



# Ladying

with  
Helen Heels

One recent 300-degree, 700-percent-humidity Friday evening while finishing up the week at my job (not Glitter, but the one that pays my bills), I decided to delay my agonizing, but inevitable, entry into the sweltering Nu Yawk streets, and lingered in my air-conditioned office while trying to sort out my plans for the night. On rotation all day was the recently-released VP Records' double disc "SOCA Gold 2002," which had arrived in the mail earlier in the day (an \$11 bargain from [www.gemm.com](http://www.gemm.com)). An impressive collection featuring a surplus of hits, the only disappointment was the limited number of female lead vocal songs that a performer such as myself might incorporate into her repertoire.

Of the disc's 18 tracks, only four are sung exclusively by women, and they are not the high-energy SOCA bam bam shakers I was looking for. The packaging photographs of a nearly-naked woman certainly lent a false association to the contents of the CD due to the fact that most of the songs are sung by men. For those pageant gyrls who are not intimately familiar with SOul and CALypso, but are looking to exploit any edge that will enhance their position in the next Miss Gay U.S.-of-A. pageant, understand that the success of a talent act based on a SOCA production is about as likely to win as booty-shaking would in a contest in the Caribbean.

Left with a desire to stay cool and still nourish my longing for womanly inspiration, Helen Heels found herself in a thoroughly climate-controlled movie theater where her lively laughter and outrageous cacklings for once did not wreck the nerves of all of the other movie-goers. It was okay for me to not be ladying in cadence and pitch, since we were all gagging and guffawing while watching Margaret Cho's "Notorious C.H.O." If you have not witnessed Ms. Cho performing live (I have not), or seen either of her films, and you need a good laugh and refreshing perspective, pack up your sisters and your purses and head to the drive-in or video rental joint.

Back in May, I was presenting awards at the Lambda Literary Foundation's LAMMY Awards banquet, which I could not have attended as an audience member since the tickets started at \$150. (Us poor kids get to celebrate our literature with book-reading groups.) The function took place at Manhattan's Tribeca Rooftop, in the same building that Jay-Z was denied the purchase of a co-op. (So you know that if I showed up as a man, revealing my true identity as a hip-hop megastar [forget that three sentences ago I said that I am broke], they would not have let me in). Anyway, Margaret Cho was receiving a Bridgebuilder Award for all of her (bisexual) contributions to "our com-

munity," and I was the lucky gyrl who got to hand her an etched Lucite book, which she hungrily reached for with mouth agape and both hands stretched out so far she almost lost her footing.

Ms. Cho was scheduled to speak for about twenty minutes. I thought this an ideal time to change out of my Gaelyn and Cianfarani ([www.latexdesigner.com](http://www.latexdesigner.com)) latex flamenco dress (also worn by Shakira) and slip into my crescent-shaped-sequin evening gown (also worn by many other women in the fitting room at Daffy's). I had just finished fastening the host's Gaelyn and Cianfarani latex angel wings to his torso when we heard thunderous applause announcing that Margaret had completed her unexpectedly brief acceptance speech. You know I gagged since Helen was standing in the upstairs dressing room in a pair of hose and heels, dressless and bald. I stole the show yet again when I fluttered down the curving staircase in my shimmering gown, the audience so captivated by my regal ladying, they forgot that the recipient of the Best Gay Science Fiction Anthology award was approaching the podium with no drag queen attendant perched with fake glass book to offer as a testament to victorious literary contributions.

The moral of this story is that Ms. Cho serves unpredictable, yet, fulfilling doses of talent. I will not reveal the entire text of her new film, but will certainly site it as a vehicle for Miss Thing's model of healthy and constructive interpretation of contemporary subject matter. Okay, I'll give you one of her jokes: "I've been down at Ground Zero in New York City, doing my part [audience gets quiet]... giving blowjobs." Her insights and ability to reinterpret otherwise disastrous traumas are as endless as her penchant for vulgarity. Of course, she finishes her brief address of 9-11 with "I am not scared of the terrorists... because I am an American." I could not figure out if that was intended to be a joke or not, but the audience whom the show was filmed in front of seemed to take pride in America, despite the irony that most of Cho's jokes are aimed at disarming the entrenched dysfunction of American culture (racism, heterosexism, sex phobia, image-based discrimination, etc.).

Maybe at a future elitist gay affair I will be able to remind her, in between celebrated jokes that mock the stupidity of heterosexist men, that the United States is the number one terrorist state in the world, the only country whose government has been condemned by the World Court. Will she be the role model smart enough to develop new material from such hard-to-swallow history? Stay tuned, and keep laughing.



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## Gyrls, are you glittering?

**IS YOUR AURA IRIDESCENT? IS YOUR LAUGHTER  
ULTRA-VIOLET? ARE YOU YOUR OWN PRECIOUS  
MINERAL YET TO BE CATALOGUED IN THE  
PERIODIC TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS?**

If so, or if you genuinely think you are, and have not been proven wrong by friend or foe, then you are probably glittering. And if you are glittering, or are on your way to be glittering, and are currently glimmering, shining, or just fronting with a key chain flashlight and your horsey Joan Rivers jewelry, then you are reading the right magazine. And since you have found your eyeballs rolling across these words, I ensure delivery of desirable content and engaging dialogues, as long as I am Helen Heels.

*Glitter* magazine isn't a tired bar rag, on par only with store circulars that your mother used to cut Pathmark and KMart coupons out of on Sunday afternoons after church—the ones you currently use to pick up your dog's poop. Oh no, dawls; our writers are seasoned professionals, not some gyrls peppered with Mrs. Dash and armed with a few fingers, a keyboard and no cerebellums. And I am the anti-diva of the bunch who is going to reveal all truths deemed inappropriate for public disclosure by those afraid of looking in the mirror for fear of cracking their reflected self-perception. Some are intimidated by my shameless glittering, castigating me for the haunting echo of my Medusa's laugh in places they would prefer to keep sheltered by reticence.

