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Thanks to Duchess Says' lead lungs A-Claude, the crowd was dancing, moshing and making out.

PAUL TILL

## live review

# Divine Duchess

Duchess Says turned on a packed Sneaky Dee's in a big way **By BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI**

**LES GEORGES LENINGRAD, DUCHESS SAYS, DIMONSTRATIONS and KIDS ON TV** at Sneaky Dee's, December 9, Attendance: 200. Tickets: \$12. Rating: **MWMM**

**IT SEEMS LOGICAL ENOUGH:** WHEN IT'S really cold outside, visit the nearest bar. Last Saturday night, on one of the

fall's coldest evenings, everyone near Sneaky Dee's took that to heart. The Mexican restaurant's upstairs watering hole, where Kids on TV, Dimonstrations, Duchess Says and Les Georges Leningrad were playing, was packed with sweaty, maniacal dancers. The energy was high right from the

start. Decked out all in red, with their faces covered in sparkles, Kids on TV unleashed their aggressive, homo-erotic dance-disco punk on the crowd. The room was half-empty during their set, but it didn't matter: The people who were there danced like it was an all-night rave.

All the buzz talk about Kids on TV is well deserved. Sure, their music is entertaining, but it's their bassist and singer, **John Caffery**, who steals the show. The guy is a madman onstage. His arms continuously pound the air, while his shaved head, violent hand gestures and theatrical performance resemble Danko Jones doing Freddy Mercury.

If the show had ended here, it would have been a wild night, but things were just getting under way. Next up were Dimonstrations, a San Diego three-piece that sounds like a cross between Bleach-era Nirvana and a dance-punk band gone terribly

wrong. Unfortunately, the group's short set brought the show's intensity down to a flicker. A few people kept the dance party alive, but for the most part the band's incoherent yells, muddy instrumentation and almost non-existent stage presence made them the least compelling act of the night.

Fortunately, Montreal foursome Duchess Says were there to relight the fire.

By the time the band took the stage, it was nearly impossible to move. Duchess Says' loud, pounding rock 'n' roll got people moving again, but this time there was more going on than just dancing. There was moshing and crowd surfing, and a few people, turned on by all the sweaty bodies or by the ear-splitting guitars, were furiously making out.

The band's industrious singer, A-C, was clearly possessed. Her wide eyes and foretful attitude came off like a preacher at a large religious gathering. Combine that with their fiery dance-punk-meets-metal from their EP *Novicel Mère-Perruche* (Slum) and Duchess Says easily stole the show.

Coming after such an incendiary performance should have been an impossible challenge, but Les Georges Leningrad met it. They weren't as entertaining as Duchess Says, but the crowd danced, moshed and made out harder for the Montreal three-piece than for anyone else. **Poney P's** wild vocals, **Bobo Boutin's** furious drumming and balalava-wearing guitarist and synth player **Mingo Uhdrien's** fucked-up riffs almost forced the audience into a collective seizure. The energy was so high that the band managed to start a "whitpool." (The crowd runs around in a circle, making what's supposed to be a giant swirl, but instead things deteriorate into a giant mosh pit.)

In the end, Saturday night turned out to be not only one of Toronto's coldest, but also one of its wildest. **©** [music@nowtoronto.com](mailto:music@nowtoronto.com)