

BEACH BODY READY





front cover & this page: artist **Anna Bean**
bluebeany.com

 bluebeany_art

Welcome to Beach Body Ready - the zine!

If you're reading this it means you've just seen *Beach Body Ready* - the show. Thanks for coming - we hope that you leave us ready to fight for your own body, to challenge those who would criticise others, and to dance to Lizzo in your bedroom.

So, to encourage this, we leave you with this gift:

a collection of stories, poems, and art all about bodies and body image.

We hope that you find something that resonates with your experiences.

Have a flick through at the bar over a pint, or leave it on your coffee table as a conversation starter, or find it at the bottom of your bag and re-discover this moment.

It's a little reminder to find the joy in your body; wiggle your belly, flex your muscles and run your fingers through your body hair.

Loving yourself is an act of rebellion: this is your invite to join the resistance.

We hope that this is the first part of a conversation - that you will keep listening to others' stories, that you will share your own, and that we will keep making things better, just a little bit at a time. The great news is, is that this conversation is happening all around you: at the back of this zine you'll find a directory of other shows that are on the topics of body image, body positivity, fatphobia, etc. There's also some books we'd recommend, a list of people and artists to check out, and some places to go if you find yourself affected by any of the things we've been talking about.

So go watch, go read, go listen, and then go and share your story. Talk to your mum, to your daughter, your partner, your best mate, a stranger on the internet, whoever!

Just keep talking.

And, no matter what your body looks like, or how you feel about it, give it a bit of love, and take it to the bloomin' beach.

Photo by The Other Richard



SHAKE WHAT YOUR MAMA GAVE YA'!

BY LUCY JOY AKA NELLY BOOBARELLI

As a little Lucy, I loved anything glamorous. My mum, in my eyes, was very glam. She wouldn't leave the house without her face on. I have great memories of having the very important job of putting away her Carmen rollers in the right holes after use.

Little Lucy Joy never lacked confidence in life. Growing up in the 80s and 90s I didn't have social media pressure, just the occasional page 3 girl thrust in my face on the top shelf as an 'ideal', oh, and good old 'just 17'. As I grew, I loved Old Hollywood and in particular Marilyn Monroe; curls and lips and curves. I wanted to be her, them. I loved how Marilyn had sparkle, strength, and vulnerability.



Then came the teenage Lucy. I didn't realise I was fat 'til a boy at school took great delight in repeatedly calling me a **fat shit**.

I was told to ignore him by teachers;

that he probably liked me;

that's what boys do.

It continued, it started to hurt, I started to doubt myself, hate my body, if someone liked me why would they be so cruel? Is that what everyone thought?

I analysed how I looked, and I hated what I saw.

My mum told me I was beautiful, my body was healthy and happy and not to be ashamed. To this day, I think she's the only person who I have truly believed.

Late teens Lucy.

Two lads talking to me in club,
one leant over and said

"you don't have to worry I'm not chatting you up;

I've stopped chatting up fat girls."

I wish I had the strength then which I have now,
I would have replied back, microwaving the prat with words.

I wasn't even interested in him! He would have been lucky!

I can't imagine what young girls go through now. This was a time without social media; it's now written in stone, permanently for the world to see. Thrown at them at every angle.

Early thirties, I had two wonderful children, and my body changed again. I breastfed for two years, my boobs stayed banging, my body got smaller, now a size 12, still curvy I realised that this, ladies and gents is my lot. If I want to make it bigger or smaller I can do it with determination, and power, and most importantly, **my choice**.

I started to feel really ok with me, my skin, and I knew I wasn't insta-perfect, but my partner adored my body. **I learnt to love what I had become**. A mum, just like my mum was: glamorous and proud of what she had. I am proud of every wobble, scar and stretch mark. I grew into this, I matured into this; this is what my mama gave me. I love it's as its part of her, and me.

Burlesque and vintage glamour continued to influence and inspire me in my looks. What a wonderful all-including Burlesque world it is! Big bums, little bums, big bellies, little bellies, big thighs, little legs, big boobs, little boobs. Real boobs and fake.

