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## Harlow Gold redux: Giving a whole new meaning to 'bar crawl' »

12:04 PM PT, May 27, 2010



We know what you're thinking: Another burlesque show? Yawn. Seen one set of fishnets, seen them all. Sure, but have you seen them writhing down the bar and hanging from the ceiling — while smoking?

The last time we checked in with the ladies of Harlow Gold, they were shaking it vaudeville-style at downtown's Bordello Bar. They've since moved west to Harvelle's in Santa Monica, and updated from the roaring '20s to a rock 'n' roll, Cabaret-style Berlin of the late '30s. They've also strapped aerial ropes to the ceilings and taken their routines straight into the laps of the dumbfounded audience.

The first act opens with the dancers stomping their stilettos to the driving chaos of the White Stripes' "Icky Thump," in get-ups that bring to mind Nazi Germany and the sense that you're about to be punished because you've been very, very bad. As scary as it is sexy, it's worth noting that if the Gestapo had danced like this, the war might have ended quite a bit differently.

Club-goers had to be quick to snap up their cocktails from the bar and tabletops because the ladies had claimed every danceable surface for their stage. It was the classic question of "Watch the dancers or watch out for flying high heels?" and nobody seemed to really care.

But in a night drenched in equal parts palpable danger and playful raunchiness, it was Denna Thomsen's haunting solo to the discordantly intimate "Missed Me" by the Dresden Dolls that stole the night. Clawing her way through the mesmerized crowd, the only thing more serious than the expression on Thomsen's bruised flower of a face was the jaw-dropping sensuality of her performance.

### X Questions



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### The Shot: Party People



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**Burbank street style**



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And that's what forced us to review a show for the second time in less than a year. Beyond the dazzling glitter, the stark sexuality, the ferocious acrobatics and the fearless choreography by Tracy Phillips and Dominic Carbone, this show possesses something generally missing from even the most sophisticated of burlesque shows -- duende (look it up). If you're not mentally, physically and spiritually wrung out by the end of the evening, then you were already dead before you even walked through the door.

**Harvelle's, 1432 4th St., Santa Monica; last two Thursdays of every month; \$10-\$25.**

-- Melissa Henderson

*Top photo: Crack open the honey and catch Denna Thomsen, right, and her fellow barflies hanging out at Harvelle's the last two Thursdays of every month. Bottom photo: Harlow Gold choreographer and dancer Tracy Phillips embodies every aspect of the word "smokin'." Credit Phil Holland.*



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## Today's Agenda

- » Hammer presents: "Flood Tide: Remixed"
- » "Becky's New Car"
- » "Enter the Void" at the Nuart
- » Football season specials at Pink Taco
- » "Love, Loss and What I Wore"

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