

HOT WIRE

THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE



DEIDRE McCALLA

KAY GARDNER IN ASIA

**THE POLITICS OF
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

DIGITAL AUDIO TAPE

LÁADAN UPDATE

LILLIAN ALLEN

SAPPHO

BETSY ROSE

MUSIC & SEXUALITY

LESBIAN TEEN BOOKS

FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

**'70s FEMINIST SCIENCE
FICTION**

**OLIVIA RECORDS
15th ANNIVERSARY**

TRET FURE

NANCY VOGL

JUDY DLUGACZ

DEIDRE McCALLA

CRIS WILLIAMSON

DIANNE DAVIDSON

LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY

**HIGHLIGHTS IN
WOMEN'S CULTURE**

HOLLY NEAR

KAREN BETH

DEBBIE FIER

KAY GARDNER

LEE LYNCH

KAREN RIPLEY

CHERRY WOLF

MUSICA FEMINA

TONI ARMSTRONG

Irene Young

STEREO RECORDING INSIDE

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 3 JULY 1988

\$5

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

THE 'HOT WIRE' EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY

HOT WIRE specializes in woman-identified music and culture, primarily the performing arts, literature, and film. We strongly believe in the power of the arts to affect social change, and enjoy documenting the combination of "politics/philosophy" and "creativity." We are committed to covering female artists and women's groups who prioritize lesbian and/or feminist content and ideals in their creative products and events.

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Each year (at the AWMAC Music Industry Conference at the National Women's Music Festival) awards to recognize outstanding achievements/contributions are given to women who work in the women's music business.

The 1987 *HOT WIRE* Readers' Choice Awards went to Ladyslipper and Alix Dobkin [see July 1987 issue for details and Readers' Choice Survey results]. These awards are determined solely on the basis of write-in nominations and votes; the *readers* do the nominating and selecting, not the magazine staff. See page 21 for this year's results.

INQUIRING WIMMINDS

Beginning with the next issue, we will be having a new feature: *Inquiring WimMinds Want To Know*. Isn't there something you've been curious about? Isn't there a question you'd like to ask a performer or writer (or someone) but haven't had any way to ask? Write in questions and we will do our best to get answers for you.

FAIRY GODMOTHERS URGENTLY NEEDED

With this issue, *HOT WIRE* is ending its fourth year of publication. We have shown who we are and what we do—and have never missed an issue. Costs have continued to rise and revenue hasn't. It's the same old story you've heard from many other small press publications: we absolutely *must* develop a bigger revenue base in order to keep going. We have a strong commitment to maintaining the size, quality, and frequency of *HOT WIRE*. But we are being drained of our personal money at an alarming rate—one that we are less willing and able to sustain.

We aren't looking for short-term financial bailouts or loans. We need to find women who are willing to commit money on an ongoing basis—perhaps \$5 or \$10 per month. We think of our work on *HOT WIRE* as an investment in women's music and culture. If you would like to make the journal a personal project of yours, please write to us for more details. We will explain what we do to raise money now, why it's not enough, and suggest ways we can work with you on this. Meanwhile...

\$\$\$ BUCKS \$\$\$

Many thanks to those of you who have donated money toward subscriptions for international archives, libraries, and individual women. We are in perpetual need of such angelic generosity. We get letters on a regular basis from women around the world who cannot afford subscriptions. We respond to all such requests, but it costs us *a lot*, primarily due to high postal expenses. We encourage readers to send donations earmarked "gift subscriptions." Your support of women's groups around the world is most appreciated. If you can't afford to pay for an entire subscription, remember: even a few dollars makes a difference. And don't forget about...

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are always happy to receive gift subscriptions. Don't you know at least one person who would be delighted to receive *HOT WIRE* for the next year, courtesy of you? Birthdays, anniversaries? Solstices, equinoxes? Send us her name and address with your check, and we will send her a card announcing your gift. This is a great way to provide financial support for the magazine, help increase our circulation, and be personally generous all in one swoop!

NO, WE DON'T SELL IT

From time to time we receive inquiries from people wanting to purchase, rent, or otherwise use our mailing list. We have a policy of confidentiality regarding our readership; under no circumstances do we allow others access to the subscription list. If you want to reach our readers, either take out an ad, send information to Joy's "Hotline" column, or write a letter to the editor. Occasionally we include flyers in the magazine; write for details regarding cost.

KATE & TRUDY AND HEATHER & SHERRY

Special thanks to Kate Clinton & Trudy Wood and Heather Bishop & Sherry Shute for allowing themselves to be raffled off as a fundraiser for *HOT WIRE*. Each of the two raffle prizes was a meal at one of Chicago's nicer restaurants with either Kate & Trudy or Heather & Sherry. The drawing was held at Heather & Sherry's April concert at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse (with Kate as emcee).

ON THE COVER: Deidre McCalla, long-time denizen of the women's music scene. Both of her Olivia albums were nominated for New York Music Awards, and *With A Little Luck* received this year's San Francisco Cable Car Award. Read the interview with her on page two.

YOU SEEM TO LIKE...

The mail this time was primarily on two topics: reactions to the letter Jean Fineberg wrote in the last issue; and compliments to the staff (for the efficient yet attractive appearance of the magazine, and the high quality content/editing).

ON VACATION

"Access," the column on issues of accessibility edited by Judi Friedman; "Noteworthy Women," the column about our lost and denied musical foremothers written by Janna MacAuslan and Kristan Aspen; and cartoonist Alison Bechdel. Have you seen Alison's new book *More Dykes To Watch Out For* (Firebrand Press)? Finally, Kay Gardner's "Minstrel Memories Part Two" will appear in a later issue.

WHERE IS THAT DARNED OL' CUTTING EDGE ANYWAY?

It's still not too late to respond to Betsy Rose's article in the November 1987 "Mulling It Over." Responses are still coming in and being incorporated into the second part of the article, which will appear in our next issue. What new "cutting edge" cultural events/forms have whetted your curiosity and excitement recently? How do you "diagnose" these times? What are the psychic/social areas that art should be addressing? Describe an ideal cultural event/activity that would include both what inspires and delights you personally as artist/participant, and what you see as being useful/transformational in the world. Betsy Rose, P.O. Box 9538, Berkeley, CA 94709.

REPRINTS AVAILABLE

Now is your chance to read those impossible-to-find early articles! Since we have several back issues sold out, we offer a "Reprints Service." Send a self-addressed stamped envelope to receive a list of the table of contents of all back issues (starting November 1984/Volume 1, #1). We will send any reprints you desire for the cost of \$1 per two articles.

WE'VE MOVED--HAVE YOU?

Please note our new address: 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640, and phone number: (312) 769-9009. If you've moved in the last four months—or will be moving within the next four—please tell us immediately. Magazines mailed to wrong addresses are *thrown away* by the post office, not returned to us. We can't afford to replace lost magazines if you didn't tell us you moved. *It is very frustrating to receive mail saying, "I paid for a subscription, but I haven't gotten my last two issues. Are you still publishing? Send it immediately. Oh, by the way, I moved..."*

Toni L. Armstrong
publisher/managing editor

HOT WIRE
The Journal of Women's
Music and Culture
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DEIDRE McCALLA

Interviewed by Toni L. Armstrong

HOT WIRE: HAVE YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A PERFORMER?

DEIDRE: I've always focused on being a performer. I've been sifting through stuff my mother has been storing for me—stuff she'd *really* like me to throw away, because she's tired of storing it for me—and I found my essay application to the National Theater Institute from late 1971, my sophomore year in college. I went there in the spring of '73. It was interesting to read it. You have to justify why you think you should be admitted, and basically what my essay said was that I had always wanted to be a performer; that's what I felt I was put on this earth to do. It said that I wanted to go to this school so that I would challenge myself, and learn, and get the skills to do the work that I think I was meant to do. It was interesting to see that through the years what I've always said about why I do this—which is I love performing—has been true from the very beginning.

DID YOU START YOUR CAREER AS A MUSICIAN?

In high school [at Mary Immaculate School for Girls of Eagle Park, Ossining, New York] I started doing glee club, and I had a folk trio called Friendship, me and my best friends Geralyn and Sue. We played school functions and Red Cross benefits and senior citizen homes. During the last two or three years of high school, my school got involved in doing musicals, which I thoroughly loved. I formed and directed the drama club. We put together a school program that was centered around anti-war protesting; we put together scenes from *Antigone*, *Joan of Arc*, and *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*, and in between we used protest songs of the '60s to kind of connect things and give time for set changes.

So for a long time my focus was actually theater. Because most of my school's effort was into musicals—and I guess every high school focuses on that—the emphasis in high school was definite-

ly musical theater. But it was acting that primarily interested me. When I went to college at Vassar I majored in theater, and at the same time was still always playing the guitar.

I finished college and didn't want to go to school any more. I decided I needed more training in acting if I was going to continue in that. Vassar's theater department, I had come to the conclusion, had been severely lacking in a lot of things. I knew I could either pursue the theater or pursue the music. And because I was tired of going to school, I didn't want to pursue the theater. I knew I needed more training, and I wasn't in the mood. I felt that musicians can learn things from records, from being with other musicians, just hanging out or watching someone play; acting is a lot more difficult to pick up. I knew I could learn the music things on my own to a certain extent. As it turned out, about two or three years after college I decided to go back to school because I didn't know enough about music, and my inability to do certain things, to understand certain musical concepts, was really limiting my songwriting. I only write what I play; the guitar generally has to be there, so my songwriting is limited by what I can technically pull off on the instrument. I decided I needed to learn more.

HOW DID YOU PURSUE YOUR MUSIC AT THAT POINT?

I moved to Milwaukee in '77 or '78, and attended the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music. It was around then—after being in Milwaukee for awhile and going back and forth to Chicago—that I met Lena dela Madrugada. I met her through Ginni Clemmens. We had a show together at Truman Community College in Chicago, and this woman was playing with Ginni. I thought she was absolutely incredible. I told her if she ever had some time to kill and just wanted to come over and play, I'd really love it. She did that, and we had a remarkable musical kinship. We worked together as a duo called Gypsy for about

three years. She lived in Chicago, and then for the last year or so moved up to Milwaukee. Also during that time, I started working with a band in Milwaukee called Breakwater that had been around for a few years. I actually started doing more with Breakwater work than Gypsy.

Then after about two and a half years I realized I'd gotten all that I thought was useful out of school. They had a jazz department and a classical department; my focus was jazz guitar. The jazz people, besides studying jazz theory, had to also study classical theory. Which I never thought was fair because they never made the classical people study jazz theory. Anyway, after two years of jazz and classical theory, I had once again had enough of school, and around that time I felt Breakwater had developed as far as it—in that configuration—was probably going to develop. I decided it was time to take things back to New York.

WHY NEW YORK?

I had spent five or six years noodling around the Midwest. I felt, at the time, I needed to get to New York to find out if all my noodling was *worth* anything. And also to be in a more creative environment. That's not to say that the Midwest isn't creative; but I think in an urban center where a lot of people are actively striving to invent themselves and to make whatever is their art work...even if you don't directly contact those people, there's energy in the air—and that's what I felt was missing when I was living in the Midwest. There just wasn't that energy in the air. So I went back in '80 or '81, and of course got very wrapped up in a day job because it's very expensive to live and work in New York.

SPEAKING OF YOUR NEW YORK DAYS, IRENE YOUNG AND YOU GO WAY BACK. HOW DOES SHE FIT INTO THE PICTURE OF YOU AND MUSIC AND OLIVIA RECORDS?

Apart from the Olivia connection, Irene

remains my most constant barometer of quality. From the first that Irene started doing photography, she had a very high insistence on the level of quality and professionalism in her own work. [See "Behind The Scenes," page 51.] The fact that someone whose work I respected so much was always there behind me in my more insecure down times...I would tell myself, "God, if Irene likes it, there's gotta be something here. If I just keep working to get better, maybe I'll feel it too." So on a level of just Irene being there for my music, she's really been a very important friend and patron.

too. There was a time period when she would fly back and forth between California and New York. Judy [Dlugacz] would ask Irene, "What have you heard, what do you like?" and Irene would always give her something that I was working on. But it was always more like a fly in front of Judy's face; like "OH! Not this again! Everytime I ask you something, you bring up Deidre." I found out later that the tapes would stay in the office, and the people working in the warehouse would play them—which is not true for all tapes received by the record company. I started to do homework

Irene, I could do my own album!" When I was doing homework on what it would take to pull off a project like that, it was around the time of the Carnegie Hall concert [November 1982], and Judy was in town. She was very giving of information about what to look for in a producer, some suggestions of names, just helping me gather information on what it takes to do an album—but always being very non-committal about Olivia's involvement. I had the sense if I totally did it myself—including manufacturing—I could probably go to Judy and she might distribute it. Irene had been throwing my name about for awhile, but it took Judy time to perceive me as a serious contender. That perception changed when I hired Teresa to do *Don't Doubt It*; it was then that Judy kind of looked up and went, "Oh, you're really going to do this." Also, I moved out to California, so seeing me bit by bit pulling the pieces together, it became more of a reality.

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS WORKING WITH OLIVIA RECORDS MADE IN YOUR CAREER?

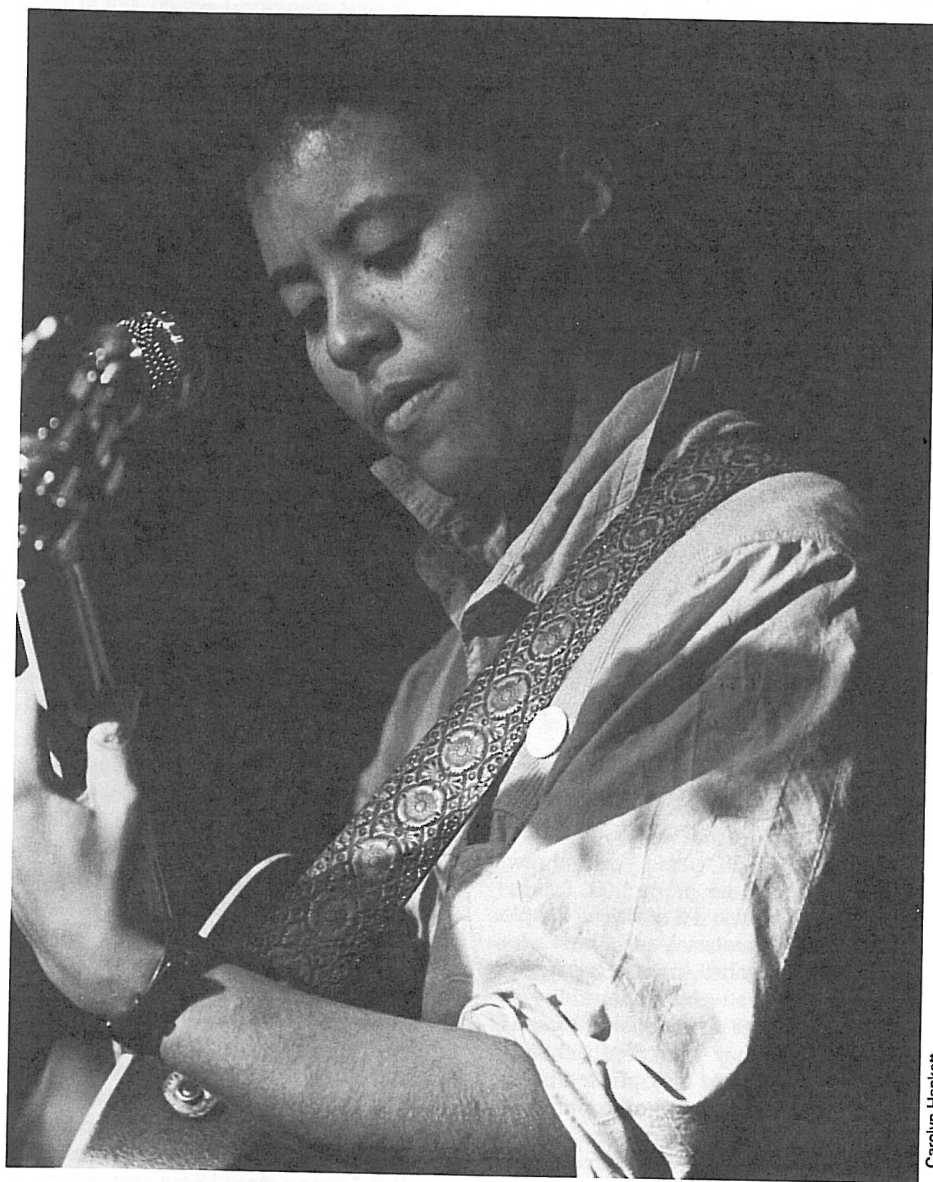
I know that there were some clubs and producers that booked me in basically because I was on Olivia, because Olivia has established a certain level of quality. They trusted the relationship they had already established with Olivia artists, and they decided to take a chance—whereas it might have taken a lot more talking with some places if I *wasn't* on a label with whom they were familiar. So definitely being associated with Olivia is a plus because it opens some doors. It has also made a difference to women who are not familiar with my music. If they see "Olivia recording artist," if they know Meg, if they know Cris, then they will check out the show, because they know at the very least it's going to be feminist—hopefully lesbian feminist. It gives people who know Olivia's history a reason to come to the show, rather than buying a pig in a poke.

Also, distribution [of my record] would have been a pain in the butt without Olivia. And in terms of career growth, there's definitely a difference between having a record out and *not* having a record out. I essentially did *Don't Doubt It* because it was impossible to book myself nationally without a record.

WHY WAS HAVING THE ALBUM SO ESSENTIAL?

Because people needed proof that I was a *real* musician. Even if the producers didn't

continued on next page



Carolyn Hankett

In terms of Olivia, Irene and I were roommates when I moved back to New York, and I guess she'd started doing a little bit of work for Olivia. People come very soon to trust Irene's musical ear. That's how Lucie Blue got to the label,

around what it took to do my own album—and the reason *that* happened was because for a year Irene had said to me, "Deidre, you could do your own album; Deidre, you could do your own album" and finally after a year I went, "You know,

personally need it, they needed some way to prove to their communities that I was real. Especially since this is very much a word-of-mouth network; it takes people having an album and being excited about it, and then playing the record for their friends and getting *them* excited about it, too...just playing it for other people in order to create an audience. It's very hard to create an audience without having a record that you can send ahead and leave behind.

YOU'VE TRAVELED JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE ON YOUR TOURS. DO YOU SEE ANY DIFFERENCES IN WOMEN'S MUSIC COMMUNITIES IN THE VARIOUS GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY?

Except for the Bay Area, the smaller the town, the closer the community. New York has a tremendous—in terms of numbers—women's community, but it's not a very *tight* women's community. And I find that in very urban and large cities they just don't realize—as women in small towns in, say, the South do—that they need each other. So although the concerts are smaller in smaller communities, I would say that they almost appreciate the event happening *more*, because it's a reason for the community to see each other. I definitely don't have that sense in a lot of larger cities. But my whole involvement in women's music is as a touring artist on a national level, sort of dropping in, so it's hard to say what's *really* happening in each community.

WHO IN THE WOMEN'S CULTURAL NETWORK DO YOU FIND INSPIRING?

Teresa Trull—she really exemplifies a well-rounded musician who is constantly challenging herself and requiring that she grow. Her songwriting, and the way she works with different writers....If you listen from *Unexpected* to my album, you can hear how Teresa has learned more about producing with each project. It's just incredible. She's a performer whose shows I never tire of. Even if I've seen her do a particular set a certain way, there is always something new and fresh about what she does. I just go home filled with awe. Teresa to me is a very strong source of inspiration because she's developed herself on so many different levels; I think that's the key to survival as a musician. Some people develop their teaching; I feel I've put all my eggs into the performing basket, and if something happened so that I wasn't able to travel, my career

would really be seriously hurt. Whereas someone like Teresa, if she can't travel then there will still be some outlet for her to get her songs out. I have told Teresa a number of times, I am her biggest fan; I'd be president of her fan club in a minute.

I also admire the poetry of Adrienne Rich; she has a way of clarifying an image in the most succinct way possible. Clarifying an image and a concept; there are no wasted words. Her images and metaphors splice immediately to the core of an idea, and because it goes on such a direct line, there's a very pure sense of integrity that I feel in her work. That clarity of image in my own way is what I try to achieve lyrically.

exceptional song *for me*. A sense of, "I didn't write it, dammit, so the next best thing to do is to sing the hell out of it." It's more when a song calls to me.

OF ALL THE SONGS YOU'VE WRITTEN OVER THE YEARS, WHICH IS YOUR PERSONAL FAVORITE? I KNOW THERE ARE DIFFERENT ONES FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, BUT IF YOU HAD TO PICK JUST ONE SPECIAL ONE...?

One reason it's hard to pick *one* is because a lot of times it's the one that's the freshest in your memory. I would say at this hour in my life, it would probably be "Too



Irene Young

"I would tell myself, 'If Irene likes it, there's gotta be something here.'" (Deldre and Irene on their way to a potluck.)

WHEN YOU DO SONGS BY OTHER PEOPLE, LIKE ILENE WEISS FOR EXAMPLE, HOW DO YOU PICK THEM?

I sing songs I wish I'd written. People send me a lot of material, and I hear a lot of stuff. I don't solicit, mainly because it puts too much of a weird responsibility on me. A lot of times women want to send me things, and they want feedback—and to a very large extent they put too much weight on what's said by someone who's done a few albums. It makes me feel weird, and I don't like feeling that I have that kind of power with someone. Occasionally, though, I hear songs that just stop me in my tracks, and touch me. I hear a lot of songs both on record and live from people that are really good, and there is something in some songs that just strikes a certain chord in me as a really

Few And Far Between," because each verse in that song actually relates to a different time period in my life, so it's like a little memory board in that sense. And I think overall it sums up my general philosophy of living, especially the last verse.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO DEVELOP YOUR MUSICIANSHIP THESE DAYS?

I need to work more on my guitar playing. The problem is I'm not home a lot. I had actually hoped during last spring to focus more on that. I've looked into video guitar lessons—you know, something I can do in my own time. Sometimes I'll be with other musicians in music stores, and they'll say, "Why are you picking up this book? It's too beginning for you," and I'll say, "But look at this page here; I've never done this, I don't know how to do that..."

No matter how simple it is, if you can learn something from it, then it's worth the five or six bucks that you put into it. I think my songwriting grows in relation to my guitar playing, so I definitely am feeling the need to learn to do more on the guitar. I need to *find* a way to do that given how much I'm not home and can't do anything with full concentration.

AT THIS POINT IN TIME, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE THE GOOD-NEWS AND BAD-NEWS ASPECTS OF YOUR CAREER?

Well, I'd say the up side is that for the last three or four years, since *Don't Doubt It* came out, I've been making a living as a fulltime musician. And that to me is a real special blessing; it is something that I remind myself every day is a treasure. One major goal I have is to continue working to pay off the first album. Women (primarily) were very generous with me around donations and loans for the album. I have a primary commitment to paying back those women who lent me some of their funds, because I know how hard money is to come by. So that's looking at another year and a half minimum of touring. *Don't Doubt It* is probably going to be paid for by the end of this year; it's taken three years, but on the other hand a lot of albums don't ever do that. Sales on *Don't Doubt It* are a little more than 11,000 over the last three years.

The down side is, I still need—in an economic sense—for my situation to change. Because at this point, I can at the most look down the road about three or four months and know that yes, I'll be fine. I would like to have a lot more security around me—and wouldn't we all! So the good news is I'm making a living, and the bad news is it's only enough to sustain me for a few months at a time. For the past three years I've looked in the paper at what the fall jobs are—I've always worried, Oh God, the next tour's not going to happen....blah, blah, blah. So far the tours *have* happened, but I always have the sense that I'm pushing my luck.

WHAT ARE THE BEST AND THE HARDEST THINGS FOR YOU ABOUT TOURING?

The best thing is that I am developing an audience. I am able to do on a fulltime basis what I feel I do best. My goal is to do 100 shows a year; I really feel that as a working musician one should *work*. Especially when you read about country acts in the mainstream that do 200 or 300 dates a year, my goal doesn't seem like so

much. What's hard is definitely touring on the economic shoestring that I have to...I probably don't have the amenities that a country artist in the mainstream has. There's no big Greyhound touring bus—I'm driving alone with my road manager Theresa McCraw. There's a lot of work—in terms of loading, unloading, dealing with people, and selling the records—that's done by me and now also by Theresa. It's very draining for any artist who has to do all that AND do the show. Not to mention I'm somewhat of a Cancer anyway, and a homebody, so this is a strange profession for me to be in.

WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT BEING A WORKING MUSICIAN?

The shows. Being up on stage. Hearing, seeing, feeling people being touched, and my being touched by their reaction to the music. That's the rush. I feel I do 95 percent of business nonsense so I can have five percent of ecstasy. I'm sure other people experience this in *whatever* their creative activity—it manifests in more than just the visual and performing arts. Someone who tears a '57 Chevy apart and puts it back together, their mode of satisfaction is turning the key and hearing the engine hum.

AND PEOPLE LOVE YOU, WHICH CAN'T FEEL BAD. I'VE BEEN AT SHOWS WHERE IT'S LIKE DEIDRE-MANIA.

Oh, it feels real good. It's saner [in women's music audiences] than some other places, though. I was at the New York Music Awards this year, and we were a little taken aback at how much Beatle-type mania was going on there. There were big performers who were performing and presenting and receiving awards—like Debbie Gibson and Suzanne Vega. 3,000 people attended this show, and the people in the upper rafters, which were the "cheap seats"—and only in New York would \$25 seats be considered the "cheap seats"—they're hanging over the balcony screaming, "Debbie! Debbie! DEBBIE!" We were like, God, women would *never* be that blatant at a Cris Williams concert! It was kind of a shock. Our audiences are a lot cooler than that.

DON'T DOUBT IT WAS UP IN 1985 FOR TWO NEW YORK MUSIC AWARDS—WAS WITH A LITTLE LUCK NOMINATED THIS YEAR?

Yes. *Don't Doubt It* was nominated for Best Independent Album and Best Song

on an Independent Album ("This Part of the World" by Ilene Weiss). This year, *With a Little Luck* was also nominated for two awards—Best Independent Album and Best Vocalist on an Independent Label. I did not get them, but given the way that the New York Music Awards and the Bammies and other types of regional awards are decided, it actually means more to me to be *nominated* than to actually win it. I would love to win, because it would give me some more promotional things in terms of pitching the album to reviewers and getting concerts reviewed; it would be wonderful to win it. But the way winning happens with those awards is that a significant portion of the voting is done by fans, and in New York they run ballots in the *Post* for a week, and you can also pick up ballots at Tower Records and at clubs. Essentially it means that someone who is *in* New York can pick up as many ballots as they want—that's the game, and I'm sure that's what people do. If I were there I would do it also, but I'm at a decided disadvantage not living in New York anymore. But the *nominating* is done from a smaller pool of critics, and what it means to be nominated is that I have made a professional impression on people. [See "Moving Into The Mainstream: Deidre McCalla's *Don't Doubt It*," March '86.] So that's significant, and it's significant that the New York Music Awards people are really committed to recognizing the independent labels. *With a Little Luck* didn't win in New York, but it received the San Francisco Cable Car Award this year, which is a recognition for contributions to the lesbian and gay community. I tied with Holly Near's *Don't Hold Back*.

You know, the honors are exciting, but the things people say to me at the record table, and the letters I get in the mail, *really* mean something to me—because the music touches people. It has made some women's lives—whatever they're going through, whenever they hear it—if not easier then at least it's a soundtrack through the experience. They say they appreciate that there's a sensitivity and an integrity in the music that seems real to them, and that they can keep with them in their heart; it means what I'm doing is working. Usually it's "I was going through a really rough time..." or "I just broke up with my girlfriend..." or "it was just a down time in my life..."

continued on page 60

ABOUT THE WRITER: Toni Armstrong watches the fish in her aquarium and is currently compiling an anthology of writings about female vampires.

TRANSmusic

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Women's and men's choirs
School band, orchestra

Rosa



1. Ro - sa, raise your gar - den, Ro - sa, raise your fam - i - ly. And
 2. Ro - sa, as your grand - child I have mem - o - ries of you: your
 3. Rose, you last - ed long - er like the wom - en most - ly do. Your
 4. Rose, you raised your gar - den, Rose, you raised your fam - i - ly. And



Ro - sa, tell your stor - ies of your home in it - a - ly.
 laugh when you re - mem - bered that old lamp I broke in two. Re -
 daugh - ter is her - self a - lone; my fa - ther's bur - ied, too. And
 Rose, you told your stor - ies of your home in it - a - ly. And



Ro - sa, that old man don't mean to hurt you, he's yell - ing down the hall.
 mem - ber how I mea - sured up a - gainst you, show - ing how much I had grown.
 Rose, the ta - ble's small - er than when you would sit and smile at ev' ry - one.
 Rose, my grand - pa nev - er meant to hurt you, he was yell - ing down the hall.

©1981, 1988 by Therese Edell. Listen to "Rosa" on this issue's soundsheet.
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SOAPBOX

I agree with Jean Fineberg ["Soapbox," March 1988] that we should be calling our festivals "women's culture festivals." Most of the women I know plan to go to the festival every year and it doesn't matter very much which musicians are on the stages—though lately I wonder why the producers are putting some of these acts on. Mostly, though, it's being in the total "womyn" environment that matters. Festivals are the #1 "valid and empowering institutions for lesbians," as Ms. Fineberg put it.

Carmen Monte, Kalamazoo, Michigan

I think the idea of calling the Wimmin's Music Festivals Lesbian/Womyn's (my own touch) Cultural Festivals is excellent!! I can appreciate the difficulty Jean Fineberg must have, along with many other women musicians, being forced to water down or omit Lesbian (or feminist) content in order to insure the payoffs from the "boys' league." My only response is, couldn't she, and others, have some Lesbian or Radical Feminist music on hand? They could play it when the boys aren't listening. I wouldn't tell.

Amber L. Katherine, Chicago, Illinois

Jean Fineberg's analogy comparing women's music and baseball ["Soapbox," March 1988] is an excellent one. I was glad to see her statement "...I would never want to see the abolishment of our league. I also understand the necessity of keeping our league exclusively for women." In a society that has achieved true equality, we would not need spaces and industries that are reserved for women—in an equal society it would be a matter of *desire*. At this point in time, however, we are still struggling at the level of "need." As Robin Tyler said in her interview [in that same issue], "Affirmative action cannot be considered the same as discrimination." If men want to be supportive of women's advancement, let them do so by supporting us *financially* rather than trying to move in and take for themselves the precious few performance or business opportunities we have developed within our own network. I am dreading the day I see a male performer on a "women's music" festival stage. I worry that this is coming.

Harriet Axell, Phoenix, Arizona

EDITORS' NOTE: See article in this issue's 'Mulling It Over' column by Jean's partner Ellen Seeling.

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Oprah.

Oprah who?

Oprah-tunity. I bet you thought I only knocked once.



Toni L. Armstrong

Jean Fineberg's comments regarding the current state of women's music sparked much reader response.

I am very interested to know what types of music your staff listens to while working on your magazine? I'm interested specifically in which artists and albums you like since you are exposed to such a wide variety!

Pammy F., Skokie, Illinois

Those of us who are here a lot each picked some favorites. *Meg & Cris at Carnegie; DEUCE; D.A. Clarke/Messages; Rita Marley/Harambe; Holly Near/Fire in the Rain; Meg Christian/Face The Music; Deidre McCalla/Don't Doubt It & With A Little Luck; Michigan Live; Ferron/Testimony & Shadows on a Dime; Casselberry-DuPrée/City Down; Betty MacDonald/Waltzing in the Sagebrush; Linda Tillery/Secrets; Margie Adam/Naked Keys; Lucie Blue Tremblay; Phranc; Alix Dobkin's These Women/Never Been Better; Blazing Redheads; Trull & Higbie/Unexpected; Teresa Trull/A Step Away; Betsy Lippitt; and Suzette Haden Elgin singing in Láadan.* The head proofreader says she prefers silence. We listen to what we have; we wish more women would send us their tapes.

I was at the October March on Washington, and thank you for your coverage of the event. Most of the other publications that covered it focused more on the political aspects. (I'm being generous; most publications, like *Time* and *Newsweek*, pretended it didn't happen!) I really liked the way you showed how "we" (the women's music—read "lesbian music"—community) were there and participating. I was one of the many women cheering your *HOT WIRE* contingent from the sidelines near the end of the parade route, by the way. I guess we shouldn't have been surprised to see you there.

Margaret Hewes, Terre Haute, Indiana

I enjoyed Sherry Shute's article ["Life as a Woman Rocker," March 1988]. It thrills me to see The Bangles and the women in Prince's bands playing those instruments when I watch MTV. The only problem is all those girls are too femme, it looks like they're Barbie dolls playing instruments to give Ken a thrill. Give me Sherry Shute and Jackie Stander and June Millington on MTV.

Ronnie Ervell, San Jose, California

Check out our sister publication 'Bitch: The Women's Rock Mag With Bite.' You will like the wide variety of rock women and viewpoints represented in their pages. Also, see article about them in the July 1987 issue of 'HOT WIRE.' BITCH c/o San Jose Face #164, 478 W. Hamilton, Campbell, CA 95008.

The girl groups and the Motown sound were my entire musical reality as a teenager in the Detroit area. Great article!!! ["Transistor Sisters" by Jorjet Harper, March 1988.] Let me add that Darlene Love deserves more credit by name than she usually gets. Hers was the main voice many listeners would recognize to this day. She was in a lot of groups. The girl groups made way for later groups like Sister Sledge, The Pointer Sisters, and Labelle. Also, Martha and the Vandellas had some classic hits like "Heatwave," "Jimmy Mack" and "Dancing In The Streets" which have been done over and over by other artists ever since. Martha Reeves is still an exciting performer to this day.

Serena Jenkins, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Excerpted from a letter to 'BITCH: The Women's Rock Mag With Bite.'

Enclosed is an excerpt from Barbara G. Walker's book, *The Women's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (1983) about the word "Bitch" and its rich cultural herstory. "BITCH: This became a naughty word in Christian Europe because it was one of the most sacred titles of the Goddess Artemis-Diana, leader of the Scythian *alani* or 'hunting dogs.' The Bitch-goddess of antiquity was known in all Indo-European cultures, beginning with the Great Bitch Sarama who led the Vedic dogs of death. The old English word for hunting dog—*bawd*—also became a naughty word because it applied to the divine Huntress's promiscuous priestesses as well as her dogs. Harlots and 'bitches' were identified in the ancient Roman cult of the Goddess Lupa, the Wolf Bitch, whose priestesses the *lupae* gave their name to prostitutes in general. Earthly representatives of the Wolf Bitch ruled the Roman town of Ira Flavia in Spain, as a queen or series of queens named Lupa. In Christian terms, 'son of a bitch' was considered insulting not because it meant a dog, but because it meant a devil—that is, a spiritual son of the pagan Goddess.

Diane F. Germain, San Diego, California

HOTLINE

By Joy Rosenblatt

NEWS

ALIX DOBKIN spent three weeks in March playing 11 concerts and giving "countless" workshops in seven towns along Australia's eastern coast. She spent two additional weeks doing nine appearances in seven towns in Aotearoa, New Zealand. "Everywhere I've been," Alix says, "Lesbians are working in disproportionate numbers (so what else is new?!) for land and civil rights for indigenous people."

Naiad Press and the National Women's Studies Association are offering a \$500 GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN LESBIAN STUDIES, according to *New Directions for Women*. Caryn McTighe Musil, National Director of NWSA, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20472. (301) 454-3757.

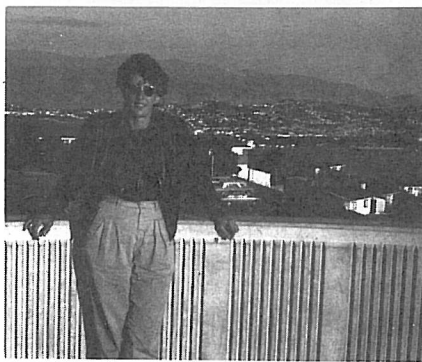
TAM MARTIN has opened a booking agency and production company—Beachfront Bookings and Productions—which specializes in scheduling national concert tours (including comedy and lectures) for women artists, and producing women artists in Southern California. Beachfront, 2819 Theresa St., Long Beach, CA 90814. (213) 439-8695.

