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HOT WIRE

THE JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURE

LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY

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COMPACT DISCS

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LIFELINE: UNION SINGING
LOVERS OF "STARS"
'DESERT HEARTS' DONNA DEITCH
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

FESTIVAL COVERAGE
STEREO RECORDING INSIDE

JUNE MILLINGTON
WOMEN IN SYMPHONIES
SAPPHO & APHRODITE

Irene Young

VOLUME TWO, NUMBER FOUR, NOVEMBER 1986 $5.00

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

"WOMEN'S MUSIC" AND "LESBIAN MUSIC"—ARE THEY SYNONYMOUS?

It's the age-old question. This is an excerpt from the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival 1986 program that deals well with it:

Who is this Womyn's Festival for anyway? The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival is for all womyn, and we believe that it reflects our common womyn's herstory—ancient and recent.

The Festival is also a celebration of lesbian heritage. It is one of the few places where lesbian identity is the dominant culture and that presents unusual aspects for all of us. It's sometimes awkward and unfamiliar to lesbians who have never felt such validation or freedom. It is also sometimes awkward and alienating for womyn who don't identify as lesbians to feel not included, "unseen," simply because "lesbian" is the general and not the "other option."

It is our intention that this Womyn's Festival belong to and reflect all womyn in the fullest extent and definition. It is our belief that each womon brings her essential identity, whatever that is. And, it is our hope that each womon leaves feeling more empowered and more infused with her strength and beauty as a womon.

"If it wasn't for the women,
we would not be living,
we would not be joyful, singing,
loving and beloved, women"

—Alix Dobkin sing-along

ON THE COVER

This issue's cover features Canadian singer/songwriter Lucie Blue Tremblay from Quebec, who has recently released her first album on Olivia Records. Read the interview with her (on page 2) and hear "So Lucky" on the soundsheet (inside back cover).

CORRECTIONS

Despite our careful attention, something always seems to slip by. Please note from Volume 2 Number 3 (July 1986, Ferron on the cover): the beautiful "Mothertongue" graphic page 61 was done

by Mary Angela Collins. In "The Audio Angle" on page 11, the last sentence should read: "When an artist signs with a major label, the record company executives take control and make a lot of decisions concerning production of the record..." Finally, in the article about Redwood, two things should be noted: Holly Near, Redwood's founder, was not included in the photo on page 26, and (see page 29), Redwood said in a letter to HOT WIRE, "Redwood Records might spend $20,000 plus for promotion, but usually it's $3,000-$10,000. We wish we had $20,000-$25,000 to put into each release."

LOCAL DISTRIBUTION

If you can sell 5-10 copies of HOT WIRE in your area, you can help us increase our distribution and you can make a profit. Keep yourself in HOT WIREs this winter. Send a SASE for details.

HOW MUCH OF AN EXPERT ARE YOU ON WOMEN'S MUSIC?

For those of you who feel like you know what's what and where it's happening, here's a challenge: a free subscription goes to anyone who can list, in order, the five cities that receive the highest number of HOT WIREs (85% of the copies are shipped the day they come back from the printer; the figures include individual subscribers, bookstore accounts, and distributors/producers who sell the journal). Another free subscription goes to anyone who can similarly name our top five states. You can use the sub as a gift or an extension of your current subscription. How do you think your city and state measure up in terms of informed readers?

BACK ISSUES

We get many requests for info regarding the availability of back issues. We have a few copies of all the issues except Volume 1 Number 1 (Kate Clinton cover). We are running out of both the Linda Tillery and Millington issues (though we have some without soundsheets). Send SASE.

YOU SEEM TO LIKE...

The mail during the past few months has continued to include favorable comments about both the Láadan and Sappho columns. We have received many compliments on the soundsheets feature as well. Women in the Directors Chair reports a substantial amount of mail following the "Novembermoon" article.

—Toni L. Armstrong
managing editor/publisher
'HOT WIRE' Journal

HOT WIRE
The Journal of Women's Music & Culture

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Volume 3, Number 1, November 1986

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LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY

An interview by Toni L. Armstrong

***Lucie Blue Tremblay** from Montreal received three of four awards at the 1984 French Song Festival: Best Singer/ Songwriter, the Press Award, and the Public Award. She has appeared more than 20 times on Canadian television in addition to doing numerous live radio shows. She was asked to sing the theme song for the Francophone national holiday for a government sponsored recording, and in the U.S. Lucie has toured extensively. She has performed at most of the national women's music festivals. She released her first album, 'Lucie Blue Tremblay,' on Olivia Records this fall.*

HOT WIRE: How did you get the name Lucie Blue?

LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY: Blue is my favorite color — it's intense and calming. Also, blue is the color of the throat chakra. After I won the awards in 1984 I knew the timing was right and that I would begin to get a lot of media attention. I became Lucie Blue at that time.

HW: What made you choose Olivia Records for your first album?

LBT: It was thanks to Irene Young. We met in Winnipeg at the women's music festival. She came to see me after my concert and asked if I had a press packet she could bring back to her California friends. Later I got a phone call from Judy Dlugacz [president of Olivia Records] and she said she really liked what I did, what she'd seen and heard — I sent a little video — and she said that she really felt my spirit. We talked about it and I thought I could maybe go to California and talk to these people. In that same period I had come to Michigan and performed. I really liked speaking to Holly Near and those people; we connected very well, and I was doing the opening for Holly in Toronto, and that was making me very excited. I think she's so precious. At the same time I thought I could come and see everybody out in California. Irene and Penny Rosenwasser and all of them worked on producing a concert with me and Jennifer Berezan — two Canadian women. I went and there were a lot of people from Olivia and Redwood, also Deidre [McCalla], rhiannon, and Lisa [Vogel] and Boo [Price] came. It was a very intimate concert at Valencia Rose with a lot of heavies from women's music. That was fun. And then we just talked.

I went home and thought about it. I knew I was going to produce the album and I felt very attracted at that point in my life; they just attracted me to work with them. The spirit was really intense and emotionally quick. When your heart says to go somewhere you like to follow it. But then I went home to see what my head would say.

We negotiated from November until March, and in March we knew that it would work. They have, since then, worked very hard. I have a lot of respect for all of the other people who work in the industry as well. I have signed with Olivia but I feel that it doesn't mean I like the other companies less.

HW: You were offered contracts with other companies?

LBT: For the past two years I had been offered contracts with Canadian companies. But I wanted to have artistic control on the contents of my album. I asked one of the producers about "Voix d' Enfant," my song about incest. I said that it was very important to me and that I wanted it on my album. He said, "Oh, you can't do that. It's a real heavy song; no one wants to hear something that heavy." So I knew it wouldn't work, doing the album together.

HW: You've made a point to include "Voix d'Enfant" on your album. You've also performed it on television?

LBT: I had the opportunity to do mainstream [Canadian] television, and I wanted to do something so people would know that I try to do things that touch you one way or another. It [incest] is a pretty hot subject. People's reactions were pretty positive, with some very negative because they were totally disturbed. And I can understand that. But the fact that they reacted positively or negatively is good.

HW: In previous conversations you have said that you don't need to necessarily say anything specific about women or lesbians in each song but that you bring "total consciousness" to everything you write. How do you write songs?

LBT: The consciousness is where it starts. Then if you're writing about women you go and write about women. If you're writing about lesbians, about being an incest survivor, or a love song, the thing is where the basis of it is— where you start and where you go from, and why.

I just feel that my songs are honest, for me. When they're being written I'm aware only of how I'm amplifying emotions. It's funny how I write songs; I'll be feeling something...it's very hard for me to sit down and say, "Okay, I'm writing a song now." I can write six songs in say three weeks and

then not write anything again for six months. But what I do is play an instrument and I'll be feeling a certain emotion, whatever it is. I'll play a chord that makes me feel that emotion even more. Then I nurture that emotion, whether it be sadness or happiness or thinking of someone. If I'm missing that person, if I'm mad at that person, you'll tell the difference in the color of the chord. When I'm sad it can be a very masochistic thing to do. I go on that way, and I really get into whatever emotion I'm into. The words will come out, and that's how I write songs.

I'm very accessible and open. I put myself out very much in my songs. The public knows me very well from listening to my songs,

Irene Young

and they recognize themselves because I write about things everyone feels every day. But then it's difficult for me when the feeling is over. For example, when I wrote "Voix d'Enfant" I was very disturbed about the subject and about certain people around me and about myself as an incest survivor. I was really into this song when I wrote it, very hurt and upset thinking about lots of things. But that was then. Now I find myself, years later, performing that song when I'm not in that mood. I do the song and go through it all over again. It's very hard emotionally to do that, and it's the same with the sad songs or the love songs, to dredge it up. Singing a love song when you're really pissed off, or you're not in love, or you don't want to be in love, something like that. It's a lot of work, and I really like it. But sometimes it looks a lot easier than what it is.

HW: Five songs on your album are in French and five are in English. How did you decide to mix the languages?

LBT: I grew up with English. In the last years I haven't been surrounded with English people, so I don't have a chance to practice it much except when I come to these festivals. I've always been influenced by, and written in, English (and also slangish English— "goin'," stuff like that) and I have never stopped myself from singing in English. I felt it was a part of myself.

At the same time, going into English milieus in the rest of Canada [outside of Quebec] and in the U.S. is scary because there is a fear of assimilation.

HW: Fear of being assimilated into the English-dominant culture?

LBT: We've been fighting for a long time in Quebec to keep our language and culture; it's very difficult not to be assimilated even in our own province. Every time there's a new government voted in there's a slim chance that they're going to put amendments on the language laws and change things to make more space for the English, even though our province is majority French speaking. Inside all of Canada we French people of Quebec are a minority. To me it's been very important not to lose my identity as a Francophone, and it's so easy to do. We have to fight right now so that the commercial radio station will play 55 percent French music. Otherwise it would be English and American music. We are bombarded all the time. If you don't defend yourself, protect yourself, and prepare yourself you can lose very easily.

It's a bit like the feminist movement, how you move ahead through a lot of struggling and a lot of people doing a lot. And then the years pass and the militants get tired and burned out and they rest. The new people come and take a lot of things for granted. Then things start changing and slipping backwards. It's the same thing.

I try to have a conscious vision when I write; I'm very conscious of my French roots. So we did five songs in French and five in English. It was important because this way I felt that I was really saying who I was.

HW: What's it like for you being a Francophone traveling so extensively through English-speaking areas on your tours?

LBT: Well, if I talk to you in English and ask you if you speak French, you will probably tell me no. Yet maybe you took French in school, a lot of women have. A little bit, maybe six months. It doesn't take much to say, "Bonjour." But because the person who is English-speaking is living in the language majority, if that person cannot show that they are perfect in mastering the language they will not speak it. So unless you are perfect in French, or know enough to have a really good conversation — and then you would say, "I speak a little," right? — even if you can only say, "Bonjour, comment ça va?" you'll say, "No, I don't speak French." And I find that a lot of times it's just because it's hard to be talking to someone in a language minority without being

perfect. And yet if you say to me, "Bonjour, comment ça va?" it means so much more to me because you've communicated, "Yes, I speak a little bit of French. I can say, 'Hello, how are you?'" That touches me because you are daring into something that you don't know much of. And no, you're not perfect, but you're trying.

HW: How does the Canadian women's music scene compare to what is happening in the United States?

LBT: The Canadian Women's Music Festival in Winnipeg is in its third year. I don't think we really have that type of label in Canada, though. Look at Heather Bishop. She's just doing what she does best, and she is great at it. She's not defining it. It's like we're not defining what we do as "women's music," we're just being a part of the mainstream music world labeled differently. It's not as big and organized because we've had to just be in the mainstream in order to survive. So we exist, and do not try to create a new circuit, but to just live and be and do what we do best.

So in that sense in the U.S. it's a little bit easier because you have...well, it depends on what you want. But let's say that you have the possibility of playing for women in the women's music industry by doing festivals, selling your records, being in HOT WIRE and all the papers—all within the women's circuit. And if you choose to, you can just be in there...and have a part-time job! You can do it because the U.S. is huge.

But in Canada I think that we just came out and continued doing what we do best at concerts. Through that we meet and have the bond. It makes us want to be together. It makes me a little

"If you tell me ,'*bonjour, comment ça va*?' it means so much to me. You've told me, 'yes, I speak a little bit of French—I can say hello, how are you?' That touches me because you are daring into something that you don't know much of. And no, you're not perfect, but you're trying."

and people are seeing us that way. It's wonderful to see Heather do lesbian songs and children's songs because there are children there along with the women and the men in the room.

HW: If women and lesbians are so integrated into the mainstream music scene, why would it be necessary to have a separate festival like the one at Winnipeg?

LBT: Because it's really a privilege to get together with women from all over and to be able to see each other perform. When you are a performer, you don't have the opportunity to meet that many people unless you play the festivals, and I think that festivals are really important in that sense.

It's not that women's music doesn't exist, it's just that it's skeptical to talk about Canada because I am so Quebecois — you can't imagine how apart we are from our own country. The culture is completely different; as soon as you step into Quebec you feel you're in another country. The way of life, the way of thinking... I can talk about Canada when I really should say Quebec.

HW: Which Canadian artists besides yourself and Heather Bishop & Tracy Riley might fans of women's music want to hear?

LBT: Ferron and Connie Kaldor. Maybe Anita Best from Newfoundland. Jennifer Berezan writes really good stuff. She has a song called "Teacher's Song" which talks about a lesbian teacher who gets kicked out of school. Wonderbrass does experimental electronic jazz. Sherry Shute, a guitar player who sometimes plays with Heather, has an album coming out. Katherine McKay is an incredible songwriter from Toronto. And of course Lillian Allen from Toronto. There are many.

HW: What is your definition of "women's music"?

LBT: Music written with a woman's consciousness, whether it be lesbian-identified or feminist-identified. Women's music to me is conscious music. Some women are lesbian-oriented, and that's fine; others are not out with the "L" word, but they're singing other things that are conscious, that are healing. I feel that women's music is healing music. We have this energy that is very powerful and what we do with our songs is a responsibility.

When I heard Alive! do "Spirit Healer" at the Montreal Jazz Festival the place was filled with people from all over Montreal, men and women, and everyone was standing there. The tears, they just came out of my eyes. You could just feel it and not stop yourself. Just let go and listen to it; that is power. That is energy and it's positive. That's what we have — the power to do it, and all the tools that we need to make this energy work, and we have a real thirst for growth. When I go into women's communities I see how many women are in therapy, and that's because there's a lot of growth there. When you're in therapy, it's because you're trying to grow and you need some help on the way. That in itself says a lot about women's energy.

HW: Can styles other than the traditional singer-songwriter folk music be "women's music"?

LBT: Yeah. I like rhythmic stuff; I really like to boogie. It depends on what's written in it and how it's performed and arranged. I think we're trying new ways. If it comes into my life, my home, and I feel that this lady is talking to me, that this lady when she wrote that song knew what she was talking about...if I can feel the performer, and know where she's coming from, then I will like that music. I won't be touched by Whitney Houston because I know she's saving all her love for


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whatever man she's saving it for. And I know that that's not touching me. For love songs, I want to be touched. Even if she doesn't say "man" I know where she's coming from.

HW: What if you found out that Whitney Houston was in fact a lesbian?

LBT: Still she didn't write the song. You look at the video and—have you seen it? — it does not touch me. It's not women's music.

HW: The message of that song seems retrogressive in that it glorifies the old stereotype of a woman waiting powerlessly for some man.

LBT: But we do wait around — we do! I'm not PC. We do wait around. I do it. When I'm in love, I'm in love.

HW: Then what makes one song about women's experience "women's music" and another song not "women's music"?

LBT: There are different ways of doing it. You can only say so much in love songs; they've been said 10,000 times and it's very hard to say them differently. The thing that makes it different is that, for example, in one song I say, "I'm rising in love with you," and for me that's what makes that song different. I felt I was "rising" in love when I always fell flat on my face before. That was the difference; the thing is when you're writing songs to try to grow. Women's music has a basic consciousness no matter what the subject is.

HW: Have you always been involved with music?

LBT: My family background is


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very musical. My mother is a musician — keyboards. She pushed me to sing and to do music since I was six years old. She had a five-piece band with a sax, bass, drum, and guitar. They did Top 40 and dance music for weddings and different types of parties. I was always following them around when they would play. My mother always had trouble with drummers. They were problems because they were after a lot of women or drinking or just late—drummers are difficult ones, in the boys. When I was about 10, that drummer taught me how to do slow dances on the kit so that he could go cruise the girls. Then it went to different rhythms. I ended up becoming the drummer for the next two or three years. I got better, and so I grew up. When I was 14 I got my first guitar, and I just started to play by myself.

HW: What about the piano?

LBT: I've only been playing piano for very little time, about two years. I can only play what I write. I don't consider myself an excellent, accomplished musician. I want to learn a lot. In my spare time I'd like to take a course. I'd like to be known in my life for being a good songwriter, for my melodic lines. I accompany myself and have arrangements that are in my mind that I want to develop with time. Working on the album was good for that because it made me use my instincts a lot.

HW: Anything else?

LBT: I'm really touched by how people are receiving the French culture. It's been difficult for a long time. Going into western Canada or the United States with half your songs in French is scary


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when you're used to traveling in places where five years ago you would go with a Quebec license plate and get three flat tires. We are looked upon as being separatist. The reason being we're so radical, trying to keep the language. So now the times have changed and to be able to be accepted with my language, with my culture, and with my errors in English. I just find that people are very open to me, and it touches me a lot. People are trying to speak French. When I talk to them about that, people do say "bonjour," and that feels really good. It really does. I just want to thank those people for being so good to me.●

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

Photographers

We are very interested in your black and white photos of women musicians and performers. Action shots, especially from festivals, are needed. Send to HOT WIRE Graphics Department.

HOTLINE

By JOY ROSENBLATT

GATHERINGS

The THIRD ANNUAL SOUTHERN WOMEN'S MUSIC AND COMEDY FEST sponsored its own version of Hands Across America on site at the festival May 25. "Dykes Around the Lake" raised $1,600 which was donated to the Georgia Women's Shelter Network to be used for anti-homophobic training for shelter staff throughout the state, said off our backs.

The Southern California Committee for the first WEST COAST CONFERENCE OF OLD LESBIANS has announced plans for a two-day conference by and for lesbians over 60 and their friends. It is planned for spring 1987 and will be held in the greater Los Angeles area. Contact: West Coast Celebration, 2953 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405.

At press time, plans were underway for the THIRD NATIONAL WOMEN'S CHORAL FESTIVAL, to be held in Chicago November 7-10. More than 200 singers from 11 choruses were expected to participate. Contact: Ann Morris, Artemis Singers, 1416 W. Winnemac, Chicago, IL 60640.

The 1987 NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE will convene at Spelman College in Atlanta June 24-28, 1987. According to Atalanta, the conference, "Weaving Women's Colors: A Decade of Empowerment," will explore the intersection of race and gender. Contact: NWSA '87, Emory University, P.O. Box 21223, Atlanta, GA 30322. (404) 727-7845.

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

LAMMAS: Happy 13th. Adrienne Rich with Joanne Jimason (foreground), owner Mary Farmer, Donna Niles, and Debbie Morris (standing) at the Grand Opening weekend ceremonies.

ANNIVERSARIES

In August, Washington, DC's LAMMAS BOOKSTORE celebrated its 13th anniversary. LAMMAS opened a second store April 1, making it the first women's bookstore to have two branches in the same city. The Grand Opening weekend featured author receptions for ADRIENNE RICH and CHERYL CLARKE. The stores are located on Capitol Hill at 321 7th St. SE, (202) 546-7282, and at Dupont Circle, 1426 21st St. NW, (202) 775-8218.

WANTED

Listener-sponsored NPR radio station KUNR is seeking women's music records for airplay on "Women in Tune," their hour-long weekly program. At 20,000 watts stereo, their listening area includes Lake Tahoe and Carson City, a total service area of 370,000. Contact: "Women in Tune," Joyce Hansen, KUNR-88, University of Nevada/Reno, Office of Communication and Broadcasting, Reno, NV 89557. (702) 784-6591.

MARVEL COMICS is seeking a 10-14 year old female who can sing and dance for the Captain America Broadway musical, says Bitch.

PUBLICATIONS

CROSSING PRESS has a new line of books, "Woman-As-Sleuth Mysteries," which focus on female protagonists and are written by women. Contact: Irene Zahava, 307 W. State St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

NAIAD PRESS is seeking fiction works by lesbian authors in the international intrigue and spy novel genre as well as in science fiction. Contact: Naiad Press, P.O. Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302.

THE WOMEN'S HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER of Berkeley has published three series of documents on microfilm. Herstory is 90 reels covering 21,000 issues of 821 women's newsletters, journals, and newspapers published by and about women's liberation, professional, religious, civil rights, and peace groups.

WOMYN'S BRAILLE PRESS, INC. was created in 1980 by six blind women in Minneapolis, reports Communique Elles, and it has been working on the problem of the lack of feminist literature in formats accessible to blind and visually impaired women. They provide books on tape (160 titles) and in Braille, periodicals on tape, and a quarterly newsletter which is available in Braille and on tape. Contact: Womyn's Braille Press, P.O. Box 8475, Minneapolis, MN 55408. (612) 872-4352 days, (612) 822-0549 nights.

ALYSON PUBLICATIONS is seeking coming out stories for two future collections. Contact: Alyson Publications, attn: Coming Out Project, 40 Plympton St., Boston, MA 02118.

WOMEN

KATE SMITH died at the age of 79. She was best-known for her renditions of patriotic songs, especially "God Bless America." Her operatic voice was completely untrained and she never had a singing lesson.

JANIS IAN is songwriting and touring again for the first time since 1981. Feeling burned out, and reportedly tired of recording songs by other people that she didn't believe in, she decided to "stop being a famous person and go back to being a writer," according to Bitch. She has been writing songs with Nashville's Rhonda Kye Fleming.

ANNE FRANK, the well-known World War II Jewish diarist and concentration camp victim, was a lesbian, according to Philadelphia Gay News. That conclusion was drawn after an unedited version of the famous diary was published by the Dutch government. It contained specifically lesbian passages.

LYNETTE WOODARD has been selected by the Harlem Globetrotters as their first female player. Also, the all-woman soul group 9.9 has been chosen by the Globetrotters to introduce the new version of their theme song, according to Bitch.

86-year-old writer and social activist FLORENCE REECE died August 3 in Nashville of a heart ailment. Her song, "Which Side Are You On," written during the 1930s to describe the plight of Harlan County mine workers, became an anthem for the labor movement after it was recorded by Pete Seeger in 1941.

TERESA TRULL, now working with BONNIE HAYES, will release an album entitled A Step Away on Redwood Records. Her previous recordings have been on the Olivia label.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR, feminist philosopher and forerunner of the women's liberation movement, died in Paris April 21 at the age of 78. In her book, The Second Sex, she broke new ground by saying that women are made, not born, and that femininity is a socially-imposed idea that is linked to women's oppression.

NEWS

The recently-inaugurated ROCK HALL OF FAME in Cleveland, Ohio did not elect any women for the initial presentation, according to Bitch, and no women are on the election committee. ROBERTA FLACK was the only woman presenter.

SHE ROCK, a new all-woman pop quintet, has become the first U.S. pop group invited over to tour the People's Republic of China, stated Bitch. While they are there they will record an album for release in China only and film a Chinese TV broadcast.

Atalanta reports that "BANG BANG UBER ALLES," the musical written by JUNE JORDAN and ADRIENNE TORF, had a five-week run in Atlanta over the summer, with the last night as a benefit for the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance.

"MISOGYNY IN ROCK VIDEO," a pamphlet exploring the anti-woman trend, has been produced by EVELYN KANE. It discusses content, programming, audience demographics, current research, and how to effect change. Contact: Women Against Pornography, 358 W. 47th St., New York, NY 10036.

FILM & TV

TURNING TIDE PRODUCTIONS released a 30-minute documentary on the lives of five women who actively participated in the social revolution in Spain during the civil war in the 1930s. Broomstick said it is entitled All Our Lives/ De Toda La Vida, and that the women are as dynamic now in their eighties as they were during the revolt.

Women in the Director's Chair will sponsor their ANNUAL WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL on March 6-8, 1987, exhibiting the best current and classic media by women from around the world. Contact: Women in the Director's Chair, P.O. Box 4044, Chicago, IL 60654.

NANCY LIEBERMAN, a close friend of MARTINA NAVRATILOVA who is discussed in Martina's autobiography, is making a movie about a basketball player programmed to perfection by a computer, reports Philadelphia Gay News.

ROCK VIDEOS: MUCH MORE THAN MUSIC is a 25-minute program which examines values, sex roles, and love relationships as depicted in current rock videos. Hysteria stated it is produced by Victoria Canada's Women Against Pornography and is accompanied by an information kit that includes background information, ideas for discussion, a content analysis of a four-hour viewing period of Muchmusic (Canada's MTV), and a bibliography. Contact: Women Against Pornography, 1221 Oxford St., Victoria BC, V8V 2V6, Canada.

STEPHANIE BENNETT of Delilah Films in Connecticut, which did the home video compilation films The Girl Groups and The Compleat Beatles, is working on a project called "Women in Rock," which will feature interviews and performances by female stars, according to Bitch.

