

# The Ladypress

Official Ladyfest Leeds 2007 News

Thursday 12th April



WHAT'S  
that SOUND?

PLEASE PICK ME UP, I'M

**FREE**

# Everybody look what's going down...

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**Page 5** - 'I don't want to do that', a look into tomorrows youth workshop that will teach assertiveness skills, plus some exercises to learn how to deal with criticism.

**Page 6** - Jean Genet are playing tomorrow! And the next day! And the next day! We caught up with the trash/pop/electro duo to find out what on earth possessed them!

**Page 8** - You are invited to get involved with the Ladyfest Bunting Project. Get out some scraps of fabric and get creative!

The first night of Ladyfest Leeds was full of fun and frolics! Colin Michel was lucky enough to go to both of the sold out events; the Cabaret and the Punk Rock Roller Disco. He wrote us a lovely review to let us know how it all went.

"The organisers of the cabaret achieved something phenomenal in their choice of acts. Each and every performer was astounding. My friends who came to see the show were speechless, as I'm not sure that they had known what to expect. We all agreed the highlight of the night was Cristelle. We were at turns mesmerised, chuckling, and breathless as she wove together spoken word and a crystal ball with dexterity and grace. And I was truly bowled over by the quality of the poetry and storytelling. I came away from the event itching to pick up my pen and begin writing... Inspiring stuff.

And how fun was it to watch the Ladyfesters and Ladyguests swirling around one another across Tiger Tiger's polished disco rink? Glitter and gratitude to the organisers and DJs of Punk Rock Roller Disco."

Page 3  
Seunna!

Tobi Vail

Top totty Tobi has been tempting us for some years now: this DIY journalist, musician and feminist theorist was born on the same day as the moon landing - proving she really is out of this world!

She's also been music to our ears for years and years, drumming in The Go Team, Some Velvet Sidewalk, The Frumpies and Spray Painted Love.

Together with Kathleen Hanna she produced the zines Revolution Girl Style Now and Bikini Kill - which gave its name to the band that they formed, kick-starting the riot-grrrl movement alongside bands like Bratmobile. Tobi coined the word "grrrl" in her zine Jigsaw, which is still going today. Grrrls on top, eh?

Some might recognise Tobi because she wore Teen Spirit deodorant, which rubbed off on Kurt Cobain while they were dating. But that's the least of her achievements and she's much more interesting than that: she also runs the cassette label Bumpidee and currently plays in a whole host of bands, including the incredibly brilliant Spider and the Webs.

And, most importantly, she's one of the founders of the original Ladyfest - so without Tobi, you wouldn't be reading this!

Get yourself some hot zine action at the 'Revolution Zine Style' workshop at 3:30pm tomorrow in the Carriageworks (room 5). The workshop will explore the potential of zines to empower and inspire young people as well as providing a voice for ideas and experiences. The cost is £2 (£1.50 conc.) or free with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass or Friday DayPass

Ladyfest  
Leeds  
Autonomous  
Space

There's so much  
going on at the  
Autonomous Space!

TO FIND OUT MORE VISIT:  
[WWW.LADYSQUAT.CO.UK](http://WWW.LADYSQUAT.CO.UK)

#### Thursday 12th Events

Workshops 11am -1pm including:

- \* DIY cock/dildo making(11am)
- \* introduction to Leeds radical mental health project(12am)

Lunch 1-2pm

Workshops 2-6pm including

- \* Massage(2pm)
- \* 3rd wave meeting(2pm)
- \* Talk on the Romanian Feminist Movement(4pm)

Evening meal 7pm

Performance and acoustic music evening, including...

- \* Threadbare contemporary dance- Familiar patterns and well-worn rituals start to unravel.
- \* Stav B performs 'Give Me Something' - a sexy performance on desire and anticipation.
- \* Music from Cherry Burns, Kay Taylor and Miranda Arieah.

#### Friday 13th Events

Fun for kids from 11am, including Monster making...

Workshops 2-6pm including:

- \* Gender, Asylum and the detention of women and children-discussion (3pm)
- \* Art Behind bars: Retrospective on educational arts programme for women in prison (2pm)
- \* Sexual violence and coercion discussion (2pm)
- \* Pedal powered generators (4pm)
- \* Self defence (4-6pm)

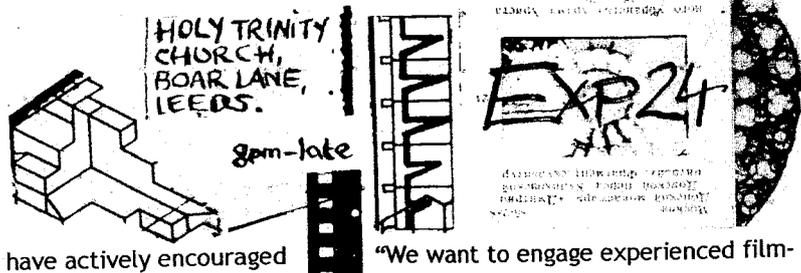
Evening meal 7pm

Live music including...

