

# Celebrating 20 Years of *Totally Tubular Costumes*



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Burlesque troupe the Sizzling Sirens mix tease with humor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY SIREN

## Jay Siren, burlesque instructor and performer

The Sizzling Sirens have been synonymous with Sacramento burlesque since 2008; founder Jay Siren has been performing with the Sirens and offering instruction to the burlesque-curious since. With classes and live performances off the table for the foreseeable future, she talks about making connections both online and safely distanced, with some good old-fashioned socially-distanced parking-lot dancing.

### The Sizzling Sirens are not performing during the pandemic, correct?

Correct, the troupe is inactive although everybody is part of a family now. We became a legit girl gang a while ago beyond our work onstage, so we've just been treating it that way...[We've] been doing intermittent, socially-distanced parking lot dance time. We love dancing together and moving our bodies. Things have evolved and changed, certainly, but it feels good to be where we're at after all these years.

### So these parking lot dances. Do you have audiences for those, or are they just for you and the gang?

No, no, purely for enjoyment and love of movement, moving together. Not with any performative end necessarily, but simply to enjoy each other and enjoy dance, which is something that obviously brought us together, and it's just a cool way to hang out with your sisters, y'know?

### You had been offering lessons through Zoom. Are you still doing that?

For the past few years I've been teaching a dance class called Foundations with Jay, which is

centered within burlesque movement style, but focuses more on the idea of mind-body connection through the lens of the sensual movements practice...and it was just fantastic and lovely, and when the pandemic hit, I transitioned to Zoom. I quickly realized that the format of that class didn't translate to the digital sphere...So now we get together [online] from 6:30 to 8:30 pm each Tuesday, and I present a topic for conversation.... It's been really organic and exciting and the level of vulnerability and sharing that we're doing is just really gorgeous and has ended up being super-meaningful. So even though it's in a way devastating to not be able to hold physical space together right now, it has become an unexpected and kind of glorious gift that the digital format has offered us...Nothing creates opportunities for creativity and expansion like limitations, right?

### One of the things people most associate with the burlesque are beautiful, sexy costumes. Do you miss those?

First of all, let me tell you, of all the beautiful burlesque costumes I've been blessed to wear in my life, I think one of my favorites was a head-to-toe solid felt pug costume.

### Did you say pug, P-U-G?

I did! Part of the sex positivity, body positivity, and excitement that comes from burlesque is really embracing that humor that comes with exploring and celebrating your body and your sexuality and character in different ways.

So for the Sizzling Sirens, as a group, that often manifested in really directly humorous ways that involved ridiculous, over-the-top un-sexy costumes. I mean I was a giant cookie, for goodness sake!...And that, to me, is the height of the sexual empowerment that comes from this, where you are so put into your own-ness, like your own-ness of your energy and yourself, that it is a freeing joy to celebrate that in as wacky and zany a way that feels right to you.

Find information about joining Foundations by Jay Happy Hours at <http://thesirenevents.com/foundations-happy-hour>