

The logo for Heroine Athletics is composed of two rows of stylized, black-and-white line drawings of female athletes in various dynamic poses. The top row contains the letters H, E, R, O, I, N, E, and the bottom row contains the letters A, T, H, L, E, T, I, C, S. Each letter is formed by the silhouette of a person in a specific athletic stance, such as a runner, a jumper, or a thrower.

PRESS KIT 2004



In May of 1999, a team of music-science journalists were on a routine field outing in Manhattan. What they discovered shocked and perplexed them. Many experts classified The Heroine Sheiks as odd and primitive throwbacks, though others pointed out that the musical structures of these creatures were absolutely unique (some even thought the species of higher intelligence.) The scientific mainstream was unconvinced.

The musical DNA evidence is now in and the dissidents have been vindicated, this is a NEW species. Many scientists still insist that these creatures will be unable to adapt themselves to a conservative climate regime. Others counter that those scientists have not personally observed The Heroine Sheiks in the wild and have ignored new data (RE. SIAMESE PIPE, Rubric Records) which suggests that these creatures have in fact been expanding their range across a spectrum of ecosystems- to the alarm of many music environmentalists



**Eric Robel, Drums**

From the Great Plains of North America, this animal has astonished naturalists in that when it attacks, it appears to possess six arms! However, careful follow-up observations with slow motion photography have revealed only the normal two. The phantom appendages are in fact a rare beneficial genetic mutation. Witness that the most elusive of evolutionary events – “The Hopeful Master.”



**Martin Ros - Guitar**

This newly discovered sub-species is thought by some scientists to have rafted over in recent times from another nearby island, perhaps on matted vegetation or some other flotsam. It has flourished in its new environment through its brute power and surprising cunning. Efforts to eliminate this exotic and destructive animal have so far proven futile.



**Shannon Selberg – Singer**

This sub-species is characterized by its frantic vocal and visual displays. It is not yet known whether these displays are intended to hypnotize prey or are a prelude to mating. Until scientists sort this matter out, authorities urge the public: Do NOT attempt to pet or feed this animal.



**Creighton Chamberlain – Keyboard**

With his Romance Novel name and aristocratic good looks, he may look like he just swung in on a chandelier – but don’t be fooled. He plays like he was raised by wolverines.



**ROB KIMBLE, BASS.**

Discovered in front of a polish bodega, like the marsupial “wolf,” or the “ostrich” dinosaur, this specimen is a fascinating example of what naturalists call “parallel evolution.” What exactly it is parallel to is not known, although theories abound.



**Scott Hill – Coalition Partner**

This startling Behemoth – half Manson, half Nureyev – defies scientific classification. Like the Kodiak Bear, he is an enigma; one moment peacefully munching on clover, the next running down a moose and slaying it with one terrible blow of his mighty paw.

# ROCK AROUND THE BLOCK

Our second annual roundup of the city's top gigging bands proves you don't have to travel far to find a wide world of great music

## THE HEROINE SHEIKS



**Where:** New York, 2000  
**Sound:** Gritty, noisy and even a little scary rock  
**Local Heroes:** Brownies, CBGB

WHEN FANS OF THE HEROINE SHEIKS DISCUSS the band's covers, they generally favor monster songs, but rather say things like "I got hit by a table—and it was great!"

"We've gotten into fights, punched friends, been emotionally torn apart," says Shannon Selberg, the singer of this raucous two-on-road band. "Once, in Texas, there was a couple fucking by the side of the stage. We just playing. I figured the two things must have been somehow connected, so why should we stop?"

Selberg's heated stage antics—no one has been known to throw large objects into crowds—and baby-funny lyrics earned notoriety for his former Massachusetts band, the Cows, which split up in 1996 after nearly a decade of warring musical and marital fronts. The Heroine Sheiks, a quintet that also features former Swans guitarist Norman Keating, continue in kind. The band's debut, *Rape on the Installation Plan* (Reptilian), came out last year, and found the singer belting "Once I was delivered / Now I produce it throughout the land / Oh yeah! My mom was a cunt!" over a raucous instrumental backdrop that features three grating guitar work. This summer, after a short American tour in June, Selberg and his merry Sheiks plan to record a follow-up. Not bad for a guy who claims to have emigrated to New York with the specific intention of having music banned here.

"I came here to get into acting," Selberg says. "After a while, I was looking for gigs to audition. I figured if I started a band, I could meet people who could help get me interesting. It hasn't happened that way, but the band has worked out really well."

—Jesse Rabinowitz  
The Heroine Sheiks play Brownies June 8.

★**Heroine Sheiks + Female Hercules + Candy Darlings + Yeah Yeah Yeahs + Vandura**

**CBGB 8pm, \$9.** For years, Shannon Selberg fronted the *Cows*, one of the best, most grossly misunderstood hard-rock bands in the Midwest. All that people saw and heard were the band's onstage shenanigans and the racket they made, and the *Cows* were often dismissed as loutish clowns. But anyone who bothered to read or listen to Selberg's lyrics learned that he's an excellent songwriter and a world-class misanthrope. Now, Selberg fronts the Heroine Sheiks (which also includes onetime Swans guitarist Norman Westberg). The Sheiks have just released their debut CD, *Rape on the Installation Plan* (Reptilian), which shows them no less brutal than the *Cows* were, but with a less overtly grating noise, leaning more toward a heavily altered, swampy blues-rock. It's still a chore for fragile ears to get through, but for those of us who know that the dark, fucked-up side of the world can be as funny as it is mean, the Sheiks make a heavy and true sound. Recommended—if you can handle it.

