



Vox Populi
319 N. 11th St. 3rd Fl. Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-238-1236 www.voxpopuligallery.org

ALIEN SHE

March 7 - April 27, 2014

Curated by Astria Suparak + Ceci Moss

ARTISTS: Ginger Brooks Takahashi (Pittsburgh), Tammy Rae Carland (Oakland), Miranda July (Los Angeles), Faythe Levine (Milwaukee), Allyson Mitchell (Toronto), L.J. Roberts (Brooklyn), Stephanie Syjuco (San Francisco)

Archival Materials from: EMP Museum, Seattle; Interference Archive; Jabberjaw; the Riot Grrrl Collection at the Fales Library & Special Collections, NYU; and many personal collections

Collaborative Projects and Platforms include: Counterfeit Crochet Project, Feminist Art Gallery (FAG), General Sisters, Handmade Nation, Joanie 4 Jackie, Learning to Love You More, LTTR, projet MOBILIVRE-BOOKMOBILE project, Sign Painters and more

Regional Music Curators: Tammy Rae Carland of Mr. Lady Records and *I (heart) Amy Carter* zine (American South); Pete Dale of Slampt Records and Pussycat Trash (England); Donna Dresch of Chainsaw Records and Team Dresch (Pacific Northwest); Maaïke Muntinga of Riot Grrrl Benelux and Ladyfest Amsterdam + Jessica Gysel of *Girls Like Us* magazine (Belgium + the Netherlands); Lynne T + Bernie Bankrupt of Lesbians on Ecstasy (Canada); Allison Wolfe of Bratmobile, *Girl Germs* zine and Ladyfest Olympia (D.C. + Olympia); Elisa Gargiulo of Dominatrix (Brazil); Ceci Moss + Astria Suparak, exhibition curators and former Riot Grrrls (California)

OPENING EVENTS: March 7, Fri.

6-10pm: Opening Reception

Vox Populi, 319 N. 11th St.

6pm Tour with Curator Astria Suparak + Artists

9pm-2am: Live Music

Johnny Brenda's, 1201 N. Frankford Ave.

Line up: Mannequin Pussy, Trophy Wife, The Pretty Greens, and Pushin it 2 the Limit

Avalon Clare of New Radio - DJ between sets

Check website for updates on event times, details + additional events: www.bit.ly/AlienShe_Vox

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Alien She is the first exhibition to examine the lasting impact of Riot Grrrl on artists and cultural producers working today.

A pioneering punk feminist movement that emerged in the early 1990s, Riot Grrrl has had a pivotal influence, inspiring many around the world to pursue socially and politically progressive careers as artists, activists, authors and educators. Emphasizing female and youth empowerment, collaborative organization, creative resistance and DIY ethics, Riot Grrrl helped a new generation to become active feminists and create their own culture and communities that reflect their values and experiences, in contrast to mainstream conventions and expectations.

Riot Grrrl formed in reaction to pervasive and violent sexism, racism and homophobia in the punk music scene and in the culture at large. Its participants adapted strategies from earlier queer and punk feminisms and '70s radical politics, while also popularizing discussions of identity politics occurring within academia, but in a language that spoke to a younger generation. This self-organized network made up of teenagers and twenty-somethings reached one another through various platforms, such as letters, zines, local meetings, regional conferences, homemade videos, and later, chat rooms, listservs and message boards. The movement eventually spread worldwide, with chapters opening in at least 29 states and 21 countries.* Its ethos and aesthetics have survived well past its initial period in the '90s, with many new chapters forming in recent years. Riot Grrrl's influence on contemporary global culture is increasingly evident – from the Russian collective Pussy Riot's protest against corrupt government-church relations to the popular teen website *Rookie* and the launch of Girls Rock Camps and Ladyfest music and art festivals around the world.

Alien She focuses on seven people whose visual art practices were informed by their contact with Riot Grrrl. Many of them work in multiple disciplines, such as sculpture, installation, video, documentary film, photography, drawing, printmaking, new media, social practice, curation, music, writing and performance – a reflection of the movement's artistic diversity and mutability. Each artist is represented by several projects from the last 20 years, including new and rarely seen works, providing an insight into the development of their creative practices and individual trajectories.

In various ways, these artists have incorporated, expanded upon, or reacted to Riot Grrrl's ideology, tactics and aesthetics. For instance, many continue to cultivate and nurture alternative communities. Ginger Brooks Takahashi creates spaces for conversation and exchange with jubilant publications, dance parties, mobile reading rooms and soup delivery service. Through photography and video, Faythe Levine documents groups committed to DIY independence and handmade aesthetics, such as crafters, off-the-gridders, and, in her new book and documentary, traditional hand-lettered sign painters. L.J. Roberts fabricates declarations of protest and solidarity with evocative banners and textile works.

