

# RUKUS

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# 20

QUESTIONS WITH

## Erika Medina

GAMES REVIEWED

MASS EFFECT 3

TWISTED METAL

Exclusive Coverage  
Of Monsters and Men,  
Andrew W.K. and  
VNV Nation

The Need For Speed  
2013 Koenigsegg Agera R

ALBUM REVIEWS



E-40

Welcome To The Soil 1, 2, & 3



Bruce Springsteen

Wrecking Ball

**R**  
April 2012





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Hair & make-up by Joanna Berdzinska



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# 20 QUESTIONS

## Get To Know Your Cover Model

# *Erika Medina*

Photography by Andrew Gates  
Make-up & hair by Joanna Berdzinska

Erika Medina was born in Hawaiian Gardens, California. Her beauty is a reflection of her Mexican ethnicity. Her dream of modeling came at a young age where she would page through her mother's magazines, admiring the beautiful models. Her actual modeling career started in 2006 when a friend dared Erika to send some photos of herself to magazines. Three months later she made her modeling debut in a national magazine. The rest, as they say, is history. Erika quit her job, got a manager and got serious about making a name for herself in the modeling industry. She's graced the covers or been featured in countless magazines, made several TV appearances and been a part of numerous music videos. Currently, you can find Erika on tour with Monster Energy Drink as a spokesmodel. With a currently-blossoming career, there's no telling where she'll end up. All we know is, she has the looks, personality and drive to make anything possible.







# 20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model Cont'd





# 20 QUESTIONS

## 1.What's your Ethnicity?

I am full Mexican. Though, I do get confused for other ethnicities.

## 2.What's your zodiac sign?

I am a Capricorn. So I am a sensitive girl and possibly one of the most stubborn people you will ever meet.

## 3.Where are you from originally?

I am originally from Anaheim, CA. I moved closer to LA once I started my acting and modeling career.

## 4.What did you like most about growing up in Anaheim, CA?

I loved that I was right by Disneyland, of course. So I got to see Mickey a lot. I also loved that I wasn't far from the beach. It's one of my favorite places! I love laying out with my girls and going to bonfires.

## 5.What kind of mischief did you get into growing up?

Mischief? Me? Never! I was actually a good girl growing up. The worst thing I did was sneak out of the house to go to a few parties. Never got caught...well, unless my mom happens to read this. If that's the case, thanks for asking that question!

## 6.What's the craziest thing you've ever done?

Hmm...I have always had a fear of roller coasters. I had some friends drag me to Six Flags Magic Mountain and I actually got on most of the rides. It was crazy for me given that I faced my fear of roller coasters. I actually had a lot of fun and can't wait to go back.

## 7.What's your favorite hobby and why?

I love watching movies, especially at the theater. It's like visual studying for me. I like comedies, dramas, thrillers, etc. I'm a sucker for Leonardo Dicaprio, Natalie Portman and Jennifer Aniston movies.

## 8.What's your guilty pleasure?

Watching the E! Channel. I like keeping up with entertainment. I love The Soup and Fashion Police. Joel McHale and Joan Rivers are hilarious! Oh, and Hot Cheetos, too.

## 9.Who do you admire?

Anyone who is following their dream. I meet so many people that work hard to follow their dream. I respect and admire that very much.

## 10.What's one of your personal goals?

I have a lot of personal goals that I would like to achieve but, I would say breaking in to movies. I have done TV shows and would love to start doing movies.

## 11.What do guys compliment you on the most?

I always get the "You have beautiful eyes" or " I love your smile." A lot of my girl friends tell me I have very nice boobs. And yes, the girls are real.

## 12.What's your favorite body part on yourself?

I would say my top three are my face, my boobs and my booty.

## 13.What's your least favorite body part on yourself?

[laughs] Nice try! I can't tell you that one! Then people will start to look!

## 14.What do you look for in a guy?

I think confidence is important. Nice eyes and smile, too. Someone kind, caring and he HAS to be able to make me laugh!

## 15.What's the first thing you notice about a guy?

I would say his smile.

## 16.What's your ideal first date?

Something fun and chill. Like dinner and bowling or something.

## 17.What turns you on?

Confidence and a sense of humor.

## 18.What turns you off?

Cocky and rude people...they suck.

## 19.What's your biggest pet peeve?

People that have no manners. Being rude is a great way to turn me off.

## 20.Who's your celebrity pass?

Justin Timberlake, Chris Evans and Dave Franco.

RM



# PIT PASS

Get In The Driver's Seat

## Breakin' Records

By Nicolas Bates

Before the Bugatti Veyron blew us away with its massive 12-cylinder engine and 253 mile per hour Guinness speed record, another car held that record—a smaller, more agile car. The Swedish-born Koenigsegg CCR pushed the boundaries of a V8 and was rewarded with a Guinness record of 241 miles per hour before anyone had even heard of the Veyron. Next, came its older brother, the Koenigsegg Agera: a sleeker and even more agile twin-turbo V8. And now, Koenigsegg releases what is to be known as the Agera R, with even more power and carbon fiber than the Agera and CCR.

Overall, the Agera R keeps the majority of its looks from the previous generation of Ageras. It is still extremely reminiscent of the Pagani Zonda, with its stub-nose front end and long, wide rear. This year, the Agera R will be offered with a removable hard top that can be stowed away within the car—nothing essential or groundbreaking, but rarely (if ever) done with a car in this genre. For the 2013 Agera R, physical changes include: carbon area on the front bonnet and bumper, new front-side winglets and Aircore carbon fiber wheels. The Aircore carbon fiber wheels are a solid, one-piece wheel constructed entirely from carbon fiber. In fact, that only metal that can be found on the wheel is the valve stem. With this technology, the wheels now weigh less than 40% of their previous weight.

