



**THE EROTIC
POWER OF
F= CONDUIT
TOUR 2018**

FEMINISM, LANDSCAPE AND HISTORY
COLLIDE IN AN EROTIC CONCURRENCE
AS F= LOOKS TO THE NORTH AND THE
WAYS IN WHICH ART CONNECTS US.

**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**

THE EROTIC POWER OF F= CONDUIT TOUR DR LIZ STIRLING

OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:
The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour

Output Type:
I – Performance

Venues:
The Chemic Tavern, Leeds; Inkwel Arts, Leeds;
Sheffield Lead Mill

Year of first performance:
2018

Number of additional authors:
3

Research Groups:
F= Feminist Research



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

Originating from an interest in the history of Leeds-based feminist organisations, The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour proposes the importance of walking as a conduit for change, empowerment and connectivity amongst women and their supporters, and an antidote for gender and social oppression. The 'walk' is a space, place or time where communication occurs, bonds are created, and social liberation is initiated. This research question explores how historical solutions to oppression can be revisited by fusing new methodologies with longstanding practices.

The methods used include non-rational, performative walks, collaborative artworks, presentations and publications. Referencing the Dada and Punk movements, absurdity, spectacle and humour become conductors for discussion, inclusion and accessibility to political debate and empowerment. To achieve these aims, F= collaborated with Feminist Archive North, Arts In Situ and The Armitt Museum.

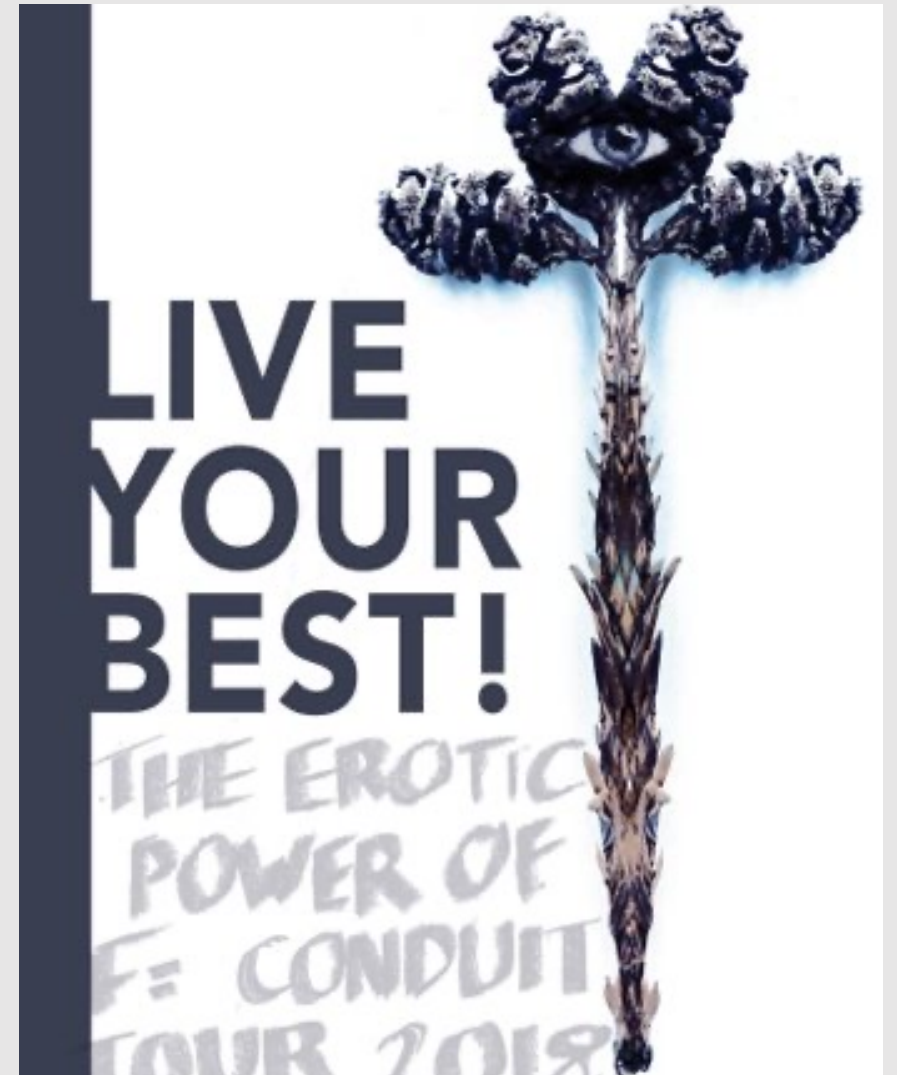
In 2018, findings were shared during participatory walks in Leeds, Pendle and Ambleside; presentations at Leeds Beckett University and Slung Low Cultural Community College; in three publications Deeds Not Words (200 copies), Live Your Best (50 copies), The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour (250 copies); an exhibition at The Chemic Tavern, Leeds, 2019. The project received £14,573 ACE funding and was exhibited at Inkwel Arts, Leeds, 2019, supported Cud at Sheffield Leadmill; and produced as a vinyl EP, played by Steve Lamacq on Radio 6.

