



VALLY GIRL VS BROOKE CANDY

LA'S QUEENS OF THE SPACE AGE TALK LATEX, JAPANESE FANS AND NOT GIVING A FUCK

Los Angeles artists Brooke Candy and Vally Girl are inspired by the playful intensity of experimental Asian aesthetics. Rising

rapper and stripper Candy is a muse to Grimes, and recently hosted Azealia Banks's Mermaid Ball in LA. Her futuristic ghetto-fabulous outfits, which boast plenty of excess while covering little, are often styled by label LA Rap.

Vally Girl, the visionary behind LA Rap's boundary-pushing style, co-founded roaming alternative arts space and collective Freak City with fellow artist and partner Justin Time. Having hosted an array of parties, films and photoshoots at the studio-shop space, it remains a magnet for freaks from all over the world. So it seemed the best place to bring the two friends

together to talk about how Asian culture has influenced their freaky style.

Brooke Candy: I met Grimes here, actually.

Vally Girl: The first time you met her was here, really?!

BC: Yeah, we were in a music video for (rapper) Lady Tragik. We were dancing and hung out that whole night, and she asked me to dance at her show. We just vibed from the start and then she asked me to be in the 'Genesis' video. The concept was to portray women in a strong and powerful light. Nothing was really planned – the dancing in the desert is just us fucking around.

VG: That video reminded me of an RPG with

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really crazy characters. She's like the schoolgirl that has these weird quirks, and you're the villain, this Power Ranger-type character. The costumes were off the hook – were you wearing metal?!

BC: The pieces were cast on me in plaster by the designer Seth Pratt, then covered with metallic paper. So, so sick! *Robocop* shit!

VG: Oh my God! How long did the body cast take?

BC: Like, an hour.
VG: Plaster is a bitch to work with. Latex is easy.

BC: Really? I love latex.
VG: That's my shit. You need some latex, girl.
BC: I need some latex everything. That's freaky. That's for a real freak.

VG: I feel like Asian culture is way ahead of us in terms of technology and fashion because they mesh weird things together, blending the future-esque. I totally saw a good mesh in the 'Genesis' video.

BC: I know Grimes is a huge anime fan, so that was a thought from the beginning. I was supposed to represent the evil side of her – she summons me up from the water.

VG: I feel like people don't want to admit it, but through the internet everything's linked to some form of Asian culture. It becomes this weird, hovering, online presence. But I can't get away from it because it's in my blood – I'm half-Japanese. I grew up with all of that.



BC: What was your childhood like?

VG: I grew up with a very strict Japanese momma and a crazy Indian-Irish dad. So... pretty fried-out. (*laughs*) I grew up with anime, comicbooks, video games – I was totally a product of all of that. When I went to Japan, I didn't want to come back. It made me kind of hate western culture, because in Japan everyone just loves everything. Everything's colourful. It's like an honour system, everyone's very generous – they just embrace everything to the fullest.

BC: Wonder if they would fuck with me...

VG: Oh, hell yeah – they would fuckin' love you to death. They would be

screaming for you. It's true, because they're all about fashion, colour, cartoons, everything.

BC: I feel like I take inspiration from cartoony shit all the time. I want to be a caricature.

VG: It's more playful.

BC: Fans from Japan are the best. They really understand the next-level shit. They've been doing crazy shit for so long. If you look at Japanese street style, they choose characters and do it to the max. They're so ahead. So they appreciate it.

VG: You don't have to explain what you're doing. It's definitely more open.

BC: What about the tan – the super-orange...?

VG: Yeah, *ganguro!*

BC: My fucking favourite.

VG: The *ganguro* girls in Japan paint themselves orangy tan with pink or blonde hair and white raccoon eyeliner. And it's normal: they go out like that.

BC: It's so sick. There's so many different little subcultures there who go all out. It's such a small group of people trying to do it here...

