

100 DUMBEST MOMENTS IN MUSIC • BEHIND THE MUZAK • WIPEOUT 3 ROCKS!

REQUEST



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READY**
**10 BEST
ARTISTS**
**FOR THE
DAY AFTER**



BECK'S SEXCAPADES

WE'RE MAD ABOUT FIONA APPLE

**REQUEST EXCLUSIVE! RICKIE LEE JONES REVIEWS WHEN THE PAWN
BOB MARLEY, LARGER THAN LIFE DOES MUSIC MATTER ANYMORE?**

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Cover photos: Ron Cadiz/Visages, grooming by Brenda Green/Celestine (Beck); Niels Van Iperen/Retna (Rage Against the Machine); Joshua Kessler/Retna (Fiona Apple)



Can this cosmopolitan agitator save America from itself?

Picture Shirley Manson. Now picture Meg Lee Chin writhing in her place. Can't do it? If Butch Vig had chosen a little differently, the reverse might be true. Though several women were considered for the vamp vocalist spot in Garbage, the tiny Asian singer formerly of Pigface actually was the first to audition. And that's hardly her only claim to fame.

Chin recorded and engineered her Invisible Records debut, *Piece and Love*, entirely by herself. Her mix of ambient noise, shifting industrial beats, grinding rhythms, and buzzing noise rises beyond mere din thanks to catchy hooks, voice samples, and clever arrangements. The result is so satisfying it makes the competition seem like, well, garbage.

Then there's her versatile voice, which dabbles in cool, collected spoken bits and P.J. Harvey-possessed wails. It's the wails that win you. In the song "Swallowing You," they're often unintelligible, but so emotionally immediate it's scary. And she really nails it in "Nutopia," a daring critique of post-cool Generation X that exposes the vacuum at the heart of club land. It very well could become her signature piece.

Before moving to London a decade ago, Chin spent a few of her wonder years in a shantytown district of Taiwan. Because her family was relatively well off, she used to plead with her mother to bring home one of the beggar children from the street. "But then she would ask me, 'Where would we put the next one that knocks on our door?'" she recalls. "And the next one after that? And when the whole island of Taiwan is at the door wanting food?" Chin says it just about killed her to understand that.

Consequently, she has little sympathy for those who inflict pain upon themselves for the sake of art or fashion. Love your pain, she says. Use it. Just don't allow it to consume you. "Let's be honest, junkies are crippling themselves," Chin says. "They're saying, 'I feel more pain than anyone else.' That's self-centered. That's because they haven't even been exposed to what's out there."

When Chin spent time in the States, she was astonished at the level of ignorance among her school chums. "Every spoiled American kid should have to live in the Third World for a bit. It should be mandatory," she says. "I'm serious! I don't mean to be nasty, but it could really stop our epidemic of superficiality." —Jennifer Vineyard+photograph by Gill Flett

