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Drag queens try to provide downtown San Francisco with a boost



BY ITAY HOD
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CBS NEWS BAY AREA

ROBBIE SILVER
DOWNTOWN SF PARTNERSHIP

7:06 PM

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Financial District continue to struggle to
an unlikely source: its drag queens.

ored tradition.

en I douse myself in perfume and I hit it,"

A popular drag queen, Rivera has regular gigs at some of the Castro's biggest venues. But on this particular evening, he wasn't appearing at a bar or a club.

Instead, he was at a flower shop on Market Street. It was in that flower shop that he blossomed into his alter ego, Bobby Friday.

Why here? It's all part of a new initiative by a local business organization called [the Downtown SF Partnership](#) that is working to help San Francisco's downtown that is still reeling from a devastating pandemic and a growing remote economy.

The group has taken a unique approach, staging [a month-long series of drag pop-up events called Drag Me Downtown](#).

Robbie silver, the group's executive director, said the idea is to bring foot traffic into an area beyond it's 9-5 rush.

"When you think of drag performances you don't think of the Downtown Financial District," he said. "We're trying to change that narrative."

Rubie Campbell, the co-owner of the flower shop [Nigella SF](#), said she signed on both for exposure and as a way to celebrate Pride.

"It's really important for us to support the queer community and just to bring livelihood to the area," she said.

The shows are happening at a time when LGBTQ+ activists around the country are working to fight a slew of anti-drag laws in several states.

"The drag community has just been under attack throughout the country, and we are putting drag culture and drag art on a pedestal to highlight them," Silver said.

For Rivera, it's a chance to show his art in places that don't usually see it while helping boost a city



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