VG: I was 19 when I went to the Harajuku district, and I saw how everyone dressed out there with their wings, their 18-inch platforms, horns coming out, latex on their face. That's how they went out to have a beer, do karaoke. I thought it was so cool, but I felt so naked.

BC: I never dress normally any more. Do you?



VG: I do, but I feel weird. I feel naked. (*laughs*)

BC: I do too. Gotta be cunt. All the time.

VG: Get that cunt face.

BC: Is it okay to say 'cunt'? I think women should feel empowered sexually. We're still repressed and that's a serious fucking thing.

VG: Hell yeah. It's a problem.

BC: We're so beat down daily. Women feel bad when they're doing something that feels natural, having sex. But if a guy goes out and fucks a million people...

VG: ...they're called a pimp or a player, whereas girls are called sluts. That connotation is so wrong.

BC: Nothing pisses me off more. Women should feel free and happy about something that comes naturally.

VG: But they're embarrassed.

BC: Women are always pushed down for one reason or another, it's never-ending. But I feel free when I'm performing. People tell me I make them want to not give a fuck. Inspiring them to not care, and just be.

VG: Is one of your ultimate goals to free women?

BC: Yeah. Also to make people feel comfortable being weird, and inspiring people to do whatever the fuck they want. Life is way too short.

VG: Part of the high is feeling empowered by that. When people relate to you, they feel freed by your expression and what you're saying on stage. That's why I keep doing it. I feel really proud that people are paying attention finally to gay rappers, gay performers too.

BC: There's a big scene for that – Mykki Blanco, all these people in New York breaking boundaries.

VG: I'm proud that it's our scene. I feel in my heart like the most creative, the most insane and artistic people are not typically heterosexual. Their artistic, fashion and lifestyle approach is just way more in tune with... some outer planet.

(*laughs*) It helps the whole arts scene.

BC: Right now gay hip hop is the final frontier. First it was black men, then women, then white men and now women. Every race and gender is accepted and now what? Sexuality. It's the final thing, and the scene that's happening is so cool.

VG: It doesn't matter what your gender or your sexual orientation is if you've got talent. If you're a boy or a girl, or you're androgynous, I don't care, you are what you are. Be it, express it, come to Freak City, and do it better. (*laughs*) Mykki Blanco was dope here, he really brought it.

BC: He killed it. The visuals of all these new people are so good. In LA and New York right now there's a lot of new, forward-thinking, amazing shit happening.

VG: I feel like people are finally not scared any more. Now it's time to shine.

BC: The internet helps, too. There's nowhere left to go but... online.

VG: People are coming out, showing off their talents.

BC: And there's enough room for everybody.

VG: There's a lot of talent out there. Spread it.

HAIR TASHEENA WILBURN
MAKE-UP NICOLE SERVIN
NAILS MADELINE POOLE

“Women should feel empowered sexually – we're still repressed and that's a serious fucking thing”

Name: Vally Girl
Age: 27
Place of Birth: Los Angeles, CA
Twitter: @FREAKCITYLA
What you knew: LA Rap and Freak City co-founder Vally Girl has styled the likes of Nicki Minaj.
What you didn't: Girl's got acting skills – she plays the bad-news minx in Blood Orange's "I'm Sorry We Lied" video. And as well as styling female rappers, Vally Girl herself rhymes – check out "4G" on the recent *Sounds of Freak City Vol. 1*.
What's next: Vally Girl and Justin Time's recording outfit The Keyishe are working on releasing their next EP this winter. But it's top secret (ish).

Name: Brooke Candy
Age: 23
Place of Birth: Los Angeles, CA
Twitter: @BROOKECANDY
What you knew: Muse to Grimes. Dazed Digital premiered her debut music video, "Das Me".
What you didn't: Brooke Candy is her "real-ass name" (we saw her driver's license to prove it). Her parents were going to call her Kelly Candy, but they "thought it sounded too much like a stripper."
What's next: Brooke's been working on her first album and putting out self-directed music videos. She has shows lined up in New York, Denmark and London.