

RED WAVE

Joanna Stingray lost all her money to a rock 'n' roll manager who said he'd make her famous. So she fled L.A. to vacation in the Soviet Union and ended up marrying a Soviet musician. Not a bad way to beat the blues.

Stingray and Yuri Kasparian, a guitarist with the group, Kino, have, most likely, the world's most unusual commuter marriage—she shuttles between Los Angeles and Leningrad. But these trips have become more than just an attempt to maintain ties with both countries. Stingray has taken it upon herself to introduce Leningrad's flourishing music and art scene to the world. "I want to bring attention to what's going on in the Soviet Union and let people know there's a legitimate art scene in Russia," she says.

She is managing to do just that with Red Wave, her distinctive collection of Soviet art and music, which includes the 1986 double album she produced with four Russian rock bands, an exhibition of paintings by those same Soviets, who call themselves "New Painters," and, most recently, her release of the Red Wave 1989 Spring Collection of T-shirts and sweats, which are decorated with silk screens of New Painters' artwork.

The New Painters are musicians, painters, and poets, all in their twenties. They are followers of "futurist" leader

Vladimir Mayakovsky, a Russian poet who led a cultural movement in the early decades of this century. Freedom for the individual word and startling imagery characterized the works of these artists. But, the New Painters differ from Mayakovsky in one important way: this new generation of futurists are "unofficial" and, until recently, have not been allowed to earn money from their work.

Stingray hopes to introduce this Soviet cultural movement to the U.S. "It's amazing how much the Soviets know about our art and music scene—much more than you'd ever suspect. There's a lot of influence from [Andy] Warhol and [Keith] Haring in the Red Wave paintings. My friends [in the U.S.S.R.] knew who the Smiths, the Cure, and the Cocteau Twins were practically before I did," she admits.

"There are a lot of cultural exchanges going on between the U.S. and the Soviet Union now that glasnost is in full swing," Stingray adds. "My goal is to keep that ball rolling. The art and music of Red Wave is so similar to what's happening in the West. If a connection between the art scenes in both countries can be acknowledged, beyond what is being revealed with all the exchanges happening now, maybe our misconceptions about the Soviet Union and its people will end, and glasnost actually can succeed in bringing us all closer together."

The key, Stingray believes, is young people. Art is expensive," she explains. "The Red Wave Spring Collection will make it accessible to everyone, particularly to younger generations. In addition to the Red Wave album, which she managed to smuggle out of the U.S.S.R. in '85, Stingray notes that, in May, CBS Records will be releasing Soviet rock star Boris Grebenshikov's new album, which was produced by Dave Stewart (of the Eurythmics).

Stingray, who has been producing the albums of Russian rock groups, now will spend time promoting her own singing/songwriting career here in the U.S. (with a new manager) and in the Soviet Union (she'll be touring there in May and June). And, the twenty-seven-year-old is busy negotiating with moviemakers who are interested in attaining the rights to her life story. It seems that original rock 'n' roll manager may have led Stingray to fame after all.

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The original paintings were created by a group of young artists and musicians in Leningrad who call themselves "New Painters." These artists have been prominently featured in various publications, including *Art & Antiques*, *Flash Art*, and *Interview*. The collection featured in CV consists of six different silk-screened designs, all of which include the title of the work, the name of the artist, and the city of origin in the U.S.S.R. These paint-

ings have been featured in Red Wave art exhibits around the world.

The T-shirts are 100% cotton and machine washable. Joanna Stingray personally supervised every step of the manufacturing process to ensure that the prints retain their vibrant colors.

We are pleased to share the work of these talented Russian artists. Their nonpolitical designs show a different and seldom-seen whimsical side of Soviet youth.

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