Music historian and archivist JEANNIE POOL has produced a video documenting California's all-women orchestras from 1893 to the present. It is now available at no charge for educational, non-profit use. Specify VHS, Beta, or 3/4". Contact: Cal State University Dept. of Music, Northridge, CA 91330. (818) 885-3157.

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

ON STAGE AND OFF

Bread and Roses Revisited:

Singing for Union Audiences

By Rena Yount

Each year the AFL-CIO and the University of College Labor Education Association sponsor several week-long "summer schools," leadership training sessions for union women. Women from a variety of unions throughout a particular region of the country spend the week in intense, often exhausting, study and discussion.

At one such summer school three years ago, the organizers mentioned several times through the week that a band would be coming to perform on Friday, and there would be a dance afterwards.

All week women kept asking, "Who are we going to dance with?" The organizers had no comment.

On Friday evening the band, Lifeline, arrived and played a long set. Then the Lifeline women put a dance tape on, got out on the floor, and began to dance.

With each other.

Slowly, other women began to join them. Then the pace picked up. After awhile the whole room was in motion, with line dances everywhere. It was a party, a blast, an escape valve—a way to blow off steam and to affirm their unity beyond the tensions of the week. For most of the women there, it was a new experience.

"By the end of the night we couldn't get them to stop," Jeanne Mackey of Lifeline says. "That's what music is about—it draws people together on a lot of different levels."

There is not a clearly-defined labor audience that women musicians can tap into in the same way they would approach, say, the college circuit. But a large potential audience is there. For Lifeline, performing for labor events, including many audiences of union women, has become a mainstay of their performing circuit.

Lifeline: bridging the gap between the labor movement and the women's community.

Lifeline is a four-woman band with an eclectic style drawing on folk, rock, jazz, and country. They recently added Rochelle Loconto, a drummer formerly of the rock band Acrilix and the women's rock band Squeeze Louise.

From the start, Lifeline has had something of a dual identity. It is a women's band, deeply rooted in the feminist movement, at home at Sisterfire or the National Women's Music Festival. At the same time, Lifeline identifies strongly with the labor movement. Their goal, in Mary Trevor's words, is to "bridge the gap between various movements, especially between the women's community and the labor movement."

Their early labor-related gigs were at strike rallies, picketlines, and union fundraisers. They performed free or for little money as a way of giving support to particular unions and strikes. At the same time, they were building contacts. With that background, Lifeline has been able to move to the next level and take advantage of the fact that there are unions with the resources to pay—and sometimes pay well—for music at their conferences and other events.

Mary says, "In the past, there was a whole tradition of using music to organize and encourage people. That's largely been lost. But we're encouraging unions to rediscover it. We're trying to help build a labor circuit."

Lifeline plays for both general and women's labor audiences. For instance, they recently performed at the annual conference of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees), with 8,000 delegates in attendance.

But the main areas for union organizing today are minorities and women, especially in the service sector. These are people who historically have been unorganized. As unions turn their attention to the service sector, there is a new emphasis on all-women conferences, leadership training, and other ways of involving women in the unions.

Women, including women of color, are finding they have more opportunity to rise to leadership positions within a union structure than in the corporate world. This is a very relative statement, of course. It's not that women have a lot of power in unions. Not yet, anyway. But there is a growing

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

network of active union women. When they are looking for musicians, they are likely to call on Lifeline.

For many union women, Lifeline's performances mark their first exposure to women's music or to any alternative culture. The pro-labor content of the music often guarantees a positive response; working-class people frequently have a sense of being ignored or patronized by the mainstream culture, and by alternative movements as well. Kris Koth, Lifeline's bass player, says, "For a lot of women, it's the first time they have seen a performer get up on stage and go to bat for them."

Still, Lifeline does not limit itself to work-related material. "Monday Shutdown," which voices the alienation most of us feel in our jobs, may lead into an anti-war piece; a song about Harriet Tubman may be followed by one addressed to legislators who voted against the ERA: "You screwed us over/ You voted 'Nay' / We're gonna get you / Come election day..."

"Women find that one very therapeutic," says Jeanne Mackey, a founding member of Lifeline.

Lifeline sings love songs, humorous songs, and feminist material such as Betsy Rose's "Coming Into My Years," or their New/Wave rock version of "No Hole in My Head," the Malvina Reynolds classic:

Everybody thinks my head's full
of nothing,
Wants to put his special stuff in—
Fill it up with candy wrappers,
Keep out sex and revolution—
But there's no hole in my head.
Too bad.

"Music brings out people's more open-minded aspects," says Jeanne. "There are things that would get people real shaken up if you said it in a speech, but you can slip it through in a song." Still, the concept of bridging gaps between different movements inevitably means dealing with people who have not been exposed to your views, or who disagree with them.

"We spend a lot of time selecting appropriate material to express what we have to say," Kris says. "We have pre-gig meetings and we work it out very carefully — the songs, the raps." They have to be prepared for diverse, sometimes unpredictable, reactions. For example, Lifeline recently performed a song on the contributions of Asian Americans before a union audience, where there is frequently resentment of Asian immigrants "stealing our jobs." The song was well-received. Then they did an anti-militarist song, "What If the Russians Don't Come?", which usually brings laughter and applause. That day it met with silence. "You can't let that throw you," Kris says. "You plow on."

Lifeline women do not overtly identify themselves as lesbian in union contexts. However, many women recognize them as lesbian. "We've had a number of lesbians tell us that we've made their lives and jobs a little bit easier," Jeanne says. "We're up there performing, playing good music, singing to union women about their lives and their issues—we're hard to discount. That begins to break down people's homophobia." Kris adds, "Women come up to me after a performance and say, 'It makes us so happy to see you here.' Again, it's something they haven't seen before—a lesbian on stage singing to a basically straight audience and getting away with it. They think it's great."

Homophobia is wide-spread in unions, of course, as it is in the rest of the culture. But it is beginning to be challenged by progressive union women. This comes partly from the recognition that "queer baiting" is used to attack and undermine all strong women. Also, there is a union tradition of solidarity, of standing by your fellow workers even if they are different, that can be drawn on.

At one women's summer school, the staff felt it was necessary to begin dealing with homophobia more directly. Lifeline women were involved in staff discussions on how best to raise the issue. The decision was to focus on teachers and on the issue of job discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. Lifeline started it all off with Charlie King's song to Anita Bryant:

Thank you, Anita,
You couldn't have been sweeter.
You brought us together like
never before.
Thanks to your mission,
You new-found profession,
It's now your obsession, not mine
anymore.

There followed two days of intense discussion in which Lifeline women participated as well. A number of union women came out to the co-unionists for the first time. "It was hard. It was upsetting," Kris says. "There was a lot of homophobia. But as I was rather abruptly told when my anger hit a high point, 'Don't you realize this is the beginning? We were doing this three years ago about racism in the union.' "

"Wherever people are trying to work out new values, there is conflict," Mary says. "That's part of the process."

In the past several years feminist musicians have been making increasing cross-overs and connections with other communities, from anti-nuke organizations to New Age bookstores. This process is important in developing a broader base of support for our music, and in building coalitions that can have a greater impact on the country as a whole.

What connections are open to individual women or bands depends on their own interests and areas of knowledge. For women interested in exploring labor-related work, there are points to be aware of:

- You will need to develop a body of songs that is work-related and union-related. Whatever else you have to say or sing about, it starts with that.
- You will probably have to "pay your dues" through free or low-pay performances connected to local labor issues: strikes, local conferences, etc. Since there is not a developed "labor circuit" for musicians, personal contacts and recommendations are essential. You will need to become acquainted with the labor scene

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Rena Yount is a freelance writer in Washington, DC. She is a member of the women's poetry group Stone Soup, and recently published her first fiction.

THE AUDIO ANGLE

Compact Discs

By Karen Kane

Rejoice! No more worries about ruining your nice new needle with an old scratchy record or destroying a nice new album with an old worn-out needle.

Those days are slowly leaving us—the compact disc is here!

In my opinion (especially with the revolution of the CD Walkperson and the CD car player), compact discs are here to stay. They can store more than an hour's worth of music, and are just about as convenient as cassettes. They have better sound quality than cassettes or records and, most importantly, don't wear out like vinyl or magnetic tape can. The quality remains intact as well as the actual physical product itself because it does not use needles that touch its surface. Utilizing a laser system, the compact disc is never actually touched and therefore will not deteriorate at all.

The CD brings the consumer much closer to hearing the original quality of the master tape of a recording. According to the July 1986 issue of Digital Audio & Compact Disc Review, "The CD is going to be much more than simply a replacement for the LP record. The CD is an extremely versatile digital medium, able to store a wide range of audio, data, graphics, and software. The CDs of tomorrow will represent enormous storage capacities that will change our listening and buying habits."

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

Barb O'Heaney

WHAT ARE COMPACT DISCS?

In order to properly answer this question, I must first explain some new advances in the recording process.

Since the turn of the century the analog, magnetic tape recorder has been the norm for storing sound onto various kinds of materials, one of them being magnetic tape.

"Analog means similar or in direct relation with," explain Robert Runstein and David Miles Huber in Modern Recording Techniques. "When applied to the analog tape recorder, it refers to the fact that the magnetic energy stored onto a magnetic tape (in the form of the smallest known permanent magnets) is in direct relation with and in proportion to the electrical signal given at its input."

The analog tape recorder is plagued by many problems, as is magnetic tape with all of its non-linearities. Noise (caused by both tape hiss and machine electronics), distortion, and other irregularities result in deterioration of the original sound source when reproduced. However, most of these problems are minimized by the technicians who make the machines and by the maintenance people who take care of them.

"Recently," say Runstein and Huber, "the digital revolution and the storage of information onto tape in the form of a digital stream of binary numbers [binary means consisting of two parts or things, or being a system of numbers having two as its base] has given new life to the recording industry by raising the clarity and quality of sound reproduction to new heights. With digital recording equipment, the end result is a recording that is free from all the non-linearities inherent to the analog medium."

Nowadays when you go into the recording studio you can choose to record in either format. Digital equipment is very expensive, so the studios that do have it are going to charge a lot for its use. In the New England area, not one studio has a digital multitrack recording machine, but many have the necessary digital equipment available for mixing. This means if you record onto a 16-track or 24-track machine here in New England, it will be the analog format. When you mix (balance all the tracks together) down to a stereo master tape, then you could choose the digital format. One reason I personally like to do this—besides the clarity—is the absolute absence of tape hiss when digital equipment is used. Whether you record analog or digital, you can produce vinyl, cassettes, or compact discs from your final product.

In order to understand the CD, it is necessary to understand the manufacturing process of both vinyl and CDs. When you are having vinyl made from your finished master tape, the tape is played back and fed through a disc mastering console onto a disc-cutting lathe. The electrical signals are converted into the mechanical motion of a stylus and cut into the surface of a lacquer-coated

recording disc. This disc gets sent to the plating plant and is electroplated with nickel. After completion of the electroplating, the nickel plate is pulled away from the disc. This nickel plate is called the "matrix" and is a negative image of the master.

This negative image is electroplated to produce a nickel positive image called a "mother." The mother is electroplated many times, producing the "stampers" (negative images) which are used to press the records. The stampers are placed on the top (Side 1) and the bottom (Side 2) of a hydraulic press with a lump of vinyl placed in the middle. With the press closed, steam lets the vinyl flow around the raised grooves of the stampers. A cooling system makes sure that the vinyl becomes cool before the press is opened. When opened, the vinyl gets pulled off the mold.

There are many problems plaguing the vinyl-making process, so a new format has been a long time coming. With the intervention of digital recording in the industry came the process of making compact discs. According to Runstein and Huber, "The CD, a silvery plastic disc, has its information digitally transferred onto the reflective underside of the disc in the form of microscopic 'pits.' When placed in a compact disc player, a laser is reflected off this pitted surface and returned back to a 'pick-up' in the form of a digital stream of information. This stream of information is then restored back to the music (sound) through complex digital-to-analog conversion procedures."

In manufacturing the CDs, after all the digital processing has been done, the process is very similar to record pressing. The CD master goes through an electroplating process, creating stampers used in the same manner as the vinyl process.

CD history began on September 1, 1984 when the first CD manufacturing plant was opened in Terre Haute, Indiana. Bruce Springsteen's Born in the USA was the first CD to be manufactured. In December of 1984 came the first "CD/LV" player, which can play either CDs or videodiscs. The CFD-5 (otherwise known as the "CD Boom Box") came along in July of 1984. Also in July many companies came up with the 2-in-1 CD player, allowing 150 minutes of playing time. The CD explosion was really evident when The Compact Disc Group opened a toll-free hotline for consumers and retailers (800-872-5565).

Increasing numbers of record companies are making compact discs along with their vinyl and cassettes. I've read in the latest CD magazines that record companies are beginning to re-manufacture a lot of old recordings into CDs. Now you can really throw out all those old scratchy records!

There also seems to be a great demand for CDs that is exceeding the availability. Some industry experts predict that CD sales will equal the combined sales of LPs and cassettes by 1989. There are presently 16 major CD manufacturing facilities in the U.S., and even with increased production at these facilities the consumer can still expect a long dry spell. CD production is expected to increase by 100 million each year for the next several years.

Compact disc players started out being extremely expensive, but I have started to see the non-portable ones for around $200. What dictates the price is the quality of the laser beam in the CD. The CD Walkperson has been averaging between $150-$300. I suspect that these prices will come down even further. A CD doesn't need a lot of special attention in its care. It will consistently deliver high-quality sound and will virtually last a lifetime.

CDs AND WOMEN'S MUSIC

I talked with Merle Bicknell of the WILD distribution network here in Boston to get her comments concerning women's music and the CD. She believes that CDs are definitely in our future and has heard the difference in quality for herself. She added that Redwood Records is talking about releasing five titles onto CD very soon. The change will be slow in coming, however. Right now Merle is having a hard time convincing the places that carry women's music to sell CDs, but she is confident that the change will come. She already carries CDs of Windham Hill artists, Suzanne Vega, and Joan Armatrading.

The biggest impact of CDs on women's music is at the record store level, according to Karen Gotzler of Midwest Music. "Alternative labels that do not have CDs—like the labels that the WILD distributors mostly carry—are getting less and less space because stores are making room for compact discs," she said. "Surveys show that every CD (because of its cost) replaces three records, so a store that has a certain dollar budget available for record buying can only buy one third the number of CDs that they could of records. When they do that they then have to cut out that many albums."

WILD distributors are now getting less and less display space in stores as well as orders for lower quantities of records. The problem is not affecting sales in alternative outlets like bookstores, but there is an increasing impact in the mainstream record stores.

CDs are here to stay.●

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

NOTEWORTHY WOMEN

Women in Symphony Orchestras
A History of Activism

By Janna MacAuslan and Kristan Aspen

Since the beginning of patriarchal times women have had their "proper place" in society defined by men. In music certain instruments were considered appropriate for women to play, namely harp, guitar, and keyboard instruments. Notice that the only orchestral instrument listed here is the harp. Women have been largely barred from traditional symphony orchestras up until very recent decades.

While female vocal ensembles have been prized since Baroque times (early 1600s), there have been only occasional ensembles of female instrumentalists. Most documentation about such groups makes it clear that they were an oddity, and certainly not the rule.

The most famous of these exceptions occurred in Venice where female orphans were taught instruments in orphanages called ospedali. During his travels to Venice for the French government in 1739-40, Charles de Brosses heard some of the performances of the female orchestra at one of the ospedali. His description is quite interesting:

> "The ospedali have the best music here. There are four of them all for illegitimate or orphaned girls or those whose parents cannot support them. These are brought up at the State's expense and trained exclusively in music. Indeed they sing like angels, play the violin, flute, organ, oboe, cello, bassoon — in short, no instrument is large enough to frighten them...Of the four orphanages I go most to the Ospedali della Pieta. It ranks first for the perfection of its symphonies."[1]

As the reputation of the ospedali musicians grew, the upper classes began paying tuition to send their daughters to these schools for training in music. In 1771 Dr. Charles Burney, the noted historian of music, described a visit he made to one of the, by then, famous female music schools:

Diana Davies

1978 New England Women's Symphony

> "I obtained permission to be admitted into the music school of the Mendicanti (of which Signor Bartoni is maestro), and was favored with a concert, which was wholly performed on my account, and lasted two hours, by the best vocal and instrumental performers of this hospital. It was curious to see, as well as to hear every part of this excellent concert, performed by female violins, hautbois, tenors, bases, harpsichord, French horns, and even double bases."[2]

At least one famous composer—Vivaldi—worked with these orchestras, and yet it is a full 100 years later before another reference can be found in music history books to women playing in an orchestra. It remains for today's researchers to delve deeper and discover what happened during that 100 years.

What follows is a brief outline of the development of women's orchestras beginning in the late 1800s.

The Vienna Damen Orchester came to the U.S. in 1871. This women's ensemble toured in the fall of 1871, prompting many American imitators to spring up after the Austrian group returned to Europe. The group consisted mostly of strings, having no brass, clarinets, oboes, or bassoons. Their repertory was light classics, waltzes, operetta themes, and an occasional movement of a symphony. The most famous of the imitators was the Ladies' Elite Orchestra which performed regularly at Atlantic Garden for more than 35 years. While New York had the majority of these beer garden entertainment ensembles, there were also ladies' orchestras in Ohio, Massachusetts, California, and elsewhere.

Between 1870 and 1900 there was a big increase in the number of women who were studying instruments and hoping to have careers in music, either as players or as teachers. Judith Tick, in the new book, Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950, states that the U.S. census reports show the biggest leap in females entering the music profession from 1870-1900. This trend is also documented by membership rolls of professional musical organizations. The percentage of women employed in music between 1870 and 1900 rose dramatically from 36 percent[3] to 56.4 percent of all musicians.[3] It was during this time that a few female harpists (harp being still considered a "female" instrument) began to enter male-dominated symphony orchestras, usually being the only female member. The Chicago Symphony had a woman harpist during its first season (1892-93).

The Musicians' Union legally excluded women from participation in symphony orchestras until 1904 when it joined the American Federation of Labor. Many orchestra leaders were caught offguard when the union merger came, and the following opinion was voiced in an article in the Music Standard which was published in 1904:

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

"Women harpists are most desirable in an orchestra but as cornetist, clarinetists, flutists and the like, they are quite impossible, except in concert work [meaning as soloists]. Women cannot possibly play brass instruments and look pretty, and why should they spoil their looks?"[4]

With prejudice against them so strong, women, with the exception of a few harpists, were forced to start their own ensembles.

By 1900 there were a number of reputable female orchestras. One of the most famous and longest-lived was the Boston Fadette Orchestra. The Fadettes were organized by conductor Caroline Nichols in 1888. They were booked in theaters all over the U.S. by vaudeville manager B.F. Keith. Their repertory was quite diverse. They played classical, standard, and popular works consisting of symphonies, opera overtures, salon music, and dramatic "film" music used as background for early silent films. They also worked comedy routines into their act. All this folderol was apparently necessary for a female orchestra to survive financially. They had to appeal to a broad audience, and the comedy undoubtedly contributed to their unique, unconventional image. But being an oddity was not Caroline Nichols' goal for the Fadettes. She sought to provide employment for young players who were not being employed by male orchestras.

In Carol Neuls-Bates' anthology of source readings Women in Music, she quotes Nichols from a 1908 interview in the Pittsburgh Gazette Times:

"There are 20-30 woman's orchestras of a professional character in the United States today," she said recently, "and while none of them has gained the fame that has come to the Fadettes, they all managed to make a good living for their members. If young women are going to earn their living, why not put them at something that will be refined, elevating in its influences, and artistic in its development? Don't you think the violin is better than the typewriter? Hasn't the girl who makes her living with a fiddle a better opportunity and greater social prestige than her sister who works her way through life playing the keys of a typewriter in a stuffy office? Mind you I do not disparage the typist! But I say all things considered, isn't it better to fit a girl to earn her living by music than in a commercial pursuit of any sort? I only use the typewriter as an illustration because there are more girls doing that sort of thing perhaps than in any other single avenue of breadwinnning for women."[5]

The Fadettes were unique in that they held their own with male orchestras of the time, occasionally sharing the stage with John Phillip Sousa's band and other popular male ensembles.

From 1925-45 was a period of major development for ladies' orchestras. This increase in the number of women's ensembles was part of the mainstream trend after World War II toward more orchestras in general. There were also growing numbers of graduates from the new music institutions which were formed in the 1920s: Eastman (1921), the Curtis Institute (1924), and Juilliard (1924). Due to the new acceptability of women pursuing careers in music, the majority of music graduates from these institutions were female. These women, highly trained in the finest American music schools, were not content to work in vaudeville theaters and hotels. They aspired to the concert stage, where they could play a completely symphonic repertory. They were, however, still barred from traditional male orchestras.

With nearly 30 active women's orchestras in the U.S. from the 1920s through the 1940s, almost every major city had one. California had one of the largest, the 105-member Women's Symphony of Long Beach. Chicago had 100 members in its Women's Symphony. Other cities included Portland, Oregon; Cleveland, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. In Canada the city of Montreal also had a women's symphony, founded in 1940, which lasted until 1965.

Not all of the orchestras had women conductors, but often even if a man started out in this position, later in the life of the orchestra a woman would become conductor. Some of the early women's ensembles filled in with men players, and one even required the male members to dress in drag to give the illusion of an all-female ensemble!

The women's orchestras of the 1920s-40s often had highly competent female conductors who were not being hired in the traditional conducting circles. Elizabeth Kuper had tried to start a women's symphony in Berlin in 1910, and the Hague and London in 1922, before coming to America in 1924 to found the American Women's Symphony Orchestra of New York. The attempts she made were unsuccessful for financial reasons.

Also organized in 1924 were the Women's Symphony Orchestra of Chicago, whose conductors included Ethel Leginska [see "Noteworthy Women" in the March 1986 issue of HOT WIRE] and Ebba Sundstrom. Leginska went on to start two more women's symphonies: in Boston (1926) and briefly, in New York, the National Women's Symphony (1932).

Frederique Petrides founded the Orchesrette Classique of New York. She also published a newsletter, "Women in Music," that documented the activities of her own and other women's orchestras across the country. It was published from 1935 until 1940 when she ran into financial difficulty. It also became a forum for women to speak out about being barred from entry into male orchestras.

In 1934 Antonia Brico started the New York Women's Symphony Orchestra [see "Noteworthy Women" in the March 1986 issue of HOT WIRE]. Brico was very outspoken about women being barred from orchestras:

"The law, medicine, economics, politics, and many other professions are open to women," she said. "Why then should not music be equally open to them? There is no lack of opportunity to study, what with tuitionless schools, music colleges, private teachers. And the union admits us to its ranks. But what after that? Where shall we work, when so many organizations will not only not accept us, but not even give us auditions?"[6]

Others like Sir Thomas Beecham had already made up their minds:

"There is no good reason why women should not be employed in orchestras. The chief question to be asked is whether they can play as well as men. After that other considerations may be taken up. Can a conductor enforce discipline among the women as well as he can among men, or will they

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Janna MacAuslan and Kristan Aspen make up the guitar and flute duo Musica Femina. The group has raised eyebrows from coast to coast with their concert/informance and lectures about women's contributions to classical music. The duo has also produced two cassettes of classical women's music.

LÁADAN

Lesson #3

By Suzette Haden Elgin

Wolaya Wohíya Lub (The Little Red Hen)

Bíide:

Rilrili wolaya wohíya lub wo. Eril náhalehal be i naya álub bethath i thaáhel be wo. Wemeneya eril di lub, "Bíi aril dala le edeth wa." I mime be, "Báa aril den bebáa leth?" "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di muda bedim wo. "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di éesh bedim wo. I "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di dithemid bedim wo. "Bíi aril hal le sholanenal wi," eril di lub. I eril shub be haleth wo.

Wumaneya eril di be, "Bíi aril róo le edeth i el le baleth wa. Báa aril den bebáa leth?" "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di muda. "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di éesh. I "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di dithemid. "Bíi aril hal le sholanenal wi," eril di lub. I eril shub be haleth wo.

Ihée di be, "Bíi aril nayod le baleth. Báada aril den bebáa leth?" "Bíi aril meden neth lezh hulehul wa!" medi muda i éesh i dithemid. "Bó mewam nezh!" eril di lub. "Bíidi aril meyod le i álub letha baleth — hulehul — wi!" Bíidi eril hinal wo.

NOTES:

1. As these lessons go along and the readings get more complicated, I have to start making changes in their format; otherwise, they'd soon take a dozen pages instead of two. From now on, therefore, I'll do what I did in this lesson: I'll abbreviate grammatical labels as much as I can; I will substitute summaries for full translations where that's possible; and I won't keep translating the same forms over and over again. If you find it impossible to understand, please let me know and I'll try to figure out another way of doing it.

2. The pronouns in this story are in sets, and if you don't have the grammar book they may confuse you. Briefly, the forms go like this: "le, ne, be" for "I, you, she/it/he"; "le, lezh, len" for "I, WE-SEVERAL, WE-MANY." (And "ne, nezh, nen," "be, bezh, ben.")

3. The very first line of the "Linguist's Translation" has a null symbol (ø) in it, as a courtesy to speakers of English. Láadan has no "copula"—that is, no obligatory form of "be" that has to appear; for "she is tired," Láadan, like many other languages, would have just "she tired." The null is where the "be" form would go if Láadan had one.

