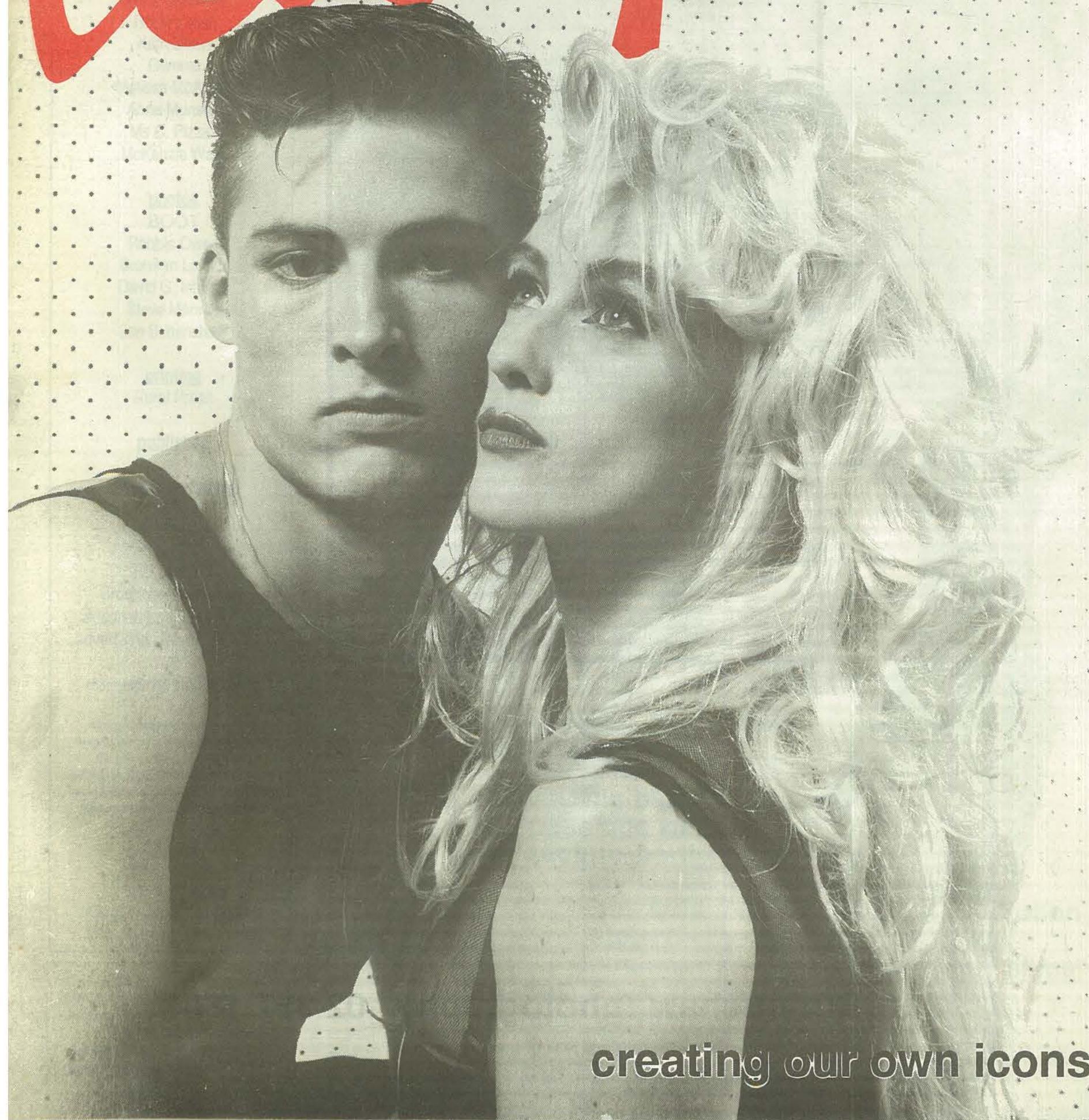


issue one
\$3

temper



creating our own icons

temper

magazine

What's Inside!

