

The Ladypress

Official Ladyfest Leeds 2007 News

**THIS
IS IT**

Can you feel it? Ladyfest Leeds kicks off on Tuesday the 10th!

Please pick me up, I am

FREE

Welcome

Ladyfest Leeds is a week-long festival celebrating creativity, diversity and promoting gender equality. Throughout the week, there will be more than 25 bands and musicians, 25 dance and theatre performances, 20 workshops, a multitude of arts exhibitions, and much, much more!

Among the many delights on offer are a rare performance by Ana da Silva and Gina Birch of legendary band The Raincoats, a roller disco with a difference, art installations in many of the city's busiest locations and even a demonstration using Samurai swords. So, I hear you cry, what on earth is a ladyfest?

Ladyfests have been held all over the world since the first one sprang up in the USA in 2000. They are a positive and creative opportunity to highlight the marginalisation of women in music and

the arts. They also allow artists, musicians and organisers a crucial opportunity to meet, share skills and build networks. This is the first ever Ladyfest to be held in Leeds, and we hope it will be an opportunity for all people who support gender equality to work together and showcase the very best of what our city can offer. All the organisers are volunteers and any proceeds will go to charity. All the Ladyfest organisers have a wide variety of backgrounds, occupations, interests and politics. Most of us had never worked together before, and almost none of us had ever been involved in a project of this scale. And it's not too late to get involved: use the 'Contact Us' form on our website - www.ladyfestleeds.co.uk - or come down and meet us.

The idea of the festival is also to start blurring some of the boundaries between performers and audience members. There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved, whether it be pinning your sketches onto the Art Wall, joining in with the Cabaret night or simply going to a skills-sharing workshop.

So buy your passes, check out some events and be inspired!

Ladyfest Leeds is running from April 10th to 15th at the Carriageworks, Joseph's Well, the Holy Trinity Church and other city centre venues. Week tickets, which give entry to all festival events, are £29.50 from the Leeds City Box Office at The Carriageworks by phone on 0113 2243801 and in person at The Carriageworks in Leeds. A range of individual event tickets and day passes are also available. Enquiries about tickets can be made to boxoffice@leeds.gov.uk.

the Ladypress...

... will be available everyday of the festival, keeping you up to date with what's happening. From Wednesday 11th onwards we'll be featuring previews, reviews, accounts of events, articles and much more. So to be fully informed on all things Ladyfest, keep an eye out and make sure you get your copy!

If you want to have your say about what's going on at Ladyfest, write a review, or just simply bend our ear, please, feel free! You can get in touch with us by emailing; theladypress@googlemail.com

Contents

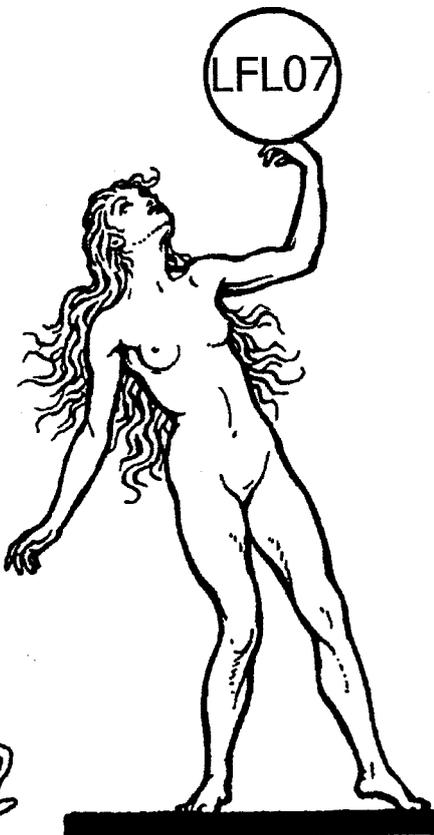
Page 3 - Ana Da Silva and Gina Birch grace our rag as our Page 3 'stunners', and we invite you to get creative and become a 'Post-Lady'!

Page 4 - If you're feeling brave, take the stage! A look into one of our first events 'The Cabaret and Open Mic Night' on Tuesday the 10th

Page 5 - Get your skates on to join in the fun at the Ladyfest Punk Rock Roller Disco!