- \* Monday Club
- \* The Venom Seeds
- \* Mz Sojourn
- \* The Vendettas
- \* Ill Ease

# Tonight's events

## FILM NIGHT



It's not often you go to a film night and discover you're one of the stars.

But that's a very real possibility if you head down to the EXP24 film night at Holy Trinity Church this evening. It's £3 on the door or free with Ladyfest Weekend Plus Wristband or any valid Day Pass (Fri Sat Sun)

EXP24, a collective that champions, in their words, "the most experimental, interesting, diverse, fun, shocking, and avant-garde film we can get our hands on", have sent out a specific requests for filmmakers and contemporary artists to set up a live feed from inside the church, so visitors may literally see the event reflected back on them.

The group have actively encouraged members of the public to submit both live-feed and pre-recorded film work to show tonight and are keeping tight-lipped about what is in the final line-up.

But you can expect a vast array of film styles, with submissions from absolute beginners to old hands, and a range of media, from Super 8 to DVD.

EXP24 are a non-profit group whose main aim is to encourage creativity through film. They say: "As well as making and screening experimental film, we're dedicated to creating a space where people can show their films, share ideas, be inspired and learn how to do it themselves.

"We want to engage experienced filmmakers and newcomers alike - from Yorkshire, the UK and beyond - to screen both celluloid and digital film/ animation; provide a platform for live performance and installation that breaks away from the frame and traditional cinematic formats, and actively encourage and participate in a relaxed environment where conversation can, through knowledge, experience and enthusiasm, breed new ideas and collaborations."

If you go to the film night, why not tell Ladypress what you made of it? Simply email your review to [theladypress@googlemail.com](mailto:theladypress@googlemail.com)

## comedy

### AT THE CARRIAGEWORKS

If you're up for a laugh tonight then don't miss the Comedy night at The Carriageworks. featuring Penny Broadhurst, Daisy Connolly, Lou Conran, Jo Neary and Isy Suttie. The show starts at 7.30pm and you can get in with a Thursday Pass for £5 (£3 conc.) or for free with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass

We spoke to Penny Broadhurst, the compere and curator of the night. She told us that a Ladyfest comedy night will be different from any other because;

"Nobody will get picked on, nobody will remember Spangles and everyone will get a free zine with contributions from the acts."

#### Let's take a look at the acts!

**Penny Broadhurst** is a musician, actor, singer, writer, poet and spoken word artist. Her individual style of acerbic

and witty vocal narratives, delivered in a broad Yorkshire accent and often accompanied by pop and rock music, has been compared to that of a pop star rather than a traditional poet.

Penny also performs her new show 'A Little More Sonic - Live' which mixes fierce, witty spoken word with intelligent and catchy proper pop music at Ladyfest on Saturday.

**Daisy Connolly** will be telling it like it is with her scathing Northern wit. A comic who combines a surreal perspective with the familiarity of everyday life, Daisy forgoes the usual political targets to tackle the real threats to society, such as the voodoo behind Diet Coke, and the difficulty of building boyfriends out of Lego.

**Louise Conran** has been described as "a potty mouthed individual, who manages

to get away with it, with a smile and a huge personality." That, pretty much sums up Ms Conran. In a nutshell, her father would be shocked, her mother wouldn't be surprised, and her friends have seen it coming for years.

**Joanna Neary:** Gasp! at her 1985 diaries, smirk! at Stories of Interest and gawp! at her characters and songs as she prances about, pointing her toes and waving.

**Isy Suttie** is one of the most innovative acts to emerge on the circuit in recent times, Isy's gloriously silly and twisted songs, stand-up and stories have drawn comparisons with Victoria Wood and Tom Lehrer. Nominated as Best Newcomer at the 2005 Chortle Awards, she went onto perform in the prestigious showcase The Comedy Zone at the 2005 Edinburgh Fringe.



'I don't want to do that!' is a workshop taking place on Friday in the Carriageworks (room 5). The aim of the workshop is to teach young people assertiveness skills. If you are aged between 11 and 18 and would like to learn how to express yourself with confidence then this fun and friendly workshop is for you!

