

# Fat Sex

Steve Larkin's body... of poems and songs!

## Press Pack



**"A furiously escalating punk  
satire of women's magazines"**

*Liz Nicholls - Edmonton Journal*

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# 1. About Fat Sex

Written and performed by Steve Larkin

**"Fat Sex... Steve Larkin's body... of poems and songs!"** is a comedy driven poetry and music show which showcases some of the highlights of a glittering career spanning three decades that has seen often hilarious and occasionally poignant performances enthuse audiences world over in venues as diverse as a high security prison and The House of Commons!

The title poem/song 'Fat Sex' has been a crowd pleaser for many years whether performed as a solo piece or with Inflatable Buddha - the 'big fun gypsy punk band' which Steve fronts:

**"Manic, terrifying, acerbic, brilliant"**  
*Edmonton Journal*

**"Cosmo-bashing foot-stomper"**  
*Vue Magazine*

See a video of the poem here:  
[youtube.com/watch?v=VzpLeO\\_iE\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzpLeO_iE_w)

The show brings together a huge diversity of styles of poetry and song from the light-hearted to the grave, from the sharply satirical to the outrageously comic and pleasingly musical:

**"Smashing together palatable slam poetry with politics-driven songs played on a balalaika like it was a rented ukulele, Larkin's wit and energy are both breathless."**  
*Edmonton Journal*

'Fat Sex' is a show that draws on vast experience of commanding audiences' attentions whether it be at noisy open mics, drug-fuelled music festivals, or staid literary salons. It succeeds in simultaneously tickling the funny bones and feeding the brains of those that are exposed to the unique combination of live performance that aims to 'make the transition from thinking to dancing!'.

## 2. About Steve Larkin

Steve Larkin is an internationally respected writer and spoken word artist, a lecturer in performance poetry and storytelling, the founder of the UK's largest poetry slam organisation Hammer & Tongue, and a singer/song-writer.

### **The Poet:**

Steve has had his poetry broadcast to over 12 million people through the BBC World Service, he has performed to the House of Commons, at the Royal Albert Hall, has toured extensively in North America and Europe and is one of only a handful of UK poets to have won an International Poetry Slam title.

In 2010 he was nominated for Oxford Professor of Poetry.

What people have said of him/his work:

"Larkin creates theatre that speaks equally to those who find their poetry from classic literary forms or subversive musicians. Run to his show!"

*Uptown Magazine*

"Funny and biting, a pump-action powerhouse on stage."

*Edmonton Journal, Canada*

"The Spoken Word Guru"

*Winnipeg Free Press*

"Prepare to leave stunned and inspired by the power of Larkin's spoken word"

*Edmonton Sun, Canada*

"Part philosophy part hysterically funny humour"

*Nightshift Magazine*

"Revolutionary, elocutionary genius makes the occupation of "poet" seem dangerously cool again"

*See Magazine, Canada*

### **The spoken word theatre artist:**

Steve has, for a number of years, turned his attentions to spoken word theatre creating nuanced dramatic theatre shows that enhance his poetic works and create great entertainment for audiences. 'N.O.N.C.E.' was a critical and box office success in the UK and Canada. It won "Best Spoken Word Show" at Buxton Fringe 2016 and was nominated for "Best Male Artist" at The Victoria International Fringe Festival.

TES - Tess of the D'Urbervilles Re-imagined was similarly a critical success and was nominated for 'Best Theatre Production' and 'Best Male Actor' at the Buxton Fringe 2015:

"Tragic tale with humour, poetry, wordplay and enough pathos to leave the audience shaken. One of the best shows at this year's fringe, no doubt."

*Vue Magazine, Canada*

"An Orwellian portrayal of Britain's rotting underbelly that slices like a rusty razor. An

intelligent gut-puncher of a show that lingers.”

*Victoria Times Colonist, Canada*

"An impressively woven play"

*Fringe Guru*

### **The Educator:**

Steve has been one of the only university lecturer in Oxford dedicated to performance poetry, leading the Performance Poetry and Storytelling module as part of the Oxford Brookes University's Performing Arts Course and lecturing on Creative Writing with English and Modern Languages. Steve has extensive experience of leading workshops in schools, colleges, universities and prisons. He was Poet-in-Residence at HMP Grendon Underwood and regularly leads teams of performance poets, enthusing young people in primary and secondary schools about poetry. He independently runs accredited courses in writing and performing poetry. His workshops and lectures have been extremely well received:

“This course was a life changing experience”

HMP Grendon Inmate

“My SAT's results have never been as good”

S Donnahey (teacher)

### **The Promoter:**

Steve has been a pivotal figure in the growth of spoken word and performance poetry in the UK. He founded Hammer and Tongue in 2003 staging some of the best-attended live literature events that have taken place in the UK for some years. The Four Nations Slam in 2005 was attended by a capacity 500-strong audience at The Zodiac in Oxford, and was said to be: “the best collection of English language poets ever to perform on the same stage” (PoetCD.com) The organisation now has a national profile with a number of year-long regional programmes that feed into an annual final at the Royal Albert Hall.

