



THE GOLDEN ROAD

ISSUE 16 • SPRING 1988

Since it costs a lot to win...

Well, here we go with year five of *The Golden Road*. Things are going fairly well at the mag these days. The subscription rolls continue to grow, and cutting back on the number of issues we publish has made things much more pleasant for us. We'd like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your continued support and good vibes. We've made many friends through the magazine, and there are lots more of you we've never met who feel like friends at this point. It continues to be an amazing adventure for us, alternately exhilarating, frustrating, emotional, fatiguing, funny and maddening. One thing's for sure, though—it's never dull.

The bad news is that we find ourselves forced to raise the subscription rate again, this time (definitely for the last time) to \$16 for four issues. Over the past four years we've maintained a very casual attitude toward the business end of this operation. It seems as though we've always had just about enough cash on hand to produce and mail the next issue and pay the photographers and artists on whose work we depend. This has never been for personal gain—Regan and I have never drawn any sort of income from the magazine; instead we've put any "extra" money that comes in toward increasing our print run, adding pages to the magazine or buying the rights to more photos.

During the past several months we've finally taken a closer look at our operating budget and discovered that we're barely breaking even at this point and are in fact losing money on all our foreign subscriptions. Where does the money go? Well, printing and postage eat up the majority of what we take in. We've learned that major circulation increases are a double-edged sword. On the one hand the cost per issue comes down a little bit as the print run goes up, but the total sum keeps increasing. And first-class postage is a real backbreaker. Because we come out fewer than four times per year we are ineligible to get the bargain second-class rate that most magazines use. And we simply refuse to send *The Golden Road* out at some third-class or bulk rate, with which it might take more than a month for issues to reach some subscribers. At our current size it costs \$1.25 per issue to mail in the U.S. (more to Canada and lots more to Europe, Asia and Africa), an outrageous 18¢ increase since our last issue. Other regular expenses include typesetting, camera work (half-tone veloxes, photostats, color separations for cover

art), circulation services, back issue reprints, envelopes, art supplies, and the list goes on and on.

Even though countless people with considerably more business acumen than we possess have told us we could rake in big bucks by getting into our own merchandising trip, we have so far resisted that route—we want to keep the spirit of this magazine as far from the world of true commerce as we can. But we also want to keep it going and growing, so the price hike is a necessary evil. It'll be worth the extra bread—honest! Four issues of *The Golden Road* still cost less than a ticket, and you don't even have to wait in line at 6 in the morning to enjoy it!

This also seems like a good time to clarify a point that seems to be confusing some subscribers. Although your subscription money still buys four issues, we are not actually a "quarterly." We mention this because we still get a lot of orders saying "Here's \$\$ for a year of *The Golden Road*." More like a year-and-a-half, the way it's working out these days. Our publishing schedule is going to continue to be erratic. For instance, this year we have this spring issue, we'll have an issue in late summer, and then probably one around Christmas. Beyond that is just guesswork at this point, but our current intention is to come out with three issues a year. (Apologies to all those who have written urging us to go monthly—we'd prefer to be alive a few more years.) Hang in there with us and we'll keep you up on what's going down.

On another even more mundane matter, when you order back issues or renew your subscription, please *print* as legibly as you can. We're not cryptographers, y'know!

But enough talk about biz. Yucko!

This issue's stunning cover collage was created for *The Golden Road* by the noted Bay Area artist David Singer, best known for the many posters he created for the Fillmore West between 1969 and 1971 (as well as numerous other memorable works through the years). Singer helped put collage on the map as a serious art form, and he is also widely known for his imaginative letter and logo design work. Our main "Feedback" graphic is one of his black-and-white collages. Needless to say, it's been a great thrill for us to be able to work with a person of such vision, integrity and skill.

—BJ & RM



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Typesetting: image factory, Oakland

Printing: Anto Offset, Berkeley

The Golden Road is published occasionally by Blair Jackson and Regan McMahon, 484 Lake Park Ave. #82, Oakland, CA 94610. The publishers are entirely responsible for its contents. This is Issue Number 16, Spring 1988.

The Golden Road is in no way affiliated with or endorsed by the Grateful Dead or their organization.

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FEEDBACK

"Mr. Garcia on Line 4"

Not surprisingly, a lot of the mail last issue concerned the band's newfound megastardom and the problems that are coming along with it. Just what are we going to do with all those drunks, gate crashers, loud talkers and assorted trendoid prep school students who have taken such an interest recently in what used to be America's best-kept secret?

A number of suggestions were put forth, ranging from weirding out the straights (my personal favorite) to some sort of "teaching" campaign. While there may be some people who would think twice about gate-crashing if they knew it could hurt more than just the promoter, we have to realize that a Nancy Reagan-esque "do not tolerate casual gate-crashing in your company" (a.k.a. Just Say NO) isn't going to work. After all, the Dead have been complaining about this problem in their mail-order ticket newsletter since at least last spring, without any noticeable change. To start with, the people who are mail-ordering their tickets probably aren't going to crash anyway (since they have tickets). But more important, the people who are causing most of the violence probably wouldn't listen if Jerry Garcia himself called them up to ask them to stop, because they're just screwheads.

One of the basic principles of the GD scene (if I may talk of such things) is that people won't do something just because you tell them to, and in fact, being told something by an authority figure makes a lot of people do just the opposite. Because of this, it seems like the only thing we can really hope for is a drop in the general popularity of the Dead as *In the Dark* fades into obscurity. If the number of people going to shows purely for reasons of peer pressure and/or fashion declines, the atmosphere at shows can't help but improve.

Arthur Cohen
Somerville, MA

Both Sides Now

I agree that the recent crowds at shows have become almost unbearable, especially when beer is easily accessible. We affectionately refer to these newcomers as "In the Darkers." At Angel's Camp, during the "Bird Song," I felt the peak of frustration when a fraternity guy who was hooting and hollering during the instrumental found it impossible to maneuver his drunken self to the john and proceeded to urinate right there in a very tightly packed soundboard location. Those of us in the vicinity were also treated to his pathetic, high-decibel analysis of each tune *during* each tune. He was, of course, busy gulping beer in between tunes. What an experience!

But I am truly writing to share a very special story about the spirit that doesn't cease to exist even during this trying time.

It was in line for the Friday Greek of '86 that I met our friends from Boulder. After spending a most interesting day together in line, I discovered that they were without lodging. So we invited them to stay at our house. Thus began our friendship. They have been able to adjust their student

budgets to visit us regularly for many other shows.

After this year's Greek shows, we received a most gracious and generous gesture from them in the mail. In the envelope were two round-trip plane tickets and tickets to all Red Rocks and Telluride shows for my fiancé and me as a wedding gift. (We otherwise would have been unable to make it.) The week was spent in profound celebration of Harmonic Convergence with our friends, whose very existence the convergence symbolized.

Suzanna Jones-Leddy
Oakland, CA

A New Start

This letter is to let you know of a group of Deadheads who are not drinking beer, do-

ing drugs or being rude and obnoxious at shows, but are enjoying the band to the max. We call ourselves the Wharfrats, and we're a group of Deadheads for whom drugs and or alcohol had become a major problem in our lives. Our primary purpose is to stay clean and sober and to help others who want to, while retaining our connection to the Grateful Dead. We meet at shows, usually flying a yellow balloon to let others know where we are. We have Wharfrat parties and meetings between shows, and we generally keep in touch.

Speaking for myself, I can say that the Grateful Dead and clean living are not mutually exclusive. When I came to the point in my life where I had no choice but to get straight or die, I was told the only three things I needed were honesty, open-mind-



"Ghost Riders." Collage by David Singer © 1988

FEEDBACK

edness, and a willingness to try—attributes the Grateful Dead have been advocating for years. I just needed to look at them in a different light. For me being a Deadhead has made sobriety easier, and sobriety has made being a Deadhead even more fun. Now when I go to shows I can remember what songs they played, and I can tell the difference between a great show and a merely good show without having to ask myself if it was the band or the drugs.

Tom Heckley
Topsham, ME

Caution: Bad Vibes Ahead

What a rotten year creatively for the Dead! Sure, they finally struck gold on a heavily promoted record that had been awaited for seven years. But their concerts have seemed increasingly stale and tedious, grinding out their "new" (five-year-old) songs over and over and, for the Dead, a relatively small repertoire of the same stuff they've been playing to death for the last several years, peppered with some of the tunes they worked up to back Dylan. The band has been frustrating their most loyal long-term fans by refusing to play their most cherished (and admittedly more difficult) classics. Their once clever, ambitious segues and set structures have decayed into one song ends, the other begins (wow!). And, personally, I can't get over the castration of "The Other One." Phil, where are you when we need you! And speaking of Phil, where did all those great ideas he had for the band's return-from-near-extinction go?

Gee whiz, I don't want to ruin the day of some nice 14-year-old who just got into the Dead with my bad vibes, complaining like this and all. But, gosh golly, it's just that I remember when it was so much better.

Rick Williams
Berkeley, CA

Familiarity Breeds Contempt

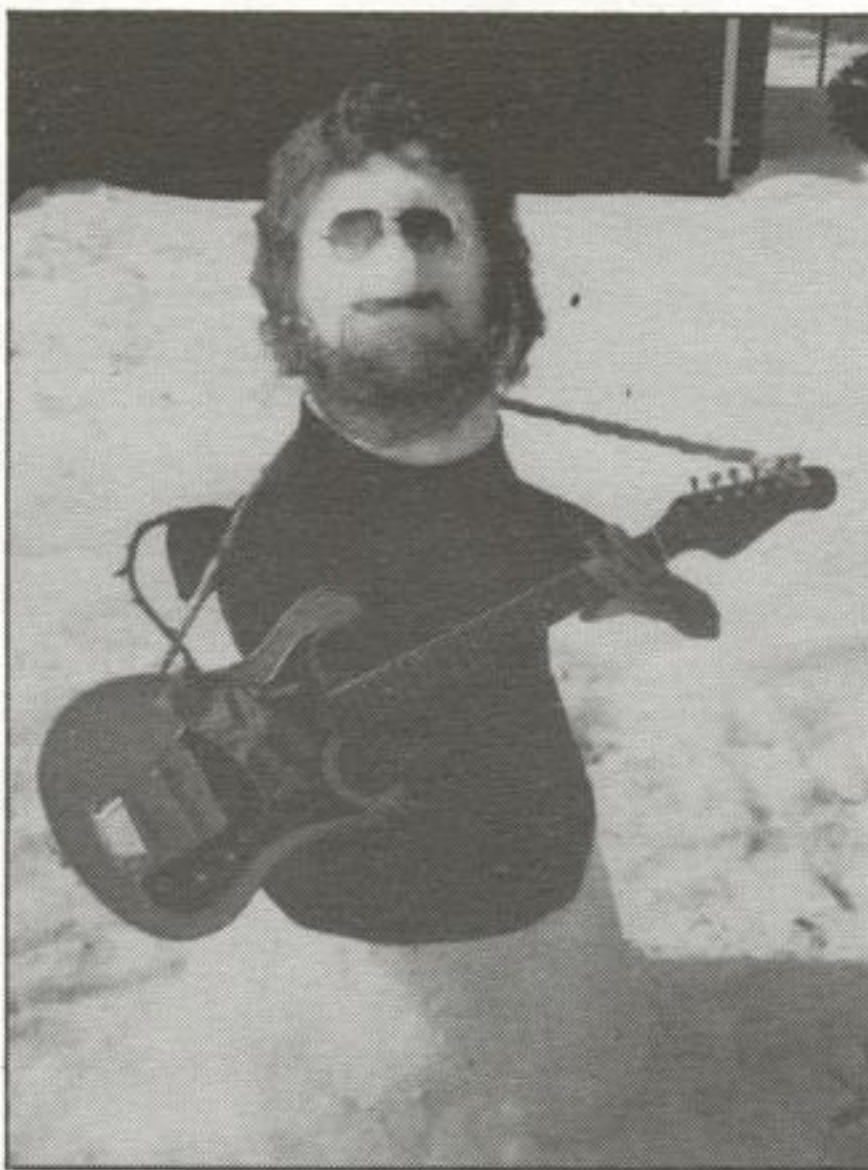
There's been a lot of interesting dialogue in recent issues about what's going to happen with all the newcomers on the Grateful Dead scene. I'd like to share some thoughts about some who've been around for a while—the tourheads.

Yes, it's a truly wonderful thing to see the Dead three days running at the Greek, for example, but—face the facts, tourheads—while you're enjoying all three shows, there are plenty of folks who would love to see just *one* show, but can't because there aren't enough tickets. It isn't because these other folks want to see the band any less; it's just that the pie gets that much smaller with each person who does the whole weekend gig. How about a little restraint for the sake of fellow Deadheads?

More disturbing is what I think tourheadism does for the scene in general. The old cliché about familiarity breeding contempt is true even here, and it's particularly obvious in the *Golden Road* set list commentary. Some of the reviewers are seeing so many shows that it's becoming routine, something that seeing the Dead should *never* be.

Those complaining about hearing certain songs too often are simply going to too many shows. What's important is whether the band has played them well, and by most accounts they have. The "all too common" (your words) "Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" set closer was played with real relish on New Year's—and, as a 16-year veteran Deadhead who sees four or five Bay Area shows a year, I enjoyed it thoroughly!

So why shouldn't we worry about how often certain songs are played or that there is a certain degree of predictability? Because, no matter how close the band and the audience are, there is a fundamental difference between the perceptions of the players



Jerry the Snowman. By David Meirs and Janet Jones, Charlotte, NC

and those of the audience for any given song. The songs can be vital for the band in ways that won't always work for an audience of substantially the same people night after night. It becomes a vicious circle—the more tourheads grab up available tickets, the fewer people get to see the band and everyone enjoys it less. It's like an addiction, I suppose. But as with any jones, it doesn't work forever. The high points and special moments get harder and harder to find.

I'd love to hear what tourheads think about this. What can we do to make it more fun for everyone?

Pete Parkinson
Santa Cruz, CA

Worth Repeating

Just a thanks to the boys in the band, the Nevilles, Bill Graham and everyone else involved for throwing a fantastic party on New Year's Eve. It was perfect.

To those who didn't have a good time, you've only yourselves to blame. People want some type of spontaneous combustion to occur every New Year's, and when the world doesn't stop they come away feeling slighted. They moan about songs being re-

peated. I've got news for you: *Every* song is a repeat, my friends. That's how they've gotten good.

John Herbert
Oak Harbor, WA

Another Time's Forgotten Year

Judging from the lists of favorite shows in the *Golden Road* Poll results, even the tapers don't seem particularly interested in the "interesting in-between passages." You left 1981 out of the tabulation, but if 5-6-81 was *not* #1, maybe the Dead should give up true improvisation. The fact that it received fewer votes than 7-13-84 says a lot.

