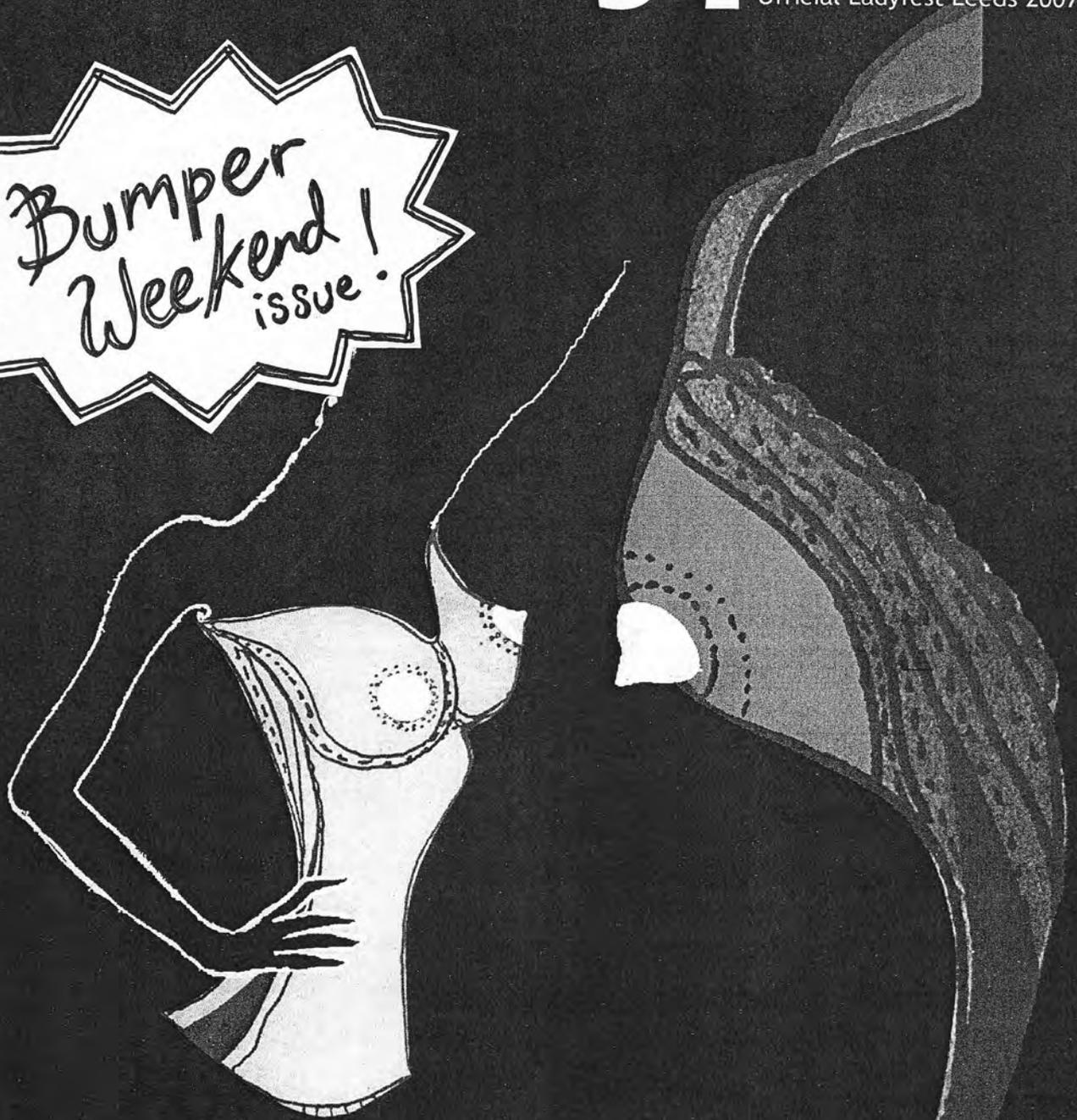


# The Ladypress

Official Ladyfest Leeds 2007 News

Bumper  
Weekend!  
issue.



Awe-inspiring  
Life-enhancing

**FREE**

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Would you like to be involved in the next LADYFEST LEEDS?

CONTACT:

LADYFESTLEEDS@GMAIL.COM

Cover illustration by Jennifer Rodgers - jenrodgers@hotmail.co.uk  
[www.warmtoastcafe.com/art/fancypantsrodgers/](http://www.warmtoastcafe.com/art/fancypantsrodgers/)

The Ladypress was put together by SarahCharms

(sarahcharms@gmail.com), but none of it would have been possible without everyone who contributed and everyone who lent a hand.

