

UPFRONT *America*

HOUSTON, TEXAS

VOL. 1 ISSUE 15 JULY 18, 1980

Who's expecting the stork
after ten months
in Houston?

Turn to page 2.



LA CAGE AUX FOLLES

Houston's Greenway Theatre is anticipating the delivery of a new baby: "La Cage Aux Folles II." The film, starring the cast of the original is in production in Rome according to the Greenway's assistant manager.

Due to almost 1000 repeated runs the theatre has worn out its first print of the French comedy. The now to be considered "cult" film is in its 41st record breaking week. According to the assistant manager the gay related film is the highest grossing, longest running film in the theatre's seven year history.

"It has helped the theatre a great deal," he said. Although the theme is gay, and its rating is R, "...the appeal of the film is diverse," even attracting families. "People love it and laugh a lot," he said.

When asked how long the theatre intends to show the film, he said, "There is no end in sight." United Artists, promoters of the film, took out a two page advertisement in *Variety* to promote the film. The Greenway was used in the ad as an example of success with the film. The importance of this is that it was the first time the theatre had been mentioned in a national trade magazine advertisement.



Michel Serrault is astonished to find that his apartment has been redecorated by his roommate (Ugo Tognazzi), right.

Steve Buck, manager of the theatre which is a member of the American Multi-Cinema Corporation, had refused to show the controversial film, "Cruising" several weeks ago.

"La Cage Aux Folles," based on the French play of the same name and still running in France, is the highest



Trying to avoid hostile newspaper reporters, Chairman of the Squad, Michel Galabru, seated, is given a new identity by a friendly Michel Serrault.

grossing foreign language film ever to be released in America.

The film stars the famed Italian actor, Ugo Tognazzi, Michel Serrault who won France's "Cesar" (the equivalent of the Academy Award) for his performance, and Michel Galabru.

It was nominated for three Oscars including Best Director— highly unusual for any foreign film.

Directed by Edouard Molinaro, "La



Claire Maurier attempts to seduce her former lover, Ugo Tognazzi.

"Cage Aux Folles" is set against the world of French nightlife, according to a publicity release. The title is taken from the name of a nightclub in St. Tropez, which serves as the principal setting for the film. The screenplay and adaptation was written by Francis Veber, Molinaro, Danon, and Jean Poiret.

"La Cage Aux Folles" is released by United Artists, a Transamerica Company.

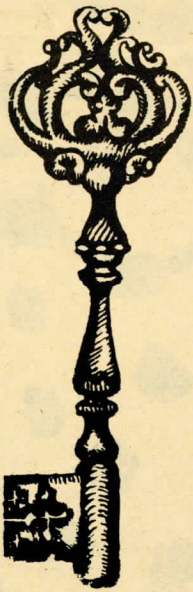
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needs writers and photographers. We will pay for quality work. Contact the Editor at (713) 529-8188, or write 3217 Montrose, Suite 111, Houston, TX 77006.

The position of GPC Secretary is open. Please call Lee Harrington at 526-2668 or 523-4400.

Americans Against

Washington, D.C.(GRNL)—Gay Rights National Lobby reported that a new anti-Gay organization, "Americans Against H.R. 2074," has kicked off a major campaign. "American Against H.R. 2074" is a project of the Gates Community Chapel of Rochester, N.Y.

Their first direct mail effort predictably employed distortions about the impact of H.R. 2074, including the spectre of it requiring Gay teachers in religious schools, ordination of Gay ministers and the possibility that H.R. 2074 would require Gay marriages. And spokesperson Pastor Fletcher Brothers said:

"Passage of bill H.R. 2074 could result in the hiring of known practicing

homosexuals without regard to their job qualifications simply *because* they are homosexuals."

GRNL lobbyist Steve Endean expressed serious concern over one aspect of this development. "Their direct mail package indicates a new level of 'sophistication'—with the letter personalized, the enclosed petitions to Congress personalized to the correct Members of Congress, etc. This mailing, plus the information we have from Capitol Hill that Members of Congress are beginning to receive large numbers of anti-Gay mail, only increases our resolve to continue our efforts on the national Constituent Network."

Glee Club vs Gay

New York, NY(NGTF)—On behalf of President Carter, Anne Wexler, Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, responded to an April 1 NGTF letter that protested the participation of the West Point Glee Club in a television program sponsored by the Anita Bryant Ministries, Inc.

The program, "Anita Bryant's Spectacular—My Little Corner of the World" was aired during March on independent television stations across the country. Considering that Anita Bryant Ministries is essentially a religious organization, the cooperation of the military raised serious questions relating to the traditional separation of church and state.

In her June 24th letter, Wexler stated that "the Department of the Army has concluded...the Glee Club's appearance was not consistent with the Department of Defense's guidance concerning the Department's support of and participation in events and activities in the civilian sector."

She went on to say that "the Military Academy has been informed that the appearance of the West Point Glee Club was inconsistent with regulations. The producers of the show...are aware of the objection to use of the West Point segment in connection with Anita Bryant Ministries, Inc."

In concluding, Wexler said: "...the Department of the Army is studying the matter to see whether changes in procedures are necessary to avoid repetition of the event."

NGTF Co-Directors Charles F. Brydon and Lucia Valeska expressed general satisfaction with the Administration's response. "There is little justification for this kind of incident. Separation of church and state is a fundamental principle of our form of government. If the military establishment was not so infected with homophobia, the helpful intervention of the White House would not have been necessary."

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Beyond Bartending

Los Angeles Mixologists Organize to Serve Community

By Mike Varady

(Mike Varady is a bartender/writer in Los Angeles.)

April 1979 saw an unusual gathering among Los Angeles area bartenders. The nationwide potentials of that meeting are enormous and may provide a model for other cities.

The premises: the gay bar is the major institution in our community. Bartenders meet more people daily than anyone else in the gay culture. Bar frequenters are one of the largest groups of gays as well as in the largest group of *unorganized* gays. Therefore the bartender is probably one of the best resources to begin raising awareness of community consciousness among those needing it the most.

"...the bartender is probably one of the best resources to begin raising awareness of community consciousness..."

With this in mind, the Southern California Gay Bartenders Association (SCGBA) was formed.

Paul Palmer, dynamic young president of the organization, says, "We feel that since we make our livings from our community, we owe something back to it—something that will help to better it in the long run. At the same time we're learning more about what's going on, and we're finding out we care more than we realized."

What makes leaders so interested is the potential for a nationwide organization with chapters working on local and regional situations, as well as a countrywide network informing gays on the latest developments affecting them. This would help make more aware those of us who most often do not pick up community papers.

Along the way SCGBA has grown strongly in the area of member benefits. There is a group health insurance plan, something virtually no bar has ever carried. Many local businesses—gyms, gift and card shops, private clubs and bathhouses, plant shops, TV, furniture clothing, book stores—are offering free memberships or discounts ranging up to 25% on purchases. Palmer continues, "We're working on other benefits: other forms of insurance, a referral service for members looking for jobs, and when we have enough money in our bank account we'll have emergency loans for our members who may need them."

Almost immediately after its formation SCGBA ran into trouble. A rumor started that it was a bartenders' union. The rumor, though unfounded, dies hard.

Palmer, who works at *The Lodge* in the San Fernando Valley area says:

"SCGBA has never been, and was never intended to be, a union. From the very beginning it was designed as an idealistic volunteer service organization. In the past we met resistance from many bar owners because of the rumor. That's lessening, fortunately."

Rick Schellenberg, the group's secretary, adds, "The only people who repeat it are those who have never attended one of our meetings. They're speaking out of ignorance. We are here to help *unite* our community, not divide it, and as owners attend they are becoming aware of our real purpose."

The monthly meetings are open to all observers. The list of guest speakers has included many of L.A.'s most concerned gays: Don Amador, formerly Mayor Tom Bradley's Liaison to the Gay Community and candidate for councilman in the heavily gay 13th District; Joan Sprague, with the gay radio collective IMRU; Jim Kepner, longtime activist, gay historian, founder and curator of the National Gay Archives; and Susan McGreivy, Staff Attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union who is working to set up Gay Rights Chapters (ACLU-GRC) for that organization across the nation. Each has speculated at length that SCGBA could develop into one of the most important nationwide organizations we have, both as an information dissemination tool and as a politically influential group.

