

# Spank, Rattle and Roll

THE PLEASURE AND PAIN  
OF THE GENITORTURERS

By Maryam Henein  
Photography by Ward Boulton

**T**he lead singer of the Genitorturers is the ultimate shape shifter — a force to be reckoned with. Ask anyone who has experienced the Caligula-like shows where the beautiful and bodacious Gen transforms herself into an array of characters, whisking audience members through a carnival of lush soundscapes and through a wild journey of piercings, whippings, spankings, bondage, and a variety of other kinky activities.

“When you come to see a show, you get an entire presentation with multimedia, props, costumes, and actors. It’s like watching a live music video unravel,” explains the 5’8”, hazel-eyed, raspy-sounding vocalist. “What we have tried to do is to bring the music to life conceptually a la Alice Cooper’s *Welcome to My Nightmare* or Pink Floyd’s *The Wall*.”

Some of the music’s integral themes revolve around sexuality and femininity, and in order to best communicate these ideas, Gen assumes different roles, be it ringmaster, shaman, or temptress. For instance, in the song, “One Who Feeds,” she wears a costume with huge breasts and a vagina made out of metal, portraying woman as both seductress and the giver of life.

“I strive to present women as strong, and not passive as previously stereotyped,” she adds.

Since the release of their first album *120 Days of Genitorture* back in 1993, the audio-visual exploits of this Tampa, Florida-based group have earned them the title “The World’s Sexiest Rock Band,” by Playboy TV’s *Sexcetera*. Their newest album, *Flesh Is the Law*, is slated for a summer release. Besides Gen, the Genitorturers include Evil D (Gen’s husband and the original bassist of the band Morbid Angel), Chains on guitar, and Angel on drums. The band has cultivated a devoted fan base (both men and women) from all over the world, many of whom travel to repeat shows and call themselves “Genheads.”

Gen, who is a native of Albuquerque, New Mexico, initially formed the Genitorturers 17 years ago at a time when she needed a creative outlet. Being a Gemini, Gen’s dualistic personality should come as no surprise. On one hand, she is a real-life dominatrix, who plays bass and oozes stage presence, and on the other she is an intelligent, articulate woman with a background in medicine and microbiology.

“Before the band became my primary focus, I worked as a transplant

coordinator. For four years, I performed surgery to retrieve the parts,” explains the artist who cites early ’80s hardcore bands among her influences. “It was very fulfilling because you are kind of taking a sad situation and being able to give people comfort because they know that part of their loved one is going to help someone else.”

In regard to the band’s name, Gen came up with it when someone in the gay leather scene handed her a card that read, “Know your hot hanky colors.” “Each color identifies what you’re into. For example, a blue hanky worn on the left means you’re a top, yellow stands for golden showers. Well, purple stands for genitorture, [which refers to sadomasochistic acts performed on a person’s genitals]. And being that my name is Gen and that I was also a piercer at a time when it still hadn’t reached the mainstream, I just figured it was a very appropriate moniker.”

As far as the music, the band tries to transcend the boundaries of any given genre. The sound can best be described as a mixture of brutal metal licks, a little punk, and intense hard rock. “We’re a band that just cannot be pigeonholed,” marvels Gen. Unless, of course, that turns you on.