4. When the hen asks, "Who will help me?" for the last time, she puts the affix "-da" on the question word "Báa." This "-da" is the marker that means, "I say this to you only as a joke."

5. Finally, when she tells the do-nothings she doesn't need their help to eat the bread, she adds the teaching affix "-di" to the declarative, to let them know that she's hoping they will understand this and learn from it. And the command form "Bó" that starts her speech is one used very rarely, and usually for speaking to small children.

6. CORRECTIONS: There were three typos in Lesson #2 (July 1986 issue). The word for "carpet" is "rem" not "ren." The word for "melody," "wethalehale," is not "melody path"; it is "music path," which makes more sense. And I forgot entirely to tell you that "Aranesha" is a kind of pet name for Arkansas; the full form is the "Arahanesha" that is in your dictionary. Someone who disliked Arkansas intensely would use the pejorative marker "-lh-" and turn that into "Lharahaneshalh," marked for negative content at both ends. Very handy, that "-lh-" marker!

And then there was the set of corrections provided in the lesson, with the explanation that they were primarily for misplaced or omitted tone markers...but none of the words had any tone markers AT ALL. Let's try those one more time please.

Láadan does not ever allow double vowels unless one of them is marked for tone. Any time you see something like "neeha" you will know that it has to be a mistake, and that it should have either "née-" or "neé-" as a first syllable.

7. You might be interested in knowing a little more about the words for "bridge" and "butterfly."

LÁADAN LESSONS
Recommended materials

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

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

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

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

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

LINGUIST'S TRANSLATION

"The Little Red Hen"

First line: Láadan
Second line: morpheme-by-morpheme, upper case
Third line: "free" translation

1. Bíide: (DECLARATIVE-NARRATIVE, "I say to you, in a story:")
2. Rilrili (ø) wolaya wohíya lub wo.
   HYPOTHETICAL RELATIVE-RED RELATIVE-LITTLE HEN HYPOTHETICAL.
3. Once upon a time, there was a little red hen.

1. Eril náhalehal be i naya álub
2. PAST CONTINUE-WORK-VERY SHE AND LOOK-AFTER CHICK
   bethath
   SHE-POSSESSIVE-BY-BIRTH
3. She worked very hard, and looked after her chick

1. i thaáhel be wo.
2. AND GET-BY SHE HYPOTHETICAL. (3. and she got by.)

1. Wemeneya eril di lub, "Bíi aril dala le edeth
2. SPRING-IN PAST SAY HEN, DEC FUTURE PLANT I GRAIN-OBJECT
   wa."
   MY-PERCEPTIONS.
3. In the spring the hen said, "I will plant the grain."

1. I mime be, "Báa aril den bebáa leth?"
2. AND ASK SHE Q FUTURE HELP 3rd PERSON-Q I-OBJECT
3. And she asked, "Who will help me?"

1. "Bíi ra le hulehul wa!" eril di muda bedim wo.
2. DEC NEG I FOR-SURE M.P. PAST SAY PIG SHE-TO HYPOTHETICAL
3. "Not me!" said the pig to her. [Repeat for "eesh" (the sheep) and "dithemid," (the cow).]

1. "Bíi aril hal le sholanenal wi," eril di lub. I eril shub
2. DEC FUTURE WORK I ALONE-MANNER PAST SAY HEN. AND PAST DO
   be haleth wo.
   SHE WORK OBJ-HYPOTHETICAL.
3. "I will do it all by myself," said the hen. And she did the work.

1. Wumaneya eril di be, "Bíi aril róo le edeth i el le baleth wa."
2. SUMMER-IN HARVEST MAKE BREAD-OBJ
3. In the summer, she said, "I will harvest the grain and make the bread."
   (ADD "Who will help me?" AND AS BEFORE, THEY ALL SAY "Not me!" AND SHE SAYS SHE WILL DO IT ALONE, AND SHE DOES.)

1. Ihée di be, "Bíi aril nayod le baleth. Báada aril den bebáa leth?"
2. LATER START-EAT Q-JOKE
3. Later she said, "I'm going to eat the bread. Who will help me?"

1. "Bíi aril meden neth lezh hulehul wa!" medi
2. PLURAL-HELP YOU-OBJ WE PLURAL-SAY
   muda i éesh i dithemid.
3. "We will help you!" said the pig and the sheep and the cow.

1. "Bó mewam nezh!" eril di lub. "Bíidi aril
2. COMMAND PLURAL-BE STILL YOU DEC-TEACHING
   meyod
   PLURAL-EAT
3. "You just stay where you are!" said the hen. "We will eat the bread,

1. le i álub letha baleth—hulehul—wa!" Bíide eril hinal wo.
2. THUS
3. me and my chick!" And that's the way it was.

One of the things that women do in their language behavior, in all of the languages I know, is a whole lot of body language work. I wanted that work to be less in Láadan, and the language is therefore constructed to lexicalize body language. (That is, to give it a pronounced form, instead of leaving it all to be done by tone of voice and gesture and facial expression and so on.) That's why you have the set of words that tell whether the sentence coming up is a statement or question or something else; and that's why you have the endings that tell whether the sentence is meant as a joke or a lesson or a narrative or something else—to reduce the communications labor for the women speaking. The word for bridge, when its tone markers are in the right place, has a sound pattern like this: The word for butterfly is like this:  Since intonation (the melody that carries the spoken words) is part of body language, this is another way of lexicalizing it. For both of these words, the voice makes the shape of the thing named, in the ear's space and the ear's time. Shapes "in the air," you perceive, but for the ear rather than for the eye. ●

A DOZEN CORRECTIONS TO ADD TO YOUR DICTIONARY

ALIEN (noun): néehá
AT LAST, FINALLY: dooí
BABY NURSE: háwithá
BARREN ONE: rawóobaná
TO BETRAY: ulhad
TO BRAID: boóbin
BRIDGE: oódóo
BUT: izh
BUTTERFLY: áalaá
COUSIN: edin
CUPBOARD, DRESSER: dimidim
TO BE CLEAN: the second entry of "to be clean" should be "to be *clear*"

Second Annual 'HOT WIRE' Readers' Choice Award

Now is the time for readers of 'HOT WIRE' to send in nominations for the second annual Readers' Choice Award.

See page 51 for details

THE TENTH MUSE

Sappho and the Goddess Aphrodite

Sappho's Religion: the erotic dimension of the sacred

By Jorjet Harper

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

For the ancient Greeks, gods and goddesses were not metaphors but real entities. These immortal beings took a great interest in human events, and their progeny could be found in the trees, in the streams, in the rustling of the woods. They revealed themselves through nature, through other people, through dreams and even in conscious thoughts and visions. You never knew when a god or goddess might be appearing to you in the form of, say, a beggar, or a beautiful woman, or an animal (a favorite guise of the rather bestial king of the gods, Zeus, when he went out to seduce mortal women). And these divinities, especially personal favorites, could be summoned by their devotees.

Though Sappho's poetry mentions several other goddesses and gods—Artemis, Hera, Apollo—the most important divinity by far in her life was the Goddess Aphrodite.

The Boeotian farmer and epic poet Hesiod, who lived in the eighth century B.C. (several centuries after Homer and before Sappho), is the source of much of our knowledge of the religious beliefs of the ancient Greek peoples. In his Theogony he describes how the Goddess Aphrodite was created from sea foam: the Titan Cronos (Time) ambushed his own father Uranos (Heaven) and severed his genitals with a jagged-toothed flint sickle. When the genitals of Heaven were cast into the sea, "a white foam spread around them from the immortal flesh and in it there grew a maiden." This was Aphrodite.

The Aphrodite from Arles, attributed to Praxiteles, c. 350-330 B.C. Roman copy. Paris, Louvre.

Hesiod's story was undoubtedly taken as literal truth by some of the people of his time. Today we can interpret it as an example of the woman-coming-from-man, male-as-primary-creator type of myth that is familiar in a number of religious-mythological contexts. In all likelihood, such stories served as propaganda—sometimes blatant, sometimes subtle—for the patriarchal consciousness that was, from roughly the fifteenth century B.C. onward, eroding the worship of the Great Mother, the original focus of religious mystery since the paleolithic beginnings of human culture.

It is believed that Aphrodite actually originated as a fertility goddess in the Orient, or perhaps on the island of Crete, and may have been a triple goddess, that is, worshipped as virgin, mother, and crone (associated with the three Fates). She was often identified with Astarte and sometimes with Isis as the supreme goddess, presiding over all aspects of birth and death. Worship of Aphrodite spread throughout Greece as she was assimilated into the Greek pantheon as the goddess of love, birth, beauty, marriage, sexuality, hunting, and the sea. Her following was particularly strong on the island of Cyprus, and consequently she is sometimes called "the Cyprian." During Sappho's time, the sixth century B.C., it was this "incarnation" of Aphrodite that flourished, though probably traces of the earlier concept of the all-encompassing goddess still prevailed, especially among those who, like Sappho, were her priestesses and followers.

When the Greek culture was eclipsed by the power of Rome, Aphrodite became the Roman goddess Venus, and her focus was further narrowed: she became the Goddess of Love—especially sexual love. Her statues proliferated. Many of them were—as in the case with much ancient statuary that has survived—Roman copies of now-lost Greek originals. The Birth of Venus, the adventures of her son Eros (the Roman Cupid), and tales of her many love affairs enjoyed a triumphant popularity in the art of the Renaissance. As

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

such, Venus became the prototype of the modern "sex goddess."

SACRED CONCEPTS OF LOVE AND BEAUTY

It is difficult for us to gain insight into the spiritual system of the ancient Greeks, especially through the layers of mythology and its constant reinterpretation, history, changing artistic iconography, and above all, through the veil of the totally male-oriented belief systems we have been taught in our so-called modern world. But judging from her poetry, there is no doubt that Sappho wholly believed in the existence of Aphrodite, and dedicated her life and art to her own interpretation of the sacred concepts of love and beauty that the goddess embodied for the ancient world.

"Aphrodite is not merely the goddess of love," notes eminent Greek scholar Sir Maurice Bowra, "or rather, because she is, she is also much besides. She is as much the goddess of beauty as of the desire of it. She is the goddess of flowers and of the smiling incalculable sea. Her power lies in the enchantment which she throws over things, and therefore her attendants are Eros and Peitho, Desire and Attraction...But since the strongest of all attachments is the human form, the goddess who gives it is responsible for the spell which it lays on all who see it.

"In her own way Aphrodite stands for an absolute value, for the magic light which falls at times on life and makes someone or something seem so desirable that men [sic] are driven almost to madness. Therefore the Greeks regarded the gifts of Aphrodite as akin to madness and thought that her girdle contained those arts of enticement 'which steal away the wits of even the wise' (a quote from Homer, The Iliad). In the beauty of girls and the enchantment which it laid upon her, Sappho saw the work of Aphrodite, and because she was the presiding deity of her own powerful longings, she found in her both strength and consolation."

Lesbian poet Judy Grahn gives a psychic dimension to her interpretation of Sappho's connection with Aphrodite. Grahn, a believer in telepathy and other psychic phenomena, theorizes that "what the ancients named as gods were highly developed psychic states..... Suppose that, when Sappho said that Aphrodite lives in a golden house, she was describing the way love looks, when we are able to enter the psychic mode of seeing/feeling, as she was. I say that Sappho was able to enter that plane of being because tribal people do; they maintain everyday contact with the spirit world, the world of dreams and vision." Grahn links the suppression of Sappho's work with "suppression of the psychic plane (until recently) and of the erotic dimension of the sacred."

However we attempt to explain Sappho's devotion to Aphrodite, it is clear that in the ancient world, and for Sappho in particular, the concept of "sacred" was not, as it came to be believed in the Christian era, opposed to the earthly. The Greeks conceived of a unity in which worship and erotic love were not seen as necessarily separate acts, or worse, as opposites, one sacred and holy, the other profane and debased. Grahn's phrase, "the erotic dimension of the sacred," is an apt one.

SAPPHO'S POEMS TO THE GODDESS

Two of the poems of Sappho's which have survived are ones in which Sappho speaks directly, and at some length, to Aphrodite.

One is a hymn in which Sappho summons Aphrodite to be present at a feast. This poem is badly preserved and contains some gaps—it was found on a fragment of pottery dating from the third century B.C.—but in what remains, Sappho's respect for Aphrodite is mingled with feelings of intimacy between herself and the goddess:

Come to me here, from Crete,
to this sacred temple of the lovely
apple grove.
Your altars are fragrant here with
offerings of frankincense,
and cool water rustles through the
apple shoots.

All the place is shadowed with roses
and deep sleep slips down through the
shimmering leaves.

In here is a meadow, with horses
grazing, alive
with spring blossoms and breezes
that blow redolent.

And here may you, Cyprian, pour
with graceful charm,
your nectar, mixed with our own festive
rites.
into these golden cups.

Sappho fully expects that Aphrodite will come in response to her invitation, and will mix holy nectar into the wine of Sappho and her companions. Flowers, horses, and apples were all associated with Aphrodite, so it makes perfect sense that Sappho would mention that these things were present in the place in which she awaits the presence of the goddess.

The other poem in which Sappho addresses Aphrodite is the only complete, undamaged poem of Sappho's to come down to us from her entire life's work.

This poem is cast in the form of a prayer. It is highly personal, and only survived at all because it was quoted in its entirety by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in a book he wrote in Rome during the reign of Augustus. The book was essentially a textbook, and in it Dionysius presents the seven-verse ode—composed in what is known as the Sapphic meter—as an example for students of literary composition, to illustrate "the verbal beauty and enchantment of her cohesion and smoothness of construction."

The poem is an appeal to Aphrodite to grant that the women whom Sappho is in love with will love her in return. She speaks to Aphrodite not only as a goddess capable of granting this favor, but as she would speak to a close friend. She sees Aphrodite very clearly, describes how she looks, and recalls what Aphrodite said the last time Sappho asked for help:

Whom, Sappho,
shall I lead to be your love
this time?

Sappho reminds Aphrodite that on the previous occasion the goddess had granted "what my heart

most craved," and had promised Sappho that

Even if she flees you, soon she'll chase,
And if she scorns your gifts, why,
she will offer hers.
And if she does not love you,
soon she'll love, even if she
does not want to.

And Aphrodite must have been true to her word, because now Sappho is calling on her to repeat this miracle of seductive conversion—presumably upon another woman!

"DIVINE SANCTIONS FOR THE PASSIONS"

"Though Sappho wrote on other subjects, it was love that meant most to her," says Bowra. "She knew it was the gift of Aphrodite, who furthered and fostered it, and through it led her to the Graces and the Muses. It was indeed something sent by the gods and at the moment it brought Sappho close to them, not merely in her vision of Aphrodite, but in her belief that the girls whom she loved were divine in their beauty." Reflecting on how this affected her poems he says, "It is this conviction of a divine sanction for the passions which gives Sappho's work a peculiar quality and distinction."

Despite Sappho's repeated bouts of lovesickness, "her love had something divine in it, and she had no qualms or misgivings about its rightness."

Speaking of the prayer poem in particular, Bowra says, "The appearance of Aphrodite must be treated as a genuine experience, even if it is hardly possible to translate it into modern terms. There is no hint that it is a dream, and indeed it can hardly be one; for it comes in answer to a prayer which Sappho presumably made in her conscious, waking hours. It is certainly more like a vision, and a vision in which something is revealed with unusual clarity and force." This kind of experience is "by no means impossible for a woman who believed implicitly in the existence of Aphrodite and passed hours of imaginative communication with her. The poem shows Sappho thought herself to be specially favored, and this would strengthen her belief in the visitations of the goddess."

Another expert on Greek poetry, scholar Herbert Weir Smyth, explains in his book Greek Melic Poets how Greek Lyric poetry has been categorized according to the system of the Alexandrians (who possessed all of Sappho's work in their library). They grouped Sappho's work under the category they called Erotikon. Smyth comments, "In Sappho even the hymn is made tributary to the theme of love, and all her verse is essentially erotic."

As love informed the spiritual center of Sappho's being, the pursuit of love and the expression of passion was a holy connection with her goddess, one she believed the goddess understood and approved of. But at the same time it was intertwined with the passionate attractions her companions aroused in her; perhaps it was even transposed onto them. The goddess herself could be thought of as embodied ("incarnated," she says in one poem) in the girls Sappho loved and desired — the "erotic dimension of the sacred" becoming the sacred dimension of the erotic.

Even in our fiercely rational modern world, we know that love can be like that sometimes. If we're lucky.●

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

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Maxine Sullivan

Honored in Sacramento with a "Maxine Sullivan Day," this jazz singer is going strong at 75.

By Betty MacDonald

When you're up there on the stage, it all seems so glamorous. But it didn't just happen overnight, and nobody knows better than you do about the amount of work that went into getting yourself up there in the spotlight.

Well, Maxine Sullivan knows! She's put in 40 years of time and energy, taking a 12-year break after the first 20 years tired her out.

Maxine was 75 on May 13, 1986 and she's still going strong. It took me a month to track her down for a phone interview which I wanted to air on my jazz radio show. She was due to perform at the Greene County Council on the Arts' Third Annual Riverboat Cruise to be held on the Hudson River.

Maxine, who is mostly self-taught, was discovered singing at the Benjamin Harrison Literary Club in Pittsburgh by Gladys Mosier, pianist in the all-women band of Ina Ray Hutton. She became a protege of arranger and big-band leader Claude Thornhill, and soon after made her record debut.

In 1938 she married band leader John Kirby, and hit it big with a swing version of "Loch Lomond." Unfortunately, the folksong typecast her, and it was only in the late 1960s—after she emerged from her retirement—that she came into her own as a jazz singer. "Even now," Maxine says, "there's always somebody in the audience who'll ask me to do 'Loch Lomond'." She has dropped the tune from her repertoire.

Maxine's talent took her into the movies, starring with jazz great Louis Armstrong in Singing the Dream (a jazz version of Midsummer Night's Dream), followed by roles in St. Louis Blues and Going Places. She also appeared in the off-Broadway production of My Old Friends, which won her a Tony award nomination.

She disappeared from the jazz scene for much of the late 1950s and early 1960s, occupying her time with teaching and studying the trumpet and valve trombone which she later used on her gigs. She made her comeback in 1967 at Town Hall in New York City, and it wasn't long before she was traveling all over the world performing in concerts, clubs, and at festivals. One of her world tours was with The World's Greatest Jazz Band, and she is honored in Sacramento with a "Maxine Sullivan Day."

Maxine's voice strikes listeners with its light, gently swinging quality and warmth. She's a tiny woman with an engaging smile, and aside from singing she has devoted a good part of her life giving to others. She conducts workshops and lectures about music and anticipates publishing her talks. Maxine loves helping younger musicians. In 1975, the Bronx resident founded The House That Jazz Built, which has concerts and encourages local talent.

continued on page 60

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Betty MacDonald is on the air six nights a week with "The Sounds of Jazz" on WDST FM100 from Woodstock, NY...the jazz connection for the Hudson Valley. Musicmachine's Fourth Annual Readers Poll *recently listed her as one of the Top Ten Radio Personalities. She has produced a cassette of her own music, 'Waltzing Through The Sage Brush.'*

The San Francisco Bay Area

Is it the "mecca" for lesbian feminist culture?

By Kate Brandt

Think of fog. It moves, it changes shape, it's dense, it's sparse, it's sensuous, it's ominous, it's pervasive. And, to some people, it's symbolic of San Francisco.

In fact, it has a lot in common with our women's community.

There's a strong case to be made for anointing the San Francisco Bay Area* a "mecca" for women's businesses and culture. It's a place where a women's directory just published a 105-page tenth anniversary edition. It's a place where a local women's cafe owner produces an annual guide listing more than 30 woman-owned and/or -oriented businesses on one 10-block stretch in The City. It's home to the premiere women's record companies, Olivia and Redwood, as well as to many of their artists.

But other cities, such as New York, Los Angeles, Cambridge, and Chicago have distinct women's communities. What is so special about San Francisco?

Its size, for one thing. Although socioeconomic factors rank San Francisco as a major American city, it's actually nothing more than a small town in fancy clothes. Its compactness has proved beneficial for women looking to establish community.

"The power struggles in San Francisco are not the same as in big cities, where people are spread out," according to Sara Lewinstein, owner of the Artemis Cafe. "This is a small city—there's a foundation to build on. There are just enough people—if there's no burnout!"

Musician Hunter Davis also sees practical advantages to the population density here:

"If you get a place [such as San Francisco] where people centralize, it cuts down on transportation costs. For example, if you were recording in Boston and you wanted to use women musicians, you would have to fly them to Boston. That can double your production budget."

Irene Young

Judy Dlugacz of Olivia Records: "[The Bay Area] is a center of activity in terms of women's music—a tremendous amount comes out of here."

In the small town where she had lived previously, Hunter was the only woman musician, and she found that, as a woman, "I couldn't get beyond a certain level because people wouldn't give me the time I needed." She calls her relocation to the Bay Area "a studied move, a strictly professional move" made in order to get a contract with a women's record company. [Hunter now records with Redwood. See HOT WIRE, July 1986.]

Kim Corsaro, editor of the lesbian/gay newspaper Coming Up!, calls women's music "a major binding force in the community." The prominence of women's music in the Bay Area is not an accidental phenomenon.

Olivia Records moved from its home base in Washington, DC to Los Angeles in 1975 in order to be closer to the record industry. But the company relocated once more in 1977, to Oakland, because the Bay Area is "a receptive place for independent labels," according to Judy Dlugacz, president of Olivia.

"Being a small label in Los Angeles as opposed to San Francisco," she says, "was like night and day."

Judy felt that the women's community in Los Angeles was dispersed, and that "the Bay Area would be a place for women's music to blossom. It's a center of activity in terms of women's music — a tremendous amount comes out of here. It was important for us to be here."

Olivia's move to the Bay Area in the mid 1970s coincided with a growth in women's businesses

during those years. One leader in that growth was Sara Lewinstein, who in February 1977 established Artemis Cafe, a restaurant featuring live entertainment.

"I was very young," she says, "and wanted to take a chance on owning my own business. My attitude was 'let's see how it goes,' and it always worked. We're nearly 10 years in the same location."

This sense of risk-taking also motivated Carol Seajay to establish Old Wives' Tales bookstore at about the same time. As she relates in Words In Our Pockets:

"I joined [A Woman's Place Bookstore] collective [in Oakland]...For a year and a half, I commuted two to three hours a day from my home in San Francisco...Then suddenly an idea formed: if I hated commuting to Oakland to get to the women's bookstore, other San Francisco women must, too...I could open up a women's bookstore in San Francisco and support myself... Using [my lover's] car, a friend's signature, and our combined experience...the local feminist credit union loaned us $6,000. No one else would have. We were able to open Old Wives' Tales seven weeks later on Halloween, 1976."

The establishment of each woman-owned endeavor had a ripple effect. For example, Pell, a former member of the Old Wives' Tales collective, had plans of owning her own business in a neighborhood frequented by women. Finally, after three years in the bookstore, Pell opened WomanCrafts West in 1983. The store specializes in collectable women's art, such as one-of-a-kind ceremonial pieces in pottery, jewelry, textiles, and graphics, made by women from all over the country.

Artemis, Old Wives' Tales, and WomanCrafts West are all located on Valencia Street, a major thoroughfare in The City's mostly Hispanic Mission District. Over the past 10 years, encouraged by Sara Lewinstein's example and her zealous belief that women should own their own businesses, enough such enterprises have opened for Lewinstein to publish "The Woman's Guide to Valencia Street." This pocket-sized handbook, which unfolds to a 19"x14" information sheet, advertises 32 establishments of interest to (and mostly owned by) women: bookstores, restaurants and bars, counseling and health services, auto supply and repair centers, a travel agent, a hair salon, insurance and tax consultants, a woman-only bathhouse, a lesbian/gay newspaper, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, and the Women's Building (Edificio de Mujeres), a "clearinghouse" for several women's groups.

Is this kind of woman-intensive neighborhood evidence of a thriving women's community or of a "ghettoization" of women—particularly of lesbians?

Tina Arruda of Old Wives' Tales bookstore collective (left) with customers.

"Both," responds Old Wives' Tales Jennifer Krebs. "Valencia Street is an inexpensive street to live on or rent space for a business, so in that sense it's 'ghettoization,' although the majority of Valencia Street residents are Latino. On the other hand, the Women's Building, Artemis, Old Wives' Tales, etc. are a gathering ground, very positive for lesbians."

And Pell of WomanCrafts agrees that while Valencia Street is "not yet thriving, it's developing into a lesbian/feminist community."

In fact, most of the women I spoke with, who represent a cross-section of the women's community, are lesbians. In the San Francisco Bay Area, is the term "women's community" synonymous with "lesbian/feminist community"?

Not necessarily, thinks Andrea Lewis, a member of the collective that publishes the feminist newspaper Plexus. "There's also a progressive feminist community that is not necessarily lesbian. Plexus is woman-oriented; it's not a lesbian newspaper, it's a feminist paper. That's why it's important."

But Hunter Davis finds the balance to be a bit more lopsided.

"Without a shadow of a doubt," she says, "the women's community [here] is a predominantly lesbian community. A lot of us would like to deny that."

