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## Jess Indeedy: queen of quirky club nights in London

*No alternative nightlife concept is too 'out there' for this list-loving lady*



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Discos don't have to be after-dark or uber-cool. **Kate Hutchinson** meets the 'over-achieving' Jess Indeedy, who's determined to put the kitsch into your social life.

If you're an intrepid nightlife explorer, as familiar with a mid-week night spent working out your nostrils at [Scratch and Sniff](#) as you are heckling just-published writers at [Literary Death Match](#) or sharpening your one liners at a quirky speed-dating party, chances are you will be familiar with Miss Jess Indeedy. She's the giggly-shrill American presenter handing out inflatable bananas at her popular night, [Musical Bingo with Jess Indeedy](#), which she runs with her husband, DJ Helix.

The party – in which you cross off song titles as you hear them – has taken place all over London, at Shoreditch House, Balham Bowls Club, Adventure Bar in Covent Garden and Drink, Shop & Do on Caledonian Road. It's one of a growing number of bingo-themed nights in London, with events like [Indie Bingo](#), [The Underground Rebel Bingo Club](#) and Musical Bingo (no relation to Jess's night) all regularly dishing out the daubers. But just as bingo is, as she says herself, 'turning into a genre of its own, like karaoke', Indeedy has cooked up two new concepts to test the limits of the capital's clubgoers.

[I Love Lists](#) has been monthly at The Baby Bathhouse in Stoke Newington since late December last year. Like Jess's bingo night, the idea is no frills: quite simply, an evening of making lists on anything from your favourite dishes with potatoes in them to what you'd like to tell Boris Johnson. Each one has been a sell-out.

'I've always made lists, since I was in high school,' Jess reveals. 'My friends and I would go to the local diner, drink bottomless cups of coffee and make lists about all sorts of things. Sometimes they were focused on goals and what I wanted to do with my life and other times they were about our favourite cakes. People can learn so much from each other that they wouldn't otherwise do in another social environment.'

Jess adds a touch of magic with her twee – and 'borderline obsessive', she jokes – approach to themes. Depending on the night, she has cut-price cocktails The Listini and the Bingotini on offer, and awards prizes for everything from the best decorated dauber (at Musical Bingo) to the best doodle (at I Love Lists). 'There's an art to buying prizes,' insists Indeedy. 'If only I'd have known that buying prizes was going to be part of my job description when I was working in the City! You're not going to come to one of my nights and win a new car – it's not 'The Price Is Right' circa 1983 – but I buy prizes that I think are funny. You'd be surprised how crazy people go for my £5 sandwich toasters.'

Her nights cater perfectly for hen party caterwauls and quirky girls with 'Portlandia' fixations, but guys are into it too. Recently, artist David Shrigley came out about his love of lists too: 'My life is ruled by lists – the act of writing a list de-stresses me,' he confessed. Jess agrees: 'I thought that I Love Lists was going to be very female-heavy and full of over-achieving women, like me, that strive for perfection and that love stationery,' she says. 'But it's about 60 per cent women to 40 per cent guys in there.'

Jess's convivial crusade doesn't stop there. Next up, she wants to bring some disco magic to your afternoon with her micro-club, [Lunchtime Disco](#), starting in April. From noon till 3pm, it will take over the new basement bar at King's Cross shop and café bar Drink, Shop & Do, with DJs 'spanning the decades with wild abandon'. Upstairs, the venue is a craft 'n' cake sanctuary, but the downstairs dancefloor – in a former sex shop, no less – is one of London's best-kept secrets. Some of the triple-X, neon-lit relics still remain (note the adult sign above the door as you walk in) and best of all are the eye-popping DJ decks encased in an antique piano. It has rock 'n' roll glamour in spades – an alternative, says Jess, to a lunchtime pint in a boring boozier.

Was there a demand for a breaktime boogie then? 'Err, no,' Jess admits, 'but I'm going to *create* a demand for it. When I used to work in the advertising world, I couldn't sit still on a Friday. I wanted to go out and dance and start the weekend early. People don't know that they need a boogie on their lunch break but I'm going to give it to them.' Thus Lunchtime Disco was born, complete with a 5ft-by-5ft foam sandwich 'with lettuce, cheese and tomato' that people will be able to cavort with as they throw shapes.

Hopelessly kitsch? Probably. Fist-in-mouth cheesy? Almost certainly. But Jess's passion for having a ball (or, rather, creating the ball) is, indeed, infectious. 'I don't subscribe to that too-cool-for-school mentality at all,' she says. 'Don't be afraid to dance and don't be afraid to enjoy yourself – those are the two things I judge my events by. I was put on this earth to have fun and to make fun things happen. So, I'm just going to go for it, and if it means having a huge foam sandwich built for people to dance with at Lunchtime Disco then I'm going to do it.'



### See Jess Indeedy in London

#### Musical Bingo with Jess Indeedy

**Thu Aug 23** *Drink, Shop & Do*

A musical twist on the humble game of bingo. Instead of calling out numbers they play tunes which...

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### Alternative bingo nights in London

#### Musical Bingo with Jess Indeedy

**Until Thu Sep 20**, *Drink, Shop & Do*

A musical twist on the humble game of bingo. Instead of calling out numbers they play tunes which...

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