Burlesque class and performance is 'me' time. This time is my time. I switch off; I dance, I move, I enjoy my body. It's me saying

**"Here I am world, I ain't changing; lumps, bumps,
flat bits, flabby bits, and great tits and all."**

I feel alive, I feel empowered, and I feel my mum would love me performing with what she gave me to shake.

I still struggle with body image, often daily.

In slow labour I was told I had the worst stretch marks the midwife has ever seen, which you really need to be told at such a frightening, vulnerable point in life, while she has her fingers up your chuff doing a stretch and sweep. I still see those marks every time I look down. But I also see the home I cooked up two cracking babies in. Which have made me **me** on my journey in life. To turn these negatives that people throw at you into positives is a method we all need to develop individually when we are ready and we must re-visit them to reinforce them and remind us how good our unique individual bods are.

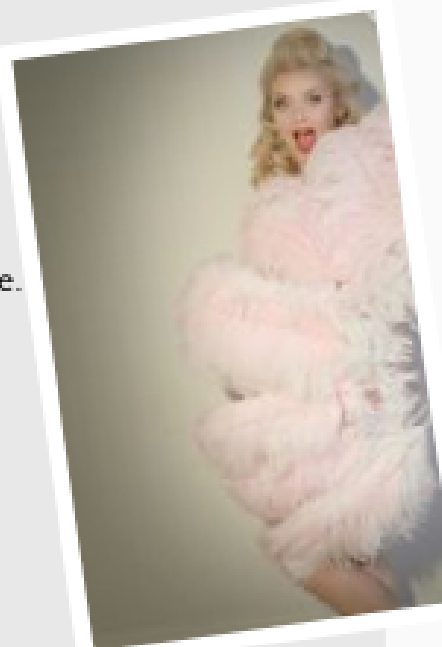
You have one life boys and girls.

Enjoy being you in your own unique skin.

It's special; your body, it's you; it has stories
and a future, it has adventure to continue.

**Shake it now, love it now, touch it now;
be proud of it now.**

Love yourself, you spectacular, unique creation, you.
If we were all the same it would be dead boring.
Go shake what your mamma gave you. You'll love it.





No longer ruled by labels

By Rachael Tomlinson



In 2017 when I first became ill, I was bored. I had gone from being a professional business person to nothing; it was hard to deal with while trying to keep myself and my brain active in some way.

My original diagnosis, prior to my MS diagnosis, was ME/CFS, and through that I found instagram which gave me a purpose; highlighting the lack of understanding and funding for CFS/ME.

While scrolling, I was finding plus size bloggers and models. WhatLauraLoves, Danielle Vanier, Jess on a Plus Size, The Em Edit; these women were accessible, these women were human beings who were happy to respond to your questions/queries etc. What stood out the most at the start was how confident they all were in their own skin.

I was tall at school and developed boobs very early, and from an early age I remember my friend's brother calling me thunder thighs. For years and years, I suffered abuse for my size. Early in my working life, I came in one day to a picture of a whale on my keyboard with my name written right through it. While I laughed it off, I was breaking inside every time another comment was made.

I was a yo-yo dieter; I would lose and then put it straight back on again. The only time I lost a significant amount of weight I had had gallbladder surgery and a hysterectomy, but to friends and family I looked amazing because I was finally slim – but bloody hell did I pay for it in pain. I was so ill – but hey, I was in a size 12 – even my partner at the time jokingly said one night he would leave me if I put the weight back on. He left me anyway.

These bloggers started to make me think about me; about how I had punished myself for years because of my weight, how it made me so unhappy, how the picture of a whale on my keyboard hurt me so badly, the realisation that this was how my friends saw me, the me that used to spend hours in front of the mirror trying clothes on before I went out – and I always seemed to end up under or overdressed. I spent years being ruled by label sizes, worried how my nose looked, did I have a double chin, was I ugly?

Now I look in the mirror and I take the outfit shots. I post the face of the day, I feel good in my clothes, I have thrown the scales away, and I am no longer ruled by labels.

