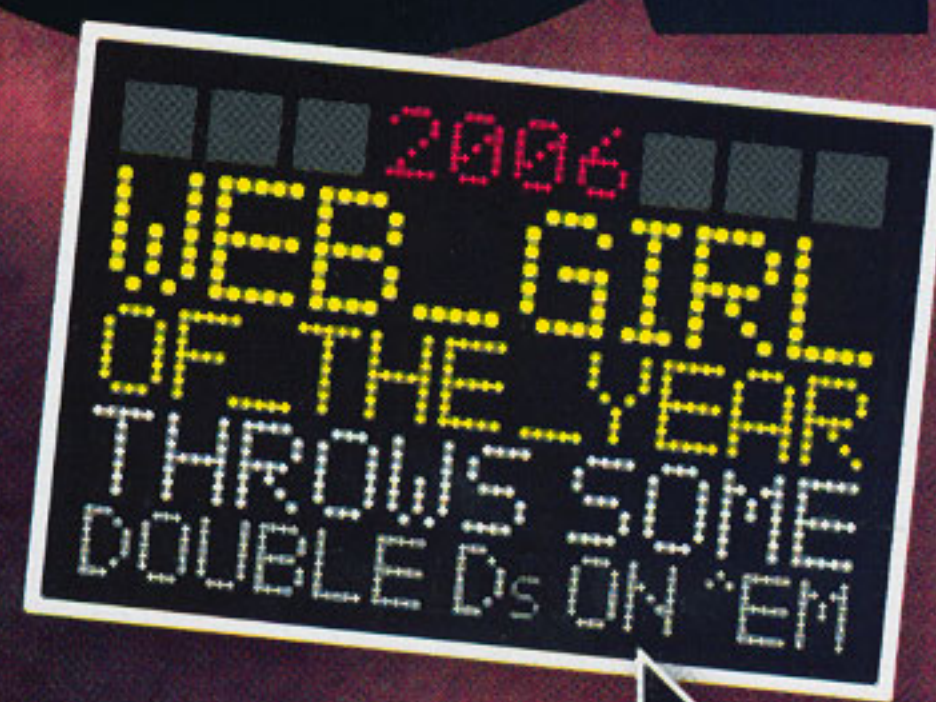


THE ILLEST MAGAZINE EVER!

MAG

*Pretty
Young
Changes
Issue!*

VOLUME 2



**BUFFIE,
VIDA &
MELYSSA**

**EXPOSE THEIR
MONEY MAKERS**

EXCLUSIVE!!!

FAT CAT

**THE KINGPIN
OF QUEENS
BREAKS HIS
SILENCE**

PLUS

**JAY-Z
ROCS THE NEW
'BACH-MOBILE**

**KOBE
SUITS UP**

CIARA

**ATL'S SEXY SUCKER POPS
HER CHERRY! ***

***EASY, WE'RE TALKIN' LOLLIPOPS!**



bad seed

story Jerry Barrow *photography* Ellen Stagg

APRIL HERNANDEZ SWEARS SHE'S A CUT-UP AT COMEDY CLUBS.

HER SAYING IT WITH A KNIFE IN HER HAND WASN'T SO FUNNY, THOUGH





The world needs another comedian

Like it needs another crime drama, so men everywhere breathed a collective sigh of relief when April Hernandez ditched standup to become a thespian. Maybe it was seeing John Leguizamo in drag one too many times, but after a few semesters of college, the Nuyorican bombshell decided she didn't have time for jokes. She cut her teeth as a monosyllabic clerk who punks Yao Ming in a Visa commercial and has since made several impressive turns on the small screen (*ER*, *Law & Order*, *Blind Justice*). Now she makes her feature-film debut in *Freedom Writers* as Eva Benitez, a teenage gang member who would have the entire Dipset washing her drawers in the bing. While her character favors baggy clothes and street fights, KING convinced this bat-wielding tomboy to go a couple of rounds with our photogs. Guess who won?



“Whatever happens in the Bronx, stays in the Bronx. Snitches get stitches.”





KING In your new movie, high school is like the front lines in Iraq. What was it like for you in real life?

APRIL HERNANDEZ I went to an all girls high school in the Bronx, St. Thomas Aquinas. I'm an Aquanite, but I was a good girl. I wore my skirt down to my knees.

