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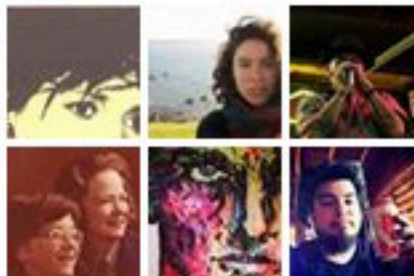
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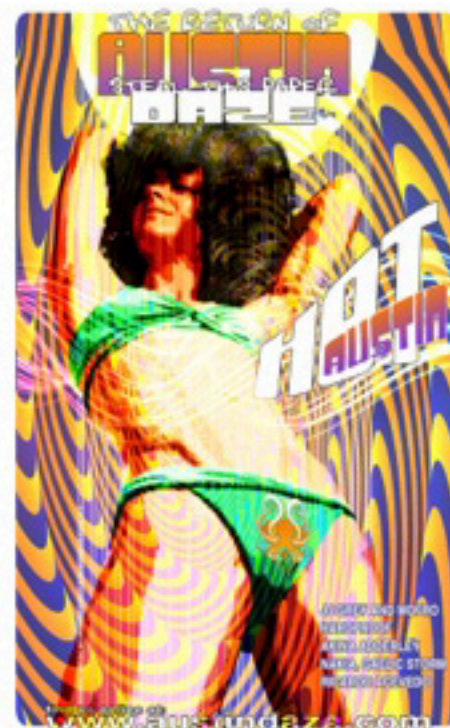
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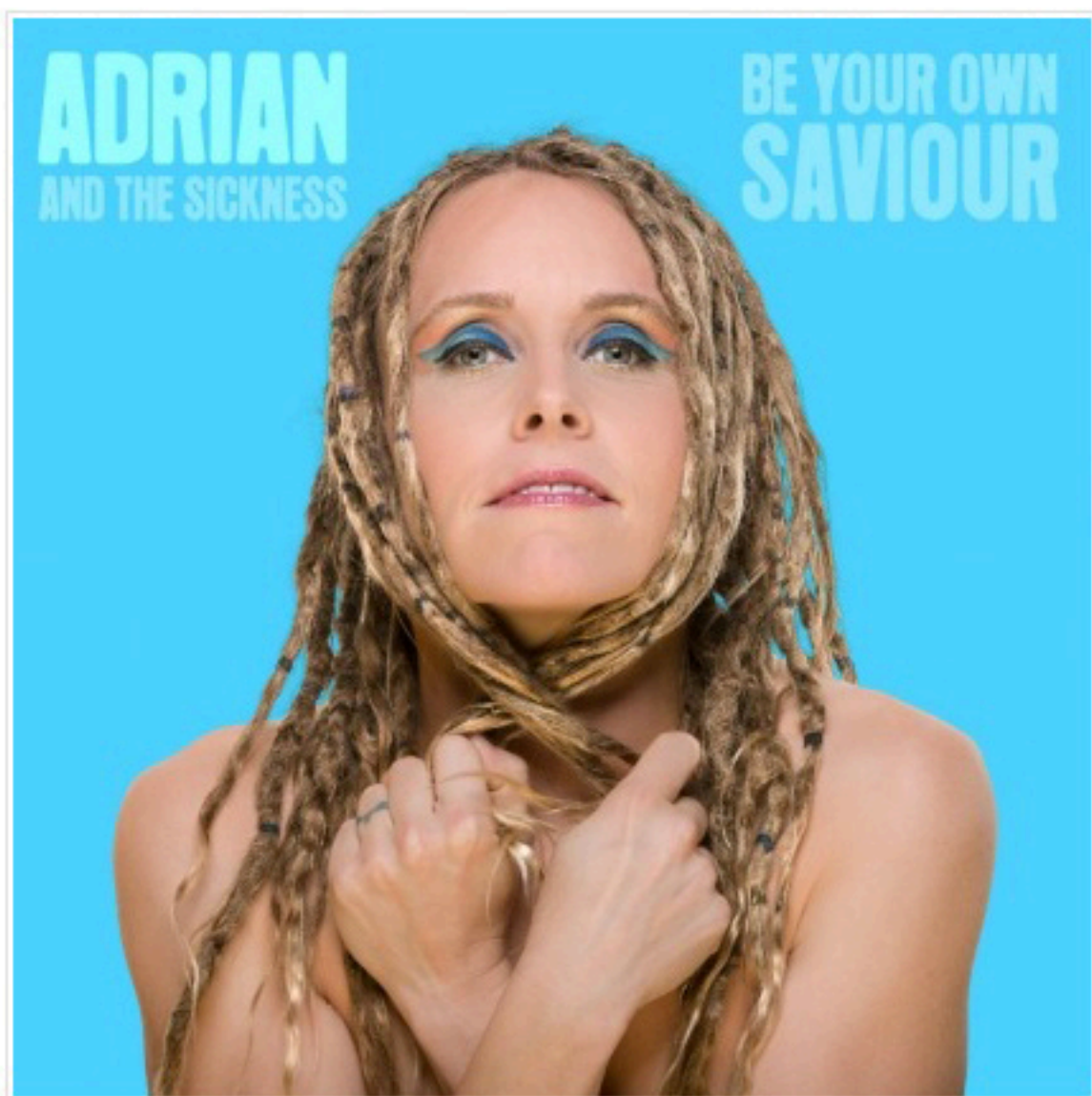
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MARIA MESA RETURNS TO REVIEW A NEW DISC BY ADRIAN AND THE SICKNESS "BE YOUR OWN SAVIOUR"

