

Kilby Block Party 2025: George Clanton and TV Girl are Weird

By: Elizabeth Griffiee

Photo Credit:



Virginia-based musician [George Clanton](#) was one of the larger artists playing [Kilby Block Party 2025](#), but his Lake Stage set was scheduled for an early afternoon spot. This did not stop the renowned producer and songwriter from drawing a large and extremely enthusiastic crowd of fans who screamed his lyrics and moshed to his electro-pop beats. I did not enter the festival on Saturday until the very last song of Clanton's set, just in time to watch the crowd erupt as he brought his paramount collaboration, [Brad Petering- TV Girl](#)- on stage.

George Clanton and TV Girl's surprise performance of their most-streamed song, "[Summer 2000s Baby](#)," was electrified by genuine audience surprise and authentic on-stage chemistry. However, there was a deeply uncomfortable and impossible-to-ignore detail that made me and my friend, who were initially overjoyed to see part of Clanton's set, abruptly leave. Petering entered the stage with a gigantic

Pokémon-esque sex doll. The bright-yellow blow up appeared to be Pikachu if he was a hypersexual caricature of a woman, sporting a tail and pointy ears but also comically large breasts with pointy nipples and exaggerated thigh and ass proportions. Petering ran onto stage holding the human-sized doll by nothing but its bright yellow breast as he screamed into the microphone. Throughout the rest of the set, Petering and Clanton took turns groping the doll and miming sexual acts, passing it back and forth by its large breasts as they fondled its hyperbolic proportions.

Although I anticipate that my opinion on this performance will not be popular, the most jarring aspect of Clanton and Petering's stunt was how happy the crowd was with it. A scan of

the audience around me revealed hundreds of men, both old and young, who appeared to find the conspicuously public act of objectification entertaining. This was a moment that made me feel disturbed and shaken. Misogyny is quite often the most widely accepted and culturally normalized form of oppression.

Hyper sexualization and objectification: how symbols harm women

Sex dolls are one of the highest forms of the alienation and objectification of women's bodies. They are one of many inventions that allow men to get as close to owning a female body as possible. Sex dolls are a 1:1 analogy for how the patriarchy reduces women to sexual objects. The substitution of a woman for a doll does not shield the woman from harm. Rather, it makes harm infinitely more available and acceptable. [A 2022 study published](#) in The Journal of Sex Research linked sex doll ownership and hostility towards women. [A 2021 Unicef study](#) linked the hyper sexualization of women's bodies in other forms, such as TV, movies and advertisements with worldwide violence and exploitation against women. The commodification of women's bodies and the industrialization of sex uses technology to create more ways of exploiting women, not less.

Lonely men are not inherently dangerous, but lonely men who feel entitled to women's bodies are. Objects like sex dolls and their normalization in the media bolster the cultural notion that men are entitled to women's bodies. The idea that it somehow protects women from violence to ensure no man remains sexless is key to the ideology that women must do whatever it takes to make sure men can always have sex; this counteracts itself as the latter perpetuates the violence which the former claims to absolve. The myth that male sexual outlets prevent violence against women is further debunked by [numerous studies](#) that have linked pornography consumption with male violence and female sexual exploitation. Additionally, men who have a lot of sex and suffer no trouble when it comes to getting with women



are oftentimes the most renowned and violent predators- look no further than celebrity rapists such as the recent case of [Sean Combs- Diddy](#).

Sex in music



I am aware that it was not the intention of Clanton nor Petering to promote sexual violence against women during their Block Party set. However, I do not think it should be acceptable for two middle-aged men to essentially mime the motions of sexual violence for entertainment with hundreds of people watching. Make no mistake- it is counterintuitive to both women's liberation and art to be prudish and stigmatize sex when it comes to music. Sexual themes and ideas are ample in music and often enhance performances when incorporated. Some of my favorite artists of all time are renowned for the sexual themes that they incorporate into their artistry- [Megan Thee Stallion](#), [Billie Eilish](#), [Troye Sivan](#), [Miley Cyrus](#), [Britney Spears](#), [Nicki Minaj](#)- the list goes on and on, as sexuality is crucial to music. I also love attending drag shows, an art which oftentimes features men embodying exaggerated female personas.

There are key differences that separate these acts from something objectifying and violent.

These artists take radical ownership of their sexuality, which is constantly stolen, stigmatized and used against their character. Drag is a performance art with [deep historical roots](#) that functions as a form of queer liberation and a commentary on gender as a construct. I have no issue with drag performances because dismantling the gender binary's rigid constraints robs the patriarchy of its primary tool to enforce women's oppression. Gender exploration and radical sexual acceptance are the actual healthy sexual outlets that lead to lessened violence against women.