But worry not, for I will not share your secrets and identities, telling of who I saw cruising the park for sex while his monogamous boyfriend waited alone at home. I don't name names or play games. I demonstrate compassion and realness with examples extracted from my own experiences, allowing you who feel fierce and flawless to identify with my carryings-on at your own pace. After all of the diva tribulations we have endured, I rejoice in being able to embrace vulnerability with both candor and grace, for it allows me to tell it like it is without fear of embarrassment. Of course, my pseudonym also helps.

With that out of the way, let me begin my tales of *Ladying*, particularly of my latest frustrations in sex acquisition. In Nu Yawk City, at the end of Christopher

Street in the Village, the West Side Highway piers are being gentrified so that YUPPIEs can take over, leaving us underclass queer kids displaced from our good old gay stomping grounds. When the city is through building its river-front Starbucks coffee shops and such, there better be a public bathroom that we can set up shop in, because the Badlands and West World (sex) video stores are as dead as a bucket of drumsticks at the drive through of Chic Fil-A or KFC. And I have absented from consciousness the booths that have been re-installed in the basement of Harmony Video, because they also installed the brightest of lights and hired a man to sit on a ladder so he can peer into the booths and interfere with your fun. *Peek a boo!*

Speaking of which, I was visiting Atlanta for a pageant a few weeks ago, and I noticed that the video stores were only a little more active than the NYC venues. Miss Insurrection offered a collection of men who had nothing better to do with their time than stand around staring at the floor. Not inviting.

The "Peep-A-Boo" was dimly lit, which assisted with getting my freak on since my standards of acceptable good looks had dropped significantly on account of my being so desperately horny and all of those pretty pageant boys being so preoccupied with their shows that they had no time for me. (Can you imagine?) It seemed like the whole town was wrapped up in preparation for working the function as an cuntestant or an audience member. The whole place was inaccessible; even the hustlers on the cuts were turning tricks just to get money to place bets on the pageant's outcome.

That's why I prefer the balls in Nu Yawk, where it seems that no one takes more than a moment to prepare to walk and the judges never spend more than a second deciding to chop you. It leaves you with more time to catch a piece of trade or at least revel in the delusion that such a possibility is likely. And for the kids with eternally fake phone numbers, your cowardice is less attractive than your genuine unavailability. Well, I have been ladying for almost as long as this periodical will allow, so I am off to catch the gyrls at Escuelita and find some left over tips and tricks.

# Ladying

with Helen Heels

**H**otlanta has come and gone, and with it, endless gawssip that you already heard a hundred times before you boarded your cheaptickets.com plane ride home from Georgia. What needs to be gagged on now are the Anti-Labor Day tales from Brooklyn, New York, where lovers of Caribbean culture carried on at events preceding and following the West Indian American Day Carnival Association's 35<sup>th</sup> annual Labor Day Carnival. The carnival is considered the largest in North America, traveling along Eastern Parkway in the mostly Caribbean neighborhood of Crown Heights, ending at Prospect Park. Before I serve the juicy details of the post-parade flesh fest that brewed in the park on Labor Day night, let me spill the tea from the days that lead up to it.

The gay clubs that have an identifiable Caribbean clientele hiked up admission by five dollars and played an extra twenty minutes of reggae songs that were expected to provide entertainment satisfaction to an otherwise ignored population. Helen Heels was

## Helen Heels was not to be played like Ms. Pac Man.

not to be played like Ms. Pac Man. On Saturday, I hot-combed my tresses until they stood up on my head like pineapple leaves and dyed them red and black (the colors of the Trinidadian flag). The Heels then headed to a live soca bashment promising appearances by over a dozen soca stars from the Lesser Antilles.

Upon arrival at the dance hall, the first of the brass bands was blazing in full force, and so were the glances stolen at my extra light-skinned beauty. Oh, in case you are blind and have not seen the self portraits that have accompanied this column in the past, and your vision assistant who faithfully reads this text to you each month has failed to describe my lovely cara, my complexion is alabaster. Understandably, my presence in the middle of a bashment provokes curiosity, but the revelers at the concert gagged with more surprise when I wined my waistline down to the ground and mashed up the place like a real dance hall queen. More brash than I, were the ladies pressed against the stage, who stretched hands up beneath the pants legs of heart-throb Machel Montano to steal a feel on his cockstand. As the night and the drinking continued, the supposedly straight men made further attempts to get up on your gyrl. Certainly, many were calling on the convenience of forgetfulness upon waking the following afternoon. Those who willingly remembered me were undoubtedly not happy to spend yet another day of their lives evading their old wives' wrinkled pension pussies that ceased satisfying long ago.

Sunday, at a packed Escuelita, Harmonica Sunbeam hosted the "Miss Caribbean 2002 Pageant." More a simple drag contest than a southern-style "pageant" that stretches for days, the event featured four gyrls performing one number each with audience applause determining the winner. The contestants were Madame Sequin of St. Lucia, Mahogany of Jamaica, Vanessa del Groove representing Jamaica and Trinidad, and Mimi Mancini, also from yard. Based on the performances, the obvious contenders were the soca acrobat, Vanessa del Groove, and the coochie-grabbing, heavily-tipped Mimi Mancini. Mimi turned out a Red Rat and Lady Saw duet with a partner. As another man laid her down to dig for gold in her cabbage patch, a near-nude femme queen (and countless others) showered her with dollar bills. Madame Sequin's rendition of TC's "Kim" lacked contest-winning excitement, but that proved irrelevant when she delivered the onliest testimony during a seemingly impromptu question and answer section.