So to all those who wrote articles, all those who asked or answered the questions in interviews, those who created lovely art work, or took photographs, or wrote reviews... to everyone who ever came to a newspaper meeting...

and especially those who took on the boring job of photo-copying, folding, stapling and distribution....

THANK YOU

to everyone of you, Thankyou!

I really hope everyone has enjoyed The Ladypress, and has a wonderful time at Ladyfest! - Love Sarah x

[www.upliftmagazine.com](http://www.upliftmagazine.com)



alternative  
PAGE 3!  
Stunna!

Yoko  
Ono

Time for a little mysticism from the east: born in Japan in 1933, Yoko Ono is a world-famous artist, musician and campaigner. She grew up in poverty around San Francisco and New York, and by the age of 18 was the first woman ever to be accepted by Peers' University to study philosophy.

During her time in New York she converted her apartment into a concert hall and helped to form the avant-garde, post-Dada art collective Fluxus. Between 1964 and 1972 she made 16 art films, including the world-famous 'No. 4' - a film investigating body issues by filming people's bottoms with voice-overs by the subjects and people who were considering joining the project.

By 1961 her experimental music - incorporating classical and jazz piano and the harsh sounds of Japanese opera - had made her successful enough to sell out New York's famous Carnegie Hall, and after she met John Lennon in 1967 she formed the Plastic Ono Band, collaborating with him on several projects. (It is often said that Ono bravely relieved the world of The Beatles by encouraging Lennon to leave the band, but sadly this rumour remains unfounded.) Many of her songs - including 'O'Oh', 'Walking on Thin Ice' and 'Don't Worry' - have been covered by the likes of Elvis Costello, Pet Shop Boys and Sonic Youth.

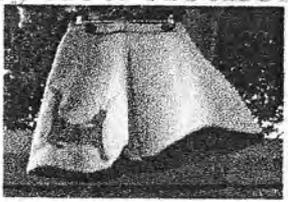
Throughout her life Ono has campaigned for world peace and spoken out against racism and sexism. In 2002, she started up a peace award giving \$50,000 to artists living in conflict, in countries such as Israel and Palestine.

Above image is of Ono performing 'Cut Piece' in 1965, a performance where Ono invited the audience to come and cut the clothes from her body.

# Stalls AT THE CARRIAGEWORKS

if you like fun clothes and you're bored with all the over-priced, sweatshop-made tat on the high street, have a shuftly at **PEDALKRAFT** recycled clothes

- \* made from 99% recycled/reclaimed materials
- \* not-for-profit: all proceeds go to women/queer-positive organisations
- \* every item between £2 - £10
- \* hand-customised with love - each piece is unique



based in todmorden  
\* models required!!  
[www.pedalkraftclothes.com](http://www.pedalkraftclothes.com)



The Manifesta Distre stocks a range of zines & comics, music and crafts.

[www.manifesta.co.uk/zines](http://www.manifesta.co.uk/zines)

# up came the rain

Kim Gordon and Kurt Cobain loved them. They turned The Kinks' sugary 'Lola' into a dark homage to girls who don't play by the rules. They were one of the most prominent female bands on the punk scene. They were The Raincoats. Swithun Cooper talks to founder members Ana Da Silva and Gina Birch - who make a rare appearance together at Ladyfest Leeds.

"You know, these guys are no Bikini Kill or Raincoats, but they're not bad." Thus spake Heath Ledger in the cutely trite teen movie *Ten Things I Hate About You*. And unwittingly, the scant Google research that the scriptwriters no doubt did into "girl bands with attitude" paid off. Because like Bikini Kill, The Raincoats are one of the most important and influential girl bands of all time.

Formed in 1977, The Raincoats were part of the punk explosion. But the

prominence of Vicky Aspinall's violin on most tracks, the contemplative, mid-tempo 'You're a Million' and the vocal melodies of 'No Side to Fall in' set them apart from most punk music. But as Ana Da Silva says, their influences stretched outside of that sphere.

"I had always listened to a lot of Bob Dylan," she says. "I loved Patti Smith and The Velvet Underground, The Slits, The Clash and the Sex Pistols. Our influences came from seeing women do things in other bands."

"Watching the Sex Pistols didn't make me feel like I could form a band," says Gina Birch, "but when I saw The Slits I thought, 'Wow, I wish I could do that.' I think it was important to feel you were able to do it."

So it was the punk ethos itself - the idea of getting up and getting involved - that caused them to start the band? "I think when we started we didn't have any big ideas or a plan," Da Silva explains. "We had seen other people play and one day we were in the pub, wondering, 'What if we started a band?' It just went on from there."

"When we played our first show my art teacher came along and said, 'Don't give up the day job,'" Birch says with a laugh, "but at the time that didn't matter - everything seemed ephemeral, amazing, like things were changing."

