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Out of the Closet at Last: 80's Pop Icon Josie Cotton Reveals Truth Behind the Recording of "Johnny Are You Queer?"

Over a quarter century after a single word in a classic pop cult hit launched and then plagued the promising career of Josie Cotton, "Johnny Are You Queer" has re-entered the cultural zeitgeist via its placement in the mega-popular film "Jackass Number Two" and now, as a track on iconic film director and actor John Waters' Valentine's Day 2007 compilation "A Date With John Waters."

The singer/songwriter -- who caused a stir among religious conservatives and the gay community in New York -- is happy to declare, once and for all, yes, Johnny was not only queer, he was flamin'. For the first time ever, she's coming out with the long tale of how she and the song first met and romanced.

"The Punk band Fear," she says, "was the first to perform a version of the song live. They made no mention of the Johnny character, there was just that sing song melody in the verses to 'You're a f**in queer boy' screamed over and over again in that jugular vein-poppin' Fear kind of way."

Enter The Paine Brothers, Bobby and Larson, master songwriters and musical trendsetters who had discovered The Go-Go's during their first gig at the now legendary Masque. They produced an album for Fear, but were also working with the Go-Go's. They re-wrote "Johnny Are You Queer?" and had the all-girl group perform it live.

When The Go-Go's walked out on a production contract, The Paines forbade them to play "Johnny" anymore; the song was now a free agent in search of the right voice to bring it to the world. Enter Cotton, who met Larson in a bank line in Hollywood.

The song became an underground legend, and as Cotton was recording her debut album "Convertible Music," "Johnny" hit #2 on Canadian radio, just under Joan Jett's "I Love Rock And Roll."

They turned to the upstart video channel MTV and were ready to make a video when their label Elektra pulled the plug the night before the shoot. Cotton says, "There is no arguing that someone had gotten cold feet and made a corporate decision to make 'Johnny' go away."