



Home > Chicago Theater > Story > Double Fantasy

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MsPixy talks fantasy RPG burlesque, geek traits and ways to get girls' clothes off

By Julia Borcherts
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Does the phrase "gaming culture" conjure up images of a world that exists only in your mom's basement? Think again, suggests Belmont Burlesque Revue founding member MsPixy—a self-proclaimed nerd with a bachelor's degree in directing, a minor in dance and improv training from ComedySportz and The Second City Conservatory—who brings new meaning to the term "fantasy role-playing game."

Last October, MsPixy created "Boobs and Goombas: A Super Mario Burlesque," a striptease parody of the classic video game, which she wrote and directs. Its success spawned "Fellowship of the Boobs: A LOTR, WoW, D&D, RPG Burlesque," a sexy homage to "Lord of the Rings," "World of Warcraft," "Dungeons and Dragons" and other role-playing games. We called her to find out more about how she's planning to save the world—or at least your quest for an evening out.

What inspired you to combine geek pursuits with burlesque?

Gorilla Tango approached me to direct a show. I don't remember if it was me saying, "Well, if I write it, it's going to be a nerd show 'cause I'm a nerd," or if it was them—they had seen some photos from a "Star Wars" burlesque show in L.A., which sparked their interest. And they were specifically interested in sketch comedy-burlesque blend. They didn't want just burlesque number, burlesque number, burlesque number, comedian, burlesque number, burlesque number. They wanted to see something that was actually a story that had the striptease integrated into it. So I took that and ran with it.

What are your geek credentials?

From my youth, I'm a fantasy book nerd. And specifically bad fantasy books, like Mercedes Lackey's Valdemar series. I'm actually a big fan of Anne McCaffrey, all that dragon-y stuff. And in college, I was a video gamer. But in the last 10 years, I've been focusing on making a living in the arts, which doesn't, sadly, leave much time for video games.

Do you wear glasses?

When I'm not wearing my contacts, I wear very thick glasses, yes. [Laughs]

Are they broken, taped or safety-pinned?

This pair isn't but there have been times in my life when I've been known to venture into public sporting doctored facial wear. [Laughs]

What can people expect at 'Fellowship of the Boobs'?

You join the characters on a quest for the icosahedron of power, which has been stolen by the evil dragon bitch—the audience is greeted by the Dungeon Master and treated as though they are a character on the journey. It follows the storyline of pursuing this object and, of course, the many enemies and obstacles they meet along the way.

When you audition performers, do you look for dancing ability or nerd cred?

I look for solid actresses first because my belief and my training lead me to think that a good actress can play anything, even a dancer, if they're not a strong dancer.

And some of the crueller Yelp reviews might tell you [laughs] my focus is not really on dancing choreography. For me, this is about seeing what else there is in terms of ways one can get a girl's clothes off. She can bump and grind and wiggle her hips and do fancy dancing but that's kind of already being done. [Laughs] So I wanted to play with some alternates—what if it's a fight sequence and she loses her clothes? What if she's already lost her clothes and you see her escaping from a spider web? What if she's transforming into a monster and that's how her clothes come off? So, really, the focus is less on dance and more on the many ways you can explore "revealing."

Do audience members ever arrive in costume?

Oh, yeah. And we love it. [Laughs]

What's your favorite?

There was a gentleman with lovely, Hobbit-foot sandals on opening night of "Fellowship," which delighted us all.

What's next?

The two shows that I've had in my back pocket for awhile are "Boobs to the Future"—science fiction burlesque—and "Super Boobs," which I'm really excited about right now. I would love to write a burlesque superhero origin myth [laughs] and create a burlesque super villain.

Interview has been edited and condensed.

Julia Borcherts is a Metromix special contributor. metromix@tribune.com

"Fellowship of the Boobs: A LOTR, WoW, D&D, RPG Burlesque"
See it: Thursdays through Aug. 26 at [Gorilla Tango Theatre](#)
Tickets: \$15 (18+); 773-598-4549; [gorillatango.com](#)

"Boobs and Goombas: A Super Mario Burlesque"
See it: Fridays and Saturdays at [Gorilla Tango Theatre](#)
Tickets: \$20 (18+); 773-598-4549; [gorillatango.com](#)

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