Page 6 - Elena Stoehr discusses her Photography, she will be putting on three (yes, three!) exhibitions especially for Ladyfest Leeds

Page 8 - A little look at the history of UK Ladyfests. Find out more at the 'Ladyfest History Poster and Publicity Exhibition' on at The CarriageWorks all week.



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fest | WORDS

LadyGuest- Ladyfestival attendee

LadyQuest- to find out/solve/do something for Ladyfest

LadyPest- someone who is hassling you about something to do with Ladyfest

LadyStress- stress of organising Ladyfest

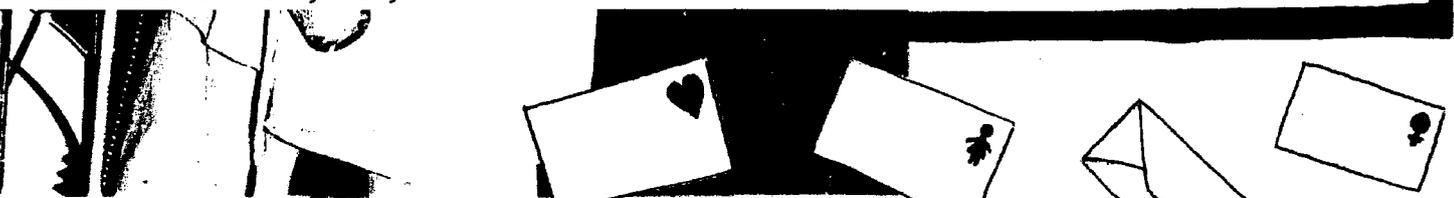
LadyMess- when things go wrong

LadyStar- a compliment for doing something great for Ladyfest

Are April showers getting you down? Or simply getting you wet? Well fear not, as The Ladypress can cheer you up and keep you dry with this charming pair of ladies: Ana Da Silva and Gina Birch, the founder members of The Raincoats.

After meeting at the Hornsey College of Art, Ana and Gina formed The Raincoats in 1977, with the line-up changing regularly until they found drummer Palmolive (formerly of The Slits) in 1978 and appointed Vicky Aspinall on violin. Their self-titled debut album was released in 1979 and proved that the punk movement wasn't all about sweaty boys with safety pins in their ears: it could be about girls, about being angry, scary, scared, funny and catchy. After three more albums - Odyshape in 1981, The Kitchen Tapes in 83 and Moving in 84 - the band split, and gorgeous Gina went on to make music videos for the likes of New Order, Daisy Chainsaw, Beth Orton and The Libertines. Amazing Ana released a solo album, The Lighthouse, in 2005.

Ana and Gina reformed for one-off gigs in 2001 and 2003, and they have both appeared at different Ladyfests. But Leeds gets a special treat: at our event, they'll be playing solo sets and performing together, playing Raincoats songs, for the first time in nearly four years.



Post Lady Project

Lizzie Guinness wants you to pick up a postcard and get creative! Here's why...

Postcards have always inspired me. What I like about them is how they capture a moment in time- the illustrations on the front, the correspondence, the date stamp. Postcards are accessible and undaunting as an art medium because we know from browsing seaside shops that there is a whole range of postcards- from the tongue-in-cheek seaside tat to ones with beautiful photography. So, they feel comfortable to work with. Anyone can make anything with them.

I felt that there were plenty of people who will be attending Ladyfest who would have something to say. One of our central ethos has been to encourage creativity - and extending that idea to the LadyGuests seemed a natural thing to do- to make the festival as participatory as possible, not just for people to come and observe all the wonderful arts and performers but to also actively participate in it to.

I'm inviting people to create a postcard in whatever style they choose, as a space to reflect and think about themselves, their gender, their creativity, and/or their activism.

The postcards will be available at the Ladyfest merchandise/info stalls located in Carriageworks and Josephs Wells. There will be loads of crafty bits with them so people can make these cards then and there. A gold LadyPostBox will be available to post them in. If lady-guests want to take postcards home to make, there are stamps available and they can send them to: Ladypost, 22 St Hildas Mews, York, YO10 3SF.

After the festival I'm hoping to make the postcards into a zine as a lasting legacy to the creative power to the festival.

