

HOT WIRE

THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

HOLLY NEAR

1990 FESTIVAL PHOTOS

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S
MUSIC & COMEDY FESTIVAL

CARTOONISTS ALISON
BECHDEL AND KRIS
KOVICK

MICHELLE SHOCKED
ON COMING OUT

RECORD DISTRIBUTION
AT SUMMER FESTIVALS

THE FIRST OLIVIA CRUISE

SONIA JOHNSON ON
CREATING A "WOMEN'S
WORLD"

THERESE EDELL'S
40th BIRTHDAY CONCERT

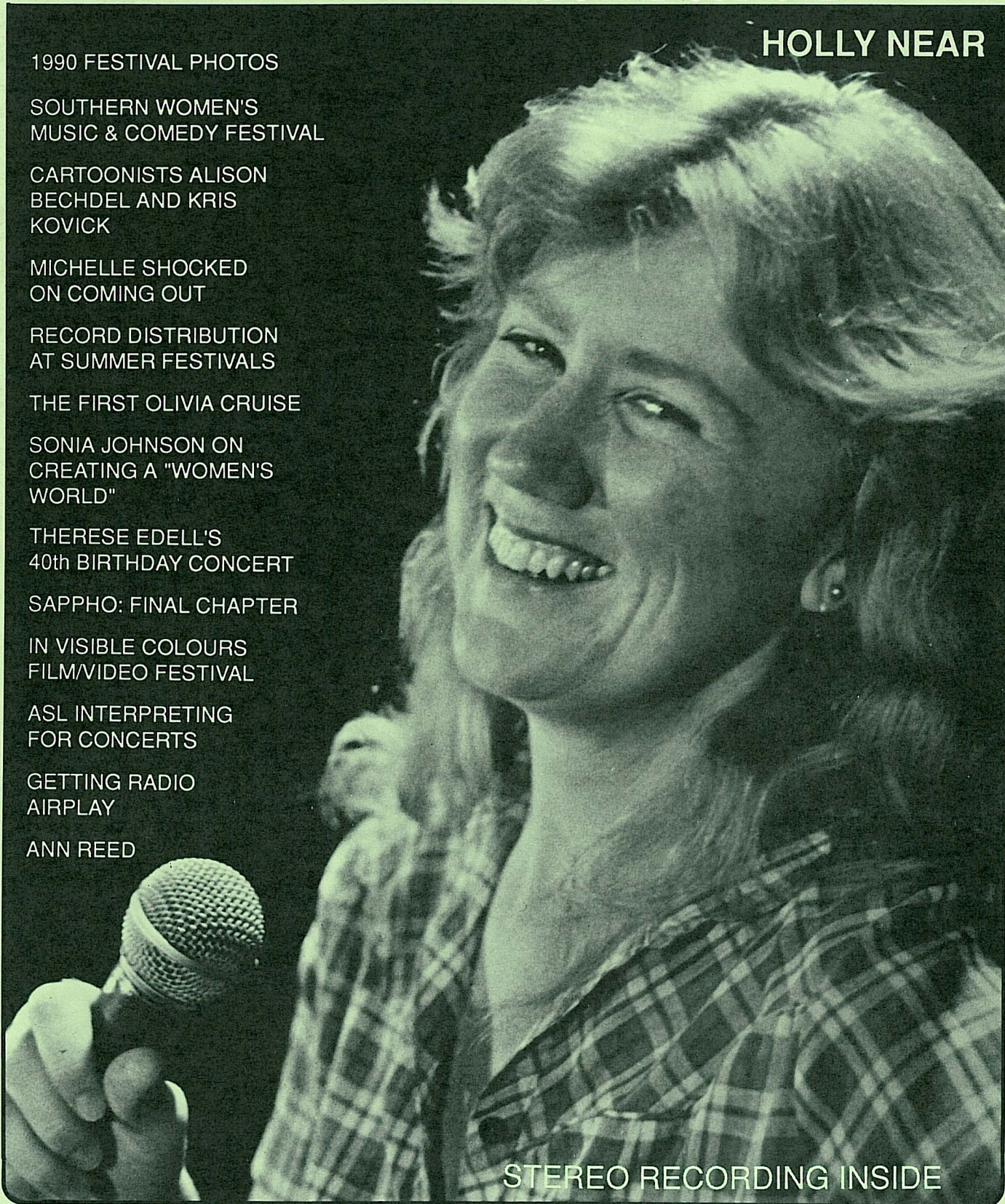
SAPPHO: FINAL CHAPTER

IN VISIBLE COLOURS
FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL

ASL INTERPRETING
FOR CONCERTS

GETTING RADIO
AIRPLAY

ANN REED



STEREO RECORDING INSIDE

Susan Wilson

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3 SEPTEMBER 1990

\$5.00

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

THE 'HOT WIRE' EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY

HOT WIRE specializes in woman-identified music and culture, primarily the performing arts, literature, and film/video. We strongly believe in the power of the arts to affect social change, and enjoy documenting the combination of "creativity" and "politics/philosophy." 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. We enjoy helping to both create and strengthen the international community of those who love women's creativity.

DOUBLE OUR PLEASURE, DOUBLE OUR FUN

Beginning with this issue, the *HOT WIRE* bureaucracy has undergone a significant change. Welcome Lynn Siniscalchi (pronounced sin-iss-CAL-chee) as co-managing editor. Responsibilities have been split up between us, roughly in this manner: editorial, photography, office, advertising, and fundraising are my domains; production, computer, sound-sheets, accounting, and festivals are hers. We continue to share the migraine headache known as the *Women's Music Plus Directory of Resources in Women's Music & Culture*, which we divided like this: she does all the work and gets all the blame; I take all the credit and boss her around. Ah, what a good system we've worked out.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US

Yep, this issue marks the end of six full action-packed years of publication. The writers, photographers, artists, and volunteers have continued to contribute zillions of hours of unpaid labor to keep the magazine going. Although we are slowly but surely upgrading our computer system, we need several thousand more dollars to obtain the system that would make this a reasonable activity. (We still have to use borrowed equipment in another location, sometimes late at night, when it's not being used by its owners.) Meanwhile, we continue to appreciate the



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Welcome Lynn Siniscalchi, new co-managing editor of *HOT WIRE*. (Pictured here with Susan Waller at the 1990 National Women's Music Festival.)

use of the desktop publishing equipment and laser printer that *Outlines* allows us to use. *HOT WIRE* continues to be made in the basement of the 5210 building, where several staff members currently reside. All of us have other full-time jobs. It continues to be heavily subsidized by monetary donations from the staff and from our Fairy Godmother sponsors (see the masthead for names). We continue to seek more sponsors, and wish we could personally kiss and hug each of the women who generously provide money on a regular basis to keep the project alive. So far we have managed to keep going for six years without having to cut back on quality, frequency, or size. Only a dozen more issues and we'll be celebrating the end of our *tenth* year. Those of you who have been with us since the beginning, can you believe it?

MY TWO CENTS WORTH...

HOT WIRE has observed many trends during its six-year lifespan. One of the developments we like the most is the re-emergence of strong woman-identified performers and events. After a period of generic pronouns—and feminism that was glaring in its absence—songwriters are being more specific in their lyrics again; performers are being more explicit in their in-between raps; and we've seen the birth of several regional annual festivals. Many androgynous women performers are "making it big" in the mainstream, some of whom have had at least

peripheral contact with the women's music scene. Hats off to everyone who hangs in year after year, enjoying our culture in boom years and supporting it in lean years. The '90s are looking *very* promising.

IS WOMEN'S MUSIC DEAD?

Nope. Not even close.

PAT PARKER DAY

I for one would love to see Pat Parker's birthday—January 20—be honored every year as a national feminist holiday. Anyone else interested in developing this idea further can contact me c/o *HOT WIRE*.

IN THIS ISSUE...

Some of our regular columnists have taken a summer vacation: Janna MacAuslan and Kristan Aspen ("Noteworthy Women"); Suzette Haden Elgin ("Láadan"); and Karen Kane ("The Audio Angle").

continued on page 55

ON THE COVER

Holly Near, founder of Redwood Records, has made fifteen records; has appeared in films, on stage, and on TV; and has written an autobiography which is being published by a mainstream publisher. A documentary about her will be broadcast on PBS this fall.

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HOT WIRE (ISSN 0747-8887) is published in January, May, and September by Empty Closet Enterprises, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. (312) 769-9009. • All material is **COPYRIGHTED**; do not reproduce without permission. • **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** U.S.—\$15/yr. **SURFACE** mail to countries outside U.S.—\$18/yr. **AIR MAIL** rates: Africa/Asia/Australia: \$30/yr. Europe/So. America: \$26/yr. Central America: \$22/yr. • **BACK ISSUES** are \$6 postpaid.

HOT WIRE: THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3, SEPTEMBER 1990

FEATURES

- 2 **Holly Near** interviewed by Toni Armstrong Jr.
3 **Excerpts from 'Fire in the Rain...Singer in the Storm'**
16 **Fifth Annual Readers' Choice Awards**
20 **Michelle Shocked on Coming Out**
by Christine Nordheim and Julie A. Kreiner
23 **In Visible Colours: Technicolour in a White World**
by Yasmin Jiwani
30 **Ann Reed TKO Over His Purple Badness Prince**
32 **1990 Festival Photos**
34 **Long Live the Queen! Dinah Washington**
by Rosetta Reitz
37 **Sonia Johnson on Creating a "Women's World"**
by T. Armstrong, L. Post, and S. Wolfersberger

"I WAS THERE" FIRST-PERSON REPORTS

- 22 **How I (Almost) Met Martina** by Bonnie Morris
26 **Maiden Voyage: The First Olivia Cruise** by Laura Post
28 **This Longest Concert: Therese Edell's 40th Birthday Concert** by Charlene Ball
40 **Southern: The "Live and Let Live" Festival**
by Jorjet Harper
43 **Doing the Festivals** by Cathy Andrews

DEPARTMENTS

- 7 **Soapbox** Letters from Readers
8 **Hotline** by Toni Armstrong Jr. and Annie Lee
12 **Confabulation** Alison Bechdel and Kris Kovick
15 **Seldom Scenes** by Susan Wilson
18 **Access** by Sara "ASL Interpreting for Concerts: What Producers Should Know"
44 **'Dykes to Watch Out For'** cartoons by Alison Bechdel
48 **The Tenth Muse** by Jorjet Harper
50 **"Sappho: Rediscovering Lesbian Space"**
50 **Freestyle** by Kay Gardner
60 **"How to Get Airplay on Non-Commercial Radio"**
60 **Classified Ads**
64 **Soundsheets** by Joy Rosenblatt

"I Spent My Last \$10 (On Birth Control and Beer)"/Two Nice Girls;
"Diner"/Erica Wheeler; ""She's Not Somebody's Wife"/Yer Girlfriend;
"Dandelion"/Catie Curtis; "O My Friends"/ From Therese Edell's 40th
Birthday Concert/Betsy Lippitt, Deidre McCalla, Sue Fink, Annie
Dinerman, Mary Lynn Barber, Chris Collier, Carle Andersen, Mary
Kroner, Brenda Folz, MUSE—Cincinnati's Women's Choir, the Atlanta
Feminist Chorus, and Louise Anderson

A PERSONAL CHAT WITH
HOLLY NEAR
ABOUT HER NEW AUTOBIOGRAPHY

By Toni Armstrong Jr.

Holly Near grew up in rural Northern California and moved to Los Angeles after high school to pursue acting. She acquired parts on TV and in films, as well as a role in the Broadway production of the musical 'Hair.' In 1971, she joined Jane Fonda and Donald Sutherland on the controversial "Free the Army" tour, a show for GIs and servicewomen opposed to the Vietnam war. In 1972, she founded Redwood Records, and her latest release, 'Singer in the Storm,' is her fifteenth album. This fall, PBS will air a documentary about her work. Her autobiography has just been published by William Morrow & Co.

TONI: WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO WRITE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY?

HOLLY: People have been asking me to write about particular aspects of the work I do in articles, and evolving out of that was the idea that there *should* be books written about this era that we've been such a part of. I even include going back before the so-called "women's music era": post-hootenanny, post-'60s revolution. There's something in between there that isn't called '70s or '80s, and doesn't really get dealt with. I didn't want to be the one to do it, but we've been seeing lots of people coming through Redwood Records, setting up interviews with me and different people who work at Redwood, planning to write "the book about women's music." They would fall through some magical place somewhere, and we'd never see them again. I'm not sure why...maybe it's that they had no idea what a can of worms they were opening, and once they dug into it, they saw how huge it was and got scared, or overwhelmed.

Anyway, I didn't want to write "the book about women's music." That's been an important part, but not the only part, of my work. I didn't really want to stop everything I was doing to go and do a research project.

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Toni Armstrong Jr. has full-time careers in both special education, and women's music & culture. Interests include sign language, movies, vampires, neurophysiology, pinball, and the occasional nap.*

This book evolved slowly. The twenty years of the '70s and '80s were a very major percentage of my adult life and career life, and I figured that if I just followed the travels and the lessons and the pitfalls and the pratfalls of my actual life and work, it would cover a lot of historical territory. I thought if I wrote it from a real personal place, people who sort of shy away from reading history, or get bored with pragmatic discussions of things, might actually get a taste of all kinds of movements and places and people that they haven't had much contact with.



Sarber Studio

Holly Near (right) at age ten with her sister Timothy.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO DO IT?

Three or four years ago, the idea of something being written seemed important, so we decided we'd find somebody to write the book. We approached Dirk Richardson, a political writer and music critic in the Bay area, who has a very good understanding of women's music, of feminist music, as well as the Left. He had done dissertations on artists in the '50s who'd been red-baited; he had a real historical context in which to put all of this. When we asked him if he'd write the book, he said he'd be very excited to do that. I also wanted a man—and a music

critic—to write it in this particular situation, because I didn't want to get steeped in all the different perspectives and personalities of the women's movement. Because each of us was so personally involved, we didn't have any detachment from it. I was going to ride herd, in a fairly major way, on it, but I thought that his sensitivity to it, his musical criticism of it, would be good. He reviewed every feminist artist that ever came through the Bay area.

The publishers said, "Well, we really want *your* voice in this in some way. Why don't you write a few paragraphs, maybe a chapter, and see how it could maybe be him writing and then you writing, and then him writing." Well, I had a good day that day and I wrote a great chapter. They said, "This book will do much better if people feel like you're talking directly to them." Well, I panicked. I said, "How about a ghost writer? We'll say I wrote it—he can write it!" But then we tried that, and he said, "this isn't working: you have a very particular way of talking and speaking," and I didn't really like the idea of someone else writing my voice, so... I said I'd give it a try. And it took a couple of years.

WHEN DID YOU START WORKING ON IT FULL-TIME?

I'd say two years ago. But I can't really call any of it "full-time" right up to the end, because I was taking a laptop computer on airplanes, backstage, in hotel rooms—I mean, I would be writing all the time. In some ways this was good, because the energy, the work was going on all the time, and so that style is in the book. If I'd gone off to an island somewhere, I might have started writing it really relaxed.

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU TO WRITE SUCH A MAJOR PROJECT?

It was a much longer and less well-written book the first time out. When I sent the first draft to the publishers, they sent it back and said, "First of all, it's your

first book. Don't write *War And Peace*. Cut, cut, cut!" I didn't know what I was going to cut...this was going to break my heart. And now that I've cut it, I don't miss anything I took out. It's a writer's first lesson, of course—that your words are not diamonds or jewels, they're just words, and you really can say as much with less if you'll focus on it. So not only did I have to write the book, I had to learn *how* to write a book. I had to learn how to use a computer, things like that, that I'd never done. But it's done! I'm really very pleased with it. I'm excited about it, and scared.

IF YOU COULD START AGAIN AT THE BEGINNING, KNOWING WHAT YOU KNOW NOW...?

If I had to go back and rewrite the order of things, all of those books that were supposed to be written about women's music would have already been written. Also books about the GI Movement of the early '70s, where soldiers were protesting the war from within the military—that book would have already been written. More books about when the disarmament movement joined forces between people who were opposed to nuclear weapons and people who were opposed to nuclear power—we barely remember there was a time when those two movements were not together. If all of those books had been written and they had been popularized, my book would have been easier to do, because then I wouldn't have felt the responsibility...

...TO EXPLAIN SO MUCH?

Yeah. In a mainstream book, you can simply say "Woodstock." You don't have to stop and explain it. But in my book, if I say "Michigan," many people will think I'm talking about a state. So not only do you have to explain that it's a music festival where 8,000 women come, you have to explain *why* 8,000 women *wanted* a music festival. And *why* are they all out there running around naked with their stretch marks and their mastectomies and their whatever showing...how did that happen? Because if you aren't familiar with that concept, the information in and of itself—without a context and without an explanation—will not necessarily endear new people to the concept. You have to let the reader go through the same process each of us went through to even want to go in the first place. So that was an obstruction in a way to the flow of

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excerpts from Holly Near's autobiography **Fire in the Rain...Singer in the Storm**

William Morrow & Co./reprinted with permission

MEETING MEG

Such passion for life can get you in trouble. I watched Meg's hands as she tuned her guitar and my mind drifted backward...was it only a little over a year ago? The L.A. Women's Building had asked us to do their major fundraiser for 1975: Meg Christian, Margie Adam, Cris Williamson, Lily Tomlin, the Alice Stone Ladies Society Orchestra, and me. It would be the largest gathering of feminist performing artists ever presented in L.A. In hindsight, the omissions are obvious... the extraordinary voices of Vicki Randle and Linda Tillery come to mind. Still, I had never been part of an all-women's production before, and I was excited.

There had been disagreement over my participation. Some of the organizers liked the presence of so many lesbian performers and didn't see why they needed to invite another heterosexual woman. Those in favor, led by Bobbie Berleffi—who was an old friend of Cris's—argued that I drew a broader audience, which included the music industry, the "straight" press, and the peace movement, and besides, I sang strong songs about women and sold a lot of tickets. The critics pointed out that most of those songs were about women in relation to men/patriarchy. "Can't we for once have a major event without having to ask, 'What about the men?'"

I heard about these discussions from acquaintances who were at the meetings. I was fascinated by the debate and the level of its intensity. It served to notify me that these questions were not to be sidestepped.

The vote led to an invitation, and I, in turn, invited Meg, Cris, and Margie to my home for the first music rehearsal. The word was that Meg and I were not going to like each other. She was part of a lesbian separatist collective called Olivia Records and had not wanted me to be in the show. I discussed this with my lover, Arthur. He was visiting me from New York. We decided, in the interest of keeping the peace, that he would stay out of sight, so he curled up in my bedroom to learn the lines of a play he would be rehearsing when he got home.

The women arrived in good spirits and in their respective cars: Meg in her Toyota, Margie in her Volvo, and Cris in her VW. I was sporting an American Rambler at the time. I had prepared snacks and everyone had brought their refreshment of choice—beer, wine, marijuana. We tuned the guitars to my piano and picked a song. After the first few lines we fell apart, delirious over the delicious sound we had just created. It was, naturally and effortlessly, a magnificent quartet.

Margie was outspoken, articulate, and opinionated, and she played the piano with gregarious personality. She seemed to fall in love over and over again with the beauty of women making music together, and agreed to accompany me on my solo songs. She liked Jeff's work with me, so she took his basic approach to my songs and elaborated on it. I appreciated this respect. Cris had a voice that combined the cry of the wolf and the lullaby of the spirit mother. She was also writing some magnificent songs that later became part of the classic women's music recording *The Changer and the Changed*. It was hard to know which of Cris's songs to choose. Each one was a singer's dream. Cris also had a comic locked up inside her that seemed unable to control itself in Meg's presence. Between the two of them, we laughed as much as we sang. Meg—"little Mayug" as we came to call her—played the guitar as if she were sculpting. I can still remember watching her hands and fingers, so alive and strong. But behind her Southern articulation, her impish sense of humor, and her commitment to lesbian music, there was a huge sadness I could feel in her songs. With all our differences, I felt moved by her.

The all-women cast, crew, and staff gathered for dress rehearsal. Seeing someone make a mistake, I found myself blaming it on the fact that she was a woman. I love to catch myself being small-minded or acting out on a stereotype. I grin, close my eyes, and erase that tape from the library. The sensation of feeling my consciousness being "raised" is superb entertainment if I stay free of guilt.

Dress rehearsals take time, so I had brought a biography of Judy Garland to read. I found a place in the carpeted stairway to cry over this child star who took uppers and downers to make sure her moods were compatible with the heavy shooting schedule at MGM. How is it, I wondered, that I had turned away from being a child star, had avoided drugs and alcoholism, had made these peculiar choices to work outside fame and fortune? Why was Judy so important to me lately, as if she sat on my shoulder warning me, imploring me to be happy?

I looked up and Meg was standing there watching me. Her guitar was nowhere in

continued on page 5

the book, having to stop and say, "I have to explain this," and not wanting to be the *only* voice explaining these two decades, which have had so many voices participating in their formation. But, given all those "panics" aside, I think that I'm really pleased with the outcome of it.

HOW DID YOU PICK AND CHOOSE, IN TERMS OF THE WOMEN'S STUFF, WHAT TO INCLUDE AND WHAT TO CUT?

I decided I would do the part that was the best storytelling. There were certain points that I wanted to get across, but I tried to find examples that were interesting to read about to put forth those points. I didn't get stuck too much in rhetorical explanations. It's the specific little details that cough up the memories. So I tried to stay focused on detailed stories, like going to Saigon for the first time, and sitting in a clandestine meeting with a Buddhist nun who had just escaped from the torturous prisons there. She had smuggled out this beautiful etching from a man who was still in the tiger cages, and she gave it to me like a contract: "You must go back to your country, you must talk about what's going on here," and then she disappeared into the night. She was so extraordinary; she just took my breath away. And then going up to the northern part of the country, and meeting women workers who were in a factory. I just walked by when they were taking their break, and they had these beautiful, long, single braids. I had very long hair at that time, and I had two braids. I went in, and we sang songs to each other, and then they took the rubber bands off my braids and they each kept one, and put the bands off of each of their braids on me. It was like this cultural exchange between people who couldn't speak each other's language, and that was really one more revelation to me about how women communicate with each other in a different way than men do. Here we were, just petting each other's hair. It was so gorgeous, and oohing and aahing over the different textures between my hair and theirs. Stuff like that, you can do sort of an analytical discussion about it, or you can just tell the story. I tried to stick to the story.

There are some ponderings, but I feel like the stuff that's the most moving is when people come into the picture. That's been such an essential part of my songwriting too. A lot of people ask, "How's your daughter?" I don't have



Holly in her high school band



Renee Gaumont

Imagine My Surprise: late '70s



Irene Young

Holly Near: "In my book, if I say 'Michigan,' many people will think I'm talking about a state."

children, but they *think* I do because I've written a lot of songs about women with children. Well, I write about other people mostly. Most of the songs I've written are not about me; they're people that pass through me that have my insecurities, my sensibilities, whatever attached to them. But the songs are mostly not about me.

PEOPLE DO TEND TO THINK THEY "KNOW" A PERFORMER IF THEY'VE SEEN YOU PERFORM A LOT.

People make assumptions. I think that there will be people who, for example, have seen me in more of a peace-world work—international work—role, and then they're going to read very open discussion about loving women, and lesbianism, and separatism. There will be some people who are political, but who never knew what went on just to decide the ticket price for a concert, and all the discussions that went on in the women's movement about class in order to come to that. That's going to be really eye-opening for a lot of them. And then there will be those in the lesbian community who know me from women's music who are going to be really surprised about the global work, or some of the trips. People who have always thought that I've always been with women will be surprised to hear about my relationships with men, and people who still think I'm straight— although I don't know that there's anybody who still could think that I've never had relationships with women—but if there is anybody who didn't know about that part of my life, then they're going to read about that.

HOW DID YOU DECIDE WHICH PRIVATE DETAILS TO INCLUDE?

Well, first of all I decided that I would not come out for anybody—that was both a personal choice as well as a legal one. In terms of lesbian and gay issues, alcoholism, drugs—if people themselves were actively involved in the gay community or the sobriety community, I felt they had already made that public statement. And if there was anything that I thought would break up or rattle a relationship, or a family, or a person, then I just left it out if I hadn't cleared it with them in advance. It felt very easy once I made that decision. This was not a book about trashing, making enemies, revealing—this was not going to be an *Enquirer*. I decided that there was going to be

dignity in this book.

But I knew everybody wanted a little dirt. I included some very vulnerable stuff—it's not a good book if you don't. People *want* to know the personal stuff. I'm a fairly private person, and in some cases I would rather not have talked about some things—but it's part of what makes up artists, it's part of what makes up women, it's part of what makes up humanity.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE OFF BEING HONEST WITH YOUR DESIRE AND NEED TO BE PRIVATE?

Well, one of the things that helped is that the book doesn't come up to yesterday. It had to stop at some point, and so everything's in the past. I think, let's say, if I were in a relationship with someone that I had been with for, let's say, ten years and I wanted to write about the relationship, *that* would have been hard. My partner would have had to agree to be in this book in a way that they may have not wanted to. Because I'm not—and because long-term relationships have not been a major part of my life—I've had very few of them, there's not a consistent person in my life—that took some of the pressure off. Ultimately for the book, I decided that if I were to reveal an affair I had, what made it fun, unique, sensual, a lesson, a nightmare? It had to be something more than just a good roll in the hay to put it in the book. So I approached it in the same way I approach everything: "So what, who cares?" And then if there was an answer to that, I considered writing about it.

YOU'VE BEEN HIGHLY VISIBLE FOR YEARS. CELEBRITIES ALL HAVE DIFFERENT WAYS THEY DRAW THE LINE SO AS TO HAVE A PRIVATE LIFE. HOW DO YOU MANAGE?

I went through a time—and I've talked to a lot of other women who also did this—where somehow we felt like we *owed* it to each other to be open about everything. And I now feel that I have enough behind me that I absolutely trust my intentions. I don't doubt where I stand in this world anymore. I know that where I stand will change because I'll be learning constantly, and I'll keep going out on limbs and trying and making mistakes and falling on my face, but I don't doubt my intentions. So I don't need to keep proving myself over and over again.

continued on page 52

sight but her hands were alive, as if they were making music. I wondered if she would approve of my book. Why did I care what she thought? Why was it hard for me to be myself with these women? Meg always seemed to be saying, "You fascinate me...if only you were a..." I knew lesbians had been forced to live as outcasts, to create a world outside the world, to hide from hostile eyes. I knew lesbians had trouble finding their literature and music, and once found, would have to receive it wrapped in a brown paper bag to avoid the postal worker's silent accusations. I knew lesbian bars were often owned by the Mafia, and women had to depend on and pay for the protection offered by men who would just as soon kill them. I knew lesbians had to drive for hours to the nearest major city in search of Daughters of Bilitis or the Metropolitan Community Church. I knew some lesbians thought they had to choose roles, to be butch or femme, in order to survive in the heterosexual life model.

But courageous and creative women were changing that. Meg was one of them. She had found a home in the lesbian feminist community. Olivia Records was her new self-created family. I felt she mistrusted me as a heterosexual but admired me as a woman and an artist. I didn't want to be one of those straight women whom lesbians talk about with disdain. I wanted to be an ally.

OUT AND ABOUT

I had never been a singles queen by any stretch of the imagination. But I had sat in my share of bars and gone home with a few strangers. I had been to gay bars but never a lesbian bar. I was excited, nervous, curious. Most of all, I was feeling overwhelmed with respect for these women. They had not made their choice out of political awareness. They found each other without any help from feminist bookstores or lesbian music festivals. They took greater risks than I shall ever have to take in order to hold a woman's hand. It was in their footsteps I was about to walk. I thought I had better pay tribute.

I changed clothes about three times. Then I drove out to a country bar in North Hollywood, parked my car, sat there for a long time, took a deep breath, and headed for the door. As I got closer, a policeman walked by. I felt myself gasp and then laughed at myself. *The policeman knows about that bar, it's on his beat. He knows it's filled with lesbians. Who are you hiding from? He probably knows more about lesbians than you do. He may also harass the hell out of them, ticket their cars, check more IDs, maybe even beat up some women sometimes. I've heard stories. But you are going in there and you are going to feel all the fear there is to feel, all the discomfort, all the panic. You are going to watch all the eyes turn and look at you when you come in, as they check out the new baby queer. No matter that you are wearing jeans and jacket, you are a femme through and through, girl, so keep walking.*



"I tried to stay focused on detailed stories, like going to Saigon for the first time, and sitting in a clandestine meeting with a Buddhist nun who had just escaped from the torturous prisons there." (Pictured with Jane Fonda in Vietnam, 1971.)

I went through the door. There was nobody there but the bartender, who was a bleached-blond butch talking to a gay cowboy. It didn't matter. I had just experienced plenty of feelings to sort through. And I had learned that no self-respecting dyke shows up at the bar at 6 p.m. on a Friday night!

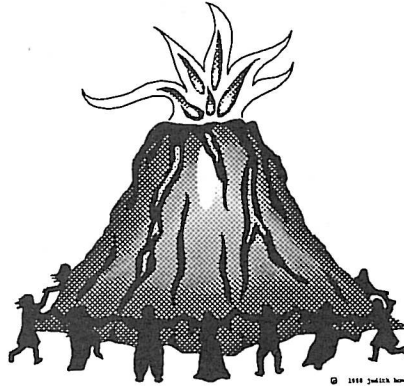
But I would have other chances. I would come to feel easy in a lesbian bar, especially if I wasn't recognized or if I came in with a bunch of friends. I would enjoy watching women, and try to imagine what their lives were like. Some who came in directly from work still had on nylons and heels or their nurse's uniforms, shattering my assumptions about

continued on page 53

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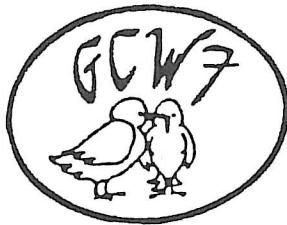
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SOAPBOX

Inquiring WimMinds Want To Know

How did 'HOT WIRE' get its title?

Sara, Chicago

Women regularly ask us where we got the idea to call this journal *HOT WIRE*. The inspiration came from a poem written by one of the publication's founding mothers, Yvonne Zipter, who is now gaining quite a bit of national attention both as a poet [*The Patience of Metal*], as a writer of non-fiction [*Diamonds Are a Dyke's Best Friend*], and as a journalist with her own syndicated column. Here, then, is...

FINDING THE HOT WIRE

By Yvonne Zipter

There is a tension between us,
physical as potential energy,
a high voltage, untapped.

Take this test:
touch me.

Not sexually,
but with the flat of your hand,
with the tips of your fingers,
touch me:

arms and shoulders;
the bend where shoulder meets neck;
my cheekbones;
the hair above my ears;
my shoulder blades;
the ribs in my back
and the small of it;
my waist;
elbows, forearms, wrists;
and hands.

If you can do that
and not want more,
closer, harder,
if you can do that and not want
the press of hip bone on abdomen,
breasts against breasts,
my hand
firm at the small of your back,
then we will know
that you are not drawn—
like an electromagnet—to my charge.

Will you take the test?



Yvonne Zipter (left), originator of 'HOT WIRE' title, with Minnie Bruce Pratt.

I have been a Heather Bishop fan for years. I get much emotional sustenance as well as musical pleasure from her records and shows. My wish is that other musicians in women's music would be as out and as fun and as sincere as Heather.

Lynette Allen, Syracuse

I came across your magazine the other day at the office of *Broadsheet*, a feminist magazine here, and was thrilled to find it! I hadn't known it existed before. I was especially impressed by the little biography at the end of the article on Melissa Etheridge [January 1990 issue.] Here is a woman [Toni Armstrong Jr.] who has dedicated herself to something a lot larger than herself—I felt inspired just reading it! I myself am a lesbian guitarist/singer/songwriter and I have dedicated myself and my music to something larger than me...something about inspiring the larger spirit in all of us. I know sometimes I've sat in an audience and listened to a singer and have just been filled up with a sense of possibility and connection with a common human spirit. I've felt bigger for the experience—and that's what I want my music to do...Hmm! Waxing lyrical there! Still—thank you Toni Armstrong Jr.—I'm glad you're alive and doing what you're doing!

Jess Hawk Oakenstar
Auckland, New Zealand

I've been reading *HOT WIRE* for ages now. It's been especially helpful in leading me to less well-known women performing artists for the purposes of reviewing in *New Directions for Women* [newspaper, now in its nineteenth year of publication, with a circulation of approximately 55,000].

Lynn Wenzel, Associate Editor
New Directions for Women

It occurred to me one day that *HOT WIRE* is one of the only publications I know of that manages to be Sep [separatist] without including hardly any dogma or rhetoric on the subject. To see if I was right, I pulled out my old copies, which go back several years, and sure enough, men are just not an issue one way or the other. Just page after page about women/womyn. Way to go!

Rosie, Ft. Lauderdale

That Kay Gardner—I can't say I always agree with her ideas, but at least they seem well researched and I always have something new to think about when I read her articles. I like it that you let her have a column and write about whatever she's interested in rather than a specific topic. Her "musings" are always of interest to me.

Penny Brigrance, Yellow Springs, Ohio

I would be interested in more articles about movies. It's tricky being from a small town, without even a decent grapevine let alone a gay film festival. I have been interested in every article you ever ran about feminist or lesbian movies. I keep a list of ones to watch for on video, which is about the only way I can see anything. I also keep a list of more obscure titles, like the ones put out by independent women or by the women's movie companies. So anything you can print will be appreciated.

Name and town withheld by request

The article by Helen Hooke ["Twenty Years of Making Music," May 1990] blew my mind out. I can't believe that our history can be so easily erased. How come I've been in women's music for the past eight years and never heard of Helen before? Come on sisters, those of you who "remember the (recent!!) past" need to be less lazy and more willing to let us "new ones" hear the "oldies" from your record collection. Thank you, Helen, for the education.

Jan Dunlop, Oakland

SEND LETTERS to SOAPBOX/HOT WIRE, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Please enclose your address when writing.

I love the cartoons and photographs in *HOT WIRE*. More, more!

Shelley E., Toronto

HOTLINE

by Toni Armstrong Jr. and Annie Lee

WOMEN

AUDRE LORDE explains in detail the impact of Hurricane Hugo on her island of St. Croix in a long letter published in the February issue of *Aché: The Journal for Black Lesbians*, P.O. Box 6071, Albany, CA 94706, (415) 824-0703. Women and groups interested in supporting Audre's non-profit, five-woman organization dedicated to education and supportive programming for women and children in St. Croix, contact Sojourner Sisters Inc., P.O. Box 1696, Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, 00821.

Talk about electrifying performances...**ADRIENNE TORF**, celebrating the release of her new collection of original piano and synthesizer music (*Find a Way*), had her sets at both the Southern and National festivals interrupted by severe weather storm activity.

For those who want to like rap music but can't tolerate the male-identification: try the three-woman **SALT-N-PEPA** group. Their third album (*Blacks' Magic*) has spun off a single entitled "Independence." Salt (**CHERYL JAMES**) says in a recent *Rolling Stone*, "There are a lot of women out there who depend on men for a lot—for their financial status, for their mental stability and happiness. My message to them is to do your own thing and make yourself happy, and depend on yourself instead of on the guy—because most of the time they're undependable."