Youth workers Debbie Clements & Anna Reilly will be guiding the group. They have run similar workshops in secondary schools previously, dealing with issues such as bullying and peer pressure. Debbie and Anna are down to earth and can't wait for the fun and inspiration of Ladyfest Leeds!

The workshop starts at 12:30pm and costs £2 (£1.50 conc.) or free with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass or Friday DayPass.

**For those of us in need of a little assertiveness boost, Sarah Smith has given the Ladypress some exercises on dealing with criticism that with practise will make those nasty comments just like water off a ducks back!**

Unfortunately we all have to deal with criticism at some point, but for people with low self esteem it can be far more devastating than it needs to be. These exercises are designed to minimise the effect of criticism whilst still being realistic about our flaws. They are best practised with a friend but can still be performed alone.

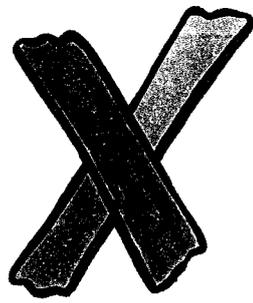
There are two types of criticism which I will be dealing with here: that which is valid and that which is invalid. First, make a list of criticism which has been levelled at you in the past but which you feel is invalid. It could be things such as "You're so self-obsessed", "Your poetry is really bad" or "That's a terrible haircut". When you have your list, you need to get

your friend to read these criticisms back to you. When they say each one, you should respond with a short sentence which will deflect away their attack and also ensures you are not drawn into an argument or become defensive. A good example of such sentences is "You might be right". With this phrase, you are not acknowledging that their words are true, but that they may be. It does not provide your attacker with anything to grasp hold of with which to attack you again and effectively stops the conversation short. As you practise this it will become almost instinctual.

The second type of criticism is much more complex, because it is true and thus more likely to hurt you. Again, make a list, this time of these valid criticisms. They may be things like "You're always late" or "You're far too emotional". Be honest with yourself. As in the previous exercise, you need to get a friend to read these criticisms back to you and you need to respond. This time though you need to show that you recognise what they're saying whilst still refusing to be drawn into an argument or becoming defensive. This is achieved by acknowledging their words and turning it back on them. For example: "You're always so confrontational." "You're right, I can be confrontational at times."

The trick is to use the exact words which were used against you. This takes the power out of them. You must be careful not to try and justify yourself here. You do not need to provide an explanation for your actions. So in the example above, you could reasonably retort with "I don't like to let things lie, I like to challenge people and their assumptions." This is only getting yourself embroiled in an argument though and is likely to lead to more criticism, which will reduce your self esteem even further. By keeping your response short and minimal, there is also a minimal amount of material to be used against you in retaliation.

JEAN GENET...



marks the spot!

If you're out and about at any of the music events being held as part of Ladyfest Leeds this weekend, it's more than likely that you'll come across Jean Genet: two semi-clad trashy folk performing and partying onstage with smeared makeup and 'tit tape' covering their nipples.

Helena (Leeds) and Bob (London) make up this terrific queer pop-punk/electro duo and will be dancing and stripping their way across three stages this weekend, all for the love of Ladyfest!

Jean Genet are named after the provocative French author whose deliberately explicit portrayal of homosexuality and criminality got his work banned in the US in the early 1950s. Following in his footsteps, Jean Genet's keyboard-driven songs revolve around their homosexual exploits and indecent behaviours; they have crap jobs, pesky wet dreams, & rendezvous with tow-truck guys - you're likely to hear about them all!

Melanie Maddison caught up with Bob and Helena this week to find them a little bit tired and hung over, but nevertheless enthusiastic and excited about their Ladyfest gigs.

**Hi lovelies, how are you? Looking forward to Ladyfest Leeds?**

**Bob:** I'm excited about Ladyfest Leeds, cos there's so much amazing stuff happening and it's like coming home for me, catching up with all the Leeds kids, I do miss 'em.

**Helena:** I think Ladyfest will be wonderful. Unfortunately I'm a complete stress head and I can't look forward to anything, but I know it will be ace.

**Why did you get involved with Ladyfest Leeds?**

**H:** I think it's so important to put on pro-feminist, pro-queer events in what is a very male-dominated, heterosexist world. The value of that cannot be underestimated. I'm also pretty fond of Leeds, we are very much of Leeds and of the queer, feminist community here, so it really means a lot to play Ladyfest.