But within just a few years, they found that the punk movement had dissipated in Britain and they split up in 1984. "It felt like it was all a bit of a con," Birch claims. "At its height there was a fever pitch of excitement, and a feeling of change in the air - then Thatcher got in and the New Romantic movement started. Bands like Spandau Ballet came around. I was so disinterested in it - it felt like the whole thing had

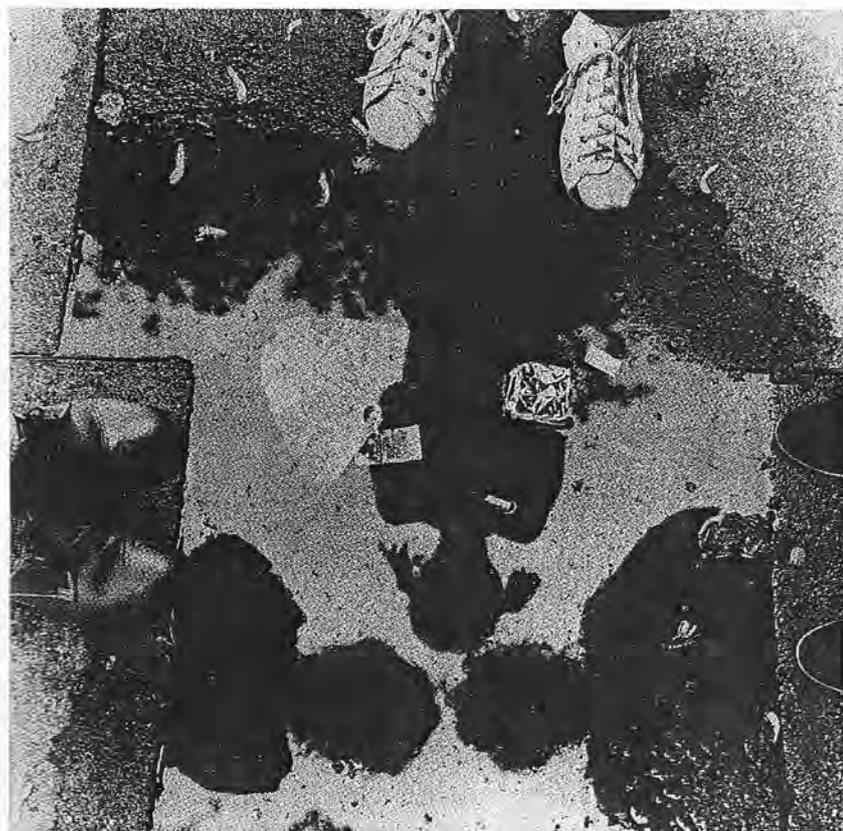


PHOTO: SHIRLEY O'LOUGHLIN



fizzled out. There weren't many girls doing it." She adds that there were a few important artists, "Madonna and Annie Lennox", but overall Birch felt alienated and disillusioned, and moved to Germany where she played in Red Krayola.

It was a decade later that Birch says she started to get excited about the music scene again: "I think it was Ana who got me into it," she says. "She went to see Huggy Bear and I went along with her, and the spirit was rekindled. It was very exciting. I didn't really feel part of it, and I'm sure it was as fraught with personal issues as any other scene but from the outside it seemed so cohesive. Punk tolerated women but riot grrrl really took the bull by the horns."

"Once I discovered that we were inspirational for these bands," Da Silva adds, "I think that's a big achievement. And then we got inspired by riot grrrl and started playing again."

Their involvement in various Ladyfests really proves this influence: both have appeared at events that grew out of riot grrrl. Birch played at the first ever Ladyfest in Olympia in 2000, as well as the London one in 2002, while Da Silva recently performed at Ladyfestspain in Madrid.

Some might argue that it's the ingrained sexism in the music industry that has kept Ladyfest the way it is - individual, irregular festivals organised from scratch by people in their spare time. Da Silva agrees, but points out the positive aspect of this: "It's great this way because there's an identity about it, through the name, but each one has its own identity - the spirit of the event is different because the people who do it are different too."

