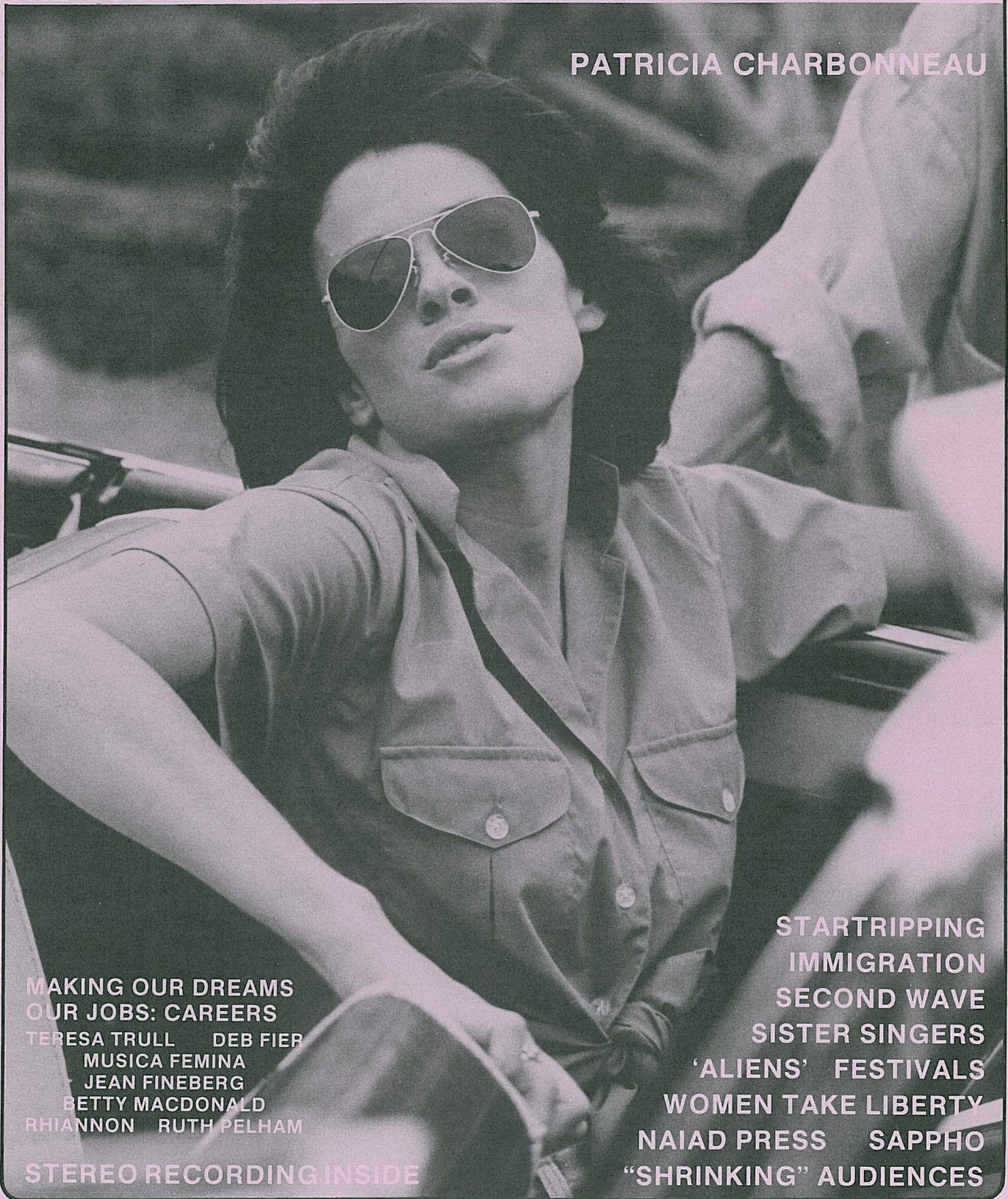


# HOT WIRE

THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

PATRICIA CHARBONNEAU



MAKING OUR DREAMS  
OUR JOBS: CAREERS

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'ALIENS' FESTIVALS  
WOMEN TAKE LIBERTY  
NAIAD PRESS    SAPPHO  
"SHRINKING" AUDIENCES

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 2, MARCH 1987

\$5.00

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# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

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## READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

It's that time again: we ask that our readers take a moment and fill out the "Second Annual Readers' Choice Awards" form found in this issue (photocopy it rather than ripping up the magazine if you can). The awards are presented at the Music Industry Conference Banquet in Bloomington at the National Women's Music Festival.

## CONTEST NEWS

In the November (Lucie Blue) issue, we challenged our readers to list, in order, the five cities and five states that receive the most issues of HOT WIRE. No one guessed with 100 percent accuracy in either category, and no one even came close to listing the cities. But congratulations and a free subscription go to Nancy Bishop of Plainfield, Vermont for being the most accurate guesser of the states. Nancy said: California, Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, and Washington, DC. The actual list reads: California, Massachusetts, Illinois, New York, and Wisconsin. We still offer a free sub to the reader who can list our top cities.

## CORRECTIONS

We accidentally reversed the endings to the two articles about Elsa Gidlow in the November issue. Please note that Kay Gardner's Freestyle article continues to page 61, not page 63.



*Desert Hearts'* Donna Deitch

## YOU SEEM TO LIKE...

The interview with filmmaker Donna (Desert Hearts) Deitch was by far mentioned the most often in the mail since the last issue. We also received numerous letters expressing eager anticipation for the Patricia Charbonneau interview in this issue. Also, more letters than usual came with favorable comments about the sound-sheets.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beginning with the July, 1987 issue we hope to include a letters to the editor page. If you write, please indicate whether or not it is intended for publication.

## ON THE COVER

Patricia Charbonneau, who plays the free-spirited Cay Rivers in the groundbreaking film Desert Hearts, is this issue's featured interview. See pages 2-5.

## PLEASE, PLEASE

Send articles pertaining to women's music and culture that you find in other publications. It helps us keep on top of things. Don't assume we already know, especially if it's an interesting item from your local press. We are also interested in popular feminist "mainstream" women.

## MOBILE WOMEN

Our subscribers move to new locations at an incredible rate. If we are not notified in writing of address changes prior to our mailing of the magazines, there is no way we can guarantee delivery. Magazines are rarely returned to us. If they are, subscribers can get them remailed (by us) for a postage & handling fee. Most often, the HOT WIRES are lost forever. HOT WIRE can not assume responsibility for lost magazines. If you've moved in the last four months, let us know. Thanks for your cooperation!

## PLEASE NOTE

With this issue we add a new horoscope feature by astrologer and singer/songwriter Paula Walowitz (see page 17)...We have four extra pages in this issue because we couldn't bring ourselves to cut any more articles...We are still in constant need of good quality photographs.

**Toni L. Armstrong**  
Publisher/managing editor

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**Music and Culture**  
**March 1987**

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** (U.S. money equivalents only):  
 \$14/U.S., \$17/Canada, \$19/institutions. Countries  
 outside of North America require extra postage charge.  
 Back issues when available are \$5.

**HOT WIRE: The Journal of Women's Music & Culture**  
 ISSN 0747-8887  
 Published three times yearly in March, July, and  
 November by **Empty Closet Enterprises**, 1417 W.  
 Thome, Chicago, IL 60660 (312) 274-8298. Unless  
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# 'Desert Hearts' Heartthrob

## PATRICIA CHARBONNEAU

An interview by Toni L. Armstrong

**Patricia Charbonneau**, the free-spirited Cay Rivvers in Donna Deitch's groundbreaking film *Desert Hearts*, has been seen in TV shows such as 'Crime Story,' 'The Equalizer,' and 'The CAT Squad.' She currently resides in New York City with her daughter Hannah.

**HW:** How did you get involved with the *Desert Hearts* project?

**PC:** Donna Deitch [the director] had seen 200 women in California for the part, and she wasn't really finding anybody who grabbed her. She came to New York and saw my picture; she said, "This looks like Cay." So I went in and met her. I read for her on Wednesday and she asked me to come back the next day. She gave me the script. I came back and read the scene of leaving—on the veranda—and another quiet scene that now has music through it, after we have the fight in the restaurant and we go back and are sitting on the windowsill. Then I went back on Monday and we talked about the part. She asked me how I would feel about playing the part and if I would have any trouble doing the love scene.

**HW:** What were your reactions at first?

**PC:** I loved Cay right away. I just thought she had such a wonderful energy and idea of life. I didn't read it as, "Well, this is a lesbian." I just wanted to do it.

**HW:** Did you have reservations about it being your first big part?

**PC:** I don't think so. It probably went through my head, but I don't really believe in typecasting.

**HW:** Why not?

**PC:** I guess because I hope I don't believe in typecasting! I hope that people will understand that you're an actor, and you try to find good roles. Since I've done *Desert Hearts* I've gotten many scripts—95 percent of which I don't even want to read for. I do, because it's my job to read for them, and I have to support a daughter now. But I don't want to play somebody's girlfriend. I don't want the movie to be about these two guys and there's this woman who's sort of involved but you don't really care about her. *Desert Hearts* has so many good women's roles in it, and the men are fine, too—there's nothing wimpy about them and I didn't look at it like, "Here they're putting women on a pedestal and making the guys look like real Joe Schmoes." Everybody was good people. So I was really excited about doing it.

Donna didn't have a distribution deal, so I went into it thinking that only 10 people may see this film, or a thousand, or a couple of million. This business is such a risk. All the parts that I've taken have always had a little risk involved in them.

**HW:** The movie has generally gotten good reviews.

**PC:** Yeah, it has. I was surprised by some of them. The Goldwyn Company sends me reviews. The reviews of Middle America especially, they've been really good. Iowa!

**HW:** What was your favorite scene in the movie?

**PC:** The three of us in the car. That and the scene on the veranda with Audra when I tell her I'm going to leave. When I see the movie, those scenes make me feel really great. I feel like the work was good there, and...

**HW:** That scene was incredible.

**PC:** Wasn't that great? You can't not smile at that scene. It was so funny that day. It was a real hot day and it was long, and we were out in the desert. But the energy was right there every time we went to film it. And Donna was really on that day, too. Not that she wasn't the whole time—she's incredible to work with—but that day I was really hitting it off great with her. I was feeling up and very alive. It shows in that scene, I think.

**HW:** How do you sustain a consistent energy from scene to scene when you don't film it in sequence?

**PC:** I thought about that because this was my first film—everything else had been theater. I thought it would be hard, because in theater you start at the beginning and go to the end. But I found that once you start working on a character, that person is there living with you. The veranda scene happened in the first 10 days we were shooting, and nothing else had happened in our relationship yet—nothing. We hadn't shot the kiss at the lake, none of that had happened yet. I don't know, it's just there when you need it. It's not difficult at all.

**HW:** What were your reactions to seeing the movie for the first time?

**PC:** Donna flew me out to Los Angeles from New York to see it. [My daughter] Hannah was four months old and I was breast feeding her. My brother, whom I hadn't seen in a couple of years, was there. We sat in the back row. It was me, the baby sleeping in my arms, David, Helen [Shaver] and Donna in the back row of this theater. The theater was filled with people. Afterwards I just had to cry; so much of my life had been built up to finally doing a movie, and then to see it, and to be really happy with it. Also, it was such an incredible year for me. I looked down at Hannah in my arms, my brother next to me...it was very emotion-

**PC:** Yeah. After I got the script I read the book.

**HW:** What did you have to do to prepare for playing the part? Did you do any sort of research other than reading the book?

**PC:** I also got a job in a casino. I'd never been in a gambling town at all, I did that for about two weeks in Lake Tahoe.

**HW:** Was it the same job you had in the movie?

**PC:** Yeah, change apron. I wanted to see what the people were like who were doing this. Then I went to Reno for a couple of days.



**Cay Rivvers (Patricia Charbonneau) refuses to allow her "adopted mother" (Audra Lindley) to reject her in the Donna Deitch film 'Desert Hearts.'**

al. It was hard to see the whole film the first time. I watched my performance a lot, and went "ugh" on some things, and "that was good" on others. And I was watching everyone else. So I wanted to see it again. I hadn't seen anything. Helen had seen a lot of the rough cuts, but I hadn't. About two weeks before I had Hannah I looped. That's when you add a line that's already been in, but you're saying a new line or lip synching and saying the same words in a different way. We looped the horseback riding scene in Desert Hearts.

**HW:** Did you read the book before you did the movie?

That's a lot of change they carry around—about 30 or 40 pounds. It's very heavy. I went out early to do that; I wanted to feel like I owned Reno, so I just kept going out and checking out the town, driving around. As far as I was concerned, Cay owned Reno. She knew everybody and everybody knew her.

**HW:** What did you think of the adaption of the movie from the book?

**PC:** I'm happy with it, and I know [the author] Jane Rule was very happy with it too. I met her at the Toronto Film Festival and she gave me a beautiful hardcover

## 'DESERT HEARTS' The New Cult Film

By Jan Huston

*Desert Hearts* became the catalyst for a four-month personal odyssey that included two trips to movie locations in Nevada and California, interviews with actress Helen Shaver, screenwriter Natalie Cooper, producer/director Donna Deitch, and more than 100 women.

It took nearly the entire four months to discern exactly what it was about *Desert Hearts* that had totally obsessed me—almost to the exclusion of everything else. My own experiences are important only inasmuch as they reflect the sort of phenomenon that's happening from New York to San Francisco, British Columbia to London. I'm not the only one whose life has changed dramatically since seeing this movie.

Whether *Desert Hearts* is a great movie is immaterial. Its contribution lies in the profound, lasting effect it's having on women. It's opening the public's mind and creating the space for lesbians to be who they are. It's helping mothers to understand lesbian daughters and heterosexual men to reassess their preconceptions. *Desert Hearts* has just "reached in and put a string of lights" around the collective lesbian heart.

A preternatural silence falls over the audience. There's a sense of almost breathless anticipation as women all across the country await the opening scene. As Patsy Cline begins singing "Leavin' on Your Mind," you can sense a palpable collective sigh. We're home. This is how it's supposed to be.

*Desert Hearts* has done more than crossed over to the general public: it's become a cult film. Not in the more bizarre sense, like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, but closer to the romanticism of *Casablanca*. Or helping the Tin Man find his heart in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Very early in the film's run, the question stopped being if you'd seen the movie, but rather how many times. Women I talk with are seeing *Desert Hearts* on an average of 15 to 20 times, many quite a few more. Nice, intelligent, rational women. (Many straight men and women are also seeing this movie more than once.)

The reasons are as individual as the women themselves. They're opening their hearts and their lives to me in our interviews in a way I've never experienced. They're telling me their secrets, dreams, fears, and about the influence this film is having on their lives. While it's almost impossible to generalize, it seems accurate to say that *Desert Hearts* is affecting, in a positive way, how many women feel about themselves, their sexuality, and their outlook on relationships. Women leave the theater with a sense of hope and a feeling of finally seeing something that's true for them.

*The video is now available on VHS and Beta for \$79.95 plus shipping from Lady-slipper, P.O. Box 3130, Durham, NC 27705. Other 'Desert Hearts' fans may write Jan Huston c/o 'HOT WIRE.'*

book, one of the first editions, with a nice note inside. She was real pleased. I think it works. In the book there was a huge age difference between the characters and I thought that would be trouble on film. Then you would get into the whole thing of, "Oh, she's looking for the mother she never had, and she's looking for the daughter she never had..." We didn't want that at all.

**HW:** Also, their physical resemblance could reinforce the myth of lesbianism being narcissism.

**PC:** Right. I know what Donna set out to do, and how we all felt about it: Here's two people that fall in love because they fall in love. Yes, because of what they found in each other, but they weren't looking for another figure.

**HW:** If you were offered a sequel or a series with this same character, would you do it?

**PC:** I don't think so. I don't know. I would feel funny about going back and trying to recreate something or about building from there.

**HW:** How do you think you're like Cay? How did that affect being able to pull it off so well in the movie?

**PC:** I think before being a mother I was very free-spirited. Like I would just take off when I wanted to, and do anything I wanted to. In that way I related to Cay a lot. There's just so much of me in her that it's hard to split it.

**HW:** Was there any way you felt you had to stretch?

**PC:** No, it just fit.

**HW:** How long was it between you getting hired and getting confirmation that there actually was going to be money and major distribution?

**PC:** While we were filming it we didn't know. It was a 31-day shoot. I was hired in March of 1983 and we started shooting at the end of July. We finished during the first week of September.

She had a \$1 million budget, and used \$800,000 of it on the actual filming. She didn't have a distribution deal until the summer of 1985. She wanted it that way because she didn't want anyone coming in and re-editing it afterwards. They would have looked at the film, maybe seen a rough cut, and said, "Okay, we'll take it over now." And they could have done anything they wanted to it. So Donna really pulled it off. Not too many people aside from Woody Allen and a couple of other directors actually get to edit their own films.

**HW:** Who is it that usually has control over the editing?

**PC:** The producer. The studio. Whoever has the big bucks behind it. They did a few tests with Desert Hearts. They asked Donna to cut the love scene down, and they showed that to an audience. They took out about 45 seconds. People have to sit and write out cards about what they think, and there was no difference in the reactions to the full-length version and the shortened version, so they left it alone. They weren't going to be able to change it anyway, but I think the Goldwyn Company wanted to show Donna that people were going to have a negative reaction—but it backfired, because they didn't.

**HW:** How much comes from the screenplay, how much from the director, and how much from the actors? Particularly in scenes of emotional intimacy?

**PC:** That was all talked about before. The love scene, in particular, was talked about by three of us [Donna, Helen, and Patricia]. Natalie Cooper [the writer] was not there; she did come at one point on location, but once the script was finalized, it was still changed a lot while we were working. But Natalie wasn't there every day to work on her vision, so it was Donna, Helen, and myself. We shot the love scene in the last week so that Helen and I would get to know each other and feel comfortable about doing it, and so Donna would know both of our work by then. Basically we knew what we wanted to do with

it, and it wasn't a matter of having to rehearse. We knew who the aggressor was and we just took it from there.

**HW:** So much of a scene is expressions and details like that; was a lot of that decided in advance?

**PC:** No, you just do it. It just comes up and then not everything is on one take. The love scene took probably nine or 10 hours to shoot. You go up to a certain point and then Donna will talk and say, "Let's do a little more of this or a little more of that..." There were adjustments we would make.

**HW:** Did you have a closed set for the filming of the love scene?

**PC:** Yes. On all the others you have the wardrobe people around, you have gaffers, the boom men—you have literally 20 to 30 people in this tiny little room where you're doing this intimate scene. This is true for any scene. But when you're doing a love scene, where you're supposed to be on a one-to-one basis with someone else, the set is "closed." It's just the director, the assistant, and the cameramen. Also we had one of the wardrobe women there with bathrobes. Sometimes the lights have to be adjusted, so someone would come in and adjust them.

**HW:** And that's how it's usually done in movies?

**PC:** Yeah. It's not a comfortable thing to do. It's not that uncomfortable kissing someone else—it's uncomfortable lying there naked.

**HW:** I hear that now you get love letters from women. What's that like?

**PC:** It's a little strange. It would be the other way around, too. It's funny—every once in awhile the men who write me are so off the wall, they're so crazed out. The women at least are straight about it. The men are like, "Oh, your body is like a temple, let me come and worship at your feet," that kind of stuff.

**HW:** "Here's my phone number..."

**PC:** Right. And they think you're going to write back and say, "Oh, yeah!" or I don't know what. But the women say something like, "I'm going to be in New York in the beginning of September and here's my number, this is the hotel I'm staying at. Why don't we get together for dinner..." I don't really know why they write that. I mean I understand, but I'm not the character that I played. Even so...am I really going to call up somebody that I have no idea who it is and say, "Oh, glad you're going to be here; let me show you the town?"

**HW:** Did you expect this?

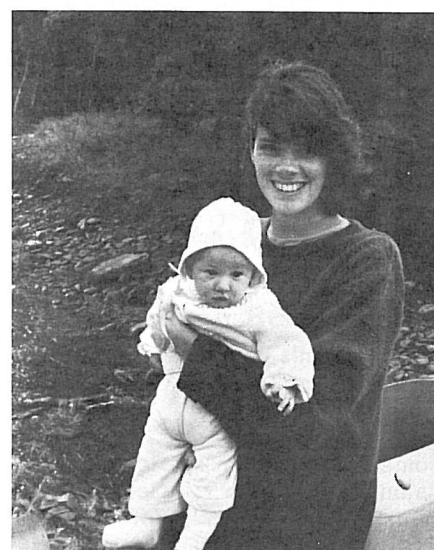
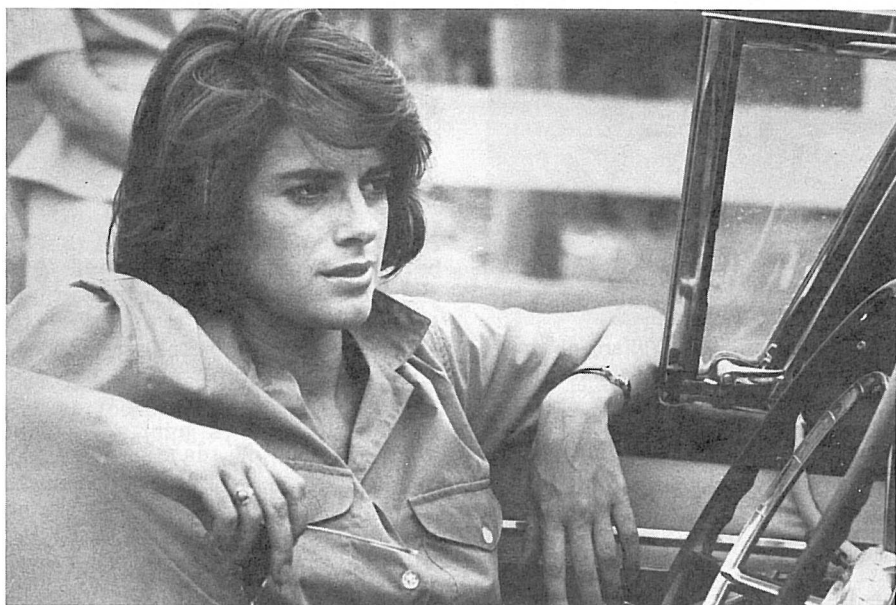
**PC:** I kept getting told to expect

film. Right away now I'm pushed into reading against...well, there are so few good scripts for women. The ones that are good are going to get gobbled up by Glenn Close and Meryl Streep and Debra Winger. I don't really have a shot at that yet. It's been frustrating. I feel my work in Desert Hearts was good, and I thought at least I would get a job from it. I thought I'd get some really great avant garde directors and get to work on some really interesting roles. Look at Alex McArthur who plays my brother in Desert Hearts; he did a great job. He's been working. He's done TV work here and there, he's played on one of those night-time soaps, and he does good work all the time.

ing with Friedkin, and I thought, "This is great; here's a woman who's going to be playing a different kind of a role." But it ended up being the same. There was talk afterwards that it was going to be a series, and the writer already had four scripts. I asked what would be happening with me, and he said, "None of them are featuring you yet." So I think I would have run into the problem. I hear they want to make four two-hour movies, but they want to recast it. It doesn't bother me; I'm glad my contract is out on that one.

**HW:** How about Crime Stories?

**PC:** Crime Stories was Michael



**Patricia and Hannah (2½ months old) at their favorite place, the farm.**

it, but I really didn't. For the most part, though, the letters are really wonderful and sincere: "I'm really glad that you did this" and "We really appreciate your work," and they like to know what I'll be doing next because they want to watch my career. It's great. It's really supportive for me and it's a wonderful feeling.

**HW:** You're a cult hero the first time out.

**PC:** Yeah. I think it's been a bit of a drawback, too, because it's been very hard for me to get a job. I don't know why. I talk about it with other people in the business, and some people say it's because I had a lead in my first

Madonna called him after she saw Desert Hearts and put him in this video, and zoom! He's getting film offers. He doesn't say a word in it.

**HW:** I guess that's what you need to do, be in music videos.

**PC:** Hey, Madonna, I'll do it with you!

But, really, I'm still waiting. I feel very frustrated work-wise right now. It's funny to me that I should be getting TV work from it. I didn't work again for almost a year after Hannah was born. I did this movie for TV—The CAT Squad ("counter assault technical squad")—and I played a forensic expert. I was excited to be work-

Mann's next series after Miami Vice. It takes place in 1963 in Chicago and I play a woman named Inger Thorson. I talked with the writer, trying to change things a bit. There were some scenes that I just said, "There is no way I can say that without being totally laughed off the screen by every woman in America." So some words were changed, but basically I'm afraid the intention is still there with what they wanted. To me it is sort of like

*continued on page 58*

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Toni L. Armstrong teaches special education in a high school, is pursuing a second Masters degree, publishes & edits 'HOT WIRE,' and is happy to report her Type-A tendencies are almost under control.

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# HOTLINE

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By Joy Rosenblatt

## HONORS

Margie Adam, Meg Christian, Holly Near, Linda Tillery, and Cris Williamson were recipients of the Lesbian Rights Awards on March 7, presented by the Southern California Women for Understanding. The Lesbian News said the awards are presented each year to those lesbians who have made outstanding contributions to the community.

Adrienne Rich was named the first recipient of the \$25,000 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize for an outstanding American poet, according to Coda.

The Women's Foundation, a non-profit group that funds living skills projects for low-income women, honored six Bay Area women's musicians: Holly Near, Cajun/blues singer Katie Webster, Lichi Fuentes (founder of the Latin American New Song group Grupo Raiz), Betsy Wong (founder of the Flowing Stream Ensemble, which plays classical Chinese music), Laurette Goldberg (founder of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of the West) and cabaret singer Weslia Whitfield. Ronnie Gilbert emceed at a benefit concert for the honorees.

Margaret Atwood won the Los Angeles Times 1986 Fiction Book Award for The Handmaid's Tale.

The Bay Area Women's Philharmonic got a \$45,000 grant from the James Irvine Foundation in the fall of 1986, according to Bitch.

**HOTLINE announces upcoming events in women's music and culture, presents capsule reports of past happenings, and passes on various tidbits of information.**



Toni L. Armstrong



Eileen Spiro

**Margie Adam and Cris Williamson were among those receiving Lesbian Rights Awards.**

## ANNIVERSARIES

The Los Angeles Women's Community Chorus starts its 11th season in 1987.

The Lesbian Herstory Archives has been in existence for 13 years and is embarking on a project to purchase its own building. LHA, P.O. Box 1258, New York, NY 10116. (212) 874-7232.

American Women Composers celebrated its 10th year in the fall of 1986 and received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a year-long series of concerts.

## NEWS

According to Judy Dlugacz of Olivia Records, Lucie Blue Tremblay's work visa has been extended through December 1987, and at least for now her problems with the Immigration and Naturalization Service are resolved.

A written language used exclusively by women has been discovered in Jiangyong County, Hunan Province, China, according to The Lesbian News. It is thought to have originated in 221-206 B.C. Young women used it to form sisterhoods and document the bond in these women characters. Some of the sisterhoods swore never to marry. Songs have been written in women characters as well as poetry and accounts of historical events.

Addie, one of the original members of Fanny, has formed her own rock band, The Heroines. She is the only woman ever asked to audition for the Rolling Stones, according to Bitch.

Congress passed a joint resolution declaring March 1987 as the first National Women's History Month, expanding on the tradition established with National History Week in 1980, according to Sojourner. The focal point will continue to be March 8, International Women's Day.

## GATHERINGS

Les Femmes Unies of Philadelphia presents their 1987 Supercruise to Bermuda from New York on July 12-18. Entertainment will include the '50s "rock & role" band The Fabulous Dyketones. 1-800-228-1775.

The first West Coast Conference of Older Lesbians is scheduled for April 24-26 at Calif. State University/Domingues Hills. It is to call lesbians over 60 together to explore who they are and make their presence felt. West Coast Celebration, 2953 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405.



Weaving Women's Colors: A Decade of Empowerment—the 9th annual National Women's Studies Association conference will be held June 24-28 at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. NWSA, P.O. Box 21223, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322. (404) 727-7845.

Women in the Director's Chair is holding its 1987 Film & Video Festival March 6-8 in Chicago. It will show outstanding films and videotapes by women. WITDC, 3435 N. Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657. Ellen (312) 281-4988.

The National Conference on Radical Thought for Women is scheduled for April 30-May 3 in Cleveland, Ohio. "Our purpose is to provide relief from day-to-day survival in conservative times and to rejuvenate our original excitement in being political women." Women's Building Project, P.O. Box 18129, Cleveland Hts., OH 44118. (216) 321-8582.

On Nov. 22, 1986 Circe Productions presented the first annual Lansing Women's Arts Festival. Featured were 11 performers and a dozen craftswomen. More than 120 women attended the one day arts festival. Circe is looking for performers for shows all year. P.O. Box 6596, East Lansing, MI 48823.

## WOMEN

Kay Gardner and Beth York are two of 14 people organizing the Association for Music, Sound, and Health. The charter members are M.D.s, certified music therapists, and independent sound healers. It is associated with the University of Louisville School of Medicine's Center for Music in Medicine and is the first organization of its kind in the northern hemisphere.

Teresa Trull and Bonnie Hayes opened for Huey Lewis & The News several times last winter.

Grace Slick is the first rocker to join Rockers Against Drunk Driving, according to Bitch. Public service anti-drug spots are being made by Rock Against Drugs, featuring Brenda Carlisle and others.

Said Helen Shaver (Professor Vivi-

an Bell in Desert Hearts): "Kissing another woman is quite extraordinary. There are no whiskers and it's very soft." She also said that Desert Hearts was "the best script I've ever been offered." (In People, Nov. 24, 1986.)

Tina Turner now has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. It is the 1,831st star and was sponsored by Columbia Records who, according to Bitch, paid the Chamber of Commerce a \$3,500 fee to consider a nomination for the walk.

Kay Gardner's latest recording, Fishersdaughter, has been officially praised and recognized by the president of the Women's Maritime Association for its positive outlook and regard towards seafaring women.

## PUBLICATIONS

The Spanish adaptation of This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color (Ana Castillo, translator), is now available. The English version was co-edited in 1981 by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua and published by Kitchen Table Women of Color Press. Ism Press, P.O. Box 12447, San Francisco, CA 94112 is the publisher of the Spanish edition.

Naiad Press has acquired the holdings of Blazon Books. The Camarin Grae titles PAZ, Winged Dancer, and Soul Snatcher are now Naiad titles.

The Nancy Drew books are back, revised for the '80s with the new title The Nancy Drew Files (Simon & Schuster).

SageWoman Magazine, the new feminist, grassroots quarterly centered on women's spirituality, is looking for contributors. P.O. Box 1478, Hillsboro, OR 97123. Also, 10 years worth of back issues of WomanSpirit are available. Send SASE: 2000 King Mountain Trail, Wolf Creek, OR 97497.

A \$1,000 National Women's Studies Book Award will be presented annually by the NWSA to the best book-length manuscript in women's studies. Interdisciplinary studies and discipline-specific studies are

especially welcome. Caryn McTighe Musil, NWSA National Coordinator, LaSalle University, Philadelphia, PA 19141.

The Third Woman announces a special issue on the theme of "The Sexuality of Latinas." Looking for wide variety of materials including criticism and original pieces. The Third Woman, c/o Chicano Studies, 3404 Dwinelle Hall, University of Calif., Berkeley, CA 94720. (415) 642-0240. ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Joy Rosenblatt does production at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse. In her spare time, she works for the State of Illinois as a welfare counselor.*

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# ON STAGE AND OFF

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## The First Solo Tour

By Judi Friedman

*Somewhere over Minneapolis I am drifting...We are in a holding pattern...Patience...as the adventure takes its wings...*

My first national tour had begun. Years of writing and playing music had brought me to this point, along with scores of conversations with women in the women's music and culture network, hours of booking, planning, reading, arranging, and all of the people and practical work that go into the realizing of dreams.

