

# NASTYFACTS



**BRAD CRAIG**  
GUITAR

**GENJI SEARIZAK**  
DRUMS VOCALS

**JEFF RANGE**  
GUITAR VOCALS

**CHERL BOYZE**  
BASS VOCALS

I'm not as drunk as I look. I'm not as stoned as I seem. I'd rather dance than read a book.

I'd rather drive my car than dream. Drive my car...

Drive my car...

Drive my car...

Drive my car...

Drive my car...

**MRR: Was it your first band?**  
Kali Boyce: Yes.

**MRR: How old were you?**  
Kali Boyce: Twelve or so.

**MRR: So, how did it come together?**  
Kali Boyce: Brad and Jeff used to play with this other kid, a boy of color who had a cute big sis who I was crushed out on. Brad, Jeff, and that kid were forming a band of their own. Suddenly, my big crush and her family moved to another state, which left us all sad sacks, y'know? I saw Jeff and Brad in one of the rooms at school, basically bumming about not having a bassist anymore and so I said, "Oh yeah, I play bass. I could be in your band." I think I'd maybe held a bass once or twice to try to impress that girl. Anyway, after school that day, I went to my mom and said, "I need a bass and an amp, I need to be in this band." And she actually said OK. She took me down to a pawnshop and we got a used Harmony bass and a Kalamazoo amp. That was pretty much the beginning of Nasty Facts.

**MRR: That's cool that you all even had a practice space even though you were all so young!**

Kali Boyce: Playing loud and fast in Genji's basement was way more fun than kicking it in the projects. I grew up in Fort Greene, Brooklyn but I always felt at odds there; I was queer, I was punk, I looked and felt like a strange little boy/grrrl. Later in life I found a phrase for it: "Two Spirit." Now I consider myself a "no-op," trans man who performs in boy drag—a natural progression from awkward baby butch punk rocker!

**MRR: What year did Nastyfacts form?**

Kali Boyce (aka King TuffNStuff): 1975, I think. I met Brad and Jeff at grade school in Brooklyn Heights. I picked up the bass and began teaching myself how to play. Genji started teaching himself to drum about then too. He got a drum kit and he had a basement in Park Slope where we hung out and played all the time. Back then we were called Pandemonium and we were a cover band.

Interview by Osa Atoe

**MRR: So your mom supported you playing music. Was she a musician?**

Kali Boyce: My mom and pops were in a swing band together, that's how they met. Music was always around when I was growing up, from as far as I can remember. Mom loved calypso music. My dad was from Barbados and played piano—yes, we had a rickety old piano in that teeny apartment in the projects! Also, my three half-sisters were teenagers who loved their Motown so I was surrounded by music all the time, on the radio, on the record player. Mom was constantly singing and cooking or cleaning and so we all sang.

**MRR: But Nastyfacts was your first time actually playing music for other people?**

Kali Boyce: Well, I first played in public at a school concert when I was nine. I played the soprano recorder from 4th grade on. Baroque music believe it or not, so naturally, I had to rebel! Nastyfacts was pure fun. We started out covering a lot of Kiss songs, which, lucky for me, were so easy to play on bass that I started out thinking I was a bad ass because I learned like all of their songs in a week!

**MRR: Did you write any of the songs for Nastyfacts?**

Kali Boyce: I wrote and sang all three of the songs on our first record. We all wrote songs for NastyFacts but we agreed on which three songs would go on the EP. All three songs ["Drive My Car," "Crazy 'Bout You," and "Gotta Get to You"] were my originals [that I wrote in my room on a piece of crap guitar that only had three strings, I shit you not. That's me singing lead vocals, with Genji howling on back up vocals. But it took us a while to really start writing originals. There was another local band called the Speedies who thought we were cool for a bunch of kids and gave us some extremely helpful tips really early on—like, if you want to start playing in night clubs youse gotta write your own songs. So we all started writing and each of us in the band wrote a song for our first demo. We shopped it to clubs, and started gigging in New York City.

**MRR: Who put out your 7"?**

Kali Boyce: Ramona Jan produced it and Jim Reynolds had an indie label called Jimboco. So our 7" EP single with three songs on it was born.

**MRR: What were Nastyfacts shows like?**

Kali Boyce: We started out playing house parties and school dances, moved on to playing clubs—CBGB's, Max's Kansas City, and other long-gone night clubs in Manhattan and Jersey where, apparently, nobody gave a shit that we were way underage! Our first club show was at CBGB's. And we played Max's Kansas City on the regular! I remember playing shows with bands like ESG from the Bronx and the Stimulators. I think the clubs would try to book us with bands that had something in common with us. The Stimulators had an eleven-year-old drummer named Harley who went on to Cro-Mags fame, and ESG were peeps of color and so damn cool! Those were good times! But it was getting a slot opening for the Bad Brains that changed my life! I was fifteen or so—the oldest in the band—and we all knew that we wanted to play music for life. Peter Crowley [of Max's Kansas City] and Hilly at CBGB's treated us like we were their spawn. They booked us monthly and paid us right. They offered advice about stuff and things in the NY scene. What a way to grow up, huh? Looking back on those days now, I realize how much support and encouragement we got from the adults around us. Other musicians, club owners, and even our parents were pretty cool...so long as I kept up with my homework! We were a working band but still we had school and stuff that we had no control over. But our songs, that was all on us and we all dove in, full on, for Nastyfacts. Who needs sleep? It was good times!

