

## The big tease

**A BRIGHT ONE**  
New York's Amber Ray shines at the Star Glow Ball.



Twisted Tassel brings burlesque back to the Admiral. By John Dugan

During the last decade, the burlesque revival brought the stylized striptease with live bump 'n' grind soundtrack back into the alternative world. The comeback has been seen at an Ozzfest sideshow, and been embraced by porn starlets, feminist entertainers and performance artists for its empowering properties. New burlesque sits pretty as a hip alternative to the mainstream schlock of the sex industry.

On Tuesday 26, Angela Eve's Twisted Tassel Burlesque Festival launches with the Star Glow Ball—a monthlong weekly residency at the Admiral Theatre. In March, it adds a weekly Glitter Glamour Revue at Wicker Park's Debonair Social Club. The breadth of the fest is a testament to the vigor of the Chicago scene—healthy, if not as frenzied as London's, where our sister mag *Time Out London* lists a full page of burlesque events every week.

As director of Chicago's Eve's Parlor Burlesque troupe, Angela (Angela Eve Freese), isn't worried about whether the art form is in or out. "In the future, I see it becoming a more sensual, artistic show—with a lot of different elements going on visually with sets, that's the way it'll survive," she tells us over coffee downtown.

Angela—who studied at the School of the Art Institute and counts performance artist Annie Sprinkle as a major inspiration—believes that new burlesque's art associations are fine, but the scene shouldn't forget its raunchy provenance. "There's a real rift in the community about exotic dancers and burlesque. The original performers were essentially exotic dancers—that's how they made a living. It's all fine and dandy to say, Let's be performance artists now, but that wasn't what it was."

If there's a venue for burlesque to get in touch with its exotic-dancing roots—and Angela promises the Tassel shows will sizzle—it's the Admiral Theatre. Designed by architects Gallup and Joy, it opened in 1927 and featured burlesque striptease alongside bawdy comedy acts in vaudeville-style variety shows before becoming a movie palace.

The theater shuttered for most of the '60s, reopened in '69 showing cartoons at first, then porn with live appearances. In the '80s, it became the no-booze gentleman's club it is today. It's been controversial: *Deep Throat* made its Chicago debut here in 1972, its owner Patsy Riccardi turned up dead in a car trunk in 1985 and the club brought a harassment case against the city in the early '90s.

But it's been doing steady weekend business since then. In September of 2007, the Admiral tested different

waters with a visit from burlesque/fetish performers Porcelain Twinz. "We saw some different faces in the crowd and thought, Maybe this is something we need to expand upon," says club marketing director Tim Brown. He reached out to Angela in hopes of attracting a hip, alternative crowd during the week. Instead of booking herself as a feature act, she proposed putting a show together—complete with a re-creation of the venue's original proscenium stage and performances from her troupe's top talent. The deal was done: Burlesque was back in its rightful home.

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Organizers and performers Angela and Maiden Sacrifice have stacked the Star Glow with national acts: Trixie Minx and her Fleur De Tease group from New Orleans, Amber Ray from NYC, Gravity Plays Favorites from St. Louis, Miss Von Livid from England, Go Go Amy from Los Angeles, plus Chicago's own Maya Sinstress and Krysten Corruption. DJ Jimmy Sutton and the Coffin Banger spin sleazy and retro rock, blues, doo-wop and jump R&B. Female-fronted rockabilly-roots act the Honeybees and '50s garage octet the Del Moroccos back the ladies with a grindhouse soundtrack. The suave Vincent Drambuie hosts.

And for those not quite comfortable hitting a strip joint, however historic, the Glitter Glamour Revue at Debonair—local burlesque talent plus sideshow acts—should suffice.

If it all seems like an overindulgence of naughty behavior, chill out: Twisted Tassel has its heart (and G-string) in the right place. Angela and artist Anastasios Ketsios have been working on a photo documentary of New Orleans for years. A portion of the festival proceeds will go to the Make It Right NOLA organization, a nonprofit working to rebuild the hard-hit 9th Ward. See? Not so dirty after all.

*The Star Glow Ball takes place Tuesday 26, March 11, 18, 25 at the Admiral Theatre. The Glitter Glamour Party runs March 13, 20, 27 at Debonair Social Club.*

## Listings

### If you want to be listed

Submit information by mail, e-mail (clubs@timeoutchicago.com) or fax (312-924-9350) to **John Dugan**. Include details, dates, times, address of venue with cross streets, nearest El station or bus routes, contact information and admission price, if any. **Deadline is 10am on Monday, ten days before publication date.** Incomplete submissions will not be included, and listings information will not be accepted over the phone. Listings are free but, as space is limited, inclusion is not guaranteed.

**Note:** Listings for ongoing events will run for two weeks and then be dropped unless written reconfirmation is received. Due to sheer volume, we cannot confirm receipt on an individual basis. All listings are subject to space limitations.

### How to use this section

The following listings are highlights. Gay clubs are included here if the emphasis is on dancing or partying rather than cruising. For more primarily gay or lesbian clubs, see the Gay & Lesbian section. For addresses, see the Venues list at the end of this section.

\* Recommended or notable  
† After-hours clubs: open past 3am

### Thursday 21

\* (Elevated Berlin. 11pm, \$3. BFF (the team of Heather Doble and Zebo) spin house, electro, B-more booty and dance classics for a polysexual crowd. It starts getting crazy at midnight, then explodes around 2am.

\* (FREE Flybynight Empire Liquors. 9pm. Flybynight has become one of our favorite young-folk-friendly, hip-hop and beyond-oriented dance parties. For this edition, Willy Joy and Capcom are joined by Red Foxx, Morgan Louis and Baltimore—three from Boston known as the Hearthrob DJs.

(Insomnia Stone Lotus. 11pm, \$TBA. With a late night license on the wall, the Zen liquor spa has turned to after-party contender in River North. Nathan Scott and Victor R. are on the decks with today's dance hits and housey remixes. The Surreal dancers shake it against the wall. For partiers spilling out of enclave, its only a short walk.

\* (FREE Junglety Smart Bar. 10pm. Smart Bar's drum 'n' bass series continues tonight with DJ sets from GC, Brandon S, Lamebrane and Skolla.

\* (Kitchen Sink Funky Buddha Lounge. 9pm, \$10-\$15. Blackish and friends serve as resident DJs for this essential weekly, where the mango shots are organic and cheap. The playlist is usually '90s hip-hop and party jams, but top-notch guests, such as Lindstrom, have made their Chicago debuts here. Jammin 4 Justice hosts.

FREE krom krom. 9pm. DJs Kalendar and Rock City bang out house and mash-ups at the South Beach—style below-street-level club with white beds. Later, the party moves on to Spy Bar.

The Lesson Lava. 9pm, \$3. Sang hosts hip-hop get-together with Overflo, Intel and Maker on the tables.

Major Taylor Betty's Blue Star Lounge. 11:45pm, \$TBA. Ralph Darden emerges