

# Time Out

## New York

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# REAL SEX

INSIDE



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**JCM:** "KIDS TODAY LEARN EVERYTHING FROM PORNOGRAPHY. BUT WE WANTED TO SHOW EXPLICIT SEX THAT WASN'T JOYLESS, THAT ISN'T JUST ABOUT GETTING OFF."

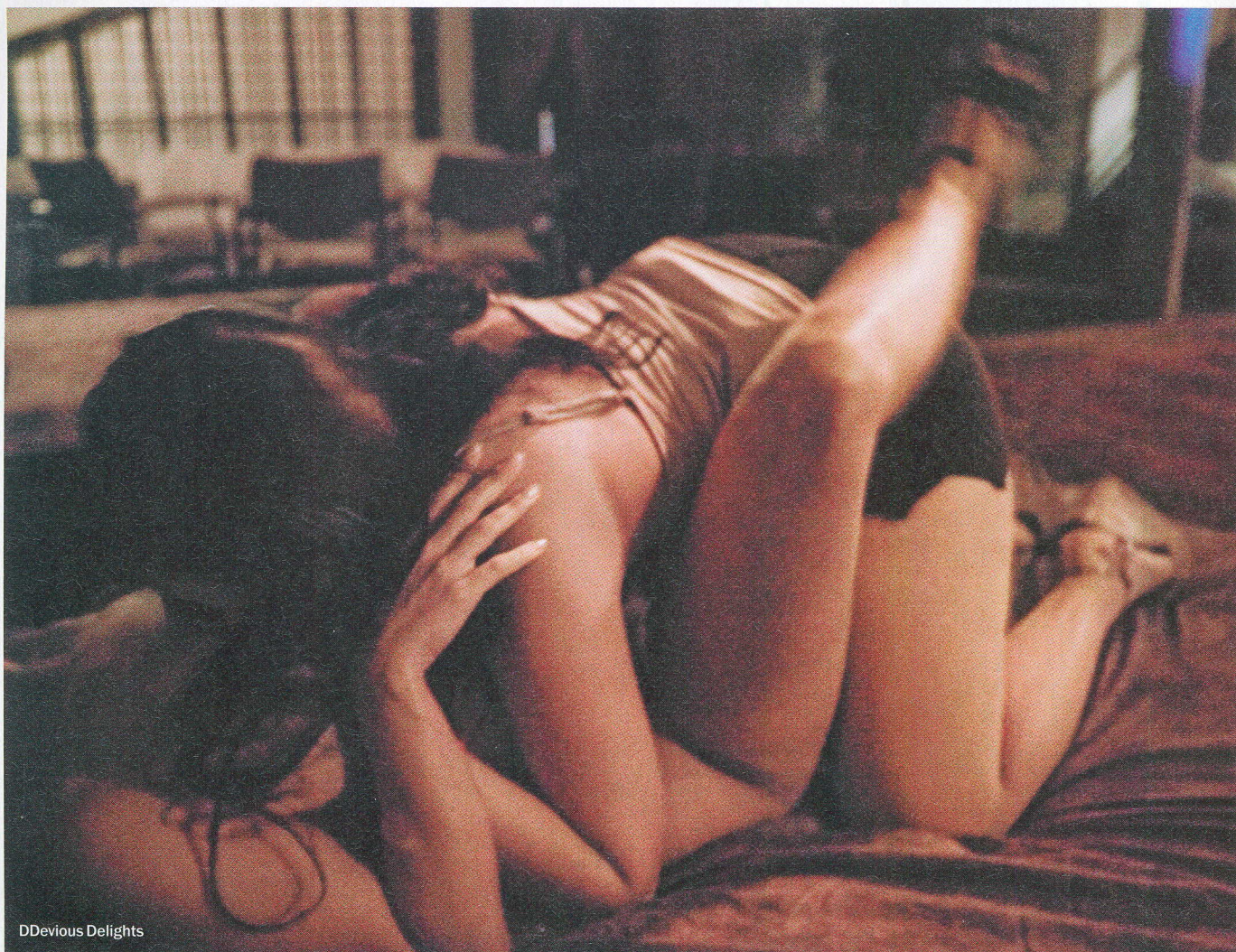
# Pressing the flesh

One uninhibited writer toured the city's sex parties—some new, some long-established—to get a feel for today's group-groping. By **Leela de Kretser** Photographs by **Viktoriya Drukker**

A baby-faced brunet named Liana, 26, is sprawled on a custom-made futon on top of a Russian blond who's ten years her senior. Liana's boyfriend, Daniel, 24, is drinking a beer and watching alongside a bunch of horny couples at this secret west Chelsea club.

