



comic Rick Shapiro

Aleister Crowley: Renegade Egg-Layer

When the cut-line for an event is "no taboo left unturned," there's not a lot to be said for attempting to judge the organizers or performers because they seriously do not give a fuck what you think. On its ghastly and somewhat disconcerting surface, **WTF Fest** looks something akin to Insane Clown Posse's Juggalo gathering – or maybe Burning Man on adrenochrome – but diving beneath a thin veneer of hardcore, tattooed conspiracy theorists, porn-stars and occultists, it's clear that the festival is actually themed expertly as a place for individuality, expression and artistic collaboration to run rampant, even if there is a somewhat Satanic element to practically every single performance billed.

Besides a smattering of Aleister Crowley reminiscence and freaky costumes, the bill for WTF Fest is laced with delicate intrigue. The event starts out with the musical stylings of singer-songwriter acts such as **Esmerelda Strange** and **Lonnie D. Wages**, and from there it gets a whole lot crazier: Take, for instance, the presence of adult-film star Ruby LaRocca, who starred in a movie called *Orgasm Torture in Satan's Rape Clinic*, among others. Sounds

like a charming lass, no? Or Rick Shapiro – the NYC comic that's billed as an amalgam of great comedians and artists from the last 50 years.

There is also great emphasis placed upon femininity and equality at WTF Fest. Performance artist and women's rights activist Ugly Shyla graces the bill, and it's pretty much guaranteed to be a bloodbath. To be honest, I'm not certain whether "bloodbath" will end up being a literal description or not, so if you have a weak stomach you might want to skip that one.

At its core WTF Fest is not just a place for people to hang out and talk about Satan, the occult or revolutionary activism; it's also a place for safety in numbers and oneness to take hold. It's about a collective soul and consciousness, a living, breathing entity of togetherness that terrifies people at its surface, but inside is a gooey ball of love and devil horns. It's like a Cadbury egg laid by Aleister Crowley, and it's not as bad as it looks – even if it does make you say "what the fuck" every once in a while.

WTF Fest starts 8:30 pm Sunday, April 22, at Sam Bond's; \$6 adv., \$10 door. – *Andy Valentine*

Still Hot

You know that feeling you got when your grandma yelled at you? That mix of shock and reverence-fueled obedience? That's how it feels to watch Jamaican reggae legend **Norma Fraser** perform. She is so dedicated to making the audience have a good time that she literally gives no other choice. That might not sound like the recipe for success, but it works. Fraser's style is funky and laid back, pairing reggae beats with covers of popular songs like "Respect" and "The First Cut is the Deepest." It's nearly impossible not to get down to the beat and sing along, and for someone whose peers and influences left the music scene long ago, Fraser is still overwhelmingly energetic. It might be easy to feel skeptical about a 60-plus-year-old woman who is proclaiming herself *Hot Again!* but Fraser is no small-time player.

She started her recording career in Jamaica, recording at Studio One with artists like Bob Marley and the Wailers and The Skatalites. The song "We'll Be Lovers," which she recorded with Lord Creator in 1961, stayed at number one on the Jamaican Top 100 for more than a year. It has also been rumored that she taught Rita Marley how to sing, and she may have talked Rita into marrying Bob.

Fraser took a two-decade break from music, during which she got a master's degree and geared up to come back in '94 to release *Hot Again!* She is currently on the road with the Skatalites. "It's going well," she says, "most of the shows have been sold out."

Norma Fraser plays 8 pm Wednesday, April 25, at WOW Hall; \$12 adv., \$15 door. – *Hailey Chamberlain*

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