WOMANSPACE, the lesbian-feminist center in Philadelphia, was destroyed by fire on January 18, reported *New Directions for Women*. The fire department said it was arson, as three separate fires had been set. A fundraising auction was held on March 20. For further information or to send donations: Bernadette (215) 824-2991.

THERESE EDELL has formed a new company called TRANSMUSIC that involves composing and writing music via computer. [See the soundsheet in this issue.] Transmusic is expected to be starting up around August 1. Transmusic, 1641 Rockford Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45223. (513) 542-5151.

A sorority formed by lesbians has been recognized officially by UCLA. LAMBDA DELTA LAMBDA is reportedly the first such sorority to be recognized by a university, according to *Outlines*. The university decision allows the nine-member LDL to meet on campus and apply for student funds, but rules forbid exclusion of heterosexual members.

HOTLINE presents capsule reports of past happenings, announces upcoming events, and passes on various tidbits of information.



Alix Dobkin in Wellington, New Zealand (Aotearoa) last March.

BETTY MacDONALD was invited to a music festival in Russia organized by a consortium of youth travel agencies known as Sputnik. The festival—located in Sochi, Russia at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains in a health resort area—ran for a week and Betty performed three times, once as a headliner. She went to Russia with a gift from the women of Woodstock's Three of Cups, an envelope containing tiny clear quartz crystals with a printed message that read: "These are the seeds of peace." She gave some to musician friends returning behind the Iron Curtain; she planted one in Sochi, and another just outside St. Basil's Cathedral in the grass of the Kremlin.

DEUCE (Ellen Seeling and Jean Fineberg) will perform at "Convention Days" in Seneca Falls, New York on July 17. Seneca Falls is the site of the Women's Rights Historical Park and the home of the first Women's Rights Convention in the U.S., held on July 19-20, 1848. DEUCE will also be backing **MARTHA REEVES** (of Martha & The Vandellas fame) at performances in the New York area throughout July.

GATHERINGS

14th annual **LESBIAN FEMINIST WEEK-END**; September 9-11 at Camp Akiba in the Poconos. Music, art, workshops, sports, entertainment. Sisterspace, P.O. Box 7935, Philadelphia, PA 19101. (215) 476-2424.

5th **INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY YOUTH CONFERENCE**: July 30-August 6 in West Berlin. North American contact: Nadine Smith, 14313 Wedgewood Circle #5, Tampa, FL 33613.

In May 1989, **PANOPTICON**, an all-women music ensemble whose members have played virtually on every continent, will present **WOMANFEST '89**, according to the *International Congress on Women in Music Newsletter*. It will be a three night celebration featuring all kinds of women performers from the classical, jazz, folk, New Age, contemporary, and rock & roll fields. Further information: (212) 645-0428.

The Association of Women's Music and Culture (AWMAC) held its second annual **WOMEN'S MUSIC INDUSTRY CONFERENCE** at the National Women's Music Festival in early June. AWMAC is a professional organization dedicated to providing a forum to promote artistic growth and express women's social/cultural concerns through the performing arts. AWMAC, 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608.

Women's Retreat: HEALING WAYS OF WOMAN SPIRIT with Susan Weed, author of *The Wise Woman Herbal*. Workshops, camping or cabins, natural foods in wooded setting. Cindy Parker, 2137 Newark-Granville Rd., Newark, OH 43055. (614) 587-3361.

This year's **FEMINIST WOMEN'S WRITING WORKSHOPS** will be held July 10-22 on the campus of Wells College in Aurora, New York. Guest writer: Alicia Ostriker; also Nancy Berano (Firebrand Press), Susanna J. Sturgis, Diane Sudol. FWWW/Katharyn Machan Aal, P.O. Box 456, Ithaca, NY 14851. (607) 273-9040.

ALL WOMYN'S SUNDANCE SPIRITUAL CEREMONY: four days during July's full moon in St. John, Arizona. Charlene or Beverly, 2505 W. Monroe, Phoenix, AZ 85009. (602) 272-3906.

The third annual **WOMYN AND WITCH-CRAFT CONFERENCE: Developing Dianic Wicca**, a conference for womyn who define themselves as Dianic and/or lesbian witches, will be held September 1-4 at a state park in central Wisconsin. Conference Coordinating Committee, Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, P.O. Box 6021, Madison, WI 53716. (608) 838-8629.

HONORS

DEIDRE McCALLA's new album *With A Little Luck* was nominated by the New York Music Awards for Best Record on an Independent Label and for Best Vocalist on an Independent Label. **ODETTA's** new album *Movin' It On*, produced by **LIZ KARLIN**, was also nominated for Best Folk Album and Best Folksinger.

In a recent WERS/FM (Boston) survey of radio listeners, Cris Williamson's "WATERFALL" (from *The Changer and The Changed*) and Ferron's "AIN'T LIFE A BROOK" (from *Testimony*) were listed in the Top Ten Favorite Songs. The WERS "Coffeehouse" program asked listeners to mail in their five favorite folk songs, contemporary or traditional. They received more than 350 replies.

ROSA PARKS—the black seamstress who helped ignite the civil rights movement by refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama bus 32 years ago—was honored on her 75th birthday January 31 at the Museum of African-American History in Detroit by presenter ARETHA FRANKLIN, reported the *Chicago Tribune*.

In the 1987 wrap-up issue of *The Advocate's* Best In Pop Music, there were 11 chosen—only two of them women. MADONNA and LYNN LAVNER shared the honor.

SAGE: A *Scholarly Journal on Black Women* and the Sage Women's Education Press, Inc. announced the winners of their 1987-88 Student Awards for Outstanding Scholarship and Distinguished Service. RUTH ELIZABETH RANDOLPH of Wellesley College won the Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Award for Outstanding Scholarship, and KIMBERLY R. JACKSON and MARGO V. PERKINS of Spelman College won the Sue Bailey Thurman Award for Distinguished Service. M. MELINDA CHATEAUVERT of George Washington University, FARAH JASMINE GRIFFIN of Yale University, MARGO V. PERKINS of Spelman College, and BARBARA RANSBY of the University of Michigan received honorable mentions for the Alexander Scholarship Award.

1988 HOT WIRE Readers' Choice Awards: Outstanding Contribution by an Individual: ROBIN TYLER; by an Organization: LADY-SLIPPER; Favorite Vocalist: TERESA TRULL; Favorite Group: DEUCE; All Time Favorite Performer: ALIX DOBKIN; Favorite Current Album: LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY; All Time Favorite Album: CRIS WILLIAMSON/THE CHANGER & THE CHANGED; Favorite Author: JANE RULE; Favorite Movie: DESERT HEARTS. For more Readers' Choice results, see page 21 in this issue.

LUCILLE BALL was named the 1988 Woman of the Year by the Hasty Pudding Theatricals of Harvard University, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. Past winners include Katharine Hepburn, Elizabeth Taylor, and Bernadette Peters. Lucy—a four-time Emmy Award winner, and veteran of three TV series and numerous Broadway appearances—received her traditional gold pudding pot during the February 16 Harvard Square ceremonies.

BARBRA STREISAND has been invited by the USSR to be the honoree next year at the first American film festival to be held in Moscow.

HOLLY NEAR (*Don't Hold Back*) tied with DEIDRE McCALLA for the San Francisco Cable Car Award (for Contributions to the Gay and Lesbian Community) for Best Record of 1987. 1,500 people attended the awards banquet on February 27.

The Southern California Women for Understanding held their Lesbian Rights Awards Banquet on Saturday, March 12 at the Sheraton Universal Hotel, according to *Bay Area Women's News*. This year's recipient was ROBIN TYLER. The award is presented annually to the lesbian or lesbians who have made outstanding contributions to the community. Six community service awards were also presented at the banquet, to GENI COWAN, CONNIE CONFER & KAY BERRYHILL SMITH, LARRY & ADELE STARR, PAT CALAHAN, BUNNY MacCULLOCH, and BONNIE ZIMMERMAN.

At the 15th Annual American Music Awards, based on a survey of 20,000 record buyers.... Favorite Female Soul/Rhythm & Blues Singer: ANITA BAKER, Favorite Soul/Rhythm & Blues Album: *RAPTURE*; Favorite Pop Rock Female Vocalist: WHITNEY HOUSTON; Favorite Country Female Vocalist: REBA McENTIRE; Pop Rock/Soul-R&B Favorite Video: JANET JACKSON/"When I Think of You."

At the Grammy Awards this year.... Best Pop Female Vocalist: WHITNEY HOUSTON (song "I Wanna Dance With Somebody"); Best R&B Female Vocalist: ARETHA FRANKLIN (album *Aretha*); Best Jazz Vocal by a Female: DIANE SCHUUR (album *Diane Schuur and the Count Basie Orchestra*); Best Female Country Vocalist: K.T. OSLIN (song "'80s Ladies"); Best Country Performance by Duo or Group: DOLLY PARTON, LINDA RONSTADT, EMMYLOU HARRIS. They also won Album of the Year (*Trio*) at the 23rd Annual Academy of Country Music Awards. The mother-daughter duo THE JUDDS took the duet award, and REBA McENTIRE was Top Female Vocalist.

At the 14th Annual People's Choice Awards.... Favorite All-Around Female Entertainer: DOLLY PARTON; All-Time Favorite Music Star: BARBRA STREISAND; Favorite Female Musical Performer: WHITNEY HOUSTON. In the past, BARBARA MANDRELL has won nine times. Favorite Motion Picture Actress: GLENN CLOSE; Favorite TV Talk Show Host: OPRAH WINFREY.

According to *Lesbian Connection*, the European edition of *Stars & Stripes* (the newspaper for members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed overseas) recently published the results to its annual poll of readers' favorite musicians. The top five female artists were 1. Whitney Houston, 2. Madonna, and 3. (ahead of Janet Jackson and Anita Baker!) MEG CHRISTIAN.

THE SUPREMES were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame on January 20. Accepting for them were Mary Wilson and the late Florence Ballard's daughter Lisa.

An award was given to KATHARINE HEPBURN on March 14 during a tribute to Planned Parenthood in New York. The actress was honored for establishing a women's rights fund.

Bassoonist JANET GRICE received a performance grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to present a concert at Studio Red Top in Boston. Recently a Fulbright Fellowship recipient, Janet takes the bassoon beyond its classical limits by playing jazz and new music.

ANNIVERSARIES

OLIVIA RECORDS celebrated its 15th year on January 21. They held four extravaganza concerts this spring: Cleveland on April 23, Boston on May 7, Berkeley on May 13, and Los Angeles on May 14. Olivia has released 31 albums over the last 15 years.

SAGE: A *Scholarly Journal on Black Women* will be celebrating its fifth anniversary at Spelman College during the first weekend of November.

The NATIONAL COALITION OF BLACK LESBIANS AND GAYS will celebrate their 10th anniversary year in October with a convention in Washington, D.C. They are actively seeking 1,000 new members for their 10th year. NCBLG, P.O. Box 2490, Washington, D.C. 20013. (202) 265-7117.

FILM-VIDEO-TV

HEARTBEAT, the feminist medical drama series, aired for six weeks this spring on ABC-TV. It is about a progressive medical group founded by women for women, and is the first TV show to have a regular major character who is a healthy, happy, well-adjusted, out-of-the-closet lesbian (GAIL STRICKLAND). According to *Outlines*, the show is being considered for the fall line-up. It is imperative that positive letters be sent (applauding the show and requesting that it be aired regularly) to Brandon Stoddard, President ABC-TV, 2040 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, CA 90067.

DONNA DEITCH (*Desert Hearts*) has finished directing her latest film, *Women of Brewster Place*. It stars OPRAH WINFREY, PAM GRIER, and LONETTA McGEE.

Attention fans of DANITRA VANCE: She appears in a new movie called *Sticky Fingers*, which stars Eileen Brennan, Helen Slater, Melanie Mayron, Loretta Devine, and Carol Kane. Danitra did a brief stint on *Saturday Night Live* a few seasons back.

continued on page 58

ABOUT THE WRITER: Joy Rosenblatt is one of the concert producers at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse in Chicago. In her spare time, she works for the State of Illinois as a welfare counselor.

THE AUDIO ANGLE

MOVE OVER, LPs AND CASSETTES

HERE COMES DIGITAL AUDIO TAPE

By Karen Kane and Cris Newport

How many times have you made a cassette copy off an album—and hated all the hiss that came with it? How often have you used the Dolby function, expecting it to help with the hiss—only to think the result sounded too dull? Well, all that could be a thing of the past.

There's a new format that's currently making a lot of waves in the music industry. Digital Audio Tape (DAT) is capable of producing the quality of compact disc sound in small, convenient cassettes—slightly larger than half the size of a regular audio cassette. Like VCR tapes, DATs play only in one direction and offer two hours of recording/playback time. Blank DAT cassettes are expected to cost around \$7. And, the DAT player can be easily hooked up to a standard stereo set-up.

The basic operation of a DAT recorder/player is similar to CD players—only CD players cannot record. During the DAT recording process, music is converted into a code of electronic digital pulses, read in numbers and "sampled" by the machine at a specific frequency range. When the tape is played back, the digital codes are reconverted into music. [For more specific information about digital versus conventional analog differences, see "The Audio Angle: Compact Discs," November 1986.]

When DAT players are tested against conventional cassette decks, the DAT machines measure incredibly better in many ways. One of the biggest quality differences between DATs and conventional cassettes is that DAT has no tape hiss or background noise of any kind. There is no "generation loss" when copying from DAT to DAT. (Generation loss is the addition of tape hiss every time you

copy regular cassette to cassette.) With DAT, the first copy is as clean and noiseless as the hundredth or the thousandth copy made. Additionally, DAT's fast forward/rewind function is 200 times faster than its normal speed. It takes just 40 seconds to rewind a full tape, and only one second to forward past a three-minute song.

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Consensus of DAT recorder manufacturers—including JVC, Sony, Technics, Marantz, Mitsubishi, Kenwood, and Sharp—is that prices on all units will be \$1100-\$1500, and are expected to drop to around \$750 by the end of 1988. According to some other estimates, however, prices could be as high as \$2500.

IMPACT ON THE RECORDING INDUSTRY

DAT has caused a major controversy in the recording industry. The mainstream record labels are more concerned than ever about home taping now that such a high quality sound is available. On the other hand, engineers, album producers, and other people in the recording

business are very excited about the clean, easy format and the upgraded quality of the final product. "Anything that makes music sound better is great," says Darleen Wilson, an engineer in the Boston area. "It's technology making art more beautifully presented."

The high paranoia level of the mainstream record labels has prompted a series of bills to be put before Congress. Basically, these bills ask that Congress require the installation of an anti-copying chip in all DAT recorders sold in the United States. This chip, called Copy-Code, incorporates what some call an "inaudible" signal onto the tape. The average listener may not be able to hear the signal, but to a musician or anyone with critical listening ears, it is very audible. Someone who heard a Copy-Coded DAT tape of an orchestra told us that an entire piccolo part totally disappeared because of the notching effect of the code. Copy-Code, developed by CBS almost 20 years ago, is not up to the standards of today's technology. It is also not a foolproof system; recording engineers say that they are sure there are ways to bypass the system if it does come out.

As of now, the legislation for Copy-Code has been put on hold, and most industry people doubt that it will go through. In the April 21 issue of *Rolling Stone*, the National Bureau of Standards said that Copy-Code "doesn't work." Japanese manufacturers have refrained from exporting DAT machines to the U.S. while Congress considers legislation, supported by the Recording Industry Association of America, that would ban the import of DAT recorders unless they are equipped with the anti-copying device.

Most of the controversy centers around the fact that the recording industry is afraid consumers will make unlimited DAT-quality copies from CDs. At this point in time, however, pure digital to digital copying (CD to DAT) is not possible with the consumer version of DAT due to the incompatibility of the "sampling rates" of CD and DAT players. (The sampling rate is the frequency range

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

in which each machine reads or samples the music. If the machines sample the music at a different frequency point, you can't make copies from one to another.) Studios, unlike consumers, will be able to get a "pro" version of DAT and copy from any source without any incompatibility problems. What is scaring the record labels is consumers' ability to copy off a CD into the analog input of a DAT recorder and achieve results that are very close to the pure digital version. This analog process is far superior to any conventional analog cassette machine.

Simply put, you'll end up with pirated cassette copies of a quality far superior to anything you could get with the type of machines you have now.

The problem in the industry since the introduction of cassette tapes has always been that home taping robs record companies of profits, and this in turn hampers the ability of the labels to seek out and develop new artists because of the financial loss. It is estimated that more than 300 million blank tapes are purchased annually, 40 percent of which are used for home taping. There's a \$1.5 billion loss in revenue each year to home taping, and a \$4.6 billion loss in general mainstream music industry sales. Imagine what kind of impact home taping has on the smaller labels such as Olivia, Icebergg, Redwood, Rosetta, Labrys, Lady-slipper, Windham Hill, Rounder, and Pleiades. It's not greed but financial desperation that motivates labels to include statements such as the one printed on the record sleeve of Deidre McCalla's *Don't Doubt It*: "We know that with today's recording equipment it is always a temptation to make cassettes of albums for friends as well as personal use. It would seem rather reasonable in fact. But for a company such as Olivia, it has greater implications. Each home taping represents a loss of income which is vital to our ability to make the music happen. Please, we ask your support in not electronically reproducing Olivia albums. Invite your friends to buy the records through local stores or directly from Olivia. Thank you!"

The recording industry is particularly vulnerable to the constant new influx of recording techniques. This creates a myriad of problems for artists and their labels. The smaller labels and recording artists are always the hardest hit; they have less money to experiment, and will suffer the greatest financial losses. Larger (mainstream) labels are often subsidized by larger, diversified corporations which can afford temporary losses—even in the millions of dollars.

On the other side of the argument,

there are people—including some law-makers—who feel that the recording industry must adjust to and live with the fact that home taping is a widespread reality. The major record companies, reluctant to "adjust," are pushing for a heavy tax (around \$1.50) on each blank DAT tape sold, the proceeds to be given to the record labels and artists to compensate for the loss in profits.

The group Musicians For DAT and several independent labels feel that this new technology offers an innovative professional product that will enhance the quality of music at an eventually affordable price. The jazz-oriented GRP label will be the first in the U.S. to release titles on DAT.

There are people in the music industry who feel that we aren't ready to market DAT. The record industry is just barely starting to market CDs at this point. Interestingly enough, though, when Redwood released three CDs last November—including Holly Near's *Don't Hold Back*—the CD sales accounted for 13 percent of Redwood's total sales for 1987. According to Joanie Shoemaker, Redwood doesn't anticipate that DAT taping will hurt them much more than cassette home taping does now. At this time, Redwood doesn't plan to release anything on DAT, but is more focused on getting some of their back titles onto CD.

Another unsettling industry reality is that the release of LPs is dwindling. *Rolling Stone* predicts that LPs will be "dead" within a few years. "It's pretty frightening," says Joanie. She noted that some albums sell more in their second or third year of release, but that small label titles don't have a long enough shelf life to get to that point. All independents, in and out of women's music, will be hurt by having fewer LPs in stock.

Ladyslipper, in addition to being a small record label, is a mail order distributor. They have the most comprehensive (in the world) catalog of recordings by women. Laurie Fuchs says she definitely sees the phasing out of LPs happening. 1987 was the first year in Ladyslipper's 12-year history that cassettes outsold LPs. She says they're not seeing a lot of CD action yet, but expects it to start, and agrees that the record stores are getting rid of LPs—especially slow-moving titles. Consequently, a lot of women's music albums are being removed from the shelves, and are not being replaced with the CD version. Laurie's reaction to the new DAT format is that women's music companies are so small that it must be creating a lot of fear and confusion: "Oh God, here comes another

format. How do we deal with *this one*?"

Elena Jordan of Labrys Records says that the vinyl making process has been demystified for a lot of artists over the years, and adding the CD and DAT formats makes the manufacturing of a recording much more complex. There's already a lot of confusion about the marketing process. An artist not only has to think about the hows of putting her recording out on vinyl, but has cassettes, CDs, and now DAT to think about. Elena says that until there's more literature explaining all of these new formats—including more information on the marketability of each—people might shy away from doing anything but putting out vinyl and cassettes. The resources available, like the classic *How to Make and Sell Your Own Record* by Diane Sward Rappaport, will soon seem outdated, and as of now there's no updated version or a replacement by anyone else.

You may already have heard about DAT. But in preparing for this article, we talked with many people and no one except the labels and people in the industry had any idea of what it was. Even most of the performers had only "vaguely heard of it." By the end of this year, however, we expect a lot more people will be talking about DAT and taking pro and con positions on whether this new technological innovation will ultimately help or hurt the recording industry. ●

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Karen Kane has been in the studio business since 1970. She was the first successful independent recording engineer in the Boston area, male or female. She has engineered and/or produced more than 60 albums. Cris Newport is a DJ for two Boston radio stations. She is also a lighting designer, writer, and part-time apprentice engineer.

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LÁADAN

LÁADAN UPDATE

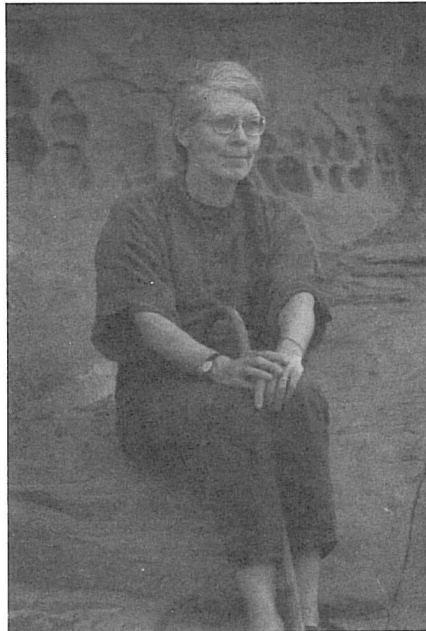
By Suzette Haden Elgin

So much has been happening with Láadan over the past six months that I am having trouble keeping up with it all, and an update right now -- before the news doubles in volume -- seems indicated. I continue to be astonished at the steady flow of queries, letters, descriptions of work in progress, and suggested new words for the language.

The second edition of *A First Dictionary and Grammar of Láadan* is out now from SF3. Diane Martin did the editing and production, and the result is fan-dangous. The first edition was handsome, but the new one is magnificent, and much longer than the first. It has the introductory material and the grammar lessons from the first edition; it has an expanded English-to-Láadan dictionary; it has the reverse dictionary we needed so badly (Láadan-to-English), prepared by Karen Robinson; it has a set of Láadan lessons originally published in *HOT WIRE*.

And it has some additional readings with translations, prepared by me, about which I have already heard complaints; the problem is that the readings are selections from the King James Bible. Some women who consider themselves Jewish or Christian find the translations satisfying--but others find them shocking, if not blasphemous. Women who do not perceive themselves as part of either religious group complain that they represent bias on my part. I have been explaining--in letters, on the telephone, and in the cassette tape that I prepared to go with the new book--that I chose the King James selections deliberately, for two reasons. First, I know no other text as militantly patriarchal as the King James, and it therefore serves as a diagnostic probe for areas of English in which the perceptions of women are cut off by the language. And second, I had needed to do some of

LÁADAN: "The language of those who perceive," a language constructed to express the perceptions of women. This column presents commentary and translation-lessons for those interested in learning to use the language.



the pieces as part of the writing of my novel *Native Tongue II: The Judas Rose*, where they are an essential part of the plot.

The Láadan Network (which was announced a year or more ago, and which fell through when the woman who had volunteered to organize it became seriously ill) has at last gotten underway. The first *Láadan Network Directory* went out in March to about 50 people. It had the necessary information to put people in touch with one another--name, address, phone, major Láadan interest, etc. In addition, it had some materials sent to me by Network members--poems, theological/theological items, and some new words and grammatical bits. The members paid \$5 to join for calendar year 1988, and there's enough of their money left to let me send out a supplement in November with directory entries for those who joined too late to make it into the first one. If I have other material, I'll include as much of it as the remaining funds will copy and mail. Network members are scattered...not only around this continent but around the world...but at least they

can contact one another now by mail or phone.

Many colleges have been using the *Native Tongue* books as course materials--primarily for Women's Studies, anthropology, science fiction lit, and linguistics--and some of them have added material on Láadan as well. Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania did an honors course (taught by Mary Kay Badami) that was unusual and innovative...the students read the materials and discussed them in class, and then they sent me their questions and comments; I responded with audio cassettes and videotapes. The list of materials available in Láadan is growing longer, and I have had letters describing many projects that are still in progress. A science fiction anthology is now being put together calling for stories that use the concept of Láadan--this book is with a commercial publisher and entirely independent of me. And there is much more that I could report if space and time allowed.

Along with all this there has been a certain amount of controversy. The major factions raising objections are people who are angry (1) because I have included some word(s)--or some concept(s)--in the Láadan dictionary; (2) because I have *not* included some word(s)--or concept(s)--in the Láadan dictionary; (3) because they disagree with me as to what a language to express women's perceptions should be like, and have an alternative proposal of their own; (4) because I don't spend more of my time working with the language, promoting it, etc.; (5) because they feel that a project like Láadan diverts energy from the critical task of bringing about change in *existing* languages; (6) because I

continued on page 59

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Suzette Haden Elgin, a Doctor of Linguistics, has taught at the University of California, specializing in Native American languages. She has written numerous linguistic texts in addition to 'The Gentle Art of Verbal Self-Defense' series and 11 science fiction and fantasy novels (which include the 'Native Tongue' books).*

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THE TENTH MUSE

SAPPHO: A WOMAN'S PLACE

By Jorjet Harper

Sappho must have written many songs that were sung as part of ancient Greek marriage ceremonies. We know that of the nine books of her work compiled by scholars at the great library at Alexandria, one entire book was devoted to her wedding songs. About a dozen short fragments from these songs have survived to the present day.

Wedding ceremonies probably differed somewhat from place to place in ancient Greece, but it was usual for the wedding day ritual to begin with sacrifices to Zeus and Hera—the "married couple" god and goddess—and a formal feast held in the house of the bride's father. The bride, veiled, sat with her maiden friends, until she was "presented" to the bridegroom. In the second part of the ritual, the bride and groom rode in a chariot in a torchlight procession to the house of the groom's father, signifying the symbolic as well as the actual transfer of the bride from one household to the other. The third part of the ceremony took place there in the evening, as the bride and groom were led, amidst the sound of flutes and singing, to the "bridal chamber." Finally, songs would be sung—usually by women and perhaps all night long—outside their room after the couple had retired.

Music was an integral part of the ritual. Different types of songs—solemn, sad, joyful, humorous—were sung as the ceremony progressed, and Sappho wrote songs in varying meters and styles, suitable for the appropriate stages in the proceedings. These songs were certainly performed at actual weddings, probably by Sappho herself, her female pupils, and sometimes by a choir.

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.



G. Richter/Metropolitan Museum of Art

Greek bride transferred in a chariot from her father's to her husband's house, circa 540 B.C.

WHY MARRIAGE SONGS?

When I began studying Sappho's work, it disturbed me to find, amid so many poems expressing love and desire between women, this group of poems praising brides and grooms, celebrating marriage. I found it hard to reconcile her passionate love for women with songs that bestowed non-critical, non-political approval on what has been, historically, the quintessential patriarchal institution. It's not that I expected Sappho to be some kind of feminist—after all, the woman lived 2500 years ago in a tribal culture—but the unqualified praise of marriage seemed inconsistent with the rest of her woman-focus.

Sappho herself was reputed to have been married, and one ancient author claims her husband's name was Kerkolas.

It appears, though, that Kerkolas was invented by an Athenian playwright over a century after Sappho's death, when many plays were written with Sappho as a stock character [see *HOT WIRE*, July 1987]. We must assume, however, that Sappho did have a husband at some time in her life, since marriage was the fate of virtually every woman in that era. This makes it all the more significant to consider that in her surviving poems there is no mention at all of this phantomlike husband, whatever his name may have been, though we have fragments that mention her daughter Cleis by name, and her mother. Not only that, but no references we have from the ancient literature describing any of the lost poems mention any songs addressed to a husband, while she addressed numerous songs to specific women. We even have a fragment in which Sappho vividly describes her jealousy as she watches a woman she loves sitting with a man.

So why would Sappho write wedding songs celebrating heterosexual nuptial bliss? First of all, it was common for poets to be hired for official functions and ritual occasions, of which marriage may have been the most common. It is quite possible that a good deal of Sappho's income came from commissioned wedding songs and performances. Secondly, as a teacher of young unmarried women, marriage must have been something that absorbed their thoughts. In a very damaged fragment of one of her songs, Sappho recounts how she reassured a young woman before her wedding night. And of course one could argue that just because you are emotionally centered in women doesn't mean you disapprove of marriage between men and women. But given the reality of what marriage must have meant to a woman in 600 B.C., and the emotional pain Sappho expresses when a woman she loves must leave her, this argument does not take us far.

What sense can we, then, as modern day feminists and lesbians, make of Sappho's wedding songs? To get a sympathetic understanding of these fragments, and to see how unique Sappho's

perspective was at the time, we must look at the social context in which they were written.

MARRIAGE AND MISOGYNY

The origins of the institution of marriage are not known, and are still widely debated by sociologists and anthropologists. But many aspects of marriage rituals suggest that it arose from capture and enslavement, inextricably intertwined with the roots of misogyny. Two hundred years before Sappho, the Greek poet Hesiod said that women were a "necessary evil" in order for a man to obtain sons. Certainly marriage as a means for men to own women by legal right and control their progeny had become established long before Sappho's era.

People who see marriage as a celebration of the joining of two souls are painting a very 20th century patina over an ancient slave institution, and like it or not, they are liable to find that vestiges of that oppression remain. How much the idea of marriage perpetuates restrictive, oppressive modes of thinking about relationships in the lesbian community remains an open question: many women would like to have their commitment to a partner legally recognized—including the social and financial benefits accorded straight couples—while some women think same-sex marriage, monogamy, and all its attendant behaviors merely mimic patriarchal modes of relating. Whatever your personal perspective on this issue, the enlightened, "modern" view of marriage—straight or gay—as a true partnership and sharing of life experiences mutes its infamous history. As we know, the virtual slavery of wife to husband, the strain of continual childbearing, and the disparagement of women and their labors goes on in parts of the world today much as it must have thousands of years ago.

One can see the sexist double standard in many accounts by male sociologists who study the subject of marriage. On one hand they will staunchly maintain that marriage is a ubiquitous institution and a "social contract" between two individuals (though often arranged not by the individuals themselves but by their families) that is essential for the preservation of the social fabric and the raising of children. At the same time, they will make it quite clear that in practice, once married, the man "owns" the wife, even, in some cultures, to the point of being able to "lend" her to other men if he chooses. And in sanctions against intercourse outside or before marriage, these

authors concede that it is the woman who is almost universally the one who is punished. As feminists well know, the "social contract" posited in such scholarly and abstract terms has been, in historical fact, for many women a harsh and awful fate, the equivalent of a "contract" taken out on her life. It is also appalling to contemplate (though no one ever seems to bring up this point) the degree to which damage to the physical and emotional integrity of homosexual women must be compounded under a system in which men possess absolute, exclusive, unquestioned and unquestionable power over their bodies and lives.

In ancient Greece, "marriage was considered a woman's sole purpose, the height of her achievement," says Sappho translator Josephine Balmer. At the same time, misogyny flourished. "In the work of male poets such as Simonides and Hesiod, wives are characterized as shrewish, lazy, greedy, and promiscuous. The only positive advantage of 'acquiring' a wife were the heirs she might bear and the work she would do, provided she was carefully trained and her disposition proved suitably malleable."

WOMEN IN ATHENS

In fifth century Athens, the "Golden Age" of Greece, all women were held in virtual slavery. The sexes were strictly segregated, with girls cut off from all formal education and intellectual pursuits. Adult women—unless they were slaves, prostitutes, or concubines—were kept behind bolted double doors in the "women's quarters" of private houses, and sometimes these were locked, sealed, and guarded. One can imagine how effective this was in keeping women ignorant and stunted. Plato said—in arguing against more freedom for women—that women were "accustomed to live in concealment and darkness," that some lived so "properly" that they were ashamed to be seen, even by members of their own households. He claimed these women would not want to go about in public, and would fight for their "right" to remain in hiding.

The average age for an Athenian man at the time of his first marriage was 30, with a bride of 14 or 15. "Attic authors make no bones about the purpose behind the premature marriage for girls," says Eva Keuls, author of *Reign of the Phallus*: the younger the bride, the more easily she could be controlled. According to Keuls, Socrates asked one husband, "Didn't you marry her as young as possible so that she would have seen and heard as little as possible?" The poet Hipponax, who lived

only one generation after Sappho, said, "A woman brings to a man but two happy days. The first is the day he marries her; the second is the day he puts her into her grave." This is an especially chilling comment in light of the fact that in ancient Greece, as in other parts of the world, marriage often ended with the death of the woman in childbirth, and the young age of an Athenian bride greatly increased the probability that premature motherhood would lead to such a death.

Needless to say, male children were held in much higher esteem than female children. "Women were trained to define their merit in terms of the motherhood of sons," says Keuls, "and to anticipate the considerable likelihood of death in childbirth as a glorious martyrdom."

LESBIAN WOMEN

Women on the island of Lesbos fared considerably better than their Athenian sisters of a century later. Much less is known about the particulars of women's status on Lesbos, but it is certain that they enjoyed a degree of freedom that the Athenian women of Athens' "Golden Age" could only dream of. The very existence of schools like Sappho's, to train young women in the arts, shows that Lesbian women were held in comparatively high esteem. Women and men were not as segregated, and women were able to join in public functions. Marriage was likely to have been entered upon at an older, more suitable age for childbearing. The role of the wife was likely to have been given substantially more respect.

Though Sappho does not question marriage in the fragments of her wedding poems, much less protest against it, she may be attempting to keep light and happy and "civilized" an occasion in which the young women she taught and loved could be either ignored or taken for granted. "Sappho does not reject or even criticize the accepted place of women within her society," says Balmer. "But the tension between male and female experience implicit in her poems reflects the changing status of women. In reality, this tension was resolved by the devaluation of women and a restriction of their freedom," which culminated in the kind of total repression that occurred in Athens in the following century.

Sappho's marriage songs praise both
continued on page 56

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Jorjet Harper writes fiction and non-fiction. She is the arts and entertainment editor at 'Outlines,' the gay and lesbian monthly news-magazine.*

ON STAGE & OFF

BETSY ROSE: TIME OUT FOR HEALING

By Laura Post

Betsy Rose's work is celebrating the creativity, community, and compassion of human beings through music. As a singer/songwriter, teacher, and activist, she has touched the feminist and other political communities with her visions and energy. A leading voice of the 1970s, her albums *Sweet Sorcery* (1980) and *Live From The Very Front Row* (1983) were critically acclaimed and engendered enthusiastic audience response.

Beginning in 1986, however, many of her followers began to wonder at—and mourn—her absence from touring and recording. Betsy Rose had taken time off from performing, with no clear intention of ever returning to center stage. She had become overwhelmed by the "momentum is motion" fallacy, but unlike many of us who find ourselves trapped, Betsy Rose found the courage within herself to let go of the structures created around her. She moved from Massachusetts—where she had lived since the age of 10—to her native West Coast to study and grow.

Rediscovering the feminist principles of spiral, circular, and other nonlinear motions through life, reaffirming her own strengths, and redefining her needs, she returned with a new album, *Wings Against The Sky*, having come to a remarkable new peace with her work.

Through the years, Betsy has toured the U.S. and Canada, playing in small cafes, in larger arenas as the National Women's Music Festival (1984, 1985), and at such events as the 1984 Massachusetts N.O.W. conference. Her folk and feminist issues expanded to include peace, Central American solidarity, and Rainbow Unity agendas, and she developed progressive teaching forums to help workers for social change to find new resources for their personal revitalization and empowerment.

With her ever-widening circles of influence, Betsy's healing of others from her own formidable inner resources took

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



Irene Young

"It was time to stop trying to save the world with my art."

its toll. She began to slowly sense and acknowledge her exhaustion with the process. "There are certain ways that creativity gets stuck when one is in the public eye, trying to hold attention. I just began to realize that the whole joy of taking risks was getting lost," she says. "I was no longer able to feel my inner life to stay deep and growing, and I had no inner self to create from."

