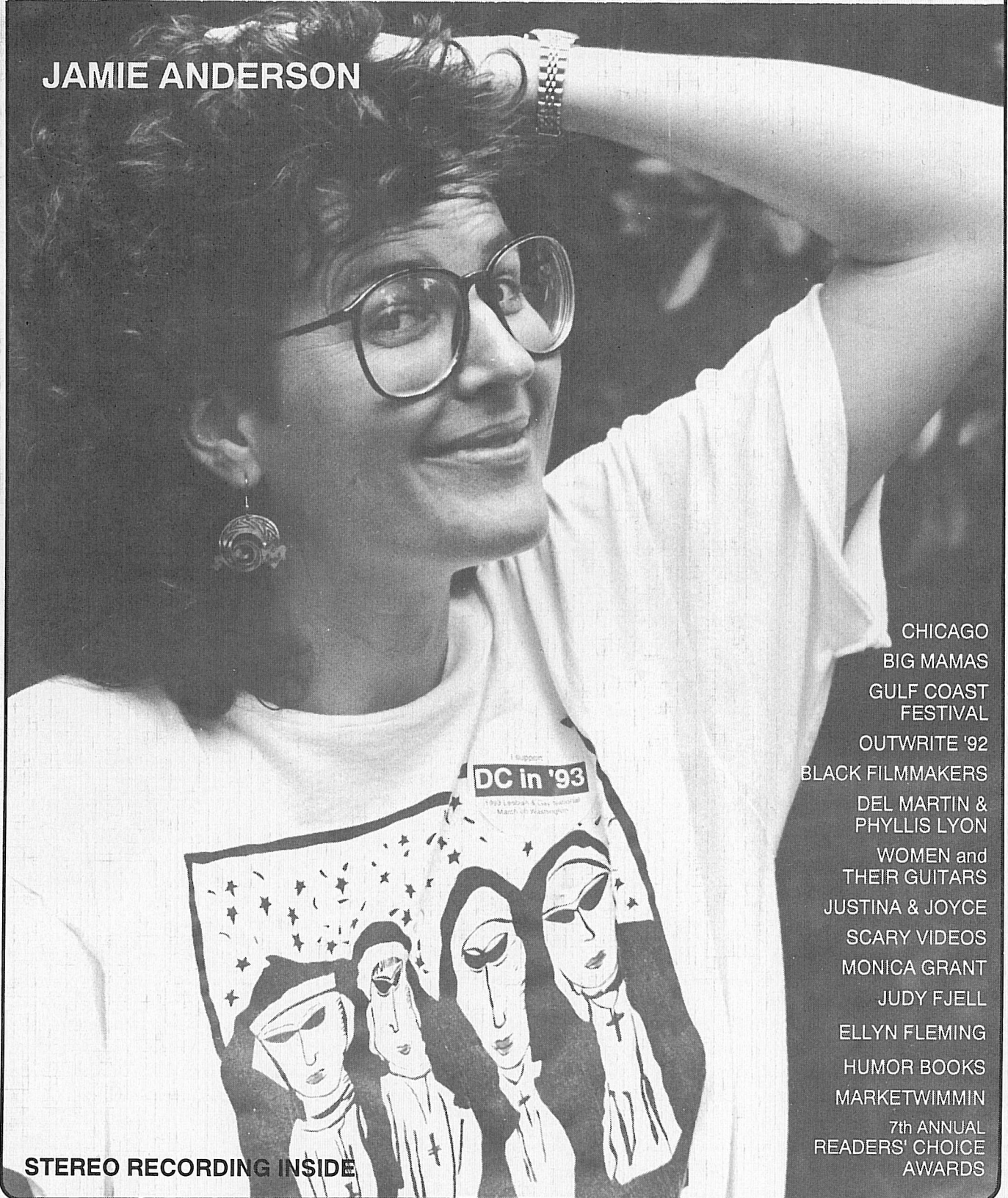


# HOT WIRE

THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

JAMIE ANDERSON



CHICAGO  
BIG MAMAS  
GULF COAST  
FESTIVAL  
OUTWRITE '92  
BLACK FILMMAKERS  
DEL MARTIN &  
PHYLLIS LYON  
WOMEN and  
THEIR GUITARS  
JUSTINA & JOYCE  
SCARY VIDEOS  
MONICA GRANT  
JUDY FJELL  
ELLYN FLEMING  
HUMOR BOOKS  
MARKETWIMMIN  
7th ANNUAL  
READERS' CHOICE  
AWARDS

Toni Armstrong Jr.

STEREO RECORDING INSIDE

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 3 • SEPTEMBER 1992

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# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

## THE 'HOT WIRE' EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY

*HOT WIRE* specializes in woman-identified music and culture, primarily the performing arts, writing/publishing, and film/video. We strongly believe in the power of the arts to affect social change, and we enjoy documenting the combination of "creativity" and "politics/philosophy." We are committed to covering female artists and women's groups who prioritize feminist and/or lesbian content and ideals in their creative products and events. We enjoy helping to both spark and strengthen the international community of those who love the creativity of women. *HOT WIRE* is the only publication devoted to the women's music and culture industry; it is an organizing tool for our community as well as interesting reading material. Each sixty-four page issue includes a two-sided stereo recording, so we (and future generations) can hear the music and poetry as well as read about it.

## HELLO, NORTHAMPTON!

Congratulations, girls, you put your town on the map. The April 21 issue of the *National Enquirer*—given to me by my mother—featured a story entitled "Strange Town Where Men Aren't Wanted: 10,000 cuddling, kissing lesbians call it home sweet home." The opening paragraph reads: "Welcome to Lesbianville, U.S.A.—a bizarre town where so many women love women you can see them cuddling and kissing on Main Street!" The piece also included a large photo of leather-jacketed Karen Bellavance and Beth Grace holding hands (presumably on Main Street).

## MARKETWIMMIN UPDATE

The Inquiring WimMinds column [page seven] brings you up to date on the status of crafts-women Blanche and Amoja since the devastating fire last year that wiped out their business, home, and life projects. At press time, we received yet another update: the MarketWimmin have received a grant to put a down payment on land. They need to find and buy this land before the end of the year, or they'll lose the money; they're presently looking in West Virginia and North Carolina.

## SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE

Our goal in '93 is to *double* the number of individual subscribers. With the holidays coming up, you can help by giving gift subscriptions and encouraging friends to subscribe. You can send a pre-written, sealed card along with your order, and we'll send it with your gift.



Mothers and daughters are a splendid living example of woman-identified love in action. Pictured at the 1992 Gulf Coast Women's Festival, from left: Wanda Henson and daughter Terri Elliott (seated); Brenda Henson and daughter Andrea Gibbs (black blouse) and mother Mary Brandenburg (white blouse); Toni Armstrong Jr. (center) and mother Toni Armstrong Sr. (white turtleneck).

## AND THE GOOD NEWS IS...

With publications and small businesses collapsing all around us, we're happy to report that we're on relatively solid financial ground, thanks to our Fairy Godmothers (and Kris Johnson, FG coordinator); those of you who've given gift subscriptions; Business Manager Lynn's good fill-the-coffers work; and our own thrifty approach to running the operation. We have *no debt*; are slowly but steadily acquiring needed equipment (a fax is on our horizon); and are now able to pay at least small sums to our diligent business manager, excellent photo lab tech (Jorjet), and beloved printer (C&D). There's no chance *HOT WIRE* will be folding in the next couple of years. In fact, we're planning

## ON THE COVER

Jamie Anderson—a favorite of many *HOT WIRE* readers, if the Readers' Choice poll is any indication—has released two albums (*Closer to Home* and the new *Center of Balance*) on her own Tsunami Records label. Women's music is her full-time job, and she tours extensively. Her 1992 schedule included gigs at nine festivals.

an expansion. In 1994, we hope to hire a full time worker (with benefits). Those rats Lynn and (office manager) Susan will be relocating to the Seattle area; since they do the bulk of the daily business work, they'll be nearly impossible to replace. But, we're making plans and will keep you posted.

## MARCH ON WASHINGTON

*HOT WIRE* is planning to sponsor a women's music and culture contingent in the '93 March, and we invite you to join us. See the "Hotline" blurb on page ten.

## GO, CAROL, GO!

Illinois will be sending Carol Moseley Braun to the Senate this November, where she will take her place in history as the first African American woman Senator. Further, I think she has a good shot at becoming the first Black female Vice President when the time comes. We hope you'll be going to the polls this November in support of your own female candidates (and others who will support our political agendas).

Toni Armstrong Jr.  
Publisher/Managing Editor

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Coordinator: Kris Johnson

Our Fairy Godmothers have become too  
numerous to list in this space. Please turn  
to page 45 to see the names of the women  
who generously help support *HOT WIRE*.

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Toni Armstrong Jr. • Ann Morris  
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# HOT WIRE: THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 3, SEPTEMBER 1992

## FEATURES

- 2 **Women's Music for the '90s: Jamie Anderson**  
interviewed by Toni Armstrong Jr.
- 18 **Big Mamas** by Rosetta Reitz
- 22 **Women and Their Guitars** by Laura Post
- 24 **Our Kind of Town: Chicago** by Alice Lowenstein & Toni Jr.
- 30 **A Slice of Lesbian Herstory** by Judy Fjell
- 51 **From Partying Body Builder to Clean and Sober  
Musician** by Ellyn Fleming

## GATHERINGS

- 32 **On the '92 Festival Circuit (Photos)**
- 34 **OutWrite '92** by Jorjet Harper
- 36 **In the Life: New Works by Black Lesbian Filmmakers**  
by Cheryl Miller
- 42 **Gulf Coast Women's Festival Photos** by Toni Armstrong Jr.

## DEPARTMENTS

- 6 **Soapbox** Letters from Readers
- 7 **Inquiring WimMinds Want to Know**  
MarketWimmin Blanche Jackson & Amoja Three Rivers
- 8 **Hotline** compiled by Annie Lee, Alice Lowenstein,  
Joy Rosenblatt & Toni Armstrong Jr.
- 12 **On Stage and Off** by Justina Golden and Joyce Zymeck  
"So What is Perfection Anyway?"
- 14 **Fade In • Fade Out** by Paula E. Langguth  
"Horrorfest: Women and the Big Scream"
- 16 **Confabulation** by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon  
"Twenty Years of *Lesbian/Woman*"
- 40 **Seventh Annual *HOT WIRE* Readers' Choice Awards**
- 44 **Mulling It Over** by Laura Post  
"Monica Grant: The Politics of Hissing"
- 46 **Re:Inking** by Roz Warren  
"Getting Glib"
- 48 **The Audio Angle** by Dakota  
"Sound Ideas"
- 52 **Dykes to Watch Out For** cartoons by Alison Bechdel
- 53 **Seldom Scenes** by Susan Wilson  
Ferron and Jodie Foster
- 62 **Classified Ads** compiled by Susan and Lynn
- 64 **Stereo Soundsheet** by Joy Rosenblatt • "Another Door to Slam"  
(Tracy Drach) • "Affirmation" (Justina & Joyce) • "30 Somethin'" (Ellyn  
Fleming) • "Little Bit of Something Special" (Barb Galloway & Cacy Lee)

women's music for the '90s

# JAMIE ANDERSON

Interviewed by Toni Armstrong Jr.

*Jamie Anderson burst onto the women's music scene in the late '80s with her 'Closer to Home' album, featuring the runaway hit "Wedding Song." Since then, she's played hundreds of shows to women's music audiences from coast to coast, and was wildly well-received at the nine festivals she played in 1992. Her latest album, 'Center of Balance,' like her debut 'Closer to Home,' was put out by Jamie and her partner Dakota on their own Tsunami Records label. Consistently mentioned in the 'HOT WIRE' Readers' Choice Survey, the Arizona-born comic songwriter has been selected "Favorite New Performer" three years in a row. In addition to touring nationally since 1987, Jamie has her broadcaster's license and is a programmer at a local community radio station. She and Dakota make their home in the sweet desert environment of Tucson.*

## HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT WOMEN'S MUSIC? AND WHEN?

In 1977. I was at a women's book store. I had been out as a lesbian for a year and I saw some albums there. I was never too interested in them because I was kind of a Top 40 snob. I didn't listen to any kind of alternative music, either. There was an album cover with this orange juice can on it [*Lesbian Concentrate*, Olivia Records, 1977]. Since I'm really connected to comedy, that attracted me. This was about the time Anita Bryant was doing her weird thing. She was a celebrity who took a very public right-wing stance on gays and lesbians in the '70s, and one of her major jobs was promoting orange juice. I thought the *Lesbian Concentrate* cover was pretty funny, so I bought the album. I thought, "Whoa, these women are singing about my life." I had never heard lesbian music before, and I was just blown away. That album was such a good sampler; I went back and bought albums made by several of the women on it. Things just went from there. A few months after that, I went to my first women's concert—Therese Edell, in Phoenix.

## YOU WERE ALREADY A MUSICIAN?

Yeah. I learned to play when I was

fifteen, and in the Girl Scouts. Scouts sing all the time, and they sing these really simple, well-structured folk songs that are pretty easy to pick up when you are first learning the guitar. My dad's a guitar player, so there were always guitars lying around the house. I taught myself to play.

## WHICH ARTISTS FROM THE EARLY DAYS ARE STILL OF INTEREST TO YOU?

Meg Christian's music still means a lot to me. She was such a fine songwriter and guitarist; she had charm and stage presence for days. I love her use of humor. Her songs don't seem outdated; they're still very fresh. I also occasionally listen to the work of others. I have a tape I made with some songs from old Teresa Trull and Linda Tillery albums that I listen to. The music is so energetic and hopeful—and there will always be a special place in my heart for Therese Edell's music. I know every word to most of her songs.

## WHICH WAS YOUR FIRST FESTIVAL?

1979, Michigan. I don't know what possessed me, but I recruited some women from Arizona to go because it really intrigued me. There were five of us in a little pick-up and it was a four-day drive. It was very cozy, but it was well worth it. A lot of women describe their first experience at a festival as being extremely overwhelming, but it wasn't for me. I felt like an Amazon. I was doing stuff like carrying this big, heavy ice chest and other stuff to our campsite. I was sore for days. I thought I could do anything!

## HOW OLD WERE YOU?

Gosh, you're going to make me do numbers. Let's see, how old was I in '79? I had been out of high school for four years, I don't know...let's see, twenty-two. I had done a little performing by then.

## MOSTLY HOBBY-LEVEL STUFF?

Oh, definitely. It was around that time that I did my first women's music concert; it was a benefit for the local women's center. It was in a big hall with a

sound system. It was the first time I had ever used a microphone. I remember the guy running sound telling me how close to get to the mic and what to do with it. I felt so weird with this hardware so close to my face. I remember we had to sing our own compositions, and at the time I had only written five songs. When the organizer came up to me and said they only had time for me to do five songs, I was really relieved.

## DID YOU START OUT WRITING WOMAN-IDENTIFIED MATERIAL?

Yes. I came out not long after I learned to play the guitar, so it was only natural that I wrote about who I was. I never intended to be the kind of writer that sells songs to other people, so I never had to pretend to be anything I wasn't. Also, by the time I was ready to write songs, I was listening to women's music, and that influenced me a lot. Many of the places where I performed were lesbian spaces, too. I wanted to write music that my audience would identify with.

## HAVE YOU SOUGHT OUT FESTIVALS ALL ALONG?

Oh, I was a festival junkie even before I was hired to perform at them. I always brought my guitar, even on that first trip to Michigan. With five of us in that little pick-up, my guitar still got in there. Not one woman bitched about it, and I really appreciated that. Yeah, I was always at the open mic or the jam tent—somewhere being outrageous. I performed mostly in Arizona up until just a few years ago. Ever since that first festival in '79, I've been to at least one festival every year.

## WHICH ONES?

I've probably been to Michigan more than any other festival, but I've also been to West Coast and to National. They all have something to offer. Up until a few years ago, West Coast was the closest festival to me—a thirteen- or fourteen-hour drive—so if I didn't have the energy or money to attend a Midwest festival, I went to West Coast. More of my friends went to

that one anyway. Arizona has a little festival now which has been going on a few years.

### IN WHAT YEAR DID YOU THROW YOUR HAT IN THE RING AS A REAL CAREER-TYPE PERFORMER?

It was probably when I did *Closer to Home* in 1989. I had been performing a lot locally and loved doing music, but I thought that I really needed to pay my rent with something that was a regular-type job. I had gone back to school, and was finishing up a business degree when I met Dakota, in 1988. We developed a personal relationship first. As she got to know me, she wanted to know my plans for the future. She knew I loved doing music, but I told her that I was interested in doing paralegal work. I was just finishing up my degree with an internship that I really liked at the State Attorney General's office.

She asked me why I didn't want to

working class kind of family where you went to a factory or office every week. You got your paycheck, and that was a job. Playing music was not a job. When Dakota said she'd support me until I got on my feet, I thought I'd try it. So, I set out to do my first album.

Dakota gradually got involved in the project. She has a good business head, and she's very well organized. She's also a trained musician, and she has a very good ear for music. She co-produced the album, and has really been an important part of what I do. I had done a couple of short national tours on a very small-time basis, mostly just to get myself to a festival—to earn gas money. So I had a little bit of experience in doing my own booking. That's when I started collecting contacts and calling women to tell them I was coming out with this album. I was booking a tour, and everybody kept saying, "Jamie who? What do you do?" Every musician hates that kind of question—"What kind of

All communities have a couple of organizers who seem to do almost all of the events in town. They're never involved in just one project, either. It's not uncommon to find a concert producer who is also a writer for the local gay paper, or a coffeehouse organizer who works at the community radio station. So, in most communities there are leaders who are committed to supporting women's culture. I know that in some circles, having leaders is a big no-no. We're supposed to be doing everything communally, I guess. But I find that even when a group is producing a concert, there are one or two women who are the guiding force behind almost everything.

Communities vary greatly in what makes them laugh. Big city women don't laugh as easily as do those in smaller towns. Maybe that has to do with the stress of living in a city. Or maybe my brand of humor doesn't grab them like it does my other audiences.

In smaller towns, I get bigger audiences. Since there's not as much going on, everyone in town shows up, even the bar dykes who don't always come to my shows (unless I'm playing at the bar). It's just a guess, but in bigger places I think women get sort of jaded because there's always so much happening. It's funny—everyone asks about my shows in places like San Francisco, or other "queer meccas," thinking that those are the best places to perform. But I have bigger audiences in places like Spokane and Little Rock. It's not that I don't enjoy the big city gigs, they're just harder.

There are also differences between the different regions of the country. Southern women are so friendly. I love booking Southern tours, because the folks I deal with love to chat. I find out a lot about them and their communities before I even come into town. East Coast folks aren't as chatty—my phone calls to them are short and business-like. When I arrive for the gig, it's then that I get to know the community a little.

**YOU'RE FAMILIAR NOW WITH THE NATIONAL NETWORK, BOTH FROM HAVING BEEN AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT AND NOW AS A RECOGNIZED PERFORMER. YOU AREN'T YET ABLE TO MAKE YOUR LIVING TOTALLY FROM DOING WOMEN'S MUSIC; DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO DO SO?**

Yes. I'm optimistic. Some people may think I'm naive, I don't know. But I believe that if there's something I love to do so



Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Jamie Anderson's stage antics and spontaneous humor make her a fun emcee and back-up singer as well as an engaging solo entertainer. (Pictured as one of Sue Fink's 1991 Leaping Lesbians.)**

devote more time to music. I thought she meant casuals. I'd done weddings and parties for awhile and I hated it. I felt that if I had to sing one more cover tune, I was going to barf on my shoes. Then she explained that she meant I should do women's music, or folk music, or whatever moved me.

### HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?

I come from this very practical,

music do you do?"

### HOW DO YOU ANSWER?

Usually I say folk-country singer-songwriter with a heavy dose of comedy.

**YOU DO ABOUT FORTY OR FIFTY GIGS A YEAR NOW, INCLUDING FESTIVALS. WHAT DO YOU FIND SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT FROM COMMUNITY TO COMMUNITY?**

much, and that I feel is important, then there has to be a way to make a living at it. Maybe that's an ass-backward way to look at it. I can be very pragmatic and say, "This is outrageous, I can't do this. I have to do weddings on the side or something to be able to make it..." but I believe there is a real need for what I do. How can I do it? Just keep being the most shameless self-promoter that I've been up until now.

#### **WHY IS OUR SUBCULTURE IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR YOU TO PUT EVERYTHING ELSE IN YOUR LIFE ON HOLD?**

Our subculture is who I am—I couldn't ignore it. And I'm not putting everything else in my life on hold. This *is* my life. It's not like I made this great career sacrifice when I decided to perform. Sure, I don't have some of the benefits I could get with other jobs—like health insurance and regular hours—but I do have the satisfaction of doing something I really love. I can't think of anything more exciting than songwriting and being on stage. And I can be myself while I'm up there. I don't have to be in the closet or squeeze myself into a size nine to be accepted and appreciated.

#### **WHY DO YOU THINK PERFORMERS IN WOMEN'S MUSIC DON'T MAKE MORE MONEY? IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET A BIGGER AUDIENCE? WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?**

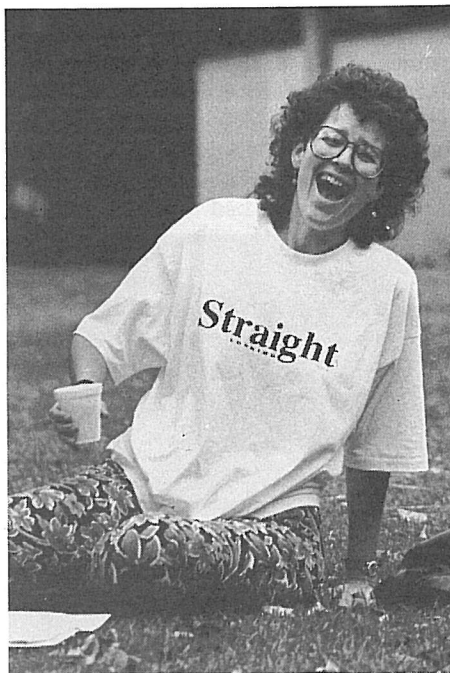
I'm not sure I know the answer to that. I've heard a lot of different perspectives, and there are parts of those different perspectives that I agree with. One of the main problems is getting people to come to concerts. Many of my concert producers do other types of fundraising events, like dances, to raise money. They get a great turnout for things like that, but struggle to get folks out for concerts. Many of them lose money on concerts.

There are women now in "mainstream" music who probably are dykes but don't say so. They attract this huge crowd through their mainstream record companies that have access to mainstream media. I feel that can draw away from women's music because we don't have the resources they have. On the other hand, maybe if people get used to hearing and seeing those mainstream performers, they'll seek out other kinds of alternative type music, such as women's music, folk, or whatever.

#### **WHAT WOULD NEED TO HAPPEN IN YOUR CASE TO MAKE A MORE SUB-**

#### **STANTIAL LIVING DOING THIS?**

I need to attract a larger audience. I don't think that I have fully explored all of my women's music or gay and lesbian avenues. I would also like to attract a folk audience. So far, it hasn't been real successful. I just started, though, and I know that with this kind of thing, you need to be pretty patient and just keep at it. That's how I approached women's music, too. Since I do out lesbian music, it might be harder to get into folk music circles. Straight people are afraid of the material, and they don't understand some of it. I do gay pride gigs and women's music gigs—those are real important to me, and I will continue to expand that way.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Political messages made palatable through satire and humor. (The shirt says "Straight Looking," by the way.)**

#### **GIVEN THAT YOU'D BE COMFORTABLE WITH MORE STRAIGHT PEOPLE IN YOUR AUDIENCES, WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON MATERIAL THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED STRAIGHT BASHING? YOUR NEW SHIRTS, FOR EXAMPLE...**

...oh, the ones that say, "I'm sorry that you're straight. Where do I send the card?" Well, one of my jobs is to educate people to value lesbians and gays. One of the ways to do that is through satire. It's a real effective tool. Truly enlightened straight people would not see that as straight bashing—and I don't think they would get defensive about it, because it's presented in a humorous way. That's why I do so much comedy. I'm very comfortable using it because I grew up in a family where

comedy was the basis for communication. That's not totally a positive thing, but I can certainly see the positive aspects of it. I don't usually like to go hear topical singers who just sing one hard-hitting song after another—it feels like I'm being hit over the head with a sledge hammer. Certainly those types of songs are very effective—I do a few of those myself—but issues presented humorously are easier to take. It's more accessible.

#### **LIKE "WEDDING SONG."**

I sing, "Sure, I'll come to your wedding/but I'll dance with the girls/I might even flirt with one or two/as we dance and twirl..." A wedding is a traditional heterosexual setting, and people don't tend to think of gays and lesbians in those kinds of settings. After hearing "Wedding Song," maybe they will extend it and think about, well, what kind of marriages and unions do gays and lesbians have? In that song I talk about how lesbians in particular don't exactly get flowers at their door when they decide to have a committed relationship. Because I present it all in a humorous manner, it's a lot easier for people to think about what that really means.

I went to a wedding a couple of months ago and I did actually dance with the bride to "Wedding Song." It was a very empowering thing—and it was the bride's idea! Most of the people there seemed very embarrassed about it, and they ignored us. There was a whole table of lesbians, and hardly anyone even talked to us. We found out later that there were far more queers there than we had known about, but they didn't approach us. The people who videotaped the reception taped the dancers on the dance floor except for the women dancing with each other—even when we tried to dance in front of their cameras.

#### **DID THEY GET YOU DANCING WITH THE BRIDE ON VIDEO?**

No, they had left by then.

**HOT WIRE READERS KEEP VOTING "WEDDING SONG" A FAVORITE SONG IN THE READERS' CHOICE SURVEY. OPPRESSORS SYSTEMATICALLY RELY ON THE OPPRESSED TO POLICE THEMSELVES, TO ACQUIESCE TO SILENCE. AT A WEDDING, WE'RE ON OUR HONOR TO NOT EMBARRASS ANYONE. SO THE IDEA OF THREATENING TO UPSET THE BALANCE IS QUITE A RADICAL ONE. HEARING IT PRESENTED WITH HUMOR ALLOWS US TO LAUGH OFF**

## THE SCARINESS OF IT WHILE WE'RE INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE.

Right, right. And I refuse to be a "good queer" anymore. A wedding is one of those sacred heterosexual places where you can't rock the boat in any way, shape, or form, because it's "their day."

## LIKE EVERY OTHER DAY ISN'T. WHAT ARE SOME OTHER SONGS WHERE YOU USE HUMOR EFFECTIVELY?

Satire is my favorite vehicle, so another satirical song is "I'm Sorry." I jokingly call it my "song of condolence for heterosexuals." In it, I include all of the things that gays and lesbians hear, like, "I'm really sorry you're that way." "Gee, what can I do for you?" "You just need counseling." "See your minister." "You just need a good man." I decided to turn that around and present it as satire with a straight face. My queer audiences love that song, because they've been told those things, and now they have a chance to laugh about it.



Jamie in 1979, a few months before attending her first women's music festival. "A lot of women describe their first experience at a festival as being extremely overwhelming, but it wasn't for me. I felt like an Amazon."

## WHAT ABOUT NON-LESBIAN FEMINIST WOMEN WHO COME TO FESTIVALS? THEY COULD TAKE THE SEEMINGLY ANTI-STRAIGHT MESSAGES PERSONALLY, AND MAYBE FEEL EXCLUDED OR EVEN HURT.

Well, you always take that risk with satire. There's always going to be somebody who doesn't get it. I hope later she *will* get it. Recently, I lost a job with a folklore society because they thought that I really believed that everyone should be

gay! They were quoting the lines to "I'm Sorry" to justify that.

I ended up doing a concert with someone else in that town, and one of the folklore people came. She came up to me afterwards and introduced herself as "the folklore bigot," and apologized. Another straight person—a folk performer—had explained to her what "I'm Sorry" really meant.

Another time, I met a woman at a festival who came up to me and said that she'd heard me three years ago in Phoenix. She was trying to stay in the closet then, and she said I disgusted her. I said, "Gee, excuse me."

## WHAT A TRIBUTE TO YOUR WORK.

Yeah. She said, "You disgusted me because I just thought it was so outrageous that there was all this whooping and hollering—a good time had by all these out lesbians." I said, "Yeah, but you came to the concert!"

makes people feel more comfortable. They don't feel like I'm going to bite their head off if they come up and talk to me. I'm willing to be an educator for the straight community. Many lesbians and gays aren't interested in that. It's a lot of work, and we get tired of answering the same questions over and over again.

## SUCH AS...?

"What do you do in bed?" "Why are you so outrageous?" "Why do you have to throw it in our faces?" Then of course I have to explain that all we're doing is living our lives. We're not being any more outrageous than heterosexuals are. I get comments about how I'm too bitter, too angry. That's because it's coming from people who don't know what being queer is like, and so I have to explain. But I'm willing, and I do a lot of it through my music.

## HOW WOULD LIFE BE DIFFERENT FOR YOU AND FOR LESBIANS IN GENERAL IF THE WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE SUBCULTURE DID NOT EXIST TODAY?

No festivals or lesbian literature? I shudder at the thought. Those things have strengthened who I am. The validation they offer has had an enormous impact on my life. Women's music has been such an inspiring vehicle for change. If women's music and culture didn't exist, I would probably still be a bar dyke who didn't like herself very much; I wouldn't have much of a feminist consciousness. Or maybe I would eventually identify as a feminist and be proud of being a lesbian, but it would've taken a lot longer.

Maybe lesbians wouldn't have women like those dyke women we now have in mainstream music. Also, without the culture that we have now, we wouldn't have documented history. We'd still be invisible. What do we know about lesbians in other times and in some other parts of the world? Not much, because their culture, for the most part, has not been recorded. *continued on page 13*

## NOT TO MENTION COMING TO THE FESTIVAL.

Right! It seems a friend had talked her into going. She was leaving the next day for another state, so I guess she figured it was sort of the safe thing to do. "But," she said, "things changed, and I became more comfortable with myself. So now here I am at the festival, and I've decided to be a lesbian. I have your first tape. I bought two of them at that first concert." That's the thing about humor—it

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Toni Armstrong Jr. has many interests in life, including movies (especially 'Sister Act'), neurophysiology, female vampires, 'The Kathy & Mo Show,' civil rights, hot women bass players, sign language, and novels about science run amok. She urges audience members everywhere to chant, "Dance, Jamie, dance" whenever and wherever J.A. appears on stage. You won't be disappointed.

# SOAPBOX

Dear Toni, Lynn, and the whole gang,

How can you be doing so many things?! [My daughter] Martha and I know what a big job it is to put out a directory. But here you are doing it and more. The fat May issue of *HOT WIRE* arrived and I'm still working on getting through it. It's so full of goodies. It defies skimming. Truly inspiring to read about all the activities on "my" pages via "Hotline." As they grow in number, so grows the movement—the women's movement—culture, ever expanding, broader, greater variety, depth—in short, *moving!* Powerful. Everything but rich; please cash my \$34 check! Love to you all,

Donna Allen, Washington, DC

P.S. Now back to more in my May 1992 *HOT WIRE*.

• • •

For the class note in my *Vassar Quarterly*—you may laugh, but it has a circulation of over 30,000!—they printed this tidbit for me: "Jill Oppenheim...writes to say...she and her lover Sylvia are celebrating their two-year anniversary, and are looking forward to the publication of an article they co-wrote in *HOT WIRE: The Journal of Women's Music and Culture*." Score one for the lesbian nation!

Jill Oppenheim, Chicago

• • •

It's so exciting to get *HOT WIRE*. Fre and I fight over who reads it first. I usually win. Each issue gets better and better. I'm especially interested in the columns and articles about our culture. "Brainy Girls A Go-Go" is a winner. Keep up the fine work!

Kay Gardner, Stonington, Maine

• • •

Loved the Wanda Landowska piece and enjoyed the Ronnie Gilbert interview very much.

Rosetta Reitz, New York

• • •

I think the Fairy Godmother's been at it again. What a delightful surprise to open the May '92 issue of *HOT WIRE* and find an ad for our own recording [*A Little Look Around*] in your classifieds. Thanks so much (to whoever was responsible) for the vote of confidence in our work. It felt great to think that someone out there (in the

**Letters may be edited for clarity and/or length. Send to SOAPBOX/HOT WIRE, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.**

**6 HOT WIRE September 1992**



Susan Wilson

**Ronnie Gilbert ("First for our parents, and now for us—she's a national treasure!") touched the hearts of readers in the May issue. Her one-woman show 'Mother Jones' was a hit in Milwaukee; watch for it in other cities.**

faceless world of booking and promotion) might actually have listened to what we sent!

Susan Lewis/Rebel Voices, Seattle

• • •

Seeing as it is late March and I just received a copy of your January issue, I'm sure you've found your three Fionas, but I'll write anyway because it's not often enough I get to use the road name my friend Lola Verona Lanes gifted me with in 1987—Fiona La Rouge. It took several years for us to find a suitable name and I was beginning to give up hope, but one day it just arrived and fit perfectly. The "La Rouge" refers to my hair and Fiona is just plain fun. My golden retriever got her road name the same year, so now when we travel it's Fiona and Bozette all the way.

Fiona La Rouge, Mt. Ranier, Maryland

• • •

Ronnie Gilbert's thoughts on what women's music is [May 1992] were very enlightening. She has a wide perspective due to her decades of experience in the political creative arts world, but she seems to feel no need to put down feminists as so many others do. First for our parents, and now for us—she's a national treasure!

Bev Barrault, Orlando

Hurricane Productions of Milwaukee celebrated its twelfth anniversary last fall by producing *Dos Lesbos*, a two-act musical comedy about lesbian life and coupledness. *Dos Lesbos*, written by Terri Baum, was beautifully directed by theater veteran Barbara Harrell. Although they claim not to be singers and dancers, Pam Petruzzi (Peg) and Abbie Green (Gracie) did both with competency and pizzazz. Their numbers "Jill the Ripper" and "Misery Loves Company" were show-stoppers. They were resplendent in black leather for the former.

Hurricane Productions took a chance on lesbian theater in conservative Milwaukee, and we are delighted to report 350 attendees at two performances in the downtown area. Women producers interested in a non-concert event will be thrilled with *Dos Lesbos*. They may write for information on this play (or any future endeavors) to: Garage Productions, 7333 Hollingsworth Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46268.

Hurricane is interested in producing concerts, plays, lectures, dance performances, and other kinds of women's shows. We are committed to providing a stage for regionally known performers who are interested in bringing their talents to the Midwest. Agents, managers, and performers may write us at: Hurricane Productions, P.O. Box 71263, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Thanks for including this in your excellent publication. Hurricane Productions applauds and supports *HOT WIRE*'s contribution to women's music and culture.

Sandy Prater, Milwaukee

• • •

Thanks for the article on Paula Berg's *Connections of the Heart* [May 1992]. I was able to see it staged in Chicago with a very professional cast, and it was great. I wouldn't have known that it was worth me and my gal making the trip for if I hadn't read about it in *HOT WIRE* first. That's my favorite thing about your mag—it keeps me informed about things to watch for, and people to watch for at festivals. Lots of otherwise obscure performers at festivals are already familiar to me because of having heard them on your soundsheets. Compliments on your wide variety of coverage.

Sharon Williams, Madison



# Inquiring WimMinds Want to Know

We have received several inquiries regarding how the MarketWimmin—whose faces are very familiar at festivals—are faring since the fire that wiped out their home last September. Their handmade musical instruments, cards, snakes, and 'Guide to Cultural Etiquette' book are hot sellers at women's festivals and other crafts fairs. Blanche and Amoja report good news and bad news.

We—plus MarketWimmin, plus our land project, plus the Accessible African Herstory Project—have been living in two rooms upstairs in someone's house, five miles from where the fire was. Our landlady has made other plans for rebuilding the cabin where we had been living, so we need to be someplace else by the spring of 1993. We have purchased two trailers, which also need to be somewhere else next year. The good news is, the woman we've been staying with hasn't thrown us out in all these months.

These trailers aren't in any kind of usable condition. We've almost given up on volunteer lesbian help to try and get them up and running—inhabitable, that is. So we broke down and hired our egg lady's husband to work on fixing them. Things are beginning to move along now. We are using the money that women have donated to help buy supplies—things the trailers need, like doors, windows, floors, and walls. (The trailers were *affordable*, not *livable*.) We'll be traveling through the summer, but we invite women with time, skills, and/or good will to come down and help us in late September/early October. There's so much that still needs to be done before we'll have somewhere to live and work again.

Over the winter, women sent us clothes and cash, and that helped us in a big way to get by. Also, the *Cultural Etiquette* guide is still selling at a good clip, so those two things are what kept us going.

We haven't been able to make any new shékeres or rattles in any numbers because of loss of production supplies and space—and loss of production heart. Some books have come back to our Accessible African Herstory Project,



Amoja Three Rivers and Blanche Jackson, one year after the fire that devastated their MarketWimmin crafts business, home, and ten-year collection of rare African herstory research books.

Photo by Toni Armstrong Jr.

but some were rare English translations which were lucky finds in the first place—we don't know if we'll ever get those replaced. Last spring somebody donated a Macintosh computer, and we were looking forward to it lightening the burden of our many projects. It was destroyed, of course, so we are now lusting for a Mac again.

Our 35mm camera, along with our Polaroid for emergency photos, got burned up along with everything else. It's pretty hard to be a craftswoman going to crafts shows without the ability to take pictures. We need to produce flyers as well

as submit pictures of our work to festival crafts coordinators, and we can't do it without the ability to take really sharp photographs. (We need camera-buying advice, too.)

We also need to be turned on to some land in the mountains somewhere—land that is racially and ecologically safe, relatively speaking. We don't want to stay in this county, because it's being turned into a toxic waste toilet. So we're looking for women who know of good places to move to that are also *cheap*. (Ha ha.)

Finally, Amoja's cat ran away. Our other cats and dog are in foster care, because we can't provide for them properly. We miss them, but they're doing okay. And so are we.

*In good years, Blanche and Amoja's MarketWimmin business specializes in professional-quality shékeres and gourd rattles. They also have original-design T-shirts, with slogans including the ever-popular "4,000 Years of Womyn's Music." If you are interested in providing support—buying instruments, shirts, or books; helping them re-establish their computer setup and/or office; sending books to rebuild the African Herstory collection; donating camera equipment and/or advising them on matters photographic; giving money for supplies/living expenses; sending letters of encouragement/messages of sisterhood and good cheer; and/or would like to spend a weekend (or longer) helping them fix up their trailers (which promises to be fun)—contact them directly. Blanche Jackson and Amoja Three Rivers, MarketWimmin, P.O. Box 28, Indian Valley, VA 24105. (703) 992-0248. •*

# HOTLINE

Compiled by Annie Lee, Alice Lowenstein, Joy Rosenblatt, Toni Jr.

