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1991 #115

Guardian

The weekly news source for Moscow's foreign community

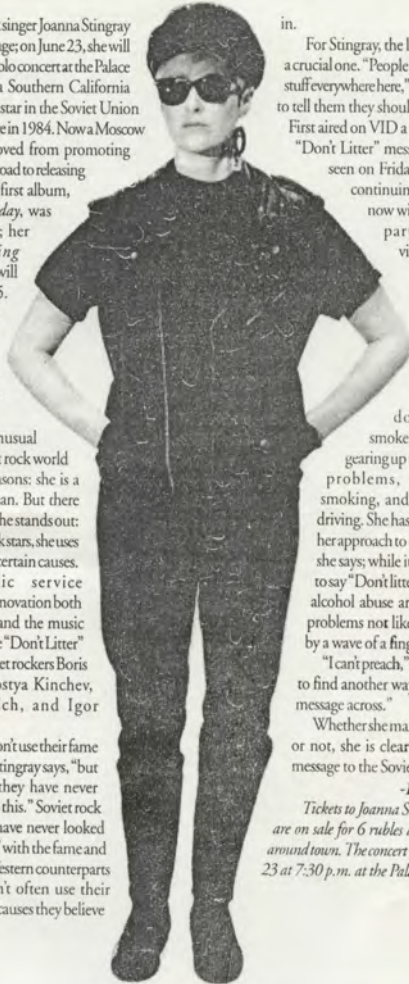
Culture & the arts

Stingray goes solo

American rock singer Joanna Stingray is coming of age; on June 23, she will give her first solo concert at the Palace of Youth. Stingray, a Southern California native, has become a star in the Soviet Union since she first came here in 1984. Now a Moscow resident, she has moved from promoting Soviet rock groups abroad to releasing her own work. Her first album, *Thinking 'Til Monday*, was released a year ago; her second, *Walking Through Windows*, will be available June 25. Both albums can be purchased at Melodiya and other venues where Melodiya records are sold.

Stingray is an unusual presence in the Soviet rock world for some obvious reasons: she is a foreigner and a woman. But there is yet another reason she stands out: like many Western rock stars, she uses her fame to promote certain causes. Her first public service announcement, an innovation both for Soviet television and the music world, is a two-minute "Don't Litter" music video with Soviet rockers Boris Grebenshikov, Kostya Kinchev, Andrei Makarevich, and Igor Sukhachov.

"Rock stars here don't use their fame the way they could," Stingray says, "but I think it's because they have never realized they could do this." Soviet rock artists, she explains, have never looked at themselves as "stars" with the fame and elevated status their Western counterparts enjoy. And they don't often use their positions to promote causes they believe



in. For Stingray, the litter problem is a crucial one. "People just throw their stuff everywhere here," she says. "I want to tell them they shouldn't do this."

First aired on VID a month ago, her "Don't Litter" message can still be seen on Friday nights. She is continuing her campaign now with a 10-minute partly-animated video cartoon.

The litter problem is only the tip of the iceberg. Stingray, who doesn't drink, smoke, or use drugs, is gearing up to attack deeper problems, particularly smoking, and drinking and driving. She has to be careful in her approach to these problems, she says; while it is easy enough to say "Don't litter," tobacco and alcohol abuse are fundamental problems not likely to be solved by a wave of a finger.

"I can't preach," she says, "I need to find another way of getting the message across."

Whether she manages to do that or not, she is clearly delivering a message to the Soviet rock world.

-Betsy McKay
Tickets to Joanna Stingray's concert are on sale for 6 rubles a piece at kiosks around town. The concert will be held June 23 at 7:30 p.m. at the Palace of Youth.