

# Calgary Herald

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## Penny Arcade rules the rodeo

□ The title's obscene but the act is genuine, warm and liberating

By Martin Morrow

(Herald writer)

Don't be misled by the screaming, obscene title: Penny Arcade's Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore! is the most warm-blooded, genuine piece of performance art you're likely to see.

The New York performance artist's show, which opened Thursday and wraps up tonight at One Yellow Rabbit's High Performance Rodeo, is thoroughly captivating. A mix of shrewd satire, angry commentary and unvarnished confession — interspersed with plenty of go-go dancing — it conjures up the restless ghost of Lenny Bruce in its deliberate use of the prurient and dirty to get at the

**HIGH PERFORMANCE  
RODEO**

truth of America's screwed-up attitude towards sex.

And Arcade proves to have the same liberating effect as Bruce.

**ONE YELLOW RABBIT'S HIGH PERFORMANCE RODEO, at the Secret Theatre and Theatre Calgary rehearsal hall in the Centre, through Jan. 17.**

When, at the top of the show, she warns that she'll be asking people questions, that a squad of semi-nude male and female exotic dancers will be working the audience, and that we'll eventually be asked to come on stage and dance ourselves, you may grit your teeth, your worst memories of abusive, confrontational stand-up comics flashing across your mind.

Never fear. By the time she comes down into the aisles, you'll be eager to talk to her. And when you're invited to bump and grind with the strippers, you'll be more than ready to dance.

Arcade, alias Susana Ventura, is a battle-scarred veteran of New York's avant-garde arts scene, who vents a lot of outrage and does a lot of gut-spilling in the course of her two-hour-plus program. Yet her honesty, if not her convictions, bonds her to an audience. Between comic monologues and Bruce-style rants, she recalls the pain of watching gay friends die of AIDS and airs a home video of the mother who beat her as a child.



**PENNY ARCADE:** New York artist examines attitudes towards sex