Rob Bertrando
Reno, NV

Sorry for the goof! The list appears below. I agree that 5-6-81 should have placed higher—the jam after "He's Gone" (which was dedicated to IRA martyr Bobby Sands) has to be one of the best the Dead have played in the '80s. I think most would probably also agree that 12/31 is vastly superior to 10/16, but the latter is so weird and interesting it made nearly every list submitted in the poll. —BJ

1981

1. 10/16 (Melk Weg); 2. 12/31 (Oakland Aud.); 3. 3/28 (Essen); 4. 9/12 (Greek); 5. 9/26 (Buffalo); 6. 7/10 (St. Paul); 7. 5/16 (Cornell); 8. 3/10 (Madison Square Garden); 9. 9/11 (Greek); 10. 5/6 (Nassau); 11. 10/15 (Melk Weg); 12. 8/28 (Long Beach); 13. 7/7 (K.C.); 14. 5/1 (Hampton); 15. 9/13 (Greek)

Fair to Mydland

Thank you for the wonderful interview with Brent. After all these years, it was great to get to know him better. As a first generation Deadhead, I find that Brent brings an impact to the band that I, for one, have missed since we lost Pigpen. Which is not to say that Keith was not good, but that Brent's versatility and pure punch have not, in my opinion, been given their due. It seems like he is finally feeling comfortable where he is, and is blowing many of our minds! Visually, too, he is *amazing*—the way he flies around and jumps all over his keyboards...Zowie! He is not Pigpen, and no one expects him to be. Brent is Brent, and I hope he is here to stay! Let it grow, Brent. You are home, and you are loved.

Marne Hadlock
Laytonville, CA

Please Mr. Postman

I have a suggestion that I believe will greatly reduce the amount of scalping and counterfeiting of Grateful Dead concert tickets, which has become a real problem the past couple of years, as we all know. I propose that for all smaller arena shows (less than 25,000 seats) and venues that traditionally can be sold out through mail order, such as New Year's, Greeks, Red Rocks, etc., that the Dead office handle 100 percent of ticket sales. It is obvious by the number of rejected

orders and ticket substitutions (many of which were mailed on the first eligible day) that GDTs receives enough orders to sell out most shows (especially on the East Coast). Maybe the box offices could hold onto some tickets for radio station giveaways, VIP passes, last minute day-of-show sales, etc., but eliminate all ticket outlet sales.

Due to the raised lettering, the variety of print used, and even the sparkles on the tickets, it seems that mail order tickets would be a lot more difficult to reproduce. Scalping would also be reduced due to the fact that most professional scalpers might not have the know-how or take the time to mail order. These lowlife scum pay young kids to sleep out and to get in line for them while they're home in warm beds. Then they show up in bunches just before tickets go on sale and they buy up all they can. I've seen it happen and it's an ugly scene!

If all ticket sales were done by mail order, only loyal Deadheads (most of whom are honest, and don't scalp or forge tickets) who "keep in touch" with the Hotlines would get most of the tickets. I also understand that for stadium or large venue shows, this system would be impossible. But at those shows you don't see too much scalping or counterfeiting because it's a lot easier for everyone to get a ticket.

Tim Surber
Bridgeport, CT

Editor's note: According to the Dead, this idea is being seriously looked into already. As you can imagine, there are a number of logistical hurdles

— like doubling or tripling the ticket office staff — and the real problem of not wanting to completely shut off new fans who might not know (or care) about the Hotline. As they've said, the Dead don't want this trip to be a closed party. But we may see more mail order for selective shows.

Keep On Dribblin'

This computer drawing [at right] expresses my feelings of having Walton on the Celtics. I'm just a happy Deadhead Celtics fan. I saw my first game recently and the organist was playing "Touch of Grey" between the third and fourth periods!

I hope I don't offend any Laker fans. Hey, they're a great team too, but you have to place loyalties somewhere, eh? And besides, how many Deadheads play for the Lakers?

Peter Thompson
East Douglas, MA



A Joyous Wake

I very much appreciated your taking notice of Joseph Campbell's passing last issue. Two weeks after he died, I attended the Dead's November 14 show in Long Beach. I had not been able to share in any memorial services for Campbell, but left the concert feeling that without any specific references being made, the spirit of the Dead's sets constituted a memorable wake. "Cassidy," "Fire on the Mountain," "Looks Like Rain" and especially "He's Gone" all penetrated the feelings and thoughts that were bound

inside of me concerning whom I consider an eternal living treasure and spiritual father.

Robert Greenwald
Santa Monica, CA

Where All the Pages Are My Days

I recently bought my first copy of *The Golden Road*, and I was very impressed with the quality of your publication. I've only read the first and the latest issues, but both have made me appreciate your journalistic abilities. As a librarian (and amateur archiv-

HOLY MOLEY!

If you don't subscribe to *The Golden Road*, Sister Mary Terrapin here will have to go back to scaring schoolchildren for a living. As it is, she has a good gig with the GR circulation staff and gets to listen to tapes while she works. Plus time off for shows, of course. So give a nun a break, and keep those subscriptions comin'!

Get the next four issues for \$16 (U.S.); \$20 (U.S.) for airmail to Europe. (All issues prior to Spring '88 must be ordered as **BACK ISSUES** for \$4.50 each; \$5 to Europe.



'My heavens, Moonflower Schwartz has moved from Philly to Boulder. Bless her soul for sending us a change of address!'

SUBSCRIBE NOW!!!!!!

The Golden Road 484 Lake Park Ave. #82 Oakland, CA 94610

FEEDBACK

ist), I'm impressed with the amount of historical documentation that the Dead inspire among their devotees. *The Golden Road* creates a valuable historical record of a very important social phenomenon. At the risk of sounding pedantic, I think that the generations to come will appreciate the way you have captured, in words and pictures, so much of the essence of the Grateful Dead culture. The more I learn about it, the more I love and embrace it!

Leigh M. Donley
San Leandro, CA

Play It, Don't Say It

Your magazine is indispensable for us European Deadheads who like to keep up with Stateside developments in the Dead scene, though I have to admit that it grows increasingly frustrating to read what's happening if there's still no opportunity for aficionados on this side of the Atlantic to experience it first hand!

When the Dead did four London gigs in March '81, we hadn't seen 'em over here for 6½ years. The first and last of those concerts were very good, but the middle two were *transcendent*. And when four more London dates were scheduled only seven months later, we were delighted! A report in a local newspaper stated that the band had been most impressed by the attentive appreciation of London audiences, which allowed them to play with subtlety and delicacy without fear of being drowned out by shrieks and yells (just listen to the extended *pianissimo* passages on the Oct. 3 versions of "Looks Like Rain" and "Morning Dew").

We blushed profusely at the compliment, but when the article went on to state the Dead's intention to undertake Euro-tours more frequently, our hearts sank, because experience indicates that if they *say* they're going to do something, it probably won't come to pass. (To put it another way: One of

these days the Dead will do something predictable and surprise everybody!) Sure enough, they haven't been back since.

Bob Quaif
London, England

The International Trade Deficit

I discovered the astounding world of the Grateful Dead about six years ago. Since then a lot has happened (needless to say) and I've moved to Europe. In the last couple of years I have gotten keenly interested in music/recording and am currently trying to build a decent tape collection. Unfortunately, I can't seem to make any contact with you guys back in the U.S. The general vibes seem to show that folks tend to forget about their comrades who decide to leave the country in order to check out the scene elsewhere in the world.

But why? What could be more interesting than receiving fresh unadulterated news from across the globe, as well as exchanging some good live music? I think a main obstacle is the higher postage rate for overseas mail (about \$2 per tape). That doesn't bother me, but seems to be a bummer for other folks.

I tend to look at it this way: There's a lot of people traveling back and forth across the U.S. recording Dead shows, but what happens when the Dead and other great bands play over here in Europe? Who's going to be on the scene monitoring those V.U. meters and keeping the good vibes flowing? Most Westerners wouldn't be able to meet expenses, so it would be good to know someone over here, right?

I guess what I'm saying is this: It only makes sense that we should help each other out regardless of where we are, and think more internationally. Life does exist outside of the U.S.

Scott Erickson
Oslo, Norway

I Been Gamblin' Hereabouts . . .

Recently I was in my hometown visiting sweet Marianna, who works at the local Fotomat. While she was busy, I had a notion to play my luck on a lottery ticket, since there is a little store that sells them right next to the Fotomat. While Marianna, from the other direction was caught in my eyes, I figured I might as well try, might as well try. (I play once in a blue moon.) Well, I had one Grateful tape in my car at the time—Boise, Idaho 9-2-83. So I played pick 4 9283 box and won \$89 on a 50¢ ticket. That's a free pass to four Dead shows! There really is some magic in those tapes.

Richie Magan
Howell, NJ

How 'Bout a Root Weir Float?

Our 5-year-old, Mark, has always had a grasp of the yin and yang of things. At age 3, on his first trip to the ocean, we told him that there was salt in the ocean water; he asked if there was pepper in the hotel pool.

So, after raving about his first taste of Cherry Garcia, Mark said, "Does Bob Weir have an ice cream too?"

Patrick & Barbara Mulvey
Winchester, VA

Bird Song

I'd like to tell you how the Grateful Dead's music helped me out with my new pet. I got an Amazon parrot for Christmas, which I named Harry Houdini because he kept breaking the door on his cage. When I first brought Harry home, he was really quiet and would turn around and face the corner whenever anyone went near his cage. Then one day I put on "Reckoning," and to my surprise, Harry started chirping along with the music. His favorite songs are "The Race Is On," "China Doll," "Must Have Been the Roses" and, of course, "Bird Song." He hasn't been the same since. The same thing happened to quite a few folks I know, myself included.

Roy Heise
Naperville, IL

Sayin' Thank You for a Real Good Time

The shows began for me on September 19, 1972, Roosevelt Stadium, Jersey City. Since that night I've seen countless concerts, read numerous accounts and listened to hundreds of opinions regarding the Dead scene. Through it all I've searched for my own expression of what it has all meant, and I've finally found the word: freedom. Our association with the Dead and their music has given us freedom that extends from the thoughts we think and the ways we live, right down to the clothes we wear. The freedom of this shared experience has produced lifelong friendships out of mutual appreciation for the music.

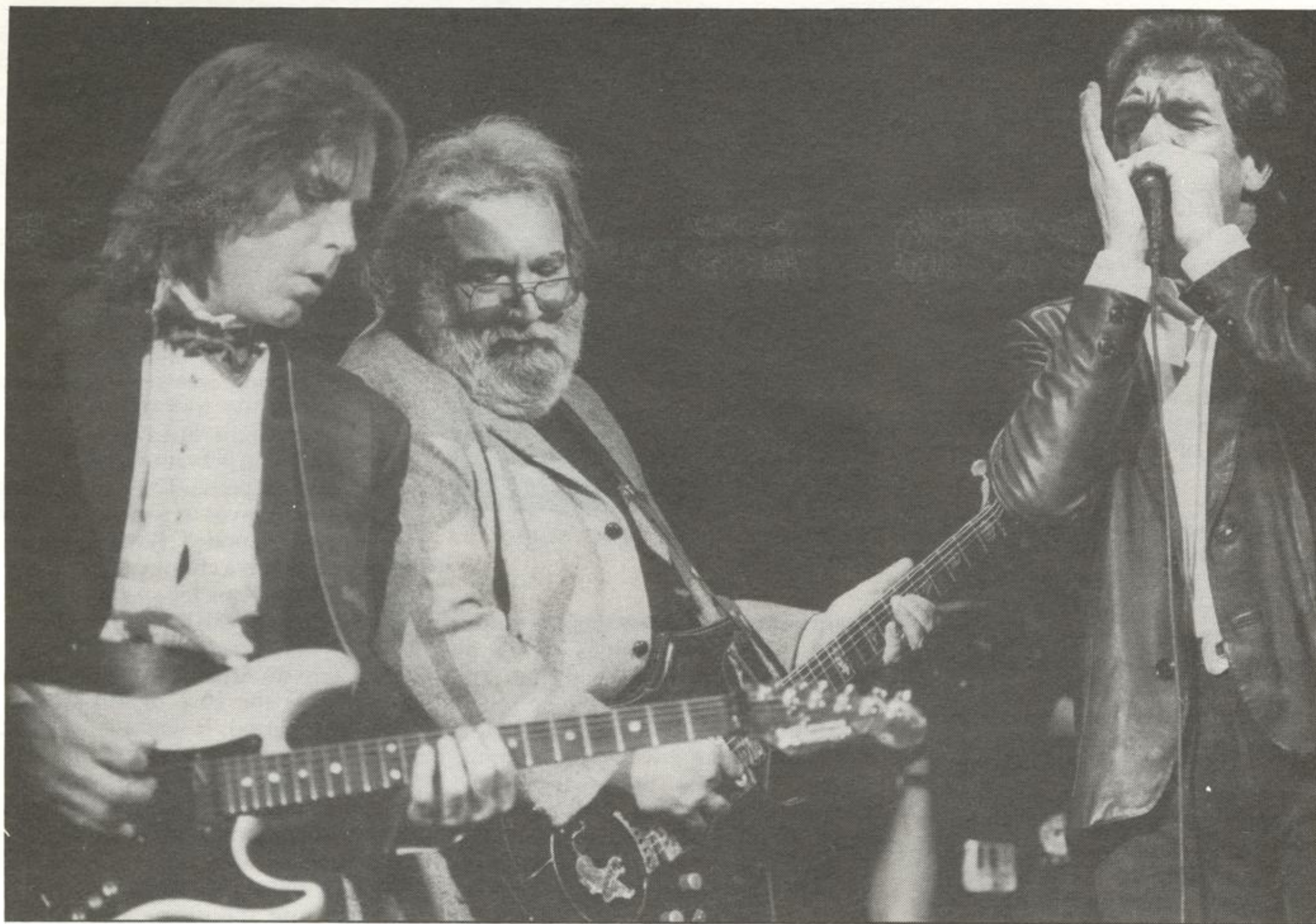
It is an understatement to say the band has impacted our lives for the better. Looking back, I can think of no finer compliment, and I thank them for so many great years.

Russ Riescher
Lithonia, GA



The heat came by . . . wearing a tie-dye? At Red Rocks '87. Photo: Jeff Whipple, Moraga, CA

DEADLINE



Garcia and Weir jam with Huey Lewis on "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" at the Bay Area Music Awards. Details on page 11. Photo: Ron Delany

Here's a very unofficial look at how the Dead's touring year is shaping up. Most of this isn't confirmed, so be careful if you're making plans around any of this info. There have been a lot of dates floating around, some of which are blatantly wrong. As always, check the Hotlines for the real lowdown. Those numbers, once again, are (415) 457-6388 on the West Coast and (201) 777-8653 in the East.

After the spring shows are over, the band hopes to do some recording on the follow-up to *In the Dark* during much of May. Yes, there's even talk of having a record in the stores by the fall. (Please, stop that guffawing. Stranger things have happened — like not making a record for seven years.) At press time, shows scheduled for June 10, 11, 12 in Ventura were in serious jeopardy, but they may play somewhere in Southern California that weekend. A week later they hit Minneapolis for a night (June 17), play four shows at Alpine Valley (19, 20, 22, 23) then hit some new places: The Buckeye Center in Columbus, Ohio (June 25) and Pocono Downs in Pennsylvania (June 27). They may or may not get the green light for a

show at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (upstate NY) June 28, but in any case look out for shows in Rochester June 30 and Oxford Speedway in Maine July 2.

The Greek, long rumored to be canceled this year, has been penciled-in for the weekend of July 15, 16, 17 (which should be a little toasty). Those are most likely going to be the Rex Foundation benefit shows, so don't be too surprised if the ticket price is about \$30 a ducat. Laguna Seca (July 29, 30, 31), which, if there is any mercy, will not be midafternoon shows this year — sun-stroke city — will once again feature a couple of other bands on the bill with the Dead. Could this be the Dead-David Lindley-Los Lobos bill we've been dreaming of? We'll see.