**MRR: Those are amazing experiences at any age, but especially at fifteen! Did you get to interact with the ladies of**

**ESG much? What were they like? What was the Bad Brains show like?**

Kali Boyce: I thought ESG was the coolest and funkiest of the bands on the "punk" scene! They were family and tight with each other and we were a bunch of kids, but they were sweet folks and treated everyone with respect. And they were people of color which was so rare to see back then in the scene! Really, going to CBGB's and Max's was like swimming in a sea of scruffy Caucasian bio-boys. ESG was unique in so many ways. Like, they were way laid back and it came through in their music! Sexy grooves and off kilter beats! I still listen to 'em! And then came the Bad Brains. Opening for them gave me a whole new perception of what it meant to be a freak of color! Everyone respected the Bad Brains—whites, blacks, everybody knew they were the shit!

**MRR: What was it like be a black kid in a predominantly white scene seeing this phenomenal all-black band?**

Kali Boyce: They made me feel so proud to be a POC [person of color] punk. I mean a whole new sense of pride and power! It was not easy being a punk of color back then. And, seriously, there were no other out queers of color to be found—I was on my own there. But the Bad Brains doing what they did so well gave me a new perspective on life—be yourself proudly and with a passion. Do whatever ya gotta do but do it really, really well or perish! Countless kids probably quit trying after seeing the Bad Brains 'cause they were so good! Like blow-your-mind-to-bits good! Seeing them lit a fire under me, mos def! I love NYC because I grew up in a place where a fifteen-year-old baby dyle daddy can play in a nightclub and open for the Bad Brains!

**MRR: It's cool that you're saying that because I've been thinking and writing about how important it is for black punks to see other black punks and for ladies and queers to see other girl/queer bands. I know it's kind of an obvious thing, but so many queer punks and punks of color never get to see people like themselves in punk, except for seeing obscure videos or reading books about bands or people who existed in the past. I feel like in the past few years that's changed a lot, though. So when did you first realize you were queer?**

Kali Boyce: I figured out I liked girls when I was around five years old. But I didn't come out to my family till I was seventeen, and that was only after I'd moved out to my own space in Greenwich Village. I came out to my closest friends when I was fourteen or fifteen. It didn't really surprise anyone. I'd always been called a "tomboy," a jock 'cause I played basketball, tennis, soccer, track, and I was often mistaken for a bio-boy from a very young age. Can you say "baby-butch"? Maybe it's my ego but in my 20s I realized that I might have had more luck in the scene had I been born male and not a baby butch daddy of African-American descent. But I am who I am and I realized that I had to be me, I had no choice, eh? So I just kept steppin' and "devil be damned" was my attitude. My coming out, it was pretty anti-climactic. I was always and obviously butch. When I told my mom I was gay she said, "Aw, I know that since you were knee high to a grasshopper." I asked why she'd let me stress over it for so long and she said she hadn't wanted to influence me one way or the other. Anyway, she was accepting about it all—coolest mom in town!

**MRR: I'd say that 90% of all of the people of color I know through punk are queer. Do you feel like you gravitated toward punk because you were looking for other queers or was it basically just the music that got you into it?**

Kali Boyce: Back in the late '70s there were no queers of color to gravitate towards! I was pulled by the feeling of freedom—the DIY attitude. I am thankful that I was a pre-teen when punk rock began and that I had the dumb luck and guts to plug into the scene! I wouldn't trade growing up in NY for anything! There was Greenwich

Village but definitely no QPOC [queer people of color] scene. I felt on my own but all my friends were kid freaks too and NY is a big place so we had each other.

**MRR:** So nowadays, punk has broken up into all these different sub-scenes. Like, in some towns, if you're lucky, you'll find a queer punk scene. From what you're saying, nothing like that really existed in the late '70s NYC punk scene and maybe you had to deal with being the only queer kid in the room or the only black punk rocker in the room plenty of times. How did you cope with your unique identities at the time?

Kali Boyce: I was trying to figure out what to do with myself as a queer. I was a baby butch and felt at odds with the lesbians I'd meet in clubs. Hell, "queer" wasn't even an accepted term by gay folks back then, but I always felt queer—at odds with everyone. Punk rock suited me just fine—I felt more relaxed letting my freak flag fly. Not trying to assimilate but trying to find, and just be, me. Back in the day, we looked so crazy to most folk that we were rarely harassed, which is saying a lot in NYC! After a while I'd get recognized as "the chick in that punk band" on the streets of Manhattan. It was kind of flattering and I felt respected.

**MRR:** So it was all worth it?

Kali Boyce: Being a punk back then made me the person I am today. I love it! I am a

originals and I have a great time doing it! I've been gigging a lot as of late and I have no intention of stopping! I love playing slide on my resonator and no musical genre is out of reach. I'll play anything—Zep, James Brown, Lead Belly, Robert Johnson, I just love being able to make music. Lucky for me I have always loved a challenge. That's probably why I'm still making music today because, seriously, this shit ain't easy to keep doing, though it's sure 'nuff fun!

**MRR:** What kinds of shows have you been playing as TuffNStuff?

Kali Boyce: Most recently, I performed in and was a co-collaborator for a production in SF funded by the National Queer Arts Festival and Mangos with Chili called QPOCalyapse Now. I really got to stretch in this one—I danced, I played a Baptist preacher, and I even got to play a "businessman zombie" in a scene! Life is so good! TuffNStuff wrote a tune for it called "Howl" that I'm really proud of! Anyway, I feel I'm blessed to be me in this day and age and I'm so happy to still be alive and kicking it. Now I've got a community of amazing, fierce, and talented queer peeps of color to kick it with! Check me out at [www.kingluffnstuff.com](http://www.kingluffnstuff.com) anytime! Send me song suggestions! I'm always adding new ones to my set list and I'll try any song once.

performance artist now and I go by the name TuffNStuff. The Las! Delta Drag King. I play resonator guitar and (still) sing originals and some covers. Basically, I play what I want, from Nina Simone to the Cramps to