Although the Agera R remains mostly unchanged, it did receive a bit of a boost in power for the 2013 model. Still running a twin-turbo aluminum 5.0L V8, 4 valves per cylinder, DOHC powerplant, it is now capable of 1,140 horsepower at 7,100 rpm (with a redline of 7,500 rpm) and 885 ft.-lb. of torque; translating to over 200 more horsepower and 75 more ft.-lb. of torque. Engine compression gets a slight bump from 8.9:1 to 9:1, but still remains extremely low due to high turbo pressure. The Agera R also possibly has the most carbon fiber within its structure than any other high-performance vehicle. Utilizing a carbon fiber with aluminum honeycomb monocoque, a curb weight (all fluids and 50% fuel) of 3,157 lb. becomes possible.





## SPECS

### 2013 Koenigsegg Agera R

Price:	Unknown
Engine:	Twin-Turbo 5.0L V8
Torque:	885 ft/lb
Horsepower:	1,140 hp
0-62 MPH:	2.9 secs.
Top Speed:	273 mph
EST. MPG:	Unknown
Available:	Contact Koenigsegg



With its gargantuan amount of horsepower and torque, coupled with its light weight, Koenigsegg is claiming the Agera R can reach a top speed of 273 mph, with a 0-62 mph speed of 2.9 seconds. To combat inertia, the Agera R is outfitted with ventilated ceramic discs (397 mm, 40 mm wide) with six-piston calipers up front, and ventilated ceramic discs (80 mm, 34mm wide) with four-piston calipers in the rear.

The Agera R stands out for many reasons; however, one that is highly commendable is that Koenigsegg is known for attempting to be somewhat of a "green" company. The Agera R can, and was designed to run on E85 fuel (but can easily run on 95 octane as well). Among standout features like what kind of fuel it can run on, the Agera R has much more to offer. For this year's Agera R, Christian von Koenigsegg has developed the Triplex rear suspension, which "works in series with the normal springs and dampers, allowing their spring and damping rates to be lowered. This results in increased comfort and better handling on rough and wet surfaces without compromising dry track handling." The car is also outfitted with traction control with five different modes, stability control, solid-state semiconductors (no fuses or relays), dual airbags, 4-point racing harnesses, power windows and navigation, among other amenities.

Currently deemed the world's quickest car, we will see if the Agera R can attain another Guinness speed record, leaving the Veyron a thing of the past. The Agera R, however, is much more than just a rocket-turned-car. The Agera R is a finely tuned, highly-specialized vehicle with cutting edge technology and looks to kill. It is said that Koenigsegg will be manufacturing a North American spec Agera R, so keep your eyeballs peeled for it. Because if you do see it, it may be gone before you realize what it is.

RM





## 20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model Cont'd





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**20 QUESTIONS**  
Your Cover Model, Cont'd

Mischief?  
Me?  
NEVER!



## 20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model Cont'd

### STATS:

Birthday: January 1

Height: 5' 3"

Weight: 120 lbs.

Measurements: 34C-25-36

See more of Erika at  
[Facebook.com/ErikaMedina11](https://www.facebook.com/ErikaMedina11)



# WORK IT OUT

Your Guide to Personal Fitness

*Fitness Guru*  
**Amy  
Lynn  
Grover**

Providing guidance on health, fitness and nutrition.

## Nutritional Nugget

### Banana Oat Pancakes

1½ Cups oatmeal (I like Bob's Red Mill Thick Rolled Organic Oats)  
1 Banana  
1½ Cups almond milk (unsweetened)  
1 Tablespoon canola oil  
3 eggs or egg whites  
Pinch of salt  
½ cup oat, rice or barley flour  
1 Teaspoon baking powder

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Directions: Combine the milk, banana and oats in a food processor on low. Next, add the oil and eggs; turn up to medium. Lastly, add the flour, baking powder and salt, turn on high for a quick minute to make sure it's all mixed, but don't over-blend. Bake on a hot, lightly oiled griddle or pan, flip when the bubbles in the pancakes pop. Serve with real maple syrup or agave.

Serves 4: Approximately 300 calories per serving, 12 grams of protein.





### Side Lunge and Obliques

Works: abs, obliques, hips, butt and thighs

1 a) Stand feet hip-width apart, plant your right foot and take a giant step out to the side with your left side bending through your left knee into side lunge (toes pointed forward), hands straight out in front or "in prayer."

1 b) Push through your left foot to return to standing straight up on right leg, crunch your right elbow to left knee (for 1 rep, repeat 12x). Switch sides.



### Lunge with Front Kick

Works: abs, hips, butt, hamstrings and thighs

2 a) Stand feet hip-width apart, step right foot back (straight) into a low lunge, (option 1: hands come to the floor to stabilize; option 2: arms straight up beside ears)

2 b) Engage the left leg and glute as you stand up, kick the right leg forward for 1 rep, step back into the lunge to continue into rep 2, repeat 12x. Switch sides.





