

Inside the subculture club

As a new exhibition throws light on the outrageous underbelly of 1980s avant-garde nightclub Taboo and its impresario Leigh Bowery, *Dylan Jones* recalls *the* place to be seen

I can still remember what I was wearing the first time I went to Taboo, the tiny pop-up in a basement in the Maximus nightclub Leicester Square run by an unassuming guy called Tony Gordon who we all knew as Little Tony, and the Australian emigre, style icon, fashion designer, Abba addict, and unrepentant champion of platform shoes, Leigh Bowery. It was 1985, midweek, and the first night of a scene that while it initially seemed like a New Romantic afterthought quickly became the most decadent nightclub London had ever seen. I was one of the editors of *i-D* magazine at the time, a self-consciously obsessive street-style magazine. I was dressed appropriately, by which I mean I was dressed completely inappropriately: a black velvet bomber jacket with a fake fur collar and metal talons hanging down, with »



>Helloyellow:
Leigh Bowery on
the dancefloor at
Taboo in 1986



“Dress as though your life depends on it, or don’t bother”

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