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# Baring, daring and fun, NOLA Nerdlesque Festival returns to tempt your inner nerd

BY SUE STRACHAN | [sstrachan@theadvocate.com](mailto:sstrachan@theadvocate.com) NOV 13, 2018 - 7:00 AM

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Dangrr Doll performs as the killer rabbit from Monty Python and the Holy Grail in the 2017 NOLA Nerdlesque Festival.

Photo provided by NOLA Nerdlesque Festival

There's a little nerd in all of us, and for burlesque performers, the NOLA Nerdlesque Festival is a place to express their inner superhero, movie monster, sci-fi villain or cartoon character.

Nerdlesque "is nerdy burlesque, or more generally pop culture parody burlesque," said festival co-producer Richard Mayer (stage name: Vincent Gallant). "It just so happens that pop culture today is superheroes, comic book characters figures and video games. There is a long history of making fun of pop culture in burlesque.

"Although nerdlesque is very new, it is also traditional and has its roots in burlesque history," he said.

At the fourth annual NOLA Nerdlesque Festival there are four themed burlesque shows over two days, Thursday and Friday (Nov. 16 and 17): Stripped Crusaders (superheroes), Cyburlesque (sci-fi), Just Drawn Like That (animated and video game characters) and Tease from the Crypt (movie monsters and villains).

Each show will feature 12 to 13 acts, each about five minutes long. There will be some group acts, but most feature solo performers.

Spectators, who are encouraged to costume, could see a performer portraying Black Panther, a "Star Wars" or "Star Trek" character. The key to nerdlesque is that these personas aren't

portrayed as exact characterizations, with the performer adding their own humorous, exaggerated elements through costuming and movement.

In previous years, the festival has done variations of the first three shows, but new for the 2018 festival is the Tease from the Crypt show.

“We ended up getting all these great submissions,” said Mayer, featuring horror characters, and “we looked at it and decided we can make a show.” Mayer, who will emcee for Tease as the “Cryptkeeper” and will tell “terrible puns about death,” produces and curates the festival. He'll get help from burlesque performers Remy Dee, Perse Fanny, Honey Tangerine and Sable Switch, who also produces the largest nerdlesque show in the southwest at the Phoenix Comic Fest.

Other performers are from throughout the United States, but for local burlesque fans, many of the participants should sound familiar: featured performers Juno, Piper Marie and Phathoms Deep (who splits time between here and Lafayette), as well as Lefty Lucy, Precious

Ephemera, Ember Blaize, Loretta Dean, Eros Sea and Ashe Wednesday. (Featured performer May Hemmer lived in New Orleans but moved to North Carolina last year.)

Nerdlesque includes elements of burlesque and neo-burlesque, which came about in the 1990s and early 2000s. It is anything that doesn't fit into the classic burlesque category: "Neo-burlesque doesn't have to be pretty costumes, it can be grotesque, it can be a comedy burlesque," said Mayer. "It is a catchall for what doesn't fit into that classic term."

For example, "Our headliner last year, Dangrr Dol, did classic burlesque as Sonic the Hedgehog. She was very pretty and shiny and portraying a video game character. So there are ways to blend these things all together," said Mayer.

Mayer credits the Bluestockings, a burlesque group that considers themselves a "naked theater group" with producing the first nerdlesque show in New Orleans, "Boobs and Goombas," a Super Mario Bros. spoof, which ran for eight months with sold-out shows. "A couple of our performers met at that show," Mayer said,

including Persy Fanne, who portrayed Luigi in “Boobs and Goombas” and will do an act as Luigi in the festival.

“Nerdlesque is a celebration of the things what people love most,” said Mayer, an actor who created his burlesque persona 8 years ago in Bustout Burlesque. “Being nerd isn’t what you love, it’s the way you love it. Being nerd means you love comic books, video games, history and literature.”

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## **NOLA Nerdlesque Festival**

### **Friday, Nov. 16:**

**Stripped Crusaders**, 8 p.m. and **Tease from the Crypt**, 10 p.m., Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp St.

### **Saturday, Nov. 17:**

**Cyburlesque**, 8 p.m. and **Just Drawn That Way**, 10 p.m., Always Lounge and Theatre, 2440 St. Claude Ave.

In addition to the shows, the festival will also include workshops at the New Orleans School of Burlesque, a nerd market at the shows, and a closing party at International House Hotel's Loa Bar.

Tickets: \$15 per show. Admission is restricted to patrons 18 and older.

For tickets and information, go to:  
[nolanerdlesque.com](http://nolanerdlesque.com)

### **Want to see more burlesque?**

*There are a number of producers in town who organize shows at different venues. Go to their sites to see when and where:*

Trixie Minx, Fleur de Tease, [fleurdetease.com](http://fleurdetease.com)

Rick DeLaup, Bustout Burlesque,  
[bustoutburlesque.com](http://bustoutburlesque.com)

Roxie Le Rouge, Big Deal Burlesque, contact via Facebook, [www.facebook.com/roxie.lerouge.3](http://www.facebook.com/roxie.lerouge.3)

Bella Blue, Bella Blue Entertainment, also the headmistress of the New Orleans School of Burlesque, [thebellalounge.com](http://thebellalounge.com)

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