



## Kim Gordon and Bill Nace Are Having Their *Twin Peaks* Moment



For the Sonic Youth legend's band Body/Head, dark and discordant music feels like a sublime escape.

Kim Gordon has always been into dissonance. Blistering Fenders pressed against the waistband of white glitter shorts. Discordant notes cracking panes of melody. Big art book terms dwarfed by bursts of emotion. It's arguably the word that best defines Gordon's body of work—the music, but also her visual art and fashion forays. Four decades of prodigious art-making in opposition to harmony—and sometimes just in opposition. In her 2015 memoir, *Girl in a Band*, she explains the dissonance in Sonic Youth's music as a reflection of the world, "Our music was realistic, and dynamic, because life was that way, filled with extremes."

All of which is why it's striking that now, at 65, Gordon is pushing dissonance to new extremes. This week, Body/Head, the experimental guitar band she formed in 2012 with Bill Nace, releases its second record, *The Switch*. It's comprised of five songs—or, perhaps more accurately, riffs—each its own crackling thunderstorm. Or execution via electric chair. Or excavated city. Suffice to say there are a lot dark images your mind might conjure.

When spending even a small amount of time around Gordon, you begin to see the world through the context of contrast. You, for instance, might notice the viscosity of the New York summer air and the busyness of the streets, with their overflowing abundance of people and commercial trappings. And if Gordon has taken you and Nace to see a retrospective on the multi-hyphenate downtown renegade Smith's work, you might juxtapose modern New York with Smith's New York, of the '60s, '70s, '80s. Jack Smith's work, you might juxtapose modern New York with Smith's New York, of the '60s, '70s, '80s.

As we wander into the show ("Art Crust of Spiritual Oasis"), full of exotic costumes, irreverent drawings and Smith's "boiled lobster color slideshows," Gordon is brought back. "Downtown New York when I first moved here felt deserted," she says. "It had a vibe. Whereas now, you have to go to a museum. It's all compartmentalized."

But then, hardly a moment later, perhaps denying herself the glimmer of nostalgia, she adds: "I mean, you could take New York decadence for granted. But actually, to have a show like this now is really important. Just because how backwards the world is going."