

from any other women's record on the market today. Most of the songs have an electronic sound, similar to Laurie Anderson's musical antics, with lyrics sounding somewhere between crazy and genius. The song, *Big Promise*, is about a woman who relates to a politician (who promises her the same big choices he promised the voters) to the shaft that women get every day of their lives. *Caught Between Two Worlds* sings of the life of a young runaway turned prostitute. *Boys Are Thugs* is a tacky, tongue-in-cheek rocker.

"From their first paper pistol -
Till Mommy slaps their mugs -
Boys are . . . Boys are . . . Boys are thugs."

The End is Near is an anti-nuclear testimonial by a bag lady. She argues . . .

"You call me dangerous . . .
'cause I wave my arms . . .
Your eyes glow green from microwaves,
Which one of us makes more harm?"

The Bomb is in Your Hands sings the Los Angeles Women's community chorus in the background in angelic soprano, and gives an eerie effect to the bag lady's "ravings."

This album is not just another big promise . . . Sue Fink delivers. Her creative, original songs are a welcoming change to women's music this year.

A newcomer to the women's music scene, Marcia Meyer, brings an artistic blend of acoustic and electronic instruments blended with sounds from nature in *Oregon Summer*. Meyer, a Canadian composer, wrote this nine-part jazz/classical release, with piano, strings, and woodwinds, as well as synthesizers in mind. It's the kind of music you'd want to mediate to, relax after a hard day at work, or just get away from it all. In the song, *Cinque Canards sur L'eau*, Meyer mixes the cries of waterbirds from Vancouver, B.C.'s Stanley Park with light string and woodwind accompaniment, (arranged by Mary Watkins).

In the song, *Green Peace*, Meyer creates a rippling piano sound much like waves, that are later heightened with synthesizers, which also sound similar to submerged whale calls. *Calypso del Sol* is a lively instrumental with Latin American dance rhythms, including congo drums, triangles, cymbals, and electric autoharp. She seems very preoccupied by water images throughout her music. The music is dreamy, and perfect "for winding yourself down." Next time you can't afford a trip to the coast or the arboretum — put the earphones on and listen to *Oregon Summer* and get yourself back to nature in your own living room!

Prairie Fire, Cris Williamson's fifth release, is a return to the music much like her first album, *Changer and the Changed*. She seems to have recognized the need within herself to connect with the Native American heritage. Many of the songs have a great deal of percussion and drum background. Song titles such as *Prairie Fire*, *Man Camp*, *Renegade*, *Grandmother's Land*, *Colorado Dustbowl Days* and *Wild Rose* show her commitment to make connections between humans and the land. In *Colorado Dustbowl Days* (my personal favorite), the lyrics are romanced through a reggae beat.

The song *Tsunami*, (Japanese word meaning a great tidal wave from a volcanic eruption) breaks the second half of the album into strong electric guitar and great rock 'n roll. *Grandmother's Land* relives the 1877 slaughter of the Nez Perce, as they ran from the reservation life seeking sanctuary in the northern lands of Queen Victoria's Canada — the Grandmother's Land. The song begins with the Freedom Drummers of Sioux Falls Prison, and ends with Sitting Bull's famous quote "Hoka hey-yeh-yoh — "It's a good day to die." Cris Williamson fans, as well as new listeners, will not be disappointed — she's put out an excellent new album.

Her first solo album since 1978, Linda Tillery has a hot new release, *Secrets*. Recorded on Tillery's own 411 label and co-produced by Ray Obiedo, *Secrets* is vastly different from her folkie-gospel first album. Side one churns out *A Special Kind of Love* by Ray Obiedo and Teresa Trull, complete with handclaps and a saxophone solo. Side one has four love songs, but, they have a slow burn, and smoldering acoustic guitar, as well as Tillery's sultry yet electrifying voice. Side Two also contains two love songs, *Count on Me*, and *Fever*, made famous by Peggy Lee. The song *The Chosen Ones*, has a rhythmic drumbeat background while Tillery sings of a woman from Soweto, South Africa, who believes that we are "all chosen ones, not just some of us, but all of us — everyone," and divisions between meek or strong have nothing to do with being "chosen or not chosen." *Basin Street* is another tune by Obiedo and Trull, and tells of a street, much like our own Union Avenue, where streetwalkers can so easily lose themselves. The singer choruses "No more . . . I don't want your painted faces . . . tired embraces . . . fallen graces . . . I don't wanna walk this street no more." *Fever*, my favorite song on the album, really explains it all . . .

"Now, you've listened to my story - here's the point that I have made: Women are going to give you fever, Fahrenheit or centigrade."

Well, this album is 100 degrees F, and cooking!

If you didn't have enough to choose from already; additional new releases include Ronnie Gilbert's *The Spirit is Free*, Nancy Vogel's *Something to Go On*, Judy Fjell's *This Side that Side*, Motherlode's *Dance the Afternoon Away*, and comedienne Robin Tyler's *Just Kidding*.

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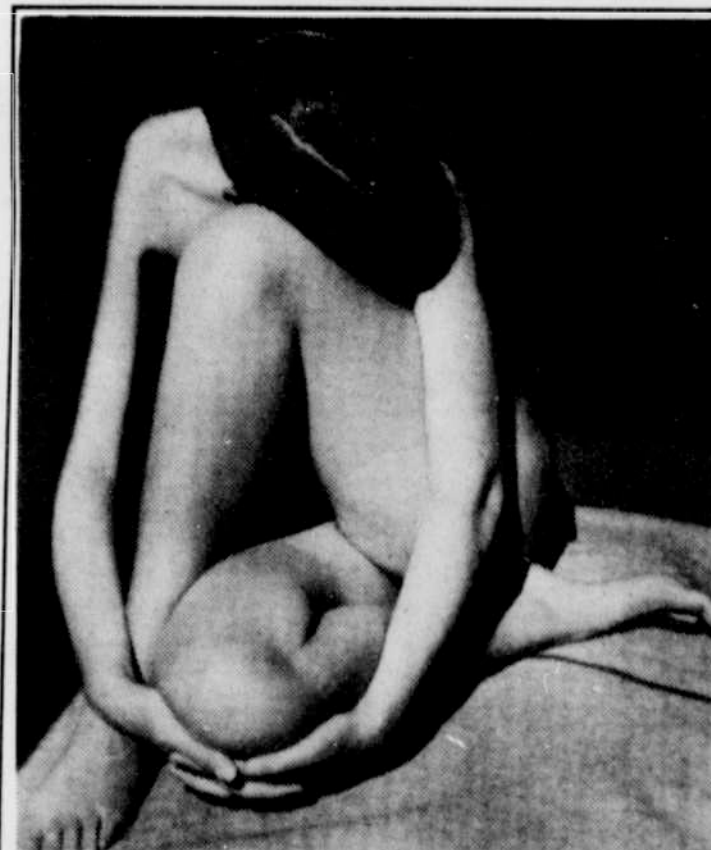
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