## TRIVIA CONTEST UPDATE

May 1992 trivia question: "Before there were Thelma and Louise, there was Asta. What does this mean?" Writes Ellen Barnard of Madison: "Why, Asta is the incredible, strong hero of the Australian movie *Shame*, a motorcycle-riding lawyer who attempts to bring justice to a town where the men rape the young women with the blessing of their male elders. Asta is stuck in the town when her motorcycle breaks down, and she proves that no man has the right to harm any woman. Even if the movie does have a devastating ending, it's a very powerful film." (Ellen wins any three back issues of her choice.) The Trivia Contest question for this issue is: Why is the combination of Shirley MacLaine/Audrey Hepburn significant to lesbian herstory?

## WOMEN

Congratulations to craftswoman **WHITEHORN** and her **FEMINIST FORGE** on twenty-five years of creating women's culture (and sculpture).

**GLORIA STEINEM** and **SUSAN FALUDI** made the March 9 cover of *Time* magazine, as part of an eight-page story entitled "Fighting the Backlash Against Feminism." It's well worth a trip to your local library.

**LYNN THOMAS** has been commissioned by a member of the executive steering committee of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Rights to write the theme song for the 1993 March.

Attention fans of **SERAIH CAROL**: she had to cancel her appearance at the Michigan festival because she's in the musical *Annie Warbucks*, which (after a successful run in Chicago) opened in San Bernardino on the same day as her festival set was scheduled. Watch for her in the show, which

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**HOTLINE** presents capsule reports of past happenings, announces upcoming events, and passes on various tidbits of info. This column is dedicated to **Donna Allen**, who has dedicated a great deal of her life to facilitating and promoting the type of connections between women that "Hotline" is all about.

will be appearing in Seattle, Houston, San Diego, and Los Angeles before going to Broadway in December.

**ELLEN SLEMP** is now representing **LEAH ZICARI** as well as **SUE FINK**, **SUEDE**, and **LAURA BERKSON**. For booking information: ETL Productions, 38 4th St., Stamford, CT 06905. (203) 353-9887.

Colorado artist **DEBORAH JUSTICE** appears in a full page ad for Absolut Vodka (which *USA Today* plans to run every other Thursday for two years). The ad first appeared in March, and features a photo of one artist from each state. In her brief bio, Deborah mentions that she is a lesbian.

*People* reports that **MARTINA NAVRATILOVA's** ex-girlfriends **RITA MAE BROWN** and **JUDY NELSON** have moved in together. The tabloids featured photos of Rita and Judy helping Martina move.

## FOND FAREWELLS

**PARKE BOWMAN**, co-founder of Daughters, Inc., died of lung cancer at her home in Key West last February. Together with her partner June Arnold, Parke founded the lesbian-feminist publishing company most often singled out for the initial publication of Rita Mae Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle*.

Internationally acclaimed actress **MARLENE DIETRICH** died in Paris last May at the age of ninety. Known for relationships with both women and men, the actress made androgyny appear glamorous on the big screen in the 1930s, wearing white tie and tails and kissing a woman in the film *Morocco*.

Poet and playwright **EVE MERRIAM** died of liver cancer at age seventy-five last April. The feminist author wrote more than fifty books, including the controversial *Inner City Mother Goose*.

Prolific Golden Globe Award-winning screenwriter **HELEN DEUTSCH** (*Lili*, *I'll Cry Tomorrow*, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*) passed away in New York City at eighty-

five last March. Her first major success came in 1944 with *National Velvet*.

**TIANA ARRUDA**, long-term staffer at Old Wives Tales in San Francisco, has left the bookstore to purchase and run a news-kiosk in a nearby neighborhood, according to *Feminist Bookstore News*.

## HONORS

At the 64th annual **ACADEMY AWARDS** last March, highlights included: Best Screenplay Adaptation: **FANNIE FLAGG** and **CAROL SOBIESKI** for *Fried Green Tomatoes*; Best Actress: **JODIE FOSTER** ("This is dedicated to all the women who came before me who never had their chance...and I thank the Academy for embracing a wonderful feminist hero"); **SHIRLEY MACLAINE**: "In some other life, we'll get our other pal, that funny girl over there—the director we'd like to work with..." (making one of the evening's several nods to **BARBRA STREISAND**, who was overlooked for Best Director nomination); Best Documentary Short: **DEBRA CHASNOFF** for *Deadly Deception* (she mentioned her "life partner, Kim" as well as urging the audience to boycott GE); **SUSAN SARANDON** and **GEENA DAVIS** presenting the Film Editing award, talking about the controversial ending of *Thelma and Louise*: Geena said, "It's ambiguous...no one saw the car land...we could have bounced!"; and **CALLIE KHOURI**, accepting for Best Original Screenplay: "For everybody who wanted to see a happy ending to *Thelma and Louise*, this is it...Geena and Susan, I think you've made the world a better place. Thank you."

Fourth annual 1992 **LAMBDA AWARDS**: Lesbian Science Fiction/Fantasy: *The Gilda Stories* (Jewelle Gomez); Lesbian Poetry: *Atlas of the Difficult World* (Adrienne Rich); Lesbian Nonfiction: *Cancer in Two Voices* (Sandra Butler, Barbara Rosenblum); Lesbian Fiction (tie): *Revolution of Little Girls* (Blanche McCrary Boyd), *The Gilda Stories* (Jewelle Gomez); Lesbian Mystery: *Murder By Tradition* (Katherine V. Forrest); Lesbian Anthology: *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About* (ed. Carla Trujillo);

Editor's Choice: *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers* (Lillian Faderman); Publishers Service Award: Barbara Grier and Donna McBride, Naiad Press.

At the National Women's Music Festival: The Jane Schliessman Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women's Music went to **JUDY DLUGACZ**, a founding mother and current president of Olivia Records; the Jeanine Rae Award for the Advancement of Women's Culture went to writer **SARAH ALDRIDGE** (see photo below).

Susan Faludi's *BACKLASH* won the National Book Critics Circle 1991 award for non-fiction. The well-researched exposé on how feminism has been systematically discredited is also this year's *HOT WIRE* Readers' Choice selection for favorite nonfiction.

Cathy C. Cook's latest short film, *THE MATCH THAT STARTED MY FIRE*, was awarded first place in the experimental film category at the 1992 Baltimore Film Festival, as well as receiving the 1992 Jurors Award at the Black Maria Film Fest Tour, reports *Feminist Voices*.

**DR. LIZ KARLIN** (Leaping Lizard Productions, Madison) was honored as Feminist of the Year by the Wisconsin chapter of NOW at the group's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration last spring.

Congratulations to **SAM WEIS** on winning the 1991 Northwest Area Music Association award for Best Acoustic Guitarist. Her album *So True!* was also named Best Acoustic Recording.

*The White Queen* (Gwyneth Jones) and *A Woman of the Iron People* (Eleanor Arnason) were the winners of the **FIRST ANNUAL JAMES TIP-TREE MEMORIAL AWARD** at WisCon last winter. Send nominations for next year's award (for feminist fantasy/SF): Pat Murphy, 2238 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94107.

*DYKES, DISABILITY & STUFF* received one of the third annual Kissing Girls Productions Lesbian Culture and Creativity Awards. Other awards included Apple Island (to build a ramp for their stage), and a grant for the construction of an accessible bathroom at a local performance space where large women's events are held.

*HOT WIRE* founding mother **YVONNE ZIPTER**'s *The Patience of Metal*—a Chicago Book Clinic Honor Book, 1990 Lambda Literary Awards finalist, and 1991 American Library Association award nominee—has been named runner-up for the 1991 Melville Cane Award given by the Poetry Society of America.

Lillian Faderman's *ODD GIRLS AND TWILIGHT LOVERS* won the American Library Association's Gay & Lesbian Book Award for nonfiction.

**ACHÉ** won the 1992 National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum's Harriet Tubman Award. The award is given annual-



**This year's Jeanine Rae Award for the Advancement of Women's Culture was given to Sarah Aldridge (Anyda Marchant). With her law degree, she worked with feminist leader Alice Paul and was one of the first women to be admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. She and her partner of forty-five years (Muriel Crawford, left), were two of the four founders of Naiad Press. Eighty-one year old Sarah Aldridge is the author of ten lesbian novels.**

ly to an organization that has made significant contributions to the lesbian/gay Black community.

**GEENA** ("I'd rather be known for my feminist roles than my wacky, kooky roles") **DAVIS** was honored with the Piper-Heidsieck Award (an annual salute to "a film

actor or actress whose career exemplifies independence, courage, risk-taking, and the avoidance of the conventional") at the 35th San Francisco International Film Festival.

*The Detroit News*, part of the major Gannett syndicate, is the first mainstream paper to have an openly gay columnist writing on lesbian/gay issues. **DEB PRICE**, news editor in the paper's D.C. bureau, appears every Friday in the *News*, and her column is now available for syndication to nearly 100 other papers, including *USA Today*.

## NEWS

Yes, you *can* do something positive for the upcoming elections. Those who don't care about the presidential race are reminded that there are still numerous women candidates who need our support this November (including Carol Moseley Braun, who is on her way to being the nation's first Black female Senator). The Human Rights Campaign Fund has been mobilizing thousands of lesbian/gay and feminist activists as part of their Presidential Project. Special emphasis now is on **REGISTERING VOTERS**. HRCF, 1012 14th St. NW #607, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 628-4160.

The Washington D.C. Health Benefits Expansion Act of 1992 extends **HEALTH BENEFITS COVERAGE** to the domestic partners of city employees, creates a citywide registry for domestic partners, and extends hospital and health facility family visitation rights to domestic partners.

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director **URVASHI VAID** will step down at the end of this year, reports *Outlines*. NGLTF's budget grew from \$866,000 to \$1.3 million and its staff from nine to fourteen under Urvashi's three-year leadership. She plans to live in Boston and Provincetown, write, study, and travel to India.

According to *Feminist Bookstore News*, A Room of One's Own (Madison) has twice been the recipient of **LATE NIGHT DRIVE-BY PELLET-GUN SHOOTINGS** that have damaged several large plate glass windows. The bookstore has also received a series of violent phone calls. The police (many of whom are women and customers of the store) are reporting these attacks as "potential hate crimes," which allows them

to continue the investigation indefinitely.

**TOYOTA** is being aggressively targeted by The American Family Association, an anti-gay censorship group, "for promoting homosexuals as normal family." AFA is angered by an ad the automaker ran in a gay publication featuring two men and a Toyota with the caption "The Family Car." Letters supporting gay-inclusive advertising are needed now—including letters suggesting two women plus children as a common "family constellation." Letters to President Y. Togo, Toyota Motor Sales, P.O. Box 2991, Torrance, CA 90509.

After a twelve-year struggle, **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** has finally agreed to include people who are imprisoned because they are gay in its widely recognized list of "prisoners of conscience," according to *Lavender Prairie News*, *Matrix*, and *Lesbian Connection*.

Vancouver feminist publisher Press Gang reports that their **CUSTOMS** broker has refused to handle two of their titles, *Drawing the Line* and *Inversions: Writing by Dykes, Queers, and Lesbians*, despite the fact that both titles were cleared by U.S. Customs. According to *Feminist Bookstore News*, Press Gang has since shifted their customs brokerage work to a firm that will clear anything that Customs will clear.

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

Asked by Arsenio on the May 7th show what it was like to kiss **SARA GILBERT** in the movie *Poison Ivy*, **DREW BARRYMORE** replied, "She's a great kisser...the way it's shot is incredibly sensual and very beautiful...I've been watching a lot of new films, and you just don't see women tongue kissing on screen." (Editor's note: don't be misled into thinking you're going to see something romantic.)

"Anything that helps promote debate on what's right and what's wrong with sexuality is healthy. Things have been swept under the carpet far too long," said *L.A. Law*'s **AMANDA DONOHOE** in *TV Guide*. "So many young women really haven't made up their minds. The male world is so antagonistic and terrifying, I'm not surprised women turn to each other, not just for emotional but physical comfort they can't get from a man unless he is truly enlightened."

"I'm proud [my hair is] completely gray, and I'm not going to bother with coloring it

because I have other things to do with my time," said **EMMYLOU HARRIS**, who became the seventieth country music artist to be inducted as a member of the Grand Ole Opry, in *People*. "I like the way it looks. If it encourages other women to say, 'I can do that, too,' that's great, and they should wear it proudly. We earned those gray hairs!"

The April 5 Pro Choice March on Washington drew an estimated 750,000 protesters. "I know Thelma and Louise are both pro-choice," said Oscar-winning screenwriter **CALLIE KHOURI**, who attended the march. "If they'd known about the march, they'd definitely have made the trip."

## GATHERINGS

Mark your calendar and make travel arrangements: as many as a million marchers will congregate in Washington, D.C. on the weekend of April 25th, 1993. Plan to stay the weekend; there will be many activities including the mass "**MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR LESBIAN, GAY, AND BI EQUAL RIGHTS AND LIBERATION**." (There will be a large women's culture contingent in the march sponsored by *HOT WIRE*; plan to march with us. We're especially seeking drummers, singers, and creative banners.) March on Washington '93, P.O. Box 34607, Washington, DC 20043-4607.

The third annual **GULF COAST WOMEN'S FESTIVAL** lost their site in February and quickly had to relocate at a Boy Scout camp in Biloxi, Mississippi. There was no RV area, and due to the poverty of the area, two thirds of the tickets were sold at reduced rate, or on the lowest rung of the sliding scale. The producers, who are committed to continuing the festival as an annual event, lost \$5,000 this year and are in need of immediate financial assistance. Checks to B. Henson/GCWF, 1806 Curcor Dr., Gulfport, MS 39507. (601) 896-3196.

The Northeastern Women's Musical Retreat (**NEWMR**) also had serious site problems this year, and the organizers were unable to find a suitable location in time to have a festival. Plans are now underway for 1993.

**A LESBIAN/GAY WRITERS WEEKEND** will be held October 16-18 at the City of New York University's Graduate Center. The conference will be "very New York-oriented," emphasizing the city's many ethnic and racial groups. Publishing Triangle, Box 114, Prince St. Sta., New York, NY 10012.

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force has

scheduled their fifth annual **CREATING CHANGE CONFERENCE** November 13-15 in Los Angeles. Catherine Carter, NGLTF, 1734 14th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 332-6483.

The annual **WOMEN'S PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL** in Vancouver is planned for January 24-31, 1993. The fest showcases work initiated by women performing artists, both established and emerging. Women in View, 314 Powell, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6A 1G4. (604) 685-6684.

**RHYTHMFEST '92**, held over Labor Day weekend in North Georgia, will include women writers in its program of performers, and plans to feature a track of writing workshops in its schedule. The fourteenth annual **WOMONWRITES** lesbian writers' conference was held in Central Georgia this June; plans for the fifteenth are underway. For info about either event: Katy Wildsister, 440 60th Ave. So., St. Petersburg, FL 33705.

The 1992 **LESBIAN SEPARATIST GATHERING** is scheduled for September 3-7 in south central Wisconsin. When requesting info, specify standard print, large print, braille, or cassette. Annual Sep Gathering, P.O. Box 1203, St. Augustine, FL 32085.

**MUSE** Chorus (Cincinnati) will sponsor the seventh **NATIONAL WOMEN'S CHORAL FESTIVAL**, scheduled for June/July, 1993. SASE to Pam Wright/MUSE, P.O. Box 23292, Cincinnati, OH 45223.

**Powersurge**: the first international **LESBIAN S/M CONFERENCE** is scheduled for Labor Day weekend in Seattle. SASE to Outer Limits, 1202 E. Pike St. #819, Seattle, WA 98122-3936. (206) 723-2356.

The **FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LESBIAN AND GAY JOURNALISTS** in mainstream media took place in San Francisco June 25-27, examining the role of print and electronic press in coverage of lesbian/gay issues. One keynote speaker was Linda Villarosa, senior editor of *Essence*. National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association, P.O. Box 423048, San Francisco, CA 94142. (415) 905-4690.

**A JEWISH FEMINIST FESTIVAL** is being planned for the spring of 1993. To get on the mailing list: Arlene (518) 355-9921.

Plans are already underway for the **1993 AWMAC CONFERENCE**. To be held in June, it will be a major gathering of women

working in the women's music and culture industry. Producers, performers, writers, film/videomakers, artist reps, radio women, technicians, and "just plain curious" urged to inquire. Conference organizers include Cathy Roma, Gilda Turner, Terry Grant, Toni Armstrong Jr., Cynthia Dunitz, Retts Scauzillo, Val Jones, and others. New AWMAC officers include Karen Williams (president), Gail Benvenuto (vice president), Cynthia Dunitz (treasurer), and Jessie Cocks (secretary). SASE to AWMAC Conference c/o Toni Armstrong Jr., 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. (312) 769-9009.

**SISTERS IN STRUGGLE:** Women's Alliances for Change was held last May at Barnard College. The multi-national conference coincided with the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas and was intended to "call attention to the devastation wrought upon native peoples, the enslavement of the African people, and the colonization of the Third World." Union of Palestinian Women's Associations, P.O. Box 3487, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008-3487. Rabab Hadi: (212) 385-2222.

## GROUPS

The new **WOMEN'S ACTION COALITION** was described by *The New York Times* as "the hottest activist scene since ACT UP formed five years ago, and members of this new group sport almost as many leather jackets." Up to four hundred women (including artists such as Laurie Anderson, Reno, Cindy Sherman, April Gornick, and Elizabeth Murray) meet on Tuesday nights in New York. According to *Outlines*, they discuss "What we are going to do with the disasters affecting feminism and what we are going to do to fight back."

A letter from **FEMINISTS FOR FREE EXPRESSION**—signed by screenwriter Nora Ephron, poet Adrienne Rich, novelist Erica Jong, and 180 other members—urged Congress not to pass "the Bundy Bill," which would allow sex-crime victims to collect damages from the makers and distributors of pornography. "If Congress is certain that books and videos cause crime, why blame only books or videos with sexual themes? Why not blame the Bible, which scores of people every year cite as justification for abuse and murder?"

**APPLE ISLAND** sponsors dances, variety

shows, performances by famous and not-yet-famous women, art shows, and other community-building events. Financial sponsorship sought now for sound and lighting equipment, a wheelchair ramp, and a piano, among other things. Performers are invited to send press kits/tapes. Apple Island, 849 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703. (608) 258-9777.

A small **SOUTHERN FLORIDA CONCERT CIRCUIT** is developing for lesbian artists who do not mind small (fifty) audiences. Rusty Gordon (407) 686-1354.

The **AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS UNION** may have services for you, if you: are a performer who presents her own programs; play mostly single night gigs; are a solo act or in a small ensemble; and travel frequently to obtain work. Marsha Lee Cutting, AFM/New Deal Committee, P.O. Box 327, Troy, NY 12180.

The Kentucky Foundation for Women, Inc. has announced thirty-four new **GRANTS**



Yes! It's the Vicki Randle we know and love, now appearing nightly in the band on Jay Leno's new 'Tonight Show.'

**TOTALING ALMOST \$158,000.** Since its establishment in 1985 by author/playwright Sallie Bingham, the group has distributed more than \$4.5 million to Kentucky-area feminist artists, scholars, and organizations. MUSE choir received \$7,500 to record a CD and Yer Girlfriend received \$1,200 toward the purchase of new equipment. Kentucky Foundation for Women, 332 W. Broadway, Louisville, KY 40202.

The **JUNE L. MAZER LESBIAN COLLEC-**

**TION** is planning a taped oral history project to preserve the words and lives of lesbians of African American heritage. The Collection is particularly eager to hear from lesbians over fifty. (310) 659-2478.

The **LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES** is interested in info concerning the use of the black triangle as a lesbian symbol during the Holocaust, and when it came into contemporary use on buttons, posters, flyers, etc. Lucinda Zoe, LHA, P.O. Box 1258, New York, NY 10116.

Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation has launched the **BROTHERS FOR SISTERS** project, a way that concerned men can contribute financial support to the women's community. Tell your interested male friends and relatives to contact Astraea Brothers for Sisters, 666 Broadway #520, New York, NY 10012.

According to *off our backs*, The **NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS** has an advice and counseling program to answer legal questions, in addition to numerous publications concerning lesbians and the law. NCLR, 1663 Mission St. #5, San Francisco, CA 94103. (415) 621-0674.

**GAY GAMES IV** presented a fundraising benefit concert last June featuring Ferron, Barbara Higbie and Teresa Trull, Toshi Reagon, and emcee Lisa Kron. The fourth Gay Games and Cultural Festival will take place in New York City in June 1994, with an estimated 15,000 athletes and 5,000 artists participating. Gay Games IV, 135 W. 20th, New York, NY 10011. (212) 633-9494.

**RED HERRING WOMYN'S COFFEEHOUSE** produces live shows every third Sunday of the month in the basement of Channing-Murray Foundation at the Univ. of Illinois. Mary (217) 359-2066.

Alix Dobkin is now on the board of **FEMINISTS FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS**. FAR c/o Bauman, 315 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10025. (212) 866-6422.

**POP AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA** has launched its seventh advertising campaign (150 posters in San Francisco, 150 in London featuring images of affectionate same-sex  
*continued on page 56*

## ON STAGE AND OFF

# SO WHAT IS PERFECTION ANYWAY?

By Justina Golden and Joyce Zymeck



Neil Hammer

**Justina Golden and Joyce Zymeck: "We learned that our idea of perfection had changed from technical brilliance to something that opens the heart—no pretensions, no fireworks, just an essential 'is-ness' that reaches into the soul of the listener."**

We have just completed our first album, *So Strong*, after two years of dreaming, planning, fundraising, and recording. This process has been one of the most profound, demanding, and transforming of our lives. It has forced us to really look at ourselves and our art, to ask ourselves over and over, "Is this really worth it?"

**JUSTINA:** I remember the astonishing array of machinery, the technical explanations by the engineer which were incomprehensible to us until we reached the mixing stage of production. I remember watching as the microphones were set up, singing the opening lines of "Ancient Mother" and thinking, *This is going to be easy*. How wrong I was.

I grew up as an only child and so

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

learned to sing harmony with myself on a portable cassette recorder. I taped rehearsals and performances throughout high school, college, and graduate school. I was used to the sound of my own voice recorded; I felt sure I could listen with enough distance to make choices about what the best "take" was, about when I had sung or played my best.

However, in listening to the clarity of the sound produced by the interaction of my voice and the German tube microphones (especially chosen for us for their ability to produce vocals with "presence"), the battle began. My inner critics were in their milieu at last! Here was the final and incontrovertible proof of what I had secretly suspected all along: I was a failure, and this recording would reveal it for all to hear. Perfection was not only unobtainable, but not even an option. My mood quickly turned to despair, and I doubted

whether this project was worth completing.

As we continued recording, I realized there were other choices I could make, other directions to explore. I could choose to allow myself to feel like a failure, or I could redefine success. I could continue to expect myself to perform perfectly (achieving everything in one take, of course...), or I could choose new standards. I could berate myself for what I was not, or develop deeper listening to what I was now.

The issue of perfection dogged us from the beginning, an issue also complicated by both time and money matters. When was a track perfect? As the project continued, several criteria emerged. The track had to be reasonably in tune and in sync with the other parts. But most importantly, we looked for a "magical" quality. When a performance had "magic" it had caught the deeper spirit of the piece, the intent in motion, flowing in consonance with the most elemental energy of the music.

One example stands out in my mind. We had done three takes of Ferron's song "Testimony." The last was technically perfect, but lifeless. In the first, Joyce's voice took on that magical quality, and after listening carefully to all three versions, we decided to return to the first version and re-record all of my vocals using her vocal as an inspiration and standard. This is the version of the song that appears on the album.

**JOYCE:** Justina and I found that often the most technically "perfect" vocal

*continued on page 61*

**ABOUT THE WRITERS:** Justina Golden and Joyce Zymeck have performed together since 1988, bringing their music to audiences from Massachusetts to Mississippi. Their life's work is exploring how music can heal this precious planet and all who live within her. Hear their song "Affirmation" on the soundsheet in this issue. Justina and Joyce, P.O. Box 442, Amherst, MA 01004.

## JAMIE ANDERSON *from 5*

### WHO ARE SOME OF THE OTHER WOMEN'S MUSIC PERFORMERS FROM WHOM YOU GET INSPIRATION?

Of the women that I hear at festivals, I find Sue Fink very inspiring. She has such a positive message in most of her songs. I like how they feel, too—they're always very nice rhythmically. I love to dance, and I really connect with that. She's very funny—see, once again that's something that really attracts me. I also admire Deidre McCalla. I think she's a fine songwriter. I get the inspiration and validation and energy to carry on from a lot of different places—from festivals, and from other performers, because we know the performing end of things. We know how hard that aspect of it can be. And the performers who do really out music—we have an additional connection. I really appreciate women like Leah Zicari and Lynn Thomas.

### BECAUSE...?

...because we do the same kinds of things—we get up on stage and say, "queer, queer, queer." We take the same kinds of risks. Not that the other performers don't also take risks, but it's a different kind of thing. Those of us who are actively out on stage take the same risks that anyone who comes out takes. We don't always "preach to the choir," either—our music gets some radio airplay, and sometimes we perform queer music in straight settings. It's always risky to come out in situations like that.

I get tremendous inspiration from the women at festivals, especially festivals like Gulf Coast where it's smaller and more intimate. We all eat together; you see all the performers out in the crafts area; women feel comfortable coming up and talking to you. It's a step beyond, "Sign my tape, I loved your performance." It's like, "I come from Pensacola, and this is what our women's community is like. What do you think about this, what do you think about that? I want to tell you more about myself." It's really gratifying to have wom-

en come up and tell me stories about listening to my music.

I get inspiration from the musicians I work with on my albums too. I wish that I could work with all lesbians, but that just hasn't been logistically or financially possible so far. The drummer I worked with on my first album told me that everything she knew about lesbians she learned from my album. It was a frightening thing, but it was positive.

When I hired the musicians for that first album, I was terrified because I thought, "Oh shit, I'm going to have to come out to all these strangers." The process of getting musicians for an album doesn't mean you just call up one keyboard player and that's it, you work with her. You call up all these strangers and say, "Hi, I'm Jamie Anderson and I'm putting out a lesbian album and I'm looking for musicians." I didn't want to hire anybody who I thought was great musically and then—after they got my charts and stuff—go, "I can't work with her." I didn't want to work with any assholes.

Out of all the musicians I've interviewed for both projects, only one has freaked out. All the rest of them have been great! For the most part they have a lot of questions. Like with my most recent album, on the song "I'm Sorry," the drummer was this eager-beaver kind of guy—he reminded me of a nine year old. After we finished rehearsing that song for the fourth or fifth time, he looked at me and said, "I know why you wrote that song. That's probably what straight people tell you all the time. Right?" Bingo! My musicians were sort of my test. They got it, so I figure a lot of other people will get it, too.

When I'm at home and booking a tour, or writing songs in my own space, I forget about that stuff. I think, "Oh, what are my little songs worth? What is my work worth?" But then I come to festivals like Gulf Coast, or I talk to that woman who came to my concert in Phoenix who said she was disgusted and then changed her mind...it means a whole lot. It's real important to me to know that someone out there is really listening to what I do. •

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## FADE IN • FADE OUT

# HORRORFEST: WOMEN AND THE BIG SCREAM

By Paula E. Langguth

Horror of horrors! Not a column about films whose entire genre is notorious for blood and gore and helpless women screaming at the top of their lungs until they're rescued by brave males! Yes, indeed, but have no fear—today's horror aficionadas can now find several movies a year with strong female roles. In just the last twelve months we've seen both Sigourney Weaver (reviving for a third time her role as Lt. Ripley, in this summer's *Aliens 3*) and Linda Hamilton (*Terminator 2*) flexing their pecs and protecting all humankind from impending doom.

And every now and again, women have triumphed over evil in the past as well—but these films were largely overlooked, ignored, or just plain misunderstood. Researching these films was great fun—you know a film is scary when your heart races in broad daylight.

So whether your genre is slasher, psycho, thriller, vampire, hair-raising suspense, or horror satire, you'll find something to give you chills and thrills this Halloween.

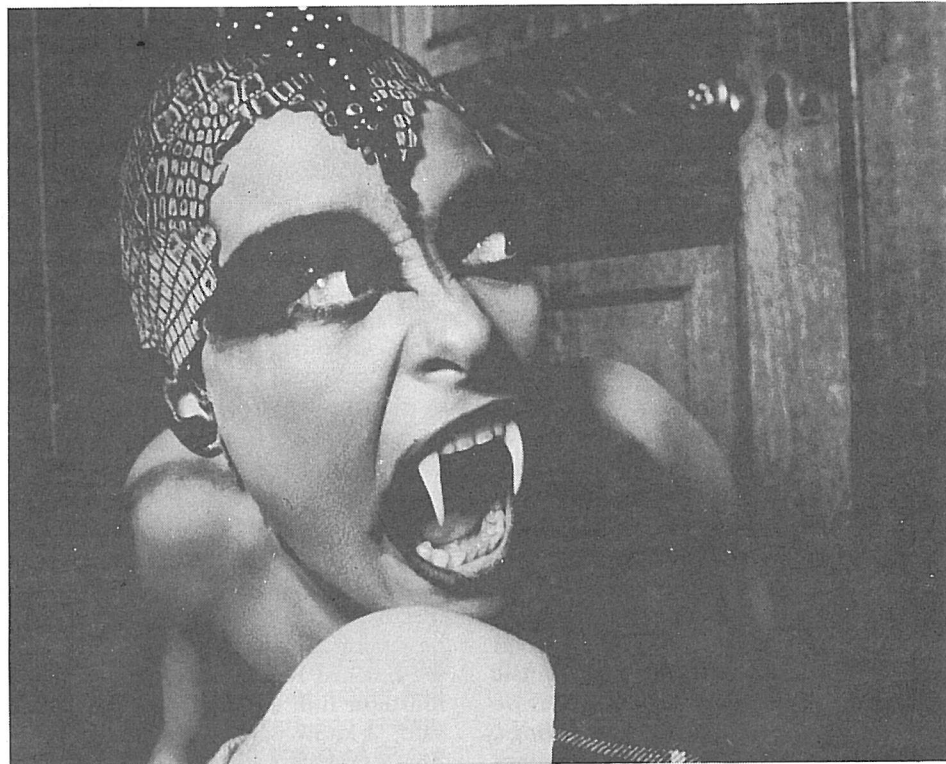
Oh, one more thing. Did you remember to lock the doors?

• FADE IN •

### THE SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE

If slasher flicks are your cup of tea, then you won't want to miss *The Slumber Party Massacre* (1982). The screenplay was written by feminist author Rita Mae Brown, which caused a bit of a stir in the women's community when the film came out. But be forewarned: although billed as a feminist parody/vengeance for all the slasher films that have gone before, there is no shortage of blood and gore. Perhaps by *feminist*, director Amy Jones meant

**FADE IN • FADE OUT:** In these tight economic times, more women than ever are turning to videos to stretch their entertainment dollars. **FADE IN • FADE OUT** is a handy guide, from a woman-identified perspective, to rentable titles.



Lady Sylvia (Amanda Donahoe) spends her time seducing one gender or the other as she seeks out a sacrificial virgin in 'The Lair of the White Worm.'

that there are some survivors who outlast the escaped psychotic driller killer. Veteran bad guy Michael Vellella is well cast as the escaped serial killer Russ Thorn.

The movie starts off calm enough, with Trish and her friends planning a sleepover while her folks are away. Unbeknownst to the teens, however, a mass murderer is on the loose. The unsuspecting women (all part of what may be the world's least athletic women's varsity basketball team) get set for a girls-only night at home. Two male classmates cook up a little teenage treachery, but their peeping tom days are obviously numbered when treachery turns into bona fide terror.

Amy Jones and company put the old-fashioned organ music and mild scare tactics to good use in the movie's first half, where unexpected events far outweigh the blood and gore. But although this film is a

spoof, it's not a comedy by any means. The horror runs rampant. The tame abductions of the first twenty minutes are Disney fare compared to the gruesome fates awaiting these teenage girls. The scream squad includes Michele Michaels, Robin Stille, Debra Delaso, Andree Handre, Gina Mari, and Jennifer Meyers.

If you want to be scared witless, invite a group of friends over for a slumber party and place bets on which character(s) will come out alive—and who, if anyone, gets to deliver the fatal blow to the killer.

### THE LAIR OF THE WHITE WORM

For a truly hilarious satire of horror films, I recommend the phallogentric *The Lair of the White Worm*. Released in 1988,



this film features *L.A. Law*'s Amanda Donohoe as Lady Sylvia Marsh, aka the sacrilegious vampire love slave of the legendary White Worm.

As the folk tale goes, the White Worm was a local dragon, slain by the courageous local land baron Lord James D'Ampton. Every year, the locals celebrate the slaying of the White Worm at a big bash hosted by the descendent and namesake of Lord D'Ampton (played by Hugh Grant, the dashing lead from *Maurice*). This year, there's a lot of extra brouhaha because a visiting archeology student has discovered what may have been the worm's original head, and the local constable has found the watch which belonged to one Mr. Trent, who with his wife disappeared without a trace a year ago while walking home from the White Worm Fest.

The Trents' daughters Mary (Sammi Davis) and Eve (Catherine Oxenberg) find themselves involved in a game of vampire tag which includes psychedelic mental and physical hallucinations of a bizarre ancient Roman erotic cult. When not playing hide and seek with the locals, or getting in a quick game of snakes and ladders, Lady Sylvia spends her time seducing one gender or the other as she seeks out a virgin whom she can sacrifice live to the great White Worm.

Watch closely and you'll catch a variety of movie spoofs, including one from *Citizen Kane*. Of course, the movie has a typical boy saves girl ending—or does it? You be the judge.

## CARRIE

Remember high school? Relive the agony and angst with Brian DePalma's film version of Stephen King's 1976 horror classic *Carrie*, in which an attempt to create a perfect prom memory goes awry and incurs the wrath of a telekinetic loner.

Naive young Carrie White (young Sissy Spacek) is a high school senior, but you wouldn't know it by appearances. Tormented by her classmates on a daily basis, scorned by her teacher, and considered crazy by most kids in town, Carrie also carries the burden of having a mother (Piper Laurie) who is an eccentric Christian zealot who decorates the dining room with a life-sized mural of the Last Supper and who believes menstruation is God's curse on women who engage in lustful thoughts, words, or deeds. Carrie's penance for getting her period is to spend hours in solitary repentance inside a closet shrine.

Communication is completely absent between mother and daughter until Carrie discovers that the unexplained events around her are actually caused by her. The late onset of puberty finally sets Carrie's telekinesis into motion. Now able to move or change objects by sheer mind power, Carrie certainly gets her mother's attention. Sissy Spacek and Piper Laurie both won Academy Award nominations for their spellbinding roles, which is unusual for actors in horror films. (Notably, Kathy Bates won her Oscar in 1991 for a role in another movie based on a Stephen King book, *Misery*.)

Popular girl Sue Snell (Amy Irving) tries to make amends for treating Carrie badly—by offering up her boyfriend Tommy (William Katt) as Carrie's prom date. But will Carrie go? And if so, will she be the perfect prom date or the prom date from hell?

Brian DePalma carries on the psychological thriller/suspense genre in the vein of that master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock. Female roles in DePalma's films are always abundant and multi-dimensional—but not always likeable, much less lovable. As in *Carrie*, most DePalma films use emotional hooks to drive their horror home. After watching *Carrie* you may well ask yourself: Do we forget the ways we humiliate others, or is the memory carried with us always?

Other notables for female actors in this film: Amy Irving and Betty Buckley made their film debuts here; veteran character actress Priscilla Pointer also plays a small, but important role, as does P.J. Soles. I also highly recommend any of DePalma's other films, particularly *The Fury* and *Sisters*.

## STRAIT-JACKET

Back in the '60s, they really knew how to make suspenseful murder mysteries. The 1964 camp classic *Strait-Jacket* is the story of Lucy Harwood (Joan Crawford), a woman who puts up with a husband who was handpicked by her parents and then bides her time until she's widowed and able to pick out her own, younger husband. Unfortunately, Lucy's choice is a philandering fellow who married her for her money. When she catches him in bed with another woman, she does a Lizzy Borden impression on both with a nearby axe—all within the view of her five-year-old daughter, Carol (Diane Baker). And that's just the first five minutes!

When Lucy gets sprung from the

mental institution twenty years later, she comes home to live with her brother Bill and his wife Emily, who raised Carol. Carol is now a sculptress nearly betrothed to the town's rich kid, Michael. For someone who suffered an early childhood trauma, Carol seems strangely disaffected by her mother's past criminal actions. Indeed, she yearns for the mother-daughter relationship she never had. To appease her daughter, Lucy works hard to assimilate herself into the real world again—even to the point of recreating herself in her own younger image at her daughter's behest.

William Castle directed and produced this film with the help of Dona Holloway, and they do a credible job of showing the strength of the mother-daughter bond, although I prefer the extra angst Joan Crawford brought to her motherly role in *Mildred Pierce* (which won her Best Actress accolades.)

*Strait-Jacket* contains plenty of plot twists and turns, but lags in the middle when the subplot of Carol seeking acceptance from Michael's family gains momentum. By this time, however, the murders have started up again, and it's anyone's guess as to how far a daughter will go to protect and keep her mother with her, and how far a mother will go to ensure her daughter's happiness.

Look for a young George Kennedy in a bit part as a nosy hired hand. And keep your eye on the charm bracelets.

## THE SEVENTH SIGN

The weak of heart (and stomach) can find solace in *The Seventh Sign*. The title refers to the seventh sign of the impending apocalypse, the end of the world as depicted in the Bible. The film opens on Christmas day, in Haiti, where a mysterious man (Jurgen Prochnow) breaks the seal on an ancient letter, and tosses it onto the surf. All the fish die as the sea begins to boil. Three days later, in Israel, a huge section of a desert crater becomes an arctic arena, encasing an entire town in foot-thick ice. These mysterious events crop up all over the world, and director Carl Schultz's detached depiction of these natural disasters

*continued on page 59*

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** When Paula E. Langguth is not editing financial newsletters for Phillips Publishing in Potomac, Maryland, she's a contributing editor at *'The Baltimore Alternative'* where she writes book reviews and occasional articles of interest to women, youth, and children.