And it's the spirit of each event that has encouraged them to keep getting involved, it seems. "Olympia

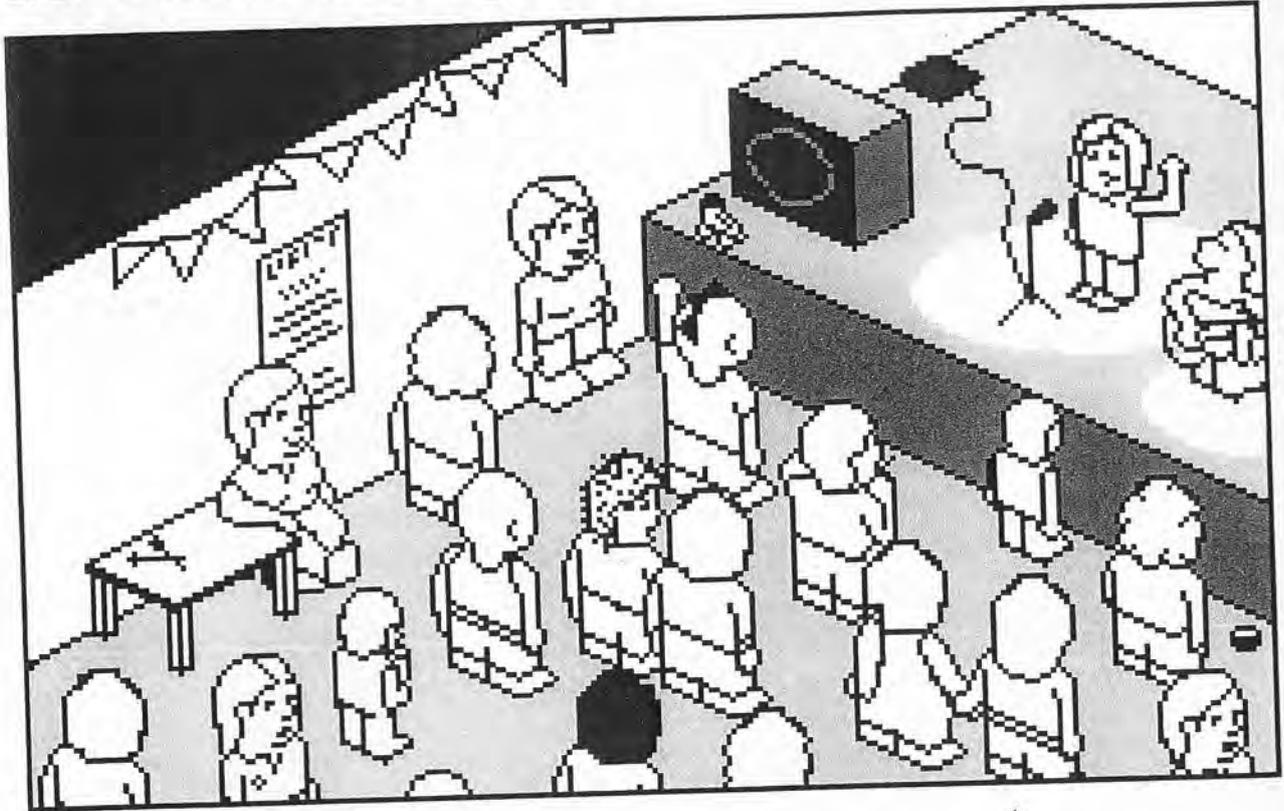
was just fantastic," Bitch says. "It's such a small town and it seemed to have been overtaken by Ladyfesters - workshops, art, music, comedy and films."

"Madrid was really great," Da Silva enthuses. "When this came up about Leeds I just wanted to do it. Other things have happened because of Ladyfest in Madrid, I made new friends there..." Best of all, she adds - and the same should be true of Leeds - "Everybody was so into it."

Gina Birch and Ana Da Silva headline at 10.30pm on Saturday at Josephs Well. The whole day's music line-up starts at 4pm and costs £10 (£8 concs, or free with a wristband).

# Colour in a Ladyfest!

by Claire Armstrong



Get your artistic juices flowing by customising your very own Ladyfest Leeds scene. See if you can spot the following:

- someone wearing a Ladyfest Leeds wristband
- a Ladyfest Leeds poster
- a roll of Jean Genet's tit tape
- bunting
- an underage drinker
- a pair of knitting needles
- a roller skate
- someone wearing a Ladyfest Leeds badge
- someone showing their bum crack
- an empowered person (answer: all of them!!!)