But denial is difficult in the face of the evidence. The women's cafes, bookstores, newspapers, and clubs all have a strongly

BAY AREA RESOURCES

San Francisco Bay Area Women's Yellow Pages, 270 Napolean St., San Francisco, CA 94124. *$4.95 (includes postage). For information about other local directories, contact The National Association of Women's Yellow Pages, c/o Leslie Stone, P.O. Box 66093, Los Angeles, CA 90066.*

"The Woman's Guide to Valencia Street, 1985-1986." Street guide by Sara Lewinstein, (415) 821-0232. *Graphics by Gaye Cavanah.*

Coming Up! 592 Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114. *The gay/lesbian community newspaper and calender of events for the Bay Area.*

Words in our Pockets: The Feminist Writers Guild Handbook on How to Gain Power, Get Published, and Get Paid, $9.95. plus $1.00 postage. Celeste West, Booklegger Press, 555 29th St., San Francisco, CA. *Excerpt reprinted with permission.*

Plexus, 545 Athol Ave., Oakland, CA 94606. *West Coast women's press, subscriptions $10/year.*

lesbian orientation. Old Wives' Tales has separate, and fully-stocked, sections for lesbian fiction, non-fiction, poetry. Lesbian musicians perform at Artemis, Baybrick Inn, Mama Bears. Even Plexus' news stories and calendar listings feature events of interest to lesbians.

Again—why here? Other cities have large centers of lesbian and gay activity; San Francisco is known as a lesbian/gay center. What is it that draws lesbians to this area?

"Politicians, i.e., Harvey Milk [the openly gay San Francisco Supervisor who was assassinated in 1978], have given national publicity to being gay in San Francisco," explains Jennifer Krebs. "Women are drawn here by tales of other women's and gay men's visits..."

San Francisco's historical reputation for tolerance and variety is another factor.

"The diversity of women here ethnically, culturally, and from different countries with different political situations and from different class backgrounds attracts women from all over for totally different reasons," theorizes Kit Quan of Old Wives' Tales. "Some women come for the political activity while others come for just the 'wimmin's culture' or because they think California's a laid back sort of place where you can do whatever you want and have it be considered part of the women's movement."

Olivia's Judy Dlugacz experienced the positive effects of the diversity when she lived with a lover and her child on a street with other lesbian mothers. She says, "The children grow up not being the only ones. There's more tolerance...This is a place that people come to; in the last few years there's been an influx of women. It's a better place to be an out lesbian—a better lifestyle here, less stressful. The negatives are less compared to other places. As a lesbian it's hard to move from here."

While the lesbian presence offers what Judy calls "more community — a level of comfort," there are some women who may not be looking specifically for that community, but discover that it finds them. As East Bay resident Toni Langfield describes it, "When one lives in a city like Berkeley where lesbians are so much a part of the scene, I think the possibility of becoming one seeps into the subsconscious unknowingly." In Toni's case, it led to coming out at age 50 after a divorce, and "discovering all over again that it's all about risk-taking, trust, and love."

But for other women this potential is not necessarily a welcome one. When student Patricia Bergeron first moved to San Francisco from New Orleans and was looking for shared living space, she specified straight women and gay men as potential roommates; not having known any lesbians, she thought they would "try to come on" to her. The first time she went to a women's bookstore and saw "butchy-looking" women, she felt extremely out of place. She admits now that this response was in part a fear of her own sexuality — a situation faced by many heterosexual women whose feminist sensibilities lead them to the realization that they, too, have the potential to be gay.

Complexities and contradictions are not restricted to straight feminists, however. They abound in the lesbian-feminist community as well. First, there is the question of whether a unified community even exists. Hunter Davis sees a measure of shared identity among Bay Area women: "I think of a community as a place that reads the same literature, such as Plexus and Coming Up!, and checks out the same bulletin boards, at Artemis and the Women's Building...We go and support certain artists that are women, and [go to] businesses that are women-run."

Andrea Lewis of Plexus agrees up to a point. "The San Francisco women's community is unified in the sense of being a large community," she says. "There are lots of women's organizations and businesses that flourish and probably couldn't in a less feminist, less progressive kind of community. But while women imagine that San Francisco is an idyllic utopian women's community, there's just as much a diversity of women and interests here as anywhere. Everyone has her own interests; it's not as easy to make progress as you might think."

However, the Plexus collective had an opportunity to experience first-hand the ways in which Bay Area feminists can find a common interest, and unify to protect that interest. Earlier this year, Plexus underwent a financial crisis so severe as to cause the cancellation of its April 1986 issue (the first such measure in its 13-year history), and to threaten future publication. The collective published an abbreviated May issue, putting the problem boldly before its readership and asking for help. The response, in terms of money and moral support, was enough to ensure the newspaper's survival, a situation that collective member Andrea Lewis calls "real encouraging."

She says she was personally surprised by the response. "When you work for a newspaper, you can become insulated in terms of how you're perceived by the community. And I'd heard some criticism of Plexus so I wasn't sure what would happen. The letters we received from all over the country showed that women care about Plexus, and that this is not a post-feminist age where things are going under. It's good to know we're of value."

But sometimes the "diversity of women and interests" represents some very profound differences. Kit Quan explains her perspective as an Asian woman:

"The women's culture/community works the same as the rest of society, the haves and have nots...For some Third World women, they come [to San Francisco] to find other women of color although they find that this place is still a white woman's wonderland unless they look real hard and real long. I immigrated here with my family when I was eight. I had no idea of what was in store for me here. My lifeline is Chinatown, not Valencia Street."

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kate Brandt plans to run for mayor of San Francisco in 1995. She wants to thank Toni L. Armstrong, Toni Langfield, Lucinda Smith, Tam Martin of Olivia Records, Celeste West of Booklegger Press, and Dotty Winter of S.F. Bay Area Women's Yellow Pages, as well as all the women who answered questionnaires and gave interviews, for their help with this article.

'Desert Hearts'

DONNA DEITCH

An interview by Jorjet Harper

"If the film continues to do well at the box office it could then be trend-setting, because it shows that people are interested in the subject matter."

__Donna Deitch__, producer and director of the film 'Desert Hearts,' spoke with 'HOT WIRE' columnist __Jorjet Harper__ after returning from a week of promotional work to pave the way for the film's August release in London. The London opening marked the film's European premiere. Donna Deitch appeared this year at the __Michigan Womyn's Music Festival__, where she did a workshop on filmmaking and answered questions after the Friday night screening of 'Desert Hearts.' The festival showing played to the largest-ever audience of lesbians, approximately 3,000 women.

JORJET HARPER: What made you decide to make a movie out of this particular book, Jane Rule's Desert of the Heart?

DONNA DEITCH: I wanted to make a movie that was about a love story between two women.

JH: That was your initial motivation?

DD: Yes, it was. And actually, somebody gave me the book at a party in 1979 and I was very drawn to it.

JH: You weren't familiar with Jane Rule's work before that?

DD: No, I wasn't. I thought Desert of the Heart would translate well to film for a variety of reasons. One was because of the central metaphor of the novel, having to do with risk and gambling and the relationship of two women set in the context of that. Also, I liked the characters very much. I thought they were very strong, very visual characters. And I liked the '50s setting and the West as a location.

This interview is reprinted with permission from 'Entre Nous,' the lesbian section of 'Windy City Times.'

JH: There are a number of changes that were made from the book to the movie. How many were changes that you made and how many the result of the screenplay? How did that work?

DD: Well, they were all changes I made with Natalie Cooper, the writer. And they were all made as a part of an adaption from the novel to film. For example, one of the changes everybody notices is that the book takes place in a boarding house and the film takes place on a dude ranch. The reason I did that was I wanted the English professor to step off the train and not drive around the corner to where the boarding houses are, relative to the train station, but to cover that expanse of territory in the desert where you understand that she is in a completely unfamiliar, alien environment. And once we got to the dude ranch, it afforded the opportunity to have more divorcees, to have a scene with horses, to have a wrangler, and all sorts of things that are common to a dude ranch but not to a boarding house.

JH: And why did you make the Cay Rivvers character a sculptor instead of a cartoonist?

DD: Because I felt it was more visual, more filmic.

JH: I also thought it was interesting that you made the professor an East Coast person rather than Californian.

DD: I wanted her to come a greater distance, and be more alienated. Because Berkeley in the late '50s and early '60s was a pretty liberal place, and I wanted to have her coming from a more conservative, conventional background.

JH: What was Jane Rule's input into this, if any?

DD: Well, she's supportive. She didn't participate in the writing of it, but she was supportive throughout the process.

JH: Once you decided you wanted to make a movie out of this book, how did you go about raising the money for it?

DD: The first thing I did was write the screenplay. Initially, I wrote it. The screenplay as it exists is Natalie Cooper's. She did a complete rewrite after I had raised the money and could afford to hire somebody to do that.

JH: So you wrote the <u>first</u> version of the screenplay based on the novel, and used that to try to raise money for the movie.

DD: Yes. And then I raised all the money. Took me two and a half years.

JH: How did you go about that?

DD: What I did was a very intense process of networking. I went from one person to the next, I gathered a lot of names, and I had investors parties all over the country.

JH: Did you concentrate primarily on the lesbian community?

DD: In part, yes. To a great extent, yes, though not all my investors are lesbians. The greater percentage of my investors are women, and the greater percentage of those women are lesbians. But my single largest investor is a man. There are definitely more women than men who invested in the film.

JH: And when it takes that long to get money together for a movie, how do you keep the initial investors believing in the project?

DD: You take their checks and hold them in an escrow account.

JH: And raising the money occupied all your time for those years?

DD: It occupied <u>all</u> my time.

JH: How much did the movie cost altogether?

DD: A million and a half. And $250,000 of that went to the music because it's all Top 40 country & western songs from the 1950s: Elvis Presley, Patsy Kline, Kitty Wells, Johnny Cash, Johnny Ray, Buddy Holly...The cost of an average Hollywood movie is, I think, about $14 million.

JH: How do you think the fact that the film has to do with lesbianism has affected its reception at the box office? Obviously it's a sensitive subject for some people, and a very welcome subject for others.

DD: People must be interested in knowing more about it, or in finding out more about it, or else they wouldn't be going and buying the tickets. It hasn't gotten consistently good reviews. It's not like every critic in the country has been saying "this is a good movie, go see this movie." In general we've probably had more support from the ticket-buying population than we have from the critics. We've had situations where it has not been reviewed well, but it has done well at the box office. So I think that the subject matter does stimulate a ticket-buying response. Maybe some people are turned away because of the subject matter, I don't know. But it doesn't seem to have hurt us in any way. And many people are going to see it more than once. And the second time, or the third time, or whatever, I think it's a great time to bring your mother or your father or your best friend from college who's straight or something. Because I do think the film can be used as a sort of positive communication tool.

JH: Are you planning to do more movies that have lesbian characters in them?

DD: Well, I don't know at this point. I'm not specifically thinking about that on this next film. Although I might again at some time.

JH: You've started working on a new film?

DD: It's in the scriptwriting stages.

JH: What is it about?

DD: Well, it's kind of hard to talk about at this moment. It's about three generations of American

women, the relationship between a daughter, a mother, and a grandmother.

JH: With a contemporary timeframe?

DD: Contemporary, yes. And we're thinking of setting it in Chicago. That's where it's set at the moment. It's hard to really talk about it.

JH: Have you started raising money for this new film yet?

DD: Not yet.

JH: Do you think that Desert Hearts will start a trend toward showing more lesbians in mainstream movies or do you think that it's sort of a fad?

DD: I think if the film continues to do well at the box office, it could then by trend-setting because it shows that people are interested in the subject matter, and that's what counts.

JH: What has happened since the film opened?

DD: We're at just about breakeven at this point. The film is doing very well.

JH: How did you choose the actresses for Desert Hearts?

DD: The first person I cast in the whole picture was Patricia Charbonneau. I auditioned about a hundred young women in Los Angeles for that part, and I didn't find anybody I was interested in, so I decided to go to New York and have a look around. I saw Patricia's photograph in the midst of hundreds of submissions, and when I saw the photograph, I realized that she looked exactly as I imagined the character to look. So I called her in for a reading, and she did a really fantastic reading. I called her back again, and again it was equally good.

I spent some time talking with her about the character and the project, and then I hired her. I went back to L.A., and at that point I hired a casting director who brought me about 12 or 15 actors for each part. And coincidentally, his first thought for the part of the English professor was Helen Shaver. When I narrowed it down to three actresses for that part of Vivian Bell, I flew Patricia in from New York. I needed her to be there in the room. I mean, I had to cast the two of them together, I had to know the chemistry was there. When she and Helen read together it was really something quite special, and obviously the right combination.

JH: In the book, the two characters look very much alike.

DD: Yes. I decided to do away with that because when you do a book it's the individual reader who conjures up those images in his or her own mind. But when you're doing a film, it all becomes bigger than life. Something that may have something less than a significance in book form can take on much more significance when you visualize it, put it up on the screen. I just didn't want to do that with that particular image.

JH: I thought the reason might have been because it could suggest the old cliche that homosexuality is based on narcissism.

DD: Yes, well, that's why I didn't want to do it; it would take that on. Once you actually do it, it takes on incredible symbolic significance, because everybody has to talk about it.

JH: Also, the movie is so punctuated by humor, which is not the case with the book. Where did that come from? Are those the screenwriter's jokes or yours?

DD: All the dialogue is Natalie Cooper's dialogue.

JH: And you also decided to put yourself in one cameo scene. Why did you do that?

DD: 'Cause I want to be in the movies. What better way to get in? ●

"I had to cast the two of them together, I had to know the chemistry was there. When she and Helen read together it was really something quite special, and obviously the right combination."

In the March issue of 'HOT WIRE': an interview with Patricia Charbonneau.

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

SISTERFIRE

Why did Roadwork skip 1986?

By Nancy Seeger

Something important was missing from the women's festival schedule this past summer. For the first time in four years, Sisterfire, the two-day open-air festival of women's culture, did not happen. In previous years, Sisterfire has given its audiences a much-needed feeling of renewal and a sense of friendship among diverse communities. It has indeed been a highlight of the women's music scene.

Conceived as a "celebration... an acknowledgement of women as vital carriers of culture," Sisterfire has become one of the largest women's festivals in the United States. Roadwork, the community-based cultural organization headquartered in Washington, DC [see "Roadwork," March 1986 HOT WIRE], has produced the festival since 1982 at Takoma Park Junior High School in Takoma Park, Maryland (just outside of Washington, DC).

Roadwork has decided to take 1986 off from producing Sisterfire and its other usual heavy scheduling to reorganize and redefine itself and its work. However, Sisterfire will be back in 1987, and Roadwork anticipates the site will be within the District of Columbia city limits.

Sisterfire was originally devised as a fundraiser for Roadwork. 25 performers worked for free on one stage for one day. The event was so popular it was brought back for the next three years. Before long it expanded into a two-day, four-stage affair with 80 individual performers. During those four years, Sisterfire has presented a wide array of artists—from the well-knowns such as Holly Near and Sweet Honey In The Rock to the not-so-well-knowns like deaf actress Marybeth Miller and singer Kim Jordan with Top Flight.

In addition, Sisterfire boasts a creative and independent child-space program, and 125 craftswomen operate the marketplace where food, crafts, and services are exhibited. More than 16 sign language interpreters are employed to make Sisterfire an accessible experience. Volunteers from Maine to California, 300-500 strong during Sisterfire week, join forces to make the festival the success it has always been.

Why then, with all this wonderful success and support, did Roadwork have to shut down Sisterfire for a year?

Amy Horowitz, founder and executive director of Roadwork, says, "In 1985 the festival costs amounted to 96% of its income. This left a marginal percentage unable to support its continuation this year. The more we stretched it, the less of a fundraiser it became, until it became a fiscal liability for the organization." Also, with a staff of only two full-time and two part-time employees, Roadwork had to depend on a huge number of volunteers just to pull the festival off.

Adding to these concerns within Roadwork was the growing negative response from the Takoma Park community. In 1985 the community drew up a petition saying the festival caused traffic and parking problems, too much noise, and that the smell of marijuana smoke drifted across the junior high school grounds. Also, complained the petitioners, some women attending the festival wore no shirts. The natives wanted Sisterfire out of their neighborhood.

In March of 1985 a compromise was worked out between Roadwork and the City Council, and Sisterfire was able to go on as usual in June of 1985. But another blow came when Sam Abbott, mayor of Takoma Park and an ardent advocate of Sisterfire, was voted out of office. Roadwork lost a powerful ally.

However, the crux of the reason why Sisterfire is not here this year lies within Roadwork. Says Horowitz, "We didn't give ourselves the time to really build a strong internal structure, and the activities and projects continued only because of the incredible dedication of community members and volunteers. We've been better community and political organizers than businesspeople."

The painful concept which the organization has had to face is that, according to Horowitz, "in order to succeed, in order to survive, we had to grow smaller. We won't be any good to ourselves or to anybody out there unless we stop and do a number of things at home." Consequently, they have cut out Sisterfire, an event which takes eight months to organize, and have drastically reduced other activities and programs.

Roadwork priorities for community outreach this year are threefold: 1) Sweet Honey In The Rock national and international bookings; 2) three Roadwork-produced national tours; and 3) Sisterfire '87 (preparations begin September 1). This may not seem to be a reduction in activity for a cultural organization, but Roadwork is accustomed to serving a multitude of communities. Their tours for artists such as Holly Near, Meg Christian, Cris Williamson, and Sweet Honey have seen not only most points in the U.S., but also countries such as Japan, Kenya, Sweden, and Germany. These tours have addressed such issues as anti-nuclear activism, black rights, the struggle of Native Americans, and anti-gay

legislation.

Yet Roadwork's activity is not restricted to musical tours.

"One of our weakest areas has been in publicizing and promoting what we do," says Horowitz, who in 1984 wrote five radio shows on Palestinian and Jewish culture in Israel. A more recent Roadwork accomplishment has been their involvement in a one-day deaf women's cultural event. Being "one of the most exciting coalition projects [they have] ever undertaken," it was an event produced by deaf women for deaf women. Roadwork has also served as cultural coordinator and/or consultant for various festivals, marches, and rallies. It's painful because, says Horowitz, "the phone rings and we hear need from everywhere, women artists want to go on tour...people are struggling for their lives."

INTERNAL CHANGES

Internally, Roadwork is undergoing major changes in preparation for becoming the "cultural resource and training center of local, national, and international scope" that they want to be.

They now have a newly-expanded (from eight) 14-member legal Board of Directors, which has been at work on outlining various committees which will be activated over the next months. Their by-laws have been revised and updated.

The issue of volunteer coordination and development has been addressed. In their new by-laws Roadwork has included a committee dealing with volunteers and the importance of having volunteers as members of the Board of Directors and/or committees whereby their voices can be heard. In addition, Horowitz envisions "a structure for volunteers where there's a very organized way in which [they] come into the organization, where they spend 'x' amount of time in training, [after which] clearly defined areas of involvement can continue."

Roadwork has recently acquired a computer. Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey will act as information consultant in an effort to ease the process of computerizing eight years' worth of Roadwork files. This computer will enable them to organize, expand, and offer their resources to the local and national communities. They would like to assemble information about political artists from every nation, covering many movements including labor, anti-apartheid, women's, and New Song. Their resource center would have information on the histories of progressive cultural movements around the world, providing others with access to historical information that might serve as a model and an inspiration.

Ellen Spiro

Sweet Honey In The Rock workshop, 1985.

Ellen Spiro

Kate Clinton, Sisterfire '85.

Nancy Seeger

Urban Bush Women, Faith Petric, and Edwina Lee Tyler.

Nancy Seeger

Moving Star Hall Singers with J. Casselberry and Evelyn Harris.

Also planned is an archive of film, video, and sound recordings, and a library of periodicals, microfilm, and books. Not only would Roadwork be a center to which artists, media, or governments could come for resources and information, but also a "training ground through which [Roadwork] can help the next generation of activists."

Of course even with volunteers and computerization none of this could happen without money. So naturally Roadwork is concentrating on fundraising efforts. The direct mail campaign was in full swing earlier this year, at which time 12,000 letters were mailed out. They have also established a Development Committee of six women and men to focus completely on high-dollar fundraising and long-range planning. The summer months were spent reviewing and revising their 1986-87 annual budget, which went into effect August 1 at the outset of their fiscal year. For community support, Roadwork has staged periodic fundraiser events, such as an August Moon Cruise, a dance, and a fundraiser for Sisterfire '87 held at the Washington, DC premiere screening of the film Desert Hearts. [Editor's note: on sale now is Sisterfire!, the live album recorded in 1984 which features 12 acts.]

Because Roadwork has always given a tremendous amount of time, energy, and commitment to various communities, it is hoped that these communities and those who benefit from Roadwork's

continued on page 59

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nancy Seeger is a librarian for the federal government in Washington, DC. She has written various arts reviews and articles for 'The Washington Blade,' 'Unicorn Times,' and 'Talkin' Union.'

Keeping "The Land"

By Robin Tyler

"In California gays and lesbians are supposed to be protected against discrimination in renting, and yet here is the city of San Francisco openly, blatantly discriminating."

The most difficult thing about putting on a festival is getting and keeping the land. This year the New England Women's Musical Retreat (NEWMR) lost its site because the Scouts, who were renting to them, wanted the word "lesbian" taken out of the program, among other unreasonable requests. NEWMR refused, lost the land, and had to cancel this year. And this was not the first time they lost land. Sisterfire, while not a women-only festival, also lost its site [see "Sisterfire" article by Nancy Seeger in this issue of HOT WIRE]. One of the reasons the Michigan festival bought land is that for the final two years in Hesperia the women were having increasing amounts of trouble from the man they were renting from.

Even the National Women's Music Festival has had problems. It was thrown off the campus at Champaign-Urbana (Illinois) because it was a lesbian festival. I know because I was the production manager during its last year there and went to the Dean who made the decision. He told us that. It's been held in Bloomington, Indiana on campus with only minor problems because the festival rents the facilities and pays high prices. But the one in Champaign was sponsored by the student union and was, therefore, less costly.

This has happened to the festivals I produce with Lisa Ulrich-Marsh and Pat Harrison as well. We rented a campground in Georgia for the Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival. The reason we chose that particular campground was that it was owned and operated by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Being Jewish, I knew these people were supposed to be liberal Jews. As a matter of fact, many of the gay synagogues belong to U.A.H.C. They have a policy of non-discrimination toward gays.

After the second year, however, a Baptist newspaper reporter came out with an article about "extreme feminists" at the camp going around holding hands, etc. Then one of the county councilmen decided that they should punish the camp by raising the camp's taxes because we were not a "religious group." Instead of fighting the county, which has a history of extreme anti-Semitism in addition to racism (the county has allowed the KKK to meet there), the camp chose to try to get rid of us. Although the board voted to have us back last year, the increased pressure scared them this year.

But we are going back. Our attorney, Kay Tsennin, and I went to Susan McGreivy of the American Civil Liberties Union in Los Angeles. She in turn got in touch with Nan Hunter, the attorney for the newly-formed ACLU National Lesbian-Gay Rights Project in New York. They got in touch with both the U.A.H.C. and the camp. They said that we could not come back because they had the right to rent to whomever they wanted. However, with the ACLU intervening, we are going back for the fourth festival. But it has been quite a struggle and, being Jewish, I was disappointed that I had to struggle with my own people.

There have also been problems with the West Coast Music and Comedy Festival in California. The city of San Francisco owns Camp Mather. The West Coast Women's Music Festival was the first group they rented the camp out to seven years ago. We had the camp for two years. A few local people complained, and the city of San Francisco threw us out. They used the excuse that we had too many people for the camp (at the time, 3,500). Last year, while at Camp Tawonga, where the festival is presently held, I found out that the Strawberry Festival, a "straight" festival, had 6,000 people at Camp Mather. Not only that, but they were allowed to do it on Labor Day, which we were refused seven years ago, and the Strawberry Festival has a long-term contract—which we were also refused.

We tried making an appointment with Parks and Rec to try to rent the camp on another weekend that year, and our attorney was told they didn't know if this event was "appropriate" for Camp Mather. In California gays and lesbians are supposed to be protected against discrimination in renting, and yet here is the city of San Francisco openly, blatantly discriminating.

You can bet we intend to pursue it. Our attorney has been in touch with them, and we have informed the ACLU. Recently a lesbian won a case against Magic

Mountain in Los Angeles because they did not want to rent to gays for a gay night. If San Francisco Parks and Rec continues to discriminate against lesbians, we will sue for our rights. Prior to this, the Boy Scout camp in Willitts, run from the Oakland office, threw us out. At the time we thought the camp was not suitable anyway, but today I would sue on principle.

In spite of everything, we've managed to keep the festival going, and it has grown back up to the original numbers of women. The best thing for us is the letters we get from lesbians saying that they feel free and safe, a lot of them for the first time in their lives. In the South women came onto the land and broke down crying; they had never "come out" before, and had never been with other lesbians where they were in the majority. Even here, on the West Coast, we get the same response.

We've not only hung on but expanded the festivals as well. We've added a film festival and a disco dance every night, and we are sponsoring lesbian authors in addition to the political speakers we always have.

We are having a rally against the La Rouche amendment on Saturday night on the Main Stage. We have never done this before, but feel that this initiative is the most oppressive and dangerous to the gay and lesbian movement in recent years. Couple that with the Supreme Court decision on sodomy...and we felt it was time for a Main Stage political rally. We also book many more performers than we originally did.