"...bartenders are among the most underrated people there are..."

After a question and answer period directed to the guest speaker, the meeting continues with the treasurer's and different committee's reports, then goes into new business. Each is held in a different bar every month, which has helped allay suspicions of unionizing. Bar owners are even beginning to ask if the meetings can be held at their taverns since thirty to forty customers, all of whom are heavy tippers, plus free publicity in the local gay papers, add up to great business for the day.

Because of the huge size of L.A. the meetings generally rotate among the four areas with the largest number of bars: West Hollywood, Silver Lake, the San Fernando Valley, and Hollywood. On rare occasions they have been held in Highland Park and Central City.

Reaction from outside the L.A. area has been slow but steady. Lately each meeting has had visitors and new members from as far away as South Bay, Manhattan Beach, Redondo

Beach, and San Diego. Ideally each would eventually start its own chapter to deal with local situations and get its own benefits from local merchants, while staying in contact with each other in a loose federation.

There are still some problems needing to be worked out: many cannot get to the meetings because of their working hours. This deters some from joining, although they would still receive the benefits by being members. The group wishes to be as open as possible for everyone, and very strong but unsuccessful appeals have been made to people from the 3rd world and lesbian bars to join. "If we can't combat prejudice, how are others of our community going to?" asks Mike Ruwan, in charge of the Census and Benefits Committee.

The Executive Council meets regularly to deal with these problems and develop new projects. SCGBA is involving itself in benefits for other gay organizations. Recently it helped co-sponsor a Blue Grass Festival and raffle of a 1965 Mustang classic. The Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center (GLCSC) was the main recipient of the proceeds, with portions going to the bartenders' emergency fund and to the L.A. Gay Chorus. Being planned is the First Annual Bartenders Ball, a huge affair with top-name entertainment, again with the monies divided between the GLCSC and the mixologists.

Donations were made to help send volunteer workers to San Jose and Santa Clara County for the recent unsuccessful attempt to defeat anti-gay ordinances.

Working with the Eastside Association (a predominantly gay citizens' neighborhood group) they have met with representatives of the police department and city council to see what can be done to stop harassment of bars and gays on the streets by queer-bashers.

Many members are, or are planning to become, deputy registrars of voters. This helps make more convenient the locations for gays to get involved in the voting process, and has been very successful.

"...many members are, or are planning to become deputy registrars of voters..."

In addition members can ask patrons to write their elected officials on timely gay issues, can pass petitions around if their employers permit, and can point out current articles of interest in publications. They can make patrons

aware of local services such as single or couple counselling, gay youth programs, Sexual Compulsives Anonymous meetings, and legal aid available at the GLCSC. Some have successfully approached their employers to hold fundraisers.

Dale Driscoll, columnist for a local L.A. paper (*COMPASS*) and a bartender at Santa Monica's *GOLDEN BULL*, says "Bartenders are among the most underrated people there are. We have to play psychiatrist to our customers, but nobody wants to think we have problems and no one realizes how talented we are." Driscoll, who named SCGBA's newsletter "The Bar Rag" hopes it will some day be large enough to encourage articles, stories, and poetry from members. He also wants to see Bartender of the Month awards for those who have earned them by their work. Driscoll is also trying to help set up a chapter in Palm Springs.

"...we are here to help unite our community, not divide it..."

SCGBA's influence on its members has been strong. Bruce Rayle, Vice-President, had been doing volunteer work at GLCSC before joining, but has become even more active since joining the association. Byron Massingill, SCGBA's tough and practical Treasurer, says, "I was the first to admit I didn't give a damn about politics or the community. All I wanted out of tending bar was a great big beautiful Seville. But this has turned out to be such fun, and I feel more valuable to myself."

Some members have also joined other groups, making music with the Great American Yankee Freedom Band and the Los Angeles Gay Choir. Others have joined citizens' neighborhood organizations such as the ESA and the Sunset Junction Neighborhood Alliance, predominantly gay groups building bridges with other minorities and local city officials.

Occasionally they take one of their patrons to these groups with them, thus continuing the process of getting more people at the bar level involved in community projects.

Palmer hopes the reader will give this article to his or her favorite bartender to encourage regions across the nation to start their own chapters. SCGBA will assist in every way possible way.

More information, and copies of the constitution and by-laws to assist as a guide if so desired, can be obtained by writing Mike Ruwan, SCGBA, P.O. Box 38865, Los Angeles, CA. 90038.

Editorial Editorial Editorial

Do Your Part

Mary's Lounge manager Andy Mills has requested that those arrested or who witnessed the Gay Pride Week police raid at Mary's complete answers to the following list of questions. The passage of time can lead to clouded memories of the event and it is important for everyone's defense that detailed and specific information be supplied. Even if you are not going to be tried your responses are important. Send to:

Andy Mills
Mary's Lounge
1022 Westheimer
Houston, TX 77006

Those not arrested, in fact those not even present as witnesses, can help support a fair trial of those arrested at Mary's as well as a thorough investigation of the Fred Paez killing. Write to officials expressing your outrage at what appears to be police harassment and request their support of fair trials and a fair investigation. Letters **can** help. Send them to city council members, Mayor Jim McConn, your state representative—anyone in an influential position. In this way all of you—arrested or not—can participate in an attempt to gain justice for the particular people involved as well as to vocalize a demand for fair treatment of gay people in general.

Questions to be answered and sent to Andy Mills:

- 1) What time were you first aware of the presence of police or the vice squad? _____
- 2) What was the first thing they did? _____
- 3) What was the first thing you did? _____
4. What did they say to you? _____
- 5) What else did you hear them say to anyone else or to each other? _____
- 6) Describe their actions and attitude. _____
- 7) Describe the conduct of people in bar. _____
- 8) Describe the treatment of arrested in paddy wagon. _____
- 9) Describe the treatment of arrested in jail _____
- 10) Are you willing to testify in court? _____
- 11) Are you willing to appear at a benefit to raise money for those arrested? _____
- 12) Other comments: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

This information will be confidential.



Craig P. Rowland
Editor

Publisher's Notes

Our community has become increasingly angry since the shooting death of Fred Paez on June 28. This anger has been directed towards the Houston Police Department, whom many see as "the enemy." Many have come to fear and or hate the police and want to fight them. I know that hate drains energy from my life and results in no good at all. If we must fight anything, it is hatred that we must eradicate, because we are oppressed and killed by hatred. We cannot fight hate with hate; that will only breed more hatred. We must have compassion for those who hate us.

The police officer who was holding the pistol which killed Fred Paez must live forever with the knowledge that a human being is no longer alive as the result of his actions. If it was intentional, he must live with the result of hatred that will consume his soul. If it was accidental, he must live with the result of his carelessness. He was hired to protect the citizens of Houston and now one of those citizens no longer needs his protection. I must have compassion for this man, though I blame him for the death of a friend.

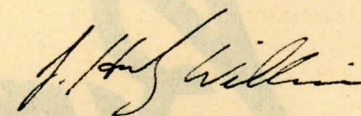
I want justice to be done in this case as much as anyone. I too have been angry but have pledged my energy to counteract the hate with love and compassion. We must educate those who hate us that we are human beings like them and that their reasons for hating are false. We must not given them reason to hate us and hurt us.

We are citizens and pay taxes and deserve the services provided all citizens. We should not be singled out as deserving less by the straight, white protestant male dominated Police Department or any other City, State or Federal agency or department. Blacks have struggled for their rights for many years, as have women and all the other groups of people who are not straight, white, protestant and male. Gay men and lesbians have also had to fight oppression for many years and the progress has been slow. Though we are all similar to the other groups in that we have suffered oppression, we too have been oppressors. I am a white, protestant, male and must question my training continually. I recognize in myself racism, sexism, ageism and other negative "isms" and must work within myself to remove those barriers that keep me from fully appreciating each person on her/his own merits. That is this publication's purpose: To help all of us understand each other and to work toward equal rights for all people.