**You're set to play a record-breaking three gigs throughout the festival;**

**Joseph's Well on the Friday evening, the Speedqueen event on the Saturday, followed up by a performance at the Ladysquat on the Sunday. Phew!**

**Have you any thoughts on how all the events, venues and atmospheres may differ?**

**B:** I am a very firm believer of working with what you've got, and the setting will kind of shape our performances for us; the Joseph's Well gig is our 'rock' setup and will be a guitar-y set, Speedqueen will be done only with the keyboard and will be about getting the house-y gays to dance to a new beat, and the Ladysquat performance is an open-mic so anyone can join in.

**As open queers, what are your views on Ladyfest working as a queer-positive event?**

**B:** As a gay boy out on the scene, it's really apparent how prevalent misogyny still is. The tragedy is that it's seen as a separate battle, swallowing all the negative media constructions of what it means to be a feminist. Any gay/queer liberation cannot be fully realised without gender equality. Ladyfest is addressing a gender imbalance that is inextricably a queer act.

**H:** For me being queer and being a feminist is about being free. It's that simple. I think free expression of queerness is tremendously important in a society that still expects men to be 'proper men' and women to be 'proper women'. I hate it when people say to queers (or any minority group for that matter), 'you're just going on about it'. Why is it wrong for queer people to talk about our lives? Why is it wrong to want to be treated equally and to have your identity acknowledged?

**What has being in this band meant to you both, in terms of confidence, empowerment, and personal creativities?**

**B:** I love the fact this band has grown out from nowhere, almost by accident, and we are still just having fun with it. It's incredible to be asked to play somewhere like Berlin, to go out onstage to a totally new crowd. I never considered myself a songwriter, but now I see it as a kind of physical d.i.y activity, collecting scraps of songs, patching ideas together 'til something sticks. It's incredibly empowering when you stop judging yourself by what you think you should be doing and just get down and dirty.

**H:** Being almost naked onstage is like a mask for me. I become a different person. Playing gigs is wonderful because I get to become someone I'm not, in those moments it's very empowering.

**Jean Genet are now quite infamous in Leeds for performing scantily clad, and encouraging the crowd to go topless, electrical tape X's covering ones modesty! What are your thoughts on Ladyfest's feminist environment being one where any statements you may wish to create, or challenge, about**

**male and female nudity can be explored effectively?**

**H:** It's so liberating. Again, I think it comes down to a sense of freedom. We should be allowed to dress or undress as we choose. What bothers me is when people think that because I have tits I should dress different to Bob. I think that's pretty anti-feminist to be honest. That the bio differences between you mean you can't dress the same. Or that if you get your tits out you must be doing it because you love yourself and think you're great. Why are positive body issues such a virtue? Why is it that, particularly if you're a 'woman' (by this I mean, get perceived as such, I wouldn't put myself in that exact gender category a lot of the time) in this society, denial and modesty and constant shame and insecurity about your body are so revered? Another common perception is that women only get naked in public to please men, as though women can't decide why they're doing something. I know that women do get sexually exploited but it depends on context, I am choosing to do what I do.

**Jean Genet's "sound" revolves around guitar, vocals, karaoke tracks, and keyboard demos. What would your response be to those who claim your sound to be overly simplistic? Do you think that there is power in 'the simple'?**

**B:** Yeah, it gives you time to focus on more important things like drinking, dancing, swearing, and stripping!

**H:** Yeah, how we sound isn't that important to me. I've had my keyboard for three years and I still can't play it! I don't care about being a great musician; I just want it to be a really fun show where people hopefully feel involved, and feel that music isn't just all about these mystical musicians on their pedestals. I think how good or bad our gigs are is as dependent on the audience and interaction as us.

**For those who have never seen Jean Genet live before, what do you advise people to expect, and what do you hope that people will get from seeing you this weekend?**