# ALL ACCESS

## The Latest Albums Reviewed

# The Boss is Back

Written by Dan Sinclair

Okay, New Jersey, time to forget about Snooki and rejoice: Bruce Springsteen has a new album! *Wrecking Ball* is the seventeenth studio album from the Boss of America's blue-collared faithful. Though some may be disappointed that not all members of Bruce's E Street Band helped record, many will be pleased to know *Sopranos* actor Stevie Van Zandt, Conan O'Brien's band leader Max Weinberg and Bruce's wife Patti Scialfa were all heavily featured alongside the recently deceased Clarence Clemons. The album was produced by Ron Aiello and Springsteen himself.

*Wrecking Ball* kicks off with the familiar sounds of "We Take Care of Our Own." I say "familiar," not because it was the first single released (so you probably already heard it on the radio), but because it sounds straight from *Born in the USA*; perhaps between "Glory Days" and "Dancing in the Dark." It's got that inviting drumbeat ready to explode, which then turns in to what sounds like the culmination of Springsteen fans everywhere clapping and stomping their feet in unison in eager anticipation for the guitar and the Boss's grizzled, yet soothing voice singing about his favorite subject: AMERICA! At first it seems to be reminiscent of "Rah Rah USA" propaganda, proudly proclaiming "Wherever this flag's flown, we take care of our own!" But when Bruce asks, "Where's the promise from sea to shining sea," over and over again, you realize that this is not a boast of how great Americans are, but rather a simple reminder of how great we can be when we take care of each other.

The next two tracks, "Easy Money" and "Shackled and Drawn," follow suit with that familiar Springsteen sound but add new elements with a gospel choir backing up those working class heroes playing guitar, bass and drums. The blend seems to flow well and it sounds like everyone's having a good time. The later tracks, "Land of Hopes and Dreams" and (tribute to the old Giant's Stadium) "Wrecking Ball," also fit this mold along with "Rocky Ground," which features a rap by Michelle Moore in the middle of it—a first for any Bruce Springsteen album.

The standout song comes at track four with "Jack of All Trades," with Bruce digging deeper and getting darker with a moodier, slower song. It's here that we begin to see that this album isn't just all about feeling good and loving your country, but actually has some depth as well. Sure it shares that working-class theme that many Springsteen songs do, but it's presented in a more natural, personal bearing-of-the-soul way without all the bells and whistles, as if even though there are other instruments, all you hear is a deep, gruff voice and a guitar. This song, as well as the honest and desperate "This Depression" and the lonely "Baby, You've Got It," deserve a shot on your playlist alongside Johnny Cash and Tom Waits.

*Wrecking Ball* also features "Death to Your Hometown" and "American Land," both sounding like classic Irish folk songs with fiddles, bag pipes and sing-a-long choruses. Listen for them the next time you hit the pubs looking for a Guinness or two. Also, the experimental bonus track, "Swallowed Up (In the Belly of the Whale)," where it sounds as if Bruce is telling you a simultaneously eerie and soothing bedtime story about the sea, is worth a listen if only to ask yourself, "What the hell is this?"

While *Wrecking Ball* may never necessarily feel like a giant ball of steel breaking new ground, it should at least knock down some walls around those who think Bruce has lost something over the years. His longtime fans will love it and it has enough solid songs on it that any music lover can find a few they can't help but listen to over and over again.

**Artist:** Bruce Springsteen  
**Album:** Wrecking Ball  
**Website:** [BruceSpringsteen.net](http://BruceSpringsteen.net)

★★★★★  
**Label:** Columbia Records  
**Release Date:** March 5, 2012







# ALL ACCESS

The Album Reviews Cont'd





# Bringin' Tha Dirt!

Written by Jeremy Weeden

When one thinks of west coast hip-hop in the “Yay Area,” one name immediately comes to mind, or actually, many names all belonging to one man: Forty Fonzarelli aka Forty Water aka E-40. E-40 has been representing the west coast hip-hop scene for over 20 years and is synonymous with Bay Area rap. It is not a stretch to say that on the west coast E-40 is the northern Californian equivalent to his southern Californian counterpart, Snoop Dogg. From “Hurricane” and albums with The Click to “Tell Me When to Go” and collaborations with T-Pain and Kanye West, E-40 is not only a hip-hop veteran, but a still relevant artist with an ever-expanding audience. This trend should only continue with the legendary MCs latest crop of music (three albums released simultaneously): *The Block Brochure: Welcome to the Soil* parts 1, 2 and 3.

Each disc of *The Block Brochure: Welcome to the Soil* is its own separate album; they do not come together as a box set. Although each album is separate, there is no unique theme to each CD. Perhaps E-40 intended for each disc to have its own direction and flavor, but they all come off similar in nature. This is not necessarily a bad thing, it just means you will get 54 songs of essentially the same type of material. From the first track to the last, *The Block Brochure: Welcome to the Soil* is 100% classic E-40. All three discs contain classic bass-driven, heavy west coast production and feature E-40's choppy, unique flow. This combined with E-Fizzle's proclivity for inventing his own slang is one of the reasons an E-40 album is so enjoyable, and none of these three discs is the exception to that rule.

