



May 22
2010 1pm

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genre buzz

The artist [Mykel](#) is currently the Artistic Director of NYC Flaggers.

The Flaggers were last seen on stage at Santos House Party for the Lift Off 2010 Dance Registration Kickoff and Fundraiser Event on Sunday, November 8th. The performance featured Mykel's signature otherworldly vocals showcasing his dance single Glossy Pink Nails accented by a wildly colorful flag dancing display and featuring a guest appearance by Tina Thompson. Although his songs and performances can have a dark and brooding undertone, there is always an uplifting crescendo present and Mykel feels that by default, the flags are magnificent elevators of feeling and expression during the performance and for the music itself. Mykel and NYC Flaggers have been a part of Dance Parade since its inception four years ago and his and their involvement has grown with each year, performing at International Dance Day (IDD) prior to last year's Parade and Mykel hopes the group will be one of the featured acts on the main stage at DanceFest, a festival housed in Tompkins Square Park featuring a wildly eccentric mix of performances by groups representing a healthy rainbow of cultures and styles and forged from an invitation only process that guarantees a diverse lineup made up of Dance Parade veterans as well as newer groups that have registered for the first time. He plans to space out the group letting the more social flaggers march down Broadway and the more performance minded members do their thing on stage with him. Flaggers need room to breathe and flow and that's why they are a perfect staple in the Annual Parade.

Speaking of FLOW, Mykel teaches flagging classes as well and has been studying the craftsmanship of making sets of flags on his own, learning the ins and outs of fabric color, texture and material choices as well as proper weighting and has designed sets of flags specifically for particular performances...all essential factors to the art that is flagging. FLOW is the name of the flagging classes, a moniker coined by George Jagatic of Axis Danz, a dance company specializing in flag dancing and more.

Mykel has been accountable for bringing performers and non performers to participate in parades and sometimes circuit parties or private parties. In 2009, the group hit a growth spurt in being invited to many different events to perform. He is a recording artist and event producer and often incorporates the two together to full realize some of his most audacious creative dreams.

There is also a recently produced documentary revolved around the flagging movement. Mykel says of the film, "I am featured in the documentary film called- A FLOW AFFAIR! and Wolfgang Busch has followed me around over the last 5 years and captured me performing with flags and along with NYC Flaggers. The film is produced by Art From the Heart Films and is being edited right now. Wolfgang's goal is to present flagging and how it educates, heals and entertains. Flaggers have strong relationships with their flags. The film is scheduled to be released during NYC PRIDE MONTH-JUNE 2010."

We also asked Mykel about the first time he witnessed flag dancing and its connection to club culture and here's what he had to say, "The first time I saw someone flagging was actually a performance in a dance studio a friend of mine invited me to attend. I am pretty sure it was Axis Danz! He was a featured dancer in the piece, and I thought the fabric and the dancers were pretty cool at the time. (about 10 years ago). About 4 years later, this same friend then gave me a quick lesson as he helped me put together a performance piece for one of my first performance gigs at a college in New Jersey. Going to the dance clubs in the early nineties was very much a part of my social calendar and the same friend who introduced me to flags used to make me dress up in the most outrageous outfits (kilt and combat boots with nothing but a thong under neath as an example). Flagging was always and still is a part of the events and festivals that happen year round in the club scene."

Word Association Time!

Because flagging represents so many different things to the flagger themselves and the audience as well. We gave Mykel a list of adjectives that may describe Flagging and we asked him to elaborate on them!

Flagging is sexual- I think of Brazilians and their style of flagging

Flagging is sensual- when two people can connect in a flag dance it is very intimate

Flagging is private- I think others would agree with me that a lot of flaggers are incredibly shy and the flags provide that extra shield to keep the flagger in his/her private space

Flagging is dramatic- I love using them to perform with an audience... satisfaction is guaranteed!

Flagging is spiritual- having just flagged with the community at World AIDS Day with GMHC I really get how they have a spiritual connection with the memory of those who have passed on because of AIDS.

Flagging is silly- only when you do silly things with them beyond flagging! Children love to be silly with flags

The art of flagging dance sometimes called flag dancing or rag spinning, but more commonly referred to as flagging, is the undulation, spinning and waving of flags in a rhythmic fashion to music. Practitioners of this form of performance art and dance are usually referred to as "flaggers" and "flag dancers", though until the 1990s this mostly referred to those waving flags to aid transportation professions

The added weights to the otherwise loose fabric made it possible for the new flaggers to spin and move the fabric through the air in ways similar to fan dancing, but with the added maneuverability of a very flexible material. Flags used by these new flaggers can be of almost any fabric, but silk, organza and lame are preponderant, with silk being the most favored. Silk flags are usually dyed in vibrant, ultraviolet, fluorescent colors, creating an almost hypnotic spectacle when waved rhythmically to music.

Flagging is empowering- i am witness to how they transform a person on the dance floor.

Flagging is soulful- they are really powerful tools during an important moment or crescendo in a dj set

For more information about the group please email NYFLAGGERS@yahoo.com for more information and to be added to their growing mailing list to keep up to date on all of their upcoming events and performances! Also check out their Facebook Group Page [here!](#)
Thank you and may the flow be with you!