I kept a journal, thinking to write an article about a first tour, something I had yet to read. But as the tour unfolded through six states and 13 cities, I found I was not only experiencing the road as a new performer on the women's and folk circuits; by the final night in Chicago I had come to know a great deal about touring as a solo artist.

My decision to tour grew from the response I was getting at home and at several regional music festivals. I was ready to test national response and my own stamina. I had been playing professionally for four years, primarily as a soloist. I loved it, and had been eager to reach wider audiences for awhile. I had started my first recording, Arc of Diamonds, and it would be ready for early fall release. The timing was perfect. Since the majority of my playing experience had been solo, touring solo was a natural choice.

To perform solo is to take on the challenge of facing one's self with each performance and, if a writer, to face one's self and one's work by publicly sharing it. The rigors of multiple gigs and continual travel and change that

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**ON STAGE AND OFF** addresses issues of interest to musicians and performers.



Leslie Smuckler

**"To perform solo is to take on the challenge of facing one's self with each performance."**

make up touring catalyze this kind of introspection as well, as independent travel often does. The context of performance forces a concentration of one's energies so that the entire tour is fueled by the power generated in the exchange between performer and audience. Heightened awareness offstage leads to sharper focus and increased power onstage, which in turn empowers the audience members—who both acknowledge the exchange in their response and provide the mirror for one's own reflection.

While this applies to some degree in all performance situations, it is particularly true for the soloist on the road, where truths of both soloing and touring accentuate each other. With each new show and town I found myself more keenly aware of energy and mood fluxes, my basic needs, strengths, survival skills, and places of most and least confidence. I was paying more attention than usual to things I loved

and was excited about, to my power onstage to deliver, and to the power of music and performance itself. The intensity and clarity that comes with being wholly dependent and focused on your own resources is, for me, one of the great rewards of solo touring.

As a singer/songwriter coming into a series of new towns, I was overjoyed to meet audiences with high expectations who had come to hear what I had to say/sing as well as to be entertained. As a soloist on the stage, you are constantly, wholly visible (unless as a comedy or magic act you've intentionally disappeared). All the attention is on you to do something entertaining, hard-hitting, and/or beautiful with the power you are given by all those people who've come to see you perform. They are expecting you to take it, to express yourself boldly, to be unabashedly present as yourself (or your stage persona), to play well, to get serious, to have a good time, and to make connections with them. This intimate connection is what live performance is all about, and it is your job to create it with each person in your audience.

Touring presents the additional challenge of keeping the quality of your performances consistent and fresh. The high expectations of your audiences are based on the PR materials you and the producer have generated, plus word of mouth; hopefully you have expressed yourself honestly to get the gig, and so can relax and be yourself once you arrive. The anticipation that then charges the air is only equivalent to what you really have to offer. And you may have more than you realized.

Unlike playing regularly back home, where you can develop your

show and artistry over time, the road puts all your hometown lessons to the test. It insists that you grow at the new pace you have set for yourself on tour. The intensity of having only one chance in each town freed me to take more risks: playing off audiences with greater abandon, trying out new lines and nuances, enjoying the immediacy of putting thoughts into action. These kinds of leaps almost always lead to gained confidence and control, so you and your art grow exponentially!

Every performer has an impact on the total culture. Whether you see your work as consciously political or as entertainment only, the very fact that you're creating woman-positive culture and sharing it makes your presence vital. I found remembering this to be the surest way to regain perspective after a day spent coping with hours of travel, changing weather, wild drivers, nerves, burnout, and stories of women making changes in their lives too often against a backdrop of increasing local violence and conservative politics.

Each performer finds her own way of handling the stresses of touring and taking in its rewards. Much of the satisfaction and success I enjoyed my first time out was due to thorough planning with a broad vision of the possibilities.

Touring solo is perhaps the simplest of all packages one can offer a producer. Costs are minimized for both producer and artist (compared with a large act or band), and both will, hopefully, reap higher returns as a result. A range of settings, from house concerts to coffeehouses to larger

halls, are available. Additional gigs can be added with relatively little complexity. If you are as yet unknown in the region(s) into which you wish to go, this viability can be the essential factor—along with the quality of your act and your flexibility—in getting you the gigs.

Everyone likes to be reminded of what and how much is possible. On the women's circuit I find enthusiasm gets sparked by three things: ease, fun/meaningfulness, and profit. (1) Ease: the production is doable from the producer's viewpoint with a minimum of burnout. (2) Fun/meaningfulness: the event is worthwhile to the community on an entertainment and/or political/cultural level. (3) Profit: the potential is good for everyone to get paid, and paid well, for their work.

Whether you're working with an agent or booking yourself, you are responsible for making sure your tour is doable and enjoyable for you, and that it is a good career investment. As a soloist, the artistic freedom you have on stage extends into the booking process. Custom designing your tour with a broad definition of success maximizes your chances for satisfaction, and helps minimize road burnout. There will always be surprises, but this basic framework allowed me to visualize the tour as a whole, and it gave me a bottom line from which I could be clear and sensibly flexible when negotiating the details (guarantees, housing, food, travel, sound equipment, and technical support) for the contract.

## ADVICE

(1) Taking ease, fun, meaningfulness, profit, and specific tour goals (exposure, travel, experience, tape sales) as guidelines, assess the needs of each of your road jobs/roles (one woman show, manager/booker, health/morale advocate, tape seller, driver).

(2) Add any given realities that will affect the overall tour. Include your health and finances, the time of year, climate, available deals on transportation, etc. (I traveled alone on my first tour; I had old friends in and around Ohio; I had to cover expenses and make next month's rent; deals on

monthly car rentals were competitive with bus fares.)

(3) Decide on a tour length and scope that is comfortable and financially feasible. (I chose six weeks in the Midwest, playing various venues within a 250 mile driving radius of Cincinnati.)

(4) Satisfy some professional ambitions (like opening for headliners in key folk circuit clubs) and personal dreams (in my case, visiting Nashville and watching the changing leaves). Arrange in advance for refueling and keeping yourself happy (intimacy, privacy, massage, gym/pool, days off). Don't be shy to ask—be generous! Contrary to the beliefs of some, life on the road is hard, real work—not a vacation.

(5) Finally, try to budget for several weeks decompression and evaluation time after the tour. And leave as few loose ends at home as possible, as they will be the first to greet you upon your return.

It is a joy and an honor for me to work in a network which is about discovering, tapping, and blending resources—a business that pays me to be myself pursuing my music and politics to the fullest, welcomed in by incredible people to places where I learn more and am allowed in to touch people's lives and to encourage our dreams.

Beyond the multi-leveled journeys, beyond whatever struggles, the very process sustains me and propels me on. ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Judi Friedman grew up in Brooklyn, lived in Ohio, and now makes home in San Francisco where she performs and writes. Hear her 'Arc of Diamonds' on the soundsheet in this issue.*

### Solo Touring Resources

- **Music Industry Conference**, at the National Women's Music Festival, Bloomington, Indiana. Annual event; workshops on booking, networking, performing; general industry info; schmoozing.

- **Be Your Own Best Booker** workshop by Sandra Washington, given at festivals. Invaluable logical and creative tips.

- **"Staying Sane on the Road"** article by Debbie Fier. 'HOT WIRE' November 1985. Health/self-respect advocacy.

- **"Hiring and Being Hired"** article by Diane Lindsay. 'HOT WIRE' March 1985. Attitude etiquette.

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# THE AUDIO ANGLE

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## Monitor Mixing and Engineer Training

By Karen Kane

**When you go to a concert, there is usually a sound engineer in the audience working a mixing board which controls the sound that the audience hears. Why do you sometimes see another sound engineer sitting on the stage off to the side working other equipment?**

When an artist does a concert with multiple musicians it is usually difficult for everyone on the stage to hear themselves and each other. To remedy this, boxy black speakers (monitors) are placed on the stage near the performers' feet. Monitors amplify the sound back to the musicians.

There are two basic ways a monitor system can be set up. The first (more elaborate and expensive) way is when a sound company provides two sound systems. The main system (the house mix) is used to amplify the sound that the audience (house) hears. The other system (the monitor mix) is used so the musicians can hear themselves. A monitor mix engineer sits on the stage behind a mixing board, creating a good blend of the microphones for the musicians in the same way that the house engineer creates a good balance for the audience.

The second way to amplify the monitors is less elaborate and is cheaper. In this situation, only one system is provided, and the independent monitor mix system is not used. With solo performers like Judy Small or duos like Caselberry-DuPreé, the production company paying for the sound system will usually rent just the one system that amplifies both the

**THE AUDIO ANGLE discusses information about recording, the mysteries of the recording studio, and answers technical questions submitted by HOT WIRE readers.**



Toni L. Armstrong

house mix and the monitor mix. This is done through the mixing board that sits out in the audience and only requires one sound engineer.

You might ask, "Why rent two systems and two sound engineers when one can do both?" When the monitor mix is run through the same board as the house mix, there are limitations. The key phrase here is "completely independent." The fact that the two systems are completely independent of each other means that you have much more control on the quality of the sound for each. What may not sound good for the audience mix may sound just right for the monitors. For example, a particular instrument may have to be very bright (lots of treble) to be heard clearly over everything else in the monitors. With the house mix being different, the sound of that particular instrument may be too piercing for the audience mix.

Another advantage of the two-system way is that during a live performance the onstage sound may vary a lot during the course of any one set. Guest musicians may be added; performers change from instrument to instrument; there are differences between loud songs and soft ones. You can see,

therefore, how the musicians would have ever-changing sound needs while they are on stage. The monitor mix engineer can easily cater to these needs much more quickly if she is sitting right there and has constant, clear visual contact—as opposed to having subtle signals to the sound engineer sitting in the middle of the hall. Did you ever notice a performer pointing to the monitors as a way of asking for more (or less)? Sometimes they actually say into the microphone, "More guitar in the monitors, please." Performers usually don't like to do this—it brings too much attention to and makes the audience too aware of the sound system.

Another real plus for the engineer on stage is that she can actually hear what's going on in the monitors and perhaps even have a monitor speaker of her own.

The independent monitor mix has the capability to give each musician a personalized mix. When you run the monitor mix through the house mixing board, there is usually only one possible blend that you can achieve. Everyone on the stage has to agree to that one mix. This is especially difficult with a full band set-up like Deuce or Alive! (bass, drums, guitar, vocals, horns, etc.). The bass player and drummer may need to hear a lot of guitar and vocals while the guitar player may need to hear a lot of bass and drums. To get everyone to agree on one mix and be happy at the same time is quite a feat! Therefore, if you have an independent monitor mix system you can create two, four, or six separate possible mixes. Each musician or small group of musicians can have their own monitor speaker with exactly

what they want to hear in it.

At the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, where I was the monitor mix engineer this past summer, you will always see a monitor mix system on the night-stage. In that particular situation the monitor mix engineer is off to the left of the stage surrounded by lots of equipment, but she is usually very visible. In an indoor situation if a monitor system is being used it will probably be well-hidden since the stage area itself is smaller and is much more of an eyesore. The system is usually put either behind the big house speakers or nearer to the backstage area.

**I'm interested in learning sound engineering for live concerts and recording in the studio. How should I proceed?**

A lot of people have asked me this question over the course of 12 years and my first answer always remains the same: TRAIN THOSE EARS!! You can learn everything there is to know about the equipment but without good ears it doesn't mean much. Unless, of course, your exclusive focus is going to be the technical end of things, as in maintaining the equipment in a recording studio or for a live sound company.

A good sound engineer must have "good ears." In my opinion this can be described in two ways. The first is having a good musical ear. Being in a recording studio, it is useful to be able to hear when instruments are out of tune, notice tempo fluctuations (unintentional speeding up or slowing down) within a song, and to be able to generally relate to the musicians in their own language. This is especially necessary if there is no record producer hired to take responsibility for hearing these things. If you are already a musician you have a terrific advantage.

If you are not a musician, it is essential to get some training in this area. You don't necessarily have to learn to play an instrument, but a few of the basics of music—and some tuning hints—are useful. To achieve this goal, check out Adult Education courses, local music schools, or private tutors. The second way one has a

good ear is more on a sonic level. (Sonic: utilizing, produced by or relating to sound waves; frequencies within the audibility of the human ear.) These are things that relate to how each instrument sounds, the color of the sound, the timbre. The timbre of a sound will possibly be different depending on the quality of the microphones used along with all the other elements that it has to pass through to reach its final destination: the speakers. If a sound is different coming out of a speaker than it is standing next to the person playing it, it is possible to sonically alter it to achieve a more natural sound. Equalization [see "The Audio Angle," March 1986 issue of HOT WIRE] can be used to vary the timbre of an instrument. An example of this is if an instrument comes out of the speaker with its high frequencies amplified less than the middle and low frequencies, the sound would then be duller—the use of an equalizer could compensate for this. Learning how to work an equalizer is one thing, and knowing what you want to hear and how to get it is another thing. This kind of aural knowledge takes training and experience.

One way to start this learning process is to listen to a lot of records and/or the radio. Define what sounds you like and why. When you listen, can you pick out each of the instruments listed on the song credits? Does each sound pleasing to you? Also, you can specifically listen to hear where things are placed in a stereo image. For example, is the sound of Ellen Seeling's trumpet coming primarily from the right or left speaker? Records such as Kay Gardner's A Rainbow Path are good for picking out different instrumentation and for developing a sense of stereo imaging.

Attend concerts and notice the "sonic quality" of what you hear. Approach the sound engineer at the mixing board and ask any questions that might help you understand how certain sounds were achieved. For example, Lucie Blue Tremblay has an unusual and pleasing guitar sound, slightly different from an ordinary acoustic guitar. Notice that it's plugged in instead of miked; inquire about

how the effects are achieved. If you sit in the front row at a concert where an electric guitarist such as Jacqueline Stander or Sherry Shute is playing, what you hear of the guitar will vary depending on the acoustics of the hall and PA system. You might hear a combination of what is coming through the house speakers as well as the guitar amp. Maybe you'll mostly hear the amp, and the guitar sound is bright. If you move to the back of the hall, it will sound deeper. From farther back you're no longer hearing what's coming through the guitar amp; now you're getting what the sound engineer thinks sounds good through the PA. After the show, ask the engineer questions about what you heard. Being able to put your impressions into words and communicate with professionals is an important skill.

Find out who the producer of the concert is and offer your services as an usher or other type of worker. This might enable you to be around during the sound check where you could learn more. Talk to sound engineers, recording studios, or live sound companies to see if there are any openings for apprenticeship positions.

There are many good schools these days that teach recording-studio skills. With the exception of hands-on apprenticeship, this is the best way to get this kind of education. For example, Berklee College of Music has a four-year audio engineering program with music studies as well. You must play an instrument to get into this school. [Berklee College of Music, 1140 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215.]

*continued on page 65*

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Karen Kane, first woman sound engineer in the Boston area, has produced/engineered more than 50 albums, including those by Alix Dobkin, Kay Gardner, Debbie Fier, Maxine Feldman, and Betsy Rose. Questions and comments can be sent directly to 329 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02144.*



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# LÁADAN

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## Láadan Update

By Suzette Haden Elgin

For this issue, the editors tell me that you readers would rather have an article than another Láadan lesson; I understand that. I went back and read the article I wrote for the November 1985 issue and thought about whether I could do something like that again. I decided I couldn't. What I can do instead is a brief update, to let you know what's happened with the language since that piece a year ago, and what needs doing, and so on.

While I'm at it I will take time to point out one thing that has to be kept firmly in mind: the fact that ANYTHING WHATSOEVER has happened, much less is still happening, is astonishing. Láadan has not swept the country, nor yet the world; it has not become a major motion picture; but it hasn't been dumped in the footnote museum and paved over, either. That is a chunk of good news in a world where such chunks are often hard to find, and I am glad to be able to pass it along. Now—to the list, be it ever so humble. (I won't include the lessons in HOT WIRE, since you already know about those, but they've been important to me.)

1. DAW Books, which was understandably a bit dubious about the idea of publishing even one novel that had a language for women as a central plot element, has gone so far as to publish a second one; by the time you read this, Native Tongue II: The Judas Rose

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**LÁADAN:** "the language of those who perceive," a language constructed to express the perceptions of women. This column presents translation-lessons for those interested in learning to use the language. Suzette Haden Elgin welcomes correspondence from women interested in the further development of Láadan. Route 4, Box 192-E, Huntsville, AR 72740.

### LÁADAN LESSONS Recommended materials

*A First Dictionary and Grammar of Láadan* by Suzette Haden Elgin. This reference book is available from SF3, P.O. Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701 (if you cannot obtain it from your local women's bookstore). \$8 plus \$1.50 postage and handling.

*Grammar tape* to accompany the dictionary/grammar reference book. \$3 includes postage and handling. From Suzette Haden Elgin, Rt 4 Box 192-E, Huntsville, AR 72740.

*Láadan: A Language for Women*, article about the development of the language, in November 1985 issue of *HOT WIRE*.

will be on the shelves. In this book I've taken up the question of how the language might—in my fictional universe, of course—move beyond the households of linguists and out into the world. And I was able to include quite a bit of the language this time, with translations and discussions. (The first book, Native Tongue, brought a lot of anger, much of it useful anger, down on me; The Judas Rose will bring twice as much, and I'm braced for it. The social climate for the idea of women bringing about major changes in our reality is not a thing of soft breezes and drifting apple blossoms at the moment.) And there are editions of Native Tongue either in print or in press in England and in West Germany; the British edition, from Women's Press, includes a sampler of the language at the back of the book.

2. SF<sup>3</sup>, the science fiction group in Madison, Wisconsin, that published the Láadan grammar-and-dictionary, has not gone bankrupt as a result of taking that risk. I was worried about that. I was afraid they would sell three copies, total. But it hasn't been like that, thank heavens. There are murmurs about maybe doing a second edition one of these days: for one thing, there are typographical errors that need cor-

recting—not surprising, since those who did the typesetting were working with a language foreign both to them and to their computer. Also, the vocabulary of Láadan is now much larger, and having the new words added would be useful. If that does happen, I'll be letting you know. The project of a dictionary from Láadan to English, so that the structure of the language would be more clear, is also being thought about in several places; perhaps that will happen, too.

3. A graduate student at the University of California has done an independent study project in Láadan, for real graduate credit; another woman is now doing a thesis with Láadan as an important component of the work, and is in the process of arranging to have me added to her thesis committee as an external member (one of the very few real world uses of a Ph.D. [see author bio] is qualifying for stuff like that). Letters have come in to me from many schools around the country—especially from Women's Studies, but also from the various social sciences—about the results of including Láadan as part of a course curriculum. Many of the profs involved in these classes have sent me copies of essay question responses about Láadan from their students, or samples of new words in Láadan proposed by their students. All have sent a letter telling me how things went in the classroom. This has been extremely interesting, especially when the classes included men as well as women and there was opportunity for that situation to produce the inevitable heated discussions.

4. There have been reviews of

Native Tongue mentioning both Láadan and the hypotheses about women and language that it addresses; a section about the language appeared in a feminist dictionary, along with a number of examples. The reviews of that dictionary have frequently mentioned Láadan. Those by men have tended to say that I'd wasted my time because women wouldn't be willing to bother with it; those by women have been more positive. (The dictionary is by Cheris Kramarae and Paula Treichler, with Ann Russo, Pandora Press, 1985. I strongly recommend it.)

5. I've made a videotape, Suzette Haden Elgin Talks About 'Native Tongue', containing much material about Láadan and women's language, and am just tooling up to send the notice about its existence around to my mailing list. It's the first video to come out from The Magic Granny Line, which up to now has done mostly cassette tapes and songbooks, and we're pleased about it. We have equipment and facilities now to produce videotapes routinely. Come the day I have reason to believe there might be a tiny market for a Láadan videotape—that is, not just a tape about the language but a tape that uses the language—I will do one.

Now I can move on to the question of what hasn't happened, or is having trouble happening. What I wanted to have in this column, for this issue, was songs in Láadan. To save your editors both space and money, I've been working on Láadan lyrics set to traditional folk tunes—so there's no need to print lead sheets. I think that few things lead more swiftly to making something truly thrive than being able to sing about it. The idea of women around a campfire (substitute whatever you gather around) singing Láadan lyrics to old tunes warms me. But I don't have those lyrics finished yet. I will do my best to have them ready for the next issue, but I have better sense than to promise. I will just try, very hard. And would welcome your help, I assure you.

We still don't have any sort of stable network for Láadan, and that is a serious problem. It's not

that we need a formal organization, with officers and dues and all that apparatus. Not at all. But the women who want to work with the language—to write in it or about it, to correspond or talk in it, to use it in non-print media—don't have any way to find one another, much less stay in touch. They write me, but without their permission I can't share their names; and so my file gets thicker and thicker, but they continue to be unaware of others they could contact. Setting up and maintaining a network like that is not a suitable task for me, for many reasons; it needs to be done by people younger and stronger and with fewer people already depending on them. So that is on hold for now.

We need—still—Láadan objects. Small, portable, inexpensive, useful objects. Calendars, and notepaper, and postcards—objects of that sort. A few women have written me, most courteously, to talk about working on such things, and it's probable that if I'd been able to get back to them properly and in detail there would now BE some of those objects. Since I haven't, I want to use a few lines here to state a basic groundrule or two, answering the sorts of questions that have been slowing down the correspondence. (1) Láadan does not belong to me; languages aren't property. You don't need my approval or permission to do these projects, and I encourage you with all my heart to go right ahead and DO them. I'd like a sample, because the language is dear to me and I'm interested, but that's the only obligation (and it's voluntary). The only time you need to think of formal permission is if what you want to do might encroach on SF's copyright—in which case you should contact them instead of me. (2) I do not want, and would not accept, any portion of the monies you might earn from such projects. I know this has caused a problem for the craftswomen among you, because you have assumed that there would be some percentage of your earnings that had to go to me, and thought that had to be worked out with a contract, and so on. Put that out of your mind, please. It's not an issue, and I don't want it hold-

ing you back.

There is a matter of basic freedom here, you perceive. If someone were to take Láadan phrases and somehow mingle them with violence—engrave them on the latest GI Joe doll's cartridge belt, or some such awful thing—that would cause me sorrow. But taking legal steps to prevent it, supposing that were even possible, would also be repugnant to me, because that's censorship, and because it implies that I have some sort of "property rights" over the language. I would rather think that perhaps Láadan is stronger than the violence, and that the child who saw those phrases might use the cartridge belt to fasten up a plant with instead of to play at war.

I think that's long enough, and that it's essentially complete. I will work on those songs...

—Suzette Haden Elgin

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Suzette Haden Elgin is a Doctor of Linguistics. She has taught at the University of California, specializing in Native American languages. She has written numerous linguistic texts in addition to 11 major science fiction and fantasy novels, including 'Native Tongue.'*

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# THE TENTH MUSE

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## Sappho: Lost and Rediscovered

By Jorjet Harper

"Beautiful women, my feelings for you will never falter."—Sappho\*

*This is the fourth of a series of articles on Sappho of Lesbos: her life, her work, her loves, her historical influence, the controversies surrounding her, and how her work was lost and some of it rediscovered.*

Scholars at the ancient library of Alexandria compiled collections of Sappho's work: they had about 1,200 verses altogether that they believed constituted her lifetime output, and they classified these lines—according to meter and subject matter—into nine separate books. Her poetry was referred to in the grammar books of the time to give students examples of great writing that they could emulate.

By the time of the Renaissance, almost nothing of her work remained. What the natural erosion of time could not erase, the patriarchs of the Church were able to accomplish by systematic destruction. After their successful purges of her work, the only words of Sappho's left to history were an ode dedicated to Aphrodite [see HOT WIRE, November 1986 issue] and a fragment of another poem.

Yet today about 600 lines or parts of lines have been recovered, remarkable, beautiful, and vivid. This is still only about five percent of what was known to the ancients, but five percent of Sappho's poetic legacy is much more than the Church fathers would have wanted us to have.

When the first wave of destruction of Sappho's work occurred is not exactly known, but

**THE TENTH MUSE: Who was Sappho of Lesbos, praised by Plato as "the Tenth Muse"? This column explores the facts, speculations, and controversies surrounding the world's first famous Lesbian.**



**Text of a poem by Sappho from 'Oxyrhynchus Papyri.'**

it's believed to have taken place quite early in the Christian epoch, most likely during the period of Gregory of Nazianus, about 380 A.D. Her works must have been judged "immoral" by a young Church that had decreed women inferior and homosexuality an abomination.

The final great wave of book-burning took place during the religious fervor just preceding the Crusades, in the time of Pope Gregory VII. In 1073 A.D. Gregory ordered the thorough and systematic persecution of the works of ancient authors considered "immoral," and these works were publicly burned in large numbers in both Rome and Constantinople at that time. Nothing, it seemed, was left.

### WAS SAPPHO A LESBIAN?

Today it seems hardly surprising that the Church set about to destroy Sappho's work.

Greek scholar Sir Maurice Bowra observes, in his classic 1936 study Greek Lyric Poetry, "Apart from her brother and perhaps [the poet] Alcaeus, she does not seem to have written for or about men. Her devoted interest was chiefly given to girls. She was stirred by powerful emotions towards them, and they inspired her to write with a remarkable intimacy and candour...She wrote about girls because they touched her deeply."

Even in our own century, when the word "lesbian" was not to be uttered, Sappho's suspected sexual orientation was often referred to obliquely—usually in order to deny it. Excuses were made for the aura of "immorality" that had come to be associated with the word "sapphic."

"Certainly, as well as Sappho's poetry, there is other evidence which refers to love between women and some which links it with Lesbos," comments translator Josephine Balmer in her book Sappho: Poems and Fragments. "The male poet Anacreon who lived on the mainland of Asia Minor in the sixth century B.C. describes how the woman he loves ignores him because 'she is from Lesbos and gapes after another woman.' An early sixth century plate from Thera and an Attic red figure vase c. 500 B.C. show women 'courting' and arousing each other. An epitaph from Athens dating from the late fifth century B.C. also records the love of two women." Another ancient source tells of a visit to the home of two women—one of whom dresses in male attire—who live together "as man and wife."

In the misogynistic legends that have come down to us,

---

*\*Josephine Balmer translation*



Sappho has been alternately depicted as a lesbian who shunned men and as a prostitute whose heterosexual cravings were insatiable (more about this in a future column). One male author, David Robinson, writing in 1924, "defends" Sappho against what he calls the "vice idea" by arguing that she must have been a "pure" woman—as opposed to a "bad" woman—because "it would be practically impossible for a bad woman to subject her expressions to the marvellous niceties of rhythm, accent, and meaning which Sappho everywhere exhibits."

He does not specify what he means by a "bad" woman. He also asserts that Sappho would "never have given herself up to unnatural and inordinate moral practices" based on the impeccable logic that "a bad woman as well as a pure woman might love roses, but a bad woman does not love the small and hidden wild flowers of the field, the dainty anthrise and the clover, as Sappho did." Robinson clearly had not heard of Jungian archetypes or the symbolic significance of flower petals.

Sappho's "bad" reputation, which Robinson strains so perversely to refute, goes back to antiquity itself. But ancient commentators were more direct and to the point. Biographical information on Sappho dating back from Roman times plainly states: "She has been accused by some of being irregular in her ways and a woman-lover." And Suidas, writing in the tenth century A.D., notes that "she had three companions and friends, Atthis, Telesippa, and Megara, and she got a bad name for her impure friendship with them."

### **"THE VERY GREATEST POET THAT EVER LIVED"**

During the Renaissance, however, when interest in classical authors was revived, a few scattered references to Sappho were rediscovered by Italian antiquarians in works that had survived. Sappho had been so well known in the ancient Greek and Roman world that some authors just assumed that their readers would know the references they made to her work, so here and there

the Renaissance scholars studying ancient texts would find an author who had paraphrased her, "You know, that line of Sappho's that goes..." or make an oblique reference, "As when Sappho talks about" such and such. But it was also discovered that an essay on "The Sublime" by Longinus contained a substantial fragment of one of Sappho's poems, given as an example of sublimity in literature. And among the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus they found a treatise on literary composition that quoted Sappho's Ode to Aphrodite in its entirety.

An interest in Sappho was sparked by these few isolated works. In fact, the interest in her during the Renaissance, after these fragments were found, was so strong that these few lines and the one complete poem were translated and published in England as early as the sixteenth century. Words of praise for Sappho by Plato and Horace which had also been discovered, combined with the few precious lines of her surviving work, led to a mystique about her that seemed to snowball with time. Arguments arose about her use of the pronoun "she" in the Ode to Aphrodite, since it is clearly a love poem. Greek scholars debated whether or not it was a mistranslation. Since her work has been so thoroughly erased, it was still possible to argue that the romantic references to women in her two remaining poems were clerical errors. Some scholars postulated that perhaps a bleary-eyed monk—out of overwork or a perfunctory knowledge of the Greek language—had confused the pronouns when he transcribed her texts, inserting a "she" where there should have been a "he." This argument was, believe it or not, seriously put forth to explain the Great Pronoun Problem.

By the nineteenth century, based only on the meager evidence of the Ode and fragments, the English poet Swinburne pronounced that Sappho was "beyond all question and comparison the very greatest poet that ever lived."

But no more of her work had been found.

## **THE OXYRHYNCHUS PAPYRI**

In January 1895, at the age of 22, Willa Cather wrote about Sappho in her newspaper column in the Lincoln Nebraska Journal.

"There is one woman poet whom all the world calls great, though of her work there remains now only a few disconnected fragments and that one wonderful hymn to Aphrodite. Small things upon which to rest so great a fame, but they tell so much. If of all the lost riches we could have one master restored to us, one of all the philosophers and poets, the choice of the world would be for the lost nine books of Sappho. Those broken fragments have burned themselves into the consciousness of the world like fire."

Cather's remarks were incredibly prophetic. Just one year later, in 1896, some of these "lost riches" were found.

Two British archaeologists, Grenfells and Hunt, stumbled upon a horde of ancient writings while excavating Graeco-Egyptian cemeteries at Oxyrhynchus (Behnesa) in Egypt. Coffins they were digging up were made of a kind of papier-mache. They discovered that scraps of ancient papyrus books and letters, torn into strips and pasted together, had been used to construct these coffins. Other papyrus strips were found wadded up and stuffed into the mouths of mummified crocodiles, and in rubbish heaps buried at the site. The writings found on these scraps, called the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, dated from the late second century A.D., and, to the amazement of the archaeologists, were of enormous literary and historical importance: some of these crumbling pieces of newly-uncovered, precious papyrus held the only known copies in the world of ancient masterpieces. Among them were the works of Sappho.

Some of the Oxyrhynchus writings duplicated works known from other sources—by Homer, Thucydides, and Aristotle, for example—and scholars had the opportunity to compare the Oxyrhynchus versions with other known versions of these texts. But of much greater interest were writings

that were unknown because they had been totally lost. Most of the works of Sappho known today came from this unlikely source. Imagine it: ancient Greek woman-loving lesbian literature from the mummified mouths of crocodiles dead for centuries in the Egyptian desert!

Naturally, separating and re-storing these crumpled, crumbling pieces of papyri was painstaking work, and it was some 20 years before all the recoverable segments were finally published. As Sappho translator Mary Barnard explains: "Papyrus books were long rolls of a kind of durable paper made from the stalks of a water plant. The poems were written crosswise on the roll, in capitals because lower case had not yet been invented... The papyrus scrolls were eventually torn into strips, crosswise of the roll, lengthwise of the poem, and pasted together."