I want to encourage you to join us for a candlelight March For Justice on July 22. We will not be an angry mob but a group of citizens demanding justice under the law. We will carry candles (with something to catch the dripping wax) to honor our friend Fred Paez and others who have died. We will rally at City Hall and listen to Rev. Troy Perry, founder and Reverend Elder of the United Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We seek no special attention, only justice. Join us.

On the lighter side, have you noticed our new gravel streets in Montrose? My first thought was of the country roads back home and many pleasant boyhood memories. Then I remembered how rough it was to bicycle on those roads. Then I noticed a roller skater carefully crossing the street and began to wonder if the city is trying to discourage bicycling and roller skating. Perhaps the money the city saves from this paving method is being used on the grade separation of Allen Parkway and Waugh Drive. It appears our River Oaks neighbors won't have to stop at the light and will be able to speed by the Montrose.

UpFront America has moved to Montrose (finally). We are now open from noon until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday at 3217 Montrose, Suite 111. Our phone (529-8188) will be answered 24 hours a day for that late breaking news or to get in touch with any of us here. We want to hear from you.



J. Hardy Williams
Publisher

We support the
Candlelight March
for Justice
to be held as a
memorial for
Fred Paez and other
victims of violence.
Join us at the
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Washington | Watches Houston

The five member Fred Paez task force met with Harris County District Attorney Johnny Holmes July 7 for almost 2 hours. Task force spokesperson Lee Harrington told UpFront America that Holmes was "cooperative and intent on determining all the facts in this case."

Harrington said that Holmes is interested in any information the task force might have, or receive, relevant to the progress of the investigation.

Harrington clarified that "it is our intention to be cooperative with Mr. Holmes fully. Further, the task force is in no way in an advisory position with any investigation into the death of Fred Paez."

In a press release issued by Harrington it was stated that "the creation of the task force does not make allowances for whatever monies must be expended to accomplish a thorough investigation. Therefore, we are appealing to the community to help out in this endeavor as best they can. All persons interested in contributing should contact the Gay Political Caucus for further information: 526-2668.

Reactions to the Mary's police raid have come from as far away as the nation's capitol. Congressman Mickey Leland forwarded the following letter from Washington to Houston Police Chief B. K. Johnson.

Chief of Police B. K. Johnson
Houston Police Department
61 Reisner
Houston, TX 77002

Dear Chief Johnson:

I am writing to protest the arrest of sixty-one patrons of Mary's Bar in the early hours of June 20.

It is my understanding that the explanation given by the police for the surveillance and subsequent arrests was that a complaint was received from a nearby resident concerning Mary's.

As I am sure you are aware, Mary's Bar is not located in a primary residential neighborhood. It sits on one of the busiest strips in Houston, wedged between an abandoned car wash and the Bobby Rock Lounge.

Although there are some residential homes located on the street behind Mary's, it is our understanding from speaking to Mr. Andy Mills, owner of Mary's, that past complaints from nearby residents have generally been limited to concern over music volume. In addition, in the eleven years Mary's has been open these complaints have normally required only a phone call from the complaining resident to the bar itself, or a visit from one or two uniformed officers to correct the problems.

According to the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, there are approximately 4,000 bars in the Houston area. With 4,000 potential violators to concern themselves with, why did the Houston Police Department choose to raid Mary's a well-known "Gay" Bar, on the first day of Gay Pride Week, and on the eve of the Democratic State Convention in San Antonio which found many Gay leaders out of town? Why was it necessary to have approximately twelve officers in riot gear involved in the arrests? Why were fire trucks standing by ready to assist with hoses? Why were many of the sixty-one patrons arrested sober, guilty only of being in the wrong place at the wrong time?

The answer to all these questions seems to be a simple one. It is apparent to me that the Houston Police Department was engaged in an obvious attempt to harass and intimidate the Houston Gay Community.

The Gay Community in Houston has grown from a much maligned minority, to a highly respected, cohesive civic and political force. Actions like this on the part of the Houston Police Department are not going to be tolerated by those of us who have come to view the Gay Community as our friends.

I am confident that this action does not reflect your views or those of the new police administration. I am equally confident that the apology due the Gay Community by your department will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,
Mickey Leland
Member of Congress

cc: Mayor Jim McConn

cc: Mr. Lee Harrington, President, G.P.C.

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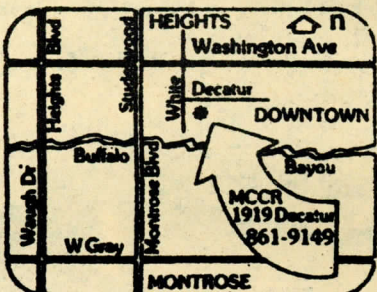
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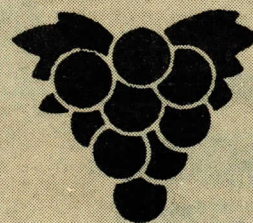


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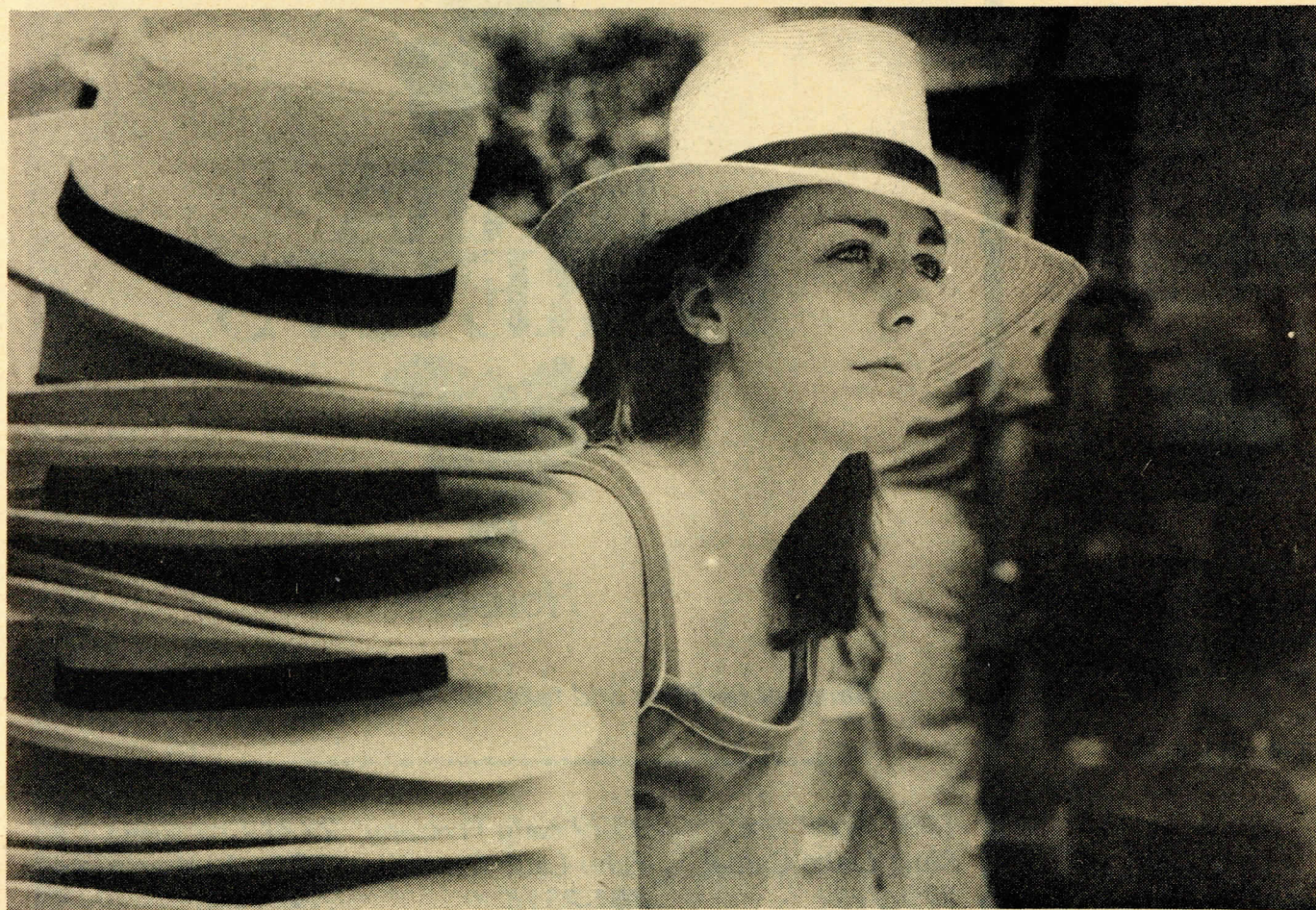
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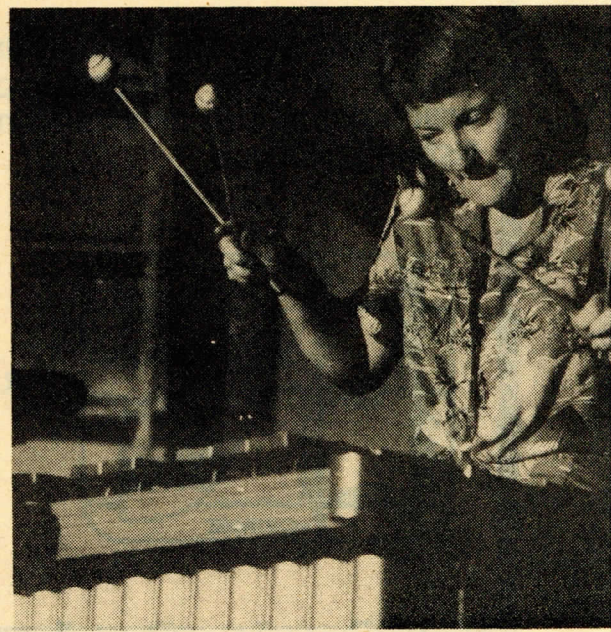