Whilst the Conduit Tour references the historical work of Pavilion, Leeds Animation Workshop and Leeds Revolutionary Feminist Group, including the first Reclaim the Night marches, its original and significant contribution to the field manifests itself in a metamorphosis between performative aspects of 1970s and 80s feminist artwork, creative activist methods of Fourth Wave Feminism, and more non-rational, playful aspects of Dadaism. It serves as a valuable document recording the viewpoints of northern women during the current unique political climate.

“Tip for 2020: F=, As in, F Equals. Feminist four-piece performance artists with a debut yellow vinyl single called ‘It’s Easy Being in a Band’. Playful, punky and unforgettable.”



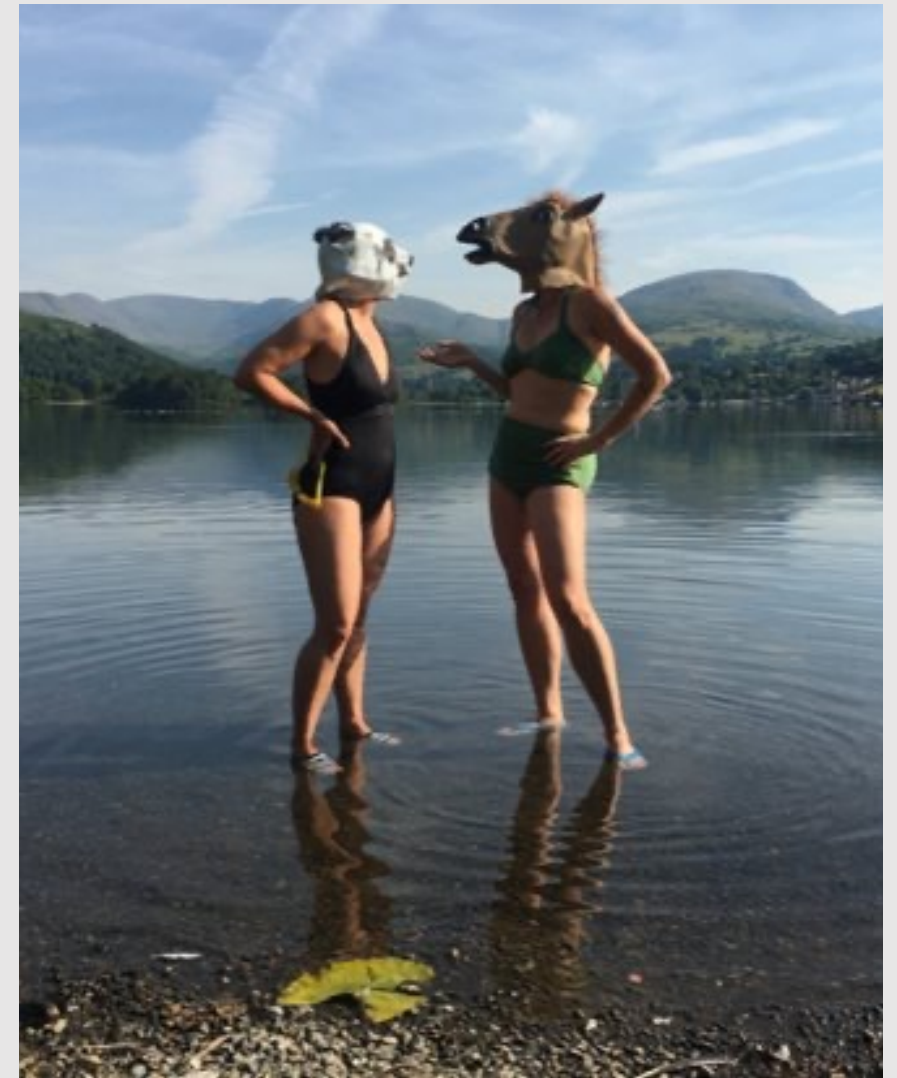
deeds not words Front cover of Pamphlet 1, 2018 designed by Jennifer Smith