# CONFABULATION

## TWO DECADES OF 'LESBIAN/WOMAN'

Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon

*Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon's ground-breaking book 'Lesbian/Woman' (1972) rode high on the tidal wave of post-Stonewall gay activism—a wave that the authors themselves had done much to create. Among other things, Del and Phyllis were the founders of the oldest lesbian organization in the U.S., The Daughters of Bilitis, which they started in the repressive political climate of the 1950s. Partners for almost forty years, they continue to be actively involved in pioneering work for lesbian liberation. 'Lesbian/Woman,' considered to be a classic of lesbian literature, has won numerous awards; the twentieth anniversary edition (Volcano Press) has been updated and now concludes with the National Lesbian Conference held in Atlanta in 1991. Del and Phyllis were journalists when they met in Seattle in 1949; they reflect and reminisce on their work and times.*

**DEL:** You were writing for the weekly *Construction News* and the monthly *Pacific Builder and Engineer*, and I was editor of the *Daily Construction Reports*. Big deal. We got titles of assistant editor and editor in lieu of decent pay.

**PHYLLIS:** Which was par for the course in those days. We didn't even really realize all that was going on. We did realize there were a lot of inequities, however—for instance, the woman on the magazine who was the whole mainstay of the organization was making less money than I started at, even though she'd been there for years. It came as a great shock to her, and to me too. I tried organizing people into the newspaper guild union, but they wouldn't do it. The women wouldn't do it. They paid attention to their husbands, who said, "Well I'm already in a union, what are you going to get out of being in one?" I was working at this trade publication before you were hired; when we women heard that you were working your way up from San Francisco to Seattle, we were kind of excited. I was especially excited because you were from San



Phyllis Lyon (left) and Del Martin wrote 'Lesbian/Woman' twenty years ago. To this day, the author/activists are meeting people who say the book changed their lives.

*Francisco, and I had lived in the Bay area for years. And what we found out was that you were a gay divorcee—I'm using "gay" in no relation to homosexuality. But it was very exciting to know that we were going to have somebody with that kind of background coming to Seattle. That's how we became friends—I had that party for you when you arrived, to welcome you to Seattle and into the company.*

**D:** We were friends, and then you decided you were going to leave Seattle and go on that trip with your sister across the country, which you had planned to do for many years. While you were gone, your sister came down with polio, and I started to get all these long-distance phone calls, collect. Eventually we did get together—in San Francisco in 1953.

**P:** On Castro Street, but it was very different than it is today.

**D:** It was a working-class Catholic neighborhood then. It certainly has changed. We felt very isolated—we didn't know any other lesbians, and we were trying to

figure out how to find them. We did meet a couple of gay men who lived around the corner from us, and they introduced us to what was going on in North Beach in the bar scene. We tried going down to the bars, but we were so shy, remember? We found that the lesbians were all in little groups and knew each other; we didn't know how to break the ice, and felt more like tourists.

**P:** *Watching all those people! But eventually we did meet a lesbian and became kind of friendly with her and her partner. Somewhere along the line we moved out of the apartment on Castro Street. We bought the house in June of '55, and it was around September of '55 that we got a phone call from this lesbian we had met who wanted to know if we'd be interested in helping to start a lesbian social club. We thought that was just the greatest idea in the world—it meant we would get a chance to meet a lot more lesbians. There were eight of us who came together to start this social club.*

**D:** This very secret social club eventually became Daughters of Bilitis, and the group

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

started publishing *The Ladder* and had public discussion meetings—it became a lot more public. Mainly the "public" was lesbians and gays, though, because there was no way of getting coverage in the traditional presses.

**P:** *We didn't have any non-traditional press at that time. There were no gay papers or lesbian magazines except 'The Ladder.' The Daughters of Bilitis turned into a lot more than was originally envisioned by the Filipina woman whose idea it was to have a social club. We started 'The Ladder' in 1956 as a newsletter, only it got out of hand because everyone was so excited about a lesbian magazine. So then DOB became more political, insofar as you could be political in those days. We began to meet the other two organizations—the Mattachine Society and One, Incorporated down in Los Angeles; that was the extent of the gay movement at that time.*

**D:** We were both, at different times, editors of *The Ladder*, and wrote a lot of the material that was in it. We reported on everything that was going on at the time. A lot of people since then have misinterpreted that, as though we were advocating what was going on. We were reporting...

**P:** *...what was going on in the gay movement, such as it was...*

**D:** ...and also in the larger society: what they were saying about lesbians and gays. We were also building the idea of self-acceptance and self-esteem; you can't have a movement without it. Later, when we wrote our book, we certainly received a lot of responses saying *The Ladder* had helped people in many different ways with coming out. Our book also helped parents of lesbians and gays gain a much better understanding.

**P:** *The way we got around to writing 'Lesbian/Woman' was interesting. Although we had talked a little about writing a book, we hadn't done anything about it. We had heard that the '70s would be a time when there would be a lot more published about lesbians and gays and women, and then we got a letter from a friend who said that McCalls Publications was looking for a book on homosexuality. So we wrote to McCalls and said, "There's a lot of stuff out on gay men, but there's nothing on lesbians," and we went on about that. We got a letter back from an editor there saying, "Well, that's true. So send me an outline of what you would write." We did, and they gave us a contract.*

**D:** While we were writing the book, our editor was fired. The new editor, a woman, said, "Don't let this stop you—just go on

and finish the manuscript and send it in." Well, about the time we had finished the manuscript we learned that McCalls Publishing had sold out to another company and we were a little nonplused, but we sent the manuscript in. It was a long time before we heard anything more. But finally this woman editor wrote and said that they wouldn't accept the manuscript, that we didn't write about what we said we would, and so forth. And she said, "Apparently you have no doubt about your lifestyle, and that's impossible."

**P:** *But we knew that we had written the book we said we would. So we got the manuscript back and then wondered what to do with it. We called Robin Morgan because she had just put out 'Sisterhood Is Powerful,' and we asked her what we should do. She said if we could possibly have a local publisher it would be much better, because then we could have control over the book. The Reverend Don Kuhn was in charge of Glide Publications at that time, and he said he'd take it—he hadn't even read it yet. Funny—I was working at Glide at that time and he knew us well. So that's how it happened that Glide put out the hardcover edition. They later sold the book to Bantam for the paperback edition.*

**D:** And Glide Publications was an arm of the Methodist church.

**P:** *That's right. So it was a Methodist-related publishing company that put out one of the very first books that dealt with lesbians as human beings and not some kind of weird creatures. It should be noted that when 'Lesbian/Woman' came out in 1972, there was little if anything out dealing with lesbians that was really true. After the book went out in paperback, it got into the hands of lesbians all over the country—despite its name. The name put some people off; they were nervous buying a book that had the word "lesbian" on the cover...*

**D:** ...but we were trying to liberate the word.

**P:** *We liberated it so much, people took a week or so to get up enough nerve to buy it! But anyway, we got phone calls and we got letters by the hundreds from women who read the book. In some cases they were asking how they could meet other lesbians; some sent us their life histories and the travails they had gone through. Anyhow, it was just absolutely amazing the amount of mail we got, which shows how badly something like that was needed.*

**D:** We were also among the first lesbians to be on the *Donahue* show, and we got scads of mail as a result of that. Some of it

was biblical tracts—people writing and saying they were going to pray for us.

**P:** *But the vast majority was positive.*

**D:** I remember letters from elderly women who said they'd really not thought about it much, but they'd learned a lot and were beginning to change their ideas. We heard about a maid in a hotel who was making up rooms—she turned on the TV and saw us, and got real excited. She hurried up from room to room, turning on the TVs to catch the show. We also received some letters from women who were still married and who had managed to get together in religious retreats—at least that's where they met, and then would get together occasionally at various points in the year. So the response was rather overwhelming. We're still finding people as we go along, telling us how much *Lesbian/Woman* meant to them.

**P:** *Back to those two women who met at a church camp—they sent us pictures along with the letter telling us how they got together two or three times a year. They had managed it so that their families were friends too, so both husbands were friends and so forth. The two families would get together besides the two women going off occasionally. Anyway, here were these pictures of these women in their little housedresses with their bouffant hairdos. One picture was of them celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of one of the couples. It really got to us—in the letter they explained that they were waiting for one of the husbands to die so that the widow could move in with the couple whose husband was still alive, and finally the two women could be living together. We wondered how many other people there were out there in this country or around the world who were plotting this same kind of thing.*

**D:** It was clear from the responses we got that very few people were out—which was certainly understandable in the political/social climate at the time. The women's movement had started, and there were a lot of conflicts. Lesbians were disenchanted with the gay movement, since they were relegated to taking the lesser roles that the men would permit—like being the secretaries or receptionists and so on...

**P:** *...making coffee...*

**D:** ...and trying to say that their organizations were co-ed, and Daughters of Bilitis was a separatist organization. Many lesbians did jump into the women's movement knowing that even if we got gay

*continued on page 54*

# BIG MAMAS

By Rosetta Reitz

*The strong, independent women emerging in the rap scene of the 1980s and 1990s—such as Queen Latifah, Monie Love, and Salt-n-Pepa—come from a long and amazing tradition of bold African American women musicians. Feminist women rappers are the Big Mamas and Mean Mothers of today.*

Big Mamas and Mean Mothers are not afraid or ashamed to speak their minds. They are nurturers who take care of themselves. They are on guard for mistreaters, and don't hesitate to tell them off.

Don't mess with a Big Mama, for she will get you told.

A Big Mama insists upon her dignity. She doesn't hide from reality, and she confronts the facts of life with candor. She is warm, generous and dependable—but she also makes demands. A Big Mama tells the truth and expects the same in return. She clarifies chaos, knows what she wants, and spells it out. She also has a great sense of humor. To be one, to know one, to love one or to be loved by one is lucky.

The women on the *Big Mamas: Independent Women's Blues, Volume 2* album (Rosetta Records, 1982) were not independent in most areas of their lives. As a group, African American women of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s were the lowest of the low on the socioeconomic scale in the United States. When they refused shabby treatment and asserted themselves in the one area of their lives that they could control—to give or not to give affection—we celebrate that and place it in bold relief. It is an enduring legacy we all must proudly claim.

The songs on the *Big Mamas 2* album—most of them reissued for the first time—shatter the myth that the women who sang the blues wallowed in their discontent, moaning about the men who left them. That was true only some of the time for some women. We have had too much of the victim-variety blues and not nearly enough of the fooling-around kind. The fun kind certainly existed; blues songs can be happy too.

*Big Mamas 2*, the second in Rosetta Records' "independent" series, is an antidote, an attempt to correct the historic dis-

ortion. It is intended to show blues singers in their multi-dimensional facets. We view them here through their songs with a fresh perspective: not in the stereotypical way they usually are presented (as laughable sexual mummies or pitiful insatiable whores), but as all-around human beings.

By using a different angle of vision, we find that these women demonstrate a clear personality, vigorously asserted, with a recognizable identity that is unmistakably American. These songs are a monument to their times.

The singers reflect their own sounds and their own rhythms with the same gusto and depth of feeling as male musicians of the period. Their respective musical personalities are individually and differently displayed with great originality. Their melodic ingenuity alone is worth shouting about.

During the Classic Blues period in the Golden Era—the 1920s—more than seventy percent of the blues records that were made featured women singers. They were the stars, and the jazz musicians had to follow their lead. It was the women who set the style of the recorded blues. The blues, so basic to American music; blues is to jazz what yeast is to bread—without it, it's flat. And without the blues, we wouldn't have jazz, R&B, soul, or rock as we know them today.

As I was putting this album together I was constantly frustrated; so many of the super songs I have been collecting on the old 78 rpm's were not good enough to use. The sound was too poor. Fortunately, at least some of the miniscule pops and clicks that disturb the music can be removed by a good sound engineer. When the static elements are gone, it moves us just a little closer to how each song sounded live.

The inadequacy of the early recordings robs us of the deeper timbres of their voices and the full resonance of the robustness they had in person. However, the suggestion is there, and we do hear the same beat and the commanding way they had of shaping a phrase.

Acoustic recording techniques in the

early 1920s were actually primitive. That we can hear the music at all, more than fifty years later, is a wonder.

Sometimes after a long search I'd finally find a title from my want list, and it would be overused. It had been played so much that there was too much hiss coming out of the speaker—or else the record was cracked or chipped. Sometimes in the record-making process an instrument would overpower the singer so that she sounded weak compared to, say, the trumpet. (That was due to her not singing closely enough to the acoustic horn to get her sound down into it so the stylus could cut deep into the block of wax. Or it could be because the day was too hot and the fans weren't keeping the block of wax cool enough to get the proper impression.)

In some cases, when the whole record was under-recorded, the words were too difficult to understand. The following is a list of some of the songs I would have put on *Big Mamas* if they could be heard without difficulty:

- Ethel Waters, "There'll Be Some Changes Made" (1921) • Daisy Martin, "I Won't Be Back Til You Change Your Ways" (1921) • Lucille Hegamin, "You Can Have Him, I Don't Want Him Blues" (1922) • Mamie Smith, "Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None O' This Jelly Roll" (1922) • Sara Martin, "If You Don't Like It, Leave" (1923) • Sister Harris, "Don't Mess with Me" (1923) • Rosa Henderson, "I Ain't No Man's Slave" (1923) • Ada Brown, "Evil Mama Blues" (1923) • Hannah Sylvester, "Papa, Better Watch Your Step" (1923) • Lena Wilson, "I Don't Let No Man Worry Me" (1923) • Eva Taylor, "If You Don't, I Know Who Will" (1923) • Lottie Beaman, "Mama Can't Lose" (1924) • Sippie Wallace, "Baby I Can't Use You No More" (1924) • Ma Rainey, "Trust No Man" (1926) • Leola Wilson, "Dishrag Blues" (1926) • Fannie May Goosby, "Can't Use You Blues" (1928) • Christina Gray, "Just Like You Walked In, You Can Walk Out" (1929) • Mae Glover, "I Ain't Givin Nobody None" (1929) • Lillian Glinn, "I'm Through Shedding Tears Over You" (1929) • and Sister Cally Fancy, "Everybody Get Your Business Right" (1929).

Among the reasons those songs are listed is to illustrate the fact that the songs

commonly existed. I do not search out isolated, unusual records to reissue. This list—and the songs on the *Mean Mothers* albums (and the others to follow)—were everyday currency on "race records." They prove that we have had an unfair picture of the blues singers because some producers were perhaps too embarrassed by the material to reissue it. Maybe it was more comfortable to reissue "Daddy, Won't You Please Come Home, Mama's So All Alone" than "If You Can't Do Better, I'll Let a Better Pappa Move In." Threatening? Perhaps.

In the small number of cases when this kind of song *was* reissued, it was mostly because of the jazz musicians behind the singer. There are albums that discuss the piano playing, the guitar strumming and the trumpet blowing as though the woman didn't exist. Her accompany-



Frank Driggs collection/Rosetta Records

ing male musicians on those albums are analyzed in great detail while the star is ignored.

One producer, who sounds as if he hates women, opens the notes on an album with, "Like any blues vocalist, Bessie Jackson could be no better than her accompanists." He has it just upside down. Many of the blues women, particularly the Classic Queens, knew better than the musicians what they wanted, and they instructed those musicians. Remember, it was the *woman's* recording date. Doc Cheatham, the legendary trumpet player, told me, "You had to know what they [the

singers] wanted or you were in trouble."

That's why there are such great instrumentalists on so many of the blues records. The Big Mamas *chose* them, and if they didn't do right—as in the case of Louis Armstrong with Bessie Smith, who got too pushy in his responses behind her—she didn't use them again. It is unbelievable the way these Big Mamas have been trivialized, with no understanding of the overwhelming fullness of their individuality and idiosyncrasies.

Bessie Smith, the Empress, is known to us primarily for wailing about her "Empty Bed Blues" and her low-class taste for "A Pigfoot and a Bottle of Beer" instead of for the same assertion of independence that made Isadora Duncan and Emily Hahn famous during the 1920s.

*Ain't gonna marry,  
ain't gonna settle down,  
I'm a young woman  
and ain't done runnin' round.*

This chorus from "Young Woman's Blues," written by Bessie herself, was one of the most popular songs in her repertoire. Why do we have the picture of her as a masochist rather than a woman who wants to explore life?

The *Big Mamas 2* album opens with Ethel Waters in 1925. [See "Ethel Waters: Quintessential Singer of American Songs," *HOT WIRE*, January 1990.] Her sweet-toned voice presaged the music later known as Swing. Miss Ethel was swinging before that style was named.

A concrete way she influenced jazz, for example, was through teaching Fletcher Henderson. He toured with

her in 1921 as piano accompanist for the Black Swan record company before he led his important Roseland Ballroom orchestra.

"Fletcher wouldn't give me what I call the damn-it-to-hell bass, that chump-chump stuff that real jazz needs," she said. And she showed him precisely what she wanted. He shortly thereafter led the most important big Black band of the middle '20s. He went on to become one of the most sophisticated big band arrangers.

"No Man's Mama" is a song of celebration over a divorce that ended "a five year war."

*I can come when I please.*

*I can go when I please.*

*I can flit, fly and flutter,*

*like the birds in the trees.*

*Because... I'm no man's mother now.*

*Hey, Hey.*

*I can say what I like, I can do what I like.*

*I'm a gal who is on a matrimonial strike;*

*Which means, I'm no man's mama now.*

*Am I making it plain, I will never again,*

*Drag around another ball and chain.*

*I'm through, because I'm*

*no man's mama now.*

Along with the charm, there's a lack of pretentiousness in her singing. In no way is she ostentatious in the graceful way she extends and bends notes.

*You know that there was a time,*

*I used to think that men were grand.*

*But no-oh more for mine.*

*I'm gonna label my apartment*

*No Man's Land.*

Her long-time friend Pearl Wright played the piano for her on this song exactly the way Miss Waters liked to be backed. Coleman Hawkins, only twenty-one years old on this record, and playing the bass sax, was probably told a thing or two, too.

Edith Johnson, in "Ain't No More To Be Said," tells us philosophically about the state of her affairs without self pity.

*Don't you know your chances*

*has always been good, honey?*

*You were blind and could not see.*

*'Cause you picked all over a good woman,*

*Lord, when you passed by me.*

Instead of lamenting, she is merely relating the facts and lets us know she is not to blame. When she tells the piano player, "Ah, pick it, little boy, for me," she is talking to young Count Basie, then twenty-five, who accompanied her with a beautiful barrelhouse style.

Viola McCoy used eight pseudonyms for her recording career because she had contracts with that many companies. She appeared in most of the reviews at the Alhambra Theater in New York City during the 1920s. In "Git Goin'" she tells her lover where to go in no uncertain terms, because, "You treated me so tough, I've stood it long enough."

Hattie McDaniel is best known as Mammy in the film *Gone With the Wind*. The role won her the Academy Award in 1939 for best supporting actress, making her the first African American person to win that prize. (Her comment: "It is much

better to play a maid than to be one.")

Before her film career she was a blues singer who also played drums and was billed sometimes as Hi-Hat Hattie. She is one of the singers Mae West studied and imitated, as is evidenced by Hattie's intonation in "I Thought I'd Do It."

Issie Ringgold cut only one record. She was another blues singer, like thousands of others, who hoped for the chance to be catapulted out of their narrow sphere. She didn't make it, and is so unknown that in the record catalog next to her name is written only "female singer." I do not claim any importance for her, nor do I consider her voice to be outstanding. I included her work because she represents the large number of singers who worked in Black clubs singing songs like "Be On Your Merry Way." It gives us a greater appreciation of the women on the top of the iceberg to realize how many there were underneath.

Gussie Williams—another almost unknown woman who made only one record—sings "Try Me Out and You Will See," a song she wrote herself. Her affirmative proposition to the man who attracts her is straightforward and without guile as she lists the goodies he will get. As she celebrates herself, she carefully inserts her requirements.

*Don't you come to my house  
actin' rough and hard.  
Just you wait and see.  
You never shoot your pistol  
off in my front yard.  
Try me out and you will see.  
You can have your coffee mornings,  
that'll be all right,  
But I've got to have hot sausages,  
each and every night.*

Clara Smith was a very big star on the Black theater circuit. She recorded 150 songs between 1923 and 1932. "Papa I Don't Need You Now" is a good example of the common variety of outspokenness that was most uncommon in the songs sung in white theaters. The Queen of the Moaners didn't have the vocal power of Bessie Smith, but she had her own definite sound, a melodious moan. Miss Clara died in obscurity in Detroit in 1935.

As unflappable as these women may sound, it is important to know that they did put their armor down when they felt safe and pleased. They sang about that too!

Ida Cox was the third in importance of the Classic Blues singers (Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith were numbers one and two), and has become better known since I

reissued her "Wild Women Don't Have the Blues" and "One House Mama." [Editor's note: '70s and early '80s women's music audiences were introduced to the music of Ida Cox by Ginni Clemmens, especially through her version of "Wild Women."] On



**Ethel Waters, circa 1931. No longer "Sweet Mamma Stringbean," she calls herself "No Man's Mamma" now.**

*Big Mamas 2* Ida sings "I Can't Quit That Man," and tells us why.

*I used to say I'd never see the day.  
When a love crazy fool I'd be.  
Used to stall them all, love to see them fall.  
Why men were just playthings to me.  
But when that superman came along,  
He made me change my song.  
I can't quit that man.  
Everything it takes to  
make me love him he's got,  
Right from the start, he put me on love's spot.  
I can't quit that man.  
His lovin' is delightful, delicious so sweet,  
His modernistic technique  
makes love complete.  
Now you understand,  
why I can't quit that man.*

See how she changes the words when she sings it again:

*His action so masterful,  
he's slow sweet and kind,  
His sweet artistic loving is superfine.*

Ida Cox used only the best jazz musicians. To know anything about her is to be certain she chose them. The backing is exquisite; everything is perfectly coordi-

nated, from the ensemble playing to the fills. Jo Jones, the legendary drummer, told me, "It was a privilege to work for Miss Ida. She was such a complete pro, and you had to pay attention every second. She was the best there was. And grand, with all her diamonds! Why she even had one in her front tooth."

Julia Lee, one of the most gifted women in jazz, was a singer who found her true inner voice—and was also a hot piano player. Her swinging piano and her easy eloquence are solidly grounded in the blues. She is a perfect example of that exquisite coordination that comes from being able to crystalize the sound behind the music because she had the technical fluency to sing and play simultaneously. By remaining and working in Kansas City for forty years, where she was securely enthroned by her court, she was able to absorb the cross-fertilization of the brilliant developments that took place there—first the regional (also known as the territorial) sound then the sounds of the great innovators Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Jay McShann, Count Basie, and Mary Lou Williams. Because she never tried to imitate anyone, she was able to allow her own fully developed essence to come forth in its female authenticity.

The song Miss Julia sings and plays on *Mamas 2*, "You Ain't Got It No More," might be considered outrageous—but only because it is a woman rejecting a man. Men have been rejecting women for centuries for the crime of aging—taking up with younger women, and then telling their mates, "You ain't got it no more." In a culture where men make the rules, it becomes acceptable as natural fact. Older women—wives, mothers, mothers-in-law—became the butt of cruel jokes that have made fortunes for comedians. But Julia Lee, like many of her singer sisters, was not afraid to tell the whole truth. (She also accompanies herself brilliantly.)

Susie Edwards was a beautiful blues singer who performed with her husband Jodie Edwards as Butterbeans & Susie. They were very popular on the Black theater circuit, headliners for forty years. Their domestic quarrels were always funny. Even in the meanest duets—and some of them were unbelievably mean—Susie always ended up on top. In "You're A No-Count Triflin' Man," Susie confronts Butter about his meanderings and tells him where to go.

*You don't mean right  
and you ain't nothin' mister,  
But a no-count triflin' man.*

Frank Driggs collection/Rosetta Records

*You said those sweet things  
so many times before,  
It's a wonder that your jaws ain't sore.  
Now those evening walks you take  
may be all right, so prepare to take  
the everlasting walk tonight.  
Cause you don't mean right  
and you ain't nothin' mister,  
But a no count triflin man.*

Martha Copeland was another one of the numerous Big Mamas of the Classic Blues period, but almost nothing is known about her except that she recorded thirty-two songs in five years from 1923 to 1928 and was billed as "Everybody's Mammy." In a song called "Second Hand Daddy," she sings about the man she doesn't want, "what is dripping 'round from hand to hand."

Ora Alexander is another almost unknown woman, except that she recorded ten songs, and two were unissued. She gives us the benefit of her wisdom in "Men Sure Are Deceiving" in a down-home way. Her unique sound and individual phrasing in the flat-toned way is captivating. Her matter-of-fact style may at first sound crude, but it is thought through; it is astute.

*I want to tell all you women,  
Don't let no one man worry your mind,  
'Cause they will put on like they lovin' you  
And quit you all of the time.  
I ain't wild about no man  
But they are nice to have around.  
In case your heater gets too hot,  
They can always turn your damper down.*

Rosa Henderson's records sold so well in the 1920s that most of the race-record companies wanted her. She worked

for eight labels, using a different name for each. In those days, artists were supposed to work exclusively for only one company. Her voice was a combination of Bessie's throaty power and Ethel's swiny sweet tone.

Rosa was light-skinned like Ethel and a Big Mama in size like Bessie. Her life was typical of the Blues Queens, following the pattern of leaving home in her early teens to travel in the Black road shows and marrying young. Vocalion made a lot of money in 1923 from one of her records: "If You Don't Give Me What I Want I'll Get It Somewhere Else" on one side and "So Long to the Blues" on the other. It sold for seventy-five cents.

The Great Depression changed everything. Rosa no longer recorded, and most of the road shows closed. She worked for many years before her death in 1968 as a stock clerk at Saks Fifth Avenue. In "Get It Fixed," she advises the man who is after her to straighten out his affairs with other women before he starts trying to win her love.

*Get it fixed. Get it fixed. You treat me proper.  
Don't come around tellin' me a lot of lies,  
Cause a lyin' man I do despise.  
Get it fixed, I'm screaming.  
I'm on to all your tricks.  
I don't want no messin' 'round my sweet love,  
So daddy, get it fixed.*

Skipping from 1925 to 1938, we can hear how vastly the recording sound improved. The electrical recording techniques revolutionized the industry. Bea Foote's "I Want a Long Time Daddy" is an imitation of Ida Cox's songs. Porter Grainger wrote it and literally lifted

phrases. This was common, and it was done in tribute. It was one of the ways the oral tradition was perpetuated. Bea Foote's voice also tries to imitate Miss Ida, and I think she does a fine job.

Billie Holiday had an independent side to her personality, but it was not nurtured enough to grow strong. "Now Baby or Never," taken from a film short she made in Hollywood with the Count Basie Sextet, is just as much the real Billie as anything else she sang. If only this facet of the diamond could have been polished more, we might have her with us today.

Ella Johnson carried the mantle of the Big Mamas of the Classic Period and updated it in the 1940s and 1950s while singing with her brother Buddy Johnson and his band. The records she made with him from 1942 to 1958 show how the transition of R&B and rock was made, while still sticking with the blues. They were very popular in Harlem's Apollo Theater and Roseland Ballroom.

Remember, the songs on the *Big Mamas* albums—like the rap songs of today—come from a music of active participation. So when you listen to the music of yesterday made by the Big Mamas, get into it; shake with it, rock your body, tap your feet, snap your fingers, and clap your hands. Enjoy! •

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Rosetta Reitz is a jazz historian who retrieves lost women's music. All of the recordings in her *Women's Heritage Series* include extensive liner notes and archival photography. For info, send SASE to Rosetta Records, 115 W. 16th St., New York, NY 10011.



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# WOMEN AND THEIR GUITARS

By Laura Post

*Whether you play guitar, just listen, or wish that you played, there are undoubtedly some things you would like to know. Like who plays what guitars; which are the favorites of musicians; and where their first guitars came from. Happily, nineteen women performers also thought that those questions were interesting. Read on about guitar thefts (four!), impulse buys, learning from musical siblings, borrowing instruments from non-musical family members, scrimping to buy guitars, naming guitars (Babe, Blondie, Guilly, Mabel, Sarah), African-American tradition, women who think that they don't play well, natural talents, and other true-life tales.*

• **ALIX DOBKIN:** A 1956 Hofner was the best I could afford after saving for a year or so. It cost \$80 and was a huge improvement over the "Buckaroo" guitar with the half inch action that I had learned on. My father bought my present guitar, a circa '65 Martin 00018, for me on the day after my previous guitar was stolen from the trunk of my car in New York City. It's the one I like best—good size, good sound; it's the best little folk guitar I've played. I also like my old, solid, punchy, resonant little Martin. (Phranc has an identical one.)

• **DEIDRE McCALLA:** When I quit piano after one and a half years, my mom said if I wanted a guitar I would have to buy it. I worked my first summer job at a snack bar, and Mom went down to the store with me when I bought a 1969 Stella Harmony, for \$50. It's at my parents', terribly warped and unplayable, but will make a great wall hanging someday. Later, I traded a friend at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music a Gibson ES175 hollow body electric for my present guitar, a circa 1981 Ovation (named Sarah.) My favorite is my Guild D-40 (named Guilly.) It's the first six-string I bought once I knew what I was doing. The Ovation is a great touring guitar, but at home, it's Guilly I keep available. The wood has a more resonant sense; most of my writing is done with Guilly.

• **DIANNE DAVIDSON:** I was ten, and my grandmother heard about a farmer—on *Tradin' Post* on the radio—who had a 1963 Silvertone for sale for \$10. My dad took me out to the country, spent a few

minutes talking to the farmer, came to the car, and found me playing a song. When I wanted a good acoustic electric guitar, I picked a 1986 Yamaha 595E, nothing exciting. My favorite is my Martin D-35. There's nothing that touches the warmth of a D-35. Mine is a 1967, and has been played on all five of my albums.

• **FERRON:** I think my first guitar was a toy, but I was small for my age and couldn't tell the difference. Later I got a larger toy guitar by cutting lawns for a dollar and spent five years learning how to tune it. I liked my early guitars to sound deep and warm. Of course I couldn't afford that kind of sound and often settled for something low-endy and boomy. I am particularly reminded of a Guild F50-R that I picked up in 1978. It was huge, and I was still small for my age. But that huge body really pushed out a sound, and it was on that guitar that most of *Testimony* was recorded. I would have used the petite Gurian guitar I had, but it got stolen from the car while I was in Golden Gate Park buying some popcorn. I loved the Gurian, but it probably wouldn't have handled road life so well. The Guild F50-R took me far, and she pooped out finally in Northampton hours before a show in 1981. I traded it right there in town for my very first—and probably only—Martin, a 1970 D-35. It was strange that night, doing a show on a new guitar, but I knew immediately that it was everything I wanted in a guitar: crisp, light, warm in sound, and when I play it feels like a part of me. The Martin was used on the *Shadows on a Dime* and *Phantom Center* albums, and I've done a zillion shows with it. On some tours it and I were the only constants. But guitars do get weary—the Martin split at the seams during the summer of 1991 and is at the doctor getting fixed. So I have added a new guitar to my list. Recently, I bought a Takamine with stereo pick-ups. I've heard that guitar on other people and it sounds pretty good. And they seem to handle the road okay. Now my favorite Martin can stay home and rest.

• **JAMIE ANDERSON:** My dad owned a Harmony classical. He never played it, but I learned to on it. I took it when I

moved away; I think it was a year before he missed it. The first performance-quality guitar I ever owned was an Alvarez. I was able to buy it because some hapless individual rear-ended my truck. With an insurance check in my hand for \$400, it wasn't hard to decide what my *real* priorities were; the bumper stayed bent. (I got rear-ended twice after that anyway; too bad they didn't have insurance, or I'd own a custom-made guitar by now!) When I needed a better quality guitar than the one I had, I got a 1990 Guild D-50. It was an impulse buy. Actually, I had gone out to find a good case for my old guitar and ended up buying a whole new guitar. My favorite is my Guild. It has a deep full sound that I really like. Even with my old strings, it feels alive.

• **JUDY FJELL:** I got a cheap Stella at a garage sale for \$10 when I was fourteen. I'd been inspired to play by a woman I worked for on a dude ranch in Montana—she had the Joan Baez songbook. When I was wanting a great six-string for performing, I heard about Taylors. I walked into Cripple Creek Music in Ashland, played this 1988 Taylor 710, fell in love, and bought it. I consistently love to play my Taylor because it's so smooth and sounds great. But I also have two Martins that I love. I have an old classical Martin New Yorker that I can play all day and night, and my fingers never get sore.

• **JUDY SMALL:** At my high school there was a folk group for boys (I don't know why boys only, but that's what it was.) Girls could only join if they played an instrument. I found a 1969 nylon-stringed guitar for \$25 in the local music store and saved for nine months to pay it off. In the end, I only had to pay \$22—my parents took pity on me! (This was the guitar I played when I first began singing professionally in 1973. I gave it to a dearly loved friend for her birthday when I bought my next guitar that same year.) Then, I was opening for an acoustic band, and the band members had a deal with the Australian distributor for Takamines. I liked the sound and got a good deal, so I bought two 1984 Takamine F340Ss. I still love the sound, both acoustically and elec-



trically, and can't imagine playing anything else. (I don't play well enough to have a Martin or the like.) My favorite is my handmade George Smith classical guitar bought in Portland, Oregon in 1982. It's a gorgeous guitar, and I bought it from the luthier who made it—there was something very personal about that. It also cost more than any of my others! The guitars I play in concert—the Takamines—have no real sentimental value for me; they're good workhorses and that's that, but I do feel *very* sentimental about my nylon stringers. I still have the Yari I bought in 1973 and the George Smith.

• **KATHY KORNILOFF:** My older sister got a 1972 Giarini classical nylon string for Xmas. I had to sneak into her room to play it. That's how I learned to play—self-taught at first. Meanwhile, my sister never did learn more than three chords. My mother sold it during a move to Europe in '74 or '75, but by then I'd gotten a Martin D-18, my favorite and my first true love. I bought it at age fourteen with babysitting money—plus matching funds from my violinist father—at Matt Umanov in Greenwich Village. I had that guitar from '74 to '81 or '82, when it was stolen from my house in Austin. Now I play a Takamine. Two Nice Girls had formed a year or so earlier, and I had been using an electric guitar exclusively at that time. We were doing folkier duet stuff, and it was time for me to get over the grief of losing

me my first guitar, a 1976 Yamaha classical, when I went to college, because in the mid '70s I really wanted to play folk music on the guitar. (My parents wouldn't let me have my own guitar until then because they thought I would "take over" the instrument and cause my sister Amy—who was taking classical and folk lessons—to lose interest). But, my sister was happy to teach me chords on her guitar. My favorite is my current one, a 1989 Guild D-25. I haven't tried a lot of different makes, though I love the Martins I've played. I like the richness of the tones my guitar presents—it can be bassy or bright.

• **LEAH ZICARI:** My lover dumped me so I kept the Alvarez, which was eventually stolen. I later bought a 1988 Aspen A1185 at a local shop because it was the only guitar in my price range with a solid top. It also had Pearl Schaller heads! I couldn't resist. My favorite would be a Taylor or Martin; you can't beat the quality, craftsmanship, design, and especially *sound/tone*. (Of course, these don't compare to a handmade instrument.) I hate Ovation!! [Editor's note: Leah majored in classical guitar studies at Fredonia State College and at the University of Buffalo.]

• **LIBBY RODERICK:** A 1977 Ibanez was a birthday gift from my parents who had wanted to give me clothes (for obvious reasons—I didn't pay much attention to how I dressed). I finally gave it to my sister, and I see it occasionally when I visit

that I made my friend walk 'round and 'round the streets with me, worrying that I should look elsewhere. She convinced me that if it's right, it's right; I bought it. My favorite guitar doesn't belong to me, but to a friend of my sister's—a beautiful Martin. Plays like heaven.

• **LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY:** I was playing drums at the time, and it was a bit loud—that's when I was given my first guitar, an Eaton's \$39.95 special. I ultimately gave it to a little girl who came from a very big family; she loved music but her mom couldn't afford to get her an instrument. The first Adamas I tried—a 1982 Ovation Adamas II—was brown. We plugged it in at the music shop in Quebec City, and it sounded so good. But it was very expensive. I would go visit it in the store twice a week. Finally, I sold my Virago 750cc motorcycle and went to the store only to learn that I could get the same guitar in *blue*. I hunted it down in music stores all over Quebec and Ontario. I found it in Ottawa, and it was shipped to a Montreal store, where I bought it. I acquired my second guitar (Blondie, a Simon and Patrick, made in Quebec) trying to get pick-ups put into my third guitar (Mabel, a Sigma; I bought her in memory of my dad and don't use Mabel in concert at all. She stays home and hangs out at my house). I brought Mabel to a guitar shop in Montreal, and the man showed me a new brand of guitar made



photos by Toni Armstrong Jr.



**Dianne Davidson (left) and Mimi Fox were each ten years old when their first guitars came into their lives. Dianne's grandmother heard on the radio about a \$10 Silvertone for sale; Mimi's mom saved up Green Stamp booklets to buy a 1966 "cheapo classical," which Mimi slept with every night.**

my Martin. I chose the 1986 Takamine EF3605 because of the great built-in pickup and preamp system and great price.

• **LAURA BERKSON:** The piano was "my instrument," but my parents bought

her in Seattle; it is still well-loved. I currently play a 1970 Martin D-28, a birthday gift from my manager and my dad. I bought it used from Seattle Music—it was the first one I tried! I was so surprised to find a guitar that I loved on the first try

out of maple that was a *studio dream of a guitar*. That's when we met, Blondie and I. She sounded so pretty, so rich. I really love all three of my guitars for their own sound and character; they inspire me

*continued on page 58*

## OUR KIND OF TOWN

# CHICAGO

By Alice Lowenstein and Toni Armstrong Jr.

*Although one of us (Alice) is a relative newcomer to Chicago, and the other (Toni) has lived here since 1978, we both have abundant opportunities to feel awed by the exciting and active community of women creating art and culture in this town. And overcome by women who laid the groundwork for the visible and vibrant lesbian and feminist community that exists today, we have been inspired to discover that behind this community is a fine feminist idea in action: By giving to ourselves and creating what helps us survive—and indeed thrive—we may also give to our sisters and to society at large. The Chicago community resolutely attests to this principle.*

*Encapsulating in one short article all the women artists and creators of culture that live and work in a city with the third largest population in the country is impossible. We invite you along to meet a few of the women and institutions that call Chicago home, and that work toward a freedom and diversity of expression that can ultimately inspire and support us all.*

Talk to Chicago women who are active in the arts, and they are likely to mention many of the same cultural resources. **MOUNTAIN MOVING COFFEEHOUSE FOR WOMYN AND CHILDREN** is one such place. The Coffeehouse is the oldest continuously running women's coffeehouse in the country—perhaps in the world.

Mountain Moving first opened its doors in 1975 when a group of Chicago women, many of whom were active in the fight against domestic violence, saw the need for a safe, chemical-free, women-only space. To this day, the collectively run Coffeehouse exists within these original guidelines. Concerts by Kay Gardner, Alix Dobkin, Deidre McCalla, Karen Williams, Sue Fink, Lynn Thomas, and Lucie Blue Tremblay—plus the world premiere of **PAULA BERG'S CONNECTIONS OF THE HEART**—are but a few of the acts seen during the 1991-1992 season. The Coffeehouse produces more than thirty shows every year, including an annual all-day **MIDWINTER MINIFEST** featuring dozens of craftswomen. For women who are interested in women's music and

culture, Mountain Moving Coffeehouse is a highly valued local treasure.

