television includes the film *Judas and the Black Messiah* and the Netflix show, *Astronomy Club*.

Lena Sands is a costume designer, collage and puppet artist, and scenographer for live performance, installation, and film. Using a variety of materials and methods to create bold and distinctive visuals, Lena collaborates with ensembles and communities to investigate bodies, histories, and the divine. Her recent projects include SITI Company's *Bacchae*, which portrayed androgynous anarchy in battle with male hierarchy, and four larks' *Frankenstein*, a meditation on flesh and obsession, for which she received the Ovation Award for Best Costume Design. Lena has designed for companies including Deaf West Theatre, East West Players, Cornerstone Theatre Company, The Equus Projects, and Watts Village Theatre Company, and her work has been seen at venues including The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), The Guthrie Theater, The Wallis, The Kirk Douglas Theater, The Getty Villa, The Skirball Cultural Center, and REDCAT.

Purchase tickets at: nakedempirebouffon.org/karen

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