The most difficult thing for me, though, is that by the time I get there, I am burnt out from the constant battle to get and keep land, as well as all the work involved. I am very thankful that we have wonderfully dedicated women, including a terrific crew of coordinators and workers, with us on the land. Without them, we could never do it. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Robin Tyler is a long-time activist and festival producer. She has also performed extensively, solo as well as with Pat Harrison as the pioneering feminist 'Harrison & Tyler' comedy team.

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The Southern Festival and Disability

By Judy McVey

I arrived at the Southern Women's Music and Comedy Festival after a full day of work on the job, yet there was still time to set up camp, get settled, and eat before the first concert. It makes a world of difference to differently-abled women to have a festival so close to home—the South in this case. It is a major task to gather equipment and pack, try to anticipate all the needs and problems on the trip (you can't), then arrive exhausted and perhaps in pain with camp yet to be set up before looking forward to relaxation.

The Southern festival is nestled in the beautiful north Georgia mountains. Such a terrain is difficult to maneuver with a physical impairment, but not impossible with assistance. The dining hall is perched on the side of a steep slope, and the main concert stage is on another hill across the lake. The workshop areas, the crafts area, health facilities and the cabins were scattered around the lake with a dirt road connecting them. Most of the workshop areas were fairly accessible, two or three steps at the most. The crafts area was very difficult to maneuver even for able-bodied women, as it was on a hillside. One foot was always walking an inch lower than the other; that will put anyone's spine out of whack! Many people last year had requested that it be moved to the sheltered registration area or spread along the flat footpath by the lake, but here it was again on uneven ground. The only place that was totally inaccessible was the Day Stage and T-shirt sales area, on a steep hillside with no direct road access.

A special area in the dining hall was set aside for craftswomen and D/A women, and a shuttle could drive almost to the tables. The kitchen workers were supportive and saw that food was available to us. No one questioned the right of ourselves or friends to be there, even if we didn't look disabled. It was such a relief not to be challenged; we get enough of it from outside.

At the Main Stage we had reserved seating. It took several experiments the first year to find the best place for us. We ended up in chairs in front of the sound equipment (which worked well). The first two years there was no accessible toilet facility on the same level as the Main Stage, and it was a major hassle to get permission to use the one backstage shared by the performers. This year the situation was much improved, with a porta-potty just beyond the stage area that was wheelchair accessible. Other seating areas were specially designated, too: non-smoking, alcohol-free, and hearing impaired.

All main events were interpreted for the hearing impaired by some of the best signers in the business. It was also requested that women who could sign do so for their workshifts throughout the festival. I don't know how successful this effort was as none of these women were staying this year in the D/A area.

Since all of the important festival places were located along a road that ran around the lake they were potentially accessible to all. Last year, however, only two shuttle cars were used throughout the entire festival, and there was no plan as to how they would be used.

This year the number of shuttles was increased to at least four to serve approximately 40 women. This included the fat liberationists who also camped in our area. (Fat is a physical disability in our culture and often leads to other disabilities.) Having more cars was a vast improvement since it meant women had more choices about when to leave for concerts and meals. They were not at the mercy of one or two drivers who arbitrarily came and went. The shuttles were a problem at the concerts, too—basically they went at the beginning and stayed until the end or until the driver wanted to leave. Women could not leave at any time because they were tired and wanted sleep or were in pain and needed medication. Anyone who has been to a festival has watched the constant comings and goings, especially between sets. Yet the differently-abled women did not have that choice.

Meals and concerts are only a small part of a music festival. What about the crafts area, buying a festival T-shirt or hamburger, going to workshops and AA meetings? All of these could be made fully accessible, but the shuttle cars for the most part remained parked in front of the D/A cabin. A woman could ask for a ride to an event, and then hope the driver would remember an hour later to pick her up. A reasonable solution to this problem would be to run the shuttles like a bus system every 15 to 30 minutes apart going around the lake and back. Independence and a sense of personal power are the very essence of feminism, and D/A women especially need that sense of independence, of saying, "I can do it on my own."

The center and focus for the differently-abled was a cabin at one end of the road. It is on a slight hill looking out over the lake, and the path from the dining hall to the Main Stage runs just

Property of the Center

below the cabin and along the lake. Every woman in the festival passed by at least once a day, and all we had to do was sit on the porch and watch. Great scenery. It was a beautiful setting, and that porch was a warm center for all of us. We made friends with each other fast and shared many experiences there. At night after concerts and dances were over a group would gather below us along the lake in a campfire circle and sing songs into the night. The first night brought back memories as Girl Scout and camp songs filled the air. (After that it degenerated into TV commercials and theme songs, but it was a good start...). The final night of the festival Karen Mackay dropped by with her "git-tar" and sang some tunes. Her magic energy and love soon had us all singing the refrains she taught us. Some of us pulled out our own instruments and contributed more than voices, and tears were in every eye as she ended her visit with "Shine On, Darlin'." It was a very moving experience, though we probably should have done our singing closer to the lake. I know we were disturbing some women who desperately needed sleep before driving home.

The facilities of the cabin itself were much improved from the year before with a longer ramp, a stool for sitting in the shower, and grab bars for the shower and toilets. A refrigerator was provided for special foods and medicines. Those of us who did not sleep in the cabin stayed in tents or various vehicles we parked in the area for sleeping. Last year there were complaints from participants who needed help from Holistic Health Care but could not get there because the cabin had six to eight stairs and required a shuttle. This year in response to previous complaints massage and chiropractic adjustments were given just outside the D/A cabin. This was a tremendous improvement and is certainly appreciated. Holistic Health still needs to be accessible, though, and the AA cabin also has many stairs. Perhaps these cabins could be relocated. There are two cabins just to the back of the main road, for example, that have almost no steps at all.

Most festivals request that participants sign up for a workshift to cut down on festival cost and make things run more smoothly. There were sign-up sheets for attendants or escorts to work with differently-abled, presumably to assist by carrying luggage, helping us get settled, driving shuttles, bringing meals, and other such aids. Unfortunately, when the attendants showed up no one was there to tell them what to do. They offered to help with the more obvious errands, but many D/A women said, "No thank you," not realizing this was their job. The attendants had no visible means of identifying themselves to us. By Saturday afternoon, though, things were getting more organized, and attendants were wearing armbands. Keys were being made available for shuttle drives, and specific suggestions were given for assistance. That night at the concert one of them cleared the way to our seats for a wheelchair, got food at the concession stand, then walked back to the cabin with a woman who needed an elbow to lean on. Next year hopefully this most important aid will be organized and available from the very beginning. I might add that D/A women also signed up to do workshifts but were unable to because shuttles were not running on schedule.

"Independence and a sense of personal power are the essence of feminism, and D/A women especially need that sense of independence, of saying, 'I can do it on my own.' "

It would be unfair to compare the Southern festival to Michigan, that great grandmother of all festivals. Indeed, the entire philosophies of the two have been different from the beginning, and I was never led to believe that producers Robin Tyler and Lisa Ulrich-Marsh were trying to recreate Michigan in the South. Many of the festival-goers, however, have seen an entire feminist culture created from the years of trial and error in Michigan. It was Michigan that taught us how to cook for 6,000 women, how to live together cooperatively with our vast differences, how to encourage and develop our own arts and crafts, how to heal ourselves emotionally and physically, how to produce music in our home communities—and how to make a four-day primitive camping experience accessible to all women, regardless of their abilities. That festival is a miracle each year, but the success of DART, the differently-abled resource tent, is to me the most amazing.

Severely disabled quadriplegics who would not ordinarily travel away for even a weekend come once a year from all over the country. They come with confidence that they will be safe, that their lovers and friends will not have the total responsibility for their needs, that others will care for them because that's their workshift, and that they will have medical and holistic care and comfort. Most of all they know they will be honored and respected by coordinators and participants alike because they are strong brave women who are struggling in an unsympathetic world against great odds. The entire festival is committed to making one safe place in our feminist culture for these women to be.

Many of the feminist concepts around disability were formed right there in Michigan. Why are we not carrying these ideas back to our communities, gatherings, and festivals each year? Why are we not using what has been learned through great pain over the years of Michigan? As the saying goes, why re-invent the wheel over and over again? We should not have to ask for shower grab bars, for wheelchair ramps,

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Judy McVey has masters degrees in music and counseling, and she teaches in the public schools. She has a small organic farm in south Georgia which she shares with her women friends.

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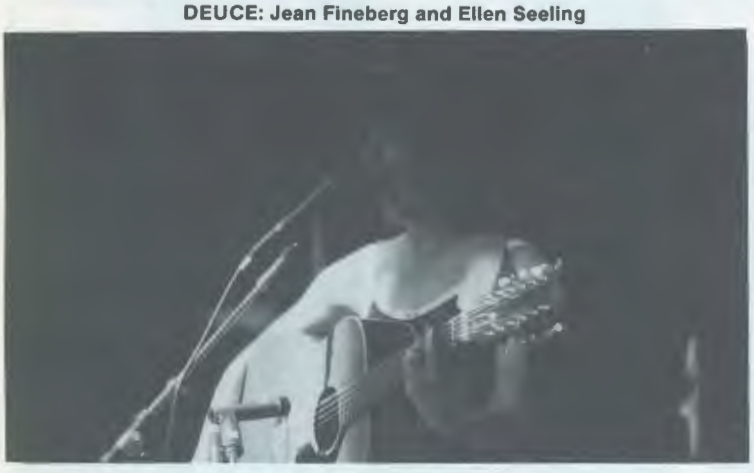

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"Wives, Widows, or Groupies"

On Being Lovers of the "Stars"

By Q.W. Bloch

The stage! Exotic, exhausting, exciting. Glamorous. Enticing. You see your honey enter the spotlight to sing, make beautiful music, dance, or tell jokes. It's exhilarating. You can hardly believe that you know this woman, have dinner with her, do your laundry together, or cuddle in bed with her. Is this the same woman, or are you dreaming a beautiful dream? Will she come home with you; will you rub the tension out of her neck; will she cook breakfast in the morning? Or will you kiss her goodbye to see her again after the tour several weeks or months later?

At Michigan some call us "widows," the small group of lovers who follow the "stars" around waiting for them off stage or maybe front row. We have the right wrist band color to eat in the tent of the "stars." We can entertain ourselves quite well as we wait and wait and wait. The widows' lovers are unofficially "dead" to them while at the festival, belonging instead to the fans, other musicians, and stage personnel who bustle them around demanding time and attention.

I don't like the title "widow," having known one too many lesbian widows whose lovers have really died. I find it an offensive and insulting term, but hey, they have to call us something. We exist, but we don't fit into any of the other categories that lesbians seem to need to define ourselves. And "significant others" is just too much to say.

We have special problems and concerns...some we inflict upon ourselves, some others inflict upon us through ignorance and lack of sensitivity. Deep down I still have that early feminist sisterhood belief that we won't hurt each other intentionally. I think that the root of the problem is "star tripping," the raising up of our musicians/minstrels to the status of demi-goddesses. Just because someone sings and plays an instrument doesn't mean she is better than general folk.

How many performers can boast of long-term relationships? I know of maybe three, counting my own. I don't believe that performers all really want non-monogamy or even serial monogamy, the constant upheaval on the homefront with draining emotional scenes. Maybe it's conducive for the creation of some music or humor, but in the long run it doesn't help performers deal with the stresses and demands of their work. As for the lovers who choose the musicians, comics, or other public women, they do so because these performers are unique, stimulating, and interesting. I don't think performers or their lovers can thrive on constant emotional, heartbreaking scenes in their lives.

This article is about some of the problems that can be caused when one woman in a relationship is seen and treated as a goddess while her partner is barely acknowledged. I'm writing for three reasons: to get some of it off my chest, to support other women in public-lover relationships, and to hopefully raise a little consciousness among the producers and fans.

My biggest fear has been that I'm creating an issue where there is none except in my own insecure head. But when I have spoken to women one-on-one, I have felt reassured. Though the details of our individual circumstances differ from woman to woman, most have seemed able to relate to my experience. Because of isolation, lack of communication, and fear of talking honestly with one another, these problems within the lesbian community are ignored or blamed on the failures of individual relationships.

I sent a questionnaire to 30 performers asking them to give the questions to their lovers/partners (though perhaps I should have asked that they give them to their former lovers). Participants were guaranteed anonymity.

I've culled the questions which got the most responses. No one has definitive answers because all women's situations are different. That's the personal part. But women who answered could relate to and identify with several of the issues. This, in my mind, makes the issue political.

How do you deal with sharing your sweetie with hundreds/thousands of adoring fans? Do you see them as a threat?

Commonly expressed concerns included pretty young women throwing themselves at the "star"; one-night stands; the attraction of love without commitment; the worry of your sweetie's meeting someone exciting and new and falling in love; and the feeling of losing her to the romance of the road.

One woman wrote that she feared her honey wouldn't ever come home, that the simplicity of touring would seduce her into further travel—especially when the bills were due at home, the relationship was uneasy, the dog was sick, and the house was falling down around their ears.

Even after eight years with my "star" lover, I hesitate before telling her on the phone that anything is wrong at home, fearing that the "easy" life will attract her more than I will. (Now per-

formers, calm your bones...I know the road is not easy because of constant demands, rehearsals, staying in strangers' homes. But to me, on the other end of the phone, having just cleaned up the dog's puke, the road is glamorous.) People take my lover out to dinner while I'm eating frozen food. There is constant excitement and stimulation for her while I, at home, deal with everyday concerns.

Another woman wrote that she feared she wouldn't be special enough to hold her lover. Still another said she was jealous because her lover seemed to be irresistible to other women and knew it...and there she was, alone on tour.

Though some of the feelings may be irrational, they are real. What do you do with them? Can you voice them without sounding negative?

A secure, monogamous relationship doesn't always seem to ease the fears. I still get stomach knots every time my honey tells me about a stimulating woman she has had an interesting dinner conversation with. I voice the anxieties to her, overstating and making jokes of them. She usually listens and tells me it's me she loves.

How do you handle the privileges which come with being the lover of a "star"?

"What privileges? A free seat at the concert?"

"When there's a ride, take it!"

"Just enjoy them."

"I have no privileges because we keep our relationship a secret. She has a lover at home, and I only see her when she's on tour or at a festival."

This issue is a hard one for me personally. Sometimes at a concert I just go through the back door to avoid saying, "[My lover] left a ticket here for me," or "I am with [my lover]." Otherwise it draws unwanted attention to me, and I feel as I sit down in the selected seat that the word is spread..."That's her lover...!" I feel as if I'm giving a mini-performance in the audience, and I've no desire to be a performer.

Sometimes I bring a book to the concert, especially when I'm on the road and have heard the concert several times in a row. Also, because we live together, I've heard her songs in their boring birthing stages. She'll practice the same notes or phrases over and over again; frankly, I'm pretty bored with it. But I get the feeling that if I don't give my full attention to her music, women will think I don't like the music. I admit that it may be my own paranoia. Nonetheless, the feelings are persistently real.

The Michigan festival is a difficult situation, too. Big crowds do not thrill me, even if the crowd is of laughing, naked women. By going to Michigan with my "star" lover, I'm given a privilege which is uncomfortable for me. The right color wrist band gives me access to the stage area and to meals in the eating tent reserved for the "stars." It also gives me the "privilege" of getting resented by those who do not have that perk. I rationalize that if I didn't have that colored band on, I would never be able to spend time with my lover or with any of the friends I've met through her. We'd never have any relaxed time together.

Do you catch yourself wanting to identify yourself as the lover of the "star" in order to raise your own worth in the eyes of others?

My saying, "Hello, I'm [her] lover," always stops conversation and rivets attention on my next words. Suddenly I'm worth talking to, listening to. What I do, especially in relation to my lover, is fascinating to people. It's tempting to use this identification ploy, especially when I'm being ignored. Other survey respondents also expressed the sentiment that once the relationship is made clear, "all of a sudden I seem to be worth something."

One woman wrote that she finds herself wanting to brag about being lovers with So-and-so, even though both parties are well-known within women's music. She said people always seem impressed, and it seems to elevate her image with them. Conversation about her lover guarantees an interesting exchange, and people always want to know what So-and-so is really like.

"Sometimes it does bug me!" another woman wrote. "I've tried to keep my own identity alive, but I get insecure as 'the girlfriend.' " Another woman said, "Occasionally I want to identify myself as the star's lover, but only when I'm in her element. I get the feeling that folks think that's all I need to accomplish in my life."

Do you feel inhibited talking about problems in your relationship?

Who can you talk with, especially if you're on the road? There is a fear of having your problems spread like wildfire, i.e., "Did you know that [she] and Q.W. are having problems? Etc."

After another "social night out," Elizabeth vows to never again become lovers with a woman involved with the women's music industry.

Women love to gossip about "stars." How else would the National Enquirer reach such (tainted) glory? The juicier the gossip the better. And if it's not juicy enough, along the way the juice will be invented.

One woman wrote that if she were talking about her relationship with a non-celebrity lover, nobody would care, but since her lover gets up on a stage, suddenly everyone is interested. One learns to be guarded and careful in the choice of confidants.

How do you maintain your own identity?

In any relationship—especially when your partner is in the limelight, has decided what her life's path is, and sticks to it—it's hard to maintain your identity. I'm still groping for mine, still trying to maintain my sense of Self. Long absences have demanded that I take care of myself and my own needs. Her focus on her life has made it imperative that I speak up and butt in about my own life.

Lovers of celebrities have different methods of dealing with the issue. Sometimes both women in the couple have celebrity status, and feelings of competition are the main threat to their individual identities. Sometimes the lover is also a business partner—an agent, booker, accountant, secretary, or roadie. These business relationships may be official working arrangements, or the lover of the performer may get "stuck" doing the work—with or without pay.

I have fought hard not to be swept into my lover's business. I don't travel with her much. I don't help her write songs, though I do tell her whether I like them or not. Sometimes I just decide I won't go to this concert or that because I'd rather stay home and watch TV. I'm not impressed by this "star" business; it's just another line of work.

Do you avoid restaurants, bars, and concerts by other performers because people assume your honey is public domain?

Lovers of celebrities have differing emotional responses to the lack of anonymity. Some like the status, some like meeting new people, some feel confident asserting themselves in those situations. But often the lover of the "star" is neglected, ignored, or actively resented. She is too frequently invisible as a person.

Once in a women's bar in Boston my lover and I were sitting in a booth, quietly enjoying a beer or two. A woman came up to drool over my lover, exclaiming how wonderful she was, how much she had changed this woman's life. (This seems silly to me because the music may have touched her, but not my lover personally.) I was on the inside, between them, and was catching all the drool meant for my lover. I asked politely (really, I did) if she wanted me to move so she could salivate directly upon her object of adoration, but she totally ignored me.

I've met this kind of woman before, a woman so blinded by the light of the "star" that she can't see anyone or anything else. So I kept quiet, expecting the fan to finish and leave. But she just kept on and on, squishing me in-between. I asked her again, but it was like I was an inanimate partition in the booth. Finally, I'd had enough! When she leaned over me to clasp my lover's magical hand, I bit her...not hard, but hard enough that she realized there was a living creature beside her (a small dog, yes), and that her rudeness was going to be met in kind.

"The right color wristband gives me access to the stage area and to meals in the eating tent reserved for the 'stars.' It also gives me the 'privilege' of getting resented by those who do not have that perk."

on different life-hats to see if any fit. My lover knew she would perform when she was a child. Her parents trained and supported her. She maintains that strength and support now through her fans and colleagues. Her work is important, touching people deeply and resolutely, even changing women's lives. Her work is all-absorbing, touching everything she does and every dream she has. No one lets you forget it. How does a lover find space to be a millworker, a waitress, a bookkeeper, or an amateur writer with absolutely no inclination to be famous or even rich?

This identity problem, which can surface in any relationship, can be intensified if one woman is a celebrity. My last lover and I merged so completely (taking the two-halves-make-a-whole doctrine to heart) that the relationship grew stale. We separated, and I felt I had no individual identity to fall back on. I decided I never wanted to go through that void again. Relating to someone as strong as my lover has forced me

It's perfectly acceptable to pay your respects in a public place, but fans should do so and then leave. Don't assume you are welcome to join us. If you have something longer to say, arrange a meeting or write a letter. A performer needs private time, and just because you've paid for her album or a concert seat, you do not own her. The person she's with has rights, too! The celebrity's lover has the right to have her presence acknowledged; the right to spend time alone with her lover; and the right to be included in conversation, even if it forces the talk to veer away from music and into other fields.

Well...

Those are some of the topics that I think are relevant because they touch me and the women who wrote back to me. It must be remembered that the perspective represents a small sampling of people, and that these issues are not problems for every woman

who is in a relationship with a "star."

But the recognition of these problems might help some women feel less alone. For public women and their lovers, security on the homefront gives them focus and energy for other efforts, encouraging them both to strive for more. The women's music network is evolving like the rest of our women's culture, opening to new ways of relating and working things through. I hope that bringing this issue to the surface will force us to look at it further.

I'm writing to support those of us who love our "stars," the women who support them, listen to them and comfort them, the women who keep the home fires burning so that the performers may go out to entertain and spread women's culture. Seen as wives, widows, or groupies, we are the women who are personally there for our stars.

My experience is limited. My lover and I have a monogamous, life-partner relationship. I enjoy my role as homemaker, because I'm able to explore my own life and my own potential. Other women who participated in the survey include those with situations vastly different from mine: those who have more than one relationship at a time, those who do not live in the same household with their lovers, those who are part of a relationship between two "stars," and those whose participation as business partners is a crucial element of the celebrities' continued stardom. We each have a different story to tell.

I examined this issue to make women think, whether they are fans, or producers, or women like myself who think they're alone and misunderstood. Maybe some of the stress-producing situations can be reduced—or even avoided—with just a little sensitivity.

Maybe someday the actual root of the problem, star-tripping, can be looked at closely and analyzed. Why do we put some women up and out of reach? Are they the magicians just because they can play an instrument and carry a tune? Someday...

But now we deal with the symptoms and try to see that they are indications of a larger problem, a problem not just within individual relationships, but one which may be within the creation of our culture. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Q.W. Bloch is a pseudonym for a writer who does not want fame, blame, or recognition, just respect. Under her real name she has had poetry and stories published in 'Womanspirit.' She is currently working on a chapter for an anthology on lesbian couples.

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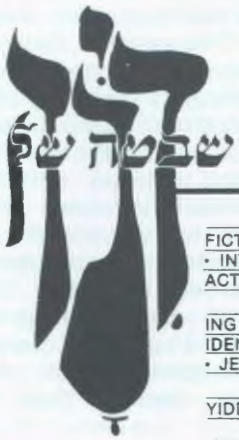

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BERLIN'S 'LESBENWOCHE'

Notes of A Jewish Lesbian from the United States Playing Women's Music in Germany

By Debbie Fier

Before I went to Germany I had many preconceived ideas. I didn't know much about the feminist or lesbian movement/culture there, though I knew that the German women were political. I had quite a lot to ponder going to a country where I didn't know anyone and didn't know the language. Everything I knew about the culture was enough to keep me—as a Jew and as a lesbian—away. Actually it felt life-threatening to me at times. My Polish Jewish grandparents could NOT understand my going to Germany. But something inside of me knew it was an opportunity for me, personally and professionally, that I could not resist. This is the story of my experience.

In September of 1985 I performed at the Artemis Cafe in San Francisco and then at Mama Bears in Oakland. Between sets at Mama Bears I met a woman from Berlin named Rula, who told me that she was involved in the production of Lesbenwoche (Lesbian Week), which would take place in Berlin October 26 through November 2. She asked me if I would be interested in performing there.

"Berlin, California?" I asked.

"No," she replied. "West Germany."

I thought for a minute and said I'd love to find out more about it. She told me she would call Berlin the following day, and the women there would meet and call her back. Well, having worked in enough collectives to know about that form of decision-making, I believed they'd do it—it just would take a few months, at which point the festival would be over.

I was amazed and impressed when Rula called me the next evening to say it was all worked out. I heard from her soon and received my ticket within three weeks.

It was my first flight overseas, and I was unprepared when told to turn my clock ahead from 3:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. So even though it was the middle of the night I had to function as if I had just had a full night's sleep.

I was met at the airport by Lise, one of the organizers of Lesbenwoche. We found each other easily even though we had never met before.

Debbie Fier with Anni, the editor of *Lesbenstich*.

We went to my housing, which was a two-bedroom flat heated with coal. Two women, a nurse and a student, lived there. After taking a nap, I took my first Ubahn (underground train), which was the way I traveled most frequently during my stay in Berlin. The neighborhood I stayed in was considered to be the poorer punk part of town. Many Turkish people live in this part of town. There is a lot of racist antagonism toward the Turks, who comprise the largest community of people of color in Berlin, from the whites.

LESBENWOCHE

Saturday was the opening night of Lesbenwoche. We went at 3:00 p.m. to an enormous round tent, the Tempodrom, for the sound-check. The show started at 8:30, and included two martial arts groups, a local Berlin rock band, a cabaret group, the British duo Ova, and myself. The martial arts performers were beautiful, but I felt the local band definitely needed more work. I couldn't follow the cabaret because of the language barrier. Ova's performance, on the other hand, was in English. Jana and Rosemary of Ova are practiced and professional, and they came across as powerful performers.

