



# THE HERALD

Wednesday, September 8, 1993

## Performance

Bitch! Dyke! Faghag!  
Whore! The Arches,  
Glasgow

**Sara Villiers**

## Hidden talents

IT will come as no surprise to hear that this is a confrontational show. After all, the title and the subtitle — The Penny Arcade Sex and Censorship Show — offers some clues to the nature of the performance.

But only some. Yes, the show features go-go dancers, routines about brothels, sex games, and the gay scene and culminates in a striptease wherein Arcade bares all but she exposes herself in more ways than one. Hidden talents, indeed. Her material is clever, challenging, audacious and so refreshingly honest it forces the audience into self-analysis.

She starts off with a sly comic skit as a madame, veers into a monologue from a Re-

## THE ARTS

publican whore which binds acerbic one-liners — “Wake up America and smell the coffee . . . burning” — with a hard-hitting diatribe against the hypocrisy of Christian fundamentalism.

A red-sequined dress is a homage to the drag queens she lived with in Warhol's New York. Things get prickly as she tells us of friends dying from Aids. She seems determined to needle the audience with a holier-than-thou attitude at this point — something she did successfully when I saw her in Edinburgh last week.

The Assembly Rooms stint was more polished and had higher production values. Here, minus the TV monitors, the show surprisingly has greater impact; the intimate atmosphere more suited to her personality.

Beautiful, statuesque, gutsy, and exuding remarkable warmth, she works an initially unresponsive audience to spectacular effect.