Live your Best Front cover of Pamphlet 2, 2018 designed by Jennifer Smith



The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour Book, 2019
designed by Jennifer Smith Images all F=



Documentation of Live Your Best F= Performance
Ambleside 2018 Images by F=



Documentation of Live Your Best F= Performance Ambleside 2018
Images by F=



F= Performance at The Armitt Museum, Ambleside 2018 Image by F=



deeds not words Performance Walk to Clarion House 2018 Image courtesy of Jennifer Smith



F= Band Performance at The Leadmill, Sheffield 2019 Image courtesy of Jenn Smith



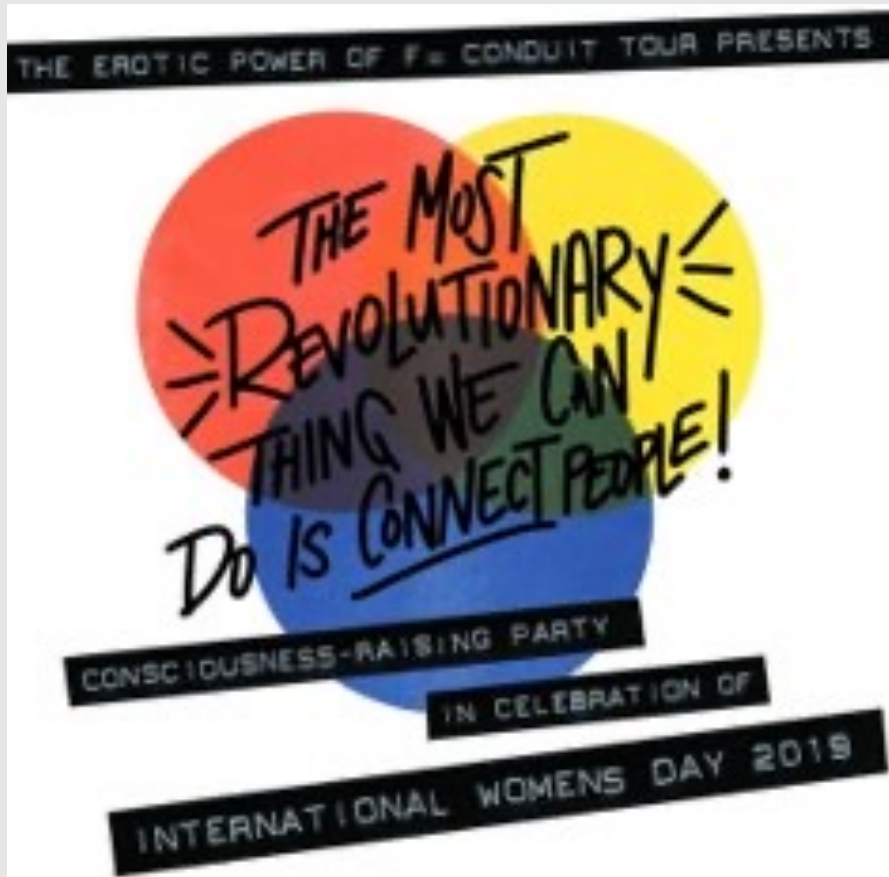
International Women's Day Public Walk, Leeds 6 March 2018 Image courtesy of Jenn Smith