What this means is that some of the poems that were found contain only the middles of each line, some contain only the left side of each line, and some only the right side. This is why, when reading Sappho's poems today, brackets or ellipses are sometimes put in to indicate a part that is missing from the papyri from which the poem was recovered.

So now we are able to read five percent of Sappho's poetry—about ten times as much as was known a hundred years ago. Yet even after the great discovery at Oxyrhynchus, Sappho's *Ode to Aphrodite* is still the only complete poem of hers we possess. Unlikely as it may seem, we can only hope that somewhere, in a desert cache or an island cave, more of Sappho's works are hidden, waiting to be found.

### SAPPHO'S WOMAN- FOCUS PROVEN

Sappho's words, retrieved after centuries, were exquisite—justifying every high opinion of her genius that had come down to us from antiquity. "The only disconcerting fact," admits Sappho scholar Arthur Weigall, "was that the newly discovered love-poems were addressed to women, not to men; and thus arguments which had

sometimes been put forward to explain away the use of the feminine gender in the two important poems already known were proved to be untenable."

I daresay not everyone found this fact "disconcerting."

Sappho's emotional attraction to women is no longer in doubt—her surviving poems now provide the proof. Yet some critics still dispute that Sappho was a lesbian, by an argument that runs as follows: "Yes, she focused her attention on women, but there's no evidence that she was physically a lesbian in the full sexual sense; none of the verses that have survived have any graphic descriptions of sex." Apparently these critics would require some ancient Greek hexameter equivalent of the Hite Report before they would concede the point. Yet when male Greek poets sang the praises of the beauty of young men and boys they didn't have to get graphic for everyone to understand exactly what they were singing about.

It has also been argued that it doesn't matter whether Sappho was "really" a lesbian or not. This rationale seems just another way to try to make Sappho's lesbianism invisible once again. One could argue that it doesn't matter whether the poems were addressed to "he" or "she" as well—

but it does matter, doesn't it? It certainly mattered a lot to all the male scholars and writers who wanted to argue in favor of her heterosexuality, who wanted to imagine she could have written her songs to them. To me, minimizing Sappho's woman-focus, denying what is obvious, is the modern alternative to the medieval method of eradicating lesbian reality by setting a torch to the truth.

The historian Maximus of Tyre (125-185 A.D.) knew the work of Sappho that the Church later destroyed. While unable to imagine a love between women that might not parallel or differ in essence from a love between men, he nevertheless strikes a sane note in this millenium-long debate when he says in his Orations: "What else could one call the love of the Lesbian woman than the Socratic art of love? For they seem to me to have practiced love after their own fashion, she the love of women, he of men. For they said they loved many, and were captivated by all things beautiful." ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jorjet Harper writes fiction and non-fiction. She is a regular contributor to 'HOT WIRE' and 'Windy City Times,' a Chicago newspaper. She is the National Coordinator of the Feminist Writers Guild.*

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# THE WOMAN'S ASPECTARIAN

By Paula Walowitz

Astrology offers us some understanding of the forces that affect us, and allows us to redirect and refocus those energies to help them work for our benefit. There is no such thing as "bad" energy. There are different kinds of energy, however, and different combinations of energies. Energy that is great for cleaning your apartment may be too antsy for romance. Likewise, romantic energy might be a little distracting when you've got to study for a statistics midterm.

Several dates within the next few months seem to be of special significance for women: International Women's Day, the Spring Equinox, Mother's Day, the Summer Solstice, and the dates of the various women's music and culture festivals being held around the country. Let's look at each of them and see what the astrological "weather" forecast is like.

## **International Women's Day March 8, 1987**

For a Sunday, this is fine energy. It's a good day to spend chatting or writing; communication of all kinds should be easy (Moon/Mercury trine). The moon in Cancer tends to favor hanging out at home. Try having a little potluck brunch, but ask the guests to bring light food since the Moon/Jupiter square will probably encourage overeating. Provide lots of celery.

## **Spring Equinox March 20, 1987**

This could be a productive day and a wonderful night if you can work it right. Aside from a little potential trouble with getting your ideas across in the morning (Moon/Mercury square), it should be an easy, pleasant workday (Moon/Jupiter trine, Venus/Saturn Sextile) and a great night for a

party (Moon in Sagittarius, Sun in Aries). Also, since the vernal equinox is the true beginning of the astrological year (the Sun is at 0° Aries), influences are perfect for starting a new long-term project.

## **Mother's Day May 10, 1987**

If you plan to do something special with mom (or the kids), do it during the daylight hours. This evening will probably be a lazy one (Moon/Jupiter opposition). Avoid eating too much, drinking too heavily, getting too high, or spending too much money tonight. The moon in Libra tends to shift our focus to lover relationships, so spend the evening, if possible, relaxing with your best girl.

## **The Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival and Wiminifest '87 May 22-25, 1987**

The first two days will be highly-charged, vigorous, exciting, and possibly volatile (moon in Aries; many conflicting energies). The Taurus moon calms down the next two days, but there will still be some potent energy floating around.

Watch out for quarrels and relationship hassles on Friday (Mars/Moon square, Moon/Neptune square); try to use the energy constructively. After all, you're at a festival; go to a percussion workshop so you can pound on something.

There are so many influences on Saturday, I can't list them all. There are favorable aspects galore all day. Any action you take, particularly with a creative bend to it, is likely to succeed. Even if you don't attend a festival today, don't waste this energy; it's too good. Just be careful of jealous feelings tonight (Venus/Pluto oppo-

sition); do what you can to keep perspective.

Sunday morning's moon "void of course" period (don't make big decisions or start big projects) will be tempered by the Moon/Uranus trine, which will add a spontaneous, independent energy to the air. Late in the afternoon, you can start trusting your judgment again, and for the rest of the day and night, you will probably feel ready to tackle anything (Moon/Mars sextile), so go ahead.

Memorial Day Monday marks the beginning of an unusually long moon "void of course" period that stretches from this morning to late Tuesday night. It could feel pleasant anyway since the last aspect of the moon was a conjunction with Venus, but don't be fooled. Let yourself wind down. Spend the day centering yourself and laying back as much as possible.

## **National Women's Music Festival May 29-31, 1987**

The festival opens to some very good energies for communication and lively discourse (Moon/Mercury conjunction) along with the loving, though sometimes over-sensitive, influence of a Cancer moon. The Moon/Mars conjunction Friday night will add vigor to late-night talks, parties, and performances; it will also add the potential for moodiness and angry outbursts, so be careful.

Saturday will be pretty much a continuation of Friday, except that the evening atmosphere will be mellower (Moon/Venus sextile). Women could be particularly af-

*continued on page 65*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Paula Walowitz, astrologer and computer programmer, is also a singer/songwriter with several "classic" Goddess songs to her credit.

# The World's Oldest and Largest Lesbian-Feminist Publishing House

## NAIAD PRESS

By Sue Gambill

Naiad Press is the largest and oldest lesbian-feminist publishing house in the world. By the end of 1986, Naiad issued close to 90 books, with 70 titles still in print. Each year 10 new books are added to that growing list.

### THE HISTORY

Naiad's roots date back to The Ladder (1956-1972), the first national lesbian periodical published in the United States. First published under the auspices of the Daughters of Bilitis, it began as a small newsletter. The Ladder became, before its demise in October of 1972, a 72-page slick, glossy magazine.

"Since it was alone in the world for most of its life," says Barbara Grier, "it worked to be all things to all women. It contained fiction, poetry, extensive and detailed non-fiction articles, political and medical and scientific articles, letters to the editor, a book review column called 'Lesbiana,' and film and art reviews."

The early writings of Jane Rule, Isabel Miller, Helene Rosenthal, Judy Grahn, Martha Shelley, Rita Mae Brown, Valerie Taylor, and Artemis Smith were included.

In 1968 Barbara Grier (as Gene Damon) became its editor, having worked with the magazine all of its life, and having been its fiction and poetry editor in 1966-67. In 1970, publishing responsibilities changed from the Daughters of Bilitis to Barbara Grier and Rita Laporte, who expanded it into the slicker literary/art/women's liberation format.

When the publication was discontinued, two women who had been supporters contacted Grier and Donna McBride about their dream of founding a lesbian-femi-



Marilyn Humphries

**Barbara Grier (right) with Donna McBride: Each week Naiad Press receives letters that say, "At last I've found you. Thank god you're there. I never knew there were lesbian books."**

nist publishing company. Because of age and other physical considerations these two women did not feel able to do the work, but they proposed that if Grier and McBride could begin the project they would provide financial backing to get the venture rolling.

Naiad began in January of 1973, and by the following January had published its first book, The Latecomer by Sarah Aldridge. Its first run was 2,000 copies. It took a year to sell that first printing, because there were fewer than 10 lesbian, gay, and women's bookstores in the United States. Most sales were to individuals who had been on The Ladder mailing list. That first book is still in print and each year a couple of thousand copies are sold. Since that time the Naiad mailing list has become enormous—well over 10,000 names—and they

do business with close to 800 bookstores. The print run on each book has grown from 2,000 to 12,000.

The first three Naiad books were Sarah Aldridge titles. As Barbara Grier explains, "This was actually a case of funding your own self-publishing company." Sarah Aldridge is the pen name of Anyda Marchant, who was one of the women who initially gave the seed money to fund Naiad. "But always," Grier explains, "our intentions were to publish other authors, as soon as manuscripts could be found, and to keep those books in print. My goal, personally, is to make it possible for any woman, on the day she discovers she's a lesbian, to have access to lesbian material that will tell her she's okay. That's what Naiad Press is all about."

For the first nine years there

were no salaried employees at Naiad. There was travel money, but otherwise McBride and Grier paid for most expenses themselves. Finally, in January 1982, Grier was able to quit her other jobs—including debt management counseling—and take a real salary out of the business. Six months later McBride was able to be employed also, and a year later I was hired.

## THE WORK

Through the years the women of Naiad Press have watched stores fold for lack of good business knowledge and practice. Barbara Grier says, "Your political philosophy will not keep your doors open if you do not pay attention to things like sweeping the floor and paying the light bill. We work 50-to-80 hours a week, and when we're on the road we work continuously. Most of what we do is fun. Part of it is attitudinal. You can't do a good job unless you care. I get so tired sometimes I could bang my head on the wall. But I really love what I'm doing."

Grier feels the reason for the work is what provides the energy to continue. "The people who determine what you publish are the people who go into the stores and buy the books, and the ones who write you the fan letters," she says. "We still get several letters every week that say, 'At last I've found you. Thank god you're there. I never knew there were lesbian books.' We have this happen all the time. Another thing is that in addition to all the out dykes or semi-out dykes all over the country who are part of this movement, we're just a tip of the iceberg. We get letters all the time from very closeted lesbians and from married women." For many, mail ordering books is the only contact they have with other lesbians.

The work of networking and creating culture is continually necessary. More and more positive literature, and other forms of media, are being produced by, for, and about lesbians. When Barbara Grier began to collect lesbian literature 40 years ago, the field was limited and the images were often created in response

to a hostile and unaccepting society. During the past 30 years, since the founding of The Ladder in 1956, there have been many changes. For some women these new and positive images are taken for granted, while others say we haven't gone far enough or fast enough. Either way, it is crucial to continue to attend events and to buy the products in order to support the work that is our lesbian and feminist culture.

## THE BOOKS

From the beginning, Naiad has emphasized lesbian fiction. "We try to hit every level," Grier explains. "We range from writing in the quality and political seriousness of Jane Rule—who is probably the finest living lesbian author today—through people like Sheila Ortiz Taylor, Katherine Forrest, who manages to touch a personal level in a wide variety of readers. Forrest is our most popular author." With the release of the film Desert Hearts, however, Jane Rule's novel Desert of the Heart was Naiad's bestseller for the first six months of 1986.

The author who follows Katherine Forrest in popularity is Lee Lynch. Grier explains, "Her books are unique in that, with the possible exceptions of Judy Grahn and Maureen Brady, there aren't any other writers who come quickly to mind who are writing about what I think of as real people: lower-middle class and working class people in our stratified society. Lee has a particular empathy with women who work as waitresses, bank clerks, fruit vendors, etc. She also is able to write about every age group with loving, luminescent prose, often poignant in her approach."

Naiad also has two mystery series. Katherine Forrest writes the Kate Delafield series, including the popular Amateur City and Murder at the Nightwood Bar. Grier describes this book as "the most lesbian of all of Katherine's work. Maybe that's a strange thing to say about someone who's written about nothing but lesbians. But the book has a lot to do with the political lives we lead, as well as the fact that it's the second adventure of Kate

Delafield, the lesbian detective." The second set of mysteries is Vickie McConnell's Nyla Wade series. Her third book in the series, Double Daughter, will be released in 1987.

Naiad Press has also published a lesbian western (The Long Trail by Penny Hayes), as well as several collections of short stories. They are doing science fiction in addition to Brenda Weathers' lesbian ghost story The House at Pelham Falls. The late Renee Vivien and early lesbian-feminist activist Claudia Scott are also published by Naiad, along with Each Hand a Map by Anita Skeen, their first collection of poetry by a living poet. Naiad receives approximately 300 unsolicited manuscripts a year, but they do not consider them. It is necessary to request submission guidelines before sending anything.

Along with the works of fiction the editors began to see that their readers also wanted other kinds of materials. In response to this need, Naiad has published a good selection of non-fiction work. Black Lesbian in White America by Anita Cornwell is a collection of interviews, essays, and short fiction by a black lesbian activist who was very visible in the black community of Philadelphia when not many people were being out any place in the country. J.R. Roberts' Black Lesbians is a heavily annotated and illustrated bibliography. As Grier says, "It's becoming outdated, as all bibliographies do, but it's an invaluable reference tool. Nothing has yet taken its place."

Naiad has also done Grier's own bibliography, The Lesbian in Literature. It has reprinted the classic Sex Variant Women in Literature by Jeannette Foster.

"If you haven't read that," says Grier, "you cannot expect to know what's gone on in lesbian literature from 600 years before Christ to 1954." Naiad has recently printed Clare Potter's The Lesbian Periodicals Index. Grier says, "One of the criticisms against this book is that it doesn't index some

*continued on page 59*

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sue Gambill is a writer who has done several articles highlighting lesbians in the arts. She has also written a wide variety of other work, and continues to do so.*

# RED, WHITE, AND (VISA) BLUES

## Immigration Headaches for Performers

By Toni L. Armstrong

It came to our attention in late 1986 that the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service had quietly proposed new regulations that would seriously impact women's music. Applicants for the H-1 visa, which allows performing artists from other countries to work in the U.S., would have to meet extremely strict qualifications. The burden would be on the artists to prove that they are of "distinguished merit and ability" and that they have "pre-eminent status" in order to obtain work visas.

Under the proposed regulations most—if not all—of the women's music performers from outside the U.S. borders could be excluded. This could affect "stars" like Ferron, Heather Bishop, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Judy Small, and Lillian Allen as well as dozens of lesser-known acts who might come for a single festival appearance, such as at Sisterfire which traditionally features women from countries like Cuba and Nicaragua.

According to the Bay Guardian newspaper, the new regulations would require that visiting artists establish their "pre-eminence" by proving that they have performed as stars in major productions, received major awards, and achieved critical acclaim. They must provide evidence that they have appeared and will appear again in "distinguished venues," and that they have had extensive commercial success. Joni Mitchell and Olivia Newton-John, yes; Heather Bishop and Judy Small, no.

The INS says these new regulations were drafted to address inconsistencies in the granting of visas. Paul Simon, member of the Senate Immigration subcommittee, says, "Visa shopping has become widespread among promoters and artists. By implementing a uniform



Toni L. Armstrong

**"Let's not talk about our love": if performers from outside the U.S. borders can even get their H-1 work visas, they must avoid incriminating "self-disclosure" from the stage.**

set of guidelines for granting H-1 visas, the INS hopes to eliminate this problem. Unfortunately, the proposed criteria are related primarily to commercial success." He expresses concern that these changes will place limitations on artists from diverse backgrounds. "I fear that these new regulations will threaten the intercultural free exchange of ideas through art and music," says Sen. Simon. "Marketability and gross earnings should not be the standards by which we judge the value of this exchange."

A Village Voice writer discovered the proposed regulations a few days before the October 24 deadline and contacted record companies, booking agents, and concert promoters who would be affected. The women's music community was alerted largely through the efforts of Canadian Lucie Blue Tremblay, who gave educational speeches in each of

her appearances during her fall album release tour, a tour that was severely disrupted because of visa problems. Legal expenses accrued in attempts to protect Lucie from deportation were enormous, and the defense fund created to pay these expenses still welcomes donations [LBT Defense, Olivia Records, 4400 Market, Oakland, CA 94608].

People in many segments of the alternative and international music industries sent letters, telegrams, and telexes to the INS and to Sen. Simon. Washington sources now say these communications had a major impact in preventing the new regulations from going into effect. Sen. Edward Kennedy, chair of the Immigration subcommittee in the 100th Congress, wrote to the INS to wait until the subcommittee can officially review the issue. Both Kennedy and Simon have expressed support

for broader rather than more limiting INS laws.

The new regulations include a provision for "ethnic and cultural groups," but it requires that the applicant be recognized for "excellence in developing, interpreting, or representing a clearly identifiable and unique ethnic, cultural, musical, theatrical, or other performing art." Far from recognizing women's music as "cultural," the U.S. government classifies lesbian identification as "sexual deviation," and therefore grounds for deportation. Women's music artists must be exceptionally cautious regarding "self-disclosure" [see "Back To The Closet?" article, page 22].

Furthermore, the "ethnic and cultural group" provision requires that the artist be coming to the country for no more than 60 consecutive days, and only one visit per year would be allowed. This would make extended tours impossible, and even if an artist was hired to play all the women's music festivals, she would be prevented from doing so.

Finally, only recognized "non-profit organizations" could sponsor

the artist, thereby eliminating most women's music production companies.

Artists who try to perform illegally on tourist visas risk a \$200 fine, a five-year ban on re-entry, and deportation.

In addition to the well-publicized difficulties of Lucie Blue Tremblay [who eventually did obtain the H-1 visa plus an extension through December, 1987], other artists have had problems, including Judy Small from Australia and Sara Gonzalez from Cuba, who was scheduled to play at Sisterfire '85. There is special concern regarding some of the Sisterfire performers, working class women of color. The U.S. government worries, according to Penny Rosenwasser, that because these women do not own property in their countries, they may never go home.

Bureaucratic problems, in addition to repressive politics, intensify the problem. Several sources within women's music, including Rosenwasser and Sisterfire attorney Denyse Sabagh, assert that many problems can be avoided by providing proper documentation,

submitted by knowledgeable lawyers, in the first place.

There are two things that concerned persons can do now. First, another flood of letters will help. Decisions will be made soon, so immediately write short, strongly-worded letters to Senators Simon and Kennedy stating that you favor making it as easy as possible for performers to obtain H-1s. Stress the importance of cultural exchange. Second, performers who have experienced difficulties with the INS in the past should immediately send documentation. Mail to: Senator Edward Kennedy/Senator Paul Simon, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

A final note: while you have your letter-writing materials out, send letters to the festivals that you attend. Let them know that you want to see women artists from other countries, and specify which performers you are especially interested in. Written communication does have an impact; now is the time to use it to our best advantage with the U.S. government and within our own women's music community.

## CANADIAN VIEWPOINT

Heather Bishop interviewed by Connie Smith

For Canadian singer-songwriter Heather Bishop, the key phrase is "pre-eminent stature," a term used by the U.S. Immigration Service to determine who gets an H-1 visa and who doesn't. To qualify, Canadian performers must prove that they are culturally different from Americans or totally unique in what they do, or so famous that they cannot be ignored. Since most Canadian performers have to make it in the U.S. before they are appreciated back home, proving any of the above can be almost impossible.

Until recently, the process was further complicated by the fact that the American producers were responsible for obtaining the visa for the performers. Unless they were familiar with the explicit needs and biases of the U.S. Immigration Service and knew how to word the application properly, the visa could be denied at the last minute. This could result in

cancelled tours, lost investments and income, and devastating legal problems for the performers.

Bishop's first experience with this process began five years ago when she was booked to play a



**"The Canadian music industry is dominated by American music, and we are in the position of trying to sell our product to the U.S.—and can't get in."**

series of gigs in and around Minneapolis. "The producers applied for my visa," she says. "I went down to do my gig assuming that the visa would be there, not realizing that it is illegal to be in the country if you have a visa pending. They [U.S. Immigration Service] found out I was in the country, denied my visa, and put out a warrant for my arrest. So, needless to say, I was very discouraged and left the country immediately.

"I lost a bunch of the tour, obviously, but fortunately for me the people who were the producers on the last gig of the tour appealed the decision and I was able to eventually get my first H-1."

According to Bishop, even her union is not offering support. "We belong to the musicians' union, which is one of those international unions, which means it's basically an American union. And that

union is part of the process of refusing entry. They should be going to bat for us, but they're not—in this country or in that country."

Bishop believes the issue at this point is a marketing issue. "And I like to talk about it in those terms," she says. "Americans do not understand that the Canadian culture is imperialized by the American culture. They don't understand that we've had to legislate to get even 30 percent of our own market—30 percent of the airplay, 30 percent of the gigs. Seventy percent of the market in my own country

is gone. Some to other countries, but most to the States. The Canadian music industry is dominated by American music and we are in the position of trying to sell our product to the United States and can't get in. This whole visa thing is the reason why most Canadian artists, whether it's movies or whatever, have moved to the States and have become American citizens."

Within the last two years the visa procedure changed to allow the Canadian performer to negotiate her own working permits and to have multiple entries if she could prove she had long-term

bookings. But more stringent laws may be coming into practice very soon which will prohibit the majority of Canadian artists from performing in the U.S. at all. In response to this latest threat Heather says, "I've been investing a lot of time and a lot of money to build this market down there, and it will just shut the whole thing down and that will be that."

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*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Connie Smith is a writer and broadcaster living in Vancouver, British Columbia. Her radio program, Rubymusic, now six years old, is Canada's oldest and longest-running program specializing in music by women.*

## BACK TO THE CLOSET?

By Kate Brandt

Are we returning to a time when lesbians and gays in the public eye have to be closeted, fearful that disclosure of their sexual orientation will ruin their careers?

"If we stay in the closet, we are letting the Immigration and Naturalization Service intimidate us before the fact," states Judy Dlugacz, president of Olivia Records. "There's a fine line between paranoia and real problems."

This line is blurred, however, because the criteria for admitting lesbians and gay men into the U.S. are fairly subjective and open to interpretation. Title 8 of the United States Code Annotated, "Aliens and Nationality," in section 1182 includes among classes of "excludable aliens" those "afflicted with psychopathic personality, or sexual deviation..." Subsequent court cases have held that: "A person who is homosexual...has a 'psychopathic personality' within meaning of provision of this section" (Quiroz v. Neelly), and that this section "was intended by Congress to exclude homosexuals from admission" (Boutilier v. INS).

Complicating matters further is the concept of self-disclosure; in other words, being lesbian is less a problem than is calling yourself a lesbian. According to Dlugacz, a lesbian performer can stand on a stage and safely say, for example, "I wrote this lesbian

song." But let the woman say publicly "I am a lesbian"—this is called self-disclosure, and it is incriminating in some districts.

"In effect, the artist can't say 'I'm a lesbian' without fear that someone will hear," notes Dlugacz. "It's as bad as it would have been in the '50s—the same experience as lesbians who had to be in the closet then." She cautions:

"We need to educate ourselves and be smart in how to handle these cases. An artist shouldn't make statements to the press while she's being scrutinized by INS. It's very important that people be very careful and very aware—not to a paranoid place—but to avoid self-disclosure. The press can even make its own judgment, as long as an artist doesn't say 'I'm a lesbian.' It's unbelievably horrible, but that's where the line gets drawn." ("Horrible" is right; Boutilier v. INS found that "Alien's sworn statement describing in detail his homosexual activities...was sufficient evidence of his 'psychopathic personality'...to justify his deportation.")

The subjectivity applied by INS to questions of sexual orientation is also a factor in judging artistic merit—another criterion which foreign-born artists have to meet. A musician wishing to perform in the United States must prove "pre-eminent stature;" that is, she

has to be considered famous in this country. But who is to define "fame?" As Judy Dlugacz says, "One person in the INS can say, 'I never heard of her,' and then we have to appeal."

In view of these strictures, I presented this "hypothetical" situation to Dlugacz:

A new artist comes to your attention—a woman from, say, England. She's a singer and songwriter who's building a following in the lesbian/feminist community. She wants to come to the United States to perform on the women's music circuit and perhaps sign with an American label. You want to sponsor her and promote her in the women's community as "one of our own." But if this publicity—and the fact of her lesbianism—catch the eye of Immigration and Naturalization, she could be denied a work permit. What do you do?

"That's a very good question," muses Dlugacz. "It has to be handled carefully. I don't think INS is out there 'looking for it'—it's too much trouble.

"I would choose a district where it's relatively easy to get a visa, one that didn't handle much music [unlike, for example,

*continued on page 58*

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*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kate Brandt lives and works in San Francisco. Janice Kimball provided research assistance for this article.*



# WIMINFEST '86

By Carol Boss



Linda Stone

Would you believe, a women's music festival in Albuquerque, New Mexico?

The three-day WIMINFEST '86 was produced over Memorial Day weekend, 1986 by Albuquerque's production company WIMIN (Women in Movement in New Mexico). At a party in 1981 some women (who became the founders of WIMIN) were discussing the inadequacy of entertaining events for women in Albuquerque, particularly the problem of not having anywhere to dance except for the women's bar. It was decided that it would be a good idea to put on a women's dance outside of the bar scene, and that a good time to do this would be after an upcoming Cris Williamson concert. That first dance was held at The Sundowner, a somewhat sleazy motel located on Albuquerque's infamous Route 66 strip.

Despite the location a much larger crowd than was ever expected turned out. The euphoria

of this great success built confidence, and the women decided to invite Meg Christian to perform. That, of course, was a great concert and soon the group was off and running, formally taking the name WIMIN.

Over 1,000 women attended the events of WIMINFEST '86. They came from all over New Mexico as well as Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Florida, and other faraway places.

Kate Clinton emceed the festivities as well as put on her usual sidesplitting show on Saturday night. Friday night's performance featured The Washington Sisters in their first appearance in New Mexico, along with Cris Williamson and Tret Fure with Carrie Barton. Afterwards, the first of two women's dances was held at the elegant historically restored LaPosada Hotel.

On Saturday afternoon more than 100 women attended a coffeehouse featuring local singers,

poets, comics, and even a kazoo band. This event was held in a downtown sandwich shop which is owned by a gay man. He is usually closed on Saturdays, as the bulk of his business comes from the weekdays business lunch crowd. He liked the prospect of having scores of new women coming to his shop. It turned out to be a perfect size for the approximately 100 people who came. A highlight was the six-woman Hate To Practice Kazoo Band, who are working on their version of "The Hallelujah Chorus" for upcoming coffeehouse performances.

Saturday night's show brought back a couple of Albuquerque's favorites. Deidre McCalla opened the show followed by Just Friends, our own local a cappella group, who delighted the audience with their versions of such favorites as "My Girlfriend's Back." Kate Clinton brought the house down with her antics.

All of the evening performances took place at The KiMo, a beautifully restored art decoish Indian pueblo-style theater. It is located on old Route 66 and was therefore part of the Hands Across America official pathway. WIMIN bought a few dozen spots in the line and on Sunday, along with the other good citizens, Dykes Across America participated right outside the theater. Joining us were Kate Clinton, Trudy Wood, and Casselberry-DuPree.

Following "Hands," many of the women gathered at a park near Albuquerque's Old Town for "Fun in the Sun." WIMIN organized soccer, volleyball, and many other assorted activities throughout the

*continued on page 64*

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Carol Boss has been with WIMIN since 1982. Her other favorite activity is being a volunteer for KUNM-FM, the local public radio station.*

# Report from Israel

# THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

June 23-28, 1986

By Sue Fink

I'm on the plane homeward-bound, flying over Dublin seeing Irish Eyes smiling up at me from below. From this celestial viewpoint, I see the arbitrary color-coded crisscrossings of farmlands. They remind me of the arbitrary border lines that mark where one language begins and another leaves off, and where clothing styles, political freedom, and cuisine change with a nod of the head of a soldier as you ride by. My imagination drifts to the world musical map as it winds its way through an equally varied terrain of altered states, styles, instruments, forms, and voices.

Maybe festival initiator and director Liora Moriel had a sense of this vastness when she envisioned bringing women from all over the world to her home town Beer-Sheva, Israel. In my hindsighted astonishment at the work involved in bringing all of us together to share ears and ideas, I can see through the shortcomings and failings of this International Women's Music Festival to its exuberant, awe-inspiring intention.

Our plane left for Israel at 8:00 a.m., which meant the alarm went off at 5:00 a.m., which meant why bother going to sleep at all, especially in that excited state of mind. Our party included Pam McCarthy (booker extraordinaire), Jacqueline Stander (the amazing guitar synthesist who tours with me), and yours truly, the humble Sue Fink. Nearly missing the plane, I checked in with my 10 cases of instruments, paying plenty in overweight and extra bags.

Our first stop was in New York, where we switched to Sabina Airlines en route to Brussels. The international flair was already evident; many types of people

were represented by the passenger list, from Europeans to Orthodox Jews to Casselberry-DuPreé.

We again switched planes in Brussels, watching for terrorists with half-opened eyes. We landed safely in the late afternoon in Tel Aviv (still 5:00 a.m. in Los Angeles). The trip was to say the least exhausting, especially for Jaque DuPreé, who was recuperating in a wheelchair from a recent operation. (Sabina, our carrier, would flunk any wheelchair acceptability test, if only they would supply the wheelchair in which the test could be taken.)

We still had to push our way through the customs lines. The officials opened the first of my cases, Jacqueline's guitar synthesizer. None of them could figure out what use it could possibly have and, faced with the inevitability of nine more cases of mine alone, waved our entire group through. Somehow we all crowded into a Sherut (a large Mercedes station wagon taxi), tied the luggage and instruments to the roof, and went south to Beer-Sheva. We readjusted our eyes to the dry scenery and new culture as we drove.

## BEER-SHEVA

Beer-Sheva is on the edge of Israel's southern desert region, the Negev, where Bedouins come to the market. The cosmopolitan Tel Aviv and Jerusalem residents say it's too far to travel. They seem to view it as an outpost, like Dodge City in the days of the American wild west. Critics blame many of the festival's shortcomings on the isolated location of Beer-Sheva.

We all stayed in the same donated hotel, which also served

as the festival headquarters. We didn't arrive until Tuesday evening due to flight reservation difficulties, so we missed the first three days of activities. I had already missed the opening ceremonies and concert led by acclaimed conductor Gisele Buka Ben Dor. The concert included an ambitious performance of "Ruth," a world premier by Dolit Warshaw, Piano Concerto in A Major op 7 by Clara Schumann with Virginia Eskin, a pianist, and Symphony 14 by Liana Alexandra who fuses elements of modernism and her native Rumanian folk music in her compositions. Other concerts held previous to our arrival included works by contemporary classical composers around the world performed by local artists as well as a recital by the Alexandra Ensemble. Festival events took place in various concert halls, schools, and outdoor facilities around the city.

Since we had missed so much prior to our arrival, we were anxious to get into the swing of the events. Determined but exhausted, we ate dinner, used toothpicks to prop open our eyes, and staggered to the "Jazz Evening" concert. We heard Marla Brodsky, who sang bravely over laryngitis, and the fine Australian jazz ensemble Criss Cross.