★**U.S. Maple + Heroin Sheiks**  
*Knitting Factory. 9pm; advance \$8, day of show \$10.* Chicago underground band U.S. Maple's frighteningly jagged rhythms and moves carry titanic weight as well. The Heroin Sheiks feature an ex-Swan and, more important, ex-Cows frontman Shannon Selberg. This gangly misanthrope is responsible for the darkest, most bizarrely literate and humorous lyrics the past decade had to offer.

Heroine Sheiks - MP3s & More



**Artist Review:** When the manic singer-trumpet player from Cows puts a band together, beware, especially when it includes former members of Swans and Sixteen Deluxe. Actually, don't beware, because you'll love the results (and they're what you expect, anyway) aggressive, nihilistic lyrics, commanding basslines, strange guitar figures, and the occasional blast of keyboards and brass. Wonderfully, Heroine Sheiks do hold some surprises for the listener. There are the moments when the drummer adds some Funk-inflected parts to his normal process of pounding, and danceable drum loops are seamlessly worked into the fray. Also, the vocalist's delivery is a study in contrasts, as he sings with nonchalant detachment about the inevitability of a quarrel with a woman he'd rather be cuddling "I'd like to oblige you And lay here in your arms But no, no -- we're gonna fight We're gonna argue and bicker And loudly discuss it." His calm demeanor gives the words extra creepiness. —Listen.com



# THE HEROINE SHEIKS

## @ 7th Street Entry

Though he's not really local anymore since moving to New York, ex-Cow Shannon Selberg is still a legend of sorts in the Twin Cities music scene. Energy is what this man has plenty of, and his latest creative outlet, The Heroine Sheiks, finds the singer spreading that energy around. With a solid musical backing courtesy of former members of the Swans and Sixteen Deluxe, Selberg screams his way through each and every one of The Heroine Sheiks' hardcore tunes. Always a showman, Selberg will definitely not disappoint his former-hometown crowd on, of all nights, Halloween. **701 First Ave. N., Mpls. 8 p.m. \$8; \$6 in advance. 612-338-8388 (Kelly)**

### Travel

New York  
BY SCOTT LINGLEY

SEE Magazine

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There were lots of great bands to see all over the East Village and adjacent areas, thanks to the College Music Journal conference, which brings 1,000 bands to 50 venues over five nights. (You miss more than you see.) Conference highlights include Spoon, a band that started out on Matador, moved to a major label quickly and hasn't been broken in Canada yet. There was also the brilliant White Hassle, a duo of guys from Railroad Jerk making bizarre, mildly distorted, dollar-bill-through-the-guitar-strings country with drums and harmonica. They also had a DJ on a few songs. Legendary punk club CBGB yielded Firewater, Gogol Bordello and the latest creation from the inventor of mean rock, former Cows vocalist Shannon Selberg's latest project, the Heroine Sheiks. Heavier than a ton of snot, the Sheiks cranked out fit metal riffs while Selberg, with colorless eyes and mustache drawn on in magic marker, antagonized the crowd. He even donned a yarmulke for the band's tribute to martial arts, Ju Jitsu. Geddit?

## theStranger.com

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by Kathleen Wilson

duetted on some showtunes and Beatles songs. In other long-lost *Stranger* personality news, Vic **Carbone** wrote from New York City to say that he'd just seen **Shannon from the Cows' new band, the Heroine Sheiks** -- get it, heroin chic? -- and he says, "They fuggin' ruled! Man, that kid can dance -- he's got the most fucked-up moves -- I told him I liked the show while chatting backstage, and he said the greatest line! 'I just go where the fire takes me.'" As for the rest of the band, Vic says they were a bunch of inbred-looking freaks who were heavy as shit and scared the pants off the audience. And that was a seasoned COWS audience! In NYC, the rock

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### The Heroine Sheiks

(Amphetamine Reptile)  
by Jon Sarre

Ex-Cows front guy Shannon Selberg returns with a triceratops look at his new effort, **The Heroine Sheiks** (also occasionally spell "Heroin" in the Amp Rep ML, clever!) Sheiks (which he's got peopled with assorted refugees from Foetus, Triple Hammer, Grand Mal, and Sixteen Deluxe). The Sheiks don't ride exactly as eclectically as the above text may imply (the "Spanish Fly" on this EP sounds like Sergio Mendes doing "Funky Gurdy Man"), nevertheless the band's bovine reputation lends one to trust that this shit will be heavy duty rock. The band's thirde song "We Are The" twists in the eye of a hurricane, turning from noisy, upturned trash cans bouncing down your street at three a.m. to a walking bass slumping up creaky stairs, at the top of which wheezes a defective trumpet (sorta hinting that something isn't entirely right). Over that, Selberg wastes no time in saying exactly who they are. The Heroine Sheiks, pay attention!



(2200 4th Street NE #1 Minneapolis, MN 55418)

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Picks & Sleepers

### SXSW Music Festival

March 17, 2000:

**HEROINE SHEIKS:** As good as the name is, it might not be familiar, but the indie rock rap sheets behind NYC's Heroine Sheiks probably are. Lead singer and bugler (yes, bugler) Shannon Selberg spent the better part of a decade fronting the AmRep adored Cows. Guitarist Norman Westberg served a similar term with the Swans. And drummer J. Bryan Bowden, who had stints in Crown Heights and Sixteen Deluxe. *(Beerland, Midnight)* -- Michael Bertin

Spin | Heavy Rotation | Now Featuring | South By Southwest Day 9



#### Heroine Sheiks

New York's Heroine Sheiks may look a little scary-- you might not want to meet them in a dark alley (though I think I did see them in a dark alley), play sweet rock 'n' roll with so much charm, you can't help but be smitten.

