

Postscript:

I feel it's important to acknowledge some of the personal difficulties many of us experienced alongside all the wonderful, exciting, revolutionary and creative times we shared. I think all of us feel quite protective of that period, and don't want to be seen to be negative. However, the pressures were pretty immense at the time and it would have been impossible to come through it without a bruise or two or three.

I, for example, left London to do a degree in music majoring in composition. Ova had ended badly, my relationship with the studio ended badly, and I turned my back on everything in order to move on and heal. I did not listen to any of Ova's music for over twenty years, and in fact it was while digitising the albums for the archive that I gave them a listen, not knowing what to expect or how I'd react. I was very pleasantly surprised. Whew!

We were all trying to create a new environment, culture, society. Many of us were lesbians and the 1970's and 1980s were very homophobic. Clause 28 was introduced. It was not safe to be 'out' if you were employed. You could be sacked for it with no chance of an appeal. We could not be part of mainstream culture if we wanted to be out. As a result, many of us who played music were also very politically active, going on marches and constantly challenging the status quo. We had nothing. We had no resources. Some of us engaged in petty crime to survive. Ova's first tour of the US was funded in this way. If we wanted to play we had to do it all ourselves: find and hire the venues; screen print the posters one by one; do all our own promotion; etc. etc. We challenged everything: the star culture; roles, uses and functions of different instruments; elitism. We tried to work collectively. Classism and racism were huge issues, sometimes dealt with constructively, sometimes not. We judged each other very harshly. We got no validation from society generally, and so we had huge expectations of each other. There were many fallings out. At the same time we were artists trying to be creative. We wanted to be open, and the women's movement generally provided a relatively safe environment for damaged individuals. A lot of us were damaged in one way or another. Back then, no one had coined the phrase, "abusive behaviour," and there was quite a lot of it. 'Bullying' was another word which we would never have thought to apply to each other, and the bullies there were had a pretty free rein.

I don't write this to diminish our achievements at that time. We all achieved quite a phenomenal amount out of nothing. But I think in any political movement, where people feel passionate about the things they are trying to do and change, individuals are bound to get hurt. My hope for the 'third wave' is that amidst the struggle to effect change, they remember to treat each other with respect and to remember that when aiming for the moon, to keep their feet on the ground. Change never happens overnight.

*~Rosemary Schonfeld, 2011*