“Hammer & Tongue has reinvented the medium for the hip hop generation”

The Guardian

### **The Musician:**

Steve worked with electronica musicians “Valley Forge” recording spoken word over beats and synthesisers and now fronts **Inflatable Buddha** a popular “worldfolkpunkskiffle” band that tours internationally. The show 'Inflatable Buddha: Bigger than Jesus!' was a hit at Canadian Fringe Festivals in 2008:

“Inflatable Buddha are a blast, finding a point at which Ian Dury and The Straycats meet, they blow the cobwebs out of your ears, a curiously enjoyable entity”

*Nightshift Magazine*



### 3. Fat Sex Press

*Edmonton Journal*



Manic, terrifying, acerbic, brilliant and worst of all, tragically prescient, what English performing poet Steve Larkin does is add two plus two and come up gasping for air in a world he convincingly considers doomed. But never mind that, because the Leeds-based performer also offers a solution, regardless of whether it's a Wednesday, Saturday or Boxing Day: just drink.

Smashing together palatable slam poetry with politics-driven songs played on a balalaika like it was a rented ukulele, Larkin's wit and energy are both breathless. Words like "Good news only flows on a slow news day," might shoehorn you into his head, while attacking our Americanized term "restroom," he jibes: "I'm just going for a good stinky rest."

But this is not a cabaret of one-liners so much as a tortured expose of a former pot addict who's based the name of his show, *Fat Sex*, on the two things with which women's magazines are obsessed — weight and constant, perfect orgasms. With a justifiably paranoid nuttiness, Larkin shifts between joking, "If women get obsessed completely with sex, men already are, so nothing's left" and seriously noting that girls are menstruating three-quarters of a year earlier than they were a decade back because of constant bombardment with sexual imagery. So, joke songs, then scary observations spanning geopolitics and a Marxist view of art.

Ground Zero of the show recounts how Larkin was hired, then banned, by the British House of Commons to perform a scathing poem convincing the elderly to move around more because they can no longer afford to heat their homes. Not for ostriches — you might like the world a little less after you see this, but you'll adore this man's multi-pronged defence mechanisms.

**Fish Griwowsky August 16, 2013 Edmonton Journal**

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*CBC*



Near the beginning of *Fat Sex*, Steve Larkin admits that his chosen profession as a performance poet is, more often than not, met with scoffs and eye rolls. But I'd be surprised if he didn't win over a good portion of the crowd during this entertaining hour of funny, politically charged poems and songs.

The titular poem - "Fat Sex" - is a particular highlight. A take down of modern women's magazines and their seeming obsession with body image and sexuality, it's a sharp combination of criticism and humour.

The UK-based poet is an affable bloke, and was able to encourage more participation from the crowd than any show I've seen at the fest yet. He's also a surprisingly talented mandolin player, leading the audience in a number of rousing sing-a-longs.

If the words "performance poetry" have scared you off from Fringe shows in the past, put your preconceptions to the side and check out *Fat Sex*.

**Andrew Friesen - CBC - June 17 2013**

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***Calgary Herald***



Steve Larkin might be the only philosophy graduate on this year's fringe circuit, and what were the odds that that would be the lead of a review of a show called *Fat Sex*?

Not only that, but British performance poet and comic Larkin is not from London, or someplace posh: he's a bloke from Leeds, which, as he explains in his introduction, is best-known for producing soccer hooligans in the 1970's and '80's.

"I grew up poor, and was the first person in my family to get a university education," he says. "You might say I'm a perfect example of what you get when you educate scum."

In that case, bring on the scum!

Larkin describes himself as a performance poet and at times, such as when he performs his government-commissioned ode to getting seniors to be more physically active – I'm serious – he's a richly-evocative poet actually – at least he is by the standards of a happy hour fringe

show at Lolita's Lounge and that's where the bar is set this weekend.

More often than not, though, he's an anti-performance poet, who spoofs all the sorts of personality one might come across onstage at a spoken word festival.

(Which led to an audience participation poem mainly involving the audience chanting "wanker" back at Larkin that was hilarious.)

He's also a bit of a closet rebel, to put it mildly, and Fat Sex includes some terrific screeds against such things as the tyranny of women's magazines and globalization.

But if I make him sound like a 21st century Pete Seeger, he's far from it. He's the Leeds version of Pete Seeger – bawdy, brawling (in a verbal jousting kind of way), funny, friendly and a great way to enjoy a few beers and some chorizo and chips.

***Stephen Hunt - Calgary Herald. - Aug 3 2013***

## 4. Notes to Editor

- Steve is available for interview – email [steve@stevelarkin.com](mailto:steve@stevelarkin.com) or +44(0)7906885069 +1 780 5304492
- More print quality photos are available at [stevelarkin.com/press](http://stevelarkin.com/press) or upon request.
- More details about the show and Steve Larkin can be found at [stevelarkin.com](http://stevelarkin.com)
- Steve Larkin was nominated for Oxford Professor of Poetry in 2010 [link](#)
- CBC Radio interview about Fat Sex: [www.stevelarkin.com/Fat Sex CBC.html](http://www.stevelarkin.com/Fat_Sex_CBC.html)
- Steve Larkin's other theatre shows include: N.O.N.C.E. (about working as a poet in residence in a prison) and TES - Tess of the D'Urbervilles Re-imagined.