Later in the hotel lobby greeting U.S. performers Judy Sloan and Beth York, I had to remind myself that I wasn't at the Michigan or Bloomington music festivals. No, Sue, you are standing in the middle of Israel's desert.

The setting was not the only thing that set this festival apart from U.S. women's music festivals. The audience "festies" were a topic in themselves. Unlike festivals at home, catering greatly

to women's music fans, the IWMF reached out to the men and women of Beer-Sheva's general community. They came to festival events polite, curious, and dressed. Another departure was that many of the performers worked with male band members.

Wednesday I traveled to Tel Aviv to rehearse with Corine Al Al, a well-known Israeli rock star. Our hope was to perform some material together for the closing night of the festival. Corine is one of the few performers considered "feminist" in Israel. Her song, "Alticra li Motec (Don't Call Me Honey)" is the feminist anthem of the country. I loved learning from her about Israel's political, musical, and feminist climate. I struggled learning the Hebrew to her songs, and she learned "The End Is Near," teaching me the Hebrew for the audience part "the bomb is in your hand." I knew I was finally saying it correctly when I was mumbling it to myself on a bus and the Israeli soldiers sitting next to me, holding guns, almost took me for a terrorist.

The folk evening concert was a hit Wednesday night. Marilina Zlatana from Greece was well-received as were members of the Black Hebrew Sect "Spirit of Israel," who perform Afro-American gospel music though they now live in the Negev.

It was after the concert at a special coffeehouse performance featuring New York-based character actress Judy Sloan that I learned of the many difficulties and disenchantments connected with the festival. While talking with other artists, I heard that many organizational problems had resulted in broken promises about accompanists, instruments, technical requirements, and performer needs. Low audience attendance for such a vast undertaking was lamented. Beth York had been promised instrumentalists for her appearance at the "Magical Night in the Desert" concert. She arrived to find that no one had arranged for them. Sometimes the concert sites were not conducive for the performers, as in Judy Sloan's case. The festival staff was too small to handle the im-

went to bed, but all managed to be up at 6:00 a.m. to go to the Bedouin Market, where nomadic Arabs bring their wares and animals to sell. Later, I enjoyed the evening of "New Israeli Songs." The Women's Army Chorus performed, and nine new songs by Israeli women composers were presented. I was disappointed that the band hired to play back-up for performances was all men. Certainly there were enough fine women musicians who could have handled the job. Sue and Fran, a Canadian-Israeli duo, closed the show, warming the audience with their folk and religious songs of Israel.

Friday was a free day, so while some went to the Dead Sea to float, Pam and I went to Jerusalem to explore the Old City. Our rental car broke down on a steep hill, and volunteers from at least 15 different religions couldn't put it back together again. The rental company had closed early for the Sabbath, and we thought we'd never make it back to Beer-Sheva to catch the festival bus to the "Magical Night

20.30, 28.6.86 בקולנוע. קין.

### קונצרט פוב

גידו פלאן, מנחה.  
 זוהי שחקנית ימית אמריקאית ותחקירנית של היסטוריה שבעל-פה. היא הופכת להיות אחת מהיוצרות במוקד לאור כחם את הנשוא המיוצג. למשל: בת עשירי-עשרה, מוסיקאית קלפרינית, או סופר. המבטא וההדרה. גידו והנה אחת הנשים הנחוצות והמחוקקות בשפתנו אי פעם!

**בתוכנית -**  
 קרין אלאל, מוזיקלית  
 לידית טנסי, גולה בישראל ולמדה מוסיקה. גיטרה, וקול בקונסרבטוריון ורדי במילנו. אטליה, שרה בלהק צבאת. מופיעה תכופות בטלוויזיה הישראלית ובפסטיבלים ומקלטת משרים.

10 פנק, בעלת רקע מוזיקלי קלאסי.  
 שרה טנסי השבעת הנשיא ריצ'ארד ניקסון. בהשפעת הפמיניזם, המוסיקה האלקטרונית והשעון תיבת השירים, השתתפה כליל. בעת היא משמשת מנצחת של מקהלת הנשים הקהילתית של לוס אנג'לס. המונה מאז הברחת ההבטעת שירים שחלמה ובהנהגתו נעלה נשים על נשים מופיעה בתוכנית טלוויזיה. תוכנית מנצחת ולחנה עברי האתרון ומקלטת את המוסיקה המיוחדת שלה בטנגו מיוזם של רוקבלאדו-טנגו-פופ עברי הברת הקהילתיים לידית סליפה.

קסלברדי-דיפה, גיורת סואן קסלבר, ברטוקאלט ונגינת גיטרה אקוסטית, הברידה את גיק ורטה, קונצרטלסטוסון האיטלקית-אמריקאית, כאשר למדו יחד בבית ספר חובן בברקלין, ג'ורג'יה, מאז הופיעו יחד בסרטים וקונצרטים, פסטיבלים מוסיקליים, מועדונים וקונצרטים. הן שרות שירים שהם מיוזם של מוליטיקים מתקיימים עם סגנונות שונים של מוסיקה שחורה. הן מתארות את המוסיקה שלהן במסורתית ברוחה, אך נכשורות בעליל. שכן עבור הופעתיהן למטרות צוקה על בן 1550 דולר, בהתאם לחשיבות המטרות.



קרין אלאל      סו טנסי      גידו פלאן

27.6.86 "לילה קסום במדבר"

על שפת מבנה רמון הים והרשימים, חגיגה של יופי כשרון, יכולת וכוון יצירה. מיוזם של אמנית, פולין אליברס מארדה: וניה יוסט, להקת מוזיקל מחור ומשיראל, ומבחר עשיר של מוסיקאיות יגיש חובות הכללת מוסיקה ומוזיקאיות, שערור ביוזם לפסטיבל, כראי להתלבש הם להיות נכונים לפגוש את אלה השורר...

**היום, מרדכי, פולין אליברס.**  
 אקורדיוניסטית פולין אליברס היא רמות ירונה במוסיקה עכשווית וכן גאדריהת והלמנה מופיעה שנה חוזם התעניינות משרים מוסיקה אלקטרונית פילוסופית מודרנית ואמפריביזציה עד לעבודה משותפת עם מוזיקאים ומחקר נושא מיוזם ופולחן בחוסת קרן נועדים. כל אלה תרמו למוסיקה הייחודית שלה. פולין, מנצחת מוסיקה כוללת המארגן זמן על ידי שיתוף פעולה של השמות לב בין המלחין, המבצע והמוזיקאי. נושאים של ריכוז וינם בכרוב האמנות שלה. היא גיבורת ביוגרפיה נהייה ון נגון. המוסיקה של פולין, אליברס (נברדה וקונצרט בת 1000 עשרים). היום מרדכי היא הקונפטיבית החיונית של אליברס, רומלס, וזו קיבלה מילנה מוקד אמריקאית לעידוד אמנותי.



פולין אליברס

בלגון (במרכז האופרה בלוגון). שנה בתפקידים ראשיים עם חברת האופרה מובילת בריטניה, באירופה ובברית המועצות.

**2**  
 זוהי מלחינית ליטונית, עובדת למה באנגליה ארץ מולדתה ובפרט - רב שדבריה אהוד לידית של הופעה, שבהיא אחת מרובי כריטה סקנרדיבת צופה, בלנית, אירלה וארצות הברית. היא כובדת בתוכנית טלוויזיה עצמאית. נשים אמניות. בתפקיד הופעות אחרות בדרום וטלוויזיה. היא הקליטה ששפתה בפרספטיבה אירוח בממה מסורת אנגליים.



ליל מנס      מלה נוסיק      קרין קוסי

24.6, 20.30. מלון באות מדבר

### קונצרט ג'ז

מרלה ברודסקי ומרת  
 מרלה ברודסקי היא גיטרה אמריקאית המתמחה בשרת בלו ג'ז. הבנה לתוכנית מיוחדת: בלו אקוסט של נשים חזקות. ליווי: להקת. תופעה: מוזיקאים.

**קרין קוסי**, רביעת ג'ז אוטונית.  
 הרחב חיה של הלהקה היא אדרין מונטגל, לידית קנה. כל הנגנים מדר באקורדה לג'ז בוינה הרבה לופיע בארצם. עד בלהקת: הלמוט שטרובל (סקסופון-ג'ז), היינריך ורקל (באס) ורולטר גרוס רובטשר (תופים).

זיוול לאנדרה, ומרת מבצעת. גברת באסי בעלת השם הבינלאומי לאנדרה ליו מנס נולדה בארצות הברית, השתקעה בירושלים. בוגרת בית-ספר למוסיקה מאג האקדמיה למוסיקה בירושלים. הופיעה בארץ ובשלה. גם עם הופעת מרדה ג'נסון. הלחנה מוסיקלית רעק וסטים. ברע מינה את הקליטה השני, המוקדש למוסיקה-תחילה מן המסורת היהודית מימי

Spending the day in Tel Aviv kept me from participating in Beer-Sheva events, but I heard that a rousing discussion on feminism with tremulously varied world viewpoints left everyone steamed up.

portant organizational details, and publicity got lost in the cracks. Technical entanglements delayed the start of all the concerts, and audiences grew increasingly irritated. It was 2:00 a.m. when we

in the Desert" concert at Ramon Crater. It was to be an all-night event at which I was scheduled to perform. History books of the future will record the next event as one of the modern miracles of Jerusalem.

I was an hour and a half away from Beer-Sheva, and yet out of the mist came three festival participants who recognized me and saved the day by getting us a new car. We immediately called festival headquarters and told them we'd be late. We asked that they please leave directions to the Crater. We sped back to Beer-Sheva on a road I later discovered was dangerous for non-Arabs. They neglected to leave the directions, and the hotel manager just shook his head and said, "You can't go into the Negev after dark." His ominous voice died away and, as I looked out the window, the sun sank below the horizon.

Undaunted and armed with a Coca-Cola bottle to quench the torturously heated night, we set out bravely into the forbidding Negev, directionless but determined. We cried "Eyfo Ramon? (Where is Ramon?)" to the few people we passed, and they pointed to the only road heading south. I brought my childhood Hebrew lessons to surface memory sounding out the Hebrew on the few signs we passed.

After an hour and a half of driving closer and closer to the Egyptian border, Israeli soldiers stopped us. They were searching for some terrorists that had snuck over the border from Egypt. They didn't speak English so we struggled in French until they could direct us to within a mile of the crater. From there we followed the concert sounds and arrived to the total amazement of all.

As a cooler wind whirled through the dusty crater, we settled in to view the many performers: Indian dancers, an international woodwind quintet, Judy Sloan, Beth York, Pauline Oliveros, Casselberry-DuPreé, and myself with Jacqueline Stander. The eerie feeling of the desert night was punctuated by avant garde composer Pauline Oliveros as she played "Echoes From The Moon" on a technically-treated accordion with echo effects, delay, and so forth.

Pam and I drove back to Beer-Sheva after the concert. We were stopped again, searched and frightened by soldiers looking for terrorists reportedly nearby. One soldier looked me over in shock, as I was still dressed up from the

concert. I made a pretty strange sight in the middle of the Negev at 4:00 a.m. He finally said in his best English, "You look pretty punky." In order to get released, I lied and convinced them that the bus with the rest of the participants would be arriving any moment.

Though we didn't arrive "home" until 5:00 a.m., I was up for Israeli breakfast at 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Liora Moriel said she needed someone to do a live show and BBC Broadcast to be held at 11:00 a.m. and I could do it. This seemed like another example of "planning ahead IWMF style." Of course, I went for it.

The large audience was non-English speaking and comprised mostly of Israelis over 50 years old. I pantomimed and sang jazz tunes at the piano (when was the last time this synthesizer player had touched a piano?). Without words the audience and I had incredible communication, and surprisingly this impromptu concert was the highlight of my festival experience.

With Saturday night came the rock concert festival finale, where I was to perform along with five other bands. When I arrived for my soundcheck at 5:30, they were just starting to set up. The hall was a dangerous firetrap. The stairs to the stage were blocked with huge speakers, leaving it totally inaccessible for Jaque DuPreé who had struggled all week in a broken-down wheelchair over every rock and ruin in Israel. I witnessed a nightmare of disorganization as lights, the sound crew, and bands set up simultaneously on the dark stage.

The concert started (count them) three hours late. The sound quality was poor. Casselberry-DuPreé's acoustical instruments fared the best under the terrible hands of the technicians, whose work can make or break a performer's act. The event made me appreciate how well women's music festivals, like the National Women's Music Festival, are organized from a technical viewpoint. Performers' sets were cut, emcee Judy Sloan quit in frustration, tempers flared, and the festival ended on a sour note.

I stayed in Jerusalem a few

days longer and performed at a small club there. Many festival participants and organizers came, and it was nice to see them in a more pleasant atmosphere.

Since my way to the festival and my expenses had been paid, I was able to take many of the festival's shortcomings in stride, and I enjoyed it for what it was. I felt bad, however, for those who had paid their own way to come so far.

I would love to see this festival continue, grow, and mature. Better organization in terms of area coordinators, division of labor, and a committee structure would greatly enhance the end result.

I wouldn't have missed this adventure for the world. ●

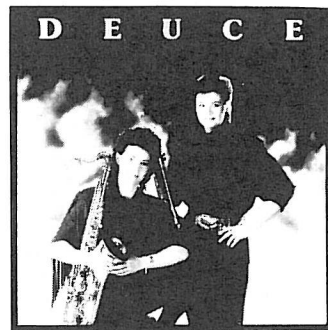
*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sue Fink, longtime conductor of the L.A. Women's Community Chorus and co-writer with Joelyn Grippio of 'Leaping (Lesbians)' has a solo LP available entitled 'Big Promise.'*

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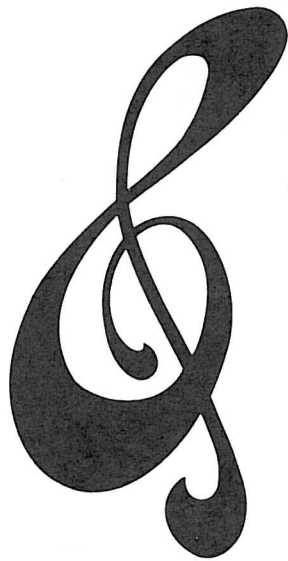
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# The Third Annual WOMEN'S CHORAL FESTIVAL

By Celia Guse

"Imagine...the energy and excitement of two hundred women from cities all over the United States and Canada, coming together to perform choral music in celebration of women's lives," said conductor Catherine Roma and chorister Christine Inserra in a preview press release.

On November 7-9, 1986 this dream became a reality in Chicago, when Artemis Singers hosted the third annual National Women's Choral Music Festival.

The festival concert on Saturday evening at Lane Tech High School featured an impressive array of all-women choruses, including Artemis Singers (Chicago), Calliope (Minneapolis), Kansas City Women's Chorus, Lansing Women's Chorus, Maiden Voyage (Milwaukee), Muse (Cincinnati), St. Louis Women's Choir, and Womonsong (Madison). Each group was limited to three musical selections. In addition to these groups, members of the Charlottesville Women's Choir, the Los Angeles Women's Community Chorus, and the San Francisco Lesbian Chorus were in attendance and joined to sing with the other choristers in the 250-voice mass choir at the end of the program.

"The first national women's choral music festival, held in Kansas City, Missouri," says Muse conductor Catherine Roma, "was born out of the need for women to meet other women interested in choral music, to sing, to share, to laugh, and to play together. Each year since 1984, the festival has drawn an ever-widening circle of participating choruses from the Sister Singers Network, as well as larger concert audiences, and an appreciation of the diverse styles of music, politics, spirituality, and regional traditions represented. The Sister Singers Network

[see article page 30] is an international, grassroots network of feminist and lesbian choruses who keep in touch via a directory, newsletter, joint concerts, and the annual festival."

The festivals are financially sponsored by the hosting choruses. "The first festival was Kansas City," says Ann Morris, facilitator of the Artemis Singers Choral Festival Planning Committee.

and raised approximately \$1,500 to compensate for the more expensive location.

## THE SINGING

The November 8 night program opened with Womonsong, an eight-year-old, 40-member group from Madison under the direction of Lynn Fendler. They sang Kay Weaver's "One Fine Day" along



Artemis Singers: 1987 festival hostesses

"They got seed money from a local feminist organization, which they paid back, leaving a small profit. That was passed on to the Madison chorus, who budgeted well for the second festival. They did fundraising, got grants, and made a larger profit—which they passed on to Artemis. We aren't done with the final bookkeeping yet, but it looks like we have an even larger profit to pass on as 'seed money' to Minneapolis." When the festival was in cities smaller than Chicago, the expenses—especially equipment and auditorium rentals—were considerably less. When Artemis volunteered to host the 1986 festival, they anticipated the higher expenses,

with her film. Initially nervous, they got better as they went along, and by the end of their third song—and the end of their set—they were just beginning to show the audience their capabilities.

Muse, a group of 30 singers from Cincinnati under the direction of Catherine Roma, were tight and conservative. Wearing coordinated black, white, and red, this group gave an exceptional performance on the complicated, dissonant, intricate harmonies of "Jubilant Song."

The small (10 singers plus director Comfree Coleman) St. Louis Women's Choir was energetic beyond its numbers, especially on

"Harriet Tubman." They also sang Colman's arrangement of Holly Near's "Riverboat."

Maiden Voyage from Milwaukee (16 women plus conductor Lanie Rubin and violinist Darla Kashian) has been singing together only since May of 1986. In blue ties, black pants and white shirts, this group showed a certain timidity in their delivery that was offset by their excellent choice of material in "Rising Green" by Carolyn Dade and Judy Small's "Never Turning Back." This last song featured soloist Diane Bloom, an outstanding singer with a voice reminiscent of the young Ronnie Gilbert's in its rich timbre.

The Lansing Women's Chorus is another young group, singing together since January of 1986. Only nine members plus conductor Rachel Alexander, they were nevertheless impressive. All the members have strong voices, and they chose sensible, ear-pleasing harmonies for their material without trying to push the high end. And they did a funny song, an adaptation of the old "Pretty Baby"—surprisingly, the first humorous song of the evening.



Marcy J. Hochberg

"Nora's Ark" medley: Kansas City Women's Chorus

The humor continued in the second set with a delightful opening number by the Kansas City Women's Chorus, "Nora's Ark," a medley including "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" (in which the farmer is a she), "Goin' to the Zoo," "Talk to the Animals," and "All Dem Critters Got a Place in the Choir." A number of the choristers wore paper or wire animal sculptures during this song,

adding to the joviality. The song "Strong Singers" expressed the philosophy of the entire choral festival in the lines "Who will know of our lives if we sing no true song...?" They closed their set with a repeat of "One Fine Day" with drums and flute. There were technical difficulties getting the film started that broke this group's momentum, until a sign was held up by the director that said "Fuck the film, we're here to sing," a sentiment that elicited cheers of encouragement from the audience.

Calliope, from Minneapolis, is a 10-year-old chorus under the direction of Mary Preus. Their 25 singers wore smart-looking bowties with black pants and pastel-colored long-sleeved shirts. Their ambitious set included synthesizer accompaniment, but unfortunately technical problems diluted what should have been a powerful finale piece ("Russians" by Sting). Calliope has volunteered to host the fourth annual festival in Minneapolis.

Artemis Singers, in black pants and bright shirts, shone under the direction of Susan Schleef with their new work, "In Praise of

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Artemis," commissioned by the group from composer Patsy Rogers especially for this event. They ended their set with their vigorous, well-choreographed version of the Pointer Sisters' "I'm So Excited," driving the hometown audience wild with their dancing.

The final portion of the program was devoted to songs sung by all the singers together, the

*continued on page 60*

# The Sister Singers Network

By Catherine Roma

The women's music movement encompasses great diversity. Many women may not be aware that there is a large grassroots organization of 31 women's choirs called The Sister Singers Network. Across this vast country, and including two choirs in Canada and one in London, hundreds of women gather each week to sing choral music arranged for women's voices. The groups vary in every conceivable way—in size, politics, structure, process, direction, level of community involvement, financial support, and types of music performed.

Within this diversity there is immense strength, and there is also a shared vision of bringing women's creative energy, music from the women's movement, and music of other cultures closer to home. Inherent in this women's choral music is taking music that is well known, often by national "stars" of the women's music circuit, and presenting the music in a new way, with many amateur artists, new performing partici-

pants breathing life into these creations. Internationally as well, there are musicians and groups who have been exiled from the countries they love, and within which they fought for social change. We perform their music to become purveyors of yet another message. Then choirs of the Sister Singers Network are the living example of the motto "Think Globally—Act Locally."

While each choir develops its own philosophy, women join these choirs for many reasons: to sing, to build community, to be cultural workers, to seek social encounters, lovers, for spiritual survival—to communicate our passions, our joys, our understandings of life, and to lift our collective spirits through song.

Many groups have come and gone, though several have long, distinguished, rich histories. Anna Crusis Women's Choir (Philadelphia), the oldest, is in her twelfth season; Los Angeles Community Women's Choir is in her eleventh; both the St. Louis and the D.C.

Area Feminist Choruses are in their ninth; Kansas City in her eighth; Artemis Singers (Chicago) and Calliope (Minneapolis) in their seventh.

The turnover has been substantial, however. A letter written in January, 1982 to all of us included the statement, "If you've been in the network more than six months, you're a valued antique."

The Sister Singers Network began in 1980 and was the dream of many women in various choirs that met at the National Women's Music Festival in Champaign-Urbana, and in Michigan at the Womyn's Music Festival. The creative energy of founding mothers such as Linda Small (St. Louis) and Linda "Echo" Ray (Kansas City), who gathered all the material and gave their time and energy in organizing the network, has been invaluable.

A directory exists listing the names of groups, conductors, coordinators, addresses, and phone numbers of all participating

## Akron Women's Chorus

Akron, Ohio

## Anna Crusis Choir

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Artemis Singers

Chicago, Illinois

## Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus

Atlanta, Georgia

## Calliope: A Womyn's Chorus

Minneapolis, Minnesota

## Charlottesville Women's Chorus

Charlottesville, Virginia

## D.C. Area Feminist Chorus

Washington, DC

## Denver Women's Chorus

Denver, Colorado

## Fayetteville Future Chorus

Fayetteville, Arkansas

## Kansas City Women's Chorus

Kansas City, Kansas

## Lansing Women's Chorus

Lansing, Michigan

## Sister Singers Network

### Lawrence Feminist Glee

Lawrence, Kansas

### Libana

Dorchester, Massachusetts

### The London Feminist Choir

London, England

### L.A. Women's Community Chorus

Los Angeles, California

### Muse: Cincinnati's Women's Chorus

Cincinnati, Ohio

### New Women's Chorus

Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

### New York Women's Chorus

New York, New York

### San Diego Women's Chorus

San Diego, California

### San Francisco Lesbian Chorus

San Francisco, California

### Seattle Women's Ensemble

Seattle, Washington

### Springfield Women's Chorus

Springfield, Missouri

### St. Louis Women's Choir

St. Louis, Missouri

### Tempe/Phoenix Womyn's Chorus

Tempe/Phoenix, Arizona

### The Treble Makers Quartet

Sacramento, California

### Vancouver Women's Chorus

Vancouver, BC, Canada

### Voices of Persephone

Rockport, Massachusetts

### Wichita Women's Chorus

Wichita, Kansas

### Women of the Heartland

Manhattan, Kansas

### Womonsong

Madison, Wisconsin

### YWCA Women's Community Choir

Montreal, Quebec, Canada



choirs. There are two binders of archives with communiques assembled from the last six years. Last fall, Small and Ray asked each choir to write a paragraph about themselves for an expanded revision of the directory. They collocated a mini-directory of composer-arrangers, and most recently the first issue of the Network newsletter was completed. In discussing her vision of the Network, Small says she believes there is energy and excitement in being connected, in realizing that there is more than just "our little choir" out there.

In the same geographic area, choirs have performed together on the West Coast, East Coast, and in the heart of the Midwest. Combined concerts have included Los Angeles and San Francisco, Anna Crusis and D.C., St. Louis and Kansas City, and Artemis and MUSE (Cincinnati). Many individuals have visited rehearsals during vacation trips to different parts of the country.

In 1981 at the Midwest Wimmen's Festival, four choirs sang 15-minute sets each and joined forces for seven works (Women of the Heartland Singing: Singing

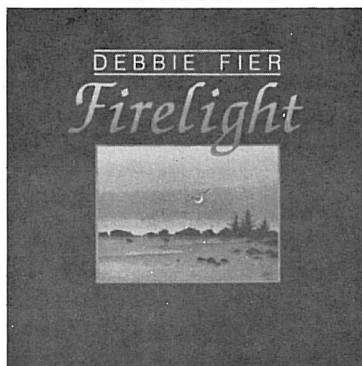
for Our Lives—Manhattan, Kansas; Kansas City, St. Louis, Artemis). This was the beginning of what is now known as the Annual National Women's Choral Music Festival. Artemis Singers hosted the third annual festival in Chicago November 7-9, 1986. Previous festivals have been in Kansas City (1984) and Madison (1985). The fourth annual festival will be in Minneapolis, October 9-11, 1987. Representatives comes from both coasts and all parts of the country.

As reflected in the pages of *HOT WIRE*, the women's music movement comprises all kinds of music—think of the ways in which our consciousness pervades the world. Our music network is truly gaining in international scope. Within the Network there exists many similar issues as in the women's music movement as a whole. What about "mainstreaming?" What happens when we move out of our home-grown movement to make our music more available to a wider audience? Among us there are cross-over artists, women who have been known more in the folk scene, or the classical

arena, or in jazz; women who work with writing non-sexist children's music, women who can turn male-dominated punk-rock music around 180° with wit, intelligence, creativity, and lesbian consciousness; women who mobilize our strength through song, women who write lyrics that touch every experience we live, and women who, as black or Latina, enrich and enlarge cultural awareness, who challenge us to see and to act. It is important for our communities to bring in outside performing artists whenever we can, and it is crucial that we support our own local musicians. Women singers in the Sister Singers Network and in the music committees of the choirs continuously discuss women's music, and these organizations are vibrant examples of how, at all levels, we are "carrying it on." ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Catherine Roma is completing her doctorate in choral conducting at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. She has been directing women's choirs for 12 years, both in Philadelphia (Anna Crusis) and Cincinnati (MUSE). In the old days she wrote for 'Paid My Dues.'*

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# THE STATE OF MUSIC

## A Lesson From History

By Maida Tilchen

I'd like to comment on a current trend in women's music that I find most unfortunate.

Women's music began as a form of protest and a medium for unifying a radicalized community of women created by the "second wave" of feminism and the Stonewall era of lesbian and gay liberation. At the start, women gathered primarily to hear political speeches, and musicians filled in the gaps. Over the years, women's music became the most marketable way of spreading feminist and lesbian ideas, and countless women lent their volunteer support to developing a system for producing records and concerts, and distributing products. Many women involved in these efforts developed musical, technical, and business skills through opportunities not available to them in the sexist mainstream and folk music industries.

Along the way, the women's community insisted that the women's music industry honor the values of the feminist movement. Wheelchairs that couldn't fit through doorways, babies who needed attention, and the homogeneously white audiences and performers with little appeal to feminists of other races were concrete issues that moved feminism and lesbian liberation from theory to practice in concert halls and on festival grounds. In response to issues raised at women's music productions, community standards, priorities, and commitments were developed that spread to other aspects of the movement. As a result women's music not only inspired and entertained, but challenged us to grow in living our ideals.

These standards were not  
*Reprinted with permission from 'Gay Community News,' 11/23/86.*

merely politely voiced, they were enforced by a community willing to forego the music if the demands weren't met. Read back issues of Boston's Gay Community News or any other feminist paper during the mid '70s, and you will find endless stories of clashes in cities all over the U.S. Perhaps it was misguided to direct so much energy towards reforming ourselves, but many women felt so strongly about these issues that they used community discussions, protests, and boycotts to hold the concert producers accountable to satisfying the needs of the community.

In other cases, the radical consciousness of the concert producers led them to initiate changes that the community resisted: for example, child care and interpreters for the deaf are costly services that raised ticket prices. White and able-bodied women had to learn the reasons why they should be willing to travel to theaters that are safely accessible to women of color and disabled women.

As a result of the insistence on these political values, women's music concerts and festivals have tried their best to provide child care, accessibility for the disabled, interpreters for the hearing impaired, low ticket prices and work exchange, employment of women in all facets of production and performance, and location of concerts in multi-racial neighborhoods. Women-only and lesbian-only concerts have also been held when the community supported them. All of these accommodations have made the medium accessible to as many women as possible, so that the message of feminism might be spread.

Since one of the community's most frequent expectations has

been reasonable ticket prices, it often has been the concert producers who have taken a loss in order to pay for child care, interpreters, and accessible space. One result of this has been that very few women producers have stayed in business long. Those who produce do it out of commitment to the music and to the community, because producers who honor these values do not make money. Even the rare profits are re-invested to produce new or less popular performers.

Given this history, where do we stand in 1987, with about 17 years growth since Stonewall and the earliest versions of "Still Ain't Satisfied"? The current situation, in Boston and elsewhere, is dismal to those who value women's music as a tool of a political movement.

Women's music has been so successful that capitalists have discovered it as one more consumer product, and since the aforementioned values are great drains on profits, they are not part of the slick, new package. The result in Boston in the fall of 1986 was that audiences filled a theater in a white neighborhood for three days of "Women in Music," concerts that had no child care, no interpreters for the deaf, and high ticket prices with no sliding scale. The male producer gathered up most of the money that women in the Boston area will spend on concerts by women during the season. The musicians who performed were reportedly paid better than they usually are by women producers, which is not surprising since the male producer did not have to lay out the costs of accessibility and inclusion. With some exceptions, the technicians and backstage workers were male, shutting women out of these roles

just as they are in mainstream music.

I suspect that many of the women who attended these concerts discovered women's music too recently to know its history, and are so unaware of the qualitative difference between Brand XY and the real thing. Perhaps others trusted the reputations of performers known for their political commitments. But many women stayed away and despaired of the effect this co-optation will have on the music and politics we have nurtured for years.

I think I speak for many women in saying that I love the music, but more than that, I love the community that women's music brings together. When I attend or work at concerts, I have the assurance that in this microcosm of the world, women actively try to realize their ideals. I admire the women carrying heavy sound amps and climbing tall scaffolds to install lights high above the stage. I'm inspired by the women directing the stage crew and running the box office. I'm in awe of the producer, who takes financial risks in stride. When the concert is a benefit, I am proud to see the producer and beneficiaries working together

**"I am furious to see all the years, tears, smiles, and muscle-producing labor we've shared turned into 'product development' for the men to sell back to us."**

to raise community awareness of the organization involved. I'm glad to see the clients of that organization introduced to women's music because of the collaboration. I enjoy exploring the variety of theaters, from old vaudeville houses to high tech modern spaces, that women's music goes into in its efforts to reach women all over the city. I have fun doing volunteer backstage work and being part of a women's crew doing "show biz." I like the music, especially when it tells me it's okay to be me, living my life—and when I can look around and see concrete proof of what the words say.

I don't go to women's music to be sung at. I go to celebrate with my community our dreams and our attempts to realize them. The music is more than the melody. I am furious to see all the years, tears, smiles, and muscle-producing labor we've shared turned into "product development" for the men to sell back to us. As part of a community, not an audience, I intend to support women-controlled women's music. At the very least, I would hope that audiences insist that male producers meet the same standards as women producers.

Ever the lightning rod, women's music is again the proving ground for our values. If we respond as an idealistic community, perhaps women's music will be as much the organizing force of the late '80s as it was in the '70s. We have all changed and nothing will be the same forever, but we don't have to go from all to nothing.