Further info is available at www.my-space.com/post_lady



Alright on the Mic

Ladyfest Leeds 2007 kicks off on Tuesday the 10th with a big shout out to everyone who wants to make their creative voices heard! The Cabaret and Open Night Event, featuring some of the best local Leeds talent, will be taking place at The Carriageworks. The event starts at 7.30pm, and will be compered by comedienne Clitty RubQuick. There will be poetry, songs, world music, spoken word, comedy, and juggling with crystal balls. Plus there will also be room for you, the audience, to take part! As Swithun Cooper tells us, you don't need to be an exhibitionist, you just need to be yourself!

The first open mic night I ever went to, I was 15 years old. I sat at the back, terrified, waiting for my turn - until, over time, I realised that it was okay because all the other readers were as nervous as me. More importantly, they were as bad as me. We all wrote terrible, terrible confessional teenage poetry. Even the old people.

There was a man who read an enormous poem that seemed to go on for ages about a ship in a storm that was wrecked (a metaphor for his marriage), there was a girl at university who read something called 'F***! It's All Gone Wrong' (still the greatest name for a poem ever, but the only bit I can remember) and there was a very refined middle-aged woman in one of those Howard's Way shoulder-pad jackets who got up and read some graphic, erotic stuff about all the sex she'd been having in her back garden with a man who wasn't her husband.

What I really enjoyed about the whole experience - apart from that it was a laugh - was that we were finally being given the chance to say these things. Writing is one of the more solitary hobbies: it's not like a dance class or being in a band, where you meet people.

When you say what you want, you say it onto paper, the equivalent of whispering into a beaker, and then you hide it away (usually out of embarrassment). Open mic nights are your first chance to feel free, to express what you want to say in front of other people. And best of all, everyone claps afterwards, which makes you feel much better.

Ladyfest is all about creating diversity and celebrating creativity, about giving a voice to artists who might previously be maligned in their line of work, sidelined because what they do is too off-the-wall or deals with topics related to gender, sexuality and feminism. The Ladyfest Cabaret, too, is an opportunity for performers to come together and express themselves. It's also, more importantly, a lot of fun. Alright, there might not be someone in a power suit writing about how an imprint of her lover's buttocks can be seen in her flowerbed, but there'll be just as much fun to be had.

The comper for the night will be Clitty RubQuick - Clytumnestra Aurora RubQuick to use her full name. The lesbian comedienne and performer has had plenty of experience in front of audiences, having performed at events up and down the country including 'One L of

a Night' alongside acts like Rhona Cameron, and in front of D-list royalty like Gary Barlow and the cast of 'Emerdale'. Clitty also recently announced that she will moonwalk the marathon in gold high heels for charity, and that she is fully equipped for it, having done two minutes of training a day. If two minutes can give her enough preparation for a marathon, several years of experience at these events means she should be even better at it...

There will also be poems, stories, songs and more from some of Leeds' local writers, performers and artists. With a smattering of open mic nights around the city - including Wicked Words in Chapel Allerton, the university's Blueprint night at the Flux Gallery in Hyde Park and Reconaissance at the Packhorse, we should have a good stronghold of experienced performers.

So come along - sing, talk, read. Speak freely and say what you feel. What's the worst that's going to happen? I promise we're all going to clap.

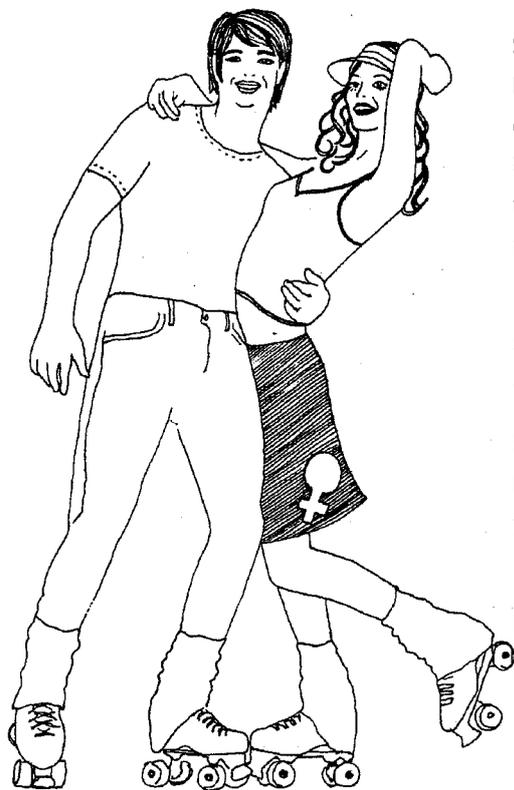
Cost - £5 (£3 conc.) or free entry with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass

