

# WITH TALENT TO BURN

Sunday, January 14, 1996 **Province Showcase**



**Penny Arcade: Outrageous as Andrea Whip in True Stories.**

■ Now, if Susana Ventura, a.k.a. Penny Arcade, had been around in 1692, chances are she would have been burned at the stake. This woman is OUT as well as fearless.

In her one-person show, True Stories, she is hilarious, outrageous, scary and occasionally self-indulgent, while calling attention to a half-dozen real people with really crummy lives living in the underbelly of New York.

There's Warhol film superstar Andrea Whip, aging hooker Charlene, Italian grandmother Aunt Lucy, post-bop speed freak Blondee, AIDS-stricken street prostitute Girl and drag queen Dame Margot Howard-Howard, a Dame Edna clone hooked on heroin.

Wigs and minor costume changes help, but it is Arcade's vocal and physical skills and her anything-can-happen approach that make it work. For all her outrageousness, she is also remarkably likeable, whether getting audience members to lift her into the balcony or wandering about in her underwear chatting casually about her life.

True Stories ended at VECC last night but Arcade promises to return soon, so keep an eye out and don't miss her next time.