As lesbians, we have a particular investment in the future of women's music which has been built on lesbian work, talents, and money. Back around 1974, when several names for this new music were being suggested, the term "women's music" was chosen over

"lesbian music." One reason for this was that it made it possible to use concert halls without legal battles. Another belief was that outreach to a broad range of women would be hindered by identifying too strongly with lesbianism. So some lesbians let other lesbians and straight women put our music into a closet.

Well, the same legal problems still exist (witness the cancellation of the 1986 New England Women's Musical Retreat because they could not find a space that would rent to lesbians; Canadian women are still harassed by U.S. immigration when they try to come here to see "women's music"; per-

## PERIODICALS of interest to our readers

**Bitch: The Rock Women's Newsletter With Bite.** c/o San Jose Face 164, 478 W. Hamilton, Campbell, CA 95008. *Opposing, clashing viewpoints aired, ranging from heavy metal head-bangers to New Age Wiccans.*

**Broadside.** PO Box 1464, New York, NY 10023. *'Broadside' publishes current songs/poems/articles on political/topical ideas. Monthly; \$20/year, \$2/sample.*

**Common Lives/Lesbian Lives.** PO Box 1533, Iowa City, IA 52244. *We print the experiences and ideas of common lesbians. Quarterly; \$12/year, \$4/sample.*

**Golden Threads.** PO Box 2416, Quincy, MA 02169. *A contact quarterly for lesbians over 50. Nationwide, confidential, reliable. Quarterly; \$5/sample.*

**SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women.** PO Box 42741, Atlanta, GA 30311. *Interdisciplinary forum for discussion of critical issues facing black women. Biannual; \$5/sample.*

**Sagewoman Magazine.** PO Box 1478, Hillsboro, OR 97123. *Feminist, grassroots, women's spirituality; 40 pages, art & articles. Quarterly; \$13/year, \$4.50/sample.*

**TRIVIA: A Journal of Ideas.** PO Box 606, North Amherst, MA 01059. *Radical feminist visionary writing. Fall 1986: Sonia Johnson, Sarah Hoagland, Anna Lee, more. 3x/year; \$12/year, \$5/sample.*

**The Wishing Well.** PO Box G, Santee, CA 92071. *Established 1974. Women who love women write/meet. Confidential, supportive. Quarterly; \$5/sample.*

formers from other countries have to be exceptionally cautious about "self-disclosure" in order to be allowed to perform in the U.S.). And as for outreach, just what are we reaching people with when the medium is consumerism rather than politics?

I think the "women's music" strategy has served lesbians too small a return for their commitment to this music, and it's time we lesbians gave our support to those who support our struggles. ●

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Maida Tilchen is a writer whose work appears in the anthology 'Women-Identified Women' as well as in 'Gay Community News,' 'HOT WIRE,' and 'Genesis II.'

# MAKING OUR DREAMS OF Making Ends Meet Through

By Toni L. Armstrong

The footlights, the applause. The thrill of hearing your latest release on the radio. Big bucks. The romantic lifestyle of wine, women, and song. The satisfaction of inspiring audiences. These are some of the dreams that motivate musicians to choose performing as a career.

Robin Flower, whose fourth album (Babies With Glasses) is due for release this spring, says, "I love the lifestyle—seeing the country, old friends, playing/performing all the time...it's demanding and difficult, and also the most fun!"

However, performers committed to earning their livings through music are the first to yell "Myth!" at the misconceptions of the general public regarding what it's like to have a musical career. The glamour, fame, and economic rewards are usually vastly overestimated, while the grueling hours are ignored and the general paying

of dues is usually absent from the imaginary "star" scenario.

One major misconception is that musicians make all of their money performing. But with the exception of a relatively small handful of "big name" mainstream entertainers—like Tina Turner, Pat Benatar, Dolly Parton, and Aretha Franklin—working musicians in all genres are faced with the same problem: it's impossible for most musicians to earn a decent living solely through performing in any musical subculture—be it folk, progressive, jazz, or women's music. Studies of the graduates of this country's most prestigious music schools show that only 10 to 15 percent of their performance majors earn their main income from performing. And despite the high visibility of the recording industry and its aura of quick riches and mass fame, it's a high risk business with an estimated 75 percent of all recordings not recovering

their costs.

Almost all women must seek out additional income-generating activities. Many musicians are committed to making ends meet completely through music. They decline the more secure route of working a steady job for a paycheck, concentrating their efforts instead on making their music dreams their jobs. They are full-time musicians if not full-time performers.

The most commonly-held other jobs, according to a recent HOT WIRE survey, include songwriting; teaching music lessons; instrument repair; producing records for other musicians; sound engineering; disc jockey work; music management/booking; studio work for others; music therapy; arts administration; music-related media work like writing articles; and giving workshops and lectures, like Alix Dobkin's "Racism and Sexism in the Top 40."

## TERESA TRULL

**Teresa Trull's** album production credits include Deidre McCalla's *Don't Doubt It*, Romanovsky & Phillips' *Trouble in Paradise*, and her own *Unexpected* (Olivia, 1983) and *A Step Away* (Redwood, 1986). She also has two previous Olivia releases, *The Ways a Woman Can Be* (1977) and *Let It Be Known* (1980). In addition to solo concerts and festivals, she has appeared with Barbara Higbie, Sheila E, Joan Baez, David Sanborn, Linda Tillery, Ferron, and Holly Near. This past winter she opened in several cities, with Bonnie Hayes & The Wild Combo, for Huey Lewis & The News.

In 1986, I earned approximately 75 percent of my income from performing. It changes a lot, but last year songwriting made up about 10 percent, with album producing generating the other 15 percent.

When songwriters place a song, they get royalties paid on it. I still get royalties from when I had a gold record for The Whispers [which included "Love For Love" and "Try It Again"], from Europe, and from Linda Tillery's Secrets album which has four of my songs on it. I also had a song with the disco singer Gwen McCrae. I've placed many more songs in addition to these.



Toni L. Armstrong

Royalties are paid quarterly or twice a year; mostly twice a year. You must rely on the record company to be honest. Let's put it this way: very often the companies are not honest. For instance, with The Whispers' album Love For Love, named after my song, we had a gold album and we were on the B side of two hit singles, "Keep On Loving Me" and

# OUR JOBS in Music



Marcy J. Hochberg

**Robin Flower: "Some years I have made my whole living from performing; others not."**

Most of the performers who participated in the survey indicated that even if they had the opportunity to earn their income exclusively through gigging, they would not totally give up their other music-related money-making activities. They report that these activities generate up to 60 percent of their income regularly, sometimes closer to 90 percent depending on the season.

Income from the sale of tapes, albums, and CDs was almost universally specified by our survey respondents as a substantial percentage of their incomes. Hunter Davis, who has released three albums since 1977, says, "It takes projects such as recording and songwriting to keep my concerts exciting. If I were to gig without my other creative selves playing this part, my concerts could be lifeless." Likewise, New York gay cabaret singer Lynn Lavner says, "The recordings document the songs and accommodate public demand. And they're fun to do."

Teaching private and group music lessons is another mainstay. Robin Flower, who makes up to 50 percent of her income teaching, says, "Some years I have made my whole living from playing music, others not. When I have made it from gigs alone, then teaching for a steady income is impossible. But generally it works well when I'm in and out of town on little 'tourlettes'. I love teach-

ing. It's exciting and rewarding. And once I even found a guitar player for my band through teaching."

Kristin Lems, one of the founders of the now-annual National Women's Music Festival, says she enjoys the percentage of income she derives from the use and broadcast of her original songs. "It exists quite independently of my performing career, but is often the means by which producers find me for a performance. The songs have a life of their own," she says. She is also a librettist with hopes of deriving royalties from her score of a musical about Jane Addams of Hull House entitled St. Jane and the Devil Baby. "Songwriting can pay," she says, "if you live long enough and write enough catchy or memorable songs!"

Few musicians enjoy the "glamour" of being on the road unless they can afford to travel at a healthy pace in comfortable transportation and stay in reasonable housing accommodations. Few performers, including those in women's music, can claim this touring lifestyle. Even if they could, being away from home for sometimes months at a time has its rigors

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Toni L. Armstrong is a bass, banjo, and pinball player in addition to her editorial and educational activities. Happily, she has put several years between her *Saturn Return* and herself.

"Tonight." But record companies have millions of ways of keeping the actual numbers from you. I was probably paid for 200-300,000 records. I would guess a lot more were sold. If it's gold, it has to be at least 500,000. Additionally, I think a lot of singles were sold, and since we had the B sides we should have been paid for that. So I estimate that I made about one third of what I should have. Some companies are more reliable and honest than others. Different companies have bad reputations.

Full mechanical rights—the royalties around writing—are 5¢, divided up into 2½¢ for writing and 2½¢ for publishing. You often strike deals with percentages, too. If you have a publishing company that places your song for you, they'll usually take a percentage

of your publishing mechanicals. Right now I'm trying to negotiate with Chapel for a publishing deal where basically they advance me money to write songs in lieu of them placing my songs. If they do that, they'll probably take 50 percent of the publishing royalties [a quarter of the total royalties]. I have my own publishing company, Dismuke Music, and when I'm not placing the tunes through another publishing company I can publish the song myself and make the publishing money.

In addition to songwriting and performing money, I have income from producing albums. Album production really varies from project to project according to what responsibilities the producer takes. I take an enormous amount of responsibility for the budget, the

hiring of musicians, making deals for studio time, scheduling, arranging—you name it, I do it. And I do it very economically.

I've mostly done independent projects that didn't have very much money for funding. I take on all of the responsibility, and my prerequisite is that they allow me to hire the musicians. That makes a tremendous amount of difference. Experienced studio musicians save time in the studio. Clients hire me for my studio expertise.

I charge a flat fee to produce an album, and I work off of that. I usually get half before and half when the project is finished. I make myself somewhat responsible for any unreasonable overcharges. Lots of times things just happen

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# DEBBIE FIER

**Debbie Fier** has been on the music scene since the age of seven and has been playing piano for 21 years. She is a dynamic songwriter who blends her eclectic musical styles together to create a show that is spirited, soulful, and distinctly her own. From concert halls to music festivals, Debbie Fier's energy-charged performances astound fans and critics alike.

It all began about eight years ago when I found out about an apprenticeship in piano tuning and repair work. Days after meeting the master tuner I began. We brought in old, funky pianos and took them apart, cleaned them, and put them back together. We replaced the necessary parts, and I learned how to tune them. I got paid about \$1 per hour, which I appreciated; most people who want to learn this trade must go into a one-to-two year program

and pay \$3,000-\$5,000 for their education.

I gradually began tuning the pianos of friends for free. I took mine apart to delve deeper. Eventually I became known as a piano tuner/technician.

After two years I was asked to tune for a Holly Near-J.T. Thomas concert. Throughout the week before the show I had nightmares that I was working on the piano all afternoon and could only tune two notes. In spite of the anxiety, it actually went well, and I went to San Francisco four months later to tune J.T.'s piano at home.

Sometimes life is a matter of being in the right place at the right time. I moved to Northampton, Massachusetts and, within a few weeks, landed a job with the university, tuning for their concerts. In the five years that I worked there I tuned hundreds of pianos and other keyboards—Fender Rhodes, clavichords, CP-70s—for Phil

Collins, Joan Armatrading, Bonnie Raitt, Taj Mahal, Todd Rundgren, Jimmy Cliff, Miles Davis, Black Uhuru, Santana, Joe Jackson, and Evelyn Champagne King. Over the years I have also tuned at Sisterfire, Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and NEWMR as well as for most artists in the women's music network. A few times I was on stage tuning between sets while 20,000 people waited for the next act!

I lived in Chicago for several months and then moved to the Bay Area. Tuning must be the right work for me: during my second week in California I landed a job with the largest piano store in the East Bay. I tune in the store when they receive pianos



Anita Schriver

# RUTH PELHAM

**Ruth Pelham** is a singer, songwriter, and educator who brings to the world a fresh vision of world peace and social change. Whether performing in concert, teaching children to build homemade musical instruments, writing songs with old people in nursing homes, or participating in international arts exchanges, Ruth Pelham's music reflects the full integrity of the human spirit. 1987 marks Music Mobile's 10th anniversary and is coupled with her national tour to celebrate the release of her new album, *Look To The People*. Listen to Ruth on the soundsheet in this issue of *HOT WIRE*.

In the 17 years that I've been performing as a solo artist in clubs and concert halls, I've also generated work and income as an arts administrator, songwriter, educator, and lecturer. The diversity of people, projects, and



Maura Tucker

places provides my life with a vital source of richness and challenge that keeps me growing both personally and professionally.

Since 1977 a sizeable portion of my income has come from my work as the director of The Music Mobile, a not-for-profit educational organization that I created. Beginning in Albany, New York as a colorful van that gathered children at neighborhood parks, street corners, and empty lots to sing songs, build musical instruments, and make friends, 10 years later Music Mobile's activities

touch the lives of people of all ages in towns and cities across the United States and as far away as Moscow.

Setting up cultural exchanges of songs, stories, and drawings between children from Albany and the Soviet Union or Supai, Arizona—the home of the Havasupai Indians—is just a part of my non-administrative Music Mobile work. Songwriting and program development/implementation fill my days and provide me with a vehicle for creative expression and grassroots political and cultural work.

For example, one program I developed is called "Musicraft." Through the building of guitar boxes, drums, or jingle sticks, children are taught concepts like respect for the earth, recycling, self-esteem, cooperation, justice, and appreciation of our differences. For reinforcement I write songs that are not only easy to sing and remember, but which also help to give the group a sense of warmth and belonging. For each workshop presented, The Music Mobile receives a fee of \$65-\$200 which becomes part of

from the factory and then, after they're sold, I tune in people's homes and in clubs. I now have access to all kinds of pianos.

For those of you who don't already know, a piano consists of the strings (which vibrate), the keys (which you touch to play), and the action (all the parts that work together to produce sound from your touch). Forerunners of the piano are the hammer dulcimer (you hold the hammers in your hand and manually play them directly on the strings) and the harpsichord (instead of a complex piano action, the strings are plucked in direct response to keys being played). Other ancestors include the harp, the psaltery, and clavichords.

Working on pianos is incredible! There are 1,000 working, moving parts. The types of wood used and the level of precision in manufacturing are the factors

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Deb Fier has two albums of original music: 'In Your Hands' and 'Firelight.' She relocated in 1986 to Oakland so she can enjoy the sunshine while not on the road.

our organizational income from which I receive my weekly salary.

My non-administrative Music Mobile tasks include publicity and public relations, organizational development, and fund-raising including grantwriting, solicitations from individuals and businesses, and special events planning. To my delight, music-making has become a part of our fund-raising strategy.

Several years ago Music Mobile was embarking on a new program, "Songstories: Contemporary Images of Aging Through Song." I wanted to interview older adults in senior citizen centers and nursing homes and then write songs based upon their stories and my impressions. I approached a local fraternal organization for a \$500 contribution and, in response, was invited to make a presentation to their group. Along with me explaining

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Ruth Pelham is a singer, songwriter, educator and activist. She is the creator/director of The Music Mobile, Inc. in Albany, New York. Her recordings include 'Look to the People' and 'Under One Sky.'

# BETTY MacDONALD

Betty MacDonald is on the air six nights a week with "The Sounds of Jazz" on WDSTFM100 from Woodstock, New York. *Music Machine's* 1986 Annual Readers Poll listed her as one of the Top 10 Radio Personalities. She was head of the string department in the Ossining, New York school system, has numerous performance credits including festivals, concerts, and telethons, and has produced a cassette of her music, *Waltzing in the Sage Brush*.



Judith Glaser

I discovered a long time ago that if I put all my eggs in one basket—and I dropped the basket—I would be in big trouble. To sink all of myself into just being a gigging musician wasn't a safe proposition, financially or emotionally.

I've been really fortunate in finding other things to do which are music related, contribute financially to my survival, and bring me happiness. Besides that I find that each one of these activities seems to nurture the others and ultimately generates other opportunities.

I am a composer, singer, violinist, and performer. In 1980, an opportunity to do radio work was offered to me at WDST in Woodstock, New York as a result of my reputation as a performer. I've been there ever since, on the air five nights a week with a show

called "The Sounds of Jazz." With this job I discovered there was more to doing it well than just putting records on a turntable. All of my experience as a musician came into play to help me create an open, friendly, interesting communication with broad appeal: my knowledge of the artists, and my experience combining sounds with regard to key, tempo, mood, style, and variety. I found what I think is a winning formula mixing these ingredients with my deep love for the subject matter—jazz—and a sincere desire to want to turn other people on to this good stuff.

I educated myself as well as my listening audience by preparing factual information with the cuts and specials that concentrated on featured artists or instruments. In fact, some of the programs which received the most response were those that revolved around women jazz artists. That felt very rewarding.

Being a disc jockey required that I perfect the art of interviewing as opportunities arose to speak with well-known jazz artists who were promoting their work or appearing in concert within our listening area. This included Sonny Rollins, Dizzy Gillespie, Marian McPartland, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Herbie Hancock, Carla Bley, and Pat Metheny. I found that being a musician was a big plus in knowing how to relate comfortably with these artists and in being able to produce a successful, interesting interview.

My position at WDST as "jazz connection for the Hudson Valley" further opened up requests for me to appear as emcee for concerts featuring such notable jazz musicians as Carmen McRae, Lionel Hampton, Chick Corea, Dave Brubeck, Taj Mahal, and others. This job has some very special requirements, and being a musician/performer is again definitely helpful in creating communication that is outgoing, warm, vibrant, and focused. I found that the emcee is the link between the performer and the audience, and my presence adds a subtle touch that

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# MUSICA FEMINA

**Kristan Aspen** and **Janna MacAuslan** began performing together in 1981. At first they played standard flute-guitar music, but soon realized they preferred to play for women's music audiences. Thus began an energetic search for enough music by women composers to put together a first program. After four national tours, several festival appearances, and two cassettes, **Musica Femina** is going strong with an engaging "concert/informance" which creates a bridge between classical and women's music, and affirms women's active participation in music history.

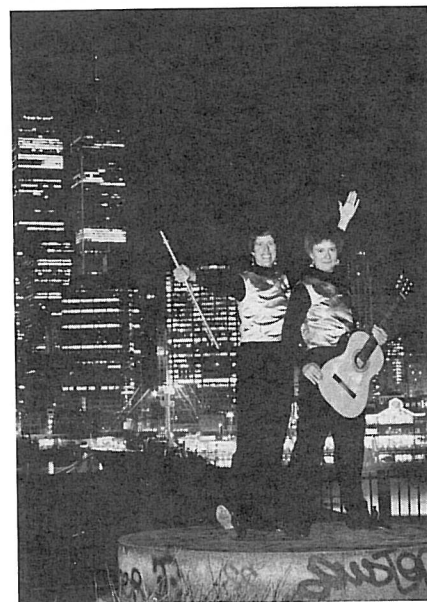
During intermission at Musica Femina's last performance on our Fall '86 Midwest Tour the producer came backstage for an answer to a question she was hearing from more than one member of the audience: "But, what do they do?" When we returned to

the stage I addressed the audience saying, "This is what we do. We tour the country introducing our audience to women composers." Then I acknowledged that in order to make ends meet we do have to have other work when we are not on the road.

Is it really possible for a classical duo playing women composers to support themselves and make recordings solely by touring? For Musica Femina with three years of touring under our belts, so far it is not. We have had to pursue other jobs during off seasons in order to support our touring habit. Don't misunderstand me: we can earn our living and pay for the tour during four-to-six months of the year, but we have not yet made enough by touring to support ourselves during the other six-to-eight months of the year. At this point we earn probably one third to one half of our income from touring.

We are optimistic, however.

In 1986 we had, for the first time, both a spring and a fall tour. This would seem to be ideal, staying home summer and winter to prepare for the upcoming tours. So we have scouted out some seasonal jobs that dovetail nicely with this plan. Actually we have both developed these posi-



Karen E. Johnson

# RHIANNON

Prior to her ten years as vocalist with the jazz band **ALIVE!**, **Rhiannon** acted extensively in theaters from New York to Chicago. In addition to her performing career, she has taught more than 200 vocal improvisation workshops throughout North America. This spring Rhiannon will be traveling in Europe, teaching and performing in France, Amsterdam, Germany, and Spain.

"When I go on the road," says Rhiannon, "I make my living almost completely as a performer. And right now I'm making almost all of my living teaching. The two twine together, and some points in the year one or the other predominates. In addition to the workshops, I have about 15 individual students."

When Rhiannon would tour with **ALIVE!**, she would return to find that she had lost about half of her students. "So in the end," she



Jennifer Campbell

says, "I had to make much more money touring, and I could never do it."

For the last two years she has not had extended tours, and her more stable lifestyle has resulted in steadier income which has enabled her to recently buy a house. "When I was traveling with **ALIVE!**," she says, "we'd make a decent salary on the road and come home and everything would fall flat for a month. Then we'd leave again for a month. Home was always a scuffle for the rent. Now when I go away, I know how to plan for when I come home.

I've built my reputation around here, and I hope it's not going to be like that again. I'm working on scores for plays, and coaching for another play in addition to my teaching. A lot of music-related work is turning up, in which I am a performer and a teacher rolled into one—which has been my dream all my life."

She eagerly anticipates traveling to countries outside of the U.S. "I want to see what the music is like out there," she says. "I know that as a teacher I'll learn all these things that I don't as a performer, because I get inside of the community and the culture when I teach. When I'm performing I'm standing in front of them."

\* \* \*

In the early days of the National Women's Music Festival at Champaign-Urbana, Rhiannon announced a vocal workshop and was met by 200 different sets of voices, hearts, souls, and musical backgrounds. In one exercise she invented, Rhiannon directed small groups of women to lay in a circle with their heads in the center



tions over the past few years by making ourselves indispensable to our employers. They are convinced that we are the best people for the job, so they tolerate our regular excursions out of town.

For three summers Janna has worked as sound technician and stage crew supervisor for several outdoor concert series held at Pioneer Courthouse Square, a brick city park, in downtown Portland. She works outdoors in the hot sun, but she gets a tan—and lots of muscles from lifting all that equipment. Concerts in the Square draw from 50 to 2,000 people depending on who is performing. It's a great job for interacting with other musicians in town, and some have called her

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Kristan Aspen has been active in women's music since 1974 when she performed with Naomi (Littlebear) Morena. The Aspen and Littlebear Duo grew to the Ursa Minor Choir and the Izquierda Ensemble until it disbanded in 1980. Aspen returned to classical music, and has worked as business manager, tour coordinator, and flutist with Musica Femina since 1982.*

and feet at the circumference. They breathed together, hummed together, sensed each other's sounds together. Like members of singing dream circles, they began to find their inner voices and to feel the vibrations the ground and each other generated.

The strength of those 200 sounds opened up new dimensions in teaching for Rhiannon. Literally hundreds of workshops later, she continues to expand the vocal boundaries of her students and to thrive on the energy they share.

Much of Rhiannon's visibility comes from her lifetime involvement in performance: initially in theater, then with jazz, and now in compelling combination — solo "scat theater." By definition, her teaching career has touched a smaller number, yet is vitally important: "Teaching is the corner-

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Pat Mullan is Art & Music Librarian at Berkeley Public Library. She's worked in women's theater and music since the early 1970s, doing sound, stage managing, publicity, production, and grant-writing. Her favorite reference questions are about jazz.*

# JEAN FINEBERG

Saxophonist **Jean Fineberg** is co-leader (along with trumpeter Ellen Seeling) of the funk/jazz group DEUCE, whose first album was recently released on Redwood Records. Based in New York City, DEUCE plays all original instrumental music. The album also contains three original vocal tunes, sung by Teresa Trull, Carol MacDonald, and Laura Theodore.



K.E. Steimbrenner

Seven o'clock on a frigid Monday morning, horns on my back, I'm waiting on the street to meet Stan, my group leader. When we became professional musicians—I 15 years ago and he close to 40—this is hardly the lifestyle we imagined. I crawl into his still-cold car, and he begins to brief me on this morning's classes. We are on our way to the Brooklyn Center for the Multiple Handicapped, a public school serving the educational needs of all of Brooklyn's "special" elementary students.

Our first group today is "Track 4," the lowest level in a four-track system. Some children will be in wheelchairs, physically as well as mentally or emotionally disabled. Some cannot care for their own daily needs, and the

staff usually outnumbers the students. Some will have Down's Syndrome, able to speak and respond but with very limited educational potential. They are one of the most lovable and trusting groups of students.

We arrive in the classroom and the air is electric with excitement. Kids stop us in the hall, jumping up and down when they see the instruments. We have been there before, and they know they are in for an hour of fun.

West End Symphony is a private organization, partially supported by the Music Performance Trust Fund, a national fund (operated locally) which collects monies from recording companies and allocates them to union musicians for public performances. West End Symphony has worked very hard to acquire additional co-sponsorship to pay for a yearly program of music therapy for special education classes. Our trio is one of five ensembles, each composed of a melody instrumentalist, a drummer, and a guitarist/singer. We have a 10-week fall schedule during which we visit one school per day, performing the same program for two different classes. We work two-to-three days a week. In the spring we return to the same classes for a recap and final session.

The repetition of schools in the spring is a central part of the concept—the students remember the musicians and really enjoy seeing us return to their school. There is a discernable difference in their attitude and acceptance of us on our second visit. We also have a 10-week summer session for summer school students.

I don't watch Saturday morning cartoons, but I think every child in New York does. There isn't a student, regular or special, who doesn't recognize the "Popeye" theme. We try to stick to familiar tunes which make the kids come alive, clapping and smiling and building a bridge of communication between us. Depending on their level of comprehension, I vary my demonstration of the saxophones and flutes. Naturally,

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# The Female Hero

## An 'Alien' Concept in Cinema

By Jessica Hunter

One of the most fascinating things about the first Alien movie was that it only gradually dawned on the viewer that the "hero" of the picture was going to be the woman officer Ripley (Sigourney Weaver). A woman as sole human survivor—after all the brave, the brawny, and even the scrawny males have failed and died—who uses her wits to outsmart the highly intelligent organic "killing machine" that has invaded their enormous spaceship? It was an unusual twist to the thematic cliché of "surviving against all odds."

The sequel, Aliens, is a suspense-filled, scary BEM (bug-eyed monster) genre science fiction/horror movie. And it certainly is violent. But it reinforces the first movie's statement that women can be actively courageous survivors who can take care of themselves. Its overt message is that women's filmic passivity is passe. Its subtler messages have more far-reaching implications.

There has been a slow change in the images of women presented in science fiction films since screaming "heroines" were abducted by monsters and robots in the early days of SF epics. In the last 10 years this change has accelerated. Star Wars' Princess Leia was strong, but her image contained mixed messages of slave girl/fighter. The female tower guard in the ultra-violent Road Warrior was all fighter, stripped of romantic dimensions by the sheer need to survive in a brutal post-apocalyptic world. And now, in Aliens' Ripley—with Sigourney Weaver picking up where the part left off in Alien—there is not even a trace of gratuitous harking back

to male fantasies of the helpless woman. Even when she's in disgrace at the beginning of the film, she never loses her dignity or her humanity.

What we adults see in Aliens is of far less importance than the impact it will undoubtedly have on kids. Whether we like it or not, there's something about scary movies that has always attracted kids. Ever since such movies were invented, kids have been going to see them in droves. And now they are seeing different images of women than have ever been offered them before.

Three 10-year-old boys are talking about the movies behind me on the bus:

"Hey, and then you know what?" says one. "She gives birth to this giant maggot!" He is recounting the one and only scene from The Fly that puts it on my "must see" list. A minute later the kids have switched to talking about Aliens. The tone becomes different, respectful: "Did you see the way she got the monster in a headlock? Wasn't that cool? And when she saves the kid trapped in that gunk and blasts the crab monsters? Oh, that was so cool!"

Comic book as they may be in a science fiction thriller like Aliens, these images of women as actively heroic are important. Not as role models, exactly, since the image of women wielding machine guns isn't necessarily progress, and women fighting off menacing extraterrestrial monsters is not something a girl might realistically aspire to do when she grows up — Carl Sagan notwithstanding. But whether it be caused by hormones, sheer youthful exuberance, acculturation, naivety, insecurity, some combination of these, or something else entirely, the fact remains that kids and

young adults are notoriously susceptible to romantic and swash-buckling images. These images are important influences, as icons of courage, as symbols of personal power.

A number of male film reviewers immediately picked up on this shift in iconology in Aliens. David Edelstein, reviewing the movie in Rolling Stone — hardly a feminist publication — said: "The most shocking thing about Aliens, the stupendous paramilitary sequel to the original gut buster, is that the women call the shots."

That the sight of women "calling the shots" could be the most shocking thing about a movie that shows people's stomachs ripped open from the inside by incubating reptiles, an android pulled apart with his plastic intestines falling out, monsters with sets of dagger-toothed jaws set in slime that nest one inside the other, and huge nightmare creatures that pop out of nowhere after everyone thinks the humans are safe at last—well, it says something about the current state of the male/female power imbalance.

Edelstein went on to comment, "The sexual politics of the movie are still risky for the genre." Sure. But in fact, it's considerably less risky to show women of heroic self-determination in movies that can be labeled fantasies or dismissed as trash than it is to show them in serious drama, at least at this point. We've come a long way, babies, but do we have to go all the way to outer space if we want to get any further?

Richard Schickel, writing Time magazine's cover story about Aliens, called it "the story of a woman who keeps finding ways to transcend the limits that unexamined custom often imposes

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*Reprinted with permission from Chicago's 'Windy City Times.' It has been slightly edited.*

on her sex." This is a rather strange way to describe the theme of what is essentially a science fiction-horror-war film, I think—but it underscores the current sensitivity toward any movie that contains breakthrough images of women. The fact that "unexamined" sexist customs are (apparently unbeknownst to Schickel) thoroughly and minutely examined in feminist journals all around the world does not diminish the importance of the theme for a general audience. *Aliens'* director James Cameron worked on the movie with extensive editorial input from his wife, Gale Anne Hurd, the movie's producer. No doubt she had something to do with the womanly focus of the film.

Sigourney Weaver is also responsible for the impressive im-

pect of her character. Ripley is not a cardboard hero, and not at all a gleeful, fearless killer. She is determined to wipe out the aliens to protect humanity, but she doesn't love her task. It's not fun. The bond that grows between her and Newt (Carrie Henn), the girl who is the sole survivor of the earth colony, becomes a type of deep, self-chosen, heroic mother-daughter relationship that is also something new for the screen. When Ripley goes back into the lair of the monsters, risking everything to save Newt, the message we get is that a girl child is worth it. Think of the subtle difference it would have made if the child Ripley risked all to rescue had been a boy.

Interestingly, male reviewers glommed onto the "motherhood" theme, pointing out that the most

fearsome of the aliens is the avenging mother, and that the ultimate battle is waged by females of both species. This plays into the old sexist cliché that women are innately capable of being more vicious than men, and mainstream culture's ambivalence about motherhood in general. "The Mother From Outer Space" was the catchy headline on the front page of the *Village Voice* in the issue that featured their review. And *Time* made possibly the most unintentionally hip observation of the year when it remarked that, like Ripley, the formidable alien monster could be thought of as "a single mom."

The militarism of *Aliens* is disturbing, I must admit. All those marines dressed in 20th century jungle battle fatigues to fight in outer space, bare arms exposed to the acid-spewing slime monsters. Very very comic book. Nevertheless this brings us to another remarkable female image in *Aliens*: the Marine Vasquez (Jenette Goldstein), whom we first see doing chin-ups in her T-shirt to shake off the effects of suspended animation. Oo-la.

