

The world of rock and roll is not widely known for its mentors, but an exception has been made by the phenomenon known as Prince. Over the past few years, he has brought a number of fledgling women rockers under his wings and released a flock of Princesses: He helped launch the musical careers of Vanity and Sheila E., and he pushed the Bangles into the big time when he wrote them a little composition called "Manic Monday."

The pint-sized Pygmalion has struck again. His latest protégé is 21-year-old Jill Jones, whose first solo album was released this spring. A rather racy video was made of one of the songs, "Mia Bocca," which aired on MTV. The black-and-white video features Jones in a spaghetti-strapped slip of a dress singing "I have only had one lover since I was 12 years old," while several prepubescent boys ogle her through a chain-link fence. Says Jones, "I have no idea why everyone's saying it's so racy. I'm trying to see it, but I guess in order to see racy, I'd have to think racy."

Jones, the striking product of a black mother and an Italian father, comes from a slightly show-bizzy family—her father was a drummer, her mother a manager of performing artists—and Jill plays passable piano, guitar, and flute. Her mother's

second marriage took the family from the Midwest to the West Coast, where Jill got involved in musical theater, and when one of her mother's clients—a singer named Teena Marie—went on tour as the opening act for Prince, Jones went along to do backup vocals. A friendship—"just a friendship," she says—was forged with Prince, and back in Los Angeles she began leading a double life—high school by day, recording sessions late into the night. "His hours are so different," she

BY AIMEE LEE BALL

**HOT
ROCKER
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JONES IS
YOUNG,
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AND VERY
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PRINCE'S NEW PRINCESSES



THE MAGIC VOICE
behind Prince's
Revolution
now goes it solo.
"It's been like
a fairy tale.
I mean, I'm this
person from Ohio."
Turtleneck,
Annie Watson,
\$50. Scarf, Baar
& Beards, \$15.
Sterling hoops,
M & J Savitt, Inc.



says. "He'd call me at 3:30 a.m. and say, 'Do you want to come to the studio?' and my parents were flipping out. My mom would say, 'Where are you going?' and I'd answer, 'I'm going to work.' It was pretty weird."

After the 1986 Parade tour, Prince surprised the group by announcing he wanted to go solo on his next album. Ultimately, Jones, too, decided to go it alone. She did so with her mentor's blessings: His managers are hers, and she records for his company, Paisley Park. "It's good to grow with him," she says, "but he can only take you so far. Otherwise you start to get scared to take risks."

Though Jones is happy to stretch her newly independent wings, she and Prince wrote "Mia Bocca" together (the music was an in-

strumental in *Under the Cherry Moon*), and eventually Jones was matched up with Jean-Baptiste Mondino, the Parisian film director who made a stunning video for Don Henley's "Boys of Summer" and a more recent one for David Bowie. "It's like a fairy tale," says Jones. "I went over to Paris, and Azzedine Alaïa did the dress. I mean, I'm this person from Ohio."

With her extravagant good looks, Jones has already witnessed her industry's version of the classic casting couch. "There are some people—I know that's what's on their minds," she says, "and those are the ones I just keep at bay. It's a terrible feeling, though. They see my two-toned hair and think I'm into kinky." It's just for fun, she says. "Some days I want to dress like a little boy. That's what fashion is for." And one of her heroines is Sarah Vaughan. "She doesn't care how she looks when she sings. You don't look pretty trying to hit some of those notes." □ Lyrics © 1987, White Fox Publishing/Controversy Music.

DRESSY DIVA
Elements of rock-star style.
Left: Rubber/wool bustier, Jean Paul Gaultier. Gray turtleneck, Joseph Tricot, \$220. Bangles, Tribe at Dennis Perry Accessories, \$12 each. Gloves, Fownes, \$30. Right: Jersey/safety-pin dress, \$3,500, fishnet stockings, \$11; Stephen Sprouse. Shoes, René Caty for Dorothee Bis. Sunglasses, Sanford Hutton for Colors in Optics, \$55. Hair, Ayo for Bumble & Bumble, NYC; makeup, Robert Snow; stylist, Roseann Repetti.