First Annual Austin Women's Music Festival



The First Annual Austin Women's Festival was attended by a crowd estimated at 400 on May 25th. 40 performers participated in categories: single performers, duos, bands or groups, and open mike (for anyone).

Hummingbird Productions, a group of



First Annual Austin Women's Music Festival



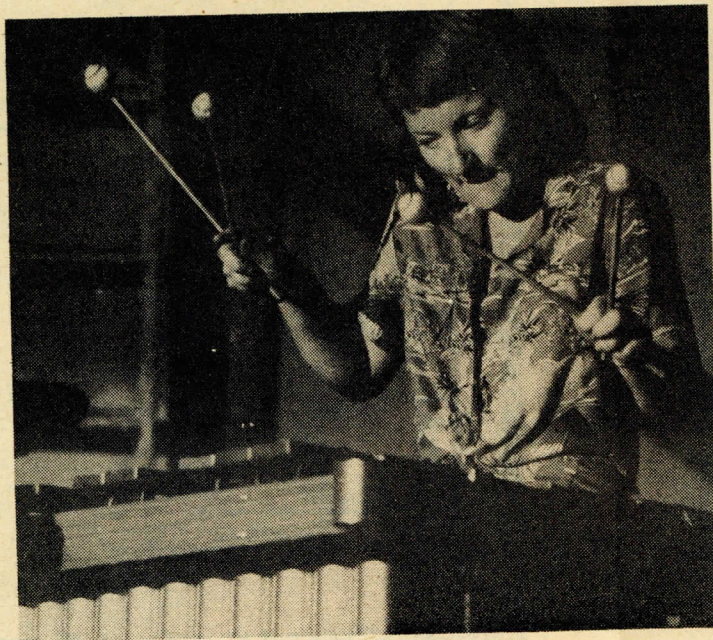
Photos By
Kit Brooking

The First Annual Austin Women's Music Festival was attended by a crowd estimated at 600 on May 25th. 40 performers participated in four categories: single performers, duos, bands or groups, and open mike (for anyone).

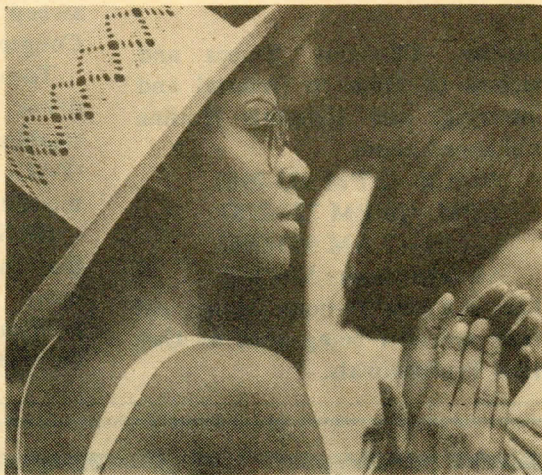
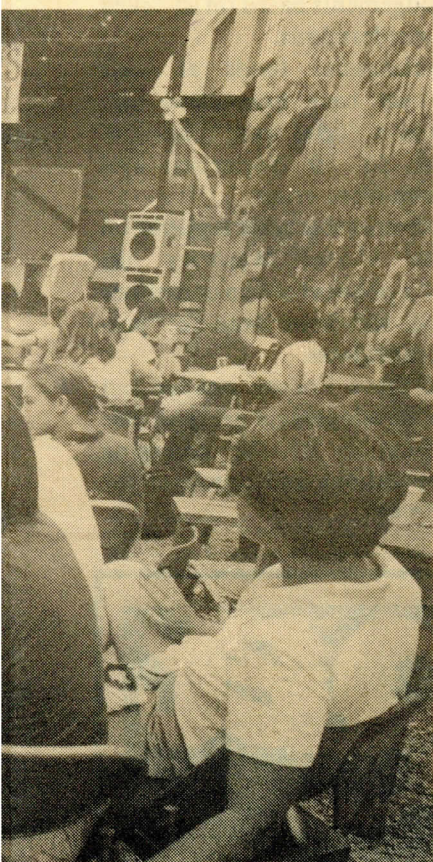
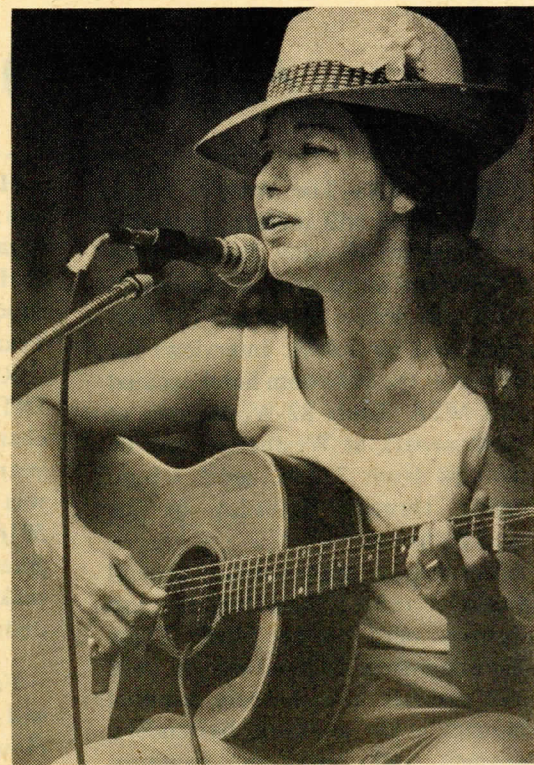
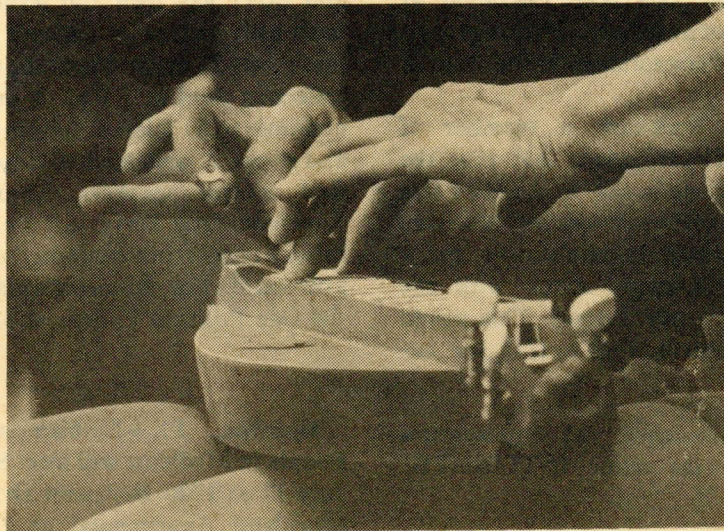
Hummingbird Productions, a group of seven

Austin women who have produced out-of-town talent such as Holly Near, Meg Christian and Chris Williamson organized the festival of local musicians and others from Houston, Fort Worth, and as far away as Taos, New Mexico.