Another frequent destination for Chicago women is **WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST** bookstore. The store is now in its "thirteenth lucky year," says co-owner **LINDA BUBON**, who—with **ANN CHRISTOPHERSON**—undertook this endeavor after they could not find adequate representation of literature by women. (Chicago's original feminist bookstore, **JANE ADDAMS BOOKSHOP**, which was active in the '70s, moved out of town.) Hence, Women and Children First was born, and has become a community asset. Lesbian-feminist filmmaker **ELLEN MEYERS** regularly checks the store's bulletin board to keep tabs on current events. Writer/restaurateur/community activist **VERNITA GRAY** gave one of her earliest poetry readings there.

In addition to meeting women's needs for information, Women and Children First functions as a gathering place. From the visit by Mary Daly (WCF's first program) to the recent book signing by Gloria Steinem (attended by more than a thousand people)—the store that began as the idea of two post-graduate English majors has grown into one of the most significant establishments in the Chicago women's community. WCF sponsors Tuesday night readings and discussions, and over the years has brought well-known women—such as Alice Walker, Alison Bechdel, Rita Mae Brown, Susan Griffin, Holly Near, and others (including Chicago-based talent such as poet **GWENDOLYN BROOKS**, historian **MARIE KUDA**, lesbian philosopher **SARAH LUCIA HOAGLAND**, and mystery writer **SARA PARETSKY**) to the community. Other bookstores catering to feminists and lesbians include the gay-oriented **PEOPLE LIKE US** and **UNABRIDGED BOOKS**, as well as the progressive **GUILD BOOKS** and **PLATYPUS BOOKS** (in nearby Evanston).

Outlets for women's music recordings are somewhat limited since Chicago has no resident record distributor, though **VAL'S HALLA** record store in suburban Oak Park has been a stalwart supporter of women's music since its earliest days

(carrying *Paid My Dues* and then *HOT WIRE* as well as recordings). Most women buy recordings at concerts or festivals, from the bookstores (which are supplied by Goldenrod Distribution, based in Lansing, Michigan), or by mail order through the *Ladyslipper* catalog. Goldenrod and *HOT WIRE* editor Toni Armstrong Jr. are currently working with a woman at **ROSE RECORDS** to establish specific "women's music" sections in that chain of stores.

Luckily, Chicago is within driving distance of both the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival and the National Women's Music Festival (Bloomington, Indiana). The nearest "festival" is the annual one-day minifest called the **OAK PARK GAY AND LESBIAN CULTURAL ARTS FESTIVAL**, which also includes a weeknight concert during Gay Pride Week.

Music-making abounds in Chicago, with musicians too numerous to list individually. The town has a solid history of producing woman-identified music. One of the nation's first lesbian bands, **FAMILY OF WOMAN**, came from Chicago in the early '70s, as did the **CHICAGO WOMEN'S LIBERATION ROCK BAND** (which made one of the first feminist albums, in cooperation with the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band). The **SURRENDER DOROTHY** ensemble (**PAULA WALOWITZ**, **TONI ARMSTRONG JR.**, **LAURIE MOSES**, and **JANE KREINBERG**) provided lesbian-specific musical comedy during the '80s. A favorite of the national women's music scene in the '70s and '80s—**GINNI CLEMMENS**—called Chicago home for many years, though she and her **OPEN DOOR RECORDS** company currently reside in Hawaii. **KRISTIN LEMS**, pioneering mother of the early National Women's Music Festivals in the early '70s, now lives a few minutes north of the city limits, in Evanston.

Many of the Chicago producers of women's music events began their endeavors to fill a void they noted in the community. **KATHIE BERGQUIST**, **CYNTHIA WHITE**, and **NICOLE BENDER** founded **GIRLTIME PRODUCTIONS** to promote women's music in mainstream venues. Occasionally touring musicians

(Phranc, *Girls in the Nose*) play at Lounge Ax, the lesbian bar **PARIS DANCE**, the gay/lesbian bar **HIS 'N' HERS**, or at other clubs—and periodically Karen Gotzler and Kitty Barber (Midwest Music, located in Milwaukee) produce large-scale shows (Kate Clinton) at the upscale Park West nightclub. But mostly women's music productions in Chicago are limited to Mountain Moving Coffeehouse. To remedy what Kathie sees as a lack of progressive programming for women, Girltime Productions brings in up-and-coming or "subversive" bands.

Classical musician **MARILYN WILSON** and her partner **CLAUDIA SHANE** started **AMETHYST PRODUCTIONS** in the mid '80s to produce women's classical music. Marilyn saw that classical musicians often needed facilities other than what were provided by the Coffeehouse. Amethyst has brought in Kay Gardner and Musica Femina, and also held workshops on women and classical music. **JOY ROSENBLATT** started **JOYFUL PRODUCTIONS** because she too saw a need for increased opportunities for the many women's music performers who wish to tour.

Another Chicago institution is **ARTEMIS SINGERS**, a lesbian-feminist chorus comprised of women with diverse backgrounds who are dedicated to performing music written and arranged by women. "We want to entertain, amuse,

shows every year, with music conducted by various chorus members.

Chicago presently has no women's music radio show, though one called "**WOMEN WITH WINGS**" (from Northwestern Illinois University) was on the air for several years in the 1980s. Today we have **THE 10% SHOW**; lesbian and gay cable TV is alive and well and broadcasting from the Windy City, as is **OPRAH WINFREY's** top-rated talk show.

Women overwhelmingly cited diversity as one of the things they most value about this community. As is the case anywhere, we struggle with serious and divisive issues—not the least of which is racism—but Chicago women often feel empowered enough to work together to create what they need.

**LESBIAN CHICAGO** meets every Monday evening. In the words of its mission statement, "The objective of Lesbian Chicago is to create and maintain a community center for lesbians that will provide space and resources in which to carry on activities, events, and services that are accessible, and to promote the well-being of lesbians, lesbian families, and lesbian communities." The multi-racial/multi-ethnic group seeks to recognize and combat some of the problems in the community, with special emphasis on fighting racism. It follows in the footsteps of the volatile '70s **LESBIAN FEMINIST CENTER**, which helped to mobilize scores of

successful **LESBIAN COMMUNITY CANCER PROJECT** to provide a structure to direct women's energy and resources toward our own health plague.

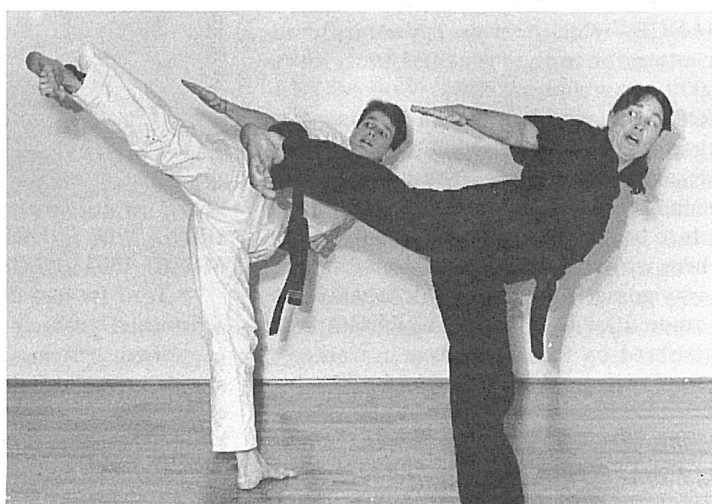
**BLACK LESBIANS ABOUT BUILDING SISTERHOOD (BLABS)** also meets Monday nights in the same space Lesbian Chicago occupies. **NATALIE HUTCHINSON**, video artist and employee at Women and Children First and Paris Dance, belongs to the group. "Any time that Black lesbians get together for any kind of event, or come together in a unified front, you have little political differences," she says. "This group helps to build a more unified community." In addition to providing a forum for discussion, BLABS also sponsors events.

For sportswomen, the opportunities are numerous. From **THE METROPOLITAN SPORTS ASSOCIATION (MSA)** which organizes league sports for lesbians and gay men, to **THE WOMEN'S SPORTS ASSOCIATION (WSA)** which emphasizes non-competitive fun for all women regardless of athletic ability, the Chicago community encourages physical activity in all its forms.

Several women in the local arts scene find participation in sports to be essential among their commitments. **MARY JO SCHNELL**, who works with performance, video, and special events at Chicago's Randolph Street Gallery, notes that her involvement in volleyball, softball, and foot-



Alice Lowenstein



Vada Vernée

**Linda Bubon**, co-owner of Women and Children First bookstore, checks out the new '**HOT WIRE**' with **Cynthia White** of Girltime Productions. **Black belts Nancy Lanoue** and **Sarah Ludder** of Thousand Waves Spa work tirelessly to have the martial arts recognized as an art form as well as self-defense and self-discipline technique.

and educate; to highlight historical, political, and personal events and experiences common to women; and most of all to share a sense of community with the audience," reads their mission statement. Now in its twelfth year, Artemis does several

Chicago lesbians during those formative, radical early years.

Like other communities, many women in Chicago have mobilized around their gay brothers to help with the AIDS crisis. In addition, this city has a strong,

ball might seem odd in comparison to her professional life in the alternative or avant garde arts. But, she says, "that's my balance." Likewise, **YVONNE ZIPTER**—author of *Diamonds Are a Dyke's Best Friend* (Firebrand Books) and "Inside/

Out," a column syndicated in the lesbian/gay press—is a devotee of softball and volleyball. Both teams for which Yvonne plays are sponsored by Women and Children First.

**TRACY BAIM**, who worked in Chicago lesbian/gay media for many years before founding *OUTLINES* (lesbian/gay newsmagazine serving the Midwest) and the weekly *NIGHTLINES*, is in a good position for a full view of the goings-on about town. She observes that a wide array of offerings makes it possible for women to seek out and connect with what interests them, from politics to religion to professional groups to the arts. Another gay paper, *WINDY CITY TIMES*, also provides some coverage of women's events and issues.

Tracy extols the variety of events for women in Chicago. She cites a typical weekend as one where she needs at least six reporters to cover all that is happening in just those two days. Concert producer/women's music activist Joy Rosenblatt agrees. "The Chicago community is rich and full and dynamic," she says. "You can be a bar dyke, a jock, a brain. You can be an I-don't-want-to-get-involved dyke. There are just so many choices!"

As we discovered again and again, much of this plethora of activity arose out of the feminist tradition of women creating what we know we need for ourselves, and inviting other women to participate. The **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY DANCE**—which this year (its third) had an attendance that reached more than 1,000—came about this way. **MONA NORIEGA**, who is involved in numerous organizations in the community, describes the initial inspiration. "The original idea behind the dance was for Black and Latina girls to be able to hang out in a safe space, where we controlled the kind of situation it was going to be." Now put together by women like **CARMEN ABREGO** and sponsored by five Chicago area women's organizations (including **LITERARY XCHANGE**) who serve a wide variety of constituents, the dance has grown incredibly since its first year. The event began with a few women noting an absence in their lives and seeking to fill it.

Publisher **MIDGE STOCKER**, founder of Chicago's **THIRD SIDE PRESS**, says that she would never have undertaken such an endeavor if Chicago was home to Firebrand Books or Seal Press, for example. She saw the lack of a women's press in Chicago as "noteworthy, unfortunate—and remediable." Third Side, which publishes lesbian fiction and wom-

en's nonfiction, is the result. Local writer **KAREN OSBORNE's** *Hawkwings*, a lesbian love story set in Chicago, was the first novel published by Third Side, which was incorporated in January 1991 and now has six books in print, including *Cancer as a Women's Issue*.

Of course, feminist and lesbian publishing has been a consistent presence in Chicago. The pioneering lesbian-feminist **METIS PRESS** (active in the '70s and '80s) was based in Chicago, and over the years a steady stream of feminist papers have come and gone, including *CATALYST* and *SISTERSOURCE*. **PAID MY DUES: A JOURNAL OF WOMEN AND MUSIC** (the older sister of *HOT WIRE*) was published here between 1978-1980. In 1984, four women (**TONI ARMSTRONG JR.**, **ANN MORRIS**, **YVONNE ZIPTER**, and **MICHELE GAUTREAUX**) came together to



Bonnie Cook

**Cartoonist Nicole Hollander brings Sylvia to life in her Chicago studio.**

work on cultural projects, and *HOT WIRE: THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE* was born.

Toni Jr. has dedicated more than seventeen years to promoting woman-identified arts on an international level; she describes herself as a "midwife to the emerging women's music and culture baby." In addition to involvements with *Paid My Dues* and *HOT WIRE*, she is a nationally known photographer and sometime musician. She was a founder of the Music Industry Conferences at the National Women's Music Festival in the mid '80s (the seed from which AWMAC grew), and she and Yvonne Zipter initiated and produced the first Women Writers Conference there. Toni's company, **EMPTY CLOSET ENTERPRISES, INC.**—which she runs along with partners **LYNN SINISCALCHI** and **SUSAN WALLER**—pub-

lishes *WOMEN'S MUSIC PLUS* international directory of resources in women's music and culture (more than 3,000 listings), as well as sponsoring lesbian theater outings, picnics, retreats, and other community-building activities (such as slide-shows by Alison Bechdel and JEB, and country western line dancing with Maile and Marina). *HOT WIRE* will be sponsoring a **WOMEN'S CULTURE CONTINGENT** in the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Rights.

"*HOT WIRE*, like most community institutions, is run by dedicated volunteers," Toni says. "That has always been the way; just like the people who keep religious groups going, we're willing to do the zillion hours of work necessary to keep our community thriving because we deeply believe in it. Everyone would like to get compensated for her labor, but we're willing to donate time if that's the only way. It's great to live in Chicago—there's not much backbiting and infighting here. The community is very interconnected; women tend to volunteer to help with more than one group. It's a superb and diverse creative community. Given the choice, I wouldn't live anywhere else." Toni and Yvonne Zipter host a by-invitation-only **SALON FOR CREATIVE FEMINISTS** to share work and support.

Chicago women are indeed "lifting as we climb." **WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR** not only serves as a resource and support network for women filmmakers, but it also brings films and videos to women in prison. Their prestigious annual film festival, coming up on its twelfth year, spotlights women from around the world, often providing a venue for work which otherwise would have none. [See article on page thirty-six.]

The theater scene is one of the most active aspects right now in the Chicago community. The not-for-profit **CHAMELEON** theater company was incorporated in May 1987 in order to "expand, enhance, and challenge the current image of women of varying ethnic/racial backgrounds." The group is committed to serving all people, but especially emphasizes the participation of African, Latin, Asian, and Native American women. The theater began when a group of Black women decided to address the lack of opportunity for women of color in the theater. ("Chameleon celebrates women of color," says current Artistic Director **LISA DUNCAN**.) It would not exist had a handful of women not taken direct action to change their lives.

Likewise, **VITA DENNIS** and **JILL METZ** founded **FOOTSTEPS** to provide

lesbian-oriented theater. Director **MARLENE ZUCCARO** regularly brings relevant theatrical works to life through **ZEBRA CROSSING**; **BAILIWICK** sponsors lesbian/gay plays, particularly during their Gay Pride season series; and award-winning playwright **CLAUDIA ALLEN** lives in Chicago. Together with singer/playwright Paula Berg, these people all provide Chicagoland women with a steady diet of woman-identified theater experiences.

**WOMANWILD**, located next-door to Women and Children First, is yet another example of community building starting with individuals. Owners **JANET SOULE** and **NANCY PERRONE** were on a trip when they discovered a store that sold women- and lesbian-made products. Upon their return to Chicago, they decided that such an establishment was exactly what the local community lacked and needed. Plans were soon afoot to locate side-by-side with the bookstore, and **WomanWild** opened in August 1990. Janet has a long history in the Chicago creative community, including being a founding mother of *SisterSource* newspaper, participating in the Metis Press collective, and self-publishing the **TRACKING OUR WAY THROUGH TIME** lesbian journal-cum-calendar.

**KATE** (her professional name) began **WE ARE EVERYWHERE** when she saw a need for a gift shop catering to gays and lesbians that was positive. Her store sells everything from T-shirts, sweatshirts, and shorts to oven mitts, hats, and jewelry—all of which bear a lesbian- or gay-affirming image or statement. Kate designs all of the merchandise, and enjoys seeing the varied responses it elicits. Some women are more out and might wear a shirt saying "DYKE," while others choose the more discreet "Closets are for Clothes."

For writer **NEDHERA LANDERS**, art has often involved confronting the oppression women experience. A veteran of lesbian and gay print journalism with more than fifteen years experience, her first nationally published essay—"The Black and White of Publishing"—explored racism in lesbian and gay media. At one point in her involvement with *Outlines* she wrote a regular column for women of color. Nedhera has also dealt with the issue of the oppression of fat women in her writing, noting that this particular prejudice is not generally acknowledged or taken seriously in women's community. Her latest effort is the compilation of an anthology on the relationship between food and sex, and she actively encourages

the participation of "big and beautiful women."

Chicago women artists continue to make the personal political with a strong tradition of activist art. In the '70s and early '80s, the **CHICAGO WOMEN'S GRAPHICS COLLECTIVE** was one of the most influential makers of lesbian and feminist imagery; the posters they produced were distributed internationally. The city now boasts a chapter of **SISTER-SERPENTS**, a group of radical feminist artists who channel their rage (at society's treatment of women) into posters, stickers, and an annual art show. Says painter/founding member **JERAMY TURNER**, "We use art as propaganda, but it is art primarily." This year's show, *Piss on Passivity, Piss on Patriarchy, Art by and for Repulsed Women*, has attracted work which explores such themes as abortion, anger at men, women looking angry, and women in



**Creative community activists Mona Noriega and Vernita Gray in the doorway of Sol Sands restaurant.**

Alice Lowenstein

fierce poses. *SisterSerpents'* membership fluctuates, perhaps reaching as many as 1,000, and includes women in France, England, and Germany, as well as the U.S.

Cartoonist **NICOLE HOLLANDER**—creator of *Sylvia*, the first syndicated feminist strip—also calls Chicago home. A musical comedy production entitled **SYLVIA'S REAL GOOD ADVICE** was staged in 1991, bringing her character to life. Other Chicago-based visual artists include three photographers whose concert work is familiar to *HOT WIRE* readers: **VADA VERNÉE**, **MARCY J. HOCHBERG**, and **TONI ARMSTRONG JR.**

Local writer/performance artist

**CHERYL MILLER** used her art to protest the Persian Gulf War when she and several other women formed the **TWAT TEAM**, a guerrilla theater group. Mary Jo Schnell observes that women in performance art have often been at the forefront of putting volatile issues in front of an audience, and confronting preconception. Just the simple fact of a woman on stage gives opportunity for such an artist to call into question the societal notion of a female body, especially if the artist is a lesbian.

Other artists asking audiences to expand their notion of art are **NANCY LANOUE** and **SARAH LUDDEN** of **THOUSAND WAVES SPA** (formerly **THE WOMEN'S GYM**). Both women have black belts in their chosen area of the martial arts. In addition to running the Spa, which teaches karate and self-defense to more than 100 adult women as well as many children, both work to have the martial arts appreciated. "One of the things we struggle with is even having our art form recognized as an art form," Nancy says. "Our commitment is to make our art activist art—art that works for change." Future plans for Thousand Waves Spa include teaching martial arts and self-defense to homeless women. They are following in the footsteps of **CHIMERA** women's self-defense group, founded in the '70s.

Vernita Gray—who has been "out and active" in the Chicago lesbian community for more than twenty years—sees activism as the inspiration behind her most recent artistic project. As the owner of **SOL SANDS** restaurant in an area of Chicago that is often hard hit by drugs and poverty, she tends to act as a "sidewalk counselor" with her customers. From this experience, Vernita is writing a novel about the children of drug-addicted lesbians.

In between her busy hours at the restaurant, Vernita finds time to participate in **LESBIANS OF COLOR**, a poetry group which meets regularly and holds readings (by women such as Vernita, poet **DONNA WEEMS**, and activist **LOLA LAI JONG**, who is also involved with the **PACIFIC ASIAN LESBIANS** group) around town. **LOC** periodically sponsors performances at Mountain Moving and elsewhere, including comedy (such as **MARLENE MOORE**) and sometimes music.

Mona Noriega's activism often directly relates to the fundamental issues of her life. For the past three years, she has held a **MOTHER'S DAY FOR DYKES PARTY** at her home. Her own children are twenty and seventeen. She especially wants to help the children of lesbians know that

their family situation is not unique. She is also active with **LESBIANAS LATINAS EN NUESTRO AMBIENTE (LENA)**. "It's a group that tries to provide space for ourselves," she says. "We felt a significant need to say that not only are we Latina among the lesbian community, but we are lesbian in the Latin community." **LENA** sponsors poetry readings, dances, and other events. It also operates as a resource for young Latina lesbians who may need guidance.

In some ways, however, the community is not so supportive. Certainly racism is strong in Chicago. Sarah Ludden is one of many who recognize the divisions in the community, and sees as fundamental to her work at Thousand Waves a strong effort at outreach to combat this. And she sees hope. "There's spirit of recognizing the problems, and the separations between us, and trying to heal them and work together," she says, "although the struggles for diversity, openness, and multi-cultural awareness are high."

Other difficulties exist as well. Striking the balance between accessibility and financial reward for the artist may present problems. Chicago comedian/performer **MARCIA WILKIE** notes that while below-average ticket prices at women's events may be essential to our efforts at inclusivity, there is also the need for an artist to affirm her own worth by charging enough to earn a living.

Painter **RIVA LEHRER** is represented by two Chicago galleries, but has found that success as an artist does not usually come from the women's community. She has observed that her "out" lesbian and feminist paintings, mainly dealing with sexuality and disability/chronic illness issues, are often purchased by heterosexual couples. "Where is the women's community that should be supporting and enjoying these images?" she wonders. In an effort to increase exposure of women's fine arts, Riva put together a program at Women and Children First which involved several women artists talking about and showing their work.

In spite of our current, very real struggles to honor, affirm, and include one another, many women in Chicago have been able to carve out an existence in the arts and culture that satisfies and supports them. Is there something unique to Chicago that allows this? Perhaps. As writer/musician/jeweler/photographer **JORJET HARPER** observes, "The women's community here is really very solid." She also points out that some of the internal conflicts of the past years—over S/M for

example—have not hit as hard here.

"In Chicago, people are a little more laid back. In a way that's detrimental, because overall they probably don't tend to be as activist. But on the other hand, they don't tend to get as hostile toward each other as has happened elsewhere," she says. **Jorjet**, who's been with **HOT WIRE** since its debut issue, writes for several lesbian/gay papers, and is working on a feminist, anti-racist comic novel called *Little White Lies*. Her one-woman show **LESBOMANIA**, based on newspaper columns she has written, has been performed in several venues.

For many women, Chicago gave them the initial applause that helped them grow. Long-time professional actress/singer **SERIAIAH CAROL** says, "Chicago has sent me around the world. It was here they said to me, 'You're okay.' I got my first ova-tions [from the women's community] here,



Alice Lowenstein

**The store We Are Everywhere specializes in merchandise with gay-affirming images and messages.**

and that has sent me many different places." **Claudia Allen** says her work also received its first nurturing in Chicago, where she still experiences some "shut doors" even though she was the first woman to win a Jeff Award (the Chicago equivalent of a Tony) for Best New Work. Five productions of her plays were staged around the U.S. this past summer, most of them with lesbian themes.

Singer/songwriter/musician **ELLEN ROSNER** is expanding her performance network after having first experienced success in Chicago in the late '70s and early

'80s. She and saxophonist **CAMILLE ROCHA** play women's festivals and concerts around the country, though she doesn't identify herself primarily as a "women's music person." **Ellen** has sought out and received a positive response from mixed audiences as well as from women's music venues.

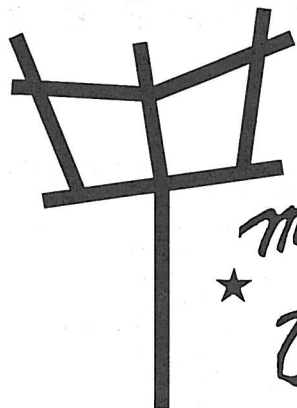
The same is true for storyteller/musician **SHANTA NURULLAH**. She has worked with women-only groups such as the women's music collective **SO-JOURNER**, which played many gigs—including the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival—before going into hibernation in the mid '80s. She now plays in a women's improv trio called **SAMANA**, and says she has found abundant support from the museums, libraries, and schools that are part of the city's established culture scene. **Shanta** values, however, what she and other women get from each other. "The encouragement and feedback that women give each other is especially important, because we don't get that outside of groups of women," she says.

Chicago women share that spirit. This has been just a taste of the talent, energy, creativity, events, people, places, and issues that make up the Chicago women's arts and culture scene. (There are literally dozens more that could have been included.) That this community exists, in all its glory, is a fact that flies in the face of those who try to keep us silent. **Vernita Gray**, like many women, has been in Chicago long enough to witness its evolution. "My favorite thing is seeing how much the community has grown and how much has changed since I first came out in 1969," she says. "It makes me know that times really can change, and that the change can actually be brought about. It makes me excited to see what will be going on the the next twenty years."

That we are still divided and struck by oppression and intolerance points us in the direction of work to be done. As the Chicago community illustrates, art, culture, and change can and indeed do start with one woman, or a few. •

**ABOUT THE WRITERS:** *Alice Lowenstein misses the rolling hills of her birthplace, Missouri, but would rather go dancing in Chicago. She thanks Chris D'Arpa for research support and editorial assistance. In her lifetime, Toni Jr. would like to compile an anthology on female vampires, win a lot of money in Vegas, watch a 'Brady Bunch' marathon featuring the six siblings singing and dancing, and dance with Marga Gomez on an Olivia cruise.*

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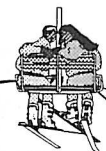


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# A SLICE OF LESBIAN HERSTORY

By Judy Fjell

The '70s was a great time to awaken as a lesbian. Lesbians were gathering everywhere! We formed lesbian softball teams, we found out about women's bars and danced together *in public, surrounded by other lesbians*. We shared record albums with each other, we sang together in packed coffeehouses, and we bought lesbian books from women's bookstores. We formed consciousness-raising groups, we explored our sexuality with each other, and then we made plans to overthrow the patriarchy! It was a juicy time, to say the least.

My history as a folksinger started with hearing Joan Baez and finding a garage sale guitar in my fourteenth summer. Entertaining the locals in my small Montana home town occupied me throughout the high school years, so it was a natural progression to perform the early "hit songs" of women's music soon after I came out as a lesbian at age twenty-one.

This July, I'll be celebrating my "golden forty-second birthday," marking a midpoint in my life, having now spent half of my years as a conscious lesbian. In the past twenty-one years I have moved from fear-laced excitement about loving a *woman* to comfort and enthusiasm about loving *women*.

This celebration took a turn toward performance this past spring in San Diego, as Judy Reif of Shirtail Productions and I brainstormed a Lesbian Herstory Show which would showcase my original music and poetry along with sing-along medleys of beloved women's music from the past twenty years.

With a little review of these past favorites, it was easy to include them in my new show, which is called *A Slice of Lesbian Herstory*. Everyone loves to sing along on "The Road I Took to You" (written by Barbara Keith and recorded by Meg Christian on *Face the Music*) and "Woman-Loving Women" by Teresa Trull (*The Ways A Woman Can Be*). Then there are the blatant "women-dispensing-with-men" statements—one of the earliest known being "We Don't Need the Men," written by Malvina Reynolds in the late '50s.

*It says in 'Coronet' magazine, June 1956, page 10 that married women are not as happy as women who have no men.  
Married women are cranky, frustrated and disgusted  
while single women are bright and gay, creative and well-adjusted.  
We don't need the men, we don't need the men.  
We don't need to have 'em 'round except for now and then.  
They can come to see us when we need to move the piano.  
Otherwise they can stay at home and read about the White Sox.  
We don't care about them, we can do without them.  
They'll look cute in a bathing suit on a billboard in Manhattan . . .*  
(©1959 Malvina Reynolds, Schroder Music)

Next we do that famous celebration of women discovering and enjoying their own bodies—"The Bloods."

*Now you might think that it's ludicrous, but when the moon is full I feel my uterus and I know my time's a-comin', comin' soon.  
Some sisters get down before menstruation, but it ain't no time for sad desperation.  
There's a new day comin' when you got the bloods again.  
Because you know your body is a-workin' alright.  
If you had self-help you could watch all night.  
Get your speculum at your neighborhood clinic, learn about your cervix and what's in it.  
There's a new day comin' when you've got the bloods again.*  
(©1974 Deborah Lempke, Berkeley Women's Music Collective)

I also include a special medley which includes Alix Dobkin's "Amazon ABC" (*Living With Lesbians*), the classic "Leaping Lesbians" by Sue Fink and Joelyn Grippo (*Lesbian Concentrate*), and Meg Christian's "Ode to a Gym Teacher" (*I Know You Know*).

*A you're an Amazon,  
Becoming brave and strong  
Clearly and constantly you see.  
D you're so dykey, E how you excite me,  
How Fortunate a Female Faculty,  
Gee, I guess it's good for me, H, how heavenly,  
I never knew how butchy I could be.  
J for sweet justice, K for sweet kisses . . .*  
(words ©1976 Alix Dobkin, Women's Wax Works)

Just as we begin to sing that "L" word, we swing into...

*Here come the lesbians,  
here come the leaping lesbians,  
Bo-dee-o, bo-dee-o, bo-dee-o, bo.  
Bo-dee-o, bo-dee-o, bo-dee-o, bo.  
We're going to please you, tease you,  
hypnotize you, try to squeeze you.  
We're going to get you if we can.  
(Here come the lesbians.)  
Don't go and try to fight it,  
run away or try to hide it,  
we want your love and that's our plan.  
(Here come the lesbians.)  
Oh-oh-oh, don't look in the closet.  
Oh-oh-oh, who's creeping down the stairs?  
Oh-oh-oh, who's slipping up behind you?  
Oh-oh-oh, watch out, better beware . . .*  
(©1977 Sue Fink/Joelyn Grippo, Terre Music)

And then the unforgettable "Ode to a Gym Teacher."

*She was a big tough woman,  
the first to come along  
that showed me being female  
meant you still could be strong.  
And though graduation meant  
that we had to part,  
she'll always be a player  
on the ballfield of my heart.  
I wrote her name on my note pad  
and inked it on my dress,  
and I etched it on my locker,  
and I carved it on my desk,  
and I painted big red hearts with her initials  
on my books,  
and I never knew 'til later  
why I got those funny looks . . .*  
(©1974 Meg Christian, Thumbelina Music)

These early women's songs were pivotal in my own return to creating and performing music. (I had quit for several years because I didn't like playing cover songs in bars.) They gave me courage to write from my own experiences, and the opportunity to perform in the growing context of women's culture.

Performing lesbian-identified songs was a difficult thing to do then, as I was employed as an elementary music teacher by the Oregon public schools. I wrote "The Telephone Song" during that more closeted period of my life, and include it in the show as one of the pieces of my own personal lesbian herstory.



# MY LESBIAN DREAM

©1992 Judy Fjell

*I want to talk about a dream  
One of my first dreams  
The dream I had before I had the language  
to tell my dreams  
Because now that I'm 41 I see it more clearly*

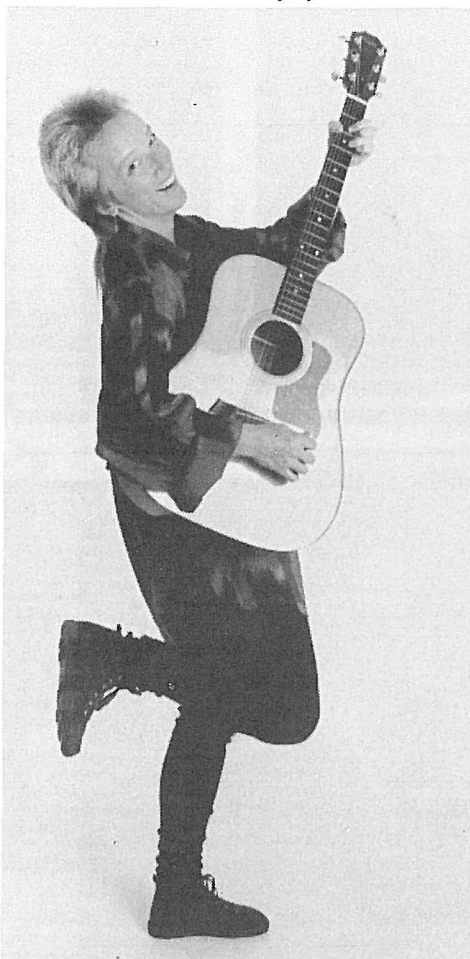
*Before I could even speak I dreamed that I would  
grow up to be a lesbian  
I wanted to be a powerful woman  
Free to make my own choices about my body  
I wanted to love myself  
I wanted to be able to speak my mind  
I wanted a challenge, I wanted to  
spend my life with women at the center  
I wanted to care for them, fight for them, love them  
I wanted to be intimate with them  
I wanted to trust them enough  
to have differences we could resolve  
That's it—my dream  
I wanted to be a lesbian*

*I remember some of my steps toward that dream  
(Not your steps, now...  
Remember, this is my dream)*

*First off ...  
I was slogging through the horse pasture  
in my red cowgirl boots  
Bib overall shorts  
Dimstore binoculars 'round my neck  
Annie Oakley pistols slung from my hips  
There I was  
A real live tomboy  
Following no one else's voice  
No, ma'am, what I was was a lesbian dreamer  
My dolls lay neglected—their dresses  
looked nearly as new as mine  
My Farah jeans needed knee patch after knee patch  
My friends played with their Barbie and Ken dolls  
I built the furniture for their houses  
I was a lesbian dreamer and builder  
When the time came, I chose the cornet*

*Sometimes when I'm far away  
and I call you on the phone  
I have to laugh at the words you say  
'cause I know you're not alone.  
When I say I love you,  
you tell me you know what I mean.  
When I say I miss you, you tell me  
you're sorry to hear it.  
And then you tell me how the weather  
has been there with you...*  
(©1982 Judy Fjell, Honey Pie Music)

Since my sense of humor has been a great asset when encountering this society's lesbophobia, I include many of my lighter pieces in the show—"I've Got a Middle-aged Body with Teen-aged Emotions," "I Love You But I Don't Love Your Dog," or "Take a Leap, John Paul," (a piece I wrote for the Pope about his habit of wearing a dress). "Thank Your Lucky Stars" is the result of a poignant "religious revelation" I had about my contribution to



Irene Young

*Not the flute, not the clarinet—the cornet  
I played hardball every night 'til dark  
I defied the 7th grade teacher  
who humiliated my best friend Mary Lou*

every man in the world as a result of my choice (or was it destiny?) to be a lesbian.

*Now some men spend their lives  
wonderin' what to be thankful for.  
I can give you one good reason,  
no need to look for more:  
I am a single-minded woman  
who just cannot be tamed,  
And you can thank your lucky stars  
you never won me in a marriage game.  
Yes, you can thank your lucky stars  
I never married you.  
You would have been sad, downhearted,  
miserable, and blue.  
I would have been mad when you  
came home at night,  
glad when you went away,  
and you can thank your lucky stars  
you're not married to me today.*  
(©1985 J. Fjell/Joan Kerr, Honey Pie Music)

The balance of the *Slice of Lesbian Herstory* show is a selection of songs about

*when she started her period  
I stood up to him  
I was a lesbian dreamer with anger  
In high school I was mistaken for a boy  
by the school principal  
I was buddies with most of the boys,  
and girlfriends with none  
Except one of the local juvenile delinquents  
I was a lesbian dreamer in confusion and pain  
The P.E. teacher provided no clues  
She also taught Home Ec—it was a mixed message  
My friends and I started the first  
girls' track team in our high school  
I was a lesbian dreamer with ambitions for us  
At Girls' State I fell in love with a girl  
from a neighboring town  
Big brown eyes, dark hair, a beauty  
I wrote her poetry as soon as I learned French  
"Pour toi, Debbé, ma bonne, bonne amie"  
In college I fell in love with my  
women's choir teacher  
Swoon—I was a lesbian dreamer  
During those years most of the men  
who were attracted to me were gay  
They told me so  
Still I was a clueless lesbian dreamer  
After college I was a counselor  
at a Campfire Girls Camp  
I wanted to camp with women,  
sing with women, stay up late with women  
I was a lesbian dreamer  
One night during the last two weeks of camp  
a lesbian on staff called my bluff  
Her hand touched my head as we sat listening  
to the surf  
My head touched her knee  
Suddenly I was a lesbian coming out of my dream  
And into consciousness  
The first touch of a woman set my heart  
to pounding  
And awakened me to my lesbian dream*

women's spirituality, lesbian heartbreak, and the connection between love and justice. I dedicate my song "Love That Goes the Distance" to Karen Thompson and Sharon Kowalski, and celebrate the gains that have been made for us through Karen and Sharon's fight for justice.

The show ends with a piece I wrote in 1990 called "Listen to a Woman's Heart." It is an experiential song which demonstrates the enormous power of women singing together and foretells

*continued on page 47*

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** *Judy Fjell is a songwriter, performer, and music workshop leader who lives in the Napa Valley in California. She tours throughout the United States and leads a summer music camp for women each August in her home state of Montana.*



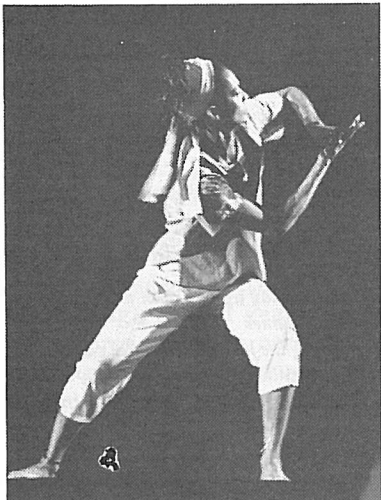
Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Yikes! She's a dyke!** Lynn Thomas is becoming widely known for her cabaret-style act, big voice, skill on keyboards, work with children, and songwriting talents.