The band is taking August off (there are rumors in the wind of a Garcia Band tour then), but in early September they go back East for four shows at the Capitol Center in Landover, MD (Sept. 2, 3, 5, 6), four at the Spectrum (8, 9, 11, 12) and an unprecedented nine at Madison Square Garden (14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24). Then they close the month at Shoreline Amphitheater south of

San Francisco (Sept. 30, Oct. 1 and 2). October finds them heading South for shows in places like Florida, New Orleans and possibly Birmingham, Alabama, though nothing is firm yet as far as we know.

The New Year's series will once again be four shows at the Oakland Coliseum.

Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir and John Kahn played as an acoustic trio for the first time at a concert to benefit AIDS research organized by Joan Baez and held at the Warfield Theater Dec. 10. The trio opened their segment of the show — which was telecast locally on SF's public television outlet — with a rough version of "When I Paint My Masterpiece" (including the song's bridge, which the Dead don't sing). Then they laid down a nice "Deep Elem Blues." Weir followed with his tuneless, impossible-to-sing-or-play song "Victim or the Crime," with Garcia gamely following Along. Next, Garcia launched into "Bird Song," which seemed like it was really going to take off until Joan Baez unexpectedly walked out onstage with her guitar. Garcia cut the song off

DEADLINE

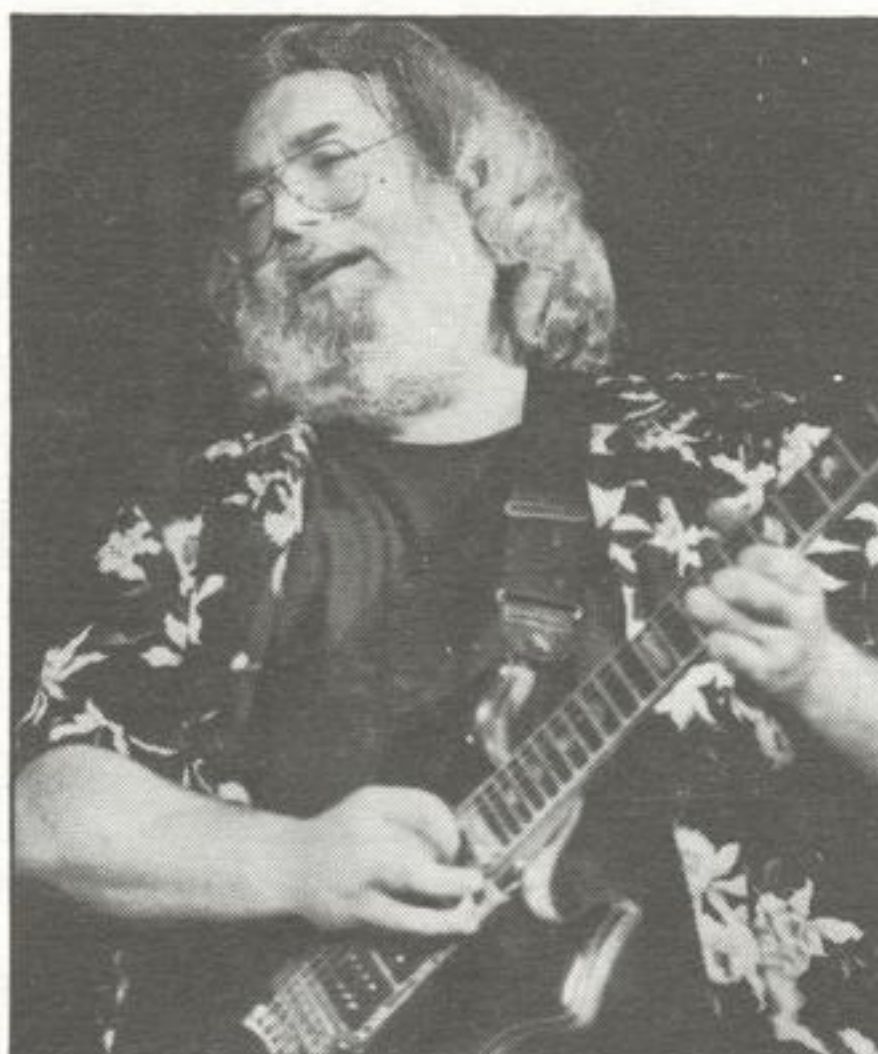
almost immediately, eliminating the jam, much to the chagrin of the many Deadheads in attendance.

Joan's a saint and all the rest of it, but as a longtime benefit-goer in the Bay Area, I can say with some authority she is no stranger to walking onto stages at inappropriate times. Nonetheless, she provided typically angelic backup vocals to the last three songs of the set — "Dark Hollow," "Turtle Dove" (one of the tunes from the fall Garcia acoustic sets) and "Knockin' on Heaven's Door." Garcia and Weir also sang (though they were nowhere near a microphone) on the show's finale, a Baez-led version of "Let It Be."

On January 23 at Kaiser Convention Center in Oakland, Garcia and Weir were part of an all-star line-up that gathered together to raise funds to rebuild four war-ravaged villages in El Salvador. The concert was put together by Carlos Santana, who always seems to be there with his time and energy for worthy causes. The marathon concert (5½ hours!) opened with a set by Bay Area favorites the Caribbean All-Stars, joined by Carlos for a couple of songs. Carlos then stayed onstage for a passionate reading of his recent instrumental tune "Blues for Salvador," with only keyboardist Chester Thompson accompanying him on synthesizer.

Next up was Oakland's Tower of Power for a long set of horn-driven funk. In the middle of their set, Garcia, Weir and soprano saxophone giant Wayne Shorter hit the stage, and that's when the jamming really started. Shorter laid down a couple of incredible solos that had more muscle than the entire TOP horn section combined. Shorter then left and the GD boys took center stage for a brief stint. Fresh from a trip to Hawaii, Garcia and Weir were both tan and decked out in islandwear — Jerry in a floral print black-and-white Hawaiian shirt; Weir in swim trunks (!), sandals, Hawaiian shirt and a palm-frond beachcomber hat (which we hear he wore on a dare). Bobby led the horn-heavy band through a short but inspired "Lovelight"; Jerry followed with a high-energy version of "Goodnight Irene," before they surrendered the stage to TOP again.

After a short break, Bonnie Raitt and her partner Johnny Lee Schell came on and played a few acoustic numbers, the most affecting of which was a heartfelt version of Greg Copeland's "El Salvador." Bonnie then introduced her good friends NRBQ, whose endless set of trash-rock frankly left me cold. (I liked



Jerry goes Hawaiian at "Blues for Salvador" show. Photo: Ron Delany

them better when I saw them in concert a few years ago.) Things picked up when Bonnie returned with her Strat and her slide and rocked through a few tunes fronting NRBQ, including "Me & the Boys" and a driving version of the Stones' "The Last Time" (which would be a great Weir cover, if you ask me). With NRBQ still center stage, Boz Scaggs replaced Raitt and led the band through a few blues numbers. Boz was in excellent voice, as usual, though his slow mini-set seemed to have a slightly soporific effect on much of the crowd.

Within minutes of the end of Boz's final number, mikes were set up all over the stage, equipment was shifted around a final time, and most of the evening's players — Weir and Garcia, Raitt, Santana, the TOP horns and

more came out for a tremendous jam session. The giant group roared through several different jams — Santana would start each by setting up a groove, and then he'd direct the solos to different players, so a long, wailing Garcia solo might be followed by Tower's Greg Addams on muted trumpet, followed by Chester Thompson on keyboards (who was really something all night!), followed by Carlos and then Garcia again.

It was freeform and freewheeling and the playing was red hot. Garcia was in fine shape, truly dominating every jam, I thought. But everyone got in some incredible licks; this was a shared jam in the best sense. The styles ranged from Latin grooves to rock classics like "Johnny B. Goode" (Weir sang the third verse) and a chunky "Shake, Rattle & Roll," to quieter spaces, like the jam that started with Carlos and Thompson playing the adagio from Rodrigo's "Concierto de Arjunez" (better known to some as the base of Miles Davis' *Sketches of Spain*). It was a long, tiring evening, but the high points were amazing indeed — the monster jam the last hour lived up to its promise, in the grand San Francisco tradition. And the best news of all is that \$100,000 was raised by the event. The money will be used for four specific projects, including the construction of a medical clinic and 100 houses for homeless families.

A week later Weir played a brief solo set ("Festival," the ubiquitous "Victim or the Crime," etc.) and also jammed with Carlos Santana, bassist Marcus Miller, guitarist Hiram Bullock and a host of others at a special tribute to the



Jamming at the "Tribute to Jaco Pastorius" benefit are (L-R) Wayne Shorter, Hiram Bullock, Weir and Carlos Santana. Photo: Ron Delany

late, great jazz bassist Jaco Pastorius, held at Oakland's Omni nightclub. With these players, Weir sang versions of "I Shot the Sheriff," "Easy to Slip" and "Fever," among others. That concert raised money for Jaco's children. Weir, you may recall, played a few club dates with Jaco a couple of years ago.

Since the days of the Deadhead newsletter in the early and mid-'70s, direct communications from the band have been few and far between. So it was quite a surprise when tickets sent by mail-order for the spring East Coast tour were accompanied by a spirited open letter from Robert Hunter. Hunter's communiqué addresses some of the issues and problems Deadheads have been facing the past year, and also clarifies the band's position on the vendor scene. The letter is reprinted in full below:

Dear Deadheads,

Here we are sitting on top of the world: big record, open doors and lots of steaming plans. This raises the question of who we are — the answer is: partly us, partly you. Our part is to provide the music and logistics of the Grateful Dead experience; your part is to have one hell of a good time without anyone getting hurt or sore, which is

what this trip is mostly about.

Our current situation demands that we provide our part to growing numbers who are beginning to catch on to what you knew all along.

There is no blanket solution to the problems caused by increasing demand, and there is no turning back. We are now the biggest "draw" in the history of rock and roll. That's not a self-congratulatory statement, rather a bald fact showing the seriousness of our logistical problem. The good old days when we were your personal minstrels have been overshadowed by a new reality which must be addressed. We are not a political, religious nor a grassroots movement; not a counter-culture, drug culture nor the latest big shakes snatch-and-run glamour act. We are a symbiotic fun machine designed to get 10,000 or more heads straight at a pop.

We don't want to be consigned to doing only stadium gigs, but, in order to play smaller venues, our friends must heed our pleas not to attend certain shows without tickets. Otherwise, cities will simply not rent us their facilities and that will be that.

Many doors have been closed to us in the last several months due to the trash-and-boogie behavior of new fans who have no regard for the way the

Dead do things.

Environments as large as those which we are called upon to provide must be controlled or we will be responsible for the ensuing pandemonium.

Some of the changes we are making are for our benefit, others are for yours. Frankly, we don't intend to hand over a big portion of the bread we need to run this operation to organized crime. This is no joke. There are some big-time heavies muscling in. Follow the cigar smoke! Hence we are forced into a tighter structuring of merchandising. What began as a spontaneous vagabond marketplace has devolved into a competitive and obnoxious full-scale illegal rip-off, squeezing out the gypsy Deadheads and offering violence to rival merchandisers. We intend to step on it—hard!

Wherever venues allow it, good people will still be allowed to make road money dealing artifacts—all you gotta do is ask for permission. You keep what you make, or give us a cut if you deal our trademarks. Fair and simple.

Tapers, as you may know by now, are assigned certain sections because they are so touchy. We let you tape for free and love it when you exchange tapes. But if anybody asks for more than the price of the blank tape, they are playing a different game.

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DEADLINE

If you can keep your sense of proportion and understand that we are doing what must be done to ensure our rights and yours, we gratefully invite you to experience this unexpected era of Mega Dead-dom. Take it with the grain of salt it deserves and enjoy watching the ripples as our personal tributary begins mingling with larger currents. It's just as weird for us as it is for you, but, after all, this wasn't meant to be a private party!

Robert Hunter
for Grateful Dead Productions, Inc.

Go Ahead, the occasional band featuring Brent, Billy, Santana singer/guitarist Alex Ligertwood, ex-Santana bassist David Margen and guitarist Jerry Cortez, has continued gigging successfully during the Dead's down-times, building a good-sized following. And for some shows this winter they became a sextet with the addition of Bob Weir.

The fans really got their money's worth at those concerts. The early February show at the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles, for instance, opened with a generous and typically eclectic set by the original fivesome, with Brent and Ligertwood leading things for the most part. After an intermission, Weir came out with acoustic guitar and played a few songs solo ("Throwing Stones" and The Beatles' "Blackbird" among them), then plugged in and led Go Ahead through a set con-

sisting primarily of Bobby & the Midnites tunes. The encore was a medley of "La Bamba" (sung by Cortez) into a Dead-ish "Good Lovin'" that was so exuberant that members of the audience jumped onstage and danced with the band.

Originally, Go Ahead had hoped to do some recording in the fall of '87, but scheduling became impossible and now it's uncertain when the group might finally make it into a studio, what with the Dead's typically hectic touring plans and all. But make no mistake about it — this band enjoys playing, and it seems to provide Brent, Billy and now Weir with a solid, highly entertaining vehicle outside the Dead.

And speaking of solo bands, the Jerry Garcia Band welcomed a special guest for part of their March 5 show at the Warfield Theater in San Francisco. Sitting in on a long, jazzy version of "Don't Let Go" was none other than organist Howard Wales, who made the excellent album *Hooteroll?* with Garcia back in the early '70s. Even though they hadn't played together for years, Garcia and Wales really seemed to click, and the song took many interesting twists and turns, since Wales' style of playing is so different from regular JGB keyboardist Melvin Seals'. It was fascinating to hear Garcia steered into a jazzier idiom.