Novelist **JANE RULE** has agreed to become an honorary director of the Toronto Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies, reports the first issue of *Centre/fold* newsletter.

Attention fans of **JOY JULKS**: a short but respectful article about her (with a good photo) appeared in the premier (Spring 1990) *Bass Player* magazine. She is currently bassist and musical director for singer **ANGELA BOFILL**. *Bass Player*, 500 Howard St., San Francisco, CA 94105.

Weeks on the *Rolling Stone* "Top Fifty" chart as of July: **PAULA ABDUL's Forever Your Girl** (74); **BONNIE RAITT's Nick of Time** (50); **JANET JACKSON's Rhythm Nation 1814** (36); **GLORIA ESTEFAN's Cuts Both Ways** (32).

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



Kaplan Photography

Cathy Fink, board of directors of the Sing Out Corporation

KAREN THOMPSON says in *Mountain Laurel* that **SHARON KOWALSKI** enjoys receiving mail (at Trevilla of Robbinsdale, 3130 Grimes Ave. N., Robbinsdale, MN 55422). Address changes to note: **Karen Thompson**, 3070 Fulton Circle, Clearwater, MN 55320, (612) 255-3104; and their Legal Fund, 801 Washington Memorial Dr., St. Cloud, MN 56301.

FLASH SILVERMOON is creating a new Tarot deck with "radical changes in the structure of the Major Arcana," according to *Of a Like Mind*. She is looking for artists to help complete the project. SASE to Flash Silvermoon, Rt 2 Box 2162, Melrose, FL 32666.

SHEMAYA LAUREL has volunteered to be the National Lesbian Conference contact person for environmental illness/chemical-scent sensitivities. Women interested in attending and/or planning the conference—or wanting to network with EI women—contact her at P.O. Box 151, Shutesbury, MA 01972. (413) 367-9873.

FOND FAREWELLS

The Lesbian Herstory Archives Newsletter (January 1990) features a substantial tribute to **MABEL HAMPTON**, who passed away last November. Photos of her span 1909-1989. The issue also urges lesbians to use the Archives as a place to commemorate lost lovers and friends. SASE for more details to "In Memory of the Voices," LHA, P.O. Box 1258, New York, NY 10116.

DR. HELEN CREIGHTON, one of Canada's foremost folklorists, died last December at 90. According to *Sing Out!*, she began her collecting of songs/stories of the Maritime Provinces in 1928 before there were tape recorders. She published nine books and collected more than 4,000 songs.

GRETA GARBO died last April at 84. Many books and articles have come out reporting the details of the reclusive actress's relationships with other women, some of them famous.

SUSAN GOLD of Circe Productions (Lansing, Michigan) died last June. She was a booker/artist manager, producer, and NOW activist.

HONORS

The National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca, New York has inducted tennis star **BILLIE JEAN KING**; former Congresswoman **BARBARA JORDAN** (the first woman and first Black person to give a keynote address at a national political convention); and photo-journalist **MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE**. The women were chosen from 1,000 nominees.

Women were named as nine of twenty-nine recipients of the MacArthur Foundation fellowships awarded this summer. The five-year awards, according to *Strategies*, are commonly known as the "genius" awards. Among those named were **BYLLYE AVERY**, founder of the Black Women's Health Project, and **BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON**, founder-director of Sweet Honey in the Rock.

RONNIE GILBERT was honored as Woman of the Month in the May issue of the newsletter *On Target: Aimed at Women Over Forty and Their Friends*. The same issue featured **ALIX DOBKIN** in the Musical Notes Spotlight section. *On Target*, P.O. Box 386, Uncasville, CT 06382. (203) 848-3887.

KAY GARDNER's composition "North Coast Nights" has been programmed by the Portland String Quartet as part of their 1990-91 concert series. The world premier will be held in Portland, Maine on November 30.

ANNIVERSARIES

CLEIS PRESS celebrated its ten-year anniversary last April.

1990 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the **MONEY FOR WOMEN FUND** founded by Barbara Deming. The Fund helps to support feminist painters, writers, singers, filmmakers,

actors, and dancers. Recent recipients of the award include Beth Brant, Susan Griffin, Sarah Shulman, and Jennifer Abod. Contributions to: Money for Women, P.O. Box 40-1043, Brooklyn, NY 11240.

CRIS WILLIAMSON and **FERRON** were among the performers last April who took part in the twenty-fifth anniversary concert of The Ark club located in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Sing Out Corporation, with **CATHY FINK** and **FAITH PETRIC** on the Board of Directors, celebrated its fortieth anniversary last May. The group publishes *Sing Out!* folk song magazine and is dedicated to preserving and promoting traditional folk music as well as expanding its definitions and supporting the creators of folk music from all cultures.

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN bookstore in Madison, Wisconsin celebrated its fifteenth anniversary last April with a concert featuring June Jordan and Edwina Lee Tyler & A Piece of the World.

OPEN ARMS: MICHIANA LESBIAN NEWSLETTER, edited by Roberta Miller, has successfully passed the one-year mark. P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46544.

DAUGHTERS OF SARAH, the magazine for Christian feminists, celebrates its sixteenth anniversary this November. It is published bi-monthly and provides a national forum for varying viewpoints within Christian feminism. Edited by Reta Finger, 3801 N. Keeler, Chicago, IL 60641.

GATHERINGS

Welcome to **RHYTHMFEST**, the new women's festival held over Labor Day weekend in the mountains where Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee meet. A Cooperative of Workers Production Company, 604 W. Chapel Hill St., Durham, NC 27701. (916) 682-6374.

Welcome also to the new annual **PACIFIC NORTHWEST WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURAL JAMBOREE**, first held this past July 6-8 at Western Washington University in Bellingham. For info re the 1991 Jamboree: Tam Martin, P.O. Box 42344, Portland, OR 97242. (503) 232-9907.

NEWMR, celebrating its tenth year, has had a slight name change. Still held over the Labor Day weekend, it is now called the North East Women's Musical Retreat. P.O. Box 217, New Haven, CT 06513.

The **WRITERS' CONFERENCE** at the National Women's Music Festival, started by Toni Armstrong Jr. and Yvonne Zipter, seeks a new coordinator for the 1991 festival. Midge Stocker, coordinator for the past four years, will work with the new organizer(s). 2250 W. Farragut, Chicago, IL 60625-1802.

The **WOMEN'S MEXICAN RIVIERA CRUISE** will sail November 17-24 from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas, Puerto Vallarta, and Mazatlan. SASE to Robin Tyler Productions, 15842 Chase St., Sepulveda, CA 91343. (818) 893-4075.

The **WOMEN'S CARIBBEAN CRUISE** will sail Halloween week (October 28-November 4) to Miami, Nassau/Blue Lagoon, San Juan, St. John, and St. Thomas. SASE to Olivia Records, 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608.

For info about the **AUSTRALIAN LESBIAN FESTIVAL** in Melbourne, write P.O. Box 02, North Carlton, Victoria 3054 Australia.

The second annual one-day **OHIO LESBIAN FESTIVAL** will be held September 8 in Columbus. Participation in the festival as an organizer, entertainer, or merchant is open only to self-defined lesbians. Non-lesbian sisters are invited to attend. Candace Pierson, P.O. Box 02031, Columbus, OH 43202. (614) 268-2616.

The 1990 **WOMEN'S MOTORCYCLE FESTIVAL**, featuring competitions, group rides, sports, entertainment, and camping, will be held August 23-26 in Western New York state. , 7 Lent Ave., Leroy, NY 14482. (716) 768-6054.

The sixth national **CATHOLIC LESBIAN CONFERENCE** is in the planning. Contact CLL Inc., P.O. Box 436, Planetarium Station, New York, NY 10024.

Keepers of the Flame **SACRED MYSTERY SCHOOL FOR WOMEN** offers weekend intensives with Diane Mariechild, Shuli Goodman, Edwina Lee Tyler, Roberta Stokes, and Bonnie Novakov-Lawler. Full Circle Workshops, RFD #3, Amherst, MA 01002. (413) 625-9587.

DANCING WITH PELE, the second annual women's retreat with Starhawk and Luisa Teish, is scheduled for March 19-27, 1991 in Hawaii. The week will include a ceremony with Hawaiian healers in a ritual to honor Madame Pele at the rim of Kilauea Crater. SASE to Jodi c/o Harmony Network, P.O. Box 2550, Guerneville, CA 95446. (707) 869-0989.

The fourth annual **GOLDENTHREADS CELEBRATION** was held last June in Provincetown, celebrating women fifty or older and women who are interested in older women; Alix Dobkin performed. Golden Threads, P.O. Box 3177, Burlington, VT 05401-0031.

The twelfth annual **WOMONWRITES** Southeastern lesbian writers' conference was located in central Georgia. 1991 info from: Sandra Lambert, 811 NW 19th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32609.

The sixteenth annual **FEMINIST WOMEN'S WRITING WORKSHOPS** was held in July on the campus of Wells College in Aurora, New York. For info on the 1991 conference: FWWW, P.O. Box 6583, Ithaca, NY 14851.

The **GAY GAMES III** (Gay Olympics) were

held in August in Vancouver, and included the Celebration '90 Festival Chorus.

The fifth annual **WOMYN & WITCHCRAFT: DEVELOPING DIANIC WICCA CONFERENCE** is scheduled for Labor Day weekend in central Wisconsin. DDW5 Conference c/o Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, P.O. Box 66021, Madison, WI 53716. (608) 838-8629.

The **NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE**—scheduled for April 24-28, 1991 in Atlanta—continues to gear up. Regional planning has been happening for years all over the country. National info from: Michelle Crone, P.O. Box 3057, Albany, NY 12203. (518) 463-1051.

The **NATIONAL GAY YOUTH CONFERENCE** will take place in Houston August 10-12. SASE to National Alliance for Young Adults, P.O. Box 190426, Dallas, TX 75219-0426.

Commemorative T-shirts (signed and unsigned) are still available from **THERESE EDELL'S FORTIETH BIRTHDAY CONCERT** last March. Also, the organizers need donations and low-interest loans to manufacture the cassettes and CDs. Call Therese directly at (513) 542-5151.

The third annual **LESBIAN SEPARATIST CONFERENCE** will be held in southeastern Wisconsin August 30-September 2. Burning Bush, P.O. Box 3065, Madison, WI 53704-0065.

The third annual **NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR GAY AND LESBIAN ORGANIZING & SKILL BUILDING** is scheduled for November 9-12 in Minneapolis. Plenary highlights will include Barbara Smith and Kate Clinton. NGLTF Creating Change, 1517 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 332-6483.

GROUPS

The **CRAFTSWIMMIN'S MUTUAL AID SOCIETY** is a group by, for, and about women artisans. For info about the group or their newsletter: CMAS c/o J'aime and Winky, 8215 SE 13th St., Portland, OR 97202.

Spinsterhaven is looking for accessible rural and urban housing, camping, and a retreat lodge. Those interested in alternatives to traditional **RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES**, SASE to SPH, P.O. Box 718, Fayetteville, AR 72702.

Every dollar you donate to **SPINSTERS/AUNT LUTE** women's press will be matched by an additional fifty cent contribution under the terms of a California Arts Council Challenge Grant. The company has published

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Annie Lee is a type B person surrounded by a type A peer group. Toni Armstrong Jr. has been involved with women's music and culture for the past fifteen years. She loves to collect and share information.

books by Audre Lorde, JoAnn Loulan, and Gloria Anzaldúa, as well as *Why Can't Sharon Kowalski Come Home?* Donations to: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, P.O. Box 410687, San Francisco, CA 94141. (415) 558-9655.

According to *Up and Coming*, a new **JAPANESE LESBIAN GROUP** publishes a monthly newsletter and hopes to develop a creative counterculture for lesbians; there is no equivalent of women's music in Japan yet. Regumi Studio Tokyo, Nakazawa 3F, 23 Arakicho, Shinjuku #160, Tokyo, Japan.

Redwood Records, started in 1972 by Holly Near, has emerged as **REDWOOD CULTURAL WORK**, a non-profit cultural arts organization with almost fifty albums and an impressive roster of progressive artists from several countries. To receive their new catalog: *Redwood Music That Rocks The Boat*, P.O. Box 10408, Oakland, CA 94610.

WOMONTYME DISTRIBUTION COMPANY has announced the formation of their Community Involvement Program, which is open to social service projects and self-help groups committed to helping women and children. SASE to Gwen Tucker, P.O. Box 50145, Long Beach, CA 90815.

The Mississippi Women's Educational and Cultural Retreat Center can be purchased for \$250,000, and the organizers of the annual **GULF COAST WOMEN'S FESTIVAL** are raising the money. The land is 160 acres and includes six twenty-bed cabins, swimming pool, dining hall, pond, and quonset building. The owners must sell in order to fund their Minorities Program. SASE to SisterSpirit Inc., 250 Cowan Rd., Gulfport, MS 39507. (601) 896-3196.

The National Women's Studies Association has several grants for writers: The **PAT PARKER POETRY AWARD** of \$250, funded by Woman in the Moon Press, is given for an outstanding poem by a Black lesbian feminist poet. Applicant's name should not appear on the submitted poem. Also, the Naiad-National Women's Studies Association scholarship of \$1,000 will be awarded to a student who in the fall of 1991 will be doing research for or writing a thesis/dissertation in **LESBIAN STUDIES**. The NWSA Award in **JEWISH WOMEN'S STUDIES** will be given in 1991 to a grad student who is enrolled in the fall semester. Application forms for all grants from: NWSA, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-1325.

The Feminist Institute has planned **FEMINIST WALKING TOURS OF CAPITOL HILL** (Washington, D.C.) from April through October, three days a week. Call (301) 951-9040.

The Critical Literacy Institute has launched a new education/training program for **YOUNG LESBIAN/GAY ACTIVISTS** "to locate and encourage the next generation of gay and lesbian

readers," according to *Hag Rag*. The program will train 200 between the ages of eighteen and thirty who have "demonstrated commitment to social service or political activism benefitting the gay/lesbian community." CLI, 2338 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94114.

The **OHIO LESBIAN ARCHIVES** now has hours available for women to browse and do research, according to *dinah*. Materials include books, magazines, newsletters, articles, and other material documenting the history of lesbian life in Ohio. (513) 421-9439.

ADVENTURE TRAVEL FOR WOMEN: The Minnesota and Northwest Woodswomen offices have internship opportunities available year round. For an information packet: Roxy Mortvedt, Woodswomen, 25 W. Diamond Lake Rd., Minneapolis, MN 55419. (612) 822-3809.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund has started a **NATIONAL FAMILY REGISTRY** for lesbians/gay men who want to identify their relationships in a formal way. This is a central repository of records of lesbian/gay families "who wish to stand tall and be counted," according to *Atalanta*. National Family Registry c/o HRCF, 1012 14th St. NW #600, Washington, D.C. 20005.

The **LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES** is determined to buy a building to house their 10,000 books, 12,000 photos, 1,300 periodicals, (etc.). For more than sixteen years it's been in a large apartment in New York City. Outright donations and fundraising support urgently needed. P.O. Box 1258, New York, NY 10116. (212) 874-7232.

RURAL WIMMIN'S PRODUCTIONS, though idle for the last few years, has made a comeback and is doing concerts again. They also publish a sixteen-page newsletter, *Mountain Laurel* (edited by Ruth Siegel and Andrea Weiner), aimed at women in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. SASE to P.O. Box 65, South Morgan Drive, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411. (304) 258-5079.

The **NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH PROJECT** in Atlanta is still trying to rebuild their main office structure after the offices were burglarized and everything stolen. The group, which sponsors ninety-six projects in twenty states, needs contributions as well as memberships. NBWHP, 1237 Gordon St. SW, Atlanta, GA. (404) 753-0916.

NEWS

Sen. Charlotte J. Pritt (D-WV) has introduced **REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS COUNTER-LEGISLATION**, including one bill which would impose sterilization as a penalty for men who fail to keep up with child support payments and another which would require men to obtain wives' permission before getting a vasectomy. "If women's bodies are going to

be violated," says Sen. Pratt, "then men's should be too."

Rutgers has dedicated a **DORM FOR WOMEN WHO ARE STUDYING MATH AND SCIENCE**, according to *Feminist Teacher*. The Bunting-Cobb Math and Science Hall houses about 110 undergrad and graduate women; the \$882,000 addition to an existing dorm was the idea of The Douglass Project for Rutgers Women in Math and Science.

The **NEW LONDON PEOPLES FORUM** lost its library of hundreds of lesbian/gay books and materials in a fire last April, reports *On Target*. Donations of books, cassettes, videos, and periodicals from groups and individuals should be sent to: Peoples Forum Library, P.O. Box 386, New London, CT 06320.

Lambda Rising bookstore reported that thirty copies of *On Our Backs* were sprayed with dye, resulting in the destruction of at least two dozen other periodicals. The store lost more than \$250, according to *Lesbian News*. The six-year-old magazine has been the target of other **VANDALISM** incidents, says editor Susie Bright.

The Department of Commerce awards **PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION GRANTS** for public telecommunications, to increase services and facilities available to/operated-owned by minorities and women. Contact Shirley Simpson, PTFP, NTIA, Commerce Dept. #4624, Washington, DC 20230. (202) 377-5802.

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY will again be celebrated October 11. Check local publications and bookstores for events near you. If you live in an area without a lesbian or feminist community, you can still do your part by coming out to at least one person that day, secure in the knowledge that thousands of others are doing the same in every part of the U.S. and in several other nations.

RADIO AND TV

Take note **SHARON GLESS** (*Cagney and Lacey*) fans: she returns to CBS this fall in a drama about a divorced woman going back into the workplace. *Cagney and Lacey* can also be seen in syndicated reruns.

Alicia Banks features the musical and literary voices of Black women on "**LES CHANTEUSES AFRICAINES**" radio show, heard Mondays from 1-6 a.m. on WRFG-89.3 FM/Atlanta.

"**GOOD FRIENDS**" is a monthly cable TV show seen on Channel 10 in Cincinnati. Since January, featured guests have included musician Betsy Lippitt, sign language interpreter Ruth Rowan, producer Estelle Riley, MUSE Choir, and highlights from Therese Edell's fortieth birthday concert. Letters/tapes to: Bobbie Kaye, P.O. Box 12306, Cincinnati, OH 45212. (513) 531-1820.

"WOMINSOUNDS" (done by Bev Futrell and Karen Jones of Reel World String Band) has been on the radio airwaves for twelve years now in Kentucky. Music and poetry by women can be heard from 8-10 p.m. on Sundays on WEKA/Richmond and WEKH/Hazard.

"WOMEN ON THE WAVES"/WGDR 91.1 FM seeks women's music in any format for show heard in central Vermont on Mondays from 4-6:30 p.m. P.O. Box 336, Plainfield, VT 05667.

"A WOMEN'S CIRCLE" is broadcast Sundays at 6 p.m. on WVPE-88 FM/northern Indiana.

Did you see URVASHI VAID on the evening news last March 29, interrupting President Bush? When it was clear that his speech at the National Leadership Coalition on AIDS Conference would not include anything but empty rhetoric, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force stood and held high a sign that read "TALK IS CHEAP. AIDS FUNDING IS NOT." Her Norma Rae-esque moment was broadcast from coast to coast.

FILM, VIDEO, THEATER

Call for entries for the tenth annual INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL. Deadline September 15; festival in March. Women in the Director's Chair, 3435 N. Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 281-4988.

CELEBRATION THEATRE, devoted exclusively to lesbian and gay productions, seeks original scripts. Playwrights should be lesbian or gay; scripts should have lesbian/gay themes. Celebration Theatre, 1770 N. Highland Ave #536, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

Ellen Spiro has released a video entitled *DIANA'S HAIR EGO: AIDS INFO UPFRONT*, which tells the story of a woman who has fought the extreme inadequacy of local information on AIDS by educating Black communities in Columbia, South Carolina.

A group of women theater artists have determined to award cash prizes to the nominators in the new NATIONAL SEXIST THEATER CRITIC AWARDS (the "winners" to receive "Dickies"). Nominators may choose to remain anonymous. SASE to The Dickie Awards, P.O. Box 460786, San Francisco, CA 94146.

"If all the world's a stage, what part do lesbians of color play?...[in Sapphire] lesbians of color will play all parts." Sacul L'Adnabré is the founder and director of SAPPHIRE THEATRE COMPANY, the new Black lesbian-feminist theater group, according to *Aché*. Sapphire Theater Co., 6034 Colby, Oakland, CA 94618.

STUDIO D was established by the National Film Board of Canada as a forum for women filmmakers. The woman-centered, issue-oriented documentaries they have produced include *Not a Love Story* and the Academy Award-winning *If You Love This Planet*. Studio

D, P-43 Box 6100, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 3H5. (514) 283-9533.

A **POWERFUL THANG**, the thirty-minute sequel to Zeinabu irene Davis's *Cycles*, is in the works. The new film "continues to tell a day in the life of an African American woman." T-shirts and videotapes are available from Women With a Mission, 375 W. Center College St. #144, Yellow Springs, OH 45387.

PUBLICATIONS

The first annual **BOOK OF LESBIAN WORLD RECORDS** is to be published in 1991 as a compilation of noncompetitive herstorical records. All lesbians are invited to make their accomplishments—humorous or serious—known. According to *Sojourner*, all notarized, released entries will be published. SASE to COLOR PINK PRODUCTIONS, 1918 Lake Shore Ave. #32, Oakland, CA 95606.

The sheet music to Betsy Rose's song "READ MY LIPS"—inspired by the Gallaudet students' revolt demanding a deaf president for their university—appears in Volume 35 #1 of *Sing Out!* The song has not yet been recorded.

Look for the new *SHAMAKAMI* newsletter by, for, and about South Asian feminist lesbian-identified women. P.O. Box 643, Cambridge, MA 02238.



Barbara Dumesnil

Bev Futrell (mandolin) and Karen Jones (fiddle) do "Wominsounds" on WEKA-FM in Kentucky.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORK is an extensive calendar of events of interest to women located in Chicago and surrounding communities. The monthly newsletter collects info by the tenth of each month. Editor Tracy Baim c/o *Outlines*, 3059 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 871-7610.

The work of some of our favorite women cartoonists, including **LYNDA BARRY** and **NICOLE HOLLANDER** appears in *The Funny Times: A Monthly Humor Review*, P.O. Box 18530, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118. (How many newspapers have now dropped Nicole's "Sylvia" strip for "Batman," as happened in her hometown of Chicago?)

K. Corbett of the Disabled Women's Network has developed a specific list of suggestions for organizations interested in reaching out in a substantial way to **WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES**; it's printed in the January/February issue of *Strategies: The Newsletter About Feminist Strategies*, P.O. Box 162, Port Murray, NJ; or contact K. Corbett directly c/o Disabled Women's Network, 1112 Harrison St., Berkeley, CA 94706.

For those who have been frustrated by an inability to explain to unaware people why **DEPICTIONS OF WITCHES** in stereotypical garb is oppressive, Nina Silver wrote an excellent piece entitled "Hags" in the May-June issue of *Broomstick*. Her simple, thoughtful approach could be helpful in thinking about other forms of oppression as well. *Broomstick*, 3543 18th St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110.

New bimonthly guide to camping, hiking, backpacking, and canoeing: *WOMEN'S OUTDOOR JOURNAL*, R3 Box 72, Rockport, IN 47635. (812) 359-5293.

Alyson Publications, the largest gay/lesbian publisher in the U.S., has acquired **LACE PUBLICATIONS**, the press specializing in lesbian erotica and science fiction.

Merlin Stone publishes a **GODDESS-ORIENTED NEWSLETTER** that includes news about events, publications, tapes, and archeological developments. SASE to *A Letter From Merlin*, P.O. Box 266-201, Varick St., New York, NY 10014.

MS. magazine resumed publication this summer with Robin Morgan as new editor-in-chief. As we went to press, the debut issue was scheduled to feature Toni Morrison, Adrienne Rich, Alice Walker, Carol Gilligan, Barbara MacDonald, k.d. lang, Margaret Atwood, Marilyn French, and Gloria Steinem. "This new *Ms.* will be controversial, radical, celebratory, challenging—and feminist," says Robin in a recent *Feminist Bookstore News*.

The **NETWORK FOR WOMEN WITH BALANCE DISORDERS** puts out a newsletter entitled *Cope*. Sharon Artlip, P.O. Box 305, Elliott, IA 51532.

The spring issue of *Dykes, Disability and Stuff* includes an interesting discussion of **CATS IN LESBIAN SPACE** as they impact women with environmental illnesses; a piece about coming out as a woman with **CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME**; and a thoughtful essay full of practical suggestions regarding **ACCESSIBILITY AT PUBLIC EVENTS**. Available in braille, cassette, large print, regular print. *DDS*, P.O. Box 6194, Boston, MA 02114.

For those interested in Goddess worship, **THEMOPHORIA'S NEW MOON** newsletter may be for you. "The Voice of the New Women's Religion" includes a calendar of events, re-

continued on page 56

CONFABULATION

ALISON BECHDEL AND KRIS KOVICK

ALISON BECHDEL creates the comic strip 'Dykes to Watch Out For,' which appears in two dozen papers in the U.S. and Canada. Three collections of her work have been published by Firebrand Books. She lives in Minneapolis.

KRIS KOVICK's cartoons are published regularly in several publications, including 'Outlines,' 'Out/Look,' 'On Our Backs,' 'Outweek,' and 'HOT WIRE.' She says she attended California State Home for the Criminally Artistic, and currently resides in the Bay Area.

Both Kris and Alison were born on September 10.

ALISON: Let's talk a little bit, and we'll see if the tape recorder is working. One thing that we need to do is speak a little loudly and more precisely than we probably would ordinarily.

KRIS: *I will channel Molly Yard.*

A: Kris, you're a genius.

K: Listen Alison, don't say that, ever.

A: Why?

K: Because my writing table has become a hard-hat area. Besides I'm hoping to be not so much of a genius, but to be more of a sell-out. I'm thinking of changing my emphasis a little bit. I want to put all my cartoons on a bus and around public transportation and show lesbians—or gay men, since I draw them both exactly the same—being out there.

A: What are the cartoons going to be

CONFABULATION gives 'HOT WIRE' readers the opportunity to eavesdrop while prominent women chat about topics of mutual interest.

about? I mean, you can't put your regular cartoons on the bus.

K: Yes I can. I'm going to.

A: Are you going to fund this yourself?

K: "Fund?" All of my cartoons are funded myself. I hardly sell anything. And what I sell is basically sell-out stuff. I'm sorry to say that, but...

A: You infuriate everyone. That's not being a sell-out. Sell-outs suck up to people.

K: Sometimes it's pandering to the crowd, and certainly that will whip things up.

A: You're saying that even infuriating people is selling out?

K: No, not really. It's just that you draw a bunch of cartoons and what an editor sees, at least my editors, is generally something that they want to buy or print. "Buy," I'm talking twenty dollars, okay? We're not doing this for the money. In my case, not even my middle-of-the-road cartoons, but the softest, least offensive cartoons possible that I make, so what I think sometimes is the best, or the most radical—or at least the most humorous stuff—never gets printed.

A: Of your own work? Why?

K: Because it's editors that select it. And editors are working for the publisher, who's working for the advertising. It's all connected basically to the most conservative part of the gay community, which is of course the richest. Mainly the money has been made like ten years ago and was made all in the bars. But now it's being made on the telephone. So what we sell a lot in San Francisco and what they sell in New York and everywhere else in gay papers—is [primarily male] phone sex or hustlers, stuff like that. The bulk of the advertising comes from that, and that's how most gay papers get into existence. There are only a few that don't do that heavily—and they're not commercially very successful.

A: What does this mean? That's how I make my living—through the gay press. I make a living from phone sex ads?

K: *In the lesbian and gay community our money is tied up, not directly of course, but indirectly with that. Just like in the big, big, community, in America, all the money is basically tied into military spending. When that changes, the economy will change, and when our economy changes—that is if the FCC regulates a lot of phone advertising—then our ability to make money that way, and have newspapers that way, advertise and have a culture, will be affected.*

A: Yeah, I'm really worried about that.

K: Let's say something dirty on the phone right now while we can.

A: I think we should talk about our "evil and good twin" aspect. I think it's really fascinating that we have the same birthday, for example.

K: Yes, you know I think that will be my footnote in history. We were born on the same day only ten years apart. Alison is the older one.

A: That's not true.

K: Well, morally it's true. And that's all lesbians care about anyway. Plus, you know what I think? I think lesbians are really attracted to frost-tops, and I'm not saying that just because I'm graying. Anyway, I am your evil twin.

A: And I'm your good twin.

K: Yes, now talk about that, Alison; talk about the nature of good.

A: I'm such a nice girl. And it really doesn't bother me.

K: And it doesn't bother anybody else either.

A: Well, that's the sort of pathetic side of it. I try so hard not to bother anybody. That's why you're so incredible to me.

K: Because I make the same effort only in the opposite direction? I do give a fuck, I really do.

A: But people threaten to sue you for your work. That's never happened to me.

K: Nor will they, and so you don't have to worry about it, and that's a wonderful thing in your life. So I think that's great. It does frighten me when somebody threatens to sue me—I really freak out.

A: How meaningful can your work be if no one is threatening to sue you?

K: Unfortunately the wrong people want to sue me. It would be great if Jesse Helms wanted to sue me, but did I ever tell you about that guy from Seattle? He's some state representative, and accidentally I drew him. He wanted to sue me and he's a perfectly wonderful person. I drew the wrong guy.

A: They gave you the wrong picture to draw from?

K: Right. But what I do is like fuck-ups. When people want to sue me it's because I violated some well-known anti-trust law or something. It's usually because of plagiarism or lying, or something that's really evil.

the twelve-steps, only I changed alcoholism to homosexuality. What I meant that cartoon to be was about the fact that even though the twelve-steps are great...well, it's like the bill of rights: Nazis can still goose-step down your street if they want to; the bill of rights gives them that right. And it seems that the twelve-step program is sort of like that. They can be used very manipulatively. People in the twelve-step program were so furious with me because they thought I was saying something, I guess maybe about them.

A: You push people's buttons, and that's how people learn and grow.

K: I was thinking about this conversation earlier, and wondering if cartoons really affect anything. And I thought, yeah, Trudeau got Nixon out of the White House. I would say more than anybody else, Doonesbury first threw Richard Nixon out of the White House. This might be rude and I hope I'm

offensive way, but still, there are always little lessons to learn.

A: Oh, I preach so much. It's always a process of toning down the message I'm trying to get through. It's the sort of political lesbian party line.

K: To me it's so complicated. It's like the handkerchief code, I never got it. When you found the lesbian community, was it like you sort of came home?

A: Yes, absolutely.

K: Millions of people that speak the same language.

A: Yeah! God, my first women's music festival—there were all these women there who looked like me!

K: Isn't that fabulous. The first time I saw you, I thought, "Oh, wow, we look alike!" That's a great feeling. Now tell me about your first women's music festival, because I'm trying to do a card to give to a woman who's going to her first music festival.

A: It's probably a very dated response, I mean this was 1980. I was just coming out.

K: Did you go by yourself?

A: No, I went with my girlfriend. First of all, it was seeing all of these women who looked like me. I thought I had invented my own personal aesthetic—the way I like to wear my jeans baggy, the way I had my hair cut short, and the way I moved and talked. Then all of a sudden there were thousands of women who were like that—what is now sneeringly referred to as the '70s androgynous lesbian style.

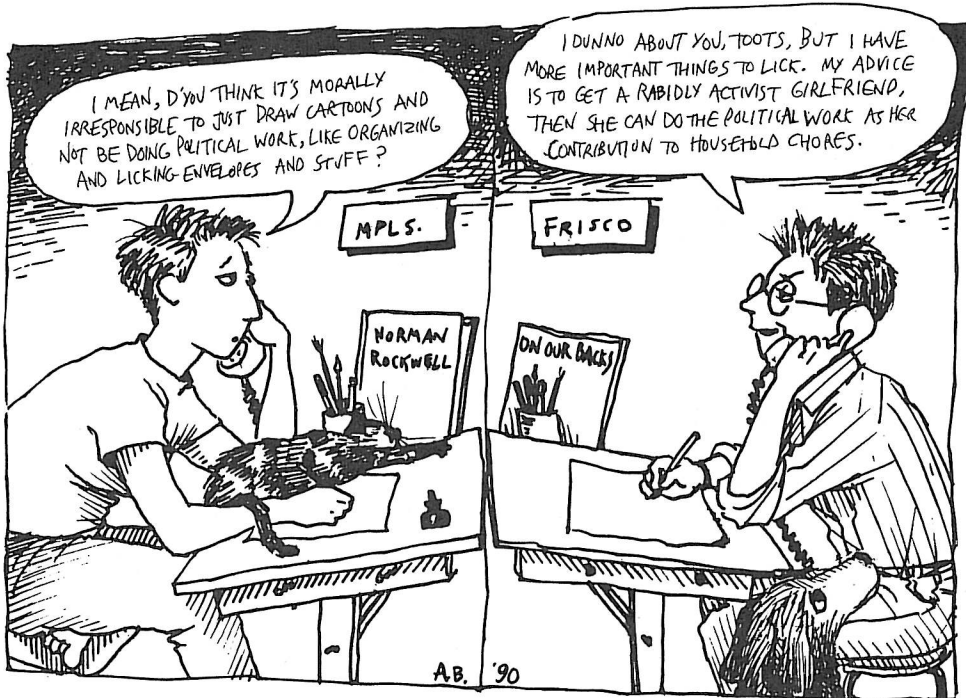
K: "Sneeringly?" I still have those clothes. I'm not sneering. I'm just out of fashion.

A: What I also realized at this first festival is that you can buy this culture. There were all these merchants. You could buy the labyris, the music, the T-shirts.

K: Yeah, the feminist mall.

A: We had all evolved on our own. We had all come to this place on our own; we had all grown up in our tiny little towns without any role models, and yet we all came out like this collective unconscious.

K: That's so true, Alison. But your first reaction was that this was so wonderful. That's so important. I think that says a lot about self-love. When you see your kindred spirit, that's fabulous. I myself was horrified, shocked.



Alison Bechdel

A: That's not true. You got in trouble over your MCC cartoon, for example.

K: Actually, it was misunderstood. I read that in the conservative church there was this thing called the Exodus Movement, where they find gay people in the church who want to go straight. There are these programs within the Christian right where you can practice this twelve-step program that's about becoming straight. So I made this cartoon that showed this woman who was sort of strapped into this chair, and then I wrote

not being offensive, but that's the role that your cartoons take.

A: How?

K: Well first of all, everybody reads them. Your strip is well distributed, well drawn, and well thought out. It's believable—it really is our community. We see ourselves mirrored in it. We see the foibles and the funny stuff, the jargon, the birkenstocks. It's who we really are. It doesn't come across in an

A: What was that like?