Content-wise, each album is similar, but there is still variety within that similarity. E-40's song topics—as always—range from songs about drugs and guns, sex, love, motivational topics, as well as deeper tracks about life and spirituality. There is even a song that gives a nod to old horror films (of course, featuring horror-core rapper Tech-N9ne). Such a wide array of topics may not work for everyone, but E-40 pulls it off effortlessly, going from one topic to the next seamlessly. The album features appearances from an eclectic variety of artists, spanning from west coast legends like B-Legit, Spice 1, Richie Rich, Mistah, F.A.B., Celly Cel, Too Short, JT the Bigga Figga, C-Bo and the Hieroglyphics to mainstream stars like Twista, T-Pain, Raheem DeVaughn, Snoop Dogg and Kendrick Lamar. This leads to an album that has something for everyone: from the west coast purists and backpackers, to those who only listen to radio and like a little gloss on their music. The production follows suit as E-40 has some tracks from industry heavyweights like Bangladesh, T-Pain and Warren G, as well as longtime west coast collaborators like Rick Rock.

The trilogy, if one buys all three albums, will definitely get a little long if listened to in one sitting. Unless one is a huge E-40 or Bay Area rap fan, 50-plus songs can be a bit much. One also gets the feeling that if you culled together the 18 best songs out of the 54, you would have the best album of E-40's career. As it is, the *Block Brochure* albums do not necessarily choose quantity over quality, but the phrase too much of a good thing does come to mind.

Overall, *The Block Brochure: Welcome to the Soil* albums are a pure west coast hip-hop experience. The vast amount of music may seem overwhelming, but the material is strong and worth a listen. So roll down the windows, turn your music up and take a long ride with the Ambassador of the Bay.

**Artist:** E-40

**Album:** The Block Brochure: Welcome To The Soil

**Website:** Facebook.com/e40

★★★★★

**Label:** Heavy on the Grind Ent./EMI

**Release Date:** March 26, 2012



# ALL ACCESS SPOTLIGHT

Written by Silas Valentino

Facebook.com/ISeeStarsMusic



## I See Stars, *Digital Renegade*

Post-hardcore band I See Stars have recently released their third album, *Digital Renegade*, and the record is aptly titled. The band are digital renegades uniting two musical genres together. I See Stars are pioneers in the growing genre known as electronicore. Combining elements of metalcore, screaming, heavy guitar and electronic beats and synthesizers, *Digital Renegade* sounds like a rave and a metal show were scheduled to play at the same time and you're caught in the middle of it.

Opener "Gnars Attacks" creeps in slowly and then suddenly an explosions of screams and cries take over. Towards the middle of the song, a drum machine back-beat begins to slither in and the song makes a genre u-turn. This is the technique I See Stars use: they mix together electronic beats and metalcore screams seamlessly. Singer Devin Oliver said of the album, "It's going to be heavier, but still with that pop rock element. I think as we progress, the amount of electronica in our music is going to increase." Combining music styles has been around for decades and at times it can appear gimmicky. This will be the challenge I See Stars will have to face.

## The Shins, *Port of Morrow*

The Shins have always been innovators of the three-minute pop song. Starting with the moment Natalie Portman gave us her headphones in *Garden State* and we heard "New Slang," The Shins have made music that challenges pop while simultaneously being pop. The band has ended their five-year hiatus with the release of their fourth album, *Port of Morrow*. This album satisfies, by being both a nod to the band's past musical style as well as a glimpse into where they'll go next.

It's safe to say that The Shins are just a fancy way of saying James Mercer, the group's leader. Mercer writes and produces almost everything the band creates. *Port of Morrow* features new musicians backing up Mercer, and the change is subtle. Lead single and album highlight "Simple Song" features The Shins' classic jingle-jangle guitar and powering melodies, but it also sounds expansive. Heavy guitars and overdubbed pop-fills show that The Shins have returned sounding improved and adventurous. With *Port of Morrow*, Mercer and The Shins show promise that they'll be able to produce amusing pop records forever.

Facebook.com/TheShins



Facebook.com/SayAnything



## Say Anything, *Anarchy, My Dear*

In 2004, Say Anything broke through with their single "Alive with the Glory of Love" on the album *Is a Real Boy*. That album blended pop and punk-aggression together smoothly. Today, they've released their fifth album, *Anarchy, My Dear*, using the same blueprint; all while sounding fresh and provocative. *Anarchy, My Dear* is an adventurous, emotional record made in a time when greasy face-covering hair is no longer in style.

Say Anything's band name is an homage to Cameron Crowe's '80s teen classic of the same name. But now that the band has been around for over a decade, they can no longer play the teen-angst card. *Anarchy, My Dear* features songs dealing with pedantic music journalists, drug abuse and even Stephen Hawking. Standout track "Admit it Again" is a part two of a previous track off their second album. Using astute vocabulary and crafty song writing, singer Max Bemis calls out all the posers with "Navajo Haircuts" and "Latent Insecurities." *Anarchy, My Dear* is a record for any fan of Taking Back Sunday and Motion City Soundtrack. It's been a while now since emo-punk has been in the spotlight, but as long as there are teenagers, there will be Say Anything.





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# LIVE & LOUD

## The Live Show Reviews

# Of Monsters and Men

Photos by Nicolas Bates  
Written by Dan Sinclair

Though the sign in the Troubadour's box office window said "SOLD OUT," the heavy amount of open real estate on the floor surrounding the stage at 9:30 P.M. seemed to suggest otherwise. That all changed about thirty minutes later when the stage lights went on. In the blink of an eye, the place was mobbed from wall-to-wall, everyone anxiously awaiting the six-piece indie folk-rock band from Iceland. Even the forty-year-old, seven-foot-tall, borderline-albino guy in the business suit clapped his hands. We were all ready for Of Monsters and Men.