You must have stood out like Jessica Simpson at a MENSA meeting.

See what happened is, the girls started raising their skirts and the nuns started noticing it, so they would stand by the door with a ruler. If it passed a certain point they would have to buy new skirts. If you're going to Catholic school and you look like a little stripper it's not cute.

Clear heels and the whole nine . . .
Making it clap . . .

So you weren't even close to being the class bad-ass.

No, I wasn't. I was very athletic, very smart. I was an A-student. I had two parents that loved me and kept me focused. Because I was in sports I didn't have time to be in the street. I was always a leader and wanted to conquer the world.

World domination and athletics go hand-in-hand, just ask Isaiah Thomas. Which sports did you play?

Softball and volleyball. I was a tomboy growing up. I never even thought about being an actress. I wanted to work for the New York Yankees as an athletic trainer. Then when I went to college I was studying nutrition, but I hated chemistry, so I became an actor.

Not everybody can fall back on acting.

No, they can't.

If you had a chance to teach a class, which would it be?

I think I'd teach English, anything that allows students to express themselves, or even acting classes. I recommend everyone take an acting class because you come out of your element and learn things about yourself. I actually started out as a standup comedian. I was inspired by John Leguizamo when I saw him in *Mambo Mouth*. So I was like, I'm going to be the Latina Mambo Mouth. When I left college I auditioned at New York Comedy Club and got booked.

That's a tough business. Appears they all go crazy or get caught with transvestite hookers at some point. Were you funny?



GANGSTA BITCHES

This goon squad is really from the school of hard knocks

Melinda Williams as Keisha in *New Jack City*

CATCH PHRASE "Rock-a-bye, baby!"

ILLMATIC TACTIC Shot the dread in the head, took the bread and the lamb spread.

DOWNFALL Shooting with her eyes closed



Vivica A. Fox as Vernita Green in *Kill Bill Vol. 1*

CATCH PHRASE "Black Mamba? I should have been motherfuckin' Black Mamba!"

ILLMATIC TACTIC Packed her gat in a box of Kaboom cereal.

DOWNFALL Brought a gun to a knife fight . . . and lost



Alicia Keys as Georgia Sykes in *Smokin' Aces*

CATCH PHRASE "I'm going down."

ILLMATIC TACTIC Dressed as a call girl to blow Aces' head off with a red-light special, but not in the way he hoped.

SAVING GRACE A highstrung lesbian girlfriend who packs a really big, umm . . . gun.



Was I funny? I think I was.

Okay funny girl, what do you think of your boy K-K-Kramer's outburst at the Laugh Factory?

It is what it is. As long as he apologized, he's fine.

There seemed to be a lot more racial unity in your first commercial with Yao Ming. How did that happen?

It's so funny, that's when I really started acting. I never knew what to do at an audition. They told me there's this big Chinese guy and he's going to ask you things and all you have to say is "yo." I didn't even know who Yao Ming was, but I booked it and it came out during the Super Bowl. And Yogi Berra was there, so that was amazing, being a Yankee Fan.

The Freedom Writers kept moments like that in a diary. Have you ever kept your secrets in a little book?

All the time. As a child I wrote poetry and throughout my life I kept a diary. The way my life is unfolding in front of my eyes I just want to document things that are important to me. Like meeting Hillary Swank was amazing.

The film happens in the aftermath of the '92 L.A. riots. Do you remember what you were doing when they really happened?

I was home and my mom was doing my hair. We were watching it on TV as it was going down. It's different when you're on the other side of the country, but I saw what was happening. It's scary. That's what happens when you have rage.

I'm sure you can relate, growing up in the Guiliani era. A lot of people are comparing this flick to *Dangerous Minds*. How does that make you feel?

If people have that conception, go and read the book, *Freedom Writer's Diary*. When you see this is real and was written by students, you have to open your eyes. The film just adds a visual element. Also it reveals the sacrifice Erin Gruwell [played by Hilary Swank in the film] had to make with her marriage. A lot of independent women are going to be able to relate to that.

One of the big themes in this movie is loyalty. So are you the one who keeps the secrets in your crew after a night on the town?

I don't gossip because it always comes back to you. It's bad Karma. Whatever happens in the Bronx stays in the Bronx [laughs]. Snitches get stitches. 🍷