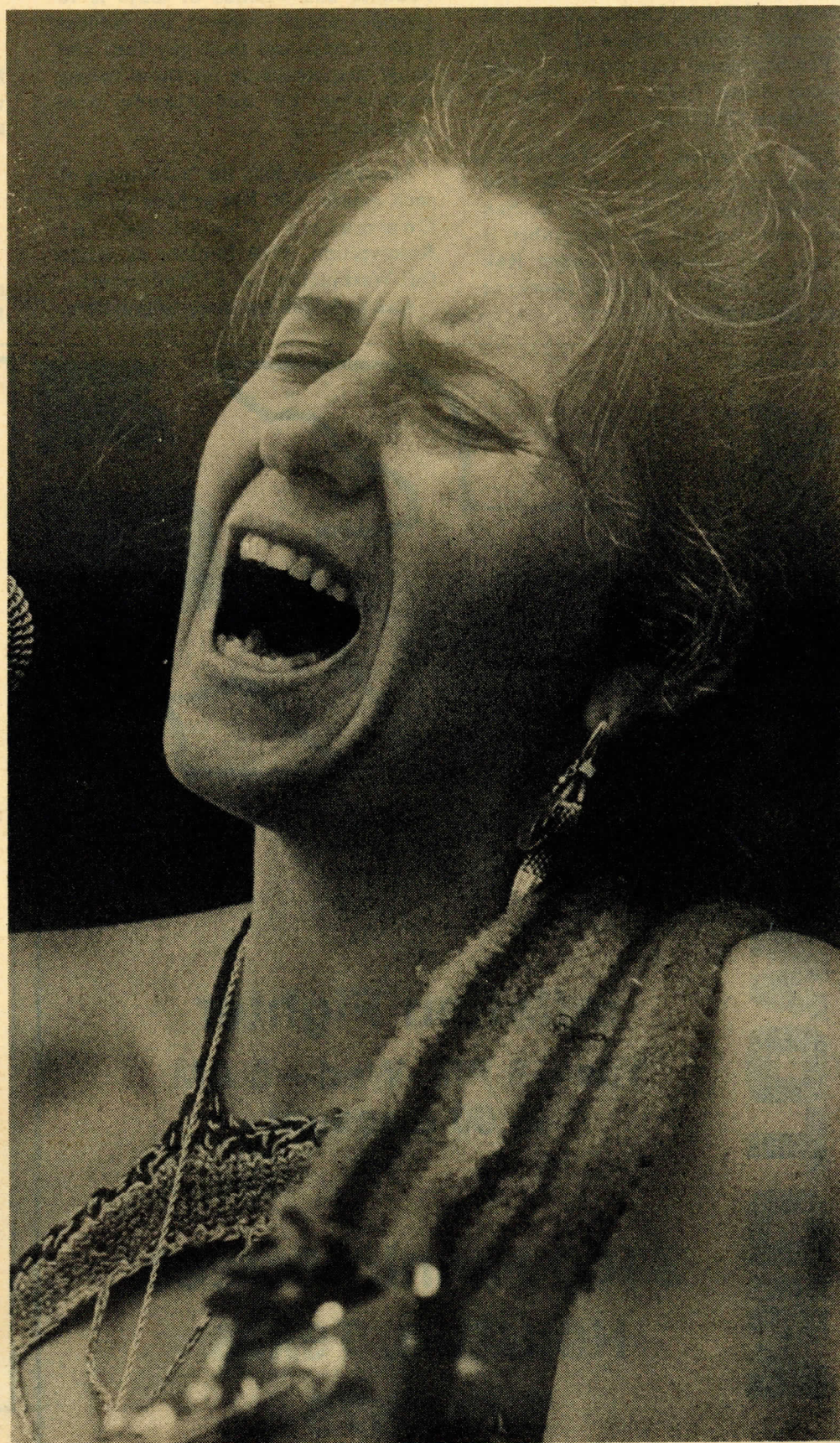
The proceeds of the event will go toward sound equipment for use at future festivals.



Annual Women's Festival



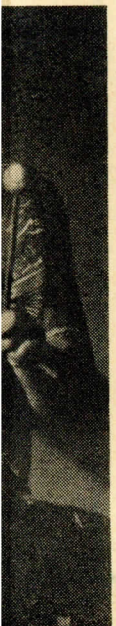
Photos By
Kit Brooking



Music
at 600
in four
groups,
of seven

Austin women who have produced out-of-town talent such as Holly Near, Meg Christian and Chris Williamson organized the festival of local musicians and others from Houston, Kerrville and as far away as Taos, New Mexico.

The proceeds of the event will go toward sound equipment for use at future festivals.



Announcements

Houston, TX—The Adam's Mark Houston Hotel will initiate a massive hiring program Monday, July 21 which will place 600 employees on the hotel's payroll and reduce Houston's (57,000) unemployed by 1.05%. Interviews for positions at the 604-room hotel, located on an MTA Route 82-Westheimer at 2900 Briarpark at Westheimer will be conducted from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday in the Grand Ballroom.

According to Stan Soroka, general manager, more than thirty job categories need to be filled. These include engineers, cocktail servers, desk clerks, cashiers, housekeepers, banquet personnel, night auditors, bartenders, housemen and restaurant captains. Special training for many of the positions will be held under the direction of Harriet Lauben, director of personnel, starting August 11, 1980.

For additional information, please contact Susan Farb, A. R. Busse & Associates, (713) 626-1144.

San Francisco, CA—The Fifth International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews will be held in San Francisco August 29—September 1 (Labor Day weekend). Contact Rob Montague at (415) 556-8367 (work) or (415) 929-0162.

Houston, TX—INTEGRITY/Houston, Texas' oldest active gay organization, has been chartered as I/H, Incorporated, a non-profit educational corporation in the state of Texas.

Richard Burkhardt, a member of INTEGRITY/Houston, said that the charter became active in April of this year and that the purpose for the action was to submit an application for a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. This would make all contributions to I/H, Inc. tax deductible.

For convenience, the organization will retain the name INTEGRITY/Houston.

Houston, Tx—The purpose of Families and Friends of Gays is to provide mutual support for families (and friends) and their gay sons and daughters, especially for those having problems of acceptance and understanding.

Meetings are held the 2nd Sunday of each month, 2:30 PM at Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection, 1919 Decatur at White (off Washington east of Studemont).

Call 664-5339 for more information.

Houston, TX—A candlelight March for Justice as a memorial to Fred Paez and other gay men and lesbians who have been victims of violence will take place July 22 beginning at the City Hall reflecting pool at 7 PM. A march will continue to 61 Riesner to join in prayer and songs. A walk back to City Hall will find several speakers, keyed by Reverend Troy Perry. All are asked to bring a candle (in a container) and black arm band. For more information call the Gay Political Caucus at 526-2668.

Houston, TX—Lesbian and Gay People in Medicine will meet Saturday, July 12 at 1700 Hermann Dr. no. 509 (Parklane Apartments) at 7:30 PM. Call 522-7360 for more information.

Houston, TX—Gay Nurses and Physicians of Houston (referral and volunteering) and Hepatitis Hotline have changed hours:

10 AM—2 PM 933-0962

2 PM—10 PM 777-2287

12 MN—3 AM 933-0962

All other hours 526-2668

This is a new 24-hour service. All referrals are now being done by Gay Medical Professionals.