K: Well, it was about the same kind of experience, but suddenly seeing a lot of lesbians together really frightened me. I had tried to hide my lesbianism for so long—with no success whatsoever. I'd been trying to stamp it out, hide it, burn it, and everything else. And so when I first was in a big meeting of lesbians I was really shocked and scared. What's in the process for me, being a lesbian, was personal acceptance. So I think you and I are in very different places in our work—I'm working toward self-acceptance; you identify with the culture, and your cartoons are about that. Mine are all extremely anguished about personal acceptance.

A: I've been thinking about culture. What I try to do with my cartoons is document culture, but what is also happening is that I'm taking part in creating the culture. I think that's probably true of many artists, but being a lesbian artist at this point in history...the whole gay and lesbian cultural experience is kind of like a volcano erupting. We've lived underground for so long, and we've only been above ground for twenty years. Everything is still really fluid and not set into rigid patterns yet. There's something very exciting about taking part in that culture. It's not just describing it, because your description is having an effect on the culture; you're describing but it's changing as you describe it. Do you think that's true?

K: Yes, I think that's profound. I wish there was a word for that. Well, I would say that's the magnaview of culture.

A: Do you remember the Sarah Schulman interview in *Gay Community News*? Let me read you this part. She says, "...I graduated from waitressing and was much more involved in the art world. I found the level of self-righteousness and lack of politics in that community incredibly appalling. I was really shocked with all this 'my political work is my art work,' because that's crap. I wanted to talk about that, because that's what the book is about. I'm real angered toward that kind of thing..." She's talking about her latest book.

K: Wow.

A: So, my immediate response was...

K: "She's talking about me!"

A: Yeah. But she's not, because now I see she's talking about whatever the "art world" is—which is not me.

K: Oh, she's talking about the New York art world, like that?

A: I guess so, yeah. Because then she's talking about how it's not enough to write the book...I still kind of feel like my cartooning isn't enough. I should go out and demonstrate and organize, which I don't do, and which I do feel guilty about.

K: Well I know that I would be ineffectual door to door.

A: Yeah, me too. And there are people who do it, who have a need to organize politically; they get satisfaction out of it and they're good at it. But I can't do that. It

I AM EVERYWOMAN



YOU'RE A RICH WHITE NORTH AMERICAN FEMALE AT A WOMEN'S FESTIVAL AND FEMINIST MALL IN THE INCOGS. YOU HAVEN'T USED A HAIR DRYER IN DAYS. WEARING NOTHING BUT A WATER BOTTLE & A PAIR OF SHORTS, YOU ARE EXPERIENCING EPIPHANY. IT MAKES YOU FORGET THAT YOU HAVE DIMPLES INSTEAD OF KNEES.

Kris Kovick

scares me. I've never even done CD.

K: "CD?"

A: Civil disobedience. Have you?

K: Well, not really, no. I mean, I've been in demonstrations, but—I've only been arrested twice, and neither one of them was really bad.

A: What were you arrested for? Looking at dirty magazines?

K: Both times for spray painting.

A: Well, see, that's really good.

K: No, it's not really good. I was spray painting something about an ex-lover.

A: Out of the personal was political!

K: Yeah, well, we hope it is. On this thing about art and politics, I don't think you should really be distressed—a lot of your stuff is in the community.

A: But see, the thing about doing political art is it's such propaganda. I feel like I'm always trying to sell people a bill of goods. If I weren't a lesbian I'd probably have gone into advertising.

K: Yeah, thank God you're working for us! You know, that's your contribution.

A: That sounds like a negative assessment of "contribution." I mean, just because I'm not destroying something....

K: Oh, I think that's basically number one on my list.

A: Not being bad?

K: Well, not being, say, destructive to the environment, for example. Like, let's take Earth Day. Earth Day was a perfect example...

A: Earth Day. Give me a fucking break. I ignored Earth Day.

K: Well, we've been having Earth Day for the last fifteen years in our community. I went to Earth Day this year and it was like what lesbian feminist festivals were like fifteen years ago, only it was all straight people. Anyway, they all took busses out there, because they were politically correct, but when it started raining, they took cabs home. Yellow Cab had its busiest day that day! "Earth Day." In order to talk about it they had to kill more trees; more ink was used on the subject of Earth Day than probably the Valdez oil spill, you know? As far as being an artist and making a political contribution, this is how I solve it for myself.

A: How?

K: Well, I don't do it philosophically. It'll never work that way. I always try to have a lover who does political work, and that is her contribution to housework.

A: "To housework"—oh, you mean to the collective responsibilities of the relationship?

K: Exactly. What do you think?

A: Well, this is very interesting, because almost always I've gotten into relationships with women who are activists, who are really much more outspoken than me. There's something that's really attractive about them.

K: And it helps your cartoons, right? I think it gives depth to your thinking...that you couldn't possibly have if you just talked to me on the phone, know what I mean?

A: Probably. Talking to you is kind of like talking to myself.

continued on page 57

SELDOM SCENES

Photographer and writer Susan Wilson has been chronicling the musical and entertainment scene for the women's press and major national media since the mid '70s. All photos and written copy ©1976-1990 by Susan Wilson. All rights reserved.



CAGNEY AND MARTHA

Fans across the nation were dismayed when TV's *Cagney and Lacey* finally rolled to an end, and one of everyone's favorite lady cops—actress Sharon Gless—no longer graced the Monday night tube. When Stage West managing director Martha Richards managed to get the glorious Gless a legitimate theater production in Springfield, Mass., however, the results were pretty spectacular.

In her first live stage role, Gless played a quite credible Sara Muller in Lillian Hellman's *A Watch on the Rhine*. The cast also included long-time theater great Kim Hunter.

Meanwhile, Gless fans flocked in from everywhere to view their hero firsthand. They came from as near as New York and New England, and from as far as London, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. And while they came in all shapes and sizes, hordes were reportedly "women, lots of women...in the thirty-five to forty-five year age range!"



MORNING BECOMES ELECTRIC

You might think that when a photographer does a studio photo session, there is total control—control of the light, the subject, and the whole situation. Ask any pro: nothing could be more mistaken! Take, for example, this session done a decade back in Camera Work Studio. The subjects were great: the women of Alive!, one of the singularly most talented and creative groups to ever pass through the women's music scene—they were fine. But that darned static electricity just made *everything* fly off or stick together. Maybe it was bass player Suzanne Vincenza's energetic bowing?!

The Fifth Annual READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

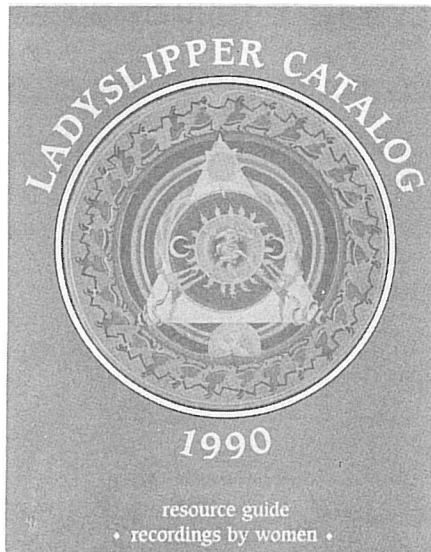
In the January 1990 issue we asked our readers to nominate women who have made outstanding contributions to the women's music and culture network. In the May 1990 issue we printed the names and accomplishments of every nominee submitted by the readers, asking readers to write in their votes.

Plaques will be given to this year's Readers' Choice Award Winners.



INDIVIDUAL ALISON BECHDEL

for her 'Dykes To Watch Out For' cartoons and books, which help lesbian-feminists laugh about our community while we feel good about ourselves.



ORGANIZATION LADYSLIPPER

for maintaining the world's most comprehensive catalog of recordings, videos, publications, and other music resources by women.

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." (Last year's results can be found in the September 1989 issue.)

- **VOCALIST:** k.d. lang, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Cris Williamson, Rhiannon, Melissa Etheridge.
- **GROUP/BAND:** Sweet Honey in the Rock, DEUCE, BETTY, Two Nice Girls, Indigo Girls.
- **SONGWRITER:** Cris Williamson, Ferron, Holly Near, Meg Christian, Jane Siberry.
- **BASS:** Carrie Barton, Diane Lindsay, Joy Julks, Alyson Palmer, Suzanne Vincenza.
- **PERCUSSION:** Nydia "Liberty" Mata, Carolyn Brandy, Edwina Lee Tyler, Vicki Randle.
- **DRUMS:** Cam Davis, Barbara Borden, Bernice Brooks, Bonnie Johnson, Kim

Zwick.

- **ELECTRIC GUITAR:** Sherry Shute, Nina Gerber, June Millington, Bonnie Raitt, Tret Fure.
- **ACOUSTIC GUITAR:** Meg Christian, Nina Gerber, Melissa Etheridge, Mimi Fox, Lucie Blue Tremblay.
- **KEYBOARDS:** Adrienne Torf, Julie Homi, Sue Fink, Margie Adam, Barbara Higbie.
- **INSTRUMENTALIST:** Kay Gardner, Jean Fineberg/Ellen Seeling, Woody Simons, Nina Gerber, Robin Flower.
- **WIND INSTRUMENT:** Kay Gardner, Jean Fineberg/Ellen Seeling, Marilyn Wilson, Stafford Street Sisters, Kristan Aspen.

- **COMIC:** Kate Clinton, Lily Tomlin, Whoopi Goldberg, Karen Williams, Lynn Lavner.
- **EMCEE:** Kate Clinton, Therese Edell, Sue Fink, Karen Williams, Maxine Feldman.
- **ASL INTERPRETER:** Laura Kolb, Sherry Hicks, Shirley Childress Johnson, Ariel Hall, Susan Freundlich.
- **NEW PERFORMER:** Two Nice Girls, Jamie Anderson, Monica Grant, k.d. lang, Suede.
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE PERFORMER:** Cris Williamson, Alix Dobkin, Holly Near, k.d. lang, Melissa Etheridge.
- **CURRENT SONG (last two years):** "Country Blessed"—Cris Williamson & Teresa Trull; "The Wedding Song"—Jamie Anderson; "If You're Gonna Break My Heart"—Heather Bishop; "Woman-spirit Rising"—Karen Beth; "No Souvenirs"—Melissa Etheridge.
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE SONG:** "Sweet Woman"—Cris Williamson; "Waterfall"—Cris Williamson; "Singing For Our Lives"—Holly Near; "Amazon"—Maxine Feldman; "Sweet Darling Woman"—Diane Lindsay.
- **CURRENT ALBUM (last two years):** *Country Blessed*—Cris Williamson & Teresa Trull; *Sky Dances*—Holly Near; *Melissa Etheridge*; *True Life Adventure*—Sue Fink; *With A Little Luck*—Deidre McCalla.
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE ALBUM:** *The Changer and the Changed*—Cris Williamson; *Testimony*—Ferron; *Lifeline*—Holly Near & Ronnie Gilbert; *A Step Away*—Teresa Trull; *Turning It Over*—Meg Christian.
- **ALBUM PRODUCER:** Teresa Trull, Karen Kane, JoLynne Worley, June Millington, Terry Garthwaite.
- **LIVE SOUND:** Myrna Johnson, Karen Kane, Leslie Ann Jones, Shelly Jennings, Marcy J. Hochberg.
- **(STUDIO) RECORDING ENGINEER:** Karen Kane, Leslie Ann Jones, Tret Fure, Joan Lowe.
- **ALBUM COVER:** *A Rainbow Path*—Kay Gardner; *Tendresse*—Lucie Blue Tremblay; *Face The Music*—Meg Christian; *I Enjoy Being a Girl*—Phranc; *Running*—June Millington.
- **FICTION BOOK:** *The Color Purple*—Alice Walker; *Curious Wine*—Katherine V. Forrest; *Rubyfruit Jungle*—Rita Mae Brown; *Memory Board*—Jane Rule; *Daughters of a Coral Dawn*—Katherine V. Forrest.
- **NONFICTION BOOK:** *Lesbian Lists*—Dell Richards; *The Patience of Metal*—Yvonne Zipter; *Lesbian Sex*—JoAnn

Loulan; *Going Out of Our Minds*—Sonia Johnson; *This Bridge Called My Back*—anthology.

• **PERIODICAL:** *HOT WIRE*; *Lesbian Connection*; *off our backs*; *Outlines*; *Aché*

• **AUTHOR:** Jane Rule; Alice Walker; Katherine V. Forrest; May Sarton; Yvonne Zipter.

• **POET:** Pat Parker, Audre Lorde, Yvonne Zipter, Judy Grahn, Adrienne Rich.

• **CARTOONIST:** Alison Bechdel, Nicole Hollander, Kris Kovick, Roz Chast, N. Leigh Dunlap.



Jorjet Harper

'HOT WIRE' readers' favorite comic and emcee, Kate Clinton.

IN PREVIOUS YEARS...

1986: Kay Weaver & Martha Wheelock for their herstorical film *One Fine Day*.

1987: Alix Dobkin for her continuing commitment to building lesbian communities and for prioritizing lesbian vision and integrity.

1988: Robin Tyler for years of dedication culminating in two annual music festivals and a great rally at the 1987 March on Washington.

1989: Lisa Vogel & Barbara Price for producing the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, the largest and oldest women-only festival in the world.

1986-1989: *Ladyslipper* has been selected to receive the Organization award every year.

• **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Joan E. Biren (JEB), Irene Young, Toni Armstrong Jr., Marcy J. Hochberg, Susan Wilson.

• **MOVIE/FILM:** *Desert Hearts*, *Beaches*, *Aliens*, *She Devil*, *Steel Magnolias*.

• **TV STAR:** Candice Bergen, Sharon Gless, Roseanne Barr, Susan Dey, Delta Burke.

• **FILM STAR:** Sigourney Weaver, Bette Midler, Whoopi Goldberg, Jodie Foster, Meryl Streep.

• **FILM DIRECTOR:** Donna Deitch, Kay Weaver/Martha Wheelock, Michelle Parkerson, Zeinabu irene Davis, Pam Berger.

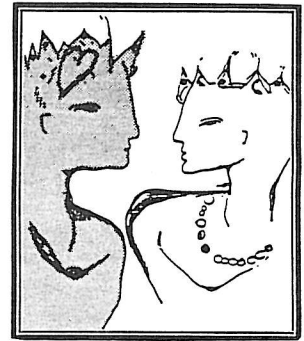
• **MAINSTREAM PERFORMER:** k.d. lang, Bonnie Raitt, Melissa Etheridge, Tracy Chapman, Dolly Parton.



JEB

Joan E. Biren (JEB): 'HOT WIRE' readers' favorite shutterbug.

• **OTHER (write-ins):** "Who I Miss The Most"—Margie Adam, Meg Christian; "Jeweler"—Lizzie Brown; "Accordionist"—Karen Beth; "Screenwriter"—Beth Henley; "Playwright"—Claudia Allen; "Sports"—Martina Navratilova; "Place"—Mountain Moving Coffeehouse; "Thinker/Activist"—Barbara Deming; "Columnist"—Yvonne Zipter, Toni Jr., Robin Ahrcarlan, Louise Rafkin; "Bookstore"—Lammas/Washington D.C., Librarie des Femmes d'Ottawa/Ontario; "Australian"—Permaculture Design; "Radio"—WYSO/Yellow Springs Women's Music Show; "Best Houseguest"—Alison Bechdel; "Play"—The Good Times Are Killing Me; "Artist"—Georgia O'Keefe; "Storyteller"—Judith Sloan, Jennifer Justice; "Cutest"—Julie Homi; "Most Versatile"—Tret Fure; "Inspiring"—Dance Brigade; "Best Wrists"—Sherry Hicks; "Best Mom"—Toni Sr. ●



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ASL INTERPRETING FOR CONCERTS

WHAT PRODUCERS SHOULD KNOW

By Sara

The sight of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter on stage is something women expect to see as a routine and traditional part of women's music festivals. While many hearing women take it for granted, a great deal of work and awareness, both technical and cultural, must go into achieving this kind of accessibility. This article is the first in a series about how we can continue to bridge the gaps between the deaf and hearing cultures in the women's music community. This list of suggestions focuses on the technical details producers should know when including sign language interpretation at concert events.

Thanks to Shirley Childress, Ariel Hall, Laura Kolb, Laurie Rothfeld, Eve Silverman, and Jody Steiner—all of whom have extensive experience interpreting at women's music festivals and concerts—for the information in this article.

TECHNICALITIES FIRST

Never forget, the interpreter is the deaf audience's link to what's being said on stage. She is not just another part of the choreography for hearing women to look at and enjoy. Seating, sound, and lighting arrangements are critical in making that link successful.

Reserved seating for the deaf and hearing impaired should be near the front, more or less on the side. This location should give them one direct sight line that holds within it the interpreter and the performer. Avoid the front row if it requires looking up to see the stage. Also, always *overcompensate* for seating capacity when in doubt about the number of deaf audience members that will be present. It is unfair and embarrassing for deaf audience members to arrive and have no available seats where they can see the interpreter. Also, allow for the possibility that they will come with hearing women—their dates, friends, family; seating must accommodate all of the deaf women *and* their parties. The area should be roped off and / or

ACCESS articles present viewpoints and information about issues of accessibility within the women's music and culture network.



Never forget, the interpreter is the deaf audience's link to what's being said on stage. (Pictured: Ariel Hall, 1990 National Women's Music Festival.)

otherwise clearly marked with signs. According to Shirley Childress from Washington, D.C., signs on posts are most effective, as they are clearly visible when audience members first walk into the auditorium. Or, marking the rows with a sheet of paper in addition to roping them off leaves no doubt for whom the seating area is reserved. In any case, Shirley's advice is to remember that the more immediately visible you can make it, the more effective it will be.

The interpreter needs a separate monitor. "When there are multiple musicians, it is usually difficult for everyone on stage to hear themselves," explained sound engineer Karen Kane in an article on monitor mixing [March 1987 *HOT WIRE*]. "To remedy this, boxy-looking black speakers (monitors) are placed on the stage near the performers' feet. Monitors amplify the sound back to the musicians."

This may seem obvious, but if the interpreter can't hear what the performer is

saying there is no reason for her to be on stage. Avoid at all costs a situation where frustrated Inez Interpreter arrives at her gig at the Feminist Fun Fair, only to discover that the performers have monitors but she doesn't. Or, Suzy Signer arrives and has a monitor, but all she can hear out of it is the bass guitar and drum mix. Without hearing the vocals, neither Inez nor Suzy will be able to do any interpreting. They will literally have to leave the stage after signing "I can't hear any of the words—sorry!" to the deaf women in the audience.

"It's happened to me before where I've had to walk off stage," says Ariel Hall from Massachusetts. "The deaf people don't understand that. They say, 'What do you mean you can't hear? You're the interpreter!'" It can be embarrassing for all parties involved, as well as unfair and disrespectful to the deaf audience members who have shown up and now can't understand the performance.

Usually, a mix of at least seventy percent vocals and no more than thirty percent

instrumentals is appropriate in the interpreter's monitor. Individual interpreters may prefer more or less of each. To avoid problems, make sure the interpreter is involved in every sound check for acts she is participating in, and that her preferences are met as closely as possible so she can perform at her maximum effectiveness.

Lighting should be direct and not cast shadows on the interpreter's face or body. If the interpreter is in a poorly lit corner far away from the performer, deaf audience members feel excluded and isolated. Also, facial expressions perform a grammatical function in ASL, so the interpreter's face must be clearly visible. "It not only looks better if there aren't heavy shadows on the body, but what may appear to a hearing person as no change at all in the face could be a complete change in meaning to a deaf person," says Laura Kolb from Columbus.

Facial expressions and other "non-manual behaviors" in ASL perform a similar function to vocal inflection in spoken languages such as English. (For example, the same combination of three words can mean many different things: Matter of fact: She loves me. Surprise: She *loves* me? Doubt: She *loves* me? Disbelief: She *loves* me? Distaste: She *loves* me? Relief: She *loves* me. Defensive: She *loves* me.)

ASL is a complex visual language with its own grammatical structure—the operative word being "visual." Deaf people "hear" with their eyes. Therefore, the interpreter *must* be well-lit and easily visible. Also, be sure the light technician is specifically directed to keep light on the interpreter during all announcements, etc., not just during songs.

In addition to stage lighting, make sure that no side lighting near the reserved seating area will be shining in the faces of audience members and interfere with their ability to see the interpreter.

WORKING WITH STAFF AND PERFORMERS

Beyond the concrete technical needs of seating, sound, and lighting, other responsibilities of the producer for the deaf audience require a bit more philosophical and cultural sensitivity. Performer/interpreter relationships, and the role of the interpreter in the overall production are some of the areas about which the producer needs to conscientiously gather input so she can best serve the deaf audience.

Facilitate the initial communication and exchange of material between the performer and interpreter. Especially if the artists have not worked together in the past, there needs to be enough time for them to communicate before the performance.

"As a general rule, recorded tapes and lyric sheets should be sent to the interpreter at least four to six weeks in advance of the performance," says Eve Silverman. "The exact time frame depends on the performer/interpreter relationship, the interpreter's style of preparing in advance, and the performer's material. Ferron's material, for example, is extremely full of metaphors, and it takes an amazing amount of time to put it into another language. On the other hand, some folk singers largely do storytelling, and it's possible that an interpreter could manage to do it without hearing the material in advance. But it's still a good idea to have it early, no matter how simple it is."

"Having the material to work on in advance allows the interpreter to call the performer and ask 'Can you give me an idea what goes through your mind when you sing this?' or 'Do I have a good translation for this foreign phrase?'" agrees Ariel. "The interpreter can bring more integrity to the performer's work for the deaf audience than she possibly could by just bolting out on stage and doing it cold."

Make sure the interpreter is fully written into the stage manager's production plans. "It steals a lot of energy from the interpreter's ability to do her job to have to be on top of everything that's going on," says Eve. For example, Polly Performer stops Suzy Signer backstage to let her know she's going to add that musical interlude in the third song after all. In the background, Suzy Signer hears the crowd roaring, as the emcee has started her opening remarks. Suzy has to sneak out on stage and catch up with the proceedings. "The stage manager should direct the interpreter like she directs everyone else," Eve emphasizes.

"The message the deaf audience member gets when the interpreter appears to be tacked on to the program is, 'My ability to understand what's going on here is not being considered very highly,' and that never feels good," says Ariel. It is up to the producer, not the interpreter or performer, to remind the stage manager of her responsibilities towards the interpreter.

[Also see the November 1985 issue of *HOT WIRE* for other considerations the interpreter may expect to have in her contract, such as food provisions; access to a dressing room; inclusion in promotional materials and printed programs; etc. as outlined by Jody Steiner and Laurie Rothfeld.]

REACHING THE DEAF COMMUNITY

You could have a show that's produced without a hitch as far as setting up the interpreter, but that doesn't necessarily

mean that deaf women will automatically attend. The most important part of making the event accessible is reaching the deaf women in our community.

There are some special considerations involved in reaching the deaf community with information about concert events. Like the women's community, the deaf community is simultaneously vibrant and isolated from the dominant culture. For both communities, events are publicized primarily through internal means: in special-circulation publications, through the word-of-mouth grapevine, and at community functions.

Ariel explains that recruiting deaf audience members is a long process of mentioning the event, talking about it a little bit, saying that it's going to be interpreted, describing what's going to happen and who the performers are, and why it's going to be interpreted. "That's often the question—'Interpreter will be there? Why? What for?'"

"Recruiting deaf audience members for a music event is a difficult issue," says Laura, "because they don't know that it's going to be about them at all. Music is the one thing that's totally outside their culture. Even in my own school when I was growing up, there was very little emphasis on understanding and experiencing the arts. And now I see in my [deaf] daughter's education, there is even less. So to go to an arts event is going to be foreign to deaf women. It's just going to look like a hearing thing. I've seen deaf people find even the National Theater of the Deaf aesthetically inaccessible, because they haven't been raised to appreciate and understand the arts. So coming to our event, there are a lot of hurdles to overcome."

Laura suggests that the easiest hurdle to eliminate in this situation is money. "I've never heard the deaf audience complain or feel that it's patronizing to offer them free or reduced-price tickets—not because we have so much to offer, but because it's a way for us to come together as women. Eliminating the money hurdle gives deaf women a chance to come check us out and see what this is all about."

In addition, always make sure that your printed concert publicity and advertising clearly indicate that sign language interpreting will be provided. If there is a deaf performer, indicate that the event will be voice interpreted for hearing women.

continued on page 46

ABOUT THE WRITER: Sara is an aspiring sign language interpreter who speaks German and French. She currently makes her living as a desktop publisher.

On Coming Out

MICHELLE SHOCKED

By Christie Nordheim and Julie A. Kreiner

Michelle Shocked played in Chicago with guitarist Nina Gerber last April 22 as part of Earth Day '90. Following her concert and rally appearances, she made time for this interview.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT SETTING UP ROLE MODELS FOR GAYS AND LESBIANS?

That's real important. For my part, I've tried to just be subversive. There's always been a very strong part of gay culture that's kind of an "is she or isn't she?" you know? I felt like I was put in a position where I was damned if I did come out and I was damned if I didn't. There would be a lot of straight media that would really like to know that I was *not* gay as much as there would be a lot of gay press that would like to know that I *was* gay.

SO THEY WANTED YOU TO COME OUT ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

Yeah. And I think—if this is in any sense a coming out on my part—it's that I would like a much broader definition for myself. Not everybody is that way, but for me I've never really been able to fit into square holes *or* round holes. So for my part, I just leave the question open.

But I've heard this ridiculous argument that I was choosing this [definition] because I was selling feminism! You know, since when the hell does feminism sell a product? Feminism forms so much of my political perspective, but the idea of using feminism to sell myself is so ironic to me.

I don't come from the gay community point of view as much as I do the radical activist viewpoint. But you still have all these very naive assumptions about the system, what it forces you to do and what you do willingly.

The strongest naive experience I've had recently has a lot less to do with politics and issues than it does with the actual politics of the [music] industry. It was if I could go on spouting whatever I

wanted to about Reagan, Bush, left-wing, right-wing, any of that, but when I started talking about independent promotion and payola that's becoming institutionalized in the music industry, I started getting slapped down. That was very revealing to me, but it's not going to have any effect on my singing. I've always taken the attitude that if something I say is going to sink my ship, just tell me what it is and I'll probably be the first one to light the match.

This [performing] was an opportunity that landed in my lap, and as long as I can do it on my terms I will. But if I have to start hedging my bets so that I can keep on talking, forget it. And here I'm talking about *my* agenda and one of the problems I've faced is that a lot of people make the assumption that I'm addressing *their* agenda.

WELL, EVERYBODY WANTS YOU TO. AND JUST LIKE OTHER COMMUNITIES, THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY IS LOOKING FOR SPOKESPEOPLE. THERE'S A RUMOR FLYING AROUND: "SHE HAS A BOYFRIEND." THE FUNNY PART IS THAT THEY SAID "THE MANAGEMENT IS TRYING TO KEEP IT DOWN BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT TO PISS OFF THE GAY COMMUNITY..."

Yeah, it's a real catch-22 situation. A real strong agenda for me, in being subversive, is that I resent like hell that I was maybe eighteen years old before I even heard the L word. I mean, that's understood, growing up sheltered in a Mormon environment. But it would have made all the difference for me had I grown up knowing that the reason I didn't fit in was because they hadn't told me there were more categories to fit into.

Now, there are plenty of forms that if they [young lesbians] know about, they know how to get more information. But you have to be tricky getting that first information out to them...That's where my real commitment is. Subverting the whole message so that you have to believe, no

matter what it looks like I'm saying, you're forced to believe that there's more than meets the eye. And that just starts the whole process in motion because it's there, once you know to look for it. But if you don't even know to look for it, you'll be like I was.

I spent the first eighteen, nineteen years of my life wondering why, in just depression, why I didn't fit in. I'm so amazed when I talk to a lot of younger fans who are so clear about their sexual orientation as a lesbian. I'm like, how did they know?

HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT IT WAS FINALLY OKAY? DID YOU JUST COME OUT WHEN YOU TURNED EIGHTEEN?

No. It's only been in the past three, four years with the security and confidence of being Michelle Shocked, and expressing myself through my own music, that I've been willing to take myself out of the prison I created. I just built barricades. You know, I obviously didn't fit into society, so my reaction was "well, fuck you." Just took this real outsider point of view. It's sort of embarrassing that it had to be something that obvious, for me to have the confidence to say I am what I am. I think a lot of people have that experience of embarrassment.

EMBARRASSMENT?

You know, what is so *obvious* for some people, how some people make their own choices about who they are. I felt like I needed permission or approval. You never get it. I was with my first woman lover about a year and a half ago. To be honest, the real fear of coming out of the closet—not fear, but the real pressures of coming out of the closet—had been if you had certain problems identifying yourself one way or the other. It's been difficult. A situation has been created now where you have to come out of the closet, whether you're straight or gay. That doesn't work for me.

YOU'VE BEEN THROWN FROM A POSITION OF WONDERING

WHERE YOU FIT IN TO WHERE EVERYBODY ELSE IS TRYING TO USE YOU TO FIT THEMSELVES INTO THEIR OWN POSITION...

I'm doing my best to make it clear that this is *my* agenda. And the way *my* politics work, if we have a common agenda we'll move forward until there is a point where we can't work together...I'm just making such a strong effort at this point in my life to never stop looking at the contradictions of my position of being an activist and being a professional working inside the system. One result from that has become a real strong value on pragmatic politics, and militant politics don't really depend so much on pragmatism. It depends on fervor and commitment and entrenching yourselves against the enemy. I'm very familiar with that as well. It's just not where I'm at right now.

Now I'm in a position to say I'm not going to be one of the collective that has

perpetuate oppression against gays and lesbians.]

Outing is not ethical. What's worse, it's so destructive. It's a cannibalism... [During a concert] one woman had drawn an eye in the palm of her hand and faced it towards me, which is fine, except that I'm becoming so jaded against that kind of masonic radicalism. When I was involved in squatting and punk culture I had a mohawk, and I could see very clearly why you would do that. It separated *Us* from *Them*.

So that started that show. Then I mentioned how I'm looking not towards preaching to the converted, but rather to entertaining the troops. That was a survival tactic that I chose for myself because I was getting so much encouragement from people to "just tell us what we want to hear."

When I was in England in November, I was almost getting *punished*

WHEN DIFFERENT PEOPLE ARE PUSHING ON YOU, HOW DO YOU CHOOSE GROUPS THAT YOU WANT TO SUPPORT?

What seems to come through more than anything is loyalty to my past activist affiliations. That's my decision, because with my politics I'm trying to speak from *myself*. When you speak from your own experiences there's a truth to it that you're never going to accomplish from speaking from some ideology or an agenda point of view. That's where I found the most consistency.

I don't like being the gatekeeper of politics, but it's sort of the position I'm in. And the way I try to resolve that contradiction is to say, "Hey, if I can do this, *you* can do this." I was thinking about my experiences and my point of view and it was three chords. What you need are articulate people who have something to say and you can identify with it. And if



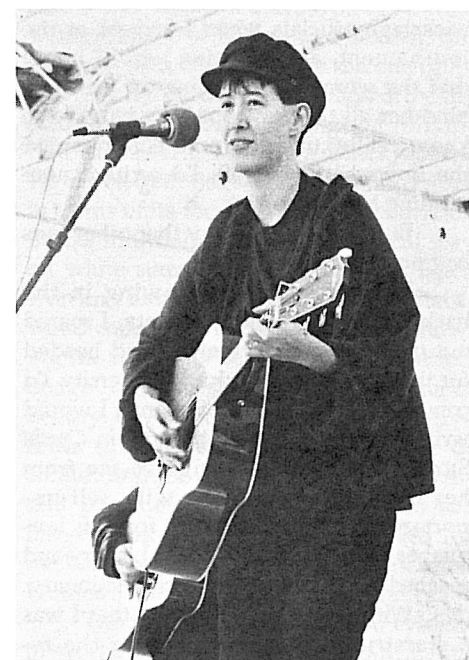
Julie Kreiner

Michelle Shocked: "It would have made all the difference for me had I grown up knowing that the reason I didn't fit in was because they hadn't told me there were more categories to fit into." (Left: talking to Christine Nordheim.)

to be pushed under the thumb of the will of the dominant. I now have a voice of my own, with which to speak out, when I feel like there's something going on that's not ethical.

[ACT UP demonstrators have protested at shows because Michelle does not believe in the political tactic of "outing," i.e., forcing well known people—especially politicians—out of the closet if they are using their fame and power to

by a very loud vocal minority that was saying, "you are not addressing our agenda and we are now going to disrupt your show." Which is really difficult for an entertainer because your first commitment is, these people paid money. They want to be entertained. They have their jobs, they have their problems. You try to use the forum for your political agenda to the greatest extent you can, but again when there's that terrorist element...



Julie Kreiner

you can't find anybody, you might need to think about doing it yourself.

The original version of this article appeared in 'Outlines' and is reprinted with permission. ●

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Chris Nordheim has been a freelance writer in the Chicago area since 1977. Julie A. Kreiner is marketing/promo director at 'Outlines.' Her journalism and creative writing pieces have appeared in numerous publications.

How I (Almost) Met

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA

By Bonnie Morris

In December of 1985, I received a wonderful present from my friend Camille: tickets to see Martina Navratilova play in the Virginia Slims Tournament! It was held in Washington, D.C., where I lived, and I walked about gleefully with the precious ticket snug against my hand.

On the afternoon of the tournament, I had an idea. Why not send flowers to Martina as a gesture of good will and Amazon pride? I dashed to the nearest florist and paid a ridiculous sum for a bouquet of the largest lavender blooms available. I could deliver these flowers to backstage officials when I arrived at the tournament, and Martina would know that the women of Washington were behind her all the way. But how would she know, really...unless a note accompanied the flowers? Very well, I'd write a note wishing her the best.

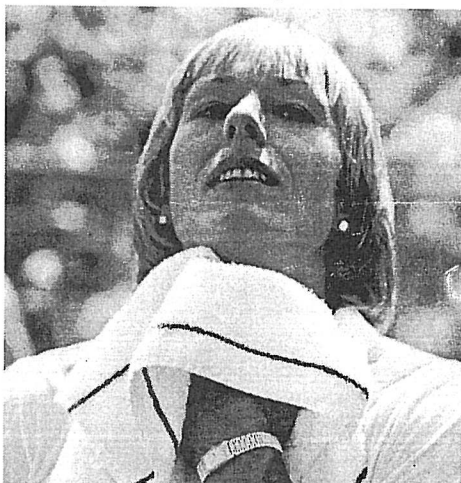
But what could I say that other fans had not yet said?

With the flowers glowing in the back seat of my parents' Toyota, I roared out of the florist's driveway and headed for the library at American University. I'd come up with a brilliant scheme: I would write Martina a good-luck note *in Czech!* Surely this would distinguish me from her other fans. Beaming with self-importance, I strode into the foreign languages department of Bender Library and reached for the English-Czech dictionary.