Where in the movies have we seen such a kickass woman before? Grace Jones' frenetic performance in *Conan the Destroyer* comes closest. Vasquez is perfectly comfortable being an aggressive, muscle-bound, foul-mouthed, tough woman. "Hey Vasquez, you ever been mistaken for a man?" teases a male marine. "No," she answers. "Have you?"

The word "dyke" is never uttered, but it doesn't have to be. And Vasquez doesn't break down under fire, either; the movie makes a deliberately calculated contrast in image between Vasquez and a scared-shitless, hysterical male marine (the same one who teased her earlier in the film) who has clearly lost control of himself.

So far no other commentary I've read about *Aliens* has pointed out another absolutely remarkable feature in its representation of women: There's not a single woman in this movie who is certifiably

*continued on page 66*

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jessica Hunter is a writer, editor, and avid fan of science fiction.*



B Perm/20th Century Fox

When Ripley goes back into the lair of the monsters, risking everything to save Newt, we get the message that a girl child is worth it.

# SUSAN SAVELL

## New Connections: Music, Spirituality, and Ritual

By Elly Haney

Women in music have long been among the pioneers in understanding the connections between music and politics, particularly the way music supports and deepens our experiences and bondedness as women transforming the world.

Susan Savell is a new artist who connects music with ritual and spirituality as well as politics. Her music becomes a means of personal and political healing as we work for the structural change and social justice that will ultimately bring about healing on a planetary level. In making these connections, she is discovering/creating a musical genre that is both very old and very new.

Savell has described her music, particularly in concert, as "ritual performance." She says, "For me, ritual is the process of re-enacting or remembering significant life experiences in a way that discovers and shares their ritual meaning—and therefore places them in a larger perspective that enables us to see our lives in a more whole or balanced or peaceful way."

The ritual quality of Savell's music has a second dimension—the presence and participation of community. In live concerts, the communal quality of the music is enhanced by what Savell and the musicians she is playing with do on stage. At a recent concert, Savell asked the audience to think of phrases or images important to them. As those were called out to her, the ensemble improvised a song or chant around them, drawing the audience into the creative process and encouraging all to join voices. For a few fun and very moving minutes, we all shared one another's pain, anger, love, and just plain silliness.

But the communal and ritual



quality of a concert is already in the music, whether heard on her record The Power of My Love For You (Heartlight Records) or live. How does her music make this happen?

It begins with the fact that most of her pieces are songs with very singable tunes. Similar to ancient chants, they can be remembered and sung again and again. They can be carried into the large and small moments of our daily lives and used to comfort, soothe, and heal ourselves and one another.

This particular quality of her music suggests the legacy of a people's wisdom that is communicated orally, only now the people are feminists, the people's struggles are part of a world-wide struggle for justice and peace, and the people's lives are rooted in a spiritual-political ground.

Savell also writes meditations and chants. "Resting Place" is a powerful example of her meditations. "O Big Mountain," a chant that is not on the album, is about Big Mountain, sacred to the Hopi

and Navajo people. Both of these forms have clear connections with ancient religions and liturgical traditions.

Much of Savell's music arises, and has been tested, in community. "Simple Ceremonies" reflects the rituals of the Feminist Spiritual Community in Portland, Maine, where she and I have both been Coordinators, as well as a shamanic vision of Brooke Medicine Eagle's. "Hearts Open Slowly" has become a standard of feminist religious gatherings.

Some of her music was written for specific community occasions. Perhaps the most notable is "Song for Jane," written for a funeral service of the Feminist Spiritual Community to grieve the death and celebrate the life of another member, Jane Cunningham.

Savell's music celebrates life and love and the possibilities of healing, justice, and more abundant life. It is hopeful music. It seems to rise out of that place where human yearning for wholeness meets reservoirs of power and love and healing. Thus, in the

course of an evening, our fears and doubts are felt and articulated and accepted and then rechanneled into new possibility. In "Carry It On," for instance, she sings:

*Sometimes I fear that all of us  
Can hardly be enough  
To lead the lands in war toward peace  
Is asking far too much.*

*But then I think of one who led  
Her people on for years  
Hundreds strong her freedom train  
Broke through a nation's fears...*

And then the chorus (we in the audience) has the last word: "We'll carry it on!"

Similarly, in "Resting Place," Savell calls out to the universe, God, Goddess:

*Oh but what will you do  
when I'm wounded  
through and through and I just want to  
scream with pain?*

Again notice the communal nature of the answer:

*I will be your Resting Place  
You can be a Resting Place  
We can be a Resting Place.*

In one of her most lyrical songs, "Hollow of My Heart," she sings:

*I understand your need to be alone now,  
We've both been wounded by our failures  
And feel frozen deep inside.  
But if you change your mind  
just let me know,  
I'll let you in  
I'm not promising, I'm challenging myself  
To open wide again.*

Every time I hear Savell sing that song, I see tears on the faces of many people in the audience. Our fears, our doubts, our yearnings are authentically captured in her words and music, and the audience is opened for healing.

The healing comes, it seems to me, through our imagination. Savell sings of a time when barriers and differences between us are broken down, when we are in touch with our own power and at one with the power of the universe, when indeed there is no separation.

I find this the heart of her music — this capacity to evoke healing, which is what I believe the ritual is about. She does it in part by using images of ecstasy and joy; she also does it by using recurring nature imagery, by making most of her songs conversations, and by the multiple levels of meaning in her songs.

Nature imagery abounds in the music of Susan Savell, and the images are those of growth, abundance, and solidarity. In "This Freedom," one's body is a garden to tend; the "Hollow of My Heart" is a piece of wood carved, which then becomes a warming fire; in "When You're Gone" she sings:

*Now my mind is clear just like a new sky  
After a storm has washed away the haze.  
Won't you surround me now  
with your rainbow light...*

Such images, constantly woven into the music, communicate the growth, the harvest, and the renewal of the seasons of our lives; they also provide an underlying sense of assurance, of being grounded, if you will, in a spiritual reality that endures.

Healing is called forth in the dialogical form of much of her music. The singer is speaking with someone as well as about something. The singer is engaged—adoring, struggling, mourning, fearing, promising. And as we enter into that music with her, we are both opened up to our own experience and joined with her in the resolution of struggle.

Finally, healing is evoked through the way in which the images, themes, dialogues become prisms, illumining multiple facets of meaning. Her songs can be heard on different levels, each of which has its own integrity. "The Power of My Love For You," for instance, is a song of one person's love for another; it is also a song of divine or universal or goddess love. "This Freedom" is a pro-choice song; it is also a song about freedom for lesbian women and gay men, and it is a song about caring for the environment. "Hollow of My Heart" is a song of care, the offer of friendship and love; it also expresses a promise that we are cared for. And "Resting Place"

is a conversation within the self and between the self and the universe.

Each level has its own integrity; one is not simply or primarily a symbol for the other. Together they reflect a central feminist spiritual insight: spiritual communion and political activism, interpersonal relations and public roles, concern for the earth and concern for social justice, women's power and the power of the universe are all facets of a single global struggle toward love and abundant life. And because it is a single struggle, the hope for justice and healing is both within us and outside of us. We too can and must become full contributors...with grace, with passion, and in community.

Savell's music is spiritual; it is equally personal and political. As it manages to weave together these dimensions, it is also intelligent. Though it is both singable and playful, it is not simplistic. The ideas it expresses, the feelings it evokes, and its use of the imagination are complex and sophisticated.

For all of its creativity, Savell's music is closely related to her own life. She is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, a tradition used to congregational singing. She has been active for years in movements for racial, economic, and gender justice and peace, and that commitment grew out of her faith and continues to challenge her religious heritage. A lesbian and a feminist, she celebrates women and seeks healing and renewal for all. A healer, she is clear about the necessity for social and structural change, for the healing of the earth, and seeks reconciliation with those we have considered "other."

To what extent does Savell's music have similar power for those whose experiences and roots are quite different from hers? For those with other religious traditions or who have been so scarred

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*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Elly Haney teaches ethics at the Portland School of Art in Maine, writes about feminist ethics and theology, coordinates the Center for Vision and Policy, and, in her spare time, runs a freelance editorial and writing business.*

# WOMEN TAKE LIBERTY IN '86

By Rosemary Curb

**CELEBRATE the Statue's 100th Anniversary**  
**DEDICATE Her to Liberty, Equality, Sisterhood, and Peace**  
**HONOR the Women of the World**  
**AFFIRM a Feminist Vision of Our Future**

The Fourth of July hoopla at the Statue of Liberty left me so cold that I may be one of the few people in the United States who didn't watch the tall ships on TV, listen to corporate America congratulate itself in radio replays of interviews, or ogle full color newspaper spreads. Friends informed me; I imagined the rest. Living simply in a yurt in the Berkshires has been far more liberating than admitting the intrusions of civilization. But the flyer I picked up by chance at the National Women's Studies Association Conference at the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana in mid June with the words above drew me out of my mountain retreat and down to the steaming concrete jungle to join hands with women at the feet of the Statue of Liberty.

"She's no lady! She's a woman—amazon—goddess!" headlined the flip side of the flyer. If "Mother Nature is a Lesbian," why not make The American Symbol be Our Goddess?

Once I'd made my way out of the woods to Boston to Peoplexpress to Battery Park to the right succession of lines to the ferry from New York to the island and actually stood there looking up at the pedestal to the gargantuan hunk of metal that means "America" to every native and visitor, I had my doubts. She/It is not Us. What the media persists in calling "The Lady" has no connection with the real struggling, sweating, earth-rooted women. One hundred years ago the people of France

gave the people of the U.S. a symbol of liberty and equality in the form of a classical allegorical female figure. Athena, goddess of wisdom and defensive war? Lucina, goddess of rational enlightenment? Both are fabrications of male fantasy—not really our sisters or mothers. Real women are everywhere in bondage on our small planet.

But there we real sweating ones were—determined to have a good time in our costumes, singing, shouting, drumming, dancing. Our small turnout (300-500, not the 2,000-3,000 hoped for) disappointed those of us who went and the grassroots organizers, all of whom live in the Midwest.

Flowing Margaret Johnson in St. Louis envisioned the demonstration two years ago. Mary Lee Sargent in Urbana, Illinois joined her in planning it more than a year and a half before the event. The Fourth of July 1984 was the first date, but organizers quickly realized they would need more time, and they moved the date forward a year and a month. The flyer distributed on Liberty Island also lists Susan Hills, Pauline E. Kayes, Barbara J. McGough, Leslie Mouse, and Marilyn Ryan as national coordinators. Needless to say, the organizers are in personal debt for printing, postage, phone—\$9,000. [To help them out, you can send checks payable to GGSCC to Women Rising in Resistance, P.O. Box 2096 Station A, Champaign, IL 61820.]

Western Massachusetts activist Jean Grosholtz said that several years ago when she was tired of

organizing, she simply sent out a call to women to encircle the White House on Mother's Day. When women asked, "Where will we stay? How will we organize?" she replied, "Just BE there." Only 30 women came, but she doesn't consider their action a failure because she feels that the more women take resistance to the streets everywhere and the more experience women have confronting the system and getting arrested, the more ready we will be to act when "the magic moment comes." Jean is now calling women to withdraw support from the institutions which perpetuate violence against women by striking one hour a week. Thus Jean considers "Women Take Liberty" a success because demonstrators felt empowered.

Z Budapest led the opening High Noon ritual passing a beach ball globe around the circle of 300 women, asking each of us to bless a spot on Mother Earth. And so we blessed South Africa, Palestine, Tennessee, San Francisco, Hawaii, Chicago, Florida, women everywhere recovering from alcohol and drug addictions, South Sea Islands, Nicaragua, mothers everywhere, land for women's music festivals, the dykes at Smith College, and much more. In conclusion Z held up the ball proclaiming, "This earth is all we've got. There is no heaven. There is no hell. There is only Mama." And she tossed the ball into the center of the circle singing, "She's been waiting so long. She's been waiting for her sisters to remember, to return." [Editor's note: this popular chant is from the song "She's Been Waiting" by Paula Walowitz.] Looking much more like my idea of an Amazon Goddess than the Statue, Z held bouquets of incense high in both

hands and blessed us: "May there be Beauty before you. May there be Beauty behind you. May you all walk in Beauty. Blessed Be."

As more speeches and singing continued, 20 of us led by Mary Lee marched our way up the narrow metal staircase inside the statue base, intending to display the huge "Women Take Liberty" banner made by women in Iowa City. A few of us invisible ones (middle-aged white women indistinguishable from tourists) slithered past, even though I was wearing a large square hot pink button from Lesbian Herstory Archives with the word Lesbian in 30 languages. But the dark-skinned young woman actually carrying the heavy bag and Mary Lee in her paper Liberty crown were stopped and threatened with arrest if we unfurled our dangerous banner. Heart racing I started singing down through the stairwell Naomi Littlebear's song I remembered singing at the Seneca Peace Camp in the summer of '83: "You can't kill the spirit. She is like a mountain. Old and strong, she lives on and on." A whole column of women picked it up. Why did it amaze me that uniformed men encased in their armor and firearms bristled in anger and fear?



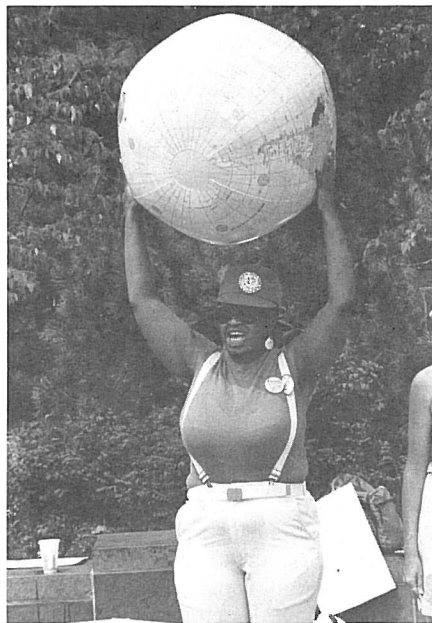
Marilyn Humphries

While a few of us tussled with "authority," Vinnie Burrows stirred the circle of women outside to take our power. Better known to me as a captivating performer, she announced herself as Vice President of Women for Racial

and Economic Equality and reminded us that we are a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural movement. She reminded us that the Sixth of August commemorates the bombing of Hiroshima, a racist attack on the Japanese people. She reminded us of the South African women who marched on Pretoria, of the Native American peoples struggling to keep their lands. Thinking of her own slave ancestors, she said, "We may have come in different boats, but we're all in the same boat now." She concluded with a dramatic reading of a poem by Langston Hughes with the telling line, as true for all women as it is for all poor, and people of color: "America never was America to me."

Sonia Johnson held the cheering circle urging us to love women passionately, madly. As the focal speech of the afternoon, I offer an abridged version:

"Patriarchy is ending. We probably chose to be born at this time to help it happen. This is women's time on this planet. For 70 centuries women haven't had a say in anything, and you can sure tell it, can't you? Women are rising all over this globe. In rising to save our own lives, we're rising to save all life on the planet—this



Marilyn Humphries

little green and blue marble rolling out there in space. Men say, 'When we get the real problems solved, then we'll take care of you girls—we mean "ladies".' They call our friend up there a lady. You and I know that women came

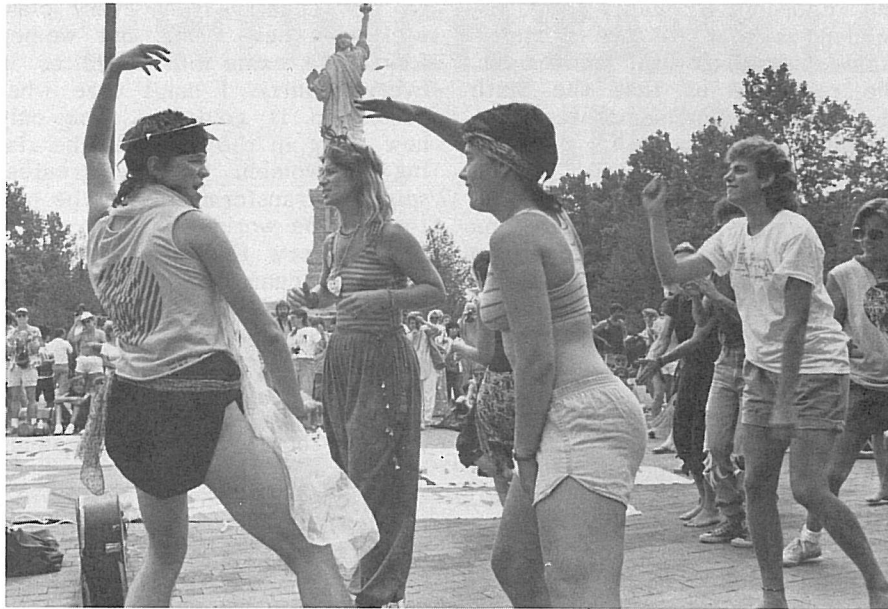
to this country from every class seeking a new world, but women found the same old world as in every country. I don't care what revolution is going on. The only new thing in the world is the rising of women. It's the greatest spiritual transformation in the history of the world.

"We know that how they treat women is central to all problems—in the Middle East, in Central America—everywhere. Oppression of women is the archetypal oppression on which every other oppression is modeled. Men came out of those ancient equivalents of bedrooms and kitchens with those paradigms of power-over fixed firmly in their minds. The mind that states that it's natural, reasonable, necessary for half the human race that is male to rule over half the human race that is female, that god ordained it, extrapolates that it's all right for the rich to rule the poor, the strong to rule the weak, people of one color to rule people of another—that all oppression is all right. On every square inch of this planet there's a war raging against women—the primal, basic, archetypal war. But we and even they know that patriarchy is dying. Violence is everywhere, and violence is the last resort of weakness. They would rather blow us all skyhigh than lose their power.

"There is just a moment in time for us. We'll know it when it comes. If we can cease to be slaves in our hearts and souls, men will cease to be masters. As we change our minds, we turn our attention away from men and listen to women. Patriarchy is based on hatred of women. The most revolutionary, seditious, transformative thing we can do is to love women—not just dykes, not just heterosexual women, but all women."

Sonia concluded by leading us in three verses ("We are strong, courageous women. We are proud that we are women. We are women loving women") to the tune of Holly Near's "We Are A Gentle, Angry People."

A few moments after Sonia's speech, we looked up in amazement at the banner some amazing women had slipped past the



Marilyn Humphries

guards for all of Liberty Island to read: "Witches Weave Wildness and Wishes for Wellness." Our cheering made the island vibrate. Even the larger banner finally had its moment in the sun, although irate police took organizers into temporary custody for questioning in the guardhouse. What the old boys thought of as our naughty pranks shook them up in a surprising way: not only were those of us who had come to celebrate and affirm under suspicion—but every casual female tourist, wife, mother, daughter was narrowly eyed anew as a potential radical revolutionary. Let all the boys quake a bit with the recognition of women rising, when they go home to their wives, mothers, daughters—smiling faintly from the sidelines today, but tomorrow joining hands in our circle.

Only about 200 women made it to Liberty State Park in New Jersey for the closing ceremony and more speeches and performances. Andrea Dworkin spoke out with her usual vehemence against pornography. As part of Citizens for Media Responsibility Without Law, Nikki Craft spoke against advertising's devaluation of women and the corporate dismemberment of the Statue as a symbolic violence against women. Moving among the crowd she called for civil disobedience and direct action.

Sally Roesch Wagner made a spectacular appearance in cos-

tume, voice, and ideology as Matilda Joslyn Gage returned. One hundred years ago, when the Statue was dedicated, women were excluded from the ceremonies "for their own good." Our foremothers did not take to their fainting couches, you'll be happy to know. They staged a protest demonstration in Liberty Park, New Jersey led by Matilda among others, on precisely the spot where their daughters gathered a century later. How apt that Matilda, fierce scholar/warrior for women's rights, should return like the goddess herself.

When the Statue was dedicated in 1886, the New York Women's Suffrage Association chartered a boat to take its members to the ceremonies. The suffrage proponents reportedly circled the island, shouting slogans through a megaphone. And years later, in 1915, a group of suffragists led by Carrie Chapman Catt assembled at the bottom of the monument to demand the vote.

Was Women Take Liberty in '86 a success? We did celebrate, dedicate, honor, and affirm. We rose/spoke/sang/danced in resistance. We had fun.

Was the action a symbolic failure? Did it lack focus? Who was our audience? What did we hope to affect? We danced and sang somewhat the way we do at our festivals on women's land, but none of us forgot for a moment that this wasn't a music festival

and that curious passersby were gaping at our feathers and beads, our shades of lavender, our familiar slogans on buttons and T-shirts, our face paint not purchased from the Avon lady.

But we weren't really doing it for them. We were whistling in the dark, howling at the door of the citadel with full knowledge that the boys with only their muscle and weapon power were reinforcing their barricades. Sad to say, it takes some grotesquely obscene move within the oppressive system to throw our masses into the streets. Protesting the recent Supreme Court decision upholding the Georgia sodomy law, 9,000 people poured into Sheridan Square in New York City and moved on to stall traffic for hours on the Avenue of the Americas. Perhaps the time for an amorphous demonstration—part protest, part celebration—is past. Most Liberty demonstrators came from the Midwest, the South (especially Florida), the Northeast, but few from New York. Women who have been leaving home to stage revolution for over a decade are blood and bone tired.

Let's start living the revolution we've sparked at the center of our own consciousness NOW. Our demonstrations have been joyous flamboyant communal dress rehearsals. Let's Build Community and Take Liberty every day. ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Rosemary Curb is co-editor of the groundbreaking best-seller 'Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence.'*

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### 'PAID MY DUES'

Back issues of historic women's music journal from the 1970s now available through 'HOT WIRE.' Original Milwaukee as well as later Chicago volumes. Send SASE for price list on these collectors' items.

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# READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Starting in 1986, HOT WIRE has presented awards at the Music Industry Conference in Bloomington to women who have made outstanding contributions to women's music and culture during the previous year. In the November 1986 issue, readers were asked to submit nominations specifying their nominees' contributions. The point is not competition, but appreciation for those who have contributed to our network in an especially outstanding way. Please vote for one individual and one organization. Also, this survey of favorites is being added for fun and to give us at HOT WIRE a closer look at the tastes of our readers. Please make your survey selections completely on the basis of your personal favorites; this is in no way intended to be a competition or a list of "bests." The last two HOT WIRE questions can be answered with articles/photos from any issue. The Readers' Choice votes and survey must be returned to us no later than May 15, 1987. Send to HOT WIRE, 1417 W. Thome, Chicago, IL 60660.

## INDIVIDUALS

ALISON BECHDEL for her "Dykes to Watch Out For" cartoon series, which help lesbians laugh about our community and ourselves.

ALIX DOBKIN for her continuing commitment to building lesbian community and for prioritizing lesbian vision and integrity.

DONNA DEITCH for the groundbreaking film Desert Hearts, featuring healthy women, a healthy lesbian relationship, and a happy ending.

JOAN E. BIREN (JEB) for documenting the feminist and lesbian-feminist movement, culture, and people through photographs.

LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY for promoting cross-cultural awareness and raising consciousness about repressive U.S. immigration laws during a tour made nearly impossible by the INS.

SUZETTE HADEN ELGIN for constructing and promoting Láadan, "the language of those who perceive," a language constructed to express the perceptions of women.

LADYSLIPPER for maintaining the most comprehensive catalog of recordings, videos, publications, and other resources by women.

MOUNTAIN MOVING COFFEEHOUSE (Chicago) for 12 years of continuous operation as women-and-children-only space, providing at least 50 music/culture events per year.

NAIAD PRESS for being the oldest and largest lesbian publishing house in the world.

## ORGANIZATIONS

ROADWORK for being strong role models of how to operate a multi-cultural, multi-racial organization of women devoted to coalition building, and for the urban Sisterfire festival.

THE WOMEN'S MUSIC ARCHIVES for the preservation and documentation of our women's music heritage by collecting recordings, publications, and other materials relating to women's music since the early 1970s.

## FAVORITES

Vocalist _____	Current album (last 2 years) _____
Bass player _____	All-time favorite album _____
Percussionist _____	Album cover _____
Electric guitarist _____	Fiction book _____
Acoustic guitarist _____	Non-fiction book _____
Keyboards player _____	Periodical _____
Instrumentalist _____	Author _____
Wind instrument player _____	Cartoonist _____
Comic/comedienne _____	Photographer _____
Emcee _____	Movie/film _____
All-time favorite performer _____	
Current song (last 2 years) _____	'HOT WIRE' article _____
All-time favorite song _____	'HOT WIRE' photo _____

# THE "SHRINKING" AUDIENCE

## Learning From The Mainstream

By Liz Karlin

In the fall season of 1986, women's music events filled 7,000 seats in four halls in Madison, Wisconsin, population 170,000. This was due to the efforts of three production companies: the mainstream feminist Leaping Lizard Productions (4,300 seats, including shows with Sweet Honey In The Rock, Ferron with Connie Kaldor and Bim, Claudia Schmidt & Judy Small, and Odetta); Fallen Woman Productions (1,500 seats, featuring Deidre McCalla, Alix Dobkin, Cris Williamson & Tret Fure with Carrie Barton, and a film festival); and Ron Paskin's Cloud 9 Productions (1,500 seats for Holly Near & Ronnie Gilbert).

We have arrived. Or have we? Despite this triumph for women's music, audiences throughout the industry were smaller. According to arts administrators, audience sizes in the 1960s doubled, and in the 1970s it doubled again. In the 1980s things are very different.

Throughout the mainstream as well as alternative music industry people are in trouble. There are fewer record companies. Productions throughout the country are doing poorly. Many feel like, "Where is the damn audience when you need it?"

Is the women's music audience different from the audience that goes to opera, ballet, traditional folk, jazz, and other "mainstream" shows? Given that audiences across the board are smaller, who is it we must attract in order to increase the audiences in our particular branch of the arts industry?

### THE STUDY

In 1982, The Association of College, University, and Community Arts Administrators started

a mammoth study to define who actually attends performances. The audience is described in the study by socio-economic-psychological background.

Our audience, the women's music audience, is comprised predominantly of three groups as described by the ACUCAA study.

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**"Why are audiences smaller? Because there are fewer people. The post-war baby-boomer generation that swelled audiences and other consumer markets for the past 20 years has turned 40. Music audiences are comprised mainly of those under 35."**

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The first group is called the "I-am-me" group: young, active, inquisitive, innovative student-types. This is a transition state; its population changes rapidly; they are out to experience, to experiment. The I-am-me population, though few in number (3 percent of the population) attends arts events very frequently—about 26 million visits a year. Of note is that in university communities these can constitute up to 25 percent of the population. Targeting this group, as we have in the past, makes sense.

The second major third of our audience is what may be called the "experientials": young, into holistic health and mysticism—they are also very frequent arts attenders. The experientials go to an average of 4.8 arts events per person per year, for a total of 38 million attendances. Again, in university communities, the number for this group is increased. In Humboldt County, California, for example, there is twice the national average for experientials (13 percent). This makes for a formidable audience group indeed.

The third and largest group is the "societally conscious," each

attending arts events 5.5 times a year for a total of 109 million arts visits. This group is approximately 10 percent of the national population, and with numbers as high as 20-25 percent in university towns. This group of professors, teachers, artists, and the occasional enlightened physician is

successful, politically informed (although not necessarily correct), and the individuals may lead lives of voluntary simplicity. Because of the huge number of arts attendances per year, this group is being highly sought by all arts promoters.

The three main groups from which our audience comes are "inner directed": interested in psychological growth and motivated by internal factors more than by traditional societal expectations. Although there are many differences between them, they attend the arts for the same reasons: to be entertained; to experience, to feel, to be fulfilled; to have a way of spending time with their friends, of being social; and to meet the artist.

The women's music scene has been uniquely adapted to satisfy audience needs as defined above. Small concerts, promoted by members of the community, with records sold by other members, welcomed artists who were talented, available, and could enter the concert hall to provide the aura and warmth of a special women's music event. Kate Clinton's de-

scription of concerts as "see and be seen events" tells all. We could move and be moved within the aura of a woman-defined event. This can continue as our concerts fill large halls.

Of note is that all mainstream music and theater events are woman-defined. In the case of a female-male couple attending an event, it is the woman who usually chooses the show. Also, the largest single group of audience members is women attending alone. Of music audiences, 57 percent are women; theater (76 percent) and dance (67 percent) also have large numbers of women audience members.

So the difference between large women's music concerts and so-called mainstream concerts is not necessarily in the numbers of women versus men, but that the performance aura is woman-identified; we are not the silent majority. The success and growth of women's music attests to the efficacy of this identification. (Whether women's music is/should be synonymous with lesbian music is a subject for another article; sexual orientation seems less definable than woman-identification. There are radical lesbian separatists of the 1970s who are now married and driving the carpool while their mothers have woman lovers. The degree of emphasis can be left to artists and audiences.)

Understanding our audience is helpful, but we still need to deal with the fact that audiences are smaller throughout the industry than they once were. Sometimes we lose sight of the bigger picture when we are examining the implications for our own network.

Why are audiences smaller? Because there are fewer people. The post-war baby-boomer generation that swelled audiences and other consumer markets for the past 20 years has, alas, turned 40. Music audiences are comprised mainly of those under 35. In 1985, dance companies cancelled entire tours (at a reported cost of \$65,000 per week), contracts were renegotiated because of disappointing classical music subscriptions, and record companies closed doors.

Colleges and community centers have a cushion that commer-

cial ventures do not—often 70 percent of their budgets come from grants.

It really is quite amazing that we are still here.

Attendance of the performing arts is declining in the arts-going audience. According to the study, twice as many respondents say that their attendance is declining, rather than holding or increasing. Only the I-am-mes, our stalwart audience, is increasing. (Noteworthy is that the I-am-mes show the richest background in the arts; if we want a women's music audience in 10 years, we should be making sure that young girls have musical training.)

"Outer directed" portions of the population have not in the past been a large percentage of our audience and, for different reasons, probably will not be. Aging, traditional church-going believers are 39 percent of the U.S. population. Their spare 2.3 (and declining) arts visits a year comprise a total of 144 million attendances—mainly top 40 and country music.

Sustainers and survivors, the least economically advantaged groups, differ in that the poorest, the survivors, are aging, sick, frequently women of color—with little access to the arts. Sustainers are younger, angrier, and may attend jazz and dance events, but they say the arts are frequently a waste of time and that they feel uncomfortable in the audience—a difficult message for producers to hear. In our smaller concerts in community centers, these two groups may feel more comfortable than in mainstream halls, but we have to be aware that the arts may not be a priority to them for good reasons. Our music may not be the food that we think it is and even well-placed outreach might not be effective. Free tickets, on the other hand, may be gratefully accepted; for production companies who prioritize reaching these groups, free tickets should be budgeted. Inviting members of these groups to our shows is an important mission, but even special outreach will not fill a hall.

Since the beginning of the women's music industry we have developed the perfect audience, one that is the envy of mainstream bookers across the coun-

try. Mainstream bookers have asked me the process for having their artists at our music festivals. Teri Reed, of Uncommon Partners Productions in Seattle, was told by a male producer in Seattle that our network has something incredibly special and that we shouldn't lose sight of it.

This group of the societally conscious experientials and I-am-mes are the mainstays of all audiences, and for us a group of the most devoted music-goers. Since we have the best audience, our first effort must be to keep them—covet them, nurture them, give them what they want, and expect that they will bring their friends because of the excitement of the concerts we can offer. The women's music audience is the best kind, the kind that goes to concerts—and our job is to keep it that way.