"This body is just a vessel for my awesomeness"

(T-Shirt to follow)





Already
CONFIDENT

Just put on a
BIKINI
and **GO!**

IT IS MY BODY

By Fantacee Wiz

I have been attacked multiple times by my male colleagues, friends, acquaintances & the only reason or crime I seem to have committed is because I am a woman

The way you dress will get you gang raped and you'll have no one to be blamed but your self, they say
(Whatever that means)

They said I have to dress the way I want to be addressed to earn society's respect, they say
(Whatever that means)

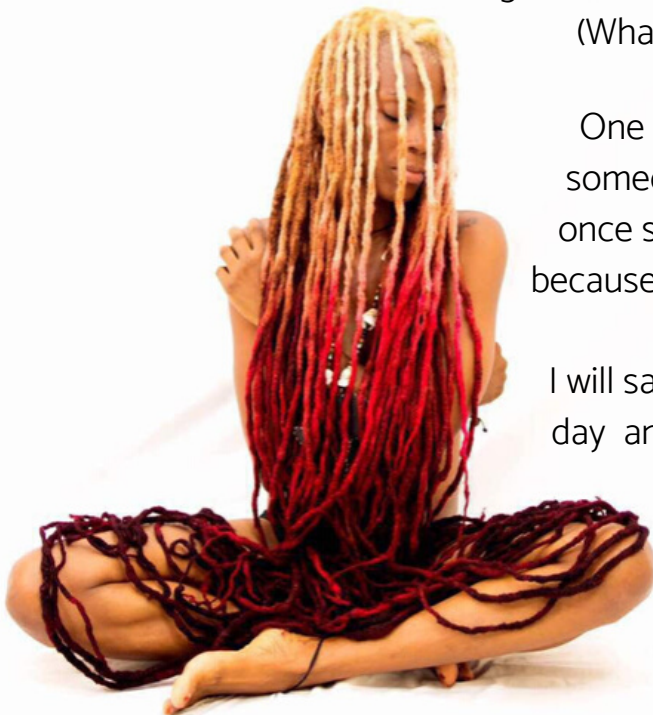
Because to earn respect as a woman in society I have to cover up and be modest, they say
(Whatever that means)

You need to wear a bra because the way your nipples are sticking out is tempting us you know, they say
(Whatever that means)

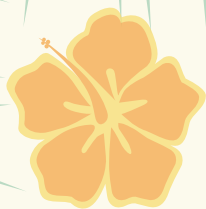
One of our custodians of the law and someone who's supposed to protect us once said we as women solicits rape just because of what we choose to decides wear

I will say this today and I'll will say this any day and anytime, it's my body and it's my human right to wear

whatever I choose to wear be it naked or not doesn't give anyone the right to violate, abuse, harass nor talk down on me.



IT IS MY BODY



BODY IMAGE AND ME

By Alessandra Botham, Ambassador for Beat

I've had an extremely rocky relationship with my body. It's only now, in my recovery of Anorexia, am I able to look upon my body with kind eyes and a mind that tells me I'm so much more than this physical being.

Pre recovery life, my body was sad, shrunken, under nourished and not well. The unhappiness ran through my veins, inhabited my blood and took over my mind set. My physical image represented a small portion of how I was feeling inside. I was never happy with how I looked, Anorexia wouldn't allow that. Nothing is good enough for Anorexia. Even as I spent years controlling everything being put into my body and the exercise trying to burn it off, my mind set toward myself never changed.

It wasn't until I learned to #BeBodyKind was it that I was able to start to change my relationship with myself. For me, being kind to myself meant eating. But beginning to eat with less restriction and allowing myself to do so. I love food, I really do, so having Anorexia really is heart-breaking for me but the way to win and succeed is to BE KIND and to allow myself what I want.

It can be difficult as Anorexia tries to shoot me down, but I try to see these 'challenges' as 'opportunities'. They provide me with the opportunity to learn and to grow and to learn how to love myself. I accept that this body I have will always change; everything is temporary, and I'm thankful for how that body is today. The less I restrict, the more I step outside my comfort zone and the more I do that the more confidence I gain in life.