It was during the period of impending burnout that Betsy became aware that addictive and compulsive patterns were affecting her relationship to performing. Quick to recognize that many people in the public eye are plagued by the discrepancy between expectations of them and the reality of what they can give, she is sympathetic to those performers who have trouble with drugs or alcohol.

As she began her own recovery process, she experienced a radical shift in her experience as a performer. "I was starting to get healthy," Betsy says. "It was time to stop trying to save the world with my art and trying to please. I didn't need so much public worth, and I began to feel

uncomfortable onstage, since I had lost all my defenses which prevent stage fright."

Wings Against The Sky is a testament to spiritual renewal in many ways. One song on Betsy's new album, entitled "Let Her Go," was written out of the grieving for her sister's drug-related death several years ago.

Several titles witness Betsy's revitalized musical assault on the political ills and evils of the world. "Open The Door Again" welcomes weary freedom fighters from Latin America into the sanctuary of our country, and "In a Circle of Light" details the release and strength in harmonizing voices. The most personal song, "House Full of Secrets," represents the laying to rest of many of Betsy Rose's personal ghosts, and provides her audience with a strong lesson through courageous example: "In the house full of secrets/With curtains of doubt/You may run away early/or stay much too long/But you're trying to get out..."

Betsy answered the "personal and family pull to California" and decided to take a year off to obtain a Master of Arts

at the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality. "I moved out of touring and let my career go. I acted as if I were done with it, and it was a conscious decision," she says. "I was letting go of my addiction."

Betsy describes her shifting gears as "stepping off a cliff. It was a great experience. But, by spring, I was panicked. School was ending, and I didn't have a plan. I felt trusting, though; everything else had gone well. I spent time meditating, painting, writing, and talking to others," she says. "Very slowly, a voice emerged within me. It said 'you need to document the work you've already done before you can move on.' I had written songs since the last album, and I had a sense of sitting on my own resources."

Betsy made a commitment to release a new album, to produce a cassette of music by and for children [*As Strong As Anyone Can Be* (1980) was her first cassette of children's music], and to record her East/West musical collaboration with Vietnamese Zen poet and peacemaker Thich Nhat Hanh. "My resolve launched me back into the fray of the music business, and I understood the wisdom of 'What do you do after a breakthrough? If you worked in the stable beforehand, you work in the stable again' (Meister Eckhart). I was a musician, I am a musician, and I learned that I had needed to change my inside not my outside structures."

As Betsy Rose re-established her routines after her time out, she knew that she needed to heal herself with her music as well as healing her audiences, and that she needed to make time for "deep conversation about the world and people's souls," she says. "I wanted to not be coming from empty but from juice, and not from habit. My songs had remained powerful even when I was feeling empty, but I wanted to come to it with overflow."

Although Betsy labors over her lyrics, she recognizes that sometimes "the most powerful songs come out whole." She says she wrote "House Full of Secrets" virtually "in a trance, in a burst of years of inner process finally coming together in a poetic form. I had reached a powerful place in me, told my own story honestly, and found that I told many other people's stories as well. It is often true that when one goes personal and deep, one also goes universal," she says.

Unlike many of Betsy's other songs—which weave together piano, guitar, and voice in traditional, simple styling—"House Full of Secrets" [included on the soundsheet in this issue of *HOT WIRE*] is dramatic with roving viola, haunting bass, and ominous percussion. It com-

bines abstraction with blunt detail and is personal, political, and perhaps the most vivid and compelling account of childhood in a dysfunctional family on record: "...And it clings to your body/Your voice and your dreams/'Til you find that you're still keeping secrets/And you never feel clean/They smile when they're angry/They joke when they're sad/There were sudden explosions/And good times gone bad/You're caught in the crossfire/Like a kite in a storm/You learn how to change with the weather/But you never feel warm...And they hide it in bottles/They hide it in food/In jovial teasing/And sudden dark moods/Public opinion becomes God on the throne/And children learn early to show a good face/And bear secrets alone/In the house full of secrets..."

Betsy's personal cry for freedom becomes a call to all who are struggling to break free of old family patterns.

"...Tell my sisters and my brothers/Who carry this load/We can't run away/But we have to be home/I'm spillin' my secrets/My back is to the wall/I'm savin' my own skin/Let the house of cards fall..."

In the November 1987 *HOT WIRE*,

Betsy wrote an article entitled "In Search of the Cutting Edge Part One: Asking Questions," soliciting reader feedback regarding what new cultural events/forms have whetted appetites and curiosity recently. Part Two—summarizing conversations and letters on this topic—will follow in the upcoming November issue. She has asked, and answered, many questions in altering her own momentum, and is discovering ways to return to her career without being trapped by it. She has evolved from what she calls an "over-responsible and serious" musician who saw music as a way to "save the world" to a more content, peaceful woman who appreciates and can express her unencumbered "love of the singing and the love of you," in the lead song of her new album.

Her sabbatical has ended, and Betsy Rose has made a cyclic journey. "I'll always be an artist," she says. "I enjoy this fun in singing." ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Laura Post heads a progressive feminist company, Lady Phoenix Productions, committed to the promotion of women's music and culture in the Bay Area.

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MULLING IT OVER

THE POLITICS OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

By Ellen Seeling

I guess it's hard for people to see what they're not looking for.

A woman approached me recently, as I stood waiting for the elevator in my apartment building, horns on my back. "Still singing?" she asked sweetly.

I was a little confused. "I'm a trumpet player," I replied.

"Oh," she said. "Well, I saw you last week at the Lone Star Cafe with your band. Great show."

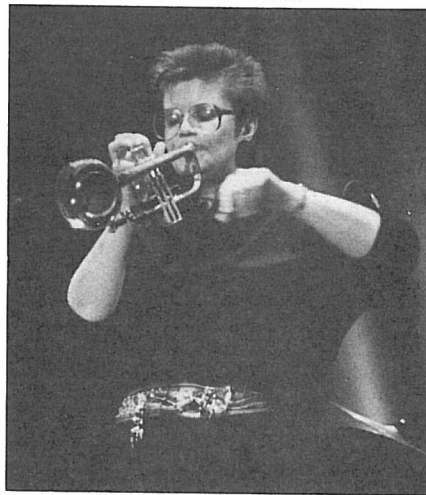
"Thanks," I said, the lightbulb in my brain flashing on. "I'm glad you liked it."

You are probably now as confused as the two of us were. But it is not really so unusual for someone in an audience to watch a woman play the trumpet for over an hour and still think she is a singer. After all, women in music are singers, right?

Let's face it, in the real world, women instrumentalists are just not taken seriously. We can play in our school bands, or maybe even get into college as performance majors. But when it comes to the real deal—making a living—you may as well try out for the Dallas Cowboys.

However, this does provide women with an opportunity to make a dramatic statement by becoming visible in this largely male occupation of playing instruments (especially instruments like drums or trumpet). To the mainstream audience, the image of an instrumentalist is so male that many myths about women can be shattered by the performances of women virtuosi. Their care and feeding are essential to the struggle of women artists, and therefore to the women's movement in general.

How many women instrumentalists can you name who have their own major label album deals? A few come to mind (Marian McPartland, Carla Bley, Jane Ira Bloom), but they are critically scarce. Do you remember how many women players were featured in the days-long Live Aid concerts? (I don't recall seeing *any*; maybe I missed one or two.) And recently, of the



Marcy J. Hochberg

Ellen Seeling: "Lacking words, can instrumental music convey those feelings of pride, solidarity, urgency, and purpose to an audience?"

"100 Greatest Albums of the Last 20 Years" selected by *Rolling Stone* magazine in its 20th Anniversary Issue, only four were by women—and all were singers. Get the picture?

Please don't misunderstand me—I have nothing against singers or vocal music. It's just that I'm a trumpet player, and would like to have the same opportunities available to me as my warbling friends. After all, I've worked just as hard, studied just as long, paid my dues, and have as much to say as any musician who uses her vocal chords instead of an instrument.

And as an audience member, I love watching women play instruments, especially the instruments that require real physical strength and endurance. I get the same rush as I do from watching women compete in track or skiing. I would love to see women instrumentalists perform frequently, but in spite of the fact that I live in one of the cultural centers of the world (New York City), these performances are a rarity.

Having been a part of the women's music scene for more than a decade (I first recorded with Isis in 1975 on the now-defunct Buddah label), I'd like to think that

women artists don't face the same obstacles and prejudices from their enlightened sisters as they do from mainstream audiences and colleagues. But vocal music is preferred in women's music, and opportunities for instrumentalists are very limited as a result. There seems to be only minor interest in instrumental music, and little concern that what was once a very diverse artistic community has become a singer/songwriter ghetto. Assuming that this is the case (don't just take my word for it—look at recent artist signings and concert schedules), why is it so? I think we owe it to the music and to ourselves to take a hard look at this question.

In the beginning, there were a lot of women's bands on the scene. Remember Fanny, Isis, Baba Yaga, the Berkeley Women's Music Collective, BeBe K'Roche, Latin Fever, Deadly Nightshade? Those were just *some* of the recorded bands in the mid '70s. Several—like Fanny, Isis, and Latin Fever—had their albums released on mainstream labels).

Instrumental, or at least largely instrumental, music on this scale does not exist in women's music in 1988, nor has it for some time. Although some of the earlier groups incorporated vocals to a greater or lesser degree in their music, there was always acres of room for instruments. As I peruse my recent record catalogs and festival and concert advertising, I still see some bands—but almost all of them serve as back-up vehicles for the frontline vocals.

There are many reasons why instrumental groups have suffered a steady decline as women's music matures. Understanding this decline may shed light on the state of instrumental music in the women's community and address questions regarding the industry, the audience, and the artists.

As far as the industry is concerned, the main obstacle to sustaining large acts (which bands or ensembles usually are) is financial. Plane fares, hotel rooms, salaries, and equipment all cost money. For example, to bring the seven-piece version of DEUCE to Michigan can cost anywhere

MULLING IT OVER is a forum for discussion of the connections between art and politics.

from \$2500-\$3500, depending on airfares. This figure includes salaries and transportation only, and does not reflect what the festival must spend for housing, food, ground transportation, equipment rental, and other items related to presenting the performance.

This obviously affects the mainstream music industry as well, and is just a fact of life. Audiences are smaller in 1988, and it's difficult for many promoters to meet high production costs for instrumental groups with shrinking concert receipts. In other words, why should I put out \$\$\$\$\$ for this band when I can get this duo for \$? This one obstacle dictates hard terms to the producer, who must make artistic choices based on business realities.

It's also very expensive to record an instrumental ensemble, not only because of its size (and accompanying payroll), but also because it requires a large studio, high-tech equipment, salaries for arrangers, etc. Recording pay, as set by the local musicians' union, is based on a

for a production company to stay in business, it must produce artists whose draw is a known quantity. It cannot gamble too often on new artists who may lose money. But it walks a tightrope between this and watching its audience whither and die from lack of stimulation.

Happy exceptions to this trend away from instrumental music are some of the larger festivals, particularly the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival with its acoustic stage and eclectic programming.

While artist selection based on production costs versus attendance figures represents the bottom line to the industry, audiences cast their supporting votes every time they buy a concert ticket or a sound recording. And audiences want the same thing—to be entertained.

On a more profound level, audiences in the women's community want to be moved spiritually and emotionally, and the politics of feminism plays an important role in this.

Since the women's movement is a social, cultural, and political force, the mu-

is very real and very important. But, lacking words, can instrumental music also convey those feelings of pride, solidarity, urgency, and purpose to an audience? I think so, especially when the nascent abilities of its proponents are questioned by the mass culture in such an elemental fashion.

Or, to put it simply, an audience of feminists can get a real charge out of listening to a woman play her ass off.

In a live situation, the performance of instrumental music can have a highly visual impact on the listener. The beauty of watching a virtuoso create sound from a conglomeration of wood, brass, strings, or electronic circuitry has sensuality, athletic grace, and romantic appeal. The musician and the instrument appear as one; the years of solitary preparation command silent respect. The theater of instrumental music is subtle and understated, yet powerful. The music flows through change after change, the performer experiences the sound as naturally as breathing.

"To me, the greatest turn-on is seeing a woman handle her instrument and the performance situation with ease and assurance, making it look simple, and communicating irrefutably that women artists are as strong, skilled, and creative as any male counterpart."

three-hour session, and ranges from \$125-\$300 per musician per session. State of the art recording studios—and a large instrumental group would need a 16 or 24 track studio—can cost from \$75-\$200 per hour and more, with fees for engineers, producers, and arrangers not included. And when the album is released, there is the financial burden of promoting the new recording with a tour. (Record companies are very concerned that their artists tour as much as possible, because that translates directly into record sales).

Also, from an industry standpoint, it may be difficult to conduct business with a group of musicians, especially if the personnel or the leadership keeps changing. Instrumental acts can rarely afford business managers.

Although the women's music industry is much more sensitive to the artist and to the audience than is the music industry at large, it cannot survive if it does not make at least enough money to keep producers from going bankrupt. In order

music must embody all of these qualities. This implies that the audience has a responsibility to educate itself about the movement and its representative art forms in order to participate fully in the effort. One could go further, and suggest that women's music audiences should also be responsible for knowing something about the technical and traditional aspects of the music they are enjoying. For a community that prizes equality and values women's work, this is a legitimate expectation.

It's pretty easy to understand the appeal of vocal music within the climate of any activist struggle. Vocal music has a long and honored tradition, and has been significant in almost every grassroots movement in this country (labor, civil rights, disarmament, environmental, gay rights, etc.). The melodies are a dynamic way to verbalize the objective of the movement, serve as a rallying cry at marches and demonstrations, and unite its comrades in sound. This phenomenon

It is the ultimate drama.

Assemble several highly-skilled players in an ensemble performance and you add the complexities of communication, cooperation, interplay, and sacrifice to the on-stage mix, much as in a team sport. To me, the greatest turn-on is seeing a woman handle her instrument and the performance situation with ease and assurance, making it look simple, and communicating irrefutably that women artists are as strong, skilled, and creative as any male counterpart. *continued on next page*

ABOUT THE WRITER: Ellen Seeling has been a professional trumpet player for more than 20 years. She attended the University of Indiana (Bloomington) on scholarship, and was the first woman to receive a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies from IU. In addition to leading DEUCE with Jean Fineberg, she has been featured with Laura Nyro, Sister Sledge, Luther Vandross, Ray Barretto, Chic, Joe Cocker, Teresa Trull and Margie Adam, among others.

This image can move powerfully even a remotely accessible audience. I've seen mixed crowds at New York clubs stand and scream for more after performances by the likes of jazz pianist Joanne Brackeen, the Harp Band, or classical guitarist Sharon Isbin. A largely feminist audience can surely do no less.

It's important politically for women to develop virtuosity in their art, whatever it may be. In the women's community, where instrumental music is often perceived as male-identified, it's crucial that young women instrumentalists are not discouraged from realizing their potential as performers. In the highly closed and competitive world of the mainstream music industry, it's practically impossible for many women players to survive without support from their community. Indeed, the professional environment is such that merely existing as an instrumentalist is, for any woman, a highly political statement in itself.

I've worked for many years in two worlds. Part of my time is spent performing for feminist audiences (with DEUCE and with other women artists, such as the Harp Band, the Carolyn Brandy Band, Isis, Latin Fever, and Debbie Fier), and part is spent working with men. I'm often the only woman in a group of 15-20 musi-

cians, sometimes traveling with them for days or weeks. I can only describe the difference between these two worlds as bizarre. It's difficult to exaggerate how much the women's community has meant to me—it's been a refuge from being treated by my colleagues as though I were a freak of nature, or a threat to their existence. I sometimes worry that I've become so thick-skinned from working with all-male bands that I no longer possess an artists' sensibilities, or that my creativity has been compromised by constantly being on the defensive.

When I began to get some notice as a player in high school, my (male) band director had an enlightening encounter following a performance by our stage band. We had just finished winning a first place in AAA competition, and the (male) director from a rival school stopped by the band room to extend his congratulations.

"Too bad about your little lead trumpet player, though," he said, shaking hands with the boys while he eyed me hesitantly.

"What do you mean? She played great!" said my teacher.

"Yeah, but why waste the experience on her? You know a girl can't really make it."

Women's music must jealously guard its power to demonstrate possibilities to young women performers. They *can* make it, and toward this end, role models are crucial. When we were coming up there were none visible; I listened to Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Herbie Hancock to learn how to play, knowing all the time that something was not right. Now, young women can take direction from Emily Remler, Jane Bloom, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Kay Gardner, Barbara Higbie and many others. Women as role models make the difference between young players realizing their true potential (because others have), and doubting whether it's even possible.

Women's music has a responsibility to the instrumentalists who have given much to its continuing growth and influence, and have much more to offer. It's time women's music reaffirmed its commitment to opportunity for all women, and gave increasing support to those musicians who personify the goals of the movement.

Let's explore all of women's music more profoundly, and discover the soul of its sound, the color and shape of its theater, and the passion of its performers. The rewards are great—all we need to do is see what we haven't been looking for. ●

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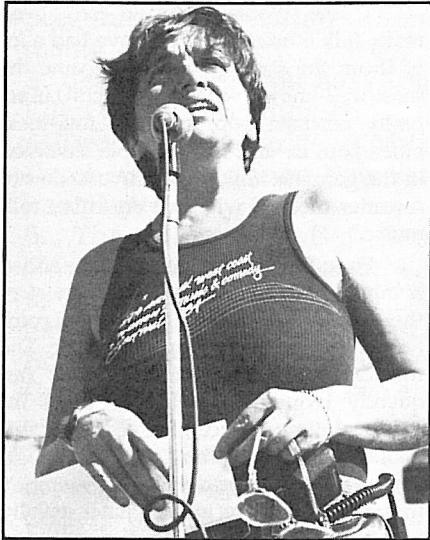
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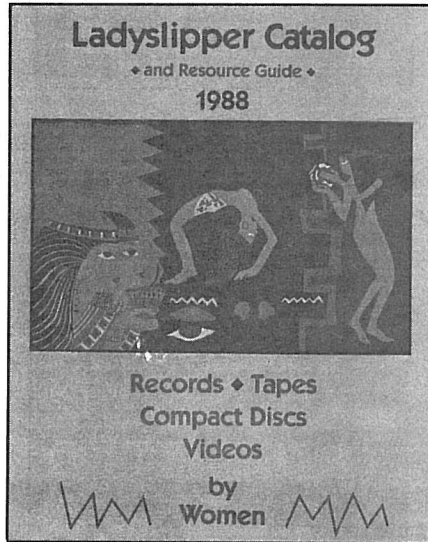
The Third Annual READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

In the November 1987 issue we asked our readers to nominate women who have made outstanding contributions to the women's music and culture network. In the March 1988 issue we printed the names and accomplishments of every nominee submitted by the readers, asking readers to write in votes. Plaques were awarded at the AWMAC Women's Music Industry Conference (at the National Women's Music Festival) to this year's Readers' Choice Award winners.



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FAVORITES

This survey of favorites is included each year for fun and to give us a closer look at the tastes of our readers (so we know who and what you are most interested in seeing in the next year's issues). Readers were encouraged to make selections based completely on the basis of their personal favorites; this is in no way intended to be a list of "bests." Results of last year's voting can be found in the July 1987 issue. Women are listed in order of most write-in votes received.

VOCALIST: Teresa Trull, Cris Williamson, Rhannon, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Holly Near.
GROUP/BAND: DEUCE, The Fabulous Dyketones, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Robin Flower's Band, Party Line Dance Band.
SONGWRITER: Cris Williamson, Meg Christian, Holly Near, Alix Dobkin, Lucie Blue/Ferron.
BASS: Carrie Barton, Diane Lindsay, Joy Julks, Suzanne Vincenza, Jan Martinelli/Barbara Cobb.
PERCUSSION: Edwina Lee Tyler, Carolyn Brandy, Nuru Dafina Pili Abena, Nydia 'Liberty' Mata, Debbie Fier.
DRUMS: Barbara Borden, Annette Aguilar, Bonnie Johnson, Cam Davis, Jake Lampert.
ELECTRIC GUITAR: Sherry Shute, June Millington, Terry Garthwaite, Tret Fure, Jackie Stander.

ACOUSTIC GUITAR: Meg Christian, Mimi Fox, Ann Reed, Betsy Lippitt, Sharon Isbin/Ferron.
KEYBOARDS: Adrienne Torf, Julie Homi, Barbara Higbie, Sue Fink, Margie Adam.
INSTRUMENTALIST: Barbara Higbie, Jean Fineberg & Ellen Seeling/DEUCE, Kay Gardner, Saphron Obois, Robin Flower.
WIND INSTRUMENT: Jean Fineberg, Ellen Seeling, Kay Gardner, Michelle Isam, Saphron Obois.
COMIC: Kate Clinton, Robin Tyler, Linda Moakes, Lynn Lavner, Sue Fink.
EMCEE: Kate Clinton, Robin Tyler, Therese Edell, Alix Dobkin, Margaret Sloane-Hunter.
NEW PERFORMER: Lucie Blue Tremblay, The Washington Sisters, Labrys, The Dance Brigade, Sherry Shute/Lynn Lavner.

ALL TIME FAVORITE PERFORMER: Alix Dobkin, Cris Williamson, Holly Near, Heather Bishop, Teresa Trull.

CURRENT SONG (last two years): "These Women"--Alix Dobkin, "Rosalie"--Teresa Trull, "Seduced"--Heather Bishop, "Marie"--Laura Berkson, "Understated"--The Washington Sisters.

ALL TIME FAVORITE SONG (as performed by): "The Woman In Your Life"--Alix Dobkin, "Sweet Woman"--Cris Williamson, "Leaping (Lesbians)"--Sue Fink, "Ode To A Gym Teacher"--Meg Christian, "The Magic of Love"--Lucie Blue Tremblay.

CURRENT ALBUM (last two years): *Lucie Blue Tremblay*, *A Step Away*--Teresa Trull, *These Women/Never Been Better*--Alix Dobkin, *Wolf Moon*--Cris Williamson, *Brooklyn From the Roof*--Adrienne Torf/*A Taste of the Blues*--Heather Bishop.

ALL TIME FAVORITE ALBUM: *The Changer and the Changed*--Cris Williamson, *These Women/Never Been Better*--Alix Dobkin, *Unexpected*--Teresa Trull & Barbara Higbie, *Imagine My Surprise*--Holly Near, *I Know You Know*--Meg Christian

LIVE ENGINEER: Boden Sandstrom, Myrna Johnston, Leslie Ann Jones, Margot McFederation.

STUDIO ENGINEER: Karen Kane, Leslie Ann Jones, Joan Lowe.

ALBUM COVER: *Rainbow Path*--Kay Gardner, *Unexpected*--Teresa Trull & Barbara Higbie, *Face The Music*--Meg Christian/*Moon-circles*--Kay Gardner, *A Step Away*--Teresa Trull; *With a Little Luck*--Deidre McCalla.

FICTION BOOK: *Curious Wine*--Katherine V. Forrest, *Mists of Avalon*--Marion Zimmer Bradley, *Another Mother Tongue*--Judy Grahn, *The Color Purple*--Alice Walker, *Native Tongue I*--Suzette Haden Elgin.

NON-FICTION BOOK: *Going Out Of Our Minds*--Sonia Johnson, *Lesbian Sex*--JoAnn Loulan, *Nice Jewish Girls* anthology; *This Bridge Called My Back* anthology, *Gyn/Ecology*--Mary Daly.

PERIODICAL: *HOT WIRE*, *Lesbian Connection*, *Lesbian Ethics/Sojourner*, *Sinister Wisdom*, *Outlines*.

AUTHOR: Jane Rule, Katherine V. Forrest, Andrea Dworkin, Audre Lorde, Mary Daly.

CARTOONISTS: Alison Bechdel, Nicole Holander, Lynda Barry.

PHOTOGRAPHER: JEB, Irene Young, Susan Wilson, Marcy J. Hochberg, Toni L. Armstrong.

MOVIE/VIDEO: *Desert Hearts*, *I Hear The Mermaids Singing*, *Two in Twenty*, *One Fine Day*, *Working Girls*.

TV STAR: Sharon Gless, Susan Dey, Bea Arthur, Veronica Hamel, Tyne Daly.

FILM STAR: Lily Tomlin, Cher, Debra Winger, Glenn Close, Meryl Streep.

DIRECTOR: Kay Weaver/Martha Wheelock, Donna Deitch, Michelle Parkerson, Lizzie Borden, Laurel Chiton.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

POET: Adrienne Rich, Emily Dickinson, Pat Parker, Yvonne Zipper.

ALBUM PRODUCER: Teresa Trull, Karen Kane.

ASL INTERPRETER: Sherry Hicks Glover, Shirley Childress Johnson.

TV SHOW: *HeartBeat*, *The Golden Girls*.

MAINSTREAM ENTERTAINERS: k.d. lang, Janis Ian, Joan Armatrading.

ARTIST: Linda Herbst, Georgia O'Keefe, Judy Chicago. ●

MULLING IT OVER

THE GREAT WHITE FOLK MUSIC MYTH

By Toni L. Armstrong

It gets my goat to hear distortions or myths that are put out as "fact" about what women's music "is"—often stated by people who know little or nothing about our history or about what's happening nationwide in women's music today. One such "fact" I have discussed in my Lesbian Music HOTMIX columns [in *Outlines*, Chicago's newsmagazine] is the notion that the lyrical content of women's music is radically feminist and lesbian; a review of the lyrics of women's music albums immediately proves otherwise. [Reprints of HOTMIX columns are available; send self-addressed stamped envelope.]

Another "fact" is that women's music "is and always has been" exclusively a "white-girl-with-guitar" circuit.

This well-entrenched myth is a tribute to the effectiveness of the pioneers in women's music who fit the stereotype of acoustic singer/songwriter acts: Ginni Clemmens, Maxine Feldman, Margie Adam, Cris Williamson, Holly Near, Deidre McCalla, Heather Bishop, Kristin Lems, and particularly Meg Christian and Alix Dobkin. These women, who were not all white girls—and many others—were able to establish themselves as well-known "presences" in the infancy and childhood of women's music, partially through talent and charisma—and partially because the simpler your act is, the more economically feasible it is to take it on the road. Consequently, you develop fame more easily. Yes, single acoustic acts have received the widest recognition and the most attention over the years. Yes, many have been white women with guitars (or pianos).

But: the women's music network as a whole—the national thing we've all worked so devotedly to create and maintain—"is" much more than how successful a handful of individual musicians have become. It is a *national cultural movement*

MULLING IT OVER is a forum for discussion of the connections between art and politics.

which is the sum total of the contributions of countless women over the last two decades. When discussing what women's music "is," this must never be forgotten or minimized.

SO WHAT?

There are four main reasons why, in my opinion, it is destructive to perpetuate the myth that women's music has always been—and still is—a WGWG genre.

One: It's historically untrue. We have *always* been an incredibly diverse network in terms of musical style—a review of festival stage line-ups over the years is most educational. Re-read back issues of *Paid My Dues*, the historical women's music journal from the '70s. The mainstream media *consistently* lies to us and erases our history—witness the recent media treatment of the October March on Washington. The accomplishments of women, lesbians, and people of all ethnic and religious minorities are usually ignored or "forgotten." Let's not contribute to the distortions out of our own ignorance. It is not constructive to take the attitude, "I never heard of it, so it never existed." We're erasing our own role models. We're allowing women *from the 1970s* to become "forgotten musical foremothers." [See "The 'Me' Decade and Feminist Science Fiction" by Jean Gomoll in this issue of *HOT WIRE*.]

Two: Reinforcing this particular myth contributes to the mentality that makes us, as a national community, keep reinventing the wheel—i.e., I think I'll scream the next time I hear, "It's time we *started* to expand to include musical styles other than folk..." How about we *start* to seriously support the musicians who have, *for years now*, been doing other styles? This support begins with acknowledgement that they exist, and that their work has value. The support continues with our making the effort to see that non-acoustic and other acts have production venues within the women's music network *in addition to* festival stages.

Three: Women's music isn't even really folk music! What we have had a lot of (from the stars who have become the most well-known within our circuit) is actually acoustic pop, or light folk-rock, blues-pop, or jazz-rock. People involved in the genuine "folk music circuit" do not consider most of what we do to be "folk music."

Four: Finally, the stereotype is racist; it minimizes or just plain erases most of the contributions which women of color have *always* made to women's music. The musical styles of women of color frequently require ensemble or band instrumentation; between the economic difficulties of touring and the racism inherent in the white-dominated women's music circuit, these groups have usually not gotten the widespread recognition they deserve. *That doesn't mean they haven't existed; it doesn't mean they haven't been on albums and on festival stages and performing in their home regions from the earliest days of women's music.*

The little quiz that accompanies this article is a brief walk down memory lane, focusing on relatively well-known acts. There are *dozens* of other examples of women doing rock, Latin/salsa, classical, reggae, jazz, funk, R&B, technopop, and other forms of non-folk-style music that could have been included; I concentrated on examples that have received some national exposure throughout the years. Many appear on albums and/or have appeared on women's music festival stages. Keep in mind that I had to weed out most of the more obscure examples in order to whittle the quiz down to 30 questions.

See how much of this information *you* know. And the next time you hear or read any version of the assertion "Women's music = WGWG," take the opportunity to be an educator/historian. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Toni Armstrong Jr. has been involved with women's music since the mid '70s, as a producer, publisher, performer, and organizer.

QUIZ

1. June Millington's all-woman rock band which had mainstream chart success in the 1970s.
2. Five black a cappella singers from Washington, D.C. who play hand percussion instruments.
3. Jean Fineberg on sax/flute; Ellen Seeling on trumpet.
4. Two women's bands in which Carol McDonald from New York has played.
5. The all-women Big Band started by Jerene Jackson.
6. The instrument Linda Tillery, Jake Lampert, Barbara Borden, Bonnie Johnson and Cam Davis have played live and on record.
7. R&B/pop vocalist prominent in women's music for the past decade whose latest album was recorded in the studio where Michael Jackson did *Thriller*.
8. Five women from Seattle singing/playing/dancing music of the Shona people of Zimbabwe wearing traditional costume.
9. Instrument played by Carolyn Brandy, Vicki Randle, Debbie Fier, and Nydia "Liberty" Mata.

SCORING

27-30: You are an expert on women's music who should be consulted by everyone for factual information and perspectives.

23-26: You've paid attention to what's happening for the last two decades; you have a reasonably well-rounded knowledge.

19-22: You've got a basic understanding of women's music, but there are serious gaps in your knowledge of our history.

18 or less: You're either new to women's music or have slept through the last two decades

10. Two publications that regularly focus on non-folk-style music...one from California subtitled "The Women's Rock Mag With Bite," one from Chicago subtitled "The Journal of Women's Music & Culture."

11. Two "women's liberation rock bands" appeared on *Mountain Moving Day*, one of women's music's earliest albums. Which cities were the bands named after?

12. What the music done by Sue Fink, Adrienne Torf, Jackie Stander, and Labrys has in common.

13. Reggae/pop/political/spiritual duo with current album entitled *City Down*.

14. Leader of the instrumental Sunwomyn Ensemble, which does the midnight Acoustic Stage at the Michigan Festival.

15. The original three members of the jazz group Alive!

16. The comedy show/dance band that bills itself as "'50s rock & role music."

17. Electric rock guitarist from Canada; sometimes tours with Heather Bishop.

18. Dance band featuring Debbie Fier, Alix Dobkin, and River Lightwomoon.

19. Name of the tour in the '70s featuring more than a dozen black women, including Mary Watkins, Linda Tillery, and Pat Parker.

20. Famous woman conductor who led the women's orchestra at the Fifth National Women's Music Festival (in Champaign).

21. '70s women's band; one of Olivia Records' first albums.

22. Rocking daughter of a famous member of Sweet Honey in the Rock; has worked some-

times with band called The Agitones.

23. Leader of the percussion-based group A Piece of the World.

24. Now-defunct jazz/Latin/pop women's band from California; toured Nicaragua and included some players from Baba Yaga.

25. Old timey/country group that frequently does square dances at Michigan.

26. Olivia Records' most prominent electric guitar playing pop/rocker.

27. Women's rock band that recorded *Boston Ride* on the Galaxia label.

28. Women's ensemble combining socially-conscious dance and music; evolved from Wallflower Dance Order.

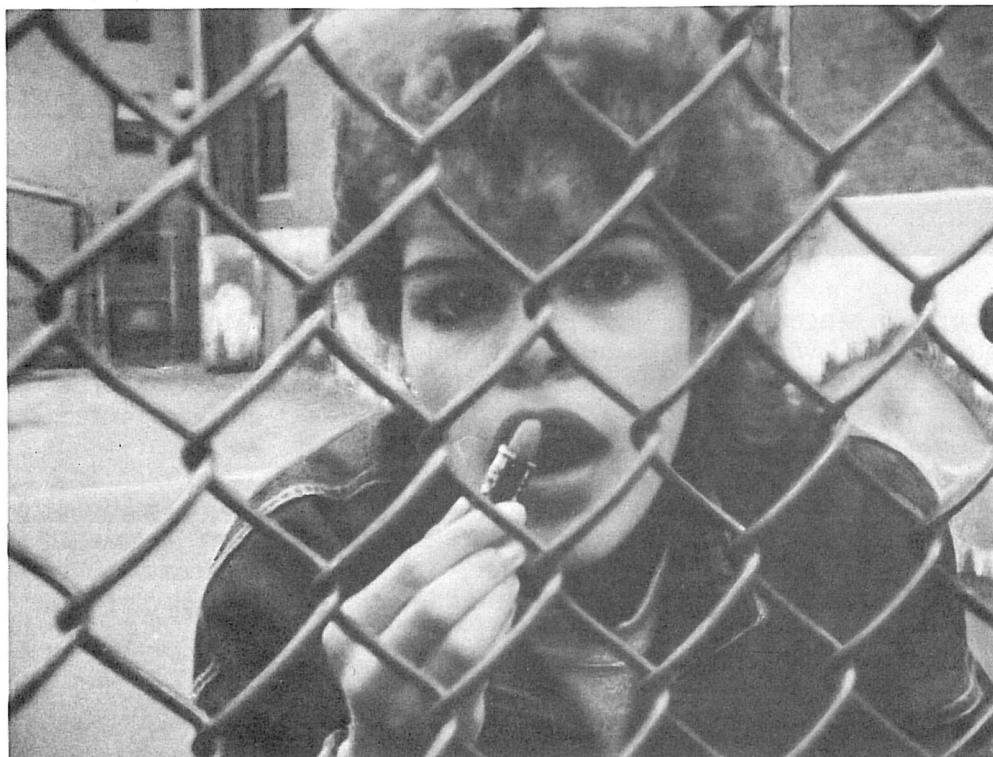
29. Icebergg Records' recording trio from St. Louis--formerly a duo featuring Michelle Isam (on sax) and Carol Schmidt (piano).

30. Best-selling Olivia Records recording artist; each of her albums and tours has gotten increasingly more pop/rock oriented.

ANSWERS

1. Fanny 2. Sweet Honey in the Rock
3. Deuce 4. Witch, Isis 5. Malden
Voyage 6. drums 7. Teresa Trull/A
Step Away 8. Gwynal 9. congas
10. *Bitch, HOT WIRE* 11. Chicago,
New Haven 12. use of synthesizers
13. Casselberry-DuPree 14. Kay
Gardner 15. Rhammon, Suzanne Vin-
centza, Carolyn Brandy 16. Fabu-
lous Dyketones 17. Sherry Shute
18. Party Line Dance Band 19. Var-
ied Voices of Black Women 20. Anto-
nia Brico 21. BeBe K.Roche 22. To-
shi Reagan 23. Edwina Lee Tyler 24.
Swingshift 25. Reel World String
Band 26. Tet Fure 27. Lilith 28.
The Dance Brigade 29. Jasmine 30.
Cris Williamson

A shorter version of this article originally appeared in "Lesbian Music HOTMIX"/Outlines.



Pinky, one of the adolescent women whose stories are told in the film 'Girltalk' by Kate Davis (to be released to theaters in the fall of 1988).