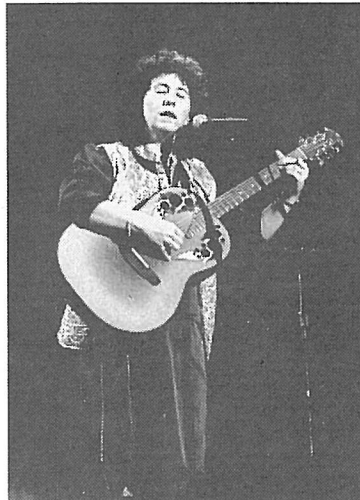
Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Laura Berkson: "Dental dams and condoms, finger cots and gloves, pleasure hand in hand with safety, that's the sign of love."**



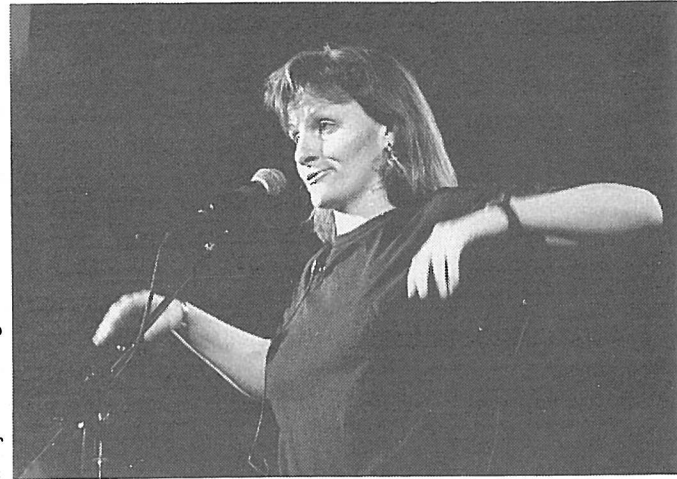
Marcy J. Hochberg

**Urban Bush Women** explore the transformation of suffering into the bittersweet joy of survival.



Marcy J. Hochberg

**French-Canadian Lucie Blue Tremblay:** romantic in any setting, in any language.



**Second City comedy grad Marcia Wilkie** did excerpts about teenage lesbians (from her one-woman show *HERS*) at the National Women's Music Festival Showcase.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Welcome back to our stages, Margie Adam.**



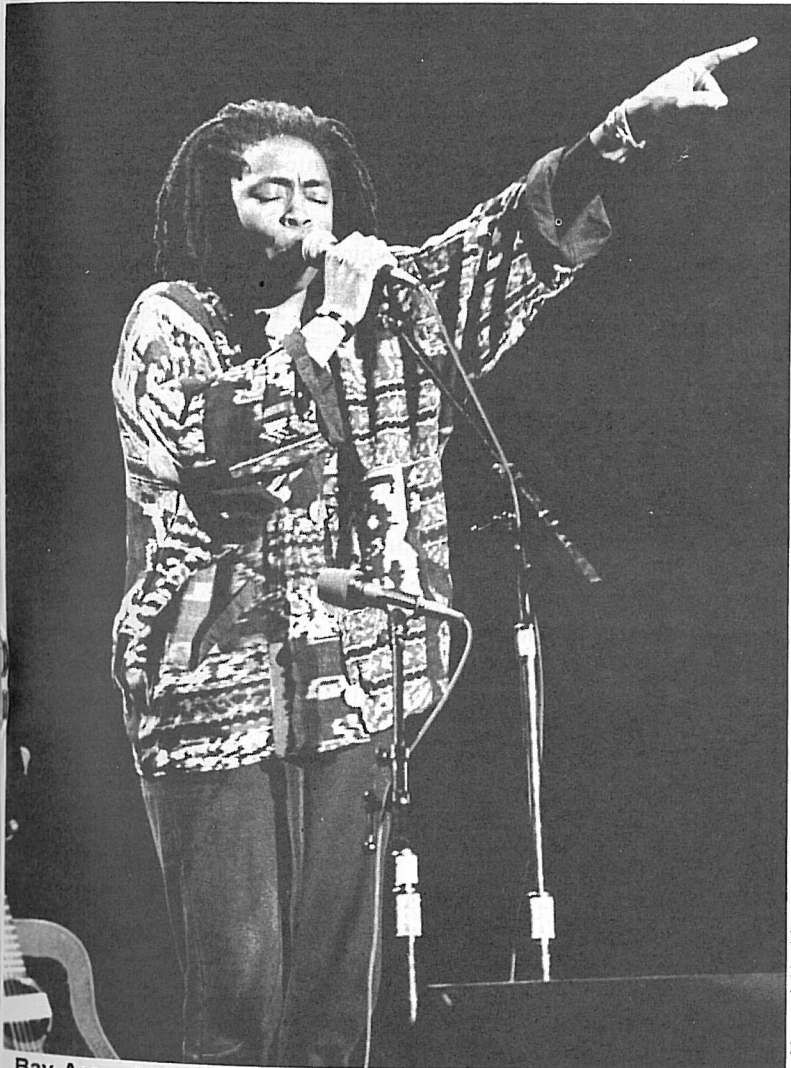
**Dianne Davidson and Leigh Maples** keep the crowds laughing wherever they go.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

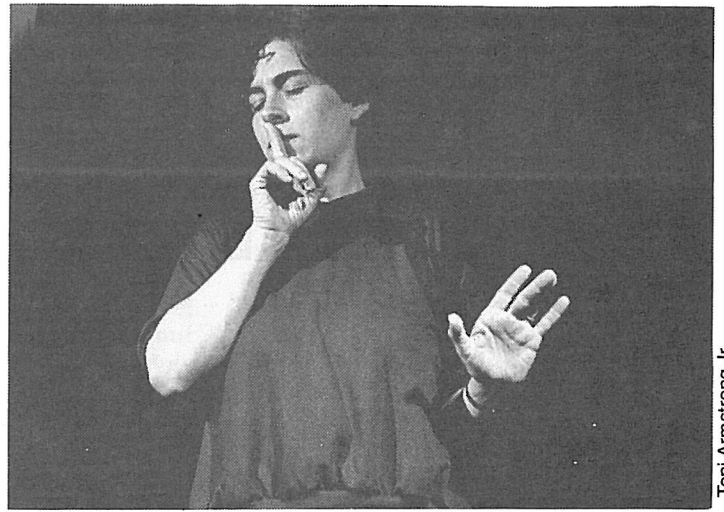
Jazzy R. Jay Allbright and daughter Punky are the Sugar Hill Duo.

## on the '92 festival circuit



Marcy J. Hochberg

Bay Area choral director Melanie DeMore brings audiences to their feet during solo gigs with her deep voice and powerful messages.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Sign Language interpreters are part of the show at almost every women's music festival. (Pictured: Rebekah Hammer)



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Hot sassy mama blues, Marla BB style, involves a lot of interplay between performer and audience.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Nurudafina Pili Abena with Nana Korentema and Janet Pabon: affirming the spiritual connections of all people.

# THE POWER OF THE PRINTED WORD: 1,500 ATTEND OUTWRITE 92

By Jorjet Harper

More than 1,500 lesbian and gay writers, editors, publishers, agents, booksellers, publicists, and readers of gay and lesbian literature met in Boston's Park Plaza Hotel March 20-22 for the third National Lesbian and Gay Writers Conference, OutWrite 92. [Editor's note: This article will concentrate on the woman-oriented aspects of the conference.]

The conference offered an abundance of activities for anyone interested in lesbian and/or gay writing. More than fifty panel discussions were presented, most of them very well-attended, with panelists speaking on such wide-ranging topics as "How Lesbian and Gay Writing Moves and Shapes the Movement," "Representations of Black Lesbians and Gays: Image and Text," "Coming Out in the Mainstream," "Zine Cuisine," "Is There Such a Thing as AIDS Literature?," "Definitions of Censorship," "The Wacky World of Lesbian and Gay Cartoonists," "Uses and Abuses of the Erotic: Sex, Race, and Ethnicity," "What's So Funny? Gay and Lesbian Humor Writing," and "Experimental Writing."

A series of workshop sessions were also held, in which writers could sign up for small groups to share their work and get feedback. A new Literary Series—called "Outspoken" and held concurrently with the workshops and panels—featured many well-known writers reading from their works. Also new this year were "Public Conversation" sessions in which two prominent writers spoke in a forum setting.

This year, OutWrite was jointly sponsored by the Boston newspaper *Gay Community News* and the San Francisco-based quarterly journal *OUT/LOOK*. The two previous conferences were held in San Francisco, organized by *OUT/LOOK*.

The list of lesbian and gay writers, poets, playwrights, journalists, and editors

who participated in the panels and readings was a long and impressive one.

Among the lesbian writers: Joan



"We are not supposed to tell the truth about our queer lives," said keynote speaker Dorothy Allison. "The worst thing done to us in the name of a civilized society is to label the truths of our lives as subjects outside the legitimate subject matter of serious writers."

Nestle; Leslea Newman; novelist Sarah Schulman; Jane DeLynn (*Don Juan in the Village*); science fiction writer Melissa Scott; *HOT WIRE* staff writer Jewelle Gomez, author of the lesbian vampire *Gilda Stories*; Sabrina Sojourner; Lynn Yamaguchi Fletcher; Jacqueline Woodson; Karen Lee Osborne; poet Janice Gould; Jess Wells (*AfterShocks*); Angela Bowen (*Aleta in the Forties and Fifties*); Blanche Boyd (*The Revolution of Little Girls*); polit-

ical satirist Susie Day; Maureen Brady (*Give Me Your Good Ear, Daybreak*); journalist Donna Minkowitz (*Village Voice*); Rachel Guido de Vries (*Tender Warriors*); performance artist Dominique Dibbell; Louise Raffkin; Ruthann Robson; Anna Livia; and *HOT WIRE* cartoonists Kris Kovick and Alison Bechdel. Other cartoonists included Jennifer Camper as well as Diane DiMassa and Stacy Sheehan of the "zine" *Hothead Paisan*, featuring a homicidal lesbian terrorist.

Many and varied were the lesbian book and magazine editors who participated, including Nancy Berano (*Firebrand Books*); Karla Jay; Mi Ok Bruining; Charlotte Bunch; Linda Villarosa, senior editor at *Essence* (who co-authored a coming out story with her mother Clara [May 1991 issue] which received more response than any other article in the magazine's history); Sara Levi Calderon; Christine Cassidy (*Naiad Press*); Rachel Pepper (*Cunt magazine*); Bryn Austin (*Advocate, Scream Box*); Sarah Pettit, executive editor at *Out magazine*; Roxie (*Girljock*); Carole DeSanti of Dutton Books; Jane Troxell (*Lambda Book Report*); and Robin Stevens, executive editor of *OUT/LOOK*.

Other luminaries included Vondora Carzen, the International Lesbian and Gay Association's representative to the United Nations; Debra Cash (*National Writers Union*); June Chan (*Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation*); literary publicist and consultant Michele Karlsberg; and Urvashi Vaid, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Sue Hyde, former news editor at *Gay Community News* and a member of the organizing staff at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, was the overall coordinator of the conference. More than sixty volunteers contributed to making the event happen.

As in past years, most of the workshops maintained a balance between les-

bian and gay male panelists, but there were several workshops that focused exclusively on lesbian issues (with all-women panels): "Between the Sheets: The Language of Lesbian Sex," "Getting Lesbians Into Print," "Language and Imagery of Lesbian Poetry," and "Beyond Boundaries—New Lesbian Fiction."

Opening plenary keynote speakers Mariana Romo-Carmona and Dorothy Allison spoke Friday on the topic of "Survival."

Mariana Romo-Carmona was one of the early members of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. She is co-founder of the Latina Lesbian History Project, which produced the anthology *Compañeras: Latina Lesbians*. Born in Chile, Mariana came to the U.S. in 1966, and has just completed a book of poetry and fiction, *Speaking Like an Immigrant*.

She introduced a group of Native Americans who formed a circle in front of the podium for a ceremonial burning of sage "in honor of all those who have suffered prejudice and discrimination." As the sweet scent of sage drifted through the hall, Mariana stressed the interconnectedness of our struggles.

"For those of us who are writers, we cannot accept to be separated from our origins in order to be palatable to a universal lesbian and gay audience," she said. She gave a historic account of the European occupation of the New World—the genocide and virtual enslavement of indigenous peoples, and the obliteration of their cultures—linking a respect for all human rights with "something so basic to human nature as sexual orientation."

"If we expect every one of us—every writer and artist—to emulate only one way of being gay, we are limiting our world. We can't be who we are, none of us, if we have to leave our cultures behind...it's not true that white people have no culture. We want to hear about all of it, but *all* of it—not just the folks who get to go on dinner cruises, but the ones who bus the dinner tables."

Mariana described the importance to her, as an immigrant, of her childhood diary—doubly precious once she was no longer in the environment of her childhood experiences. And she spoke of the tragedy of learning "almost nothing" about native peoples in history.

"If we understand the importance of carrying on history, as lesbians and gay men—if what we are talking about here today is survival—then it has to be the survival of all of us. For the past five hun-

dred years, the Old World has been reproducing itself in the New, exploiting the resources of the New World to maintain the values of the Old," she said.

"It's time to tell the truth, and figure out, where did all this money come from anyway? What and who has made this country great, and why are all these immigrants coming in great waves, clamoring for resources they have never seen but were grown in their soil? These are all gay and lesbian issues worthy of being included in our literature."

Dorothy Allison, author of the award-winning *Trash*, *The Women Who Hate Me*, and a new novel, *Bastard Out of Carolina*, spoke of the need to look beyond survival.

"More and more when I write now, I write in homage to those I have lost, we have lost. And to do more than survive, that's what I need from you—I need you to tell the truth, to tell the mean stories, and to sing the song of hope."

Dorothy read "Boston Massachusetts," a moving poem that she wrote a number of years ago after reading about the street murder of a lesbian in Boston. The woman was never named a lesbian in the article, but from the description of her appearance, her life, and the attack on her, it was clear that the gruesome killing (she was doused with gasoline and set on fire) was what would now be called a hate crime.

"We are not supposed to tell the truth about our queer lives," said Dorothy. "The worst thing done to us in the name of a civilized society is to label the truths of our lives as subjects outside the legitimate subject matter of serious writers."

She said that she has been shaped, as a lesbian and a writer, by miracles. "It was a miracle in my life that I discovered feminism and found that I did not have to be ashamed of who I was. That I did not have to be ashamed of my desire as a lesbian, or of my peculiar behaviors—most of which can be traced to the fact that I grew up in a trashy neighborhood. Feminism gave me possibilities of understanding my place in the world. I claim it as a title, as an entitlement," she said.

"I believe absolutely that the secret in writing fiction," said Dorothy, "is that it never really exceeds the reach of the writer's courage. And that the best fiction always comes from the place where the terror hides."

Sunday's plenary featured Melvin Dixon and Alan Gurganus, in two emotionally charged talks that left some audience members openly weeping and in-

stilled a renewed conviction of the vital importance of the work of gay and lesbian writers.

OutWrite 92 was marked not only by a more visible emphasis on the impact of AIDS than in past conferences, but also by an increased awareness of disability and accessibility issues. Heeding complaints from last year, this year's organizers arranged for plenary sessions to be interpreted in sign language, and seating was reserved for disabled participants.

Many conference-goers took advantage of the "Chill Out Room" that was set up in the conference area for anyone who might not be feeling well or just needed a place of quiet amidst the conference bustle.

The social highlight of this year's OutWrite was "Out is In," a Saturday night dance party/fundraiser held at the Park Plaza's posh Imperial Ballroom that drew hundreds of partiers. Comic Kate Clinton, singer/comic Lea DeLaria, and the group Adult Children of Heterosexuals entertained the packed crowds. The dance raised about \$10,000 to benefit both *Gay Community News* and *OUT/LOOK*, both of which are in financial difficulty. Other appeals during the weekend raised an additional \$5,000 in subscriptions and donations for the two publications. •

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** *Jorjet Harper is currently at work on a comic feminist, anti-racist novel called 'Little White Lies.' Her show 'Lesbomania' has been seen in several venues.*

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# IN THE LIFE

## New Works by Black Lesbian Filmmakers

By Cheryl Miller

Every March, the Chicago-based Women in the Director's Chair organization sponsors their annual International Women's Film and Video Festival. The event is well-known for the diversity of its screenings and the varied cultural backgrounds of the presenting film- and videomakers. [See articles in *HOT WIRE* issues July 1987, July 1988, and September 1989.]

The 1992 WIDC Festival offerings included a panel discussion and screenings called *In the Life: New Works by Black Lesbian Film and Video Makers*, which was part of "Mosaic in Black," a special presentation of films and videos that spotlighted the works of African American women filmmakers and video artists.

"Mosaic in Black" films included *Spin Cycle* (Aarin Burch), a short experimental film that explores some of the filmmaker's relationships; *Among Good Christian Peoples* (Jacqueline Woodson/Catherine Saalfeld), the story of a Black lesbian who was raised as a Jehovah's Witness; *A Powerful Thang* (Zeinabu irene Davis), about intimacy; *Finding Christa*, about adoption and reunion, and *Suzanne, Suzanne*, about heroin addiction and mother/daughter communication (both by Camille Billops); *A Powerful Thang* (Zeinabu irene Davis), about intimacy and friendship; *Land Where My Fathers Died* (Daresha Kyi), about family dynamics; *Illusions* (Julie Dash), about false imagery as status quo; and *Losing Ground* (Kathleen Collins), in which a Black female philosophy professor undertakes a quest for ecstasy.

The panelists for the *In the Life* discussion were Yvonne Welbon, Cheryl Dunye, and Michelle Parkerson. Yvonne Welbon is a MFA candidate at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and a journalist and writer/producer. In addition to creating her own works, she is interested in cataloging the work of other Black women film- and videomakers. She has just completed a video about film director Julie Dash (*The Cinematic Jazz of Julie Dash*). Her award-winning experimental film *Monique*, which tells the story of a childhood relationship and her first comprehension of racism, was included in the *In the Life* screening. The autobiograph-



Leigh H. Mosley

**Michelle Parkerson: "I'm coming into a phase of fruition in terms of putting some of the import and achievement and complexity of African American lesbians onscreen." She is currently working on a documentary about Audre Lorde's life.**

ical film tied for first in the Best Documentary category of the 17th Annual Festival of Illinois Film and Video Artists, and was also the winner in the Experimental category at the Chicago Student Film Festival.

Cheryl Dunye is an independent film and video artist committed to creating works that explore the lives and experiences of Black lesbians. Two of her videos were screened in this year's Festival. *She Don't Fade* explores the lusts and loves of Shae Clark, a character played by the filmmaker herself. *Janine* is a short video about Cheryl's high school friendship with an upper middle class white girl.

Michelle Parkerson, the Washington, D.C.-based writer and independent producer/director, is currently working on *The Audre Lorde Project*, which chronicles the life and work of the internationally acclaimed Black lesbian poet. Michelle's other documentaries include *Storme: Lady of the Jewel Box*, *Gotta Make This Journey*, *Sweet Honey in the Rock*, and *But Then, She's Betty Carter*. [See "Filmmaker, Activist, Writer: Michelle Parkerson," July 1987 *HOT WIRE*.]

### MICHELLE PARKERSON

Debates occur at media arts conferences—as well as informally among members of the film-video community—regarding the value of specialized festivals and programming. Some feel that the distinction between different films should be completely eliminated. Is there value in specialized film festivals, such as the annual one put together by Women in the Director's Chair (WIDC), or is women's work presented enough in other venues?

Michelle Parkerson says that the WIDC festival—now in its eleventh year—is increasingly considered to be one of the major international women's festivals. Women filmmakers are able to be seen in other venues, but not with the specificity that is found at the WIDC festival. She has had her work screened at the WIDC festivals over the past five years, and says the response has been tremendous. For example, her documentary *Storme: Lady of the Jewel Box*—about a woman of mixed race who worked as a male impersonator—was screened at the 1987 festival. *Storme* was a

starring member of the Jewel Box Revue, a female impersonation company that played the Black theater circuit in the 1950s and 1960s. The Jewel Box Revue gained much notoriety because it was the first integrated cabaret of female impersonators. The screening of *Storme* at the WIDC Festival was instrumental in the film's being shown at other festivals. "FilmFest D.C., an international film festival in Washington, D.C., picked up *Storme* because of the tremendous response and the press generated at the WIDC Festival," says Michelle.

The importance of the WIDC Festival is underscored by the size and diversity of the audience. "Not all of them were gay or lesbian," she says of this year's *In the Life* audience. "Not all of them were Black. Not all of them were female. I think it highlights and showcases this particular body of work in a way that might not happen at other festivals."

Cheryl Dunye expresses concern about the "ghettoizing" of Black gay and lesbian works in some gay and lesbian film festivals as well as at the women's festivals. "Our work ought to be intermingled with the main body of work," she says. "Our work and images are comparable to—and competitive with—the kinds of images that are being put out at large in the Black independent media and in the gay and lesbian media."

Michelle agrees, but also believes that there is value in providing an umbrella under which certain work can be highlighted and showcased. "In a setting such as the *In the Life* screening and panel, Black lesbian work can be seen and judged within its own indigenous community," she says.

There is a wave of Black lesbian and gay filmmakers who are producing work that is explicitly gay. Michelle Parkerson is widely perceived to be at the forefront of this movement, though she doesn't think of herself that way. She says that she is of a certain generation of African American women who entered filmmaking in the mid 1970s. Among her peers are Ayoka Chenzira, Jackie Shearer, and Julie Dash. "We came of age at a time in which the political climate was such that the mere presence of women behind the camera—let alone African American women—was a big surprise to most people," she says.

The topics of her documentaries and early works were not necessarily specifically lesbian, though she herself was out. "In my writings, I've been much more out than if you look at the body of my work

over the years," she says. "I think that now I'm coming into a phase of fruition in terms of putting some of the import and achievement and complexity of African American lesbians onscreen." She has been encouraged by a younger generation of lesbian filmmakers, such as Cheryl Dunye, Dawn Suggs, Sylvia Rhue, Aarin Burch, Jocelyn Taylor, and Yvonne Welbon. ("I always knew there were other Black lesbians in the community of Black independent filmmakers; however, their works were not specifically lesbian, or they themselves were not out.") She is inspired by this new generation because their initial works have been both lesbian-identified and Afrocentric. She believes that these African American women filmmakers, along with their male counterparts, are creating a new sensibility in images of Black gays and lesbians.

Michelle's current project documenting Audre Lorde's life and work is being produced by Ada Griffin, the executive director of Third World Newsreel, one of only a few distributors of politically progressive films and videos by people of color. In the past three years, Third World Newsreel has targeted works by lesbians and gay men of color. Ada Griffin developed the idea for the Audre Lorde project and invited Michelle Parkerson to be the director.

"I never knew the luxury of having just one job on a film project until I was invited to be the director of this project," says Michelle. "I don't have to be the director/editor/sound person. Most independents wear at least twenty hats when trying to bring a concept to screen, often because of the financial realities we encounter. At other times it is because of a reluctance to relinquish control of the vision. For me, though, it has usually been because of not having the resources to afford a large cadre of technicians and personnel. Often you don't have the money to pay them even minimally, let alone a wage that is comparable to their talents and expertise."

This project has produced a quantum leap in her career. Since being asked to direct the Audre Lorde project, Michelle has been offered other directing jobs, including the 1991 series of seven half-hour dramas for the Howard University PBS station celebrating the bicentennial of Washington, D.C. The dramas highlighted the lives of historic and contemporary ethnic leaders.

Michelle feels that the Audre Lorde project has taught her to examine more

fully the subjects of her documentaries. "I think that *Betty Carter*, *Sweet Honey in the Rock*, and *Storme* all had a very celebratory premise. Investigating the complexities of these African American women's lives was not as central as the lauding of their artistic achievements. I'm learning to question more—the circumstances, the ambitions, the motivations of the subject. By doing this, I hope to show what makes Audre Lorde so important to so many people across so many cultures—to recognize her achievements, and frame them in such a way that someone who has never heard of Audre Lorde can understand why she is such a seminal figure in her discipline. I want to show some of the wonderful things about her life and illuminate some of the contradictions as well. This will not dilute the celebratory feelings of audiences toward women such as Lorde who are, in a sense, icons in their communities. I hope this will push us as viewers to investigate the range of our identities from the problematic to the wonderful ways that we all are."

## YVONNE WELBON

Yvonne Welbon graduated from Vassar in 1984 with a degree in history. She moved to Taiwan to learn Chinese and stayed there for six years. After her first year in Taiwan, she founded an arts magazine for English-speaking foreigners who did not speak Chinese and consequently did not frequent the local galleries and theaters. "I started it because I believe you should live wherever you are," she says. The magazine's name, *Bang*, was derived from a Chinese word meaning great or terrific. When martial law was lifted in 1987, *Bang* expanded its focus to include political coverage.

Two factors contributed to Yvonne's transition into film and video. Around 1987, she developed a writing style that she called "imaging," in which she attempted to appeal to the reader's visual, auditory, and tactile senses. Her efforts were unsatisfactory, and she began to feel a growing need to express herself in a different medium. At a publishing conference, she first became aware of the power of video as a communications medium. "Although the conference was print-oriented, everyone was talking about video," she recalls. She then put together a pilot issue of the magazine on video. "If my strong area is as a communicator, then I should learn to communicate in the most powerful medium to get my message across."

Shortly after completing the pilot, Yvonne Welbon was involved in a near-fatal motorcycle accident. During her recovery, she began to re-examine her life. ("When you get really hurt, you think 'Why am I so far from home?'"") She decided to close the magazine, return to the U. S., and go to film school.

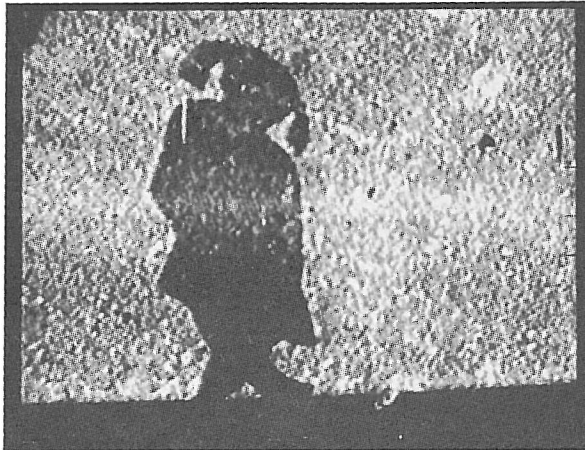
On her return, she was disturbed by the fact that she knew of only one Black woman filmmaker—Julie Dash. "Get real," I thought. "How can I be the only other Black woman who's thought about being a filmmaker?" When I tried to find more information about Black women filmmakers, I was amazed at how difficult it was. I could find more information in Taiwan than I could here! Because of my history background, it was important for me to know who the other women were. To know who you are, you have to know about the women who are like you, who came before you," she says. She currently has a database cataloging about sixty Black women filmmakers and 150 of their films, and has information on twenty-five more ready to be added.

Feeling that part of her mission is to document the work of these filmmakers, she recently completed *The Cinematic Jazz of Julie Dash*. "There needs to be work out there," she says. "We're not going to exist unless we put information out into the world that we do exist. I'd like to do more video essays on Black women filmmakers. When I do my feature, I don't want people to say, 'Black woman filmmaker? What's that?' or even 'Black lesbian filmmaker? What's that?'"

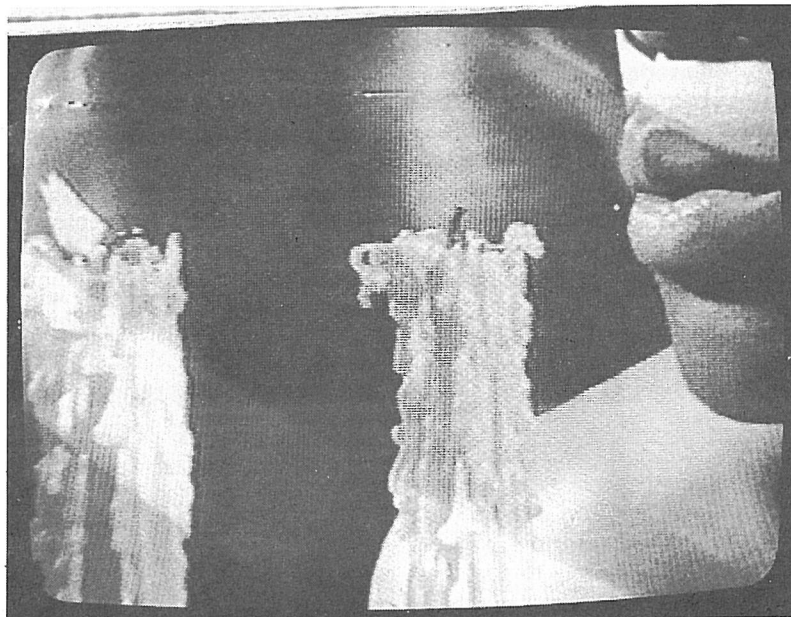
Last Christmas, Yvonne returned to Taiwan, where she shot footage for *Wei Yi-Fang, Remembering Myself*, an autobiographical film. She has also completed a screenplay entitled *Resurrecting Faith*, which she describes as a story about mistaken identities as well as about women finding themselves.

I asked her what she thought the '90s would mean for Black women filmmakers. "I'm really optimistic about the future," she says. "I can see a lot of women in and out of school taking cameras into their

hands. Good quality consumer equipment is becoming more available, and with the popularity of the multicultural movement, you find the public—even white males—demanding to see more diverse work. There are just so many stories to tell—now more than ever we can and will make sure ours are seen."



Yvonne Welbon: "To know who you are, you have to know about the women who are like you, who came before you." (Pictured: still from 'Monique.')



Cheryl Dunye: "We're all just trying to make it. Being a woman artist is hard even if you're not dealing with the issue of lesbianism." (Pictured: still from 'Janine.')

## CHERYL DUNYE

When Cheryl Dunye was a beginning film student, she attended a Spike Lee lecture. A Black woman approached the mic and asked him to address what she felt to be the poor representation of Black women, particularly Black lesbians. He said that if she wanted different repre-

sentation then she should make her own films. Next question. "I thought, 'God how cold—but in a way, how right,'" Cheryl recalls.

She is making films that create images and explores the worlds of Black lesbians. She had two pieces included in the Women in the Director's Chair film festival this year: *Janine* (about the struggle for acceptance despite racial and sexual differences), and *She Don't Fade* (about one woman's search for love and her relationships with other women). Originally, Cheryl intended this to be a video about a Black woman's coming out story. After the first rushes, the filmmaker inserted herself into the video as one of the characters.

"Then it became my story in relation to other women," she says. "It was very much off-the-cuff, and yet a somewhat structured production. There were a lot of narrative references to storytelling as well as comedy. I think that it is very interesting to use comedy to get your point across. This piece just evolved, and in some ways it was about evolution."

Cheryl Dunye just received her master's degree in Fine Arts from Rutgers University and is currently working on several different projects. In addition to being a filmmaker, she is also a performance artist, and is working on a performance piece that is largely autobiographical, with the characters in the piece representing various Black lesbians. In the sketches which compose the piece, she explores the relationships of the characters to themselves, to other Black lesbians, and to the white lesbian community. "One personal story I call 'Vanilla Sex,'" she says. "It's about the term 'vanilla sex' and how it played in my life at one point."

She is also currently discussing a joint project with several Black gay men, including Essex Hemphill. "Essentially it will be a dialogue between Black lesbians and Black gay men. I believe that it is necessary for culturally active Black lesbians and Black gay men to develop some type of community with each other." She is almost finished with an experimental video called *The Potluck and*



*the Passion*, which is about the meeting of souls at a potluck hosted by a Black lesbian couple to celebrate their anniversary.

When Cheryl first started working in the media arts, she knew of only one other Black lesbian filmmaker—Michelle Parkerson. When asked if there is now more of a community of Black lesbian filmmakers, she responds, "Yes and no." She believes that there is more openness and discussion about sexuality in the '90s. "However," she says, "we're still working against the dominant mainstream and/or dominant independent notion of what film and video art is—and that still remains white and heterosexual. There's also the conflict between working together and working individually. We do talk to each other and try to support each other's work. We are on each other's panels." She thinks that there is more of a gathering together, but adds, "We're all just trying to make it. Being a woman artist is hard even if you're not dealing with the issue of lesbianism."

Unlike some other art forms, film and video require substantial amounts of money in order to produce a finished product. Many people are concerned that in this current political climate it will be-

come even more difficult to raise money for work that has a gay or lesbian theme. Cheryl believes that people must become more creative in their fundraising efforts. During the panel discussion she suggested that people try to raise funds on a grassroots level. "Offer a lottery. Throw fundraising parties." During the interview I asked her if she thought money will become even tighter in this climate. She said, "I know of a white straight male filmmaker who said that he wishes he was a Black lesbian, because supposedly we're getting all the money and attention. I haven't seen it. There are still very few funds that are specifically for gays. There's the Out Fund, and there are a couple of lesbian funds," she acknowledges, "but there's not much out there."

• • •

The eleventh WIDC International Film and Video Festival was held in conjunction with The Center for New Television. In addition to the *In The Life* panel, there was also a panel of Black women filmmakers moderated by Dr. Gloria Gibson-Hudson (writer and assistant director of the Black Film Center/Archive at Indiana University). It featured Camille Billops (mixed-media artist, filmmaker,

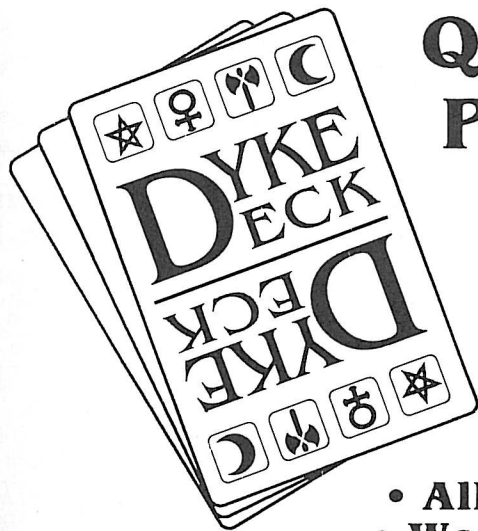
playwright, TV staff writer, and keeper of the Archives of Black-American Cultural History of the Hatch-Billops Collection in New York); teacher/filmmaker Zeinabu irene Davis (*Cycles, A Powerful Thang*); and Michelle Crenshaw (producer/director and union camera assistant for feature films, commercials, and industrials).

In addition to the films shown as part of the *In The Life* series, the festival featured work by more than four dozen other women, and was divided into several categories.

For info about the 1993 International Women's Film and Video Festival: *Women in the Director's Chair*, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 281-4988. •

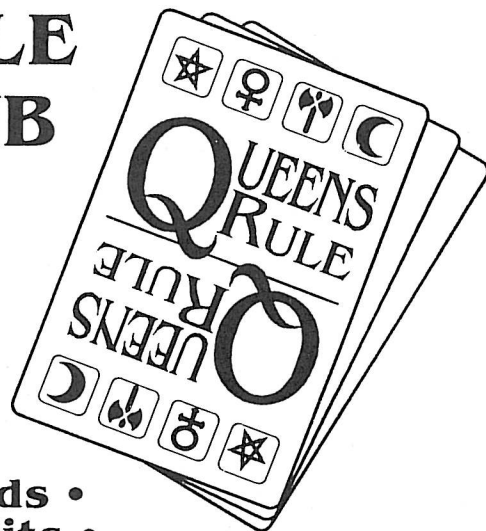
**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Cheryl Miller is a writer, storyteller, and performance artist who has been active in the Chicago creative community for many years.

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## READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

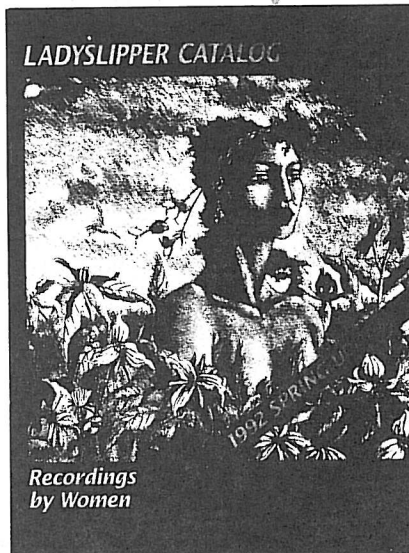
In the January 1992 issue we asked our readers to nominate women who have made outstanding contributions to the women's music and culture network. In the May issue we printed the names and accomplishments of every nominee submitted by the readers, plus our annual "favorites" survey. Here are the results. As is customary, specially engraved plaques will be given to this year's Readers' Choice Award winners. This year, we're appreciating our record distributors...



Toni Armstrong Jr.

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## FAVORITES

This survey of favorites is included each year for fun, and to give us a closer look at the tastes of our readers (so we know who and what you are most interested in seeing in upcoming issues). Readers have been 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 1991 (Karen Williams cover) issue.

### IN PREVIOUS YEARS...

- 1986: Kay Weaver & Martha Wheelock, for their film *One Fine Day*.
- 1987: Alix Dobkin, for her continuing commitment to building lesbian communities.
- 1988: Robin Tyler, for two annual music festivals and the rally at the 1987 March on Washington.
- 1989: Lisa Vogel & Barbara Price, for producing the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival.
- 1990: Alison Bechdel, for her *Dykes to Watch Out For* cartoons and books.
- 1991: Holly Near, for commitments to our culture; for book *Fire in the Rain... Singer in the Storm*.
- 1986-90: Ladyslipper, for comprehensive catalog of women's music and music by women.
- 1991: Naiad Press, oldest lesbian-feminist publishing house, for introducing lesbian writers.

