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I Do Think I Can Drag

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The queens of this year's So You Think You Can Drag competition on what they hope to gain from winning the crown.

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By: [Mark Dommu \(/authors/mark-dommu\)](/authors/mark-dommu)



(Paige Turner by Andrew Werner)

It seems like a new drag competition or pageant launches in New York every week, but Paige Turner's long-running *So You Think You Can Drag*, which returns for its fifth season on September 11, is a bit different. The self-styled "showbiz spitfire" calls it the city's live drag reality show. Hold on to your wig, RuPaul!

"[SYTYCD] is fully produced in a professional environment and really gives queens a lengthy exposure time over the course of nine weeks," says Turner. "Not only does the audience get to know the girls, but the girls are challenged with weekly themes, numerous judges, and feedback—not to mention turning out many looks and show-stopping numbers. It's definitely a wonderful boot camp for queens!"

One of the things that sets SYTYCD apart from other drag contests is how many of its past winners have gone on to have actual careers in drag, painting and performing for a living. "All the winners have switched to doing drag full-time, which is a pretty big deal in NYC, especially with the amount of queens," Turner insists. "Crystal Demure is in *Kinky Boots*; Honey Davenport ended up performing in The Orion Experience's rock concert and is an active producer of her own band; Lady B is mopping it up in Philadelphia; and Sutton Lee Seymour went from winning her own show to doing three shows a week!"

But who of the new crop of queens has what it takes to win? A few of the contestants told us why they think they'll take home the prize, and where they imagine themselves after winning.

MACI SUMCOX

"Being new to New York, it was important for me to find a way to show what I can do in the hope of having a long and—god willing—successful drag

career. The chance to have my own show and follow in the footsteps of past winners like Sutton Lee Seymour is the most exciting part of all."

JESSA MINUTE

"I'm really thrilled and humbled to be selected to compete in Season 5! The past contestants have gone on to do some pretty major things in NYC, and I hope I'm lucky enough to follow in those footsteps! I hope I see everyone at New World Stages this fall!"

THE COUNTESS MASCARA

"I am elated to be involved with such a wonderful competition! I hope to win over the hearts of all of the peasants in the land! Now go fetch me my bushel of wheat, bitches!"

DUSTY RAY BOTTOMS

"I'm so excited to be a part of this season of SYTYCD! I hope to make a positive footprint in the drag community and inspire others to live their fantasy. I would be so grateful and fulfilled to have a consistent drag career!"

CHARMAGNE ULTRA

"This show has given so many talented performers the opportunity to prove to NYC that they have what it takes to work in this crazy business. I hope to someday rise to the ranks of drag legends like Sherry Vine, Candis Cayne, Shequida, Peppermint, and Paige Turner."

KIMBERLY SMALLZ

"Despite my name, I'm no small order! As one of the new girls in town I'll be looking to make these other queens bow down."

LACY LANE

"I come into SYTYCD with a strong sense of self, nothing to lose and everything to gain. The ultimate goal for me is to take my career as a drag performance artist to a professional level and whole-heartedly pursue a career that truly makes me feel happy and fulfilled!"

HOLLY BOX-SPRINGS

"What I am looking forward to from doing this competition is learning as much as I can. I'm excited to start the process of making Holly Box-Springs a household name and bringing a little Texas to New York!"

ALEXIS MICHELLE

"I'm looking forward to gaining additional exposure and hopefully spending more time in drag—getting paid! I'm also excited to go through the competition with a great group of girls and make new friends in the community...and then beat them!"

SCHWA DE VIVRE

"As a trained Broadway performer, I plan on bringing some triple-threat realness to this competition, so watch out, squirrels! Regardless of the outcome, I look forward to kiki-ing with new friends, having a fabulously fun time, and serving it to the children. I play to win, so expect a show!"

So You Think You Can Drag at The Green Room at New World Stages, 340 W 50th St (btwn Eighth/Ninth Aves), Thursdays beginning September 11 at 10:30pm; \$10. Visit newworldstages.com for more info.

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