At the end of January, Garcia flew back to New York to add guitar

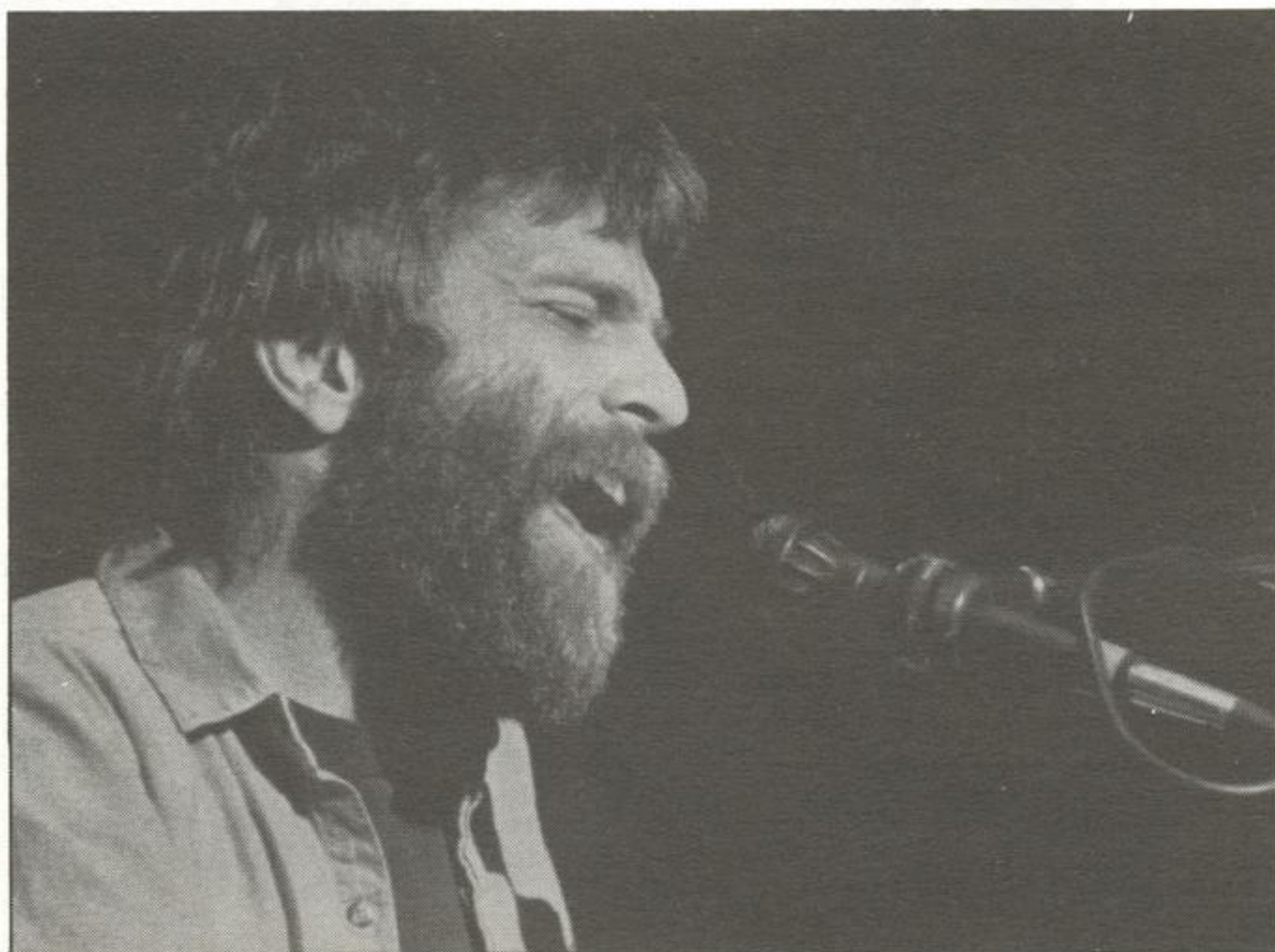
parts to three songs on the next album by free-jazz giant Ornette Coleman. Garcia's been a fan of Ornette's for years (anyone who plays heavily improvisational space music owes a debt to Ornette, John Coltrane and a few other jazz players), and when the Dead played Madison Square Garden last fall, he invited the sax great to come to a show. Ornette came on down, along with his son, Denardo, who is producing the new album.

"Not long after that," Denardo says, picking up the story, "they got together again when Jerry was in town for his Broadway shows. They seemed to get along pretty well and they knew a lot of people in common in California, dating way back. It so happened that the music [Ornette] was working on had a sound to it that was complementary to how Jerry plays, so we came up with the idea of having him play on it."

The album, which should be out in May on the Epic label, is tentatively titled *Virgin Beauty*, and features Ornette's regular band, Prime Time. If you're unfamiliar with this group, we should warn you that it's very dense, complex music, though Denardo claims that this album will be more accessible than some of Ornette's past work. "I would call it pop music," he says, "but at the same time Ornette is doing what he does. We've been working on this record since September and I'm real happy with the way the project has gone."

The sessions took place at Clinton Recording, a top midtown Manhattan studio. According to the studio's maintenance chief, a Deadhead named Phil Vachon, "Jerry played a Steinberger guitar rather than his usual instrument, and basically tried to blend his style and sound with some existing tracks by Prime Time. Like any musician, Jerry took the time to listen to each piece and then get comments and suggestions from Ornette. On one song, Jerry had a little trouble laying in his part, so Ornette described to him a method of hearing, thinking and playing music that seemed to both excite and confuse Jerry a bit. So Ornette pulled out his horn and invited Jerry to play a riff while Ornette played/explained his method. The few people who were in the room were treated to a few minutes of wonderful jam, the sort one would hope they would play onstage together. From there, the session went smoothly, with Denardo getting the performance he wanted on tape."

"They had a real good time," Denardo says. "These are two guys who love music, so they talked a lot of music and



Brent wails at Los Angeles Go Ahead gig. Photo: Eric Sabroff



Jerry with Ornette Coleman at Clinton Recording in Manhattan. Photo: Phil Vachon

even worked things out theoretically."

Check it out. It's bound to be heavy-duty.

Here's the final proof that '87 was truly the Year of the Dead. On March 12 at the SF Civic Auditorium, the group nearly swept the annual Bay Area Music Awards, winning trophies for Best Album, Best Drummer/Percussionist (shared by Mickey and Billy), Best Bassist, Best Guitarist and the prestigious Bay Area Musician of the Year award, given to Garcia. On top of that, Mickey Hart and a huge troupe of dancers and percussionists performed toward the end of the show, and the event closed with an electrifying set by the Dead and Huey Lewis & the News, playing together for the first time!

Actually, the first Dead music of the evening wasn't from the boys, but was instead courtesy of Dick Bright & the Sounds of Delight Orchestra, who have been the house band at all 11 Bammies. Bright's orchestra—which mixes strings and horns with electric rock instruments for a bizarrely hip, rockin' Guy Lombardo feel—has a tradition of opening the show with a mock-serious overture of the most popular Bay Area rock songs from the previous year. This time out, Bright & Co. closed the overture with a great, lush version of "Touch of Grey," which segued briefly into the theme from "The Dating Game" before coming back to "Touch of Grey," by which time all the musicians in the orchestra were wearing skeleton masks! The crowd loved it!

Phil was the first member of the group to receive a Bammie, which he

dedicated to his young son Graham, who he suggested could use the trophy as a bathtub toy. The irreverence continued when Bob Weir (looking dashing in a tuxedo) and John Cutler (wearing his "Think Platinum" T-shirt) picked up the Best Album award. The duo threatened to stay onstage all night in Congress-style filibuster, reading from the phone book for hours on end. Fortunately for everyone, the phone book never materialized from backstage. On Garcia's first trip to the podium, to nab his Bammie for Best Guitarist, he thanked the Deadheads for their support and dedicated the award to them/us. Mickey and Billy

looked thrilled to be honored, and clowned around on the dais like a couple of kids when their time came. The most emotional moment of the evening, though, came when Garcia won the Bay Area Musician of the Year award, presented by his longtime friend and ally Bill Graham. Garcia earned a long, thunderous ovation from the crowd; indeed, he looked both thrilled and embarrassed by the adulation. And his remarks put the whole awards-giving process in perspective: "Most of us who play music for a living consider it an honor and privilege and exceptional good luck." He went on to note, "We'd do it for nothin', man!"

Within moments of Garcia's exit from the stage, the rumble of distant drums began to echo through the hall. Then, from the back of the auditorium, Mickey Hart led a huge group of dancers and percussionists through the sea of tables on the main floor and up onto the stage. All of a sudden the Bammies were transformed into Carnival in Rio! As Mickey bopped around onstage, pounding a huge drum, the other percussionists beat their instruments and shook their rattles and shakers, and a line of women clad in bikini-sized costumes augmented by huge colorful plumes of feathers grooved in a line across the front of the stage. There was a brief change of pace where the music took on a quieter, more jungle-like feeling, and then it was back to the rhythmic assault once more, as a couple of very athletic martial-arts types performed a fast and furious routine to the music. After a while, the musicians departed as they'd arrived—through the crowd, reeling and spinning and chanting and beating their instruments



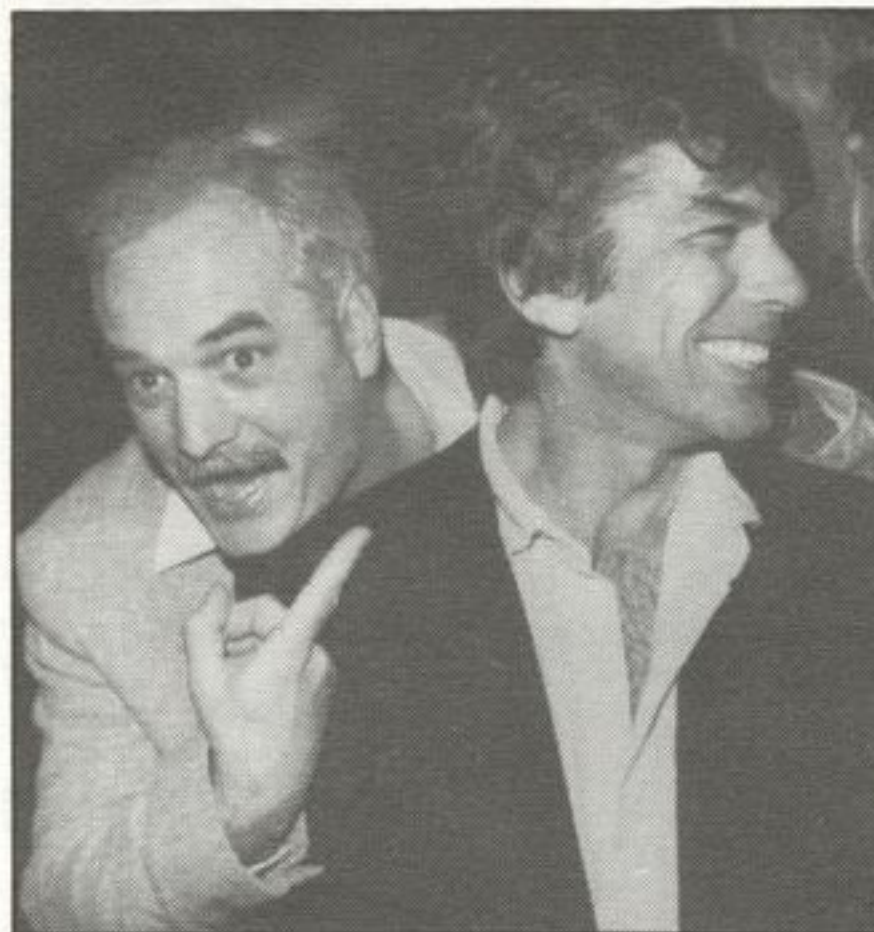
Phil accepts his Best Bassist trophy at the Bammies. Photo: Clayton Call

DEADLINE

all the way.

Mickey & Friends (which also included Michael Shrieve, of Santana and Go fame) had barely made it off the main floor when the show's finale began. It was quite a sight when the curtain opened: all of the Dead and Huey Lewis & the News were spread across the big stage — two bassists, three guitarists, three keyboardists (Merl Saunders helped out, too), three drummers, a sax player and Huey, who played harmonica and sang. "This is for Huey's mom," said Bob Weir before they started playing. Huey had accepted an award earlier in the evening and thanked his mom for taking him to the Fillmore to see the Dead when he was 13.

The first of their three numbers was definitely the highlight of the show for me — a long, rowdy version of "Good Morning Little School Girl," with Huey wailing on vocals and harp. Garcia traded solos with Chris Hayes of the News, and Huey prowled the stage like a jungle cat, blowing mean riffs. The whole thing had a big, thick sound, particularly toward the end of the song's long jam, as the pace accelerated



Mickey and Billy clown backstage at the Bammies after winning their award. Photo: Ron Delany

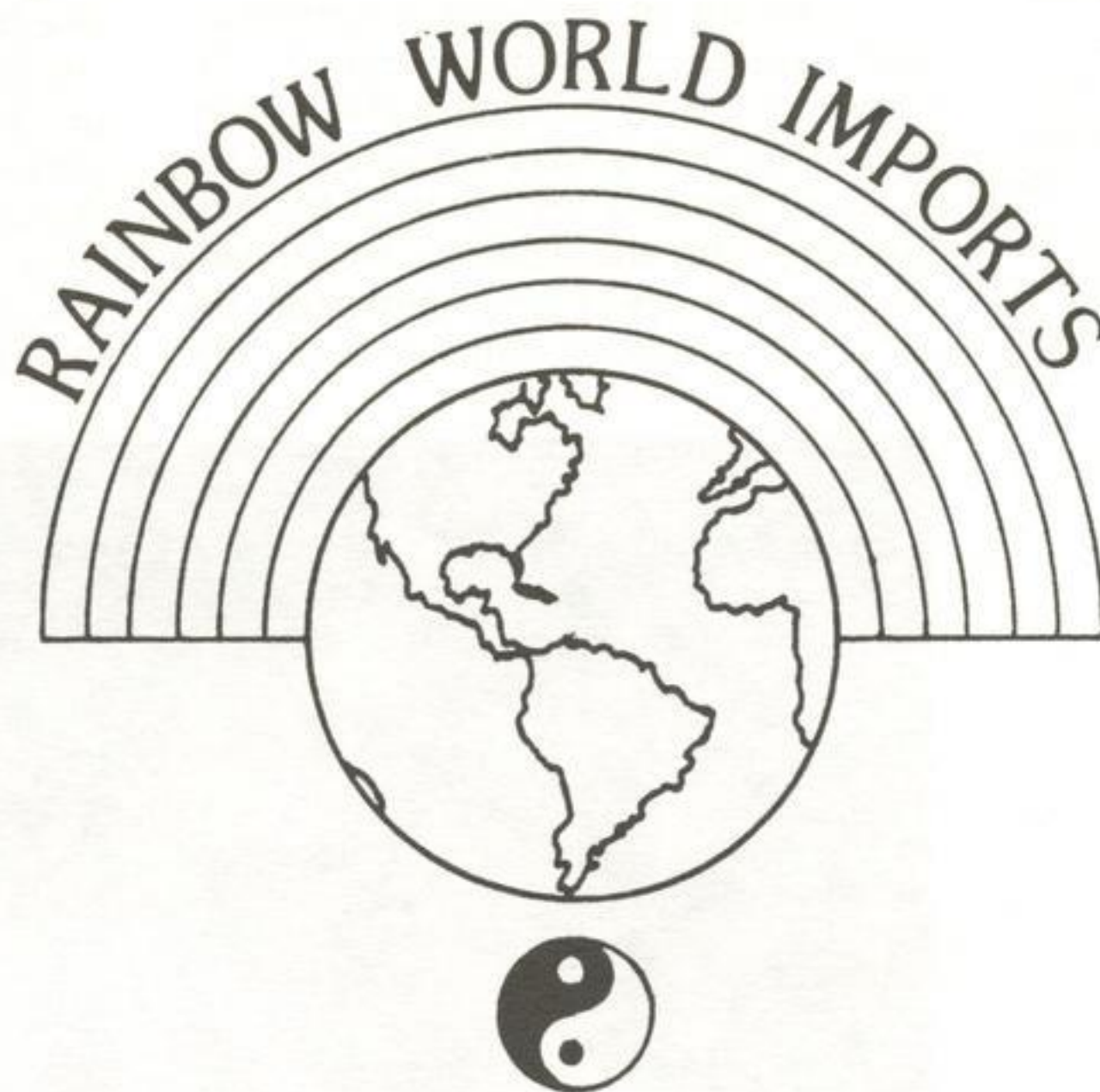
and everyone seemed to be soloing at once. It just built and built and built, sort of like the Dead's old jams on "Viola Lee Blues" (or "Schoolgirl" for that matter). These big jam sessions can be unwieldy, but this one really worked. It got the crowd up and dancing, too — what a great sight seeing folks in formal wear dancing to the Dead! (By the way, even the

Dead's road crew wore tuxedos for the occasion.)

"Lovelight" followed, with Weir singing, and once again a great jam ensued. I was particularly amazed by the comfortable interaction between Huey and Garcia, and on this tune in particular I also noticed Phil having fun playing with News bassist Mario Cipollina (John's brother). For the final song, John Fogerty joined in and shrieked his way through a rippin' "Long Tall Sally," and took a couple of neat solos himself. Fourteen hot players make a fair amount of noise, as you can imagine.