There's nothing like a bit of girl-on-girl action to bring people together. This is DDevious Delights—just another sex gathering, and there's no shortage of them. For every well-established club catering to middle-aged men looking to watch their wives in a gang

bang, you can find a new event for the younger, perky-breasted and washboard-abs set—also interested in a gang bang. I sampled a quintet of the city's ongoing sex soirees—some spanking new, some old and showing their age—to assess the state of our prurient parties. ►



DDevious Delights

**EVENT: CHECKMATES**

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Friday and Saturday nights. 227 East 56th Street between Second and Third Avenues, 212-421-3313.

**WHO GETS IN:** Hetero couples only (\$130 per pair)

**THE ACTION:** If it weren't for the occasional nude wrapping herself around a pole on the dance floor, Checkmates could pass for any other velvet-rope club. Good lighting, a DJ who loves disco and a skillful bartender (BYO) attract patrons with a high sexiness quotient, like Agnes, a comely 26-year-old grad student. On this night, Agnes and her boyfriend of two months didn't make the leap to group sex in the row of rooms discreetly situated around the dance floor. It was their first time, and while they thought it would be fun to explore something new, they weren't quite ready to start swinging. No matter. Other partyers traipsed back and forth between beds and couches in groups of three, four and more.

**EVENT: ONE LEG UP**

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Roving parties, usually held twice a month. Go to [onelegupnyc.com](http://onelegupnyc.com) for details.

**WHO GETS IN:** Hetero and lesbian couples

and single females only at the Take-Out version of these events (erotic interaction, but no sex); \$65 per couple and \$20 per single female. The same restrictions apply at Eat-In parties (there's lots o' sex, but only after you pass the organizer's screening, either online or at a Take-Out event); \$250 per couple and \$50 per single female, plus membership (\$30).

**THE ACTION:** Nothing says "Welcome to our party" like a pigtailed blond gently licking a towering brunet's glittered tits. This was the scene as I walked through rose petals and into the throng of about 200 people at a recent Take-Out. The One Leg Up events are still clearly the Rolls-Royces of the sex-party scene, several years after their founding by an artist named Palagia. Take-Outs are designed to get the juices flowing before continuing the action elsewhere. On my visit, bare breasts, lace and glitter were all around, though people were covered below the waist, per the rules. Girl-girl make-out sessions dotted the club as bare-chested men did their best dirty-dancing moves to keep up. A stage at the front attracted the most-sensuous guests, including a voluptuous siren in an eye-popping little black dress, who had the crowd in a frenzy with her striptease. Palagia uses Take-Outs, which

usually attract upwards of 200 like-minded partyers, to screen for the hard-core Eat-Ins, where you should be prepared to get naked by the stroke of midnight, along with about 80 others (those who pass muster will be granted entry at the next Eat-In, on October 21).

**EVENT: LE TRAPEZE**

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Wednesday–Saturday. 17 East 27th Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues; 212-532-0298, [letrapeze.org](http://letrapeze.org).

**WHO GETS IN:** Hetero couples, sometimes with an accompanying female. Membership fee is \$30. Admission is \$80 per couple Wednesday and Thursday, \$90 per couple Friday and Saturday; accompanying female \$30.

**THE ACTION:** English pub kitsch hides the orgy in the back of this granddaddy of the sex-club scene, which has sustained swingers through the past two decades. Anything goes at Trapeze in terms of the clientele's looks, which doesn't please everybody; one narrow-minded, hairy-chested Florida developer and his flight-attendant date told me they found the crowd a little "mixed-race" for their tastes. But where else, at 2am, can a gyrating, fake-boobed brunet compete with two naked Hasidic women kvetching about the woes of unemployment, as

they watch a man go down on his partner? (Yes, they were Hasidic women; we chatted in the locker room afterward.)

**EVENT: DDEVIOUS DELIGHTS**

**WHEN AND WHERE:** A secret Chelsea location that's disclosed only after registering at [ddeviousdelights.com](http://ddeviousdelights.com).