Co-singer and guitar player Nanna Bryndis Hilmarsdottir, donning a cool, gray brimmed hat and an adorable smile, was the first to catch my eye. I now had a face to match that amazing voice of hers and wasn't disappointed in the least. And she came out drinking a New Castle—now that's my kind of girl! Ragnar "Raggi" Þórhallsson also co-leads the band alongside Nanna. The charming singer looks how I imagine a slightly more handsome, blond and Icelandic Jack Black would.

The show starts with "Dirty Paws," the opening track from their debut album *My Head Is an Animal*. Nanna, almost shocked at the warm LA reception, mentions how thrilled she is to "so many of you singing along to our songs!" "From Finner," featured even more "la la la's" than the first song, and after that, Of Monsters and Men threw a brand new "Mountain Song" at us, which was one of the best of the night.

Raggi took center stage next, beginning to belt out "Your Bones" alone, armed only with a guitar. Unfortunately, said guitar was out of tune. He apologized and while he tuned it, Nanna told us the band's first LA experience: a giggly story about fist-fighting taxi drivers in Santa Monica. She was so cute. I'd listen to any story she wanted to tell me in that darling accent. After waiting patiently for the end of the story, Raggi flawlessly continued "Your Bones" to the sounds of heavy applause.

The rest of the band was on-point all night with not only bass, horns, accordion and piano, but drummer Arnar Rósenkranz Hilmarsson seemed to have more energy than a meth head. Other songs played that night included "Lakehouse" and "Slow and Steady." But if you asked the ladies, the highlight was when Nanna carried the show in solitary on "Love, Love, Love" (this assumption based solely on the screams of every female present at the show).

When the time came for their single "Little Talks," the Troubadour erupted (even the annoying asshole at the bar took a break from hitting on girls long enough to pretend to sing along). There wasn't a single still body in the house. Half expecting a mosh pit, I had to remind myself this was an indie-folk show. *Whew*. They closed out the set with "Six Weeks," much to the crowd's delight.

When they returned to the stage after a brief intermission, Raggi said, "Thank you for your incredibly loud screams," which, of course, brought even more incredible and louder screams. During the two-song encore, they played a version of The Cure's (one of the band's biggest influences according to Nanna) "Close to Me." It was slow but powerful (sounding very distant from the original, poppy 1987 single), and quite the memorable way to end the show.

Throughout the night, though there were so many musicians up there, the stage never looked crowded. Each member stood comfortably alone as they played together in harmony. And though I'm not sure where the *monsters* were, the one thing I *am* sure of is, Of Monsters and Men plays great live.

**Venue:** Troubadour  
**Website:** OfMonstersAndMen.is

**Date:** March 21, 2012  
**City:** West Hollywood, CA







**LIVE & LOUD**  
LIVE SHOW REVIEWS CONT'D

# Andrew W.K.

Photos by Nicolas Bates  
Written by Michelle Oberg

It has been 10 years since Andrew W.K. released *I Get Wet*, his first studio album recorded under the Island Def Jam label. As tradition holds anniversaries as a date to celebrate, Andrew W.K. revels in that institution by touring the states, performing the album in its entirety with the same track order as it appears on the record.

Hip-hop blared through the speakers as the show openers disbanded from the stage and roadies prepped for the next performance with a simplistic stage design. The controversial album cover from *I Get Wet* hung from the rafters showcasing our evening's headliner and his bloody face. Andrew W.K. spends his pre-show time wandering the crowd before he takes to the platform, clad in his all-white-everything traditional attire, smiling and greeting his following. If you're not familiar with Andrew W.K.'s history, he's highly educated, multi-talented with an array of instruments, energetic, charismatic and yet, bizarre in a way where you wouldn't be surprised if he was the leader of a cult. All of which made his diverse crowd both refreshing and intriguing.

The lights went dim, and the crowd roared. Sirens, helicopter sounds and a pre-recorded voice-over track blasted through the speakers as Andrew W.K. entered the foreground. With no hesitation, he spoke briefly and prominently: "Hello everybody, it's time to party..." breaking the wall of concert-going anticipation and going straight to the music. The first song was just as his greeting implied: "It's Time to Party." Following Andrew W.K. to the stage, his seven band mates each showcased their instruments as the audience clapped in sync, like at the end of a theater production.

Classically trained musicians mixed with party-rocking anthems and insinuation of sex, drugs and rock n' roll render the show a must-see for its aesthetically pleasing performance. Most of the songs present similarities in their sound, lyrics and style but are uplifting and entertaining for their audience. Like a rave without the blatant presence of drugs or a house party loaded with booze and good friends. A very animated frontman makes faces and mimics gestures constantly at the crowd, who eat it up, including when he puts the microphone in his pants and makes movements across the stage imitating that of a robot.

The performance is more of a spectacle than it is a showcase. Andrew plays keys, guitar, rhythm machine and sings. The keys are his first nature, which is effervescent, but his guitar skills expressed that this was not so much, and sounded like more of a band practice over any form of polished playing. With a few attempts, and fails, he finally gets the notes right and breaks into a Slash-esque solo, but it doesn't last long enough to deserve accolades.

After playing "*I Get Wet*" in its entirety, his encore included an additional six songs. One of which was from the "*I Get Wet*" Japan release, appropriately titled "We Want Fun." Another four were off his second album "*The Wolf*" and lastly, off his latest EP "*Party All Goddamn Night*." To close out the night was the song "Head Bang." His eccentric nature is nothing less then captivating and the show is quite the exaggerated performance. We give you our blessing to check his website for tour dates in a city near you.