More Morality

Washington, D.C.(GRNL)—"Get 'Em saved, baptized and registered," is the Rev. Jerry Falwell's (Moral Majority) slogan for this year's election. Falwell has announced plans to register eight (8) million new Christian voters.

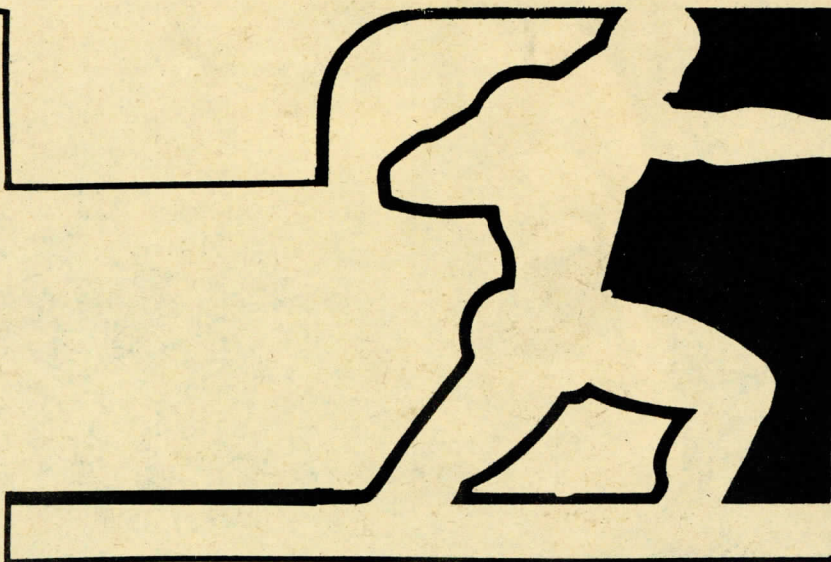
These voters presumably make their electoral judgements based on so-called "moral" considerations.

With substantial funds at their disposal, they have announced that their goal is a "tidal wave" that will sweep 40 to 50 Senators and Congressman from office.

To supplement this voter registration drive, the Moral Majority has established a political action committee (PAC) that will contribute to "pro-morality" candidates.

GRNL's Steve Endean pointed out that these developments are just one more indication of the emerging political operations and power of the anti-Gay forces.

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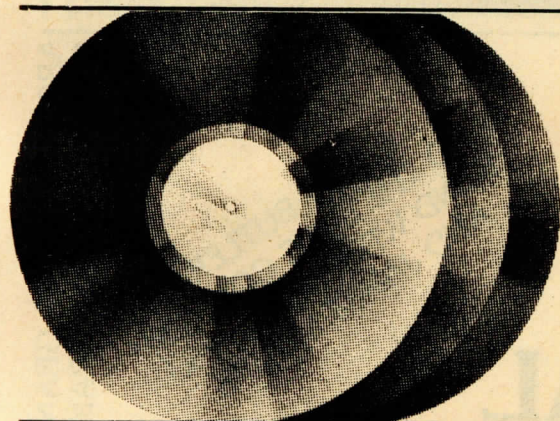
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records

By Richard Dearborn

Motion picture soundtracks have regained national attention and heavy regional sales in the past few years. Witness the success of **Saturday Night Fever**, **Hair**, **Star Wars**, **Grease**, **Urban Cowboy**, **The Rose**, and **Coal Miner's Daughter** to list a few. Add to that list **American Gigolo** and **Can't Stop the Music**. Though released five months ago with "Call Me" by Blondie—deservedly zooming to the top of everything—the overlooked cut of the LP that is THE standout is "Love and Passion." Sung by Cheryl Barnes, who kidnapped the film version of **Hair** away from her cohorts by singing "Easy To Be Hard," she again steals another show with her blood-and-guts revival singing.

Produced and written by Giorgio Moroder and Paul Schrader (who also directed the film or depending on my opinion misdirected), "Love and Passion" is an anthem of emotion for the eighties. It's surely the sister song to Pat Benetar's "We Live For Love."

Listen to Miss Barnes urging you to "... let out your heart and watch it bleed/Wake up and show the world what feelings mean!" And why should you refuse? "Love and passion are back in fashion."

The love in "Love and Passion" lives in its harmonies, especially the gospel-sounding chorus with its shouts of "Love!" "Passion!". The passion is undoubtedly the feverish, funky rhythm and not one but two palpitating drum patterns played one on top of each other (missionary style).

It's curious that such gutsy, spirited, sexy music could be given birth within such a dismal, unhappy, anti-gay film. Considering Mr. Moroder's music is the movie's saving grace they should respectfully retitl **American Gigolo—American Giorgio!**

Now that **Can't Stop the Music** is flooding the entertainment waves you'll be hearing The Ritchie Family's

forceful vocalizing on "Give Me A Break." Superb lead singer Vera Brown gets excellent support from Jackie Smith-Lee and Dodie Draher as they sing the woes of job seeking. As more and more people get laid-off, expect this song to remain number one on the unemployment lines.

Hotter than most songs have the right to be is "I Got the Feeling" and "Do You Wanna Boogie" by Two Tons O Fun—now famous for being Sylvester's very noticeable back-up singers. Highly rhythmic and quite danceable, "I Got the Feeling" slides along with strong positive vocals that glide with the bouncy arrangement. Unassuming guitar work blends with the songs smooth as silk approach for having a good time.

Prophesying of more good times and the Golden Rule (do unto others . . . etc) is "Make Someone Feel Happy Today" and "Earth Can Be Just Like Heaven." The Two Tons—Martha Wash and Izora Armstead—

release enough spirit and joy to cover a month of Sunday School lessons. This album is unconfused, uncomplicated and a simple happy testimony to fun—two tons worth.

Simplicity, again, seems to be the rush of the moment with the latest Three Degrees' single "My Simple Heart." With a softer, more relaxed arrangement than their previous single "Jump the Gun," the ladies sail through this mid-tempo tune with their golden harmonies fully intact. A very catchy melody line, outstandingly played on chimes (ala Bonnie Pointer's "I Can't Help Myself") fully develops the rich sweetness of the song's sincerity. A light airy synethizer line breezes along with the ladies vocalizing making this gem as fresh as a summer night. Giorgio Moroder's tasteful, lovely arranging, along with Harold Faltermeyer, only proves one more time that Moroder is the best Italian music import since Puccini.

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A Fairy Tale, by S. Steinberg, New York: Delacorte Press, 1980. 184 pages, \$8.95.

A FAIRY TALE

By E. J. Owens

The question always comes—when are you getting married? In my family, it always was the duty of Aunt Phyllis, the unofficial matriarch, to ask that question. Phyllis was never sure if she really wanted to be a Jewish mother. After all, she was too Catholic to be a genuine “yenta.” But try she would as she’d smother me in her massive breasts, hug and kiss me, and ask: “So, when are you getting married?”

My answer was always the same. First, I would smile. Then, clearing my throat, I would try to look both serious and troubled, and would answer, “I just haven’t found the right person.” Notice the buzz word. I would say *person*, gender-free, a word that I hoped would get me off the hook. What Phyllis would hear, however, was that I was still looking for the right woman. And, of course, I was still looking for the right man, however. If Phyllis knew this, she would have tried her very best to inflict terminal guilt on me. Such knowledge would do more than cause her arthritis to flare up. Or her ulcer to bleed. Or her asthma to return. No physical ailment could possibly compensate for the shock of knowing that her favorite nephew was gay. The news would have cut right to the core. “What are you saying? Are you queer? You have broken my heart.”

Sounds familiar, doesn’t it? You don’t have to be Jewish to have an Aunt Phyllis. Sooner or later our families realize that we do not plan to have babies and that the only way we intend to keep the family name going is on our business cards.