May 6th, 2014 by Russ



Adrian and the Sickness

"Be Your Own Saviour"

2014 Fantom Records

Produced by Alex Lyon and Adrian Conner

There are many things that set Adrian Conner apart from most rock musicians today (assuming the term "rock" even applies to the current musical landscape) but the most important is this: Adrian Conner understands what a ROCK SHOW is, the way rocks founding fathers did. The early pioneers of the genre knew that first and foremost they were entertainers putting on a show, and rock music was the vehicle that got them there (obviously no longer common knowledge).

Perhaps it's all the time Adrian has spent nailing the role of Angus Young in the all-female AC/DC tribute band "Hells Belles" (Angus being a master rock showman himself) but also I think it comes down to basic work ethic. How happy do you want your audience to be? How hard are you willing to work for that? This is a time when work ethic is in short supply, and Adrian has a very happy audience... Coincidence? Nah...

In 2006 I picked up my box of CD's to review from the Austin Daze office, containing an offer from the dread-headed wonder I didn't know about yet. I looked at the cover of "Adrian for President," she seemed pretty cocky, so honestly I expected her stuff to suck... but I was wrong. Instantly it was obvious that AATS were a band with talent, vision, and a professional level future- just not much of a budget at the time. But they won me over with abundant heart, soul and attitude, and I had big hopes and expectations for them. Guess what folks, they have delivered and continue to deliver... Bigtime.

2009's release "B.F.D." is big, solid and powerful. Produced by Kathy Valentine of the Go Go's, it has that polished "We've been signed to a major label" kind of sound. Smart songwriting, thick and lush production, it proved that this is a band to take seriously. I really thought it would put them on the big stages and big tours they deserved, but the music business these days doesn't often reward those who are so deserving of success. But their local popularity grew, and in 2011 they were awarded Austin's Best Punk Band by the Austin Chronicle. (Punk band? Uh, well, okay...)

2014's "Be Your Own Saviour" is a big move for AATS. Raw, edgy, filled with unstoppable confidence, Adrian delivers her best songwriting to date. Her guitar work puts her alongside some of Austin's best known 6 string heroes, and in this setting she gets to show off her lead vocal skills (something she doesn't get to do as Angus). The album goes into unpredictable territory, sometimes ambient, sometimes acoustic, then full out hard rock. Longtime collaborator Heather Webb lays down the best bass tracks of her career with masterful chops and a monster retro tone, and drummer Aaron Nicholes is solid and in the pocket throughout. Former AATS drummer and Austin stalwart Ric Furley supplies percussion. Stand out tracks are: "We Got It All," "Take The World," "Dark Force" and "Turn Off Your TV." You will be happy and a better person with these songs in your life, and the karma you will receive for helping them out is immeasurable...

-Maria Mesa

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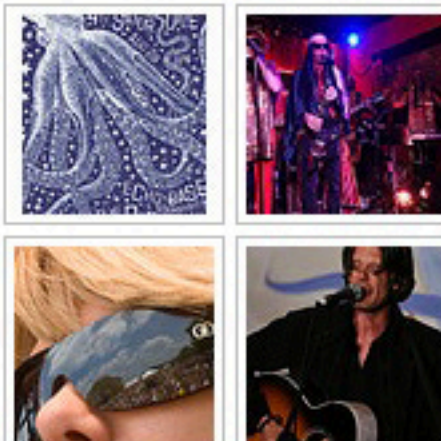
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