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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Final dates for the Fourth Annual National Women's Music Festival are June 28 - July 3, according to organizers at their Urbana headquarters. The event, first of a number of festivals featuring women musicians, particularly those of a feminist leaning, combines daytime workshops taught by experienced women in all areas of music-making and production, and evening concerts highlighting the achievements of a number of women performers. "The festival is a time for sharing skills and information as well as experiencing fine feminist music," said Mary Van Horn, one of the organizers. "Interest in the festival is growing and we're seeing women who've attended our festivals tackling kinds of music in which women have always been underrepresented," she added.

Heralded by the New Yorker magazine as a kind of "women's Woodstock", the National Women's Music Festival has been written up in such diverse publications as MS. magazine, the Chicago Tribune, off our backs, a feminist monthly, and Sing Out! magazine, a national folk-song periodical. Such varied musical styles as jazz, folk, protest, Afro-American, classical, and rock material have been represented at the Festival. There has also been an instrumental concert at each of the past two year's Festivals.

Workshop leaders and performers have included such people as Melissa Manchester, Arista recording artist; Victoria Spivey, blues great who died shortly after her last public performance at the Festival; Holly Near, singer-songwriter once active with the anti-war movement and now active in the women's movement; Judy Roberts, well known jazz pianist; Ella Jenkins, singer of children's and black ethnic songs; and many others less well known to a national audience but equally gifted.

"One of the greatest things about the Festival is the exhilarating

atmosphere created by the music," remarked Claudia Jordan, another organizer. "It's hard to realize just how many fine women are making themselves heard around the country until they are assembled in one place."

Festival attendance may be arranged on a full week or daily basis. Last year's admission price was \$20 for the week which included seven concerts and unlimited workshop attendance. Extra benefits include day-care for children and access to low-cost housing arranged by Festival workers with community people and in University of Illinois residence halls.

Women work in all roles at the Festival, including running the sound and lighting system, leading the workshops, and organizing the Festival itself. This way, Festival organizers state, a great number of women can have the valuable experiences that can set them thinking seriously about pursuing, or continuing, a career in music. All concerts and workshops are open to the public. Both women and men are encouraged to share in the spirit as listeners and learners.

Confirmed performers include: Malvina Reynolds, reknowned activist songwriter now in her 76th year; Margie Adam, young feminist songwriter/pianist who has just released her first album; Kathy Kahn, author of the widely acclaimed book Hillbilly Women and a singer of mountain music. Many other performers are pending. All those interested in attending or desirous of more information are urged to contact the National Women's Music Festival at P.O. Box 2721, Sta. A, Champaign, IL 61820, 217-333-6443.

national women's music festival

june 28-july 3, 1977

PO Box 2721 Sta. A
Champaign, IL 61820
217-333-6443

We are on the sunrise of a fourth festival. As we move into plans for the event, we would like to reflect for you on what we've seen develop during the past three years.

The first festival involved a lot of reaching out to find feminists around the country. Contacts were made for the first time, and an excitement was generated about the beginnings of feminist music. Many feminist musicians had never met, and there was an atmosphere of exchange, and of careful listening. The main source of publicity was word-of-mouth and a few periodicals which saw the possibilities inherent in our festival.

By the time of the second festival, we had established preliminary contacts with other alternative media and feminist publications. More women came to know of us, and the quality of musicianship and material to draw from had grown dramatically. By now, some feminist musicians had toured the country, spreading the excitement, and "the word" about the growth of our music.

Locally, more interest was shown in supporting our efforts, since it was obvious we were serious about them (having worked our way out of a \$4000 debt and total humiliation when our "feminist promoter" skipped town with our money, our information and our credibility). Workshop topics, as in the first festival, divided fairly evenly between studying "the tools of the trade," and ideological discussions, which centered around internal trends of the women's movement and the larger context of our music in the international movement for social change.

Last year's festival, the third, showed changes in quantity and quality. The number of participants skyrocketed from a couple of hundred to over a thousand. More than 50 women we hadn't known sent tapes to us in hopes of being in the evening performances. Many more inquiries were received from new women's production, performance and distribution groups. We stayed solvent for the first time. Now, in almost all areas, we could find a competent and experienced woman to lead our workshops and produce our evening concerts.

On the other hand, hostility over our open admission policy — that men could attend the festival — grew to explosive proportion. Headlines were made here and in Chicago over the threatened early closure of the festival by the university in response to numerous reports of Title IX violations, the code guaranteeing equal access to public institutions by all persons. Factionalism on the issue of segregation of men ("separatism") split the organizing group right down the middle by mid-Festival and a state of non-direction prevailed. The atmosphere was heightened by the less-than-supportive spirit of some of our guests, who attempted to both deter and evict

men from the events in complete disregard of our situation. Other women attending were quite helpful, and have continued to be so over the past few months.