In *A Fairy Tale* Solly Steinberg has finally had enough of his Aunt’s efforts to marry him off to the right Jewish woman. He flees Aunt Sylvia’s and Uncle Hymie’s house in Beverly Hills and moves to San Francisco where he becomes Murray Roberts, *Interior Designer*. After a disastrous encounter at a Beverly Hills wedding, Murray telegrams his aunt. “Have decided I agree with you, and would like to get married. Do you know any nice Jewish boys? Best Regards, Solly.” What follows is a farcical, overstated, humorous account of how Aunt Sylvia and Uncle Hymie cope with their nephew’s news and how Murray finds true love along the way.

Uncle Hymie first tests the waters in San Francisco. While touring bars with his nephew, he meets his good friend Sol Levitz. During the week Sol supports his family by selling fabrics wholesale. His wife has accepted his impotency. But on business trips to San Francisco he becomes an overweight macho leather-man, keys dangling and leather vest bursting at the seams.

Coping is not nearly as easy for Aunt Sylvia. Letters fly to San Francisco and she finally decides to visit Murray



herself. She takes the advice of her doctor, Norman Pomerantz, that she and Murray should visit a psychiatrist. In a world of coincidences, however, Norman suggests Jimmy Coleman, his former lover. And rather than “curing” Murray, Jimmy, with his six-foot-three-inch frame, his wavy hair, and his blue eyes, and Murray fall in love. Aunt Sylvia eventually gives Murray her blessing by sending him and Jimmy a queen-sized bed.

Like all fairy tales, this one is difficult to believe. It strains for effect and is frequently overdrawn in its efforts to be comic. And when the book tries to be serious, brief “sermonettes” scattered throughout fall on converted ears. But the characters, no matter how stereotyped, invite the reader to laugh, with, not at their foibles. And a wide number of scenes—Murray’s attacks of diarrhea when he goes cruising; Uncle Hymie’s arrest by the San Francisco cops for not having proper identification (there was no room for a driver’s license in the paisley bell-bottomed pants he wore to one of Murray’s parties); or the drunken sprees of Scotty, Murray’s best friend, with an overweight Mexican hooker—cannot be forgotten.

Summer definitely is here. As temperatures soar and brains begin to melt, *A Fairy Tale* is the brief, funny book to pack for a day sunning by the pool. While it will not tax the intelligence, it certainly will amuse. Right now, one probably could not ask for more. And, like all true (Jewish) fairy tales, it ends happily and successfully—Murray marries his doctor.

The Club by Steven Gaines and Robert Jon Cohen, William Morrow, \$10.95.

THE CLUB

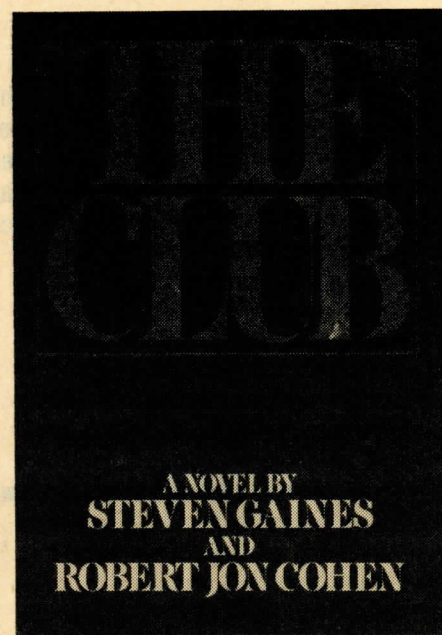
By John Hill

Happiness, I decided recently, is having a dance partner for “Funky Town.” This statement gives me away. I am a hardcore disco queen. I know, I know. Disco, if not dead, at least sucks.

Yet, my old cowboy boots have kicked more hiball glasses across dance floors than cow paddies across pastures. Most weekends, those boots take on a life of their own and demand to go out.

Disco has been an important part of our community for years. Its effect on our lifestyle was accurately described in Andrew Hollerman’s *Dancer From the Dance*, published in 1978. Since disco has only recently invaded Middle America, it seems reasonable that few books “of general interest” have been written about this phenomenon.

The Club, a collaboration between a professional writer and a former bartender at Studio 54, centers around a disco “so narcotic in its pleasure giving ability that it had become the most famous nightclub of all time.”



This nightspot caters to only the most exclusive of the beautiful people. Jacky Mellon, an acclaimed actress and singer whose mannerisms have made her a drag queen’s delight, and Ellison, a world famous designer who always dresses in black, are habitués. They are also best pals and the leading characters in this book. But the end of the novel, each has snorted so much cocaine that Ellison has undergone a plastic septumology and Jacky has ended up with bad teeth. “I must say pussy,” Ellison comments. “It’s trashy to have fractured teeth.”

Jacky has returned to New York to appear in a lavish Broadway musical, “The Performance.” Ellison is designing his costumes and Eddie Bernardo, a director noted for his feminist movies, is directing her in his first Broadway production. *The Club* recounts the events leading up to the opening of the musical. Of course, other roots are interwoven. The most important is Stu Shorter’s arrest by FBI agents for income tax invasion and his attempt to fight the charges. Shorter, a qualude freak, owns the club and dictates its elitist policies.

Can you guess who these people are in real life? If so, *The Club* will provide enjoyable, light summer reading.

The Club depends, greatly on catering to the reader’s snobbery. Ah, we say to ourselves, that character is really Bianca Jagger and then pat

ourselves on the back for being so knowledgeable, so chic.

Surprisingly, the novel is well constructed and well written. It should not be compared to Cheever or Updike. Yet, it is quite good when compared to Susann or Krantz. Usually, this type of novel is, to quote Ellison, tres trashy. *The Club*’s plot actually makes sense and proceeds swiftly to its conclusion, the opening of “The Performer.” The writing style is concise and never gets in the plots way.

The Club is good, poolside reading. It won’t tax the brain. It is easy to read.

Who knows? You may be able to identify Calvin Klein, Faye Dunaway, Michael Bennett, Lauren Bacall and all the other celebrities.

Brother Songs: A Male Anthology of Poetry, Edited by Jim Perlman. Holy Cow! Press, Minneapolis, 1979. 118 pages. Paper, \$3.50.

BROTHER SONGS

By Rudy Kikel

There are good things in *Brother Songs: A Male Anthology*. And I suppose we ought to be grateful for them: poignant images in poems by David Feela and William Kloefkorn; vividly remembered fathers (Ronald Koertge, Paul Carroll). There is even—what we do not much get in this poetry—humor (thanks to Gerald Locklin). The revelation of this book for us, however, is probably represented by the two poems—the two gay male poems—of James L. White, whose delicate and comfortably intimate work is a delight to come upon. (James White—remember the name!) Most of the other poets—there are 56 all told—would seem with a few exceptions, from the evidence here presented, to be “straight.” (Of the exceptions, Robert Peters and Paul Mariah are not particularly well-represented.) And the strain involved in the relationship between one man and another in our patriarchal culture makes itself felt in various ways.

That would be fine. That would be interesting. One expects a poetry written by men, in a time when connections between them are troubled ones, to be a troubled poetry. A troubled poetry would satisfy. But *Brother Poems* does not satisfy—because it is not troubled enough.

The hesitations, the feints, the open declarations of war in this poetry never rise to the surface—the way they do, we know, in life. Mostly this is the fault of the editor, Jim Perlman. His book is divided into poems about Fathers, Sons, Brothers, and then lastly Friends and Lovers. All of them are poems written by one man for another particular one. Now when one person comes to know another—man or woman—I would argue, they know each other as a person, not only as a

Continued on Page 15

Newsfront Newsfront Newsfront

Gay Rights Plank Adopted

San Francisco, CA—The San Francisco Chronicle reported that the Democratic Platform Committee adopted a gay rights plank as part of a list of pledges to voters this November.

Adoption of the plank marks the first time a major political party has called for an end to discrimination against homosexuals. The plank was adopted unanimously and cannot be challenged at the convention.

"We must affirm the dignity of all people and the right of each individual to have equal access to and participation in the institutions and services of our society, including actions to protect all groups from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex or sexual orientation," the plank says.

"This includes specifically the right of foreign citizens to enter into this country. Appropriate legislation and administrative actions to achieve these goals should be undertaken."