Within minutes I realized that I was a starstruck peabrain. Lacking the remotest knowledge of Czech grammar and conjugation, I could use no verbs in my note. I frantically lumped nouns and forms of greeting together in a truly insipid pattern. For hours, I strained and sweated over the dictionary. Finally I had crafted a short note (in lavender ink of course!) that said, in formal Czech, something like "GREETINGS EXCELLENT TENNIS BALL. AMAZON WOMEN HELLO FROM WASHINGTON CITY. BEST GAME TONIGHT PLEASE YES. SPORTS OF WOMEN TRIUMPH. FRIEND PEACE FORTUNE, BONNIE."

I tied the card to the flowers and returned home to eat a tasty meal with my jocular parents.

The tournament was held at George Washington University, where I had attended my first lesbian dance at age nineteen. I entered the sports arena with



Carol L. Newson

complete confidence. After all, had I not sent flowers to Judy Collins on two occasions and thus succeeded in meeting her? Perhaps I'd have the pleasure of meeting Martina too, if only I behaved calmly.

I looked around for a security guard. Unfortunately, it wasn't that easy. This was not just *any* tennis match; this was the Virginia Slims tour—and the streets outside the arena were jammed with protesters who objected to the tobacco industry's sponsorship of women's sports. I paused to chat with an attractive demonstrator, who urged me to burn my ticket and join her in the struggle.

Due to the confusion, noise, and tension of the anti-cigarette demonstration, dozens of security guards paced through the arena. How would I find the one who could lead me to Martina's dressing room? I had to appear non-threatening, placid—or better yet, official as hell. I had to shift into actress gear.

Of course! Pasting a yuppie smirk on my face, I approached the nearest guard and announced that I was a courier

from the Potomac Tennis Club and where should I deliver Ms. Navratilova's bouquet? The security guard waved me downstairs to the "backstage" area—and suddenly I was outside of the players' dressing rooms.

At this point I had no plan, but before I could scheme anew I was confronted by an enormous man wearing a gun and several badges. He wished to know my business. I opened my mouth and tried to speak. Suddenly I heard myself sneer in a phony Czech accent, "Hallo. I am from Czech Embassy. We have forgiven Martina for defecting. Our women's sports bureau wishes Martina to have these flowers. You will please deliver."

The word "embassy" has great power in Washington, D.C. Moreover, I was conveniently dressed in a folksy outfit that might pass off as Czech if one was unfamiliar with East European fashion. And, to clinch my act, I had a note written in authentic Czech! Ungrammatical, yes! Incomprehensible, yes! But could the cop prove that? I stood in a posture of crisp dignity, flaring my nostrils and intoning like a mantra "Embassy... embassy."

Within seconds, another security guard appeared and gave me an awed smile. He took the flowers and the card from me and said, "I'll see that she gets these, ma'am. We appreciate your stopping by."

"Hnn, ya," I nodded gravely, my left eye straining to see over his head and into the dressing room. I saw: towels. But no other flowers. Only I had thought to send flowers. And I knew mine would be the only fan letter in awkward, earnest, Lesbian-American-Czech.

I turned around, took the stairs three at a time to my seat in the arena. And watched Martina win. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Legend has it that Bonnie Morris, an occasional contributor of writing to 'HOT WIRE,' is a whiz as a festival kitchen worker.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS

Technicolour in a White World

By Yasmin Jiwani

Vancouver, Canada was the site last November for a unique film/video festival and symposium. In Visible Colours was designed to showcase the works of women of colour and Third World women. More than a hundred titles from twenty-eight different countries were screened, and the symposium featured diverse panels and workshops revolving around the critical concerns of these women film- and videomakers. Additionally, the festival included a one-day workshop for high school students covering the themes of media literacy and the misrepresentations of women of colour in mainstream media.

In Visible Colours, as a project, was the culmination of two years of hard work by its creators and facilitators. It represented an attempt to rectify cinema's oft-times deliberate neglect of women of colour, and the concurrent stereotypical representations of people of colour that are popular in Western industrialized nations. The objectives of the festival and symposium were to provide alternative representations that could displace stereotypical images, and that would communicate more authentically the lives, concerns, and visions of people of colour.

In Visible Colours was an astounding success. More than 7,000 individuals attended the screenings, and participation at the symposium was equally high. Video- and filmmakers had the opportunity to network amongst themselves with a view towards creating and developing pathways for the distribution and exhibition of their works. These women were able to share with their counterparts—and with the public in general—the commonalities underlying their divergent situations and cultural backgrounds. What emerged from their coming together was a dynamic and vibrant community of imagination, grounded in the foundation of shared experiences but



Marina Dodis

Festival Co-directors Zainub Verjee and Lorraine Chan.



'Black Mother Black Daughter' by Sylvia Hamilton and Claire Prieto (Canada).



'Define' by O. F. Makarah (U.S.).

diversified by the unique social and cultural circumstances that inform their creative visions and voices.

These threads of similarities and differences were apparent also in the works screened at the festival. The racial and cultural diaspora engendered by voluntary and forced migration to dominant societies was a prominent motif. Its articulation is pronounced in the works by Black British directors—Martina Atilla, Gurinder Chada, Ngozi Omnuwarah, and others who concentrate on the devastating impact of racism and sexism, but whose works also celebrate the emerging cultural hybridization displayed by the second generation of immigrant minorities in Britain. Maureen Blackwood's *Perfect Image?* fits within this framework in terms of its focus on second generation Blacks in Britain. Through a satirical play on white standards of beauty and Black women's attempt to emulate them, Blackwood comes full circle by not only showing the futility of searching for a "perfect image" but also showing how notions of beauty have been used as exploitative tools to deny and exclude women of colour, and/or contain them within certain parameters of social life. [*Perfect Image?* won the public prize in 1989 for the best short European film at the Creteil Women's Film Festival in Paris, France.]

The agony of exile was also evident in works by American, Canadian, Latin-American, and Native Canadian film- and videomakers. Through their visions, one gets a sense of the poignant and far reaching consequences produced by enforced marginality of living at the peripheries of dominant societies, with voices silenced and visions blinded by the

continued on page 54

ABOUT THE WRITER: Yasmin Jiwani is a freelance journalist currently completing a Ph.D. in Communications. She was program editor and communications director of *In Visible Colours*.

BACK INSIDE HERSELF

Sandra Sharp/United States, 1984, 5 min.

This highly poetic piece urges Black women to reject the images placed on them by white society and instead reclaim and celebrate their own identities and African roots. (Women Make Movies)

BLACK MOTHER BLACK DAUGHTER

S. Hamilton-C. Prieto/Canada, 1989, 29 min.

Black Mother Black Daughter recovers the history of Black women in Nova Scotia. It underscores what director Sylvia Hamilton describes as "the double whammy of being Black and female." At the same time, it celebrates the courage of these women by focusing on their sense of pride and their determination to overcome the obstacles they face. (NFB)

BLACK WOMEN/MULHERES NEGRAS

Silvana Afram/Brazil, 1986, 23 min.

Made by one of Latin America's most active feminist collectives, this documentary takes a hard look at the racism experienced by Black women in Brazil. Through interviews, we get a sense of how these women perceive themselves and their situation in relation to the racially heterogeneous character of Brazilian society. With the help of music and religion, they have found ways to counteract the oppressive forces that surround them and, at the same time, celebrate their own identities. (GIV)

A CHANGE OF FACE

Tracey Moffatt/Australia, 1988, 30 min.

This made-for-TV work is a realistic and insightful presentation of a widespread and haunting problem: the depiction of aboriginal and ethnic people in visual media. A collage of interviews with actors, producers, and directors communicates the extent to which ethnic stereotyping and typecasting have become part of the perceptions of those in power. (Artist)

CREATING A DIFFERENT IMAGE:

PORTRAIT OF ALILE SHARON LARKIN

O. Funmilayo Makarah/U.S., 1989, 5 min.

This documentary pays tribute to one of the pioneering women in the Black independent filmmaking movement in the U.S. It provides insight into some of the formative influences that helped shape Alile's career in film. (Artist)

CYCLES

Zeinabu irene Davis/U.S., 1989, 17 min.

A penetrating and richly detailed story about the psycho-spiritual journey of a young Black woman as she awaits her period. *Cycles* makes explicit the anticipation, relief, and symbolism that surrounds this profound biological and social event. (Artist)

DEFINE

O. Funmilayo Makarah/U.S., 1988, 5 min.

Experimental video dealing with the crucial question of who has the right to define how people of color should exist. Weaving together color, voice, and image, the life experiences of three women of color—a Black, Chicana, and Japanese-American—are presented as they explore this highly relevant issue. (Artist)

THE DISPLACED VIEW

Midi Onodera/Canada, 1988, 52 min.

Midi Onodera traces her personal search for

identity and pride within the unique and suppressed history of Japanese Canadians. Through the relationships of women in one family, she shows how history and meaning are constructed and reconstructed through generations. (DEC)

DOCTOR, LAWYER, INDIAN CHIEF

Carol Geddes/Canada, 1986, 29 min.

This celebratory work focuses on the lives of five successful native women who have forged non-traditional careers. Contrary to popular notions which suggest that success can only be attained by assimilating to the ways of the dominant society, the women portrayed in this work reveal how they draw their strength from their native heritage. (NFB)

identity and meaning among immigrant women of diverse cultural backgrounds. Faced by racism and exclusion from the larger white society, as well as pressures to conform, these women undergo a tremendously painful yet liberating process in trying to define themselves in relation to their own cultures and a wider society. Through the works of four women poets and artists of color, the culture of diaspora is presented in all of its complexity. (G.I.V.)

THE EYES OF MIRIAM

Clara Riascos/Colombia, 1986, 24 min.

Made by the Cine Mujer collective, this video is a heartrending account of a woman who lives with her three children in one of the shanty towns on the outskirts of Bogota. The film out-

A SAMPLING OF THE FILMS SHOWN AT 'IN VISIBLE COLOURS'

The International Women of Colour and Third World Women Film/Video Festival and Symposium

DREAMING RIVERS

Martina Attila/U.K., 1988, 30 min.

Dreaming Rivers is a film of lament. It focuses on the death of Miss T, a Caribbean-born teacher who dies in England. Through the recollections of her family and friends who gather at the wake, and through her own spiritual presence, we are invited to gaze into Miss T's life in terms of the motives and concerns that guided it. This intimate film provides a beautiful account of the hardships faced by Caribbean immigrants in their quest to carve out a better life for themselves in a hostile society. (Sankofa)

DREAMS OF PASSION

Aarin Burch/U.S., 1989, 5 min.

A sensual exploration of the essence of self and of the intimacy and desire between two Black women as communicated through movement and dance. Matima the dancer daydreams about another woman, the subject of her desires and affection. (Artist)

EAGLE RUN

Loretta Todd/Canada, 1989, 28 min.

This educational docudrama explores traditional native games. The story is seen through the eyes of Robyn Dennis, a young runner who seeks greater meaning in physical activity than competition. She asks her elders for their guidance in finding a traditional and spiritual dimension in athletics.

EMERGENCE

Pratibha Parmar/U.K., 1986, 18 min.

A poignant examination of the search for iden-

lines the poverty of her childhood and her determination to provide a better life for her children. (Cine Mujer)

THE FAR ROAD/TOI IPPON NO MICHI

Sachiko Hidari/Japan, 1977, 115 min.

An intimate portrayal of the impact of mechanization on railway workers in Japan told from the viewpoint of one woman, the wife of a railway worker. *The Far Road* weaves its central messages into the fabric of cinematic drama, combining within its central characters, the psychological desire for maintaining honour and the economic necessity of making a living. (Japan Film Library Council)

FROM THE BURNING EMBERS

Media Storm/India, 1988, 36 min.

Media Storm is a group of five women ex-members of the Jamia Millia Islamia. *From Burning Embers* is their second work, and it has fueled controversy. Based on the death of Roop Kanwar, an eighteen-year-old bride who was publicly burned on her husband's funeral pyre in Rajasthan, this work clearly lays the blame on the fundamentalist groups who openly advocate Sati, and on the government officials whose silent acquiescence culminated in Roop Kanwar's death. (Media Storm)

GANGUBAI HANGAL

Vijaya Mulay/India, 1987, 20 min.

Gangubai Hangal at seventy-five is considered a living legend, and has captivated audiences all over the world with her powerful voice and her command of classical Indian music. But this status has not been acquired easily, and

the film documents the difficulties of becoming and being an artist for women in India today. Interviews interspersed with brief musical passages; a vibrant portrait of a woman and musician. (Artist)

HAIRPIECE: A FILM FOR NAPPYHEADED PEOPLE

Ayoka Chenzira/U.S., 1982, 10 min.

In a society where beautiful hair is defined as that which blows freely in the wind, nappy-headed people have a raw deal. *Hairpiece* is a humorous work on the conflicting images faced by Black women as they learn to live with prevailing standards of beauty and the physical attributes of their Black heritage. (DEC)

JUXTA

Hiroko Yamazaki/U.S., 1989, 29 min.

Journey through the life of a young Japanese-American woman as she attempts to understand her hybrid world. *Juxta* also unveils the impact of racism on children of mixed parentage, highlighting its effects on the children of Japanese women and American servicemen. (Artist)

A LOVER AND KILLER OF COLOUR

Wanjiru Kinyanjui/Kenya, 1988, 9 min.

An African woman painter and lyric-poetess, now living in West Berlin integrates her thoughts in a poem about her personal experiences of discrimination. She uses the metaphor of sexual exploitation in order to portray the historical oppression of Blacks, their art and their culture. (Artist)

MEASURES OF DISTANCE

Mona Hatoum/U.K., 1988, 15 min.

Still photographs of the director's mother in a Turkish bath screened by ornate Arabic script form the moving visual framework of this piece. Mona's voice-over, reading letters from her mother, discloses in increasingly intimate detail various aspects of the relationships within this family—separated by more than miles, more than cultural displacement, more even than the isolation created by war. *Measures of Distance* is a moving analysis of the effects of the diaspora on the lives of those caught in the vortex of political upheavals and social change. (Video Out)

THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO LAS MADRES

**Susana Munoz and Lourdes Portillo
Argentina & U.S., 1985, 64 min.**

This sensitive portrayal of the frustrations, anxieties and pain suffered by women in Argentina focuses on the events of April 1977. On a Thursday in April, fourteen mothers met at the square in front of the Presidential Palace in Buenos Aires to protest the mysterious disappearances of their children, who had been accused of being enemies of Argentina's military government. Their protest mobilized others, and every Thursday the group increased in numbers. This documentary was nominated for an Academy Award. (IDERA)

NATIVE DAUGHTER

Jeneva Shaw/Canada, 1989, 2 min.

This extremely short but poignant piece recaptures the racism and violence inflicted on a native woman. Through her recall we gain an

insight into the traumatic nature of the experience and its impact on her psyche. (Artist)

NAVAJO TALKING PICTURE

Arlene Bowman/U.S., 1986, 40 min.

This film is about the making of a film. An assimilated Native American filmmaker attempts to rediscover her own cultural heritage by filming the traditional lifestyle of her grandmother. Although she is Navajo, the filmmaker remains a stranger on the reservation, separated from the Navajo people by her inability to speak their language; she resolves the conflict created by camera taboos and miscommunication. (James Mulryan)

NICE COLOURED GIRLS

Tracey Moffatt/Australia, 1987, 17 min.

This dramatic experimental film focuses on Aboriginal women living in urban areas in Australia. *Nice Coloured Girls* examines the historical evolution of the exploitation of these women at the hands of white men. We see an interesting reversal as Aboriginal women ritualize the practice of "picking up a Captain" (sugar daddy)—as a way of economic survival and as a way of getting back at those who oppress them. (Women Make Movies)

NOT BECAUSE FIDEL CASTRO SAYS SO

NO PORQUE LO DIGA FIDEL CASTRO

Graciela Sanchez/Cuba, 1988, 13 min.

An exploration of the gay subculture in Cuba. Interviews with lesbians, gay men, and non-gay people from all walks of life form the content of *Not Because Fidel Castro Says So*. The film uncovers the realities of gay existence and illustrates how homophobia is not an outgrowth of political ideologies, but rather a social phenomenon. (Artist)



'Cycles' by Zeinabu irene Davis (U.S.).

OLDER, STRONGER, WISER

D. Brand and C. Prieto/Canada, 1989, 25 min.

An examination of the lives of Black women from the 1920s to the 1950s. *Older, Stronger, Wiser* focuses on five Black women and under-

lines the concerns and issues that characterized their lives. This is an eloquent testimonial to the silent and unrecorded history of Black women in Canada. It demonstrates their oppression and highlights their determination and survival. (NFB)

THE OPERATION/LA OPERACION

Ana Maria Garcia/Puerto Rico, 1983, 32 min.

This chilling documentary examines the practice of mass sterilization of Puerto Rican women as a method of birth control. In contrast to the availability of other forms of birth control, sterilization is legal and free and a part of the state-sanctioned program to control population growth. Sterilization is now so widespread that it is simply known as "The Operation"—a seemingly harmless term which denotes total control over a woman's reproductive cycle. (DEC)

ORACION

Marisol Trujillo/Latin America, 1986, 9 min.

A suggestive metaphor that pays tribute to Marilyn Monroe as a woman who was an orphan and a victim of rape. Her tragic destruction serves as a reminder of the continual annihilation of life in Latin America, where a child dies of hunger every fifty-two seconds. (ICAIC)

ORI

Raquel Gerber/Brazil, 1989, 90 min.

Ori is a well-documented account of the spiritual and historical connections between Africa and Brazil. "Ori" is a Yoruba word for head, meaning Black consciousness in relation to time, history, and memory. Historian Beatriz Nascimento and director Raquel Gerber trace the migration of this Black consciousness through the mythical hero Zumbi and the Quilombo warrior establishments and initiation societies of equatorial Africa. (FESPACO) (Angra Films Inc.)

PERFECT IMAGE?

Maureen Blackwood/U.K., 1988, 30 min.

Accompanied by a jazz soundtrack, this fast-paced satirical piece deals with Black and white notions of beauty from colonial times through the era of slavery, down to the present. The attempt to measure up to white standards of beauty is critically and comically examined. (Sankofa)

PITY THE DEFEATED

AY DE LOS VENCIDOS!

Lotty Rosenfeld/Chile, 1985, 4 min.

A montage of images characterizes this experimental and expressive work. Beginning with an Art Action at the El Tololo Astronomic Observatory in northern Chile, the video continues with images of diverse gestures, sexual intercourse, and free flight in space. Together, these juxtaposed images represent the distanced, desperate and perpetual state of the defeated. (GIV)

SLAYING THE DRAGON

Deborah Gee/U.S., 1987, 58 min.

This documentary deals with the portrayal of Asian Americans in American television and film since the 1920s. With vintage footage drawn from popular Hollywood films and contemporary representations, the work fore-

continued on page 54

THE FIRST OLIVIA CRUISE MAIDEN VOYAGE

By Laura Post

FEBRUARY, 1989. The first notice arrived by mail: Olivia had done Carnegie and the Waldorf (both of which I'd attended), and the idea of a women-only cruise in the Bahamas appealed to me. Initially planned for February 19-23, 1990, with an itinerary including Nassau and a private island, the first-ever (billed as the First Annual) women's cruise required an advance deposit and offered the possibility of a payment schedule, with full payment to be received by June. It seemed no coincidence that the organization that had given us some of the most enduring women's music was now providing the first women's cruise.

From a selection of accommodations ranging between the exquisite (Sun Deck, super deluxe suite with picture windows, queen-sized bed and sitting room at \$1,075 per person) and the ascetic (lowest deck, inside cabin with twin beds at \$595 per person), my lover and I chose a middle deck, inside cabin with a double bed, costing approximately \$800 for each of us. For those of you unfamiliar with cruise fees—as I was—this price included on-board meals and entertainment, as well as usual and customary gratuities and transfers ashore. Transportation to the port (Miami), bar and other services, and all shore expenses were extra.

We chose to fly to Miami in advance of the sailing and spend some time seeing the famed Seaquarium and enjoying the Cuban and Jewish cuisines of Miami Beach. We ended the vacation with several days in the Everglades, amidst that complex tropical ecosystem abounding with alligators, crocodiles, turtles, herons, anahingas, snakes, eagles, raccoons, and panthers, most of which we encountered. These two extra weekends added several days and hundreds of dollars to the cost of the Monday-to-Friday cruise. Total expense for two: approximately \$3,000. Total pleasure: great.

MAY 1989. We had paid in full for our cruise passages, and we spent the

days in anticipation. By this time, due to the substantial demand, a second cruise had been added to the first, a week earlier. Since the new cruise encompassed Valentine's Day, we had elected to alter our prepaid cruise date and were now scheduled to sail Monday, February 12 through Friday, February 16. We purchased our round trip plane tickets.

SEPTEMBER 1989. Olivia Records sent us notice that Becky Kent, a lesbian with experience in gay men's cruises, had been hired as Director of Cruise Service. Information about how to prepare for a cruise was sent to us, and we were informed that the cruise line had changed (to Dolphin), along with the itinerary, so that we would now be stopping at Key West in addition to Nassau and a (now different) private island.

JANUARY 1990. We received an official Olivia package containing luggage tags, cruise streamers, tickets, and customs forms. Both festive and official, these documents marked the countdown to the cruise date. We began to imagine warm weather (it had been cold and rainy in San Francisco) and beautiful azure seas in a most realistic and expectant manner.

FEBRUARY 12, 1990, 3 P.M. We arrive at the port of Miami amidst an ocean of bedecked, exuberant women. Though many men were present (maitre d' to reconfirm our early versus late seating preferences and particular dietary needs, uniformed garçons to assist with our luggage), the energy was female and lesbian. Smiles of recognition, dropping pretenses and defenses, becoming ourselves. Embarkation and many photos by the ship's photographer in front of a prearranged placard. Finding our rooms, getting used to elevated door jams, crossing and recrossing the narrow corridors.

4 P.M. Mandatory fire drill. A bonding exercise, another excuse for more photos by the photographer. The first recognition by the crew of whom they were actually dealing with came when a

wit among us reminded them that, in the case of a real emergency at sea, all women and children were to abandon ship first.

4:30 P.M. Olivia "Sailaway" party. The first of many, perhaps one continuous one, poolside on an upper deck.

6 P.M. Dinner/main seating. We moved to our preassigned tables in the formal dining room and were treated to the first of the ship's customary four-course, five-star meals. I had to re-explain that my vegetarian diet meant no dairy, which was met with politeness if not full comprehension. Conversation with our six other tablemates, two couples from Florida and one twosome from Southern California. Sticking with my OA/AA programs was not easy amidst the richness of the cuisine.

8:15 P.M. Main show: Second Wave recording artist Dianne Davidson with opening act by Olivia staffperson and poetess/singer Donyell Carter. Donyell kicked off the music with a short set featuring moving, passionate a cappella versions of Tracy Chapman's "Behind the Wall" and Holly Near's "Mountain Song," as well as several of her own poems. Dianne Davidson's show was her scorching blues-rock, from her 1988 Second Wave release *Breaking All The Rules*, just as rowdy solo as she was with the band who had been part of her previous performances. Teresa Trull lent her powerful blues harmonies to the first set. Playing rhythm guitar to the accompaniment of prerecorded band tracks, Dianne delivered both rousing (Karla Bonoff's "Trouble Again") and more sensitive ("What'm I Gonna Do") numbers, along with earthy and extemporaneous Tennessee-accented commentary. (About "Tonight I'll Dream That You Care," she said, "This is a song about loving two women at one time; when I was in Provincetown, someone said, 'only two?'" Dianne's professional editorial: "All the Olivia artists are told to wear the 'obligatory Olivia jacket,' but tonight I didn't, I said to hell with it!") For those who did

not attend the packed shows, Dianne was omnipresent and accessible throughout the rest of the cruise; in fact, she and her lover of six months won The Newlywed Game on Tuesday.

10 P.M. Movie *All of Me*. The first of daily film entertainment, including *Tootsie*, *Some Like it Hot*, *Beaches*, *Desert Hearts*, *Personal Best*, *Torch Song Trilogy* and *Entre Nous*.

and famished dancers with nourishment.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 7 A.M. Buffet breakfast for early risers or all-night carousers.

7:30 A.M. Aerobics with Janice Campbell. Through these exercises, we were reminded of sock hops (Tuesday's motif) and TV shows (Thursday's motif), but learning the hot new dance Lambada Wednesday morning was a highlight.



Deborah Jones



Mary Massara



Mary Massara

(Left) Teresa Trull, Cris Williamson, Tret Fure and Olivia President Judy Dlugacz. (Right) Comic Marga Gomez was only one of many entertainers aboard the Lez Boat.

10:45 P.M. Dance.

11:30 P.M. Disco with Bay Area D.J. Page Hodel as Mixtress.

MIDNIGHT. The Dating Game, the first of the lesbianized fun. Later in the week, there was The Newlywed Game, pool games, a talent show, casino, coffee and cookies and, of course, Bingo.

12:30 A.M. Italian Buffet, replete with ice carvings and fruit/vegetable sculptures. Each night, a different theme buffet provided late-night food junkies

8 A.M. Tuesday was spent in Key West, Florida, a relaxed "conch community" at the western tip of the Florida Keys famous for its gay/lesbian culture. We chose to snorkel and see tropical fish; others toured the streets.

2 P.M. The boat sails for Nassau, as we are entertained on board.

5:15 P.M. Captain's Reception: introduced as "Miss," we all met the Captain and then the crew, who were initially perplexed at the rousing ovations given only

to the female staff. Our lesbian presence again felt strong and made itself known.

8:15 P.M. Main show featuring Olivia recording artist Deidre McCalla and seasick Second Wave recording artist Tret Fure. Deidre spoke frankly about her political concerns and beliefs ("A year ago, who would have imagined the Berlin Wall coming down, Russia a multi-party system, Mandela free, [wryly] the U.S. invading Panama, an Olivia cruise?") and performed new songs. She commented on the earthquake that struck the Bay Area October 17, 1989 (she lives in Oakland), and sang her classic "Oh the Earth," as well as favorites "Too Good" and "Home in My Heart," her feminist anthem "All Day Always," and new material. She played a tune co-written with her mother to hushed attention, and a Ginni Clemmens spiritual of communion with dolphins. Ever topical, personal and relevant, Deidre succeeded in educating as well as entertaining.

As Tret Fure set up her complex and sophisticated sound system, emcee Marga Gomez took the opportunity to announce that two women had approached the captain and asked him to conjure his powers and perform a ceremony that would unite them in wedded bliss. The captain ("There is no problem here. Who was the first lesbian? [Sappho]. Where was she from? [Lesbos]. That is where I am from") acquiesced, and the ceremony was planned for Wednesday evening at 7:15 P.M.

Tret Fure's show was a mixture of well-loved tunes from her first *Terminal Hold* ("Terminal Hold," the piscean "Turned Around Again," and "That Side of the Moon") and second *Edges of the Heart* ("I Move For Your Love," "Alone with You") albums. Much of Tret's current material is from her upcoming third album and is both revealing and engaging. "It Could Have Been Close" evokes that bittersweet moment when one recognizes that, though happy and monogamous, one must occasionally deal with painful and unresolved past loves. In "Hold Me to Your Heart," Tret captured the feelings of moving-on-yet-taking-with engendered during her recent relocation from her city

continued on page 58

ABOUT THE WRITER: Laura Post is a poet and concert reviewer who has contributed to 'Coming Up!' and 'Sinister Wisdom' as well as being a staff writer for 'HOT WIRE.' She is a physician in her spare time.

THIS LONGEST CONCERT

THERESE EDELL'S 40th BIRTHDAY BASH

By Charlene Ball

We—the Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus—are on our way to Cincinnati to take part in Therese Edell's fortieth birthday celebration. The event represents a triumph for Therese, who continues to write more and more complex and beautiful music. She has her own music business, aided by a computer and numerous loyal and loving friends. [See the article in the January, 1990 *HOT WIRE*.]

We met Therese when she visited us in Atlanta in February, and we are delighted to be part of her celebration.

We have been rehearsing madly since November. We gave a concert on March 3, and we are still high from that experience. Our concerts are one of the cultural focal points for women in our city, and we're a little heady about that. So we pack up our black and white and turquoise outfits and our music, and off we go to Cincinnati. "Driving all day, driving all day, driving all day" (from Therese's song "Texas, Texas") becomes the anthem of those who take to the road.

A word about Atlanta and the South: It is a place of contrasts, of paradoxes. In Atlanta, if you're going to be a feminist at all, you might as well be a lesbian and be done with it. (Except you certainly won't be done; you'll just be beginning.) Atlanta is where the famous Hardwick versus Bowers anti-sodomy case originated; where the insinuation that lesbians run the battered women's shelters is enough to knock out their funding; where lesbians from all over the Southeast run to get away from Valdosta and Rocky Mount, Black Mountain and Cowpens, Cedartown, Rome, and Little River. And then they bring all those places, transformed, with them.

Our group exhibits high spirits, bawdy jokes, innuendo, physical energy. Some wear mascara and lipstick; some swagger in leather jackets. Some have bouncy, curly long hair and some have crew cuts. We wear jewelry, earrings, handmade ceramic bolos, bright colors. We are the New Gay South, full of open-

ness and bravado.

Bravado is a difference between Atlanta and Cincinnati. The women of MUSE seem serious, quiet, politically aware. Their carefully enunciated, Middle-American voices fall subdued and cautious on our ears. Our music is different from theirs.

We arrive in Cincinnati at St. John's Unitarian Church where we greet each other, meet Cincinnati women, and fall voraciously upon the thoughtfully provided buffet—vegetable soup, cheese and fruit. Tea, tea, and more tea.

Linda Vaughn, our director, arrives. Everyone cheers when she walks in. We are very proud of Linda. She brims over with musical talent, practical know-how, discipline, and energy. True, she is not a Southerner, but we forgive her that.

Linda and Catherine Roma, the director of MUSE, lead their two choruses in warm-ups. Cathy is one of the founders of the movement for women's choral music. A small, delicate-looking woman with black hair streaked becomingly with gray, she has a strong clear voice, an ironic wit, and a flowing, elegant conducting style.

Cathy and Linda contrast like silver and gold, like heat and coolness. One's style is cerebral; the other's, visceral. A nice balance, a good partnership.

We rehearse at the church until 10 p.m., then head out in cars to Kresge Hall. Most of us promptly get lost. Dorothy—my long-term, long-suffering partner—drives around and finally pulls up in front of some medical buildings. "Ask those people," Dorothy tells me. I roll down my window, and it's Linda and Sheila, her partner. They know where we are, thank goodness. Kresge is dead ahead, unmarked and hidden in Something Medical Center.

As we line up to march onstage, we see Therese Edell at the stage entrance in her wheelchair, smiling at us. She seems like someone we've known for a long time, an old friend.

We rehearse. At about 1 a.m. we are getting weary, especially those who drove. When I get back to my hotel, my ankles are swollen. I hadn't even realized I was tired.

Next morning, Dorothy drops me off at Kresge at 10. The musicians are gathering—Kay Gardner, the grand lady of classical women's music, at home in Mytilene or on the moon; Sue Fink, wild bleached ponytail, big round glasses, punky black clothes; Betsy Lippitt with guitar and violin, slim in jeans and gold T-shirt; Nydia "Liberty" Mata, drummer from New York, stylish and wild-haired. Our own Atlanta musicians: Joy Petermann, who can do anything it's legal to do with a piano; Kay Busbey, who plays an acoustic guitar like nobody's business; Beryle Tylar, who also plays a mean guitar. The orchestral instruments: oboe, bassoon, cello, harp.

Therese sits in the aisle, a quiet focal point, all business. Teresa Boykin, her partner, works with the equipment. Two separate sound operations are going on—recording the concert for a CD and the actual sound production for the concert. Engineers Karen Kane and Kaia Skaggs are working the recording equipment located backstage.

At 2 we disperse. A hard rain begins to fall, then the sun comes out again immediately. There is a full moon; I have my period: auspicious events for a women's concert. Back to the hall at 5 in our uniforms. Sheila is snapping pictures. We head back to the classroom set up as our "greenroom" where we eat fruit and drink juice, chat, and wait.

At 5 we begin the first concert. We file past Deidre McCalla and Sue Fink; both smile encouragingly. Kay Gardner stands with her flute, rather clerical-looking in a high-necked white blouse and black jacket.

Atlanta leads off with "Silver Apples of the Moon," a magical song with words by W.B. Yeats and music by Gwendolyn Walker, a woman composer from Connec-

ticut. Then a change of pace with our Shooby-bob number, "I'll Be Forever Loving You." It's a campy delight with Carolyn Mobley of Atlanta as soloist. When she sings "I feel so gay!" and we all echo "We feel so gay!" the audience applauds. Atlanta's style goes over in Cincinnati. We feel more at home.

Then on comes MUSE. They do "Elegy" by Scott Warrender and "Seven Principles" by Bernice Johnson Reagon. Solid political stuff. They have a strong and confident sound; we are impressed. The two choruses join the soloists and small orchestra in "This Longest Night" and "It's a Blue Moon": richly textured, complex songs.

Sue Fink sings "Emma." Then "O My Friends": with Deidre McCalla joining Sue, Betsy Lippitt, and several other friends of Therese. The two choruses sing back-up. A lovely layering.

And then the concert is over. We relax. Forty minutes until the next show. Atlanta and Cincinnati chat. I hear about my second-alto neighbor Diana's five-year-old daughter, who plays the Suzuki cello. Diana and Winnie, both strong second altos, are my neighbors when the two choruses sing together. Hearing them sing for the first time, I say, "God help me!" (I'm a middle-weight second soprano.) Winnie looks surprised, then an-

test this mike," she tells the audience. Her bike tights, swallowtail coat, and crazy quick gestures keep them entertained for a few short minutes.

Several people leave the auditorium. We still stand on the risers. Linda remains on the little platform, smile painted on.

Then Therese comes on wearing a tux, looking entirely relaxed and calm—a bit tough, totally in control. "You spoiled my entrance," she quips, then explains, "The crossover is malfunctioning, so we're going to yank it out and put in another one. Those of you who want to find out what that means can take one of our sound workshops." She chats up the audience, reassures them, and then rides off. Nobody else leaves.

So we do our two opening songs, and MUSE does theirs. Linda mouths encouraging messages to us before, after, during each of our numbers. We file out.

And we have an hour's intermission.

We drink juice and water and wait. People are lying about like casualties. Linda and Sheila have collapsed into each other's arms on one of the sofas. Turquoise collars, cuffs, cummerbunds on white shirts litter the area as Atlanta chorus members fall in heaps. Dorothy

had gone wrong with their equipment.

Backstage, people collapse again.

Then back onstage. "Holly's Waltz" with accordion, violin, and mandolin. A traditional, nostalgic, European sound. Therese's program notes on this piece read simply: "I used to play the accordion and I used to waltz."

Twelve-year-old Therese driven around to accordion gigs by her mother. Long-haired Therese on the cover of her album *From Women's Faces*. Therese at Sublette's Winery, watching the women who came there on Thursday nights, watching their faces, wondering where they came from, who they would go home with, and writing "If You Came Here Alone" for them. Therese on the road with Betsy and Teresa, driving all day through Texas, joking about cows and dust. Therese pulling off to the shoulder in a frenzy to write down a melody that came to her after she met Michal Brody—"Sister Heathenspinster"—in Iowa City and saw her calendar, shaped like a nautilus. "When you wake up on a day and know you are here for a reason, then that's when you celebrate." All here, all the Thereses, past and present.

