Girl Friday think of themselves as an explicitly feminist project, though not in the didactic way one might expect from that appellation. The L.A-based quartet, founded by bassist Libby Hsieh and guitarist Vera Ellen after they met at a UCLA house party a couple of years back, operates collectively, each member taking turns at the microphone and equal parts in songwriting; they’re all big personalities and big presences, but they find balance—and complement—in one another. There had been iterations of the band before, but none had truly clicked until drummer Virginia Pettis and guitarist Sierra Scott joined. This is the iteration of the band found on Girl Friday’s new EP, Fashion Conman; in four nimble tracks, these young women are able to fuse mod-pop a la the early Bangles with ‘90s alt-rock (“we all love Hole,” they say with enthusiasm), the urgency and tension of minimalist ‘70s post-punk, and contemporary observations, without sounding like pastiche. They’re uninterested in genre designations, and hope nobody’s ever able to pinpoint them in a word.

The feminist collective, of course, is a storied radical tradition, tied closely to the practice of consciousness-raising, in which collective members shared stories of their own lives in order to find commonality, learn one another’s perspectives, analyze systems of oppression, and find imaginative and active solutions. On Fashion Conman, Girl Friday are coming of age, trying to find their footing in a world in which image is clearly prized over substance. None of them are L.A. natives—they take aim at the noted sinister shallowness of entertainment industry interactions in that city on “Decoration/Currency,” which swings easily from sweetly melodic verse to distorted, fist-raising chorus. “Headstones” and “Lullaby No. 13” point not just to a nightmarish present but to the possibility of escape, of finding safety with one another. “Generation Sick” is a pointed indictment of abusive men and all those who protect them. (These songs are also, it should be noted, wickedly catchy).

Girl Friday are a band out of time—sensitive, perceptive, careful songwriters who feel displaced in this moment, but find comfort and resilience in their friendships with one another and the music they make together. On Fashion Conman, they’ve got plenty of truths to speak, if you’re ready to listen.