Since the entire affair was on radio, there should be good tapes circulating. And if you've got some room for filler on your Bammies tape, try to get the Santana-Pharaoh Sanders jam from earlier in the second set. It smoked!

At presstime, four Dead records were scheduled to come out on compact disc: *Garcia* and *Ace* (from Grateful Dead Merchandising), *Europe '72* and *Bear's Choice*. □



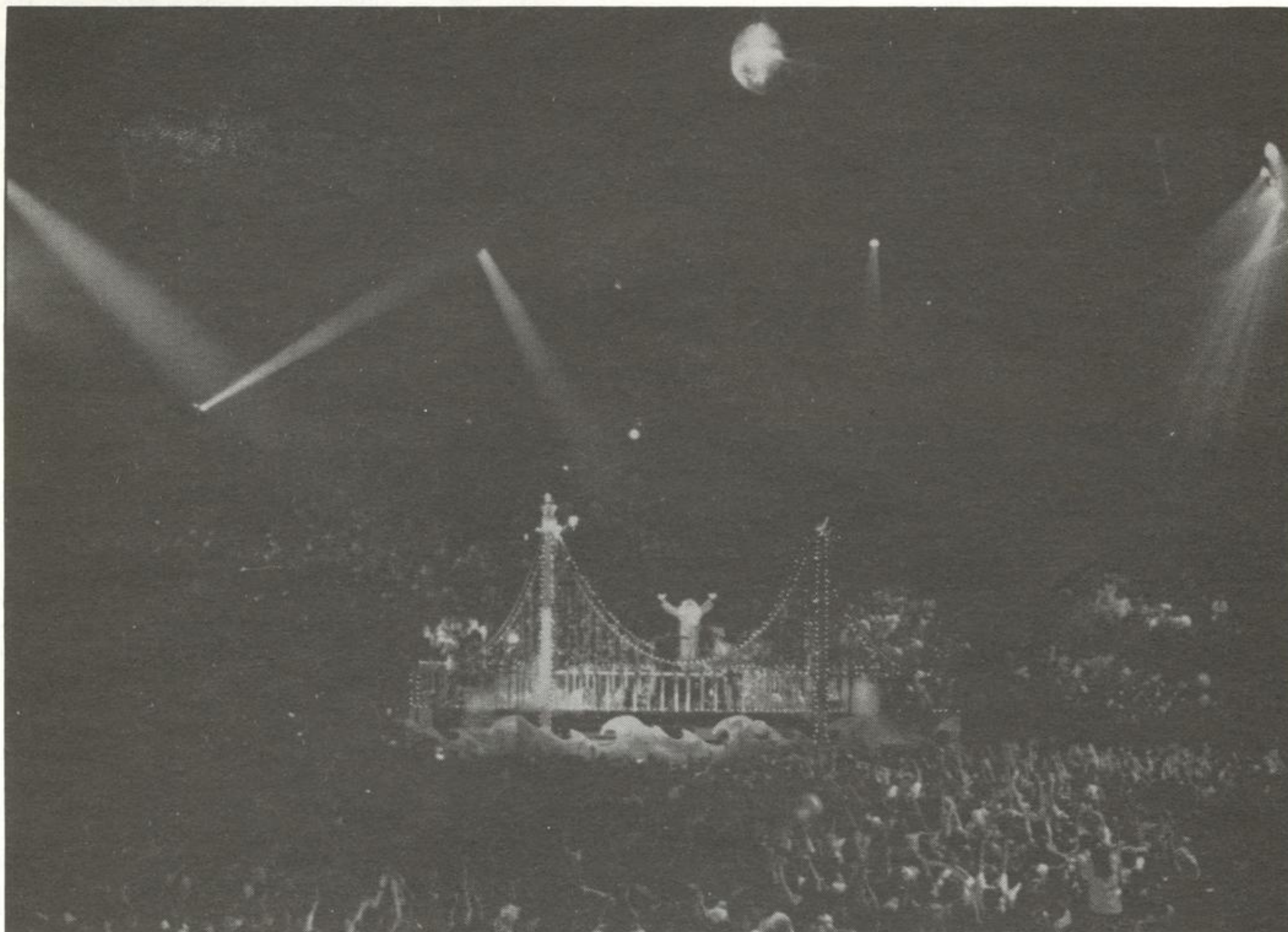
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SET LISTS: NOVEMBER KAISER THROUGH MARCH KAISER



Float of the Golden Gate Bridge rolls across the floor of the Oakland Coliseum just before midnight on New Year's Eve. Photo: Eric Sabroff

NOVEMBER KAISER

It was great to be back at tiny (7,500-seat) Kaiser Convention Center after a summer of giant outdoor shows. Kaiser feels like home to me (and a lot of others, I'm sure); it truly is the Winterland of the '80s. All three shows were lively and interesting, and the second was unquestionably among my favorites of '87. The second set that night featured an amazing transition between "Uncle John's" and "Playin'," one of the better "Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" closers in recent memory, and a "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" encore that was such a mind blower that the crowd kept applauding for a solid 17 minutes after it, eventually forcing the band back for a second encore — a crowd-pleasing "Saturday Night." Nice to see the band respond to a genuine outpouring of enthusiasm.

The first show had a few shaky moments but the band was obviously trying hard to make things happen, and the show did end with a bang — a

"Morning Dew" sung with unbridled passion, and the band's first show-ending "Watchtower," which kicked up a fierce gale in the arena. The highlight of Night Three for me was a long, beautifully developed "Other One," sweet satisfaction after two nights of hinting at the tune, only to have the riff veer off to other directions at the last minute. The encore was the lone surprise of the run — a faster, more assured "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues." From there the band charged into "Touch of Grey," or most of it anyway. Garcia forgot to sing the last verse, the band became disoriented, and the song basically came crashing down around them as if they were the musical Keystone Kops. "Watch us fuck up our big hit, folks!" You gotta love it.

— BJ

11-6-87, Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland, CA

Big Boss Man, Feel Like a Stranger, Must've Been the Roses, New Minglewood Blues, When Push Comes to Shove, Me & My

Uncle ♦ Cumberland Blues, Let It Grow

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Hell in a Bucket, He's Gone ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Morning Dew ♦ All Along the Watchtower/Black Muddy River

11-7-87, Kaiser

Hey Pocky Way, Jack Straw, Row Jimmy, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Dupree's Diamond Blues, Box of Rain, Cassidy, Might As Well

Uncle John's Band ♦ Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Black Peter ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Not Fade Away/NFA ... Knockin' on Heaven's Door/Saturday Night

11-8-87, Kaiser

Iko-Iko, Little Red Rooster, Stagger Lee, Mexicali Blues ♦ Big River, West L.A. Fade-away, The Music Never Stopped, Don't Ease Me In

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Looks Like Rain ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ Truckin' ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Lovelight/Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues ♦ Touch of Grey

LONG BEACH

The growth of the Dead's following in Southern California the past few years has really been quite remarkable. In 1987 the band played to about 180,000 people there, putting the L.A. area up there with Philly and the New York-New Jersey metroplex as one of the top-drawing regions. All ten shows the Dead played there last year were hot ones, too, with this last stint in Long Beach as consistently strong as any series in '87.

Highlights of the first show included the "Bird Song"—"Music Never Stopped" close of the first set, an excellent second-set "Bertha" and a version of "Estimated" that featured an airy, jazzy jam with Brent and Bobby leading the way. The second show was uniformly powerful, with the "Playin'-Terrapin"

combo particularly beefy. But perhaps most notable was the "Lovelight" finish. The band roared through the song with real fire and then, after the ending crescendo, unexpectedly launched into the close once again, *Live Dead*-style, with Bobby screaming and Jerry even singing backups, which he doesn't normally do on the song these days. It was an electric, spontaneous moment. The third show was another good 'un, with standouts including inspired versions of "Scarlet-Fire" (which was spotty in '87), "Morning Dew" and "Watchtower."

— BJ, from tapes and eyewitnesses

11-13-87, Long Beach Arena, CA

Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree, New Minglewood Blues, Friend of the Devil, Far From Me, Bird Song, Music Never Stopped

Bertha ♦ Man Smart Woman Smarter, Ship

of Fools, Estimated Prophet ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Knockin' on Heaven's Door

11-14-87, Long Beach Arena

Shakedown Street, Little Red Rooster, Althea, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Hey Pocky Way, Deal

Maggie's Farm ♦ Cumberland Blues, Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Quinn the Eskimo

11-15-87, Long Beach Arena

Iko-Iko, Walkin' Blues, Candyman, Me & My Uncle ♦ Mexicali Blues, West L.A. Fade-away, Cassidy, Don't Ease Me In

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Fire on the Mountain, Looks Like Rain, He's Gone ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Morning Dew ♦ Around & Around ♦ All Along the Watchtower/Black Muddy River



New Year's Eve. Photo: Ron Delany

NEW YEAR'S

The band closed out its most successful year ever on a definite high note; three of the four Oakland Coliseum shows were positively supercharged. The second set 12/27 featured 60-or-so minutes of some of the most powerful Dead I saw all year. From the set-opening "Playin'," through a chunky "Uncle John's," through "Estimated," "Eyes" (with a nice long jam after the final verse, for a change) all the way up until "Throwing Stones," this band could do no wrong. During the Rhythm Devils and "space" segments, Dan Healy tried out a delightfully hallucinogenic quad sound system that shot the sound to every conceivable part of the hall. (It was also used the other three nights, though not quite as effectively, I felt.) And the "Dear Mr. Fantasy" that crept out of the "space" was monumental. A stupendous show all the way around.

I didn't make the same kind of emotional connection with the band the next night, though there were undeniably great moments, including an energetic "Franklin's Tower" (again, played fat and chunky, instead of spry and sinuous), an outstanding "China Cat" and a "Sugar Magnolia" whose power was mitigated only by the sad realization that once again we probably wouldn't hear it on New Year's.

After a spacier than usual "Hey Pocky Way" opener on the 30th (which has gotten the reputation as being the hot show in a New Year's run) the show took the first of several inexplicable downhill slides. I thought this concert had long stretches where the band seemed to be fumbling and uninspired—perhaps it was the presence of the TV cameras, which were shooting as a rehearsal for the New Year's telecast, or the unfortunate amount of light being

cast on the audience during most of the first set (also because of TV's requirements). Still, the band managed some fine jamming on "Althea" and "Cassidy," and the second half of the second set exploded in places. When a set starts out with the dreaded "Scarlet-nothing," though, it's usually a bad sign, and that was certainly the case here.

The New Year's Eve show, however, was a complete joy from beginning to end. Well, almost the beginning. I didn't care for the opening band, The Looters, a heavily political Bay Area band that plays African and James Brown-inspired funk. Though I'm sure their hearts are in the right place, their angry-young-man posturings seemed out of place on a celebratory night like New Year's, and they received a tepid response from a crowd that was clearly ready to party down.

Though there had been a lot of grouching about the presence of the Neville Brothers on the bill (again?!) I think most would agree that they played very well on the 30th and New Year's. Their sets were shorter than in past appearances with the Dead, and their new material stands head and shoulders above the tame fluff on their *Uptown* album. Saxophonist Charles Neville remains one of rock's coolest dudes.

For their part, the Dead looked completely "on" for the entire show. The "Bertha-Promised Land" opener got things off to a rocking start, and by the end of the first set, when the band tackled "Bird Song" and "The Music Never Stopped," it was clear they had their space chops down as well. Between sets, as the crowd prepared for the midnight hour, guitarist/composer Mason Williams and a small ensemble performed Williams' most famous composition, "Classical Gas," as well as some other music, on an adjacent small stage. And then Ken Kesey prowled the main stage like a crazed preacherman, mock-haranguing the crowd about the evils of demon alcohol and weed in "Shall We Gather at the River."

At a few minutes before midnight, the lights went out and Bill Graham began his grand entrance as Father Time — this year on a huge model of the Golden Gate Bridge. Joining Graham on the float were assorted costumed figures representing San Francisco history and culture, from Sir Francis Drake to Barbary Coast dance hall girls to Joe Montana. Atop one of the bridge's towers sat a skeleton, his hands on a detonator, seemingly ready to blast it all to smithereens. As exploding fireworks lit the hall in bright white light, and a musical collage blared from the quad sound system, Graham rose from the middle of the Bridge on a hydraulic lift



Billy during the Rhythm Devils' part of the show on New Year's. Photo: Ron Delany

bearing the inscription "WE WILL SURVIVE." Then came the countdown to midnight, the traditional dropping of a billion multicolored balloons, and the band kicked into ... "Hell in a Bucket"? I thought it was a pretty strange choice, particularly given the fact the band had played it three nights earlier, but it was played powerfully.

A more pleasant surprise was the "Uncle John's" that followed—when's the last time that was played twice in a run? This version was long and spacey and set the tone for the rest of the show. I felt that a few of the songs—"Terrapin," "The Other One" and especially "Wharf Rat"—were just about as good as those tunes get. And though I could spot the "Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" ten miles away (or, more accurately, four nights earlier) it, too, was great.

The encore was a sort of mini-set featuring the Nevilles and the Dead in a virtual reprise of the excellent Pittsburgh Dead show last July—versions of "Man Smart Woman Smarter," "Iko-Iko," "Day-O" (with "Do You Wanna Dance" attached for good measure and, finally, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door."

All in all it was a supremely satisfying evening, and the video of the event really stands as state-of-the-art Dead; the group at an undeniable peak. I felt that in general the video (which I saw after the fact) was expertly handled, from the sound, which was as close to perfect as I could imagine, to the visuals, which offered such intimate views of the band at work (and play). I confess that I was distracted by some of director Len Dell 'Amico's images—personally, I don't want to see sailboats

during "Bird Song," a literal depiction of "the northwest corner of a brand new crescent moon" or war footage during "Throwing Stones" (especially since it looked nearly identical to the *So Far* images), but these are minor complaints about a job very well done. It did cross my mind at the show that the cable audience got a second set very similar to *So Far*. Wouldn't it have been nice if the band had the presence of mind to deliberately play something different?)But as we all know, that goes against the serendipitous way the group operates.)

—BJ

12-27-87, Oakland Coliseum, Oakland, CA
Touch of Grey, Jack Straw, Peggy-O, Walkin' Blues, Ramble On Rose, Me & My Uncle ♦ Big River, Must've Been the Roses, Desolation Row ♦ Don't Ease Me In

Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Uncle John's Band ♦ Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Quinn the Eskimo

12-28-87, Oakland Coliseum
Feel Like a Stranger ♦ Franklin's Tower, New Minglewood Blues, Row Jimmy, Far From Me, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Sugaree, Hell in a Bucket

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Cumberland Blues, Man Smart Woman Smarter ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Truckin' ♦ jam ♦ Black Peter ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Black Muddy River

12-30-87, Oakland Coliseum
Hey Pocky Way, Big Boss Man, Greatest Story Ever Told, Friend of the Devil, Mama Tried ♦ Mexicali Blues, Althea, Cassidy, West L.A. Fadeaway, Let It Grow

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Samson & Delilah, Ship



"Knockin' on Heaven's Door" at New Year's, with the Nevilles, the Dead and guests Ramblin' Jack Elliott (far left) and David Nelson (next to Jack).
Photo: Eric Sabroff

of Fools, He's Gone ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space
♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦
Morning Dew ♦ All Along the Watchtower/
Baby Blue

12-31-87, Oakland Coliseum (New Year's Eve!)