- **VOCALIST:** Cris Williamson, Rhiannon, k.d. lang, Holly Near, Dianne Davidson.
- **GROUP/BAND:** Two Nice Girls, The Wild Hearts, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Indigo Girls, Casselberry-DuPreé.
- **SONGWRITER:** Ferron, Judy Small, Cris Williamson, Sue Fink, Margie Adam.
- **BASS:** Laura Love, Joy Julks, Carrie Barton, Toshi Reagon, Alyson Palmer.
- **PERCUSSION:** Vicki Randle, Nydia "Liberty" Mata, Barbara Borden, Edwina Lee Tyler, Carolyn Brandy, Nurudafina Pili Abena.
- **DRUMS:** Cam Davis, Barbara Borden, Jake Lampert, Carolyn Brandy, Bernice Brooks.
- **ELECTRIC GUITAR:** June Millington, Tret Fure, Nina Gerber, Nancy Vogl, Sherry Shute.
- **ACOUSTIC GUITAR:** Nancy Vogl, Nina Gerber, Meg Christian, Mimi Fox, Tret Fure.
- **KEYBOARDS:** Barbara Higbie, Adrienne Torf, Libby McLaren, Cris Williamson, Bonnie Hayes.
- **INSTRUMENTALIST:** Kay Gardner, Robin Flower, Musica Femina, Adrienne Torf, Bay Area Women's Philharmonic.
- **WIND INSTRUMENT:** Kay Gardner, DEUCE (Jean Fineberg/Ellen Seeling), Suede, Kristan Aspen, Klaudia Promessi.
- **COMIC:** Karen Williams, Marga Gomez, Kate Clinton, Whoopi Goldberg, Judith Sloan, Suzanne Westenhofer.
- **EMCEE:** Karen Williams, Sue Fink, Kate Clinton, Maxine Feldman, The Washington Sisters.
- **NEW PERFORMER:** Jamie Anderson, Pam Hall, Venus Envy, Leah Zicari, Laura Berkson, Laura Love.
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE PERFORMER:** Ferron, Cris Williamson, Holly Near, k.d. lang, Teresa Trull.
- **CURRENT SONG (last two years):** "No Closet"/Jamie Anderson; "Singer in the Storm"/Holly Near; "I'll Be a Homo For Christmas"/Venus Envy; "Sunken City"/Ferron; "You Deserve"/Susan Herrick.
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE SONG:** "Song of the Soul"/Cris Williamson; "I Spent My Last \$10 (on Birth Control and Beer)"/Two Nice Girls; "Wedding Song"/Jamie Anderson; "Leaping (Lesbians)"/Sue Fink & Joelyn Grippo; "Sweet Darlin' Woman"/Diane Lindsay.
- **CURRENT ALBUM (last two years):** *Phantom Center* (Ferron); *Toward Home* (Rhiannon); *Closer to Home* (Jamie Anderson); *Singer in the Storm* (Holly Near); *Justice* (Toshi Reagon).
- **ALL-TIME FAVORITE ALBUM:** *The Changer and the Changed* (Cris Williamson); *Blue Rider* (Cris Williamson); *Testimony* (Ferron); *Journeys* (Holly Near);



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Newcomer Pam Hall from Mississippi made a big impression on fans of women's music this year.

*Hello Betty!* (BETTY).

- **ALBUM PRODUCER:** Teresa Trull, Rosetta Reitz, Terry Garthwaite, IMA, Dakota.
- **LIVE SOUND:** Myrna Johnston, Shelley Jennings, Haley, Karen Kane, Boden Sandstrom.
- **(STUDIO) RECORDING ENGINEER:** Karen Kane, Leslie Ann Jones, Tret Fure.
- **ALBUM COVER:** *Country Blessed* (Cris Williamson/Teresa Trull); *Never Enough* (Melissa Etheridge); *Meg & Cris at Carnegie*; *Garden of Ecstasy* (Kay Gardner); *Honey On My Lips* (Pam Hall).
- **FICTION BOOK:** *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistlestop Cafe* (Fannie Flagg); *Daughters of a Coral Dawn* (Katherine V. Forrest); *The Wanderground* (Sally Miller Gearheart); *Temple of My Familiar* (Alice Walker); *Stoner McTavish* books (Sara Dreher).
- **NONFICTION BOOK:** *Backlash* (Susan Faludi); *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers* (Lillian Faderman); *Fire in the Rain...Singer in the Storm* (Holly Near); *Lesbian Passion* (JoAnn Loulan); *Another Mother Tongue* (Judy Grahn).
- **PERIODICAL:** *HOT WIRE*, *New Directions for Women*, *Ms.*, *Deneuve*, *Mama Bears News & Notes*.
- **AUTHOR:** Audre Lorde, Katherine V. Forrest, Fannie Flagg, Jane Rule, Alice Walker.
- **POET:** Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Cheryl Clarke, Yvonne Zipter.
- **CARTOONIST:** Alison Bechdel, Nicole Hollander, Kris Kovick, Lynda Barry,

Andrea Natalie.

- **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Irene Young, Joan E. Biren (JEB), Toni Armstrong Jr., Annie Liebowitz, Marcy J. Hochberg.
- **MOVIE/FILM:** *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Thelma and Louise*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Salmonberries*, *Strangers in Good Company*.
- **TV STAR:** Roseanne Arnold, Candice Bergen, Amanda Donohoe, Marlee Matlin, Laurie Metcalf, Sara Gilbert.
- **FILM STAR:** Mary Stuart Masterson, Jodie Foster, Susan Sarandon, Bette Midler, Geena Davis, Sigourney Weaver.
- **FILM DIRECTOR:** Jodie Foster, Penny Marshall, Barbra Streisand, Debra Chasnoff, Michelle Parkerson.
- **MAINSTREAM PERFORMER:** k.d. lang, Roseanne Arnold, Bonnie Raitt, Whoopi Goldberg, Tracy Chapman, Kathy Najimy.
- **OTHER (write-ins): SEXIEST SONG:** "Linda" (Pam Hall); **PLACE:** Michigan; **LINDA TILLERY/VICKI RANDLE VOCALS** on "Fly Me Away" (*Take Two*, The Washington Sisters); **MOST MISSED:** Meg Christian; **FEMINIST THEOLOGIAN:** Carter Heyward; **MOST SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTER:** Jamie Anderson; **CHORUS:** Libana; **SEXIEST DANCERS:** Maile & Marina; **PERFORMER OF THE PAST:** Meg; **BEST HOMECOMING:** Margie Adam in Lansing; **BACK-UP VOCALS:** Tret Fure; **MIDI PROGRAMMER:** Sue Fink; **ARTIST/PAINTER:** Susan Seddon Boulet, René Porter; **HEROINES:** The Hensons; **SEXIEST PERFORMER:** Pam Hall; **WRITER/JOURNALIST:** Laura Post; **SCREENWRITER:** Fannie Flagg; **PIONEER:** Meg, Ronnie Gilbert; **AUTHOR** of *Touching Strength*, an incredible gay-affirming book!; **MOTHER/DAUGHTER COMBO:** Toni Sr. and Toni Jr., Sugar Hill Duo; **REDWOOD CULTURAL WORK** for working to integrate all the many issues and movements that affect our lives; **CRUISES:** Olivia; **LABEL:** Second Wave; **ALICE DIMICELE** for making huge contributions to the integration of feminism and the environmental movement. •

## MAKING NOMINATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR

*HOT WIRE* readers are welcome to submit nominations for next year's Readers' Choice Awards throughout the year. If you know of an individual woman or feminist organization making outstanding contributions to women's music and culture, send us a note specifying the accomplishments of your nominee. *Readers' Choice/HOT WIRE*, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.

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**Sue Fink, recipient of the first Sue Fink Award, to be given annually to a woman who is a cheerleader for our cultural endeavors.**



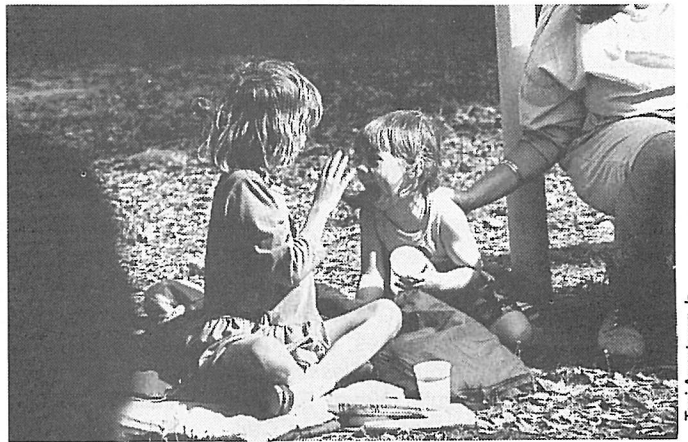
Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Storyteller Louise Kessel told mythical stories about women and our place in nature.**



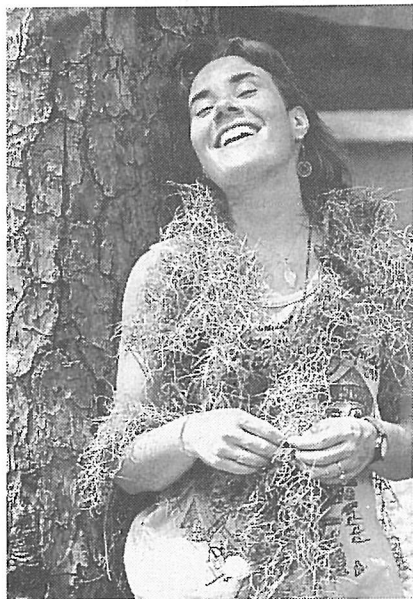
Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Festival producers just wanna have fun. Brenda and Wanda Henson delighted in their event despite losing the original camp site in February and incurring heavy financial losses this year.**



Toni Armstrong Jr.

**Females of all ages are always welcome at Gulf Coast. Little ones especially enjoy the Gyrifest programming.**



Toni Armstrong Jr.

**A new fashion for Dr. Bon Morris.**



Toni Armstrong Jr.

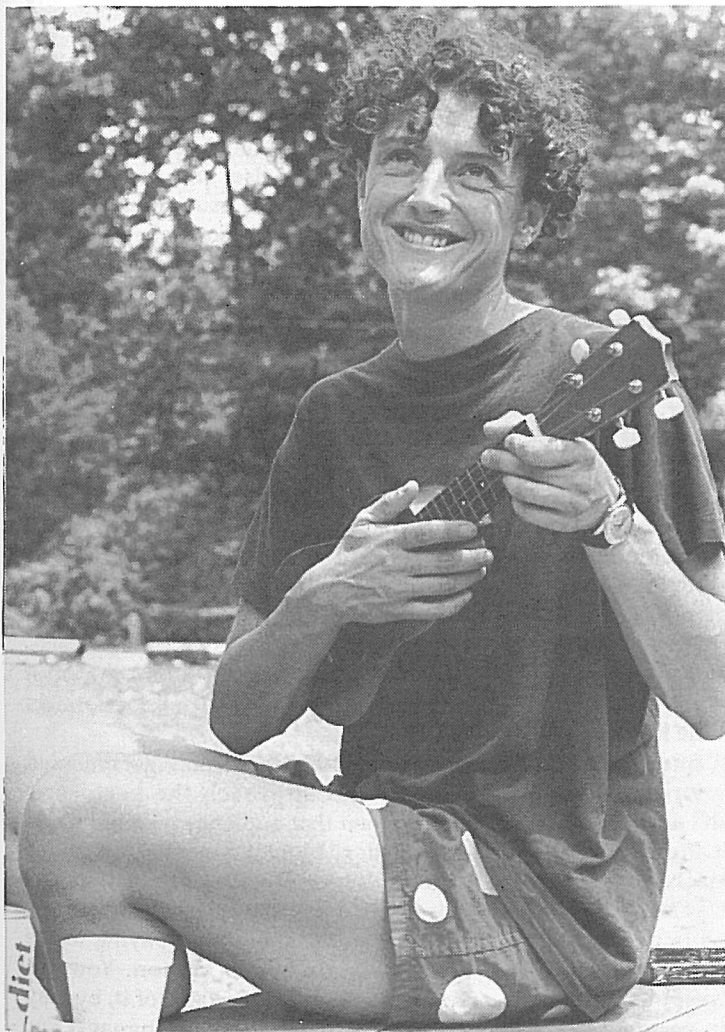
**The radical feminist world view according to character actress Judith ("Muriel") Sloan.**



Toni Armstrong Jr.

The annual Seder (led this year by Marla BB, pictured, and others) was woman-identified in tone, using Ruth Simkin's haggada—a feminist interpretation of the Passover ritual.

*fun in the Biloxi sun at the*  
**1992 GULF COAST  
 WOMEN'S FESTIVAL**



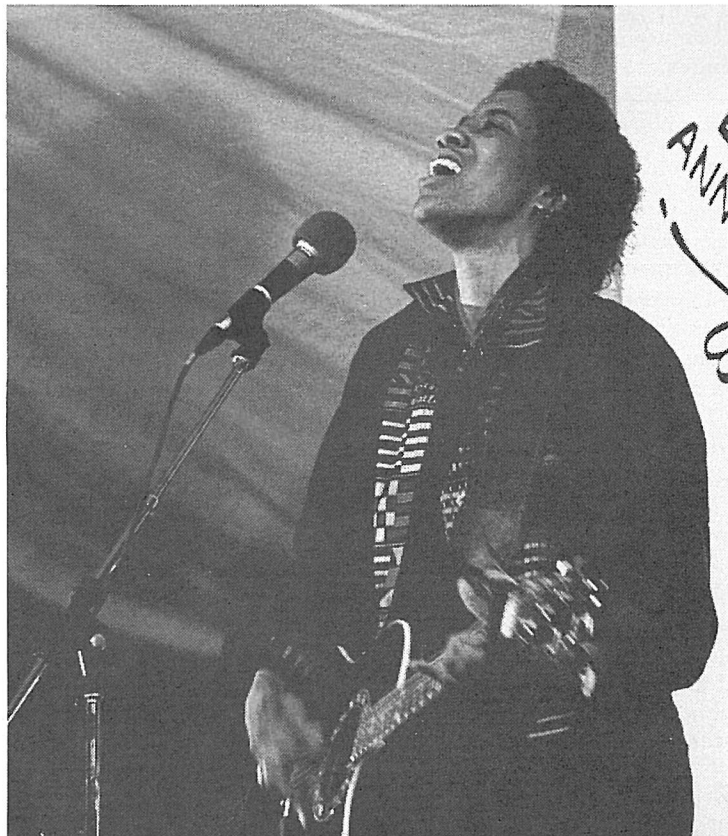
Toni Armstrong Jr.

Over the Easter/Passover weekend, the festival audience was charmed by the whimsical yet biting tunes of Zöe Lewis.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Sue Fink exchanged banter with Jamie Anderson (pictured) throughout the festival. Emcee Sue taught the crowd to chant "How big are they?" whenever Jamie appeared on stage.



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Southern homegirl Pam Hall debuted her hot-off-the-press 'Honey on My Lips' album at the fourth annual GCWF.

## MULLING IT OVER

# MONICA GRANT: THE POLITICS OF HISSING

By Laura Post

For several years now, Monica Grant has successfully combined crafting and singing songs about serious topics (addictive and healthier relating; the fear and sadness of loss) with her authentic and sincere stage presence and her right-on, impish humor ("Down at the Sperm Bank," sung to the tune of "Under The Boardwalk"; her parody of Ferron's "Shadows on a Dime"; and the uproarious "The Co-dependency Polka," featured on the January 1992 *HOT WIRE* soundsheet). Following the release of her debut record *Harbor Girl*, she was named *HOT WIRE*'s "Favorite New Performer" of 1990; her latest album, *The Heart of It*, has also garnered critical acclaim.

As a performer, she has ample opportunity to experience audience reactions to her work, from delight to indifference to downright rudeness. She believes that communication between performer and audience is a two-way street, and recalls a particular incident in which she was hissed by an audience member.

"I was talking about movies—specifically *Dances With Wolves*—and was referring to the woman I call Standing With Bad Hairdo," says Monica. "There was a sssss from the back of the room, along with a taunting 'P.I., P.I., P.I.' The hall was the size of a living room; everyone noticed that a woman was hissing and that it had to do with my remark. I could not see who had hissed, so I said, 'I would love to talk to you afterwards, if you want to tell me why that's P.I.' Then, I just went on.

"A day later, a woman came up to me and said that she was the one who had said something during my show. She explained that she had taken my remark as derogatory towards Native American Indians. I asked her, 'Do you know how in the movie...?' and she answered, 'Oh, I didn't see the movie.' I said, 'Well, had you seen the movie, you would have observed



Irene Young

**Monica Grant: "But why, just because an audience member doesn't like what a performer is saying, does the disagreement need to be expressed at that moment, in that context? Is a live show necessarily a forum for dialogue?"**

that the woman I was talking about was a white woman who had been raised by Indians, and the only woman in the film who wouldn't brush her hair. Everyone else had really beautiful hair that was all brushed, but hers wasn't, and *that's* what I was talking about.' I also thanked her for being invested enough to talk to me; I assume that she had hissed in order to be heard. But I believe that if women knew how it felt to *receive* hissing, maybe they would respond in a different way."

Monica says being hissed at can feel like an attack. "It can also be very strange to receive because it is anonymous," she explains. "Performers handle it in different ways—sometimes with funny rude remarks, sometimes by ignoring it—but I can't imagine that it doesn't affect us all on some level. I know that it affects me. I also know that I'm an approachable person, and if somebody hears something that they have a hard time with, or that they really want to let me know is not okay, I want them to take the responsibility to approach me about it—in person, face-to-face—after the show. That would be con-

structive because I can hear what it is that they want to tell me."

Like most performers, Monica has changed things in her own act in response to constructive feedback. "In the past, for example, I would use the word 'lame' interchangeably with 'dull.' Another artist pointed out to me that 'lame' really means 'disabled,' which of course I wasn't trying to say. Expressions and words we use are sometimes derogatory or exploitative, even when we don't mean them to be. I now consciously use the word *dull* when I mean *dull*, and try to be careful about my word choice. I try to think about what I'm wanting to communicate and what I will end up communicating with the words I choose to use," she says.

"I sometimes need to be educated just like anybody else, and I'm certainly willing to think about issues in new ways. A lot of times, though, someone might not understand what I'm trying to say—like in the case of *Dances With Wolves*. It seems a bit of a paradox to me—in our women's community, we try to be cognizant of really listening to each other, empowering each other, and not censoring each other—yet there seems to be this practice of hissing, which seems contradictory to empowerment and non-censorship."

What about when performers aren't as accessible as Monica tries to be? She acknowledges that this can happen, especially in a situation such as a festival where performers may not be approachable, and audience members may not know in advance what all the performers are like.

"If an audience member got offended and couldn't approach the performer directly, then that audience member could write a letter," Monica suggests. "Of course if the audience member *knows* that she finds a performer's act distasteful, simply not going to the show—not paying to see this act—is always an option. You can express your support, or lack of it, by way of applause or other body language. For musicians, applause is the gauge of a

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

successful song; for a comic, laughter is the success meter."

Monica herself has occasionally been in the audience when something offensive has been happening on stage. She doesn't just ignore it. "There was one time when I went with eight other dykes to a fancy comedy show on New Year's Eve," she recalls. "A straight male comic whose humor was really derogatory toward many different groups was performing. We were sitting right there in the second row, wearing our tuxedos, when he did a whole series of abusive jokes about gays and lesbians. There we were, right in eyeshot—we gave him icy stares and didn't applaud or laugh. He became very aware of us, and our non-response made him visibly uncomfortable. I thought that was a good, effective use of body language, and it got our message across.

"I believe that one goes to a gig, takes what one likes, and leaves the rest. We are not going to like everything we hear. That's just the bottom line. How could someone go to hear all those people and totally agree with every one? We're all different. But why, just because an audience member doesn't like what a performer is saying, does the disagreement need to be expressed at that moment, in that context? Is a live show necessarily a forum for dialogue?"

Monica says if she strongly felt that

what a performer was doing was offensive, she would let that performer know afterwards. "For me, as a performer, being hissed at while I'm onstage is just not an *effective* way to have me hear what the person hissing is specifically trying to tell me. Being hissed at when I'm in the middle of a set is not going to get me to change my material. When I am hissed at—which is not all that often—I do not even understand the point of the hissing," she says.

"This topic of hissing is a delicate one, and I have not heard anybody talk about it from the receiving end. I am always working at heightening my consciousness about what I do. I can't speak for others, but I'm definitely open to hearing what people have to say, and I'm committed to making myself accessible. What tends to happen when someone hisses at me is that she has the experience of yelling out what she feels, and maybe some door opens up; because I'm human, and I have my defenses, and I have all my wounds, something shuts down. I never say things on purpose to hurt anyone—but because of all of our different backgrounds, because of all our personal experiences, I probably will sometimes say things that others will find offensive. If I say such things, my purpose is not to attack anyone—but when somebody hisses, it feels like an attack to me. Maybe they're interpreting what I said from the stage as an

attack, and they are simply hissing at me as a form of a defense. But what we're talking about here is not just a performer's work, but her heart," Monica emphasizes. "Any of us who do any kind of art—it's not a job, it's our passion. I would ask that when audience members give feedback about somebody's heart and their passion, that the feedback be *constructive*. That is not to say that there is not criticism to be made, because there is. It's my philosophy, though, that we treat each other with mutual respect and act for each other's higher good."

Monica says she doesn't want anyone to think she's trying to tell everyone how to behave at concerts. "When I talk about this topic, I'm not making anybody wrong; I know what it's like to be offended, and I know what it's like to not appreciate or even be hurt by something that I hear. I really do. But I hope that these words have been helpful in sharing one performer's point of view on hissing. I hope to hear other points of view, and I invite future dialogue about it. In the meantime, 'Just remember this/A hiss is just a hiss'...." •


**ABOUT THE WRITER:** *Laura Post is on the 'HOT WIRE' staff; she listens to and reviews over 100 albums per year and thinks that 'The Codependency Polka' is a very funny, right-on song.*

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# RE:INKING

## GETTING GLIB

By Roz Warren

I'm the editor of *Women's Glib*, a collection of humor by and for women. I first felt that a book like this might be useful when I realized that my favorite cartoons and funny stories never made it into the humor anthologies. When a new humor collection hit the bookstore I'd scan the table of contents: where was Alison Bechdel? Alice Kahn? Jennifer Camper? If Nora Ephron were included, it was always the essay she wrote for *Esquire* back in the '60s bemoaning the fact that her breasts were too small, and never the more recent *Heartburn* stuff bemoaning the fact that her hubby was a complete schmuck.

The humor collections in print weren't called "men's humor anthologies," but they were made up mostly of material by and about men, with only

a smattering of work by women (and only that work by women that wouldn't antagonize the guys). Here, as elsewhere, male experience was considered universal experience; women's experience was mostly absent. (Need I add that lesbian experience was totally invisible?)

My book *Women's Glib*, in contrast, would be "women-only space" (although one male cartoonist did manage to sneak in by lying about his gender). Even when cartoonist Carol Lay, whose work I admire, refused to participate in a book that wasn't open to both genders, I stuck with my all-woman lineup.

**RE:INKING** articles deal with women's publishing and writing, including individual women, book projects, and related issues.

Sure, plenty of men are feminists (I married one), and not all women humorists are feminists. (Is *Cathy* a feminist strip?) But so many venues eagerly publish humor by men, while so few are open to women's material; I longed to tip the balance in the other direction for once.

To do the book, I had to ponder what exactly is "women's humor"? It's humor by and about women, based on all the terrific experiences only we get to have. Getting periods. Getting pregnant. Getting paid fifty-nine

cents for every dollar a man

makes. Motherhood. Daughterhood. The joy of dating heterosexual men.

The joy of lesbian sex. Seeing a penis for the first time. (There's a funny moment for you). And so on.

The humor in *Women's Glib* is also based on experiences common to both sexes. Sex. Romance. Jesse Helms. Still, the humor is different when the humorist is a woman. Two excellent books that explore the nature of women's humor are Nancy Walker's *A Very Serious Matter* and Regina

Barreca's *They Used To Call Me Snow White But I Drifted*.

How did I decide what to include in *Women's Glib*? The selection process was far from scientific. If it made me laugh I took it. If it didn't, I passed on it. When in doubt, I ran it by my sister Diane (who would often shout with laughter, then hand something back, saying, "This isn't funny"). I shared therapy cartoons with my therapist, who never took any position on whether they were funny or not.

Not being a humor scholar, I made no attempt to include a representative selection of important women humorists. I left out as many funny women as I included, either because I didn't then know of their work (Barbara Brandon, Nina Paley, and Kris Kovich, among others) or because I loved their work but couldn't track them down in time (such as Shary Flenniken and Trina Robbins). Since I was published by a small press, there was also work that I just couldn't afford. Whenever I got anxious about all the terrific stuff I was probably leaving out, I'd remind myself that I was assembling a humor book, not a nuclear power plant. If I made a mistake, it was just a mistake, not a disaster. And because *Women's Glib* is the first book in a yearly women's humor collection series, future books could (and will) include what *Women's Glib* left out.

I wanted *Women's Glib* to be a feminist book. This means I included as much material as possible about important issues like racism, choice, and homophobia. But I also included material on





gefilte fish, mail order catalogs, and bumper stickers. If *Women's Glib* is a feminist book, it's due as much to what I tried to leave out—like fat oppressive, homophobic, agist, racist, and ablist "humor"—as what I included.

The result isn't perfect. For example, the Womyn's Braille Press volunteer who recorded *Women's Glib* for blind and print-disabled women was understandably offended by a cartoon whose punchline was "How can she be so blind?" *Women's Glib* also contains nowhere near as much material by women of color as the "sequel"—*Women's Glibber*—will; *Glibber* will feature work by Becky Birtha, Maya Angelou, June Jordan, Alice Walker, and cartoonist Barbara Brandon, among others. Still, I'm happy with *Women's Glib*, and happy that it has reached its audience; it has sold 15,000 copies so far and received rave reviews from a wide range of publications, from *Feminist Bookstore News* to *Glamour* magazine.

Part of the success of *Women's Glib* is due to its strong lesbian voice. Close to a third of *Women's Glib's* contributors are lesbian humorists, and I'm proud of the fact that my book is a Lambda Book Awards Finalist. (Also slightly confused; when my own "Lammy" ballot came in the mail I assumed by book was ineligible since I'm not a lesbian, so I didn't vote for it). Reviewer response to humor by women like Alison Bechdel, Jennifer Camper, and Julie Blackwomom has been very positive, with the exception of the interviewer who told me lesbians didn't belong in a women's humor anthology because "lesbians really want to be men." I wanted to borrow a favorite line from Roseanne Arnold and reply "suck my dick!" He got a lecture instead.

There were many surprises putting *Women's Glib* together. The worst was the topic I got the most submissions about—dieting and weight loss. Nothing else even came close to the volume of material I got on this topic, from endless verse about dieting difficulties to sci-fi tales about aliens traveling light years through space to share their weight loss secrets with us. Each day's mail brought a new "fat poem," and I received a truly depressing number of stories about women performing liposuction on themselves at home. It was alarming to discover how many women still go along with this culture's insane preoccupation with the size of our bodies.

Another surprise was how angry many women are with men. (Should this have been a surprise?) I got many vivid castration fantasies, and assorted other

tales of mayhem and murder, described in vivid detail. The rage in this work would usually blast the wit right off the page, although I did get a few items I could use. Of course, I also received humor based upon love instead of rage, including the book's most popular piece: "Morsels and Memories," Myra Chanin's photo essay about her mom's gefilte fish.

And if women aren't wild about their men, at least they love their cats—I got so many marvelous cat cartoons that I gave them a book of their own, *Kitty Libber: Cat Cartoons By Women*. (A friend, reading the manuscript, asked why there was no material about "how terrific men are." Is there humor about how terrific men are? By women?)

The best surprise was the amount of good material available, particularly from humorists I hadn't heard of. I knew I could count on "superstars" like Nicole Hollander (who designed the cover), Alison Bechdel, and Nora Ephron, but what a pleasure it was to discover Ellen Orleans, whose column "Can't Keep A Straight Face" runs in Denver's *Quest Magazine*, or cartoonists like zana and Noreen Stevens, or to find funny work by "serious" writers like Maya Angelou and Leslea Newman. Also impressive was the diversity of subject matter. The old cliché is that women's humor is limited to domestic matters—"hubby and housekeeping"; instead, contributors to *Women's Glib* were laughing about the Pope, politics, jury duty, Cher, and the Educational Testing Service.

"Is there enough material by women to fill a book?" I was often asked. No problem. I got—and continue to get—five to ten submissions daily from all over the world. Putting together a 200-page book was a snap, and *Women's Glibber* will be twice the size of *Women's Glib*.

The problem isn't that there aren't enough good women humorists, it's that there aren't enough places publishing our work. I'm hoping that the success of *Women's Glib* will help change that. •

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Roz Warren is the editor of *Women's Glib: A Collection of Women's Humor* (1991, *The Crossing Press*), *Kitty Libber: Cat Cartoons By Women* (1992, *The Crossing Press*), and the upcoming *Weenietoons! Women Cartoonists Mock Cocks* (*Laugh Lines Press*), and *Women's Glibber: State of the Art Women's Humor* (*The Crossing Press*).

**Seek out books written by women.**

## JUDY FJELL from page 31

what might happen if all women were truly heard.

This lesbian herstory show has been full of surprises. A couple of San Diego women came in early '70s lesbian drag: work boots, jeans, and plaid shirts. In Seattle a straight woman who had known me in high school cried during the entire first half of the show—both tears of joy for me in my happiness as a lesbian and tears of grief for the loss of her gay brother who is very much alive but has never reconciled with his family. Another surprise came when I took a random survey of lesbians in a Sacramento audience as to when they had come out. Hands raised representing every decade from the '50s on, including "newly-out" lesbians attending a women's concert for the very first time that night.

Since we lesbians come out individually—at different points in our own lives and in different decades as well—it is important for us to share our herstories. In creating and singing this lesbian herstory show, I am part of a larger movement of lesbians who are trying to increase our visibility and audibility in this heterosexist society. It is in this spirit that I offer this show—another piece of our lesbian herstory.

*We're woman-loving women,  
sing it loud and long.  
Sisters united in a love that's oh-so-strong.  
Some say our craze is an Amazon phase,  
but soon they'll see  
that we're woman-loving women  
and that's all we'll be.*

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# THE AUDIO ANGLE

## SOUND IDEAS

By Dakota

*The purpose of this article is to give some very basic information and ideas about managing sound at a live performance. It is not intended for the sound sophisticates out there—this is for beginners. It's for those women who might like to assist with sound at the next community gathering, or women who would like to produce a concert and want to understand more about the sound requirements in performers' contracts. It can also help performers new to sound systems who might be purchasing equipment, or who just want to understand why they sound the way they do on stage.*

*This is a two-part article. This first segment will deal in general terms with the components of a sound system. The second part [in the January 1993 issue] will deal more specifically with each component and how to troubleshoot basic problems that occur with sound reinforcement. It will focus on sound reinforcement from the perspective of the sound woman.*

Let's begin with some very basic definitions. "Acoustic sound" is anything that has no amplification—such as an acoustic guitar, a singer without a microphone, a piano. Then there is "reinforced sound." This is anything that "boosts" the sound—such as a microphone or an amplifier. A sound system is what amplifies and regulates those sounds—thus the phrase "sound reinforcement."

Usually the first step in providing sound for a concert is talking with the performers about what type of sound reinforcement they need. Often the musicians will send a sheet listing the sound specifications (sound specs); this outlines the equipment they will require for the performance. It's important that you read and understand the spec sheet. Sometimes performers add things to their spec sheets that *they* don't understand or necessarily require. Make sure everyone understands all the sound requirements.

If there are any grey areas, write down specific name brands. For instance, the musician requires a PV-30 microphone and you can't find one—but you *can* find a Shure 58. Ask if it's okay to substitute with

a Shure 58. Communication will avoid any last minute problems.

There are several common components to a sound system used for concerts, debates, etc. The basic parts are: mixing board, amplifier (sometimes part of the mixing board), cables, monitors, speakers, and microphones.

### THE MIXING BOARD

First and most basic to any sound system is the mixing board. It is similar to the receiver on your stereo at home. The mixing board is the equipment into which all sound goes. It is also what is used to regulate how everything sounds. Finally, it is used to determine where that sound goes. Just like your receiver—you can have multiple inputs, adjust the treble or bass, send the sound to speaker set A or B, or crank up the volume. A mixing board works the same way.

There are basically two types of mixing boards—powered and unpowered. If you are using an unpowered board, you will also need an amplifier (amp). Something must supply the needed electricity to make the sound louder than it would be without the equipment, and that's the job of the amp.

Some mixing boards have amps built in, and they're called "powered mixing boards." It is important to know whether a mixing board is powered or not, because an unpowered mixer without an amp won't do you any good in a concert setting.

If you are using a powered mixing board, it will be located near the stage (usually within fifty feet or so), because there must be power close to the instruments in order to amplify the sound properly.

If you are using an unpowered mixer, you will have an amplifier (one or more) on or very near the stage, and you can then have the mixer at the back of the hall. What is important to remember is that your power source (amp) must be close to the stage.

Also, there are different ratings to

sound systems, listed in watts. Just as light bulbs and radio stations have wattage, so too does a sound system. The more watts, the more power or sound you can produce. If you're in a large auditorium, you need a good-sized sound system. For an outdoor stadium, you'll need a much more powerful system.

Check with your local music equipment rental/sales store on how much power you're going to need for the venue you have in mind. It helps to have rough dimensions of the space when talking to your sound people. If you're purchasing equipment, you need to keep in mind the size venues that you usually play; be sure to get one that will handle the average.

### BASIC SOUND SYSTEM INPUTS

Next you have inputs to the mixing board. This can be a simple set up, or it can be quite complex.

The simplest setup would be one microphone. The microphone is connected through a cable to the mixing board. The cable can be either high impedance or low impedance. (Don't panic—I'll explain this in a minute.) Regardless of the cable, it plugs into an input on the mixing board (a "channel").

Mixing boards come with as few as four channels (and can have many more). Each channel will be assigned to a specific input, like Microphone A on channel one and Microphone B on channel two.

There is usually at least one other input if you're using a mixing board. Many musicians will plug their instruments into the system. Often it is a guitar, either acoustic or electric. An acoustic guitar will sometimes have a pickup attached to it. The pickup electrically "grabs" the sound of the guitar and transmits that sound through the cable to the mixing board.

Although an acoustic guitar can be heard without a pickup, it's very common to see ones that use pickups. Sometimes an acoustic guitar will be amplified with a standard microphone.

## MORE SYSTEM INPUTS

Along with the guitars (and other instruments) come a plethora of electronic gadgets that the musicians might bring with them—things like chorus, reverb, delay, etc. These are called "effects" (because they have an effect on the sound), and are generally the responsibility of the musician. Each effect changes the sound of the instrument in its own unique way. They are usually arranged in a serial manner—meaning, for example, that the cable comes out of the guitar, into a bank of pedals (the effects), and out the other side into a direct box or into the mixing board. Your basic concern will be plugging the cable into the mixing board. Let the musician set up her effects in the way she likes them. This avoids confusion and frustration. (Of course, you can be nice and help her.)

## CABLES

There are two types of cables used: high and low impedance. Impedance has to do with what "slows down" the electrical impulse traveling down that cable. Low impedance—also called "low Z," because Z is the symbol for impedance in electrical math—cables have three small prongs at each end, and are quite often used with microphones. They generally have better sound quality and can be run a longer distance. High impedance (or "high Z") cables have one 1/4" prong at each end. They are generally used with instruments and cannot be run as long a distance as low Z cables.

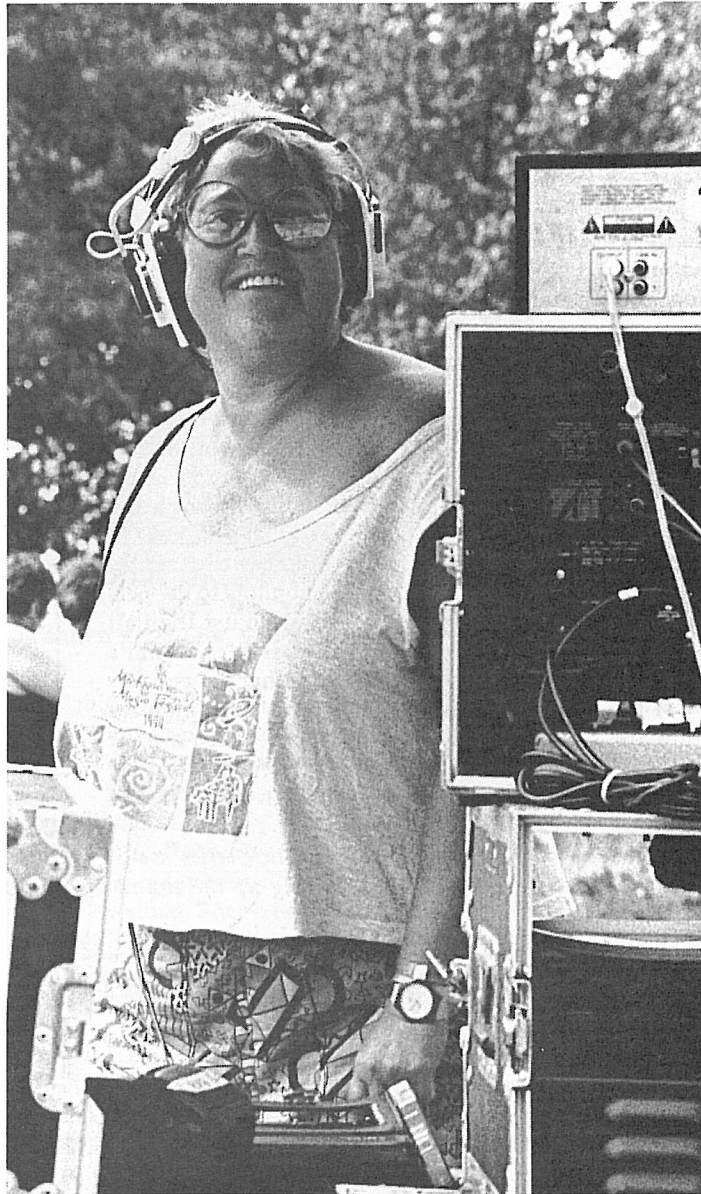
Sometimes you will see a "direct box." This is a low Z cable that is run from the mixer to the stage. You can plug in a high Z cable (like a guitar) into the direct box. This allows you to run the guitar signal all the way back to the mixer without using a different cable on the guitar.

It's important, so remember: there are two different types of connectors that you will see. It's essential that the mixer have both types of connectors, or that you have some way of converting them. You can rent or purchase short cables that will convert high to low Z. If you need to make this conversion, you'll need a transformer.

*Have all of these things before your sound check.*

In addition, there are "speaker cables" and there are "signal cables." So far, we have been discussing signal cables. Speaker cables should be used only for speakers and should not be intermingled (on the floor) with signal cables. This can cause noise.

It is also important to remember that



**The opportunity for women to learn technical skills is one of the best things women's music has offered over the years. (Pictured: Ruth Simkin, 1991 Michigan Day Stage.)**

you should have extra cables (including your basic electrical extension cords) with you. Cables can *and do* go bad—usually they break inside under the outer coating so they look okay but they sound bad. Sometimes they crackle, other times they just quit altogether.

Don't get caught short on cables.

## OTHER SYSTEM INPUT OPTIONS

One common input is a cassette deck. This can be your cassette deck from home, but not a portable boom box; it must be a stereo system component. You will need a special "Y-cable" to connect it to the mixing board. These will need to be connected together to form one input and one output. (There are other ways to connect it, but this is the easiest way.) The cassette output is plugged into a channel, just like a microphone.

Remember that output from the cassette is like a microphone. Whatever comes out of the cassette deck when you press the PLAY button will come out over the house speakers. You can use it for playing cassettes before the performance and during intermission if you want some background music. If the artist sings to a tape, you will definitely need this set up.