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Broadway NSW 2007
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thanks

to
Lyn & Philippa
Jasper & Ben for computers
Rod & Lyn at Rural Press

front cover:

photo: Jon Buttenshaw
models: Peter Hamann
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clothes: Pile Up, Oxford St.
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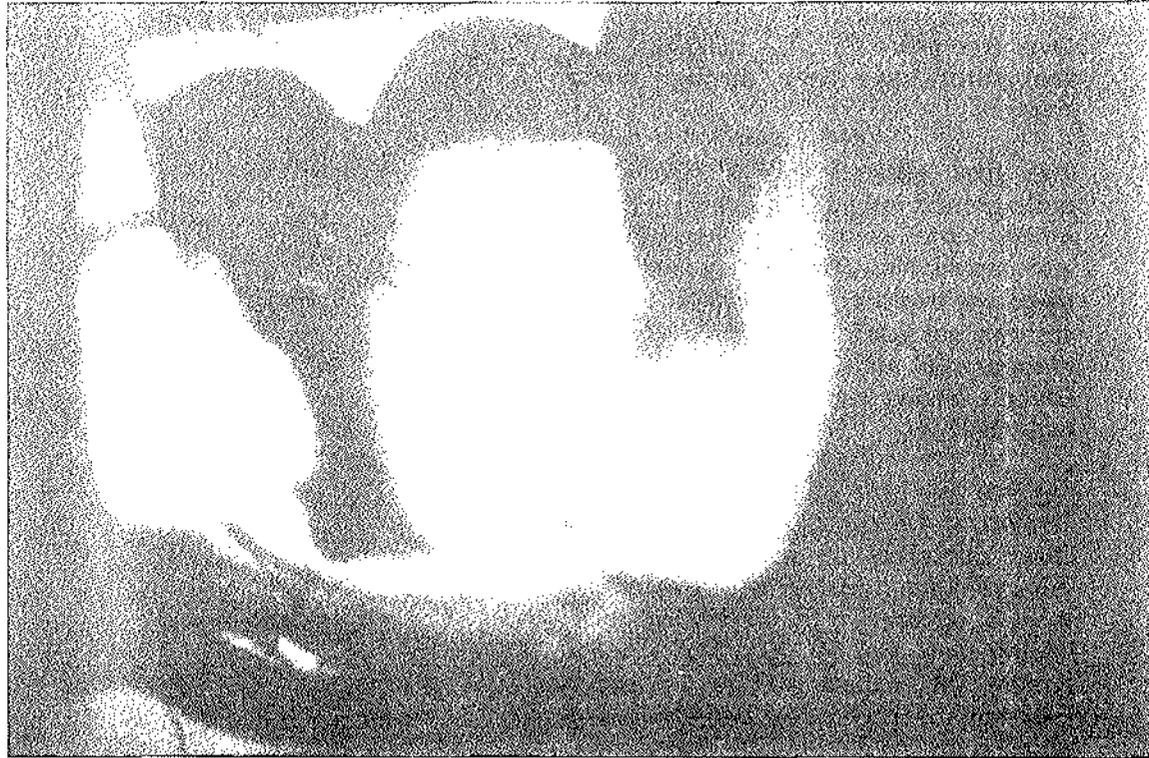
BOOT

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6. **gemma**
7. **brad roser**
10. **deborah cheetham**
12. **house of libido designs**
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HYSTERIC

was the title of Virginia Barratt's latest inversion performance in Melbourne.

"my work's always been hysterical and I use that word in a very considered way. It connotes a sense of being outside, because hysteria is seen as a very dangerous thing - but I like to invert it and see it as a very powerful way to communicate."