I would like to be moved. But when you're onstage, you don't always get to feel the emotions of the music. You are

Therese Edell's birthday celebration was not exactly what we expected. It held excitement and frustration, joy and disappointment.

swers sharply, "I'm sure She will!"

The nine o'clock concert begins. We have just filed onstage for our first number when we hear a loud, insistent whine. Karen Kane, the recording engineer, races onstage and then disappears.

We and Linda just stand there, we on the risers and she on the tiny platform. We all smile. Linda asks one of our members, Jean, who clogs Appalachian-style, to come down and clog. Jean does for a second or two. But it's hard to clog without music or other cloggers. Jean returns to the risers. We stand some more. Linda keeps on smiling.

Sue Fink hurries on. "I'm just here to

comes backstage to hug me and bring me some V-8 juice.

This longest concert finally starts again. Once more, we march onstage and take our places. The mike hum is not gone, but we ignore it.

We are in the middle of "It's a Blue Moon" when suddenly it seems that the instrumental interlude has been going on a little too long. Cathy Roma stops conducting and says with a little tight smile, "We have to start over." This time we finish without further mishap.

When we come offstage, we hear that the recording crew was overjoyed that we started over because something

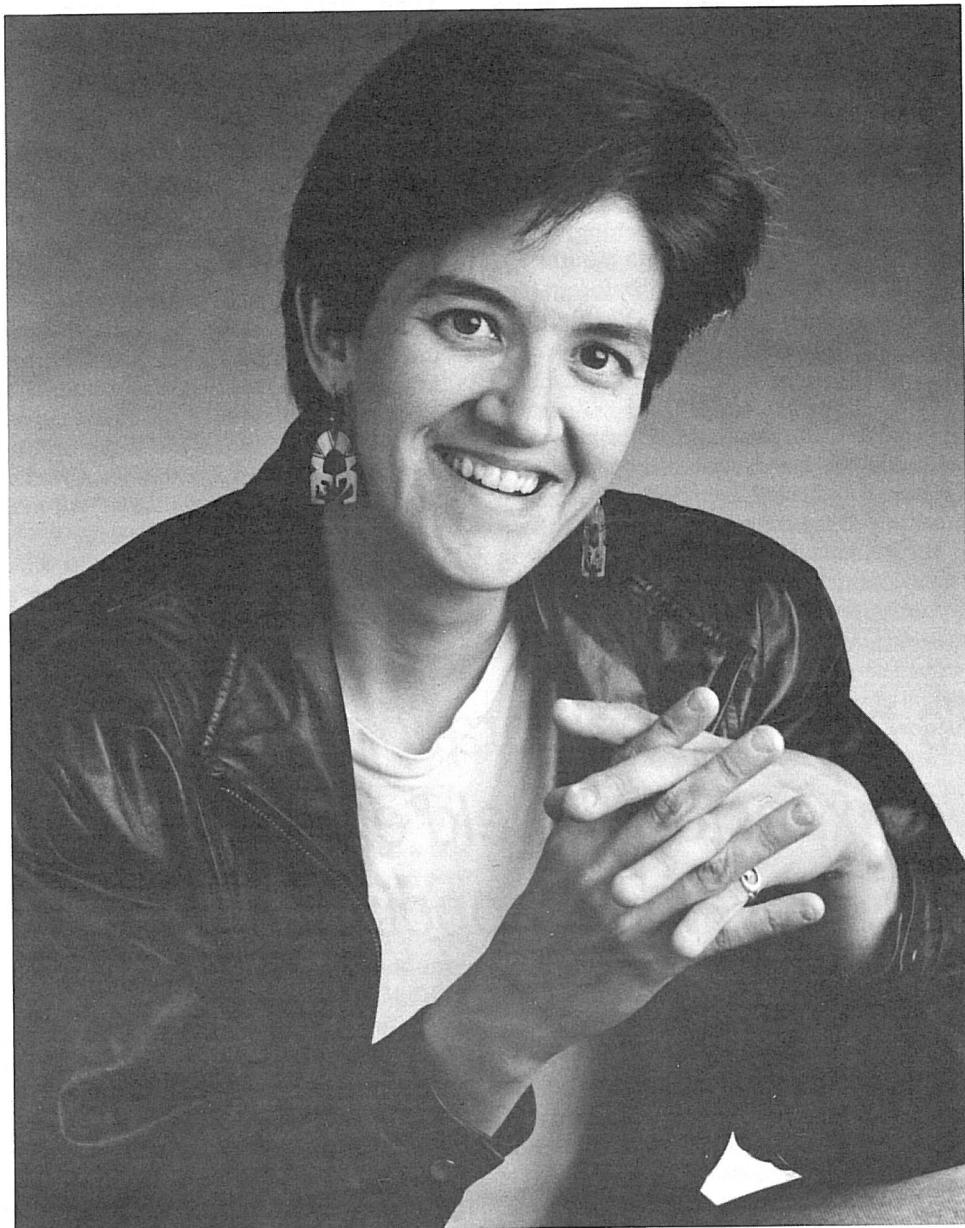
making it. When I get the CD, I will be able to hear and respond to it, but that won't be the whole thing either, because it won't have the visual, real presence of everyone. Kay Gardner with her pure musicianship; the rich voice and manic vigor of Sue Fink. It will capture that wild, exotic sound Betsy and Nydia created with guitar, voice, and drums on

continued on page 31

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Charlene Ball* writes for 'Southern Voice,' and her work has appeared in 'Sinister Wisdom,' 'Atlanta Magazine,' and 'Cotton Ball/The Atlanta Review.'

ANN REED

TKO OVER HIS PURPLE BADNESS PRINCE AT AWARDS NIGHT



The time, 10 a.m. The place, Turtlecub Productions, Inc. The staff is busy plotting the career of singer/songwriter twelve-string guitar player Ann Reed. Nestled deep in the heart of Minneapolis—and nearby to twin sister city, St. Paul—Ann, the president, has just finished her mid-morning Pepsi. Her

manager, the vice-president, is busy scolding the company cat for unwarranted hissing. The aged company dog stands guard over the two-story residence that houses the corporate offices. Turtlecub started in the spare bedroom, and now sprawls over into every room of the upstairs. But that's how it is in the

dog-eat-dog world of the music business. You either grow or die.

My name, it's not important. What is important is that on the morning of April 16, 1990 Turtlecub staff thought they were going to have a typical Monday a.m. meeting. But as fate would have it, there would be a twist today. A fellow musician arrives bearing news of the strange and weird: Ann's been nominated as artist of the year by the Minnesota Academy.

All staff raise their eyebrows. Some even hiss, others bark. Could this be? After all, Ann's fourth album, *Talk To Me*, had received a NAIRD nomination for record of the year, but it had been out for more than twelve months; her once-a-year appearance in Minnesota had sold out the prestigious Guthrie Theater. Do you think they considered that kind of stuff? Nah.

The vice-president is instructed to call the Academy. The staff continues to busy themselves, but each keeps an ear or two pointed toward the conversation.

It's confirmed. Ann's been nominated—only one of two solo women nominated in seventy overall categories. She had been the past recipient of the female vocalist award, but the artist of the year award came as the result of an industry vote of 900 members. The joke, the catch, there had to be one. Yeah, the other nominees in this category included four men—a folk rocker, two other pop rockers, and his royal purple badness, Prince. Well, with Prince, that would be the end of this story.

Or would it?

There are a hundred bizarre tales out there in the naked city, and this is one of them. Yes, Turtlecub had been plunged into the twilight zone. Not only did the little Turtlecub company get a good chuckle out of this news, but they got highly motivated. ("Come on, stranger things have happened. Didn't Nixon resign?") There would be the industry vote, coupled with a popular vote. Did

Prince ponder his fate while locked behind the pastel walls of Paisley Park in Chanhassen, Minnesota—twenty minutes west of Turtlecub corporate headquarters? They wondered if Kim Basinger—or maybe Paula Abdul—nervously paced and tried to console the lavender king?

Ann Reed—wanted in more than thirty-five states, by over 120 venues a year, for her outrageous storytelling, her original songwriting that captures the nuances of the human condition, her low throaty voice, and the twangs of her classic, custom built twelve-string guitar. Mainstream festivals open their doors, and product sales soar. Fan mail flows in and Turtlecub Productions, Inc. grows.

The night arrives.

More than 1,000 folks paid twenty to thirty bucks a pop to crowd into the Minnesota Music Awards at the St. Paul Radisson Hotel. Oddly enough, Ann would be in town. The organizing committee had called and asked her to perform a couple of songs, warning her that the rest of the entertainment would include a major dose of heavy metal—Minneapolis, once an acoustic mecca, now the garage band capital of the Midwest, would have a variety of city anthems performed. Could she do it? "Oh, heck, yes—what's a little loud music between friends?"

May 7, 11 a.m., Turtlecub goes to sound check. This setup is nothing short of a stage for the Rolling Stones. Because all the bands would play from the main rear stage, Ann would be placed on a jutting runway and brought out to the audience.

"After forty minutes of screaming racket, people drinking, folks talking, the stage goes black, I get pushed out on a runway, and I sing some folk music?" she asks the production manager. "Yeah, that's right," he responds. "Then you give Prince the award, and we all go home?"

"Something like that," he says.

At 8 p.m. the awards ceremony begins. Turtlecub leverages their comp tickets and pops for a table. Ma and Pa Reed, Ann's manager, close personal friends, the producer for her fifth record, an entertainment attorney, and a few major label representatives all gather at table twenty-six. Ann's dad, well into his seventies, endures the group Powermad and their heavy metal sounds.

The evening drones on, and near the end, two local major label representatives stroll out to present the Artist of the Year

Award. They parade onto the stage, complete with dark sunglasses and egotistical smugness. They read the nominees, including Ann Reed—she's last because they are read in alphabetical order—and flippantly retrieve the winner's name before tossing the envelope over their shoulders. They unfold the results.

There is complete and noticeable silence—the Turtlecub table holds its collective breath—could she have won? The silence is now deafening, the presenters try to regain their composure as they announce: *Ann Reed*.

Every acoustic musician is on her or his feet, the-little-Turtlecub-table-that-could is airborne, the miracle has happened.

For the next month, media representatives continued to call Turtlecub. Local, state, and national press and radio asked for interviews, all of which began, "What's it like to beat Prince?" Even *USA Today* noted: "...Acoustic folk singer trounces his royalness, Prince...acoustic music still alive in Minneapolis."

The award had barely found its way onto the mantle and things were starting to settle down when *Billboard* magazine presented Ann with two Certificates of Achievement in the country and pop songwriting categories. Turtlecub was also notified that Ann had been nominated by a national songwriters organization as one of the most promising songwriters of the '90s.

After fifteen years of fine music-making, and two years of great intensity and overwork, all the planets have lined up for Ann Reed. Her publishing career in Nashville and Los Angeles is picking up; her fifth record will be released in 1990, produced by a nationally recognized producer; and in the coming year audiences in Europe and Japan will have a chance to meet and hear her.

Can you see Ann at a women's music festival? Well, she says she'd love to be there, but she can't seem to master a talent for getting invited. Nonetheless, you can still catch her at a club, college, or mainstream festival near you.

Ann's latest release, *Back & Forth*, features cuts from her first two albums (*Carpdiem* and *Room & Board*) plus three new songs. All songs were rearranged and re-recorded in an all-acoustic format in Minneapolis last March. Turtlecub Productions, Inc., may be reached at 3857 Harriet Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409, (612) 822-5102. ●

EDELL CONCERT *from page 29*

Betsy's "For Therese," but it won't show them as they created it.

The CD will have the music, but it won't have Cathy Roma's fluid, graceful conducting and her pixie smile—or Linda Vaughn's molten energy. It won't have the sign language interpreting as done by Ruth Rowan. And it won't have Therese—tux and little round glasses, hoarse, calm voice; gritty, warm, no-nonsense, tough, soft, unforgettable.

This longest concert finally reaches its end. Therese makes her closing speech, and her mother and sister go over and hug her. She gets flowers—the same ones she got after the first concert. Cathy and Linda both get the same bouquets they got earlier. They bow together. We all bow and leave the stage.

Sue Fink is waltzing in the hall with someone. Linda hugs Lauren, one of our youngest members. Betsy Lippitt is hugging somebody. Everybody is hugging somebody.

Therese Edell's birthday celebration was not exactly what we had expected. It held excitement and frustration, joy and disappointment. But, looking back, the positive feelings are what most of us remember. We shared the stage with fine, dedicated musicians; we heard them, we watched them work. We saw what dedication means—staying in and giving your best shot and leaving the results up to that spirit Therese calls "The Universe."

But we do know that the longer it all went on, the better the music sounded. The musicians outdid themselves; the singers sang their hearts out. It was after midnight, and the audience was still with us, and the music sounded better and better.

And even if we do not believe in spirits—except those belonging to finite and mortal beings—we know that, ultimately, we experience a celebration of mortal endurance, strength, love, joy, and lust (in Mary Daly's all-encompassing sense).

Sunday morning, Dorothy and I skip the brunch and go to walk in Eden Park, overlooking the Ohio River. Eden indeed; crocuses purple and yellow, woodpeckers and squirrels in the trees. That afternoon, we sit, drink wine, and wait for our plane. I can't get the concert out of my head. All the women. All the music.

Are the women around you the reason you came? Ah, yes. ●



Laura Beer + October Browne + Terry Dame = Jane's Aire



Twenty years of rock: sisters Jean and June Millington

Toni Armstrong Jr.

Toni Armstrong Jr.



Patrice Perkins, Ady Torf, Sherry Shute, and Marilyn Lerner were among thousands who evacuated the auditorium during Ady's set at the National Women's Music Festival during a tornado warning.

Marcy J. Hochberg



Politico Urvashi Vaid and the hilarious Kate Clinton at the Southern Women's Music & Comedy Festival

Jorjet Harper



Filmmaker Zeinabu irene Davis at Bloomington

Toni Armstrong Jr.



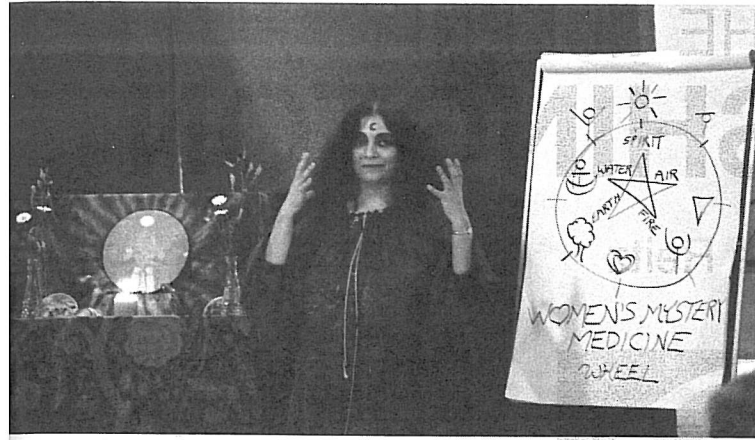
Political rapper Marilyn T

Toni Armstrong Jr.



Two Nice Girls: wildly popular with festival audiences this season

Marcy J. Hochberg



Shekhina Mountainwoman, NWMF Spirituality Conference

Marcy J. Hochberg



Alix Dobkin: Yahoo Australia!

Toni Armstrong Jr.

1990 FESTIVAL PHOTOS



Canadian Faith Nolan for freedom to love

Jorjet Harper



Photographer Diana Davies at the East Coast Lesbians' Festival

Toni Armstrong Jr.



Singer-comic Jamie Anderson

Toni Armstrong Jr.

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN!

DINAH WASHINGTON

By Rosetta Reitz

Dinah Washington, Queen of the Blues, is still in my opinion the number one soul sister. No one yet has wailed like her, or rocked like her, or covered such a wide range of feeling in song. With her positive energy she intuitively captured the world and sang about it with revelation. An innovative artist, Dinah willingly surrendered to the evolving form of the blues, and helped create the R&B sound.

Her ability to engage the listener as participant was part of her genius. She intensified and clarified the experience of the songs she sang, breaking down the barriers that divide us. Dinah's idiosyncrasies can be quickly identified on her records. She used words like an artist uses pigment; vowels became primary colors. She sang the color of her dreams, inventing a syntax of sounds. Her yearning becomes the listener's; her pauses and silences are as important as her sounds. Dinah's singing represents an heroic attitude toward life because of her musical courage and integrity.

If I had to choose the single most compelling phrase sung by Dinah Washington, it would be "Good morning blues, blues how do you do" (toward the end of "Jailhouse Blues" on her Bessie Smith album), in which Dinah imparts the wisdom of the strong female through the ages. How brilliantly Dinah used the resources of the past to inform her own present and to project the future. She also learned what not to do, such as slurring words with hums, an old blues device which confuses and separates ears unaccustomed to it. Wanting to embrace a wider audience, she found another way to scoop, slide, stretch and bend notes, to anticipate them and behind-the-beat them without sounding conspicuously Black (as did Bessie and Billie Holiday). She didn't invent the idea of using liturgical chant in pop music—Ma Rainey did that. But Dinah refined it, without losing its essence.

She covers the full spectrum of blues sounds, from the backwoods hal-



Dinah Washington at nineteen years old (in 1943).

lelujah shout to the urbane flatted fifth. Her country church sisters are as alive in her projection as are her slick city brothers of the jazz band. Dinah took the best of Bessie and the best of Billie and filtered it all through her own sensibility, updating their legacy, making it new. Dinah learned her straightforward delivery from Georgia White, a less known blues singer on the South Side from Chicago, whom Dinah heard a lot while she was in school in the late '30s.

Like all heroes, Dinah was a warrior, trying to gain and maintain control of her life. And like a queen, when she was displeased, the off-with-the-head order was sounded (as in her marriages). But for all her rebellion, inventiveness, and independence, Dinah's *oeuvre* reflected the social patterns and ideological beliefs of American mythology. In her rugged individualistic way, she glorified the icons of commerce and the idealized patterns of the good life. When she was confident she soared. She said she could "sing anything—anything at all." When she was down she undermined herself, agonizing over not being beautiful and slim with long hair. But her sense of humor kept her balanced. How else could she have referred to herself in the third person as

"Miss D," or answered the phone, "This is Dinah Washington, Queen of the Blues." Her use of metaphor was sharp. She said, "The Queen's hair is about as short as dust on a jug."

Dinah Washington was a hearty woman with robust appetites, who lived life with gusto. But she internalized the national hysteria for thinness with greater force than she internalized the arrogance of these non-sisterly traditional blues lines:

*"I'm a big fat mama,
got the meat shakin' on my bones,
Everytime I shake,
some skinny woman loses her home."*

Had she done otherwise, she might be alive today, fat and shouting in her sixties. Instead, she died at the age of thirty-nine, by her own sword, so to speak, accidentally overdosing in 1963 on diet pills while on a crash diet. But it was the culture that put the sword in her hand, creating the fashionable anxiety: fat is fatal for popularity. That was almost thirty years ago before anorexia nervosa became the idealized form of beauty, but thin was in even back then.

The irony is that she was at the peak of her powers when she died. Everything was going right. She had been married for six months to Dick "Night Train" Lane, star halfback for the Detroit Lions. Finally, she felt, she had found Mr. Right. Her life was full of activity and plans. She was doing what she wanted and making lots of money. She loved cooking, so when the urge to open a restaurant emerged, she did, in Detroit. When her civic self wanted expression, she founded the Baltimore Belles, a do-good group. She had established her own booking agency, Queen Attractions, and in addition to herself, her office handled bookings for Sammy Davis, Jr., Aretha Franklin, and Muhammad Ali. Dinah also thought seriously about establishing a scholarship fund in her name to help young singers.

A few days before her death, Dinah had watched President Kennedy's funeral

Driggs & Harris © R. Reitz

on television and spoken of her own death "When the Queen quits the scene, don't be sending her back home to Tuscaloosa," she said, "Send the Queen back to the Windy City and lay her out like she's supposed to be; she was laid out in a solid bronze casket lined in tufted velvet, wearing a yellow chiffon dress with a white mink stole, a sparkling tiara on her head and rhinestone shoes. 30,000 people stood in line in the below-zero Detroit weather for hours to get a last glimpse of her at the memorial service. The funeral at St. Luke's Baptist Church in Chicago was even more crowded. Her cortege to Burr Oak Cemetery was made up of twenty-five Cadillac limousines and over 100 cars in a seven-block long procession.

The tragedy of her life resulted from the two mythologies Dinah lived with concurrently, one popular and stylish, the other serious and folkloric. The struggle to keep them in balance was part of her genius. When she gave way to the pop myth, it cost her her life.

RUTH LEE JONES: FROM RAGS TO RICHES

Dinah Washington's story is an only-in-America—rags-to-riches one, of a woman who carved out her own life, who invented herself—and, with a brilliant stroke of semantic tyranny, even titled herself: Queen of the Blues. The Queen was born Ruth Lee Jones on August 29, 1924 in a clapboard shack with an out-house in a Black neighborhood in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She died on the integrated West Side of Detroit in a two story brick and stone house with crystal chandeliers and mink toilet set covers.

When Dinah was three, her family (mother, father, and four children) moved to the South Side of Chicago, where she attended St. Luke's Baptist Church. As early as age five she traveled with her mother and the adults when they performed gospel recitals at other churches, singing right along until she was fourteen. She was already playing the piano in church at age eleven. Playing and singing were so natural to her that becoming the choir director while still in her teens also seemed natural.

At fifteen, she won an amateur contest at the Regal Theater in Chicago and got her first job singing blues at the Flame Show Bar. She didn't study singing until the next year, 1940. Her teacher, Sallie Martin, had been the singing partner of Thomas A. Dorsey, long time pianist for



"No one can copy my blues-or my beer!" says Dinah confidently in an ad for Rheingold in 1959 sans wig.



Here she is, as she appeared on the Apollo stage for the first time, wearing her best silver dress, May 25, 1945, not yet 21.

Ma Rainey. Dinah (then Ruth) toured the South and Midwest with the Sallie Martin Gospel Singers for over a year, singing and accompanying them on the piano. Clara Ward and her mother Gertrude were also in the group, the first all-female touring gospel group. But Dinah loved blues and jazz more than gospel and didn't want to be limited. Her mother didn't like Dinah's decision to leave the group; blues was still "the Devil's music" to her.

Dinah married for the first time in 1942, when she was seventeen. John Young didn't think she should be an entertainer; they remained together only for a year. Dinah worked a while with Buddy Johnson's early R&B band when his sister Ella left to have a baby, and she fell in love with the drummer, George Jenkins. They married in 1946. She had her first son (George) then divorced Jenkins in 1948.

Her third marriage was to Robert Grayson, an old school chum she had had a romance with when she was playing in his father's church in Chicago. That was another two year stint; she had her next son (Bobby) with him. Walter Buchanan was a quickie in 1950; he sued her for alimony after only two months of marriage. (Dinah always got a big laugh out of the courtroom scene.)

She waited for seven years before marrying again. The fifth marriage, in 1959, was to a saxophone player, Eddie Chamblee, whom she had known in high school. They were good friends and worked well together. Both of them thought it would last, but two years later she was again in divorce court. Chamblee remained her music director for two more years. Only a month out of that marriage she was into another, a quickie to handsome actor Latin Raphael Campos.

Some say she married Horatio Rusty Millard, another attractive man who was a New York taxi driver. If so, that would put the count at seven. Another possible marriage was to drummer Jimmy Cobb, who also acted as her music director when his trio was accompanying her. If that was so, the count would be eight, and her last marriage to Richard Lane would be number nine.

But back in 1941, before she married, she was trying hard to find work as a singer. She had a date at the Rhumboogie Club, and the next year in the Downbeat Room, and another at the Three Deuces. The dates were too far apart. Eager to become involved with

Driggs & Harris © R. Reitz

Driggs & Harris © R. Reitz

jazz, Dinah took a job in the Ladies' Room of the Garrick Lounge, hoping to sit in with the great trumpeter Henry Red Allen, who was playing there at the time. He let her sing, liked what he heard, and told booker Joe Glaser about her. A job with Lionel Hampton's band followed.

Hampton thought the name Ruth Jones was too plain and changed it to Dinah Washington. At nineteen years old, she didn't care, as long as she got the job. She made her first recordings in December, 1943 with some of the musicians in the Hampton band. For three years Dinah was the band's singer. In 1946, she went out on her own.

She recorded 450 songs in twenty years. Toward the end of the '40s and in the '50s she had numerous Top Ten hits on the R&B charts. In 1949 she was number one, with "Baby Get Lost." But it wasn't until 1959, with "What A Difference A Day Makes" that she also hit *Billboard's* pop "Honor Roll Of Hits."

Her best performances, if one were forced to isolate them, probably were doing her Birdland date in 1958. Every one of the three shows a night were packed, and it was especially chic at that time to make the last show to see the Queen. And what a court came to pay their respects—the 1940's debutante crowd had flowered into society's matrons and came with their escorts. There was an elegance then. Clothes were neatly pressed and pearls were still stylish. The women were Dinah's age and identified with her singing of life's incongruities, about independence and being bound. They felt her longing for personal freedom. Dinah was safely articulating it, passionately expressing their feelings, in an upbeat way without being gloomy. She was adored by this classy crowd and adored too by the crowd in the balcony of the Apollo. Never a social climber, she was nonetheless pleased to have this regal attention.

The song that catapulted her into the huge pop big-time was "What A Difference A Day Makes," for which she won a Grammy in 1959. Written by a woman, it had a deep female sensibility; the female collective unconscious was at work here. (No matter that Maria Grever wrote the music in 1934 and the lyrics in Spanish.)

Up to that time, the promotion and sale of her records were geared to Black buyers. Although Dinah had made the R&B charts many times by then, this song remained there the longest: seventeen weeks. In 1975 it was again a hit, when

Esther Phillips revived it.

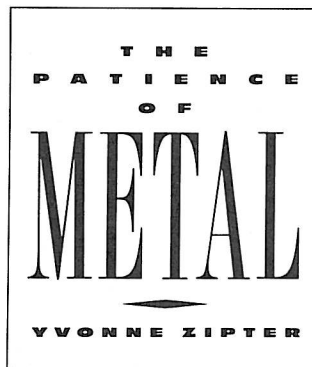
Ebony magazine described her: "When Dinah sang, when she really got down and got mean with a song, nobody could come close to her." The Queen herself said, "When anyone sings they ought to let the soul come out—just let it flow out. That's what I try to do." She laid her soul bare and left us a versatile legacy.

What was her genius? It was the ability to be selective musically, to know what the right choice should be and to make it almost every time, not from intellectual reasoning but from gut intuition. She had a sophisticated sense of what was right; her timing was perfect. And could she swing!

Dinah's early church music training gave her the iron below the surface, supplying her with an unerring density of structure. When she held her notes, it was artistically right and an integral part of her pacing. Dinah never sounded thin or shrill because she never strained. She was lucky enough to have a wide range and the wisdom to keep within it. Her sense of musical appropriateness set the standard for women singers to follow. She strongly influenced Ruth Brown, Etta James, Esther Phillips, Diana Ross, Carrie Smith, Dionne Warwick, Nancy Wilson, and countless others.

Dinah flamboyantly cut across the historic lines of jazz from early blues to be-bop. She transcended the overly lush

continued on page 59



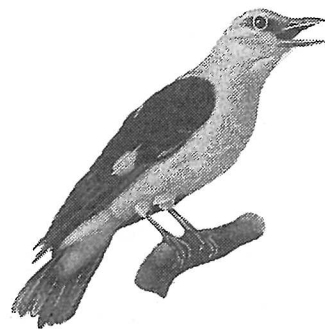
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SONIA JOHNSON

Speaks of Creating a "Women's World"

As told to Toni Armstrong Jr., Laura Post, and Sara Wolfersberger

WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

I see that it gives women a lot of deep satisfaction. When I go to the festivals, women are talking about it all around me. I'm usually in the craft area with my materials, talking with women. They can't wait for the concerts every night, and they're talking about the one last night. They just feel a relief to be among women and to be listening to music that they perceive as their own, to have some feeling that this is our culture. I think that they like to be among other women and see women performers as much as they like the music. Women's music performed at festivals is not just the music, it's the ambience—it's "we're all sitting here, thousands together, all women on the stage, all women behind the stage." It's highly skilled stuff that goes on there and everybody just feels so proud that women can do this, that women can do wonderful things—can do anything. It's another example that we don't have to be dependent on men. And now that we've learned that in our heads, we have, through festivals, some kind of *evidence*. I can see how useful that is to women. It's very enlivening, and makes women feel very powerful.

I especially love the dramatic performances, and the poetry. I think that women actually write better poetry than music, and what's coming out of women is absolutely exquisite. I'm getting a lot of it. At home I get letters all the time, and some woman whom nobody even thinks of as a poet is writing it. Women are writing poetry massively out there; they hand me poems, they send me poems. I'm wishing there were some place for poetry readings at festivals—maybe do some open mikes for women's poetry.

I know music. I know that there's some really good stuff happening out there, and that women can't get pub-

SONIA SPEAKS GOING FARTHER OUT OF OUR MINDS



Diana Souza

lished—aren't even thinking of getting it published, unless you are somebody like [Marge] Piercy or [Adrienne] Rich. And so I'd very much like for us to be able to hear each other's written art and poetry.

Not just having performances—though that's another thing I'd like to see more of—but lots more impromptu, improvisational stuff from the women who come. I'd like to see, at festivals for instance, a lot less consuming mentality. We come to hear people play music, buy things from women who have made them, all of which is dandy—but I'd like to see women come to do their own performing, too. And in a sense that's beginning to happen. Kay Gardner, at Michigan anyway, has that time where she invites musicians to play with her in the acoustic area. There are splendid musicians who just haven't been able to make a breakthrough, and one of the things that happens when those women perform is that

other women in the audience who are also musicians get very cheered. They feel that it's possible for them to also do it.

I don't think there's anything wrong with the consumerism either, as long as we're not *just* consumers. I think it's absolutely fine to listen to each other. But the women's movement is about *all* women finding their gift and believing in it and being heard and listened to. I'm glad that there's a swing back toward more participation by nonfamous women. It's a very healthy thing, and I don't think that it will detract from the professional stuff.

I've been at Michigan when the Reel World String Band played. [Hundreds of women get up and dance.] Lots of women like square dancing. They like country/western dance because it's got form and you do it together. That's the kind of participation that I'm really glad to see. Although there are those who do music professionally, I just want us to recognize how immensely gifted we all are. I'd like to see the star system just a little bit less vertical. I'd like to see women who have no recognized name, have places and times to perform in central spots where people pass by. I'd like the same things to happen in drama; I'd like to see women who write plays come to these things.

And also a part of our culture is what you see in the crafts areas. That is splendid beyond belief. Often it just takes your breath away. It does a great deal of heartening and lifting of women's spirits to be walking through those aisles and seeing the word lesbian, and seeing all the imagery that fits us, all the goddess stuff. That's culture.

ON FEAR

I have had serious fear around being able to do things on my own, especially last year. But I've gotten past that, which is great. One of the reasons I did was because I discovered just how fearful I was. You've got to face and get through any-

thing you're afraid of. Fear stops you from being able to really do the new world, which is what I've got in my mind.

I have to admit that compared to when I began, I can hardly believe myself now. And I believe there's almost not a woman on the planet who couldn't say that about herself. Look how much we do now that we didn't.

One of the most scary things I've done was going over the White House fence when there were men on the roof with machine guns. This was in 1981 or '82, and I did a lot of civil disobedience about the Equal Rights Amendment. This group of us did it in Washington, D.C., where we lived around the White House. So one day a group of us went over the White House fence, where the police were lined up with their dogs. We knew there'd be machine guns focused on us, because they shoot people for going over the fence; they've done it before and they've killed people. So here was this whole group of women going over the

White House fence, with a document to put on the White House door. We knew that in a few minutes it was in the realm of possibility that we would no longer exist. In that moment of fear, you don't think that they will do it—and they obviously didn't—but they really *do* preposterously violent things, so you can never really trust that they won't do it this time.

When I was running for president, I would have to meet with the board of editors from big city newspapers. I especially remember one in San Francisco or Los Angeles, somewhere in California, because it really frightened me. I knew that they thought I was an absolute moron, a total off-the-wall crazy. And they were going to be sitting there just waiting to interpret everything I said in this vein. The whole purpose of my running for president was to say "feminism," but I also had to know all the issues. I had to know everything that was going on, and I had to make reasonable replies that were still feminist to all their questions. It was an immensely challenging thing to do. I

wanted to represent women more, and I let the newspaper men know I was a lesbian. I wanted to represent lesbians well, who in their opinion are even crazier than the usual woman, because you have to be crazy not to want to be with a man. And most of the people sitting in this room were men.

So just before I began I had to face the fear, just like before I went over the fence. I saw that they were still coming into the interview room, so I went off to the bathroom and shut the door to the stall and closed my eyes. I did what I always try to do when I'm afraid: I saw in my mind all the women that have ever lived. I saw them up there in the sky, in droves, with their arms around each other and smiling, coming over the mountains. Just hoards of them, all of them. And I said to them in my mind, "Sisters, help me say our stuff right. Help me be really clear. Help me not to be afraid." Like a prayer really. "Just be with me. Just let me remember you. Let me feel you in me while I'm doing this so I

SONIA

By Laura Post

Sonia Johnson was born in Idaho in 1936 and raised amidst the fiercely patriarchal belief system of the Mormon church in Utah. She experienced a multiplicity of cultures during her travels while married (to a man) for two decades—and now she wants passionately to make and live in another, feminist, anarchist world.

Self-described as "a longing and lonely child," and aware early on of the atrocities of male conflict through the Second World War which raged during her formative years, Sonia found solace in a world of reading, fantasy, and storytelling. On August 4, 1978, Sonia—having accepted Senator Birch Bayh's invitation to testify as part of a religious panel in support of the Equal Rights Amendment—confronted Senator Orrin Hatch at the Senate ERA-extension hearing.

Through the excommunication from the Mormon Church that followed, through her divorce from her husband, Sonia says she learned that "men have the power through their behavior, expecta-

tions, and structures. They define 'power' as control through violence and then attempt to be powerful, on their terms. But truly powerful people don't control, don't attempt to control anybody; powerful people are themselves. Women are battered and terrorized in this world, and yet the feminist ideal of power shows us that men are false, weak, and violent."

Along with not keeping current with the most recent events in men's violence—"I don't read the 'olds,' there's nothing new in it"—Sonia refers to the elected, best-known men in our society as "the men in weakness." The dramatic change of perspective from a simple altering of language underscores Sonia's assertion that language distorts women's sense of our own empowerment.

Defining power differently allows women to use generative and loving elements to heal ourselves and each other. Sonia avows that truth ends with each of us. "When I stopped looking outside myself for self-proclaimed authority figures to tell me what was right, I began to learn what I want and what I can do," she recalls. "It is a principle that the means are the end, not, as we have learned, that the end is more valid than the means. For example, if I want peace, then I must be peaceful. Said in that way, it is evident that 'fighting for peace' is

counterproductive. The truth is that all time is now. Feminist analysis, more than any other analysis of the human situation, has its origins in direct experience."

