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NEWS

Ex-porn star to perform in Graham Greene's former home

6:00am Thursday 4th June 2009

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By Reg Little »

FORMER porn star Annie Sprinkle will be testing Oxford audiences with a heady mixture of sex, paint and art when she brings her Love Art Laboratory to Iffley on Monday.

And it will all be happening at the former home of the novelist Graham Greene and the ex-family home of Cardinal Newman, the Victorian churchman who looks like becoming a Catholic saint.

Miss Sprinkle and her partner, Elizabeth Stephens, will be hosting a week-long workshop at Grove House, which holds out the prospect of Making Love into Art and Art into Love.

The American sex worker, who turned performance artist, is best known for her piece Pubic Cervix Announcement, in which she invited audiences to "celebrate the female body" by viewing her cervix with a flashlight.

Over the week at Iffley, guests will be invited to make prints from the naked bodies to decorate the walls of the rotunda at Grove House. And things will reach an impressive climax on Sunday when the couple will hold their own 'blue wedding', when as "eco-sexual brides", they will "make sacred vows to their lover, the sky".

Blue Wedding is the latest 'love art' project from a couple who specialise in interactive performance art, with organisers promising "an extraordinary day of art, performance, fun and celebration".

The Blue Wedding event is being produced by Polly McLean, the owner of Grove House, a regency building dating from 1792. It was previously owned by Cardinal Newman's mother and also by Graham Greene. The rotunda was originally a museum created for the celebrated collection of antique dolls houses brought together by the novelist's wife, Vivien, a devout Catholic.

Ms McClean said: "I would like to point out that although Annie and Beth have worked a lot with adult material over the years, next Sunday's wedding will be family-friendly in nature and



Ex-porn star and the Oxford literary house



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CARS

Hyundai Amica £4,995,
Humphris Oxford,

hopefully a sunny afternoon of high-quality performance art."

Miss Sprinkle has previously toured with one-woman shows about her life, including Post Porn Modernist and Herstory of Porn. She also claims to be the first porn star to earn a Ph.D. But for the last seven years she has collaborated with her partner, to explore themes of sexuality and gender, with their current passion said to be "sexcology".

The catalyst for making Love Art Laboratory, they say, was the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. Ms Sprinkle said: "The Love Art Laboratory grew out of our response to the violence of war, the anti-gay marriage movement and our prevailing culture of greed. Our projects are symbolic gestures intended to make the world a more tolerant place."

The week-long workshop, costing £180, will include a 'show-and-tell' evening.

Writer and historian Julie Summers, who lives in Iffley, said: "It sounds an amazing concept, pushing the boundaries of art in a way that Graham Greene would not have imagined."

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