The audience asks to be entertained, and that definition must keep changing. As new, sophisticated audiences—ones brought up on different music—emerge, we must be prepared to offer new music, combinations, technologies, and artists to attract as many young people as possible. We have brilliant creative artists traveling our circuit; Sweet Honey, Sue Fink, Kate Clinton, and others stretch the limits of their traditions. We must assure that through training and encouragement others can grow to fill audience expectations. More workshops, organized together with the mainstream world, to encourage risk-taking may help changes occur.

#### LEARNING FROM THE MAINSTREAM

The information in this article was collected from *The Professional Performing Arts: Attendance Patterns, Preferences, and Motives*, ACUCA Vols. I and II, 1984 and 1985. These are available from the office:

ACUCA

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Cost: approximately \$45/members, \$65 non-members

Also, see:

*ACUCA Bulletin*, vol. 29/no. 2, February 1986

*ACUCA Case Study*, June 1986/no. 39

Small concerts have been our mainstay for developing new artists and audiences, supporting a special aura of a concert, and allowing for a need that all audiences have—to meet the artist. The audience wants new artists, new shows, and with the recent growth and diversity in the women's music circuit we can offer that. Conversely, however, they will no longer be satisfied seeing the same entertainer yearly.

Most important for us, we must avoid misogyny. We can't think that our problems are ours because we are women, that our audiences shrink just because they

are women's audiences. Audiences decline in size when the audience members don't get what they want or because there are multiple demographic trends which we share with other artists, management people, producers, and record distributors in a risky industry.

In Madison, a small but active city, women's music season audience headcounts have increased from 500-1,000 in the so-called heyday of women's music to 7,000 today. And management is saying we aren't doing enough. In order to continue expanding our industry, we have to study everything

we have done right. For years we have practiced giving the audience what it wants, and they give in return. By doing this we have become the envy of other artists, producers, and bookers. We have the means for taking more sophisticated looks, sharing criticism and knowledge, and for growing at any pace necessary to fulfill the expectations of audience members, producers, performers, and management alike. ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Liz Karlin is a medical doctor in Madison, Wisconsin. After her fall 1986 season she (more or less) retired from production to devote more time to her book on the medical consequences of marriage.*

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# NOTEWORTHY WOMEN

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## The Troubador Countess of Dia

By D.C. Culbertson

The popular image of a "troubador" is that of a man with long hair and tights, strumming a lute and wandering from castle to castle to earn his living. In fact, troubadors were of noble birth, their songs were accompanied by minstrels called joglars or jongleurs, and they did not need to travel to other castles, as they already owned one. Nor were all the troubadors male. In the late 12th century, a number of female troubadors (trobairitz) appeared in a section of southern France now known as Occitania. Twenty trobairitz are known to us today, and of these 20, one of the most highly-regarded is the Comtesse de Die (Countess of Dia).

Surviving facts about the Countess's life are extremely sketchy and not at all reliable. They state that she was the wife of one Guillem de Poitiers; however, according to Meg Bogin in The Women Troubadors (Paddington Press, 1976), "There is no wife of a Guillem de Poitiers who can be construed to have held title to the county of Die (today a small town northeast of Orange, dep. Drome). There is, however, a Guillem of Poitiers, by legend a bastard offshoot of the great house of Poitiers...who was married to a lady of the Viennois whose son appears to have held the title Count of Dia. This woman was the daughter of Marguerite de Bourgogne Comte (d. 1163) and of Guiges IV, dauphin of the Viennois and Count of Albon, who died young on the battlefield in 1142."

He left his wife with a son and twin daughters. One of these

**NOTEWORTHY WOMEN** is devoted to reclaiming and celebrating the talent and accomplishments of our lost and denied musical foremothers.

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daughters, who were probably born in 1140, may have been our Countess, and perhaps she took the title "Countess of Dia" when her son assumed his title in 1189. This woman was apparently named Beatriz, and Bogin states that indeed there is "a popular tradition that calls the Countess of Dia Beatriz." However, the validity of these facts is questionable.

Four of the Countess's poems survive, one with music, and on examination they seem to follow a sequence. The first, "Ab joi et ab joven (Of joy and youth)," celebrates the singer's love and expresses great hopes for the relationship. The second, "Fin joi me don' alegransa (Fine joy brings me great happiness)," disdains the gossips, singing happily of her apparently fulfilled love. In the third, "A chantar m'er do so qu'ieu non volria (Of things I'd rather keep in silence I must sing)," she laments her beloved's unexpected unfaithfulness, bitterly saying that her "beauty, virtue, and intelligence" are worthless: "I've been tricked and cheated as if I were completely loathsome." She reminds her beloved of the promises they made to each other, and warns about having too much pride. The final poem, "Estat ai gran cossirier (I've lately been in great distress)," dolefully

laments the loss of her love and is full of sensual imagery and self-blame.

These poems are almost entirely free of the literary pretensions and clichés associated with courtly love often found in the work of male troubadors. They have an engaging directness to them, sounding as if the poet is conversing with the reader and making it easy for the reader to identify with her. They seem to reveal a woman who does not want to be worshipped or venerated, only to have her love honestly returned.

Some scholars believe these poems refer to an actual frustrated affair, while others say the affair was purely imaginary, and indeed a contemporary source says that she fell in love with one Raimbaut d'Orange. There is a famous troubador by this name (1146-1173), and his character, as described by James J. Wilhelm in Seven Troubadors: The Creators of Modern Verse (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), is that of "an arrogant exponent of poetic obscurantism (trobair clus) who wasted most of his patrimony on gambling and riotous living." Further, he "accords perfectly with the handsome, noble, unresponsive lover to whom the Countess addresses her work." Die and Orange were geographically close, and a tenson (dialogue poem) attributed to Raimbaut and a Lady, in which she chides him for his behavior towards her, begins in a way strikingly similar to her

*continued on page 64*

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** D.C. Culbertson is a composer and musician who has a master's degree from the Peabody Conservatory. She is especially interested in women composers of the past, and has written for publications such as 'Paid My Dues.'

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# MULLING IT OVER

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## The Second Wave

By Hilary Harris

The second wave.

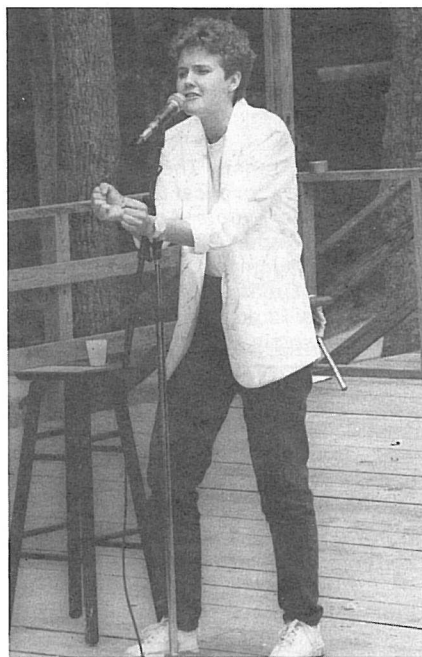
It is a powerful act to number a wave. It is a human act, an aggressively creative act, to suggest that order does exist even in those most insistent reminders of infinite restlessness. And to label one wave second, to suggest that a first wave was planned, or if not planned at least retraceable, to imply that a third wave is not only destined, but desired, is to place oneself at the beginning of eternity, an eternity of one's own creation and choice, an eternity of possibility and not mere fate.

For the last few years, the women's community has welcomed the arrival of our culture's second wave while celebrating the achievements of the first. That is as it should be, for waves have no true beginnings and endings: the creation of one flows directly from the continuing life of another. Still, within that cycle of shared life, there is individuality. Each wave finds its own rhythm, and for women's culture, in particular, that inner voice bespeaks the promise of the second wave, the promise of new greatness rather than simple redundancy. But such, really, is the hope for any progeny; the women's second wave is no different in this. Instead, what is different for the second wave artist and what gives her both artistic and historical distinction is the process by which she came to that hope and the context in which she acts upon it.

Mass nudity brought me to the second wave. Festivals. Bare bones feminism. By the third

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**MULLING IT OVER is a forum for discussion of connections between art and politics. Each guest columnist discusses her personal politics as they influence her art.**



Patsy Lynch

**"I have never known a world in which there was no such wonder as a self-proclaimed lesbian-feminist stand-up comic."**

night of my first festival, I was convinced that I had stumbled onto a working model for utopia. Even when I awoke from that dream, my taste for it lingered. And today as I make the trek from festi-goer to festival performer, I continue to believe in festivals as showpieces of women's culture. Yet during this journey, I made a startling observation. I realized that festivals and concerts are not mere reflections of the culture; they are perpetuators of it. I call this observation startling—others may call it obvious.

The point is that today, when I stand on a festival stage as a performer, I am a member of the second wave not simply because my tenure as stand-up comic falls at a great enough distance from

the first onslaught of the breed to constitute a new generation, but because, since the time in my life when I might know of these things, I have never known a world in which there was no such wonder as the self-proclaimed lesbian feminist stand-up comic. I, in turn, am able to walk this path because someone else charted the course, cleared the way, and showed all who might see that it could be done. I find this not only stunning but a bit humbling.

Such blessings are not without their trials. In fact, for the second waver, the very richness of our culture can impoverish her art by intensifying the cultural duality suffered by any feminist living in the Reagan/Rehnquist era. What it means to be an artist in the second generation of women's culture at this moment in our country's history is that, even as a stand-up comic (a supposed commentator on contemporary phenomena), I often do not care, for instance, to know whose are the top 10 music videos in the United States. But I do know and can recite with passionate intensity both lead and back-up vocals on almost every album released by Olivia, Redwood, Lady-slipper, and Icebergg over the last 15 years. And, with but the slightest prompting, I could—with passable accuracy—recite choice selections from the Whyscrack repertoire as well. The trouble lies in the fact that as an artist committed to social change, I must not limit myself to such cultural specificity even though as a woman I may find the greatest solace when I do.

I do not mean to suggest that the words "women's culture" should be written in caps and set in granite. Obviously, the culture is not a fait accompli. And it

does not take a Music Industry Conference (only time on the road) to discover that at least as much remains to be done as has already been accomplished in terms of expanding the circuit, creating new audiences, and including new media. That fact does not lessen the larger truth of another—that the second wave artist, unlike any other woman artist ever, has an acknowledged, affirming cultural milieu in which to develop her own vision and from which to influence the visions of others. Though it may seem paradoxical, I believe that a strong feminist base is the reason the second wave may well become our culture's mainstream generation.

Making it in the mainstream has acquired a larger-than-life meaning, which it does not deserve. We all make it in the mainstream every day of our lives. We live there. We speak the language. If, then, it makes economic/moral sense to take our art there, why not? Apart from the obvious answer that they see us coming and batten down the hatches, the real reason, I think, is our own uncertainty. We hesitate because to sell a message in that crassest of all markets, the popular art scene in the U.S., may mean so diluting it as to render both the message and the artist virtually impotent. But they need us out there! And the economic reality is that we probably need them too. Fortunately, the historical reality is that the second wave will one day have gathered enough momentum to help carry women's culture into the mainstream. When that happens, ours shall be a joyful ride, with the only fear being the loss

of our cultural identity in the process of sharing it with others. But because this is not a lost generation of artists, because we are too firmly rooted in our community ever to become its expatriates, such fear seems unnecessary.

Cultural commitment on the part of the second wave is evident in our choice of the women's culture as an artistic homeland. Make no mistake: women's culture is a choice. It is both an artistic choice and a choice of conscience. It is not a dumping ground, a dust bin for those unable to make it elsewhere. Nor is it a stepping stone for those on their way to the mainstream. Women's culture is a working culture. Among new artists sitting in those Music Industry Conference workshops, the hunger to participate in that work is palpable. Further, theirs is a hunger that does not grow from a longing for glitz, glitter, and glamour. (Sue Fink aside, women's music and comedy rarely hold such allure.) Rather, theirs is a desire born of the dream that artists of a strong, independent women's community can best prompt the global community toward a time when insanity is recognized as the disease it is rather than canonized as the law of the majority.

That is the dream. Life, of course, has its own landscape. For me, the truth of the second wave is that I have to accept the obvious—tampons, mini, maxi, and occasional pads, they've all been done. These days it's a long, hard haul to a good feminine hygiene joke. But that's the easy part. The hard part of second-wave living is remembering that although the movement may have

paid its dues, the individual performer has not. So even though the second waver may have six whole months of performing under her belt, the Great American Music Hall probably just does not need her. But Peggy's Lavender Unicorn, the bar with aluminum foil in the windows and a spare \$75 in the till, sure might. After the show, women will come to that artist and thank her and tell her she is great. Sometimes she knows she is and sometimes she wonders if she ever will be. But the love of those women, the women who want to touch her, to look at her, to see something of themselves and their lives in her, insures not only that there will continue to be a second wave and that it will be great, but that there will be a third and a fourth and a fifth wave until finally we can no longer see the waves for the ocean.

Until that time, I will ride the second wave and hope that when I land on a beachhead formed by the first, the inevitable comparisons will at least be hopeful. I have come to know, however, that more often they are simply mystifying.

Texas, 1986, 1:35 a.m.:

"Wow! You remind me of Kate Clinton!"

"Gosh, thanks."

"Your chest looks bigger in person, too."

"Oh."

Well, I recognize an artistic debt when I see one, so, uh, Kate—second wave to first—thanks for the mammaries. ●

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Hilary Harris is a stand-up comic and playwright. In her spare time, she plans to finish a Masters degree in literature this spring.*

## 1987 Index-Directory of Women's Media

Extensive listing of resources, primarily mainstream feminist: radio, TV, video, cable, film, presses/publishers, speakers bureaus, library collections, etc. Extensive international listings, including feminist periodicals.

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# RE:INKING

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## The Feminist Women's Writing Workshops 1986

By Susanna J. Sturgis

Circles. The workshop is made of circles. On a sultry Sunday afternoon, women begin to arrive at the dorm, Weld House. Wary. Curious. Just before five, two more carloads arrive, one from the Boston area and one from New York City. Most of us are here.

The 1986 Feminist Women's Writing Workshops officially begins with an orientation circle in the downstairs lounge of Weld House. The lounge is carpeted, wood-paneled, and dimly lit, redolent of old money and finishing schools. A formal portrait of Mr. Weld hangs on the wall. I wonder what he would think of us.

We number 21 this year; the room barely contains us. Director Katharyn Machan Aal opens the meeting with a brief description of the workshop structure. The only required sessions are the daily classes, the "how's it going?" meeting on Friday night, and "re-entry" a week from Tuesday.

The first circle begins: introductions. Who are you? What brought you here? Tell something serious about yourself, something that no one would know by looking at you. Tell something light or humorous. One new participant says a few modest words about herself, and another woman, also new, leans forward and says, "That isn't enough."

For me the 1986 workshop begins right here, with a challenge: I want to hear what you have to say, and you are the only one who can say it.

After a brief break, Katharyn

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**RE:INKING** articles deal with women's writing as a cultural phenomenon, including individual writers, women's publishing ventures, and the growing Women-In-Print movement.



Guest speaker Judy Grahn (left) talks about her life as a writer. Beside her is Katharyn Machal Aal, director of the Feminist Women's Writing Workshops.

snaps a cassette into her tape recorder. It is Adrienne Rich reading "Women and Honor: Some Notes on Lying" (from On Lies, Secrets, and Silence, W.W. Norton, 1979). The tape was made at the first Women's Writing Workshops, which were held at Harwick College in 1975. As I listen, I feel like I am at the beginning of something immense and indescribably precious.

"When a woman tells the truth, she is creating the possibility for more truth around her." The words, so eloquent and simple on the tape, turn somewhat unnerving as we gather for class at 9:30 the next morning. Truth? Can we hear the truth, whatever it is, without falling apart? Can we tell it to each other?

Once again we sit in a circle, this time on comfortable sofas and chairs. Our classroom is the second floor lounge of the Wells College boathouse. Cayuga Lake surrounds us on three sides with mists and birds and lapping water. Though we only spend two and a half hours here each day, this circle is the heart of the workshop.

Class structure has changed little since the first Women's

Writing Workshops. (The workshop's beginning is described by Beverly Tanenhaus in To Know Each Other and Be Known: Women's Writing Workshops, Pittsburgh: Motherroot Publications, 1978.) For one hour, each writer's work—usually either one short story or two poems—receives the undivided critical attention of the other participants. The author does not participate in the discussion, which proceeds as if she were not present at all. She will have an opportunity to respond at the end of the hour.

When I first came to the Workshops in 1984, I had grown discontented with the feedback I was both giving and getting in my group of similarly overextended feminist writers. I had no idea where the boundaries lay between criticism, being judgmental, and trashing. When I couldn't understand or didn't like something, I figured my own ignorance was at fault and kept silent.

In this workshop class, there is no Right Answer. Line for line, paragraph for paragraph, 20 women respond with 20 different complementary and often contradictory readings of each poem and story. Afterwards, I sit alone in my room with a formidable pile of written comments, free to take what I need and leave the rest. Adrienne Rich speaks of the profound stake we all have "in the project of describing our reality as candidly and fully as we can to each other." Honest criticism clearly has something to do with honor among women.

The Feminist Women's Writing Workshops is a place where taking our work seriously begins to come naturally, where—again in Adrienne Rich's words—we "know we are trying, all the time, to extend the possibilities of truth between us."



Criticism starts from within the work, not with theoretical notions of what the work ought to be. Grammar, punctuation, poetic forms, and other elements of style become tools rather than tyrants.

In 1985, I presented an excerpt from my fledgling novel. I learned the hazards of multiple points of view in fiction, yes, and much more than that. I watched in fascination as my characters came to life outside my head and became acquainted with other workshop participants. To know that my work was being taken seriously was an inspiring and sometimes fearsome challenge.

Challenges and opportunities abound outside of class as well. During the workshop, each participant meets in private conference with the director, Katharyn Machal Aal. Writer and pioneer feminist publisher Judy Grahn is in residence for three days, during which she gives a public reading and conducts a class. One evening publisher Nancy Bereano, founder of Firebrand Books, discusses feminist publishing and provides some answers to that thorny question, "So it's written—what now?"

The workshop's setting removes many of the distractions that keep us from writing at home, or that keep us from calling ourselves writers. Meals are served in the Wells College cafeteria. The demands of daily life and paid employment are far away. News from the outside filters in slowly. Sometimes I leave my bedroom door open to the sounds of typewriters and voices passing down the stairs. When I close the door, I know my wish for privacy will be respected.

Yet we are not autonomous artists, pursuing our work in isolation, coming together only in class or at meals. The Feminist Women's Writing Workshops provide an island in time and space, where an intense focus on writing is expected and encouraged. Each year an alternate reality grows on that island, a community. We become, dare I say it, family.

Years of right- and left-wing rhetoric about "traditional family values" and "saving the family" have given me a cynical aversion to the word "family." My hackles also go up when feminists and

lesbians, including myself, talk about "community." Show me, I think. Show me this community. Show me how "diversity" works. Show me "tolerance of differences."

Utopia the workshop is not, but each year has given flesh and blood to my vision and language of feminist community. Tolerance of differences? In theory, I can't quite accept that a married, heterosexual, Christian poet can be a feminist too. In reality I know she is, and, what's more, we're friends. Theory can catch up later. One woman asks who Adrienne Rich is; I no longer hear the question as the sign of a character defect.

"I feel peripheral to the group," says a woman across the table. Heterosexual, not connected to a feminist community, she is writing a novel about a community of women. "I think all of us do," I say. At home each of us is deemed weird for some reason. Can a group bond grow among women who have come, of necessity, to see themselves as outsiders?

### FEMINIST-ORIENTED WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

**Freehand**, P.O. Box 806, Provincetown, MA 02657

**International Women's Writing Guild**, Box 810 Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028

**Womonwrites: Southeastern Lesbian Writers Conference**, c/o Ran Hall, 7134 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33710.

**Flight of the Mind**, 622 S.E. 28th, Portland, OR 97214

Yes, and each year the bond grows. But each year there is fear, discomfort, resistance, a jarring collision between the familiar rhetoric of community and the often gut-wrenching demands of the real thing. Perhaps the hardest lesson to learn is that inclusion in community here depends largely on a willingness to risk telling and hearing the truth—a willingness that is, not coincidentally, essential for feminist writers.

This year, in only 10 days, 21 women have gathered, circled together, and formed something that didn't exist before: the 1986

Feminist Women's Writing Workshops community. New friendships have formed, and old ones have deepened. Tensions have sprouted and grown; some have been dealt with, some have not. All of us are apprehensive about leaving this alternate reality. Will our insights and writing commitments survive in what we call "the real world?"

We make our last circle. Each participant recalls what the workshop has meant for her, what she has done. She imagines what she will be doing in the next few days: returning to work, seeing a therapist, camping in the Adirondacks, visiting parents, getting ready to move. Each of us has brought a keepsake from home, to be passed on tonight. To Diane on my left I pass a yarn and bead necklace, made two years ago at a fall equinox celebration. From Carolyn on my right I receive an old photograph of a young woman with visions in her eyes and a poetry postcard by Ursula LeGuin, who is one of my favorite writers.

Later I am lying with five other women on the dock by the boathouse and watching the just-past-full moon rising through the trees. We howl at the moon. We tilt our heads backward and look at the lake upside down. Someone sees a shooting star. We rename some constellations: Cassiopeia becomes the Woman Writer; close by her is the Popcorn Popper; and, directly overhead, is Judy Grahn's Luggage, in honor of our guest speaker whose suitcase was lost for two days by People Express.

In the morning, most of us from the night before gather on the dock again to hear each other's work. The sun is scorching hot. After the mid-morning coffee break, we resume our reading on the shaded porch outside our usual classroom. Afterward, we walk up the familiar rocky driveway. Alone and in groups, some of us say our farewells and leave.

Just over half of us remain for lunch. Our numbers are diminished, yet we are complete. Pat

*continued on page 67*

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Susanna J. Sturgis has participated in the FWWW for three years, the last two as an assistant to the director.*

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# FREESTYLE

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## Charisma and Startripping

By Kay Gardner

In order to be a successful performer one must have charisma. It has absolutely nothing to do with talent, for there are many immensely gifted musicians who are not comfortable doing their work in front of crowds; they'd rather shine in recording studios. On the other hand, there are many mediocre musicians whose charisma or vibrant personalities—not their music—bring them fame and riches.

When an audience member sees a performer as "star" or icon, elevating the performer to an idealized status above "mere mortals," or even worshipping the performer, this is startripping. I see startripping as an act which is, for feminists, as politically incorrect as anything I can think of. Isn't one of the primary foundations of our Women's Movement the desire to stop the objectification of women? Why then are we doing it to our own performers? Are we so starved for acceptance and respect that we continue to buy the star stuff in order to gratify our own oppressed and battered egos?

Can performers startrip? On themselves? Yes, I think so. If you are a performer who is perceived as an icon, your self-perception can get terribly distorted. There are several stages to a performer's charismatic development as I see it—having seen or been through them all.

### Stage One: New and Scared

This is when a performer is just beginning and sees starry-eyed people looking at her as if she can do no wrong, as if each word she utters is a special pearl of

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**FREESTYLE:** the musings of Kay Gardner.

**Charisma:** 1. rare quality or power attributed to persons who have demonstrated an exceptional ability for leadership and for securing the devotion of large numbers of people. 2. Theology. A divinely inspired gift or power, such as ability to perform miracles. (Greek: kharisma—favor, divine gift)

—American Heritage Dictionary

wisdom. The performer feels that she has an immense responsibility to say only things which are profound, perfect, and true. As a result, she either goes into hiding, saying nothing, or she moves on to...

### Stage Two: First Taste of Success

When the performer begins to be recognized for her work...say she's recorded her first album or has suddenly caught on with audiences. She can begin thinking, "Well, if all these folks think I'm so hot, then I must be special and maybe even superior!" Where once the performer was a modest, pleasant person, she becomes a backstage horror, a demanding and obnoxious prima donna. This can happen if the artist is insecure in her new success; it's come too soon and she secretly feels it's undeserved or unearned. She hasn't really paid her dues, so she covers her inexperience by acting like Joan Collins. Or maybe she's been ignored for so long that she over-reacts once she starts getting public attention.

### Stage Three: Saviorhood

The performer has moved into the theological description of charisma. She has transcended humanity and believes her press clippings. She's no longer insecure and obnoxious; she's overly secure and obnoxious. She might even use cocaine on a regular basis to maintain her distorted "superior" image.

Here I must interject a personal anecdote and associated observations. Soon after my first recording (Moocircles, Urana Records, 1975), I was exhibiting Stage Two and Stage Three tendencies. The first clue was that I started to perform wearing all white, a dead giveaway that I was operating under a "savior" delusion.

I came out on stage, so to speak, and proclaimed to the New York City Gay Pride Day lesbian audience, "I Am a Goddess!" Little did it matter that the audience's collective intake of breath drowned out my continuation, "We are all Goddesses." The damage had been done and, what's more, my arrogance began an eight-year nightmare!

A New York City street woman, diagnosed schizophrenic, took me literally and began following me no matter where I performed. I could write an entire volume on my "adventures" with this woman.

One rather amusing episode was when she found out where I was living in Pennsylvania. (I'd moved from the city four months previously both because I'd been evicted from my apartment and because she'd taken to camping on my apartment doorstep harassing and heckling passersby and

terrorizing my young daughters.)

It was February. I was living in a remote cabin in the Pocono foothills. On the day after my birthday I looked out my kitchen window to see an unwelcome apparition happily strolling along the dirt road, wearing a wool-blanket toga and no shoes, and carrying a ribbon-wrapped scroll. There was a knock on the door. All I could think was, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts." I answered the door and took the gift, but did not invite her in.

With an "I-found-you" smirk on her face, she went down the hill, singing gaily, and when she reached the bottom, she ran into my landlord who was working in the woods.

"Who are you?" he asked.

She gave her exotic ethnic name.

"Where are you from?" he said, eyeing her strange winter attire.

"I'm from the moon," she answered.

"Oh, then you must be a friend of Kay Gardner's."

For every strangely amusing incident, there were three not-so-amusing events. Institutionalized periodically during those eight years, she called me at all hours of day and night. When on the streets again, she'd show up at my concerts and hassle me if I didn't act goddess-like.

As long as somewhere inside I was flattered by her obsession with me and believed I could "save" her, she was stuck to me like glue. It was only after she ran into my house and physically attacked me that I had to have her committed—though even then I felt terribly guilty about it.

The social worker from the institution called me up and said that I was giving her mixed messages.

"But I care about her," I said.

"Well, if you tell her that she will follow you for the rest of your life. Do you want that?"

"No, I certainly don't," I admitted.

"Then I suggest you tell her to go away and mean it," she said, further suggesting that I go to Al-Anon to learn how to detach and to recognize my own part in the problem.

I took her advice. Somehow,

once this sad woman disappeared from my life, so did my arrogance. But what a hard, long lesson!

This is where charisma became magnetism. It is very dangerous for performers to become magnetic. Charismatic magnetism means that not only does a performer have the ability to "hold an audience," but that along with regular, stable fans (and remember that the word "fan" is short for "fanatic"), the performer will have to deal with strange, unstable people who are drawn to her as well.

#### Stage Four: Burn-out or The Great Fall

When a performer is presented or presents herself as on an unattainable pedestal, she will surely fall at some point. She'll burn out trying to maintain a false image, or she'll succumb to her true nature. Strangely enough, if she falls low enough, she endears herself to audiences who suddenly realize that she's as human as the rest of us. Cases in point: all the "stars" who have taken up publicized residence at celebrity clinics for substance abusers. The honesty of these performers along with their successful treatments may return them to realness and to...

#### Stage Five: Humility and Radiance

When a performer realizes, or is made to realize, that her vanity is a cruel trap, that her arrogance breeds selfishness and contempt, and that it is good fortune and not her superiority putting her wherever she is, she settles into a comfortable and more humble place in her profession. She allows herself to be seen onstage and offstage as human, full of foibles and frailties as well as giftedness and givingness. Rather than pulling audience attention to herself, she realizes that she can transform that magnetism to its opposite energy—radiance. She sends energy out rather than sucking it in.

"This little light of mine/I'm gonna let it shine..." becomes her theme song as she honors her own light as no more and no less than the "little lights" in each and

every one of us. She has settled into her career and will probably endure.

## DEALING WITH STARTRIPPERS

Some audience members will approach a performer after the show, placing extremely unreal projections on her. I call these unformed and needy people "emotional vampires." I can feel their vibes coming at me half a room away. Using a technique learned from my esoteric studies, I visualize a sky blue shield of light surrounding me, especially my torso. Somehow this shielding technique works.

Chrystos, a poet friend who travels nationwide doing readings and workshops, wears silver clothing, a Native American technique of reflecting unstable energy back upon the giver.

I love the story I heard about Ram Dass. When a fan sat down next to him and went on and on with statements like, "O my God, I'm actually sitting next to Ram Dass! I can't believe it! (and on and on, sigh after sigh, etc.)," Ram Dass stood up, looked at the fan, said, "Yuck," and left.

In some cases drastic measures are needed. I found the following solution quite by accident. One of the organizers of a women's music festival was giving me the starry-eyed worshipful looks I've grown to loathe. It was as if she expected me to float from place to place while exuding the essence of white lilacs, nodding benedictions to everyone along the way.

The festival organizers were staying in motel rooms near the site. I asked this woman if I might use her bathroom. When I finished, the essence I left was much more earthy than the scent of lilacs. When the woman caught the essence, I could see the starryness drain from her eyes immediately. From then on she treated me as she'd treat anyone else; we could then be friends.

*continued on page 60*

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kay Gardner, M.Mus., is a composer, performer, and recording artist who has been deeply involved in Women's Music and Culture since 1973. She is also in demand as a teacher of the healing properties of music.*

## CHARBONNEAU from p. 5

a man's idea of what this woman should be, as opposed to how I would like her to be. My character is a secretary, a personal assistant to this corporate lawyer, and she falls in love with the lieutenant [Dennis Farina]. I look back at it and I don't have any hard feelings. I really enjoyed the experience and I certainly loved working with everyone. It's just that when you have so many men involved in a project, it's real hard to get a woman's point of view across.

I don't think I'll ever have the experience of *Desert Hearts* again as far as it just being such a labor of love, with everybody pulling together and wanting this to work. It may be when I find the book I want to do and produce it myself.

**HW:** You want to produce?

**PC:** I have a friend in Chicago—Cindy Chvatal—and we have a couple of books in mind. We're looking for good work with parts for women; we're mostly working in that direction.

**HW:** This is such a demanding profession. What's it like having a child and trying to succeed in this business?

**PC:** It's really difficult. It's very hard to have your career open up the way mine has from this, trying to figure out what road you want to take, and giving the attention and time that I very strongly feel is needed for a child in its first five years. I mean,

I've gotten bad press about it. I don't really give a flying fuck what anybody has to say about my daughter coming with me when I do things.

**HW:** You've been criticized for that?

**PC:** Hannah's been called my "badge of heterosexuality." It really makes me angry. I don't care what they have to say about my performance in this film, but they have no right getting into my personal life or how I decide to raise my daughter. I come from a big family where I'm the last of 10 kids—from a real strong family-feeling, close-bonded group of people. It's very important to me to have her with me. I don't want somebody else raising her; besides, I wouldn't have had a kid if I was going to just leave her in daycare until she was 18. But it is very hard to also find the time to work at everything. It's unbelievably hard being a mother. I think it'll get easier; the first two years are probably the hardest. I can leave—like I've gone to California for a couple of days without her, but I don't like to stay away from her that long. It is hard balancing out everything, but people have been really great about it. I think it has to do with some of the more famous women who've had children and who've had them on the set. Hannah does not come on the set with me—she might drop in at lunchtime, but it's not like hanging around there. She's usually playing outside. Hannah is really a jewel. I don't know what I would do without her. And I'm glad I had a girl; there's a nice bond there. I'm sure it's the

same with having a son, but since I don't have a son I can't make the comparison.