**Venue:** Avalon  
**Website:** AndrewWK.com

**Date:** March 8, 2012  
**City:** Hollywood, CA







**LIVE & LOUD**  
LIVE SHOW REVIEWS CONT'D

# VNV Nation

Photos by Nicolas Bates  
Written by Michelle Oberg

In this age of music, where sounds from the past have re-emerged with the same force and fan appreciation they did 20 years ago, artists like VNV Nation continue to tour while making music that has subtle to no stylistic changes. The synthpop/industrial genre has been present for decades, and thanks to the aforementioned artist, seeing it at the Mayan Theatre was a spectacle that, personally, I have never seen before.

As trance blared through the PA system, the costume clad, all-black-everything adorners flipped their hair like out of an episode of South Park stereotyping the goth scene and danced as if they had just dropped 10 hits of acid. Upon walking into the venue, the fish-out-of-water feeling was evident, but the scene was welcoming to say the least. The headliners took to the stage and screams of a somewhat commanding nature drew the polar opposite of raving clubbers to a bit of the darker side. The crowd roars as you're left trying to comprehend what you just heard: patrons reacting as if they had just seen God.

There were tattoos, tank girls and guys wearing larger-than-life headphones although they were at a live show. The girl-to-guy ratio seemed to be about 10:3. The mezzanine was quite the sight, as the staircase-style seating arrangement doubled as a secondary stage, and it wasn't for the artist: patrons acted out what were like scenes from Glee, dancing as if previously choreographed, and executing it flawlessly.

Refreshingly, VNV Nation brings out the best in people through their music. Everyone in attendance looks and seems to be acting real—their true selves. Instrumental, futuristic tunes play on an organ as lights go up on the stage with a countdown appearing on the LED light panels stationed in the background. Flashes of red zeros are displayed across the screens as the cue for a night of live dance music and feel good vibes.

Two key players, a singer and electronic percussionist is all it takes for the ensemble to entertain. Vocalist Ronan Harris speaks his vocals and never sings a note. His voice resembles that of an MMA announcer: it's loud, penetrating and dominating. Live dance music with an attempt at carrying out synthesized vocals is not an easy feat, but VNV makes it appear as easy as riding a bicycle. Between the instrumental beats, denying the rhythm coursing through your veins and urge to dance is nearly impossible.

Amidst the dance-beats a slower song, "Dark Angel," showcases their additional talents. It's sweet, but not poppy and has a movie score-esque vibe. They create every type of sound imaginable: tribal beats, goth metal, love songs, worship music and so much more. A simple stage design has lighting to fill all voids keeping it small but perfect.

Between songs, which barely have a transition, VNV Nation keeps the continuous beats entertaining for non-stop partying. The vocal effects were fun and the energy from the frontman radiated throughout the venue. Whether you're a clubber, dancer or just appreciator of music, this is a show that should not be missed. There are no rules, judgments (except from yours truly, in the sincerest way possible) or reason why all the positive attributes of VNV Nation wouldn't make this one-of-a-kind artistry. For more information and tour dates, check out their website at <http://www.vnvnation.com/>