As a result of the controversy we have had prolonged difficulty obtaining space from the University this year, and until this week it looked likely there would be no Festival at all. Those of us who organized last year's Festival took numerous personal blows, both during the week and in its aftermath. Getting a new Festival together has been a struggle for us, and we expect you to respect our position and attend in a spirit of cooperation. We do place responsibility for last year's events partly on our own shoulders because we neither identified exactly *who* we were, exactly *what* our priorities were, or how we meant to go about implementing them. Instead we all proceeded with the planning, each for her particular reasons, and hoped that our own position would win out by festival time.

This year we feel we owe ourselves, and all of you, as much clarity as possible about our motivations, our polities, and our persons.

The Festival cannot be all things to all people. We stand firmly behind a few top priorities, and we encourage you to join us on the basis of your interest in the same.

The purpose of our festival is to build the presence of feminist voices and their surrounding media in order to strengthen the fight for human rights, the redistribution of wealth, and the institution of humanistic values which are in many cases carried on mainly by women in capitalist societies such as ours.

We don't feel it is adequate to substitute the male supremacy under which women have been stunted for so long with our own form of chauvinism. We do not see our problems as "caused" by men but rather by the structure in which a few men have exerted enormous power over many other people, including all women.

Therefore, we are organizing to criticize and celebrate, to gain confidence, and to bring feminist values into the American public as a whole. We must become comfortable as professional musicians and producers; we must learn to speak out against sexism as listeners and consumers; we must get acquainted with what we already have, and help it grow.

For these reasons, we refuse to deny access to participants on the basis of their sex or sexual identity (if any). We believe being pro-feminist is being pro-people, and we welcome those who share our values. We consider this an abiding principle of our organization, not subject to challenge every year. Those who have different beliefs should organize their own events, and make themselves equally clear.

BUDGETARY REPORT

NWMF 1976

(through fiscal 1976)

Income

Pre-Registration
Registration
Individual Concert Tickets
Individual Workshop Tickets
Tee Shirts
Tape Sales
Program Advertising
Dinner Fundraiser

Expenses

Performers and workshop leaders
Travel
Housing

Advertising

Registration forms
Newspapers
Posters
Program

Equipment

University Bill
P.A. system
Piano
Tuner

Miscellaneous

Postage
Phone
Dinner Benefit
Tapes
Tee Shirts

Total

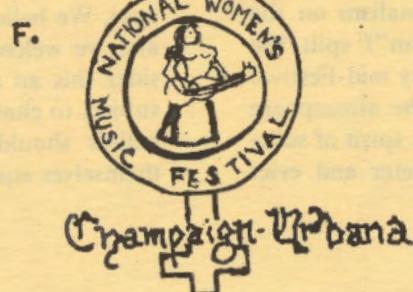
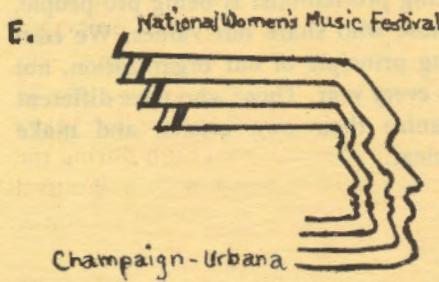
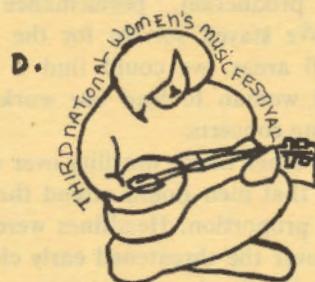
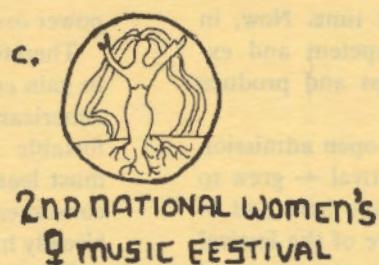
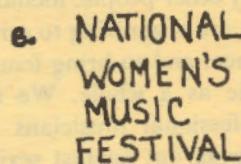
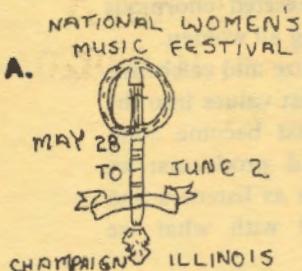
Balance

2570.00
3563.75
2685.00
192.00
1292.00
152.50
82.00
362.00
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200.00
290.00
158.48
100.00
91.90
1200.00
1315.00
290.00
25.00
81.31
104.95
126.30
118.00
979.15
\$9,485.78
\$1,413.47

TEE SHIRTS

The Festival has been sustained partially through tee-shirt and tape sales throughout the last three years. We have a tee-shirt design and festival highlights tape representing each year of the Festival. Tee-shirts are available by mail in most colors and all sizes for \$4 apiece; please specify.

The designs are roughly the following:



ANNOUNCING the National Women's Music Festival Logo contest! We are offering a free pass to the Festival to the prize-winning artist who designs our logo for the fourth festival. Entries must be black on white paper and arrive in our hands no later than the vernal equinox (March 21). Entries not used will be returned if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed.