

The Queen of 'Zine

G. B. Jones Is the Mother of the Modern Gay Punk Scene

BY ADAM BLOCK

"The other girls would probably say that they're bi," says G. B. Jones, a drummer-vocalist with Toronto's renegade girl group Fifth Column. "I'm the dyke from hell in this band."

She is also an artist, the lesbian Tom of Finland, whose drawings are currently on display at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions. And she is a filmmaker as well, whose third opus, *The Yo-Yo Gang*, will premiere Nov. 23 in Buffalo, N.Y.

But aside from all these efforts, Jones is probably most notorious as the cofounder and editor of *J.D.s*, the seminal gay-punk 'zine, which she launched "with my best fag buddy Bruce La Bruce" back in 1986.

"We thought of the magazine as just a joke," Jones admits. "There was no gay-punk scene here. You could hardly put the words together. The gay clubs had no time for punk or even dykes. The hard-core scene was macho and homophobic."

Jones and Bruce, Fifth Column's go-go dancer at the time, invented their own word—*homocore*—and a text to illustrate it. They cobbled together trashy photos of their friends and a list of their favorite punk tunes with gay references. Jones inked a few of her tough-girl fantasies, and Bruce wrote a story about his hustler boyfriend in the style of



Gagging on convention
Jones is a jack-of-all-punk-trades.

J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*.

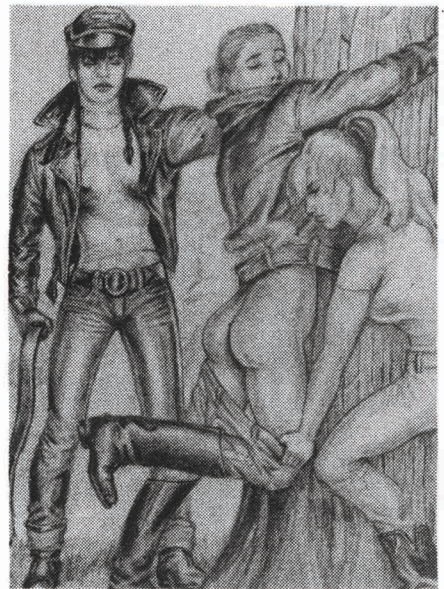
The magazine struck a chord with a largely invisible population of disaffected dykes and fags (the budding Queer Nation generation) and inspired a spate of homemade gay publications. Last spring the pair sent out 1,000 copies of a recent issue of *J.D.s* to what has now become an international roster of subscribers. In a recent survey of the gay 'zine scene for the *Village Voice*, Dennis Cooper called *J.D.s* "everybody's favorite—the 'zine whose style of combustible romanticism triggered the onslaught."

The woman behind that onslaught was raised in Toronto and ran away from home at 16. "I met Janet and Katherine, these sulky, pouty punk girls with chips on their shoulders the size of 2-by-4s," Jones recalls. "They'd go to these hard-core clubs and make out together." Jones had found two soul mates, and when they recruited a vocalist, named Caroline, she and Jones began a tempestuous affair. The two would form the nucleus of Fifth Column.

In 1986 the quartet released an album, *To Sir With Hate*. The disc's standout cut, "The Fairview Mall Story," was inspired by a famous Canadian case of police surveillance in a suburban mall's men's room. The names of the men accused of having sex in the rest room were printed in the press, and one—a high school coach and father of three—lost his job and committed suicide. The song lets the sad horror of the case speak for itself.

Fifth Column recently released their second disc, *All-Time Queen of the World*. "My favorite cut is 'She Said Boom,'" Jones admits. In this lesbian love song to an urban terrorist, Caroline croons, "My girlfriend bombs monuments, I don't know what to do./I know she's right about the state of affairs/But why does she put on such fucking airs?" Sighs Jones: "I love that line."

The Yo-Yo Gang, Jones's latest film, "is about this all-girl gang who use yo-yos for entertainment and self-defense and their rumble with this all-girl skateboard gang."



The lesbian Tom of Finland?

Jones does a spin on gay male erotica.

She is already planning her next two films. *Girls of the S.L.A.* will be the "the true dyke story of the Symbionese Liberation Army," she says. And *The Lollypop Generation* is "about young teens in porno. I'm not really for child pornography, but I'm interested in young people's representations of their own sexuality." In another project, Jones is starring in Bruce's feature-length skinhead romance video, *No Skin off My Ass*.

Does Jones feel proud of the scene she has helped spawn? "Lately, on the hard-core scene, I've been seeing more and more bands who may be straight but are real queer-positive, and I think it's gotten easier for hard-core kids to come out.

"It makes me feel, well, humble if I've had something to do with all of that," Jones smiles a little wickedly.

Fifth Column LPs and cassettes are \$10, issues of J.D.s are \$4, and No Skin off My Ass videos are \$33 (cash only). Write to HIDE, P.O. Box 1110, Adelaide Street Station, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 2K5, Canada.