



"I was really shocked that the people who were asking for Sister Spit were all these different ages... it was really cool to see that we had made this impact on the culture."

—MICHELLE TEA

"If I could take her on every tour I would," Tea says. "She has such a great mixture of wisdom and she's totally smart and a smart ass. You never know what you're going to get from her, she's like a loose cannon in the best way. And she drives."

Tea says. "It was really cool to see that we had made this impact on the culture."

It was at that point she realized that the name Sister Spit—despite, or perhaps because of, what Tea calls its unintentionally "funny second-wave kind of granola lesbian" connotation—meant something to people.

"The name recognition means a lot," Tea says. "It suggests a certain type of performance in terms of both quality and content."

The van is full of quality, all right. Take Nelson, who earned his Sister Spit cred by the mere fact that his first novel, *Girl*, was excerpted in *Sassy* magazine. It can't hurt that he has since written *Gender Bender*, in which a teenage boy and girl switch bodies, or that his novel *Paranoid Park* was made into a film by Gus Van Sant.

Nelson and Mac won't be the only men in the van. They'll be joined by Kirk Read, author of the queer coming-of-age memoir *How I Learned to Snap*. Mac, who made an appearance on the second half of the European tour, will be sharing photos from *Original Plumbing* as well as photos and a letter from the first issue of *Translady Fanzine*, featuring artist and transwoman Zackary Drucker.

"I am a huge fan of [Mac's] whole deal," Tea gushes. "His photography is beautiful and fun and striking, his vision as a trans person of how he wants to place trans culture kind of front and center in the larger culture is completely excellent, and I think he's really visionary."

The guys will be joined by writer and teacher Ali Liebegott, author of the book-length poem *The Beautifully Worthless* and a four-time Sister Spit veteran.

It's a good thing Tea can't take her favorite writers on every tour, however, since she's already booking future bills in her head. The lineup for 2012—featuring Dorothy Allison, Mx. Justin Vivian Bond and Kit Yan, among others—is already posted on RADAR Productions' website.

This time around Tea was lucky to nab Myriam Gerba, whom she calls a "wacky and really smart" writer and high school teacher and Mari Naomi, a graphic novelist and visual artist. In addition to the folks in the van, Sister Spit's two Portland shows will include performances by local writers and artists Nicole Jorges, Chelsea Starr and Matilda Bickers.

While Tea has no problem rattling off the glowing qualities of her fellow tour mates, she had not decided, just days before the tour began, what she would be performing. Will she share excerpts from her upcoming young adult novel featuring mermaids and talking pigeons, her apocalyptic memoir hybrid, her collaboration on the Beth Ditto memoir *From Coal to Diamonds* or something else entirely? There's only one way to find out.

When it comes to Sister Spit, Tea says, "You never know what you're going to get but you kind of know you're gonna like it." ☐

Sister Spit: The Next Generation, Monday, March 28, 7 p.m., Holocene, 1001 SE Morrison St., \$10 in advance from brownpapertickets.com, \$12 at the door; Friday, April 1, 7 p.m., Lewis & Clark College, Evans Auditorium, 0615 SW Palatine Hill Road, free; radarproductions.com.



CAFFE MINGO

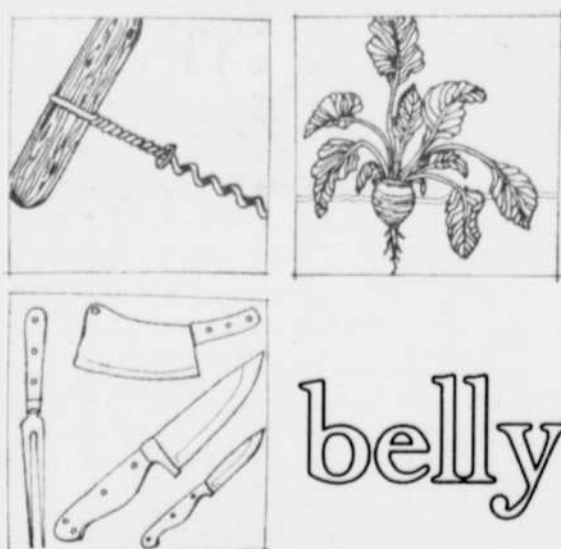
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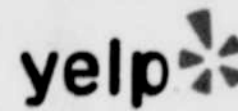
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