## Ladyfest A Leeds Autonomous Space Events

### Saturday Events

Lunch 1-2pm

Workshops 2-6pm

Including:

- \* Bike maintenance (1pm)
- \* Ciudad Juarez- photo exhibition and talk (2pm)
- \* Making things from rubbish, preparation for the fashion show(4pm)

Evening meal 7pm, then;

Junk Fashion show, performances including Sr. La Muse: international gender performance artist and bio drag queen

Music from:

- \* Angryfloss
- \* Gertrude
- \* Lyndsey Cockwell
- \* Printed Circuit
- \* and more tbc + DJs

### Sunday Events

Sunday will be a relaxing day with a fry up from 1pm and films being shown in the day. In the evening, from 7pm onwards there will be an open mic night.

for more info on the autonomous space head to [www.ladysquat.co.uk](http://www.ladysquat.co.uk)

# 'I might be getting an allotment this weekend'

Vile Vile Creatures in conversation

As we probably all know by now, one of Ladyfest's principal aims is to offer a voice and an opportunity for acts who might otherwise be sidelined by the mainstream media: female artists, political activists, queer musicians and plenty more. And who encapsulates all of these things? Why, queer feminist noise-rock band Vile Vile Creatures of course. Over their fast-paced bass guitar rumblings and heavy chords, you can hear them shouting through megaphones about all number of topics. Swithun Cooper caught up with frontwomen Jenny and Sian and found out what Ladyfest means to them, how to get a goth down from a tree and their love of stuffed toy owls.



**Hello Vile Vile Creatures. You are really incredibly good. When did you form the band, and what were your reasons for starting up?**

**Jenny:** We formed the band in the spring of last year. I wanted a song to be out there about feminist, queer issues because none of the things that are important to me were being articulated. It's not about being famous or making money - it's about visibility and being heard. I wanted to create something that might just be understood by one person who might then want to form a band...

**Sian:** It's like we need Le Tigre's 'FYR' or Team Dresch telling us 'queer sex is great'. I wouldn't be doing this if they

and others hadn't done that before. I wanted to be in a band with people who felt the same as me but also who could play without any of the ego crap that comes with it. There's no fine line between shambolic unprofessionalism and wanking on a fretboard. There's lots of room for us all to play.

**So who are your influences and heroes (musically or otherwise)?**

**Jenny:** Bikini Kill, Heavens to Betsy, Sleater-Kinney and The Need. I also love The Pixies. Kim Deal was a big influence when I was discovering music.

**Sian:** Patti Smith followed by Kim Gordon, Delta 5, The Slits and X-Ray Spex.

**Jenny:** Feminist theorists such as Butler, Creed, Kristeva...

**Sian:**... and artists like Hoch, Cahun, Sherman and Golding.

**How did you decide on the name Vile Vile Creatures? Are you really that vile?**

**Sian:** No, we're lovely!

**Jenny:** Especially if you buy us a drink!

**Sian:** The name's from Monique Wittig's *Les Guérillères*.

**You've played at a couple of Ladyfest fundraisers before - is it something that's close to your heart?**

**Jenny:** It's extremely important, especially in the sexist, homophobic and racist 'normality' that appears to be society now. It's important to have a safe place for ladies, queers and like minded people. Everyone's so supportive and I hope that Ladyfests will continue to provide this space in the future.

**Sian:** It's a cool way to make friends with people who like the same stuff as you plus new things can happen like

clubnights, zines and bands etc.

**So. Onto the serious stuff. What's the most childish joke you know?**

**Sian:** How do you get a goth down from a tree? Cut the rope.

**Jenny:** why did the mermaid blush? Because the sea weed!

**Where do you buy your vegetables from?**

**Sian:** Aldi and sometimes Unicorn in Chorlton.

**Jenny:** Well I might be getting an allotment this weekend.

**Sian:** You know that's going to be in bold as 'the rock 'n' roll' quote now...

**At the festival, will you play the raffle like you did at the fundraiser?**

**Sian:** YES! I love that wizard owl that I won!

**Jenny:** Yes definitely - the erotic massage book I won has come in handy. I now know where all my money will disappear to (on the raffle, NOT erotic massage).