**Venue:** The Mayan Theatre  
**Website:** [VNVNation.com](http://VNVNation.com)

**Date:** March 15, 2012  
**City:** Los Angeles, CA







# COMING UP

## Models To Keep An Eye On

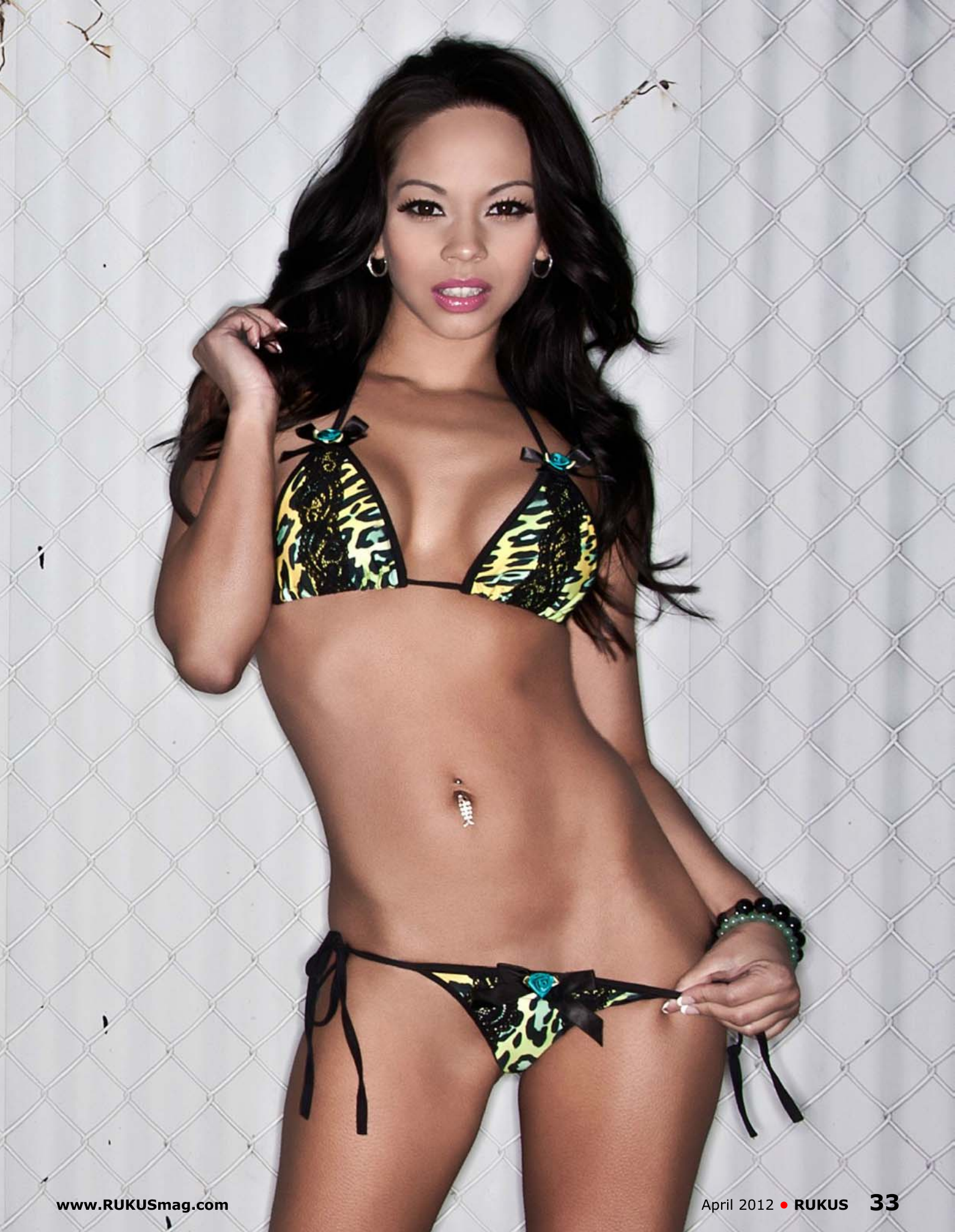
# NIKITA

# ESCO

Photography by Andrew Gates  
Make-up & hair by Kim hill

Nikita Escó is a mix of Chinese, French and Polish descent. She was born in Bremerton, WA but, spent most of her teenage life in Seattle. Nikita got her first taste of the modeling industry when she attended a Hot Import Nights event in Seattle, WA where she signed up for a modeling contest and ended up becoming a finalist. She then became the official spokesmodel for the USA Drag Show tour, Battle of the Imports. When she turned 21, she picked up and moved to sunny California where she kept in pursuit of her modeling career. Soon after moving she was asked to tour with Hot Import Nights as a go-go dancer. Nikita has graced various magazine covers and plans to keep expanding her modeling portfolio. She would ultimately like to get in to acting to become a soap star or a scream queen in horror films. Wherever she ends up, she'll definitely look good getting there!







# COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd







## THE STATS

**Birthday:**  
February 23

**Zodiac Sign:**  
Pisces

**Measurements:**  
32C-24-33

**Height:**  
5' 3"

**Weight:**  
103 lb.

**Ethnicity:**  
half-Chinese and half-French

**Hometown:**  
San Diego, CA

**Turn Ons:**  
Someone who can dance,  
make me laugh and has a  
nice body.

**Turn Offs:**  
Anyone who looks like they  
came from or want to go to  
the Jersey shore.

**Guilty Pleasure:**  
Alcohol. I love to drink. I'm a  
lush, not a drunk; there is a  
difference.

**Pet Peeves:**  
I can't stand bullies. Anyone  
who makes fun of someone  
else to make themselves look  
or feel better. They are a  
total loser in my book.

**Celebrity Pass:**  
Johnny Depp. All the  
characters he plays are very  
strange, quirky, mysterious  
and confident. I would let  
him lead me in to all sorts of  
adventures & trouble.

See more of Nikita at  
[facebook.com/officialnikitaesco](https://www.facebook.com/officialnikitaesco)



# COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd





# ARIKA

# SATO

Photography by Andrew Gates  
Make-up & hair by Inara Akin



Los Angeles native Arika Sato was born in Torrance, CA. This Japanese-American beauty was a contestant on MTV's *Paris Hilton's My New BFF* where she earned the nickname Japanese Princess. Arika is far from a prissy princess though. She can be found hosting for various websites, schooling you on some of the latest high-tech gadgets that are hitting the market. Arika can also be found at some of the hottest spots in and around LA, as well as keeping you informed about the Asian-American pop-culture scene. Currently, she is vlogging on her YouTube channel and using social media to make her presence known. If it's hip, trendy and hot, then Arika knows about it, and so will you.



# COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd







## THE STATS

**Birthday:**  
May 26

**Zodiac Sign:**  
Gemini

**Measurements:**  
32C-24-33

**Height:**  
5' 5"

**Weight:**  
105 lb.

**Ethnicity:**  
Japanese

**Hometown:**  
Torrance, CA

**Turn Ons:**  
Sweet guys. Guys always try to act all hard and impress girls, but I'm sorry, assholes are gross! I hate them!

**Turn Offs:**  
Mean people...just be nice. I'm sorry you had a bad day, but don't take it out on others!

**Guilty Pleasure:**  
Candy, sweets, dessert and pinkberry. I know that models shouldn't eat sweets because sugar equals fat, but I just can't help it if a big, yummy chocolate lava cake and ice cream is so hard to resist.

