

culture

Full Disclosure

Jefferson Theater strippers bare all

by Joshua Ryan

You always wanted to be a male stripper. Oh, stop it. Every red-blooded American queer has, at one point or another, wondered what it would be like. Some have even acted upon this fantasy, unfettered by the fact that their dicks are average, they're packing a few extra pounds and, while they might be cute, they're not exactly "hot."

So, under the influence of one or two Midori sours, it was you, living out your man-whore fantasy, who got up on stage on Amateur Strip Night. Or, having sipped waaay too many Red Bull vodkas, you thought it was actually a *good idea* to get up on stage during Mardi Gras and whip out your enthusiastic but altogether shriveled penis, only to have just two measly strands of beads tossed your way.

But what would happen if it was not a fantasy? What if it was not a one-time thing? What if being a full-frontal, let-it-all-hang-out male stripper was your vocation?

Just ask the men who appear each Thursday night at Jefferson Theater. The venue is like your typical adult bookstore with a security entrance, lots of naked posters, video and toys for sale. The Jefferson is a "private club," meaning you pay for a membership and then get into the theater space, which is divided into a large theater with a stage and a small theater for queers. You can tell it is for us because there is a wall with glory holes to the immediate right of the entrance—and, of course, all the videos played in this theater feature man-on-man action.

Here, in the "privacy" of the theater, you can pretty much do what you want. You can have sex, and others can watch. Or participate. Or jack off while they watch. In the main theater space there is a semi-separated "couples area" where twosomes and threesomes can rut, spurt and orgasm before an audience of well-wishers and looky-loos. I mean, why watch a video when you can watch the real thing, right?

On Full Frontal Thursdays a minimum of four (and sometimes more) men dance for a packed house of patrons. The dancers are uniformly buff. They all get completely naked and offer lap dances at \$20 a shot. Each lap dance lasts about the length

of a standard Top 40 song, about four minutes.

One dancer calls himself Rico. He is about 5-foot-9 and reminds one of Mario Lopez without the dimples. During the day he works in banking. No shit. Money counter by day, full-frontal dancer by night! Rico is 23 and of Israeli-Costa Rican descent.

Sancho is bisexual. You buy, he's sexual. He recounts that although he is in great shape and has a cute face, the key to being a successful dancer is "charm and personality." Like the other strippers, Rico claims that none of them fluffs. When I see the dressing room, I understand why. Considering it's the size of a small closet (about 5 feet by 4 feet), the idea of fluffing is pretty much impractical—they'd virtually be bumping into each other. A hot thought for gay men, but not for these guys, most of whom are straight (and, obviously, gay-friendly).

Sancho earns between \$200 and \$300 a night. He is well-known to stripper aficionados, having danced at Three Sisters and Silverado prior to the Jefferson. He tells me the worst thing a patron can do is to ignore a dancer. Or make the strippers work for a dollar like it was their ticket to fame and stardom.

The troupe is led by veteran dancer Kurt. He is tall and built like the proverbial brick shithouse. His hair is blond and spiky. In the first set, he is the first guy to get completely naked. I attribute this to his method actor training...or to the fact that he is a completely confident, absolutely unembarrassed professional.

Kurt has danced for several years and has a following. He is quick to let the crowd touch his chest, stomach and legs. All the dancers permit the patrons to touch their bodies. Less so around their asses and genitals, but this is permitted during lap dances. Without exception, each guy is sexy, friendly and hot, and there is plenty of variety for patrons.



Dancers at Full Frontal Thursdays profess that the job is fun, the money good and they are in complete control.

The dancers claim that they do not permit private shows and that they are not "gay for play." I question this, as each guy separately tells me stories of private dances he's arranged during his career but is not currently conducting. I am assured that the dancers are rarely embarrassed—other than when patrons try to insert fingers into their butts without consent or warning—and that the job is fun, the money good and they are in complete control.

It also seems that if you want more than a great lap dance, the other patrons at the Jefferson are more than willing to oblige. At first, everyone seemed like they were at a bar show, politely focusing on the dancers and tipping. As the night grew longer, many patrons (ranging in age from late 20s to early 60s) had dropped their pants or exposed themselves and were masturbating. Clearly, most had set their inhibitions aside and were part of the show.

So, maybe the fantasy of a full-frontal life as a male stripper is attainable. You might not be dancing on a stage, but you could be straddling a theater seat with an audience of men around you, your goodies completely exposed and staking your own claim to the full-frontal experience. **10**

Jefferson Theater presents FULL FRONTAL THURSDAYS from 9 to 11 p.m. at 1232 S.W. 12th Ave. Cover is \$8. Other gay or gay-friendly venues for male strippers include Viewpoint, 8102 N.E. Killingsworth St.; Silverado, 1217 S.W. Stark St.; and Darcelle's, 208 N.W. Third Ave.

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