Bertha ♦ Promised Land, Cold Rain & Snow,
Little Red Rooster, When Push Comes to
Shove, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Bird
Song, Music Never Stopped

Hell in a Bucket ♦ Uncle John's Band ♦ Ter-
rapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other
One ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Not
Fade Away/Man Smart Woman Smarter ♦
Iko-Iko ♦ Day-O ♦ Do You Wanna Dance ♦
Knockin' on Heaven's Door (encore with
the Neville Brothers)

FEBRUARY KAISER

There were rumors the week before these first concerts of the new year that the shows might be canceled because Garcia had a bad case of bronchitis. The trouper he is, though, he decided to go on, even in his obviously weakened condition. While the first show was an up and down affair because the band hadn't rehearsed and Garcia had to hold back some and conserve his energy, there were a surprising number of bright spots when it all coalesced, such as "Loser," "Looks Like Rain," the middle of "The Other One" and "Wharf Rat." If the show was slightly lacking in spark, it still had plenty of spunk — everyone was trying his damndest to make the music work, and that's good enough for me.

By the next evening, the band was nearly back to full speed. After a rough opening to "Touch of Grey," the band found its groove midway through the song and then held onto it for the entire (short) first set. "Feel Like a Stranger" and "Cassidy" both featured some wild jamming, and the "Franklin's" was expertly sung. The second set took off in many places as well — most notably during "I Know You Rider," the deli-

cate "Stella Blue," the jam in "Throwing Stones" and "Lovelight," the perfect closer for Valentine's Day.

For the first two shows, huge red hearts made out of dozens of balloons were suspended from the ceiling around the arena, giving the place a warm, cheery feeling. For Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras, more balloons were added — this time in big, loose circles that looked like giant strings of Mardi Gras beads — as well as clusters of willowy colored cellophane cut in the shape of dancing harlequins. The festivities got off to a great start with a long set by Dr. John and his band, who laid down what amounted to a history of New Orleans R&B, from Professor Longhair ("Tipitina," "Big Chief") to the good Doctor's own best-known tunes, like "Such a Night" and the eerie, voodooized "Walk on Gilded Splinters" (my personal favorite). Dr. John's set was funk at its absolute finest, and the crowd was with him every step of the way. His singing and occasional raps — all in his gravelly creole/black hipster *patois* — were electrifying, and as a New Orleans-style pianist he has few peers. He even stepped away from his keyboards a couple of times for some slinky dance steps, his large frame snaking smoothly under his big black and gold cape.

With the place already funkified and the crowd feeling *desitively bonaroo* (as Dr. John says) the Dead kept the energy high. The first set ranged from a crashing, booming, squealing "West L.A." to a "Bird Song" that flew out to the cosmos and threatened to *stay* there. Once again, Bill Graham's forces put together a big Mardi Gras parade for the opening of the second set. The giant papier-mâché heads of the band members made their annual appearance, painted in wild day-glo colors, and scores of costumed partiers rode through the crowd on floats or followed the joyful procession up onto the

stage, where the Dead held forth with a rockin' "Iko-Iko." (Mickey and members of the Brazilian percussion troupe Batucaje provided a feisty rhythmic assault for the parade before it reached the stage.)

Though the "Playin'" and "Eyes of the World" that followed were smooth as Mardi Gras Indian feathers, the real fireworks came after the Rhythm Devils' ultra-loud and spacey segment. In succession, the band played incredibly charged versions of "The Wheel," "Watchtower" and "Dear Mr. Fantasy," with that last tune completely over the top: I could swear I saw heat sparks flying out of Garcia's guitar on the final solo.

You know how sometimes you go to a show and even though the band is playing well they don't play what you want to hear that night? Well, that was my experience of the final show of this run, Chinese New Year. The boys were in fairly good form all night; I just found the song choices overly safe and predictable. The best moments for me came during Weir's second-set tunes — "Man Smart Women Smarter," "Estimated Prophet" and the "Sugar Magnolia" capper. The unquestionable high point of this night, though, was the traditional entrance of the Dragon during the Rhythm Devils. First the giant beast twisted, danced and undulated through the crowd, the "smoke" of its breath carpeting its circuitous pathway in white. Once onstage, the big Dragon was met by a little two-person dragon (representing the new year — Year of the Dragon), and the two engaged in an electrifying dance/battle as the band spaced noisily behind them. What at first seemed like a fierce struggle for dominance eventually became a great moment of mutual conciliation, then joy, and the two dragons were last seen happily bopping off the stage into the darkened hall as the band rolled towards its own Chinese

New Year finale. Once again, high praise to all the dragon dancers and parade participants. They treat this very seriously — it's a meditation in a sense — and I think that's why the crowd gets off on it as much as it does. This is the *real stuff*!

— B/

2-13-88, Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland, CA

Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree, New Ming-lewood Blues, Friend of the Devil, Mama Tried ♦ Big River, Loser

Iko-Iko ♦ Looks Like Rain, Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ jam (everyone except Jerry) ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Good Lovin' ♦ Saturday Night/Black Muddy River

2-14-88 (Valentine's Day), Kaiser

Touch of Grey, Feel Like a Stranger ♦ Franklin's Tower, Walkin' Blues, When Push Comes to Shove, Cassidy

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Samson & Delilah, Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Quinn the Eskimo

2-16-88 (Mardi Gras), Kaiser

Jack Straw, West L. A. Fadeaway, Me & My Uncle ♦ Mexicali Blues, Row Jimmy, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Bird Song

Percussion intro by Mickey and Batucaje ♦

Iko-Iko, Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ All Along the Watchtower ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Not Fade Away/U.S. Blues

2-17-88 (Chinese New Year), Kaiser

Hey Pocky Way, Desolation Row, Tennessee Jed, Little Red Rooster, Cumberland Blues, All Over Now, Box of Rain, Don't Ease Me In

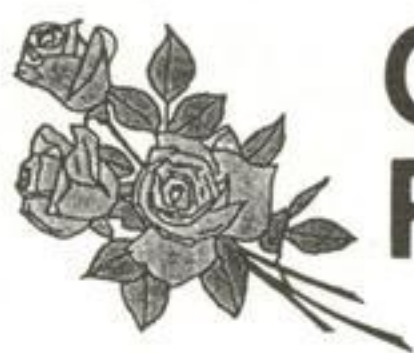
Bertha ♦ Man Smart Woman Smarter, Ship of Fools, Estimated Prophet ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils (Dragon entrance) ♦ space ♦ Truckin' ♦ Black Peter ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Brokedown Palace

MARCH KAISER

OK, so you've been reading the reviews of the shows and checking out the set lists, maybe taking mental notes about which ones you want to score tapes of. Well, perhaps your hunt should begin with 3-16-88, which was one of the spacier concerts I've seen the past couple of years. This was the sort of show I fantasize about—a handful of my favorite songs played with nearly as much verve as the band can muster. Although the "Scarlet" and several other tunes had that first-night rawness that falls somewhere between dangerously exciting and out-and-out sloppy, the "Fire on the Mountain" was monumental, and the jam between the two was playfully circuitous, more like a

late-'70s version than a late-'80s one. The "Playin'" jam, too, left me slack-jawed, as Garcia led the band through a dazzling series of crescendos and exploratory passages, again rather different from the way the band has played it recently. All of the post-drums had the same kind of rough-hewn edge. For brevity's sake, I'll mention only the "Morning Dew," undertaken with the sort of authority you want from a "Dew" — at its best, that song has so much going on in it that it feels like a ballad *and* a scorching rocker at once, a nifty feat to pull off. From the excellent first set, special note should be made of "Queen Jane Approximately," played much faster and more confidently than it was on the East Coast last fall. I've occasionally been accused of being too enthusiastic in print about shows that are only "good" (a fair bust, I suppose — fun tends to kill the critic in me), but in this case, the above ranting actually undersells my opinion of the show. I don't know — maybe you had to be there. Judge for yourself.

That first show was a tough act to follow, to say the least, but I thought the band gave it their best shot the next night, too. With much of the crowd (as well as Bill Graham's staff) decked out in green to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the festivities began with a surprise set



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by a local Irish band, Train to Sligo, who played an hour or so of folk tunes and spry reels. These players were jammin'! The Dead's first set was a little ragged, but it hit several peaks, most notably when they roared through "Stuck Inside of Mobile (with the Memphis Blues Again)" for the first time without Dylan. I know that was many people's favorite from the Dead-Dylan shows, and Weir & Co. pulled it off nicely. No doubt it will get even tighter with repeated playings.

I felt the entire second set was powerful and well played, particularly from the Rhythm Devils on. Following another delicious "Eyes," the guitarists and Brent left, and Egyptian musician Hamza El-Din (who's played with the Dead periodically for more than a decade) joined Mickey and Billy at the front of the stage for a warm, marvelously understated jam (with Mickey and Hamza each playing a tar, and Billy a little hand drum). Hamza sang a few verses in what I presume was Egyptian and eventually the crowd began clapping rhythmically with the players. It was really quite magical all the way around.

What seemed like an "Other One" space veered into a very brief but hot "Goin' Down the Road," followed by a slam-bang "I Need a Miracle." Garcia and Brent completely wailed on the "Dear Mr. Fantasy" that came next, but the real shocker came toward the end of that tune, as Brent led the band into the coda of "Hey Jude" for the first time since Red Rocks in '85! And whereas the Colorado version was primarily a brief vocal refrain, this one had incredible instrumental punch with Garcia coaxing screams from his guitar with brute force. The band wisely ended the set on that very high note.

There were no surprises the third night, but I'd argue it was as excitingly played as the first two. In the post-drums segment, both "The Other One" and "Not Fade Away" featured long, imaginative jams, and the first set's "Bird Song" was, once again, a stand-out. In all, it's remarkable that in three shows there were virtually no flat spots at all. But neither was there any new material. Though several new songs had been written, the group resorted to its old lazy ways and didn't bother showing up for its own rehearsals to learn them before these shows. So what else is new?

—BJ

3-16-88, Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland, CA

Alabama Getaway ♦ Greatest Story Ever Told, Stagger Lee, Walkin' Blues, Candyman, Queen Jane Approximately, Big Boss Man, Cassidy, Don't Ease Me In

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Fire on the Mountain,

Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ All Along the Watchtower ♦ Morning Dew/Touch of Grey

3-17-88, Kaiser

Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree, New Minglewood Blues, Ramble On Rose, Stuck Inside of Mobile, Row Jimmy, Let It Grow

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils (with Hamza El-Din) ♦ space ♦ Goin' Down the Road ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Hey Jude coda/Black Muddy River

3-18-88, Kaiser

Iko-Iko, Little Red Rooster, Brown-Eyed Women, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Bird Song, Music Never Stopped

When Push Comes to Shove, Man Smart Woman Smarter, Ship of Fools, Uncle John's Band ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Not Fade Away/Brokedown Palace

LATE-BREAKING TOUR NEWS

Our publishing deadlines prevent us from offering full reports from the spring East Coast tour, but we thought you'd like to know a few interesting highlights from the shows up through Hartford. Look for more in-depth write-ups from our correspondents on the road, as well as complete lists, in the summer issue.

The first night at Hampton (3/26), the band toyed with the reggae classic "Stir It Up" during the first set. They sang the chorus, part of the first verse (with Weir on lead vocals), and then the chorus again, before aborting....For the first set the next night, the band

introduced the premiere post-Dylan version of "Ballad of a Thin Man," with Weir on lead again. (Where are Garcia's new Dylan tunes? Where's "Frankie Lee & Judas Priest"?) Later in that set Garcia played "To Lay Me Down" for the first time since 10-17-83 (Lake Placid). "Cumberland ♦ Me & My Uncle" was another nice combination from that very hot set. The second set opened with a couple of minutes of "space" noodling (including what some astute observers picked out as a few bars of Miles Davis' "So What," from *Kind of Blue*) followed by "Sugar Magnolia" and "Scarlet Fire," a three-some they played in Hampton last year, too....Want a hot tape tip? Check out set two of the 3-28 Hampton show. The set list is dullsville but the playing is scorching, especially the jam after "Truckin'" and "The Other One." Ya never know....The "Hey Jude" coda got another workout after "Dear Mr. Fantasy" at the second Brendan Byrne show (3-31)....The third Brendan Byrne show had a great opening trio: "Half-step ♦ Jack Straw ♦ To Lay Me Down," followed by the second "Ballad of a Thin Man"....At Hartford 4-3, the second set opened with "Playin' ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ Franklin's," an interesting grouping unfortunately marred by Garcia's voice, which was completely shot....The 4-4 Hartford show opened with a first—"Alabama ♦ Johnny B. Goode"—and ended with one as well: "Good Lovin' ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Hey Jude coda"....And the final night at Hartford (4-5) Brent led the band through a slow, funky "Louie Louie" following "Iko" at the beginning of the second set. □



Mickey looks to the crowd for inspiration. Photo: Eric Sabroff



THE GOLDEN ROAD POLL

◆ PART TWO ◆

YOUR MESSAGES TO THE BAND

Those of you who filled out our poll last year will recall that we provided a few lines of space for you to write a message to the band. What follows is a sampling of those messages. I must say, sifting through the more than 1,300 ballots (after John Scott had tabulated the other data for last issue's report on the poll) was a very emotional process for me. The outpouring of love, affection and good vibes for the band was deeply moving. Not surprisingly, the messages were overwhelmingly positive. Many featured just a pithy line or two—common ones included "Thank you for a real good time," "I love you more than words can tell," "Keep on growing," "Live long and prosper" (Mr. Spock's salutation, of course), things of that nature. Others were long, eloquent testimonials about the impact the band has had on individuals and the world. Because the poll came out a few months after Garcia's return to performing, many messages were directed specifically at him, from general comments like "Please take care of yourself, Jerry!" and "Stay away from hard drugs!" to specific diet and health ideas (yoga, jogging, etc.).

While nearly every message had at least some sort of upbeat remark, I'd say more than half also made critical comments and/or suggestions. Nearly a third complained that the band's sets have become too regimented and predictable. Within that group, there were dozens who specifically mentioned the staleness of the post-drums segment of the show ("Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" came under heavy fire), and many complained that the band should branch out more with the encores. "Why does it have to be the same four or five songs all the time? Try anything!" one person wrote. Many, many messages had that sort of challenging but still respectful tone. "Surprise us!" was a very common message. Other messages that popped up frequently were "More SPACE!", "How about some solos, Phil?" and "Let Brent sing more!"

Most striking to me, though, were the impassioned pleas from all over the country (and Europe and Asia, too) for the band to try to tour more expansively instead of always playing shows in the same Eastern and Western cities. Those of us who do see a lot of shows and who can travel to see the band from time to time sometimes forget that there are thousands and thousands of Heads who never get to see the band because circumstances in their lives (money, jobs, family, etc.) prevent them from traveling to shows, and the Dead never come around to their part of the world. Our heart goes out to those fans, who manage to keep the faith and hold onto that Deadhead spirit long distance. And who knows,

maybe someday that band beyond description will come high-steppin' into a town near you!

What follows is a smattering of the messages, which should give you some sense of the range of comments. The ellipses (. . .) separate one person's message from another's. Needless to say, these do not necessarily reflect our own opinions. *Our* message to the band is this magazine.

