berkeley women’s music collective

We are lesbians who came together to give form to our thoughts, feelings, and visions as women struggling to overthrow our oppression, and to support the struggles of other oppressed people. Because each of us loves music, we chose it as the vehicle for our self-discovery, and through its discipline we learn to face each other.

Working with a responsible process is as important to us as our music. We try to listen carefully to what each of us is saying with our instrument or voice and support each other musically and emotionally through constructive criticism and encouragement. Our collective process takes a lot of time and new skills, and sometimes we feel frustrated and turn against each other. It’s through our music that we share these highs and lows, and put our egos aside for our sensibilities.

We all wrote these songs and collectively arranged them over the two and a half years we have played together. We decided to record our work to document what we have been doing, and to make our music available to people in lots of places anytime they need or want to hear it. We utilized the resources of our community for engineering, producing, design, layout, typesetting, photography, and playing music. We used whatever equipment we could get our hands on; most of which is half way between what you might have in your home and what is found in expensive studios.

After all the work of arranging and practicing, the most exciting feeling as a band is merging into one energy and one music that you can experience as we have. We hope you like it.

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SOME NOTES:
Jake originally helped form the b.w.m.c. in 1973. She is a member of the friends. We have been playing together for a long time and are very close. We are very happy that we have been able to record this album and are looking forward to the future.

Jake: I have always been interested in music and have played the guitar since I was a child. I have also been involved in various community projects over the years.

Sheila: I have been involved in music for many years and have played the guitar and other instruments since I was a child. I have also been involved in various community projects over the years.

Jane: I have been involved in music for many years and have played the guitar and other instruments since I was a child. I have also been involved in various community projects over the years.

We hope you enjoy the music we have created together.

We are all aware of the importance of music in our lives and believe that it has the power to heal and to inspire. We hope that this album will bring joy and hope to all who listen to it.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the years, including our families, friends, and fellow musicians.

We would also like to thank our label, VOYAGE, for their support and for giving us the opportunity to record this album.

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SPECIAL THANKS TO: *** the people who lent us the money to produce this album *** to diane tuteau *** to nancy r. *** to nancy v. *** for being who you are *** to transbay graphics for use of their equipment *** to sue who feeds us all *** and especially to the bay area women’s community for supporting us and encouraging us to play and stay together ***

SIDE ONE
1. the bloods (s. shambaum) 2:30
2. the time (e. vogt) 4:29
3. fury (s. shambaum) 4:49
4. "no thanks mistress" (n. henderson) 2:29
5. we’re hip (c. torrellas) (l. tempek) 4:10

SIDE TWO
1. san francisco bank song (s. shambaum) 3:43
2. jayne’s song (s. shambaum) 2:22
3. nancy’s rap (n. vogt) 4:08
4. gay and proud (l. tempek) 3:26

we’re hip
I wrote the words to We’re Hip when I was feeling the pull of many forces on women’s music. Jake had been offered a high paying job in a commercial ‘a la girl’ band. There are many difficult decisions to make in choosing where to put one’s energy. What I am saying in the song is listen to your own inner voice and don’t get taken in by the advertising. The last verse was written after the band played at the California Institute for Women (the c.i.a.) for the women’s prison. I was incredibly inspired by the determination for change I felt from the women there. Many were facing indeterminate sentencing; a practice that keeps the prisoner in constant apprehension about her release date.

defile: lead vocal, rhythm guitar
susan: lead vocals
nancy y.: vocals
nancy y.: saxophone, vocals
nancy y.: piano, vocals

janet’s song
Janet was my best friend in high school. This song is a journal of our coming out together. Every line is true. We didn’t know any lesbians and couldn’t say the word for a year and a half. We just knew that we loved each other so much that it had to be the right thing to do. Luckily it was the ‘happy days’ era and everyone was confused enough so that we escaped many of the horrors other lesbians have faced from isolation inside the straight world.
susan: lead vocal, lead and rhythm guitar
nancy y.: piano, vocals
nancy y.: vocals

fury
I wrote this while I was a repair technician for a large corporation. It was the first time I had a job that paid a lot of money. I thought that money and respectability would make me feel less powerless, but actually, it all gained me was more bills and the realization that I could still be raped or arrested just as fast as before.

I discovered power and respect in this system is not accessible to me no matter what I do. I realized that other women shared my experience and that together in our outrage we must take the power and turn things around for good.

I hope country women won’t take my line about farm labor as a lack of support. I used to see moving to the country as a drooping out of the struggle because it wasn’t on the same front where I was fighting. I still feel it is important to resist, however I realize now the importance of struggling on every level in every place; learning to take power in every way.
susan: lead vocals, harmonica
nancy y.: piano, vocals

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susan: lead vocals, harmonica
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susan: lead vocals, harmonica
nancy y.: piano, vocals

the bloods
This song grew out of a discussion with a friend about the pros and cons of menstruation; that historically the cons have been exploited by men to make us feel bad about our bodies, and hence, weaker.

defile: lead vocal
nancy y.: piano, lead vocal
susan: lead vocals
nancy y.: lead and rhythm guitar, vocals

take the time
This song was written for the first woman with whom I really fell in love, Therefore. We shared years of changes, pain, and learning, and a special love. I will always remember.

defile: lead vocal
nancy y.: piano, lead vocal, harmonica
nancy y.: piano, vocals
san francisco bank song
susan: lead and rhythm guitar, vocals
nancy y.: piano, vocals
nancy y.: vocals

we’re hip
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defile: lead vocal, rhythm guitar
susan: lead vocals
nancy y.: vocals
nancy y.: piano, vocals

mercy me, i’m lonely tonight
nancy y.: lead vocal, rhythm guitar, vocals
susan: lead vocals, harmonica
nancy y.: vocals
nancy y.: piano, vocals

When I was growing up around Redondo Beach, I thought politics was something that happened at City Hall, or Sacramento, or Washington. Why wasn’t I taught that politics was my own daily interaction with the world around me? Multiplied by thousands, it’s all of our daily frustrations, joys, and interpersonal relationships that shape our perceptions of the world. If we can see that our personal choices taken together can affect political change, we can begin to reclaim the basic necessities for our survival, and control over our lives that the patriarchal society has always defined for us.

gay and proud
defile: lead vocal
nancy y.: lead and rhythm guitar, vocals
nancy y.: piano, vocals

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