The input for the cassette deck is only needed if you are going to record the performance. The input cables to the cassette deck are plugged into an OUTPUT on the mixer (usually called something like AUXILIARY OUT or AUX OUT). This will cause any sounds that would ordinarily go through the house speakers to also go into the cassette deck. If you plan to record the performance, do it *only* with the express written consent of all artists involved, or at their request. It is *illegal* (not to mention unethical and just plain rude) to do otherwise.

You may have many other inputs, like synthesizers, drum machines, etc. Read the performers' sound specs carefully. If you are not sure how many inputs you will need

(and this will affect what size mixer you need), check with the artist(s) and *ask questions*.

## HOUSE SPEAKERS

Speakers are *not* something you're

Toni Armstrong Jr.

going to be bringing from your home stereo system. If you have a mixing board, you will have to get speakers to match the power output of the board. Generally, you'd like to get a good power "match" so that the sound from the mixer will "fill" the speakers nicely without overloading them. What you want to avoid is blowing the speakers by having a mixer that is too powerful for them.

Equipment is rated in watts and ohms, and they need to be compatible. If you're renting equipment, the owner should match it for you. If you're borrowing from two different sources, ask around, or call a local store that specializes in sound equipment and ask them to help you. Aside from potentially destroying the speakers, you can end up with lousy sound. Also, remember: more speaker is *not necessarily* more sound. The best sound comes from good speakers, good microphones and *adequate* power.

The speakers will attach via a cable (one for each) to jacks that will be marked on the mixer as MAIN OUT or SPEAKERS. You can get pretty fancy with speaker arrangements, but we'll keep it simple. Let's assume you have just two speakers. They should be placed on either side of the stage, out of the line of sight of your audience (as much as possible). If they are small, putting them up on tables to make them higher can help get more sound to the back of the room. Angle them in a way that causes them to overlap most of the room. This overlap is what gives the listener a sense of "stereo" sound. One speaker will carry the LEFT channel output, and one will carry the RIGHT channel output. By angling them so they mix, it sounds like one full sound.

Another fact to keep in mind is that low sounds are "omni-directional" and high sounds are "uni-directional." What that means in plain English is that bass or low sounds go everywhere at once. Higher sounds go more in one direction. In a concert hall that means that the bass sounds will be heard equally well from almost all directions, but the higher sounds will be lost as you move out of the direct path of the speakers. While this may not be a factor, it is important to understand how sound travels when setting up the speakers.

## MONITORS

Monitors are simply speakers that are used by the musicians on stage to hear what they are playing. Audience members usually don't notice them, but they are the

medium-size boxes at the feet of the performers. From house speakers, the sound can take awhile to float back to the performers. This delay can make it nearly impossible for them to stay in tune and on time. If the venue is a small auditorium or hall, this may not be a problem. If it's a large hall (or outside), it could be a *major* problem. Many musicians will include monitors in their sound specs.

Monitors, like the rest of your sound equipment, can be rented. There are usually one or two MONITOR outputs on the mixing board. If you are using more than two monitors, they can be run together by attaching cables from one to the next.

Often the sound that goes into the monitors is sort of a generic blend—sometimes it is what's coming out of the speakers, and sometimes you can adjust the sound to *just* the monitors. When dealing with a band, adjusting the monitors is difficult as well as critical. Each woman wants to hear herself clearly, but she needs to know how loud/soft she is in relation to the other performers. A solo performer needs to hear her voice as well as her instrument.

*Hint:* Since the sound through the monitors is not always what you hear in the hall (the sound bounces differently sometimes), adjust the monitors to the performers' preferences and adjust the hall sound separately (if possible). What's important to remember is that the monitor is a tool for the *performers*. Poor monitor quality or adjustment can cause a poor performance. [For more information, see "Monitor Mixing" by Karen Kane, March 1987 *HOT WIRE*.]

*In Part Two of this article series, we'll cover microphones, setting up the sound*

*The following diagrams were inadvertently left out of the "DAT Update" article in the September 1991 issue.*

Figure 1  
Analog

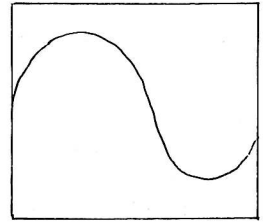


Figure 2A  
Digital

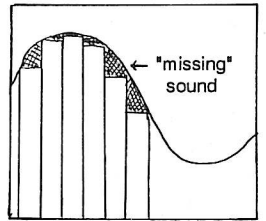
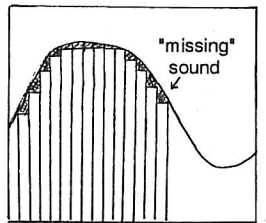


Figure 2B  
Digital



*system, adjusting the sound on the mixing board, and troubleshooting various common problems. Special thanks to Beth Johnson for technical assistance with this article. Questions about basic sound can be addressed to Dakota/Audio Angle, P.O. Box 42282, Tucson, AZ 85733. •*

## NEW FROM JAMIE ANDERSON!

### Center of Balance on CD and Tape

A great variety of music — from the hilarious "I'm Sorry" (a song of condolence for hets), to the celebratory "No Closet" (with Mimi Baczewska, Laura Berkson, Sue Fink, Leah Zicari and others).

"...her voice is strong and her songs are powerfully political and very funny." — L. Wenzel, *New Directions for Women*

New t-shirt: "I'm sorry that you're straight, where do I send the card?"

Also available: *Closer to Home*, Jamie's first release on tape and LP. "...one of the best albums I've heard this year." — V.J. Beauchamp, *Visibilities*

Available from regular women's music outlets or directly from Tsunami Records.

For booking and ordering information:  
Tsunami Records, PO Box 42282  
Tucson, AZ 85733-2282, 602/325-7828



# FROM PARTYING BODY BUILDER TO CLEAN AND SOBER MUSICIAN

By Ellyn Fleming

I have to admit, the lifestyle of an avid free weight body builder in comparison to a very committed musician is quite a contrast. It would certainly leave one wondering how this change came about. I think now about my life and how I got so far away from my true inner self—and why I decided it was okay to go back and find it.

At twenty years old I entered into what some of us know so well: a very dysfunctional, codependent alcoholic relationship in which I remained for ten

years. During that decade, I rarely picked up my guitar. It sat in the corner of my memory, collecting dust and haunting me.

I escaped my fear of change and growth at the gym. I aggressively pumped iron and released my emotional pain and frustration through sweat while my well-worked muscles were "rewarded" and appeased by the once a week catastrophe of alcohol and cocaine.

In 1988—still in my glorious relationship—a normal morning at the gym turned into a nightmare. A locking mechanism on an exercise machine failed and several hundred pounds knocked me to the ground and changed my life.

I remember fighting to recuperate from the back injury I sustained.

I remember lying in bed for weeks wondering: who is this woman underneath all the muscle, and what is my purpose on this Earth if not to train myself and others as competitive bodybuilders?

I remember feeling lost, frightened, and confused.

I remember eating everything in the refrigerator.



**Ellyn Fleming:** "In 1990, I made the decision to live! I threw some socks and underwear in a bag, grabbed my guitar, and left my lover of ten years."

I knew that my whole life and my whole plan had changed, and I wondered who did it and why—as I have always believed that everything happens for a reason.

Recovery came slowly, which allowed me time to search my soul through writing. The writer was another part of me I had allowed my relationship to bury. The more I wrote, the more I healed from the past (and the present).

It seems in this life we are all in a state of injury or healing, depending on whatever it is we need to do and learn—and that's okay. But the letting go, the hanging on, the tears, the laughter, and the fear became so much more precious to me than the free weights and bodybuilding. I found I needed to share it all.

In 1990, I made the decision to *live!* I threw some socks and underwear in a bag, grabbed my guitar, and left my lover. I had no idea where I was going, but with my guitar in hand, I felt a safety and a warmth unlike any other. My baby of strings and wood—she pulled me through!

I am now a folk-rock musician, song-

writer, and poet living in central Massachusetts. The nine original cuts on my album *Pickin' Up The Pieces* address the issue of fear as well as several other psychological issues dealing with abandonment, rejection, and other "challenges."

My song "Thirty Somethin'" [on the soundsheet in this issue] is receiving airplay on women's radio shows around the country. It documents the struggles that need to be overcome to access self, and obviously comes from "facing one's shadow"

experiences and moving on. My desire is for my music to reach out to each listener and help her or him connect to those places of inner strength that give one control of one's life.

My musical style is folk-rock, so *Pickin' Up The Pieces* has a lot of electric guitar. I have been enjoying playing acoustic music lately, though, because I find it to be more marketable in the current expanding New England coffeehouse scene. (There are now more than 100 acoustic venues within a 100 mile radius of Boston.) Also, most clubs that want electric usually require a whole band for the gigs. Mostly I'm playing solo these days, or sometimes in a duo.

I've been working with my guitar and harmonica since I was twelve, and I wrote my first song when I was four years old. I remember loving Paul McCartney's

*continued on page 61*

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** *Ellyn Fleming plays in the New England area and looks forward to touring. "What I want for tomorrow is music! music! music!" she says.*

Cartoons by Alison Bechdel

# DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

**Alone at Last!**  
©1992 BY ALISON BECHDEL

GINGER ANXIOUSLY AWAITS THE ARRIVAL OF HER AERORNE ANDROSA!

13A

BEER BEER BEER BEER

PHOTOPASSION 14

NOT A LEAD IN PULL

WHAT! IT'S GINGER AND HER LONG-DISTANCE BABE? DON'T JUST STAND THERE! COME ON IN!

ARE! ARE! ARE!

UM... THIS IS MY DOG, DIGGER, AND THESE ARE MY ROOMMATES.

ALL OF THEM?

NO, NO, JUST ME AND SPARRON OVER THERE ON THE PHONE. I'M LOIS AND THESE ARE MY FRIENDS MID AND YOSHI.

HI, NICE TO MEET YOU! GINGER'S MY LIT. PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY. SHE'S FAB!

NICE CATCH, MS. BROWN!

HEY, MALIKA! I'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT YOU!

OK... I GOTTA GO. TALK TO YOU LATER.

WOOF!

I'M NOT GOING! MY FAVORITE STAR TREK EPISODE IS ON TONIGHT, WHERE SPOCK GETS STRAYED WITH ALIEN SPORES THAT MAKE HIM FALL IN LOVE!

LISTEN, DON'T WORRY. WE'RE GOING TOWN! TO PROTEST THE LATEST GAYED LESBIAN PSYCHO-KILLER FLICK, ARE YOU READY, SPARRON?

MALIKA! WELCOME!

YOU'RE RIGHT, THIS IS MUCH BETTER THAN RUNNING ALL OVER TOWN. DID YOU PLAY SCARBLE? OR MAYBE THERE'S AN OLD MOVIE ON CABLE. WE COULD MAKE PORNORN.

MMH. I GUESS I AM KINDA TENSE NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.

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HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIFTING WEIGHTS?

THEY'LL COME ON! ENBY YOURS! NICE TO MEET YOU!

I'M NOT GOING! MY FAVORITE STAR TREK EPISODE IS ON TONIGHT, WHERE SPOCK GETS STRAYED WITH ALIEN SPORES THAT MAKE HIM FALL IN LOVE!

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MMH. I GUESS I AM KINDA TENSE NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL THINGS, APPLY...

*As Time Goes By...*

©1992 BY ALISON BECHDEL

135

SO HERE'S OUR OPTIONS FOR TONIGHT: WE'LL GO HAVE DINNER FOR STARTERS, THEN SEE A MOVIE - HERE'S THE LISTINGS - OR THERE'S AN AFRICAN DANCE TROUPE IN TOWN, OR WE COULD GO TO THIS PLAY AT THE UNIVERSITY. THEN AFTER THAT, WE CAN GO OUT DANCING, OR ELSE TO A PARTY. SOME FRIENDS ARE HAVING. WHATEVER YOU PREFER.

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HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIFTING WEIGHTS?

THEY'LL COME ON! ENBY YOURS! NICE TO MEET YOU!

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MMH. I GUESS I AM KINDA TENSE NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.

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## SELDOM SCENES

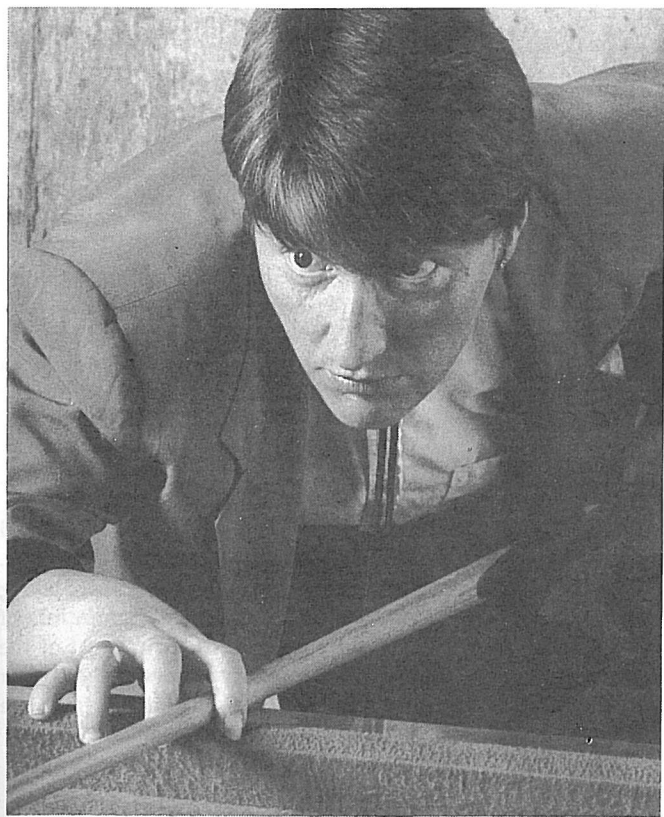
### LAST ONE INTO THE POOL...

Everyone assumes that folks who spend a lot of time performing on stage are easy models for photographers. The truth is actually often the opposite: most performers feel just as awkward in front of a camera as your average Jo-Anne. Last time Ferron came into our Cape Cod studios for new promo shots, for example, we tried to make her as comfortable as possible by letting her go at the warped old pool table in the basement. Meanwhile, we fiddled with the camera stuff. Ferron recently told the *New England Folk Almanac* of the refuge that can sometimes be found in billiards. "I like to find real billiard parlors, where it's quiet: all you hear is the balls and the clicks. It's very meditative." Watch for Ferron's new instrumental album, *Resting With the Question*.

### SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Seems like actor *extraordinaire* Jodie Foster is always surrounded by men with strange ideas or strange costumes. In this shot taken in February of '92, Jodie and her gayly-clad entourage parade through Harvard Square (Cambridge, Mass.) for Harvard's annual Hasty Pudding awards. The street crowd was arguably the largest in Hasty Pudding history, and—needless to say—largely female. Six weeks later, Jodie grabbed an Oscar for best actress in *Silence of the Lambs*, a film which some gays boycotted for the assumed homosexuality of its transvestite killer. Jodie herself seemed sincerely flattered, thanking "all the women who came before me," and her trusted circle of "friends."

(Photos and text © 1992 Susan Wilson.)



## DEL & PHYLLIS from page 17

rights through, we would still be discriminated against as women. And besides that, we were tired of taking the back seat. But then we found that *women in the women's movement* wanted us in the back seat, too. And there was a lot of conflict—for instance, we were involved with the National Organization for Women...

*P: ...well, most of the conflict took place on the East Coast. There wasn't so much in the West.*

*D: That's true. When Betty Friedan told all the chapters that we needed to start coalition building, we invited every women's group in San Francisco to come to a coalition meeting. We found that we had omitted Daughters of Bilitis as being a featured group, although they were represented. After lunch, Women's Liberation spoke up and said, "You haven't talked about Daughters of Bilitis." So DOB got a chance to speak at the plenary and not just at a workshop. We also found that the western region of NOW had a meeting in San Francisco and passed a resolution...*

*P: ...saying that lesbianism was a bonafide concern of feminism—that you couldn't exclude a group of women from the movement.*

*D: The conflict just grew and grew in New York. Aileen Hernandez had become president of NOW after Betty Friedan, and there was going to be a national conference in Los Angeles in 1971.*

*P: Aileen asked us to lead a workshop on lesbians.*

*D: So we thought that we would probably end up as referees in a big debate, and were not exactly looking forward to it. But at least it was a chance to try and settle the argument. When we got to Los Angeles we found that the L.A. chapter had written a position paper that was just terrific. It was rather lengthy and told about NOW's problems, which was a great introduction to our workshop. The grassroots was way ahead of the national leadership—the national board was rather conservative.*

*P: The grassroots of NOW has always been ahead of the national leadership, it seems to me.*

*D: Detroit, Atlanta, and some other chapters—besides us in California—had come with pro-lesbian resolutions, and when the time came for us to have the workshop, so many people kept signing up that they had to keep postponing it and looking for a larger room. So finally we*

*ended up in the grand ballroom, and it was amazing.*

*P: It was proposed that we use the Los Angeles paper on lesbians as the resolution. A woman from New York was upset that it said NOW had been nasty to lesbians—which it had been—and she didn't think it should have that in it. But we kept it, and it passed virtually unanimously.*

*D: Not only at the session, but also at the plenary where it was really adopted. And we had lots and lots of straight support. By that time Stonewall had happened, and there came a shift in the gay movement. I think that Stonewall would not have happened if there had not been the build-up in the '50s and '60s, and the increasing number of organizations. Of course they multiplied much more rapidly after Stonewall.*

*P: Like rabbits!*

*D: There was a definite shift in direction. There were many organizations that had different approaches to reaching our goals of being accepted in this society as human beings, and voters, and everything else. We always thought that no one group had all the answers; we knew it would take many approaches for us to get anywhere as a movement. In the early days of the homophile movement—which included One, Mattachine, and DOB—we were faced with being considered illegal, immoral, and sick. Those were the issues that we in DOB worked on. We were certainly interested in learning how to change the sex laws—because as long as there were laws against our sexual activity, we were considered to be unapprehended felons.*

*P: That doesn't help one's self-image a lot.*

*D: It certainly doesn't. And there had been a model penal code made up, based on the idea of removing private sexual activity between consenting adults from the statutes. We talked to legislators in the early '60s about changes in the law, and while they were sympathetic, they said, "If we came up with any legislation of that sort right now we would be considered to be 'for sin' and would be booted out of office; we would be of no help to you then." The suggestion was put to us to deal with the churches on that...*

*P: ...which we thought was a total loss. How could we possibly deal with the churches? And at that particular time we didn't.*

*D: Later we decided—with other groups, such as the Council on Religion and the Homosexual—to do some educational*

*work with church groups.*

*P: The Council on Religion and the Homosexual included ministers. There were regular mainline denominational ministers involved, except for the Catholic and the Jewish faiths. Well...we didn't have any Southern Baptists, I don't think, but we did have American Baptists and Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, United Church of Christ representatives, and Presbyterians. Lots of the biggies.*

*D: That's where we learned a lot about politics. We learned who the movers and shakers were, and where the decisions were being made. And we also obtained access to different congregations to talk. And we did start making some changes in attitudes—there's nothing like knowing a real live lesbian instead of that horror person that is usually depicted.*

*P: And is still depicted today in movies like 'Basic Instinct.'*

*D: No kidding. So being considered "sinful" was a serious problem back then. Then there was the thing about being "sick." We acted as guinea pigs in lots of research about lesbians. And most of the results showed that we were like other women, except that we might be more self-energized or self-propelled.*

*P: Anyway, we just sort of had a tad's edge on non-lesbian women—probably because we knew we had to make a career for ourselves and support ourselves lifelong; no knight in shining armor was going to come and whisk us off and support us.*

*D: This research was used in many lesbian mother custody cases to show that we were just as able to raise children as other women, and were not all that different. I know that saying we were not all that different is going to upset some people, but at that point we had to indicate more sameness than difference to get our points across. We had to think in terms of language. As we talked earlier about that post-Stonewall shift [in political focus], it meant that we became much more demanding—we did more street theater...*

*P: ...and more of us came out!*

*D: That makes a lot of difference.*

*P: And the more of us that come out, the better off we are, because people's attitudes change as soon as they realize that they know some of us.*

*D: As a result of the research, we had more ammunition in talking to the American Psychiatric Association. They voted on whether we were mentally ill or mentally*



healthy, and ultimately decided we weren't sick after all. But I think we really need to be aware that it was by a vote—how political can you get?!

**P:** *Getting the APA to vote us "well" was one of the biggest changes of the '70s. There have been so many changes since—as we found out when we were writing the update to the twentieth anniversary edition of 'Lesbian/Woman.' Remember how amazed we were at how many things had changed, and what's happened not only in this country, but on this planet? All over the world things are going on. We certainly never dreamed that one day there would be Gay Olympics—or "Gay Games," as we have to call them. New York City in 1994!*

**D:** I think that's also the twenty-fifth anniversary of Stonewall, and the International Gay Association is going to meet at the same time.

**P:** *And there's an International Gay Human Rights Commission that's been working with the Russian gays and lesbians. It seems like there's some sort of an organization of lesbians and gays in almost every country.*

**D:** It's happening in the east with Japan, it's happening in South America...

**P:** *...in Europe, and certainly in the former Soviet Union in a lot of the different countries that have now broken away into individual countries...*

**D:** ...and lesbian and gay issues are also coming up before the United Nations committees.

**P:** *The international gay organization wanted to become a member. They didn't, but will keep trying.*

**D:** And there's the whole issue of domestic partnership and even marriage, which we

her husband. She was later put in jail for bigamy, and caused the first dissolution of a lesbian marriage in Denmark.

**P:** *Along with these changes in laws you get some changes in your responsibilities. Domestic partnership is definitely an issue for the '90s, and it's happening all over—not just in cities, but in companies—like Levi Strauss has a domestic partners provision.*

**D:** And some of the universities are now providing housing for lesbian and gay couples as well as for married students.

**P:** *Not all of them, though. Not enough of that is happening.*

**D:** But the fact that it's happening anywhere is something special.

**P:** *Not only that, but we have the whole issue of politics: how many lesbians are in office now? Two members of the board of supervisors here [in San Francisco] are lesbian—that's two out of eleven. And we have one gay man on the board, too.*

**D:** We also have lesbian judges both in the municipal court and the superior court. This is happening here in San Francisco, but also it's happening in New York—Deborah Glick was elected to the state legislature, and took the oath of office by putting her hand on a copy of *Sisterhood Is Powerful*. And then we have lesbian judges in New York City. We also have some lesbians in Minnesota and Maine who were elected to the state legislature. It's an exciting time as far as we're concerned. And whatever we did to help it along is certainly...

**P:** *...it's really been gratifying!*

**D:** Yes. I think a lot of the time we get too much credit for all that has happened, though. We were only two of the people

**P:** *It would be boring not to be involved.*

**D:** At times I've had trouble with so much discussion about burnout. We just keep on being excited about change. I guess we don't do as much of the nitty gritty work as we used to. We don't do it now, but we sure put in our years.

**P:** *Well, I think that we were smart in that we pulled away from being so involved in organizations. We don't go to all these meetings, etc. We do more ad hoc kind of actions, except for our work with the older lesbians...*

**D:** ...which is our new crusade.

**P:** *But every time we get involved in something, it's fun.*

**D:** And then we keep getting involved with new issues, and I think we ought to let our sisters know that old lesbians can be pretty militant. They have decided that old starts at sixty, and they're very much concerned about ageism in the lesbian and gay community as well as the larger community, and are conducting workshops on ageism and what to do about it.

**P:** *That's under the auspices of the Old Lesbians Organizing For Change.*

**D:** At the National Lesbian Conference, we had a day-long old lesbians session and a workshop on ageism. We found that most of those there had come out in their fifties and sixties.

**P:** *We found that the majority of old lesbians at the first and second Old Lesbians Conferences had also come out in their fifties and sixties; there were more of them than those of us who have been out for a long time.*

**D:** But having come out like that, and then getting a grip on ageism and so on, and then really getting involved with other

**Del:** "We did start making some changes in attitudes—there's nothing like knowing a real live lesbian instead of that horror person that is usually depicted."

**Phyllis:** "And is still depicted today in movies like *Basic Instinct*."

*never thought would ever happen—and it's happened in Denmark.*

**P:** *Right—lesbians can get married in Denmark, if they're Danes.*

**D:** One thing that was really amusing was the fact that one lesbian, in her rush to get married, neglected to get a divorce from

who worked. So many lesbians and gays along the line have contributed greatly to our progress in various ways.

**P:** *We just hung in there longer or something.*

**D:** I think we just rolled along as the movement progressed. A lot of people just stopped. We find the challenge exciting.

lesbians—it was just a joy to see them come out and then be so militant. They came into the first plenary session at the National Lesbian Conference with a banner, dressed in white with purple sashes; they pinned their banner up on the curtain of the stage and were just so proud to be a  
*continued on page 61*

## HOTLINE from page 11

couples). For info about the organization's goals/strategies/posters: Pop Against Homophobia, In-Factor Music, 3rd Floor, 104-108 Bolsover St., London, England W1P 7HF.

The **GAY AND LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION** has a newsletter, sponsors an aggressive mediagram campaign, and fights homophobic censorship campaigns, and works with mainstream media on how lesbians and gays are represented. SASE to GLAAD, 80 Varick St. #3E, New York, NY 10013.

Bay Area young people (ages thirteen to twenty-five) can call the **GAY AREA YOUTH SWITCHBOARD** for information, referrals, peer counseling, and updates on activities. Switchboard, P.O. Box 846, San Francisco, CA 94101. (415) 386-GAYS.

An individual contribution of \$500,000 has been made to San Francisco's New Main Library to create a **GAY & LESBIAN CENTER**. The foundation of the archive is a personal library of more than 10,000 books, periodicals, and photographs amassed over the past forty-two years by Barbara Grier and Donna McBride (Naiad Press). The Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California has also indicated interest in having its vast collection housed there.

The **LAMBDA FOUNDATION** awards scholarships to full time sophomores and juniors who have made positive contributions toward the integration of gay/lesbian/bi people, culture, or organizations into their college communities, according to *Sojourner*. For an application: Lambda Foundation, P.O. Box 5169, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.

## RADIO•TV•THEATER

The **FIRST ANNUAL LESBIAN PLAY-WRITING COMPETITION** is accepting full-length plays, one-acts, and small musicals with all-women roles. The winner will receive \$200 plus production of the play. Script/resume to Tiana Lee, Tribad Productions, P.O. Box 1745, Guerneville, CA 95446. (707) 869-0155.

Keep your eyes peeled for reruns of the May 18 **NORTHERN EXPOSURE** episode, in which it is explicitly portrayed how the town was founded by Cicely (Yvonne Suhor) and her devoted Roslyn (Jo Anderson), two culturally-minded lesbians. In an attempt to create a culturally diverse, free-thinking, utopian "Paris of the North," the two characters bring dance, literature, and

respect to the town. The episode features witty feminist/political dialogue and a scene in which someone is learning to read and write by reciting Gertrude ("pigeons on the grass, alas") Stein.

**IN THE LIFE**, the first nationally broadcast, regularly scheduled network gay and lesbian television show, has begun airing on some PBS stations in major U.S. cities, according to *Outlines*. The first episode was taped May 30 before a live audience in New York and was hosted by Kate Clinton. The show is being kept independent by offering memberships for a \$50 annual fee. Call your local PBS station for airing details. *In the Life*, Media Network, 39 W. 14th St. #402, New York, NY 10011.

**ALTERNATIVE MUSIC TELEVISION** (WYOU/Madison) is seeking submissions of arts or music-related videos by independent producers. For technical specifications: Alternative Music Television, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703. (608) 259-0548.

**HER TURN** radio news program by and about women is looking for new collective members. Volunteers must be able to work five-ten hours per week, be available on weekends, and make at least a one-year commitment. No radio experience necessary; feminist perspective is crucial. *Her Turn*, WORT-FM 118 S. Bedford St., Madison, WI. (608) 256-2001.

**IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN** is a one hour women's radio show featured Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. on WXUT, 88.3-FM in Toledo. Each show highlights a pertinent women's issue and features music, quotes, and poetry. Promo materials to: Sarah Morgan, WXUT/Univ. of Toledo, 2801 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, OH 43606. (419) 537-4172.

WEFT, 90.1-FM (Champaign-Urbana, Illinois area) features **SONG OF THE SOUL** on Saturday and **WOMYN MAKING WAVES** on Sunday. (217) FLY-WEFT for requests and other info.

The **NATIONAL WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL** is considering staging at least one woman-identified play at each year's festival. Theatrical directors, producers, playwrights, etc. contact Festival Producer Mary Byrne, NWMF, P.O. Box 1427, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1427.

**GOOD FRIENDS**, the cable TV show airing six times a month in Cincinnati on channel 10, is seeking contact with musicians, poets,

singers, dancers, actresses, activists, and other types of feminist thinkers. Materials to Bobbie Kaye, P.O. Box 12367, Cincinnati, OH 45212. (513) 531-1820.

## FILM•VIDEO

By the time we went to press in June, **THELMA AND LOUISE** had consistently stayed in the top ten on the video rental charts since its January release. (Fifteen years ago, **LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY** dominated the TV most-watched charts.) The success of *T&L* inspired other women-on-the-road movies: **LEAVING NORMAL** (Christine Lahti and Meg Tilly); **POETIC JUSTICE** (Janet Jackson); and **RUBY CAIRO** (Andie MacDowell).

Speaking of **FILM KISSES TO WATCH OUT FOR**...Winona Ryder supposedly kisses an unidentified blonde woman in the upcoming *Dracula: The Untold Story*...Callie Khouri, who wrote the screenplay for *Thelma and Louise*, had this to say about the screen kiss shared by the title characters: "The kiss just seemed so natural, you know? They were really just kissing each other goodbye—and hello."

If you object to the depiction of lesbians and bisexual women in **BASIC INSTINCT** as man-hating, ice pick-wielding psychos, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation urges you to write film director Paul Verhoeven c/o Marion Rosenberg Office, 8428 Melrose Pl. #B, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Send copies of your letter to producer Mario Kassar, Carolco Pictures, 8800 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069, and to TriStar Pictures Distribution, 10202 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232.

Congratulations and thanks to **DEBRA CHASNOFF**, whose film *Deadly Deception: General Electric, Nuclear Weapons and Our Environment* won an Oscar for Best Documentary Short. Debra singled out her life partner Kim Klausner and their son Noah in her televised acceptance speech. Debra is on the board of directors of *OUT/LOOK* magazine, and Kim is one of its founders. The two women produced the film *Choosing Children* in the 1980s.

**GEENA DAVIS** is working with lesbian filmmaker **JAN OXENBERG** on a comedy in which Geena plans to star. "It's a modern romance that has a lot of fantasy scenes in it. I think it'll be fun. She's directing it," says Geena, owner of Genial Pictures. **PENNY MARSHALL** directed Geena's current film, *A League of Their Own*, based on the All-



A handful of admirers gather around ninety-three year old Miss Ruth Ellis (center) at the National Women's Music Festival to listen to her talk about her life.

Toni Armstrong Jr.

American Girls Baseball League that was formed in 1943.

Distribution rights for the lesbian satire soap opera *TWO IN TWENTY* have been acquired by Wolfe Video, the women-owned production/distribution company. For info about *Two in Twenty*, *West Coast Crones*, *The Changer: A Record of the Times*, *Country Attitude*, and other films: Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden, CA 95042. (408) 268-6782.

Film/videomakers from Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri will be interested in **WOMEN'S MEDIA PROJECT**, which sponsors an annual regional showcase. (The 1993 festival will be the eighth.) SASE to Women's Media Project, 3402 Randolph Rd., Austin, TX 78722. Claudia Sperber (512) 474-4337.

A non-profit group of filmmakers creating a **DOCUMENTARY ON LESBIANS OVER SIXTY** seeks women of color and women who have experienced discrimination in the area of spousal rights. Mary Ruth Smith (213) 876-8592.

In *Entertainment Weekly*: "FASTEST ESCALATION TO GODDESS: JODIE FOSTER. Her second Best Actress Award in three years consolidated her status as perhaps the most powerful woman in Hollywood today. Clearly, she'll be wielding as much influ-

ence behind the camera in the future as she now has in front of it."

## DIRECTORIES

**WOMEN'S MUSIC PLUS: Directory of Resources in Women's Music and Culture** is available for immediate shipping. The 1992 edition is seventy-four pages thick, and includes more than 3,000 listings in categories like Performers, Festivals, Producers, Writers, Publishers, Radio, Theater, Publications, Film/Video/TV, Bookstores, Photographers, Sign Language Interpreters, Record Distributors, Grant-givers, etc. To be listed in the 1993 edition and/or to order copies: *Women's Music Plus*, 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640.

**FANNY: DIRECTORY OF WOMEN COMIC STRIP ARTISTS AND WRITERS** is being compiled by Carol Bennett, Knockabout Comics, 10 Acklam Rd., London, England W10 5QZ.

Send suggestions for plays to be included in the **DIRECTORY OF AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY PLAYS**. (Plays must have been published or produced.) Nancy Hellner, ASU English Dept., Tempe, AZ 85257.

**IN HER OWN IMAGE: FILMS & VIDEOS EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR THE FUTURE** is a new media guide listing more than eighty films and videos. Media Network, 39 W. 14th St., New York, NY 10011. (212) 929-2663.

## PUBLICATIONS

To get on the mailing list for the 1993 **OLIVIA CATALOG**, which includes recordings, jewelry, clothing, women's cruise info, and other items of interest to **HOT WIRE** readers: Olivia Records, 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608-3424.

**WE ARE HERE** is a newspaper/resource guide distributed by Gay Youth Networks to "provide a voice for young queers throughout North America." *We Are Here*, 2215 Market St. #479, San Francisco, CA 94114-1612.

**ARMENIAN SISTERS** is a newsletter hoping to build a support network for those interested in both the Armenian and women's communities. Zaum and Salpi, c/o 147 14th St. #13, New York, NY 10011.

**DYKES, DISABILITY & STUFF** (The Disabled Womyn's Educational Project) is doing a survey of lesbians with disabilities. Request a specific number for you and/or your friends. DDS Survey, P.O. Box 8773, Madison, WI 53714-8773.

**WOMEN AND RECOVERY** is a new monthly newsletter for women in all aspects of recovery and for professionals providing women's services. SASE to Women to Women Communications, P.O. Box 161775, Cupertino, CA 95016.

The **ASIAN LESBIAN NETWORK NEWSLETTER** has an international focus. Its purpose is to share info about daily lives, organizing activities, contact addresses, and to share struggles with the international feminist, and lesbian/gay movements. ALN c/o Anjaree, P.O. Box 322, Rajdamnern, Bangkok 10200, Thailand.

## SUBMISSIONS

New Terri Jewell projects: Submissions wanted for **MULTICULTURAL LESBIAN RELATIONSHIPS** anthology. First-person writings and cassettes of dialogues acceptable; you can request interview. Racism within/outside relationship; having/raising children; socializing/friendships; language differences. Also, unpublished manuscripts (fiction, essays, interviews, graphics) sought for **SNAP! BLACK GAYS AND LESBIANS TELL ALL**. SASE Terri Jewell, P.O. Box 23154, Lansing, MI 48909.

New Leslea Newman projects: *Eating Our Hearts Out* anthology seeks first-person, nonfiction narratives by women about **EAT-**  
*continued on page 59*

## GUITARS from page 23

differently. On my blue Adamas II, I wrote "Seventh House," "Magic of Love," "Laissey-Moi Sortir," "Nos Belles Annees," and "Mademoiselle." On Blondie, "The Homeless Song" and "Troubled Times" (from my upcoming third album). On Mabel, "Tour Song" and "Daddy's Song."

• **MELANIE DeMORE:** I worked and saved the \$20 that it cost me to buy a 1967 Decca when I was thirteen years old, because I was determined to learn to play. My current, and favorite, guitar is a 1982 Guild. Guild guitars are the best-sounding acoustic guitars—very deep and rich, and accompany my voice very well. Guitars are very much a part of the African-American tradition, which not many people are aware of.

• **MIMI FOX:** My mother saved up all her Green Stamp booklets to buy me a 1966 "cheapo classical" when I was ten. The action was so high it was absurd, but I treasured and slept with it every night. My mom has it still! It has autographs of Buddy Rich, Sergio Franchi, and the Mamas and Papas on it! When I was fourteen, my parents saved up to buy me my first good guitar. (I had been playing for four years and was very serious.) We went to Manny's Music in New York City, and they gave me a huge discount on a 1970 Guild F-30 because I played my own flamenco arrangement of "Eleanor Rigby"! My favorite—my Guild (Babe)—is really chewed up from years of traveling and gigs, but it sounds beautiful still, and I love it—it's bright and rich. (Martins are too "bassy" for my taste).

• **MONICA GRANT:** When I was ten years old, my family and I were visiting my grandmother in Germany. She had said that she wanted to buy me a guitar (I had become obsessed with wanting one.) I still remember going to that music store and picking out a 1970 Hohner. My family gave it away to the Catholics (St. Vincent de Paul) when they moved out of our house to retirement land. The day I bought my 1983 Martin D-35 was a day that I will never forget, because it was also the same day that I kissed a woman for the first time. (Okay, I was a late bloomer.) I was the camp director at this camp in the Santa Cruz mountains and had fallen for one of my counselors. It was a "day off," and I drove down to Santa Cruz and bought the guitar with cold hard cash. I had never bought anything that was \$1,000 in my life before! That night, this girl and I slept in front of a fire in one of the lodges, and I played her some songs on my new guitar.

The rest is "herstory." I owe the Martin Co. an awful lot!! My favorite is my Martin. It's a beautiful instrument—great action. And of course sentimentality. Wish I could play it better!

• **NANCY VOGL:** My brother (who played guitar) bought me a circa 1930 Washburn for 50 cents in 1960 from a boy down the block. My dad and I fixed it and refinished it, and I played it for a few years. It hangs on my bedroom wall. I got my pre-1971 Guild D-40 when I was broke and had sold my Martin; I went to a pawn shop in L.A. several months later and saw the Guild. My favorite: Martin D-45, herringbone purfling, the binding, white piping down the neck, ease of play, mellow tone. Or else Bernie Pettit, handmade with elongated, dreadnought pear-shaped body, inlaid animals all up the neck. I built a guitar in 1978 in a class by Irvin Somagyi: cedar top, rosewood, dreadnought steel—I play it some, but it needs work.

• **SUEDE:** I saved babysitting money and bought a Yamaha FG-180 from my brother's friend. Before that, I was sneaking into my brother's room to play his—he hated that! I got my 1981 Ovation Custom Legend because it was recommended by several other performers and gave a full, rich sound in performance. It was also one of the first guitars to have a built-in pick-up, so I wouldn't be bumping into wires on stage. Guild makes an incredible acoustic guitar. I just used a friend's Guild on my new album. The sound is warm and clean, and the back is shaped like a woman's belly. Help me; I want to keep it!