LASTING EVIDENCE

THE 7TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

By Annie Lee Leveritt

Seen any films lately made by a female cinematographer? Chances are pretty slim that you have. Not because there aren't any, but because the work of women film and video makers—especially in technical capacities—is not as likely to be shown in traditional venues as those of their male counterparts.

The Chicago-based Women in the Director's Chair (WIDC) is committed to presenting films and videotapes produced or directed by women. WIDC's Lasting Evidence: The 7th Annual Women's Film and Video Festival—held March 3-8 at Facets Multimedia in Chicago—screened more than a hundred films and videos.

"Lasting Evidence" is an apt title for this showcase of women's work. The festival provides evidence of women's work

as film and video makers—and the films and videos shown provide evidence of women's history, lives, and vision.

THE FILMS

From more than 200 films and videos submitted, WIDC's board of directors selected the work shown at this festival on the basis of quality and subject matter, with an eye toward creating a cohesive film program. Eight films on the schedule were U.S. premieres.

This year's expanded six days of programming allowed for an increase in scheduling more international films. Included among these was a preview of the International Third World Women's Film Program curated by Parminder Vir and funded by Channel 4 of Britain. Vir organized the first Black Film Festival in

England in 1982. She was involved in promoting the work of Third World filmmakers in London's Festival of Third World Cinema in 1983 and the Anti-Racist Film Programme in 1984. WIDC is planning to feature the International Third World Women's Film Program in its 1989 festival.

Silver Into Gold, produced and directed by Lynn Mueller, tells the stories of swimming champion Gail Roper and marathon runner Marion Irvine who struggled to become world class athletes at the age of 55. *Frances Steloff: Memoirs of a Bookseller*, produced and directed by Debra Dickson, is a fascinating look at the founder of the Gotham Book Mart of New York City as she recalls many of the writers whom she has known. Both *Silver Into Gold* and *Frances Steloff* were non-

inated for Academy Awards this year in the documentary category.

Also shown was *Acting Our Age*, produced and directed by Michal Aviad, in which a diverse group of older women talk about aging in this culture. Especially good to see was that one of the women was an out lesbian who added that perspective to the dialogue.

Several of the presentations dealt with non-traditional families. *Stepdancing*, directed by Deborah Magidson, intelligently conveys the story of what it is like for family members to have two sets of families as a result of divorce and remarriage. *We Are Family*, produced and directed by Aimee Sands, takes a positive look at what life is like for families with lesbian and gay parents. Parts of this video seem to be a direct response to Massachusetts Governor Dukakis's controversial policies on foster care in gay homes.

Choosing Children, directed by Debra Chasnoff and Kim Kausner, entertainingly documents many of the ways that lesbians are establishing families. For example, the film goes into detail about artificial insemination—putting sperm into a

Girls' Baseball League" by Yvonne Zipter in the July 1987 issue of *HOT WIRE*.] Old shots of the team were intercut with footage taken at a league reunion in the 1980s, and the video featured short interviews with players reminiscing about their experiences.

Crossing Borders, co-directed by Jeanne Kracher, Barbara Laing, and Linda Balek, documents the history of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The film includes footage of Jane Addams, who won a Nobel Prize for her peace efforts.

In the "no, we won't just quietly go away" category of films and videos was *Remember the Witches*, directed by Laurie M. Meeker. This film looks at how the "crime" of witchcraft has been used by those in power to control and destroy women. The beginning of the film shows historical drawings, and the end shows footage of a modern coven. *Remember the Witches* celebrates the power of women bonding.

The video *Legacy of the Hollywood Blacklist*, produced and directed by Judy Chaikin, documents another type of

played roles in this piece of American history.

Two videos and a film that look at contemporary social problems were screened. *Just Keep Going*, produced and directed by former WIDC festival coordinator Ellen Meyers, looks at a shelter for the homeless, its occupants, and the three women who co-direct it. The video shows the people behind the homeless statistics and looks at the role of shelters themselves as an answer to the problem of homelessness. In *Too Little, Too Late*, produced and directed by Micki Dickoff, people with AIDs and their loved ones talk of their ostracism from society due to the widespread fear of this disease. Emotionally stirring and well made, *Too Little, Too Late* shows ways that people have coped with this problem. *How To Prevent a Nuclear War*, produced and directed by Liane Brandon, provides an upbeat look at what individuals can do as part of their everyday lives to work toward nuclear disarmament. For example, a woman who identified herself as a "Republican wife" takes every opportunity to talk to people about it—whether at dinner parties or on airplanes. Also shown was a high school picnic for peace; a preacher preaching; and a group of people who have made a commitment to weekly picketing to raise the consciousness of their neighbors.

On a more lighthearted note, two animated works shown in the festival deserve mention. *Cerridwen's Gift*, produced, directed, and animated by Rose Bond, does a splendid job retelling an ancient Celtic myth of how the Welsh gained the gifts of poetry and prophecy. *Snookles*, produced by Juliet Stroud, is a humorous look at a pink baby dragon who still has a lot to learn about appropriate dragon behavior.

The difficulties of being a lesbian in this culture were addressed in three videos. *Just Because of Who We Are*, co-produced by Abigail Norman, deals with the topic of violence against lesbians. Barbara Smith and Cherrie Moraga talk about a break-in at their apartment, and women at the Northampton, Massachusetts women's bookstore talk about anti-lesbian violence that swept their community. *You Can Fight City Hall*, produced and directed by Vivain A. Schaefer, documents the attempt to pass a civil rights ordinance for gay men and lesbians in Columbus, Ohio. *Lifetime Commitment: A*
continued on next page

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Photographer Annie Lee is production coordinator of HOT WIRE. When not playing with rubylith, she battles the algae in her tropical aquarium.*



Women claim the power of witchcraft despite opposition in the film 'Remember the Witches' by Laurie Meeker.

marinated artichoke jar, wrapping a sock around it to keep it warm, etc. An extended family was shown, with several women taking on the responsibilities of co-parenting.

In an historical vein, *A League of Their Own*, produced by Kim Wilson, tells the story of the professional women's baseball league that flourished during the World War II era. [See "The All-American

"witchhunt": the McCarthy anti-communist "red scare" activities. Because of their communist sympathies or support for other blacklisted people, many of Hollywood's most creative people were blacklisted during the late 1940s and '50s, unable to continue their Hollywood careers. This video shows how their lives and the lives of their families were forever altered. *Legacy* includes footage of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, who both

Portrait of Karen Thompson, produced by Kiki Zeldes, chronicles how Karen has dealt with the changes in her life and the life of her partner Sharon Kowalski since Sharon's disabling car accident. Sharon was declared legally incompetent as a result of her injuries. This is an important work for every lesbian and gay man to see, as well as for straights who wonder whether civil rights ordinances for lesbians and gay men are necessary.

More than 100 films were shown at Lasting Evidence, including *El Crucero*, produced, directed, and edited by Julia Lesage; *Rose & Katz*, produced, directed, and co-written by Ruth Anson; *Table of Silence*, produced, directed, and edited by Annette Barbier; *Damned If You Don't*, directed by Su Friedrich; *Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, produced and edited by Helena Cynamon; *Property Rites*, directed by Heather Powell; *No Longer Silent*, directed by Lorette Deschamps; *Hearts and Hands*, produced and directed by Pat Ferrero; *Enough Crying of Tears*, co-produced and co-directed by Catherine Russo; and *First Moon*, produced and directed by Carma Hinton.

METHODS TO OUR MADNESS: THE PANEL

In addition to screenings, WIDC traditionally invites several guest film and video makers to participate in a panel discussion open to the public. This year's guest artists were producer/directors Kate Davis (*Girltalk*); Muriel Jackson (*The Maids! A Documentary*); and Zydnia Nazario (*The Battle of Vieques*). Their panel, "Methods to Our Madness: Women Working in Film and Video," focused on the difficulties and satisfactions of producing independent documentaries. The discussion was enhanced by the presence of eight to ten other women whose works were being screened at the festival.

Kate Davis, whose early work included working with Richard Leacock on progressive political documentaries in a cinema verite style, talked of moving to a more thematic approach with her recent films. In *Girltalk*, her non-fiction film about three adolescent women with histories of sexual abuse and neglect, the subjects told their own stories. There were no voice-overs or narrators. To ensure that the subjects do not feel exploited by the filmmaker, Kate says she feels that it is important to develop personal relationships with the subjects before the filming begins—and to maintain these relationships after the filming ends. The three women in *Girltalk* had "final cut," which means that they had veto power over the footage. "Giving people the chance to

speak for themselves [in documentaries] elevates them and gives them dignity," says Kate.

Visiting artist Zydnia Nazario decided that she wanted to make a video to document the U.S. Navy's exploitation of the island of Vieques, a municipality of Puerto Rico. *The Battle of Vieques* documents how the Navy uses parts of the tiny inhabited island as a bomb site and place to practice military games.

Although she had no previous experience making documentaries, the technical aspects were not a stumbling block to Zydnia. Raising funds for the project was. Since she had not proven herself as a filmmaker—and because of the controversial, political nature of the piece—it was impossible to obtain grants.

All three of the guest artists talked of funding their first projects out of their own pockets. Once a track record is established, grant money is easier to obtain. Still, the task of finding funding for a current or future work is an ongoing battle. [See "The Courage To Create: Independent Filmmaking" by Martha Wheelock in the March 1988 issue of *HOT WIRE*.]

Muriel Jackson's first documentary *The Maids!* was the result of her feelings at seeing hundreds of black women waiting

for buses in downtown Atlanta to travel to their jobs as domestic workers for white families in the suburbs. She trained and has worked as a journalist. Muriel used university students from the school where she taught to work on the video. She tried to keep her budget low by using "in kind" exchanges—she would borrow equipment for a shot from a videomaker in exchange for donating her labor on that videomaker's next shoot. Muriel says she thinks of her documentary work as an educational tool rather than as an organizing vehicle.

The opportunity to hear women film and video makers talk about their work and to actually see the large body of films and videos that WIDC programs each year is exciting. It is exciting not only because women's work is getting a rare chance to be seen, but because the work is lasting evidence that women are creating a new way of looking at the world. And creating these new visions is a vital part of building a feminist culture and feminist world. ●

For more information about *Women in the Directors Chair*, the films mentioned in this article, or about next year's festival, write: WIDC, 3435 N. Sheffield #3, Chicago, IL 60657.



The Dehon House Shelter co-directors Joye Gros, Kathleen Kunze, and Lois Mc Govern talk about homelessness in the video "Just Keep Going" by Ellen A. Meyers.

STONEHAVEN

An Attempt to Preach What We Practice

Following a POWA-SW (Producers of Women's Arts-Southwest) retreat in December at Stonehaven Ranch, 'HOT WIRE' received a generous donation from 25 women producers [see "Soapbox" column, page 7]. The following is about Stonehaven, one of the inspirations of the grant.

Stonehaven, founded in 1985, is based on the idea that women's nurturing is a basic value system which provides an alternative to the present value system, a system which has led—through competition, manipulation, exploitation, and self-aggrandizement—to war, famine, and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Presently located at a rented ranch in San Marcos, Texas, Stonehaven has two full-time and one part-time female staff members. Stonehaven women believe that "women's nurturing is free gift-giving which does not require an equivalent repayment. Stonehaven is an attempt to extend this principle outside the family and show that in fact gift-giving—concentrating on satisfying needs rather than

'GIFT ECONOMY' VERSUS 'EXCHANGE ECONOMY'

The gift-giving principle may be called a "gift economy" as opposed to an "exchange economy." Gift economy means the gift goes from one person to another without being paid back—it just goes on and on. The women involved with Stonehaven believe that when we receive kindness it is easier to be kind.

Stonehaven asserts that we should not be repaid even for food—or *especially* not for food, since this is representative of women's nurturance. Mother's milk is free and is stronger, more empowering, *because* it is free. "Just think if babies had to pay back mother's milk," they say. "We need interdependence. Being mammals means not only that we have mammarys but that we have mothers. Snakes (etc.) don't have mother-child relationships. Our exchange economy denies nurturing and dependence and therefore mothering. It's as if it wants to make us look like reptiles instead of like mammals—every man

kind of altruistic behavior when it co-exists with the exchange economy (which requires repayment and centers on the independent ego) is necessarily in conflict with it. The two are opposites, and the me-first competitive behaviors succeed in hiding and denigrating the altruistic behavior. By denying the importance of their dependence on others and of the nurturing they receive, many people make it seem that their power comes from themselves alone and independently. This makes the others, who have been co-opted or used, seem powerless and, in fact, become powerless.

The Stonehaven organization, funded primarily through one woman philanthropist, doesn't have people pay them. They ask that the recipients of Stonehaven generosity give to somebody else the price they would have paid the organization. The new recipient will either use it or pass it on.

"We're doing this to foster and recognize a value system which does not lead to war and famine," they say. "We as

A world where 5 billion people freely satisfy each others' needs has more probability of success and happiness than a world where everyone is trying to be me-first at the expense of others.

on receiving payment—is a normal, healthy way for human beings to behave," they say. "If people can overcome the embarrassment giving and receiving sometimes engenders, and keep it free from the taint of bribery or blackmail, we find that giving and receiving are pleasurable and satisfying," according to the official philosophy statement. "We can counter or dissolve the greed, ego-mania, and fear which are part of the competitive exchange system. A world where five billion people freely satisfy each others' needs has more probability of success and happiness than a world where everyone is trying to be me-first at the expense of others."

for himself.' But we are all reciprocally dependent even if we deny it." The salaries people earn—which they claim give them "independence"—in reality only allow the wage earner to have access to dependence on others—for example on those who produce and sell food. Stonehaven encourages people to refocus to see what we usually call "independence" in the exchange economy as "multiple and extensive dependence."

In mother-child relationships, dependence is evident and cannot be covered over. Nurturing and the satisfaction of needs (free gift-giving of milk, food, caretaking) produce bonds which enhance life and growth. However, this

women are learning to respect gift-giving, both as a principle and in ourselves, and to stop putting ourselves down for doing it. We are often blind to our own generosity because in fact generosity is best when it isn't pointed out. When it is pointed out, it sometimes stops being a virtue and starts being an ego trip. But mainly we put down our own generosity in favor of the mindless issue of exchange which rules our society. This wrong rule says that we may only give in order to get something back."

According to Stonehaven, exchange comes from the patriarchal economic

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If It Weren't For The Music

15 YEARS OF OLIVIA RECORDS

By Judy Dlugacz



Irene Young

Judy Dlugacz: "The music helped to create a completely new environment where you'd go to a concert and see other women--i.e., other lesbians."

This is part one of the history of Olivia Records as remembered by Judy Dlugacz, President and co-founder of Olivia. Part two will appear in the November issue of 'HOT WIRE.'

In 1973 10 women got together. Some of them had been part of *The Furies*, the radical lesbian feminist newspaper out of Washington D.C. which had been run by a lot of fairly high powered gals--like Ginny Berson, Charlotte Bunch, Rita Mae Brown, Jennifer Woodhul, and Colita Reid. Several women from that group were looking for a way to work together on an on-going basis after *The Furies* disbanded.

There was also a group that had been a part of Radical Lesbians in Ann Arbor (including me) who had recently moved to D.C. We were also looking for something on-going to do politically. I was 20 years old.

These two groups met each other. As we started talking, there was this understanding that we all wanted to find a way to do an institution that was politically conscious, one that would be able to pay people so we wouldn't be constantly burning out on volunteer labor.

Meg Christian wasn't writing music yet, but she was performing in small clubs, and her audiences were strongly women audiences. She was either changing the words or reinterpreting the songs so that they made a whole lot more sense in terms of woman-identification and lesbian audiences. She used to go through every bargain bin in the world in record stores looking for new and interesting female artists. She would take their material and introduce it to the community. "Did Jesus Have a Baby Sister?" by Dory Previn, for example, was one of Meg's early discoveries.

One day she found Cris Williamson's debut album, which had been discontinued by a company that had gone out of the record business. She took it home and fell in love with it. Cris was already singing many of the songs that ended up on *The Changer and The Changed*; so much of her music had some relationship to women. It was obvious she was speaking from her own point of view, from her inner soul. Meg started performing Cris's music in D.C. The audiences there were very excited about Meg's music, and then got very excited about Cris's music.

Cris was touring at that point, and she was performing at Georgetown University. Meg found out about it, and basically told every audience she performed for to come to the concert. Cris, who was used to going to small concerts and coffeehouses, had this room filled to capacity with people who (she realized as she started to sing) knew her music. This was a new experience.

She became a little bit flustered during the concert when she started to sing "Joanna" and the audience was singing along. When she forgot some of the lyrics, out of the audience came this voice (of Meg Christian) singing the words to her. This was a most wonderful beginning of what turned into an incredible relationship.

At the end of the evening, Meg introduced herself and asked Cris to come do a radio show in Washington D.C. called "Sophie's Parlor" [editor's note: this show is still in existence; see *HOT WIRE*, July 1987]. Meg and Ginny Berson did the interview with Cris, and they asked her, "Isn't it difficult to record in the industry?" They got into a discussion about

that, and Cris said she thought it was important for women to have more opportunities than they do. She said--sort of off-the-cuff--"Gee, maybe *you* all should start a *women's* record company." And then she left town and went on her way. They had certainly cemented a friendship.

Maybe two days after that I got a call from Ginny saying, "We've got it. It's perfect. We have the answer. Come over to our house tomorrow night." I said, "What is it?" She said, "No, you have to come over, but don't worry. *We've got it.*"

So the 10 of us convened at their house, and Ginny announced, "We've got it--it's a women's recording company." The rest of us sat there. She was so excited, so clear--the rest of us said, "You're crazy. What do you mean 'this is it'?" Ginny went on: "Think of it, we could record Meg, we could record Cris, we should get it out to women all over the place..." Within 10 minutes the rest of us were absolutely convinced that this was an absolutely brilliant idea and there was *no* question in our minds that all we had to do was do it and it would happen and it would be perfect.

And that was how Olivia started.

The name Olivia Records is from one of the '40s pulp novelettes about lesbians. One day Meg came running down the stairs saying, "Gee I have this novelette *Olivia*, this would be a good name..." We had been considering calling it Siren Records--we had gone through all the mythologies, and hadn't found anything that really worked. But when we got to "Olivia," we thought, "Well, gee, that's a nice round sound, very melodic..." We also liked the idea of taking from difficult roots and creating something beautiful... sort of owning the history of the way in which our culture has survived over the years, which is not always the best of ways. (If *The Well of Loneliness* was our best, we had a lot of problems.) So we decided to take that name and turn it into something better.

We made Olivia Records into a corporation, though we had no intention of running it in any traditional corporate way. We spent almost a year trying to create new and alternative structures, including collectivity, women being paid based upon need, and lots of these things.

For the first half of the year, it remained 10 of us. And then it was eight, until five of us later decided to move to Los Angeles.

We had no money--we knew nothing about the recording industry--and we knew less about business. So it was perfect to go ahead, because we knew exactly not what we were doing. The first thing

we did was to tell people. Meg became the troubador. She was doing more and more touring, running around and putting out the word that we had started a national women's recording company. We got a tremendous amount of support.

Then we got a letter from the engineer Joan Lowe, who owned a small record company: *I live in Oregon, and I will drop everything to help you*, it basically said. *At any point that you need an engineer, I will be there, because I think what you're doing is very important.*

We contacted her. "How do we do this? How do we be a record company?"

She suggested we start out by doing a 45, and she stopped her work to come to D.C. to record Meg's "Lady" by Carole King/Gerry Goffin and Cris's "If It Weren't For The Music." We were going to send out the 45 as a fundraiser to all of the rich and famous people we could think of, predominantly women--actually everyone but our relatives was *all* women--and then they were going to send us lots of money and we could start this company. We got back about \$250.

This was not enough money, but women seriously all over the country were saying, "Where *is* this 45? We've heard you're making it and we'd like to buy it." We kind of went, "Oh yeah, right!" and we started to sell it. We sold a huge number of copies--maybe 5,000--through mail order and through Meg going out on the road and talking about it. The revenue from that plus one other loan enabled us to make Meg's first record, *I Know You Know*.

This brings us up to 1974. Meg and Ginny had gone around touring since '73, and they had been on the West Coast several times. They had now met Margie Adam and several other women in addition to Cris. They were convinced that if we were going to do this seriously, we needed to move to the West Coast. Five of us thought it was something we wanted to do, and the other three did not. So Meg, Ginny, Jennifer Woodhul, Kate Winter, and I quit our jobs and moved across country.

Within a week or two of our arrival Meg's album arrived. We honestly thought that within the album's life we would sell 5,000 copies. And wouldn't that be terrific. But within the first few *months* those 5,000 copies were gone. We probably sold 10-12,000 copies the first year, even more the second year, and have ultimately sold maybe 75,000-80,000 copies of *I Know You Know*.

At this point, we were getting \$15 a week each for spending money. The five of us lived in a house together which was

also the office--we did not have outside jobs. We pooled all of our savings and became a living and working collective. We would each get \$15 a week for our personal expenses. We would share food and everything. Whatever savings we had, we just put into Olivia. For several years we sent Meg out on the road, and she would come home with her earnings from concerts--and that's how we would live. I don't think the collective received salaries for several years.

When we had about \$18,000, we decided to make Cris' album. We did *The Changer and the Changed* in the summer of 1975. Joan Lowe came into town, as she had promised to do whenever we wanted to do one of these records.

The process of how we did albums then was very interesting. Mostly we would go in with Margie and Cris and Meg and hire musicians--and then *everybody* would mix the record. The mixer was sitting at the board and five people would do collective mixing.

We had a commitment to using women, and particularly at that point in time our premise was based upon a fairly separatist viewpoint. We were aware that there was no other place to represent what we were doing. Where did women have the opportunity to learn these skills? We were the place, and that's what we were there to do.

Also, one of the reasons that we were doing this record company in the first place was that we saw a really strong opportunity to create community. And as we built Olivia, we saw this develop right before our eyes. Just as the feminist and lesbian movements were beginning to grow, so was Olivia; I know Olivia helped to create community at the same time as the community helped to build Olivia. There was a very symbiotic thing going on. These minstrels went out and created concerts around the country, and producers sprang up. The audiences--which were at first in women's center basements or in the hallways of dormitories or in the YMCA--were going from 50 people to 200 people to 800 people very rapidly.

When we made *The Changer*, we expected to sell 10,000 of them over the course of its life, since we had already sold 5,000 of Meg's. But in the first couple of years it was an extraordinary number, more like 40,000 or 50,000 a year. It has gone on to sell over 250,000 so far.

It was like a tremendous explosion had taken place. A very major event that happened was that Cris and Meg and Margie had solidified a friendship and a musical relationship, and soon Holly

continued on next page

Near was to also enter into that. The four of them did a tour called Women on Wheels in 1975, which took the audience size from about 500 to 2,000, literally overnight. The four of them interacted and performed on each other's music; it was an incredible environment.

There are a lot of interesting aspects to the way in which we evolved. The living collective remained for seven years, and we just kept adding people to the working collective. Sandy Ramsey [see "Behind The Scenes," July 1986] came from Albuquerque, Robin Brooks from L.A., we just kept adding—and as we grew, it became more interesting and diverse. In other ways it became a little bit more difficult, because it would take more people at meetings to disagree or agree. We also had different values and viewpoints, and at the same time we had to run this very fast-moving and high-pressured organization. As we added new people, they didn't always come in with the same expectations or levels of commitment—we had to work harder at being a collective. It was hard enough with five different minds—when you have 10, it becomes geometrically harder. But it worked well for awhile. This was a wonderful group of people; if we didn't understand each other, we'd find a way. We'd go until we did.

Economics became the critical problem. Little things would come up, like we couldn't pay for things. Or we didn't figure out that we couldn't hire as many people as we wanted to because we couldn't afford to. We didn't always figure those things out until the money was no longer there. We didn't know enough to know that when you expand you should know what you're doing; we didn't know that we didn't know what we were doing. It *seemed* to work every time. So we made decisions—oh, you're a musician and you need a job, and we want you to record, well come and we'll take care of that. It was a special, wonderful thing, but we didn't realize we didn't have the money to do everything we were doing.

Not every project we did worked as well. We thought, "Well, gee, everything we do will be like Meg and Cris," and it didn't work that way. We thought that we'd put out a Linda Tillery album and sell as many as we sold with either Meg or Cris, and it just didn't happen. In fact, those two artists never quite happened in the same way again.

From the very beginning we had had an incredible love affair going with just about everybody and Olivia. It was a great experience, and the audiences were just amazing. Somewhere along the line,

though, we started having some real problems. We started getting a lot of criticism.

Some of it was deserved, and some of it was the product of a very young and developing movement. For example, when we first started, we decided it was really important to do women-only events. It was a way to develop community so that women could see each other and be with each other. The ways that lesbians had to do that back then was limited mostly to interacting in bars, or to attending consciousness raising groups in women's centers.

The music helped to create a completely new environment where you'd go to a concert and see lots of other women—i.e., other lesbians. You were having artists on stage who were in fact speaking to you from that environment. It was creating community.

So we were promoting women-only events, and getting a lot of flak for it. Many people didn't understand why we would do such a thing; the YMCA was about to sue us; there were all sorts of places that were refusing; the press was hearing about it and they weren't liking it. But also within our own communities they were saying, "Why shouldn't this be open to everyone? What are we doing—trying to exclude people? Trying to discriminate?" Not everyone agreed with women-only, but at Olivia we had decided that our vision was to create this.

We planned early on that once we had accomplished a fair amount of what we wanted to, we would also start to do concerts that were open to everyone who wanted to go to them. That was, from our viewpoint, a way for other women to have an opportunity to find out about this music and to become a part of it. So it was very important to our whole long-term plan that we be expansive as well as providing entertainment to a community that was now in existence.

We couldn't win: when we were doing women-only, there were those who attacked that. When we were doing concerts that were open to everyone, we were clearly and definitively attacked for that by women who felt that we were betraying the separatist view.

In retrospect, it's clear that we were a nationally visible organization, one of the very few who was seemingly successful at that point—so what we did, and how we made our decisions, affected other things. We were seen as *representing* a lot of people who either liked or didn't like what we were doing. This was on a national level. We're talking about a very young, very angry movement. So we got a lot of

love and devotion, and we got a lot of anger and hate.

This had a tremendous effect on our ability to do what we were doing. It took a lot of effort not to get pulled into it. And it had an effect on the artists. We were very open—we used to do workshops after every show and take feedback. But what ended up happening was, we'd get both loving feedback and angry feedback, and to spend the energy at every event dealing with that was very, very exhausting and demoralizing. So even if it was only five negative people out of 200, they ended up sometimes being the most vocal—and they always had to be dealt with.

I think the strongest example was at the point where we were working with a transsexual. This was a very major turning point for us. We were still in Los Angeles, and had been looking for a woman engineer who was a little closer than Joan, one who lived at least in California. Someone recommended Sandy and we interviewed her. She had tremendous credentials, which was terrific. It seemed like yet again lightning had struck and we had found the perfect engineer. So we were going forward, about to start *BeBe K'Roche*, our third record, when we got a call from Boo Price [see "Behind The Scenes," July 1986]. She said that she was now recording Margie's album *Songwriter*; they had been in the studio where we were going to record *BeBe*, and an engineer there had told her that Sandy was a transsexual. I took the call from Boo, and when she said, "I just wanted you to know," I said "Thank you very much." I got off the phone and called over to Kate Winter to ask what a transsexual was. She had a friend who was a transsexual, so fortunately she was able to describe what it was to the rest of us.

There's an ethical issue for me around dealing with this particular issue. There's a certain level of confidentiality for someone in that particular experience. If you don't know much about it, it's very problematic to speak of it—when people know that someone is a transsexual, then what they become in the universe is this category called "transsexual"—not female or male, just transsexual.

We were simply looking for a technician when we hired Sandy. It was someone who appeared to be a woman, and she was someone who had technical knowledge and seemed to be someone we could work with. Once the news was suggested to the company, the real problem was that we didn't know whether in fact this person was a transsexual or not. It seemed to us like a strange concept; most of us had never even *heard* of this. My job

was to go to where this person was and to find out. It's not like you walk up to someone and say, "Excuse me, are you a transsexual?" It's a very hard question to ask someone.

The punchline on all this was, yes indeed, Sandy was a transsexual. When I came back to the group I let them know that she was also a very kind and caring person. We had countless hours of discussion on issues like male privilege and was this okay or not? It was very much on a human basis that we made the decision that it was going to be okay. And not everyone--probably no one--felt completely comfortable, but I was very proud of our process. We knew it could be a problem, but we felt we were dealing with this very oppressed minority; this person had given up a lot of privilege and was also very enthusiastic about *sharing* the knowledge that she had. So, we thought it was okay.

There were repercussions. It was a difficult period for us. A number of outspoken individuals in the community were incredibly cruel. There were groups like *Dyke Magazine* that did all sorts of strange and bizarre articles on transsexuality. Some women were saying that transsexuals were infiltrating the women's/lesbians' movement. Again, some women felt it was a real betrayal on the part of Olivia Records.

These were the darkest days as far as I'm concerned. We were finding ourselves in the position of having to defend ourselves a lot. So much energy was put into that, and it was unbelievable to us that that's where the focus would be. But sometimes that would happen in those early days.

In the end, that's what's important about the Sandy episode: it's not the specifics of the episode, who was right and who was wrong, but that that level of energy could be expended on such an issue. We didn't understand it very well, and we took it all very much to heart. It forced us to back away; we had to become more defended because we were getting crucified.

There's no question that some of this was the tension between how much of what we were doing was "entertainment" and how much was "politics." Also, I don't know how much of it was specific to Olivia and what Olivia stood for at that time to a lot of people. We were so visible, and different people wanted Olivia to be different things for them. The emotional connection to the music made it that much more intense. We're talking about a group of people who were really literally just starting to come out of the closet,

which is almost like recovering from alcoholism--you're the most angry and the most excited and every fiber of you is a little more intense at that point in time. Suddenly you have community and support and artists that are singing of you and to you--it's very potent. I never underestimate that, because it also affected me in the same way.

projects was the album *Lesbian Concentrate*, which we recorded during the time Anita Bryant was making a lot of noise all around the country, particularly in Dade County, Florida. We decided that it was very important that there be some sort of loud lesbian visible voice which didn't seem to be happening very much. There was a gay voice seeming to be fairly



"If we were going to do this seriously, we needed to move to the West Coast." Clockwise from top: Jennifer Woodhul, Kate Winter, Judy Dlugacz, Ginny Berson, and Meg Christian.

We didn't totally get it, and when we did, we couldn't get out of it. The artists had their own experiences around being both overly loved and criticized. They didn't deserve it, but at the same time, that was their job. They just didn't always understand it. Meg, from my experience, was one of the best at handling it. But it was hard. Really I'm talking about maybe 10 percent of the women we encountered, because 90 percent were absolutely thrilled, always asking, "What can we do to help?"

We continued to focus on pursuing our goals. One of our most interesting

strongly around it, but not even the media was talking about lesbians one way or the other.

We wanted to respond to this threat that was happening, so we decided to do *Lesbian Concentrate*. We asked several artists to come forward and basically be out and take part in this record. It was really a wonderful coming together of lots and lots of different people. I think it was also a special moment for some, dealing with the fact that they were going to be associated with such an out there record. Some folks hadn't ever been on an album be-

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CRIS WILLIAMSON

Born Mary Cristine Williamson in Deadwood, South Dakota, this Aquarian has the distinction of having created the #1 best selling women's music album of all time: *The Changer and The Changed*.

Raised amidst the mountains and prairies of Wyoming and Colorado, Cris gained a reverence early for the wilderness, the flatlands, and the forces of nature. The powerful mysticism of the Sioux Universe permeated Cris's early childhood and provided inspiration for the music to follow. Cris has always written music which reflects that open country, its possibilities for movement and growth, and its powerful guidance on our spiritual journeys.

An old wind-up Victrola and family sing-alongs were her first introductions to music, and by the time her family's nomadic lifestyle ended and she could formally study piano and voice, Cris was already composing melodies. The daughter of a forest ranger, she had many years of formal music and voice training; she began singing professionally at age 16. Before beginning studies at the University of Denver, Cris had already taken up the guitar and recorded three albums for the Avanti Records label. During her college years she began performing, first as a folk artist and later in a rock band for two and a half years.

In 1969, she graduated with a BA in English and headed west to San Francisco to pursue a career in music, eventually settling in Los Angeles. The Ampex label released the *Cris Williamson* album in 1971, six months before closing its record division. This was the album Meg Christian discovered, which she promoted enthusiastically to the budding women's

music audience she was developing.

In 1973, Cris was invited to be on the "Sophie's Parlor" radio show in Washington, D.C. She was interviewed by Meg and Ginny Berson about her music and asked to comment on the status of women in the music industry. She remarked on some of the challenges facing women artists and the lack of women in creative positions, such as producing and engineering, and thought it might be an interesting idea for someone to start a company to create those opportunities. This historical meeting of the minds is widely acknowledged as one of the original inspirations for the formation of Olivia Records [see "15 Years of Olivia Records" by Judy Dlugacz on page 28].

After taking Cris's suggestion, Olivia Records' first release—in 1974—was a 45 featuring Cris's "If It Weren't For The Music" back-to-back with Meg's version of "Lady." The following year, Cris was signed to a one-album contract with Olivia Records and she recorded *The Changer*, which has sold over a quarter of a million copies so far.

If there is one "classic" to come out of women's music, it has to be *The Changer*. Selected for the last two years as "All-Time Favorite Album" in the *HOT WIRE* Readers' Choice Survey, Cris's first Olivia album has become one of the all-time best selling albums on any independent label—in or out of women's music. Almost 15 years later, material from that album continues to be demanded by concert audiences. In the Readers' Choice Survey, "Sweet Woman" has been selected two years in a row as one of the top five all-time favorite songs.

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LUCIE BLU

Lucie Tremblay started her musical career in her native Montreal, singing and tap-dancing at age six. By eight, she knew that she wanted to be a singer. She would visualize herself performing, and at 12 she joined her mother's band as a drummer, from time to time stepping forward to sing. Throughout high school, Lucie concentrated on music, and spent a short time as a voice major at Vanier College. But studying opera was not what Lucie had in mind, and she left college to pursue performing her own music in clubs and concert halls through the province of Quebec. Telephone operator, school bus driver, data processor—she was all these things to survive while she honed her craft.



Having studied in English-speaking schools in Montreal, Lucie's approach to her music became bilingual. "I compose in either language, French or English," she says. "It depends where I'm at when I write the song. I feel a certain emotion then a phrase comes into my mind—sometimes in French, sometimes in English. The melodies come first when Lucie composes, and she writes more often with the guitar than the piano.

Sweeping three of four awards at the 1984 French Song Festival in Granby Quebec, Lucie burst onto the Canadian

TREMBLAY

music scene. She won Best Singer/Songwriter, the Press Award, and the Public Award. She has appeared more than 20 times on Canadian television in addition to doing numerous live radio shows, and she was asked to sing the theme song for the Francophone national holiday for a government sponsored recording.

Lucie became Lucie Blue partially because blue is her favorite color, and partially for professional reasons. "Blue is pure and calming," she says. "Blue is the color of the throat chakra, and around the time of the French music awards I felt that the timing was right—for my singing—to be Lucie Blue. Also, Tremblay is very common in Montreal—like Smith in America. I like my name, and I didn't



Jill Cruise

want to change it; I became Lucie Blue Tremblay so I could be remembered in Quebec."

In 1985, Lucie released a Canadian 45, on the Demies-Soeurs (Half-Sisters) label, featuring "La Freak" and an early version of "So Lucky." But it wasn't until Irene Young heard Lucie play at a women's music festival in Winnipeg that Lucie hooked up with Olivia Records and gained the opportunity to release an album on her own terms. She had been wanting to make a full-length record and

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TRET FURE

Born in Iowa and raised in Illinois and Michigan, Tret Fure (pronounced "fury") began early as a musician. By age five, she was performing on the piano. When that was sold during one of the family's relocations around the Midwest, Tret took up the violin. Her brother began to teach her acoustic guitar when she was 12, and she bought the records of Joan Baez and Bob Dylan. In the process of learning Judy Collins songs, she learned guitar picking and began her career as a folkie playing in church basements, country clubs, and at bridge clubs for her mother. In high school, she moved on to playing at the one coffeehouse in town.

