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### [Episode 43 – Lisa Luxx](#) (July 2015)

Transcript by Alba Frederick

Host: David Turner – **DT**

Guest: Lisa Luxx – **LL**

#### **Conversation:**

**DT:** Hello my name is David Turner and this is another episode of Lunar Poetry Shorts. This evening I'm at our Spoken word evening 'Silence found a tongue'.

**[Whoops and claps from audience]**

**DT:** Well done for not whistling! Thank you very much. We're in South London, Waterloo and I'm joined by editor of Prowl, Lisa Luxx. Hello Lisa.

**LL:** Hello, how you doin'?

**DT:** I'm good. And as always, we're gonna start with a poem.

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**DT:** Cheers Lisa. So ... why poetry?

**LL:** Why poetry?...I guess it's interesting because language is a completely inadequate signifier of the human condition. I don't think that we can actually express ourselves most of the time using the language that we do in conversation. So, what I find interesting and fascinating to do is to use language to manipulate it, to arrange it in certain ways; to try and crash through neural pathways in other people's minds and just for a moment allow them to peek at what it's like in my human condition and other people's human condition. I think it's a fascinating science with which to do that with.

**DT:** Thank you. I became a little distracted there, sorry.

**LL:** I noticed that. It's alright. I'm interested in what I'm saying! Don't worry about it. I've got it covered.

**[Audience laughs]**

**DT:** What have been the main influences of your writing and performing?

**LL:** When I was about 13 years old an older friend got me a copy of Sylvia Plath's poetry. I'd been writing for a long time before that but that turned me on to seeing who else I could find, similar to that, who was using language in such ways that were evoking feelings in me that she was evoking. From that I went all the way from Blake through [to] the Surrealists, the Beat poets, and as a performer, I guess probably my biggest influence is my spirit animal - Patty Smith!

**DT:** Oh sorry, did you want me to say something there?

**[Audience laughs]**

**LL:** I thought that was the nature of it. I can ask the questions if you want.

**DT:** I'm not used to this. No one's ever said Patti Smith and then looked directly at me. I don't know what to do!

**LL:** I guess it's kinda freaking me out. You look uncannily like my old housemate who was like my brother and it's almost spooky.

**DT:** Let's move on. Let's have another poem.

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**[Audience claps]**

**DT:** Thank you Lisa. As I introduced you, you are the editor of Prowl.

**LL:** That's right.

**DT:** Sell it to us.

**LL:** Okay, so Prowl is a print publication that celebrates the art of being human in the post-net world. That is kinda asking ourselves "What is it to be human?" and also celebrating independent creativity through that, because we believe that one of the arts of being human is to be expressive, is to be mind-independent, is to be badly behaved, because rules were made for us, we weren't made for rules. They don't really fit, you know.

So, what we're trying to do is trying to break down those things that aren't really working in society and have a really good time while doing it! It's a[n] international publication sold in over 20 different countries. We feature poetry, illustration, essays on things such as the war on consciousness and other social [and] political things as well.

**DT:** How long has it been going for?

**LL:** It started as a zine called Howl when I was at University. I'd make it with suede covers and studded spines on it and celebrate the counterculture creatives who were around me with it. I'd make out with each copy in blue or black lipstick and hand them out to lovely people. When I started working for the national papers like the Sunday Times, I suddenly started to realise that there was a very big gap in the market for honesty. I wanted to fill that and to do that I had to compete with their quality so I created a magazine that's this stellar quality, that's beautiful.

**DT:** I'm holding it in my hand now, listeners. It isn't half shiny!

**LL:** How does it feel?

**DT:** Feels like a proper thing dunnit?!

**LL:** It's proper yeah.

**DT:** It's really heavy.

**LL:** So it could sit on those shelves with those glossies but give our fellow man something of worth to read.

**DT:** So you didn't initially think that way but with time you came to believe that in order to compete with their ideas you also had to compete with the physical feel of the magazine as well.

**LL:** It's the Trojan horse, isn't it? If you want to get your message out there, I can't go out there shouting "Revolution, revolution, revolution!", because everyone's who's turned off by the very idea of people making change aren't gonna listen to that. So you make something beautiful that they're gonna wanna pick up and they're gonna wanna look at. And then you just put in there some stuff that's gonna make them go, 'What's going on around me actually, I don't really get it?'