• **SUSAN HERRICK:** I was finally graduating from my nylon learner guitar (a Conn) to a performance acoustic model. Mom and I went to the local music store and picked out a 1975 Gurian. In college, I traded it for two speaker columns and a classical guitar, which I eventually traded/sold as well. My real regret, however, was trading/selling my drum set and cymbals, but that's another story. When I was between high school and college, hanging out and working a summer job, I heard of a Martin (which I had always longed for) that someone was selling quickly for cash. The owner clearly didn't know the value and was asking very little. Still, I didn't have the money. A friend who appreciated my music helped me pull together the money to buy a 1978 Martin D-18. Last year, I went out looking for a new slick guitar and found nothing that compared to my Martin. It is seasoned and full of memories, good energy, lots of love. I love that guitar. We've been through it all for ten years. Once someone asked me, "If

your house was on fire, and you could take one thing, what would it be?" My reply came without a beat, "My Martin!"

• **TRET FURE:** My brother bought me a 1962 Kay when he discovered how naturally I could play. My 1991 Montana is a newly purchased instrument that is very inexpensive. Since the airlines have destroyed two previous guitars—including Cris's 1958 Martin D-18—we no longer carry a precious instrument; we just use a good pick-up. My favorite is my 1963 Gibson Hummingbird, my sweetest and oldest guitar (the Kay was a learner). I also have a beautiful Guild F-50 from the early 1970s.

• • •

"Sometimes after a show I will most remember how my guitar sang along with me during a particular song. Because they *do that*," says Ferron. "If you love your guitar and play it a lot, your guitar will sing with you; you'll be in a vibe together and the world will be perfect for a moment. Like shoes, you've gotta wear a guitar to make it yours. Sure, there's a gorgeous '20s Martin that I have played in a store on Bleeker Street. It sits in a glass case, costs lots of money. But the last time I played it, I thought my Martin was sounding as good. Funny how that happens." •

*ABOUT THE WRITER:* Laura Post writes about women's arts, entertainment, and culture in her monthly column, "Muse News," syndicated in nineteen papers across the U.S.; in her record/video reviews for 'New Directions for Women,' 'Mama Bears News and Notes,' 'Lavendar Life,' and 'Victory Music Review'; and in her regular contributions to 'HOT WIRE.'

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## HOT LINE from page 57

**ING AND FOOD** (To be published by Crossing Press). **LOVE POEMS FROM WOMEN TO THEMSELVES** needed for *How Do I Love Me? Let Me Count the Ways*. Prose also considered. Leslea Newman, P.O. Box 815, Northampton, MA 01061.

*Discourse: A Journal for Theoretical Studies in Media and Culture* seeks essays on **LESBIAN AND GAY STUDIES**. *Discourse*, Journals Division/Indiana University Press, 601 N. Morton, Bloomington, IN 47404.

Journal excerpts sought, particularly those written recently by Black girls or written during childhood, for an anthology on **CONTEMPORARY BLACK WOMEN'S JOURNALS**. Patricia Scott-Bell, Dept. of Child/Family Development, Dawson Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

Writing by **ASIAN LESBIANS** wanted for anthology. Anne Mi Ok Bruining, 41 Shaw Rd., Little Compton, RI 02837.

**POETRY ANTHOLOGY** being compiled by the newsletter *Dinah*, P.O. Box 1485, Cin-

cinnati, OH 45201.

Writings and artwork about **RITUAL ABUSE** sought for anthology. Prose, poetry, and first person accounts welcome. Work by friends, lovers, healers, and mothers of survivors will be considered. Also sought: critical writings on therapy and 12-step programs. Fighting Words Press, P.O. Box 4, Northampton, MA 01061-0004.

Fiction, erotic fantasy, true experience, poetry, love sonnets, recipes sought for *Eating Out*, an anthology on the combination of **FOOD AND SEX** in women's lives. SASE to N. Landers, 3717 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago, IL 60623-3011.

Women's relationships to **SOLITUDE** wanted for new anthology—personal reflections, fiction, poetry, narratives, essays, interviews accepted. SASE to Beth Morgan, 1695 12th Ave. #2, San Francisco, CA 94122.

**NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WOMEN**, the twenty-year-old feminist newspaper, seeks personal essays on any aspect of women's lives and arts/cultural criticism. SASE to

Lynn Wenzel, 108 W. Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ 07631.

Articles full of basic facts, with some discussion of theory, needed for new **CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HOMOSEXUALITY** being published by the Collier Books division of MacMillan Publishing. This encyclopedia will update Garland Publications' two-volume *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* and is aiming for mass readership. SASE to Stephen Donaldson, 3147 Broadway #12A, New York, NY 10027. (212) 666-0344. •

**ABOUT THE WRITERS:** *Annie Lee lives in a three-flat in Chicago that has a steady stream of lesbians and women's periodicals. She's interested in both. Alice Lowenstein is exploring the potential for her latest interest: a women's reading, writing, drumming, and wine-tasting group. Joy Rosenblatt has one of the world's most extensive collections of recordings by women, so it's only natural that she would be producing the Soundsheets feature for 'HOT WIRE.'* Toni Jr. likes to know everything everyone is doing, so she can't resist working on the "Hotline" column.

## HORROR FILMS from 15

brings to life an all too realistic apathy that is exhibited by most of society.

Unphased back in Venice, California are non-religious expectant parents Abby and Russell Quinn. Abby is a fine arts restorer for a local museum, Russell is a lawyer, and they've already had one pregnancy go awry, which sent Abby into a suicidal funk. Now, Russell's absorbed with stopping the execution of a young man with Down syndrome (played brilliantly by newcomer John Taylor, who has Down syndrome in real life) who killed his folks—who were brother and sister—for going against the laws of God. Meanwhile, Abby's trying not to dwell on the baby she lost, while also fighting off recurrent nightmares which equate death and her current expected child.

On a dark and stormy night, who should show up to look at the Quinn's rental garage apartment but the mysterious stranger himself. Passing himself off as David Bannen, an ancient language teacher, the stranger takes the apartment and then continually pops up wherever Abby goes.

Convinced that David wants her unborn baby as a sacrifice for some satanic cult, Abby warns her husband, who thinks she's overreacting based on

fears from the last pregnancy. At first, she too questions her sanity, and almost takes her own life. But she soon becomes resolute in her quest to expose David by seeking out people she knows will believe her. (The only drawback to this movie is that Abby doesn't seem to have any friends, female or male, and instead must rely on the kindness of strangers.)

What she finds out about David, however, isn't at all what she expected, and there's a bit of social commentary thrown in to demonstrate how little most of us know about other cultures when Abby seeks the assistance of an Hassidic rabbi.

As Abby works to expose David as a psychopath, an accidental turn of fate soon sets into motion an irreversible path of destruction. It's up to Abby to unravel the mystery and, with a selfless act, save the life of one good soul in order to halt the apocalypse.

When this movie was released in 1988, it was written off as a satanic film—which basically sealed its fate at the box office. But in reality this is an empowering movie about faith and altruism—and one woman's desperate attempt to save the world from its end—mixed in with a heavy dose of truly informative religious history.

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Book and companion cassette tape available from the following distributors: New Leaf, Inland, Music Design, Bookpeople, and Ladyslipper.

## JUSTINA & JOYCE from 12

or instrumental parts were not the final ones we chose. In their perfection, these tracks sometimes seemed less "filled with life" than the ones on which we took vocal risks, expressed our passion, explored making music with wild abandon.

We came to redefine perfection: a perfect version of a song came to be the version most filled with life force, most filled with what we feel is the essence of art: Passion, Vision, and Magic.

As one of our engineers kept reminding us, it is human beings making this music, after all. We can't help but breathe, snort, laugh, miss a note here and there. We are alive!

With all the machines, all the electronics, all the fancy effects available, we at last came back to the home truth: we, as imperfect and preciously alive human beings, were making this music. And the music contained all parts of us, the glory and the flaws; the beauty of the whole.

And during the process we had to keep asking ourselves: is it really worth it?

Worth—what? The early mornings, late nights, no time for friends, the increasing indebtedness? These were but the surface things. What I was really asking was, "Is this worth the deep examination of my creativity and the journey into self-acceptance and self-love that I am being compelled to make?"

On the first day of recording, I could barely stand to listen to my singing. I know that this condition is not unique to me as a singer; many of us who perform, who are daily putting ourselves "out there" on stage, do all we can to avoid listening to ourselves (or, even worse, watching videotapes of ourselves). I remember early times of hearing myself on tape and weeping—that wasn't what I wanted to sound like! But in a recording studio, there is no way to avoid listening to oneself. There is truly no place to hide.

I knew I had a choice—either learn to accept and love myself and my music as I was at this moment, or protect my scared and vulnerable artist by closing my heart to the process and being there only intellectually.

Choosing to be open-hearted and spiritually present during the recording process made this not just an artistic project, but also a personal healing journey. We came to the question again and again, "What is perfection?" Is it never making a mistake, never hitting a "wrong" note, never breathing in the "wrong" place? Is it being totally synchronized and on beat all of the time? Does perfection mean no mistakes ever?

In art we are so often dealing with the ineffable that we hunger desperately for some sort of yardstick that will be a concrete standard. The concept of perfection is one such yardstick, and we learned that our idea of perfection had changed from technical brilliance to something that opens the heart by just being itself, in the moment. No pretensions, no fireworks, just an essential "is-ness" that reaches into the soul of the listener. What greater challenge can exist than simply being who you are? As singers, it is our greatest challenge, and our greatest joy.

And yes, it is worth it! •

## DEL & PHYLLIS from page 55

solid group of old lesbians. There was lots of pride. Another thing that has happened over the years since *Lesbian/Woman* came out has been changes in the law. We have changed the sex laws in half the states, and have finally passed non-discrimination laws in five states—mostly in the '90s. We had two in the '80s and three in the '90s already. New Jersey was this year.

P: And New Jersey was the biggest, the most populous of them.

D: So the states we have are Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Hawaii, Connecticut, and New Jersey. We passed it in California twice, but it's been vetoed by two Republican governors. Our only saving grace here would be to get a Democrat in as governor. And Goddess help us if we don't get a Democrat in as President of the United States this year.

P: We have made great progress in the Congress. For one thing we've got two openly gay Congressmen who have been re-elected several times since it came out that they were gay. It doesn't appear to be too much of a problem for them. And we've also gotten a record number

of signatures on a federal gay rights bill in the House and in the Senate this year.

D: And we could get two more if we could elect Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein...

P: ...and probably more still if the other women that are out there running for the Senate—like Geraldine Ferraro, Carol Moseley Braun from Chicago, and others—can get in. If we could elect all those women to the Senate, it would no longer be two percent. No longer would it look like it did during the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings.

D: One of the things that we say in this updated version of *Lesbian/Woman* is that a lot of people are talking about this being "the Gay '90s." But as we have seen, so much more is happening among lesbians—and more coming out—in different fields, not just politics. We feel strongly that the '90s is the decade of the lesbian.

Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon can be contacted c/o Volcano Press, P.O. Box 270, Volcano, CA 95689-0270. Special thanks to Toni Armstrong Jr. for editorial assistance. •

## ELLYN FLEMING from 51

guitar playing, and one day I went upstairs and wrote all these capital Ds, positioning them on the paper to show how the notes would go (up or down). Then I brought the paper downstairs to show my mother. I can't help but imagine how much easier my life would have been if I didn't allow my creative process to be obstructed by "rational, mature" behavior.

Presently I'm searching for a publisher for my manuscript *Once Upon an Ant Hill*, a mix of poetry, short stories, and anecdotes that are biographical and humorous in nature. It's about the essence of life, told with a combination of innocence and ironic, sarcastic humor.

These days when I'm off stage, I try to be disciplined and private. I spend most of my time writing new material, practicing music, and painting in acrylics. I slip away to Provincetown and Martha's Vineyard when I can.

Clean and sober now for more than two years, in love with music and all that goes with, I'm letting freedom reign!

Special thanks to Esther Haggie for help writing this article. •

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## ARTISANS • MAIL ORDER

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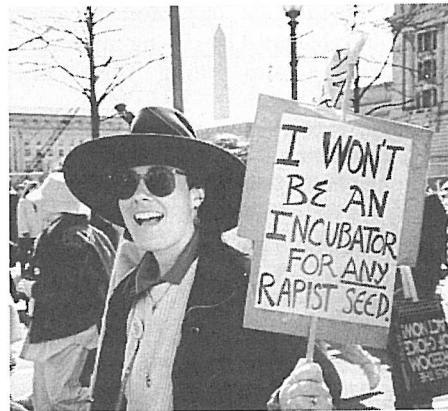
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An estimated 750,000 marchers went to Washington, DC in an effort to protect *Roe v. Wade*. **'HOT WIRE'** writer Bonnie Morris was among the marching celebs (including Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda, Mary Stuart Masterson, Cyndi Lauper, and Molly Ringwald).

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**HOLLY NEAR.** c/o Jo-Lynne Worley. PO Box 10408 Oakland, CA 94610. (415) 835-1445. *Concerts, workshops, lectures.*

**JUDITH SLOAN.** PO Box 4580 Sunnyside, NY 11104. For booking info: (718) 729-3668. *Out-raged comedienne, actress, writer and news junkie who lives in New York. She tours whenever possible; has video and audio tapes for sale. Her current show is 'The Whole K'Cufin World...and a few more things.'*

**STEEPIN' OUT ENTERPRISES.** Dee Greenberg, Gail Zacharias. 1615 Commonwealth Ave. #11, Brighton, MA 02135. (617) 562-0294. *Country Western dances and workshops, two-stepping and line dance.*

**CATHY WINTER.** 1017 Chrisler Ave. Schenectady, NY 12303. (518) 377-6312. *Singer/songwriter, guitarist. Flying Fish recording artist.*

## PRODUCERS OF WOMEN'S MUSIC & CULTURE

**APPLE ISLAND.** 849 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703. (608) 258-9777. *Women's cultural and events space for concerts, plays, and workshops.*

**CAMPFEST.** RR5 Box 185, Franklinville, NJ 08322. (609) 694-2037. *The comfortable wimmin's music festival. Every Memorial Day Weekend.*

**CLUB LE BON.** 76 Main St. Woodbridge, NJ 07095. 1-800-836-8687. *An all-inclusive gay resort for women! October 24-31, 1992.*

**EAST COAST LESBIANS' FESTIVAL.** Particular Productions, 279 Lester Ave. #3, Oakland, CA 94606. (510) 763-9228. *June 18-21, 1992. Music, comedy, theater, films, panels, writers' tent and more, 3 hrs. north of New York City. ASL intensive course for Lesbians at "Silent Pre-Fest" three days before festival begins.*

**17th ANNUAL MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL.** WWTMC, PO Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458. (616) 757-4766. *A 6-day all-womyn's camping event on 650 acres near Hart, Mich.—a full week of activities including 40 performances, 300 workshops, and 125 craftswomyn. Attendance up to 8,000 womyn from US, Canada, and 20+ countries worldwide.*

**MOUNTAIN MOVING COFFEEHOUSE.** PO Box 409159, Chicago, IL 60640. Joy Rosenblatt (312) 769-6899/Marcy J. Hochberg (312) 973-2477. *Oldest women-only coffeehouse in the world. 40+ Saturday night shows/year; all types of entertainment; "big names" and novices. Chem-free; annual one-day midwinter festival. Recently moved to new, non-homophobic space.*

**NORTH EAST WOMEN'S MUSICAL RETREAT (NEWMR).** PO Box 217, New Haven, CT 06513. (203) 522-6543. *An annual gathering over Labor Day Weekend; since 1980.*

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURAL JAMBOREE.** PO Box 42344, Portland, OR 97242. (310) 439-8695. *Tam Martin, producer. Annual in July; since 1990.*

**WEST COAST LESBIAN'S FESTIVAL.** Particular Productions, 279 Lester Ave. #3, Oakland, CA 94606. (510) 763-9228. *1st Annual was June 1992; private camp in Malibu Beach. Lots of Bay Area talent, Olympic-sized pool, indoor/outdoor theaters, catered meals, beach access, more.*

**WESTERN WOMYN'S ROUNDUP.** Mimar Produc-



tions, PO Box 103, Lakeside, CA 92040. (619) 390-9830. *Extraordinary four-day annual event begins '93 Memorial Day Weekend in southeastern California at the Triangle Ranch. 'A western festival extravaganza' to be enjoyed by thousands.* **WILD WIMMIN PRODUCTIONS.** 577 Linwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209. (716) 881-1574. *Beginning our third year producing female entertainers. Performers please contact.* **WOMONGATHERING.** RR5 Box 185, Franklinville, NJ 08322. (609) 694-2037. *The festival of women's spirituality; annual, in May.*

## VIDEOS

**COUNTRY ATTITUDE.** PO Box 103, Lakeside, CA 92040. *Country Western dance instruction featuring Tush Push, CC Shuffle, Slap Leather, Ramblin.* \$24.95. Maile Klein & Marina Hodgini. **HOUSE O'CHICKS.** 2215-R Market St. #813, San Francisco, CA 94114. (800) 367-0786. *"How To Have A Sex Party," lesbian libidos explode in 30 minutes of hot, safe sex video.*

## WANTED

**BLACK LESBIAN CULTURE BOOK** being compiled by Terri Jewell. PO Box 23154, Lansing, MI 48909. (517) 485-3500. *Seeking past and present photos, names, organizations, anecdotes and rumors, song titles and lyrics, publications, notes on personal style, lovemaking tips, recipes, black and white artwork, references, herstory and sheroes, conferences, anything by, about, for Black Lesbians. Also need fundraising ideas!* **PHOTOGRAPHERS** experienced shooting live performances. *'HOT WIRE' is in perpetual need of good quality photos from women's festivals and other events. Looking for photos from early '70s to present. Contact editor if interested.*

## TRAVEL

**BLUEBERRY RIDGE.** Contact G. Moran. RR1 Box 67, Scotrun, PA 18355. (717) 629-5036. *Women's Guest House in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania.*

**BRENDA GOLDSTEIN.** Vega Travel, 1-800-359-8437 or 1-800-FLY-THER. *You pay no fees. Traveling for business or pleasure? See how much time and money a dedicated travel agent can save you.*

**CHARLENE'S.** 940 Elysian Fields Ave., New Orleans, LA 70117. (604) 946-9328. *New Orleans' oldest gay women's bar. Occasionally bands, DJ.*

**CHECK'ER INN.** 25 Winthrop St., Provincetown, MA 02657. (508) 487-9029. *Women's guest house located within minutes of all Provincetown has to offer.*

**HIGHLANDS INN.** PO Box 118Q, Bethlehem, NH 03574. *Lesbian paradise! 100 acres, pool, hot tub, hiking/skiing trails.*

**MERMAID INN.** 725 N. Birch Rd. Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304. 1-800-749-DYKE. *Ft. Lauderdale beach rooms, efficiencies, suites; pool, A/C, cable TV; women's concerts, workshops, gatherings.*

**MARGE & JOANNE'S.** PO Box 457, Glen Arbor, MI 49636. (616) 334-3346. *Women's B&B located in*

*Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park area of northern Michigan. 3 bedrooms. View of Lake Michigan. Expanded continental breakfast. Open all year.* **MOUNTAIN MAMA PACKING & RIDING CO.** Harpy, Box 218 Palaco St., Santa Fe, NM 87501. *Horse Pack trips, trail rides, rustic bed and breakfast in northern New Mexico mountains.*

**SALLIE AND EILEEN'S PLACE.** PO Box 409, Mendocino, CA 95460. (707) 937-2028. *Secluded cabins in the woods for women. 3-1/2 hrs. from the Bay Area. Kitchens, fireplaces, hot tub on site. Safe, comfortable.*

**SEA GNOMES HOME.** PO Box 33, Stonington, ME 04681. (207) 367-5076. *Women's rooming house on the Maine coast; open June-September. Several rooms; ocean view.*

**SUSAN'S PLACE B&B.** 204 Chisolm Trail, Prescott, AZ 86303. (602) 445-5673. *Pamper yourself in the beautiful serenity of the Arizona mountains.*

## BOOKSTORES

**BRIGIT BOOKS.** 3434 4th St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33704. (813) 522-5775. *Lesbian/feminist/women's books, music, jewelry. Open every day.*

**INKLINGS—an alternative bookshop.** 1846 Richmond Ave., Houston, TX 77098. (713) 521-3369. *Full-service women's bookstore, with large selection of women's fiction & women's music.*

**LUNARIA.** 90 King St., Northampton, MA 01060. (413) 586-7851 voice or TDD. *Lesbian/feminist new, used, rare and out-of-print titles 100+ page catalog, \$2. (Refundable with order.)*

**NEW WORDS BOOKSTORE.** 186 Hampshire St., Cambridge, MA 02139. (617) 876-5310. *Boston's women's bookstore features extensive selection of women's, lesbian, multicultural music, books, and journals. Wheelchair accessible.*

**SISTERSPIRIT WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE/COFFEEHOUSE.** 175 Stockton Ave., San Jose, CA 95126. (408) 293-9372. *Women's books and music, emphasizing lesbian fiction. Our coffeehouses feature the best and newest artists in women's music. Mail order; free catalog.*

**WOMEN & CHILDREN FIRST.** 5233 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640. (312) 769-9299. *Since 1979. Feminist/lesbian books, records, tapes, posters, jewelry. Weekly programming, readings, book signings, local and nationally known talent.*

## SERVICES

**BARBARA SINCLAIR,** Fretted Instrument Repair. PO Box 2104 Costa Mesa, CA 92628. (714) 545-5172. *Repair and restoration of all fretted instruments, with a speciality in Dobro and National guitars.*

**GAIL FAIRFIELD,** PO Box 8 Smithville, IN 47458. (812) 331-0501. *Author of 'Choice Centered Astrology' and 'The Basics of Choice Centered Tarot'. Individual/business consultations by phone/in person—using Astrology and/or Tarot.*

**GRAPHIC SERVICES FROM A TO Z.** Lambda Publications (publishers of *Outlines* lesbian/gay newsmagazine), 3059 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 871-7610. *Using advanced desktop publishing, we can meet your artistic and graphic needs, including posters, menus, flyers,*

*brochures, letterheads, newsletters, camera-ready ads, resumé's, and more.*

**VIVIAN B. LARSEN, LCSW.** 6445 Humphrey, Oak Park, IL 60304. (708) 524-0236. *Lesbian psychotherapist helps you Heal The Hurt Child In You!*

**LESBIAN CPA: serving wimmin nationwide.** Deb Murphy CPA, 1012-1/2 Dodge, Evanston, IL 60202. (708) 864-5217. *Personalized accounting, tax services, financial consulting, and business planning for small businesses and individuals.*

**MULRYAN AND YORK,** Attorneys At Law. 3035 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 248-8887. *General Civil Practice: Real Estate; Estate Planning, Matrimonial; Small Business.*

**NEED MONEY?** Wolfe Video, PO Box 64, New Almaden, CA 95042. (408) 268-6782. *Offering special fundraising packages to groups for the performance rights to 'Two In Twenty,' the world famous lesbian soap opera. Call for details.*

## PERIODICALS

**ACHE: Journal for Lesbians of African Descent.** PO Box 6071, Albany, CA 94706. (415) 824-0703. *Bimonthly publication by Black lesbians for the benefit of all women of African descent. 6x/yr; \$10-\$25 (sliding scale) subscription.* **BITCH: The Women's Rock Mag With Bite.** c/o San Jose Face, #164, 478 W. Hamilton, Campbell, CA 95008. *Opposing, clashing viewpoints aired, from heavy metal head-bangers to New Age Wiccans. \$15/12 issues.*

**BROADSHEET.** 476 Mt. Eden Rd. Box 56-147, Auckland, New Zealand. Phone: 608-535. *New Zealand's feminist magazine. Ten 40-48 page issues per year—regular music section.*

**BROOMSTICK.** 3543 18th St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110. *National feminist political journal by, for, about women over forty. 4x/yr; U.S. \$15, Canada \$20 (US funds), Overseas/Institutions \$25, sample/\$5. Free to incarcerated women over forty.*

**CAULDREN.** PO Box 349, Culver City, CA 90232. (310) 633-2322. *Lesbian-identified publication seeking writers, artists, photographers. 4x/yr; \$13/yr; \$26/2 yrs.*

**FEMINIST BOOKSTORE NEWS.** PO Box 882554, San Francisco, CA 94188. (415) 626-1556. *Trade publication for women's bookstores. FBN's "Writing Wanted" column is sheer inspiration for writers. Easily worth the price of the magazine. \$50/6 issues, \$5/sample.*

**FEMINIST TEACHER.** Ballantine Hall 447, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. *Multidisciplinary magazine committed to combatting sexism, racism, other forms of oppression in the classroom. 3x/yr; \$12/yr, \$4/sample.*

**HAG RAG.** PO Box 1171, Madison, WI 05401-0031. (608) 241-9765. *Now available on cassette tape! \$10-\$15/6 issues (sliding scale), \$3/sample.*

**HOT WIRE: The Journal of Women's Music & Culture.** 5210 N. Wayne, Chicago, IL 60640. (312) 769-9009. *Only publication devoted to national woman-identified music & culture scene. Music, writing, film, dance, comedy. Many photos. Each 64-page issue includes two-sided stereo recording. 3x/yr; \$17/yr, \$7/sample (includes postage). Canada: \$19 US/yr. Overseas: write or see masthead on table of contents page for rates.*

continued on inside back cover

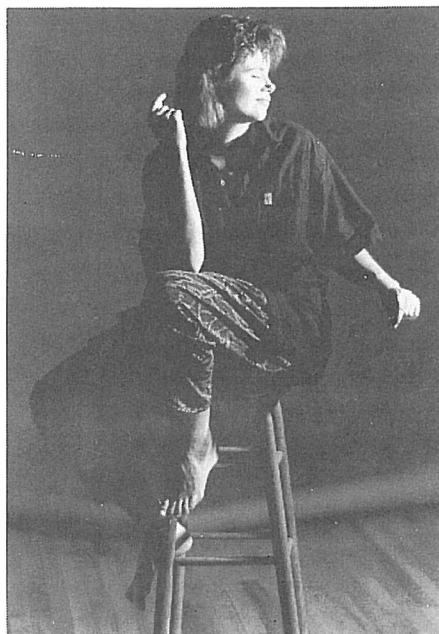
# SOUNDSHEET

Produced by Joy Rosenblatt

## ANOTHER DOOR TO SLAM

**WRITTEN BY:** Tracy Drach  
**PERFORMED BY:** Tracy Drach (vocals, guitar, cymbal); Susie Crate (upright bass)  
**FROM:** *Another Door*  
 Drach 'n' Droll Music  
 P.O. Box 61634  
 Durham, NC 27715  
 (919) 220-8341

As a solo performer for the last eight years, Tracy Drach has brought together her powerful vocals and folk guitar to sing about women's lives, laughter, and tears. She loves to celebrate women's voices by sharing their music with other people. In performance, Tracy often introduces "Another Door to Slam" with, "I wrote this song in one of my mad phases. But you're women, so you wouldn't know anything about anger, would you?" The phrase "I wish I had another door to slam" was a gift from Durham writer/activist Cris South.



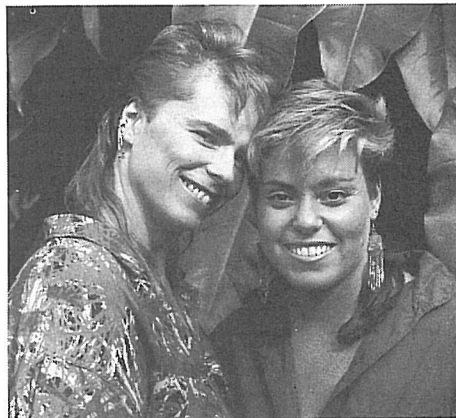
M.J. Sharp

### TRACY DRACH

## AFFIRMATION

**WRITTEN BY:** Joyce Zymeck  
**PERFORMED BY:** Justina and Joyce (vocals), Laurie Goldsmith (percussion)  
**FROM:** *So Strong*  
 Justina and Joyce c/o HSP Records  
 P.O. Box 442,  
 Amherst, MA 01004  
 (413) 584-7384

From Justina and Joyce's debut album *So Strong*, "Affirmation" is about the positive and



Neil Hammer

### JUSTINA & JOYCE

healing power of saying no. They say, "We include this song in concerts as part of our 'folk therapy' series. Why pay so much money to process why you can't say no when you can just sing along with us and practice?" Justina and Joyce have performed from Massachusetts to Mississippi, including the East Coast Lesbians' Festival, the Gulf Coast Women's Festival, and the Northampton/Amherst Lesbian Festival.

## 30 SOMETHIN'

**WRITTEN/PERFORMED BY:** Ellyn Fleming  
**FROM:** *Pickin' Up the Pieces*  
 Ellyn Fleming c/o EF Records  
 P.O. Box 117  
 Northbridge, MA 01534  
 (508) 234-6360

Ellyn Fleming is a singer/songwriter/folk-rock musician from central Massachusetts. She entertains alternative and mainstream audiences with an acoustic guitar, a funky harmonica, and an innocent, somewhat candid sense of humor. "30 Somethin'"—one of nine songs on Ellyn's *Pickin' Up the Pieces* release—is an upbeat a cappella piece filled with strength,



Bruce Whitney Photographers

### ELLYN FLEMING

hope, and inspiration. This cut is bound to give you the attitude and motivation you need to overcome the darker hours of your life. So get that turntable moving and drink some of the positive energy this song is meant to bring you!



Donna Luckett

### BARB GALLOWAY & CACY LEE

## LITTLE BIT OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

**WRITTEN/ARRANGED BY:** Barb Galloway  
**PERFORMED BY:** Barb Galloway (lead guitar); Cacy Lee (bass)  
**FROM:** *...Something Special*  
 Galloway & Lee  
 3614 SE 11th  
 Portland, OR  
 97202  
 (503) 231-9351

For the past twenty years, Barb Galloway has performed all types of music—including Latin-jazz, rock & roll, blues, country, and more—with a variety of women's music artists, including The Fabulous Dyketones and Baba Yaga. This is Barb's first release of instrumental music. Cacy Lee plays bass with a percussive beat, adding flavor to Barb's guitar leads. She has also performed in women's music for many years, and has worked during the past three years with Barb and the Vital Move Band as well as in a dynamite duo with Barb, playing primarily jazz/blues. •

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 ONTO CASSETTE TAPE WITH SONGS  
 FROM PREVIOUS SOUNDSHEETS**

**HURRICANE ALICE.** 207 Lind Hall/207 Church St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. *Feminist review of literature/arts/culture featuring essay/reviews/art/fiction. Quarterly; \$9/yr.*

**IN THESE TIMES.** 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. (800) 827-0270. *ITT is committed to democratic social and political change. Its weekly coverage of the nation, the world, and the arts combines incisive reporting, thoughtful analysis and timely reviews with exciting, award-winning design. Experience the very best in alternative American journalism by ordering a free sample copy today.*

**LADYSLIPPER CATALOG.** PO Box 3124, Durham, NC 27705. (919) 683-1570. *World's most comprehensive catalog of records/tapes/CDs/videos by women; free but stamps appreciated.*

**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/yr, \$1.50/sample.*

**THE LESBIAN NEWS** PO Box 1430, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277. (213) 6560258. *A digest of information from Southern California and beyond. Monthly; \$12/yr.*

**NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WOMEN.** PO Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-1973. (201) 568-0226. *Women's health, family issues, racism, ageism, culture, and sports from a feminist perspective. 6x/yr, \$12/yr, \$20/institutions, \$18/Canada & Mexico.*

**OF A LIKE MIND.** PO Box 6021, Madison, WI 53716. *A leading international network and newspaper of women's spirituality. Quarterly; \$13-33/yr, (sliding scale); \$3/sample.*

**ON TARGET.** PO Box 386, Uncasville, CT 06382. (203) 848-3887. *Newsletter for women over 40 and their friends.*

**OUTLINES.** Editor Tracy Baim, 3059 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 871-7610. *Lesbian/gay news/monthly; extensive women's music & culture coverage. Midwest and national focus. \$25/yr by mail.*

**WOMAN OF POWER.** PO Box 2785, Orleans, MA 02653. (508) 240-7877. *'Woman of Power' can no longer accept unsolicited poetry and fiction. Issue #26: 'Language.' Deadline: March 1, 1993.*

## RECORDINGS

**BETTER THAN NORMAL,** Sue Dunlop. PO Box 28069, Wellington 5, Australia 2040. *A controversial cassette including "Hairy Legs" and "Tell The Boys."*

**CLOSER TO HOME,** Jamie Anderson. Tsunami Records, PO Box 42282, Tucson, AZ 85733. *Women's music with strength & humor. "Wedding Song," "Straight Girl Blues," and "Nothing."*

**FOR THERESE,** Various Women Artists. Sea Friends Recordings, 1641 Rockford Place, Cincinnati OH 45223-1632. *Betsy Lippitt, Kay Gardner, Sue Fink, Deidre McCalla, Nydia Mata, MUSE: Cincinnati's Women's Choir, and Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus—perform the highest quality recording of women's voices singing women's music in today's feminist choral movement. Fifteen years of Therese Edell's choral, solo vocal, and instrumental compositions. Very good, very fun—a must. Sixty minutes on CD (\$16) and cassette (\$12).*

**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/technicians.)*

**IT'S A MIRACLE,** Alice Di Micele. Box 281, Williams, OR 97544. *Heartfelt songs about today's politics and environment.*

**ORIGIN OF THE WORLD,** Girls In The Nose. PO Box 49828, Austin, TX 78765. *Second album of original rock tunes; "Sappho's Song," "Breast Exam," "More Madonna, Less Jesus."*

**RETURNING THE MUSE TO MUSIC,** Musica Femina. PO Box 15121, Portland, OR 97215. *The flute and guitar duo of Kristan Aspen/Janna MacAuslan; classical music from the 17th century to the present. \$10 cassette/\$15 CD, plus \$1 postage.*

**SINCLAIR—READY OR NOT.** Quartz Apple Music, PO Box 2104, Costa Mesa, CA (714) 722-6023. *A collection of her songs performed for political rallies and fundraisers concerned with women's issues of domestic violence, peace, relationships, and empowerment.*

**STRETCH, BREATHE & RELAX,** Diana M. Grove, LMT. Dancing Mountain Productions, PO Box 76222, St. Petersburg, FL 33734. *Movement designed to improve physical and mental well-being through practice of flexibility exercises and basic yoga postures.*

**TOWARD HOME,** Rhiannon. Ladyslipper, PO Box 3124-R, Durham, NC 27715. 1-800-634-6044. *Folk, jazz, scat singing, improvisation, and melodic storytelling by featured vocalist of Bobby McFerrin's a cappella group Voicestra; previously of women's jazz group Alive!*

**YAHOO AUSTRALIA,** Alix Dobkin. PO Box 727, Woodstock, NY 12498. (914) 679-6168. *Recorded live during Alix's 1990 tour of the world's oldest continent.*

## BOOKS

**AFTERSHOCKS** by Jess Wells. Third Side Press, 2250 W. Farragut, Chicago, IL 60625-1802. *Lesbian life in San Francisco after a major earthquake.*

**CLOSER TO HOME,** edited by Elizabeth Reba Weise. Seal Press, 3131 Western Ave. #410, Seattle, WA 98121-1028. *New anthology explores what it means to be bisexual and feminist.*

**THE DAUGHTERS OF ARTEMIS** by Laura Wright Douglas. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Caitlin Reece's newest case requires finding an heir to a trust fund who has hidden in a women's commune.*

**DELIA IRONFOOT** by Jeane Harris. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Delia agrees to lead a mysterious woman on a dangerous trek through the Utah mountains.*

**DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR: The Sequel** by Alison Bechdel. Firebrand Books, 141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Alison Bechdel's latest cartoon extravaganza continues her hilarious documentation of the lesbian community.*

**GENDER VIOLENCE, A Development and Human Rights Issue** by Charlotte Bunch/Roxanna

Carrillo. Douglass College, PO Box 270, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0270. *Two articles detailing failure of mainstream human rights frameworks.*

**GRANDMOTHER MOON** by Z. Budapest. Harpers San Francisco. *Lunar Magic in our lives: spells, rituals, goddesses and legends.*

**KITTY LIBBER: Cat Cartoons By Women,** ed. by Rosalind Warren. Crossing Press, PO Box 1048, Freedom, CA 95019. *52 cartoonists address topics from the mundane to the surreal.*

**THE LAVENDER HOUSE MURDER** by Nikki Baker. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *A new sexy, contemporary novel by the author of 'In The Game.'*

**LESBIAN (OUT)LAW, Survival Under The Rule Of Law** by Ruthann Robson. Firebrand Books, 141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Lesbian legal theory: includes issues of housing discrimination, child custody, etc.*

**LESBIAN/WOMAN,** by Del Martin/Phyllis Lyon. Volcano Press, PO Box 270, Volcano, CA 95689-0270. *The ground-breaking classic of the '70s is reprinted in celebration of its twentieth year anniversary, updated to include recent developments important to lesbians, including women's music*

**LESBIANS IN GERMANY: 1820s-1920s** by Lillian Faderman/Brigitte Ericksson. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Translations of turn-of-the-century lesbian documents available for the first time.*

**LOVE, ZENA BETH** by Diane Salvatore. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *A young journalist faces conflict when forced to choose between intrigue and her career and relationship.*

**PASSION BAY** by Jennifer Fulton. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Two women from different cultures become involved in passion, mystery, and intrigue.*

**RIVERFINGER WOMEN** by Elana Nachman/Dyke woman. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Young lesbians in the anti-war '60s. Classic of the 1970s.*

**SPEAKING DREAMS, Science Fiction** by Severtina Park. Firebrand Books, 141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Slavery and spiritual freedom, power and resistance, love and destiny.*

**STICKS AND STONES** by Jackie Calhoun. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Alex faces conflicts of career and child custody common to many lesbians.*

**STRANDED** by Camarin Grae. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Lesbians from another planet inhabit Earthless-bodies in order to save Earth.*

**THE WORRY GIRL, Stories From A Childhood** by Andrea Freud Loewenstein. Firebrand Books, 141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Growing up under the scowling portrait of Sigmund Freud.*

**UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS** by Claire McNab. Naiad Press, PO Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. *Romance in the Australian outback, by the author of 'Cop Out.'*

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women's businesses.  
They support women's culture  
in general and  
'HOT WIRE' in particular.



Toni Armstrong Jr.



Marcy J. Hochberg



Toni Armstrong Jr.

Festival stages were stormed this season with new-to-the scene performers like Seraiah Carol (top); returning-to-the-scene favorites like Margie Adam and (pictured) Diane Lindsay; and perennial crowd pleasers like The Washington Sisters (Sandra and Sharon).