Tret moved to the West Coast to attend the University of California at Berkeley and began to write music when she was 19. Impressed by the diversity of music she found there, listening to the likes of Jimi Hendrix and Buffalo Springfield, she abandoned her plan to graduate from college and went to New York City.

She eventually settled in Los Angeles, and learned to play the electric guitar by gigging with various groups in local L.A. clubs. Her career took a decided turn for the better when she worked as a vocalist and guitarist with Spencer Davis, touring the country in the early 1970s. She recorded the album *Mousetrap* with Davis, and wrote the single "What's Gonna Happen When the Rainy Season Comes?" from the album. She has toured extensively over the years, opening for major acts including the J. Geils Band, Yes, and Poco.

Tret's own first album, *Tret Fure*, was produced in 1973 by the late Lowell George of Little Feat for MCA Records. With his encouragement, Tret decided to augment her performing and recording experience with a thorough knowledge of engineering and producing. After working for a year and a half as a second engineer, she assumed the role of first engineer, with her own clients. Since 1975, Tret has engineered such diverse projects as the soundtrack for *Palmers-town USA*, and the PBS documentary *Is Anyone Home on the Range*. She has continued to apply her technical and musical skills to such projects for Olivia as engineering/co-producing/performing on several Cris Williamson albums, including *Blue Rider*, *Prairie Fire*, *Snow Angel*, and *Wolf Moon*. In 1982, she also worked and performed on the landmark double album *Meg & Cris at Carnegie Hall*, which



Irene Young

was recorded live at two sold out concerts. The November shows celebrated Olivia's tenth anniversary. Also in 1982, Tret collaborated with Cris and June Millington on Cris's album for children, *Lumiere* (Pacific Cascade) which she engineered and on which she was featured as a vocalist.

Tret first became involved with women's music through her work with June Millington, a founding member of Fanny (the first all-woman rock band to gain national prominence). She had known June since she was 19. Together they produced *Heartsong* on Olivia in 1981; Tret co-wrote the cut "Trouble" and engineered the album. Through June, Tret was introduced to the music of Cris Williamson and to the feminist cultural network.

The women of Olivia Records were, according to Judy Dlugacz, impressed by Tret as a person and as an artist. "We perceived her consciousness, and we saw

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OLIVIA RECORDING ARTIST PROFILES COMPILED BY *Laura Post*, who got her start writing about women's music for 'Common Ground,' the Western New York women's newsjournal. *Laura has also written on women's sports, women's sexuality, and women's political issues.*

DEIDRE McCALLA



Irene Young

In listening to Deidre McCalla's music, we learn she is a woman who loves to dance, is close to her mother, maintains clear connections with her friends, is wryly optimistic on love, takes risks, is awed by natural forces and hopeful about human resources, and has had her own quietly explosive battle of wills with a lover's cat.

"What I have always been is a performer," she says. "When I was five or six, I sang 'Jesus Is My Sunshine' in church, and I got my first guitar at age 15. In high school I was in a group called Friendship with my two best friends, and in college I played music in coffeehouses. I also did a lot of theater." [See interview on page two in this issue.] A theater graduate of Vassar College and the National Theatre Institute, Deidre was a member of the ensemble cast of the film *Chords of Fame*--a docudrama on the life of the '60s folk singer Phil Ochs.

Despite Deidre's interest in and talent for formal dramatic performances, she marks the beginning of her professional career from the release of her first album, *Fur Coats and Blue Jeans* (Roulette Records, 1973), which she says "didn't go anywhere." In the meantime, Deidre was working on her warm and assured stage presence. "I have a well-developed sense of timing. And, I am able to construct a good movement of words around the songs, blending reason, rhythm, and pacing," she says. "People don't get tired of the songs but of the introductions."

Deidre is one of the few Black American women gaining prominence in the singer-songwriter genre, and she resists being categorized. "Because I do acoustic stuff, people peg me as a folksinger," she says. She also challenges racist cultural expectations. "I don't play blues. I don't play jazz. I don't come from Harlem. I want to throw out the stereotypes of what Black women are supposed to do. And," she says, "I am lucky that the white women with whom I work make sincere efforts to educate themselves on the racism that we all grew up with."

Deidre is currently celebrating the release of her second album on Olivia Records, *With A Little Luck* (1987). Produced by Teresa Trull, *Luck* was written in the two years since Deidre's first Olivia album, *Don't Doubt It*, was released to critical acclaim in 1985. Both albums received New York Music Award nominations for Best Album on an Independent Label.

Deidre McCalla's collaboration with Olivia Records began many years ago, after she hired Teresa Trull to arrange and produce *Don't Doubt It*. Olivia recognized in Deidre not only a lively and unique lyrical style but a professional seriousness. "I have, in working with Olivia Records, a large amount of autonomy and a lack of having to compromise. By contrast, major labels are prone to control and exaggerate. But," she adds, "the money is not there in women's music; that is the na-

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DIANNE

Born into a Western Tennessee family she describes as "half musical and half medical," Dianne Davidson was into music full time by the age of 14. She has played in many different bands, beginning when she was 11 years old with a Top 40 cover group called Mad Martians, which entertained at school functions, parties, and at the week-long West Tennessee Fish Fry. She obtained a record contract at 17 and left school to become the passionate blues-country-folk-rock musician that she is today.

Dianne has released three singles and four albums (*Baby, Backwoods Woman*, and *Mountain Mama* on the Janus label; *Breaking All The Rules* on Second Wave), and has performed with artists such as Linda Ronstadt, B.B. King, Jimmy Buffet, Dan Fogelberg, Barry Manilow, Steve Forbert, and Tammy Wynette. Maturing and developing by playing at rowdy West



Tennessee night spots, West Coast and Greenwich Village clubs, and as an opening act in major concert halls, Dianne has recently joined forces with Olivia's Second Wave Records.

She tells the story: "Nancy Vogl came to town. She'd heard about me, called me, and I sang backup on her demo [which became Nancy's 1986 Olivia release *Fight Like The Dancer*]. Then Olivia was trying to book Lucie [Blue] in Nashville, and one thing led to another. I sent a tape to Judy Dlugacz at Olivia Records, and she said, 'Who are you, and why don't I know about you?'"

It is clear that Second Wave Records and Dianne Davidson offer each other some very special things. "Second Wave is

DAVIDSON

good for me, will allow me to make the kind of music that I want to make and to be honest about it," says Dianne. "It's great being able to work with women."

As Dianne sees it, the function of a company like Olivia is to give a chance to women artists. "An integral part of that is lesbian music—the identification of the music with woman-identified women," she says. "I often play for very mixed audiences; they may come in with their own prejudices, but there is an emotional involvement with the audience—I try to create a warm and comfortable atmosphere which enables people to share an emotional experience. They come to hear me, and they get the whole Dianne Davidson: Dianne Davidson the musician, Dianne Davidson the woman, Dianne Davidson the lesbian. And though the nature of the music is woman-identified, it



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draws them in and lets them hear. If people are ready to deal with it, it's there for them; if they're not ready, they can at least get their feet wet."

She has a clear view of the interplay between the feminist cultural network and mainstream music. "I'm coming into women's music from the mainstream," she says, "and I want to take women's music back to the mainstream. I'm happy about who I am, I want to let people know who I am, and I want them to listen with open hearts. I want to obliterate the barriers that people erect by their own prejudice and broaden their horizons. I hope I can sell some records and bring financial resources to other women musicians." ●

NANCY VOGL

Born in Turkey and raised in both southern and northern California, Nancy Vogl settled in Berkeley, she says, because "it was 400 miles from Hollywood." Actually, Nancy headed north from the beach cities to pursue the lure of feminism.

"I was a lesbian from the age of 15 who wasn't feminist," she says. "When I was 22 or 23, I met my first feminist. She challenged my ideas, saying that I knew things emotionally. We both went to the First Lesbian Conference at UCLA in April 1973, and to Kate Millett's first women's music festival. After I had those two experiences, I knew that there was something I wanted to be a part of. I moved into a collective household of women on a Saturday, and by the following Wednesday we said, 'Let's be a band.'"

And so the Berkeley Women's Music Collective was born—with Suzanne Shanbaum, Debbie Lempke, Nancy Henderson, and Nancy Vogl. (Bonnie Lockhart joined two years later. See "Still Ain't Satisfied," November 1987.) One of the first feminist bands, BWMC made five national tours beginning in 1975, and produced two albums—*Berkeley Women's Music Collective* and *Trying To Survive*.

"We experimented a lot," Nancy says. "Deb played guitar for two years, then drums when I played guitar. Suzanne started on guitar then moved to bass. I'm actually a frustrated drummer who puts a lot of rhythm into the guitar. In general, I've had a lot of freedom because I've done many different things."

Nancy appeared as a bassist in 1981 with Lynn Messinger at the First International Women's Rock Festival in West Berlin. "I had purple hair and wore a black jumpsuit," she says, "and it was great." Between 1978 and 1984, she made several national tours with Robin Flower and Suzanne Shanbaum, as well as several solo national tours between 1981 and 1986. She is currently performing again with her old friend Robin.

In 1984, Nancy released her first solo album, *Something To Go On* (Redwood Records); one side featured instrumental pieces and the other, songs of love and politics. In 1986, Nancy travelled to Nashville to record a demo tape, which she had planned to sell privately. After hearing it, Olivia Records became enthusiastic about distribution. Unlike much of her previous music—which has drawn attention to such political themes as Central American revolution, gentrification in Black and Latin communities, unemployment, and the oppression of Native Americans and lesbians/gay men—Nancy's newest album focuses on affairs of the heart. *Fight Like The Dancer* has a Memphis swing, state-of-the-art Nashville sound, and is rooted in solid country instrumentation.

But Nancy Vogl is nowhere near finished being political. In fact, she is more committed to her beliefs and ideas than ever, and has a clear conception of how to integrate her politics with her mu-

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AN OPEN LETTER TO JOANNA RUSS THE 'ME' DECADE AND FEMINIST SCIENCE FICTION

By Jeanne Gomoll

This essay should definitely not be read as any kind of review of 'Burning Chrome.' The single paragraph that I quote here was taken out of context (though probably not out of meaning) and should be viewed as one of those breaking-the-camel's-back life experiences—not as a sample of the content of the book or even of the essay from which it is excerpted.

It was raining steadily one morning, and so I left my bike locked up in the basement, grabbed a book to read, and took a bus to work. The book was *Burning Chrome*, an anthology of stories written or co-written by Bill Gibson; Bruce Sterling wrote its preface. I started with that.

It's only a 15-minute bus trip to my office, but I should have had the time to at least finish Sterling's short introduction and maybe even to start one of Gibson's stories. But I got sidetracked.

Gibson's short stories (which I expect to enjoy), until I've told someone about that sentence and my reaction to it.

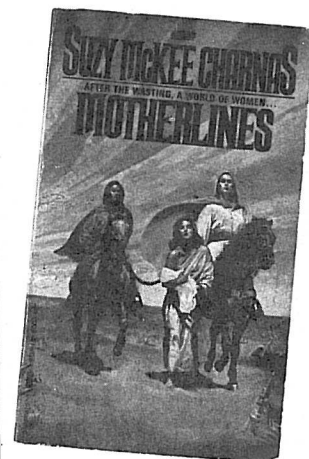
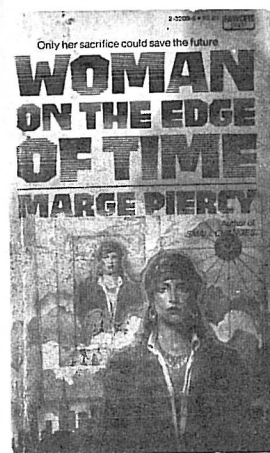
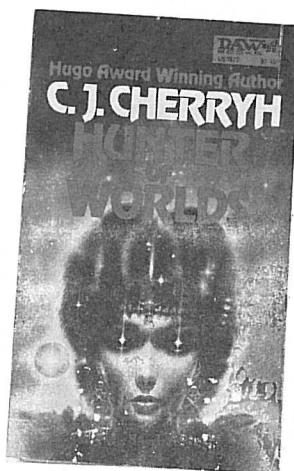
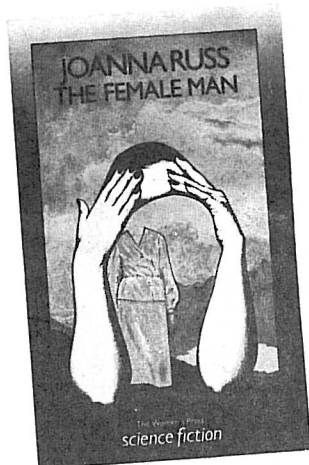
So I'm going to tell you about it, Ms. Russ, because I think I've just discovered another strategy to suppress women's writing. You wrote the book, *How To Suppress Women's Writing* (University of Texas Press, 1983), describing in gory detail all the different ways that have been used to disallow, prevent, discourage, disbelieve, discredit, devalue, ignore, categorize, debase, forget, ridicule, malign, redefine, re-evaluate, and otherwise suppress women's writing. I'm sure that you meant to warn us with your book—to warn us that the suppressive strategies are still around, armed and dangerous—and that it's important for women to recognize them and to work against them. But still, I remember (or perhaps I imagined) an up-beat ending to your book, and I'm surprised

Here's the new one: "*They wrote it, but they were a fad.*"

It was not one or two or a mere scattering of women, after all, who participated in women's renaissance in science fiction. It was a great *bunch* of women: too many to discourage or ignore individually, too good to pretend to be flukes. In fact, their work was so pervasive, so obvious, so influential—and they won so many of the major awards—that their work demands to be considered centrally as one looks back on the late '70s and early '80s. They broadened the scope of SF extrapolation from mere technology to include personal and social themes as well. Their work and their (our) concerns are of central importance to any remembered history or critique. Ah ha, I thought, how could they suppress *THAT?*!

This is how:

In the preface to *Burning Chrome*,



In fact, I felt as though I had been punched in the stomach. I may have to give up trying to finish reading that introductory essay, because I keep running painfully against a few sentences on the very first page that send my mind whirling and my anger growing until I have to slam the book shut with a muttered curse—just like I did that rainy morning on the bus. I won't be able to get on with actually reading the book and

that there really is no happy ending. That the business is still going on today.

You observed some of the strategies that suppress women's writing: "She wrote it, but she wrote only one of it," or "She wrote it, but she had help," or "She wrote it, but she's an anomaly." Well, the late 1970s and early 1980s spawned many women SF writers who wrote quite a bit of highly praised fiction. The old strategies don't quite work.

Bruce Sterling rhapsodizes about the quality and promise of the new wave of SF writers, the so-called "cyberpunks" of the 1980s, and then compares their work to that of the preceding decade: "The sad truth of the matter is that SF has not been much fun of late. All forms of pop culture go through the doldrums: they catch cold when society sneezes. If SF in the late '70s was confused, self-involved, and stale, it was scarcely a cause for wonder."

With a touch of the keys on his word processor, Sterling dumps a decade of SF writing out of critical memory: the whole decade was boring, symptomatic of a sick culture, not worth talking about. Now, at last, he says, we're on to the right stuff again.

All the people who were made nervous or bored or threatened by the explosion of women's writing and issues now find it safe to come out and speak out loud of their dissatisfaction. Of course, it's safer to criticize generally ("It was a self-involved 'Me Decade,' and nothing worthwhile was created") than to say specifically what they mean. ("The women writers of the '70s bored me because I didn't care about their ideas; I felt left out... They wrote it, but it was a boring fad.")

This new strategy not only attempts to detract from the critical assessment of SF writing by women, and to belittle the accomplishments of women in fandom (which I'll write about later in this letter), but it has also been turned against the women's movement as a whole. For the last couple years I've begun to suspect that the phrase "The Me Decade" is really a euphemistic attack upon the changes made by the women's movement. The phrase is both inappropriate and misleading.

than their fathers had been, is that women who are not selfless must be *selfish*. The phrase "The Me Decade," with its pejorative tone, rejects all of the positive, vitalizing effects brought about by the healthier, stronger, more capable women flourishing among us—and for that reason alone, it is an inappropriate label. But like all the other neat, decade-naming labels, it is crucially inaccurate as well, because artificial boundaries of dates that end in zeros can no more properly encompass all the names, events, and ideas of a movement than can a catchy phrase. Both abridgements (the decade-lumping and the catch-phrase) are, however, part of a very effective strategy of suppression. "They wrote it, but they were part of 'the Me Decade'."

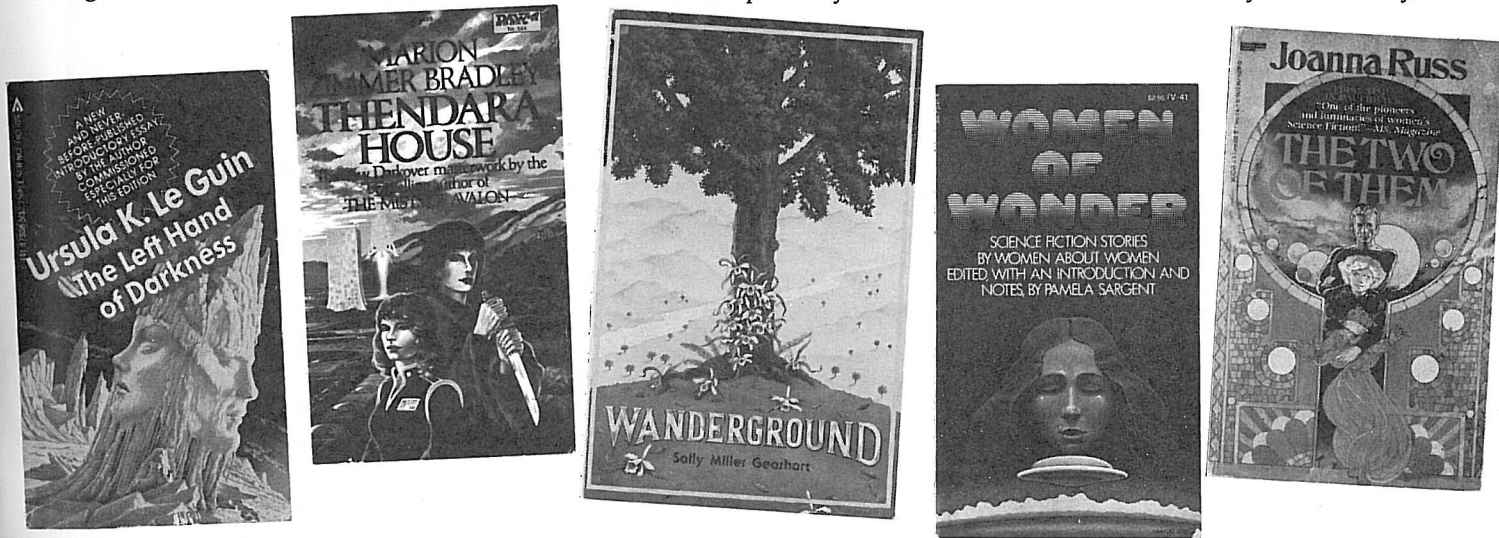
A growing number of people don't remember that SF in the '70s heralded the grand entrance of many new women writers. As time goes on, the two statements—first, that SF was boring or faddish in the '70s, and second, that women's writing and issues were boring—appear to be mutually exclusive, and the new readers are lulled into ignorance. Not everyone, of course, shares Sterling's opinion of the 1970s science fiction. For instance, many people remembered that it was a shame that James Tiptree, Jr. had turned out to be a pseudonym for female

thologies of SF by women were published not only for the novelty of their authorship, but for the significantly different way that women were writing SF. Their emphasis on character development and human interaction completely changed our expectations of the genre.

SF/FANTASY FANDOM

Have you ever attended one of those fannish retrospective panels at science fiction conventions? You know—those are the panels held in some remote program room where a few well-known fans from the period ("Fandom of the '40s," "Fandom of the '50s," etc.) reminisce about the time, about what fandom was like, about who the BNFs (Big Name Fans) were, and about what feuds were going on? No?

Well, I've attended a few panels spotlighting the period when I first got involved in fandom (the mid '70s), and I'm always amazed at how unrepresentative the memories of the panelists seem when I compare them to my own recollections of the time. I used to put the phenomenon down to the same mysterious "Babel Gas" that confuses convention attendees and causes them all to recall totally different conventions. Maybe that's it, I thought; now that the era is passed, we all recall totally different decades. That's a very fannish theory, but



The changes brought about by the women's movement were, of course, rooted in egotistical choices made by individual women. In fact, huge numbers of us rejected the traditional role of anonymous, self-sacrificing helpmate that has so long trapped women in unhappy marriages and unrewarding jobs. We stopped caring for ourselves less than we cared for others. But the ironic judgment of the men who found *themselves* cared for less well

SF writer Alice Sheldon. "He" was, they said, one of the very few exceptions to the general rule that seemed to preclude all but women as important new SF writers in the '70s—at least it seemed that way at the time. From 1953 through 1967 there had not been one single woman to win a Hugo award for fiction. Between 1968 and 1984 there were 11, and the increase of popular SF writers who were women was an exciting event of the 1970s. An-

it's not convincing.

I don't think it's too egotistical of me to expect *some* overlap.

Fandom is supposedly cemented together by tradition and memories held in trust and passed down to future fannish

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ABOUT THE WRITER: *Jeanne Gomoll is a long-time activist, writer, editor, and graphic artist. She won the 1986 TAFF race to go to Britain for Conspiracy.*

WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE HIGHLIGHTS

DEBBIE FIER

As a professional piano tuner and technician, I am often in a position to tune for, and meet, some of the big "stars" in the music business. [See "Making Our Dreams Our Jobs: Making Ends Meet Through Music" in the March 1987 issue of *HOT WIRE*.] I had an opportunity to do more than that a few years back!

I was tuning for a concert at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst one afternoon when the head of the Program Council approached me. He'd heard I was a performer—my album *In Your Hands* had just been released—and he asked if I'd be interested in doing an opening act for International Women's Day on March 8, 1983. When I heard that I'd be opening for Phoebe Snow, I didn't hesitate to say "Yes!"

I was excited, thrilled, nervous...terrified! The concert was being held in the Fine Arts Center on campus—a 1,500 seat hall. I invited Jean Fineberg of Deuce to play sax and flute with me. Jean told me that Phoebe had opened for the band Isis—which Jean had been part of—in New York City.



Diana Davies

We had a snazzy dressing room—right down the hall from Phoebe's—equipped with everything, including a tough set of bouncers. Well, leave it to lesbians, a whole bunch of my friends managed to get backstage, using a slew of witty, creative excuses to get past the security crews.

What a high to be celebrating International Women's Day performing on the same stage as Phoebe Snow! I got paid well, everyone had a great time, and I still have T-shirts and posters commemorating the event. ●

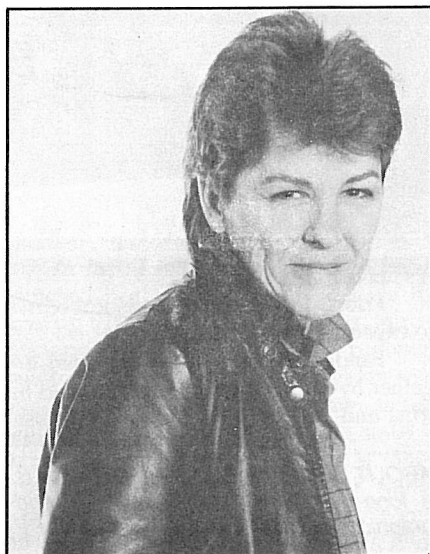
KAREN RIPLEY

As a California comic, the most exciting night of my career was June 28, 1986. It was midnight at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco—2,500 seats to fill...we sold out. I was one of 10 SF Bay Area comics to participate. We were given the honor of kicking off Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day 1986.

To hear 2,500 lesbians and gay men laugh so hard they needed oxygen...the energy in the room was astounding. My heart pounded, I shook all over...once I set foot on that stage, the energy went to work...I was in control. Such a rush to bring so much joy to life.

Absolute & complete freedom of speech (not always possible if you want to eat).

I love humor. ●



Irene Young

LEE LYNCH

It was June, 1983 at the National Women's Studies Conference in Columbus, Ohio. *Toothpick House*, my first book, had just been published. I'd been gearing up to face the most awful consequence of authorship, reading in public, with timid trials in friends' living rooms. Now I was to appear on the "Before Stonewall" panel in a room large enough to hold at least 100 women. My publishers would be there along with other Big Names. Tee Corinne and JEB would blatantly take pictures just as if I were a celebrity too. Really Important Women would be on the panel with me. I was utterly terrified and sick with eagerness to do well.



Tee A. Corinne

"Before Stonewall" panel/NWSA Conference, 1983

Literally sick. I'd been up all the night before with convulsions, contortions, convolutions, and ejections of the digestive system. By morning, when I was supposed to meet the Really Important Women to plan our presentation, I had passed out of the state of humanity into something that felt more like sticky melted popsicle. The greenish puddle that had been me sat on a couch waiting for

continued on page 59

**KRISTAN ASPEN
MUSICA FEMINA**

Two highlights for Musica Femina in 1987 were both occasions on which we were produced in concert by brand new women's production companies.

The first concert was in Knoxville, Tennessee, where a random collection of friends and acquaintances formed itself into a production group called Random Productions after Musica Femina expressed interest in performing there. The concert was a huge success, drawing more than 100 women from up to three hours away. Everyone wanted to be on the mailing list, and before leaving that night they wanted to know what the next production would be. Our guess is that Random Productions may become less random and more frequent in the near future.

The other special highlight of Musica Femina's 1987 Fall Tour was New Orleans. There we were the second event produced by Women in Harmony Productions, the first in conjunction with

the Univeristy of New Orleans Women's Center. Women in Harmony had been working hard to get some mainstream publicity, and they really got a break when the local TV morning talk show picked up on Musica Femina's women composers program. We were invited to play live on the show. It was a struggle to get "camera ready" by 6:30 a.m., but we made it. The interview was fantastic, and the whole crew liked the music so much that no one talked through the entire rolling of the credits. There were more than 100 people in this audience, too, an unbelievably good turnout for chamber music. The Women's Center was happy, Women in Harmony was ecstatic, Musica Femina was thrilled, and the audience was beside itself with energy.

Both of these concerts captured the best in women's culture. They validated our collective experience as women, lesbians, and a community with a her-story. For *this* Musica Femina tours. For *this* production companies are formed. For *this* audiences will come out. And women's culture will flourish. ●



Janna and Kristan between gigs.

Karen E. Johnson

CHERRY WOLF

My name is Cherry Wolf (formerly Wolfarth). Up until 1981 I was very active in women's music. As a drummer/percussionist, I toured with Sue Fink & Joelyn Grippo and Cathy Winter & Betsy Rose, and appeared at both the National Women's Music Festival and the Kansas City Jazz Festival. I played on the albums *Oh Mama* by Kristin Lems and *Sweet Sorcery* by Winter & Rose. Between 1979 and

1981, I started doing solo vibe performances, which was a real pleasure for me because of the independence it granted. As a drummer I was always dependent on other musicians to work.

On June 27, 1981 I was the opening act for the first Hazelwitch Productions event. The main performers were Word of Mouth, a theater collective from Austin, Texas performing a Nancy Drew mystery with a lesbian twist. My program consisted of jazz, classical, original, women's

music, and a flashy vaudeville-type number performed under black light with fluorescent mallets. It was lots of fun!

That time marked a change of focus for me in women's music. My transition was from performer to producer and radio show host. Hazelwitch Productions is still active here in Houston seven years later (I am the founding member), and since 1981 I've been the co-host of the award-winning women's program "Breakthrough" on KPFT, Pacifica Radio in Houston. ●

KAY GARDNER

The First Boston Women's Music Festival, held in October 1975, was a highlight for me. Other than the two National Women's Music Festivals that had been produced in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, this event—held on the Harvard University Campus—was the first to boast such a large array of performers from across the U.S.: Jade and Sarsaparilla, New Harmony Sisterhood Band, and Maxine Feldman (Massachusetts); Ginni Clemmens (Chicago); Willie Tyson and Meg Christian (Washington, D.C.); Margie Adam, Cris Williamson, and Holly Near (California), and (from New York) Holly's sister Timothy, and me with my "army" of musicians.



Ellen Schub

First Boston Women's Music Festival

It was especially memorable for me because (1) I was able not only to sing my songs but to perform my own instrumental compositions (many of which appeared on my first album, *Mooncircles*); (2) the performers shared sets with each other for the fun of it; (3) Holly Near's "You've Got Me Flying" instigated signing for the hearing impaired, and Timothy made it an art form; (4) I met Joan Gibson and Shirley Watt, the major financial angels who enabled *Mooncircles* to be released later that month; (5) I turned down a major New Age conducting opportunity to honor my commitment to women's culture; and (6) there was a woman-identified spirit and enthusiasm there that is rarely captured in today's events. ●

KAREN BETH

full aquarius moon
silver light
bright in an august sky
michigan festival
'81

my back rests against a tall pine tree,
guitar in hand,
seeking completion to a song
of starlight and canyons
alienation and return.

the moon moves against the sky.
the starwheel turns.
sharp edges round to river rocks
and i stop,
knowing "the journey" has ended
yet has only just begun.

i breathe a prayer of gratitude
and begin to leave my needed
nest
when a voice calls thru the trees,
"thank-you,"
and i,
normally shy of birthing before
another,
smile,
return the thanks,
and begin another journey
towards the dancing feet of many
women
and the voice of thousands joined
in song. ●



Irene Young

HOLLY NEAR

There have been hundreds of wonderful highlights.

**Singing with Cris Williamson, Margie Adam, and Meg Christian in the California Women on Wheels Tour of 1976, where thousands of women gathered to celebrate each other and women's music.

**Singing "Waterfall" for the first time with Rhiannon at the National Women's Music Festival in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

**Singing with Bernice Johnson Reagon as we sat across from each other in a Buddhist Temple in Tokyo, Japan in 1977, preparing songs to sing together for the World Conference Against Nuclear War in Hiroshima; her voice demanding that my own voice grow and strengthen to meet hers.

**Singing with my sisters Laurel and Timothy whenever, wherever.

**Singing with Lichi Fuentes and

Capri, Chilean women; Bernice Johnson Reagon, a Black American; and Tanya Sanchez, a Native American, as we presented *Hay Una Mujer Desaparecida*. With this song, our voices called out the names of the missing women in Chile, and called for the power of our different heritages. We called out the only major statement made by and about women at this important NEW SONG festival in 1985.

**I loved the audiences at the Southern Women's Music Festival (1986) and at WIMINFEST/Albuquerque (1987). I think *Sisterfire* is a magnificent representation of some of the hardest work being done in this country on racism and cross-cultural coalition. I will never forget Edwina Lee Tyler drumming and healing and loving us to the bone at the Michigan Women's Festival in 1986.

**And the letters I have gotten from women--and in particular from lesbians--has been perhaps the highest light of all. ●

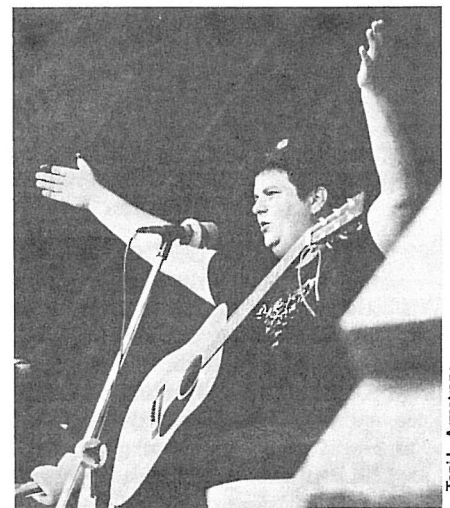
TONI L. ARMSTRONG

Singing "Amazon" year after year with thousands of other women, led by Maxine Feldman from festival stages, has been one of the most emotionally stirring traditions for me. It was also the first exposure I had to the use of sign language by the audience as part of women's music--or any type of music.

"AMAZON"

CHORUS: *Amazon wimmin rise
Amazon wimmin weavin' rainbows in the sky
Amazon wimmin fly, Amazon wimmin fly.*
VERSE 1: *I am and once was called Amazon,
Now I am called Lesbian
I know the matriarchy ruled back then
Sisters, the matriarchy's gonna rule again
Amazon nation is about to rise*

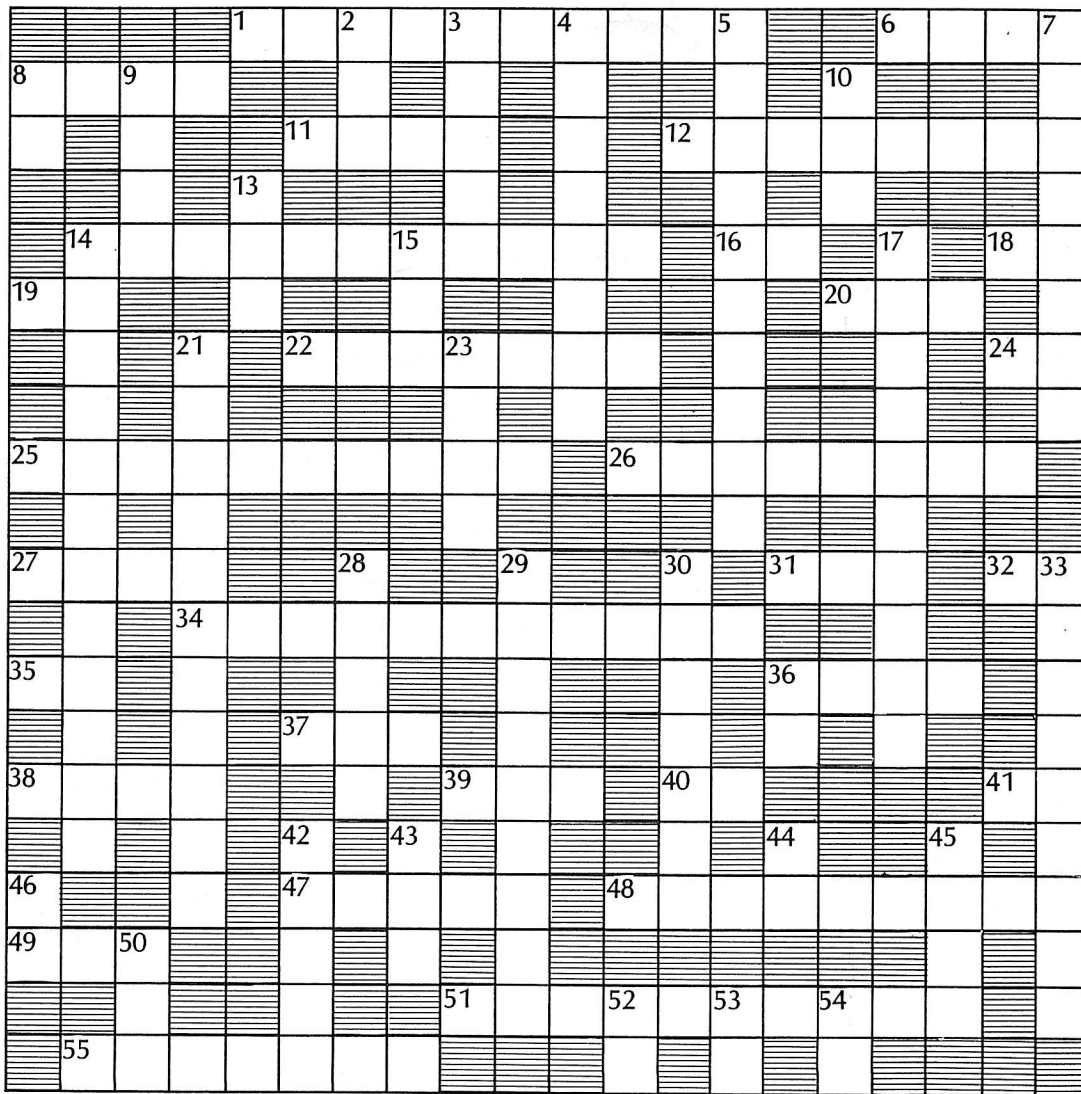
words & music by Maxine Feldman
c. 1976, 1985 by Mich. Wom. Mus. Fest/Aug. Night Prod.