Believing that the women's movement cannot survive without constant infusions of our thought—infusions of those feminist principles we have distilled from our own lives—Sonia has written of her transformations. Published by Doubleday in 1981, *From Housewife to Heretic* recounts Sonia's struggles through her excommunication and divorce. *Going Out of Our Minds: The Metaphysics of Liberation* (Crossing Press, 1987) details Sonia's efforts at civil disobedience; her beginning to free herself from internalized oppression, appreciating the worth of affirmation, individual changes, and hope; and her 1984 campaign for president of the United States. Despite her access to mainstream channels for self-proclamation and education, Sonia concludes, "Feminism as I understood it included all women finding our power, not within the fundamentally unjust system that now prevails on planet earth, but within a new system of our own design and making."

Sonia's third book, *Wildfire: Igniting the She/volution* (Wildfire Books, 1989) explains her current philosophy. Having concluded that she no longer chooses to

won't be afraid." They held their arms out to me, and they came up and hugged me, and they told me, "We'll be with you, don't worry, we're right here, we'll be right there. Just think of us all around you, just get the feeling of that."

I did, and I went back and sat down and was not afraid at all. I felt so powerful. After the first two or three minutes I could see them beginning to take notes, beginning to take me seriously, to realize that this was not a kook here, that this woman was sharp. This woman knew what she's talking about. At first, they didn't even have their notebooks opened, they were looking at their watches, you know: "we'll give her fifteen minutes." But they kept me there for close to an hour, and then they were telling people who were bringing messages to tell them they would call back.

The reason I could do it with so little fear is because I got the support of all the women. And not just the women who have ever lived, but of the women who are *ever going* to live. Periodically I just

gather them all up from wherever I can think of them; and at any moment when I'm feeling really serious fear, I call upon all the women. I have a very visual mind anyway, which is a great asset. Lots of people think them or feel them, but I can *see* them in my mind, which is very useful to me. I can really see them in my mind sitting around me, holding me and touching me. Or if somebody asked me an especially difficult question—about the economy or something—I could just feel them putting their hand on my knee for a minute and suddenly it was an easy question.

There's nothing that men understand that we can't understand. They think anything that's complicated is brilliant; the more complicated, the more brilliant. What women absolutely know is that the simpler it is, the more brilliant it is. So to have to try to persuade them of that without saying it, to get rid of all that nonsense and get it down to what's really meaningful, and make it sound to them like it isn't pabulum—for me, that takes the

help of all the women. I feel like I am never in this alone. And I particularly feel that now as I'm doing the work in the actual beginning to build a new world, to create an actual physical new world—a "women's world." ●

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fight men or their system—and moreover that resistance represents collaboration—Sonia affirms that she wants to live in non-patriarchal space. True to her belief that her means are her ends, she is already living in such space in Albuquerque. "I have just begun, though I have thought about it for years," she says. "Other women live with women in communities, but I wanted to build a house to live in alone, as part of a new community. I recognized that I couldn't write about it if I didn't do it; I want to live my ideas. I know that my own integrity will give me power."

Sonia is working with other women to build a community. "I am still learning how to 'get rid of'—from my internalized, negative feelings about other groups of people to the depth and contour of my own misogyny," she says. "I have underestimated the intensity of internalized oppression."

With Christine Champion, Sonia's Wildfire Books publishing partner, and Susan Horwitz, Sonia's co-conspirator, she has decided to pool resources, ideas and love. "Anyone can do this. Once you've made the decision, it gets easier and easier," she says.

From the historical example of the "Texas Commonwealth," Sonia has drawn her metaphor of the feminist potluck to

explain why a community of women, using the principle of doing things together, will work. [In Texas, in the late nineteenth century, a group of farmwife friends left their husbands, pooled their money, and lived together. Initially, they operated a laundry business, then expanded to hostelry and farming. Through the latter years of their lives, they lived surrounded with abundance, demonstrating that, through ultimate cooperation, thriving on one's own terms is a pragmatic reality.]

Sonia's ideas for the community in which she is living are new, unproven, untested. "The essential elements of this community are to have each woman do as she wants all the time, loyal first to her own welfare while remaining fully aware of her critical interconnection with everyone else's. Under these circumstances, chances are very good that, like a gigantic feminist potluck dinner, there will be enough of everything, and all needs will be met with a minimum of time spent by any one individual. It is only a matter of maintaining the flow. Functioning within the design of the natural world is always the simplest and most effective plan."

In Sonia's estimation, free gift-giving—not money exchange or barter—will allow the most equitable use of resources. The absence of formalized rules

will allow the women to govern themselves. "If we want a world in which women love and trust ourselves and one another, *right now* we must feel that love and trust. Women's learning to respect and honor women is the basis of a spiritual revolution that is changing what it means to live as human beings on Earth," she says.

"I long for a world again governed by womb time, warm time, free time, life time, gift time, Mother time. I long for a regulation-free world of self-governing people. I long for anarchy, and I believe there is only one way to have it. It seems to me, as it has seemed to women before me, that only by combining our dreams, our energy, and our material and cultural resources in self-designed and self-created communities with one another can we hope to free enough time for enough women to restructure the hologram and make tyranny an anachronism. That we will do this, that we will begin now, and that because this is our appointed hour we will succeed beyond our wildest expectations—this is the dream that sustains me." ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Laura Post is a lesbian in recovery who is completing her training as a psychiatrist in San Francisco.*

SOUTHERN: THE "LIVE AND LET LIVE" FESTIVAL

By Jorjet Harper

Everyone I'd ever talked with who'd been to the Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival told me it was fun—a "real good time, y'all," "a hoot," "a blast," a "great party." It's held on a beautiful private camp in northern Georgia, with cabins as well as camping, and a lake, they said, and has a relaxed atmosphere. Several women who said they found the Michigan Festival too rugged and too politicized told me the Southern Fest was "more like a lesbian vacation than a women's music festival."

That sounded pretty good to me. When I found out that several friends of mine who work for *HOT WIRE* magazine were driving down in a van and I was welcome to join them, I decided that 1990 would be the year this Yankee lesbian ventured into the Deep South for the first time.

Well, everything I'd heard is true. The Southern Festival is indeed a lot of fun. It's unique in a number of ways that I found interesting, and yet shares some important things in common with other large lesbian gatherings. It's a lesbian vacation *and* a women's music festival—because though the atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly, the Nightstage performances (held in a large roofed theater with rows of real *chairs* to sit on, for goddess' sake!) were top-notch.

Nightstage highlights included Black Canadian lesbian Faith Nolan, a strong political singer-songwriter whose repertoire includes traditional blues and folk songs as well as her own material; Kate Clinton, who was in top form and kept the audience laughing nonstop; and Jelsa Palao, a lounge singer who gave a lesbian spin to tried-and-true nightclub songs like "Our Love is Here to Stay"—kind of an unusual act for a women's music festival, but it worked.

Sue Fink was never funnier or in better voice. As opening night emcee she announced that she was changing the festival's name to Camp Nowanaweenee, and taught the audience to sing the Camp



Beautiful land, lake, and lesbians at the seventh annual Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival in northern Georgia.

Nowanaweenee song, which she had composed—and which I found myself humming at odd times during the weekend. [By the time the East Coast Lesbians Festival rolled around, she was selling Camp Nowanaweenee staff shirts.]

Adrienne Torf, debuting her newest instrumental album *Find A Way*, was nothing short of superb. The ultracamp trio BETTY—something of an enigma to the Southern audience at the beginning of their set—won the crowd over with their eclectic musical performance art in a matter of minutes. Two Nice Girls, the super-talented lesbian foursome from Austin, Texas, had a slightly off night, as technical difficulties seemed to drain their energy and focus a bit—but an off night for these fantastic musicians is still a great show.

A Country-Western flavor was very much in evidence this year, with dances every night and dance lessons during the day. Even New Yorker Lynn Lavner, who

emceed the Nightstage for three of the four evenings, fell under the country spell, alternating her usual leather garb with a fringed western shirt.

FEELING SAFE

The Southern Festival has a reputation for being "non-political," though festival-sponsored workshops featured some highly political speakers. Urvashi Vaid, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, spoke on lesbian political activism and the recent legal accomplishments of the gay and lesbian community. "This is a moment of intense contradiction," she said. "In the same instant that we are winning, we are more vulnerable than we've been. We're threatened. There are powerful forces in this country that want to eradicate and eliminate us, and I'm not being extreme when I say this, I think it's true—that's their rhetoric, that's their agenda, that's their policy. So we can't be complacent."

Vaid said she believes that lesbians are now coming to the forefront of the gay and lesbian political struggle. "Lesbians have so much experience, skill, and organizing ability to contribute to the mixed gay and lesbian movement."

Other speakers included Susan McGreivy, an attorney formerly with the American Civil Liberties Union, who gave a feminist analysis of the patriarchal legal system as it affects reproductive rights; Sandra Lowe and Paula Ettelbrick with Lambda Legal Defense; Pat Ireland, vice president of NOW, who said "The lesbian movement is coming into its own, addressing the issue of what lesbians need and want, and I think that's a very positive sign"; and Joan Bokaer, who is participating in the walk across the U.S. to bring attention to the many threats to our environment.

Despite the presence of these high-powered women, I think it's true that, relatively speaking, the Southern Festival is less politically charged than some other festivals I've attended. Things happened at Southern that I'd never expect to see at Michigan. Sitting in a workshop, for



Robin Tyler (left) with Wanda Henson, co-producer of the Gulf Coast festival.



The countrified Lynn Lavner, emcee.

example, I noticed to my shock that I was surrounded by women wearing mascara—in the middle of the woods. During the piped-in music before Nightstage I heard some selections that would have caused apoplexy at Michigan—like Bonnie Raitt singing, "I Want a Real Man"—but at Southern, nobody gave a damn. It's definitely a change of pace from the acute political angst I've witnessed at other festivals—and I found it a nice change at that.

And yet, because women-only gatherings are by their very nature political in our misogynistic society, they spark experiences that are similar from one to another. "The first time I came to this festival, I'd been out just four months," a lesbian from Alabama told me. "Walking around the land, I felt that something was different here. Then it came to me what it was: I felt safe. And then suddenly I became very angry, because I realized that as a woman, I'd never really felt safe before in my whole life."

Obviously, the Southern Fest is providing a vital function, particularly for Southern lesbians who can't or don't want

The Fight to Save Southern Fest

The Southern Festival is in serious danger of being evicted from the north Georgia site where it has been held for its entire seven-year history. Festival producer Robin Tyler is involved now in a battle to keep producing the Southern Festival at that location—a beautiful camp with many amenities surrounding a lovely lake. The camp is owned by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, a national liberal Jewish organization with gay and lesbian synagogues under its umbrella. But, according to Tyler, the camp's new director has said he will not have the festival back again.

During this year's festival, Tyler held a meeting with influential lesbian leaders to discuss the situation: Urvashi Vaid, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Patricia Ireland, the vice president of NOW; Paula Ettelbrick of Lambda Legal Defense; and Susan McGreivy, a lawyer formerly with the ACLU.

"First we are going to try to resolve this politically," says Tyler, "and if that doesn't work, we will legally file against

[the UAHC] and use this as a test case of the Federal Fair Housing Act." Tyler pointed out that many women's festivals have been thrown off land—NEWMR has lost land three times, Michigan bought its own land after being kicked out of the Hesperia site, and the West Coast Festival has had to move several times. "At some point we have to stand up and get behind the central issue which is, as women, our right to rent, and as lesbians, our right to gather."

Tyler discussed the festival's impending eviction from the Southern Festival's Nightstage on Saturday after introducing Vaid, Ettelbrick, McGreivy, and Kathryn Stoll of the Human Rights Campaign Fund to the audience.

"You may be wondering why I gathered them all here at this festival," she told the audience. "No, not to form a rock group! As you know, rumor has had it that this is the last year of this festival. Let me guarantee you this is not the last year of the Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival!" Tyler said, eliciting wild applause.

"I sat with the director of this camp in April, who said to me, 'You don't have a right to be there, and an all-women's gathering doesn't have a right to be there, and we're going to tell you...,' and so on," said Tyler. "And after fifty minutes of taking this, I stood up and said, 'You may think you are trying to play hardball with me, but let me assure you I have the hardest balls in the country and I intend to drag you through the courts to prove it.'"

Tyler announced that she was going to raffle off two first-class cruise tickets for her weeklong November 1990 lesbian luxury cruise, and the money raised would go to the organizations represented by the women onstage for the festival's legal defense. (By Sunday night over \$5,000 had been raised.) Tyler told the audience that the women had made a commitment to use their organizations' political clout to ensure that the festival would continue.

"We intend to win," Tyler concluded, as the audience raised their fists in approval, chanting, "Fight! Fight!"

—reported by Jorjet Harper

to travel far from home to one of the other festivals.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

The land is, as I'd been told, beautiful. The camp's centerpiece is a small lake with an enclosed dock area for swimming, and a small beach. With our campsite directly against the shoreline, it was quite magical to hear the crickets in the grass and the bullfrogs in the water, and watch ripples of moonlight reflected on the lake under the Georgia sky at night. And as festivals go, this one was minimally physically taxing. Cabins with flush toilets and showers were only a few steps away from camping areas. Food was served in a large dining hall near the dock, and hot dogs, barbecued chicken and ribs, sodas, and some other food items could be bought at several stands, one near the dock and one near the Mainstage. Coffee, both regular and decaf, was on sale in the dining hall at breakfast time. All very civilized and comfortable, as long as you think ahead about *all* the things you'll need to bring with you, since once you're parked at the festival, you stay there until you go home. Before entering the land, my friends (who had been to this festival before and knew the ropes) made a stop at the local Piggly Wiggly supermarket (apparently an ubiquitous institution in the Southern food chain) for provisions—and we met several other pre-festival dykes there also cruising the aisles for munchies and mineral water.

Daystage entertainment at Southern Fest was kind of a potpourri of amateur lesbian talent, and as one might expect, some of it was great and some not so great. One of the clichés I've been told about Southerners is that if you ask anybody from the South to sing, they will immediately break into "Summertime and the livin' is easy..." Well, I found out that's not quite true—I saw lots of performers, and only heard "Summertime" six or seven times. And anyway, the audience loved it every time, so why not sing it again?

Interestingly enough, though political rhetoric was less than I've observed at other festivals, as far as explicit lesbian visibility, Southern Fest is one of the more radical. There was no mistaking the lesbian nature of the event. Unlike the more general focus on women at some other festivals, everybody at Southern seemed entirely clear that this festival was by, for,

and about lesbians, lesbians, lesbians. This was also apparent from the Nightstage, as almost every performer did explicitly lesbian-oriented material—*if not in the lyrics, then in the delivery.*

I was particularly impressed by the "live and let live" atmosphere among the festival attendees. Lesbians of diverse subcultures seemed to coexist quite well. S/M dykes who wore dog collars, nipple rings, and nothing else chatted cheerfully with the "Fashion Victims" (so they called themselves) who changed their outfits every hour and who actually set up a wardrobe rack between two trees next to their elaborate campsite to hang their dry cleaned, pressed clothing. Two very sincere, very young-looking lesbians toted their Bibles around with them through the crafts area as they nonjudgementally examined the pagan healing crystals. The hippie-goddess-nature crowd appeared to enjoy the crowning of the "Wus Queen as much as the wusses did. A procession of biker dykes—many from as far away as Boston—roared in on Thursday afternoon, eliciting cheers from all around the lake.

Though there were women who clearly had no interest in politics, feminist or otherwise, I also met many women who are doing unbelievable feats of lesbian-feminist political daring in small Southern and Western towns with very little safety and support. The diversity of lesbians, however, unfortunately did not extend to race. Aside from the performers, there was a startlingly low proportion of women of color at the Southern Festival, and this surprised me, since Atlanta—only fifty miles away—has a large Black population and has the third largest gay and lesbian population in the country. "This is the South," one white woman reminded me. "There's not a lot of integration, and it's a hard thing to overcome."

CHANGING LIVES

"Most of the women who have come here over the last seven years had never been to a women's festival," says Robin Tyler, who produces both the Southern Festival and the West Coast Women's Music and Comedy Festival. "They were very scared. It took us several years to get over the fear—could 2,000 lesbians congregate in rural Georgia? They were not involved politically, and there has been a tremendous political organizing that has come directly out of this festival."

Wanda Henson is one example of the festival's influence. "This festival, Robin's festival, saved my life," she says, adding that she and her lover Brenda cried for days during the first year they came to Southern. "It was an immense amount of culture shock, but it was *my* culture, it was *my* people, it was *my* home. My whole life is different now." Wanda and Brenda were so inspired by their first contact with lesbian culture that they opened Mississippi's first feminist bookstore in their hometown of Gulfport, and founded the Gulf Coast Women's Festival, now heading for its third year and in the process of raising \$250,000 to buy the festival land.

"No amount of therapy or anything could compare to the festival experience," says Wanda. "To me it's so phenomenal that you can't even explain it to people—it's guaranteed that you come into a change process. Folks back home don't know who the hell you are when you get back."

At the moment, Tyler is in the midst of a dispute to save the festival from having to move to another site [see sidebar]—and certainly it's not easy to find welcoming sites for lesbian gatherings. Hopefully, with pressure from influential gay and lesbian organizations, Southern Fest will remain stable in its location.

The Southern lesbians I met at the festival were, without exception, a very friendly bunch, and many of their lives and perspectives are quite different from mine, so it was extremely interesting to talk with them and find out about their experiences living as lesbians in Alabama, the Carolinas, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, Tennessee, Texas, and Georgia. I'd definitely go back to the Southern Fest again—I had a *real* good time meeting y'all at Camp Nowanaweenee. ●

ABOUT THE WRITER: Jorjet Harper writes news and reviews about lesbian culture for over twenty newspapers and journals around the country. She has been writing for 'HOT WIRE' since our very first issue.

Special thanks to our financial supporters... See listing of Fairy Godmothers in the masthead on page one

DOING THE FESTIVALS

or

How I Spent My Summer

By Cathy Andrews



Mary Massara

Goldenrod staff at Michigan, 1989. From left: Becky Huntington (festival staff), Lorie Powers (office manager), Lori English (warehouse manager), Cathy Andrews (sales manager), Connie Marks (festival staff), Susan Frazier (concert rep), Georgia Emmert (festival staff).

Once upon a time I would go to music festivals as part of my vacation—a great time to relax, hang out with friends, and see more concerts in three days than I could the rest of the year.

That all changed when I began working for Goldenrod.

We are distributors of women's music. Most of the year we are mild-mannered wholesalers, getting women's music into as many stores as possible. During the summer, though, we reveal our alter egos as...*festival merchants*. I still have a great time at festivals, but it's different to be there working rather than vacationing.

Long before the doors open at the National Women's Music Festival in Bloomington, Indiana or at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, long before the first customer strolls up to our tape racks, hundreds of hours of preparation have occurred. Some of the work is simple—

Goldenrod Distribution, owned by Terry Grant, has been distributing women's music throughout the Midwest since 1975.

like filling out the festival application. That kicks off "festival season" for us—and happens about six months ahead of time.

Some of the work is more complicated, like trying to predict the buying patterns of up to 6,000 women for 400 (or more) titles. The sheer volume of product that we take presents its own challenges.

One of the main things we aim for at a festival is to have available the greatest variety of music by women. We also aim to have enough of it with us. When I sit down to write up our packout, I warm up my crystal ball. There is some degree of predictability for performers, as well as for many of the "deeper catalog" items, but there's plenty of room for chance. I have to consider: How many releases does each performer have? How old is her most recent one? When was the last time she was at the festival? Did she tour heavily or lightly when her newest album came out? Which night at the festival is she performing? Who else will be on that night? Who else is performing during the festival?....

Sometimes things are easy. For

example, Holly Near has fourteen albums, five of which are on compact disc, plus a songbook. Her most recent album this past year, *Sky Dances*, was about a year old, but she hadn't been at the National festival since it was released. It was easy to figure out how much of each title to bring because we've covered a number of her concerts this spring, and we've kept records of our sales. Two Nice Girls only have two albums, one of which is a new release (at a special price). They have never been to National before, and haven't toured much in the Midwest. They would be reaching a new audience, along with the "word-of-mouth" audience they have built, but would be the final performance on the last day of the festival.

Figuring all this out for twenty to thirty performers—and on about 350 catalog titles—presents one of the bigger challenges in getting ready for a festival.

One of the most time-consuming, labor-intensive parts of our preparation work is the actual packing up of the product so it's easy to stock the bins when we get to the festival. It also needs to be extremely well organized so that it will be easy to find each artist in the overstock when her recordings are selling briskly and we need to quickly retrieve more. Typically we have about thirty-five boxes ready to be put directly into bins and racks, and then fifty to 150 boxes filled with overstock. We keep track of every piece we pack up—and when we come home, we count every piece that's left. This gives us an accurate record of our sales.

It's relatively easy to deal with stock at National. Since it's a smaller festival than Michigan, we pack out at least a thousand fewer pieces. Our boxes of overstock fit underneath the three eight-foot tables. Everything we take to Bloomington fits in a van. It takes eight to ten women to staff our crafts area space, working four at a time in half-day shifts. We also sell at the evening Mainstage,

continued on page 58

Cartoons by Alison Bechdel

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

3
a crowd
© 1990 BY ALISON BECHDEL

... AND THAT'S WHAT MY PROBLEM IS! MY FAMILY WAS **DYSFUNCTIONAL!**

OM! HARRIET, THAT TICKLES!

... SO ANVA THINKS MAYBE MY ANXIETY STEAMS FROM REPRESSED **ANGER** AT MY **MOTHER**...

MMMA... HOW EXCITING IS IT?

HARRIET! JEEZ! YOUR HANDS ARE FREEZING!

MO, IT'S BEEN A MONTH!

YOUR HANDS HAVE BEEN COLD FOR A MONTH? DID YOU TELL YOUR CHIROPRACTOR?

A MONTH SINCE THERE'S BEEN ANY **SEXUAL** ACTIVITY IN THIS RELATIONSHIP?

WHADDAYA MEAN? WHAT ABOUT THAT NIGHT WE HAD **ARTICHOSES** FOR DINNER?

THAT WAS FOUR WEEKS AGO!

OH!

WELL, JEEZ HARRIET, I MEAN, A LOT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR A LATELY, WHAT ABOUT **THERAPY** AND ALL THAT? JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE HAVING SEX!

IF YOU WANT TO PRESSURE YOURSELF INTO A PARTY, A LONG TIME!

WELL CAN'T YOU LET ME TAKE CARE OF IT YOURSELF TILL I'M IN THE MOOD AGAIN?

THAT'S NOT THE POINT, I'M WANTING TO BE CLOSE TO YOU!

BUT WE ARE CLOSE! WE'RE RIGHT NEXT TO EACH OTHER!

THEN WHY DO I HAVE THE DISTINCT SENSATION THAT YOUR THERAPIST IS TRYING TO GET BETWEEN US?

ALL
IN THE
FAMILY
© 1990 BY ALISON BECHDEL

COOL! DO YOU HAVE A BIKE?

UH... YEAH, A TEN- SPEED. THIS IS JUST A FASHION STATEMENT.

LOIS, I THINK YOU'VE MET MY PARTNER, DOROTHY AND THIS IS MY EX-HUSBAND JEROME AND MY SON JAMES.

DAD! LOOK! I'M A **HELL'S ANGEL!**

IT'S EMMA'S BIRTHDAY. SHE'S HAVING A FEW FRIENDS OVER FOR CAKE. D'YOU THINK **IRISES** ARE TOO OVERSTATED?

WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO, LOVERGIRL?

THAT DEPENDS ON HER **MAIN SQUEEZE** IS THERE OR NOT?

ARE.

WELL, SHE DIDN'T SAY DOROTHY WAS COMING.

BUT IF SHE DID I'M SURE SHE'D ALL GO OUT COURTESY OF MY **CIVILIZED MANNER**.

YEAH, RIGHT. I'VE COME TO THE **NINETIES!**

LOIS! COME IN! THE OTHERS JUST ARRIVED!

JAMES DARLING, PUT LOIS' COAT IN THE CLOSET!

WELL, I SHALL WE EAT CAKE?

SHE-RA? LET ME DOWN!

WE'RE OUTPAVING, MOM. I'LL JUST STICK WITH HER IN WITH THE OTHERS!

LOIS? IRISES! HOW SWEET! WELCOME! AMELIA, NOT THERE IN WATER.

I CALL HER **SHE-RA!** LOOK, SHE'S A **HELL'S ANGEL!**

YO.

AND HER **LOVER** SHEILA

Give Blood. Play Rugby.

SO YOU'RE MOM'S OTHER GIRLFRIEND?

MY DAUGHTER, AMELIA...

COOL! DO YOU HAVE A BIKE?

UH... YEAH, A TEN- SPEED. THIS IS JUST A FASHION STATEMENT.

LOIS, I THINK YOU'VE MET MY PARTNER, DOROTHY AND THIS IS MY EX-HUSBAND JEROME AND MY SON JAMES.

DAD! LOOK! I'M A **HELL'S ANGEL!**

IT'S EMMA'S BIRTHDAY. SHE'S HAVING A FEW FRIENDS OVER FOR CAKE. D'YOU THINK **IRISES** ARE TOO OVERSTATED?

WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO, LOVERGIRL?

THAT DEPENDS ON HER **MAIN SQUEEZE** IS THERE OR NOT?

ARE.

WELL, SHE DIDN'T SAY DOROTHY WAS COMING.

BUT IF SHE DID I'M SURE SHE'D ALL GO OUT COURTESY OF MY **CIVILIZED MANNER**.

YEAH, RIGHT. I'VE COME TO THE **NINETIES!**

LOIS! COME IN! THE OTHERS JUST ARRIVED!

JAMES DARLING, PUT LOIS' COAT IN THE CLOSET!

Cartoons by Alison Bechdel

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

NO DYKES

©1990 BY ALISON BECHDEL

IT'S A SLOW DAY AT MADMIMIN BOOKS...

STEEZ! WHAT'S THE LESBIAN NATION COMING TO?

HAVE YOU READ THE PERSONALS LATELY? LISTEN TO THIS! "MADMOCKING NONDYKE, 38, SEEMS SAME FOR LONG WALKS, CANDLELIGHT DINNERS, ETC. ETC."

AND THIS! "PROFESSIONAL, FINANCIALLY FABE GF CAPITALIST SEEKS SPECIAL SOMEONE FOR LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP. NO DYKES NEED REPLY."

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN "NO DYKES"? AND WHAT THE HELL IS A NONDYKE?

I MEAN, ARE YOU A DYKE IF YOU CALL YOURSELF A DYKE? DOES EATING TORTU AND SHOWING YOUR ANKLES AUTOMATICALLY MAKE YOU A DYKE? AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING A DYKE ANYHOW?

THIS IS WHILE TREND SMACKS OF SOME VERY SERIOUS INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA

ARE IT EASY, AND YOU'RE GONNA RP A RIVET. LOOK, ALL THE AIR ABOUT LIKE THAT?

NO THEY'RE WORSE! "FEISTY GIRL 24, INTO LIPSTIC, LERNGA & LUST, SEEKS HOT BIKER TYPE FOR HIGH P.P.M. ACTION (SMOKES, DRINKS, DO TRIPS), AND CAPABLE OF IT 700 DON'T BZZORT!"

LOVE! WHETHER HARRING TO FEMINISM, WIRGE HADOUR POLITICAL ANALYSIS GAME? AND MAN ARE ALL THESE WOMEN TRASHING EVERYTHING I STAND FOR?!

MAYBE IN A WAY ALL THIS IS A GOOD SIGN... LIKE, MAYBE WE'VE GROWN ENOUGH AS A COMMUNITY THAT IT'S SAFE NOW TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST LESBIAN-FEMINIST MONOCULTURE.

NO!

AFTER ALL, LESBIANS AREN'T ALL ANDROGYNOUS VEGETARIAN RADICALS. SOME OF US LIKE DRESSES AND MAKEUP! SOME OF US EVEN VOTED FOR BUSH!

HEY, SINCE WHEN DO YOU READ THE PERSONALS ANWAY? THINGS GOING FLAT WITH YOU AND HARRIET?

...AND... STARTS IN

A Breach of Etiquette

©1990 BY ALISON BECHDEL

WHERE ARE THEY? MY STIR-FRY IS RUINED!

YOU SHOULD'VE WAITED TILL THEY GOT HERE TO START COOKING. I RECALL MENTIONING SOMETHING TO THAT EFFECT ABOUT 40 MINUTES AGO.

HI! MIMM... SWEETS GOOD? WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

SEACHUAN VEGETABLE PULP?

HI CHARIE! HI TONI!

LISTEN, I'M SORRY WE'RE LATE. ME, UH... LOST TRACK OF TIME. TONI SORTA JUDGED ME WHEN I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL.

HEY, I JUST WANTED A QUICKIE, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED WE TAKE A FOAMING LAVEN-DEK LOVE BATH!

OH, GREAT! YOU WERE MAKING LOVE WHILE MY STIR-FRY DECOMPOSED!

MR. BR GODDESS' SARE! WILL YOU TRY AND BE CIVIL? LET GO OF THE STIR-FRY!

I MEAN, YOU'D EXPECT THIS SORT OF RESPONSIBILITY FROM SOME LOVE-SICK NEW GUY? BUT YOU GUYS ARE IN A RESTAURANT, LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP? YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO HAVE SEX!

YEAH, I KNOW, BUT OUR HOR-WOMEN HAVE RINDA GONE CRAZY LATELY.

IT'S BEEN LIKE FALLING IN LOVE ALL OVER AGAIN EVER SINCE WE STARTED PLANNING OUR COMMITMENT CEREMONY.

MR. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM? JUST BECAUSE WE'RE NOT HAVING SEX DOESN'T MEAN NO ONE ELSE CAN!

PUH-LEEZE! NOT AT THE DINNER TABLE!

HARRIET! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE DISCUSSING THIS IN FRONT OF COMPANY!

HAW... HANE YOU TRIED SEX TOIS? OR ACTING OUT YOUR FANTASIES?

DO YOU WANT OUR TREATARIS NUMBER?

COULD WE JUST EAT PLEASE?

IT'S OKEY THESE LIMP GREY THINGS ARE STRONG BEANS, NOT NIGHTCRAWLERS.

Producer's Checklist for ASL-Interpreted Concerts

BEFORE THE SHOW

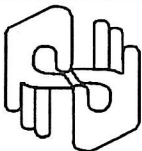
- ✓ What is the name, address, and phone number of the interpreter(s)?
- ✓ Has the performer sent lyrics and tapes to the interpreter (four to six weeks in advance)?
- ✓ What is the name, address, and phone number of our deaf consultant(s)?
- ✓ Have we given the name and phone number of the deaf consultant(s) to all staff members?
- ✓ Does the publicity indicate the concert will be interpreted and show the generic symbol for sign language interpreted events?
- ✓ Have we invited the interpreter to every sound check and given her all relevant details (times, locations, phone numbers)?
- ✓ Have we designated reserved seating?

AT THE SOUND CHECK

- ✓ How many seats have we reserved?
- ✓ Have we marked the reserved seating in an obvious, visual way?
- ✓ Are the performer and interpreter both visible in one direct sight line from the reserved seating area?
- ✓ Is the interpreter well-lit and free of shadows?
- ✓ Have we eliminated side lighting that would interfere with seeing the interpreter?
- ✓ Does the interpreter have a monitor?
- ✓ Does the interpreter's monitor have the proper vocal/instrumental mix?
- ✓ Have we instructed the stage manager to write the interpreter into all of the production plans?
- ✓ Have we instructed the light technician to keep the light on the interpreter during all announcements as well as songs?

THE NIGHT OF THE SHOW

- ✓ Have we assigned someone who knows sign language to greet deaf audience members at the door?
- ✓ Are there surveys for feedback in the reserved seating area or in the lobby?



The generic symbol indicating a sign language interpreted event.

ACCESS from page 19

HIRE A DEAF CONSULTANT

"One of the best ways to bridge the culture between deaf and hearing women around festival events and ensure the most accessible performance is to hire a deaf consultant," suggests Eve. Just as women and lesbians know our own culture better than even the most sympathetic man ever could, deaf women know about their culture and what works for them in a hearing environment more than hearing women ever could. While interpreters and other friends of deaf women can be good resources for information about deaf culture and their general needs and preferences as an audience, the best source for the information and perspective is the source itself. While a deaf consultant can't speak for all of the women in the deaf community—just as one lesbian can't speak for all of the lesbians in the community—she is at least a member of the cultural group that the accessibility is provided for.

The roles the deaf consultant can play in outreach and liaison are many and varied. Ideally, this consultant would be knowledgeable in production as well as involved in the deaf community. She could be available to:

- provide input about appropriate lighting and set design options at sound checks
- suggest appropriate reserved seating and how best to mark it
- provide input if the interpreter wants help with a translation
- do outreach to members of the deaf community
- have an idea of who will be present and indicate to the interpreter what their language preferences are (since Signed English and American Sign Language are two completely different languages)
- maintain a mailing list and encourage women to publicize the next interpreted event
- greet deaf women at the door—welcome them and let them know where the reserved seating area is
- gather feedback from audience members about technical and aesthetic elements of the production—what they would like to see more of, what was accessible to them and what wasn't
- include written consciousness-raising information for hearing audience members in printed programs and/or advertising
- facilitate a pre-show and/or post-show meeting for interested deaf participants—perhaps to go over some new or specialized signs, read some of the lyrics, meet the performer, or discuss ideas about how the event could be more acces-

sible or enjoyable for the deaf audience members

- use her expertise to suggest other job functions she might perform in the role of consultant that would facilitate accessibility for deaf audience members

Consider that you and the deaf consultant will need to communicate with each other. If writing will be your primary means of communication, allow more time for meetings and working out logistics.

If you can't find a deaf consultant, a hearing consultant who has contact with deaf culture and can bring the opinions of deaf audience members to the planning process is another option. You might even consider hiring a team of consultants, one deaf and one hearing.

If you are unable to hire a consultant, at the very least put surveys on the seats in the reserved seating area, or on a table in the lobby. Feedback from deaf audience members is the best way to improve on the services intended for them. Also have someone who signs (not necessarily an interpreter) greet them at the door.

DON'T GIVE UP

There is a lot of work involved in creating an accessible event. You may hear stories from those who believe it would be best not to have events interpreted at all until the process is perfected. However, don't give up! If you are producing a concert, *absolutely have the event interpreted*. As Laura Kolb states, "Sometimes you have to tear something down to build it up right. But in the case of having events interpreted, I don't see [eliminating interpreters] even as a short-term solution—because then the event becomes inaccessible. Granted, it hasn't been perfect, and it's not as widespread as it should be, and we've made mistakes. But it's a start. There are deaf women out there who want to come and be part of the community *now*, and we can't isolate them. I find in my own life that [when events aren't interpreted] it means I can't even take my own family. Let's just try to keep on the journey instead of saying, 'Oh, we're not doing that, because we haven't perfected it yet.' It's a shared responsibility; it's two cultures coming together. Let's make that happen." ●

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DO YOU KNOW ENOUGH?