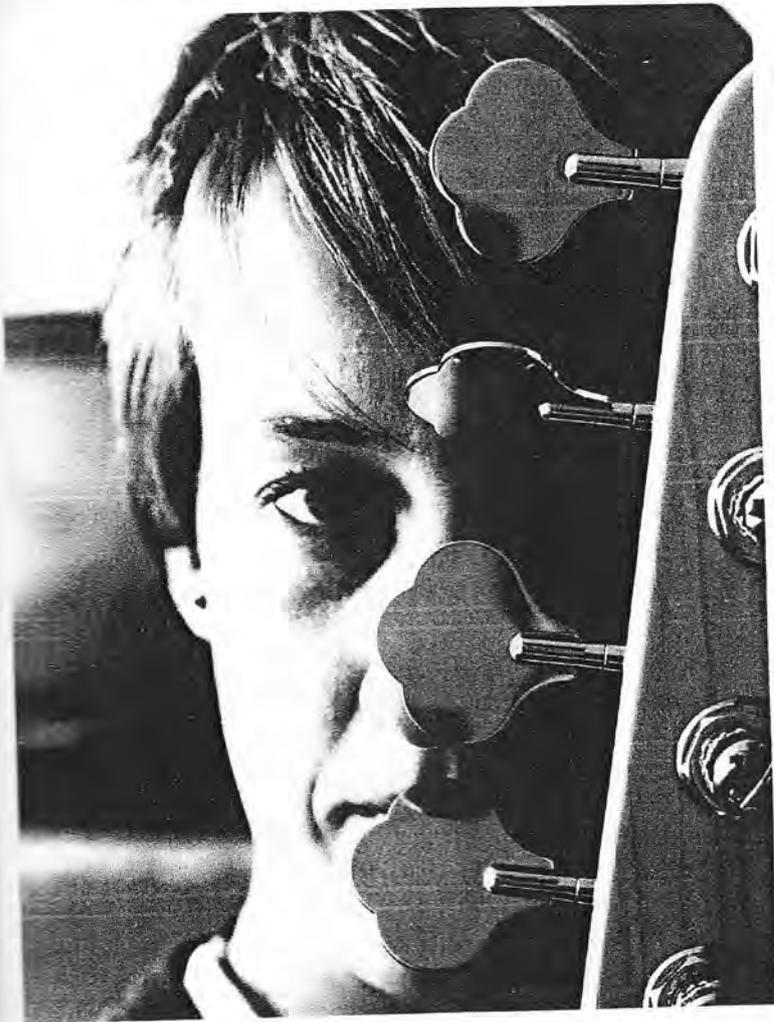
Vile Vile creatures play Josephs Well at 7pm on Saturday. Entry with Joseph's Well Saturday music only pass £10 (£8 conc.) or free with a Festival Weekend-Plus Pass or Saturday DayPass.

[www.vilevilecreatures.co.uk](http://www.vilevilecreatures.co.uk)

[www.myspace.com/vilevilecreatures](http://www.myspace.com/vilevilecreatures)



LF07



# Making jam

Improvised Jazz and Jamming' workshop

Ever wanted to just pick up an instrument and play an off-the-cuff melody, thereby securing the respect of your peers and perhaps even landing you a few secret admirers? Fear not - help is at hand.

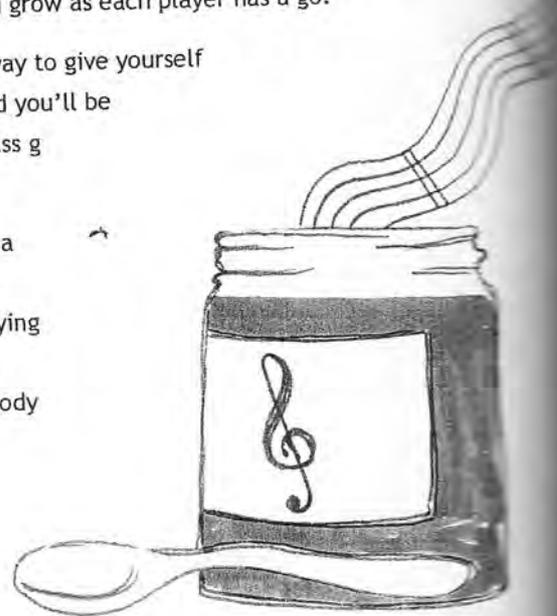
Ruth Wilde has been teaching jazz, rock and folk music in Leeds for three years. She has given the Ladypress five expert tips for budding musicians who want to learn how to improvise.

Put your new-found skills into practice at Ruth's workshop: a class on jamming and improvisation for all levels at the Carriageworks at 5.30pm on Sunday. Bringing your own instrument is recommended, but some spares will be on hand.

Cost - £2 (£1.50 conc.) or free with a Festival WeekendPlus Pass or Saturday DayPass

## Tips for making Jam....

1. **Listen-** not only to yourself, but to the rest of the group as well. You'll sound like a much more cohesive bunch if you're all singing from the same hymn sheet, as it were.
2. **Eye Contact-** absolutely essential. Eye contact with the other players will help the whole group, simply by giving them a visual indication of what you're going to do next (i.e. pass solos to other members, or end the piece). A slight nod of the head can speak volumes.
3. **Question and Answer-** a brilliant way to get listening skills up to scratch. Take it in turns to play short phrases (2 to 4 bars long should suffice). Try to react to the previous player's phrase through your own little ditty; perhaps copy their rhythm, but change the notes, or vice-versa. The exercise isn't meant to be competitive, each reaction needn't be as complicated or as simple as the phrase before it. The important thing is for the phrase to adapt and grow as each player has a go.
4. **Major Scales-** Yes, exciting I know... but playing your scales really is the best way to give yourself more freedom whilst improvising. So, learn all of them (that's 12 altogether!) and you'll be prepared for anything - within reason! If you're lucky enough to be a guitarist/bass guitarist all you need to learn is the major scale shape, and you'll be sorted.
5. **Learn melodies-** If you can read music already, but are not sure how to make a break from the dots on the page, this is a great way to get started. Once you've learnt the melody, you can mess around with it, (same goes with scales). Try playing little snippets of the melody backwards, or repeat small sections at a higher or lower pitch. If you don't read music, it doesn't matter because learning the melody will make your listening skills pretty darn good!