F= at Feminist Archive North, 2018



The Chemic Tavern Performance, 2019



International Women's Day Poster, 2019



Image from F= Conduit Book, at The Armitt Museum, 2019



deeds not words Performance walk, 2018



Dr Penny Bradley, 2018



The Brett Kavanaugh Hex, 2018



Barbara Todd and Maureen Colquhoun, 2018



F= Band practice 2019



F= Pendle Hill Performance walk, 2018



F= Performance & Exhibition co-curated with Leeds Beckett Graphic Arts & Design students. Gender Conference, Cloth Hall, LBU. 2018



F= performance at The Chemic Tavern, Leeds. Launch of the Conduit Book. 2019

Image courtesy of Jen Smith

F= performance & Exhibition

Inkwell Arts 2019

Image F=





It's Easy Being in a Band. F= 12" single yellow vinyl

F= MANIFESTO

1. F= is WOMXN POWER!
2. We believe in ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
3. We listen to NATURE
4. We use ABSURDITY, SPECTACLE and LAUGHTER as CONDUCTORS for discussion, debate, celebration and empowerment.
5. We embrace the activating force that is UNCERTAINTY.
6. We direct RAGE into ACTION.
7. We wear YELLOW.
8. We work with others from different PLACES and across GENERATIONS, sharing skills, expressing something COLLECTIVELY and lose ourselves in the same BEAUTIFUL
9. We live our WILD NATURE. ^{THING.}
10. We believe in the levelling action of HUMOUR and use it to neutralise power and make space for OPENNESS and
11. We seize the PRESENT MOMENT. ^{LISTENING.}
12. We believe in THE EROTIC POWER OF F=!

F= Manifesto

Poster and Stimulus Respond Journal Editorial Statement 2019/2020

GG

“The lunch art event and performance with F= was wonderful in so many ways. We are elderly, not always well, have mobility issues and because of this we don’t get out much. It can be very isolating. We spent our lives as feminist artists and activists working for equality and for a better world for women. We felt celebrated by our friendship with F= and their interest in our lives makes us feel as if we are passing on some of our work to them in the way we have kept alive the work of the social reformer Harriet Martineau.”

Babs Todd, Writer, activist and founder/editor of 1970s lesbian magazine Sappho

**Additional context:*

Babs is the wife of Maureen Colquhoun. We (F=) met Maureen (aged 91) and Babs (aged 88) in 2018 as part of The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour with F=. Maureen is an activist, writer and former Labour MP. Barbara Todd was a writer and actor. They lived in The Knoll, Ambleside, the house built by 19th century social reformer and writer Harriet Martineau.



“F= have brought joy into our lives. We think of them as connected to us, as kindred. Through their interest in us, our friendship and the art they have made, we feel as if our work and memory will be kept alive.”

Maureen Colquhoun,

Activist, writer and former Labour MP



"I've got to say I loved being a part of the project, the whole team are so enthusiastic and creative and empowering. I also felt empowered celebrating international women's day here, especially in such a male dominated environment with so many like-minded people. The pub has a long history of landladies but our customer base is still majority male and we didn't get female toilets here until the toilets were built indoors circa the 70s!

F= came in like a feminist whirlwind of optimism and powerful thought-provoking art, and changed not only the pub physically, but the way I viewed myself as the landlady. Researching the census to find the first documented landlady of the pub made me think about my roots here and the long line of females who have been so important to the pubs survival even when women weren't socially accepted inside the building.

The whole experience really made me think as well as feel more confident in myself and the crucial role women play in history - before then I saw myself more as babysitting the pub until the next people come to run it better. In fact, after the experience I wrote a song after I'd faced a particularly unpleasant sexist customer I hope you don't mind me sharing - it's just a few lines that stick with me - You had a mother raise you, her body gave you life, but still for generations that strength has been denied. I am a part of a history that won't exist without me."

Anna Shepherd, Landlady at The Chemic Tavern, Leeds

“I’ve read the F= book and I LOVE it. I found myself reading every little bit of it because it’s INSPIRING and JOYFUL and RADICAL and FEMINIST and UTOPIAN and ARTY. Every bit was interesting.

It all wove together in such a great way, following your noses to see where it lead...I’ll read it again if I lose my way and get too serious and dispirited. It’ll be my yellowprint for joyful radical feminism.”

