

Why are we surrounded by guerrillas?

Guerrillas are in our midst. What is it with this word's voguish reappropriation? First came guerrilla gigs – bands like the Libertines playing on the tube, on rooftops, or in someone's front room. Then there were guerrilla stores, popping up in warehouses the world over, from uptown Tokyo to the grungiest parts of New York and London. Now, if you're planning an opening any time soon, particularly one that's a bit "art", sprinkling the "g" word drives the hype.

Transient restaurants such as the forth-

coming Reindeer in Shoreditch, which opens for three weeks in December, bandy the word about, as does the new Heavenly social bar Everything Must Go in Soho. But when did such a pugnacious little word start to recline uncharacteristically on its laurels and trade sabotage for something so mundane? When did it become an adjective for what is probably just another restaurant or watering hole?

The terminology may date back to the Vietnamese tradition of small portable eateries – sometimes called guerrilla restaurants – that could be quickly moved if they



No, not that sort of gorilla

were shut down by the police. Although, let's face it, this has precious little to do with a glossy diner in Shoreditch that is open for just 23 days and which is using the word, on its website, to mean "style and energy". "It's terrorist chic," argues Andrew Moor, senior lecturer in media at Manchester Metropolitan. "These events aspire to be guerilla because they are fashioning themselves on irregular warfare, outside the establishment, but actually they are governed purely by popular fads."

We've seen the emergence of guerrilla gardening – the illicit nocturnal landscaping of urban eyesores. And now we have the first self-styled "guerrilla" model – Elle Muliarchyk, who likes to take pictures of herself trying on frocks in the changing rooms of designer shops. Why? "Revenge," she moans, for the fact that she's a model and forced to wear nice clothes as part of her job. Where will all this monkey business end?

Stephen Emms

reading his favourite poem.

BBC's late show called



will collecting gold stars entitle them to getting their mouthwash back? Still, Fame Asylum will be hard to top. Imagine escaping persecution and misery only to be forced to belt out Relight My Fire in stupid trousers. Sends a shiver, doesn't it?

Julia Raeside