# Selberg's Casio chic

By Vickie Gilmer Casey  
Star Tribune Staff Writer

**Y**ou'd think someone who displayed the verve, nerve and tough-as-nails attitude of Shannon Selberg wouldn't mind a little cold. But that's why the former Cows frontman left Minneapolis for New York nearly two years ago.

"I'd been there my whole life, and every winter it became harsher and harsher. I just got sick of it," said Selberg, who returns to the 7th Street Entry on Sunday with a new group, the Heroine Sheiks.

The Cows' demise, 10 years after their debut album, marked the winding down of the local punk-noise scene. As part of a regional heritage that included the Suicide Commandos, Hüsker Dü and Otis's Chemical Lounge, the Cows differentiated themselves largely by Selberg's assumption of various roles, alternately sporting fake furs, suits, athletic gear or as little as shaving cream.

He planned to pursue writing and acting in New York, "but everywhere I went I was running into music people. . . . I had a hard time getting employment. It just seems that if you want to get into film acting you have to know someone. Eight or nine months went by, and I had to get my finger in something so I figured if I was in a band I might get something going."

Selberg began working with a friend, bassist George Porfiris, and auditioning other players. He also bought a Casio keyboard and began pounding out rhythms in his living room. Soon, the Heroine Sheiks were born, a group whose musical lineage is somewhat similar to the Cows' aggressively anxious diatribes, but is also a departure for Selberg.

"I didn't really write the songs for the Cows. I just wrote my parts," he said. "All these years I didn't consider myself a musician; I considered myself an entertainer. Everyone else in the Cows were the musicians."

The Heroine Sheiks have released a three-song, seven-inch single on the Cows' longtime label, Minneapolis-based Amphetamine Reptile Records. "(We Are The)" is a squalling autobiographical tale with over-the-top amplitude. On "Let's Fight," Selberg delivers a weary, deadpan rumination on a relationship as a keyboard rhythm breaks in to shine a little light on the grim lyrics. The biggest departure is "Swedish Fly," a bossa nova-flavored cut that speaks to Selberg's newfound comfort with his Casio.

With upward of 20 original songs, the Heroine Sheiks have been performing in New York clubs. "We've been filling every show," he said. "We get a lot of hip-hop guys and avant guys showing up at our shows that say, 'We don't even like rock, but we like this.'"

Casio or not, don't expect Selberg to tone down his act. "I still do what I do onstage; that's just naturally what I do when I perform," he says. "I could try and turn it down, but then I wouldn't be having such a good time."

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pulse 21  
ON THE PULSE

**U**nlike No Alternative hosted its Minneapolis-comes-to-New York party only a few blocks away, ex-Cow Shannon Selberg (who now calls New York his home) shook the walls at the infamous CBGB with his new group, Heroine Sheiks. Along with former members of the Swans and Sixteen Deluxe, Selberg delivered a whole-hearted hardcore set that, at one point, found the singer laying on his back shouting "Ouch-! Ouch-!" Fans of the Cows should definitely mark the Sheiks' upcoming Minneapolis gig on their calendars — this is something you've got to see.



## THE HEROINE SHEIKS

### “Siamese Pipe”

The HEROINE SHEIKS are proud to release their full-length Rubric debut, “SIAMESE PIPE” on October 1st. This long awaited album features ten songs of madness that could only be brought to you by one of NYC’s most exciting bands (as stated by Time Out New York).

SIAMESE PIPE is their second full-length album, but sophomore this band is not. Shannon Selberg started the Heroine Sheiks after the break-up of the Minneapolis-based Cows, one of America’s great degenerate punk-rock bands. He spent almost 12 years fronting them and with them released 9 full-length albums and countless EP’s. After Selberg formed the Heroine Sheiks in the spring of 1999, they quickly gained national attention due to constant touring and word of mouth praising the unpredictably outrageous and energetic shows that Selberg has always been known for. Amrep records released their first single, and the Reptilian records released their first album “RAPE ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN” in November of 2000.

SIAMESE PIPE was produced by Greg Gordon and recorded at Headgear Studios in Brooklyn. Much buzzed-about NYC artist LAZLO did the striking cover art. When asked about the new record in comparison to previous efforts, Selberg states, “It sounds much better and the songs are stronger—the loud ones are louder, the scary ones are scarier, and the “funny ones” are funnier, though much darker.” Many of the songs on this album such as “My Boss” and “Kiss It” have already become crowd favorites.

The lineup of the Heroine Sheiks today is only slightly varied from their original lineup. Eric Eble started out on keyboards during the brief absence of Scott Hill, and is now the bass player. He is also bassist in the Kings County Queens (also on Rubric Records) Guitarist Norman Westberg is a true legend after spending years in both The Swans and Foetus. Scott Hill plays keyboards and left the band for a brief hiatus so that he could be a dad. John Fell is on drums and is a veteran of many bands including China Shop, Velour, Polio Ponies and Kelly Township.

THE HEROINE SHEIKS are one of the hardest working bands today, and the progression of the band and visibly growing audiences are proof that hard work brings rewards.