When asked why she entered the contest, Madame Sequin, a larger lady, said she "wanted to show all of the shady West Indians that a big gyrl can still bring it." The audience went nuts and forgot about the other drags, voting Madame the winner of an undisclosed cash prize. Mahogany admitted that she entered the contest because Harmonica called her and asked her to; Vanessa told her convoluted life story, after which, Harmonica announced "last call;" and Mimi tied her tongue inaudibly. Oops!

Did they know there was a Q&A? Backstage, little ladying was observed as non-winners angrily expressed their disappointment, alleging that the outcome was fixed. Revenge came when Madame Sequin was asked if she had change for a five dollar bill. She only had four singles in her tip jar. But she had a fickle, easily-biased audience on her side, and that is all that seems to have mattered. Many felt Mimi was cheated, but the show was over, which meant it was time to focus exclusively on the abundance of fine-assed men jumping to DJ Relentless' audio offerings.

Monday's rain kept many gyrls indoors and away from the carnival on Eastern Parkway, but the streets still filled up with half-dressed men oblivious to being cruised by me and my chichi man crew. Moko Jumbies (stilt walkers) and thousands of beads-and-feathers-wearing masqueraders kept spirits up as they shuffled down the road with wet flags waving in the cloudy air. The rain stopped by dusk, in time for the final fete in Prospect Park. Hundreds of men (more than at any other time of year) climbed over muddy hills and slippery tree roots to get in on the action. If one dude pulled out his piece in front of another, a dozen others would appear instantly to set it off. This persisted for hours, free of police interruption, surprisingly. Not surprisingly, my phone has been ringing off the hook with calls from hopeful suitors who met me on Labor Day. I need to go return some calls now. More ladying and labrish next month.

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Nu Yawk Shitty winters are almost worth the price of living in such a culturally rich and somewhat progressive city, even if the cold comes early. November blew in with winds that knocked the temperature well below freezing. Miss December and Empress January competed for tiara and title in the Ice Queen pageant. Standing on a street corner close to dawn, trying desperately and with equal priority to hail a cab and keep warm, I wonder how much colder I would be had I not worn ten pairs of pantihose (ladies' long Johns). That was last year. This winter, I am taking a sabbatical from drag. Since my only job these days is to cash my unemployment check every Wednesday, I cannot afford the luxury of drag consumables (stockings, eyelashes, nails, hair spray, etc.) or new wardrobe pieces and accessories. My life circumstances have not affected the demand for my appearances though.

Thank goodness that Christmas, Kwanza, Three King's Day and New Year's have all come and gone. All of the children who threw holiday parties wanted drag queens to perform at their fetes, but few fully grasped the concept of work. Sure, it is fun to bear witness to the flawless and enchanting performance of Helen Heels at your private function, but remember that it is a gig. Roll your coins before you dial my digits. If you have nothing to offer, then you get nothing in return. Let me reiterate: my unemployment check is not a lottery check; it comes with severe limitations.

Honey, finding a well-paying job and a satisfying blow job in this town are expeditions unto themselves. Both have been absent from my life for a minute, but I am not looking to merge the two into a singular career option. Looking for either as a man with penciled-in eyebrows and dried Crazy Glue remnants on my fingernails does not yield the desired results. Hence, the Heels is pumping in public exclusively in boy drag.

A regular day sees me getting out of bed early (before 3 p.m.) and heading out doors by dusk, if I am lucky. My favorite past time involves liberating the Baby Phat bling bling pussycat pendants from Kimora Lee's sale fashions at the Burlington Coat factory on Sixth Avenue and Twenty-Third Street, then chilling in the magazine section near the front of the Barnes and Noble one block south. While one eye scans the periodicals, the other clocks the boys traveling to and from the Bally's gym next door. The magazine cruising is essential since my purse has no resources for subscription renewals. I miss Glitter the most. The last one the mail man brought to

my door had Raven on the cover. Does the magazine still get published? If you are reading this, kindly email me at [HelenHeels@AlterArts.Net](mailto:HelenHeels@AlterArts.Net) and let me know where I am being syndicated these days. My literary agent has not returned any of my calls after I told her that losing my job meant that I would no longer be able to Western Union her the duckets she needs to bail her boyfriends out of jail every time they get picked up for hustling on the cuts. She seemed to find little comfort in my promise to write her jail trade even though a letter in jail is worth more than a lawyer's retainer fee.

Speaking of fiduciary philanthropy, Jennifuh Leathuh and the Heels finally flew down on a Western Union-chartered plane to Montego Gay, Jamaica to check on our charity investments. A gyrlfriend of ours, Donna Hue, had been building a house since 1999, and the two of us had been making steady payments from mama's Playtex treasure chest since 2000. Well, it turns out that the house on Homo Hill was built in the countryside of Lethe, where Glitter's editor-in-chief, Lewis, spent much of her formative young gyrl years. We didn't get to meet any of her kin, but spent much time avoiding sunburns and setting up shop in the very in-progress palace. The beauty of the sunset-in-the-mountains backdrop remained undisturbed as we all pumped to blasting bootleg SaISoul house classics from the porter's closet-turned-kitchen into the pasture-turned-driveway atop Jennifuh Leathuh Boulevard (she funded the boulevard's solar-powered lights) in order to chase away a bull that wandered over from a local farm to eat our Bird of Paradise flowers.

After a full day of house work, we'd race around winding roads carved into the mountains five deep in a lime green 1983 Nissan Sunny with Kevin Aviance's "Cunty" terrorizing the Barnett Street straights stumbling out of the Juicy Patty as we drove to every hardware store in town to pursue such luxuries as rodent glue traps and single-edged razors. One night, Jennifuh Leathuh had a drag appearance at a club on Bottom Road and Queens Drive that Vanessa del Groove put together as a benefit for Jamaica Aids Support. The cuntry kids were gagging at Jennifuh's beauty and doubly gagging at her performance talents. I guess they don't get out too much. Many thought Leathuh was a real woman, and that's what we told the road block cops when they came to our car to encounter more than routine in their spot check. All of that rustic relaxation left us needing shamelessly to indulge in the benefits of living an industrialized country as opposed to one of it's colonies. Cookies, it was damn cold when we got back to Nu Yawk, and that is when I realized I should have sublet my apartment until April and stayed in warm JA. Regardless of where I am, you can always count on Helen Heels serving you the drama you deserve. Catch it.