Riot Grrrl thrived through the establishment of DIY networks and information sharing, an aspect manifest in Stephanie Syjuco's project for freely distributing copyrighted critical texts and in Miranda July's video chainletter for "lady moviemakers." Recalling forgotten her/histories was also central to Riot Grrrl, and in that vein, Allyson Mitchell pays homage to key writings, feminist presses, bookstores and libraries with lesbian feminist library wallpaper, while Tammy Rae Carland reveals intimate relationships in her autobiographical photo series. All of the artists included here have worked collaboratively and many have built platforms for other artists and under-recognized groups to connect, encourage, share resources and self-publish.

The exhibition's historical section is designed to be plural and open-ended; this is a living history, not a sealed past. By representing numerous voices and experiences, rather than outlining one single definitive story, we hope it will reflect the multiplicity that was such an integral part of the original movement. Toward this end, a sampling of the Riot Grrrl movement's vast creative output is included here. Hundreds of self-published zines and hand-designed posters were solicited from institutional and personal archives through open calls, word-of-mouth and invitations – similar to the way Riot Grrrl expanded. Music playlists represent different Riot Grrrl scenes across the U.S., Canada, South America and Europe, guest curated by musicians, DJs and label owners, and accompanied by records, cassettes, set lists, band T-shirts and other ephemera. Video interviews and an ongoing, online Riot Grrrl Census provide an expanded oral history.

The exhibition's title, *Alien She*, is a reference to a Bikini Kill song of the same name. The lyrics are about the negotiation of normalized gender roles, the uneasy line between feminist critique and collectivity, and the process of coming to a feminist

consciousness, with the repeated refrain, "She is me, I am her." More broadly, *Alien She* conjures the possibilities of identity, self-determination and subversion. In the face of alienation and bigotry, Riot Grrrl fostered community, action and creation. **This exhibition provides a view into the passion and diversity of the original Riot Grrrl movement, and highlights how these ideas have broadened, evolved and mutated in the work of contemporary artists.**

Alien She was curated by Astria Suparak and Ceci Moss, former Riot Grrrls from Los Angeles and the Bay Area, and organized by the Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University.

* From data compiled in the *Riot Grrrl Chapters Map*, an online collaborative project created for the exhibition that assembles research from various people and the public: www.bit.ly/RGmap

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9pm–2am: **Live Music**

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March 29, Sat.

Riot Grrrl Burlesque Show

w/the Dead Flowers Burlesque Troupe
Connie's Ric Rac, 1132 S. 9th St.

March 29 & 30, Fri/Sat.

Zine Workshop

w/Beth Heinly
Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, 1400 N. American St.

April 4, Fri.

First Friday Reception

April 12, Sat.

Self Defense Workshop

w/Elena*
Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St.
* Sliding scale donation requested

April 16, Wed.

Panel Discussion: Feminism and Race

William Way Ballroom, 1315 Spruce St.

April 18, Fri.

Women who ROCK Karaoke

w/Sara Sherr
Teri's, 1126 S. 9th St.

Check website for updates on event times, details + additional events: www.bit.ly/AlienShe_Vox
All events are free of charge + open to the public, unless otherwise indicated.

ABOUT Vox Populi:

Founded in 1988, Vox Populi is an artist collective that works to support the challenging and experimental work of under-represented artists with monthly exhibitions, gallery talks, performances, lectures, and related programming. For over 25 years, Vox Populi has played a unique role in the cultural life of Philadelphia by bringing our audience a diverse range of programming and providing a supportive environment in which artists can take risks and gain valuable professional experience.

Vox Populi's programs are possible through the generous support of individual contributors, our audience and Board of Directors, and the following funders: The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, The William Penn Foundation, Philadelphia Cultural Fund, The Andy Warhol Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Samuel P. Mandell Foundation, Samuel S. Fels Fund, Dolfinger McMahon Foundation, and The Barra Foundation.

Alien She has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.



Front: *Women's Studies Professors Have Class Privilege/I'm With Problematic*, Allyson Mitchell, framed shirts, 2012
Poster: *Untitled (Lesbian Bed #8)*, Tammy Rae Carland, photograph, 2002
Design: Margaret Cox with modifications by Sharon Koelblinger



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Vox Populi, Philadelphia

ALIEN SHE

March 7, Fri.: Opening Night
ALIEN SHE

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