**DT:** Poisoning magpies with the truth.

**LL:** No, no. Quite opposite. It's like feeding the fishes.

**DT:** Sorry. Feeding. I'm always thinking in terms of poisoning! I'll read later, you'll learn! Why was the decision taken to introduce poetry to the magazine and has it been there since the start?

**LL:** Since day dot, yeah. As a poet who's also surrounded by poets who are themselves surrounded by poets, it never really crossed my mind not to have poetry in there. More than anything, what we are trying to do is [to] capture the human experience and what it is to be human and now a lot of people are using poetry in which to do that, and so I wanted to make that space available for people to do that.

**DT:** More than since last Wednesday perhaps!

**LL:** Yeah, more today!

**DT:** Have you had any feedback from readers about the poetry specifically?

**LL:** The poetry goes down really well. We don't just present it to people in the magazine either. We also had a web series last year on our website called '[Basement beats](#)' which is spoken word artists and that went down fantastically well. In fact, one of the members of our Prowl community now, who's flown over here from Madrid did so after watching the 'Basement beats', so people dig the poetry, man.

**DT:** Good. And can you tell us a bit about some of the poets you've published? Perhaps their names and why you chose them.

**LL:** The last issue was the [Indigo kids issue](#) which is a concept which we don't have time to explain right now, so, look it up. But we were looking [at] that theme and so what I was looking for for the last big issue that we did was spoken word specifically, not poetry. There's a vast difference. And we published spoken word because it very much is the voice of the people who are standing up and saying "I wanna do things differently now and this is how I'm gonna do it, and I'm gonna talk to you as freely and liberated as I can".

So we publish people who are coming to our events like ['Bus da rhymes'](#) where we took over the top deck of a public bus with poets. People like [David Lee Morgan](#) , [Jason Pilley](#), and many other names that you'll know and you can read about when you pick up the magazine. But for the next ones we're gonna be looking at straight poetry for the future issue.

**DT:** And how can people submit their work to Prowl? Or is it 'invitation only'?

**LL:** It's not invitation only, no, but I really encourage people to be a part of Prowl and to be published in Prowl to just come and be a part of us and what we're doing. It's a community. It's something for you to get involved in and build relationships with. We host a lot of hangouts, a lot of parties, we gather creatives in as many ways as possible. Find out what we're doing, which is pretty easy 'cos it's on our website, or sign up to our mailing list 'cos it's not all on our website actually! Come and join us and be a part of it. And if people who are listening are too far away to do that, then yes, you can email me. I just think if you're in the borough next to me, come and see me face-to-face and say hello.

**DT:** Do I have to cross the river?!

**LL:** Come on man, you gotta cross the river! Do it on a bike, it feels good!

**DT:** Ugh, maybe. I'll think about it. And we were talking briefly before that Prowl isn't only a physical magazine. It's not just a paper-bound object. Maybe you could just describe it a bit...

**LL:** That's right. What we also do is, as I've mentioned, we've got the website and we generate [video content](#) for that, all of which supports independent creatives within the community, and we have a clothing line. The last one of which was to break down sexual taboos. We had the ['Happy fanny' t-shirt](#) for example, and other such wonderful garments which sold out, and did really well - you wouldn't be surprised to know!

**DT:** My iPad's telling me we're running out of time so we'll take a final poem please.

**LL:** Final poem? Absolutely, sure.

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**[Audience claps]**

**DT:** That's it, but before we go, [you have the] chance to mention any websites or blogs or anything.

**LL:** Absolutely, yeah. If people dig the sound of Prowl, come on over to [prowlhouse.com](#), sign yourself up to the mailing list. We don't pass on your details to the man, and we share information where we have quite private gatherings. So if you wanna be a part of it, then do that. Also, if you don't like Prowl but you kinda like me, you can go to [lusaluxx.com](#) and you can check out what I'm doing on there as well.

**DT:** And those links will be in the description of the video. Thank you Lisa, very much.

**LL:** Thank you for having me.

**DT:** Thank you 'Silence found a tongue'.

**[Audience whoops and claps]**

**End of transcript.**