“The Sheiks’ vaudeville theatrics combined with a damn sick sense of humor will either make you walk out of the club forever or become their biggest fan” – SEATTLE STRANGER

## Pulse of the Twin Cities

### Round the Dial

Wednesday 02 October @ 10:15:59

by Tom Hallett

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: “Punk rock (is) not for elevators. It’s not for your regular radio stations. It’s for the nighttime show. Where the guy plays what he wants, not what the programmers tell him to...it’s tapes that get handed from people to people. This is the bloodline of rock and roll...”

—Neil Young

SONG OF THE WEEK: “One O’ Clock High”

—Cows

It’s kinda weird how the music of Shannon Selberg has cruised in an’ outta my personal rock radar over the years. When I first began scribin’ for local ‘zine The Squealer in the mid-’90s, many of my more scene-hip co-workers chided me for not having caught the seminal Am Rep post-punk outfit the Cows—which singer/songwriter/bugle-blatter Selberg fronted for over a decade—live at one of their countless legendary Twin Cities performances. Luckily, I heeded their advice and made it a point to drag my ass out to some of the loudest, most overwhelming, brave-as-#@!#& rock and roll gigs to ever grace (well, maybe grace isn’t quite the right word here—let’s try conquer) a Minnesota club stage.

My first exposure to the infectious, seething mass of musical genius that was the Cows came from a home-made best-of compilation a pal threw together for me. It was cool #@!#&, to be sure, but without the live exposure, it was almost like trying to hear a painting. Walls of sonic thrash, howls of rage and pain, ear-splitting trills on the bugle, and downright hoodoo rhythms all combined to assault my senses to such a degree that I found myself fast-forwarding the tape to various segments of various songs (“Whitey In The Woodpile,” “I Miss Her Beer,” and “One O’ Clock High” were instant faves) and splicing together my own “Best Of Cows” with little pieces of said tunes. Turns out that was a good move—when I finally did catch the band out live, I had warped my mind to the appropriate degree and was able to wrap my head around the wall o’ sound and the whirling dervish on stage, and understand a little of the incredible, ant-like energy of the crowd around me.

It was at a Squealer Reader Appreciation night at Lee’s Liquor Bar in the Mill City, and the tension in the air was almost palpable. Though it was below zero outside, the bar was roasting. The dance floor was packed—despite arriving early and scoring a great spot up front, I was soon shoved, jostled, and elbowed until my back was flat against the rail surrounding the stage. At first I was pissed, but I soon realized that, had I been standing in any other area that night, I probably would’ve needed an ambulance. The band took the stage with no fanfare—just ran up and kicked out the jams. High as the temperature was in that room, I swear it went up another twenty degrees, as a hot, half-angry, half-joyful wind blew outta those amps and Selberg whirled and screeched and slobbered a ballsy tribute to all the best #@!#& rock has

ever had to offer; rebellion, teen angst, lust, disgust, rage, and mistrust. The crowd became one, a huge mass of unbridled energy, arms and legs and heads and necks flailing and entwining, a sea of leather, denim, combat boots, and sweat—oceans of sweat.

I barely recall the songs the band played that night—but in the end that didn't matter. The Cows weren't a band you went and sat politely through, tidily jotting down their setlist and clapping, whistling, or laughing at all the right moments. The Cows were pure, unadulterated %@!#\$%&ing rock and roll—and you either bent with the hurricane or were snapped in two like a twig. Not long after, they parted ways and I wondered what would become of such a wild, original character like Selberg—he obviously had the talent and the guts to bust outta the Cities, but would he ever find a lineup like Thor Eisentrager, Kevin and Sandris Rutmanis, Tony Oliveri, and Norm Rogers again? I heard he'd moved to NYC awhile back, and kinda put the band on the back burner of my brain.

Then, a few months ago, I was once again favored with a Selberg musical reunion of sorts at First Avenue's Rock And Roll Garage Sale. I found a mint copy of the "Slap Back"/"One O' Clock High" 45 in mint condition, with the original picture sleeve of that rascally, Boris Badanov-with-Bullwinkle-antlers guy on the cover. Recently, I bought a jukebox and was able to hear the Cows blasting outta 1975-era Rock-Ola speakers, the way they were meant to be heard. And I'm sure that's the coolest record that old juke has ever had the fortune of spinnin', too. But I digress. Not long after the garage sale, I started gettin' e-mails from folks buzzin' about Shannon's post-Cows outfit, The Heroine Sheiks. Well, kids, I'm thrilled to tellya that the band's second full-length (their first, Rape On The Installment Plan, was released in 2000 on Reptilian Records, and Am Rep put out their first single) absolutely kicks ass and was in stores as of yesterday.

Recorded and mixed by Greg Gordon at Headgear Studios in the Big Apple, Siamese Pipe (2002 Rubric Records) more than does justice to the legacy of Selberg's past. Though he's once again responsible for those brilliant, deviated lyrics, spine-chilling bugle blats, (if the Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse had an official herald, it would definitely be Shannon) and gruff, back-alley vocals, Selberg has managed to not only match the awesome power of the Cows, but to gather a band of top-notch musical freaks (the only kind that matter) to help him bring his own personal brand of chaos to mind-blowing, crotch-rattling life.

I'll tellya more about the album in a sec—but first, here's Shannon's take on his latest: "How does it compare with Rape On The Installment Plan? It sounds much better and the songs are stronger—plain and simple. The loud ones are louder, the scary ones are scarier, the "funny ones" are funnier, though much darker. It's a more daring CD lyrically and musically while at the same time sounding more (here's that dirty word) accessible, mainly because the parts are more stripped down and played more tightly. Overall, I'd say that it's the best album that I've been a part of."

