

culture

# Dirty Laundry

Super Queer Lusty Fun Xtravaganza pushes the sex-positive envelope

by Julie Sabatier

A young woman with long, red-blond hair takes the stage, clutching a spiral-bound notebook in the shape of a butterfly. She takes a moment to compose herself before the microphone before she begins reading one of the most graphic love letters I've ever heard. The woman who follows her grins and says into the mike, "This is a repeat because I've been too busy fucking to write about it."

Sossity Chiricuzio's smile widens as she watches from the wings. She wanted to create a safe space for queer Portlanders to showcase their dirtiest prose and poetry before a live audience. Since January, she has been doing just that with Dirty Queer, a monthly X-rated open mike night at In Other Words Women's Books and Resources.

"This event pushes me. It's intended to push me. It's intended to push other people," says Chiricuzio, a Web designer by day and dyke poet by night. She always reads something of her own to kick off Dirty Queer. Frequent performers also include writer and fat activist Stacy Bias and writers with clever stage names like Bitter Kitty and Holden Magroin. The event, which has a significant following, raises money for In Other Words with raffle prizes and donations at the door.

Now, Dirty Queer enthusiasts are teaming up with two talented visitors for something they're calling the Super Queer Lusty Fun Xtravaganza. "A little hyperbole never hurt anybody," says Jennifer Lanier, who helped organize the event with sociologist and storyteller Kimberly Dark. Lanier, whose credits include subversive children's theater, is a gender-bending performer and self-identified "big, brown dyke."

"There's been a lot of anti-sex things going on in the women's community for a long time...I wanted to create an event that was sex-positive and talked about sexuality and sexiness in a really fun way," she explains.

Both Lanier and Dark call Hawaii home, but they share a connection with the Portland-based Chiricuzio, who designed their respective Web sites. Chiricuzio says she's excited for the opportunity to meet these two clients in person. The three also have a lot in common when it comes to their interests as performers. Dark and Chiricuzio share a penchant for talking about body image in their work.

"That's a big time-waster for women—worrying about whether we're pretty enough," says Dark. "We sometimes forget that lesbians aren't just queer—we're women, and we have all of the same socialization that straight women have."

Dark's spoken word show *Stripped and Teased* garnered awards from *Curve Magazine* and the National Gay and Lesbian Theater Festival in 2006. She says she's excited to return to Portland, a city that she's grown fond of since her first visit in 2001, when she came to perform her show *The Butch/Femme Chronicles* at Theater Theatre.

San Diego drag king "Johnny-O" (aka Rebecca Olachea) will perform at the Super Queer Lusty Fun Xtravaganza, and Lanier will host as "Bruce the Drag King," a character she has cultivated through the years. Lanier says that Bruce will also sing a number or two and that at least part of the performance will be interactive.

"I will probably pull someone up to the stage—a femme girl to help her unlock her inner drag king. That's always a funny, fun bit," she says.

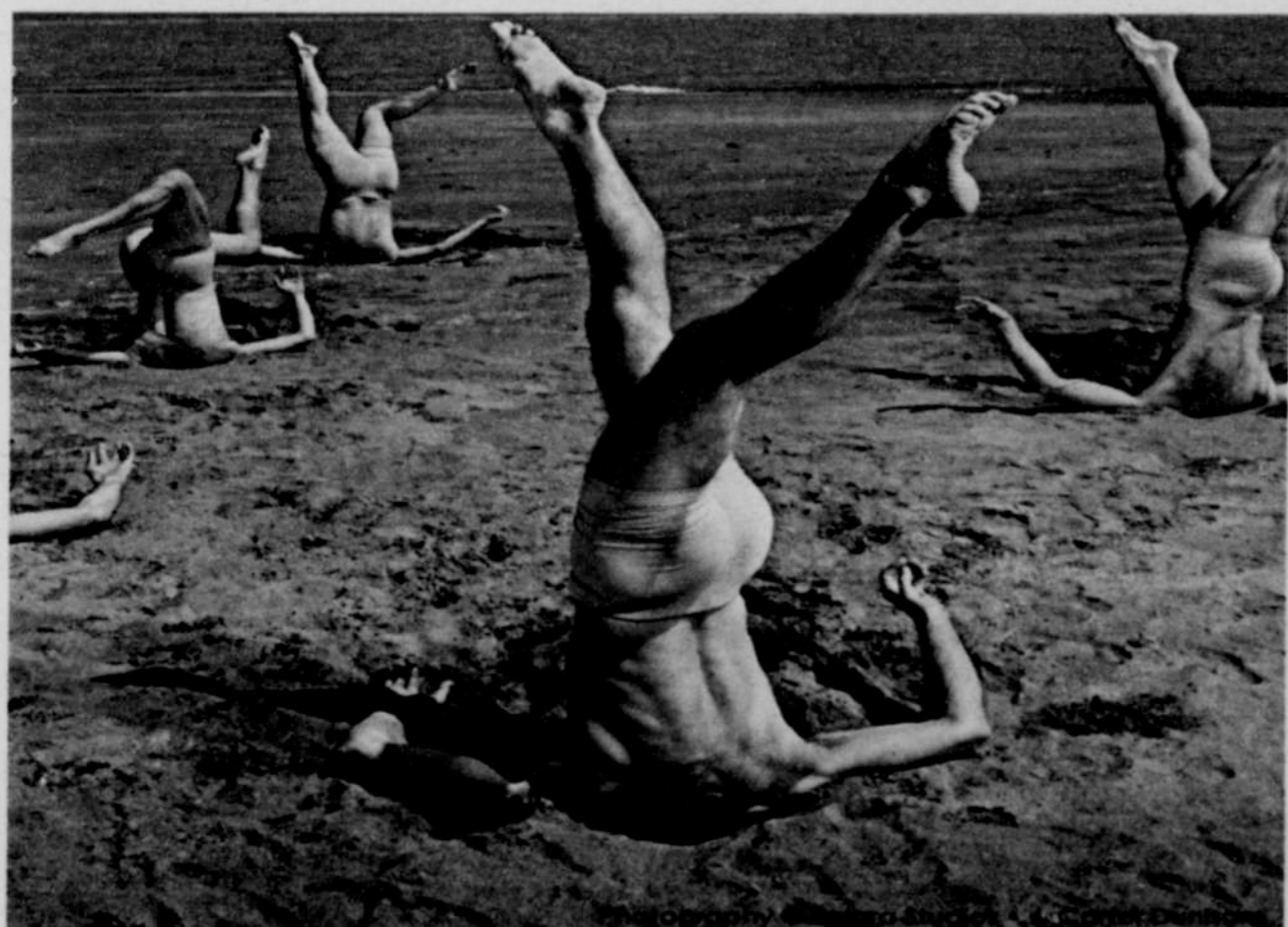
Dirty Queer enthusiasts will probably recognize many of the Super Queer performers, including a daring duo juggling panties and dildos while handcuffed. Another regular, photographer and improv artist Nik Wilhelm, will be on hand to do an improv act based on anonymous slips of paper submitted by audience members. Burlesque and spoken word and are also on the roster for this fun and fast-paced event.



Award-winning sociologist and storyteller Kimberly Dark addresses body image in her work.

"It's a big ol' queer burlesque variety show," says Lanier. "Come one, come all, and we guarantee there won't be a dry seat in the house." 10

Holocene presents the SUPER QUEER LUSTY FUN XTRAVAGANZA 8 p.m. Oct. 25 at 1001 S.E. Morrison St. Admission is \$15. In Other Words presents DIRTY QUEER from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on the second Friday of each month at 8 N.E. Killingsworth St. The free event is limited to people 18 and older.



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