

# GAY SCOTLAND

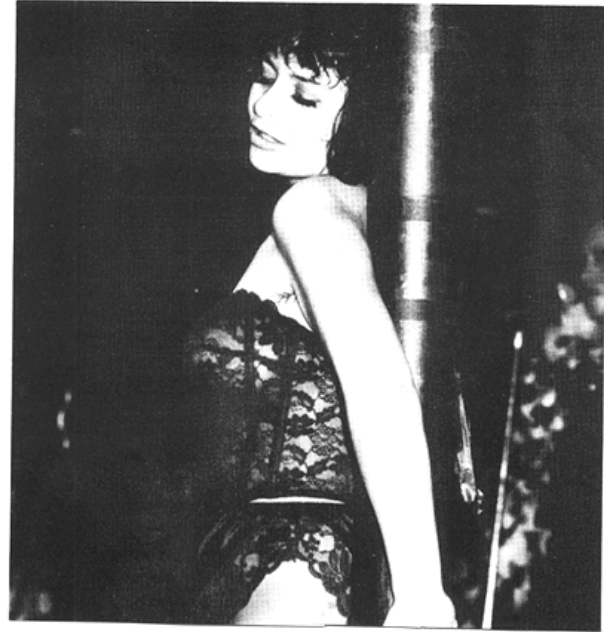
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## Penny Arcade

"WHEN I TELL people I was raised by fags, no-one ever knows what I'm talking about. They actually think it means that my father came out, he left my mother, he moved in with his lover, I stayed there at weekends, and they took me to the opera. That's strictly a post-seventies phenomenon. When I say that I was raised by fags, I mean that I was taken in by a tawdry band of drag queens—and their minions—and that I am today who I am because of those gay men".

Today, Penny Arcade (aka Susana Ventura), ex-Warhol Factory initiate and Playhouse of the Ridiculous member, is one of the most talked about performance artists in New York. Her show, *Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore! (The Penny Arcade Sex and Censorship Show)*, has just clocked up a year of full houses at PS122 and The Village Gate, making it the city's second longest running off-off Broadway performance piece. Now *B!D!F!W!* receives its British première at the Assembly Rooms where temperatures (and Edinburgh City Councillors' hackles) are bound to be raised by its fearless celebration of sexual freedom and expression. The exuberant ninety-minute revue features erotic dancers (of both sexes), music, video and the

redoubtable Ms Arcade in a concoction of hilarious stand-up, audience dialogue and character sketches which blur the distinction between personal experience and fiction. Her material doesn't miss and hit the wall either: she rails against Jesse Helms and the hypocritical 'moral majority'; celebrates her upbringing by the pre-Stonewall, pre-AIDS gay community and shares her sense of grief and anger at the loss of over 200 friends. She also fires a few well-placed shots across the bows of the politically correct who came out in favour of Mapplethorpe but supported removal of *Playboy* and *Penthouse* from supermarket shelves: at lesbians who think bisexual women "aren't trying hard enough", and her mother, "the Marlon Brando of Italian mothers". Make no mistake, Penny Arcade is one angry woman, yet she tempers her passionate polemic with tremendous warmth and humour, and scores some brilliant points against the censorship movement in the process. As she says, "they're trying to pull the wool over our eyes—and it's 85% polyester." *Bitch! Dyke Faghag! Whore!* is at the Assembly Rooms from 29 August–4 September at 8pm. Box Office: 031 226 2428.



EDINBURGH FESTIVAL  
*fringe\**