Toni L. Armstrong

Maxine Feldman at Michigan, late '70s.

'HOT WIRE' Puzzle



ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD ON PAGE 57

ACROSS

1. Best selling Olivia Records artist
6. Margie
8. Cincinnati chorus
11. Sharon's partner
12. Big Mama Festival
14. Lesbian soap opera (3 words)
16. Home of Sweet Honey and Michelle Parkerson (abbr)
18. Home of Musica Femina (abbr)
19. Home of Kay Gardner (abbr)
20. Lesbian mecca: --- Area
22. Andrea, the radical writer
24. Home of Pat Parker and Kate Clinton (abbr)
25. Colorado Womyn's --- Retreat
26. Location of West Coast Fest
27. Reel World String ---
31. --- & Cris at Carnegie'
32. Home of Crazy Ladies Bookstore and Brynna Fish (abbr)
34. Most comprehensive catalog of recordings by women
35. Overheard at JoAnn Loulan workshops: "Ooo, ---"

36. 'Wolf ----'

37. --- York, home of Rosetta Records and Firebrand Books
38. Poet --- Broumas
39. Leslie --- Jones, --- Allen Shockley
40. "Feather your engine, we're --ing out tonight"
41. "Sometimes -- takes a rainy day..."
47. Jean Fineberg & Ellen Seeling
48. Jean Fineberg & Michelle Isam
49. Outrageous --- Fink
51. TV actress/lesbian nurse practitioner
55. Women's music favorite type of Brandy

DOWN

2. --- down
3. --- Young
4. --- Moving Coffeehouse
5. Katherine V. Forrest's publisher (2 words)
7. Home of Lucie Blue
8. Home of Terry Grant (abbr)
9. It's --- time!

10. "--- Woman In Your Life (Is You)"

13. '--- Promise'
14. Tret's first Olivia album (2 words)
15. Merle ---
17. Location of massive civil rights march 10/87; singing twins
21. President and co-founder of Olivia Records (2 words)
23. Writer of "How To Suppress Women's Writing"
28. Robin and Edwina Lee
29. Albuquerque Festival
30. Location of Southern Fest
33. Feminist medical show with ensemble cast
36. 'Annie On -- Mind'
42. The Voice of Michigan
43. --- away
44. "--- Lucky"
45. 'Don't --- Back'
46. Home of Dorothy (abbr)
50. Civil rights legislation stalled since the 1920s
52. Home of Artemis Singers and 'HOT WIRE' (abbr)
53. Knockout
54. "Like -- Island Rising"

MUSIC AND SEXUALITY

By Marla B. Brodsky

*Entertainment.
Enlightenment. Pleasure.*

What kind of events are the women turning out for these days? Lesbian soap operas—like *Two In Twenty*—where we get validation for the types of lives we lead. Lesbian bodybuilding competitions—can you imagine females opposite females flexing and intertwining oiled limbs, sensually holding each other, for us to judge to music? "Women's" dances, to a DJ or live band—do you go to get femmed out and turn somebody on, or get turned on by a butchy band? Does the music excite or the chance to dance? Women's music festivals—is it really the music? Or the opportunity to go as adults to an all-girls overnight camp where there are no restrictions, nudity being an expectation, whether you're observing or being observed? It could be the music. Ladies, how many say "naah" to the music and "yeah" to the coming out, I mean camping out? How many come out for the camping? How many camp out for the coming?

How many experienced the harmonic convergence last summer in Michigan? Was it really the planets lining up, or just all those womyn together on the same piece of earth? A turn out inspired by music.

Music and sexuality. When you "watch" music live on stage—are you looking at something else (perhaps the piano player's legs) while listening, or are you listening and looking at the same thing (the singer's face, mouth, and lips)?

I was talking to an acquaintance about the local bar's weekly dance night for women. She said it's been slow unless there's a holiday. I said that's because the women need something new, but management's afraid of making waves. I think if they had women burlesque like the men do on Thursday nights it would attract. How many of you do not enjoy a woman who's enjoying dancing for women? That's what I call being sensual where it's safe, turning on who you want to turn on. What's the matter with sexuality on stage? It sells, and it's done by choice for pleasure—not by necessity for men. We love each other, for our minds, our emotions, our work—and yes, our bodies.

As a friend of mine put it, "We no longer just want to hear women's music, we want to see it. This is one of the points of music video—people want to see the music acted out. People like songs because they can fantasize to them. Songs bring back memories, or visions of the future. It is no longer enough that we go to concerts and festivals to hear music. Isn't this why the crowds [at festivals] were enthralled when they saw and heard Linda Tillery getting down to her famous version of 'Fever'? She breaks the typical model-like stereotype of American female sensuality, and she turns us on. Turning the audience on. Isn't that what it's all about, whether to please, educate, or just communicate?"

I conducted a series of informal interviews with assorted women, asking them, "When I say 'music and sexuality,' what do you think of?"

A popular New Yorican gym owner/bodybuilder said, "Love songs, ballads, how the singer sings, sensuality...What comes to my mind is music that I want to get up and get down to. I don't want to just sit and listen. I want to get up and dance. I want all my senses to be alive," she said. "If a singer can make me feel this way, I'm gonna buy their music. That's what I want, that's why I bought Barry White. Put him and Donna Summers together and you get everyone melting on the floor. That's music and sexuality at its best to me. So why not give me a woman I can get turned on to? I'm tired of changing genders to songs I listen to. Instead of a 'guy' I like, I always say a 'dyke' I like."

My roommate, who is a social worker and photographer, thinks music and sexuality come from the same place in us. "They are different expressions of the same, the spirit of which either comes from within us or is around us. As for performers who represent music and sexuality...Lily Tomlin *is* sexuality; Dolly Parton; and all women rock bands. I think they're hot just seeing them," she said.

"Striptease music comes to mind," said a strawberry blonde actress. "Some music has no sexuality, like show-tunes/musicals. I think of music that makes you move, moves your body. Act-

ing exercises are very sexual. I feel open spaces inside my body where the music comes from. Hearing music and feeling sexual, I'll move like a Goddess across the floor, playacting in my mind. I hear it and images come. As a singer/actress, music is passionate and tender. Feelings locked up in sexuality are always present in performance. Music is sensual. The more it's felt, the more the audience feels, the larger the response will be."

A Haitian dental hygienist and mother of three said, "When it comes to music, I do enjoy that. And when it comes to sex, I do enjoy that. Dancing puts something in me; after, I'm ready for love. Music puts something in me, definitely sex. I want to lay on my bed with my woman and finish my dancing mood. Oh, definitely."

My sister said, "Music affects everybody differently; people listen for dif-



Linda Tillery gets down with ASL interpreter Susan Freundlich on 'Fever.'

ferent things. Yes, music can make people sexual/sensual...Kim Carnes; 'Katrina' skating at the Olympics; or the two women in Prince's band."

A personal leather accessories artist agrees that music affects us in different ways. "Most people lose their virginity to music," she said. "It turns us on and turns

Marcy J. Hochberg

us off. We look at the performer on stage. We listen to lyrics that are provocative."

A Portuguese international educator said, "Sometimes [music and sexuality] seem synonymous to me. Sometimes they seem complementary. One is not complete without the other. A woman performer I associate with music and sexuality is Maria Betanha, the Brazilian singer; she does it for me."

"Funk, bluesy, a four-beat...it goes



Susan Wilson

"What's the matter with sexuality on stage? It sells, and it's done by choice for pleasure--not by necessity for men. We love each other, for our minds, our emotions, our work--and yes, our bodies."

down to your lower chakras," said a Boston chiropractor. "I think of Nona Hendryx, with her wild leather whips. Sexuality is an integral part of music."

For a final response, I turned to the women of yesterday and the birth of the blues.

Women blues singers of the 1920s occupied a privileged space; they had broken out of the boundaries of the home and taken their sensuality and sexuality out of the private and into the public sphere. For these singers were gorgeous, and their physical presence elevated them to being referred to as Goddesses and the high priestesses of the blues, or like Bessie Smith as the Empress of the blues. Their physical presence was a crucial aspect of their power; the visual display of spangled dresses, of furs, of gold teeth, of diamonds, of all the sumptuous and desirable aspects of their body reclaimed female sexuality from being an objectification of male desire to a representation of female desire.

The women blues singers have become our cultural icons of sexual power, but what is often forgotten is that they could be great comic entertainers. In the song "I'm a One Hour Mama, So No One Minute Papa Ain't the Kind of Man for Me," Ida Cox used comedy to intensify an irreverent attack on male sexual prowess. The women blues singers had no respect for sexual taboos. They would break through the boundaries of respectability and convention.

But this moment of optimism, of the blues as the exercise of power and control over sexuality, was short-lived. The space occupied by these blues singers--the likes of Ma Rainey, Clara Smith, Trixie Smith, Alberta Hunter, Rosa Henderson, Victoria Spivey, Lucille Hegamin, and Edith Johnson--was opened up by race records, but race records did not survive the Depression. Some of these blues women, like Ethel Waters and Hattie McDaniels, broke through the racial boundaries of Hollywood films and were inserted into a different aspect of the culture industry--where they occupied not a privileged but a subordinate space, and articulated not the possibilities of black female sexual power but the "Yes, Ma'ams" of the black maid. Still, the woman blues singer remains an important part of our 20th Century black culture reconstruction and more.

from Hazel V. Carby's article
"The Sexual Politics of Women's Blues,"
Radical America, 1986

I love the blues. It's the root of what I sing. I'm trained as an actress. I grew up as a singer. I bring them both to the stage.

I once had a newspaper article wonder, "Why would an attractive 25 year old from tree lined streets feel the need to express such emotions, since the blues express rebellion and sadness...?"

That writer did not know of my emotional life experiences. Being Jewish, when I performed at the festival in Israel [see "First International Women's Music Festival in Israel" by Sue Fink, November 1986], I did have the right. Besides, I may be 20-some years old now, but who knows how old my soul is.

I tried it their way; conformed to rock & roll, white woman, pretty face, all-boys band, mainstream clubs. What did it get me? Experience, yes; money, no. Constant competition with my musicians for me to be heard. Ringing ears, one dimensional belting. I have a strong voice, words that can be heard, and lots of feeling. Within the women's music industry I'm getting back to my roots.

Last year in Bloomington at the Association of Women's Music and Culture (AWMAC) conference at the National Women's Music Festival, I attended a workshop entitled "Where Does the

Music End and I Begin?" given by Odetta and Liz Karlin. It was different from all the other workshops I had gone to. It felt spiritual.

I said to Odetta that I'd like an honest answer to a question I have; she nodded. "Do you think as a white woman I have the right to say I sing the blues?" She leaned back, folded her hands across her mouth, closed her eyes for a moment, and then looked at me and said, "You have the right to say whatever you wish. I'll have my doubts, but if you convince me, if I feel it, I'll believe."

Now I label myself a blues-based singer. As Sweet Honey in the Rock said at the same festival that year, "If you do somebody else's music, acknowledge it."

Hey, where does the soul of rock & roll, R&B, pop, funk, and jazz all come from? The blues. As a woman, where does my power come from? My sexuality and my music. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Marla B. Brodsky has been living in the East Coast cities of Philly, New York, and Boston for 29 years now. "It comes natural to be controversial or at least direct--sometimes," she says. Hear her sing 'Just Enough (To Keep Me Hangin' On)' on the March 1988 sound-sheet.

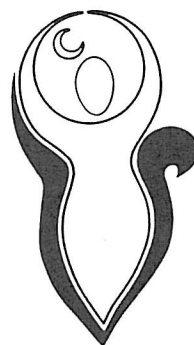
Kay Gardner invites you
to join her...

MYSTICAL
ENGLAND
&
IRELAND
TOUR

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FEMINIST SF from page 37

generations by word of mouth and by fanzines. It seems that a whole big chunk of memories has gotten entirely misplaced. For instance, here is a list of some of my memories of the '70s. *None* of these events has ever been mentioned at any of the retrospective fandom-of-the-'70s panels that I've attended.

**In 1974, Big Mac's programming included the first "Women and Science Fiction" panel. We have Susan Wood to thank, because she fought for it against vociferous convention committee opposition. We listened in the standing-room-only audience in spite of the heckling by men who thought the whole thing was a bore. (Some of them still think it is a bore, apparently, although their heckling technique has evolved since then.) We *kept* talking (after the panel had ended) in a packed, standing-room-only lounge for several hours afterward. It was an exhilarating, exciting, unbelievable gathering of people, overjoyed to have found one another. None of us used the word "boring" to describe the experience.

**That gathering eventually led to the founding of *A Women's Apa*, which became one of the most popular apas around for several years. When we kicked men out of *AWA*, the controversy spilled out of the apa into fanzines, letters, and gossip in general fandom. Eventually two British women started their own women-only *Women's Periodical*, which generated similar controversy in Britain.

***Janus*, the fanzine I worked on in the '70s (which later became *Aurora*), was one of the most well-known zines of the time, and only the second feminist SF zine ever to be published. (The first was Amanda Bankier's short-lived *The Witch and the Chameleon*.) *Janus* earned three Hugo nominations and raised a hue and cry for suspected, vile, "block voting." People--it was alleged--were voting based on their interests and politics, and if *Janus* hadn't been feminist-oriented, it wouldn't have been nominated for a Hugo. Of course we didn't agree; there was no conspiracy. But no matter what the reasons were for *Janus*'s Hugo nominations, these slurs and accusations only pointed out the importance of the women's movement in fandom, even in the opinions of its detractors.

**At Suncon [the Miami worldcon in 1977], fans organized against the just-legislated Dade County anti-gay laws with buttons ("Happy Gays Are Here Again"), parties, and an hysterically funny, satirical masquerade entry, "Slaveboys of Gor."

**When Phoenix won the Worldcon bid for 1978, the site turned out to be a problem in that N.O.W. subsequently organized a boycott of all non-ERA-ratifying states--which included Arizona. Guest of Honor Harlan Ellison spearheaded a campaign to raise fannish awareness of the situation, and wrote a passionate letter which was published in and commented upon in dozens of fanzines.

**Women and SF panels started to appear at conventions all over, though strong opposition was mounted by concons and fans who complained bitterly that feminism just wasn't fannish. Wiscon 1 was nicknamed "Pervertcon" by some of those fans who were upset by Wiscon's encouragement of feminist, lesbian, and gay programming. Feminist panels have now become so *uncontroversial* at cons that jokes are made about the so-called generic "Women and SF Panel"--though the real things seldom feel generic to the participants. On the contrary, they have encouraged diverse and energetic discussions whenever scheduled. Wiscon, the Madison SF convention [see "Wiscon 10," in the July 1986 issue of *HOT WIRE*], regularly organizes a dozen or so programs related to women's issues. Usually these panels amount to at least a quarter of Wiscon's heavily programmed schedule, and they range from "Feminism 101" all the way to academic, fannish, and speculative program items.

**The late 1970s was the time when "rooms of our own" were opened at many conventions to give women space to gather and talk alone together without hecklers. The first such room was organized at Westercon in Vancouver in 1978, again by Susan Wood. The fact that fewer such exclusive spaces are planned now--and the fact that there are fewer people heckling feminist discussion--illuminates the changes in the atmosphere and the generally raised consciousness of fans and society in general.

**Things have changed a lot in SF fandom. In a few years the percentage of women has increased so dramatically that women don't seem to be an endangered species at cons or in fanzines any more. Science fiction has changed so dramatically that I get fewer confused reactions when I use the phrase "feminist science fiction," whereas in the past people thought the term must be an oxymoron. The changes didn't take place in dark closets. In fact, we still hear men who weren't even members of *A Women's Apa* complaining about the women-only rule (invoked at least 10 years ago!). But judging from the fuzzy memories of some

fans today, you'd almost think these changes must have been made secretly, behind locked doors and with muffled whispers...

Just as women's frequent presence in professional Hugo nominations during the 1970s-80s now seems in the process of being camouflaged with expressions of boredom with the period as a whole, it may be that fannish history is being whisked under the rug as so many dustballs. I was interviewed by a woman from the Women's Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin recently, and was a little surprised by how few names of female SF writers were familiar to her. Are we, perhaps, working hard to preserve the art of "lost" women writers--digging through dusty archives to read, collect, and advertise our forgotten ancestors' work--only to lose track of the work done by women just a decade before us? Let's try to keep a truer perspective of our history, so future women don't have to dig it up and publish a special "Unheralded Women of SF" issue of *Aurora* to spotlight it.

I sit in the audience at all-male "Fandom of the '70s" panels (and so far, that's the only way the panels I've witnessed have been filled, by men only) and don't hear *anything* of the politics, the changes, the roles that women played in that decade--except sometimes a little chortling aside about how it is easier now to get a date with a female fan...The prevailing picture of the decade that these panels paint is of an over-serious, rather boring, too academic, lifeless period between better times, between remarkable fannish eras that (unlike the '70s) had good, reprintable fan writers.

I don't think there's a conscious conspiracy to cover up the work of women. Many of the guys up on those panels are friends of mine, and they'll be horrified to hear me ever suggest they were involved in any kind of even vaguely sexist activities. For the most part, these friends supported us, shared our excitement, and seemed to admire the work of the new women writers. These men wrote to *Janus*, attended feminist panels, and were involved in the discussions about sexism and politics. Sometimes they even lectured us about not being feminist enough, about not being assertive enough, about not taking enough responsibility for ourselves.

Was this involvement of fleeting importance for some of these men? Is it just a coincidence that I hear male commentators in the media referring to feminism as a fad that has now passed? Maybe it's

continued on page 59

LESBIAN INTELLECTUALS ANONYMOUS

By Diane F. Germain

Good evening, and welcome to the Thursday night meeting of Lesbian Intellectuals Anonymous. My name is Diane, and I'm a Lesbian Intellectual.

I've been an intellectual since I was quite young, as long as I can remember actually. But I didn't see it as a problem 'til I hit bottom. Oh sure, people were always making off-handed comments that I could have paid much more attention to, like "Your problem is you *think* too much," or "Diane, do you always have to analyze everything?" Well, obviously she didn't realize that I *did* have to analyze everything as if my life depended on it.

People got tense with me 'cuz I had to know everything: "Then what did she say? What did *you* say? What did her face look like when she said that? Were her hands gesticulating or just in her pockets? How did you *feel* when she said that? How do you think *she* felt? Did she say? Did it remind you of your father? Tell me more. (I couldn't get enough.) *Tell me faster.*" I was called intense; sure I was intense, wasn't everybody intense? No? *Whell*, they must be deadheads or druggies or something. If they aren't intense, they don't know what the fuck is going on in the world.

I was tense, all right.

But then I began to lose more and more of my old friends, one by one. I turned to reading to ease my pain, distract myself, and take up the extra time I had on my hands. Early on, Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology* book convinced me to give up any medical care or therapy. Claudia Black's children of alcoholics book *It Will Never Happen To Me* convinced me to give up relationships. Sonia Johnson's book convinced me to give up religion, and Andrea Dworkin's book convinced me to give up sex. So what, I thought, now I have more time to read.

I began hanging around libraries anxious for a chance to fondle the books in a public place where I might get caught at any moment. I stuffed them in my jeans jacket, thrilled to feel their heavy weight and stiff bindings up against my body. As I walked around, faint gusts of warm glue and musty paper filled my mind with conspicuous fantasies. Just as long as I

stayed away from the electronic detectors I was more or less safe, even when I paraded around under the pinched nose of the head librarian. I knew she was trying to catch me at something but she never did. I was too clever for her. I was high with power and superiority. My books shielded me from mere human touch.

I began to get up earlier and earlier in the morning to watch a few hours of PBS television before I went to work. Starting at 5 a.m., I was fascinated by *Aerobic Calculus*, *Computer Chronicals*, and *The Joy of Geothermal Physics*. I learned how to fix a toilet, a light switch, and a leaking nuclei. I became an expert on insect sexual practices, gourmet sea gardening, Ukrainian economics. Yet it never seemed enough. The more I learned, the more empty I felt. I was a great student but never a teacher.

I tried to teach! I wanted everyone to be an intellectual. I'd often buy my friends and even strangers sets of gift books. I'd step up to the counter and loudly say, "Yes, B. Dalton, the books are on me." But all too soon they got tired of me telling them what to read. I bought a Lhasa Apso but she ran away after the first week. My boss caught me reading *The Wall Street Journal* in the toilet one time too many. He fired me. That same day, I ran my car into a telephone pole while straining to read the bumper stickers pasted on a truck.

I was beginning to play Trivial Pursuit all by myself, pretending I was four or more players. I needed more and more card sets, Baby Boomer, Genus I and II, Silver Screen, the Gay and Lesbian version, the naughty *Heterosexual* version even. Then, I knew I was in deep trouble.

So I came here to get some help. I know I can't do it alone.

I admitted I was powerless over books and ideas—my life had become... LITERAL.

I came to believe a mind smarter than mine could restore me to blissful ignorance.

I made a decision to turn my books back to the library and pay my overdue charges, which were by then over \$100.

I made a fearless search and moral

inventory of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

I admitted to my dog and several inarticulate animals in my neighborhood the exact nature of my intelligence quotient.

I was entirely ready to have the great professor in the sky remove all these high marks of my intelligence.

I humbly asked her to remove the A+ grades from all my report cards since kindergarten.

I made a list, oh yes I did, I made a list of all persons I was smarter than (and it was a *long* list, let me tell you). But I became willing to make witty statements to them all. I made direct biting satirical comments to such people whenever possible, even when to do so would insult them or question the nature of their parentage.

And I continued to take a personal inventory of each and every misspelled or mispronounced word of people around me, which I promptly announced publicly.

Yes friends, I was unafraid in the glow of enlightenment.

And so, I sought through meditation and musing and thinking to improve my knowledge of everything I could understand, praying (only when I had a moment free of ideations and conceptions) for more knowledge and will and power to carry even more ideology in my left brain.

Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of modifying these steps, I try to carry this message to individuals all over the country, and to practice effete snobism in all of my meetings.

Finally, I have made a solemn determination to turn my life over to Mary Daly, as I understand her so well. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Diane F. Germain is a cartoonist as well as a psychiatric social worker. She runs a group for women survivors of incest or childhood molest.

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RE:INKING

ANNIE ON MY MIND

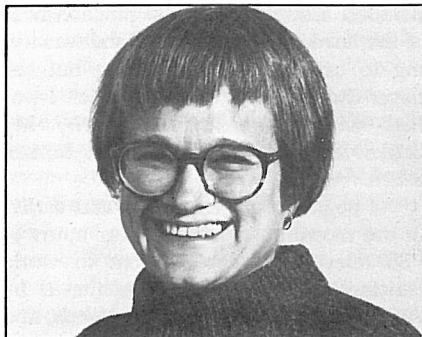
By Nancy Garden

'*Annie On My Mind*' is a young adult novel about two young lesbians, Annie and Liza, who meet and fall in love during their senior year in high school. Liza, who tells the story, is president of the student council of a coed private school in Brooklyn, New York, and Annie goes to a tough public school uptown. The book opens with Liza in college in Boston, reminiscing about her relationship with Annie, who is now in college in California. Liza hasn't written Annie for awhile. She thinks she wants to, but needs to sort out her feelings first. Most of the book is a long flashback in which Liza tells her and Annie's story as she tries to reconcile their love with what happened to it. For awhile the two young women had enjoyed a basically idyllic relationship, but then a schoolmate "caught" them together at the house of two teachers, and all hell broke loose. The book ends happily despite Liza's initial uncertainty, and there is no question but what she and Annie are gay and will resume their relationship as lovers.

Annie On My Mind was published in 1982, when taboos against homosexuality had already begun to lift from books for young people. The main difference between *Annie* and earlier breakthrough books was the happy ending and the absence of the implication that adolescent homosexuality is only a step on the way to happy heterosexuality—or must inevitably be punished by unrelieved tragedy.

Writing *Annie* was harder than getting it published. In a way, I started writing it around the time I began to realize I was gay, at 16—at least that's when I started trying to write about being gay. Back then, my main interest was in theater, so my first attempts—aside from a lot of sincere but bombastic adolescent poetry—was a play. But it was embarrassingly autobiographical and so full of raw anger and pain—my lover and I had been told never to see each other again—that it didn't work.

RE:INKING articles deal with women's writing, including publishing ventures and individual women writers.



Tim Morse

READING LIST FOR YOUNG LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

Compiled by Nancy Garden and Starla Sholl

- ANNIE ON MY MIND**, Nancy Garden; Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982 (female).
COUNTER PLAY, Anne Snyder; Avon/Flare, 1983 (male).
CRUSH, Jan Fatcher; Little, Brown, 1981 (female).
DANCE ON MY GRAVE, Aidan Chambers; Harper & Row, 1982 (male).
FLICK, Wendy Kesselman; Harper & Row, (female).
HAPPY ENDINGS ARE ALL ALIKE, Sandra Scoppetone; Harper & Row, 1978 (female).
HEY, DOLLFACE, Deborah Hautzig; Greenwillow, 1978 (female).
I'LL GET THERE, IT BETTER BE WORTH THE TRIP, John Donovan; Harper & Row, 1969 (male).
INDEPENDENCE DAY, B.A. Ecker; Avon/Flare, 1983 (male).
THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE, Isabel Holland; Harper & Row, 1972 (male).
NIGHT KITES, M.E. Kerr; Harper & Row, 1986 (male).
ONE TEENAGER IN TEN, anthology edited by Ann Heron; Alyson, 1983.
REFLECTIONS OF A ROCK LOBSTER, Aaron Fricke; Alyson, 1981 (male).
RUBY, Rosa Guy; Viking, 1976 (female).
STICKS AND STONES, Lynn Hall; Follett, 1972 (female).
TRYING HARD TO HEAR YOU, Sandra Scoppetone; Harper & Row, 1974 (male).
WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. FORSTER? Gary W. Bargar; Clarion, 1981 (male).
YOUNG, GAY AND PROUD, anthology edited by Sasha Alyson; Alyson, 1985.

I tried a novel when I was in college, for adults, called *For Us Also*. But even though I worked on it off and on for several years, and it provided me with an emotional outlet and considerable solace, I ultimately had the sense to realize that it didn't work either. It, too, was too full of anger and pain to be viable fiction, and stylistically it sounded like a combination of the Bible and Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, which influenced me enormously when I was growing up. That landmark book has fallen out of favor now, but back in those days it was just about the only serious work I could find about gay women.

After I abandoned *For Us Also*, I started writing juvenile and young adult fiction and nonfiction, and it was after publishing six or so titles that I returned to the subject closest to my heart. I wrote a book called *Summerhut*, which was still pretty autobiographical and bombastic but a bit closer to a real book than *For Us Also* had been. A kind editor read it, encouraged me to continue with it, and gave me suggestions for revising. I rewrote it for him a number of times before I finally realized I was going to have to start afresh. This book wasn't working either.

As most writers know, the hardest subjects to write about are often those one cares most deeply about. So far in my attempts at writing about gay women, I had been so concerned with the "lessons" I wanted to teach that I tended to make mouthpieces out of my characters and to manipulate them to illustrate my theme, rather than simply to tell a story about real people and let my characters act that story out themselves.

After many tears, much soul searching, and many long talks with my lover (the same woman I wasn't supposed to see at 16!)—who is an excellent critic and who couldn't have been more understanding and supportive—I put *Summerhut* aside and started a new gay book. That one is still sitting in a drawer in my section of our study. It was better, but it still wasn't right.

And then I began *Annie*, on a rainy

day when I had tomato soup for lunch. The book's first line, "It's raining, Annie," popped into my head, and with it came a strong feeling that maybe this time the book was going to work.

Annie went through many revisions, as most of my books do, before I showed it to anyone. One major change I made while I was working on it was to revise it from the first person to the third, because for awhile having Liza tell the story seemed too limiting. But in the third person I wasn't able to explore Liza's feelings about her lesbianism as deeply as I wanted, so I changed it back to the first person.

Eventually I sent *Annie* to my agent, and suggested that she not send it to Farrar, Straus & Giroux, who by then had published one or two of my books. I wasn't sure they'd want an author of "regular" kids' books to also be the author of a gay one. But I was wrong, and luckily my agent knew it. Farrar took *Annie*, after the editor who'd helped me with *Summerhut* rejected it, and has stood behind it 100 percent.

Working on *Annie* with my wonderful editor, Margaret Ferguson (one of those rare people who sees other human beings as individuals, not manifestations of labels), was one of the most exciting professional experiences I've ever had. Her commitment to the book was no less than mine, and we both wanted it to be as good as it could possibly be. We want that with every book, of course, but with *Annie* we somehow wanted it more.

As far as I know, *Annie* has been received pretty well. The reviews, certainly, were good. The American Library Association voted it a Best Book for 1983, and listed it as one of the Best of the Best from 1970-1983. It was nominated for the Gay Book Award (which ended up not being given that year), and for the Golden Kite Award, given by the Society of Children's Book Writers. Most important, I've gotten numerous lovely and often very touching letters from readers. I did get one that objected to my writing about such things for impressionable young people. But that was more than canceled out by the letter from the reviewer who had asked her very reluctant ("I don't want to read about those people!") teenaged daughter to read it. After finishing the book, her daughter reportedly said with astonishment, "They're just like other girls!"

Annie is basically a love story. It's a coming-out story, too, of course, and a story about the horrible jolt that comes to most of us when we find we're gay in a straight world. But my main purpose in writing *Annie* was to show that lesbians

can truly love each other. I wanted the book to reach both gay and straight people, too. I think it's vital to show gay kids they have a right to be who they are, and that they're not doomed to a life of loneliness and misery. But it's also vital to show straight kids that their gay brothers and lesbian sisters differ from them in only one very important way.

The librarian in my home town shelves *Annie* with the adult books so kids who are "too young" won't get hold of it, and I've heard of a number of librarians who won't shelve it or buy it at all, but I suppose that's to be expected. I was more flattered than hurt when I was notified that Her Majesty's Customs and Excise in Britain had "seized and held" *Annie* for six to nine months in a widespread attempt to prevent "indecent and obscene" books from being imported into the United Kingdom. And I was very flattered when I learned that at least one college has used *Annie* as a text in a course on minorities, and that the book has been favorably referred to in a number of articles on various relevant subjects.

The most negative experience I've had with *Annie* has come, I'm afraid, from the lesbian feminist community. I had a flash of recognition when I read what Rita Mae Brown said in the July 1986 issue of *HOT WIRE*: "Why assume that a woman who says she is a feminist is honest?" I had to learn the same lesson myself when a woman I didn't know at all—but who knew a friend of mine—telephoned me and asked if she could do a play version of *Annie*. She wrote a script with verbal permission from me, and began rehearsing, but she never got around to signing the contract my agent drew up; the bookings she said she had—she was going to take the play on tour with several others—turned out not to exist. I felt betrayed by a sister, but Rita Mae Brown is of course right that feminists are a varied as any other group. At least this woman and I now do have a written agreement that covers revising and marketing the script.

The other negative experience seems to be a continuing saga, and has to do with the book's jacket. It's not unusual for an author to dislike a book jacket, although I have liked many of mine. But fortunately or unfortunately, the jacket of a book about a minority makes a political as well as an artistic statement, and therefore has to be chosen with unusual care. The first jacket proposed for *Annie* was done in cold blues and grays, with *Annie* looking like a partly threatening and partly seductive vampire about to swoop down on poor reluctant Liza. The second

jacket was the one the hardcover ended up with. It's better, certainly, and is basically a striking painting, but the young women's heads seem oddly out of proportion to me, and Annie—at least to me and most of my friends—looks both tough and strange. The paperback cover, my favorite, is softer than the others, and shows the two characters relating warmly to each other. But Annie looks so much older than Liza that I'm afraid a person who doesn't know the book will think their relationship is unequal—that of teacher/student, perhaps—and that makes the wrong statement. The most recent cover is the one of the forthcoming British edition and is by far the worst. Both young women look like losers—again, Annie especially—and as if they're sorry they've been born. It's hard not to conclude that it's difficult—if not impossible—to find jacket illustrators who can draw happy, normal-looking lesbians.

People often ask if I'm going to write any more gay books. The answer is yes. In fact, within the next few months I'm hoping to return to one I've drafted, but have had to put aside for some time because of other commitments. It's less of a coming-out book than *Annie*; I'd like to write books that show lesbians and gay men facing situations only peripherally connected with coming out and being gay, and handling them decently. I'd like to see a day—and I'm happy to say I think it's coming—when books about gays deal with the same life problems that books about straights do, as well as with the problems peculiar to us as a minority. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Nancy Garden, author of 15 books for children and young adults, lives in Massachusetts with her lover, two dogs, and two cats. She has been an actress, stage lighting designer, office worker, teacher, and editor.



LIVE! FROM CANADA

DUB POET LILLIAN ALLEN

By Connie Kuhns

As I wrote in my November 1987 column, the population of Canada is not large enough to support a separate women's music industry. Although there have always been women who ran production companies and coffeehouses, organized benefits, and performed other jobs associated with an alternative women's music scene, the performers do not have the option of a women's music circuit. The Canadian women's music festival in Winnipeg has been called off; the organizers say there isn't enough support to finance it.

There exists in Canada a large and diverse collection of socially and politically conscious performers—female and male, gay and heterosexual, white and of colour—who share the same stages at Canadian music festivals, benefits, and clubs. It is generally seen as a smart move both financially and politically to take one's message to the Canadian *people*. But since sexism and racism still impede the progress of many talented people—and eliminate the careers of others—it is a cause for celebration when a performer with strongly-held beliefs wins a national award for an album which clearly voices her concerns. Dub poet Lillian Allen is such an artist.

Although its roots are in Africa, dub poetry owes its life to Jamaica—to a woman named Louise Bennett who broke form in the 1930s and began writing dialect poetry in Jamaican Creole. She wrote as people spoke, not in "proper English" as was the tradition imposed by Jamaica's conquerors. Her talent for capturing this rhythm launched a career which took her and her poetry around the world. She was, and still is, a serious hardworking cultural ambassador whose work inspired national pride.

Now, 50 years later, dub poetry has emerged as the artistic language of Jamaica. As the Caribbean sister of rap music, dub sprouted from the legacy of Miss Lou, was seasoned by the d.j. toasters of



Lillian Allen: "I've been called 'too political,' and that's a term other people use when you don't conform."

the '60s, and brought to boil in the '70s with the popularity of reggae music. It left the Caribbean on the tongues of Jamaican immigrants, and its revolutionary message came to Canada in the form of Lillian Allen.

Lillian immigrated to Canada in 1969 when she was 17 to escape the economic and class restrictions of Jamaica. But she also came, she says, to find "new worlds, new ways of thinking, new ideas, and new people." She planned to attend university and become a lawyer.

"I got into Canada quite easily," she says. "I came at the time when they were looking for more people. When they wanted workers. I fit the bill. I was nice and clean and well-spoken, and had the pioneering spirit. You know, the one that moved mountains. They accepted me and welcomed me. Officially."

Unofficially, it was another matter. As Lillian writes in her poem "I Fight Back," *I came to Canada/and found the doors of opportunities well guarded.*

"There was nothing that reflected or validated my existence. For the way society was set up and looked, I didn't exist. That was quite a shock," she says. "It was hard to get jobs. And it took me awhile to realize that is was because I was Black. I had never had the experience of racism. I

was completely naive and hopeful."

Like many immigrants, Lillian was unable to find employment equal to her educational background and experience, so she worked at a variety of low-paying jobs to support her studies. Eventually she decided to try New York City where she studied Communications and Black American Literature and worked on a community newspaper. Ultimately she returned to Jamaica.

"The thing with racism is that it's blind to any other factor except colour. So it doesn't matter if you're a pimp or a doctor, or you were born in Nova Scotia or Buckingham Palace," she says.

In 1974 an even more determined Lillian Allen returned to Canada. She enrolled at York University in Toronto and studied creative writing. She founded an annual Third World cultural festival. She began writing plays, short stories, poetry, and songs. She joined the reggae band Truth and Rights as a resource person, education coordinator, and writer.

She was among the Canadian delegation in 1978 to the International Festival of Youths and Students in Havana, Cuba. There she experienced what she calls "one of the most magical memories of my life" when Jamaican dub poet Oku Onoura gave her a private performance.

