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## Album Review: “Heaven Sent Delinquent” - Shawna Virago

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PHOTO: LYDIA DANILLER

Shawna Virago has this to say about the songs on her latest album: “These are the stories of my generation – a generation of transgender people who came out long before the internet, before transgender celebrities and reality TV stars ... before anybody gave a shit about us.”

The album is entitled *Heaven Sent Delinquent*, and contains ten excellent tracks. Stylistically, Virago’s sound is folk-punk, kind of an amalgamation of Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen. Only Virago’s style demonstrates not only better vocals, but an undiluted intensity that surpasses both Dylan and Cohen. It’s raw and unrelenting, while at the same time giving breath to scurrilous conjectures, socio-political assertions and seminal truth.

Basically, it’s great!

Virago’s voice is a notorious reality, a voice that exudes a sonic aura of lethal expertise, a voice stridently asserting its vitality. It’s one of those voices that glisten with a great irregular clot of primitive power, like an old stone come to life. And her lyrics portray an intellect in full control of itself, an intellect that refuses to submit to the dreary treadmill of convention – that conspiracy of dullness.

The album paints a musical Mad Max-like landscape of individuals marginalized simply for being different. For example, “Gender Armageddon” relates the tale of pariahs who band together to fight back, or as Pascal might have said, the song is a license “to lick the earth.”



PHOTO: LYDIA DANILLER

The other nine songs on the album provide “*pieces justificatives*” – supporting documents for Virago’s talents as a singer/songwriter, as she confronts mankind’s topmost graven image, before which he prostrates himself, and whose cryptic utterances he receives like Delphic Oracles. Like a prophet of old, Virago reveals that the image is composed of plastic flesh that utters fraudulent words.

My favorite song on the album is probably “Gender Armageddon,” although I thoroughly enjoyed “Bright Green Ideas,” simply because of its simple melody and the lyrics: “Come on, kiss me for a thousand years.” Of all the songs, “Last Night’s Sugar” demonstrates a real feel for folk-punk, with its haunting melody and simple acoustic guitar.

When you come right down to it, what Virago does well is take emotion and transform the ineffable, by means of music and lyrics, into the definable. You can’t ask much more than that of any singer/songwriter.

*Heaven Sent Delinquent* is a wonderful album, one you don’t want to miss. Find out more about Shawna Virago: [www.shawnavirago.com](http://www.shawnavirago.com)