If it's fun, keep doing it! . . . Grateful Dead is the understanding of "Lots of us and not much me" . . . I want to see Phil sing "New York New York" the next time the Dead are at Madison Square Garden . . . Don't stop playing, at least until our unborn children have a chance to see 50 shows! . . . Try *closing* a show with "China Cat-Rider" sometime . . . I really hope I don't piss you off when I yell so loud everyone in the county can hear me. But goddammit I just ain't ready to stop partyin' with y'all! . . . The diabolical experiment in which the band is effectively isolating the Pacific Northwest from personal appearances is beginning to show the predicted results: scores of otherwise contented loyal followers are beginning to join the ranks of the "un-Dead." There is only one way to stop this—a string of concerts in Oregon (Hult center, of course)! We must stop the madness! We must make everyone cry "Iko!!" . . . Stay tight but loosen up and explore more of the band (Phil, Mickey, Billy, Brent) in the construction of new songs . . . Remember the lyrics! Pull more skeletons out of the closet! Don't play where cops are assholes! Go out into the DEEP UNREAL! Fer chris-sakes, JAM LONGER! But most of all, remember we all love you, no matter what we might say about you after a shitty second set . . . Can my dog sing backups on your next record? . . . Please don't cater to the crowd. It's become too rah-rah. People applaud every lick and don't get into the shows. Just displease 'em for a couple of years, thin the ranks, and we'll all have more fun . . . "Grateful Dead" spells "love" in every language . . . Heeeeere commmmmmes suunnn-shine! . . . I'm getting married around the time you'll be in Worcester. Please come to the wedding and play a few tunes . . . Please come back to Europe. Waiting for six years has been so hard. Don't forget us . . . As a student of geophysical sciences at a major academic institution, I feel the need to constantly be classifying and categorizing to increase my internal/external harmony. As such, I have placed what the Grateful Dead does under "metamorphic rock." Is that all right with you? . . . Thanks for moving the tapers off the floor . . . Oh happiness! The Dead family and Heads have

created a sacred space where our spirits dance together, while our feet dance to blisters! . . . Thanks for the inspiration and for giving me a fairly legal hobby . . . Thank you for all you've done to inspire my own musical style. Play for as long as you want or need to . . . You guys throw the best parties! . . . Eat shit and die! (Oops, sorry. My brother's suggestion) . . . Let's start planning for New Year's 1999 . . . Do you sometimes wish you were in the audience with us? I hope you get off at shows like I (we) do . . . Thanks. You keep us going. And there's no rush, so don't tire yourselves out with endless tours. I'd rather see fewer shows for a longer time . . . Next stop, Moscow! The barriers have to come down for world peace to be more than just visualized . . . I really dig y'all and all that, but will you PLEASE QUIT FUCKING AROUND?!? There's "barely time to wait," so would you please play a "Dark Star," "St. Stephen" or "Cosmic Charlie"? With so little effort you could make so many people so much happier . . . I can't imagine what my life would be like if I'd missed The Bus . . . Please play New Hampshire again—I've never slept in my own bed after a show . . . Let Mickey sing! . . . Greatness stands alone. Leave Dylan at home . . . Keep on being a band that most folks in the world can't figure out. Stay a mystery. Do an entire concert of songs no one has ever heard before . . . If variety is the spice of life, you must cook Mexican. Keep up the salsa . . . Through all my life's ups and downs with religion, drugs, jobs, women and friends, the only thing that has never let me down, always been around and always come to town, is the Grateful Dead . . . Love you a lot but would love to see y'all get back to more spacey, jazzy, extended improv in the second set . . . Life hasn't been quite the same for me since Bobby cut his ponytail. Let's try it again! . . . Why not do a set "backwards" some time: "Sugar Mag" ♦ "Wharf Rat" ♦ "Not Fade Away" ♦ Rhythm Devils ♦ "Eyes of the World" ♦ "Estimated Prophet" ♦ etc. Shuffle things up a bit! . . . If you're ever in Cape Cod, Mass., drop by for lunch or something . . . Four letters, Phil: S-O-L-O! . . . Now that more of us are doing fewer drugs, we need to either make the shows weirder and stranger (more exotic and different), or we need smaller shows with more participatory activities. Further Dead faster . . . Billy, you've beaten your way into my heart and now I can't get you out. But that's not a complaint . . . We do care about records, particularly carefully made ones. Audiophile-quality Grateful Dead records would be fabulous . . . If you play Curtis Mayfield's "Freddie's Dead" at Alpine Valley, I'll inhale a large vegetarian pizza . . . We're a softball team called the Ozone Pirates who use your skull motif in our logo. We live in Turlock, California, your favorite city. How about coming out for a game . . . More Kesey! More Thunder Machine! . . . How about a frequent-flier program? . . . Thank you for making my day job bearable . . . It can rain, snow, sleet or flood, but you can bet that the Dead can bring in the sunshine . . . It's been a pleasure growing up and growing old with you . . . Let Phil SPACE! . . . Please, never wear spandex suits on stage . . . Please try to start sending Deadhead newsletters again, like the old days. Even one a year would be great . . . It's so obvious—HAWAII!!! . . . Please do the watusi . . . As you have cultivated an extremely open-minded audience, challenge that audience (and yourselves) by subverting predetermined structure at all points. In the words of the sage, "Fuck the format—GO OUTSIDE!!" . . . Please take care of yourselves. NO hard stuff, but occasional sacramental drugs, with appropriate mind set, would probably be GOOD . . . Pigpen came to me in a vision the other night and told me to get 1000 hours of Dead on tape by the fall tour or I'm dead puppy meat. Please send me tapes so I can avoid this horrid fate. Maxell UD-II's only, soundboards from your vault preferred . . . Keep progressing but don't be afraid to go back and dust off some of the old gems many of us never had the chance to see you play . . . 1. Thanks for all that's



been. 2. I can't wait for what's next . . . Billy, thanks for that smile back at Duke in '82; Bobby, may your hair grow longer and your shorts shorter . . . Vladimir Horowitz still tours in his 70s. Let those bones creak and keep jamming! . . . Here's a suggestion for a new format: ANY SONG, ANYTIME! The predictability of where in a show a particular song will surface lessens a factor that could increase the "high" between band and audience—namely surprise. Imagine a show where any tune could crop up anytime. We're up for it. Are you? . . . Keep on playing—your music is one of the few truly precious things the human race has produced in this century . . . Jerry, please wear a tie-dye sometime . . . Thank you for providing a vehicle for so much joy, love, laughter, insights, friendship and warmth. For the musical ecstasy as well as the depths that were less than pleasant. So simple, yet so complex . . . I'd like to suggest an alternative to the current taping scene: Broadcast every show on a limited-range FM signal within the concert hall and announce the broadcast frequency to those inside. This will eliminate the need for microphones and maybe even the segregated tapers' section . . . Go for it. Space is the place. The rest is just passing the time hoping to get there . . . AND LEAVE IT ON!! . . . There are few places I'd rather be than deep in the heart of the second set, sweaty, exhausted, oblivious, yet acutely aware, laughing, crying, ecstatic—thanks . . . Thank for trusting us with the taping . . . The words to your songs float like clouds, in various configurations, suggesting infinite possible meanings. Below, the music flows like waves and the wind . . . In a world full of confusion, aggression, violence and self-centeredness, you serve as a clear message and influence that we matter, we will survive, that giving love will open the way to peace, and that each of us has our own unique gifts and corresponding contributions to the world. Oh, just for the record, I proposed to my wife on the third night of the three rainy Red Rocks shows in 1982 . . . When asked "What is the worst disadvantage to living in Alaska?" my answer isn't that it's frequently 40 below in winter or that there are hordes of mosquitoes in the summer. It's that I can't see the Dead without plane reservations. Please, please, please play Alaska again! . . . Phil, grow back your beard! And the rest of you guys—get your hands up and turn around real slow-like, 'cause we gotcha covered! . . . You have committed your lives to finding out what you want, working at it, excelling at it, and inspiring and overjoying people by doing it. My life will be spent that way, too. No

matter what I do, I wish to do it as well and with as much spirit as the Grateful Dead. You modern-day minstrels are a modern parable . . . Grateful Dead tickets are better than money . . . I would like to see a CD tribute to Pigpen with some of his best unreleased performances . . . Please play "The Golden Road ♦ The Eleven," and get me a real good job with long vacations so I can tour after I graduate and not starve. Then you might try walking on water . . . Maybe a little international touring would be a good idea. It could do us and the world some good to provide a glimpse of that "other" America that we know exists, but that others may not have a clue about. It's a spirit that's not bound by imaginary, obsolete borders, so why not? . . . Throw an over-30 concert so we can enjoy a night with all our old friends . . . I'm sorry I asked you to play "St. Stephen" when I bumped into you at the hotel in Saratoga in '85 . . . Don't pay attention to any of this "Poll" shit, because it's just bullshit. Just keep on playing what you want to play . . . Mekka Lekka Hi, Mekka Hinee Ho! . . . Thank you for being such gracious channels and providing the atmosphere for many a shamanic journey . . . JUST KEEP FUCKIN' WITH MY HEAD!!! . . . How about more verbalization on the whole trip, like the Joseph Campbell symposium? . . . What can I say to a band that is a way of life, a way of being, a philosophy of life, an ideal, an ideology, a "religion," a fundamental archetype, a consciousness-raising experience, a cosmic correction, a vacation, a new awareness, a thought, a feeling, a will, a way, a "band beyond description"? Thanks for being who you are! . . . I can't begin to count the good times the Grateful Dead have given me (and I probably only remember half of them!). I love to dance to the colors you play! . . . What will it take to get you guys to send someone into the vault, pull out maybe the 100 best shows you can find, and release them on CD? You'll make oodles of money and we'll all be in heaven. In fact, may I volunteer my services to help pick 'em? . . . Stadiums are for other bands, not the Dead. You don't need the bucks that bad . . . Thank you, Mickey Hart and Billy Kreutzmann for opening my ears to worlds of music I never imagined existed. Keep the weirdness coming! . . . The time has come for a Grateful Dead cruise — maybe a week island hopping in the Carribean. Trip around a different island every couple of days, shows on the boat every night or two. We could redefine "The Love Boat" . . . If parents paid an extra dollar or two toward special tickets, maybe we could sponsor a day- (or night-) care area at every show so those of us with kids could go to every show in a series without having to always find a sitter. My husband and I would go to more concerts if we could . . . LET PARISH SING! (And then I can sneak behind Jerry's amp!) . . . I'd love to see T.C. up there onstage sometime sharing the keys with Brent. And while we're at it, how about inviting Donna back for a few tunes sometime . . . I resisted the Grateful Dead for years because my sister played nothing else. A year ago I finally went to a show (reluctantly) and immediately "got it"! Now I wish I'd listened to my sister all those years. I would've seen some great shows. Better late than never, though, huh? . . . Jerry: "Mason's Children" sounds fine to everyone I talk to. It could be just the tune to wipe out "Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" and "Around & Around" in our lifetime! . . . Please don't lose that old spontaneity in the quest for consistency . . . To me, the best music of the Grateful Dead ranks as one of the greatest achievements of human life on this planet. It has taken DNA millions of years to evolve to the point where it could unleash the awesome magnificence of Grateful Dead space music onto the quivering masses of protoplasm that we call audiences . . . Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank, THANK YOU, thank you, thank you, thanks, thank you, gracias, thank you, thank you, thank you, sure appreciate it, thank you, thank you, yowee, thank you, thank you, keep it up, thank you, THANK YOU! I love you. Peace. □

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A Final Look Back at '87

A Compendium of Ideas Guaranteed to Offend Almost Everyone

MY 20 FAVORITE SHOWS OF '87

Not "the best" necessarily; just my favorites. I attended 33 shows in '87, only eight of which appear below. The rest I heard on tape. They are listed in chronological order.

1. 3/24 Hampton
2. 3/29 The Spectrum
3. 4/4 Worcester
4. 4/19 Irvine
5. 6/13 Ventura
6. 6/19 Greek
7. 6/21 Greek
8. 6/26 Alpine
9. 7/6 Pittsburgh
10. 7/8 Roanoke
11. 7/12 Giants Stadium
12. 7/24 Oakland Stadium
13. 7/26 Anaheim Stadium
14. 8/20 Park West
15. 8/23 Angel's Camp
16. 9/18 Madison Square Garden
17. 9/23 The Spectrum
18. 11/7 Kaiser
19. 12/27 Oakland
20. 12/31 Oakland

Best New Venues: Town Park, Telluride, Colorado; Roanoke (Virginia) Civic Center; Laguna Seca Raceway, Monterey, California.

Best New Cover Tunes: "All Along the Watchtower," "Hey Pocky Way," "Knockin' on Heaven's Door"

Most Improved Tunes: "Ship of Fools," "Black Peter"

Special Merit Award: "Bird Song" and "The Other One" are great in any year, but I really felt like the band took the time to explore some new directions with both of these tunes in '87.

Seriously Underplayed in '87: "Comes a Time," "Shakedown Street," "Big Railroad Blues," "Playin' Reprise"

Surprisingly Rare in '87: "U.S. Blues," "Might As Well," "Around & Around"

Surprisingly Common in '87: "Dear Mr. Fantasy," "Morning Dew." "The Dew" was played more (16 times) than any year since 1970, but the versions seemed more erratic than in the past. Whereas the song used to crop up only



Grateful sunsplash at Laguna Seca, May '87. A nice place to hear music. Photo: Ron Delany

in shows that were already great, in '87 "Morning Dew" occasionally felt to me like it was thrown in to salvage a so-so show. Not that I'm complainin'...

Most Personally Nostalgic Musical Moment: The first strains of pedal steel on "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight" at the Oakland Stadium show with Dylan. It had been 17 years since I'd seen Garcia play steel.

Strangest Place I Heard "Touch of Grey" on the Radio: A dilapidated produce market in Oakland run by a family of turban-wearing Sikhs. It did not get them dancing, I'm afraid.

The Last Person I Expected to Buy *In the Dark*: My mother. And she kind of liked it.

The Outer Limits Award: To Mickey and Billy and their technical support crew for making the Rhythm Devils portion of the show consistently exciting, unpredictable and strange. At a time when the rest of the band seems to be getting slightly more conservative, Hart and Kreutzmann are getting farther out, and in the process redefining the role of percussion in the band. (Still, I miss the ol' baliaphone.)

Give the Guy a Break, Please: Bob Dylan. OK, the shows weren't what anyone expected them to be. (Remember the rumors that said the shows would feature Dylan playing on Dead tunes, acoustic numbers with Garcia and Dy-

lan, Dylan solo acoustic and all sorts of weird cover tunes, from "Nowhere Man" to "Boy in the Bubble"?) And yeah, he doesn't really sing so much as shout these days. Sure, now that you mention it, he *did* step all over the music, cutting off solos at inappropriate times. But at its best, the Dylan-Dead collaboration was dynamite, and showed off each's strengths in a new light. Some of the arrangements were the best Dylan has ever played live ("Stuck Inside of Mobile," "All Along the Watchtower," "Frankie Lee & Judas Priest," to name a few), and it was great seeing the Dead really put their hearts into it 100 percent (even if Dylan only seemed to be giving about 75 himself). With a few more shows and perhaps multiple concerts in the same city or two, the relationship could have really turned into something. Here's to a future Dylan-Dead collaboration!

So Glad I Made It: Telluride. The shows were only fair, but what a trip!

So Sorry I Missed It: "Good Lovin'" into "La Bamba." It was played four times on the East Coast last fall and never again. Was it something we said?

Worst Show of '87: The first show of the year, January 28, SF Civic. Probably qualifies as one of the worst shows of the '80s.

Worst Musical Moment of '87: The "El Paso" the following night, January 29.

Words cannot convey the horror of it. You had to be there (and I'm sorry I was).