Her earlier performance work was concerned with madness - the difference of madness and how dangerous it is considered in terms of disrupting the social order. Now her work explores the way sexual difference is viewed as a kind of madness with the same disruptive effect. Her recent inversion performances have her suspended over the stage. "Finding that space to speak from is exciting. That idea of being free of the earth, of being contained." In the Hysteris performance she speaks text to an omnipresent She who "demands that I free myself from my current biological and social constructs and form a body of difference with which to move into the future." Suspended in a harness, feet bound, there's an admitted s-m sensibility to her work, "but I'm holding the rope, I'm in control. Everything about my performance is ambiguous and I want to keep it that way so people can't read the codes."

Virginia's other work centres around technology. Her concerns here are to critique new technologies from a feminist perspective while trying to 'whip up some enthusiasm, and a little bit of hysteria amongst women about actually using the technologies."

Her performance art, however, is something she works on alone. "Being a performance artist...is a primary libidinal drive for me"

Currently she's producing a magazine, Machine Queen, aimed at women artists working with new technologies, and one of the UNS Matrix group. (see page 29)

VIRGINIA BARRATT

I am dying again and again.
I die and I die and I die.
My heart rolls over and over
My bones crack and shake.
I go on shedding skins.
Something like love and panic
seizes me
shakes me like a leaf.
Each breath I take is
my shocking last.
I milk each fresh instant for
final impressions.
Each hano second holds a
million catastrophes.
I am in shock.
I live on the jagged
edge of disturbance.

VNS Matrix cyberpussies Virginia Barratt, Julianne Pierce, Francesca da Rimini and Josephine Starrs take on the **testosterone zone** of Gameboy teen cult with their latest project. No keyboard cowboys and jerking off and featureless chrome silver suzi fem-bots here - their **All New Gen** is an omnipresent intelligence which takes many forms. With her sisters in slime, the **DNA Sluts** - abdicators from the oppressive super-hero regime - All New Gen's aim is to infiltrate the data banks of **Big Daddy Mainframe**, undermine his military, imperial, industrial data scape and render insensible his **techno-bimbo side kick, Circuit Boy**. A computer game in the works, All New Gen is an inversion of Nintendo's 'Gameboy'; a **Tank-Girl-of-the-data-space declaration of subversion**. In an age when the new frontier of colonisation is the hyperspace of computer networks and data banks, VNS Matrix want women to get their hands on new technologies and claim some of that information-rich space. "We're trying to **insert a feminist consciousness** into the technological future...we want to encourage women to use technology and take it in different directions," says **cyberpussy** Barratt, "and we want to insert those strong female images in there."

Most boys get an early introduction to **techno-friendly living** through arcade games and Gameboy fads, but girls don't seem to have hooked into these past times in the same way. Could it be that the video game themes of adventure, war and sci-fi obliteration just don't appeal to girls? Is Barbie the answer? Do girls really want to take their **Barbie-plastic-glamour-fantasies** into the future, a hyper real image-doll in hyper space? That's what we're to believe, or at least, that's what's **marketable**. "One of our cyberpussies is actually going to meet with Nintendo next year, but there's no way they'd take on something like All New Gen, we're not mainstream, and besides we want to be ironic, intelligent and funny, which none of those games are." All New Gen sometimes appears as an intelligent mist, sometimes as slime. The DNA Sluts used to hang out with the superhero boys, Spiderman, Superman, until they got sick of it and decided that they wanted their own regime, so set off into the data space unknown. And then there's Circuit Boy, born from the pages of a **Boy Jock** magazine. He's a headless, armless, legless chrome torso with a huge erect penis, "which he probably thinks with."

"There's just no getting around the fact that technology is a very masculine site. Research and development money is spent to create technologies that will be used to create the perfect war, **the virtual war**, the war from a distance. That's what virtual reality is all about, that's what arcade games are all about. There has to be guerilla action. People need to get their hands on these technologies and run with. We need more **female hackers**. We want All New Gen to be a virus that suddenly oozes onto the screens.

We want All New Gen the virus to fuck things up."

VNS

forget barbie,

let's slime

MATRIX