Wow. Heavy words indeed from a guy who's released a slew of classic albums over the past 11 years. And not to take anything away from the Cows, but I think he just might be right. Maybe it's cuz I've already been (willingly and happily) damaged by

the man's music, but right from the get-go, Siamese Pipe is a brilliant, shimmering, twisting-and-turning rock 'n' roll trip (and I do mean trip) that's worth every second. Kicking off with the punk-scat riffage of "Army Brat," ("You know me/Global P.I.G./I am an army brat/My dick's a baseball bat/That oil's gotta flow, cuz I say so/Those %@!#\$&ers in Iraq/They got their %@!#\$& shellacked...") Selberg (if he wasn't already) has most certainly managed to get his name on the CIA's "Rock Freaks To Keep An Eye On" list with this album—but hey, so was John Lennon, so he's not in bad company.

"Grab The Wheel" is a funky, punky cheatin' tune, lumbering along with a chunky bass line and lyrics like, "I'm peakin'/I'm peakin' in my own damn room..." (Gasp!) Oh, no!! Not drug lyrics! Well, what the %@!#\$& do you expect from a band called The Heroine Sheiks and an album called Siamese Pipe? A rubber biscuit? This isn't music for politically correct, lame-ass white-bread tee-vee addicts, man. This %@!#\$& is scary—like all REAL rock an' roll is. Hell, like all real music is. But like a roller coaster or a tab of Purple Microdot, it's one cool ride for those who can stand the barenaked, unadulterated truth. On "Banger," Selberg appropriately recalls the gravelly vocals of Shel Silverstein-era Dr. Hook—specifically, dooper tunes like "Get My Rocks Off," "Freakin' At The Freaker's Ball," and "Gertrude The Groupie." Weird-ass whistling and kooky keyboards alternate with blasts of pure-dee guitar noise. Cool!

Album closer (if ya discount the freaky hidden track tacked on the end) "Mas Suicide" stands as a coherent, post-everything reply to Sammy "The Red Rocker" Hagar's mindless radio hit of a few years back, "Mas Tequila." In Selberg's world, people aren't sitting around on sunny beaches, quaffing expensive margaritas and checking their stocks on their palm pilots: Between pounding drums, driving bass, whining guitar, and monkey-ish cries of "Oooh! Oooh!" he spews lines like, "Since I was just a little tyke/I've kept on swingin' with all my might/My life's a shotgun, without a sight/And I say, mas suicide!"

And if there's any doubt left about the man's disgust, disdain, and disillusionment with the whole steaming pile of bull%@!#\$& that is today's America, he continues the rant with: "Folks, I tried that religion—but that ain't right/That Ooga-Booga, that's too uptight/Worse than the needle, worse than the pipe...the local men folks, they ain't too bright/Though there's a couple who read and write..." Think he's done? Naw, he ain't hit the weenies where it hurts yet: "I'm still tryin' with all my might/To end this journey into the night/The last two patrons started to fight/Cuz one yelled "Freebird"—one yelled 'That bites!' What more can I say after that? GO BUY THIS ALBUM NOW!! My only regret is not having the new stuff on 45 for my jukebox—but hell, I guess I can crank it up just fine on the home stereo; after all, the people who need to hear it the most are the ones who'll never read about it here. Until next time—make yer own damn news.

If you have local music news/gigs/events that you'd like to see listed in this column, send replies to: TMygunn777@aol.com.



The Heroine Sheiks  
Siamese Pipe  
[Rubric; 2002]  
Rating: 6.7

I really never saw Shannon Selberg as the poster boy for anything, aside from maybe one of the nastier forms of mental illness. As the voice of Minneapolis thrashers The Cows, he managed to swing requisite menace and a disarmingly arch, lowbrow wit at the same time, leveling both barrels at the oozing backalley/trailerpark underbelly of life. The ugly version of Americana Selberg wallowed in always used to strike me as a bit too extreme to represent reality (which, of course, was most of the fun); however, since the Cows split up, it seems like Selberg and America have been on the same road.

Take the first track on the second full-length from Selberg's first post-Cows project: "Army Brat" doesn't just nail the zeitgeist, it knocks it up and refuses to pay child support. Selberg hawks up lines like "I am an army brat/ My dick's a baseball bat/ That oil's gotta flow/ Cuz I say so, so so!" with utterly convincing belligerence, while ex-Swans/Foetus guitarist Norman Westberg crunches away like a T.Rex with a mouthful of Grape Nuts. As with everything Selberg's ever articulated in galvanic ultra-scumbag mode, you get the feeling he's either completely messing with you or sneaking up from behind with a loaded shotgun in his sweaty hands! If you laugh along with the song, you're aligning yourself with this maniac; if you ignore it, you're missing the point. Which puts it-- along with the Dead Kennedys' "Kill the Poor"-- in the ranks of the best sarcastic protest songs. But still: Shannon Selberg? A conscience?

