

# mischief, mistress daily defiance

YOUNG QUEER PUNK ROCKER JANE ANDRES  
NAVIGATES LIFE AS A TRANS WOMAN  
WITH MIDDLE FINGERS UP BY DANIEL BROMFIELD



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

Jane Andres isn't religious, but she has a lot of what she calls "woo-woo ideas." She's really into astrology, for one. And she's fascinated by Norse mythology — especially the goddess Freyja.

"Most people don't know this," Andres explains, "but only half of the warriors went to Valhalla, the realm ruled by Odin. The other half went to Freyja."

Those in Valhalla were stuck in what Andres calls an "eternal manly quest for glory," while those who went to Freyja mostly "just chilled in this sunny meadow having a party."

"I'd rather go there any day," she concludes.

Andres, who records experimental music as Mischief Mistress as well as under numerous other monikers, finds Norse mythology to be a great canvas for her own ideas about femininity and queerness. The same could be said of her music, which puts her identity as a trans woman — and the "daily defiance of everything" required to live openly as such — front and center.

"I know when I go out anywhere I have to deal with people giving me stares or occasionally insulting comments," she says. "Playing songs where I fantasize about women with razor-sharp fingernails and lipstick terrorizing groups of shitty men helps me feel sane in some way."

Andres has lived in Eugene since 2009, when she moved to enroll at the University of Oregon; she spent a year at the school before dropping out. But she was born in Newberg, Oregon, which, according to a rumor she heard often as a kid, has the most churches per capita of any city in the U.S. (It's actually Indianapolis, but her high school was sandwiched between a Methodist church and a Mormon temple, so she had no trouble believing this.)

Andres was raised in the Religious Society of Friends, better known as the Quakers — a church with a storied activist history. This commitment to social justice, alas, didn't extend to her parents.

While in high school, Andres came out to her friends as bisexual. After one of them outed her to her parents, they sent her to therapy, causing her queerness to once again become "good and bottled up."

But there was still what she calls a "suppressed weirdo" deep down, and for a long time the only outlet for this was music. She's always leaned towards music she finds "defiant" — hip hop, punk, extreme metal, alternative rock, queer-oriented riot grrrl bands like Bikini Kill and L7. This is the music that came to influence her musical projects, which generally gravitate towards some combination of these genres.

"I identified with 'Sheena is a Punk Rocker' a lot because I secretly wanted to be Sheena," she says of The Ramones' song, laughing.

Defiant music tends to be loud, and it's easy to see these inspirations in her harsh, atonal music. Even her poppiest compositions can be overwhelming. Yet Andres doesn't just make noise: She aims for a fine balance between disorienting her listeners and having her message come through as clearly as possible.

"I want each and every single syllable to come through and I want the listener to understand it," she says. "Some of my songs have very complex layering of synths and drum machines, but I want every part to stand out in creating something larger."

It works. Andres tries to play shows with large queer audiences, which she's found at DIY punk hubs like the Campbell Club and The Boreal. She says she's noticed on more than one occasion the reactions among other queer members of the audience.

"When I see the queer women in the audience, an overwhelming joy takes them," she says. "I definitely see a lot of young queer-looking kids with this awe-filled stare — this gives me this great sense of joy."

She's keen to point out the difference between the stares she receives on the street with those she receives when she's onstage.

"When I'm onstage, people want to be looking at me, they came there to look at me," she says. "It's not like I'm some sudden obstruction in their daily life by how fabulous and queer I look."

Andres' music can be found at [soundcloud.com/mischiefmistress](https://soundcloud.com/mischiefmistress). She performs 5 pm Monday, Aug. 15, at The Boreal; \$5 door. All ages.