www.clittyrubquick.com

punk rock ROLLER DISCO

It was acceptable in the eighties ... and it's cool as f**k now ... on Tuesday the 10th of April there's just NO excuse not to freak out on the dancefloor at the Ladyfest PUNK ROCK ROLLER DISCO with old skool skates n' upfront punk. Learn how to bust out some moves and stay upright with Northernroll professional skaters who'll be on hand throughout the night to help you get dancing, introducing you to rollerdisco or helping you to improve on roller disco dance moves. Skaters of all levels are welcome to this fun Ladyfest night.

Providing the soundtrack to the night are the infamous Suck My Left One DJs spinning a mash up of queercore, riot grrrrl, punk, rock n roll, electro-pop-queer-beat & indie-trash-glam-randomness on rotation with France's finest Robotmagique. The Tiger Tiger bar is open all night and be sure to arrive on time to see a demonstration from the LONDON ROLLERGIRLS.



In the meantime, here's some handy hints from Claire Armstrong on how to avoid embarrassment on the night!

How to stop without crashing into something

If you find using your brakes just a little too conventional, try the 'T-Stop':

Step 1 - As you are skating forwards, with knees bent, take one leg behind you.

Step 2 - Hold the skate at a 90 degree angle and drag the wheels to stop. Keep your weight on the heel of the drag skate, or you'll spin around.

How to fall over with dignity

Everyone falls over, so don't get embarrassed. For those who point and laugh at the person falling on their bum, it's actually the best way to land as most injuries happen to the wrist or arm when people use their hands to break their fall.

Step 1 - If you feel you are losing your balance, try to squat down and slide onto the ground. Don't use the 'Windmill of Death' technique (see below) - you'll only increase the momentum as you fall over.

Step 2 - Let your bum absorb the shock and keep your fingers out the way of other skaters.

Step 3 - Get up by first kneeling on one leg. Put on your most dignified look as you skate off again.

How to skate backwards

Step 1 - Begin with your skates closer than normal. Point your toes slightly in, and push your

skates outwards.

You should begin to move backwards.

Step 2 - As your legs move apart, turn your heels towards each other and pull your feet in together.

Step 3 - Repeat, forming an hourglass pattern. Oh, and watch out behind you!

Learn the lingo

Rexing: dancing on roller skates. Not the easiest for beginners.

Face plant: falling onto your front.

Windmill of Death: waving arms around as you fall backwards. Doesn't help.

Ticketing INFO

Limited places available - reserve your place through Carriageworks Box Office £3 conc./£4 or Free entry with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass - No walk ups. Bring your own skates or call John to pre-arrange hire at £3 [07884 346 932] www.northernroll.co.uk



Beauty in Detail...

Ladyfest Leeds is exhibiting artwork by many female artists throughout this week. One of these women, Elena Stoehr, has three photography exhibitions on display at The Carriageworks from Tuesday to Sunday. Entry is free. Melanie Maddison interviewed the 24 year old German artist for her art zine 'Colouring Outside The Lines' to see what she hoped for by exhibiting her work at Ladyfest Leeds. You can read the full interview in issue 3 of 'Colouring Outside The Lines'.

Unfortunately work commitments in Cologne prevent Elena from being in Leeds with us this week.

Three of your photograph exhibitions are being shown at Ladyfest Leeds 10th-15th April. Why were you interested in showing your work at Ladyfest?

My photographs have been exhibited at various Ladyfests (in Nuremburg and Toulouse) before and I consider them a safe space to show my work because some of my pictures are very personal and intimate and I don't want to provide them to an environment that would make me feel uncomfortable. I have never exhibited my photography in the UK before and I am just curious what it will bring.

On 15th April there is going to be a discussion group where visitors can talk about your photographs and any issues raised. How important to you is the discussion of your work?