**Pet Peeves:**  
When people flake! Hello, I have a schedule, too!

**Celebrity Pass:**  
Channing Tatum. So sexy!

See more of Arika at  
[Twitter.com/arikasato](https://twitter.com/arikasato)



# GAME ON

## The Latest Games Reviewed

# Critical Mass

Written by Jesse Seilhan

There is a glaring lack of original games in this generation. Most big games are sequels, and with development, advertising, and post-production costs rising higher and higher, studios and publishers are less likely to take a risk on a new product. Luckily, *Mass Effect* came along and gave gamers a reason to stick with a franchise: the promise that not only your character, but the choices made and lives lost would continue on for the following five years. *Mass Effect 3* is finally out and delivers on that half-decade-old promise.

The team at Bioware had a tough task of creating a deep RPG, normally fleshed out with fun side-stories and random romps to break up the gravity of the main story. The side-missions now help push forward the "Galaxy at War" mentality, with each battle representing one piece of the chessboard crossing the galactic frontlines. The storylines are engrossing, save for the random dream sequences and other departures. When the game gets into that nitty-gritty political discourse, the camera angles, lighting tones, and voice work push this game beyond almost all others. The ending has become a firestorm online, with fans expressing outrage at the perceived lack of choice during the games final moments. Without spoiling anything, I will say that having the ending sequences (all six of them) simply featuring different color schemes and split-second flashes of an altered cut scene is a terrible way to wrap up a franchise dedicated to the idea of individual choice. However, there is no way to create a million different endings that take every tiny permutation into account. With DLC and spin-offs in the future, the end of the *Mass Effect* saga may end up just fine but the final five minutes of this game is slightly depressing and not just because war is hell.

The older this series is, the less forgiving you may become at some of the glaring issues. *Skyrim* broke modern gaming last year because it connected so many dots in one package. Now all of those dots are near-expected by RPG fans and it may be another generation before those changes become incorporated. Graphics are stunning as usual, but slow-down and framerate hiccups happened more in this third entry than the prior two. This starts a series of gripes I have with the game, including a lack of a proper inventory, a beyond-basic quest log, constant disc-switching (on Xbox), and a map system that serves little purpose. When *Mass Effect* works, however, it works amazingly well. The combat variety and dialogue choices are maddening, giving fans dozens of playthroughs worth of unique content before every aspect is uncovered. Also, the squad-based multiplayer (new to the series) is addicting, with its own character progression, level-up system, and waves and waves of challenges to tackle with up to three of your friends.

As much as I (and millions of others) wanted this to be the greatest game of all time, it is definitely not. What it is, however, is the culmination of the most enthralling sci-fi franchise this generation and fulfills almost every promise given at the birth of the franchise. The ability to import a character created five years ago is an impressive feat unto itself, but it is that exact process that makes *Mass Effect* more rewarding than almost all other franchises. Seeing my Commander Shepard go from humble beginnings to champion of the universe over a five-year span is not simply entertaining, it dwarfs nearly every other gaming experience I have ever had.

**Game Title:** Mass Effect 3  
**Producer:** EA Games  
**Platform:** PS3, Xbox, and PC  
**Website:** MassEffect.com

★★★★★  
**Ratings:** Mature  
**Genre:** RPG  
**Release Date:** March 6, 2012





**MASS** 3  
EFFECT



**GAME ON**  
The Game Reviews CONDUIT



# TWISTED METAL



# Road Rage

Written by Heather Spears

The *Twisted Metal* series has made a dramatic impact on PlayStation owner's lives for years. Now Sony's longest running franchise is back and better than ever. PlayStation 3's *Twisted Metal* brings fans from around the world that same sinister humor, fast-action game play and the immeasurable assortment of lethal vehicles as the series past. *Twisted Metal* is matchless, it is mysterious, and when you play through the game you will witness things that you will never see in another title. Sit back and let the turmoil unfold in this vehicular combated game!

*Twisted Metal's* campaign brings motive to the corruption. Atop his penthouse loft, deranged lunatic Calypso holds an annual Twisted Metal tournament. Within the tournament, contestants fight to the death, and in the end Calypso grants the winner one wish. Calypso's need for chaos and obliteration can only be clenched by the spilling of the other contestant's blood.

The player takes the role of three separate characters in single player mode. Each character is set with their own dark story which unfolds after a number of rounds including as much annihilation, mayhem, and demise you can handle. The player will unlock the mystery behind these crazed characters as they progress through the story.

The multiplayer in *Twisted Metal* is some of the best multiplayer you will ever play. This is not your average game, so you won't be experiencing your average multiplayer. With as much destruction you cause in the single player story you can double up on that carnage for the multiplayer experience. The player has the option to take part in a 2-16 online multiplayer match or play multiplayer through split-screen. There is truly no limit when it comes to massacring your friends.

There are a vast variety of multiplayer modes which include Death Match, Last Man Standing, Nuke and so many more. I found Nuke to be the most interesting. This original mode is a perverse take on capture the flag. It is your team's goal to capture the leader and drag them back to your base. You then sacrifice the enemy leader by launching a missile into the air which will hit the other team directly.

*Twisted Metal* turns out to be one of the hottest PS3 exclusives out there. Its unique stance on a driving game leaves players in awe. It might not be the kind of game you want to play with your children; however, you can use it as a great way to let out aggression lingering deep inside your soul. The destruction, gameplay, and twisted storylines are not something that is seen every day on any game. I would consider this game a definite buy for all PlayStation3 owners!

**Game Title:** Twisted Metal  
**Producer:** Sony  
**Platform:** PS3  
**Website:** TwistedMetal.com

★★★★☆  
**Ratings:** Mature  
**Genre:** Vehicular Combat  
**Release Date:** February 14, 2012





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