Maybe not. All this newfound relevance doesn't imply that he's actually changed-- not for the better, at least. The Cows' concept of artistic development mainly involved learning to play their instruments; once they could claim some success on that front, they proceeded to tear down whatever they'd accomplished with a snowballing sense of self-parody a hell of a lot funnier than most. True to Selberg's primitivist intentions, it kept "art" at a safe distance. You'd think, though, that with a fresh start in a promising new band-- Westberg is ample replacement for Cows axeman Thor Eisentrager (minus the kickass rock name), and the John Fell/Eric Eble rhythmic axis is just as evil-- they wouldn't have that much to parody; they certainly don't have to lay it on this thick. And while the Heroine Sheiks still have a lot of things going for them, Selberg's recent keyboard fixation isn't one of them: When he's playing it like an actual instrument, as on the creeping noir narrative "Grab the Wheel", and during the frighteningly visceral pop violence of "Open You Up", it's good enough for flavor. As a noisemaker, though, it often sounds like a lump of plastic tossed around on the ocean of real skronk the Sheiks muster elsewhere.

While the band's leanings toward novelty actually complement some of the songs-- well-placed bicycle bells push their nigh-impossibly sleazy cover of Sonny Boy Williamson's "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" into twilight-zone pedophilia-- they just as often take the edge off of Selberg's ferocity. The album's redneck-baiting final track, "Mas Suicide", has the

makings of another sarcastic classic: Selberg growls "My life's a shotgun/ Without a sight"; arguments over "Freebird" escalate to homicide, etc. However, after a couple of wheezing synth interludes and unfortunate monkey-hoots from Selberg, the song loses enough of its razor focus to fade into another simple joke. Maybe it's just that over the past few years I've become desensitized by the flood of junk culture, but where Selberg once distinguished himself by perpetually sinking lower than America, in 2003, Uncle Sam's finally caught up.

-Brendan Reid, February 10th, 2003

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## Weekly Dig

### Siamese Pipe

by TC

Once the head hyena for bone-grinding racket mongers and Am Rep superstars The Cows, Shannon Selberg now preaches his Anglo-schizoid blues from the pulpit of The Heroine Sheiks. Not much has changed between the Sheiks debut and this second album. There's still the sizzling stink of a greasy brain hitting a hot skillet, and Selberg doesn't so much sing as he sounds like a ranting gas can looking for a match. But underneath all this twisted gargling lie tales of wrong doing, slicing, dicing, kissing and killing told by the numerous wounded personalities living behind his blackened eyes. Former Swans and Foetus guitarist Norman Westberg adds some serious slither, especially on the haunting slow burner "Let It Die" and the burbling sex beat of "Open You Up." "Kiss It," Selberg's paean to his cock, is probably the best tune here. With its piano jangle and dry-humping drums propelling the mix, it typifies Siamese Pipe's "inmates- taking-over-the-mental-ward" atmosphere. There is genius at work here, but not the kind you want to meet on the street or share a needle with. Like a splash of murderous sperm, the Sheik's breed bastard anthems for dangerous times. (Rubric Records)

Mark's Record Reviews  
Mark Prindle

Siamese Pipe – Rubric 2002

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OCTOBER 1ST - ONE OF THE BESTEST ROCK ALBUMS OF THE YEAR IS SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE ON THAT DAY!!!!!!

NO! I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT STEPHEN STILLS' SONGS FOR SURVIVORS! THAT COMES OUT ON JULY 30th. JESUS CHRIST, GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF MY ASS! WHAT THE HELL KIND OF NEIGHBOR ARE YOU? NO WONDER YOUR DAD PUT THAT STUPID COMMANDMENT IN THERE!

But enough rib-tickling religious buffoonery. Last Saturday night, July 13th, 2002 (I remember the date clearly because it was four days before my 29th birthday – thanks for nothing, ASSHOLE), I picked up my Paul McCartney and Wings fanbook from 1977 and headed on down to Brownie's. No no, it's not a dessert café, you silly sasser! It's a soon-to-be closing NYC musical club. My goal was to enjoy a fine outing by what is probably NYC's finest band (though I can't say for sure, having only heard 1 or 2 other NYC bands), The Heroine Sheiks (the name of the band is a hilarious pun. Just like "Foghat" would be if it meant anything). I couldn't wait to see this killer line-up of ex-Cows singer Shannon Selberg, ex-Swans guitarist Norman Westberg, ex-Replacements leader Paul Westerberg, late Mad Magazine cartoonist Dave Berg, legendary pimp Slim Iceberg and soft rock sensation Dan Fogelberg.

HAHAHAH! I WAS JUST MAKING A BIT OF "BERG" HUMOR FOR YOU!!!! NONE OF THOSE PEOPLE ARE IN THE BAND AT ALL!!!!

). I couldn't wait to see this killer line-up of ex-Cows singer Shannon Selberg, ex-Swans guitarist Norman Westberg, ex-China Shop drummer John Fell (personally I can't believe they let him drum in the shop as long as they did – especially after that "recreating Keith Moon's kit using nothing but plates" incident!), ex-King County Queens bassist Eric Eble and ex-tra special keyboardist Scott "Scooter" Hill. But enough about the band that I'm purportedly talking about. Let's get back to talking about me some more.

I arrived and took a standing position right by the fire exit so I could read my Paul McCartney and Wings book by the fading sunlight. Two opening acts played as I read to my little heart's content (why is my heart so little? Because YOU NEVER LET ME HAVE A TEDDY BEAR!!!!), and finally! I jumped up on top of the crowd and walked on everybody's head until I was at the front of the stage. And out they came – Norman, looking like a creepy dirty old man with a mustache and more tattoos than an entire season of Fantasy Island (zinger?). Scott Scooter, still bulky with long hair, a full beard, denim jeans and denim jacket, inspiring fond memories of "(Everybody Wants To Do) The Horizontal Bop" while challenging all laws of it being really really hot as hell in the club. John, the ol' grease monkey in his funny Tide Detergent T-shirt (I think it was Tide, but I was so high on life, it's hard to remember). The new bass player Eric was next, and a more normal looking young man you're not going to meet!