**H:** Scabies.

**B:** I want people to think 'I could do that' and then actually go and form a band.

**If Jean Genet were still alive today, do you think he'd be down the front wearing tit tape?**

**B:** Only for a little bit, before turning a trick in the toilets and stealing the door money...

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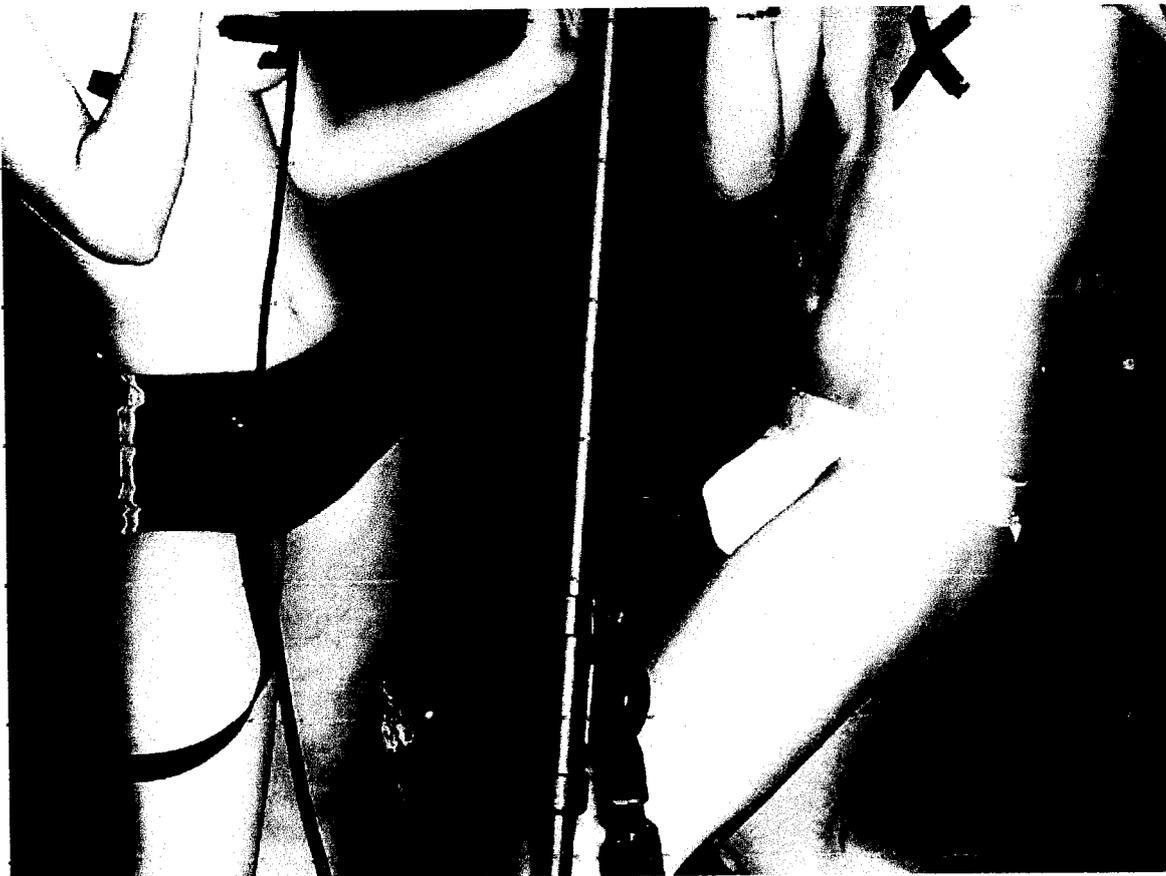
Jean Genet's Ladyfest Leeds gig diary looks a bit like this:

Friday 13th - Joseph's Well. 9pm

Saturday 14th - Speedqueen @ Rehab.  
From 10pm - 4am

Sunday 15th - Open-mic event @ LadySquat. From 7pm

By a twist of fate their performance on Sunday coincides with the 11th anniversary of Genet's death. The band are sure to mark the occasion in style!



www.myspace.com/jeanenet

LF07

# Ladyfest Leeds Bunting Project

Colin Michel tells us the inspirations and aspirations behind the Ladyfest Leeds bunting project...

"Ladyfest encourages the creativity in everyone and aims to bring down the boundary between the artists and the festival goers. I wanted to urge people to contribute to the festival and when I began to get involved in creating the displays and decorations, I came up with the idea of growing bunting throughout the week.

Bunting triangles are really easy to make - everyone can have a go. When they all get stitched together, they'll make everywhere look lovely and they'll also be so inspiring. We'll be able to see a long line of bunting and see how many people have done something creative because of Ladyfest."

## TO MAKE YOUR LADYFEST BUNTING

① CUT A TRIANGLE SHAPE, APPROX 25cm

IN LENGTH IN YOUR CHOSEN FABRIC

② NEXT, DECORATE YOUR TRIANGLE ON THE THEME OF LADYFEST.

What does a festival celebrating diversity and creativity mean to you?

③ TAKE YOUR TRIANGLE TO THE LADYFEST INFO STALL,

2ND FLOOR AT THE CARRIAGEWORKS

What should happen to the Bunting project after Ladyfest Leeds?

Could it continue?

Perhaps it could be passed on to other Ladyfests?

Why not give in your ideas along with your triangles?!

Come and see the Bunting grow!

THE BUNTING WILL BE DISPLAYED IN THE CARRIAGEWORKS THEATRE ALONG THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF STAIRS.