**HW:** Do you plan to have more?

**PC:** Yeah.

**HW:** Ten?

**PC:** No! Maybe one more—in about five years. I'm going to space them a little bit, so one can help the other.

**HW:** What do you do for fun besides be with Hannah?

**PC:** Just get off by myself. I like to get up into the mountains. My folks live in upstate New York and to me that's paradise. I've got some property up there that I've got an old broken-down house on. I'm going to take it down and then build me another one. As long as I can basically be outside I'm happy. And I bake pies.

**HW:** Do you consider yourself a feminist?


**PC:** I'm so bad with titles and what they mean. This is my view on life: I believe in equality for everyone. It doesn't matter if it's woman, man, or child. I believe in equality between ages, too. I don't like discrimination. Of course I also believe people should get paid the same. I just feel as if it's silly to think otherwise; I don't see any other way of thinking. We're all one humanity, and we should all be there for each other. What I really believe in is for everyone to have their dignity. ●

## IMMIGRATION from p. 22

California]. If an artist is from another country, she has to be careful in handling the case. But not go overboard; I feel very strongly about that. I wouldn't want an individual artist to become paranoid..."

Judy adds, "We need to support these artists when they can perform in the United States because of what they have to go through to be able to perform here." ●

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## NAIAD from p. 19

40-to-50 other periodicals. But it was a work for a number of women over an eight-year period. Very few of us have a lifetime to devote to a single project. What we need is another series of indexers to do some of the other periodicals. The book is getting very good notice in the major library periodicals."

Until now Naiad has printed only work by, for, and about lesbians. For the spring of 1987, however, they are doing a book by a woman who is not a lesbian: Parents Matter by Ann Muller. Muller is the mother of a gay son. She writes about the relationship of parents with their lesbian and gay children. Grier found the book to be unique.

"What Ann discovered in her very scientifically conducted research," Grier says, "was that, contrary to every expectation you may have read in the past, lesbian daughters are greeted by their families with a hell of a lot less love than are gay sons. So we decided, based on the importance

of this knowledge, that this was a very significant book."

Naiad's past three years have brought big successes with Curb and Manahan's Lesbian Nuns anthology and Rule's Desert of the Heart. In late 1986 Naiad published the second novel of Isabel Miller, an author whose first book, Patience and Sarah, was an international best seller. It was published nearly 20 years ago. Her new book, The Love of Good Women, is set in the second World War and is about several women who begin to see changes in their lives as they enter the factories to work and to earn their own money.

In the fall of 1987, Memory Board, Jane Rule's first full-length novel since 1980, will be published. Grier says, "There will always be a romantic place in many women's hearts for Desert of the Heart, which is simply a very beautiful love story. Memory Board is a different kind of love story, equally beautiful and, I think, more meaningful. I believe it will be a very popular book."



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## Dykes to Watch Out For



## CAREERS from p. 35

and crazy-making aspects. Hunter Davis says, "I depend on the business part of my career to ground me. Traveling really takes its toll after several months. I look forward to my time in California that I spend taking care of business."

Sister Californian Judy Fjell says connection to a place and its people is a vital factor for her. "Musical touring as a business can be extremely lonely and isolating because it consists of many meetings and partings and acquaintanceships. Long-term friends are almost always a long distance phone call away, and although the people I continually meet on the road are usually very nice, it takes time and consistency to have real friendships," she says.

According to Betsy Rose, well-known in the political/folk circuit as well as in women's music, the

"separateness of onstage life and the lack of real feedback and dialogue creates isolation and a kind of myopia about reality and people." So in addition to performing, she leads workshops on creativity, voice, and songwriting at colleges and conferences. "I like being a part of another's unfolding," she says, "seeing a child write their first song, helping a woman find a powerful voice in herself, seeing creative sparks light up in someone who thought they 'weren't artistic'."

J. Casselberry and Jaque Du-Preé, who released their second recording, *City Down*, in 1986, also value contact. They conduct workshops. "Music is a growing process," they say. "We love the exchange, be it through school, workshops, or contact with our audience. This helps to keep channels open. So there must always be other ways to express ourselves and have feedback with communi-

ties."

Fortunately, most of the performers interviewed claim to find the variety enjoyable. Betty MacDonald [see page 35] says, "I love my music-related jobs. Being a DJ is wonderful. I'm loving writing about music and musicians and doing voiceovers for commercials and instructive films. In fact, they all nurture each other and continually stimulate me to do more."

Debbie Fier [see page 34] agrees. "I enjoy doing different aspects of the music biz; that way I don't tire and burn out on only one aspect. Life stays exciting and I learn about writing music, repairing instruments, and working in the business world—as well as performing—all in one fell swoop!"

On pages 32 through 37 of this issue of *HOT WIRE* we take a closer look at how seven musicians make ends meet through a wide variety of music-related activities. ●

## CHORAL FEST from p. 29

"mass chorus." Seeing and hearing the 250-strong voices singing together was visually impressive and vocally very powerful. Together they sang six songs, ending the

evening with Violeta Para's moving song, "Gracias a la Vida."

Many women besides the musicians themselves worked hard for the success of this concert, and it certainly was impressive that they were able to pull it off so well. Artemis Singers did a magnificent job of hosting the event. The festival coordinators ("The Cronos") were Ann Morris, Chris Pfeil, Penny Wilson, and Vada Vernee, who also served as the evening's emcees. Marcy J. Hochberg and Joy Rosenblatt of Mountain Moving Coffeehouse served as sound engineer and production consultant, respectively. And the local women's community baker/chef Betty Flatley prepared dinner for all the singers and workers before the festival.

Of course, a festival such as this one is not only a musical

event, it is a community event as well. The overall tone of the evening was one of accomplishment, pride, and solidarity. Considering the fact that all of the choruses in the Sister Singers Network are amateur rather than professional—and that many of the choruses are open without auditions to any woman who wishes to join—the quality of the singing was excellent. And a few of the choruses have assembled some exceptionally good voices.

"The main exciting thing about the festival as an annual event," says Ann Morris, "is that it's perpetually a grassroots festival. It moves from city to city and has different planners each time. It's becoming an institution because it happens every year, but it's always fresh because there are new women planning it." ●



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## STARTTRIPPING from p. 57

I've written this column while on the road, scribbling much of it mid-air between Juneau and Cleveland. I must admit, though, that I've just read my weekly *STAR* magazine while peering out of my right eye-corner at the *National Enquirer* being read by the woman across the aisle. I read *STAR* because it's funny as well as terrifying, because it clearly

shows the slimy underbelly of "straight" showbiz, and because it makes me grateful that I've chosen an alternative route, one which ignores hype and manufactured rumors. The women's music and culture industry tries, though not always successfully, to approach its form of show business with integrity and ethical considerations. We still have a long way to go, but we're getting there. ●

## MACDONALD from p. 37

knits all the parts of the event together and enhances the flow of activity, i.e., opening intro, intermissions, announcements of tape/record sales as well as upcoming events and, in general, adding that necessary human element: congeniality. This particular aspect of my radio work gives me a chance to actually see my radio audience. And this past year I was pleased to be asked by concert promoters for suggestions of artists to feature in concert.

Doing radio work has given me a chance to do voice-overs for radio and TV commercials. Once again, my musician background gave me the necessary tools. Doing voice-overs requires a good voice plus the knowledge of

sound, pitch levels, dynamics, sense of timing, and emotional expression as well as the ability to grab and hold attention. I have also had the experience of singing jingles for commercials.

On a different creative level I have done collaborative works with poets and dancers, and I recently prepared a tape of music for Barbara Bertoli's art installation entitled "Goddess Moon-dance." These projects either don't pay or are funded in some way through arts organizations.

In this past year I have also done a lot of writing: interviews, biographies, reports, critiques, and HOT WIRE articles, all promoting you know what...jazz, of course! Writing has become another avenue for my music and music-related activities.

It's obvious that I'm pretty busy and have a lot of things to do. At this point there isn't a lot of financial reward for most of these music-related activities. I live in a small town and work at a small but unique radio station. My particular situation affords me some great opportunities, though. I'm having a wonderful time and I'm growing with each one of these experiences. It isn't easy trying to survive on money made as an artist...but I put it all together and my needs seem to be covered. There's no way I can put a dollar sign on my emotional fulfillment, and at this point in my career and in my life (I'm 48 with two grown children and a grandchild), my music and my music-related activities are a priceless asset. ●

## RHIANNON from p. 39

stone of my way of looking at my work," Rhiannon says.

The energy which drives Rhiannon's creative energy has long fueled her teaching: Rhiannon has been teaching individuals for 12 years. The workshop experiment beginning at the festival naturally expanded to group vocal workshops that Rhiannon organized and led during ALIVE!'s national tours. Women who were already singing and those who were enticed to sing for a day responded enthusiastically to the chance to work with Rhiannon as she passed through town. Eventually, the workshops grew from part-days to full weekends; Rhiannon now offers workshops for vocal improvisers that run for a 12-week series and include a wide mix of participants. Dancers, carpenters, actors, and radio announcers want to find their voices.

### INSIDE THE WORKSHOP

At the beginning of a workshop students limber up with intensive vocal and full-body physical warm ups. Exercises are centered on the breath to build vocal strength. The total person is called upon to extend vocally: Rhiannon kindles sounds from students that are drawn through the soles of the feet and from fingertips. Close attention is given to awareness

of sounds rather than a strict concern with singing. Students learn to channel and structure the sounds they make, and to explore the variations of sounds they generate together.

Exercises then move to streams of consciousness: participants experiment with vowels and consonants, letting whole words emerge. Integrating games from the theater, students play with singing and tossing words to each other, transforming them to other words, and beginning to build off melodic and rhythmic patterns. Individuals might begin to transform and change their sounds and chosen rhythms independently, reaching toward discovery of that personal inner language.

Exposure to students with a broad spectrum of musical skills has influenced Rhiannon's flexibility in devising vocal improvisation workshops that speak to the varied needs of the students. Rhiannon refreshes students' musical skills by running through scales and intervals and developing their technical ease with rhythm and harmony. Participants learn to sing over blues and jazz chord changes. The atmosphere can become charged as students step past old barriers, emboldened by a new vocabulary and each other.

### INSIDE THE SINGING

Besides responding to her very

unique and exciting vocal work, students are drawn to work with Rhiannon from sensing her willingness to take risks. In a workshop atmosphere that is supportive and relaxed, Rhiannon has coaxed, cajoled, and inspired individuals to do almost-dangerous acts. In the course of finding one's voice, students find themselves responding to the voices of others. In a process that is often deeply emotional, singers find their capacity to improvise. They reach that essential stuff of personal storytelling, total honesty, instant communication, creative skill. Once experienced, improvisation is hard to let alone.

Rhiannon teaches by leading individuals to locate their voice and then encourages the sound to emerge from there. Working with Rhiannon is not so much to figure out singing or to find a style as it is "a real spiritual thing. Singing creates vibrations out into the universe. It makes changes. It affects other people," Rhiannon says. "We learn to offer it."

Rhiannon recently produced two teaching cassettes: one for those just beginning to find their voices ("Finding Your Voice") and another for those already singing who want to move toward improvisation ("Loosen Up and Improvise"). These tapes are available for \$10 each directly from Rhiannon at 1344 Carleton Street, Berkeley, CA 94702. ●

## MUSICA FEMINA from p. 39

to "twist the dials" for them in other circumstances. There is also some work at the Square in December doing sound for the children's choirs who perform for the holiday shoppers.

Janna teaches guitar students whenever we are in Portland. It is hard to keep students when we go away every other season, but there are some who like her teaching enough to put up with interruptions in lessons.

A third source of income for Janna is playing solo guitar in restaurants. She does this more or less frequently depending on other obligations and availability of a good restaurant. The situation has to be just right for this work to be worth the hassle and the smoke. With Reaganomics not working in Oregon, fewer and fewer places are willing to pay musicians.

Occasionally we do a duo restaurant gig, but they usually don't pay enough to be worth it for two people. What we do get from restaurants are weddings, parties, students, and food. Exposure to the general public can be useful, and we did play restaurants more when we first started working together. But we don't enjoy playing background music much anymore, especially when it's "greatest hits" by male classical composers.

I also work outdoors in the summer, setting up and hosting concerts in the parks under the auspices of the Portland Park Bureau. Outdoor concerts are a 35-year tradition in Portland, and

even though the budget has dwindled recently there is work for one person to do—one person who can plan the concert series, negotiate with musicians and the union, work with the PR department, schlep sound equipment, set it up, run it, be the announcer, and generally police the park during the concerts. Janna and I shared these responsibilities this past year, and we have also job-shared these duties with other women musician friends when we had to be away.

For the past two summers I have also worked for a local non-profit arts organization which produces a festival in September. It's called Artquake and is a four-day indoor/outdoor event which attracts close to half the population of the city. I have worked as logistics coordinator for Artquake, and it is a three-to-four month high-stress job which utilizes many of my organizational skills. I interact with artists, food vendors, techies, crafts people, media, businesses, and the public—not to mention a board of directors, an executive director, and fellow staff members.

In addition to these two jobs I do all of Musica Femina's tour bookings. So whenever we are home I'm working frantically on the next one or two tours, updating PR materials, calling potential producers, sending out audition tapes, and planning our travel route. This work doesn't pay much. Or at least I don't take much for it. I'd like to find someone else to do the job so I could focus more on practicing and writing music and grants, but

a good booker is extremely hard to find. [See Kay Gardner's "Be Your Own Agent," *HOT WIRE*, March 1985.] Besides, I'm not sure I could afford anyone else.

In years gone by, when I was still working with the Izquierda Ensemble, I not only played in the group—and did the tour coordination—but also was an auto mechanic and drove a truck for U.P.S. during the peak holiday season. I feel more integrated now that my work centers around music and music-related activities, but it's still hard to shift gears from touring and working for myself to reporting to an employer for a weekly paycheck. I must be doing something right, though. It's been 16 years since I got out of college, and I have always been able to support myself, have enough to eat, and have a roof over my head, yet I have never worked longer than six months in a row at any one job.

Being self-employed has some great advantages. Financial security is not one of them. Setting your own schedules and having variety in your days is. At age 38 I wonder how much longer this can go on. Maybe I should go get a degree in Arts Administration or Music Performance. Maybe I need something to fall back on. But maybe I just need to wake up and acknowledge the instincts and skills which have brought me this far, and trust that I will continue to be able to meet the challenges that Life presents to me. Is this the attitude of The Fool? Perhaps. But it feels appropriate for me, a lesbian feminist classical musician, in 1987. ●



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## PELHAM from p. 37

the project, I invited them to join me in singing my "Grandma Song." They did, and by the end of the song, each of the five men present had intimately shared his reminiscences about his own grandmothers while accompanying the song on the homemade instruments I'd brought along. The outcome was that the Music Mobile was given the donation and I was able to proceed with the pilot project from which my song "The Activity Room" was born.

A small but significant part of my income is that generated from royalty payments on the use of my songs by other artists or organizations. For example, I've received more than \$2,500 from Redwood Records for Ronnie Gilbert's recording of "The Activity Room" on Lifeline, her first album with Holly Near. I'm also receiving royalties for Holly's recording of "I Cried" on their second album Singing With You, Pete Seeger's recording of "Look To The People," and additional monies from other artists who have recorded my songs.

## FINEBERG from p. 39

all children want to touch the instruments. We employ a great deal of tactile contact, making sure the kids don't grab or injure the instruments. In the case of blind children, the best way to describe an instrument is to let them touch it and feel the vibration while it's being played. This works just as well with deaf children.

We emphasize give and take, constantly asking questions which the kids can easily answer, and progressing if possible to ones which require basic critical thinking. Some of these children are unable to speak, and our task becomes one of determining the best way to reach them. Often our goal is to focus their attention for a short period of time on the presentation at hand. Some children, especially those categorized as "autistic," have difficulty responding to direct communication. For some reason, music breaks through the barrier of communication better than words. Teachers are constantly amazed to find that previously unrespon-

Royalty payments amount to five cents per song on every album sold. Although a nickel seems hardly significant, they do add up to sometimes considerable sums over time.

Like royalties, honorariums for the use of my songs on video projects can pay \$35 or more. My song "I Am A Woman" is used as the accompanying music on several videos, including one about the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment and another on prostitution and pornography. "What Do I Do?" is the music on a video about a family that is coping with a parent who has Alzheimer's disease.

While royalties and honorariums do generate some income, so do the sale of albums, tapes, and songbooks. I buy recordings of my albums Look To The People and Under One Sky from Flying Fish and A Gentle Wind and then sell them for approximately twice the amount that I've paid. As far as I know, this is a typical arrangement for most recording companies and artists.

Whether I'm wearing my re-

sive children are able to focus attention for increasing periods when clapping, singing, or just listening to music.

Since we are unfamiliar with the progress of individual students, our greatest satisfaction comes from the teachers who tell us that the program makes a difference for a long time after we have left. Many teachers tell us that they try to continue some sort of music program on their own, finding it a valuable teaching tool.

I feel like a chameleon. At night, I put on my stage clothes, psych myself up, and walk out on stage with DEUCE, our seven-piece funky jazz band. This is the dream of my life—to perform for audiences (the bigger the better!) with my own group, working closely with my partner, playing the tunes we've so carefully written and practiced. We try every night for some new excitement, for the surge of energy which transports me into a different world—one in which all I can see is the audience, all I can hear is the music, and all I can feel is a rush of energy from six other

musicians giving their best to the moment. The next morning, bleary eyed, there I am on the corner, waiting for my ride to another special education class.

I was a full-time high school teacher for two years, but I realized then that I could never be happy without performing. It is my goal to perform constantly with DEUCE, touring the world with our musicians of choice. Approximately 70 percent of my income is derived in this way now. I depend on music therapy for the other 30 percent. I would like to reach a point where I no longer depend on teaching for necessary income.

With the release of our first album, DEUCE, on Redwood Records, bookings for the band have dramatically increased, and I may soon have to discontinue the school work. I am grateful, however, for the experience of having participated in music therapy, and I am sure that those skills will not go to waste. I hope to continue my involvement with special children or adults in some way, alongside my performances with DEUCE. ●

I believe that it's possible to make our dreams our jobs and to convert our creative gifts into income by developing our imaginations, skills, and positive attitudes. I celebrate that my work takes many forms and expressions that enrich my life and challenge my growth. The definition of my work is broad...that is, to use music to empower people and to help make the world a safer and more peaceful place to live. From that viewpoint, there's no limit to what is possible. ●

## WIMINFEST from p. 23

afternoon. There was little time to rest, for soon it was back to The KiMo for the final evening of WIMINFEST.

Opening the show was a local comic named Echo, who presented strong evidence that comedy is very much alive and living in Albuquerque. Last but not most was the fabulous Casselberry-DuPree. They rocked the hall and had us dancing in the aisles. The evening formally drew to a close at about 1:00 a.m., following a reception at the La Posada Hotel.

WIMINFEST '86 took many months of hard work and planning. By the size and enthusiasm of the audience, it was very much a huge success. WIMIN would love to welcome more and more women from out of town for future

festivals. The festival organizers plan to continue to arrange housing for festival participants.

WIMINFEST differs from existing, better-known festivals in that they draw primarily a local audience. It is not a national festival, though it is a regional one. Women came from many states.

In this part of the country there are not as many choices for women to make as far as cultural events/entertainment. We publicized the festival in Las Cruces, where New Mexico State University is located, and which is close to El Paso, Texas. We were most surprised, however, by the substantial contingent from El Paso, and were heartened by their very enthusiastic responses. It seems that WIMINFEST is becoming an important anticipated gathering

for the women's community in this region. It's an event-packed weekend for women who don't very often have the opportunity to take part in such activities unless they are willing to travel long distances. It's a big party for our women's community with some visitors from afar.

So, for this upcoming Memorial Day weekend, think beautiful weather, the Sandia Mountains, fabulous red (or green) chile, sopapillas, and wonderful women. Join us in Albuquerque for WIMINFEST '87. ●

*WIMIN is a non-profit production company producing cultural events for New Mexico's women's community. Currently there are 10 members. To be on the mailing list or for further information: WIMIN, 2101 Altez NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112.*

## COUNTESS from p. 51

poem ("Amics, en gran cossirier").

Even more tantalizing in this regard is the fact, according to Bogin, that Raimbaut's older sister Tibors, herself a trobairitz, "brought up the orphan Raimbaut" at her nearby court, making it possible that the Countess was acquainted with her as well. However, Raimbaut never mentions a Countess of Dia or a Beatriz

in any of his surviving works. Furthermore, there were many men named "Raimbaut d'Orange" at this time and, given Die's proximity to Orange, it is not at all unlikely that the Countess could have known someone by that name, if not the troubador.

Perhaps the best way to approach the Countess is to ignore the sketchy facts of her life and concentrate on her poems: "Since an examination of historical rec-

ords unearths nothing about the trobairitz," says Wilhelm, "we should forget what her age did not want us to know and admire what she has actually left us." Facts about her life are vague and unreliable, but the poems are concrete.

(Note: A "chantar," the one poem by the Countess that survives with music, has been recorded on Chansons der Troubadors, Early Music Quartet Munich, Telefunken SAWT 9567-B.) ●

## TRULL from p. 35

in the studio that can't be helped. They're reasonable added expenses. I am careful in the budget to have a large percentage for miscellaneous stuff, but if due to some error on my part the project costs more money, I then take less of a fee.

For five years Ray Obiedo and I produced albums and albums worth of material to sell for the songs. We'd go in with the songs as if they were being recorded for an album, and that's what gave me all the production skills. I've logged thousands of hours of studio time.

What's really required when you're producing an album is a great deal of technical knowledge as well as musical knowledge. It's up to you to be sure that the studio is good, the engineer is

good, and that the sound is technically viable. That requires a trained ear.

I'm one of those musicians who really enjoys a lot of aspects of music, not just the musical parts. I am a technical freak; I love modern technology and the newest toys. Being in the studio is like the ultimate plaything, with very expensive equipment. There's always some new piece of equipment coming out, and every time I go in the studio I learn a lot. But I also have enough knowledge already to be able to quality control what's going on.

A lot of people are alienated by the technical part; it alienates them from their music. They go, "Oh god, if I have to think too much about sounds or limiters or machines I can't really think about my music." But that part fascinates me.

When I'm writing, sometimes I'll write an entire song in my head. When I was growing up I read a lot, and did math in my head. I clipboard things out in my head rather than on paper, and when I'm writing a song, I'm imagining a new sound or an effect I just heard. You have to listen a lot, be an observant listener. It's hard for me now to listen to a record without immediately breaking down exactly what's going on with it.

And I have a good ear. I like things to come out right. I feel that one of my biggest skills is an editorial skill, and that's one thing that makes me a good writer. I'll take a basic inspiration and work with it, formulate it, and then write the melody and lyrics. I have a good whole-picture kind of head. And that's what I do with albums. ●

## HOROSCOPE from p. 17

fectionate and romantic; a lovely time is quite likely.

Sunday will be a full day of moon "void of course," so don't expect it to be on the same energy level as the previous two days. The Moon/Jupiter square encourages laziness and over-indulgence of all kinds, so it might be a hard day to move yourself out of bed, especially if you've been staying up late enjoying the good music, good conversation, or whatever else you've been enjoying. The day will go better if you meditate or do exercises in the morning; just do something to center yourself.

## AUDIO ANGLE from p. 11

Non-college courses which do not require music skills include:

- Institute of Audio Research  
64 University Place  
Greenwich Village, NY 10003  
(212) 777-8550
- The Recording Workshop  
455-L Massieville Road  
Chillicothe, OH 45601  
(800) 848-9900
- Institute of Audio-Video  
Engineering  
1831 Hyperion Avenue  
Hollywood, CA 90027  
(800) 551-8877

If you have one of these schools under your belt, it is much easier to get a starting position in a recording studio. Even if it's doing menial things it could lead to more. I speak from personal experience. In 1975 I was an administrator at Intermedia Sound in Boston. I got the itch to learn engineering, and I asked to be "demoted" to apprentice engineer. A new administrator was hired, and for the next year I took out garbage, cleaned toilets, and was assistant to three senior engineers. But during this time I worked on albums, including Jade & Sarsaparilla. Joanna Cazden, who really wanted to work with a woman, hired me as a solo engineer for her album in spite of the fact that I had only done assistant engineering up to that

## Summer Solstice June 21, 1987

An inspirational Sunday (Jupiter/Uranus trine). You will tend to feel optimistic today, probably with reason. Creative work is highly favored and intuition could be sending strong messages. Since Uranus is retrograde, however, be sure to check those intuitive messages thoroughly before acting on them. The Taurus moon and the sun entering Cancer could work to keep you at home, but putzing around the house might be fun today. Cook a special dinner for someone (or ones) you love; it's the perfect day for it.

## Sisterfire June 27-28, 1987

Friday's new moon energy extends throughout Saturday as well.

Start a new project, especially one that could manifest results in two weeks, around the full moon. It's a Cancer moon today, and the upcoming full moon will be in Capricorn, so your new project will be most in line with lunar energies if it involves work. Steer clear of overindulgence tonight (Moon/Jupiter square again); otherwise, just enjoy yourself.

Sunday, unfortunately, is potentially unpleasant. Self-doubt and suspicion of others could surface (Sun/Neptune opposition); the key to keeping perspective is doing whatever brand of creative or spiritual work you do. Don't give in to paranoia if it shows up. Listen to the women making music and let yourself dream. ●

point. Since then I've been doing engineering full-time.

The audio field can be crazy. It's very demanding work, has long hours, and calls for a lot of patience and perseverance. It's also very rewarding, challenging, and creative. These days, it's highly competitive. More people than

ever want to do this work, and many schools are sending Music Production and Engineering graduates into the work market. You have to have something special to stand out in a crowd.

If you want to try it, hang in there and be prepared to pay your dues. ●

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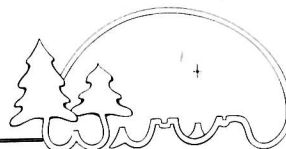
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## 'ALIENS' from p. 41

straight. Not a single one who couldn't easily, I mean easily, be a lesbian.

I don't mean to imply that Aliens is Desert Hearts in Outer Space. The de-emphasis of any heterosexual love interest in a combat-survival science fiction epic is not all that unusual. Male killer-heroes often have to kiss and run. But in both Alien and Aliens the love interest is conspicuous in its absence. The one and only suggestion of any romance in Aliens is a joking exchange between Ripley and the "good-guy" marine Hicks (Michael Biehn), and it's plunked into the script and discarded again in an

instant.

On the other hand, every adult female in the film, from Ripley to the corporate executive, to the nurse on the space station, to the pilot and the other woman marines, especially Vasquez—all of them could be lesbians without any stretching of the imagination.

There's one exception: the alien "single mom" who Ripley interrupts in the course of her busy egg-laying day is, presumably, heterosexual. But who knows? Could she be capable of some kind of extraterrestrial parthenogenesis? We'll have to wait for the sequel-to-the-sequel to find out.

It's a brave new world out there. ●

## SAVELL from p. 43

by oppressive religious institutions that any reminder is painful, or who are at a different place in their own pilgrimage? I don't know.

Certainly, Savell's music speaks compellingly to many of us who are white; committed to fundamental political, economic, and environmental justice; and either are desperately trying to work within our traditional religious structures or hunger for new forms of spiritual community. I do know that many find healing and empowerment in music like Susan Savell's that helps us make the connections between spirituality, politics, and ritual. ●

## FIER from p. 37

that make the quality vary between Steinways, Yamahas, and the hundreds of other brands.

Pianos must be tuned at least once a year, twice or four times a year (each change of season) for new pianos. Serious players require more frequent tunings.

You can expect to pay \$35-\$50 for tuning, depending on where you live and the experience of the tuner. If you have sticky keys or notes that don't work, expect to pay \$5-\$30 for repair. It will depend on whether you need parts as well as labor. Other jobs can run as high as \$1,500. So before you sink lots of money into a piano, have someone who knows pianos—and whom you trust—look at the piano to be sure it is worth pouring money into. Some piano parts are standardized and others vary slightly, especially on older pianos. A few times I have had to create parts when standard ones don't work.

I love working on pianos. It means I have work, in addition to performing, that pays me well. I also love my work because I'm repairing and tuning instruments

that make beautiful music. I appreciate that I have work that doesn't have the pressures of performing. If I don't feel like being on stage or traveling extensively I can still eat and pay the rent.

Also, I meet many interesting and diverse people. Two of my best performance jobs came to me by way of piano tuning at the university: opening for Phoebe Snow and playing at a jazz festival with Betty Carter and Weather Report.

Piano tuning requires much patience. If you get restless or bored while a performer on stage tunes her six-string guitar, just think of a piano with 200-plus strings! I've tuned as many as eight pianos in one day. My head was just about vibrating off my neck. It's work that requires a high level of concentration and focus. It is necessary to train your mind and ears to listen well and distinguish between sounds that most people don't hear (or don't notice). I've had to tune in some unbelievable situations—while a drum soundcheck was going on, for example. Or tuning through headphones so the stage crew could set up simultaneously.

The technician part of my work requires being good mechanically. I enjoy making my own hours and working them around the rest of my life. I'm someone who's highly self-motivated, and I do well creating my own structure.

I've used my skills to barter all kinds of things, from lawyer fees to newspaper ads. Since my tuning tools are portable, I can take them on the road and work whenever, wherever.

Finally, I must mention how invaluable my skills have been when I've shown up to perform a concert at a club and have discovered the piano is horrendously out of tune or that some of the keys don't work.

So you can see that being a piano tuner/technician has helped me out as a musician and has provided me with a source of income that allows me to continue to travel and perform. There are so few piano tuners in the United States (and fewer still are women!) that I have a job that not only challenges me and keeps me happy, but which also keeps me in high demand. ●



Workshop assistant Susanna Sturgis (left) and Linda Teplitzky prepare the day's assignment on the dock before class. The 2½-hour class sessions feature intensive but loving critiques of each participant's work.

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## WRITING from 55

and I are going to Boston together. We get up to go. My hands feel glued to the back of my chair. "Let's make a circle," I say, and we do, there in the dining hall.

I say words familiar to the pagans in the group: "The circle is open but unbroken. Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again."

"Keep coming back!" I add on impulse, speaking from another tradition. A new friend and I exchange grins across the circle. In twos and threes all of us head back to the dorm, the cars, and home.

For more information: Feminist Women's Writing Workshops, Kathryn Machan Aal, P.O. Box 456, Ithaca, NY 14851. ●

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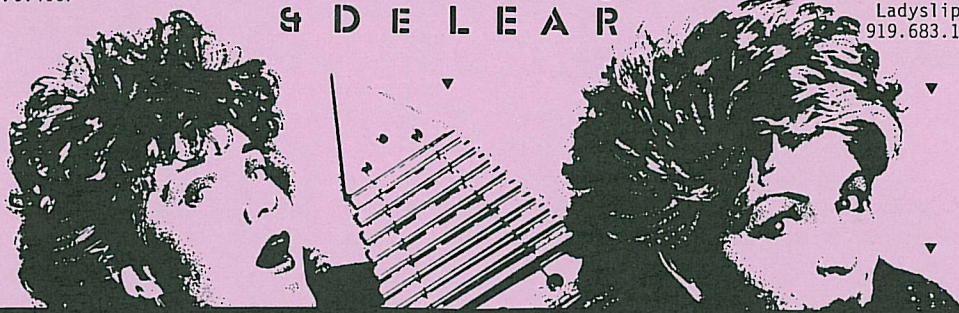
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