Created by Tristan Meecham and Willoh Weiland.
Produced by All The Queens Men

CAKE

A heart-breaking coming out story and radical polemic
on the dangers of binary thinking.

Trestin Meacham

Tristan Meecham

"This is the perennial appeal of dopplegangers:
the idea that two strangers can be indistinguishable from each other taps into the precariousness at the core of identity— the painful truth that no matter how deliberately we tend to our personal lives and our public personas, the person we think we are is fundamentally vulnerable to forces outside of our control."

- Naomi Klein, Doppleganger

INGREDIENTS

In the case of Masterpiece Cakeshop versus Colorado Civil Rights Commission, Christian baker Jack Phillips cited his religious beliefs in refusing to create a wedding cake for a gay couple. Gay rights groups feared the ruling would set a precedent. CAKE originates during an intense pressure point (the same-sex marriage debacle) when the rights and roles of LGBTIQ+ diverse communities were being debated in Australia and America.

It's 2014 and our 'leader' Australia Prime Minster Tony Abbott has God on his side. Mr Opus Dei will not allow Gays to marry. He is sure it will impact on his religious freedom.

It's during this pressure point in the same sex marriage 'debate' that I 'wed' my long-term partner, in a big Queer ceremony as a public protest. Shortly afterwards, my Twitter became jammed with vitriolic personal abuse attacking my 'disgusting' homophobic stance, opposing same- sex marriage. Confused? So was I.

Why would an artist known for his work within Australia's Queer community suddenly get trolled for being homophobic? I discovered an unbelievable coincidence: I have a double, a Utah-based Mormon named Trestin Meacham. Trestin was undertaking an internationally publicised hunger strike, protesting the US Supreme Court's ruling legalising same sex marriage – he was the intended target of my online abuse.

Nothing prepares you for the obsession that follows finding your Doppelganger. Trestin and I are both middle aged, white men who grew up in conservative military families. We are both driven by our personal convictions about the Government getting a say in who we love. We are tethered by this intractable difference. Should we have to find a common ground?

This extraordinary coincidence— has fuelled a deep dive not just into these terrifying binaries— but into the moral, spiritual and philosophical grey areas that sit adjacent to them.

RECIPE

Cake is an epic piece of dance theatre created by queer performance artist Tristan Meecham, writer and director Willoh Weiland, choreographer Melanie Lane, dramaturge and actor David Woods and composer and club icon, Lotic.

A surreal spectacular that uses the coincidence of Tristan and Trestin to tell the dark true stories that emerge from denying another person's right to exist.

In it Tristan Meecham, must bake, decorate and serve his own wedding cake while battling his real-life doppelganger Mormon anti-gay marriage activist Trestin Meecham, his inner demons, his demon mother and his own boyfriend(s) - all played by an ever-growing cast of body doubles. dancers - white, bald, male body doubles.

Using Tristan's own story of coming out in a military family, religion and same sex marriage the work digs into the moral, spiritual and philosophical grey areas inhabited by conservative gay men, queer trolls, misogynistic trad wives and corporate queerness, and religious wedding bakers who refuse gay couples.

Chloe Jones (AD UtahPresents) said that 'CAKE is a work of cultural urgency in the US at the moment' and after what we have seen in Australia recently with rollback of queer rights, we think it is just as urgent here as we face increased conservatism and factionism.

CAKE is...

A heart-breaking coming out story and radical polemic on the dangers of binary thinking.

A stinging rebuke to the suffocating binaries of both the left and right.

A heterosexual vanilla hellscape devolves into a spectacle of sodom.

A solo show performed with 100 doubles - a core group of dancers, a few actors and ideally a whole lot of bears from the queer community in which the work is performed.

CAKE is a work of cultural urgency in the US at the moment and after what we have seen in Australia recently with rollback of queer rights, we think it is just as urgent here as we face increased conservatism and factionism.

THE COOKS

Tristan Meecham (Creator, Producer, Performer) is a Queer Artist and Performer and Artistic Director and Co-CEO of All The Queens Men. He is the 2023 Australia Council Fellowship recipient. Previously, he was awarded the VCA George Fairfax Memorial Award, British Council Fellowship and inaugural Richard Pratt Scholarship. His work is presented nationally and internationally.

Willoh Weiland (Creator, Writer, Director) is a writer, artist and curator who across art forms and is concerned with creating and realising epic impossible ideas. From 2018-2024, Willoh was Creative Director at the Mona Museum curating the night-time program of the Mona Foma Festival and special projects-such as the Mona Gala and Mona Forest Congress. From 2010-2018 she was Artistic Director/ CEO of the artist-led experimental arts organisation Aphids.

Melanie Lane (Choreographer) is an Australian choreographer and performer of Javanese/European cultural heritage. She works across visual arts, theatre, music and film. Commissions include Sydney Dance Company, WA Ballet, Australasian Dance Collective, Chunky Move, Schauspiel Leipzig and HAU Berlin.

David Woods (Dramaturge, Performer) is joint Artistic Director of the UK based performance group Ridiculusmus. Past collaborations include Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne/Company B Belvoir, Sydney Theatre Company/ Edinburgh Festival, Back to Back theatre and Sydney Dance Theatre.

Lotic (Composer) is an electronic music artist, DJ, and producer originally from Houston, Texas who lived and worked in Berlin and Europe from 2012 to 2025. Renowned for her innovative and often confrontational sound, Lotic's work frequently explores themes of identity, power, race, and queerness, blending elements of noise, R&B, hip-hop, and ballroom culture into a distinctive avant-garde club sound.

Jonathan Oxalde is an award-winning designer for theatre, film and television. Jonathon designs for companies including: Chunky Move, Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Black Swan State Theatre Company, Belvoir Theatre, LaBoite, Bell Shakespeare and many more.

ENGAGEMENT

All The Queens Men (Presenter, Producer) is an internationally recognised leader in queer, artist-led and community-engaged contemporary performance practice. For more than twenty years, ATQM have developed ambitious projects that bring diverse communities together through shared creative experiences. A core strength of our practice is building trusted relationships with communities and creating meaningful pathways for participation.

Working closely with presenting partners in each city, ATQM will lead the recruitment, engagement and support of local queer participants to perform in CAKE.

Through our extensive networks, community partnerships and proven engagement methodologies, we will ensure each presentation is shaped by the people and communities who call that place home, embedding local voices, experiences and identities at the heart of the work.

PARTNERS

CAKE is being developed with presentation partners RISING, Sydney Festival, Perth Festival. Supported by the Major Festivals Initiative, Creative Australia and Create NSW. CAKE will premiere in 2028.

All The Queens Men is currently seeking international presentation partners to support the final stage of creative development and build an international touring network for 2028–29.

Please contact Tristan Meecham (Artistic Director and Co-CEO, All The Queens Men): tristan@allthequeensmen.net

CAKE a spectacular bake-off. First prize is your right to exist.

Australian Government | Creative Australia | NSW Government | Major Festivals Initiative | RISING | Sydney Festival | PERTH FESTIVAL

ALL THE QUEENS MEN

www.allthequeensmen.net