If the addition of a gigantic sex doll had any link to the music or artistic thought behind it, the message was incomprehensible and negated by the much clearer themes of misogyny as the grown men excitedly rubbed their hands across the figure's enormous breasts. Clanton and

Petering's song, "[Summer 2000s Baby](#)," is about nostalgia and yearning for your childhood. [The lyrics](#) read:

*Summer 2000 baby
Let's go completely crazy
Don't be shy, just jump on in
And let the party begin*

Perhaps the pair was attempting to replicate the feeling of a crazy summer party and juvenile rowdiness through the groping of a giant sex doll (although Petering and Clanton were 12 and 10 years old in the Summer of 2000, respectively). Still, illustrating these lyrics through blatant objectification is unnecessary and taints Clanton and Petering's lyricism about "partying," and, "going crazy," as something more sinister than care-free.

I don't trust TV Girl: men who sing about women

For Petering, themes of nostalgia for youth are expected. KBP 25 was the third time I had seen [TV Girl](#) live, and each time I have developed more distaste for their music because of Petering's personality. The 35-year-old seems to have a strong case of Peter-Pan syndrome as he repeatedly tries to appeal to his young audience while also clearly resenting them. In [a 2024 interview](#), Petering described his audience as "Consisting mostly of chronically online teenagers..." saying, "...but no fanbase is perfect and it's nice to be liked by someone, I guess. Mostly, I try not to think about it and just do my own thing." In response to his fans making sarcastic satanic panic jokes after he posted a corny TikTok in which he states that he sold his soul to Satan for his mid-range success, "I grew up with irony and sarcasm being the primary cornerstones of my sense of humor, and that seems completely lost on the younger generation."

The resentment that Petering clearly has for his TikTok rise to fame translates to his condescending and out-of-touch attitude while performing, as he awkwardly jokes about vaping and rips his shirt off in a way that somehow feels neither earnest nor ironic. The TV Girl founder and lead man is also no stranger to allegations of misogyny. His music and artistry have repeatedly been criticized for creepy lyrics and reductionist viewpoints surrounding women. The name 'TV Girl,' paired with the band's prominent (and rarely credited) samples of iconic women in Hollywood Films and old girl groups such as [The Yeastie Girlz](#) has caused surprise for many listeners who understandably assume that the band, entirely composed of middle-aged men, features women.

The band also uses images of women in their album art, stage dressing and merch. This has caused a bait-and-switch situation for many listeners who have criticized some of the band's

most popular songs for lyrics and themes that go under the radar with the common assumption that the band heavily features women.

Petering has a pattern throughout his discography of mostly writing about failed relationships with nameless women who are sanctified yet villainized, falling into a trope that is all too common with male indie musicians. Women are reduced to love objects (romanticized sex objects) that are larger-than-life yet completely expendable. This trope, coined in film as the “[manic pixie dream girl](#),” fabricates a woman entirely based around the male gaze and then demonizes her for not matching the expectations of male entitlement. In TV Girl’s 2014 song, “[Louise](#),” Petering sings about the story of a French girl, Louise, who climbs into bed with a man but proceeds to tell him she could never love him. The lyrics proceed to align the song with the romanticized yet demonized, just-out-of-reach, perfect woman trope,

*She came from across the country
Just to stare into her phone
She came to the same apartment
She only wanted to be left alone
And she could catch anybody's attention
But it never won her friends
Love could kick you out on the streets
But it never paid your rent*

These “manic pixie dream” girl songs are written about male heartbreak and are defined by the resentment imposed upon women for causing male suffering, further pushing the exploitative notion that men are entitled to women. Petering’s response to his fan’s accusations of misogyny has been obnoxious at best. In 2023, [he tweeted](#), “Please do not call me a misogynist. I identify as a nihilistic misanthrope and I ask you, please respect that.” [Nihilism](#) being the belief that life is meaningless and [misanthrope](#) being the general dislike of all humankind, Petering’s remark read to me as, “I don’t hate women, I actually hate everybody and everything.”

Petering has affirmed speculations about his perspective on women multiple times. In a [2020 Reddit](#) ask-me-anything thread, the musician talked to a fan about a woman he saw in the crowd at a show he played in Nashville, “One time I did become instantly infatuated with this beautiful girl named Janelle who came to our Nashville show. She had a child of one at the time. I entertained visions of moving and starting a whole new domestic life. But I never saw her again.” In this same thread, Petering goes on to describe the stories behind his songs, “[Louise](#)” and “[Melanie](#),” both of which he says are about women who he was infatuated with but ultimately rejected. He does address misogyny in this thread, in response to a Reddit user who asked him why the band is always hating on women for just, “living their lives.” “What can I tell you,” responded Petering, “I don’t consider my music as particularly misogynistic,” he said.

“Women are a part of my life and inspire a range of emotions in me and I’m compelled to write about even the parts of me that I’m not proud of or that don’t paint me in a good light.” As a 35 year-old man, your relationship with women should not be part of your life that fails to paint you in a good light.

Attending a TV Girl concert was the first time I walked away from seeing an artist live with a diminished appreciation of their music. Brad Petering has always come off poorly, and George Clanton’s strong association with him has, in the past, made me question Clanton’s values. The pair’s 2025 Kilby Block party set validated my hesitation to respect either of them, and became the second time I have ever walked away from a concert enjoying an artist's music less.