# Sky Larkin, at your service!



The Ladypress caught up with Sky Larkin's singer and guitarist Katie Harkin (sounding remarkably sprightly for someone who had been celebrating her birthday the day before) to talk dream Ladyfests, alligators and the dreaded university exams.

## **Are you looking forward to Ladyfest Leeds?**

I have been looking forward to it since it was a notion, even before we were asked to play, let alone headline. I'm from Leeds but I'm studying in London, so I want to come to it all but I can't. I'm still very excited though.

I'm actually planning to get there early so I can go to one of the workshops on feminism - I'm hoping it will help me with my dissertation!

## **You're studying History of Art at University College London - do you find the music scene is suspicious of higher education?**

It depends, because there's the kind of

lad bands who don't exactly wear their degrees on their sleeves and there's people who make interesting, intelligent music. Of course, you don't need a degree for that, but it's where lots of people meet so it's a fertile place for young people to come together. We met our bass player [Doug] because he came to Leeds to study music technology.

## **You've had to cancel a few April gigs because of your uni finals - Ladyfest is pretty lucky to be having you!**

Yeah, it's because UCL messed up some exam dates. Our whole department messed up, so we had to cancel some gigs. This is the last gig before I disappear off the face of the planet for a while!

## **Who would play at your ideal Ladyfest?**

I'm still kicking myself in the face for not seeing Le Tigre before they broke up, so them.

## **Your debut single, One Of Two, came out in January. What's next?**

We're going on a UK tour with a band called Land Of Talk, from Montreal. They've got this girl called Lizzie as their front-woman - her mum was the first female alligator wrestler, or something like that...

## **Crumbs. Anything else?**

We want to have a fun summer, play some fun festivals, and try to record some more music.

## **What, aside from other musicians, inspires Sky Larkin?**

Well, at the moment, because of educational commitments, we do a lot of sitting on trains and talking over the internet. So, at the moment, distance!

## **You're constantly referred to as the next big thing in Leeds - is it a blessing or added pressure?**

Well, it's one of those things. We went on tour with a band called Los Campesinos! and I was talking to Gareth their frontman, who had experienced the same thing. He said once it happens, you can't really stop it and it doesn't mean anything, but it's nice. It's something that's weightless, but really nice and positive. It's nice that people have got some good thoughts. Who knows, they could be wrong...

## **What's the most rock 'n' roll, and un-rock 'n' roll, thing you've done today?**

Um, well, the most un-rock 'n' roll thing I've had to do was updating Sky Larkin's Flickr account. And as for rock 'n' roll, I don't know. I'm going for a picnic - that's the new rock 'n' roll.

## **What can people expect from your show on Sunday?**

I don't want to give anything away, but we have something planned... At our live shows, generally we see each other on the day of the gig. It's just three people enjoying themselves and hoping some others are enjoying themselves too. Our drummer is a bit of a beast and he has strange faces that scare children.

## **So your show is not suitable for children?**

No. Or the faint of heart.

**Catch Sky Larkin headline at 10pm on Sunday at Josephs Well. The whole day's music line-up starts at 2.30pm and costs £8 (£7 concs, or free with a wristband).**



# bedroom dancing

An ode to all the Ladyguests who are going to celebrate all things Ladyfest this weekend by simply shaking what they've got on the dancefloor! Whether you're off to the gigs at Josephs Well on either day, or Speed Queen on Saturday, have an amazing time....

This one's for you!

If these four walls could talk, they would tell you tales of a girl everyone thought they knew becoming a star. Whilst nobody watches, music transforms her. A brush turns into a microphone, the mirror an audience.

I'm going out with my friends tonight, but for now I am encased in my bedroom, in my own musical universe. "Hey Babe, take a walk on the wild side" I strut and pout. Debbie Harry's smoky eyes look back from my reflection as I whisper "Woah your hair is beautiful, tonight"

In pink hotpants I thrust along to Peaches, then in Converse high tops I stamp along to the Ramones. I put the Yeah Yeah Yeahs on my stereo and ripped fishnets on my legs simultaneously.

How many outfits have I tried on now?

