

# The Sun-Herald

## SUNDAY REVIEW

SYDNEY, MARCH 20, 1994

### Touch of class

**P**ENNY ARCADE is like a breath of zesty air. She's fast-talking, funny, over-the-top outrageous, and girl-next-door warm. She's not at all politically correct — and entirely politically correct.

Stand-up comic, story teller and rhetorician she ranges across subjects as diverse — or as similar? — as the anatomy of the Barbie Doll; establishment stranglehold on the freedom of the artist; loud-mouthed childhood (“I have a terrible authority problem”); the business of prostitution and the prostitution of business, also of politics; the devastation of the AIDS virus.

Erotic dancers warm up the audience. And re-appear from time to time throughout the show. Penny Arcade seems to say here are my tribe — artists relegated to the fringe by conventional definition. It's a gleeful subversion of expectations of theatrical correctness.

Penny Arcade has little patience with received notions of theatre. She talks to her audience — “what am I supposed to do, pretend that you're not there?”

She works for considerable time in the dark — why should the performer be the only one in the light? Instead of dressing up, she dresses down: she ends her show comfortably chatting to her audience wearing nothing but a gauzy stars and stripes scarf. She's a sharp witted, irreverent and utterly disarming performer.