

MUSIC BEST OF 2014



Kathleen Hanna

KATHLEEN HANNA IS A FEMINIST MUSICIAN BEST KNOWN AS A MEMBER OF THE PUNK BAND BIKINI KILL AND THE MULTIMEDIA GROUP LE TIGRE. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

1 GIRLS ROCK CAMP ALLIANCE The best rock/rap shows in the US, South America, Europe, Iceland, and Canada are at the Girls Rock Camp showcases that happen every summer. Seven- to seventeen-year-olds take the stage for the first time and perform original songs, and last March more than 170 girls from all over the world participated in the eighth annual conference at Appel Farm Arts and Music Center in Elmer, New Jersey. It is bone-chillingly great.

2 MINDTROLL, EP #4 (self-released) I hate it when people tell me to “just be myself.” WTF does that even mean? Somehow this absurdist yet catchy band answers that question by writing way too many lyrics and playing way too many

instruments but still making things sound sparse. It's like a magic trick—as a band.

3 HARI KONDABOLU (Union Hall, Brooklyn, NY, March 14) I saw comedian Hari Kondabolu perform live at Union Hall, and he turned a dick joke into a feminist one in five seconds flat. He has an album out on Kill Rock Stars called *Waiting for 2042*; it's like Rapunzel turning straw into gold, if straw was injustice and gold was humor.

4 BECCA BLACKWELL I ran into Becca Blackwell (the ginger-haired performance artist who stole the show at Young Jean Lee's *Untitled Feminist Show* a few years back) at a party. We talked about Corey Haim: his struggles with masculinity, being sexualized at a young age, and his eventual demise. Blackwell claimed to be writing a show about him. The next day, I received a clip in which Blackwell, aka “The Charisma Machine,” plays a performer trying to make a web series called *Trans Cop*. Totally hilarious.

5 THE YOUNGER LOVERS, SUGAR IN MY POCKET (Southpaw) If you want to hear the rawest nouveau garage rock, this is IT. Heartthrob Brontez Purnell takes shit a step further with his gorgeous DIY YouTube videos.

6 BRIDGET EVERETT & THE TENDER MOMENTS, POUND IT! (Beavertails Music) It's like Peaches on acid on Broadway,

7 BONGOLOIDZ, BONGOLOIDZ (self-released) Alfredo Ortiz made a record that is sonically nuts. One song is full-on rock, and the next sparse percussion and keys with his vulnerably beautiful voice way up front. Lyrics like “Every time I go to sleep, start to dream of you and me, driving around endlessly, when we crash you're still asleep” appear out of nowhere. I've never heard a record that flashes so quickly between impenetrable and sincere.

8 JOHANNA FATEMAN ON ANDREA DWORKIN, IN ICON, ED. AMY SCHOLDER (Feminist Press) In 1995, Johanna Fateman handed me a copy of her zine after a show my band played in Portland, Oregon. I read it in the van on the way home to Olympia, Washington, and knew she was a genius. I decided to move to Portland and force her to become my best friend. Her essay on Andrea Dworkin in the anthology *Icon* reminded me why I did that. I've always wanted to explore the essentialist trash can that so many feminists get thrown into. Fateman does it with more gusto and style than any other writer could.

9 BECCA ALBEE, ON A PERSON'S PERSON Becca Albee went into an art gallery with no art—just a white cloth, a table, and a camera. As people came in, she asked them to empty the contents of their handbags, duffels, knapsacks, hobo sticks, whatever, onto the table. She arranged their stuff into beautiful little sculptures and photographed them. Like portraits. Or evidence.

10 TAMMY RAE CARLAND IN “IN LIGHT OF IT” (Contemporary Calgary) Tammy Rae Carland's 2010 solo show “Funny Face I Love You” at Jessica Silverman Gallery in San Francisco was so stunning that it inspired me to curate my own show. In it I presented, among other things, Carland's large-format photograph of a comedienne hiding under a Strawberry Shortcake towel as she performs, and another of a woman in a banana costume crawling across a stage. Both pieces left me continually wondering when I am effectively using humor to deal with oppression and when I just look like a fucking clown. □