I was nervous about performing for an audience full of people who knew little English. I decided that in order to make a lasting impression on these women I would have to emphasize musically and emotionally what they were missing lyrically. I also decided to perform a variety of instrumental music including drumming, a universal language in which words are unnecessary. I was warmly welcomed by the 2,500 women present. Most of the women were from Germany, but many came from Austria, Amsterdam, France, and England as well.

Three days later I had my own concert at a school in Berlin. The enthusiasm for exciting feminist lesbian music was high and, as a performer, it felt wonderful! Women were dancing through parts of the show, even though the concert consisted only of my voice, a piano, and my conga drums (with some percussion improvisation with Ova). I had a few women tell me that they had never seen or heard a woman play the piano like I did, which came as a surprise to me, being in the home of Steinways.

I was amazed that these Ger-

man women had so much energy. Concert production was not something that many of these women had done before. But for both of my concerts they moved a piano from someone's second floor apartment to the Tempodrom and then to the school—no problem. There was a strong willingness to do hard work, and they had lots of enthusiasm even though they didn't know me at all.

I was further amazed by how much we could communicate—in half German and the other half English—without understanding each other's every word. Most women spoke a little English and I picked up a bit of German while I was there. They have many words with 10-20 letters, so learning German is a mouthful.

Women I met were independent, anarchist, rebellious, political, and talented (women had their arts and crafts set up all week). I met a lesbian surgeon, women working at women's centers, and others who were unemployed: a cross-section of the diverse classes and backgrounds that exist in the European lesbian community.

I found a whole new audience to tap into musically. Berlin is such a center for music, theater, and politics. On the local radio, some stations were exclusively German, some were British, and others played the U.S. Top 40.

OBSERVATIONS OF A JEWISH LESBIAN IN GERMANY

The hair colors and styles I saw were incredible, making Los Angeles and New York seem like small-town timid places in comparison. It was easy to see how much of the punk/new wave movement in the U.S. follows what is happening in Berlin and London.

Part of the punk style I observed in Berlin consisted of metal and leather. This disturbed me and it bothers many lesbians who live with it daily. Many of the punks and lesbians dress in military drag. Most of the punk clothing shops I visited sold old army boots, old army jackets, old army medals, pants, shirts—everything but swastikas. It was something I could not and did not want to get used to. In Berlin, many lesbians outrightly call this form of dress and behavior "fascist" and "nazism." The ones wearing the clothing say it's just fashion. Either way, it's quite frightening to me.

I didn't feel fully safe in Berlin; my skin bristled hearing sirens and encountering military people in uniforms speaking German got my adrenalin going. Sometimes while walking the streets I had the urge to approach people around the age of 55 and just shake them...and ask them how they could have let the Holocaust happen. Once, while waiting for the train and spotting military-looking men, I wondered how they would act if they knew I was Jewish.

After a few days I experienced a strange feeling. I realized that hardly anybody had dark, curly hair like mine. It was eerie to consider that the Holocaust was about killing Jews off in order to make room for a falsely supremist culture. I did, however, meet some Jewish women there who feel strongly that Germany is their home and they don't want to leave. Also exciting was meeting Italian Jews and South American Jews.

Another unsettling observation had to do with alcohol consumption. As a culture and within the lesbian community, the Germans drink a great deal of alcohol. Germany is one of the top beer manufacturers in the world. Beer was readily available even though it was sometimes difficult to buy good water.

I was happy to note that women's clubs in Berlin do not allow men inside. Men who attempt to stay are physically removed from the premises. One of the clubs I went to was cozy, bright, and very popular—somewhat of a contrast to many of the hole-in-the-wall U.S. lesbian bars.

Being surrounded by "the wall" is creepy. Berlin is surrounded by the German Democratic Republic, known as East Germany. This makes for barbed wire and a lot of police around. I heard many stories of people trying to escape into Berlin and being killed by the variety of high-tech methods the government has invented. If you want to venture into East Germany there is a curfew time by which you must leave. I felt like I got a taste of Russia by hearing such vivid details of communist living.

All in all, though, it was exciting to be in Europe, to think about touring there and exploring and discovering the many different cultures that live close to each other. I met women who each spoke three or four different languages because there are so many countries within a small radius, much like traveling from state to state within the U.S.

I got more of a perspective about the United States, too—seeing how readily the U.S. government has gotten itself into places and situations where it has no

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"Concert production was not something that many of these women had done before. But for both of my concerts they moved a piano from someone's second floor apartment to the Tempodrom to the school—no problem."

WOMEN'S MUSIC IN MUNICH

Things are changing in Munich. Traditionally women's music festivals have taken place in northern Germany, especially in the area around Cologne. But this year will see the first women's music festival held in southern Germany. On the weekend of February 28-March 2 there will be three days of live music by women for a women-only audience, workshops, courses, opportunities to improvise, discussion groups, and in general a chance for women involved in all areas of music to get together and exchange tips/information. The high point of the festival will undoubtedly be the "Sirenade" (a play on the word "serenade"), a big women's dance in Munich's Alabama Halle.

The preliminary program of the Munich Festival looks like this:

CONCERTS

Susanne Weinhoppel (Munich): "Harp & inappropriate songs"; **Brest** (Berlin): women's rock band; **Ginette Kleinmann** (Strassbourg): Chansons; **Ulrike Haage/Anne Gebauer** (Hamburg): jazz improv voice/piano; **Reichlich Weiblich:** the only German women's jazz orchestra (14 women); **Sirenenensang** (Munich): vocal ensemble of the "Sirenen"; **Ruth Geiersberger/Laila Muhs** (Munich): vocal improv; **Miss C** (Munich): "no wave" rock band; **Double-x Project** (Aachen): experimental music; **Sibylle Pomorin** (Rikkerode): free jazz; **FAM** (Vienna): free music/modern jazz; **ADJE** (Bonn): African sounds; **Contagious** (Denmark): traditional jazz; **Samt und Saite** (Munich): blues; **Elisabeth Kollek/Anneliese Jung** (Munich); works of women composers for alto voice/-piano; **Renate Lettenbauer/Elisabeth Prossel** (Munich): works of women composers for soprano/piano; **Leonardaensemble** (Cologne): madrigals of women composers; **also** piano compositions by women through the centuries, chamber music by women composers.

WORKSHOPS

flute improv: Anka Hauter (Vienna); **vocal improv:** Laila Muhs (Munich); **classical voice education:** Elisabeth Kollek (Munich); **music & meditation:** Luisa Francia (Munich); **music therapy:** Eva Bauer (Munich); **drums & percussion:** Bettina Busse (Berlin); **instrument building:** Sabine Stegmuller (Rosenheim); **music—technical equipment:** Jean Miller (Berlin); **music theory—harmony & arrangement:** Andrea Simmendinger (Munich).

LECTURES & DISCUSSIONS

Five centuries of women composers: Eva Weissweller (Cologne); **Music & law (GEMA), contracts:** Gaby Werth (Munich); **Rock music as a career:** Kerstin Kilanovsky (Cologne); **Societal status of women in the music business:** Andrea Simmendinger (Munich).

...ALSO...

jam sessions; exhibit: women in music; video clips of women musicians; cafe/forum as a communication tool; women's dance.

"SIRENEN"

The group producing the festival, the "Sirenen" (Sirens), was initially simply a "Stammtisch," a support group meeting once a month for women involved in music. The Sirens are now a strong organizing group with well over 30 active members. The basic purpose for the group's existence remains the same: to work together so that more women have more to say in the music world. (According to figures published by the German office of statistics in 1980, the percentage of women in the German music world: professional musicians, 2.8%; conductors, 1%; orchestral musicians, 10.5%.)

The "Sirenen" are made up of composers, text-writers, instrumentalists, singers, technical specialists, producers, music teachers, stage hands, and music lovers of all kinds. The group produces concerts, courses, and workshops in all areas of music as well as the informal monthly gatherings to meet each other and exchange information. The "Sirenen" are there to support the work of women musicians in all areas of music, the development of a female music culture, and individual musicians and projects through information, referrals, and practical help.

—Lavenda Schaff, Hamburg

right to be.

My last night in Berlin was a bit traumatic. A few of us were going out to dinner and I had gotten the wrong address for the restaurant. I asked a man working at the underground for help and got none. I asked a cop who feigned knowing no English. Then I asked two somewhat friendly-looking men (my mistake) who were not at all helpful. It was frustrating; none of the above made any attempt to assist me. This illustrates (even before all the recent violent acts performed by the U.S. government) how many Europeans have a negative attitude toward Americans.

Closing night of Lesbenwoche was a performance by a satiric lesbian folksinger from Munich and then a dance with taped music. They asked me to perform again, but by that time I was fully exhausted. Again women showed up in droves. It was incredible to realize that when I arrived in Berlin I knew no one, and now there were many women with whom I had warm, budding friendships. One friend made me a tape of European women's music to bring home. Of course I invited them to the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (where a few of them were in 1985).

I hope to return to Berlin and other parts of Germany because overall it was an expanding, eye-opening, heart-opening experience for me personally, musically, and culturally. And it's terrific being part of international networking that feminists and lesbians are doing—especially focusing on bringing our different cultures together around music and art.●

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

Marcy Hochberg

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Betsy Lippitt

From the Bar Mitzvah Band to Michigan

By Catherine Roma

Betsy Lippitt is most familiar to the national women's music audience through her work with Cincinnati-based Therese ("the voice of Michigan") Edell [see HOT WIRE, March 1986], who introduced her to the network. Together they have appeared at the third, fifth, sixth, and tenth Michigan Womyn's Music Festivals, and the sixth (in Champaign) and tenth (in Bloomington) National Women's Music Festivals, as well as the New England Women's Musical Retreat. Betsy has appeared with Therese or as a soloist at numerous colleges, universities, and clubs across the U.S. and Europe.

Betsy's training, hard work, spontaneous and innate musicality have combined to form a composer-performer who refuses to be pigeon-holed. Is she a folk musician, jazz-rock-pop performer, a classical prima donna, a creator of women's music? All of these, and yet none. This refusal to be categorized has enabled Betsy to remain free and to find her own characteristic fluid style and voice, to develop on various musical fronts simultaneously.

This fall, Betsy will release her first album, a collection of songs which, according to the artist, "chronicles my growth over the last 15 years; the songs, all of which I composed, span the years 1972-1983."

Betsy grew up in a very musical family. Everybody played music, or sang, or wanted to dance. Her father, who plays piano by ear, used to sing with big bands. Her mother holds a music degree, plays piano, and conducted the Mother Singers, a women's chorus associated with the PTA at Betsy's elementary school in Dayton. As a youngster Betsy started to harmonize melodies and vocalize because she loved doing it and because she got encouragement and support from her parents.

When Betsy was in fourth grade, violin lessons were offered in school, and Betsy began studying and playing in public.

"I studied violin for a year," says Betsy, "and at the end of that time I participated in my private teacher's student recital. After this performance my parents found me another teacher, because she didn't make people play in tune, though I pretty much did. They found me a good teacher named Eugene Piotrowski. He was very musical, and was a good influence on me. He could draw music out of the least talented child."

Betsy went the usual route of a talented public-school student: entering state competitions as a vocal and violin soloist, participating in two high school choirs, and playing violin in the orchestra. Eugene Piotrowski was her only private teacher until she reached the College-Conservatory of Music. Betsy had a few piano lessons and vocal coaching sessions during her senior year in high school, but it wasn't until she came to Cincinnati as a freshman that she began more serious musical study.

Betsy says she didn't really feel pressure as a child to become a musician. "I always felt that I was a musician and that I had lived past lives as a musician, that I could get what I wanted musically if I just worked. I never thought about being a performer. I either wanted to be a missionary, or a social worker, or a musician. And I thought, well, if I teach, then I can be helping people, as with those other professions.

"I was getting a music education degree in school. My father always worked with handicapped people," Betsy says, "and so I spent a lot of time being involved with volunteer work when I was growing up. I saw him use music as a therapeutic kind of recreational activity. When I started college, what I really wanted was a music therapy degree."

Betsy began formal study at the College-Conservatory of Music and had vocal lessons from Jeannine Philippe for several years, suffering through juries (with allergies). She also took music theory and music history courses. Doing very well, but not getting exactly what she wanted at CCM, Betsy quit during her senior year and started to do substitute teaching in the public schools in music as well as in special education classes. At this time, however, a change happened in Betsy's life which was to profoundly affect her musical future.

She started playing her violin and singing back-up vocals with Little Rick and the Door Jambs, Hirschberg Circus, and the Bar Mitzvah Band in a folk club called The Family Owl. At the same time, Betsy began performing in a musical theater company called FreedEntertainment, where she sang roles in Jesus Christ Superstar, Tommy, and Godspell.

Also significant during this time was meeting Therese Edell, who had joined the rock opera company. Therese had been playing at the Blind Lemon, a club in Mount Adams, and Betsy began to sit in with her, singing and playing violin and guitar. They formed a trio called Lady Grace with Louise Anderson playing bass.

"So instead of pursuing music therapy, I decided that I would perform and learn about music

that way," Betsy says. "Later on, I would do music therapy instead of becoming a performer when I was 40, having lost my youthful appeal. I didn't think that would work. I figured I'd go back to music therapy when I grew up."

Betsy learned to play guitar in high school, but didn't begin performing until 1971 or 1972. "I had been sitting in and playing with Therese," Betsy explains, "and I just started playing my guitar more and started singing some, too. After awhile, we started playing together all the time and we got an extra night at the Blind Lemon. For awhile Therese had to take a vocal rest and I filled in for her. A few months before, I had started working up some songs and auditioned to play at Zino's Restaurant. I went to my audition knowing three or four songs and told them I could play for three hours if I got the job. I went home. I was pretty sure I had the job, so I crammed in 25 or 30 songs and started working there the next week."

In 1976, Betsy toured with Gypsy Fire, a Denver-based group. Later, she performed extensively in San Francisco and on the West Coast, first as a soloist and then with feminist poet/musician Lallo. She also began an enduring musical relationship with violinist Sylvia Mitchell.

Returning to Ohio, Betsy rejoined Therese, and they began their long and exciting career in women's music.

During the summer of 1979, Betsy studied with internationally-acclaimed Oregan, the acoustic group. Her most musically challenging endeavor was with a group called Elberon, which performed progressive folk-jazz during the mid and late 1970s.

Currently, in addition to performing every Wednesday in Cincinnati and working in the studio on her forthcoming album, Betsy plays violin in the Charleston, West Virginia, Symphony Orchestra. She also is a member of the Fleeting Moments Waltz and Quick Step Orchestra, doing vintage music from the 1880s to 1920, and she gives private musical instruction. She recently completed a series of songs based on the work experience of several Cincinnati women in the early 1920s. Her interest in holistic healing has led to a long-awaited degree in music therapy, awarded in 1985 from the College of Mount St. Joseph.

"One vision I have," she says, "is to continue writing, and working with a few people musically on a continuous basis—singing, performing, and playing as a way to support ourselves. Some of the writing I want to do is towards music and healing, so I'd like to be involved with some kind of group of people who are interested in that. In Charleston, I'm talking with a cellist from the orchestra. She's a music teacher and has a few retarded children in her string program. I volunteered to do a workshop with her and the kids. I'm looking forward to that. I'm not exactly sure in what direction my interests will lead me, but I hope to perform and continue to work with special needs people, individually or in groups."

According to Betsy, most of the time her experience with the compositional process has been varied. "Some melodies," she says, "would just come as I'd sit and play my guitar, and then words would follow, sometimes spontaneously. Sometimes it was the other way around. I'd write lyrics but wouldn't necessarily have a melody for them. I'd keep them around and put fragments to music, and somehow those fragments might find their way to each other in a song.

"I don't really write the verse-chorus kind of music. The bridge of a song holds a pivotal position. If I do write a verse-chorus song, the bridge is different, a little more experimental and expansive. The pieces I write don't use a lot of chords."

About the songs on the album, which at this point include no in-

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Diane Dennerline

"This is a quest kind of album, not the having found it, nirvana album; it is more about struggle and growth."

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

"The More Labels the Better"

HAWKINS & DELEAR

By Lois A. Parsons

The dimly-glowing lights of a 16-channel rack mount mixer, the drum machine, the keyboards, and the other instruments crowd the stage as the audience awaits the appearance of Hawkins & DeLear. Chris Hawkins, lead vocalist, steps into this uncommon collection of instruments and smiles at Gillian DeLear, seated behind her drums. The audience is treated to a visual orchestration of song; the sound of Hawkins's haunting soprano is heightened and sharpened by the texture of DeLear's accompaniment. The variety of the percussion from drums to suspended wind chimes to Chinese temple blocks brings nuances of unusual sounds. Together they create a fresh new addition to women's music.

This duo's music incorporates technology and variety in a way that the women's music circuit has not seen. DeLear puts character into her music through the use of numerous percussion instruments; in addition to those listed above, she uses a Simmons SDS-9 electric drum set and an RX-11 drum machine, along with an electric bass. Hawkins plays Oberheim matrix 12 and Yamaha DX-7 keyboards, and occasionally adds a special dimension by playing the saxophone, in addition to singing.

Hawkins & DeLear have been described as "progressive," "energizing," "versatile," "delightful," and "captivating." Labels to define the type of music they do, however, are more difficult.

Do they consider their brand of technopop to be "women's music"?

"I'm very much a feminist," says Hawkins, "and I hope this message comes through in my music. Perhaps it can reach some ears that it might not reach otherwise. I started out doing folk music. A lot of women's music has been folk, for a variety of reasons. Folk is more intimate, it's from the heart, it's grassroots. However, I think it has also not reached a lot of people. In making my music a little more pop sounding, I hope it will reach people that may or may not consider themselves feminists, egalitarians, or whatever. Our music is such a combination of things; it is feminist because it is from our feminist hearts, it is political because it is our politics. I don't know if I would label it one thing or the other."

DeLear adds, "I would label it any which way people want to label it — and the more labels the better."

Hawkins & DeLear want to speak about the experiences that they feel they share with many women. They have observed that women who are going through changes are often judged when they most need understanding. They speculate that perhaps some regression in the women's movement happens because sharing has not been forthcoming between the women who are just coming into an awareness and those older in the movement.

Music is a way of life that can dominate one's existence. Hawkins & DeLear consistently take time from their busy schedules to research everything they can about music, exploring the "nuts and bolts" of record labels and the whole album-making process. They feel that artists who do their homework in exploring labels, selecting good record pro-

ducers, and obtaining appealing album covers will have a better chance of crossing over to mainstream music, and will be generally more professional.

Hawkins & DeLear have some excellent equipment and are looking forward to pursuing new musical ideas that they have so far been unable to do. "Just creating sounds, and different kinds of music, is exciting to me," says Gillian DeLear. Both of them have future plans to explore performance art and to integrate other media with their music, such as slide projectors, movies, painting, or sculpture.

They each bring a varied background to their combo in terms of the kinds of music they perform and explore. Both women had classical training and some jazz, but there is where the similarity ends. DeLear was into rock & roll and progressive rock, while Hawkins came from the folk scene. It's that blend, called by some listeners "high tech folk," that has been a strong factor in their music.

This duo brings together lifelong interests in music. Hawkins, who loves peaceful walks in the country and feels they contribute to her creativity, grew up in rural Ohio. She loves swimming, painting, and science fiction novels, particularly those written by women. She graduated from Indiana University's School of Music, with an unusual classical major in bassoon. Before teaming up with DeLear, she spent three years as a soloist in the St. Louis area.

They met at the movie Terms of Endearment. Hawkins & DeLear soon discovered their common love of music and decided to get together to jam. An hour later, they were performing for the St. Louis women's coffeehouse with congas and an acoustic guitar. They have been together almost three years.

Gillian DeLear is the rhythm section, and she adds vocal harmonies. She is currently studying applied electronics and exploring new electronic music techniques.

Born in California, DeLear spent most of her childhood in the St. Louis area. She is the third generation of performers in her family. Her grandfather was a stage technician in San Francisco's theatrical revival following the big earthquake. Her grandmother and great-aunt were dancers who performed with Al Jolson and other legendary entertainers. Her baritone-bass father and pianist mother toured the country as a duo, performing everything from Broadway tunes to classical arias. In such an environment it seemed natural that young Gillian began picking up instruments as early as age five.

As a physical diversion, DeLear enjoys karate. She's quite accomplished, having earned a brown belt in Ken-Po. She intends to persevere until she has earned her black belt.

Working together since 1984, Hawkins & DeLear have developed their abilities to communicate with audiences. Their listeners hear true-to-life situations in the songs. For example, in Midnite Silence [see the soundsheet in this issue] they sing of the fear a woman feels going out at night. Midnite Silence is the title cut of their soon-to-be released tape, available through Ladyslipper.

Midnight silence binds me home
Midnight silence won't leave me alone
They tell me I can't go out at night
They tell me I've got to stay out of sight
I'm telling you it's hard to do
Wondering what a man's going to do
Midnight silence binds me home
Midnight silence won't leave me alone
Midnight silence, where's a woman to roam?

"My favorite thing to do on stage is to communicate," says Hawkins, "to feel like I've connected and that they understand. That is gratifying to me."

The duo will be touring the Midwest this fall and hopefully the West Coast in the winter. They are currently seeking a booker for national tours and a technical person to travel with them and do sound. They have plans for an album release in 1987. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Lois A. Parsons is pursuing a degree in operations research. Her interests include poetry, dulcimer, and guitar.

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MULLING IT OVER

Music, Life, and Politics

By June Millington

When I first started playing music, politics was the last thing on my mind. It was groove, groove, groove, and survive, survive, survive. But when I think about it now, playing Motown and rock & roll when we did (in the early to mid '60s) was a very political act. My sister Jean and I were young and brown, and no one near our age and color (or gender for that matter) was doing it as far as the eye could see, or the ears could hear. Everyone was both threatened and intrigued by us, and why not? We were independent, doing our own thing, and stepping out of the norm. If a girlfriend joined the band, as many did for a month or maybe more, then there were not only daily after-school rehearsals, but forays to air force bases, fraternity parties, or high school functions, and God alone knew what else.

And do you know what? They were right to be concerned. We really did feel the throbbing of our own beat, did see the effect in people's eyes, the desire to know more, the excitement of it all. If only we had a message.

But—maybe not. Maybe it was enough just to see us, to get the uneasy feeling that there was something stirring, something that was out of "their" control. There was a wind, and we were riding on the fringe of it, heralding... what? Women in music? Women's (wimmin/womyn/womon's) music? Women, women, women? I think that it was all of that. And it sure was fun doing it out of instinct, acting from the hip.

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

I'll never forget our first woman drummer. Kathy, her name was. She called us and wanted to start a band. Up until that point, it was folk and singing Beatles songs during the intermissions of our boyfriends' surf band (Jean and I always seemed to have boyfriends who were in the same band. I think it was for company).

There were four of us, all playing acoustic guitars, playing the same chords, trying to rock out. Then Kathy called, then Sandy dropped out, then it was June and Jean and Kathy and Cathy.

That was the beginning of the never-ending saga of the girls in the band. They would literally come and go. We would fervently practice songs like "Heat Wave" after school, and have to drive over to each other's houses, where we would hole up for hours, having some serious fun. And, we started to make some money. And meet a lot of people. And not have the time to go out with the regular boyfriend on just any old Friday or Saturday night. In fact, what with school, rehearsals, and gigs, there really wasn't any time left at all for the normal activities. Boyfriends flipped out. Moms and Dads couldn't see it at all. We were out of their control.

Slowly it dawned on us: we really could sorta do what we wanted. Act different. Act out. Make our own decisions. Make money. Have a really good time, and still make those good grades. It really wasn't that hard.

Well, Kathy had the strictest parents, and she was the wildest. We had to rehearse at their house, and her parents had to accompany us to every gig, including a long haul up to Portland, Oregon. She couldn't wait to jump into bed with any guy who moved (it seemed). I really wasn't that interested, and at that point couldn't quite figure it out.

I sublimated my interest in some of the other girls through work, work, work. I booked the gigs, negotiated the deals, bought the records and learned the songs and taught them to everyone else. I was the only one who could back up the trailer.

I felt really out of it on every level except books and music. I felt really unattractive. I had zits and was brown and the guys were always picking up the girls in predictable order, first Cathy (long, golden hair, hedonistically good looks, daughter of a tennis pro), then Kathy (short, brownish-blonde hair, pixie-ish good looks), then Jean (brown and so alluring looking, always took good care of herself), and then me, but not really. I had no sense of the political then; if I had, I might have thought there was a racial moti-

vation there, instead of the natural pecking order of things. As it was, I was angry enough. I just didn't know whom to direct it at, or how.

I was really mad at myself, and had a hard time. Like, once when I was on acid in Lake Tahoe I heard some of the guys in the other band talking about which of the girls was a good lay. And like, I was just there stretched out in the back seat in the parking lot late at night, stoned out of my mind and minding my own business, when they gathered right outside the back door and started shooting the shit. And like, they never even mentioned me. I was kinda glad but real confused, and that was no time to hear it. And like, there was a serpent growing in my belly and it took years before I began to understand and unravel my own anger. These were the guys I played and hung out with, and now I didn't even know them or what they were saying—they were different creatures. And like, why? Why did what they were saying make me really, really angry, except I couldn't say it? And why did I just lie there in the car stoned out by myself in the middle of the night and try to forget just as quick as I could that I'd ever heard a thing?