What is he doing in the Heroine Sheiks? (Answer: Riding on their Shirttails to MTV Freedom!). And finally, the spokesman of the band himself, Shannon Selberg, carrying on his crazy stage performer tradition by walking on wearing a bicycle helmet and gauze on both shins! Or was it? No – it just looked like a bicycle helmet! It was actually a plastic bag with a rubber band around it. But it looked like a bicycle helmet! I know it sounds strange, but it's true! I'm not the only one who thought so! Ask that guy that was standing next to me!

So the show began, and at 12:10 AM or so, the HS (Ham Sandwich) blasted into a brand new punk rock song called "Army Brat." Built around John Fell's fast-as-nails "skins" slammin'g', Eric's flippity-flop bass line and Norman's "not-nearly-as-depressing-as-every-single-song-that-his-former-band-ever-recorded" woopy-up guitar slide, it TORE ME A NEW ASSHOLE! No – I should avoid hyperbole – I can't actually pass waste through the hole. But it is there! Just lift up my balls and take a look! See it?

Look, I may not know gonorrhea when I see it, but I know ROCK AND ROLL. And these guys ROCKED. Next was the classic near-instrumental "Jew Jitsu" from their debut. Shannon "struck" pose's," Mr. Denim danced a happy dance, Storming Norming cranked scratchy noises out of his axe-go-play and the crowd reeled and freeled (speaking of "freeling," my ninth grade English teacher was named Mrs. Freels – I bet she got FREELED all the time, if you know what I mean!).

(No wait, that's not how you spell the word – what is the – Ah yes! Here it is – "Fucked.").

Third you'd find "Nuclear Jeannie," one of the best songs ever. Blue Oyster Cult sci-fi electric fuzzy buzz for the Oughts, with Scott's noise-synth coming as close to playing actual musical NOTES as it ever will! And finally they rounded off the set with a cover of "Little Schoolgirl," a standard by legendary bluesman Sonny Bono Williamson.

But they weren't done yet! Because the crowd was so appreciative, they played MORE than just those four songs! Next was a goofy, out of tune new one called "Kiss It" with a great bass line. But don't rest on your la I'm bored with this.

After the show, I went backstage and stole 500,000 copies of their freshly recorded album number two by the Heroine Sheiks, kind of their Led Zeppelin II in that it was their second album. Entitled Siamese Pipe, it features "a lot of murder and mayhem," as some critic somewhere will undoubtedly say, as well as big-league late-period Cows-style production (!), ripping apart the Rape On The Installment Plan glut of incomprehensible noise into clear drums, crisp guitar, thundering bass, shiny bright cruddy keyboard noises and vocals so loud, you can actually make them out for a change! The songwriting is as magnificent as before, with speed demon punk rockers "Army Brat," "My Boss" and the STUNNING "Mas Suicide" (a cowpunk "cuntery" song concerning the fatigue and depression of playing great songs to crowds of next to nobody for 15 years) bringing youthful slamdancey goodtimes to a record otherwise full of dark spy/blues intrigue ("Grab The Wheel," "3-Banger," "Little Schoolgirl" and "Best Enemies"),

ridiculously funny joke songs (the sexy funk rock anthem “Open You Up,” which puts the “ball” in “cannibalism,” if you spell “cannibalism” wrong --and “Kiss It,” a set of dopey lyrics probably about a penis, sung in tune with an atrociously WRONG keyboard line while a steady, dramatic bass line rolls away in the background – when you’re finally able to get a copy of this CD, take note of how many times Shannon does that hilarious “YyyyyOU’VE!” thing with his mouth. To what end? To what purpose is his “YyyyyOU’VE!”? Probably about the same purpose as the little bicycle bell he keeps tapping in “Little School-girl”) and, just when you most expect it, a melancholy organ/bass duet called “Let It Die” – which they played in concert, by the way, right after Shannon kept trying to hit me in the eye with his damn bullwhip during “Wandering Mongrel.” So musically it’s great. Productionally it’s fantastic. But what about lyrically?

At the risk of being anticlimactic, there are some killer (murderer) stories on here too. “3-Banger” subtly draws a comparison between an aging, disrespected assassin and... well, I didn’t catch it, but maybe you will. It’s clever! “Best Enemies” says what it has to say about a former friend. And boy does he burst the damgates wide open with the tense dark comedy of “Grab The Wheel,” which concerns the unpleasant evening of a man who (a) watches his lover make sex with another guy, (b) contemplates murder or suicide, (c) gets mugged, (d) watches the mugger tell a cop that the narrator had actually been robbing him and (e) grabs the cop’s gun and threatens to march them ALL into his lover’s room for a mass murder. Thanks for the mammaries!

I know the song doesn’t have any mention of breasts – but I feel it’s important to remind women of the importance of regular breast cancer checkups. I’m talkin’ to YOU, Red Cross! Thanks for the mammary exams!

So essentially what you and the world are asking me to do is make a choice between two CDs that I consider near perfect expressions of the kind of sounds I enjoy. Only one can get the 10. And, just as I had to do on my Fugazi page, I’m simply going to pick the one I think really cheap pricks should buy, even though if they were REAL rock fans, they’d take a second job at night (male prostitute) so they could afford to buy both. Well, I guess I’ll pick Rape, but for this reason alone: the new one is mixed like a normal well-produced punk/noise/metal/rock album; the last one was mixed like nothing I’ve ever heard in my life. You’ll just stare at your speakers and go, “?”