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It finally happened. After years of preparation and anxious waiting, I reached the gay retirement age of thirty. A telemarketer assured me that my gay AARP membership kit is in the mail. Expect to find me peddling my gray-haired pension pussy at the local XXX movie theater, undeservingly accosting fine young studs with a sense of entitlement rival to that of George Bush Jr. with regard to his desire to annex Iraq. You will recognize me as the off-market man leaning on my cane with little grace, wiggling my tongue out of my mouth ever so unattractively while I attempt to flirt discretely with you, falling miserably at concealing my whispered desires to my geriatric crotch watch partner who is standing beside me in the shadows. Our resemblance to your father or uncle is uncanny, not in morphological and physical likeness, but in the immediate association drawn between us and undesirability. No realistic concept of vanity or social appropriateness will prevent me from drooling over you while the ashes of my cigarette fall onto my swollen and protruding belly. Ah, the joy of settling into adulthood..

Hold on, cookie pussies, let there be no misunderstanding: The above scenario will never feature Helen Heels, because she shall remain, with no variance, ladying untouched, free of contemporaries, trivialities of aging, and psychological decompensation, because the Heels is just a fictional character, and only that. GAG! I, on the other hand, the head over Helen Heels, the author of “Ladying, with Helen Heels,” am all mortal and no myth. And I am getting older.

Relief has accompanied my venture into the third decade of my existence, since I so longed to be far away from associations of immaturity that often plague youth. But, child, I didn't exactly rush into my thirties with limitless alacrity, since I knew that my unemployment wasn't going to afford me any grand luxuries. And a bitch still ain't got a job. The head hunters that I have relied upon for much of my work in the past tell me to call back in a few months and ask me if I know of any jobs they might be interested in. When the professionals who find me jobs for a living are asking me for employment leads, it is time to turn on the first-person networking hustle and head out on my own. No opportunity is turned down these days.

Last weekend, I celebrated the 39th birthday of one of my gyrls at a New Jersey club that was, in the word's of Karl Xtravaganza, “neither glamorous nor pumping.” It was tired,

but I needed a free night out on the town and the doorwoman knew us all, enabling my purse to stay zipped tight all night. For clear reasons, the club shall not be named, lest I lose my parking privileges. But Karl was right: although “a club doesn't have to be glamorous, the music, at least, must be pumping.” “Where [were] the classics?” he wondered. “In the other room,” I responded. We left the dance floor and found ourselves a fierce pumping classic alright: Ms. Pacman.

Being 30 means that I had the opportunity to spend many hours over half a lifetime ago punishing at Ms. Pacman. Almost twenty years later, I was still broke, but sober, and easily hustled some drunk who was playing and losing the game to sponsor my playing if I beat her, and to buy us a round of drinks if I beat the high score. The intoxicated child fell up in the bathroom before I tied the high score on that one quarter, and I lost my last life before I topped said high score. But at least I didn't pay for the disappointment that Miss Techno Pots-And-Pans DJ served the very New Jersey crowd. Since my idea didn't work to alleviate our thirst, I resorted to back-up plan B, and bought us our drinks myself.

My message is not to about being thrifty to the point of alienating oneself from the rest of civilization, but learning the grace required for such adjudications in order to maintain a reasonable likability and sense of fairness. The average person found frequenting a bar or club is not generally renowned for allowing his/herself to remain vulnerable to thoughtful suggestions or critiques. Consequently, they can expect to wind up still fierce, but also stubborn and alone. Or surrounded by equally insufferable dregs of the dance hall while retaining their unaddressed flaws.

Growing older is just what we call it—growing. Am I perfect? Hell no. Do I claim to be perfect? Not recently. Is Helen Heels perfect? She admits to what she wants, and may address public perceptions from time to time, but you'll have to read “Ladying” every month to see what she reveals. In the meantime, all of you craft queens and other tightwads need to see the film “Catch Me If You Can” to catch some history on pulling paper-based stunts. Arrange to see it at a low matinee price or when your good Judy is working at the theatre. But remember to stop by and say “wassup, mamma?” to she even when you don't want something for free. You don't want to gag when you show up with a date you are trying to impress, and Miss Theatre isn't featuring you cuz you were only a friend of convenience. It's alright if I am no longer marketable in the kingdom of the young and stuporfficial; I got my daddies to keep my company. And they get much respect, since they were blazing trails for all of us before any of us were here: before you, before me, and before Dark And Lovely. Go ahead, rub it in.

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This winter has been one of the most depressing seasons I have endured in a long time. The promise of yesterday's 50-degree temperature was annihilated by today's snow. But I was determined not to become a weather casualty. I shoveled out my stilettos and sashayed my still-jobless ass over to the five-dollar movie theatre to catch "The Hours." Afterwards, I figured I could either commit suicide, or do some thing more constructive, like write "Ladying." That you are reading this means I am not dead, but should you want to feel the torment of an afflicted writer, go see "The Hours."

The snowfall in NYC seems to be endless. One of the side effects is that the Sanitation Department has curtailed garbage collection to the point where the sidewalks are overflowing with trash, which does not assist with navigation through the narrow paths that have been cleared free of snow. The blizzard that besieged the city on presidents' day weekend kept most people off of the streets. If one did venture out and rode the subways, s/he encountered automatic rifle-toting military personnel in head-to-toe camouflage. Cruisy subway platforms were invaded by military men, supposedly to prevent terrorism. The civilian strollers held it down and hung around despite the threatening presence of the armed forces. Perhaps the thrill of being a sexual terrorist heightened the excitement. Honey, when the army clocks your ass as you are searching for a blow job on a subway platform, you have transcended categorization as a sexual outlaw; you have become a sexual terrorist. It is also an opportunity to indulge a uniform fetish, but at an extreme cost.