Because I thought it was my fault, that's why. Something was wrong with me.

The music helped make it all right. And slowly, ever so slowly, politics crept into my life. When we were in Fanny, we were asked by the press constantly if we were feminists. We had to answer quite honestly that we weren't sure what a feminist was, but that we thought we were doing what feminism stood for: doing what we wanted to do, expressing ourselves and being independent. In this way maybe we were after all. What the heck, we honestly didn't know.

Z Budapest tells me now that she tried to get into our dressing room at the Whiskey a Go Go in Los Angeles in the early days, and couldn't make it past the door. We were well-protected then, partly because in fact there were a lot of weirdos who wanted to check us out. But we had come such a long way, and struggled so hard to get there, and there was nothing to do but prove that we could play like guys. And when I say "nothing to do but," I don't mean that lightly. I mean it literally. It was the only avenue open, the only route to take, although it was the hardest one. It was climbing Mount Everest. No one had done it, and it had to be done, it had to be done for generations to come, really.

Isn't that political? We sort of knew it, but it was so hard to articulate. It was pure impulse. We were doing it all so instinctively, and we felt our destiny so keenly. Moreover, we didn't come from a political base at all. It was as if we were just reflecting some raw force which was to be shaped and refined later by all the girls/women and the groups to come. That was our politics: to do it, to survive, and to enjoy watching what was to come. And we knew it was coming. We would talk about it, and feel proud. But there were no support groups then, no Lesbian Alliances on campuses, no Audre Lorde, no Judy Grahn or Rita Mae Brown or Rubyfruit Jungle, no Personal Best or anything to look into and see ourselves reflected. So it was a lonely thing, what we did, and we clung to each other as the changes took place outside, where there were the "others."

And there were others, all right. Now we know there were thousands, hundreds of thousands, mobilizing. But we didn't quite know that then, and when I quit Fanny and left Hollywood in 1973 it was a tired and terrified woman who crept out, not even bothering to ask about money or rights or anything. But I'd learned a lot, when I could remember and look back.

Playing on Cris Williamson's The Changer and the Changed in 1975 didn't even change me, not right away. I didn't know what Cris was talking about, although I recognized hers as a very good, very strong music (I don't think "powerful" was in my vocabulary back then). We were both pretty shy of one another, and going through our own changes, so it took awhile to get to know each other. And I remember now that when I was playing with her in 1976 Karlene Faith tried to clue me in to the fact that this was healing music, but I'm sure I must have been very polite because I didn't know what she was talking about.

It took playing for a particular audience in L.A.—and one specific date in Yellow Springs, Ohio—for the energy to sink in. In L.A. it was an audience of such joy, of so many different ages and in so large a number that I couldn't help but notice. Here was something different, and I was really, really a part of it. In Yellow Springs we stayed at a woman's house who was a divorcee fighting for the custody of her children. But it didn't seem like she was fighting at all—in fact, hers was a gentle spirit. I saw that she and her lover had a different energy around them, which now I would call "centered." And I remember how they put the kids to bed, and the double deckers, and the warm, warm feeling. Here was the real thing. And at that moment, although I couldn't tell you that at the time and it probably took years to manifest, I think I became really political.

I was writing songs like "You've Got a Home" in the early '70s when I was in Fanny, songs with dim political leanings, as if I were in the shadows but struggling to reach out. The punch line to this one was, "You may not have a father, but you've got a home." You can tell I'm still deferring to the male figure there (the use of "but"). Still, this was a song written from the genuine sentiment of watching the girl child of Brie Berry (one of our original drummers) growing up in our house in Hollywood while her mom gigged around L.A., a single mother. Brie had gotten an art scholarship but had passed it up to get married to her high school boyfriend the week after graduation, much over her best friend Jean's protests. Jean was so mad at her, she stopped talking to her for awhile. And now that I think of it, wasn't that sort of political? Jean was boycotting her because of her action, which she was convinced would lead her nowhere. So perhaps the personal was political, although no one knew to call it that. All we could do was watch Brie sort of get taken up, have her husband lord

continued on next page

over her, and later—when she began to play with us again after an interim of other drummers—watch her play on those drums in club after club until she was seven months pregnant.

We all ended up in San Jose, and Brie had her beautiful baby whom we nicknamed Punkin. Brie and Mike got in these terrible fights and split up. We went to L.A., and even though Brie wasn't playing with us any more, she and Punkin wound up living with us. We would come home after those tours, months on the road, and I would see Punkin growing up. And I thought, it's okay; she's being taken care of, we're all here. I used to do yoga to Jimi Hendrix, and she would do her best to keep up with me, huffing and puffing. She was so cute, so precious and bright. And brown like us. You see, Brie was just like me and Jean: Filipine-American, down to the Filipina mother, American father. And Mike's white, so Punkin's a super-hybrid, which I love to this day. I love any mixture of peoples—it's the world truly melting together, becoming as one.

There was another song about children that made it on a Fanny album, called "Think About the Children." It echoed the idea which Native Americans have held as a sacred tenet for hundreds of years, that of thinking seven generations ahead. If you know the earth as Mother, sustainer of all, and you think of the welfare of her children at least seven generations ahead, there is no way you can paint the world into the fearful corner it's in now. I didn't know of these details back then—once again, I was writing from instinct more than from well-developed ideas, and was emulating the style of Chinese poetry and Japanese haiku: spare, beautiful, and full of references to nature. (One of my biggest personal thrills was hearing this song pre-concert in L.A. at a Rolling Stones show, back in the days when Stevie Wonder was still opening for them. It floated over the speakers, so ethereal and yet so beautifully loud as only sound at a rock concert can be. And it soared. That they had chosen to play it was a complete surprise to me.)

In contrast to the awesome maturity of the songs on Changer, however, one can only say, "Nice try." Which is perfectly okay by me. After all, they helped me to make the jump, too, and Cris was born to manifest these songs just as I was to be born brown in the Phillipines but to come here and play rock & roll. It was our destiny.

The songs on Changer, and almost all the ones that have come through the mouthpiece of women's music since then, have been a blend of the personal, political, and spiritual—and not necessarily in that order. And although I believe people are more watchful about what they write now, more conscious of what they're saying and of the ramifications, at the genesis of the manifestation of all this female energy the goddess was simply showing herself, and one had hardly the time to think about it. Not that there weren't people reflecting, or that there weren't amazingly insightful and informative books written; not that there wasn't a political movement which hundreds, thousands of women had to attend to, and devote their daily lives and precious hours to, like the light of a common fire.

But this was an energy which had to be, which was thousands of years in the coming, and which we all had no choice but to respond to, as in a calling. And who could help but hear that voice? Some gave it in song, some in poetry, still others in sculpture or street theater or dinner pieces, in any of the ways we could and would dare. And whose voice is it but our own, and all of the voices who lived before us, and are yet to come? We sing as one, and are responsible to all.

So now I can hardly help but see the political in everything I do. It's been a long time coming, and it came to me despite my original instinct to just do, groove, and survive. I'm a product of the times. Now I can write a song like "Brown Like Me" and have someone like Angela Davis tell me that she really loves the song. And next to her, I feel like I know nothing at all about politics.

But I'm learning.●

"They were right to be concerned. We really did feel the throbbing of our own beat, did see the effect in people's eyes, the desire to know more, the excitement of it all." (June far right).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: June Millington, involved in women's music since its beginnings, was a founding member of Fanny, the first all-woman rock band to gain national prominence. Fanny made four albums on Warner Brothers and toured extensively in the U.S. and in Europe. See the article about June and her sister Jean in 'HOT WIRE,' July 1985.

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Second Annual 'HOT WIRE' READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

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

In 1986 'HOT WIRE' presented its first annual Readers' Choice Awards. Individuals and groups were nominated by readers, and winners were selected by majority vote.

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At this time we ask our readers for nominations for the 1987 awards, to be presented at the 1987 MIC Banquet in Bloomington. Write the name of your nominee and explain in 50 words or less the contribution to women's music and culture that your nominee has made. Please be specific. All nominations will appear in the March issue, at which time readers will write in their votes.

'HOT WIRE' Readers' Choice Awards
1417 W. Thome, Chicago, IL 60660

All nominations should be received by us no later than January 5, 1987

RE:INKING

Poetry at Women's Music Festivals: Oil and Water

By Pat Parker

My presence at the National Women's Music Festival surprised many women. As I walked the grounds during the day prior to my performance, I was often met with, "Oh, how nice to see you," followed in rapid succession by "What are you doing here?"

I was neither surprised nor angered by this response, but somewhat disappointed that the battle I have been waging for the last 20 years is still not finished.

It seems that there are people who believe that the combination of poetry and music, like oil and water, simply cannot mix, and to carry that combination to a concert stage is unfathomable. The belief carries with it certain unsupported conclusions: that poetry cannot stand alone as a performing art and will be automatically overwhelmed by any music with perhaps the exception of light classical; that audiences will not come out in large numbers for poetry; that even the audience that does come out can only tolerate a small amount of poetry in a sitting, definitely no more than 15 to 20 minutes.

For more than 20 years I have been fighting to destroy these myths, lay them like so many others women have struggled against: women become unstable when pre-menstrual and thus cannot be placed in positions of authority and power; a woman is not complete unless she has given birth. I want to lay them in a deeply-buried tomb out of our existence.

It is not difficult to understand

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

"It seems that there are people who believe that the combination of poetry and music, like oil and water, simply cannot mix, and to carry that combination to a concert stage is unfathomable."

the resistance to the idea of poetry as a performing art. For years our concept of poetry and its presentation has been dominated by male academic ivory towerites. We have been conditioned to find poetry isolated and secluded from the masses of people, a pursuit only to be understood and especially enjoyed by those who possess trained minds and favored breeding. It has long been touted as an art form to be admired for its stylistic machinations with severe limitations on its concepts and subject matter.

Many of us sat in classrooms across this country and were told by balding men in tweed jackets, sisters in black habits, or high-collared women exactly what poetry was and how it was to be read. We were forced to memorize poems of bloody but unbowed heads, multi-faceted love, and mothers' hopes for their sons. We left those classrooms for the most part turned off by the clinical dissection of words to the point of sterility.

Some of us left those rooms and have never since looked between the covers of a book of poetry or crossed the threshold of a room where poetry was being read. Some of us, in spite of the antiseptic approach to the art, developed and retained a love for poetry; we were able to get past the archaic rituals and see the beauty and power of honing thought to its bare essence.

Yet we also took with the art form the trappings that surrounded it. We were content to go into sterile university poetry centers and dimly-lit coffeehouses and sit on hard, straight chairs and supportless sofas to listen to poets: young brash poets, old alcoholic poets, women in long skirts with straight long hair. They were almost always white and almost always men.

In the 1960s, things began to change. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets and began voicing other concerns. Concerns that touched our lives: a war in a far-away place with an unknown people; the separateness of America's ethnic minorities and the inequality of her perceptions of them; the role of women and the rape of our minds and bodies.

The poets and the poetry also changed. The concerns voiced by people in the streets appeared on pages clutched by angry hands. The audiences and the forums also began changing. Women poets started leaving the university reading rooms and coffeehouses and began going to women's cen-

ters. The move toward consciousness had created a different need and a new way to approach poetry and its presentation.

Women's centers, which in many instances were represented by a single night allocated to women in the backroom of a coffeehouse or YWCA, started sponsoring poetry reading.

Women began applying the lessons learned in consciousness-raising to their work and to their approach to other writers. The competitiveness and the one-upmanship of the male poetry scene was replaced by a joyful sharing of ideas and a commitment to sisterhood. The antagonistic discussions between poets regarding who was published and who was not and by whom; how many chapbooks poets had to their credit; and who should read last (the honored position) in a reading were replaced by discussions about the need for more presses, feminist publishers, and women's spaces to promote the work of all as opposed to a few.

Yet even as we moved away from the past, we still refused to let go of all the rituals. Our poetry readings were all women poets and all women audiences, yet we still believed poetry to be a quiet, passive art form to be read in small rooms with other poets. On occasion the sets would be shared with musicians, and then only one musician usually playing a guitar.

In the early 1970s I convinced a bar owner in San Francisco (actually a local bar owner's girlfriend) to bring poetry into the bar, but not before hearing all of the usual objections: bar women would not sit still for poetry, bar women would not give up their junkboxes and pool tables for poetry, and so forth. But eventually a compromise was struck that would alter my life.

We agreed to have the shows on Sunday afternoons, a historically slow time for the bar. We also agreed to four 20-minute sets: two poetry, two music. Finding the musicians was easy; finding poets who were willing to stand on a pool table covered with plywood and read to a bar of dykes while strictly adhering to a 20-minute time limit was almost impossible.

The first Sunday was met with curiosity, and the audience was more one of place and circumstance than of desire to view the performances, but word spread. Soon Sunday afternoons became one of the more popular times to attend that bar, and I became convinced that the fusion of women's music and poetry was a powerful combination that would do more to the raising of women's consciousness than either poet or musician could hope to accomplish singularly.

In the mid '70s, poet Judy Grahn was approached by the women of Olivia Records to record an album. She asked me to record with her, and Where Would I Be Without You was completed in August of 1976. This opened up another door.

The women of Olivia wanted to produce shows featuring their recording artists, and Judy and I were Olivia artists. So negotiations were begun. One major snag was over the performers' fees. Someone put forth the idea that since musicians had to rehearse they should be paid more than the poets. The poets put forth that they had been rehearsing their entire lives for those poems. The matter was settled, and the combination of poets and musicians took to the auditorium stage.

"Women on Wheels" produced several concerts and the "Varied Voices of Black Women" took to the road during 1977 and 1978. Thousands of women saw and felt the experience. It had been proven successfully that the combination worked. Women who had convinced themselves that they hated poetry were reintroduced to the art form and loved it. Women who loved poetry but were totally unaware of women's music heard it and loved it.

Even with the evidence before us we still tried to deny the feasibility of the two forms coexisting on stage. Women's music festivals were flourishing across the country, and there was one very large absence: poetry. The same arguments that were voiced 15 years ago were being repeated.

Thus I was not surprised by the reactions of women in Bloomington this year to a poet in their midst. There has not been enough experience for them to realize and feel comfortable with the idea that poets and poetry belong at women's festivals.

It is not easy even with consciousness to discard the environmental trappings that accompany most art forms. Most of us still expect to see classical musicians in white blouses and long black skirts—but we are changing and growing.

I was also not surprised by the reactions of women following my performance in Bloomington. One woman in the stage crew ran up to me and exclaimed, "They're standing up; they're giving you a standing ovation." The surprise in her voice told me that she had never seen a poetry performance; she had never felt the energy reverberate through a room with the Audre Lordes, Adrienne Richs, and Judy Grahns of this world. The glow in her face also told me that she would do so in the future.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Houston in 1944, Pat Parker has been writing since she was a child. 'Jonestown & Other Madness' is her fifth book of poetry about being black, female, and gay.

Put your money into women's music

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BEHIND THE SCENES

Dino Sierp and Karen Merry

By Lucy Diamond

Linda Thompson

"Re-igniting the spirit": Dino Sierp

It was a muggy Sunday evening in May when a chorus of women's voices chanted a familiar name to the heavens in Bloomington, Indiana. Yes, it was this year's National Women's Music Festival at the University of Indiana, and the chant was, "Dino! Dino! Dino!"

Denise "Dino" Sierp was being honored by the Women in the Arts Board of the National Women's Music Festival for her four years of heart-filled dedication and work. Dino has officially coordinated and produced the Showcase Stage, as well as serving as liaison coordinator to the Music Industry Conference, since 1983. In addition, she has coordinated the open mikes, coffeehouses, festival dances, and round-robin activities at each year's festival.

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

Addressing this year's MIC opening session, she delivered the keynote message in which she urged all women in the network to "re-ignite the spirit" and further unite in a more professional manner.

Born in Seymour, Indiana in 1954, Dino has two brothers, a sister-in-law, and parents who are both living. She graduated from college in 1976 with a BSW in Social Work. A hard worker, Dino began at 13 years old taking on a variety of jobs, from cleaning semi's and toilets to working with mentally ill, retarded, and abused children for the Board of Health. She is now a full-time producer, owns her own business (Branching Out Productions), and does work in promotion of artists, contractual conference organizing with non-profit organizations, and is an eager founding member of the newly-formed national Association of Women's Music and Culture.

Dino quit her full-time job with the Parks Department in Indianapolis in August, 1985 to devote her full energies to women's culture. Since that time she has produced many concert events in her community, including Linda Tillery, Kate Clinton, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, and Debbie Fier. She has had the opportunity to produce numerous lesser-known artists at the Showcase Stage at the Bloomington festival, and says "it's the women" in the network that keep her spirits high and her heart filled. One particular memory is special: at Showcase this year Dino had the honor of presenting Helen Worth to the audience. Helen, Judy Garland's ghost singer in the 1930s and '40s, delighted this year's festival audience.

Dino's dedication and love for women is constantly shown in her work. She delights in the opportunity to provide a stage for new artists, and speaks to the issues of professionalism and new challenges for the network with great conviction. Dino sees AWMAC as a vehicle to thread the network together. She believes strongly in the development of a Code of Ethics in our business dealings, and respect for individuals and the judgments they make to survive in their businesses.

Dino's thoughts for our future include bridge-building and the strength to challenge ourselves so that we can grow as women and as a network.

Toni L. Armstrong

"The label 'women's music' is an asset, not a liability": Karen Merry

For being one of the new kids on the block, distributor Karen Merry is doing great!

She bought Paradigm Distribution from Betsy York in August of 1984, and didn't really even know what the term "cash flow" was all about. The term soon be-

came clear as she assumed the responsibilities of owning her own business and distributing records in a territory that covers southern California, southern Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and El Paso, Texas.

After two years, Karen not only distributes records, but she also does grassroots concert productions in San Diego and writes a column for the Lesbian News in Los Angeles and the Gayzette in San Diego. Even though Karen's columns deal mainly with women's music and trends in the music network, she also discusses other interesting topics in women's culture. Karen's Gayzette column, in particular, fills a large gap for the San Diego-area women's community where no women's newspaper currently exists.

Before Karen became a full-time business owner in the women's music network, she spent 14 years with the County of San Diego working in child protective services. Karen's duties for the county included investigations in the areas of child abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. She was very successful at her job and was in many cases first on the scene with police when a situation arose. But after years of seeing a seemingly endless wave of abused children, Karen found her resistance breaking down, and she began looking for a new profession.

When the opportunity presented itself for her to own her own business, she jumped right in! With Paradigm she could be her own boss and create her own working environment—which was a welcome relief after 14 years of a structured and sometimes inflexible bureaucracy.

Karen graduated in 1968 from Cal Western University in San Diego with a bachelor's degree in Humanities. Before she changed her major to Humanities, she studied religion with the hopes of one day helping people as a missionary. She pursued this course until she became disenchanted with organized religion.

After graduation, Karen entered San Diego State University where, in 1970, she received a master's in social work. It was shortly thereafter that she began her work with the County of San Diego.

Karen is a dabbler and has been all her life. She values being a straight shooter in her business dealings and likes to move forward. Karen is proud to be part of our network, and sees the label of "women's music" as an asset—not a liability—for artists.

Karen is also actively involved in the area of children's music. She still has a strong connection with children and wants to see healthy music available for them.

But there is no doubt that Karen Merry's heart is with women. She especially loves her sister distributors in the Women's Independent Label Distribution (WILD) network. She sees the distributors as the "heartbeat" of the network, and feels special pride in being one of them. ●

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

1986
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FREESTYLE

I Come With a Song for Elsa

By Kay Gardner

Ten years ago at "Through the Looking Glass," the first women's spirituality conference in Boston, I was privileged to attend Elsa Gidlow's workshop on aging. Then 78, she was vital, graceful, and bright, a true role model to remember when thinking of one's advancing years.

I'd read her poetry in Country Women and later in Womanspirit (both magazines are no longer published), and I felt a strong bonding with her gentle form of women's spirituality, her trust in the universal Woman-consciousness, her love of Earth.

Upon finishing a short autobiographical volume of songs, poetry, and journal entries, I sent it to Elsa. She was encouraging about my work, and she invited me to come visit her at her home whenever a tour brought me to Northern California.

Journal Entry, November 9, 1977:

"Friday afternoon I drove through a forest of ferns, gnarled trees and redwoods to visit poet Elsa Gidlow. The dirt road was very rough. On a knoll behind a fence stood her little house, the chimney smoking a welcome. She met me at the gate with a warm hug and an invitation to come inside and sit by the fire with her. She served me herb tea and dried fruits, and we shared our lives' dreams. After she played me a recording of beautiful harp music, she gave me books of her poems and philosophical writings. We liked each other right away, and when I left she hugged me again and said she'd like to correspond with me. When I had left San Francisco for her home I thought I was going to visit a spiritual grandmother, but instead I found myself with a new friend!"

"You say I am mysterious.
Let me explain myself:
In a land of oranges
I am faithful to apples."
—Elsa Gidlow (1898-1986)

Elsa and I corresponded regularly for the next nine years, and she always had supportive things to say about my work and my struggles, sharing her creative ebbs and flows with me, and offering me insights and advice born of her many years as artist and lesbian-feminist. It was a precious and treasured friendship.

Elsa was born in England and moved to Canada when she was six years old. Self-educated, she left Montreal to become poetry editor for the progressive Pearson's Magazine in New York.

With her lover, Violet Henry-Anderson ("Tommy"), she sailed to San Francisco via the Panama Canal in 1926. [See "Elsa Gidlow: In Memoriam" on page 58.]

In 1923 her poetry book, On a Gray Thread, became the first North American publication to celebrate love between women. Her later anthology, Sapphic Songs: Eighteen to Eighty, was published in 1982. I set three of these poems to music: "Experience" (1922), "Love Song" (1922), and "A Creed for Free Women" (1979) (premiered by the Cincinnati Women's Choir on the Spring Equinox in 1982). Elsa was very pleased to have her sensual words sung and wondered if I'd think her greedy to wish they'd all be set to music someday.

Since 1981 Elsa had been working on her autobiography, Elsa: I Come With My Songs. Each winter brought me letters of her health struggles and frustrations at being totally immersed in such a huge project. I had an uneasy feeling that once the book was published Elsa would leave us.

I visited her for the last time on May 29th, three weeks after a series of strokes confined her to her bed. Though she couldn't converse, she was alert and aware of my being there. Words seemed inappropriate, so we just held hands for a long time. She looked very tiny and frail, but her hand seemed to send surges of loving energy to me. For awhile she lay there, eyes closed, just stroking my arm...such a dear, sweet friend.

Elsa died, as she lived, with poetic dignity. Nine women friends formed a "circle of care," keeping watch. Elsa wished no drugs or life-extending procedures to interfere with her passing naturally.

Love Song

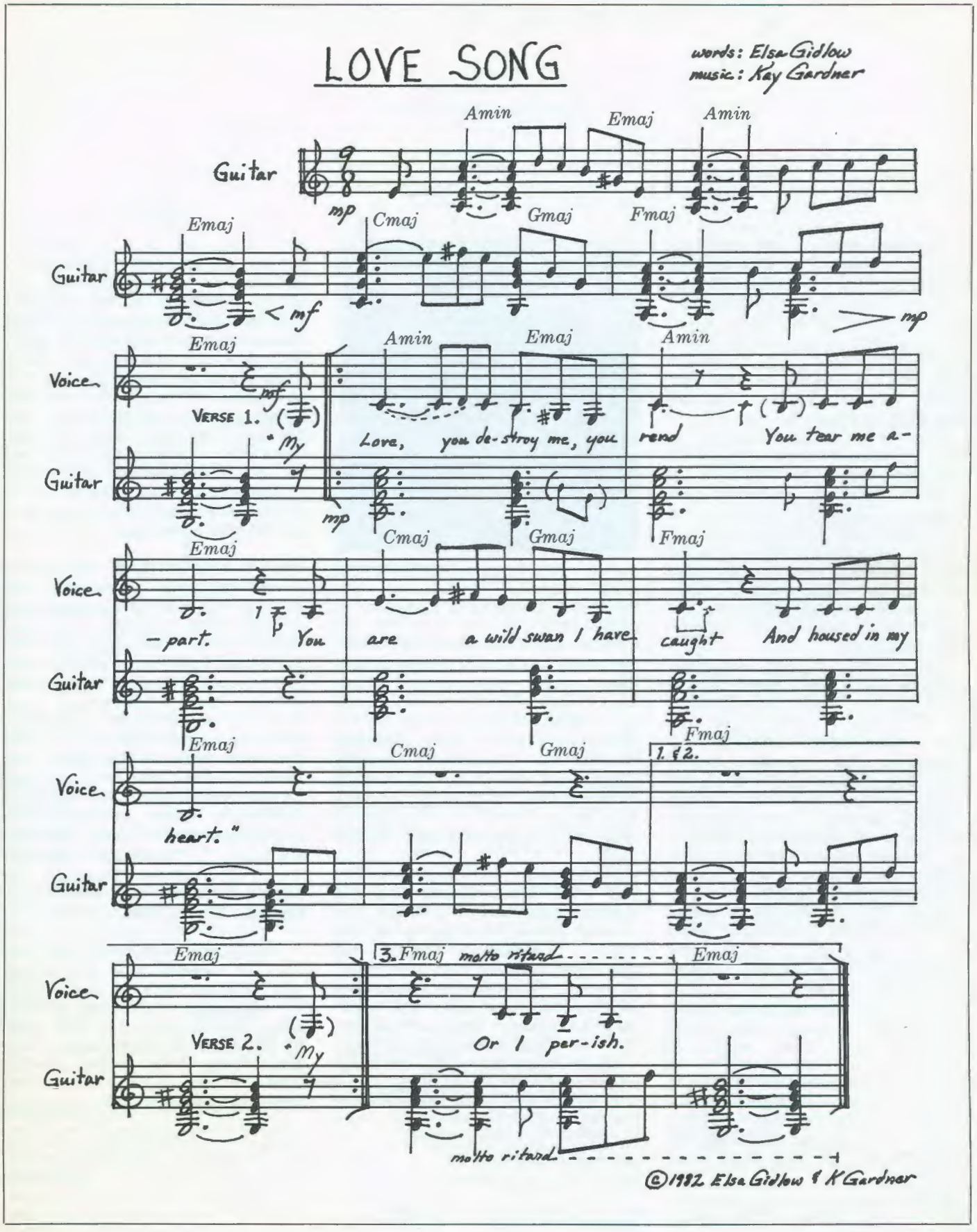
1. My Love, you destroy me, you rend
   You tear me apart.
You are a wild swan I have caught
   And housed in my heart.
2. My Sister, my Love, I am shattered,
   Broken, dismayed.
The live wings, the wild wings are beating,
   They make me afraid.
3. Fold your wings, brood like a dove,
   Be a dove I can cherish
More calmly, my tempestuous Love,
   Or I cherish.

