

Stage fright

Actors infiltrate the City's bar culture

Friday nights in the City of London are notorious, as the tensions of the week come out in a social splurge that often involves gallons of alcohol and a riotous dinner.

Now two London artists have taken this weekly Bacchanalia as the inspiration for a new performance called *My Word is My Bond*, which will take place over three Friday nights (March 15, 22 and April 5) in a bar near the Stock Exchange.

For the audience, the experience will be remarkably similar to drinking in any City bar – except they will be joined by 25 anonymous “micro-performers”, who have already been

mingling in the City crowds incognito, to research the rites and rituals of pack behaviour.

The artists behind the project, Rebecca French and Andrew Mothershead, say they are “turning up the volume” on a Friday night out. “It’ll be like a normal social situation, except that you won’t know who is a performer and who isn’t,” says Mothershead. Their aim is to make a work like a Hogarth engraving. “In ‘Gin Lane’, there’s an emaciated man, a baby falling to its death and a syphilitic whore. What we do is condense all this activity into one night.” Whether the City crowd will appreciate this portrait of their leisure time remains to be seen. *Lucy Kimbell*
Details on 020 7960 4242.