It's very important to me because normally, it just doesn't happen. People look at the pictures and leave. I don't get any direct reactions to my work, except from people who know me.

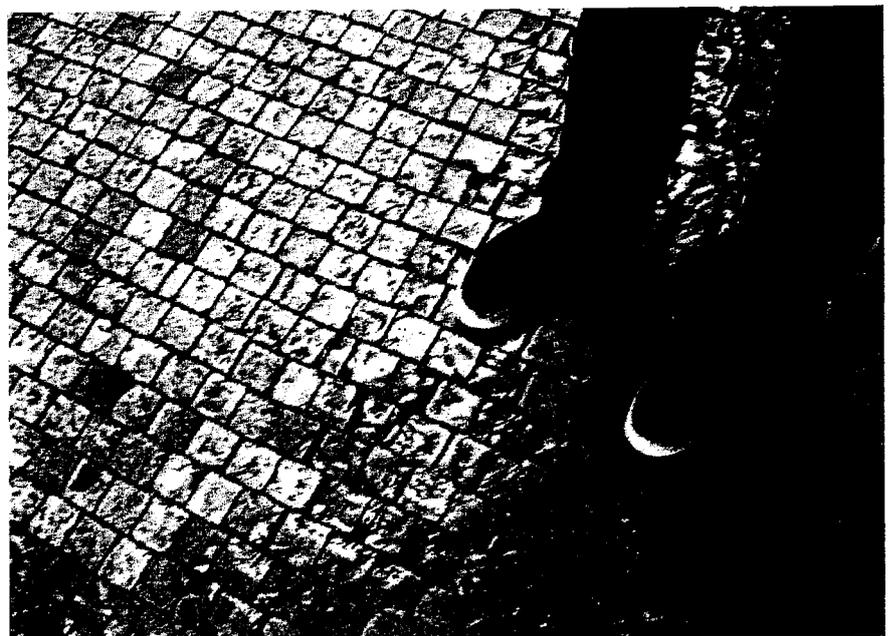
Your exhibition "Street // Art" concentrates on everyday sights that often remain unnoticed. What specific things do the photographs show?

The photographs show political statements, ornaments, beautiful things, people and much more. They were taken

in different cities, namely Barcelona, Berlin, Prague and Reykjavik. Most of them show stencils but also cut-out images and stickers. These are the things we often tend to ignore or overlook while walking around. I guess that's mainly because we think we are already familiar with the environment or we just have so many thoughts in our heads that we forget our surroundings. I love to walk around wakefully, even if that's not always an easy thing to do. Those small treasures make me smile, i.e. when I went for a walk in Reykjavik last year and felt a bit lonely because I had been on my own for a week. Then I saw a stencil saying "Eat p*ssy, not animals" and burst out laughing. Basically, I am trying to show how these small pieces of art are able to make a change.

Another of your exhibitions, "Suada" is also being shown at Ladyfest Leeds. Suada focuses on the beauty of small objects and details. What does the word "Suada" translate as?

"Suada" is derived from Latin and means "stream of words" or "tirade". Those pictures tell a story, namely what influenced or moved me during the months when the exhibition was put together. It tells something about the artificiality of categories such as "sex" & "gender" (there is a picture of me with a moustache, womyn with suits on a coffee ad in Tokyo, etc.). It talks about sad moments, like the day we visited the Jewish museum in Berlin or the Jewish cemetery in Prague. It tells about traveling Japan and all the things I learned



about life there. It recapitulates how Iceland's landscape made me question myself. And it tells you about gestures, smiles, light, broken glass, the sky and so on.

Do you find that being able to find the beauty in small things enables us to put our own lives into perspective ?

Definitely. Sometimes I get the feeling that people tend to be so obsessed with problems and worries that they forget what it feels like to appreciate small things. I guess I am so happy about those small things in life because I have had breast surgery twice (benign tumors in both breasts). After the first one, I developed post-traumatic stress disorder and hypochondria. I was worried and scared all the time and I don't even want to know where I would be now if I hadn't started psychotherapy. Now I wake up every morning and I'm just happy to be alive.

You are making some of the exhibited photographs available to be given away for free, as prints, at Ladyfest Leeds. It seems to me that you are very interested in the democratic distribution and accessibility of art. Is this the reason behind your provision of free images from "Suada"?