In 1982, Lillian published her own book of dub poetry, *Riddin' An' Hardtimes*, which sold 7,000 copies. She recorded an album with poets Clifton Joseph and Devon Haughton called *De Dub Poets*, and she released a spoken-word cassette *Live in Concert: The Poetry of Lillian Allen*. But her breakthrough came in 1986 when she won a Juno [Canadian equivalent to the Grammy] for Best Reggae/Calypso Recording for her first major solo recording project, *Revolutionary Tea Party*. Her win was a morale booster for politically active people throughout Canada.

On *Revolutionary Tea Party*, Lillian Allen does not serve milquetoast. She sits at the table with working class and immigrant women. She stands with feminists and on the side of choice. Women of all shapes, colours, and sexuality walk

LIVE! FROM CANADA is an introduction to women's independent music in Canada.

through her poetry. But segregated politically correct sentiments have no place in her kitchen. Any woman who fights for her survival is a revolutionary.

"You can doodle around in words and images and nobody will know who you are or what you stand for. When you start talking about issues, it's very clear where you are," she says. "I've been called 'too political' [one reviewer called her the most political artist in Canada], and that's a term other people use when you don't conform. What I say is, that if I reject the inequalities, the oppression, the things I see around me, then I'm political. If that's what you call political, then fine. I'm coming out of a Third World tradition where you're either oppressed by class, race, gender, or colour in this city [Toronto]. But I think that I do have an opportunity to speak up, and I've chosen to seize that opportunity."

In the last five years Lillian has performed at an extensive list of festivals, including the Second International Bookfair of Radical Black and Third World Writers in London, the Sisterfire festival in Washington, D.C., the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and the National Congress of Black Women in Toronto. She has shared the stage with Ferron, Odetta, Holly Near, Lucie Blue Tremblay, and Casselberry-DuPrée. She has appeared at a variety of rallies, benefits, and community events, on Canadian national radio and television, and she returned home to read her poetry at the Jamaica School of Art in Kingston. Women who have made guest appearances on her albums include Sherry Shute, Elaine Stef, Laurie Conger, Lorraine Segato, Juli Masi, Rachel Melas,

Connie Nowe, Sara McElcheran, and Four the Moment.

By the time you read this, Lillian's second album, *Condition Critical*, will have been released in Canada and presumably in Europe, where she shares a label with Ferron and Sweet Honey in the Rock. And like *Tea Party*, *Condition Critical* tackles and illuminates issues critical in our time: poverty, the homeless, racist justice, and the tragedy in South Africa.

Dub poetry is considered living poetry in that it incorporates the musical styles and social problems of whatever country it pollinates. Not counting d.j. toasters in the Caribbean and England, there are perhaps only 20 recognized dub poets in the world. To have Lillian Allen at the forefront in Canada is a lucky break for us all.

"If you're talking about humanity, if you're talking about ideals like freedom and justice and self expression, then you're talking about the basic essence of the human being which transcends any kind of gender or race," she says. "So at some point you just have to check your vision and see what it's all about." ●

For more information about Lillian Allen, write *Verse to Vinyl*, P.O. Box 311, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 4E3.

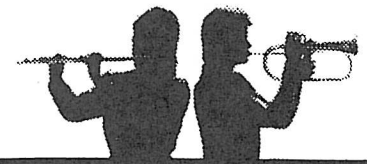
ABOUT THE WRITER: *Connie (Smith) Kuhns is the producer and host of Ruby-music, Canada's original women's music radio program now in its eighth year. She has written dozens of articles about women musicians and is currently writing a book on the history of women's music in Canada.*

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BEHIND THE SCENES

SUSAN WILSON AND IRENE YOUNG

By Lucy Diamond

SUSAN WILSON

The name Susan Wilson is a familiar one, though many of us may not remember exactly when or where we first saw it. What we *do* remember are the many incredible photographic images she has captured over the years.

Susan took her first photography course at Boston's Museum School (of the Museum of Fine Arts) in 1976, while she worked on completing her Ph.D. coursework. She had gotten her first 35mm camera a year before, and got her first professional job as a photographer three months after the class. It was only a matter of a few more months before she expanded her new career further into the area of writing.

Susan continued to take courses in photography, though she has never taken a journalism course. She worked as the music critic and photographer for *Equal Times*, one of Boston's first women's newspapers, and began taking photographs in 1977 for *Sojourner*, the other women's paper in Boston, where she soon became photo editor. In the next few years, Susan photographed and wrote reviews, interviews, and some longer pieces about women musicians, expanding to several different papers and magazines. In 1978 Susan added the *Boston Globe* to her list, and became a full-fledged *Globe* staff member in 1981.

Since 1976, Susan has been involved in many other aspects of this business, including publicity photos and album covers. Her work has been in one-woman and group photo exhibits yearly since 1977.

Writing has led to numerous speaking engagements as well as interviews on radio and television shows discussing women in music and women's music. She

worked briefly as an artist manager in 1977, but says she did not enjoy it. In 1981 and 1982, she compiled her photos and many trivia tidbits into the beautiful and informative Women's Music Calendars.

For the past couple of years, Susan has produced, written, and narrated an hour-long radio show called "Hey Girl," which features the lives of women musicians who are now deceased. Though not exclusively a "women's music" show, it is an important and informative vehicle for women in the music business. "Hey Girl" was a finalist in the NFCB radio awards in 1986.

Susan finds herself also acting as an unofficial consultant to many artists, concert producers, record labels, and others in the women's music network. Her experience regarding women in music has helped many women with their careers.

When not working in her regular job

as a photographer and writer, Susan teaches advanced photographic techniques one day a week, eight months a year at the New England School of Photography. She also continues to write for the *Boston Globe* twice a week on topics such as women in music; music in general; women in other fields; history; video; and cultural events.

Born in 1947 in Brooklyn, Susan grew up in the middle class Madison, New Jersey area. She is the second of two children; her brother died when she was in elementary school. Her mother was a classical pianist and executive secretary. According to Susan, her father—an executive with a large utilities company—loved the Bohemian life. He had lived in Greenwich Village and was friends with many of the local jazz musicians.

Growing up 45 minutes from New York City, she was continually exposed to the many different cultural experiences of that city. She recalls that as a child she went with her family to all the major Broadway musicals of the '50s. Her home was constantly filled with jazz, classical, and pop music.

In high school she was an art major specializing in drawing. As she got older, she took an interest in folk music and began an all-women's folk quartet called The Saints.

Susan's education includes bachelors and masters degrees, as well as coursework at the Ph.D. level. Her academic areas of interest included education and history, with a specialty in Russian history. She graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Tufts University.

Susan describes herself as a young woman: "I was fat, wore glasses, and got straight A's." Even though her sense of humor was very much a part of her life, she felt most unpopular. "I was never asked out to make-out parties in junior high school," she says. To resolve her dilemma, she "lost weight, got contact lenses, and acted dumb, hoping that the boys wouldn't notice I was still getting straight A's."

continued on page 56



East Coast Susan Wilson

BEHIND THE SCENES profiles the "unsung" women who keep the women's music network running: producers, bookers, technicians, back-up musicians, organizers, distributors, and dedicated workers of all kinds.

IRENE YOUNG

Irene Young has a very special gift: she sees the beauty in everyone. She translates her gift into her well-known work as a photographer.

Irene was born in November of 1950 in Tarpon Springs, Florida, a small Greek community in the Tampa Bay area, where she lived until her family moved to Atlanta when she was 15. The second of three sisters, she doesn't consider herself

Irene has had little formal training as a photographer. She attended two classes at the School of Visual Arts. One class was good, she says, and the other not as good. She knew at that point that she must learn from her own mistakes—which she proceeded to do.

After a few years photographing mainstream musicians in New York, Irene was contacted by Kate Winter of Olivia Records to do some promo work with Teresa Trull. Thus began her work in the

can provide situations that are mutually beneficial. For example, she was responsible for the introductions of both Deidre McCalla and Lucie Blue Tremblay to the Olivia Records organization. Usually this type of networking activity goes publicly unnoticed, but the facilitation of crucial connections between women is definitely a major link in making and maintaining a strong national network.

Irene Young's distinctive photographic style is easily recognizable. Many of our "big name" artists have her photo credit on their promo shots, though women's music artists make up only a small part of Irene's total photographic clientele.

A photo session with Irene Young is a well-orchestrated experience. She particularly enjoys photographing people who don't like their pictures taken. According to Irene, the challenge becomes turning a potentially negative experience into a positive one. She requests that the people being photographed bring their favorite music; she provides refreshments. By not working by the hour, Irene can take the individual situation and work at the pace of the individual client. Some of her favorite sessions have been with Laura Nyro, Alive, Cris Williamson, Robin Flower, and many of the Windham Hill label performers.

After 12 years of photographing musicians, Irene has begun to move into other areas. She says she has a deep awareness for other people in life who do wonderful work, yet who go virtually unrecognized. She expects some of her future work to reflect the lives of these people. She and designer Laura Parker prepared the annual report for the Children's Hospitals of California. To their delight, the project was an award winner.

Irene has also begun to work out of the studio environment. On-location work provides a different situation in which to work, as well as a new area for her professional growth. She is also venturing into the world of video. Working with Wolf Video, Irene co-produced and directed her first music video. It features Deidre McCalla's "All Day Always."

Irene says she was and is inspired by women who are doing courageous things with their lives. She is drawn to creative people; "Being a lesbian in this culture," she says, "is a creative act." ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Lucy Diamond, aka Linda Dederman, has been involved in women's music since 1974. She has done concert production, artist management, booking, and record distribution.



West Coast Irene Young

Fran Miller

someone with strong family ties, but she recognizes a strong bond with her sisters. Their mother died when Irene was eight.

Following her 1968 high school graduation, Irene attended college, where journalism was of great interest to her. She was editor of her college newspaper, and graduated with a degree in Philosophy.

As a young woman, Irene was primarily interested in music. She says she believes this early interest was a motivating factor in her later work photographing musicians.

At 19, she began living with a man who was a photographer. Irene got her first exposure to photography during their five year marriage, during which she assisted her husband by working to develop prints. She was discouraged from further satisfying her curiosity about other areas of photography, but later realized that she could do it all.

At age 24, Irene left the marriage and was ready to strike out on her own. With the encouragement of her musician friend Janis Ian, Irene moved to New York to begin her career.

women's music network.

After eight years in New York, Irene says she had begun to feel a little restless. After an altercation with her landlord, she was ready to leave. As she discussed her situation with friend Deidre McCalla, Judy Dlugacz of Olivia Records called, asking Irene when she was going to move to California. Olivia was working at that time on Meg Christian's *Turning It Over* record and needed an album cover.

"How about in a month?" Irene said, to which Judy responded, "Three weeks." And so Irene made the move westward. She has worked on almost every Olivia album cover since *Turning It Over*.

In addition to her contributions as studio photographer, Irene has played other roles in women's music. While in New York, she produced concerts, including Margie Adam's first New York appearance, Alix Dobkin, and the band Deadly Nightshade. She stopped producing when her partner (sound engineer Debbie Rubinfeld) and she realized they were not making any money.

Irene also contributes to the network by "hooking up" artists with others who

OLIVIA from page 31

fore. Not all were Olivia artists; for example, we had never recorded Gwen Avery or Sue Fink & Joelyn Grippo. There were a few cuts from records we had done. Everyone we asked absolutely came through; no one ever declined to do it. We basically knew how many cuts we could put on a record, and we tried to keep the costs down, so it wasn't like everyone who *could* be included was on it. We just did what we could in the quickest period of time, and it was a mammoth undertaking. I think we decided to do it, and within two months we had recorded it. Because of the political timeliness of the project, we needed it out as fast as possible. 40 or 50 percent of the record was made in our living room, using a board that was built by Sandy. The rest of it was

done in studios.

Another important aspect was the promotion we did. We made stickers of the album cover (the little orange juice cans) and basically gave out thousands of them for people to put up all over the place. It was a wonderful campaign, and people did it all over the country; it was a real kind of a political action. The fact that there was such a thing as a *Lesbian Concentrate* record, with that title and that cover, really enabled a lot of women to immediately tell what the project was all about. At that point in time it was a pretty big statement for them to be walking into stores and buying it. (Consequently we had a fair amount of mail order.)

We learned a lot from how much it affected people. Even though there had been other blatant things, like Alix Dobkin's music--here was something extreme-

ly visual, nationally visible, and from so many artists...it had a *very* strong impact. Some people have said to me, "Why don't you do another one?" It sounds like a good idea, and we might do another one sometime. But the original *Lesbian Concentrate* anthology was very much a product of its times.

Of course if people didn't yet know what we were all about, they sure knew by that. The press's response in particular made it very clear who Olivia Records was, even if they didn't bother ever to listen to the music. The reputation, especially in the media, lasts to this day. And that has been fine with us.

In part two, Olivia Records makes 'Lesbian Concentrate,' moves to the Bay Area, Meg and Cris play Carnegie Hall, Second Wave Records is formed, and Meg departs...among other things. ●

DEIDRE from page 34

ture of the independent recording industry."

Deidre says the concept of 'women's music' was once understood only by those who were part of it. "Women's music grew from the women's movement in the 1970s. But women's music is not a style, and there is really a women's music network. I'm on a one-woman campaign to adopt the term 'feminist cultural network,' because women's culture doesn't only involve music but also dance and theater as well as other aspects of music production. And 'feminist' needs to be in there because *we claim the politics,*" she says. "If we can't at least say 'feminist,' then we are in trouble."

One of the few performers currently in the feminist cultural network to consistently publicly proclaim her lesbian identity, Deidre admits, "It's taken me a while to be confident onstage--to be a lesbian onstage--without standing on a soapbox and preaching. I have tried to be a lesbian in a natural context."

A radio station manager while in college, Deidre's feminist musical identity was crystallized early. "I played one program a week of women's music. I listened to those early albums and found them nice," she says.

Don't Doubt It reflected a woman-identified attitude as well as personal healing. "It was 10 years in the making, the best of 10 years," Deidre says. "I wrote seven songs, I needed to record those songs, and I used three others from friends. I was much more conscious and deliberate for *With A Little Luck*, and it was draining in a positive way."

Nonetheless, there were special spontaneous moments in working on *With A Little Luck*. "I had been making a tape for the car," she says, "and I had forgotten about it. And one day I happened to play it again. I sat listening to what I'd written, crying, thinking, 'God, this is beautiful.' Special songs like that happen in their own time, and I put it on the album."

Both albums contain clearly lesbian songs. For example, *Don't Doubt It* has "Wake Me Up Gently," with the lines "I knew a lady once, with yellow hair/Who slept like a log but roared like a bear...I don't know where she's living now/Who shares her bed or makes her smile/Whoever you are, there's something you should know...wake her up gently, wake her up slow." On *With A Little Luck*, "Would You Like To Dance" focuses more on pursuit: "There's someone in the corner/That I would like to

meet/It'd be a big blow if she said no/I'd love to talk to her/If I could only find the nerve."

Deidre recounts a humorous moment about those songs from her family. Following the release of *With A Little Luck*, "My parents, of course, commented on it. When he heard 'Would You Like To Dance,' my father's attitude was, 'Why didn't you change the gender?' But my mother really surprised me by saying that she liked 'Would You Like to Dance' better than 'Wake Me Up Gently,'--'At least you are just dancing!'"

Plans for 1988 include more touring, and Deidre may realize her goal for this year--to play the feminist cultural network 'Grand Slam.' She is already scheduled for the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival night stage, the Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival, and at press time was hoping to be invited to one of the Labor Day festivals--NEWMR or the East Coast Women's Music and Comedy Festival.

Deidre knew the successful debut of *Don't Doubt It* would be a tough act to follow. However, "The success of *With A Little Luck* showed me that I do know what I'm doing, and I do it well," she says. "I'm pleased, and I'm resting now until I begin to obsess about the next album in 1989!" ●

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CRIS from page 32

Cris is proud that her music has touched many issues and reached many communities. "Song of the Soul," for example, has been played at stress workshops for people who make missile components. She has always let her music speak for itself.

"I've never really defined my music," says Cris. "I like to stress the interconnectedness between ourselves and the environment and all creatures. I want to affect life as much as it has affected me, help reawaken people's innate desire to be compassionate with each other and to care for the Earth."

Over her many years as an entertainer, Cris has shared her visions of spiritualism, of naturalism, of the power of women. The alchemy that occurs in Cris's creative process juxtaposes her personal experience with broader metaphor

in her attempt to speak to the whole world. Her images are stark and wild: fire, shooting stars, flowing water, light, angels, and the endless, sweeping wind. Her historical themes stir our collective unconscious: Peter Pan, Dorothy of Oz, the renegade Crazy Horse. Cris's music reflects a women's spirit and gives us a clear message: we each have our own spirit, our own process, and our own voice.

Her 11 albums include *Lumiere* for children, the historic double album *Meg & Cris at Carnegie Hall*, and her "best-of-Cris-Williamson" album entitled *Portrait*. She also has two songbooks of her music, and has performed in virtually every major concert hall in the United States.

Cris has developed her career through touring with the support of both alternative and mainstream media. She has been on a 50 city tour to promote the

release of her latest album, *Wolf Moon*. Her schedule has included several special performances with Holly Near, a series of concerts with Liz Story, and solo concerts with Tret Fure and Carrie Barton. The Olivia 15th Anniversary concerts—featuring Cris, Tret, Deidre McCalla, Lucie Blue, Nancy Vogl, and Dianne Davidson—were produced in Cleveland, Boston, Berkeley, and Los Angeles. The anniversary extravaganza may be produced in other cities before the end of 1988.

"Our audience is growing," Cris says. "The world is coming out to my concerts: men, women, children, dogs, cats, the whole works. I'm very grateful to women for their support and help with my self-definition, but I don't want to just speak to women. I'm interested in speaking to the whole world." The *Los Angeles Times* once noted: "Williamson's music is simply too good, and her themes too universal, to remain a secret." ●

LUCIE from page 33

had been negotiating with Canadian companies, but her song about incest ("*Voix d'Enfant/A Child's Voice*") was unacceptable to them.

"It was not what they wanted," Lucie says. "It didn't feel right, working with them. But after meeting and talking with the women at Olivia Records, I knew—we all knew—that it would work. I felt good doing my album with Olivia, and I still feel good with them. I feel really privileged and in great company with the other artists on Olivia, and I've been blessed to have such help and support from the precious women who run the record company."

Lucie's first full-length record, *Lucie Blue Tremblay* (Olivia, 1986), contains a more polished version of "So Lucky," as well as her songs about surviving incest, the magic and sadness of love, and her transcultural translation of sister Canadiane Ferron's "Ain't Life A Brook." The album has five songs in English and five in French (with English translations); one side is live, the other studio recorded.

Lucie has spent the past two years touring extensively, a time plagued by problems obtaining her H-1 work visa [see "Red, White, and (Visa) Blues," March 1987]. She enjoys the traveling and the connections she has made throughout the United States and Canada, but admits it has been difficult to stay balanced while on the road. "I have not had much time for myself or to myself," she says. "After two years, you want to write letters, to breathe, to celebrate your mother's birthday. You want to pay your bills yourself;

it's nice to go home and actually look at the bills. I have needed to step back seriously, and to nurture myself." So, she took a break this past spring.

"Part of it was my birthday [in May] and thinking about change: I wanted to contemplate my life and my last two years of work. And I needed to check in with myself, to make time to care for myself physically and emotionally. So I decided to do something completely different for awhile," she says. "Before I recorded my album, I had played softball—I was a catcher—and I loved it. It kept me in shape, and it was fun. Around the time that I began recording, I was hit with a bat and knocked out at the plate. Because I was also busy with my album, I decided at that point to take a break from softball. I've just started playing again. I don't know if I'll play catcher—but it's still great fun. And," she says, "the team is called 'Bosom Buddies.'"

Lucie has spent some time in the southern part of the U.S., where she tried out for the local softball team. "I'm not recognized here, and that feels nice," she says. She has been amused by some of the unexpected effects of anonymity. "When I decided to try out for the softball team, the coach asked me my name and address, which I gave. Then she wanted to know my home and work numbers. I told her my home number and said that I didn't have a work number. For a while after that, I was treated like a bum because I didn't have a work number!"

She notes that women's music in general is not as readily available in the South where she was staying. "I realize

that the women here are not as lucky as in other places," she says. "There are fewer concerts and festivals here, and *HOT WIRE* is not available. I think to myself that there are many people that women's music has not reached. Some magic could happen here; if one woman heard an album—or read an issue of *HOT WIRE*—that touched her, and then passed it on to someone who didn't know it—then, the culture would spread and be shared. This music and this writing don't lose their strength with the years; they keep on helping us to feel good about ourselves."

In addition to softball, Lucie enjoys shopping, and is riding a motorcycle again. (It's her third one, a Yamaha 550 cc 4 cylinder.) She is also planning her next album, for which some of the songs are already written. Unlike the live side of *Lucie Blue Tremblay*, which was recorded at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco, the live part of Lucie's upcoming album will be taped on the East Coast.

"I did a concert at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre in Cambridge," she says. "It was on Valentine's Day of this year, and the 1200 seats were nearly sold out. It's wood panelled, and it felt very warm, very special," she says. She decided that Sanders Theatre was the right place to record the live side of her next album, which she plans to try to do on a Saturday night so that people can come from out of town.

"I'm just doing a lot of things these days that I like to do," she says, "taking this time for myself, to rest and grow, to get stabilized again." ●

FREESTYLE

SARASWATI REVISITED

By Kay Gardner

After my Dad died I received a small inheritance, enough to take me around the world if I were thrifty. It had long been a dream of mine to travel. Maybe my mother's Uncle Henry was an inspiration; he'd been a ship's cook. As children, my brother and I would point out places on the globe, and there wasn't a continent or a port on it that Uncle Henry hadn't visited.

Two problems arose as I began planning my trip: terrorists started attacking in many of the countries I wanted to see, and my knees gave out on me. Metaphysically this meant that I did not wish either to be flexible or mobile. So, I decided instead to fund a particularly personal recording project, *Fishersdaughter*, my fifth album. The trip around the world would have to wait for better timing.

Meanwhile I began doing positive visualizations, imagining myself in foreign locales and on airplanes winging towards exotic places.

On Halloween 1986 my psychic work paid off. On that very magic day I received phone calls from two sources, each offering me free travel, expenses, and a small stipend for co-leading spiritual tours! One was from Venus Adventures, with whom I'll be leading an England/Ireland Mysteries Tour in early September '88. The other call was from Don Campbell, a New Age composer, student of the famous composition teacher Nadia Boulanger, and one of my music and healing teaching colleagues. He was planning a December '87-January '88 trip to Thailand and Bali; would I go as his co-leader? Did I even have to *think* about it?

Why was I so interested in Bali? Because of all the music in the world, it is the most unique to my ears. In this country, most of our classical music is influenced by European tradition. Most of our popular music and jazz is African in origin. Latin or South American music is easy to tune into. Even East Indian music, ever since Ravi Shankar's tours, is not

FREESTYLE: the musings and experiences of Kay Gardner.



From a 6" Sandalwood carving

Saraswati

difficult to find. But Balinese music, though Asian, is totally different from anything the East has to offer.

THAILAND

We left the day after Christmas, flying from Seattle to Tokyo and then on to Bangkok, Thailand, the most polluted city I've ever experienced. I was looking for likely lesbians on the plane but couldn't really figure anything out until our eldest member—a retired biochemist named Porty—plunked herself near me. She was wearing a labyris necklace. "Thank goodness I'm not the only one," I thought.

The Thailand (formerly Siam) portion of the trip was not the highlight of the tour, but in the three days we were there we visited many Buddhist temples and the "Juilliard" of Thailand, where 200 girls, ages 11 and 12, wearing white blouses and red kind-of Siamese bloomers, danced for us. The grace and beauty of these nymphs was truly inspiring.

Though appreciating the Thai form of spirituality, I didn't feel particularly connected with its Buddhism. Not enough goddess imagery, I guess. It was

the older religion of Thailand, a type of animism, that touched me the most. (I'm just a born-again pagan!) It was evident everywhere, even at the Buddhist temples, in the form of spirit houses. Looking like multi-level bird condos on pedestals, they were painted bright colors and had amulets, talismans, and ornate flower decorations placed within and without. I fantasized about going to a garden store and having one shipped home for my backyard in coastal Maine, but the thought of seagull guano decorating it deterred me.

I bought *Anna and the King of Siam* to read on the plane to Bali, the book that inspired Rogers and Hammerstein's *The King and I*. The true story of a Victorian English woman who was hired to tutor the king's many children, her book gave some historical perspective as well as biographical vignettes.

BALI

On New Year's Eve we left for Indonesia, of which Bali is a province, arriving at our Ubud hotels about five minutes to midnight. Some of us stayed at the Puri Saren (Prince's Palace) and others nearby at the Puri Saraswati, a woman-owned hotel. There was no time for wild celebrating, but I did play a mini-version of "Auld Lang Syne" on my ocarina.

Here I was more comfortable spiritually (Bali is mostly Hindu, meaning goddess imagery) as well as musically. Though the Thai music had been interesting, the predominant use of a raucous oboe-like instrument—which Don kiddingly called a paper bag pipe—had been very difficult for me to tolerate let alone appreciate. But in Bali there was gamelon music, and we were going to get some hands-on training with a master teacher.

Almost all of the instruments in gamelon (Balinese or Javanese orchestra) are percussion. For the largest musical performances, usually accompanying the dance-theater, the gamelon is about 20 pieces: a couple of conga-like drums played with hands and sticks; four five-

to-seven-tone tenor and bass metallo-phones; nine soprano and alto xylo-phones with about 16 bars each; a reong, a long instrument made up of 16 brass "breasts" of ascending sizes upon which four players play mostly the "nipples" with threaded sticks; two or three large gongs; a time-keeping "breast"; ceng ceng (cheng cheng), little cymbals which sound just like their name; and a small bamboo flute or two.

Our teacher was Mr. Swastika. (It's unfortunate that a word with such a beautiful meaning, "wheel of life," was perverted by the Nazis.) He was very soft-spoken and patient with a bunch of loud-mouthed Westerners—only half of whom were musicians—beating the shit out of his orchestra's instruments, but we had a good few hours' introduction to Balinese music.

When almost a week had passed in Ubud with our attending performances of dance and gamelon every evening, we were invited to the nearby village of Pelitan to see Mekar Sari, one of Bali's three all-women gamelon orchestras.

amazing. It reminded me so much of the spirit of the first concert of the New England Women's Symphony in 1978!

All dressed in rich gold costumes, their hair elaborately coiffed, they played on instruments carved of wood painted with red and gold. Most of the pieces were dance works to which the village children danced. These young girls and boys were absolutely precious, so graceful and nimble in the Balinese dance style. This dancing is mostly flat-footed, with dancers' heads moving from side to side in rhythm with the music, and hands impossibly bent backwards and turned in wrist movements. Eyes and faces often seem emotionless until a particularly dramatic event happens and the eyes' deeply-felt expression wrenches the viewer.

The boys danced as warriors (yes, role-playing is the same there) and the girls danced first as temple girls, later as peacocks, and last as golden deer, each dance beautifully costumed in the locally colorful woven fabrics.

Advertised as part of the tour, at my

Seven Nymphs. Dressed in our sarongs and prayer sashes (everyone, men and women, must wear these skirts and belts to enter the temples), we walked single file past a beautiful pond of pink lotus flowers. Seeing the pagoda shapes of the temple silhouetted against the cloudy but bright sky, we entered our circle from the east, with Porty, the oldest, first at age 75, and Lesley, the youngest, last at age 12. One of the village women joined us too, though goodness knows what she must have thought of the cedar and sage incense we smudged every woman with. It must have smelled very strange to her in a culture where the scents are so richly floral.

We shared women's chants from many world traditions, including Wiccan, Native American, Hindu, Sufi, Christian, Jewish, and Buddhist. Because the moon was hiding, we decided to howl her out. Laurie knew how to make a perfect wolf howl, and it—added to our doggie howls—persuaded the moon to join us. For the rest of the ritual she glowed in a clear starry sky.

SARASWATI IS NOT JUST A HINDU GODDESS, BUT *THE* FEMALE ASPECT OF THE CREATOR.

The women, or "ladies," were excited about having their own group. (None of the orchestras are mixed.) In her introductory remarks, an English-speaking musician said, "Every one of us is happy to be able to perform for you all by ourselves. Many of our members are also senior dancers. They have been abroad to dance with many different music groups, and they have danced in the United States, Australia, Japan, and many countries in Europe and Asia, but *never* accompanied by ladies. Tonight here we are, all by ourselves, our own group. We invite you tonight to witness our existence. Please, tell your friends, your relatives, and the ladies of all over the world!" At that the audience, mostly women, broke out into dyke hoots (well, you had me, Porty, and some Canadian and Australian dykes there) and applause (from the audience members of straighter persuasion).

It was a thrill to see these women performing traditional as well as original pieces. That they were excited was evident in their performance. The contrast between the women and their group spirit and the all-male groups, who often seemed like bored union jobbers, was

insistence, were women-only classes in gamelon and Balinese dance. For some unexplained reason—probably an "oversight" on the part of the patriarchal organizers—these classes did not occur, and some of us women were really angry about it. We also had a hard time breaking away from the group to attend the rituals of the local people, rather than those staged for Westerners. Having missed a local full moon ritual, we decided to have our own.

One of the women in the group, Marie, had walked through a temple near her hotel and had felt a real good vibration there. "Let's have the ritual at that temple," she suggested. I told her that we'd need permission, since there were temples to various gods and goddesses all *over* the place. It wouldn't be right to perform a women's ritual in, say, the temple of Siva (Shiva), the god of destruction, would it? So Marie checked into it and found that the temple was one to the ancestors, only used once every six months, and it would be fine for us to do our full moon ritual there.

We arranged to meet after the evening's performance of Rajapala and the

There is a rule in Hindu temples that "unclean" (i.e., menstruating) women may not enter, and during a tour of island temples, the group abided by this custom. When we noticed that these menstruating women weren't with us for our full moon ritual, we sent a messenger back to the hotel to bring them. Western feminists in no way are going to accept the "unclean" bit!

The ritual was as full as Mother Moon and very empowering. It was the cap or crown on the tour for many of us.

Another fine part of the trip was that my favorite goddess, Saraswati, was represented in sculpture, batik and paintings. She's not particularly easy to find in the United States. Years ago, when learning that the combination of the Greek Lydian and Lesbian modes created a Hindu raga (scale) called Saraswati, I was very excited

continued on next page

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Kay Gardner is a composer, performer, priestess, and teacher of the healing properties of music. She has been deeply involved in women's music and culture since 1973. At present she is writing a book on music as medicine.*

to learn that she was a Hindu goddess of music and the sciences, and that her scale was the same as that formed by the fourth octave of overtones (harmonics)! It was really thrilling to find out that Saraswati is not just a Hindu goddess, but *the* female aspect of the Creator third of the Hindu trinity (Brahma is the male aspect).

The caste (class) system is almost outmoded in Bali. There is no untouchable caste, and those born into the other castes are not so strict about their social relationships as they were in the past. The tour guide on the bus which took us around to the sights on the island had been born into a family of the Brahman caste, i.e., the priesthood. Rather than entering the priesthood, however, he preferred to be a tour bus guide. Little did he know at first that we were *really* interested in the spiritual aspects of Balinese culture.

As we passed the many brilliant green rice paddies and wondered about

the little thatched spirit houses in each one, he explained that these were to Sri, the goddess of fertility, the Protector third of the Hindu trinity (Vishnu is the male aspect).

"Which gods or goddesses do most people worship?" someone asked.

"The Destroyer," he said.

We were confused. "Why would someone want to worship the god of destruction, Siva, or the goddess Durga?"

"So they won't *do* their destructive work," he answered logically.

My adventures in Bali also included a visit to the Mother Temple at the foot of the volcano Mt. Agung; a private master class in Balinese bamboo flute; peanut sauces, fresh pineapples, coconut pie (no cream, just coconut), and great curried rice and veggie meals; and my purchases of strange musical instruments and Saraswati images in many forms.

A last thought: The merchants will make up clothes for you in any style. In other words, if you give a Balinese seam-

stress a pair of pants in an American style, she'll make a pair for you in 24 hours, and because it is an American style that appeals to Americans (and probably other Westerners), she'll continue to make pants of that style to sell to future American buyers.

I like to think that we women on the tour might have done the same for Saraswati as we did for American pants. We all asked for her and bought images of her in several different forms from many different craftspeople. The local people saw that she was in great demand. Perhaps, in the future, when I go back--and I intend to go back for further study of gamelon--I'll see that more and more Saraswatis have been created for those crazy but rich Americans to spend their money on. Meanwhile, while these images are being created, a meditation on Saraswati will have occurred. May the goddess, and therefore womanpower, rise in Bali! ●

SAPPHO from page 15

the bridegroom and the bride. "In Sappho's wedding songs emphasis is laid on the qualities of the bride and the good fortune of the groom," Balmer notes. "She tells the groom that 'no woman was ever lovelier' than his bride. The groom has 'prayed' for his marriage, and 'dreamed' of his bride." The processional songs of the wedding reinforce respect for the bride by the groom; the men in these poems are praised as they anticipate their marriage with joy and eagerness--not with indifference or disdain. "Sappho understood the significance of marriage for women. She reaffirms their importance within the marriage partnership, the value of the contributions and characterizes relations between husband and wife in terms of mutual love and respect, not fear and hatred," says Balmer.

Noted Greek historian J.A. Symonds pointed out that the freedom of the Lesbian people was directly responsible for

producing what he called "the most exquisite lyrical poetry that the world has known." In his classic work, *Studies of the Greek Poets*, written in 1873, he says Sappho's era was "the flower time of the Aeolians, their brief and brilliant spring." (Aeolic was the linguistic and ethnic group the Lesbian Greeks belonged to--Lesbos was their center of culture and commerce.) Contributing to the development of lyric poetry in Lesbos was the fact that "the customs of the Aeolians permitted more social and domestic freedom than was common in Greece. Aeolian women were not confined to the harem like Ionians, or subjected to the rigorous discipline of the Spartans. While mixing freely with male society, they were highly educated, and accustomed to express their sentiments to an extent unknown elsewhere in history--until, indeed, the present time."

Sappho's wedding songs can be viewed, then, in the setting of a long term social struggle, in which the respect accorded women as life-givers was undergoing a gradual erosion. As patriarchy and misogyny became more and more entrenched in Greek society, as men became more and more encouraged to view women with fear and contempt, the grim situation that existed for women in fifth century Athens a hundred years after Sappho's death was able to come about.

Keuls notes, "From fifth century Athens we have not one scrap of writing and not a single artifact that can be attributed to a woman." In a society so oppressive to women, this is hardly sur-

SUSAN from page 50

She immediately became popular, but looking back says she feels she was a real fool.

What keeps Susan a part of the women's music network includes, she says, the excitement of discovering new talent, the delight of rediscovering old friends, and maintaining the "Old Girls Network" that took so many years to build. ●

prising. Neither should it be surprising that in a society that valued women and accorded them some degree of freedom--this "flower time of the Aeolian culture"--Sappho was able to flourish and create the "most exquisite lyric poetry the world has known."

Given the centrality of marriage to the life of an ancient Greek woman, perhaps what is most remarkable about Sappho's wedding songs is what a small proportion they make up of her overall work. And perhaps when lesbians all over the world are fully free to relate to other women as their primary interest, to *really* be *woman-identified*, the "flower time" of modern Lesbian culture will grow like the wildflowers Sappho sang about on her beloved island. ●

Many thanks to Greek scholar J.C. Jurgens for her incisive comments and help with this column.



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NANCY from page 35

sic. "It's difficult to define feminist political music because those of us who have played from the beginning have been evolving, challenging ourselves to develop, and getting older," she says. "As a group, we might not speak the overt messages of 10 years ago across the board, but the music is non-oppressive, non-sexist, and non-male-identified. The goal is to make music that you can feel, to make people feel better about themselves, and be true to our own musical vision. Hopefully, what we write of our experiences touches the lives of others, and contributes to a healthier state of loving and expression. Years ago, we were thrilled to be outrageously out onstage, because we played to only other women, and we were saying that it was okay to say 'I'm queer.' BWMC didn't care about straight women or men. It's different now than 10 years ago. I still write music for women to feel strong and healthy and supported, and it has become important for me to be a bridge between different cultures and people as an out, proud, strong lesbian. It pleases me to play straight folk clubs and have men and straight couples hear things that they wouldn't otherwise hear. I will always support women-only concerts and events, and I am who I am because of the women's movement. But I also am who I am because of the labor, civil rights, and anti-war movements and, truth of it is, I have felt welcomed and supported in crowds of mixed ages, cultures, and genders because women have had an impact on our society."