Coat hangers strewn across the bed as I glitter and grind uninhibited across the floor. It's getting dark, and the excitement builds as the stars come out.

In the private chambers of their own bedrooms I imagine happy women all over the city getting their groove on. Women everywhere dancing whilst no-one is watching... dancing because it feels good. Dancing for the sheer thrill of it.

It doesn't matter that we're not listening to the same music, we are all united by the same positive spirit, this feeling of inner strength. Tonight we are unstoppable.

All around me I imagine exhilarated extroverts in private spaces, confident in their isolation. Even so, they are slightly wary, hoping no-one outside can see the shadows dance over the chintz curtains. Being alone brings out the performer in us. It's just a shame that no-ones around to see it!

My friends are pounding on the door - the taxi's waiting. I just have time to switch off the stereo. The music has gone but the feeling's still there. It's time to take these moves on to the dance floor!

words: Sarah Barnes. This piece first appeared in 'Uplift!' magazine

[www.upliftmagazine.com](http://www.upliftmagazine.com)

10

# Lady Fest SCRAP BOOK



birds  
eye  
view

Post Lady

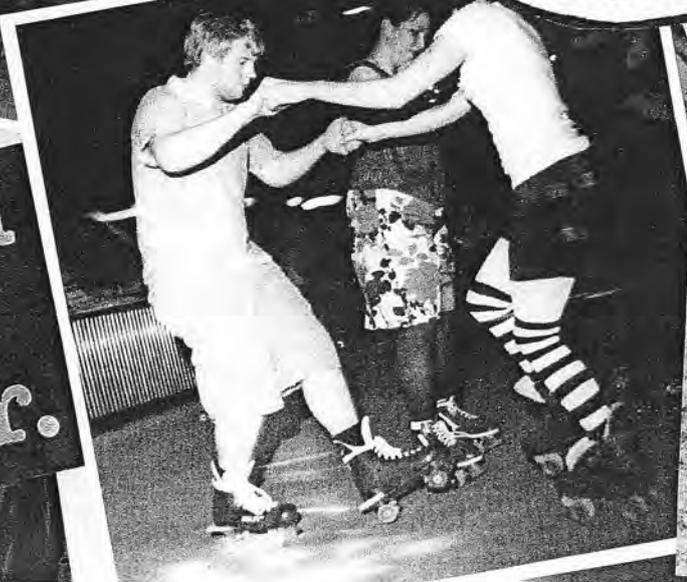


Ladyfest Leeds  
2007

Things I have done this week cos of Ladyfest, by Sarah Smith:  
Learnt to juggle with 2 balls (may not sound like much but is very good for me)  
Went to self defence workshop and now feel slightly more reassured about walking alone late at night  
Fell over at the roller disco and got a most spectacular bruise on my knee  
Met some lovely people  
Got covered in glitter (never a bad thing)

"IF I DON'T DO IT,  
NOBODY  
ELSE WILL"

What  might you like to see at a future Ladyfest Leeds? tell us!  
LADYFEST LEEDS@GMAIL.COM



We're all  
in this  
together.

NOISE  
PLEASE  
DO IT  
QUIETLY

# The Final Word...



Lizzie Guinness tells us exactly why Ladyfest Leeds has been so special

"Ladyfest has been awe-inspiring, instant friend-creating and life-enhancing. I got involved in Ladyfest because I was having a rubbish time in York- the city and my Phd were just really making me unhappy and I didn't know where to turn. I took a (terrified) step in the direction of Leeds and Ladyfest having seen a poster up somewhere.

The longer I have been involved in Ladyfest the more it has helped me reflect on who I am, particularly my feminist politics. Being involved with so many passionate, creative and dynamic individuals who are incredibly supportive, positive and productive has given me so much strength that I never thought I had. One of the most important consequences of Ladyfest is the feeling that amongst these people I can truly be myself. Ladyfest is a space for everyone, for all individualities, where differences are celebrated and respected. Ladyfest has been my rock amongst the chaotic storm of my life, not least when I was ill with M.E., it gave me a function, a reason to get up and do something.

I have developed a huge amount of skills through being involved in Ladyfest- non-hierarchical team working, writing funding bids, being interviewed by the press and managing the finances among others! Being one of the treasurers has been really stressful at times and I have got incredibly frustrated on occasion but the good thing about Ladyfest is that we have a space to be angry and upset and also a space where people can discuss and resolve their differences.

I have met so many fantastic people, and I am sure I will meet more over this weekend. I am so fundamentally proud of all of us, for what we have achieved. Ladyfest will leave its legacy on all of us, and hopefully inspire another set of people to get involved in making a Ladyfest for Leeds in the future so they can hopefully get at least as much as we all have out of it!"