Yes, it is. I would like people to take a part of the exhibition with them. It's a shame that art is often not accessible to everybody and has become such an "exclusive thing" in general.

The final exhibit of yours to feature at Ladyfest Leeds is your most recent work-in-process, "Deconstructing Barriers". What does this title mean to you?

The title came to my mind when I listened to a song by Shotmaker entitled "Reconstructing Barriers". By putting this exhibition together and finding the courage to show those pictures to other people, even strangers, I deconstructed

a barrier inside of my head. The exhibition is my way of closing the whole matter of worrying and being scared. I will no longer be ashamed of talking about it and it won't dominate my days anymore.

In focussing on your own personal, private experiences of breast surgery, and scars within the photographs, what discussion do you hope to raise with these works?

As for breast surgery and breast health in general, I found it really shocking that it is still such a huge taboo. After my first surgery, a lot of people -even close friends- turned red and changed the subject as soon as I started to talk about surgery. Which in return made me feel ashamed. Additionally, I noticed that I felt so scared and ashamed because of the relationship I had to my own body. I never went to breast check-ups or made self-exams. Actually my boyfriend was the one who felt the first tumor. I was so alienated from my own body that I didn't even notice that something was wrong! If I had known my body better and had been educated about breast health, I would have felt my tumor before it had a diameter of 3cm and the whole thing would have been easier. So, I want to talk about the relationship to one's own body scars and why there is still such an unbearable silence around illness and trauma.

Have you had, or do you expect reactions of shock, provocation, or discomfort within viewing audiences? What are your thoughts on this?

Yes, I have had those reactions. When I put the exhibition together, I made an experiment and put one of the pictures, which shows my bandaged breasts after surgery, into my mspace-profile. I was really scared to do that because now, everybody was able see the picture.



Shortly after I had put it online, a friend of mine posted a comment: "Do you make provocative and shocking art now?" When I read that, I deleted the picture immediately. And I felt so bad. But that is usually the first thing that comes to peoples' minds: That I only use those images to shock or provoke people. Of course I do not. It's hard enough to share them with anybody because they show intimate things. By the way, I put the picture online again after some time... Another thing is that what "Deconstructing Barriers" shows is often considered to be too private. That's also where a part of the taboo around surgery and illness comes from. But I want to share my experiences and I want to learn from others. So nothing is "too private" for me...

All images by Elena Stoehr

Elena Stoehr's website -
www.notjustboysfun.de

Melanie Maddison's zine, Colouring Outside The Lines -
www.myspace.com/colouringoutside-thelines

LFO7

ladyfever

Ladyfest Glasgow (2001)

Ladyfest Newcastle (2006)

LADYFEST
LONDON
2nd
Ladyfest Dublin (2004)

LADYFEST LEEDS (NOW!)
Ladyfest Manchester (2003)

Ladyfest Nottingham (2007)

Ladyfest Birmingham (2004)

Ladyfest Leicester (2007)

Ladyfest Cambridge (2007)

Ladyfest Cardiff (2006)

Ladyfest London (2002)
(2008)

Ladyfest Bristol (2003), (2007)

Ladyfest Brighton (2005)

Ladyfest Exeter (2003), (2004)

Ladyfest Bournemouth (2006)

LADYFEST
EXETER 04
APRIL 10TH-12TH

DATE: 29th August
DIRTY PUNK FROM.....
THE GOSSIP *
TEXAS PETE *
* FLAMINGO 50

COME TO THE CARRIAGEWORKS AND SEE THESE WONDROUS THINGS WITH YOUR EYES!!! e! BASTARD!

LADYFEST HISTORY POSTER AND PUBLICITY EXHIBITION

"This exhibition is an attempt to show the range of amazing artwork created for various ladyfests over the years, in the form of posters, fliers, logos and general promotional materials that have been created for these events."

Free to all: 6pm-9pm Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th April;
12midday to 6pm Friday 13th to Sunday 15th April

THE CARRIAGEWORKS



DO YOU
WANT TO SEE
MY BAND PLAY
TUESDAY?

WELL
I'M GOING
TO LADYFEST

AND.....
READERS.....
US OUT
Does 6pm