During the celebrated dead president's weekend snowstorm (may more die, and sooner too, since we need the days off from work and their administrations' terrorism), when not even the major wig stores were open as a result of the unprecedented snowfall, Nu Yawk's terrorism alert status was raised to the high/orange level, perhaps as an indication that terrorists are more efficient in debilitating blizzards than the average non-terrorist is. The most identifiable population sloshing through the slush and snow on the streets the first night of snowfall, despite common sense, were queens. We are never going to miss an opportunity to turn it out, or let that opportunity be revoked by the military or mother nature. We have survived far worse conditions, but that should not qualify us to be charged as terrorists by jealous governmental uptights. The survival of any marginal group has always

depended on resourcefulness that its mainstream counterparts have never needed to consider, let alone employ and perfect. When the government advised that we protect ourselves with duct tape, did any of my gyrlfriends run to the Homo Depot, only to fall into a quagmire of anxiety upon finding that all types of tape had sold out? Hell no. I received many a casual "Gyrl, since you're a drag queen, you got enough tuck tape for all of us, right?" phone call. Even Glitter, from day one, mastered the incorporation of the U.S. terrorism alert system into its design, registering all over the Pantone spectrum with its signature "Color Me Beautiful" psychedelia.

The day that the rest of the country's terrorism warning level was lowered from high/orange to elevated/yellow, Nu Yawk's remained at the high/orange level. This is also the day that Fred "Mister" Rogers died. I never conceived his youthful (as in kindergarten-age) followers to be violent or vengeful. Maybe John Ashcroft feared the wrath of the NYC chapter of the Lady Elaine Fairchild cult, which lived for the tipsy and fierce burlesque/call-gyrl puppet in Mister Rogers' Magical Land of Make-Believe. Certainly, the show was a little weird at times, but I am sure it became a prime target of the National Security Council due to its airing over the Public Broadcast System television network. Maybe Fred Rogers' death was really a covert CIA assassination! It wouldn't surprise me, since this country was founded on imperialist principals (genocide of the natives, enslavement of Africans, etc.). Understandably, peace-loving drag queens, such as Helen Heels, are considered terrorists. I have not been arrested on any charges yet, but Glitter will provide full coverage if Mr. Charlie tries to cause it with this ladying diva.

Speaking of governmental recklessness, there was a huge peace rally in NYC last month that hundreds of thousands of supporters came out for. One of my sistren was arrested when she failed to move faster down the sidewalk after police mashed her up against a building wall. Next to her was a womyn who fell and raised her hand to protect herself from a police horse just before it trampled her. That dawl was charged with assaulting the animal, in addition to disorderly conduct. When she got out of Central Booking the next day, she discovered that the corporate press had portrayed her as a violent activist who dragged the horse to the ground and punched it in its head. Certainly, the hostilities of such violent pacifists are what keep many of you away from outdoor mobilization, except when it comes to waiting in a long line to get into a club. Had you attended any anti-war demonstrations, you may have seen Helen Heels marching with her group, W.H.O.R.E.S. (Witty Hookers Opposed to Racist Elitist Society). There will be many upcoming opportunities to watch the Heels pump, so I hope to see you on the streets soon.

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## READING with Francine Fuentes

She accuses him of not paying her to write for *Glitter* but does she really deserve pay? Personally, Francine Fuentes feels that girl is paid enough for what she does, but she should be given at least one rhino plastic because she really needs one. Since the submission of her June *Ladying*, she has been paid several thousand dollars in back money. She is right that I get paid handsomely and that she works for free. So now the bitch has some coins in her purse and will be able to buy a Puerto Rican papi off of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to pleasure her. *Glamma* is now paying Helen lovely for her services at my expense. I took a pay cut because I know that I will remain the first lady of *Glamma* long after Helen breaks a heel.

She further goes on to call *Glitter* an “esteemed literary fish wrap,” but it’s her writing that qualifies this prestigious magazine as fish wrap. After careful research, I noticed that she is not the only person who feels this way. In December of 2001, the then-Mr. Renaissance, Carl Harris, called it *Litter*, only functional as a lining for his kitty litter box. From what I hear, Helen Heels is in good company with Mr. Harris.

It is true that she used to bail the *Glitter* Editor out of debt in his earlier years, but is it ladylike of her to discuss that in her column? Should she change its name to *Unladying*? All of you who used to ignore her column will want to go back and

## HELEN HEELS: YOU ARE ONE MALODOROUS FRAGMENT OF FILTH MEANDERING AIMLESSLY IN THE SEWERS OF JOURNALISTIC ENDEAVORS, REFUSING TO BE FLUSHED.

read it to see the gossip she is spreading. I have one sentence for Helen Heels: You are one malodorous fragment of filth meandering aimlessly in the sewers of journalistic endeavors, refusing to be flushed.

From here on, it is going to be war between that girl and me, because the editor refuses to fire her and I am being forced to work with her. Like Tiffany Brooks said to the other girls at Black America this past year, “Dahlings, there can only be one queen, and that queen is me.”

This article was written under duress from the Editor of *Glitter*, now *Glamma* Magazine. Helen heels forced him to hire an expensive, overpriced, graphic artist and to take out a loan to improve the quality of the magazine. She even convinced him to rename said magazine. She has him totally brainwashed. She exerted her white girl privilege and convinced him that it was the thing to do. He seems to think the world of Helen, so thank her for *Glamma*. I will continue to hate that bitch, as I remain the always-beautiful, ever-devastating Francine. ©

**D**ear readers, some of you may not know this, and some of you may. In all pageants there can only be one queen. Whether it is Universe, Continental, or USofA—someone is going to lose and someone is going to win. In the case of pageantry, many are going to lose and one will win. At *Glitter*—now *Glamma*—one is going to lose and the other will win.