Jacky Fleming, Political cartoonist

APPENDIX

PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS

Stirling, L & Hassall, J. 'Women, Visibility & Playful Acts. Annual Walk and Burning Ritual celebrating International Women's Day in Leeds, UK.' Architecture, Festival and the City. 14th AHRA Conference, City of Birmingham University. 2017

Stirling, L. 'Women and Visibility and Playful Acts. Using Play to Empower, Educate and Act in Public Spaces.' Conjunctions. Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation. 2016. Vol 3. No.1. ISSN 2246-3755
<http://www.conjunctions-tjcp.com>

Stirling, L & Hassall, J. 'Burning the Bra. Collaborative Teaching for a Public Event'. October 2014. Collaborative Teaching in Arts Education. ijade Conference for NSEAD.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Andrew Nicholas
@Cavedweller71

Embracing the yellow as part of [@art_feminism](#)'s Deeds Not Words walk up to the Clarion House engaging with the landscape, people & wildlife



13:50 · 08/07/2018 · Twitter for iPhone



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13:50 · 08/07/2018 · Twitter for iPhone



In Situ
@InSitu_1

Deeds not words walk with [@art_feminism](#) heading to Clarion house...it's so hot!!
[#artspenlancs](#) [@HeskethJoejoe](#)
[@zadanzig](#)



SOCIAL MEDIA



SOCIAL MEDIA

 Leeds inspired
@LeedsInspired

Put your paws together for [@art_feminism](#) - they've just won the Leeds Inspired Award For Best Event Listing Photo Of The Week! Celebrate with these wild and crazy animals at their homecoming gig at [@ChemicTavern](#) this Friday 🐾
🐰 🐼 leedsinspired.co.uk/events/erotic-...



 F=Feminism+Art
@art_feminism

Final Gig of The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour.
[@ChemicTavern](#)
[@LBUArtsResearch](#)
[@LBU_BA_graphics](#)
[@LeedsInspired](#)



 LBU - BA Graphic Design
@LBU_BA_graphics


Thanks to all students and Chemic Tavern folk at last night's 'Connecting People' International Women's Day event. Great posters, drawings, chat and cheers AND £85 raised for an important cause
[@bloodygood__](#)
[@ChemicTavern](#) [@art_feminism](#)








SOCIAL MEDIA




SOCIAL MEDIA



 **Kate C.Thomas** · 02/07/2019 ✓
I'd just like to say I specialised on the sheep noise.... #Feminisms19

     ... · 02/07/2019

Last workshop of a great day with F= @art_feminism recording animal noises for their first single. #Feminisms19

1 1 2

 F=Feminism+Art Retweeted **Leeds Beckett P...** · 02/07/2019 ✓
#Feminisms19 F=. So much to talk about ...



1

fequalsnorth
Explore the significance of feminism in creative practices and use playful acts to activate sites of learning


F= / CONTACT / BLOG / THE EROTIC POWER OF F= CONDUIT TOUR 2018

F= at The Leadmill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpBM6kZ5kNw>

October 9, 2019

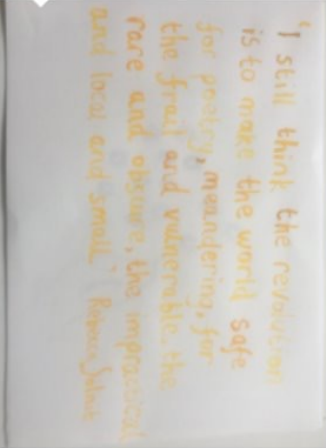
F=SUPPORTING CUD



<https://www.leadmill.co.uk/event/cud/> We've been very busy practising at Mook for our gig next week supporting CUD.

September 27, 2019

F= Inkwell Performance



'I still think the revolution is to make the world safe for poetry, mauling, for the frail and vulnerable, the rare and obscure, the impractical and local and small.' Rebecca


F= FILL IN THE FORM (Jo's Intro) This week we have been mainly thinking about filling in forms. We what's apped some thoughts to each other. I took the liberty of extracting this from our F= collective musings. [in different accents] 'it pins you down...it judges you...it may never get looked at.... it holds power...

[Continue Reading →](#)

September 16, 2019

Inkwell Exhibition

The Erotic Power of F= Inkwell Arts
please join us for an exhibition launch September 13th 4 - 8




Come and discover what it's all about! They explored the rich connections between feminist history, nature and magic as part of *The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour*. There will be a new F= performance for this event!