The following questions are for the D.Y.K.E. game written by Flowing Margaret Johnson, Julia Penelope, and Sarah Valentine. The categories are Arts (A), Earth Science (ES), Fun and Games (FG), Music and Entertainment (ME), Ourstory (O), and Potluck (P).

- 1 (A) Who described Crones as "The Great Hags of history"?
 (ES) What goddess was worshipped in the rituals from which Christians stole the idea of "Easter"?
 (FG) At what event did pitcher Kathy Arendsen pit her skills against those of Reggie Jackson?
 (ME) Who recorded the album *More Than Friends*?
 (O) What does the Greek word *kleitoris* mean?
 (P) Name three of the eight small U.S. cities described as having "thriving Lesbian communities" by Lindsay van Gelder in 1982.
- 2 (A) In what periodical of the '70s did Varda One publish her column "Manglish"?
 (ES) Name the goddess who protected medieval healers and midwives.
 (FG) What Greek goddess enjoyed beating men in foot races?
 (ME) What musical group recorded the album *Quiet Thunder*?
 (O) Name the naval officer who invented the computer language COBOL.
 (P) Who was the first female to officiate a major league sport in the U.S. and Canada?

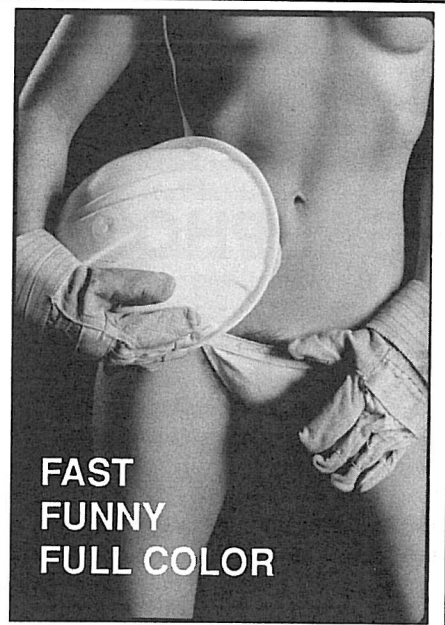
ANSWERS

- (P) Betty Ellis
 (O) Commodore Grace Hopper
 (ME) Izquierda
 (FG) Atlanta
 (ES) Hecate
 (A) *Everywoman*

2

- Portsmouth, NH
 Rochester, NY; Lincoln, NE;
 Baltimore, Oklahoma City;
 (P) Denver, Phoenix; Milwaukee;
 (O) "Divine, famous, goddess-like"
 (ME) Robin Flower
 (FG) The National Sports Festival
 (ES) Oestre
 (A) Mary Daly

1



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THE TENTH MUSE

SAPPHO: REDISCOVERING LESBIAN SPACE

By Jorjet Harper

This is the last article in the "Tenth Muse" series, which first appeared in the March 1986 issue of 'HOT WIRE.'

One evening in 1982, I read Sappho for the first time—by accident. I had no curiosity about Sappho that I can recall, despite the fact that I was out as a lesbian and vaguely knew there was some connection between Lesbos and Sappho and lesbians. I was at the time, however, intensely interested in ancient languages. I'd found a book in the public library called *Teach Yourself Greek*. With no sense of how difficult such a project might be, I plowed ahead, burning the midnight oil, learning the ancient Greek alphabet and vocabulary words and the rudiments of grammar. I was wading through exercises for third declension nouns, deciphering some sayings of ancient Greek philosophers, when I came to a fragment of Sappho, which I tried with great difficulty to translate. Something about somebody bringing a sheep somewhere?

When I gave up, finally, and looked at the answer key in the back of the book, I found these florid, archaic-sounding words:

"Evening, thou bringest everything that bright dawn scattered. Thou bringest the sheep, thou bringest the goat, thou bringest the child back to its mother."

I've found clearer, more modern translations since, but as I was going back and forth between the Greek and English that night, trying to match the right words for sheep, goat, scattered, etcetera, the *meaning* underneath this antiquated, biblically-cast language suddenly came to me. While this passage was (so the book said in a footnote) only a fragment, and the rest of the poem was lost, the *idea* it

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.



Terme Museum

Our knowledge of all women of the past is, like Sappho's poetry, fragmentary.

expressed was not at all fragmentary. Furthermore, it was so simple, so immediate, so personal, and so universal at the same time that I was taken aback. Not only was it a vivid and complete image on a literal level, but it evoked, for me, the idea that as we grow to be the age our mothers were when we saw them through children's eyes, we understand as adults what it was like for our mothers when they were the age we are now—and we experience a kind of homecoming, a metaphorical reunion with our mothers based on an understanding about them at "evening" which we didn't have at the "dawn" of our lives.

Whether Sappho meant these lines to be taken on a metaphorical level, I could not have said. But these few words of Sappho, much to my own surprise, had transported me from the plodding realm of my language exercises into an inner

place where I was deeply contemplating my own and universal experiences—and they were *written by a woman who had been dead for twenty six hundred years.*

I marvelled that for the first time in my life I was hearing the direct words of a woman, a *woman*, from way, way back in history—a contemporary of Buddha and Confucius, older than Socrates, older than Aristotle, older than almost all the male voices I was taught in school to venerate as wise and brilliant and eternal in the pantheon of Great Thinkers.

Suddenly it became more obvious than ever to me how one-sided and lopsided that pantheon was. For once, this was not a male voice telling me what the world looked like to him. It was not a "universal" voice that revolved around "man" as its center. It was a voice that made what I found to be a "universal" observation—beautifully stated—from a *female-centered* place. The child returns to its mother.

From then on, I read everything I could by and about Sappho and her "island of women" on Lesbos.

I've been writing this column on Sappho for over three years now—and I've covered just about everything I've found that is known about her—so this will be my last "Tenth Muse" column in *HOT WIRE*. Our knowledge of all women of the past is, like Sappho's poetry, fragmentary and fragmented. Recently, reading Greek scholar John Winkler's excellent new book *Constraints of Desire*, I've learned that in ancient Greece, there were several women-only festivals held each year—among them the Stenia, the Thesmophoria, the Haloa, and the

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Jorjet Harper hopes that you have enjoyed discovering along with her the information, little though it is, that has survived down through history about the first known woman poet of genius, and—not coincidentally—the first known lesbian.*

Adonia—though what we know of them comes, of course, from the accounts of men whose "attitude to women's independent operations is likely to be colored by anxiety, suspicion, or contempt," Winkler reminds us. Above all, says Winkler, the male scholars who reported what they knew about these women-only events "are likely to miss the consciousness of the women themselves about the meaning of their ritual and festive acts."

A few sparse details about these women-only gatherings in ancient Greece are also known. Women went up to the rooftops and hilltops and laughed hilariously all night long. Male accounts describe the women as shouting loud obscenities amid their raucous laughter, and the women are alternately criticized by these male historians for being "shameful" and "shameless." The women baked and ate genital-shaped cookies during their festivals. They carried plants in pots up to their rooftops, and then stopped watering them, allowing the plants to wilt and die, and they apparently found this tremendously funny. Reportedly at least one festival, however, alternated laughter with grieving.

And at least one of these women-only festivals was funded by municipal

(i.e., male) money—and the Greek men, though not permitted to attend, observe, or even know what went on, generally respected the women-only "space" and rituals. Two ancient historians recount separate instances in which men tried to sneak into women-only rituals to observe them. On discovering a "gate-crasher," the women seized the man and castrated him.

When we think of "women-only" space today, we may not even be aware that at other times, in other places, such spaces existed, and did not have to be fought for, and were considered a legitimate, even beneficial, part of social conduct—inviolable. Sappho and her followers lived in a time when the "mysteries" of women were still taken seriously and thought to be important in the perpetuation of the natural world and the social fabric. As the poetry of Sappho makes obvious to me, *it is only in a woman-centered environment that the female universe can be fully explored and given expression.* "Women-only space" is both external and internal.

One of the most basic characteristics of women-only space as it exists today is the understanding that the experience of women alone together has value—and

this is a notion that, though simple enough, still runs counter to just about everything the dominant society tells us. Perhaps now—as we gather in all-women festivals we have created for ourselves, and as we found women's and lesbians' institutions of all kinds—we are at a point in the evolution of modern women's culture in which we are beginning to get just an inkling of the possibilities of a woman-centered universe.

The child comes home to her mother. ●

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FREESTYLE

HOW TO GET AIRPLAY ON NON-COMMERCIAL RADIO

By Kay Gardner

One of the best ways of selling our records or bringing people to our concerts in various localities is by getting our music played on the radio. Though most of us in women's music won't ever hear our music on the commercial AM or FM stations, we *can* get good doses of airplay on public, college, and community radio stations—if we are smart about how we package our records and promotional materials.

Ragtime Annie is about to do a concert in Briarville, Montana. Her producer, Teton Grande of Badlands Concerts, had requested promotional copies of Annie's records. Teton does some research; she finds out which programs on her local stations play ragtime or folk music, and she personally goes to each station and meets with the program manager. Then Teton gives the station a copy of Annie's most recent recording (older albums too, if the station doesn't already have them). She then puts notes in the mailboxes of DJs whose shows are appropriate for Annie's music, announcing that the station now owns a copy of Ragtime Annie's latest album, and "by the way, a phone interview or live interview could be arranged before Ragtime Annie's concert day."

This energy repays itself twofold: Ragtime Annie gets airplay, and Teton Grande pulls in a large audience for Annie's concert.

Briarville is a relatively small community. There are only three stations needing to be covered. If Teton were producing in a large city, she'd have more stations to cover and would either need to speak to station managers by phone, following up by mailing Annie's records, or she'd need to get members of a radio

FREESTYLE: The musings and experiences of Kay Gardner, who has been deeply involved in women's music and culture since 1973.

RADIO RESOURCES

Radio-related articles that have appeared in previous issues of 'HOT WIRE.' Send SASE for info on how to order back issues.

"Broadcasting in Corn Country" (WEFT/Champaign, Illinois) by Lisa Kuhn, November 1984.

"Midnight Special" (WFMT/Chicago) by Anne Hills, March 1985.

"Making Our Dreams Our Jobs/Betty MacDonald" (WDST/Woodstock, New York) by Toni Armstrong Jr., March 1987.

"Sophie's Parlor" (WPFW/Washington, D.C.) by Nancy Seeger, July 1987.

"Women's Windows: Women's Radio on the Air in Maine" (WERU/Blue Hill, Maine) by Kay Gardner, September 1989.

committee to personally deliver the records to the stations.

COMMUNITY RADIO: (AIR) WAVE OF THE FUTURE

In almost every large city in every state—and even in smaller towns in many states—there are non-commercial radio stations with women's programming. I've had a show called "Women's Windows" for two years on WERU-FM in Blue Hill, Maine. As I tour this country doing performances, lectures, and workshops, I see that there are women's programs being aired in almost every medium-to-large city, and at many college and university stations as well.

Community radio is growing by leaps and bounds. It is run almost entirely by volunteers and has programming that usually appeals to a large cross-section of the broadcasting area's com-

munity. It is the *ideal* medium for women's music and culture. In fact, I think it's the media wave of the future for feminist politics! In the '70s we founded record companies and an alternative music industry; in the '80s we honed our business skills. In the '90s we must move on to the airwaves, utilizing the know-how we've developed over the last twenty years to spread the words and music of woman-consciousness and world peace.

At the National Federation of Community Broadcasting Conference held last May in Lincoln, Nebraska, women broadcasters from all over the U.S.—frustrated that there were no workshops or meetings scheduled to address women's programming—arranged a spontaneous gathering to discuss their concerns.

Forty women attended the meeting and formed a new organization, Community Radio Women. Plans are in the works to produce a collaborative program, with producers from each station sending short pieces to one main producer, who will put a show together. Regular meetings will be held by telephone via a satellite "audio bridge." There is talk of a regular column in the *N.F.C.B. Newsletter* about women's programming. Also, an audio library of tapes of women's programs is being set up, so sharing women's programs from station to station may begin. This chain of events holds great promise for the future of community radio and for feminist consciousness being prominent on the alternative airwaves.

Continued on next page

ABOUT THE WRITER: Kay Gardner is a composer/performer, broadcaster, priestess, teacher, and author who has been active in women's music and culture since 1973. Her book *'Sounding the Inner Landscape: Music as Medicine'* has just been released (Caduceus Publications) along with a companion cassette of guided meditations and music (Ladyslipper Records).

SENDING PROMO MATERIALS TO RADIO STATIONS

Musicians, when you are having a new record made, try to hold out a certain number of promotional albums to give to radio stations. Send them to the attention of women's [or whatever is appropriate] programming. These days DJs prefer to play CDs because they're so easy to cue up. LPs are next best—again, easy to cue—though they are getting harder to manufacture and store. Cassettes are least likely to get airplay because they're not only hard to cue, but don't have the best quality. That isn't to say they won't be played at all, but you should know that they're the least favorite format for radio airplay.

As a broadcaster, I have a personal pet peeve about most cassettes received. Because so many women's music albums are *only* on cassette, I play them a lot on the show "Women's Windows," but I really hate when the timings of the songs or pieces aren't listed on the cassette cover. This little detail can make the difference as to whether I play the song or not! I also want a lyric sheet, because I won't play a

song that doesn't present women in a strong, clear light, and I just don't have time to preview each song in advance of my show.

With your record, send some information about you and your work. I personally don't want to get a press kit. Again, it comes down to time...I just don't have the time to look at it. (Someone advised me early in my performing career that press kits, no matter how slick they are, always end up in the trash can.) Save your money. Just send a clean, well-printed sheet of paper with a professional photo of you and/or your group; a list of where you've played and with whom you've played; a list of your other recordings, if any; and a short paragraph about the style of your music and what type of programming your music would fit into (bluegrass, hip hop, new age, folk, jazz, rock, R&B etc.). The more succinct your materials, the more likely radio folks will bother to look through them.

If your town has a volunteer-run community radio station, I urge you to get involved—whether it's as a broadcaster, as a techie, or as an office worker. It is a wonderful way to meet people, to get the word out about women's con-

cerns, and to move into the '90s bringing feminist consciousness to a huge new audience of radio listeners. ●

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60 minutes of wonderful women's music from a magical birthday event

HOLLY NEAR *from page 5*

YOU FELT YOU HAD TO DO THAT BEFORE?

Not necessarily for other people, but for myself. I had to keep proving that not only was I intellectually committed to gay rights and lesbian rights and women's music, but deep in my bones and blood I understood what that was about. Well, now it's not just an intellectual debate—it's completely integrated. My criticism of imperialism and my horror at patriarchal behavior, my feeling at the tragedy of poverty, the heinousness of racism...how many more adjectives and adverbs can you come up with for these different things? Those things are just so deeply rooted in me now that I don't feel when I'm talking about something that I necessarily have to reveal my personal experience with it. I only have to deal with my commitment to the issue we're talking about. So I can talk about how still very, very backward we are in this country about how people respond to multi-racial couples—I mean after thirty or forty years of this I'm still amazed at how few multi-racial couples we see, and then when we do, how people turn and look. Well, a person doesn't necessarily have to talk about their own multi-racial experiences in order to talk about that. Someone might say, "You need to show us your papers to prove that you're an expert on the subject," and if you doubt yourself, then you somehow think that maybe you do. I don't know if this is true for all cultures; I think that there are other cultures that come to grips much sooner with what they reveal and don't reveal. There are other cultures that are much more private than WASP cultures are, and I think that white guilt also makes people want to overstate their position. But once you move past operating from guilt, you don't have to overstate your position—you just have to state your position, you just have to be your position.

BEHAVIOR TALKS.

Right. This is where I am, so when there are people who doubt my commitment to the lesbian community, I don't feel the need to overstate my commitment. I just say, "Here I am, this is what I do. It's meaningful or it's not meaningful to you, and I don't have to defend it." I can certainly be educated if I'm missing something and I need to integrate more of one thing or another, but that need to be constantly proving that

you're a card-carrying member to some idea is really not on my agenda anymore.

So now I feel pretty much that I would like to have my personal relationships be personal. Not because I'm needing to hide anything, but because it takes some pressure off the relationship. It's hard enough to have a relationship without having everybody watching. On the other hand, I know it comes with the territory and it's not just me—it's Dolly Parton, or Elizabeth Taylor, or whoever. People love to talk about other people. People love gossip; they *love* it, they don't even care whether they believe it or not. And so I have had to mature a little around that, and realize why should the women's movement or the peace movement be the exception? Why are we any different than the rest of humanity when it comes to this stuff? Everybody likes some dirt. So I try to find a balance.



Irene Young

"I'll keep going out on limbs and trying and making mistakes, but I don't doubt my intentions. I don't need to keep proving myself over and over again."

AND MOST PEOPLE THINK THAT YOU'RE CERTAINLY LIVING A MORE EXCITING LIFE THAN THEY ARE.

Well, I think I do live an exciting life, but I think I've had a lot fewer affairs than people imagine. It seems that people are always talking about who I'm sleeping with even during long periods of celibacy, so *someone's* having a good time, but I'm not sure that it's me! That used to really upset me, and it just doesn't now.

WHY IS THAT?

I don't know. Maybe because I was more insecure about my own sexuality. I thought that no matter what I did, I couldn't just go find out for myself—I somehow became a *symbol*, and every-

thing I did represented a choice. And maybe I hadn't made a choice yet, maybe I was just out testing waters, but the moment word got out of something that I was doing, it became a political statement. Now I feel much calmer about that. It's not my business what people are talking about. And the fact of the matter is, relationships are not my *forté*. It's very hard with my particular life. I'm going to do thirty concerts this fall; I'm home for four weekends between June and January. I suppose that in the olden days—even now—if I were a man, there are women who have been taught to stay at home and keep the home fires burning. But I'm not a man, and I don't want a wife. I think I've made moment-to-moment decisions. It's not something I've decided to do from now to the end of time, but right now this is what I do. I'm wanting to expand my creative career so that I'm not just doing concerts. I want to get back into films. I've written this book, and there may be a follow-up.

WHAT OTHER PROJECTS ARE IN THE WORKS?

My sister has asked me to write a one-woman play that she's going to do in May at the Santa Fe Repertory Company, based on excerpts from the book. Also, I just finished doing a cameo role in a film called *Dog Fight* with River Phoenix and Lily Taylor. Lily is the one in *Mystic Pizza* who decides to get married at the last minute. She's an extraordinary actress, and River is wonderful, too. They're both having to stretch so big in this film, it's just great. River is a real love-child and he's playing a Marine. They send him off to boot camp. He didn't know me, but we just hit it off really great, and now he wants to hear all the records, and we talked politics on the set all the time. Lily's acting—she's like a woman who doesn't have any space between her thought and her heart and her face. I play her mom, which is fun because twenty years ago I played the daughter, and now I'm playing the mom. I play Rose and it's Rose's cafe, which is a working class, Irish greasy spoon in San Francisco, in 1963. A lot of the work that I actually did on this film isn't on camera. I did some work, not a lot, with Lily doing improv so that she could figure out who her family was, none of which is in the script, sort of trying to find out the background stuff. And it's being directed by a woman, Nancy Sevoca (*True Love*). *Dog Fight* is a very

complicated script, and I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't trusted Nancy. It's one of those stories that would be terrible if put in the wrong hands.

WHEN WILL IT BE RELEASED?

I think they're supposed to put it into some theaters by December so it can get into the Academy Awards circle, but it will probably get a general release in January or February.

SO ARE YOU GOING TO DO MORE WRITING, OR IS THIS ENOUGH FOR AWHILE?

I just finished writing a children's story that isn't being discussed for publication yet. It will be a while before I think about doing anything with it. I'm finding now that I'm writing not because I have to, which is kind of nice. I guess what that example means to me is that I didn't have a deadline and I wrote it anyway.

I've only written one song in three years, because while I was writing the book I just couldn't find the voice for a song. I was thinking literary. So I wrote the title song for the new album that's coming out [*Singer in the Storm*] with George Merrill. He has a partnership and writes with his wife Shannon; they wrote Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance With Somebody." I met him through some music industry connections. Melissa Etheridge plays guitar on "Singer in the Storm." We've sort of become friends and it's nice. I think it's because she's actually gotten a lot of support from me for going out into the industry. I don't think that she has to doubt for a minute that I think what she's doing is great.

So I think I want to do more writing, but I'm not sure in what form. I know I'll be writing this one-woman show, which scares me a lot because I haven't a clue on how to do it. I seem to be in a lot of things lately that I don't have a clue how to do. I don't want to just rest on laurels. ●

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HOLLY'S BOOK *from page 5*

what kind of a woman a lesbian is. Strikingly beautiful, well-dressed women would saunter in with their lovers, who were equally striking and beautiful. Athletic women in running shorts and muscles to die for would stop by. Women who I imagined rode up on motorcycles (but may have had Volvo station wagons with car seats in back, for all I knew) would roll up their sleeves and shoot a hell of a game of pool. Older couples who had fallen in love back when role-playing was an essential part of survival would come in and celebrate their thirty-fifth anniversary, one with a butch haircut, pants, and comfortable shoes, the other in a dress, makeup, and teased hairdo. It was often the case, as it is in heterosexual relationships, that the femme was the stronger of the two, and the butch a marshmallow. I saw integration take place naturally, not out of political awareness about racism, but because women fell in love first and had to figure out what to do with their racism second. There were also the sad and lonely women, the ones who never quite got what they had hoped for, who no longer fell in love, who weren't invited home for Christmas or Hanukkah, who were the leftover victims of the time just short of the rubyfruit jungle. They looked on with sad confusion bordering on fear as they watched the new, young baby dykes flaunting proud and radical gay slogans on their T-shirts—bold, sexy, free-spirited.

There were the bartenders who tried to keep an eye on their flock, who faced the law and the mob and anyone else they had to deal with to stay in business. They would discourage the straight men who came in to gawk, harass, or work out a threesome. There were also the straight couples who came in to find a woman who would do it with them, just to liven up their dying sex life. Sometimes they found what they were looking for, but for the most part they missed the point. Lesbians didn't come to lesbian bars to do it for men or with men or with straight women. They came because they enjoyed the company of other lesbians, and they would prefer that all the riffraff start their own bar.

There was always talk about some Hollywood actress or other who had been in a few nights before. I felt bad for these women who had no privacy. I also marveled at their courage. A general rule did seem to be in effect that if you were going to pass on that kind of gossip, you told only other queers. It was not meant to be malicious; finding out a famous person is gay or a lesbian is felt to be a validation in a homophobic society. You could tell yourself, "You see, she is a lesbian and she is beautiful and respected and famous. She's okay, therefore I'm okay." Of course, everyone knew that if she was out of the closet, she would no longer be respected and famous, but damn, she would still be beautiful.

MICHIGAN

I had made this journey from airport to festival many times and in many states of mind. The Vancouver, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Mariposa festivals in Canada; women's music festivals in Copenhagen and Amsterdam; the Cambridge Folk Festival in England; Tonder and Aarhus folk fests in Denmark; the Communist party music festival in Portugal; The Nueva Cancion peace festivals in El Salvador, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Mexico; the anti-nuke festivals in West Germany and Japan; the women's festivals in Georgia, California, Michigan, Washington, D.C., Indiana, and Illinois; and the folk or jazz fests in Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island, Ohio, Massachusetts, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Iowa. I had performed at the Ten Year Anniversary of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, but I was back again for year eleven.

The luggage area of the airport was full of musicians and campers, all looking like dykes, if not in fact. A woman carrying an amplifier or a backpack has a charmingly queer look about her, regardless of whom she sleeps with. Tracy Strann, my road manager, found our bags and we made our way out to the car that was waiting to take us to the festival site. I was pleased by the clockwork organization that had developed after all these years.

My "festival friend" met us on arrival. To my delight, Adrian Hood had been assigned to help me. She is Alix Dobkin's "liddle girl" [daughter], and I have known her sweet face for years. Alix is a lesbian music pioneer, ever loved for her first bold dyke album put forth in 1974, *Lavender Jane Loves Women*. Adrian—graceful, articulate, and wise for her years—has grown up on these festivals and now she is seeing to it that the tradition of her foremothers continues. I enjoyed putting the logistics of my life in her hands for the next few days. Immediately, Adrian and Tracy hit it off, as Jews, as caretakers, as music lovers, and as two of the very few heterosexual women in attendance. They were easily enjoying the women-only environment and the lesbian energy, rather than fearing and resisting it as so many straight people do.

Women had gathered weeks in advance to make ready the campsite, laying carpets through the fields and forests so that women in wheelchairs could get around the vast spread: pitching tents and building kitchens; bringing in grand pianos, sound, and lights; creating spaces for child care, AA meetings, workshops, jam sessions, showers, games,

continued on page 56

IN VISIBLE from page 23

hegemony of patriarchy, colonialism, and imperialism. The psychic anguish caused by exclusion and fomented by racism, sexism, and class-based discrimination comes through these films and videos with force and clarity. Each work speaks to the alienation of women. Yet each exhorts its audience to transcend the immediate situation by affirming and re-defining identities; by grounding these identities in the primordial character of culture, and by invigorating the self through a celebration of that identity.

These themes are interwoven in the film that was chosen to launch the festival: Raquel Gerber's *Ori*, which won the Paul Robeson prize at the eleventh edition of the Pan African Festival of Cinema and Television at Ouagadougou. *Ori* can best be described as a sensory journey into the primeval past, tracking the traces of a civilization that once enjoyed dignity and sovereignty. In *Ori*, we come face to face with the poetic, philosophic and material dimensions of existence and identity. Through music, tempo, colour, and soul, we get a sense of the glory that once was as it reappears, ever so briefly, in moments of historical time. In juxtaposition with this melange of sights and sounds is the more spiritual message—identifying and speaking to the links between Africa and Brazil; links forged in the antiquity of time, whose etched imprints remain in the collective mind of the Brazilian people. The joy and trauma of the African journey are presented as punctuating an endless quest for identity; for regaining spiritual completeness which can only occur in the affirmation of being one.

The marked success of *In Visible Colours* points to the readiness of audiences to accept alternative ways of perceiving women of colour and Third World women. It suggests that there is room for challenging and contesting dominant definitions with a view of ultimately displacing them with more authentic visions and representations. The space that festivals such as *In Visible Colours* carve out are crucial in terms of their implications. For when alternative definitions become acceptable in the world of celluloid reality, their power to contest definitions and create redefinitions in everyday life assume a far greater potency.

For information: *In Visible Colours*, 849 Beatty St., Vancouver, BC Canada. V6B 2M6 (604) 685-1137. ●

FILMS from page 25

grounds the discriminatory perspectives that have perpetuated the representation of Asian women as geisha girls and dragon ladies. (NAATA/Crosscurrent Media)

SOLID WOMEN

Tracey Moffatt/Australia, 1989, 22 min.

This documentary examines the histories and lives of some talented Western Australian Aboriginal women. It was produced by a largely Aboriginal woman crew, and commissioned by the Women's Advisory Council to the Premier in Perth, Western Australia. (Artist)

SURNAME VIET GIVEN NAME NAM

Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1989, 108 min.

A challenge to existing stereotypes about Vietnamese culture and the role of women within it, *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* offers a fresh perspective on women's roles in a variety of settings: the resistance movement; representations of women in Vietnamese folk culture; and images of women in the media. Archival footage and interviews with Vietnamese women. (IDERA)

SWEET JAIL: THE SIKHS OF YUBA CITY

Beheroze Shroff/U.S., 1985, 48 min.

A personal and intimate portrait of one of the first Sikh women to migrate to Yuba City, California. *Sweet Jail* traces the life of this woman as she goes through the loneliness and trauma of adaptation. With the arrival of other women and the maturing of her own children, she becomes the focal point around which divergent cultural tendencies and life-styles converge. (Women in Focus)

SWEET SUGAR RAGE

Honor Ford-Smith, Harclde Walcott, Sistren Theatre Collective/Jamaica, 1986, 42 min.

A stark account of the harsh conditions affecting women workers in the sugarcane fields of Jamaica. Set against a soundscape of pulsating reggae music, *Sweet Sugar Rage* offers a brilliant contrast between the urban areas of Kingston (where the Sistren Theatre Collective resides) and the painfully desolate lives of sugarcane workers. (DEC)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

KO WAI KA HUA

Ngatai Huata/New Zealand, 1988, 5 min.

A music video featuring Maori songs from the Aotearoa region of New Zealand. (Black Katz Trust)

THE TRACE-SAMA

Nejia Ben Mabrouk/Tunisia, 1988, 90min.

Originally conceived in 1982, *The Trace* was completed in 1988 after being dragged through a major court case over the rights of the producer and those of the director, Nejia Ben Mabrouk. This award-winning film deals with the life of a young girl in a village in Southern Tunisia. Sabra is continually given contradic-

tory messages by her mother. On the one hand, her mother eagerly awaits Sabra's entrance into adulthood via marriage. At the same time, she herself graphically portrays the grim reality this entails. (No Money Company)

TWO LIES

Pam Tom/U.S., 1989, 25 min.

A sensitive portrayal of generational and cultural conflict, *Two Lies* revolves around a mother-daughter relationship. Doris Chu is a divorced Chinese American woman who decides to have plastic surgery to make her eyes rounder. Her daughter Mel embodies the quintessential characteristics of the younger generation's attempts to carve a meaningful identity in the hybrid cultural worlds of their parents. Through bitter confrontations between the two, we witness the beginnings of a harmonious relationship that transcends the boundaries of culture and time. (Women Make Movies)

VOICE OF OUR OWN

P. Ratnam/Ali Kazimi/Canada, 1988, 25 min.

The mainstream feminist tradition within Canada has always sought to address the concerns and rights of its white members. This work illustrates how immigrant and visible minority women, dissatisfied with the lack of attention devoted to their concerns over immigration, employment and racism, have struck out on their own to form a parallel movement. *Voice of Our Own* offers a superb analysis of the intersection between race and gender, and highlights how the factor of race brings a whole other set of relationships that are equally oppressive. (Shadowcatcher Productions)

WAVING

Ann Marie Fleming/Canada, 1987, 5 min.

Waving captures the ebb and flow of life as it passes through various cycles. Birth and death mark the endpoints of this journey that revolves around the artist and her grandmother. Visually arresting, this experimental work emphasizes the grief that accompanies the end of the cycle of life. (CFDW)

WEAVING THE FUTURE —

WOMEN OF GUATEMALA

Sonia Gonzales/Guatemala, 1988, 28 min.

This fast-paced documentary examines how women are building a just society in Guatemala, a country ravaged by political upheaval and economic instability. Produced by a collective of Guatemalan independent videomakers living in exile in Mexico, this work takes an important look at the contribution Guatemalan women are making in this struggle for justice. (Women Make Movies)

WOMEN'S STORY

Peng Xiaolian/China, 1987, 90 min.

The lives of three rural women as they journey from their destitute village to Chongqing, where they hope to sell yarn in a free market. While the film starts by depicting their failure to support one another and their mutual oppression in a male-dominated society, it ends on an optimistic note, emphasizing the growing solidarity of these women. An insightful and sensitive depiction of the situation of women in China. Banned by the Chinese government. (Artist)

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continued from inside front cover

GOODBYE AGAIN, SAPPHO

This edition of "The Tenth Muse" will be the last in the series about Sappho that has been running since 1986. Readers interested in obtaining a full set of reprints of the ten columns, send a self-addressed stamped envelope and request reprints info.

THAT GIFT-GIVING SEASON IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

And what a splendid time to give *HOT WIRE* gift subscriptions. We would dearly love to double our circulation—an obtainable goal if subscribers make sure their friends also become subscribers. Isn't there at least one person you know who would appreciate receiving *HOT WIRE* this year, courtesy of you? We'll send a gift card (or your card, if you send it to us) to let her know she's receiving it and to let her know the occasion (winter holiday? birthday? anniversary? courtship gesture?)

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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 tables of contents of all back issues (starting with #1, November 1984). The price for reprints is \$1 for two articles (minimum order, two articles). If you have a particular interest—a specific artist, topic, or festival, for example—you can indicate that when you write, and our staff will try to help you find exactly what you're looking for.

COMPLAINTS AND QUESTIONS...

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O YE FOOTLOOSE ONES... READ THIS, PLEASE!

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Toni Armstrong Jr.
Publisher & Managing Editor

HOTLINE from page 11

views, news blurbs. SASE to the Susan B. Anthony Coven #1, 5856 College Ave. Box 213, Oakland, CA 94618.

Lipservice is a new entertainment newsletter for **WOMEN IN THE MIAMI AREA**. Send women's music and culture info from any area in the South or Southeast to Jamie Fox, 9630 W. Fern Lane, Miramar, FL 33025.

Welcome to *Bridges*, the new journal "for **JEWISH FEMINISTS** and our friends." Edited by Ruth Atkin, Elly Bulkin, Rita Falbel, Clare Kinberg, Ruth Kraut, Adrienne Rich, and Laurie White, *Bridges* will come out twice a year. P.O. Box 18437, Seattle, WA 98118.

SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT

For a series of lectures and probably a book on **LESBIAN VISUAL ART AND ARTISTS**, send slides or photocopies of work, personal info, and copies of articles by or about you. Especially interested in self-portraits by lesbian artists and in work containing some indication of lesbian content. Tee Corinne, P.O. Box 278, Wolf Creek, OR 97497-0278. (503) 476-0425.

THE GODDESS ANTHOLOGY is an ongoing compilation of "women's true encounters with the Great Mother archetype." SASE to Helen Harvey, Rainbow City, P.O. Box 8447, Berkeley, CA 94707. (415) 527-6055.

ADVICE COLUMN for women's and New Age journals seeks letters asking advice regarding how to integrate the witchcraft philosophy into our everyday lives. Mariah, P.O. Box 8370, Des Moines, IA 50301-8370.

Submissions sought for an anthology reflecting diversity of culture, ethnicity, and age on the experience of **CATHOLIC GIRLHOOD**. Patrice Vecchione, P.O. Box 61, Capitola, CA 95010.

Narrative writing (no poetry) wanted for Crossing Press anthology **LESBIAN LOVE STORIES II**. Irene Zahava, 307 W. State St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

To Be or Not to Be BUTCH/FEMME—all written forms wanted for lesbian anthology. Caryn Goldberg, Multiple Dimensions, 1604 Vista Del Mar Ave., Hollywood, CA 90028.

New publishing house seeks manuscripts on **WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY** (Wicca, witchcraft, magic, healing, mythology, and related topics). Delphi Press, 211 E. Ohio #2901, Chicago, IL 60611.

ANTHOLOGY ON AGING wants original and reprinted works: poetry, short stories, autobiography, legends, folktales, oral histories. SASE to Peg Cruikshank, 2430 Cabrillo, San Francisco, CA 94121.

HOLLY'S BOOK from page 53

massage, and emotional support for those overwhelmed by the experience of spending the week with thousands of women. This was space designed to create room for revelation: round bellies, tattoos, mastectomies, muscles, artificial limbs, scars, body hair, burns, voluptuous thighs, and skin of every shade from iridescent white to pitch black. We also brought our violence, our self-hatred, our misinformation, and our confusion.