**WHO GETS IN:** Hetero couples and single men and women who have been carefully screened (charges vary according to the party)

**THE ACTION:** This club's contemporary-looking space could host an art opening, if it weren't for the whips and BDSM equipment strewn all over, or the mock jail setup in the back. DDevious Delights is the brainchild of Saul (no last name, please), who wanted to play matchmaker with the BDSM and swinger subcultures. His regular parties attract hundreds, but the real deal is the weekly orgy, for which he handpicks the participants and the games that will be played to loosen up. For \$40 each (a steal in swinging circles), a selection of 15 to 30 couples join Saul midweek at 7pm. I accompanied a Wednesday night group as they downed vodka and bourbon shots in a gallery adjoining the main club; then we headed to some chairs to get to know one another, with a game that was halfway between spin the bottle and striptease. A brunet financier from Queens, who is a regular, told me it's a great way to meet a stranger to screw, or at least someone to tie you to a bed and blindfold you. On the night I attended, the aforementioned Liana and her blond Russian were the first to hook up on the futon, which elicited some fevered cock rubbing and sucking among the attendees. The action always gets heated, Saul says, or he'll give you your money back.

**EVENT: CAROUSEL COUPLES CLUB**

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Friday, Saturday and Monday nights. 92-77 Queens Boulevard between 92nd Avenue and 62nd Street, Rego Park, Queens; 917-755-6930, [carouselclub.net](http://carouselclub.net).

**WHO GETS IN:** Anybody of age who's a member (onetime fee \$20). Mondays: free for couples and single women; \$50 for single men. Fridays: \$30 per couple, free for single women, \$60 for single men. Saturdays: \$60 per couple, free for single women, single men not admitted.

**THE ACTION:** Does it get any seedier than a Monday night at an underground swingers' club set beneath a Goldfingers in outer Queens? No, it does not, as I found out when I walked in to discover just three lonely old men standing at a bar. Sadly, the sexiest moment at this suburban club was watching the pole dancer upstairs. The regulars assured me the brown leather couches are heaving with bodies on weekend nights, but I was cheated out of a viewing of the action when I returned on a Saturday, after a manager discovered I was a reporter and tossed me out. Carousel is one of the few places that allows unaccompanied men, and Fridays are themed "Ladies Who Love Cock," but judging from the crowd I did manage to see, the male-to-female ratio tilts heavily toward the testosterone side. ■



**JCM:** "I USED TO GO TO A LOT OF DOWNTOWN PARTIES THAT HAD A SEXUAL ASPECT BUT ALSO FOSTERED A REAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY. THEY WERE A HUGE INSPIRATION."

**GROUP EFFORT**  
Partygoers grapple in the film's namesake shindig.

## Naked ambitions

These real-life get-togethers gave birth to the salon in *Shortbus*.

By Les Simpson

For more than a few New Yorkers, *Shortbus* will conjure memories of, Oh my God, I screwed there! The movie's erotically charged salon is based on two bygone parties that combined art and sex and attracted hundreds of adventuresome folks, including John Cameron Mitchell, during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The smaller of the two affairs was a weekly private soiree held in the modest apartment of Stephen Kent Jusick, the executive director of MIX, New York's experimental queer film festival (he appears in *Shortbus* as the salon's attendant). The bash started off innocently enough, as a chance for some of his friends, mostly free-spirited gay men, to watch avant-garde movies, and he dubbed it CineSalon. "After a while it really became a scene, with 60 people rubbing up against each other," he says. "As the night went on, a lot of them would start to hook up. The bedroom was off-limits, so people would just start having sex on the couch and the floor." The flicks-and-fucking shindig thrived for three years, but Jusick eventually grew weary of the wear and tear: "My couch was pretty much destroyed by spills, cigarette burns and come stains."

The other party, the Lusty Loft, was an anything-goes affair that took place every few months at a sprawling residential Dumbo loft that could accommodate up to 300 people of all genders and sexual persuasions. In the spirit of authenticity, Mitchell decided to shoot the *Shortbus* salon at that same location. (Hmm, so *that's* why that mattress looks so familiar....) "The aesthetic was young and artsy," says Jusick, who was one of the event's organizers, along with the seven artists who lived in the loft and various other friends. "We wanted to make the vibe something different than what you'd find at an ordinary sex club." The attractions included DJs, performance artists, multimedia art installations and unusual props (similar to the deactivated bomb that a couple of partygoers can be seen straddling in the movie). Artist and party devotee Jack Waters fondly recalls the tantalizing and uninhibited environment: "It was a wonderful experiment. There were gay men and lesbians and trans people and heteros inserting themselves into this erotic atmosphere with no judgments. It helped people to accept each other and develop a healthy attitude about sex."

Jusick reports that he's got some racy party plans for this December's MIX festival, and is also putting together a CineSalon revival. He'd better start covering the couch. ■