F= are reflecting on the conduit tour at Inkwell Arts <https://www.inkwellarts.org.uk/> in Chapel Allerton, Leeds. In preparation for the exhibition I listened again to Audre Lorde reading her inspiring essay *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*. Below this I have highlighted 3 quotes from the essay. Listening and Reading Audre Lorde I am taken...

[Continue Reading →](#)

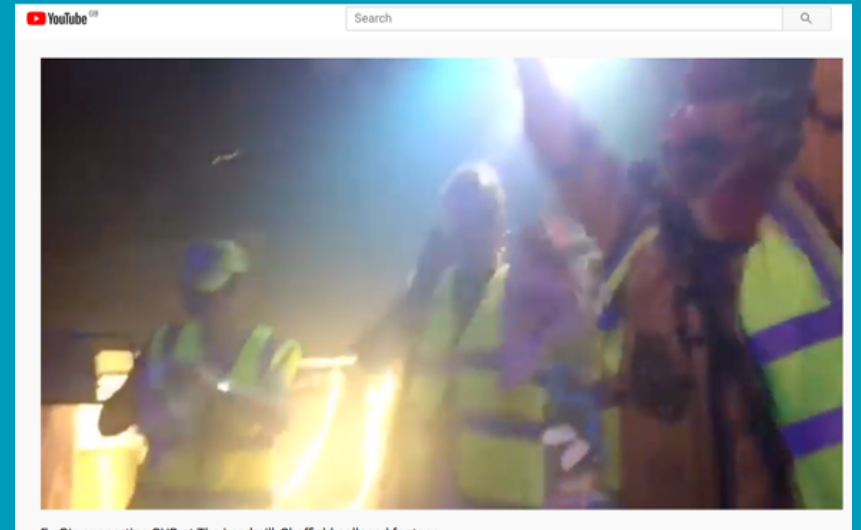
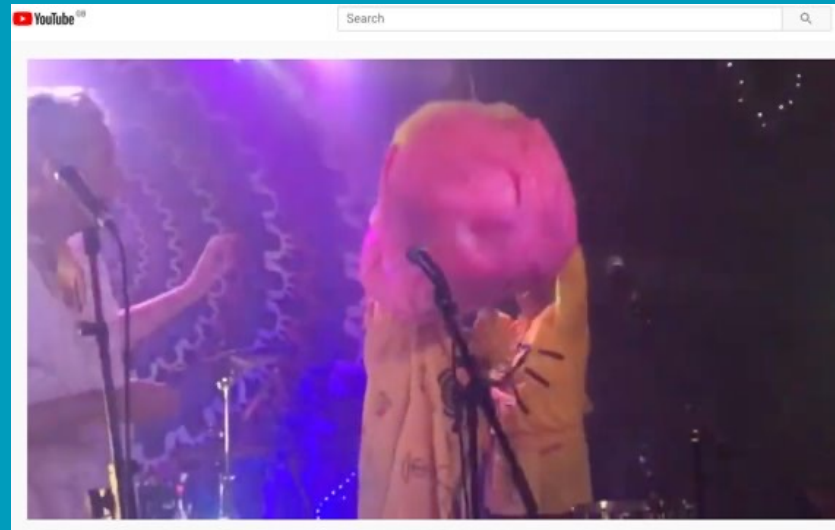
September 11, 2019