The performers gathered in the backstage area. Women from all over the country, and from other countries, hung out together or not-so-together, depending on who was in love with whom, who had a new record, who was broke, who was angry at her manager, who was invited to be in which collaborations. But mostly I hear waves of laughter coming from one table, where Kate Clinton and Ferron are discussing world affairs. Or I see/hear Betsy Rose and Deidre McCalla building bridges with their soothing good sense and gutsy voices. Or there is the circle of drums where Edwina Lee Tyler, Nydia "Liberty" Mata, and Carolyn Brandy are connecting earth and sky. Or the familiar throaty voices of Therese Edell and Maxine Feldman. Or there are the notes zooming like shooting stars from the vocal equivalent of a Stradivarius—Rhiannon. (When she and I sang Cris Williamson's "Waterfall" for the Ten Year Anniversary, I felt part of one of the most sensual lesbian performances in the herstory of women's music. Fortunately, it had been recorded for posterity.)

This year, the crew had built a ramp that went out like a Miss America runway into the audience. At sound check I was challenged by a teasing production crew to make full use of it. In fact, they said they had built it with me in mind. That night it rained off and on and the ramp was slippery, but I moved toward it throughout my set, my foot touching it slightly in passing as I crossed the stage, like a coy flirtation. I enjoyed hearing the excitement level grow in the first few rows as they thought I was about to walk out into the crowd. As I came to the end of my set, the crew told me later that they began to wonder how I could have passed up the opportunity. But no, I was just holding out for high drama. I invited Toshi Reagon, Alix Dobkin, Betsy Lippitt, and Lorraine Segato onto the stage to sing backup on my last number, and we started to have some kind of fun on my song "Crushed." Just when the singers were really locked in, I hit the ramp and the crowd went wild. I danced and shook my ass like a regular rock & roller. So much so that even Toshi Reagon, twenty years my junior and heavily into rock, told me I had definitely shattered a few stereotypes she had had about me being elder-generation folk. But for my encore I returned, and thousands of women stood to join me in "Singing for Our Lives."

Maybe it was the music or the night or the woman. I hold all three responsible for looking their best. I suggested I spend the night in her tent. Don't think me bold, I wouldn't have asked if I wasn't pretty sure she would say yes. My "festival friend," about to go off with her pals, inquired, "Is there anything else you need before you turn in?" I shook my head and bade her good night. The storm raged outside the tent, but inside we were warm and wet. No, can't think of anything else I need. ●

TRIVIA: A JOURNAL OF IDEAS seeks radical, creative, feminist thought in the form of essays, reviews, translations, and experimental prose for its special double issue "Breaking Forms." *Trivia*, P.O. Box 606, North Amherst, MA 01059.

Anthology on **WOMEN VAMPIRES** from a feminist perspective seeks submissions. Analysis, essays, book/film reviews, creative writing, art. Special interest in lesbian vampire material. *Vampire Anthology*, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.

Submissions sought for new book series, **GENDER AND GENRE IN LITERATURE**, exploring such topics as sexuality and textual inheritance; the influence of female authorship on the evolution of a genre (or the creation of new genres); the roles of women characters in patriarchal literary forms. Manuscripts/proposals to: Carol Snyder, Garland Publishing, University of Houston/Clear Lake, Box 508, 2700 Bay Area, Houston, TX 77058.

WOMAN OF POWER—magazine of feminism, spirituality, and politics—seeks submissions: "The Living Earth," "Women of

Color: A Celebration of Spirit," and "Women in Community." P.O. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238. (617) 625-7885,

Lesbian publishing company is looking for manuscripts from **LESBIAN WRITERS**. Sample chapters and plot outlines to: Clothespin Press, 5529 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90042.

Anthology of first-person accounts of the **EARLY DAYS OF THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT** seeks essays about how the movement changed women's lives; especially interested in reaching women with the Crenshaw Women's Center in the early 1970s. Barbara Chesser (213) 491-0430.

Stories of lesbians who have **LOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS** with family or friends due to "coming out" wanted for anthology. Lynne D'Orsay, P.O. Box 332, Portsmouth, NH 03803-0332.

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ALISON & KRIS from page 14

K: Is it really? Oh, Alison, that's the sweetest thing you've ever said to me.

A: You know that. I mean, we do have this strange intimacy that neither of us, I don't think, has with many people.

K: I know. Isn't it great? It's a kind of pleasant voyeurism. It's wonderful, I think, to come out about our friendship. It makes me really happy.

A: You know, in a conversation with you sometimes, it's like watching an earthquake. It's like all these planes colliding—all these different ideas coming together, and you juxtapose these ideas in this brilliant way. They just flow out of you.

K: Sick.

A: It is sick.

K: For some people. For people who have to be too close to me, it's really hard.

A: I can imagine that it would be. It's like so much activity.

K: Hey, did you know [my dog] Thunder and I have toned up this spring as a result of not driving? We've given up driving. Didn't I tell you about getting into Porsche-enders?

A: What?

K: Well, it's a twelve-step program that I'm starting for people who realize they're addicted to driving. You see, the thing is, Alison, we have to attract up-scale people with the expensive cars who can still afford, like, gas. We have to get them to see that they're addicted to driving. That's why they need such expensive cars—you know, their lives are completely unmanageable. What I notice when I walk is that rich people are driving. And so my not driving is sort of making the air better for them, which pisses me off.

A: I think walking is a form of meditation.

K: Yeah. A nice talk with yourself, and unfortunately I don't even stop vocalizing when I talk to myself. When I'm with Thunder, people think it's okay because I'm talking to the dog.

A: Do you talk to yourself on the street?

K: Yeah, when I'm with my dog, mainly.

A: In the first person or the third person?

K: Third, of course.

A: So you really are talking to yourself.

K: Well, no. People who can legitimately talk in third person are presidents, editors, and people with worms. You know, I might fall

into the third category. Hey, Alison. You know how they say "the pen is mightier than the sword"? That's why it's so important that we're cartoonists and writers and stuff, right?

A: But, if that's true then the other saying, "Sticks and stones can break my bones but names will never hurt me," that should be false. I think the sticks and stones one expresses a very primitive world view. I mean, sticks and stones—that's really violent. So I think we should just abandon that one.

K: Me, too...Names, however...

A: You know, Kris, I always feel like I don't do enough.

K: Yeah. That's the beautiful thing about you.

A: It's a terrible thing. My motivation is so much about my sense of inadequacy, like I'm always trying to make up for something, always.

K: Well, I think that's what we learn as women.

A: That's what we learn as people.

K: I don't know that you have to take your motivation apart so much if the work is really good. Out of the motivation, the work gets better and better.

A: At what cost?

K: At what personal cost? Well, that's how

we justify not doing political work—we're too wracked.

A: I do get really wracked. I don't have time to do anything else, I really don't. But that's no excuse.

K: Why not? I think it's a perfect excuse. I know that if I did go to political meetings that I would be so...not disrespectful, but disruptive.

A: You would be. They'd think you were an agent.

K: You see. They don't want us at their meetings. They just want us to draw pictures of people of color and the physically challenged, lesbians and gay men of all walks of life that represent their boards of directors. So, if you're ready to do some propaganda work, I am too. And that's what I was saying at the beginning, that a lot of my work is propaganda. Have you received any letters from me recently, anything interesting or appalling? I write you all the time.

A: People know you're good.

K: Well, only a few and they're not talking. They're all ex-lovers.

A: Your day will come.

K: Yes I know. I'm so happy. That reminds me, do you have an epitaph?

A: No, what's yours?

K: Well, I don't either, but let's start working on those. ●

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OLIVIA CRUISE *from page 27*

home of seventeen years to the country. Through the rollicking "The Girls All Dance" are evinced reminiscences for those of us whose coming out included some moments of heterosexual behavior, i.e., high school sock hops. Although the usually exuberant delivery was somewhat dampened by Tret's unrelenting and disabling nausea, the music conveyed and elicited a sense of peaceful self-awareness and contentment.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14.

This day and night were spent in the Bahaman tropics of Nassau and the adjoining Paradise Island. Gambling, sight-seeing, beach.

8:15 P.M. Olivia recording artist Lucie Blue Tremblay displayed the pearls of her new album *Tendresse* with her customary droll charm. Acknowledging the universally felt turbulence of the previous night's passage through the Gulf Stream to Nassau—as well as her gratitude that she was performing under more stable, docked conditions—Lucie started her set by forgetting the words to "Mademoiselle" (from *Lucie Blue Tremblay*) and engaging the audience who couldn't recall the second verse, either. Alternating between piano and acoustic guitar, between singing in English and her native (Canadian) French, Lucie explained about being on tour ("Tour Song"), taught us the

words to a French standard, expressed her anger at the prejudiced, dignity-crushing, unecological world in which we live ("Politique"), and introduced her new rhythmic/electronic sound. She had accompanied the solemn wedding ceremony which preceded her show with a poignant rendition of "I'm So Lucky," and was the most woman-positive performer with her introductions, her open "*Parlons de Nos Amours*," ["Let Us Talk of Our Loves"], and "The Coming Out Song." In keeping with that spirit, Lucie welcomed Deidre McCalla back to the stage for a moving cover of Meg Christian's "The Road I Took to You." Lucie was applauded into two encores by the upbeat, grooving crowd.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15. Our very own, semi-private, complete-with-bar-and-picnic-area island, Blue Lagoon. A lesbian olympics with tug-of-war, betting on crab races, impromptu volleyball, and the peacock blue water and lush snorkeling that we had awaited.

8:15 P.M. Cris Williamson and Teresa Trull, accompanied by the precise and lead guitar fretwork by Tret Fure, recreated their *Country Blessed* show which had ended its national tour in San Francisco. Starting with an uplifting, poignant a cappella mutual affirmation and ending with a song written ostensibly about children with AIDS—but speaking to the child in all of us—Cris and Teresa brought their old and new magic to this final musical performance of the cruise. The *Country Blessed* songs were interwoven with Teresa's "Rosalie," "Tell the Truth," "Hurts Like the Devil," and "Grandmother's Land." Alternating lead vocals and coharmonies, Cris and Teresa evoked the Wild West ("Calamity Jane"), open skies ("Country Blessed"), and the life of a woman bootlegger ("Darling Corey"). Bonnie Hayes, on keyboards throughout the set, sang her "Love Letter" (currently made famous by Bonnie Raitt). The set concluded with a glimpse of the imagination of Teresa's childhood ("Shady Glen") and with Cris's piercing cover of "Soulful Days" against Bonnie Hayes' acoustic piano. Solid, spontaneous, lyrical, a tribute and testament to the enduring and changing nature of the women in women's music.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 12:15 A.M.

Biggest Surprise Party Afloat. The majority of the women on board ship stood in expectant, nervous silence awaiting Cris Williamson's arrival onto the pool deck for her (surprise) birthday party. Trying not to toot and clang our

DISTRIBUTION *from page 43*

and so we have just about enough time to close up the crafts area, get changed, and head over to the auditorium to get set up before the doors are opened. It usually takes all of us at the Mainstage, because most sales happen in a very short amount of time (at the intermission and end of the show), and performers usually come out to sign at these times too.

Michigan—a festival held completely outdoors—presents its own set of challenges for us. We take more titles, and more copies of each title. We use twice as many staff. Although we only sell during the day, the weather can make it much harder on the women working. At the National festival it takes us about five hours to set up, using four to six staff members; at Michigan, it takes two days. We essentially build a record store. It takes us one entire day to build the booth, using custom designed four-by-eight wall panels and four-by-twelve roof panels. Another day is spent setting up tables, stocking the booth, and getting our displays set up. We use a moving van to store the overstock, turning it into a warehouse for the duration of the festival.

For the days we are there, our staff continually restocks the booth. In the past, we had a couple of women in the truck pulling stock plus a couple more in the booth writing up lists of what was needed, running them to the van, picking up the boxes, running them to the booth, and then shelving the stock. One of our biggest innovations in 1989 was the purchase of two headsets. Now we can simply stand in front of the tape rack or record bins and tell the "warehouse" what we need. We can keep the racks full all the time, and use staff for sales instead of running.

We have the great good fortune to have a group of dedicated women who work with us at festivals. The core group has worked with us for years, and is an indispensable part of the success of our

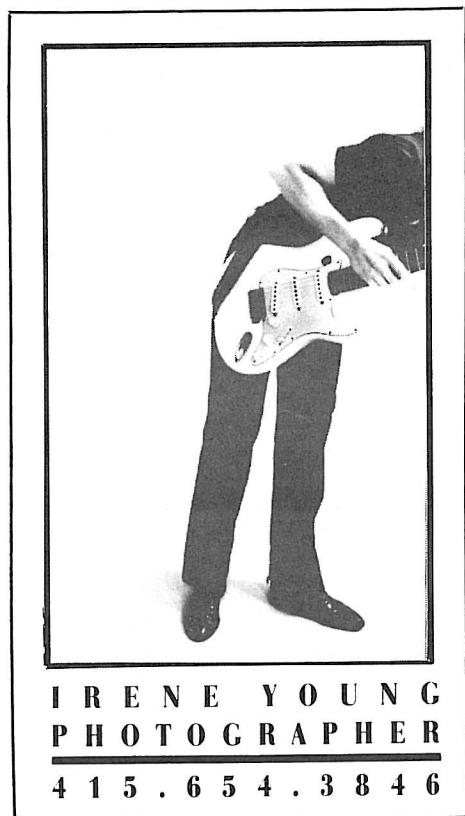
Continued on next page

noisemakers too early, yet wanting to make sure that they would work at the designated time, we shifted feet and whispered until Cris appeared. Filmed by many video cameras at the moment of her entry, perhaps delighted, perhaps overwhelmed, she remained friendly through greetings by many individual women.

6:15 A.M. The last breakfast.

8 A.M. Customs. Everyone needed to be cleared before anyone could debark.

9 A.M. The end. ●



I R E N E Y O U N G
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festivals. Working with these women is one of the best parts for me.

The other thing I like best about working at festivals is the chance to answer questions and help women find music they might not otherwise know about. I have to know the product we carry because I work directly with stores, and consequently have heard most of the music we have in stock. With the increasing number of titles—and the diversity of styles available today—it can be a bit overwhelming to try to pick among them. Sometimes it only takes a little information to help steer a customer to something she'll end up enjoying. It's especially gratifying when a woman is at her first festival, having her first exposure to women's music.

Even though I now go to festivals to work, I enjoy them more than ever. All the energy that goes into getting ready for the festival helps extend the excitement beyond the actual festival week. We have a lot of fun at the festival, too, whether we're selling, or relaxing after a long day, or watching the shows.

We, the record distributors, are one piece among many in the creation of a festival. ●

DINAH from page 36

arrangements when she sang with big orchestras by using jazz elements. But with the more appropriate jazz groups, her voice *became* an instrument, improvising in dialogue with other instruments.

There are those who laughed at her taste in clothes (she owned thirty-four furs, six tiaras and 200 pairs of shoes). But she didn't care. They didn't understand her sense of high camp. Dinah has been accused of being mean, evil, brash, loud, and gunslinging. She was also generous, kind, considerate, compassionate, tender, thoughtful, agreeable and flexible. I think she was the first Black woman whose gossip was reported in the white press. That she was demanding of her musicians—relentlessly so until she got what she wanted—is also true. She had a perfect ear and she was the boss. But she stimulated them too, getting them to give her their best.

Dinah's reputation is lasting. She will go on fascinating listeners through all the changes in pop music, because she had the gift of being able to mirror feelings you didn't know you had and the even greater gift of enlarging your imagination, encouraging you to go on looking

for yourself.

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Karen forgot to attend the "re-entry workshop" at the end of the lesbian music festival.

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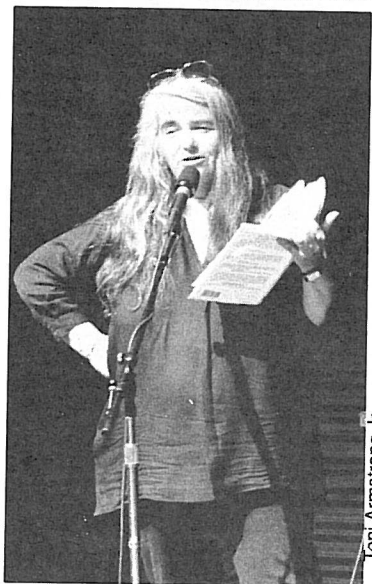
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LESBIAN CONTRADICTION: A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. 584 Castro St. #263, San Francisco, CA 94114. Commentary, analysis, humor, reviews, cartoons by women who agree to disagree. Quarterly; \$6/year, \$1.50/sample.

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.

OUTLINES. Editor Tracy Baim, 3059 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 871-7610. Free in Chicago; \$25/year by mail. Lesbian/gay newsmagazine; extensive women's music & culture coverage. Midwest and national focus.

TRIVIA, A JOURNAL OF IDEAS. PO Box 606, N. Amherst, MA 01059. Publishing radical, creative feminist thought in the form of essays, reviews, translations, and experimental prose.

VISIBILITIES, THE LESBIAN MAGAZINE. Dept. HW, PO Box 1258, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009-1258. Interviews, features, columns, cartoons—all by, for, and about lesbians. Publishing since 1987. \$15/8 issues (\$US 23 Canada and overseas). Sample copies/\$2.25 (\$US 3 Canada and overseas). SASE for writers' guidelines.

RECORDINGS

AVALON: Solo Flute Meditations. Kay Gardner, Ladyslipper, PO Box 3124, Durham, NC 27705. 7 pieces, each channelled at a different holy site in what once was Avalon.

A CIRCLE IS CAST. Libana, Ladyslipper, PO Box 3124, Durham, NC 27705. 1986; Boston-based feminist chorus. Honors spirit & spirituality of women. Songbook available.

DRUM DRAMA. Edwina Lee Tyler, Percussion Piquant, Inc., 2 Ellen St., Ringwood NJ 07456. Intensely dramatic, meditative; African drums and percussion.

FAMILIAR FACES. Peggy Seeger, Redwood Records, 6400 Hollis St. #8, Emeryville, CA 94608. 12 songs about women's lives; cassette & CD.

FROM HOUSEWIFE TO HERETIC: Sonia Speaks. Sonia Johnson Speeches on Tape, PO Box 10286, Albuquerque, NM 87184. 60-minute cassette, \$9.95.

GARDEN OF ECSTASY. Kay Gardner, Ladyslipper Records, PO Box 3124, Durham, NC 27715. "These compositions describe the colors, fragrances, and sounds which have

greeted me since I composed 'A Rainbow Path.' Rather than re-explore a meditative path, my muse this time took me on a different, more active journey." (All women musicians/techs.)

GOING FARTHER OUT OF OUR MINDS: Sonia Speaks. Sonia Johnson Speeches on Tape, PO Box 10286, Albuquerque, NM 87184. 90-minute cassette, \$9.95.

IN MY TWO HANDS. Betsy Rose, Parallax Music, PO Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707. Lively hymns, chants, country-eastern ballads. Live recording with guitarist Nina Gerber.

IN SEARCH OF THE HAMMER/RETURN OF THE HAMMER by Cappy Kotz, lyrics by Phrin Prickett. Friends of the Hammer, 5445 26th Ave

Songs of the heart & spirit, blending folk and New Age.

VERSE-ABILITY. Helen Hooke, Montana Blake, PO Box 888, Hoboken, NJ 07030-0888. Helen Hooke, of *Deadly Nightshade* fame, on lead vocals, guitar, and violin.

WALK THAT EDGE. Heather Bishop, Mother of Pearl, Woodmore, Manitoba, Canada R0A 2M0. Simple down-home flavor; contemporary folk sound with country & rock influences.

WE WON'T BE SILENT. Yer Girlfriend, Esther Records, PO Box 6154, Louisville, KY 40206. Debut cassette by five-woman folk/rock band; 10 original songs.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Festivals breed combinations of artists you'd never see elsewhere. (Pictured: Mimi Baczewska, Laura Berkson, Jamie Anderson, back-up singers for Sue Fink.)

SW, Seattle, WA 98106. Two lesbian musicals performed by lesbian-feminist theater group Front Room Theater Guild.

IN THE EYE OF THE STORM. Jennifer Berzan, Edge of Wonder Records, 5825 Telegraph Ave. #103, Oakland, CA 94609. Songs that awaken & renew our social consciousness, spiritual power, commitment to political change.

ONLY A ROSE. Leslie McKay, Eaglewind Records, PO Box 27284, Seattle, WA 98125.

RACHE APERT. Kitschen Money Records, PO Box 311, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

RETURNING THE MUSE TO MUSIC. Musica Femina, PO Box 15121, Portland, OR 97215. Flute/guitar duo; \$10 cassette/\$15 CD, plus \$1 postage. Available summer '89.

SKY DANCES. Holly Near, Redwood Records, 6400 Hollis St. #8, Emeryville, CA 94608. 1989.

SONGS YOU CAN SEE. Peggy Lipschulz & Becky Armstrong, 1122 Seward, Evanston, IL 60202. (312) 475-7269. Contemporary songs plus full-color live drawing.

TELLING THE TRUTH: Sonia Speaks. Sonia Johnson Speeches on Tape, PO Box 10286, Albuquerque, NM 87184. 60-minute cassette.

TO EACH ONE OF US. Karen Beth, Stardance Recordings, PO Box 371, Bearsville, NY 12409.

PUBLICATIONS

ALL WOMEN ARE HEALERS by Diane Stein. Crossing Press, PO Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. Stones and crystals, reiki, Chinese healing, acupuncture, reflexology, pendulums, kinesiology, vitamins, minerals, herbs, homeopathy, flower remedies, gem elixirs.

ANTHOLOGY OF LESBIAN HUMOR edited by Ann E. Larson and Carole Carr. Silverleaf Press, PO Box 70189, Seattle, WA 98107. (206) 784-2834. Cartoons, short stories, essays, and poems from 27 writers and artists.

BEHIND THE MASK by Kim Larabee. Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton St., Boston, MA 02118. Regency-style romance between two women, spiced with high adventure.

BERRIGAN by Vicki P. McDonnell. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. By the author of the *Nyla Wade* series; a charming memoir of the turbulent '70s.

THE BEVERLY MALIBU by Katherine V. Forrest. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. Third mystery in series featuring lesbian policewoman Kate Delafield. This time: murder of an old-time Hollywood director.

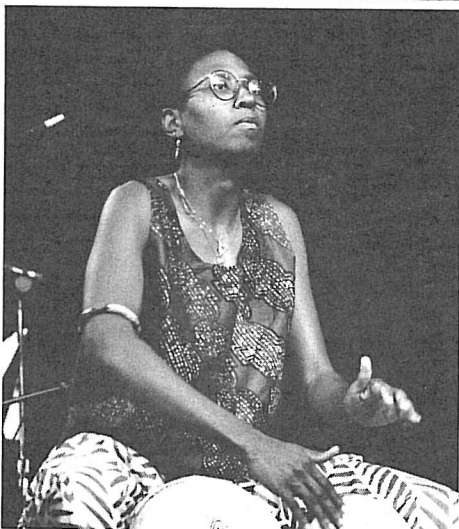
THE CHESAPEAKE PROJECT by Phyllis Horn. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Jessie works the Chesapeake Bay with her father until he is murdered, then she and her lover Meredith are pursued by both killers and federal agents.*

CHOICE CENTERED TAROT by Gail Fairfield. Newcastle Publishing, PO Box 7589, Van Nuys, CA 91409. *The Tarot presented w/simplicity and clarity as a tool for personal empowerment, introspection, clarifying issues, making choices.*

CHRIS by Randy Salem. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *A classic early novel when love between women was a shadowy forbidden adventure.*

DOC AND FLUFF by Pat Califia. Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton St., Boston, MA 02118. (617) 542-5679. *"The dystopian tale of a girl and her biker"—a futuristic S/M lesbian novel.*

ENTER PASSWORD: RECOVERY by Elly Bulkin. Turtle Books, PO Box 9141, Albany, NY 12209-0141. (518) 463-4811. *Transforming the self thru language; memory as catalyst; dyke origins; sexual abuse; feminist politics; radical Jews.*



Jorjet Harper

Festivals are almost the only venue in which to see women playing instruments. (Pictured: Portia Pollack.)

THE FABLESINGER by Judith Woolcock Colombo. Crossing Press, 22D Roache Rd., Box 1048, Freedom CA 95019. *A girl without confidence develops into a powerful woman who can control the forces of nature.*

FINDING THE LESBIANS edited by Julia Penelope and Sarah Valentine. Crossing Press, PO Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. *Personal accounts from around the world.*

FOR LESBIANS ONLY: A SEPARATIST ANTHOLOGY edited by Sarah Lucia Hoagland & Julia Penelope. Onlywomen Press, 30 Mt. Pleasant, London, WC1X 0AP. *Political fervour, autobiographical insight, theoretical analyses, philosophical treatises, short stories, poetry. 70+ contributors.*

GOING OUT OF OUR MINDS: The Metaphysics of Liberation by Sonia Johnson. Crossing Press, PO Box 640, Trumansburg, NY

14886. *Advocates a controversial and unprecedented direction for the women's movement.*

GOOD VIBRATIONS: THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO VIBRATORS by Joani Blank. Down There Press, PO Box 2086, Burlingame, CA 94011. *Illustrations by Marcia Quackenbush. SASE for info on this book and other publications.*

HEATHER HAS TWO MOMMIES by Leslea Newman. In Other Words Publishing, 11 Massasoit St., Northampton, MA 01060. *A picture book for children 3-103 about two lesbians and their daughter Heather.*

STONEWALL RIOTS



Andrea Natale

Deliria and Sucrete fairly flew to bed when either had her period.

IGNITING THE SHE/VOLUTION by Sonia Johnson. Wildfire Books, PO Box 10286, Albuquerque, NM 87184. *Original feminist theory at its sparking and incendiary best. \$10.95.*

LESBIAN LISTS by Dell Richards. Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton St., Boston, MA 02118. *A look at lesbian culture, history, and personalities. 129 lists in five categories. [See article in May 1990 issue of 'HOT WIRE']*

LETTERS FROM A WAR ZONE by Andrea Dworkin. Sacher & Warburg Ltd., Michelin House, 81 Fulham Rd., London SW3-6RB. *Collection of writings spanning 1976-1987.*

MEMORIES & VISIONS: Women's Fantasy & Science Fiction edited by Susanna J. Sturgis. Crossing Press, 22d Roache Rd., PO Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. *Stories about women who travel, fight, and celebrate together across times and cultures.*

MOVEMENT IN BLACK by Pat Parker. Firebrand Books, 141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Pat Parker—Black lesbian poet, feminist medical administrator, mother of two daughters, lover of women, softball devotee, and general progressive troublemaker—died of breast cancer on June 17, 1989 at the age of 45. Long before "coalition" became a political watchword, Pat's life and work embodied its principles. Back in print again is her signature collection.*

MURDER BY THE BOOK by Pat Welch. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Meet Helen Black; accompany her on her first*

homicide case in the debut of this new mystery series.

NOTE BY NOTE: A GUIDE TO CONCERT PRODUCTION by Joanie Shoemaker. Redwood Cultural Work, PO Box 10408, Oakland, CA 94608. (415) 428-9191. *288-page step-by-step guide.*

PAPERBACK THRILLER by Lynn Meyer. Crossing Press, 22D Roache Rd., Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. *Psychoanalyst Sarah Chayse is drawn into a bizarre case involving medical ethics and murder.*

PHOTOJOURNEY by Diana Davies. Bag Lady Press, PO Box 462, Belfast, ME 04915. *Photographic journal of faces, places, experiences, from the early '60s through the '80s.*

PORNOGRAPHY & CIVIL RIGHTS: A New Day For Women's Equality by Andrea Dworkin & Catharine A. MacKinnon, from Organizing Against Pornography, 734 East Lake St. #300 West, Minneapolis, MN 55407. \$5/U.S. *"The ordinance does not take 'rights' away from anyone...it takes the power to hurt women away from pornographers."*

RICE & BEANS by Valerie Taylor. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Story of women struggling to find their place in a world of uncertain attachments.*



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Kay Gardner performs solo and with her four-player Sunwomyn Ensemble.

THE SECOND WOMANSLEUTH ANTHOLOGY: Contemporary Mystery Stories by Women edited by Irene Zahava. Crossing Press, 22D Roache Rd., Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019.

SUE SLATE, PRIVATE EYE by Lee Lynch. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Delightful romp through a mystery, feline-style.*

THREE WOMEN by March Hastings. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *One of the best novels to come out during the "golden age" of lesbian publishing (late '50s).*

TRESPASSING AND OTHER STORIES by Valerie Minor. Crossing Press, 22D Roache Rd., PO Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. *Short stories which examine the quiet shifts in relationships and an individual's sense of self.*

THE WOMANSLEUTH ANTHOLOGY: Contemporary Mystery Stories By Women, edited by Irene Zahava. Crossing Press, 22D Roache Rd., Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. ●

SOUNDSHEETS

by Joy Rosenblatt

DANDELION

WRITTEN BY: Catie Curtis
PERFORMED BY: Catie Curtis (vocals/guitar); Nan Donald (bouzouki); Eric Kilburn (harmonica).

FROM: *Dandelion*

Catie Curtis c/o Mongoose Music
 30 Boylston St. #3
 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
 (617) 522-6304

Boston-based singer/songwriter Catie Curtis is active in the large and diverse folk scene, along with developing networks for playing in other parts of the country. She'll be making her first appearance at the West Coast Women's Music & Comedy Festival this summer. "I wrote 'Dandelion' thinking it would be one of those songs I play for myself—and maybe keep to myself because of its confessional, self-conscious style," she says. It has become one of her most requested tunes, though, as many people seem to recognize themselves in its lyrics. "Dandelion" is the title cut from Catie's album of twelve original songs (released December, 1989).



Susan Wilson

CATIE CURTIS

SHE'S NOT SOMEBODY'S WIFE

WRITTEN BY: Carol Kraemer
PERFORMED BY: Yer Girlfriend (Phyllis Free, drums; Kathy Weisbach, bass; Patty O. Veranda, keyboard; Carol Kraemer, guitar/lead vocal; Laura Shine, vocals)

FROM: *We Won't Be Silent*

Yer Girlfriend c/o Esther Records
 P.O. Box 6154
 Louisville, KY 40206
 (502) 459-8768

Taking part in her first Gay & Lesbian Pride March inspired Carol to write this song. The lyrics not only point out the insidious nature of homophobia—they describe the oppression that exists in our society for women of all orientations who, for whatever reason, choose not to derive their identities from men.



Scott Van Osdol

TWO NICE GIRLS

I SPENT MY LAST \$10 (ON BIRTH CONTROL AND BEER)

PERFORMED BY: Two Nice Girls (Gretchen Phillips & Kathy Korniloff, acoustic and electric guitars; Pam Bargar, drums; Meg Hentges, bass)

FROM: *Like a Version*

Two Nice Girls c/o Rough Trade
 611 Broadway #311
 New York, NY 10012
 (212) 777-0100

The women of Two Nice Girls were born and raised on the fertile Austin, Texas '80s hardcore punk-music scene as well as the folk-infused women's cultural community. They are currently working on a full-length album. *Like a Version* is a six-song EP which includes this remix of their rousing "Last Ten Dollars" anthem. Many consider the group to be in the vanguard of "out" lesbians crossing over into mainstream music industry success.



Debra Clem

YER GIRLFRIEND

DINER

WRITTEN/PERFORMED BY: Erica Wheeler
FROM: *Strong Heart*

Erica Wheeler c/o Blue Pie Music
 121 Pine St.
 Florence, MA 01060
 (413) 586-0033

Erica Wheeler's first recording, *Strong Heart*, is a collection of ten originals that weave the desires and ironies of love through truckstop diners to the open deserts of the Southwest. As one writer notes, "It's no accident [Erica] has been compared to Shawn Colvin and Tracy Chapman...she has that kind of insight and integrity. Her arrangements are simple yet beautiful. Sometimes we forget just how much can be conveyed with a voice and an acoustic guitar." The diner is up the street from her house, but the song is really just a metaphor for love.



Irene Young

ERICA WHEELER O MY FRIENDS

WRITTEN BY: Therese Edell & Lynn Herman
PERFORMED BY: Betsy Lippitt, Deidre McCalla, Sue Fink, Annie Dinerman, Mary Lynn Barber, Chris Collier, Carle Andersen, Mary Kroner, Brenda Folz, MUSE—Cincinnati's Women's Choir, The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus, and Louise Anderson.

RECORDED LIVE: 3/10/90 by Karen Kane

PRODUCED BY: Therese Edell

Therese Edell c/o Sea Friends
 1641 Rockford Place
 Cincinnati, OH 45223
 (513) 542-5151

Therese wrote "O My Friends" for the personal facilitators, women and men, who help her deal with her physical disability and live a quality life. Really, though, the song is for anyone helping those who need major assistance: children, people with AIDS, or others who are dependent on the "regular" people in the world. The cut is from the live recording of the concert that celebrated Therese's fortieth birthday. [See page 51 for preordering information.]

Join



Us!

Second Annual Ohio Lesbian Festival

Stage performers include
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Saturday, September 8
From 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Frontier Ranch, Kirkersville, Ohio

In addition to day and night stages, we will
offer workshops, crafts, food and services.

For more information, contact the Lesbian
Business Association, P.O. Box 02086, Columbus,
Ohio 43202, or call Candace at (614) 268-2616
or Molly at (614) 268-2973.

SOUNDSHEETS

Material is recorded on both sides in stereo. Do not bend the soundsheet. Place it on turntable at 33-1/2 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 other details will be sent upon request.

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Cassette: \$10.00
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Music by:
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Leonarda, Walker, plus more.



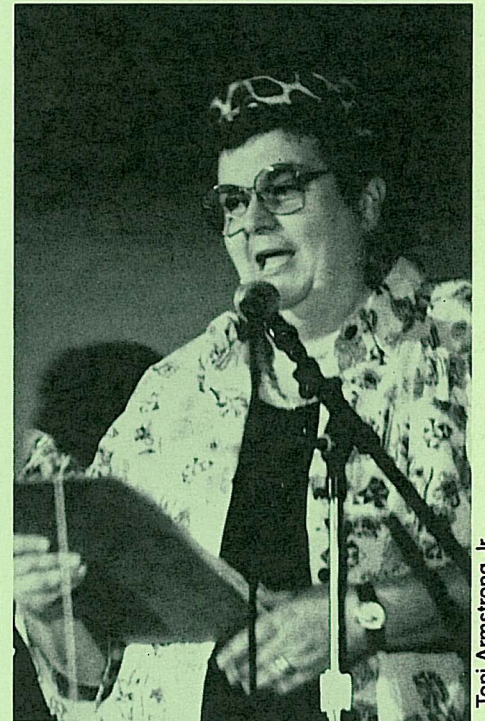
Jorjet Harper



Toni Armstrong Jr.



Toni Armstrong Jr.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Clockwise from top left: Adrienne Torf; Nuru Dafina Pili Abena; Emcee Maxine Feldman; and Sue Fink (pictured here with Jean and June Millington) were a few of this festival season's featured Night Stage performers.