Currently my body image runs much deeper than what's on the outside because I believe we're immortal spiritual beings living a temporary human experience, and these bodies are forever changing. I love the person that I am and am never afraid of myself or who I am. I think being true to myself has also greatly helped in my body image as I've learned fully to accept who I am and again believe everything is temporary, so I'm thankful for what I have today.



Gold

I wore gold the way I was told,
Eyes black as tar seeing through velvet shawls and
Pretty expectations of someone I should have been.

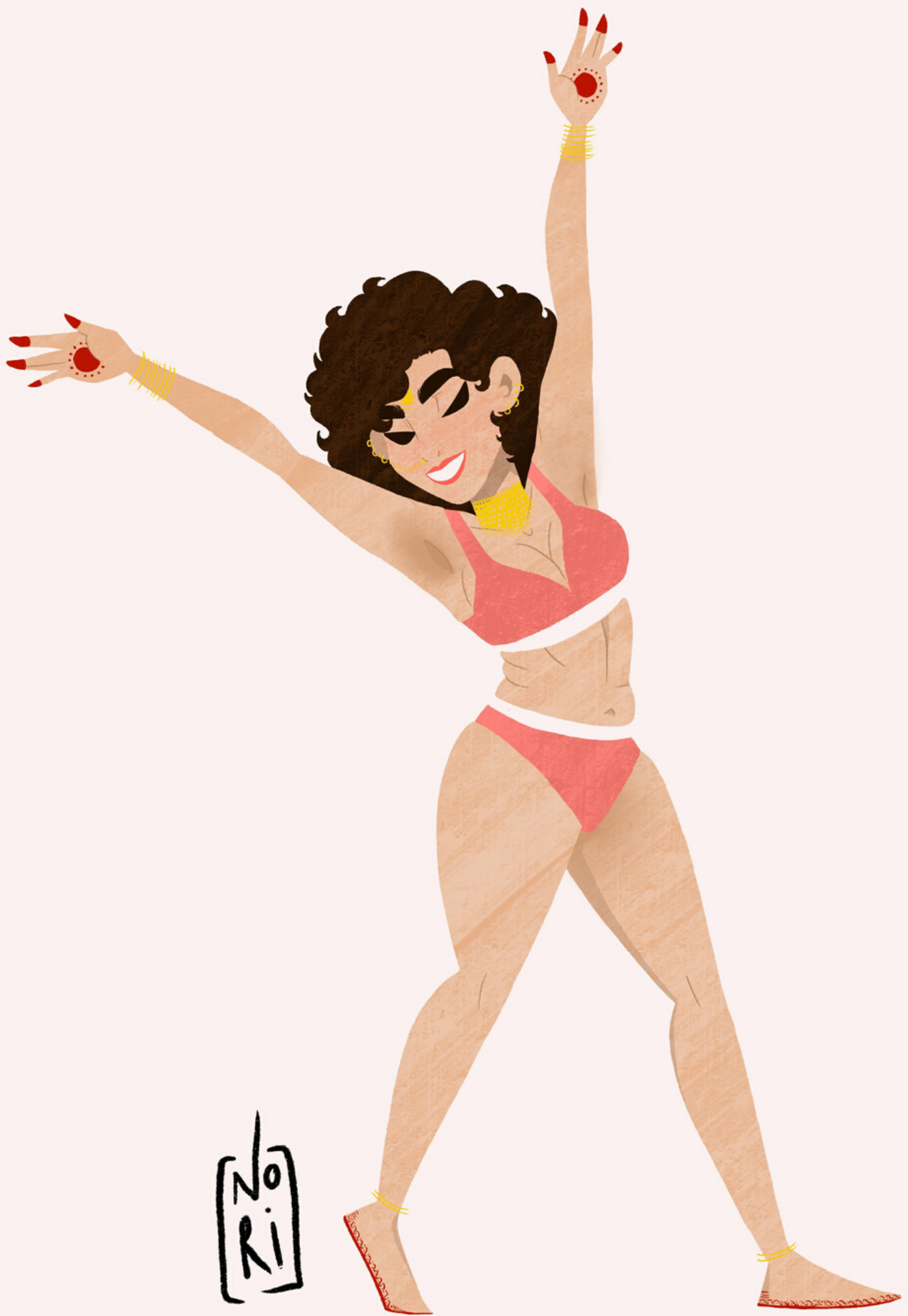
The red lipstick I wore barely clinging onto my lips,
And streetlights dreams and
Double Dutch were all a distant memory now.