At which point that guy who sang “96 Tears” will go, “Yeah, what do you need?”

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by CP Staff

### A Cow Comes Home

DESPITE REPEATED PANS in the national press, Minneapolis legends the Cows became one of the biggest punk draws in the Midwest by sticking to a brand of degenerate noise lunacy devoid of riffs or melodies--and just when alt-rock was going pop. Wearing hand-drawn Sharpie tattoos, women’s underwear, and dollops of whipped cream, frontman Shannon Selberg wielded his little dented bugle with maniacal urgency, spitting lyrics fans are still trying to sort out. The group remained jagged right up until they went on semipermanent (and unofficial) hiatus last year.

Now living in New York City, Selberg says the tradition of maligning the Cows has carried over to his new band the Heroine Sheiks. “The press here makes a point of mentioning our shows on their calendars just so they can put us down,” laughs Selberg, though that hasn’t kept a buzz from reaching old fans.

The group’s first EP, “(We Are The) Heroine Sheiks” (on Minneapolis’s Amphetamine Reptile Records), continues along the path of the Cows’ last album, 1998’s Sorry in Pig Minor, with its structured cacophony punctuated by seemingly random horn bleats and Selberg’s crazed free-associations. Buried in the EP is a little Herb Alpert-esque gem called “Swedish Fly,” a tune completely out of whack with the preceding cloud of musical distemper. “I was just jerking around on my Casio and came up with that song,” says Selberg. “It’s got that salsa flavor, because that’s the setting I used on the Casio: salsa.”

Is it a flash-forward glimpse of Selberg at 60, gigging in a Vegas casino? “I suppose if I was old and worked in a warehouse and nobody knew about me or cared about me, I might do something like that,” he confesses. “That might be fun. But that’s not a showbiz goal for me. I aim for loftier things.” (Holly Day)

The Heroine Sheiks

Siamese Pipe

[Rubric; 2002]

Rating: 6.7

I really never saw Shannon Selberg as the poster boy for anything, aside from maybe one of the nastier forms of mental illness. As the voice of Minneapolis thrashers The Cows, he managed to swing requisite menace and a disarmingly arch, lowbrow wit at the same time, leveling both barrels at the oozing backalley/trailerpark underbelly of life. The ugly version of Americana Selberg wallowed in always used to strike me as a bit too extreme to represent reality (which, of course, was most of the fun); however, since the Cows split up, it seems like Selberg and America have been on the same road.

Take the first track on the second full-length from Selberg's first post-Cows project: "Army Brat" doesn't just nail the zeitgeist, it knocks it up and refuses to pay child support. Selberg hawks up lines like "I am an army brat/ My dick's a baseball bat/ That oil's gotta flow/ Cuz I say so, so so!" with utterly convincing belligerence, while ex-Swans/Foetus guitarist Norman Westberg crunches away like a T.Rex with a mouthful of Grape Nuts. As with everything Selberg's ever articulated in galvanic ultra-scumbag mode, you get the feeling he's either completely messing with you or sneaking up from behind with a loaded shotgun in his sweaty hands! If you laugh along with the song, you're aligning yourself with this maniac; if you ignore it, you're missing the point. Which puts it-- along with the Dead Kennedys' "Kill the Poor"-- in the ranks of the best sarcastic protest songs. But still: Shannon Selberg? A conscience?

Maybe not. All this newfound relevance doesn't imply that he's actually changed-- not for the better, at least. The Cows' concept of artistic development mainly involved learning to play their instruments; once they could claim some success on that front, they proceeded to tear down whatever they'd accomplished with a snowballing sense of self-parody a hell of a lot funnier than most. True to Selberg's primitivist intentions, it kept "art" at a safe distance. You'd think, though, that with a fresh start in a promising new band-- Westberg is ample replacement for Cows axeman Thor Eisentrager (minus the kickass rock name),

and the John Fell/Eric Eble rhythmic axis is just as evil-- they wouldn't have that much to parody; they certainly don't have to lay it on this thick. And while the Heroine Sheiks still have a lot of things going for them, Selberg's recent keyboard fixation isn't one of them: When he's playing it like an actual instrument, as on the creeping noir narrative "Grab the Wheel", and during the frighteningly visceral pop violence of "Open You Up", it's good enough for flavor. As a noisemaker, though, it often sounds like a lump of plastic tossed around on the ocean of real skronk the Sheiks muster elsewhere.

While the band's leanings toward novelty actually complement some of the songs-- well-placed bicycle bells push their nigh-impossibly sleazy cover of Sonny Boy Williamson's "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" into twilight-zone pedophilia-- they just as often take the edge off of Selberg's ferocity. The album's redneck-baiting final track, "Mas Suicide", has the makings of another sarcastic classic: Selberg growls "My life's a shotgun/ Without a sight"; arguments over "Freebird" escalate to homicide, etc. However, after a couple of wheezing synth interludes and unfortunate monkey-hoots from Selberg, the song loses enough of its razor focus to fade into another simple joke. Maybe it's just that over the past few years I've become desensitized by the flood of junk culture, but where Selberg once distinguished himself by perpetually sinking lower than America, in 2003, Uncle Sam's finally caught up.

-Brendan Reid, February 10th, 2003

Heroine Sheiks Website <http://www.heroinesheiks.com>

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