Inclusion of the term "sexual orientation" in an anti-discrimination clause was proposed by President Carter's domestic affairs adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, two weeks ago. Representatives of challenger Senator Edward Kennedy and gay activists on the committee had pushed for a stronger plank.

Martin Franks of the Carter-Mondale campaign said the change since 1976, when Carter opposed a gay rights plank in the party platform, came about because "there has been a meeting of the minds" between gay activists and Carter advisers.

Bill Kraus, head of the Harvey Milk Democratic Club and a member of the committee, saw Carter's change differently.

"Carter sees the gay vote as critical in California and New York," Kraus said. "Jimmy Carter can't lose both states and win the election. It's a political reality that we are important."

Time Marches On

Washington, D.C.—Time Magazine, in a July 7th article about the Democratic Party's plank problems said:

"At least three planks in the platform could embarrass Carter. One is a commitment to an issue he would rather have avoided: civil rights for homosexuals. The platform not only pledges to protect people from discrimination based on 'sexual orientation,' but also calls for Government action to achieve this goal."

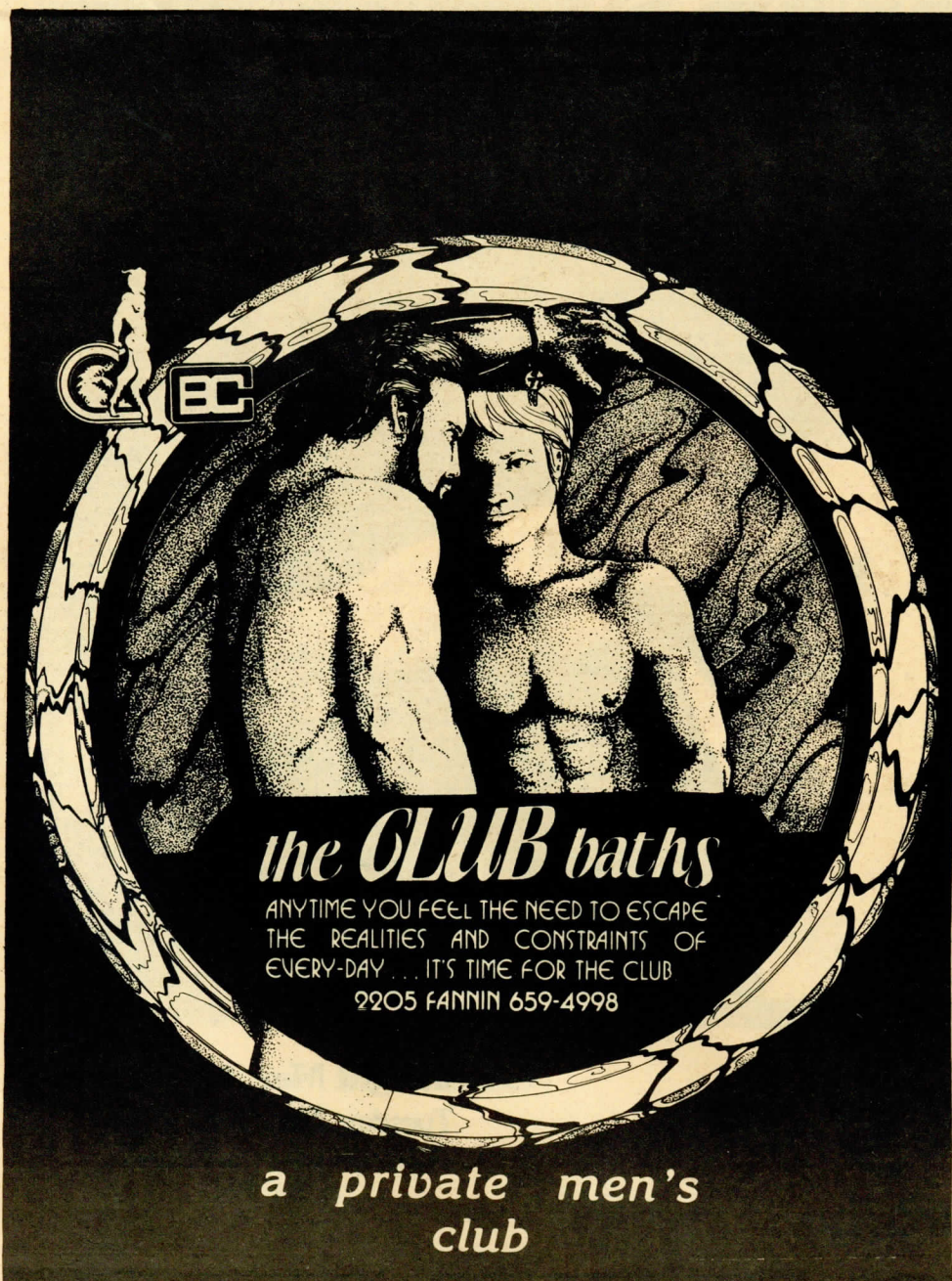
READERS

Write to us. Let others know what you think: Frontlines, UPFRONT AMERICA, 3217 Montrose, Houston, TX 77006.

Continued from page 13

man or a woman, Perlman hopes to make just this point: that men are capable of relating to each other on some profound level. The net of his classifications, however, does not capture other feelings men have about men: feelings about men we do not know—the passing stranger, for instance, rivals at work or in love—and about the concept of maleness itself as men have come to experience it in their lives—as pressure. There are poems by Aaron Shurin, Kenneth Pitchford, Ron Schreiber, and Dennis Cooper—to name only four gay male poets—who are not represented here but whose work addresses just these issues.

It would be fine if the points these poets raise were raised also by the poets Perlman does anthologize—but they are not. The clarion calls of gay male liberation—even of male liberation—are only mutedly sounded in **Brother Songs**—as if in the distance. Interestingly, 16 of the 56 poets whose work is here brought together are from Minnesota! None from Texas, none from Massachusetts, and only a few from New York or San Francisco. **Brother Songs** is itself a book "for friends—friends of the editor, friends of the press—based in Minneapolis."



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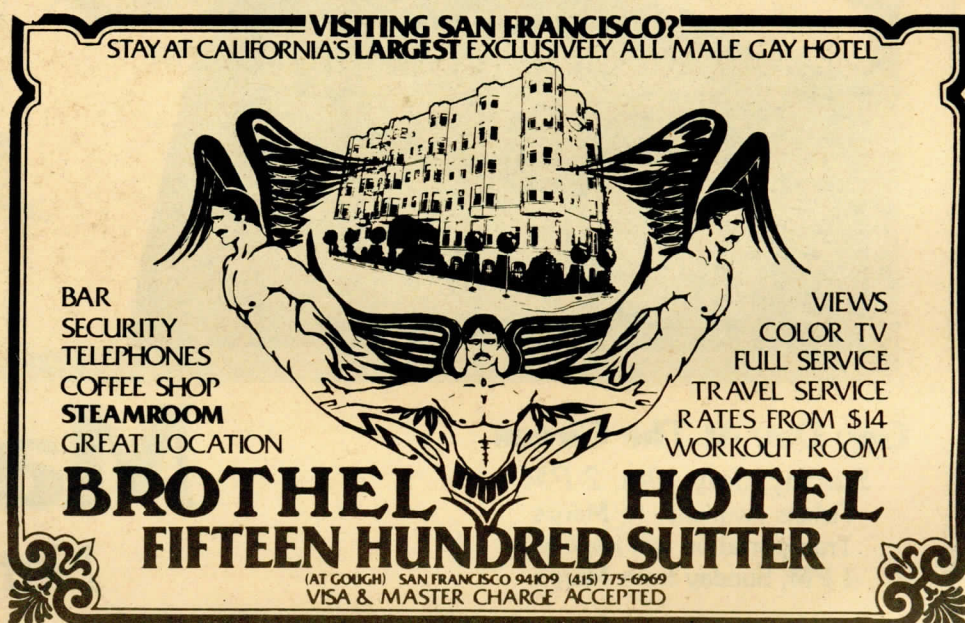


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