Nancy says she was "a victim of sexism 12 years ago"; if she saw a man in the audience, she assumed that he played guitar better than she did. "I don't think that way any more," she says. "I am more secure and proud, and I thank the wom-

en's community for that. My home will always be with lesbians; my political work as a lesbian is for the world. We have a lot to learn about each other, about who we are and how to give each other respect. I have a different sense of priority than in the past. It used to be very important for me to wear no makeup, to have short hair, and to not have to wear a dress; it was important to be absolute, uncompromising, and revolutionary in order to push the boundaries," she says. "Now, it is important to me to not only challenge boundaries but to create new ways of communicating. If I wear a little makeup and put on a dress to maximize my effectiveness at a church group to raise money for radical political work, that's not a compromise of my integrity, that's a re-ordering of my priorities."

According to Nancy, "Each person must create daily her or his vision of a new culture—that's the greatest thing, making our lives works of art, and loving ourselves and loving others enough to make it real. I like something that Suzanne Shanbaum said: 'Feminism is not the answer, it's the question.' It began for many of us when we were in our 20s—pushing to see who we were and pushing each other. We identified human needs that were not being met and developed social services, physical security for battered women and for rape victims, in substance abuse and co-dependency areas. We saw conflicts and challenged each other on seemingly every issue. Lesbians are thinkers and talkers; we've learned from each other and from history," she says. "As frightened as I am sometimes to be in this world, it's still exciting and challenging."

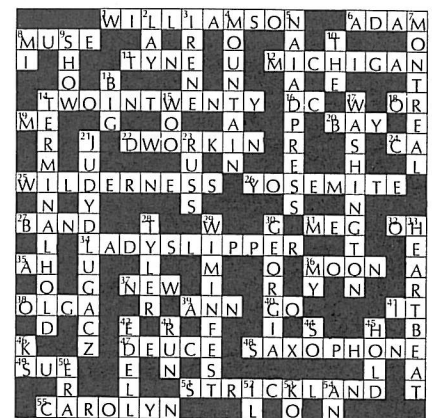
Nancy is not one to only theorize abstractly. She will continue writing, touring, and playing concerts and women's festivals. She also is in school with

plans to be a high school band teacher, and intends to continue working as program director at the local senior center.

"I need contact for writing music; I feel strongest about the music when I'm connected with a home and a community," says Nancy. "Traveling and touring is exciting; I've done both all around the U.S. and Europe. What I'm learning now is how to take my ideas and turn them into strategy and accomplishments at the grassroots level—to create the future today," she says.

"I'm 37 and I only have 50 years left. One has to decide what to do." ●

CROSSWORD from page 41



"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat..."

(Rebecca

West, 'The Clarion,' Nov. 14, 1913.)



TRET from page 33

that she had a sensitivity that was special," says the president of Olivia Records, "both in her engineering and in her musicianship."

Tret returned to center stage in 1984 with the release of *Terminal Hold* on Olivia's Second Wave label. Written between 1978 and 1982, the songs on *Terminal Hold* are both political and personal: while three of the 10 songs on the album address social issues such as fear in the nuclear age, poverty and disillusionment, and anonymous disempowerment, the focus is on people and relationships. She followed the release of the LP with two years of touring extensively throughout

the United States and Canada.

On the recent *Edges of the Heart* (Second Wave, 1986) eight of the 10 cuts are love songs. "This album doesn't lack bite or insight just because its focus is more personal and intimate," said the reviewer in the *Washington Post*. And "Tight Black Jeans" and "Cherish The Love" were singled out by *Cash Box* as "superb" rock songs, "either of which should become chart hits."

Tret has been on a 50 city tour promoting the new album. "I'm very proud of this album," says Tret. "I write from the heart, from the experiences of my life, and draw from the styles of music in which I am most comfortable—namely rock & roll and folk." ●

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HOTLINE from page 9

A video about EDITH PIAF, the French singer who died in 1963, is now available. Her life is told by friends and associates, and is illustrated by filmed passages of her performances; the video takes a look at the enormous appeal Piaf had for her adoring audiences. Films for the Humanities, P.O. Box 2052, Princeton, NJ 08543. 1-800-257-5126.

The Video Data Bank presents *WHAT DOES SHE WANT*, a home video library series produced by LYNN BLUMENTHAL. It includes six 90-minute programs, a full set of program notes by Lynne Tillman, and cassette jackets designed by Lynda Barry, Barbara Kruger, and Nancy Spero. Video Data Bank, 22 Warren, New York, NY 10007. 1-800-634-8544.

GRETA SCHILLER, Emmy Award winning producer of *Before Stonewall* and *The International Sweethearts of Rhythm*, is producing a new film: *TINY DAVIS: HELLDIVIN' WOMAN*. Billed as "the female Louis Armstrong" in the '40s, Tiny was until recently still blowing her horn in the Chicago blues clubs. Having outstanding achievements in an exclusively male field and living openly as a lesbian with her lover and musical collaborator RUBY LUCAS are but two aspects of Tiny's story. Filmmakers/Jezebel Productions, 1338 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657.

MEDIA NETWORK is a national membership organization linking independent media producers with audiences seeking an alternative viewpoint on the issues affecting their lives, their communities, and the world at large. The organization collects, catalogs, and disseminates information on films, videotapes, and slideshows so that activists can find and effectively use the media in their work. The Media Network's Information Center lists more than 4,000 titles and is open to anyone. Media Network, 121 Fulton St. #5, New York, NY 10038. (212) 619-3455.

In her new hour-long documentary *HEARTS & HANDS*, filmmaker Pat Ferrero continues and expands the work she began in *Quilts In Women's Lives*. She goes to the 19th century to study quiltmaking as it reflected or touched on the work of whalers' wives and textile mill laborers, of abolitionists and slaves, of Union and Confederate women, of Midwestern and Western pioneers, of temperance activists and suffragists. There is also a companion publication book, *Hearts & Hands: The Influence of Women and Quilts on American Society*. Ferrero Films, 1259A Folsom St., San Francisco CA 94103. (415) 626-3456 or about the book: Quilt Digest Press, P.O. Box 14127, San Francisco, CA 94110.

ME AND STELLA, a film on the life of folksong writer and singer ELIZABETH COTTEN (and her guitar named Stella) includes biographical material as well as excerpts from live performances. Phoenix Films & Videos, 468 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016.

PUBLICATIONS

CAMERA OBSCURA, widely considered the leading American journal on feminism and film theory, is now being edited at the University of Rochester and will now be published by the Johns Hopkins University Press, the oldest humanities press in the country. *Camera Obscura*, Jana Carlisle, University of Rochester, Office of Public Relations, Rochester, NY 14627. (716) 275-7800.

OUT/LOOK, the new national quarterly magazine of lesbian & gay opinion and culture, arrived several weeks late on the stands because the original printer broke his contract and refused to print it. He claimed to be worried that two of the graphics would be offensive to his staff. They were a Kris Kovic cartoon poking fun at JoAnn Loulan's upbeat commentary about the state of lesbian sex, and a photo by Annie Sprinkles in which a woman's breasts were visible. *OUT/LOOK*, P.O. Box 146430, San Francisco, CA 94114-6430. (415) 282-3344.

AUNT EDNA'S READING LIST is a monthly review of feminist books. Included are books on feminist theory, social commentary, international affairs, plus lots of novels and just plain good reads. Also includes ordering info on hard-to-find books. *Aunt Edna's*, 2002-H-27 Hunnewell, Honolulu, HI 96822.

NEW MOON, a quarterly general interest magazine for lesbians, will begin publication this October. The intention is to provide for lesbians what *Ms. Magazine* has provided for feminists. Editor Claire Hueholt, 2 Kings Terrace, Ames, IA 50010. (515) 292-1972.

MUSIC CONTACTS INTERNATIONAL—a directory of progressive/alternative music distributors, promoters, radio stations, and music publications—has recently been updated. It lists hundreds of contacts in 23 different countries. Media Distribution Co-op, 1745 Louisiana St., Lawrence, KS 66044.

New address for *SING OUT!* magazine: P.O. Box 5253, Bethlehem, PA 18015-5253. (215) 865-5366.

SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT

The magazine *GMAC Quest* is seeking submissions in which you reveal YOUR TURNING POINT—the people and events that have changed the course of your life—in 800 words or less. If selected, payment is \$100. *Turning Point/GMAC Quest*, 30400 Van Dyke, Warren, MI 48093.

Anthology of writings about FEMALE VAMPIRES and feminist perspectives on vampires; seeking essays, articles, artwork, prose, reviews, commentary. Editor will work with non-writers who are knowledgeable. Inquiries, proposals, and manuscripts to Vampire Anthology, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.

The editors of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women*, are soliciting manuscripts for a special issue on LEADERSHIP. Deadline: July 15. Special issue on BLACK WOMEN'S STUDIES, deadline: January 15, 1989. *SAGE*, P.O. Box 42721, Atlanta, GA 30311-0741.

Tough Dove Books is looking for LESBIAN BEDTIME STORIES for an upcoming book. Deadline: December 31. Seeking fictional stories of a pleasurable, problem-solving, forward-moving nature to help, encourage, and empower sisters, and offer sweet dreams. Working class and women of color especially welcome. Bluejay, Tough Dove Books, P.O. Box 528, Little River, CA 95456.

An anthology collecting accounts of LOVE BETWEEN WOMEN OVER 60 by women over 60 is soliciting poems, short prose pieces, letters, diary entries, songs, photos, drawings. Deadline: October 31. Send SASE. Old Lovers c/o *Womanspirit*, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley, OR 97497.

Nemesis is seeking written work and photos from separatists, lesbians, and radical feminists which tell our tales of HETEROPATRIARCHAL DISRUPTION AND WOMYN POSITIVE REALITY BUILDING. Deadline: December 1. Send SASE. Nemesis/Amber L. Katherine, P.O. Box 417042, Chicago, IL 60641-7042.

The American Musicological Society announces that it would welcome the opportunity to schedule a session at the 1988 Annual Meeting (November 3-6 in Baltimore) on FEMINIST ISSUES AND THE STUDY OF MUSICOLOGY (the influence of sexual stereotyping on historical formulations). Abstracts should be one page in length, typed, double-spaced on bond paper, written so that they can be incorporated directly into the published *Abstracts of Papers*. The title should appear at the top of the page, the author and institutional affiliation at the bottom. Send abstracts to R. P. Morgan, AMS Program Chair, Dept. of Music/University of Chicago, 5845 S. Ellis, Chicago, IL 60637.

TRIVIA CONTEST

The answer to last issue's Trivia Contest was ALLA NAZIMOVA. We had only two correct entries: The earliest postmarked was from ROBIN DIANNA GAGOS of Valencia, California, who wins a free subscription or T-shirt; MARTHA FICKLEN of St. Louis, Missouri sent us a card which arrived one day later than Robin's, so she wins a free issue.

Trivia Contest for this time: WHAT ARE THE NAMES (FIRST AND LAST) OF THE FOUR GOLDEN GIRLS? The first correct answer to arrive wins a free subscription or T-shirt; the second receives a free issue. Send to *Hotline Trivia Contest*, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. ●

FEMINIST SF from page 44

not so much wish-fulfillment working here as guilty self-criticism? Some of them have found more exciting interests (cyberpunk writing, for instance) and may have honestly begun to forget their earlier interest in feminism. Unfortunately, a lot of women seem to be catching this mood and agreeing with such frequently heard statements as: "Fannish writing was (academic/boring) in the 1970s. Today's fannish, humorous/anecdotal writing is so much better."

The fact is that there is a measure of truth to the observation that the writing done by fans in the late '70s was more academic than the quantitatively more personal/humorous early '80s writing. Unfortunately, that tends to make people assume that the qualitative judgment

which accompanies this observation has equal validity. But it just doesn't follow that the different, lighter, less SF-oriented writing of the early '80s is intrinsically better than the sort of writing that was done in the late '70s. Different times encourage different sorts of writing.

Well, there's an obvious solution to this problem I have, isn't there? I should stand up at those retrospective panels (maybe even try to get included on them) and join in with other women in the audience and add a few of my own recollections to those of the panelists. And we should all keep up critical pressure for balanced retrospectives, anthologies, and reprints (fannish as well as professional). If we ourselves forget, why should we expect new generations of readers and fans to dig up the truth about what really happened? ●

LÁADAN from page 12

have not taken steps to prevent men from becoming involved with the language; and (7) because some people just find the whole project not up to their standards.

All of this is to be expected, and I am dealing with it as best I can. It is sometimes very sorrowful work -- but it is *always* interesting.

If you would like to have more information about obtaining the Láadan books, tapes, and other materials, or about joining the Láadan Network, send a SASE to me at P.O. Box 1137, Huntsville, AR 72740 and I will be glad to send the details along. If you have a solution for any of the seven problems listed in the paragraph above, don't hesitate to send *them* along as well; I'd be grateful for your help. ●

STONEHAVEN from page 27

mode. It teaches us to denigrate gift-giving as "not normal" because gift-giving is its contradiction and can undermine the structures of greed. The female mode--which gives in order to satisfy a need--fosters a knowledge of the needs of others, and creates bonds of trust and reciprocal support on a practical plane beyond definition.

At Stonehaven they trust that by stimulating this alternative way of doing things they are taking a step towards a world based on women's nurturing--altruism rather than patriarchal me-first egotism.

"The objection has arisen that people may take advantage of us if we give away things free," they say. "We hope to be able to defend ourselves against this if anything really negative comes up. But we trust in the capacity of all people to respond to trust responsibly and to self-regulate so as not to exploit us."

LEE from page 38

them. And waiting. And waiting. I thought their truancy was a sign that I did not belong in the Limelight. If I'd been capable of an emotion other than fear, I'd have felt relief. I could go throw up in peace.

Suddenly, rounding a corner so fast she seemed to be on roller skates, came my publisher Barbara Grier. "There you

And if people keep the money instead of giving it again? "This means that in their estimation they need it themselves more than others, or that our society's habitual rules of etiquette have triumphed once again over a gesture of the heart," they say.

AT STONEHAVEN RANCH

Stonehaven is a meeting place for feminist and other peace & justice groups. It is requested that the different groups who come to the ranch network with each other whenever possible and inform themselves about each others' ideas and purposes.

The big house should be alcohol free in order to "provide a space where our thoughts and feelings are clear, and where we can know and respect ourselves without alteration."

"We live in a world of immense injustices which most of the middle class in the United States never comes into contact with," says the organization. "Our

are!" she cried. "We've been looking for you everywhere!" The panel had changed its meeting place the day before, right in front of me, and my terrified mind had joined my digestive system to eject that essential fact.

But I'll tell you, the rush of adrenalin I got when I saw that group bear down on me was a hell of a cure. I watched my future approach and I knew I could not refuse it. ●

news media does not inform us of what is happening to poor people, either inside or outside of our country's borders. This artificial manipulated blindness is like the denial of an addiction--it permits it to keep on happening. Our government together with big profit-motive business creates havoc worldwide--both economically and militarily, destroying the poor and those who want to self-determine. People here often do not know, or do not grasp, or do not really believe this--but it is true. Perhaps we do not believe it because we feel powerless to stop it. Many of the people who come to Stonehaven are overcoming their feeling of powerlessness and *are* trying to stop it."

Stonehaven is an attempt to foster something that is not based on the profit motive or exchange economy. The gift economy is just the opposite and is already widespread through the world--as widespread as mothers--though it has been unrecognized even by those who are engaging in it, including ourselves. By informing ourselves and validating our altruism, we are trying to promote an alternative to the me-first profit motive that already lies ready and waiting to emerge in the human spirit, and in women's free labor and daily practice.

Stonehaven encourages recipients to collaborate by accepting gifts without embarrassment and by passing them on to others. They would like to hear from women with thoughts or experiences connected with this experiment. "We hope that most--if not all--of you will take the risk of trying this new, small, practical thing for peace," they say.

Stonehaven Ranch, Rt. 23, San Marcos, TX 78666, (512) 353-8701. ●

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DEIDRE from page 5

THE FIRST TIME I HEARD "WAIT UNTIL MORNING," I THOUGHT, "NOW THIS IS GOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE; SOMEONE SOMEWHERE IS GOING TO LISTEN TO THIS AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME."

As a matter of fact, I got a note last tour basically saying that: "I heard one night that I didn't have to decide, and 'Wait Until Morning' got me through that night. Thank you," and there was no name on the note. To know that my music has made a small difference in someone's life...I can't ask for more than that.

IF WOMEN WANT YOU TO COME TO THEIR TOWN BUT NO PRODUCTION COMPANY IS THERE TO DO THE SHOW, WHAT CAN THEY DO?

The way my booker Tam Martin and I have been working for the last few years is that there is almost no reason I can't come to a town *some* way. We've done a lot of what I call "starter" concerts with people who've never done a show before. Tam will practically hand walk them via the phone through the steps that they need to do to pull it off. I have always been very flexible in my fee schedules and what I'll work with, because it's in my interest in the long run to have a production happen—to have that interest sparked, and to have the music vital in that town. Because it works not only for me that time, it works not only for me another

time in the future, but it works for *everyone* in the network—that seed is planted. I think our longevity still depends upon being able to develop new places to do shows. There are some shows that are just too complicated for new people to take on, but because it's just me and guitar, they don't even need to worry about piano. I'm a very simple show to learn how to do a show on. As long as I can make it economically feasible for me to be there. If Tam knows that someone wants to try a show—and that place is between point A and point B where I'm already going to be—then Tam finds a way for me to swing up there to do it.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN WHEN YOU'RE NOT ON THE ROAD?

God, when was the last time I had fun....I think most people would be sorely disappointed to know that I really am a couch potato. Theresa and I travel quite well together—we get to places and if the housing doesn't have a television, we're about to freak out. We quip that people really don't believe how incredibly *boring* we are until we actually get there. But I also like to work out, and that's what I miss the most at this point when I'm touring so much. It interrupts my workout schedule. Working out, besides the physical benefits, is my main means of stress control. When I'm home I spend anywhere from 90 minutes to three hours per day working out—running, stationary bikes, and weights. I'm really a pathetic person; I get these noble ideas every once



Annie Lee

in awhile to read a book or something, but then I find out they've made it into a movie and so I'm set!

Actually, what I have been trying to do in the last two years or so is to *have fun*. I definitely have gotten—from living in New York—into such a work mode; everything has had to have a purpose, and I've had to work on this, and I've had to practice that. There was so little time and so little money. So I decided to work on having fun. *It's okay to do nothing but see a sunset*, my friends tell me. One teases me that I'm the only person she knows who works on being spontaneous. But my friends in California have been trying to get me to lighten up.

And it's working. ●

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HOT WIRE READER SURVEY

1. AGE: under 18 18-21 22-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80-89 90+

2. CITY & STATE OF RESIDENCE: _____

3. ANNUAL INCOME: under \$10,000 \$10-\$19,000 \$20-\$29,000 \$30-\$39,000 \$40,000+

4. OCCUPATION: _____

5. HOW MANY WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE EVENTS DO YOU ATTEND IN A TYPICAL YEAR (INCLUDING FESTIVALS, CONCERTS, READINGS, FILM SCREENINGS)? _____

6. LIST WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVALS YOU HAVE ATTENDED IN THE LAST THREE YEARS: _____

7. LEVEL OF EDUCATION: high school some college completed undergraduate degree
 masters degree trade school business school school of hard knocks other: _____

8. LESBIAN/GAY/FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS IN WHICH YOU ARE INVOLVED:

political religious/spiritual sports cultural/arts book discussion personal growth
 professional AIDS community academic other: _____

9. IN WHAT ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED?

music dance journalism fiction/poetry theater film/video
 visual/graphic arts crafts photography business aspects festivals comedy
 any woman-identified creativity philosophy spiritual ritual as art form
 the interface between women's music/culture and other politics [i.e., disabled women; anti-intervention; anti-apartheid]
 other: _____

10. IN A TYPICAL YEAR, HOW MANY OF THESE FEMINIST AND/OR LESBIAN ITEMS DO YOU BUY? books periodicals albums cassettes compact discs videos crafts by women

11. WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT 'HOT WIRE'? (pick your top five)

articles by well-known women interviews articles about well-known women
 stereo soundsheets festival coverage letters to the editor historical women musicians
 Hotline column Sappho/Tenth Muse Láadan Noteworthy Women
 The Audio Angle Kay Gardner/Freestyle Behind the Scenes photos of celebrities
 Re:Inking Mulling It Over On Stage and Off advice & information
 Woman's Aspectarian Alison Bechdel cartoons Access Live! From Canada
 other: _____

12. WHAT IN GENERAL DO YOU LIKE ABOUT 'HOT WIRE'?

13. IN YOUR OPINION, HOW CAN WE IMPROVE 'HOT WIRE'?

14. IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT 'HOT WIRE' THAT REALLY BUGS YOU?

15. WHAT KEEPS YOU INTERESTED IN WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE? COMMENTS ON THE CURRENT STATE OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE?

Please write your answers to these questions on a separate sheet. Thanks.

16. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO YOU:

feminist lesbian/gay activist Democrat Republican third party Independent non-political
 other political affiliation/orientation: _____
 female male lesbian/gay bisexual heterosexual celibate ??????
 other: _____

IF YOU CAN HELP INCREASE 'HOT WIRE' CIRCULATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY BY DISTRIBUTING FLYERS, SEND US YOUR NAME & ADDRESS...OR WRITE IT ON THIS SURVEY.

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HOT WIRE: The Journal of Women's Music & Culture. 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. (312) 769-9009. *Only publication devoted to national woman-identified music & culture scene. 3x/year; \$14/year, \$6 sample.*

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THE LESBIAN NEWS c/o Pat Sampson, 1025 Coronado, Long Beach, CA 90804. *A digest of information from Southern California and beyond. Monthly; \$12/year.*

OF A LIKE MIND. PO Box 6021, Madison, WI 53716. A leading international network and newspaper of women's spirituality. Quarterly; \$13-33 (sliding scale)/year, \$3/sample.

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PUBLICATIONS

OUT HERE FLYING by Jan Hardy. Sidewalk Revolution Press, PO Box 9062, Pittsburgh, PA 15224. Entertaining, softly erotic lesbian poetry even non-poetry lovers will love!

WOMEN PERFORMERS

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THE DANCE BRIGADE: A New Group from Wallflower Order. PO Box 2962, Oakland, CA 94609. Manager: Cindy Cleary (415) 648-3719. Socially-conscious dance that incorporates theater, sign language, martial arts, jazz.

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HOT WIRE



THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE

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SOUNDSHEETS

By Joy Rosenblatt and Karen Kane



ALISON FARRELL

STOP BEING SO NICE

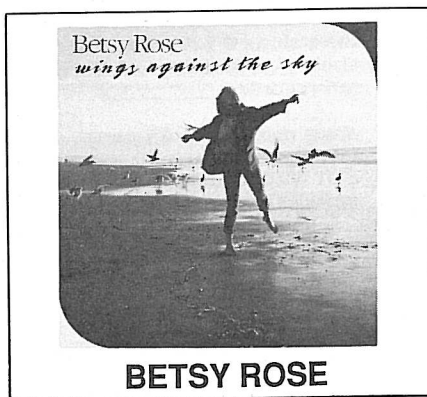
Performed by: Alison Farrell (vocals/guitars), Don Wallace (bass), Bob D'Angelo (drums)

Written by: Alison Farrell

From: *Fine Lines*

Alison Farrell
P.O. Box 847
New Haven, CT 06504
(203) 787-1079

Fine Lines is Alison Farrell's independently-produced debut album, consisting of 11 songs, 10 of them originals, ranging from powerful repudiation of anti-Semitism on "See No Evil" with its soaring vocals, to the full harmonies and stirring violin on the soothing "Cradle My Soul."



BETSY ROSE

ROSA

Written and performed by: Therese Edell
at New York University, October 23, 1981
Recorded by: Teresa Boykin

Transmusic
1641 Rockford Place
Cincinnati, OH 45223

Therese offers this recording as a small gift to long-time listeners. Please copy it for your personal use, and expect another song or two in upcoming issues of *HOT WIRE*. The sheet music for "Rosa" on page six introduces the capabilities of Transmusic, Therese's new music services firm.



Cary Chapin

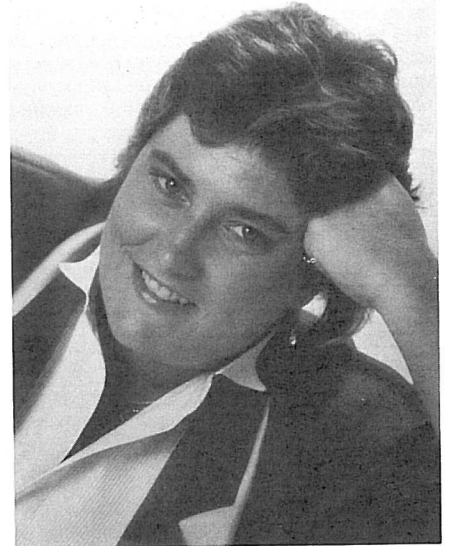
THERESE EDELL

HOUSE FULL OF SECRETS

Written and performed by: Betsy Rose
From: *Wings Against The Sky*

Kaleidoscope Records
P.O. Box O
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(415) 540-5340

Betsy's new album *Wings Against The Sky* and the background on the writing of "House Full of Secrets" are discussed in the article beginning on page 42 of this issue.



SUEDE

FROM A DISTANCE

Performed by: Suede (vocals, guitar, trumpet), David Pearl (piano), John Leonard (bass), Paul Hildner (drums)

Written by: Julie Gold

From: *Easily Suede*

Suede
P.O. Box 8505
Baltimore, MD 21234
(301) 661-5799

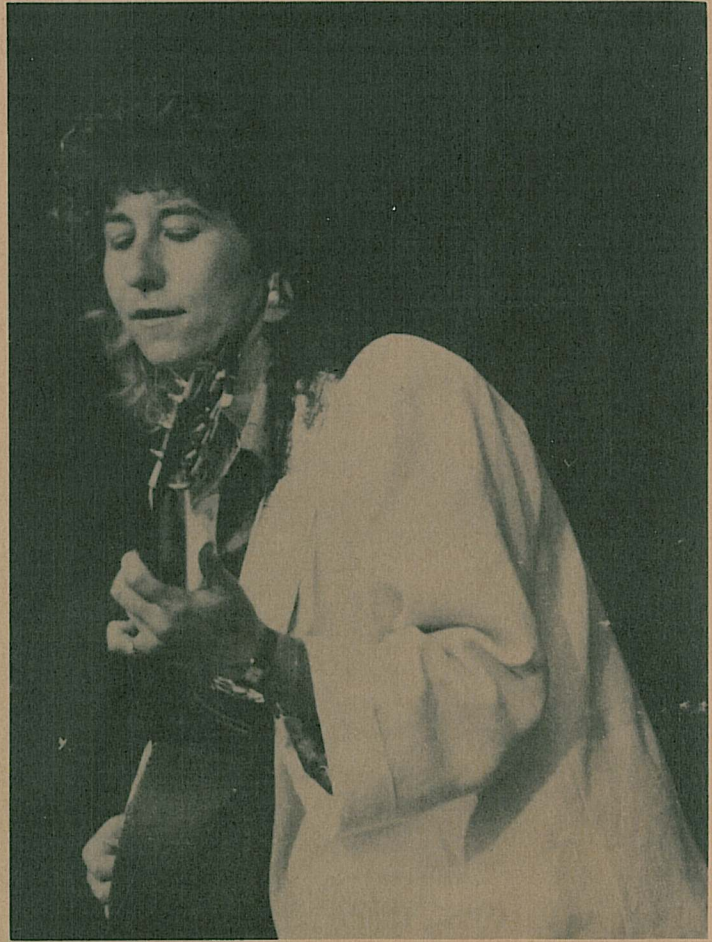
"From A Distance" is from Suede's long-awaited debut solo album *Easily Suede*, which features an intriguing blend of jazz and light rock styles. Her music communicates everything from the dream for world peace (as in this cut) to the strictly fun "Doncha Wanna Know (you got me where you want me tonight)." You've loved her in concert and at festivals, now you can take her home...well, her music, that is.

SOUNDSHEETS

Material is recorded on both sides in stereo. Do not bend the soundsheet. Place it on turntable at 33-1/3 rpm. A coin placed on the label where indicated prevents slipping. If your turntable has a ridged mat, placing the soundsheet on top of an LP may be advisable. Questions and comments about the soundsheets? Recording specifications and costs will be sent upon request.



Vada Vernée



Toni L. Armstrong

TRET FURE AND LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY ARE TWO OF THE ARTISTS FEATURED IN THE SPECIAL SPREAD ON THE 15 YEARS OF OLIVIA RECORDS. ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: CRIS WILLIAMSON, NANCY VOGL, DIANNE DAVIDSON, DEIDRE McCALLA, AND PART ONE OF THE HISTORY OF OLIVIA AS TOLD BY OLIVIA PRESIDENT JUDY DLUGACZ.

HOT WIRE

JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE

JULY 1988 UPDATE

PLEASE NOTE: CHANGE IN PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

Beginning with Volume 5 (that's the next issue), we will be coming out in January, May, and September instead of November, March, and July. This will put all three issues in one calendar year, and we'll have new issues in time for festivals. Keep this in mind when your "November" issue arrives in January!

INVESTORS (FAIRY GODMOTHERS) URGENTLY NEEDED

As we complete our fourth year of publishing, our budget analysis informs us that we need to raise at least \$4,000 more per year than we do. The recent hike in postal costs is not helping; also, the new tax "reform" is heavily putting the bite on us.

We are committed to continuing to publish HOT WIRE, but we need help from like-minded readers. At this point, we just don't have the resources to pay \$\$thousands\$\$ out of our own pockets every year.

To reduce costs, we have considered cutting the size of the magazine; reducing the quality; eliminating soundsheets; coming out only once or twice a year...but we have rejected these ideas. Furthermore, we want to keep our advertising rates within the "affordable" range for women's businesses. We don't want to raise the cost of the subscriptions.

To raise the necessary capital, we are selling merchandise such as shirts and notecards; we have fund-raising events; we apply for the few grants we are eligible for; and we are making a serious effort to sell HOT WIRE at as many festivals as possible. We continue to solicit paid ads and encourage readers to give gift subscriptions.

PLEASE DO NOT INTERPRET THIS as a notice that, like many small press publications before us, we are about to fold. We intensely appreciate the value of HOT WIRE and are determined to keep it afloat.

We donate our labor--some women volunteer as many as 60 hours per week each during peak seasons--because we believe in the value of what we're doing. We enjoy planning for future issues. We are willing to do this because we see HOT WIRE as an opportunity to not only document but also to celebrate what creative woman-identified women are doing. We believe in the power of the arts to change the world, beginning with our individual lives and communities. We--the 50+ staff members and regular contributors from all over the country--are proud to be part of HOT WIRE.

We realize that there are many women who, though they are supportive of the ideas, don't have opportunities to be actively involved in cultural or political work. Maybe you live in an isolated geographical region. Maybe you work long hours and have little time left over. Maybe you live in conditions that make it uncomfortable (or impossible) to be "out" either as a feminist or as a lesbian. Or maybe you have a reasonable income and have been looking for a cultural/political "investment" that you can feel personally excited about.

WELL...HERE'S YOUR CHANCE! We are urgently seeking to lengthen our list of women "investors" who are adopting HOT WIRE as their cultural work. You won't see a financial return on your investment soon (just as we don't now get compensated with money for our long labor hours), but you can share in the deep satisfaction that because of you something important is in the world, something that otherwise wouldn't exist.

If you can commit \$5, \$10, or even more per month, it will help a lot. Is this a loan? NO--we aren't looking for short-term financial bailouts. We need stable, reliable sponsorship spread out over more women than it presently is.

Are you interested? Please write to us: HOT WIRE Sponsorship Program, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.

P.S. Thanks a million to all of you who have sent in one-time donations ranging from \$1 to \$100. You have no idea how much this money helps to cover expenses. It makes HOT WIRE possible.

SOUNDSHEETS

By Joy Rosenblatt and Karen Kane



ALISON FARRELL

STOP BEING SO NICE

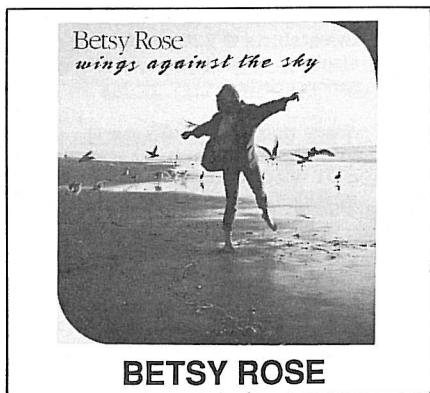
Performed by: Alison Farrell (vocals/guitars), Don Wallace (bass), Bob D'Angelo (drums)

Written by: Alison Farrell

From: *Fine Lines*

Alison Farrell
P.O. Box 847
New Haven, CT 06504
(203) 787-1079

Fine Lines is Alison Farrell's independently-produced debut album, consisting of 11 songs, 10 of them originals, ranging from powerful repudiation of anti-Semitism on "See No Evil" with its soaring vocals, to the full harmonies and stirring violin on the soothing "Cradle My Soul."



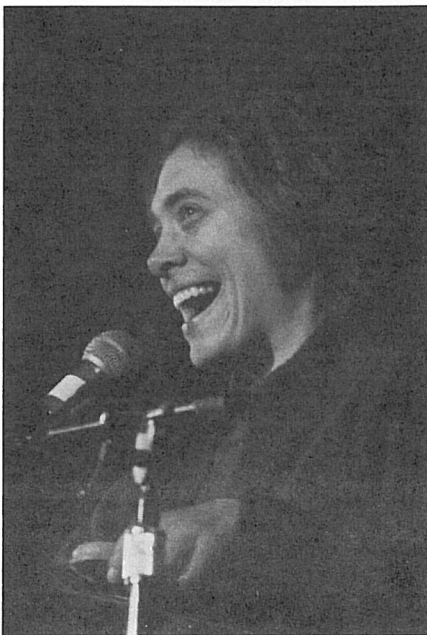
BETSY ROSE

ROSA

Written and performed by: Therese Edell at New York University, October 23, 1981
Recorded by: Teresa Boykin

Transmusic
1641 Rockford Place
Cincinnati, OH 45223

Therese offers this recording as a small gift to long-time listeners. Please copy it for your personal use, and expect another song or two in upcoming issues of *HOT WIRE*. The sheet music for "Rosa" on page six introduces the capabilities of Transmusic, Therese's new music services firm.



THERESE EDELL

HOUSE FULL OF SECRETS

Written and performed by: Betsy Rose
From: *Wings Against The Sky*

Kaleidoscope Records
P.O. Box O
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(415) 540-5340

Betsy's new album *Wings Against The Sky* and the background on the writing of "House Full of Secrets" are discussed in the article beginning on page 42 of this issue.



SUEDE

FROM A DISTANCE

Performed by: Suede (vocals, guitar, trumpet), David Pearl (piano), John Leonard (bass), Paul Hildner (drums)

Written by: Julie Gold

From: *Easily Suede*

Suede
P.O. Box 8505
Baltimore, MD 21234
(301) 661-5799

"From A Distance" is from Suede's long-awaited debut solo album *Easily Suede*, which features an intriguing blend of jazz and light rock styles. Her music communicates everything from the dream for world peace (as in this cut) to the strictly fun "Doncha Wanna Know (you got me where you want me tonight)." You've loved her in concert and at festivals, now you can take her home...well, her music, that is.

SOUNDSHEETS

Material is recorded on both sides in stereo. Do not bend the soundsheet. Place it on turntable at 33-1/3 rpm. A coin placed on the label where indicated prevents slipping. If your turntable has a ridged mat, placing the soundsheet on top of an LP may be advisable. Questions and comments about the soundsheets? Recording specifications and costs will be sent upon request.