Pics of the Tour

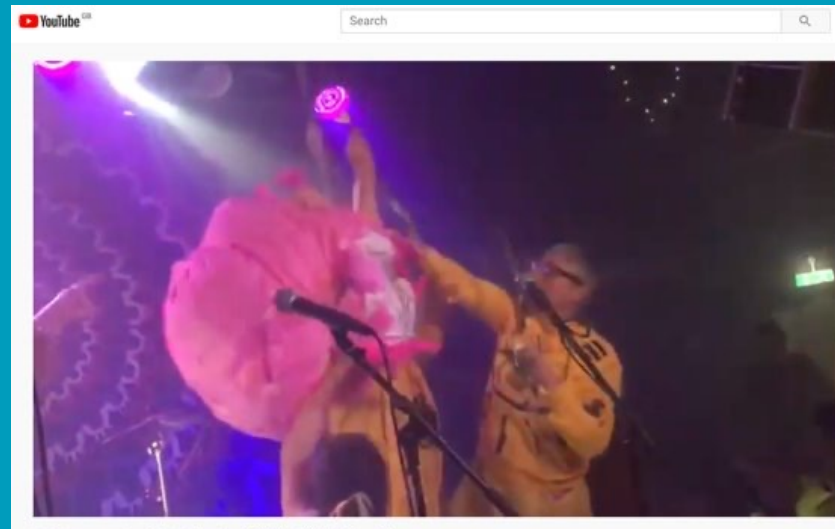


It's Easy Being in a Band (Final Gig of Tour)

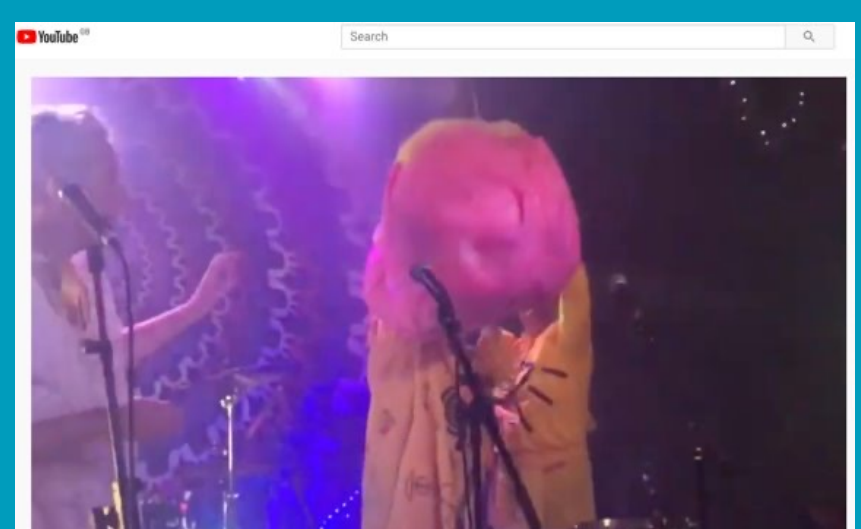
SOCIAL MEDIA



F= Gig supporting CUD at The Leadmill, Sheffield-collaged footage



F= Gig supporting CUD at The Leadmill, Sheffield-collaged footage



Keywords:

Feminism
Performance
Nature
Witches
Activism

Key Dates:

2020 - F= Co-Editors of 'Female Gaze' section, Stimulus Respond Online Journal
4.10.19 F= Band, supporting Cud, The Leadmill, Sheffield
13.9.19 - 14.10.19 The Conduit Tour at Inkwell Arts, Leeds. Exhibition and Performance
17.5.19 Final Gig, Conduit Tour, The Chemic Tavern, Leeds
Live your Best Performance, Ambleside
8.7.18 Deeds not Words Performance Walk Nelson to Clarion House, Lancashire
6.3.18 Put up your Hands. International Women's Day Walk, Leeds.
2018-2019 The Erotic Power of F= Conduit Tour
6.2.18 Performance, Exhibition Curation. Gender Conference, Leeds Beckett University
November 2017 Paper and exhibit at AHRA Conference, Architecture, Festival City Conference. Birmingham city University.
September 2017 Paper at Ideas of Revolt, Graphic Design Educators Network Conference, Sheffield Hallam University
March 2016 Performance at Leeds Cultural Conversations. Leeds Town Hall
March 2016 Festival of the Body, Room 700, Leeds Central Library. Exhibition and 13 events.
March 2015 International Women's Day Walk and Burning of Freedom Bin, Leeds City Centre
March 2015 Women, Visibility and Playful Acts 2 Conference by F=, Leeds Artspace, Leeds Central Library
March 2014 International Women's Day Walk and Burning the Bra, Leeds City Centre
March 2014 Women, Visibility and Playful Acts 1 Conference organised by F=, The Gallery, Munro House, Leeds

Funding:

Arts Council of Great Britain
Leeds Inspired, LCC
LARC, Leeds Beckett University
Room 700, Leeds Central Library
Centre For Culture and The Arts, Leeds Beckett University

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WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC

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