Over here at *Glamma*, we have a score to settle. There has been a feud going on between Miss Helen Heels and myself, and I am about to put it to rest once and for all. If you read her column this month, you will notice that she had no respect for the graphic design of *Glitter* magazine, nor its Editor, Lewis Nicholson. They used to be best of friends when they were Prospect Park sluts in New York City. Then he moved away and she has been mad since.

# Ladying with Helen Heels

**D**earest *Ladying* fans, with much disappointment, I report that this may be the last time you read a Helen Heels epistle in *Glitter*. It seems that the periodical in your hands, *Glitter 7 Magazine*, *Glitter 17 Magazine*, or *Glitter 27 Magazine*, depending on which page you are peering at, has distanced itself from the Heels in a subtle and shady social segue. This ostracization correlates with the introduction to *Glitter* readers of a new gyrl in possession of quill, parchment, sass, and shit to say: Francine Fuentes. While I appreciate Francine Fuentes' shout-outs to me in the March issue of *Glitter*, there are a few things that need to be cleared up before I clear out. Her portrayals of me were nothing but fictions that were ungrounded in any truthful reality. These lies will be identified much easier than Francine Fuentes' original physical morphology, so read on for the real herstory.



## HELEN HEELS IS A CASH AND CARRY GYRL: NO CASH, NO CARRYING OF MY WRITINGS IN YOUR ESTEEMED LITERARY FISH WRAP.

About being “in an uproar trying to get [a photographer] to shoot [me] for free” because “*Glitter* does not pay [me] enough to afford new pictures.” I do not want to be shot at, as the loquacious Francine Fuentes encourages (“Why doesn't someone just shoot her?”). I am opposed to the gun-related violence that Francine Fuentes advocates, and already feel aesthetically assassinated each time I see the design of *Ladying, with Helen Heels*.

If Francine Fuentes' eyes were not swollen shut as a result of her latest innumerable facelift, she would have seen that the Lucky Charms cereal box colors applied to her column are what need a make-over, not the “ever-lovely” Francine Fuentes. Her su-su about me seeking free photographic services is as authentic as those fake “Ask Bianca” articles that appeared in the ill-fated *Clikque* magazine when Dwight Powell ousted Lewis Nicholson and became the sole publisher of said rag.

My flawless image has been captured photographically by one of the few professional camera artists associated with *Glitter*: me. My photographic self portraits, along with never-used illustrated portraits and *Ladying, with Helen Heels* logos were sent to *Glitter* offices on many occasions,

long time ago. If the *Glitter* design team are admirers of the grotesque D.C. *Malebox* (circa 1996), that is a visionary handicap that can be overcome with assistance from professional help. That they are so unsavvy as to turn down professionally-prepared artwork is a transvesty that undermines any progress. Furthermore, as I mentioned late last year, the act of writing “*Ladying, with Helen Heels*” is a community service contribution.” *Glitter* pays me nothing, not even dust. Francine Fuentes may get paid in surgical trade, but Helen Heels is a cash and carry gyrl: no cash, no carrying of my writings in your esteemed literary fish wrap.

Throughout the last ten years that the Editor-in-Chief of *Glitter* and I have been sistren, I provided debt amnesty to all of the loans I made to sistergyrl. Recently though, she has failed to deliver to me mucho dinero for artistic reimbursables (separate from my unpaid, monthly *Ladying* installments). And mind you, the Heels is pumping into her sixth month of joblessness. Resultingly, anticipate my self-extraction from these garish pages unless the coins are rolled in my direction. These contentions might be considered petty, especially within the context of the current

global climate and life loss due to the mad cowboy-diseased presidential administration of this country, but, you are reading this in *Glitter*, after all.

One strategy of successful ladying involves the ability to offer fashion forecast, so as to be sartorially prepared for any situation. For instance, wear stretch tights for fights, and flats for quick flight. But when a partnership is no longer fun, and there is no need to defend or run, or when the money isn't right for the work of a full night and there is no recompence, pack the Pradas and prepare for disappearance. Do not expect my bundles to be trundled on wheels; I am the graceful Helen Heels, who will neither cause a sad scene, nor fade into the shadows of obscurity. I can always be found ladying online at [www.alterarts.net](http://www.alterarts.net). If you want to confirm the tea, you can always ask Francine. But if you want the secret to ladying longevity, it is knowing when it is time to go. As long as I am Helen Heels, I will not be waiting for Godot. **G**

*The preceding article was recovered from the former Glitter offices and has been reproduced with permission from Helen Heels, who has agreed to contribute regularly to Glamma magazine upon having received financial recompense from Glamma. Look for Ladying, with Helen Heels in next month's Glamma.*



# READING

with  
Francine  
Fuentes

Also, the last time I ditched Lady Bunny's Wigstock to go to Paris for yet another nose job, she was the highlight of the event. Oh well, I have more important things to do than see some drag girl perform. My whole life is a performance; why do I need to go see one? There are only two important things in Francine's life: her face and more of her face. The cara is always sitting untold.

I am having a party in November and here is how you get on the guest list: If you can honestly say you know none of the girls that *Glamma* goes up over each month, you and a guest are invited to my party. It will be an all-Francine worship event. The staff is going up over one Chevelle Brooks and her ability to spin her head like a top. I was getting nervous until I walked over to see her picture. Love her hair, hope she wins, but she is no threat to my status as most beautiful.