—Elsa Gidlow (1922)

continued on page 63

FREESTYLE: the musings of Kay Gardner.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kay Gardner, M.Mus., has extensive recording and performing credits. She has been deeply involved in women's music since 1973. She is also in demand as a teacher of the healing properties of music. Her fifth album of original works, 'Fishersdaughter: Troubador Songs,' was released in mid August on her own Even Keel Records label.


LOVE SONG
words: Elsa Gidlow
music: Kay Gardner
Guitar
Amin
Emaj
Amin
mp
Emaj
Cmaj
Gmaj
Fmaj
Guitar
< mf
mp
Voice
Emaj
Amin
Emaj
Amin
VERSE 1.
mf
"My
Love, you de-stroy me, you
rend
You tear me a-
Guitar
mp
Voice
Emaj
Cmaj
Gmaj
Fmaj
-part.
You
are
a wild swan I have
caught
And housed in my
Guitar
Voice
Emaj
Cmaj
Gmaj
Fmaj
1. & 2.
heart."
Guitar
Voice
Emaj
3. Fmaj
molto ritard
Emaj
VERSE 2.
"My
Or I per-ish.
Guitar
molto ritard
©1982 Elsa Gidlow & K Gardner

Elsa Gidlow: in memoriam

By Celeste West

Poet-philosopher and lesbian-feminist pioneer Elsa Gidlow died peacefully June 8, 1986, in her mountain retreat "Druid Heights." She is survived by her sister Thea Gidlow, her cat Burma, and countless friends, many of whom came to know Elsa through her poetry volumes, essays, and the film Word is Out.

Born in Yorkshire, England, in 1898, six-year-old Elsa immigrated with her family of nine to a French Canadian village near Montreal. Raised in privation, she was mainly self-educated, allowing her what she called "the untutored space to Be." Leaving Montreal art circles for Manhattan in 1920, Elsa became poetry editor of the progressive, much-censored Pearson's Magazine.

She sailed to San Francisco in 1926 with her older, aristocratic lover, Violet Henry-Anderson ("Tommy"), with whom she lived until Tommy died. In San Francisco, she became friends with Del Martin, Phyllis Lyon, Ansel Adams, Robinson Jeffers, Kenneth Rexroth, Lou Harrison, and Margo St. James, and became the beloved "sister" of zen philosopher Alan Watts, who dedicated his autobiography to her.

Elsa led the precarious career of a freelance journalist, while often supporting family and others. Despite economic struggle and family tragedy, she created a motherlode of spiritual, erotic, and protest writings. She slowly began creating Druid Heights in the 1950s with her lover of ten years, Isabel Quallo. Isolated Druid Heights became a pilgrimage for women throughout the country, a bon vivant garden—run with zen discipline. In 1962 Elsa co-founded

Marcelina Martin

one of the first organizations to bring Eastern wisdom to the West, the Society of Comparative Philosophy.

Elsa was North America's first published writer of a poetry volume openly celebrating lesbian love (1923). Of Elsa's large body of poetry and prose, five of her 13 books remain in print, including her luminous love poetry, Sapphic Songs, and her recently released autobiography, Elsa: I Come With My Songs. Elsa was a charter member of the Feminist Writers Guild.

Friends always joked that Elsa was born avant garde. She was a radical feminist of the first and second waves, as well as an activist prosecuted during the McCarthy era. She was a member of San Francisco's bohemian, psychedelic, New Age, and women's spirituality circles. Just before she died, she completed Elsa: I Come With My Songs (Booklegger Press), the first full-life, explicitly lesbian autobiography ever published, a magnificent "portrait of the artist as an old woman."

Elsa had the capacity to fight class privilege, religious and political dogma, and sexism, while celebrating all varieties of love and beauty. This is why the Irish mystic and revolutionary Ella Young called Elsa "the poet warrior." Elsa insisted her life was her art: "We consider the artist a special sort of person. It is more likely that each of us is a special sort of artist."

A "circle of care" was formed on May 12 of this year when Elsa, at 87, had an incapacitating stroke. Nine friends scheduled their lives to keep vigil with her at home and coordinate professional care. Elsa's "living will" forbade drugs, intravenous feeding, and any attempt to interfere with the natural cycle of death. Elsa thus died as she lived: with grace, dignity, clarity—and Capricornian earthiness. In clarifying Elsa's last wishes, she shot back a fine zen koan: "Elsa, when you are gone..." "Where am I going?"

On her choice regarding the various Buddhist death rituals, she replied, "Toss a coin."

When she completed her own rites of passage here, Elsa's body was covered with a dozen kinds of wild and cultivated flowers from her garden. She was robed in this coat of many colors, windows flung wide to the morning light. As always, she did it her way—with poetry.

continued on page 61

Books in print by Elsa Gidlow

Ask No Man Pardon: The Philosophical Significance of Being a Lesbian
ELSA: I Come With My Songs
Makings for Meditation
Sapphic Songs: Eighteen to Eighty
Shattering the Mirror

All are available from Booklegger Press, 555 29th Street, San Francisco, CA 94131.

Reprinted with permission from the Summer 1986 Feminist Writers Guild national newsletter.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Celeste West of Booklegger Press in San Francisco has worked as a freelance journalist, publicist, designer, book and magazine publisher, and editor. She is currently working on a feminist comedy of manners.

HOTLINE from page 7

PATRICIA CHARBONNEAU, who played Cay Rivvers in the film Desert Hearts, appears in eight episodes of the TV show Crime Stories, to be broadcast in the fall TV lineup.

HONORS

LILY TOMLIN received a 1986 Tony award for her one-woman Broadway show, Appearing Nitely... Accepting with her was co-writer JANE WAGNER, co-creator of the show and Lily's long-time partner. off our backs reported that the continuation of that play, The Search for Intelligent Life in the Universe, has two main characters who are lesbians. Lily is also scheduled to be reunited in film with DOLLY PARTON and JANE FONDA in an as yet untitled spy film.

DEBBIE FIER's latest release, the instrumental Firelight album, was nominated by the National Association of Independent Record Distributors for best New Age album and best New Age album cover.

KOKO TAYLOR swept the W.C. Handy Blues Awards, according to Bitch. She won as blues entertainer of the year, vocalist of the year, and contemporary female blues artist. ALBERTA HUNTER won as traditional female blues artist.

BEVERLY SILLS has become the youngest artist to be honored with a Kennedy Performing Arts Center Award, reports Bitch.

American Music Awards this year went to: TINA TURNER (female vocalist), PAT BENATAR (female video artist), CRYSTAL GAYLE (country female vocalist and country female video artist), ARETHA FRANKLIN (soul/R&B female vocalist, soul/R&B female video artist), THE POINTER SISTERS (video group), and WHITNEY HOUSTON (soul single, soul video single). Also, according to Bitch, Whitney Houston's mother, Cissy, appeared with her in the video "The Greatest Love of All," shot at the Apollo. She also swept the Ohio Valley Urban Music Awards as best female performer, female performer in a video, and album.

HELEN GURLEY BROWN, Cosmopolitan's founder and editor, has had the Hearst Corporation name a magazine journalism research professorship in her honor at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

SHEILA E took the Bammie (Bay Area Music Award) for top percussionist and top female vocalist this year, reports Bitch. GRACE SLICK was ineligible as she has won it three years in a row.

ELLA FITZGERALD received an honorary degree from Yale, where she made her debut in 1935 singing at a celebration.

More news from Bitch: The Women's Rock Newsletter with Bite: SADE became the first black woman to be nominated for best female artist by the British Phonographic Industry; DOLLY PARTON has won a Muppet Magazine Kermie; BARBARA MANDRELL got a "Saved By The Belt" award from the American Seat Belt Council following her serious traffic accident; PEGGY LEE is now performing again after successfully recovering from open heart surgery, and she won an Aggie from the Songwriter's Guild of America; and PATTI LABELLE recently received the B'nai B'rith Creative Achievement Award. ●

SISTERFIRE from page 27

efforts will return the love and generosity.

And how will Sisterfire '87 look when it returns to us? According to Horowitz, "It can maintain the best of its first four years, but also [we will] allow her to risk being new and to not go into it with a real rigid idea of doing it just like we've always done it. We'll kind of take it apart and put it back together."

We can't wait. ●

BOOKSTORES
of interest to our readers

A Different Light, 4014 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90029. (213) 668-0629. *Primarily gay/lesbian.*

A Room of One's Own, 317 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53703. (608) 257-7888. *Primarily feminist.*

Bookwoman, 324 E. Sixth St., Austin, TX 78701. (512) 472-2785. *Feminist and gay/lesbian.*

Dreams & Swords, 828 E. 64th, Indianapolis, IN 46220. (317) 253-9966. *Primarily feminist.*

Emma Women's Books & Gifts, 168 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201. (716) 885-2285. *Primarily feminist.*

Faubourg Marigny Bookstore, 600 Frenchmen, New Orleans, LA 70116. (504) 943-9875. *Primarily gay & lesbian.*

Giovanni's Room, 345 S. 12th St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. 1-800-222-6996. *Feminist and gay/lesbian.*

Old Wives' Tales, 1009 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110. (415) 821-4675. *Primarily feminist.*

Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, 15 Christopher St., New York, NY 10014. (212) 255-8097. *Primarily gay/lesbian.*

Page One—Books By & For Women, 966 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104. (818) 798-8694. *Feminist with extensive women's music collection.*

Women & Children First, 1967 N. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60614. (312) 440-8824. *Feminist and children's.*

PERIODICALS

Bitch: The Rock Women's Newsletter With Bite, c/o San Jose Face ñ164, 478 W. Hamilton, Campbell, CA 95008. *Opposing, clashing viewpoints aired, ranging from heavy metal headbangers to New Age Wicca-ans.*

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

SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women, P.O. Box 42741, Atlanta, GA 30311. *Interdisciplinary forum for discussion of critical issues facing black women. Biannual; $15/$25.*

Talkin' Union, P.O. Box 5349, Takoma Park, MD 20912. *Songs and folklore from America's working women and men. 3x/year; $7.50/year, $2.50/sample.*

TRIVIA, A Journal of Ideas, P.O. Box 606, North Amherst, MA 01059. *Radical feminist visionary writing. Fall 1986: Sonia Johnson, Sarah Hoagland, Anna Lee, more.*

ORCHESTRAS from page 13

have recourse to the defense of tears when the hard-hearted one addresses the instrumental body in merciless rebuke? Can women endure the severe strain of long and repeated rehearsals?"[7]

Even as late as 1970 Zubin Mehta told the New York Times:

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The issues were debated long and hard, but it was not until WWII and the draft, which sent men overseas, that women were suddenly in great demand in mainstream orchestras. While some musicologists claim that women, after the war, generally held their positions whereas women in other areas of employment were told to give back the jobs to men, other scholars maintain that those who were retained after the war were generally first chair players and many women were, in fact, told to go home. A more thorough study and analysis of this period is definitely needed. It is true that not many of the women's orchestras lasted beyond the end of the war. It remains a question whether this was because women really had "made it" into mainstream orchestras by then or whether they were forced by the "cult of domesticity" to leave their careers and return home to become homemakers [see "The International Sweethearts of Rhythm" in the March 1986 issue].

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9. *The New York Times*, 1970.

SULLIVAN from page 19

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SOUTHERN from page 31

for private accessible toilet facilities, for special seating for clean and sober, hearing-impaired and differently-abled, and for round-the-clock shuttles. We have already seen the need for these things. There is so much more for us to improve and re-create beyond the obvious. Michigan only got us started.

The festival is finally over and we must leave after four days of intense sharing, music, and loving. But it is not really over if each of us can take back home what we've learned about living cooperatively and respecting our differences, if we use these lessons to better our own communities.

Next year the Southern festival will have improvements and new challenges, and we in the South look forward to it happening again. All of us together can make it better. ●

Deborah Jenkins

"Hands Around The Lake"—Southern Fest's "Hands Across America."

GIVE THE GIFT OF 'HOT WIRE' TODAY

FREESTYLE from page 58

Let none speak sadly of October,
I, Elsa, from the peak of years,
Say this: I have loved all seasons.

—excerpt 'From the Peak of Years' written at age 80

According to Elsa's wishes, proceeds from her books and donations will help fund a trust for women artists. Memorial donations may be made to the Druid Heights Trust for Women Artists, P.O. Box 426, Larkspur, CA 94939. ●

Deborah Jenkins

Melissa at the Southern Women's Music & Comedy Festival, 1986.

LIFELINE from page 9

in your area. What unions are strong? Are AFSCME or SEIU, major organizers of state and local government employees, active? Are there organizing drives among hospital workers? Start noticing picket lines!

• Working with unions requires flexibility in how you are willing to use your music. At a week-long conference, Lifeline may do one concert-type performance. They may also be used to help lead a workshop, to fill in time and release tension, and for wake-up music (8:30 a.m., trying to sound enthusiastic...).

• You will need to think carefully about what concerns—lesbian, feminist, and otherwise—are important to you as a musician. How are you willing to present yourself and your beliefs? Equally important, you will have to approach unions with a willingness to listen and learn. Because working-class people are often treated condescendingly by the media, by schools, by performers, and so on, anyone coming from "the outside" may be viewed warily. That wariness will dissipate to the extent that you are able to show understanding and respect for the experiences of the people you meet.

In the long run, time spent developing labor connections can be very rewarding for women musicians. The emergence of a labor circuit offers challenge, learning, money (!), and a chance to reach a new audience, including many women who will never show up at Michigan unless more bridges are built between "us" and "them."

There should not, of course, be such a sense of "us" and "them." There is an overlap and a natural connection between the feminist community and the labor movement. Both have an essential interest in changing the current divisions of power and privilege. The more their connection is developed, the better chance each has to succeed. ●

ORCHESTRAS from page 13

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BAY AREA from page 22

And Kim Corsaro of Coming Up!, in discussing women's music as a "binding force" in the community, admits, "Women of color aren't necessarily part of it [in that] their music doesn't get the attention that white women's gets."

Kim also sees political and economic factors as having an effect on community among lesbian feminists. "We're not nearly as organized as four or five years ago," she says. "This is a result of living in the Reagan years. The community is not nearly as activist as it used to be. There are a lot of different groups within the lesbian community working on issues: Central American solidarity, mainstream politics with gay men, East Bay women buying homes and starting community groups. No big events are drawing hundreds of women as before, except music..."

She observes, "Everything seems diffuse, not coherent. What do we want? We carry on about class oppression, but people get good jobs, become the oppressor—there's no viable community alternative. This generation of lesbians came out in their early 20s...now, we get older, we want different things, basic stability. It's the natural process of aging. You get tired of fighting, dealing with classism and racism, although you deal with it anyway. It's exhausting. The community has never learned to take care of themselves properly—there's a lot of burnout."

This is a trend which may be reversing itself on some fronts, however. Women's historical tendency to be the nurturers is now being turned to our own advantage. Women's massage centers are becoming common in the Bay Area (one women's health clinic recently began offering the services of a masseuse), as are alcohol-free gathering places. Sara Lewinstein, who established Artemis Cafe as an alternative to bars for gay women, says that while half of her runs a cafe and restaurant, "the other half is a sports fanatic."

Sara, an organizer of the cosexual Gay Games II [Gay Olympics] which took place in San Francisco this past August, says, "For health reasons, I encourage women in sports. Women come out, they are happy about themselves—and this [physical activity] follows."

Her goal is to bring gay women and men together "as survivors, so the world will look at us differently."

The question of solidarity versus separatism is a recurrent one for the lesbian community. The AIDS epidemic and the recent Supreme Court anti-sodomy decision have worked to a certain extent to bond lesbians and gay men, since the resulting anti-gay backlash has included women as well as men.

Kim Corsaro is another community leader who advocates cosexuality, a position she had to choose early in her editorship of Coming Up!. The newspaper was started in 1979 by two gay men. In 1981, Kim was hired as its first staffwoman, in a move to expand the newspaper and include the women's community. At the same time that Coming Up! recruited her, Kim was offered the position of news editor at a women's publication. She chose Coming Up! because "it had a different structure and I felt I could get a lot more done."

When one of the founding editors left, Kim became editor and had to decide whether to "dump the men" and turn Coming Up! into a women's newspaper. Her choice of cosexuality came about because of her belief that it is "necessary for the two communities to work together and respect each other's needs and perspectives...We publish a fair amount of 'politically incorrect' material. The key is diversity. We try to recognize the different places people are coming from, and to get as many different communities within the gay and lesbian community into Coming Up! as they want to be represented."

And Hunter Davis also sees the need to move beyond safe boundaries. "My whole life is the women's community [but sometimes] I need to take refuge from it...I want to work in straight clubs and say 'I'm gay but I'm normal,' or rather 'I'm gay and I'm normal.' That's my thing now. How can I reach out to the next generation if I perform for just women? Women-only spaces are important but I want to get out to tour in the Midwest and say, 'It's okay to be gay.' "

This desire to set an example, to be the vanguard, is echoed by Sara Lewinstein. Asked whether she regarded San Francisco as a "mecca" for women, Sara replied, "We have a long way to go to become a mecca. But it's a place of change, growing—it's a teaching mecca [around AIDS issues, for example]. We are teachers, and we have to continue—but we have to start someplace."

Judy Dlugacz agrees. "We're still a small community and fairly invisible compared to others," she says, "but we're making headway. A lot of women who live here don't necessarily appreciate how others perceive it."

On a more personal level that reflects our political endurance as well, Toni Langfield muses, "Why does one take a chance again? I guess, some kind of perpetual optimism at work..."

And Patricia Bergeron states, "I would not have become a feminist if I had stayed in New Orleans. Most of the people I knew were not serious about politics; there's no strong feeling that they can change things. That feeling is here [in San Francisco]."

"There are things we lack," notes Sara Lewinstein, "but not because there's no room. They just have to be done."

And they will get done, because the women of San Francisco are changing its reputation for transience and building a community with "perpetual optimism at work."

As Judy Dlugacz says, "I wouldn't move—I couldn't conceive of moving." ●

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*The area popularly referred to as "San Francisco" is actually a larger collection of cities in the vicinity of the San Francisco Bay. This article generally concerns itself with The City and the East Bay cities of Oakland and Berkeley. As a certified City chauvinist, I may slip and use the terms "San Francisco" and "Bay Area" interchangeably. —K. Brandt

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PAT PARKER from page 53

Many women approached me in the days following my performance, wanting to know why I hadn't been at this festival before and when I was coming to that one. The answers to those questions do not lie with me. We still have many myths to bury and many biases to change. Producers feel—and rightfully so—that they have an obligation to provide entertainment that women want and will like, and the last they checked we "didn't like poetry."

So, to those who would still doubt the mix of poetry and music, I would remind them of the ingredients needed for Good Seasons salad dressing mix: spices, vinegar, oil and water. ●

GIDLOW from page 56

In Elsa's honor, a solstice gathering was held at Druid Heights. Her extended family, numerous friends and admirers participated in a ritual, enjoyed the garden, banqueted, and toasted the poetry of Elsa Gidlow being among us. ●

LIPPITT from page 45

strumentals, Betsy says, "I'm playing guitar, 12-string, six-string, classical, and singing everything. I am overdubbing my voice and Therese is singing harmonies on one of them. There's nothing of a violin sound coming from me now, though there might be by the time it gets done."

Betsy hired women and men she knew and respected to work on the album, including producer Sylvia Mitchell, who also plays violin on the album. Betsy says Sylvia has an overall view of arrangement ideas but it's been a joint effort. "I had ideas of different instruments that I wanted on certain songs. When I began, Therese and Teresa Boykin were producing, working with me and contacting people and talking about instrumentation. The engineer has had a lot of input in the types of sounds that we've gotten from different instruments. As far as instrumentalists, we've hired people that can play the instruments the best we could find—and so left them open to their ideas. Some are classical musicians, others are jazz-rock performers. On the album we have guitar, recorder, violin, keyboards, saxophone, percussions, and drums."

There will be 10 tunes on the album. Betsy says "Hesitate" [on the soundsheet in this issue of HOT WIRE] is very rhythmic and jazz-oriented. "Orphan Lullaby" is a "reflective kind of piece, probably the most ethereal song on the album, and it's very much not a verse-chorus piece; rather it's in continuous motion, at least until the last section, where it settles in." Other songs include the pseudo-reggae "For Therese"; "Aphrodite Love" [editor's note: see the article about Aphrodite in this issue's "The Tenth Muse"] which has a mandocello on it; the "WWEZ easy listening" slow dance song "The Song We Sing"; and "Sylvia," which tells the story of how Betsy met Sylvia Mitchell.

"In summing up," Betsy says, "a lot of songs come out of personal experience, and for others I've just been thinking about something in myself or around me. In the course of thinking, I've been able to put it into song. There are themes that run through the album: happy/sad, a lot of duality, a lot about friendships. This is a quest kind of album, not the having found it, nirvana album; it is more about struggle and growth."●

SOUNDSHEETS

By Joy Rosenblatt & Lois A. Parsons

LIFELINE

"Midnite Silence"

Performed by: Chris Hawkins & Gillian DeLear
Written by: Hawkins & DeLear
From: Midnite Silence tape

Hawkins & DeLear
1134 Corrington
Ballwin, MO 63011
(314) 576-4657

Hawkins & DeLear is a feminist musical duo whose style is considered "high-tech folk rock." They use music and vignettes to express the feelings of women in everyday life, their heroes, their relationships with other people.

HAWKINS & DELEAR

"The Harder They Come"

Performed by: Lifeline; Mary Trevor (lead vocal, electric guitar), Jeanne Mackey (vocals, electric guitar), and Kris Koth (electric bass), with studio musicians Chris Parker (drums), Dave Immer (electric organ)
Written by: Jimmy Cliff, with additional lyrics by M. Trevor
From: Never Stop, extended play (EP) record

Lifeline
722 Ritchie Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 589-0649

The independently-produced Never Stop EP by the Washington-based women's pop/rock band Lifeline includes "We Can Get It If We Organize," the Motels' "Monday Shutdown," and Mary Trevor's original "You Coulda Loved Me." Lifeline was formed in 1982; drummer Rochelle Loconto joined them this summer.

BETSY LIPPITT

SOUNDSHEETS

Material is recorded on both sides in stereo. Do not bend the soundsheet. Place it on turntable at 33 1/3 rpm. A coin placed on the label where indicated prevents slipping. If your turntable has a ridged mat, placing the soundsheet on top of an LP may be advisable.

Questions and comments about the soundsheets? Recording specifications and costs will be sent upon request. Send SASE to *HOT WIRE*, 1417 Thome, Chicago, IL 60660.

LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY

"So Lucky"

Performed and written by: Lucie Blue Tremblay
From: Lucie Blue Tremblay

Olivia Records
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608
(415) 655-0364

Canadian Lucie Blue Tremblay has been seen at women's music festivals throughout the United States and Canada. "So Lucky" is one of five English songs (the other five are in French) on her first album, Lucie Blue Tremblay.

"Hesitate"

Performed by: Betsy Lippitt (vocals), Mike Sharfe (bass), Steve Hoskins (keyboards, sax), Kenny Bobinger (drums), Richard Jensen (percussion)
Written by: Betsy Lippitt
From: Betsy Lippitt

Womonfolk & Jazz Records
P.O. Box 20222
Cincinnati, OH 45220

"Hesitate" is a featured cut from Betsy Lippitt's debut solo album. Having recorded and performed with Therese Edell for women's audiences, Betsy now offers ten original songs. Hers is a modern folk idiom and suggests both jazz and light rock.

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Toni L. Armstrong

Women's music festival coverage, including four pages of photos, pages 26-35. Pictured here: ASL concert interpreter Elizabeth Fides.

Toni L. Armstrong

Debbie Fier: A Jewish lesbian travels to Germany