

# SOVIET



LOS ANGELES

# CHIC

MOSCOW

From High Fashion to High Finance—Suddenly

All Things Russian Are Red Hot

Soviet underground art  
swept into town for the  
"Red Wave" exhibition in  
January.



LOS ANGELES TIMES MAGAZINE, JUNE 5, 1988

# SOVIET CHIC

All Things Russian  
Are at the Summit  
of Popularity  
Thanks to *Glasnost*  
and Gorbachev





Bringing underground Soviet art and music to Southern California: singer-songwriter Joanna Stingray and her husband, Soviet rock guitar player Yuri Kasparian, in Moscow, left, and in Los Angeles, above.

In January, Los Angeles singer-songwriter Joanna Stingray assembled an exhibit of underground Soviet art (which bears a surprising resemblance to that of some contemporary American artists).

Stingray herself cut the record "Red Wave" two years ago from tapes of underground Soviet rock music that she smuggled out. Her husband, Soviet rock guitar player Yuri Kasparian, who lives in the Soviet Union, came to Los Angeles in May for recording sessions. Ironically, while rock, suppressed in the Soviet Union as subversive of socialist morality before Gorbachev, is now more accepted under *glasnost*, Kasparian only speaks of disappointment. "It is not interesting now," he says. "Before it was underground and unusual, like adventure. Now it is like hard work." Top Soviet rock star Boris Grebenshikov is scheduled to record in Los Angeles this month with CBS. And pianist Vladimir Feltsman, who recently emigrated to the United States after years of being denied an exit visa, recently performed Rachmaninoff to standing ovations at a Music Center concert.

Otis-Parsons graduate Lisa Getchell and two fashion-design classmates spent a week last September in Tbilisi, capital of Soviet Georgia, designing and producing prototype sportswear with Soviet designers—and Soviet design students are due here in the fall. Mindful of the Los Angeles market, the San Francisco-based Joe Boxer Corp., which produced the hit "Surf Russia" T-shirt last year, is considering another one with a Soviet theme for the fall—"Ski Siberia" is one possibility.