My boyfriend, Killer, just got out of jail and he is going to be the next Mr. Continental. So we went shopping to buy him a pair of those baggy swim trunks that the contest organizers require. We went from Neiman's to Universal Gear, to the Versace store with no luck. Those things are ugly, but with Killer's magnificent body he will still win Swimsuit. I would like to have that category changed, because my man has the nation's most perfect bulge and I wanted the girls to see what they were missing. To make a long story short, I bought four

## IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT I AM THE OFFICIAL BITCH OF THIS PUBLICATION AND THAT HELEN NEEDS NEW HEELS.

bathing suits: two Versaces, one Prada and the ultimate Chanel. I look stunning in each and every one of them. Killer is still short two swim trunks, but we may have a solution: Justice Felani of the fashion department. That fag should be able to get my man looking flawless in those less-than-flattering trunks required by the Continental contest.

I ran into an old flame the other day for whom I lived. He used to be small with a big pinga and had the most chiseled body on a living man. He was the poster child for thugsrus.com. He, however, chose to give up a lot of the things he enjoyed to become a law-abiding citizen. He looks healthy, but not so cute to me anymore. I asked him about the weight gain. He said, "I gave up cocaine." Here I was thinking it was the gym. "How did your lips get so brown instead of their usual black?" "I gave up smoking weed." "So all of you has changed, huh?" To which he smiled, looked down at his crotch and beamed, "not all." Oh well.

He kept telling me that I look different. Of course I do. I had three rhinoplasty jobs and a breast implant since he last saw me. Of course I look different, idiot. Men—you just can't train them. On that note, I must run, as my Botox appointment is at 3:00 p.m. and it is now 2:15 p.m. I am never late for anything that will affect my remaining beautiful. If you want some tea, ask Miss Rita, and if you want a cure for your insomnia, read Helen Heels. As always, I remain the ever-devastating Francine. **G**

**H**ello, girls and girls. This is your girl, Francine Fuentes, coming to you once again from the pages of this esteemed literary fish wrap. I am happy to say that over here at *Glamma*, everything is peachy. It is quite clear that I am the official bitch of this publication and that Helen needs new heels.

With that out of the way, let's talk about some of the happenings this month. As if you don't already know, I can be a very bitter girl. With my face and body being flawless, I find others' imperfections both-ersome. I walked into the office and noticed that some girl, Hedda Lettuce, was on the cover of the magazine. My immediate response was to storm the editor's office and find out who the hell she was and why some girl I have never heard of was gracing the cover of this prestigious magazine. When I did, the editor told me that if I were not so immersed in my own face, I would have seen Hedda. "How so?" I asked. He said that she was the headliner the night I stood everyone up and did not show up at Caroline's Comedy Club in New York City.



# Ladying

with Helen Heels

**W**here's the bitch? She's got some nerve. Here I am and feeling fieceer! Miss Honey!\* That's right, Miss Honies, the Heels have not pumped into obscurity. Rather, into the helm as the most influential drag columnist at *Glamma*. I offer my apologies for not having contributed to the launch of *Glamma* with my literary prowess last month; I was busy brokering the branding of the nascent *Glamma*. I was also busy managing the night shift of a prestigious Nu Yawk ad agency and they were paying me lovely for my services, much unlike how Francine Fuentes claims *Glamma* has taken financial care of either of us. That sad, self-hating gyrl, Francine Fuentes, is right when she says that Helen Heels is responsible for *Glamma* and I doubt that anyone (Franny aside) could disagree with how much better this

This publicized battle between Francine Fuentes and myself is far more entertaining than any television soap opera that I have ever seen. What other periodical features such an open internal battle and hypes it on the front cover? Despite its obvious theatrical appeal, I am not sure that I can guarantee its eternal presence. I don't see fickle Franny anymore, so she can go on speculating whatever confusion she likes. No longer do I need to read her in response; she is self-explanatory. My job is to make sure that *Glamma's* designer makes it look legible and lovely.

While on the subject of loveliness, I recently was filming on the set of *Sex and the City* with numerous gorgeous drag queens and a few hideous has-beens. The pay was less than what I make daily on unemploy-

**FURTHERMORE, JILLIAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ME IS MORE PERMANENT THAN ANY SET OF SALINE TITTIES FRANCINE CAN PUT IN HER BRA EVERY TIME SHE FINISHES SERVICING TRICKS THAT CARE NOTHING ABOUT HER NOR THE LUDICROUS AND INFLAMMATORY INSINUATIONS SHE PERPETRATES AGAINST A CELEBRATED LADY OF SOCIETY SUCH AS MYSELF.**

ment, and air conditioning was non-existent. That's how my gay pride weekend was too—long *Glamma*-promoting days in the unforgiving sun. At least I wasn't alone. *Glamma's* Business Manager flew all the way up to Nu Yawk to hand deliver to me a hundred copies of the magazine, and I felt as though I had won Lotto. And that boy knew how to carry on! He *Glammarized* the city and got his groove on too. I didn't even make it to any parties. Post-parade Chrissy St. was full of uncouth urchins who started a few fights and melees. You should have seen all of those rainbow colors come running up the filthy, police-barricaded streets in unmitigated, frightening chaos. What a mess.

magazine is when compared to its predecessor. As for the editor owing me payment for writing, she still does, since I have never been paid for *Ladying*. This is not an accusation; it is an undisputable and neutral fact that I don't care about. I was put on this planet to write and there are enough appreciative readers to keep me satisfied. My gripe with Jillian over not having been reimbursed for my photographic services that I provided to *Glamma* has been settled out of court. Miss Jillian also took to heart my last column and cleaned up the litter that was *Glitter*. She and I go back farther than Franny Fuentes' face has been pulled back behind her ears. Furthermore, Jillian's relationship with me is more permanent than any set of saline titties Francine can put in her bra every time she finishes servicing tricks that care nothing about her nor about the ludicrous and inflammatory insinuations she perpetrates against a celebrated lady of society such as myself.

If Francine really has taken as substantial a cut in pay as she claims, she may want to mix cement into her foundation to cover crows feet and hold her sagging cheeks frozen in time—a time long since past. And the only time I will be breaking a heel is when it fractures the skull of Francine Fuentes. But I am not Helen Broken Heels, much the same way peaceful ladying is not to be misconstrued as being violently devastating. Let that poor gyrl get it through her thick heffa head before the next time she picks a fight while mopping \$5 skirts at the Dress Barn.

The newly refurbished piers now feature “comfort station” police who are carding would-be pissers to verify their genetic sex, arresting trans folks for their attempting to enter the “wrong” bathrooms. Even though we can now fuck legally in our homes, the government will not be satisfied until they have stripped away our other remaining rights wherever and whenever they can. Rest assured that as long as I am Helen Heels, *Glamma* will be here to represent trannies 24/7, regardless of whether femme queens like Francine Fuentes hate me or not. *Yes I'm back, and what a talk!* **G**

\*Moi Renee, “Miss Honey,” Project X Records, PX 10016, 1992. “Ladying, with Helen Heels” can be read online at [www.alterarts.net](http://www.alterarts.net).



# Ladying

with Helen Heels

**T**elephones are ringing and electricity is flowing in my air-conditioned apartment, two days after those aforementioned luxuries disappeared as a result of the infamous but already forgotten Blackout of 2003. Ghettos didn't burn to the ground like they did in the past, perhaps because the afterward would dictate new homes in upstate prisons as opposed to lavish rebuilding. Non-believers scrambled to buy *Seven African Powers* seven-day candles at bodegas. Everyone walked across a bridge to get out of Manhattan and back to Queens, the Bronx, and Brooklyn. I was underneath the old World Trade Center on a C train when the lights went out. I thought it was a two-year anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 in the form of an ironically twisted tribute to the recently-deceased Idi Amin and the 500,000 people he killed, whose bodies often clogged Uganda's major hydroelectric plant. This blackout

## FRANCINE FUENTES IS NOT SICKENING; SHE IS NAUSEATING. BARF BAG, PLEASE.

was clearly a symptom of our nation's nihilistic dependency on monopolistic control of dead fuel and rejection of renewable energy possibilities. But new computerized election voting machines are promised in time for the next presidential elections, surely to be rigged for Bush with little scandal. Sadly, during these juiceless days, too many queens were preoccupied with fantasies of firing up their hair dryers, or the fact that the C batteries they wanted for their vibrators had all been grabbed for flashlights by sensible gyrls.

Speaking of trifling individuals, let me spend as few words as possible on Francine Fuentes. She is not *sickening*; she is nauseating. Barf bag, please. Another sorry situation was the free People of Color in Crisis (POCC)/House of Blahnik ball held in August at Nu Yawk's Roxy. Without even witnessing one category's competition, I declare it a shade stunt. I accompanied *Glamma's* Artistic Director to the function after being asked by POCC to provide photojournalistic coverage that would appear in our prestigious publication, only to be told that we could not enter the Coxy with our camera. Many parents feel comfy dropping off their kids in day care before they go to work in the morning, but we were not about to leave our baby Rolleiflex in anybody's coat check, especially since we needed it to do our work. We were escorted to the sidewalk due to our noncompliance. The only "free" performance witnessed was when ladying Emoji Sunbeam gained entry to the club and then tossed her identification back out the door to sail over the heads of the oblivious security and land at the pumps of her waiting gyrlfriend.

After waiting on the endless line at the Coxy that night, I could understand why the city's council members voted themselves exempt from walking through City Hall's metal detectors. This proved suicidal, since

my district's councilman, James E. Davis, wound up getting his ass shot to death by a gun-packing quasi-closeted gyrlfriend who accompanied Davis past the City Hall magnometers instead of walking through solo and getting busted. *Duh!* The killer, Neil Askew, reportedly promised to give up running against Davis for Davis' council seat in exchange for a nice job in the councilman's office. Speculations imply that assassin Askew also abandoned his political ambitions on the condition that Davis wouldn't out Aksew to his family, but found that after bailing out of the race, there was no fab job waiting as promised. I guess living your life in perpetual fear of having your most consuming and complicated secrets revealed isn't as ideal as these troubled gyrls claim it is. Regardless, Davis is still at fault for his public gay-baiting, and he paid with his life; his sidekick obviously needed help, not hostility.

Speaking of disempowering lies we tell ourselves and gay gyrls in my hood, around the corner from me and up the block from the slain councilman's election headquarters resides a fine man that I had been seeing for three months. Although he was gorgeous, I gave him the boot because his narcissism and other unredeeming qualities far outweighed my interest or any conveniences. He found my estrangement from my crazy family "disturbing" (as opposed to a sign of healthy self-preservation), but failed to see that he could not be as close to his mother as he claimed, simply because he fearfully separated her from his gay self. When his mom suffered slight injuries in a car accident, all gay things in his life—including me—were temporarily terminated for two weeks because he felt he had to choose between his two worlds, as opposed to merging them and developing more honest and meaningful relationships with everyone important in his life. When we did reunite, he found no validity in my analysis and continued to invest in his maladjustments.

But I didn't push the issue further and risk my life by calling this man's mom up and disclosing the fact that her son was in my bed every night for three months. Instead, I took myself to Prospect Park, where many more emotionally unavailable men were cruising in search of limited intimacies. Cops searched for us from helicopters, cars, scooters, and bikes as though it were LA's Greenstone Park the way John Rechy portrayed it in *The Sexual Outlaw*. Further disappointment was found in the fencing off of a sex spot opposite the Boat House. It has been slated for "rehabilitation," which will probably take forever, but might be completed before most of the closeted and fake DL (*Desperate Living*) men who stroll through she have been rehabilitated for conscious living. **G**

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