I ran my hands over my shackles
Golden noose woven around my neck.

My hair crinkled too much they said.
Eyes too big, too used to seeing hurt.
Lips spoken too many harsh words.

I was unworthy they said
My hair should have fallen down,
Beyond my waistline
Lips soft and untainted.
My eyes should have seen less.

I wore gold the way I was told,
My black eyes unseeing, lips tied closed.
Hair combed against my scalp.
The red lipstick I wore barely clinging onto my lips,
I was just a distant memory now.



BODY IMAGE DIRECTORY

The Roaring Girls are attempting to create a collection of artists, companies, and activists, who are part of this conversation about body image, and accepting and celebrating ourselves. This list is a work in progress and will be kept updated at theroaringgirls.co.uk.

If you've been affected by any of the issues in *Beach Body Ready*, or just want advice and support, please get in touch with:

Mind - the mental health charity

mind.org.uk

0300 123 3393

Beat - eating disorder charity

beateatingdisorders.co.uk

0808 801 0677

Seed - eating disorder support services

seedeatingdisorders.org.uk

01482 718130

BACP - British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

find a private counsellor or therapist at **bacp.co.uk**

NHS - for referral to a NHS therapist contact your local GP

or visit **nhs.uk** for advice and self referral.



There are some awesome people making work about their bodies and body image at the Fringe this year. Here are a couple we recommend - get in touch with us @theroaringgirls and tell us about any other shows we should check out and shout about!

Fatty Fat Fat - Katie Grenhall and Daisy Hale
31st Jul - 26th Aug @3:15pm
The Attic - Pleasance Courtyard

Fat Blokes - Scottee & Friends Ltd
18th - 22nd Aug @10.40pm
Assembley George Square Studios One



Recommended reading:

The Beauty Myth by Naomi Wolf

Happy Fat by Sofie Hagen

The Body Is Not An Apology by Sonya Renee Taylor

Landwhale & Things No One Will Tell Fat Girls by Jes Baker

Dietland by Sarah Walker

Body Positive Power by Megan Crabbe

It would be nearly impossible for us to list all of the awesome voices talking about body image, but we're gunna try! Send us your recommendations to @theroaringgirls, and we'll add them to our online directory. If you're on the look out for a daily dose of inspiration, we love checking out these accounts on instagram:



@bodyposipanda
@effyourbeautystandards
@fatkiddanceparty
@gracefvictory
@harnaamkaur
@hotbrownhoney
@i_weigh
@mamacaxx
@millybhaskara
@mynameisjassamyn
@pinksandii
@positivitypoppa
@accessible_rach
@recipesforeselflove
@rollinwithlindsay_
@rubyvallegra
@sallyhewett
@scotteeisfat
@shooglet
@sheesiders
@sitting_pretty
@sofiehagendk
@sophiahadjipanteli
@sophjbutler
@tessholiday
@thebodyisnotanapology
@wearefatrascal

Photos by Tom Arran



BEACH BODY READY



Performed by
Rachael Abbey
Josie Morley
Sarah Penney

Written and devised by the cast, with
Dramaturg **Lydia Marchant**

Director **Lizi Perry**
Producer **Shaunagh McClean**
Choreographer **Jo Ashbridge**
Set and Costume Design by **Natalie Young**
Lighting Design by **Jess Addinall**
Videographer **Fly Girl Films**
Stage Manager **Jay Hirst**
Scenic Construction by **Alex Brook**

Continue the conversation:
@theroaringgirls
#BeachBodyReady

The Roaring Girls would like to thank;
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Harris, Amanda Huxtable, Zoe McBride,
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Munya Redman-Bayasi, Andrew Ross, Rich
Sutherland & sobananapenguin, The
University of Hull, Daniel Watts & Elephant
in the Room Disability Services, Fiona
Wright, and Ronnie the shih-poo.

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