Most Surprising Song Appearance of '87: "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" at Angel's Camp, California (with Carlos Santana as guest guitarist).

Trendiest Backstage Guest: *Miami Vice* star Don Johnson, at Giants' Stadium.

Best Story from the '87 Media Blitz: Mikal Gilmore's cover story in *Rolling Stone*. Yes, it dwelled on the band's drug problems, but it also put an end to a lot of rumors and speculation about some of those issues, and it was overwhelmingly upbeat and positive.

Worst Story from the '87 Media Blitz: Hank Harrison's abominable cover story in the January '87 *High Times*. The article was littered with inaccuracies, the best of which was definitely his lone reference to keyboardist "Bret Maitland." But if you'd read Harrison's books on the Dead you knew what to expect...

Scariest Trend of '87: The Dead donning costumes for MTV videos.

Six Tunes in Need of New Spark: "My Brother Esau," "When Push Comes to Shove," "Quinn the Eskimo," "Greatest Story Ever Told," "Tons of Steel," "When I Paint My Masterpiece"

BJ'S '87 DREAM SHOW

Again, these are some favorites, not necessarily "the best" in each case. For instance, my gut feeling is that the Angel's Camp "Scarlet-Fire" was the best of the year, but there's something

about the Roanoke version—the swelling of the crowd, the booming percussion accents, Garcia's phrasing on the third verse, the way the echo on the chorus of "Fire" reminds me of the '84 Hampton "Fire"—that hits me the strongest emotionally. I've kept song pairs together and tried to keep the number of songs in each set within the realm of the possible. (OK, it's a little optimistic.)

Set One:

Shakedown Street (Pittsburgh, 7/6), Jack Straw ♦ Franklin's Tower (Spectrum, 3/31), When I Paint My Masterpiece (The Garden, 9/18), High Time (Red Rocks, 8/11), Hey Pocky Way (Long Beach, 11/14), Cassidy (Alpine, 6/26), Bird Song (New Year's Eve), Feel Like a Stranger (Kaiser, 3/2), China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider (Park West, 8/20)

Set Two, with Dylan:

Tangled Up in Blue (Philly), Slow Train Coming (Giants Stadium), I'll Be Your Baby Tonight (Philly), Stuck Inside of Mobile (Eugene), Frankie Lee & Judas Priest (Eugene), It's All Over Now, Baby Blue (Oakland), I Want You (Oakland), Chimes of Freedom (Giants), John Brown (Giants), The Wicked Messenger (Giants), Highway 61 Revisited (Giants), Knockin' on Heaven's Door (Oakland)

Set Three:

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Fire on the Mountain (Roanoke, 7/8), Maggie's Farm ♦ Cumberland Blues (Shoreline 10/3), Playin' in the Band (Greek, 6/22) ♦ Terrapin (Hampton, 3/24) ♦ rhythm devils & space ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy (all from Oakland, 12/27) ♦ The Other One (Oakland, 12/31) ♦ Goin' Down the Road

(Greek, 6/19) ♦ All Along the Watchtower (Park West, 8/20) ♦ Morning Dew (The Garden, 9/18)

Encore:

Uncle John's Band (Oakland, 12/27) ♦ Good Lovin'/La Bamba (Providence, 9/7)

FIVE WISHES FOR '88

1. The return of "Help on the Way."

Why do I get the feeling the band doesn't play this because it's so difficult? That's why they *should* play it—keeps 'em on their toes.

2. A new slot for "Throwing Stones."

This song hasn't appeared anywhere other than near the end of the second set for four years. How about ending a first set with it? Or right before the drums? Maybe it wouldn't seem so self-important if it wasn't always the penultimate number. And while we're at it... free "Not Fade Away" from the bondage of being a show-closer! Remember that beat coming out of "space"?!

3. A live, double Garcia Band album.

They're the tightest they've ever been and 95% of their current material has never been on a live album before, from "Dear Prudence" and "Tangled Up in Blue" to "Ruben & Cherise" and "Lucky Old Sun."

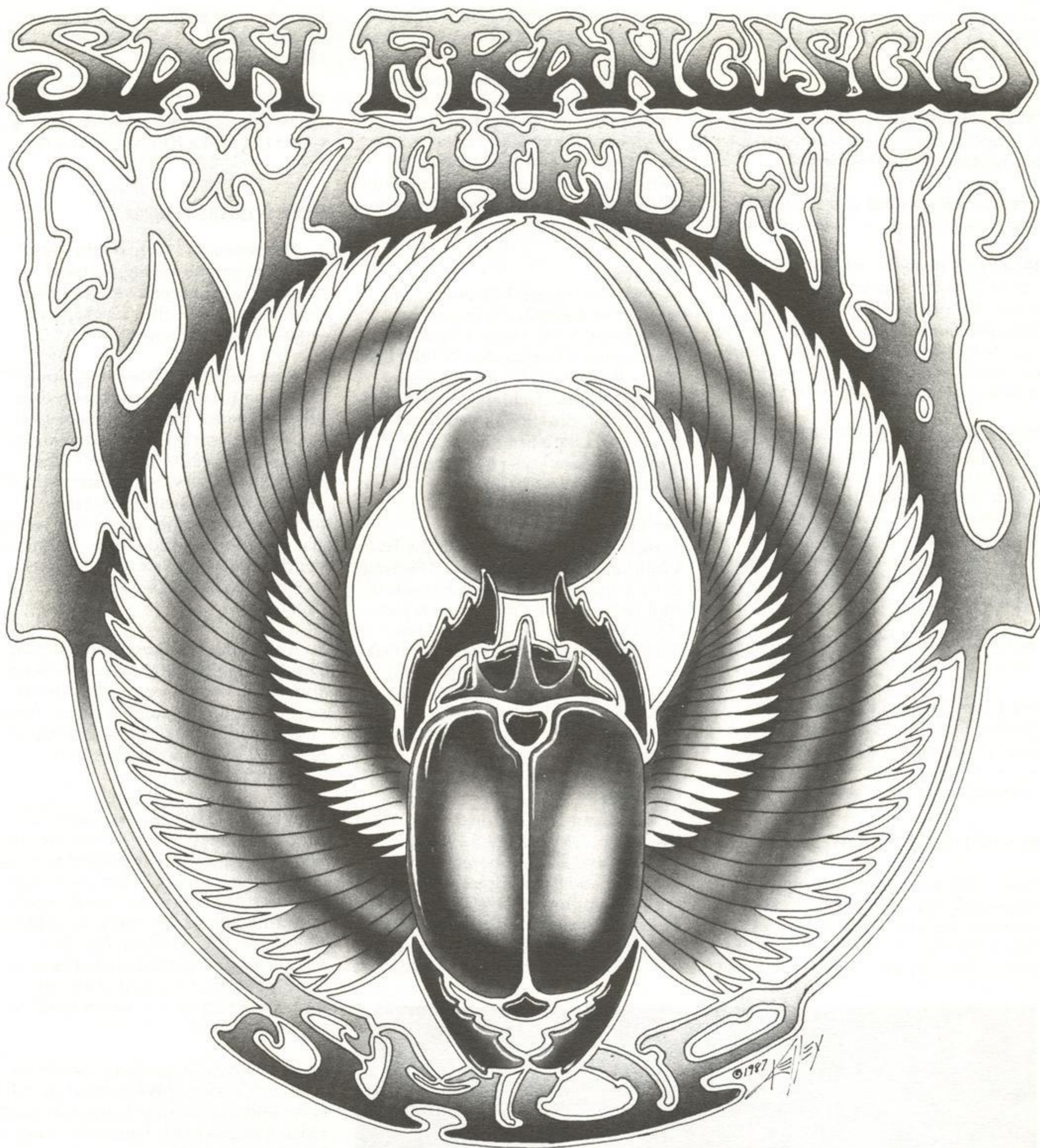
4. **SPACE—The CD.** A specialty CD, taking advantage of the CD's sonic capabilities and 80-minute playing time, of concentrated "space" from the whole band—just freeform electronic weirdness and percussion, sort of an extension of the *Rhythm Devils Play River Music* concept. Guaranteed sales of at least 20,000 units immediately; lots more over time as it's "discovered" by the avant-weird.

5. **The release of *Sunshine Daydream* and *The Closing of Winterland* on videocassette.** The former is the only good video glimpse of the band in the early '70s. It's fun, funny, very trippy, and the music is outrageously good (it's the '72 Kesey's Creamery show). The band thinks it's amateurish and out of tune. But anyone who has audio tapes of the show can tell you it's one of the best concerts the band *ever* played, flaws and all. The Winterland concert is another classic, and already exists with top quality audio and video. The market for either won't be huge, but each would certainly pay for itself quickly (after all, not much production would need to be done) and then Deadheads would have two more priceless historical documents.

—BJ



What's so damn funny, you guys? Oakland Stadium '87. Photo: Ron Delany



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ECHOES IN THE JUNGLE

By Ed Berkop

The sun was beginning to burn through the morning haze. Two toucans flew slowly below me, trying desperately to keep their huge bills airborne. I leaned back against the ancient stone structure and let the sun burn off the morning dampness. In a few hours it would be too hot. An unbroken sea of green vegetation lay below me, flowing to the horizon in every direction. I was deep in the heart of the Guatemalan rain forest. In the distance a group of howler monkeys added their screams to the cacophony of thousands of parrots. Just a normal day in the jungle.

Gradually I became aware of another sound. Something or someone was moving around on the ground far below. I began scanning the forest in the direction of the sound and soon located its source. A man was steadily climbing toward me using exposed tree roots as steps and handholds to scale the steep slope. The hill he was climbing was actually an overgrown pyramid that served as the base for the temple where I was sitting. I watched as he slowly reached the clearing about 20 feet below me. It was another gringo. We nodded to each other in silent greeting and he began scaling the eroded stonework that led to my perch. A few moments later he pulled himself onto the ledge next to me. I handed him the pipe.

We sat in silence while he caught his breath. Then he spoke for the first time: "They're going to play Telluride, August 14th and 15th."

I sat staring at him in frozen silence. There was, of course, no question as to who "they" were. Deadheads somehow recognize each other instinctively; there was no need for him to explain that he was talking about the Grateful Dead. Besides, the only concert that would be of interest to someone sitting on a Mayan temple in the middle of the Guatemalan jungle would be a Grateful Dead concert.

Telluride! Aside from where I was sitting at the moment, I couldn't think of a more perfect place for a Dead concert—spectacular mountain scenery combined with a town that is always ready to party at the drop of a hat. I took a long pull on the pipe.

"Any idea what month it is now?" I asked my companion.

"I think it's May. Give or take a few weeks," he replied.

I sat back and did some quick calculations. Five hundred miles north to Palenque, Mexico. No roads; two to three days by canoe. Palenque—known for its tower, its tomb and its mushrooms. Better allow at least five days there. Bus to Mexico City; one to two days. Bus to El Paso; 29 hours. Hitchhike through New Mexico; two to three days. Roughly two weeks to Colorado. Tack on another month to get

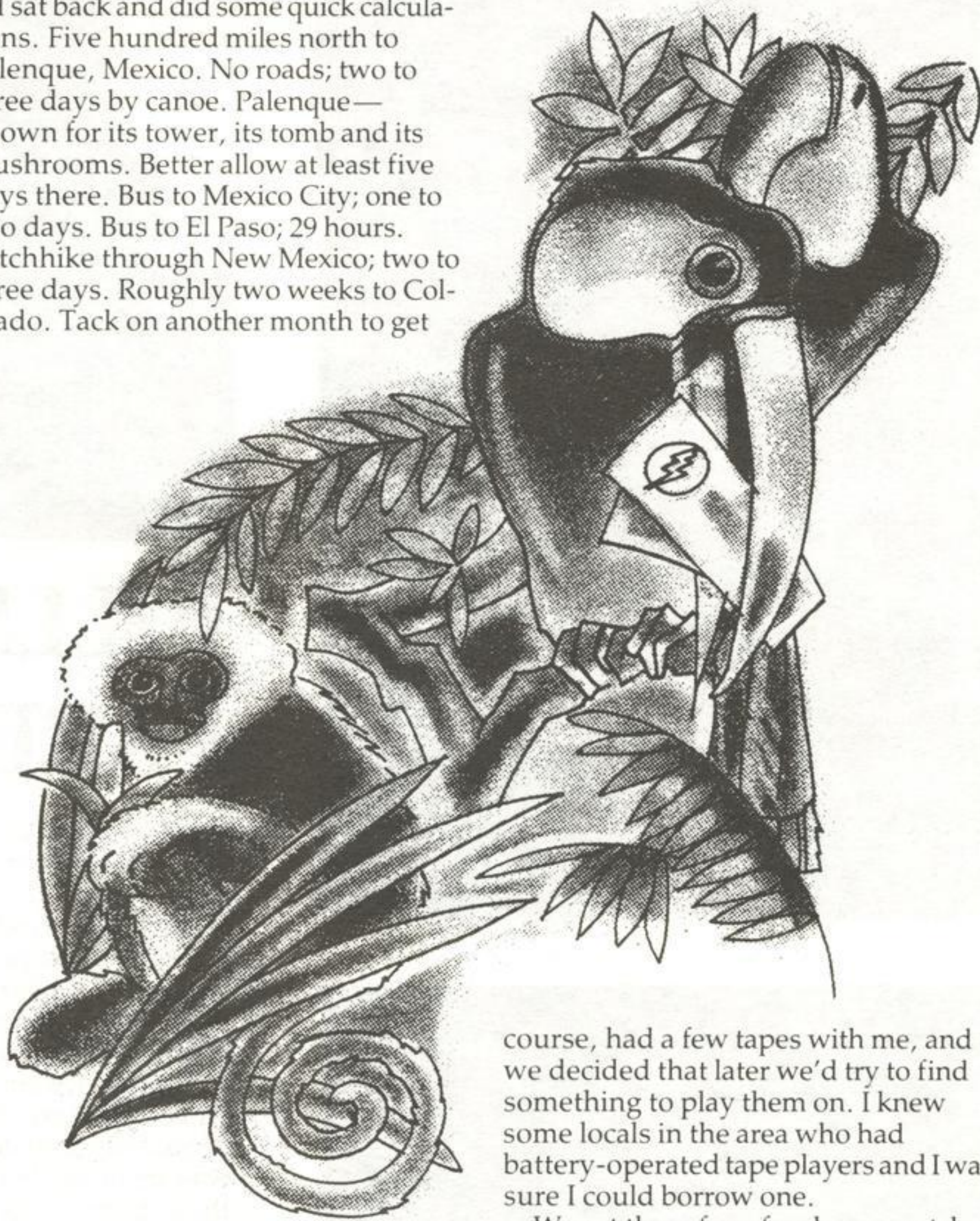


Illustration: Lourdes Livingston

tickets. That meant I'd have to leave here by the first of July. I decided I'd better find a calendar.

An alarm was flashing somewhere in my unconscious. I took another hit and tried to pinpoint it. TICKETS! My God, they'll be coming from all over the world for this one. I was proof of that. Not going was never even a consideration. And I didn't doubt for a moment that I'd be there. One of the tenets of Grateful Deadism is: have faith, you'll get in. A lot of people scoff at this. They don't get in.

My new friend turned out to be English. He was planning his trip so he could be in the States for summer tour. We sat there discussing our favorite songs and concerts, as a group of spider monkeys passed through the trees in front of us. In Nicaragua he had traded a Bolivian poncho for a tape of one of the last New Year's shows. I, of

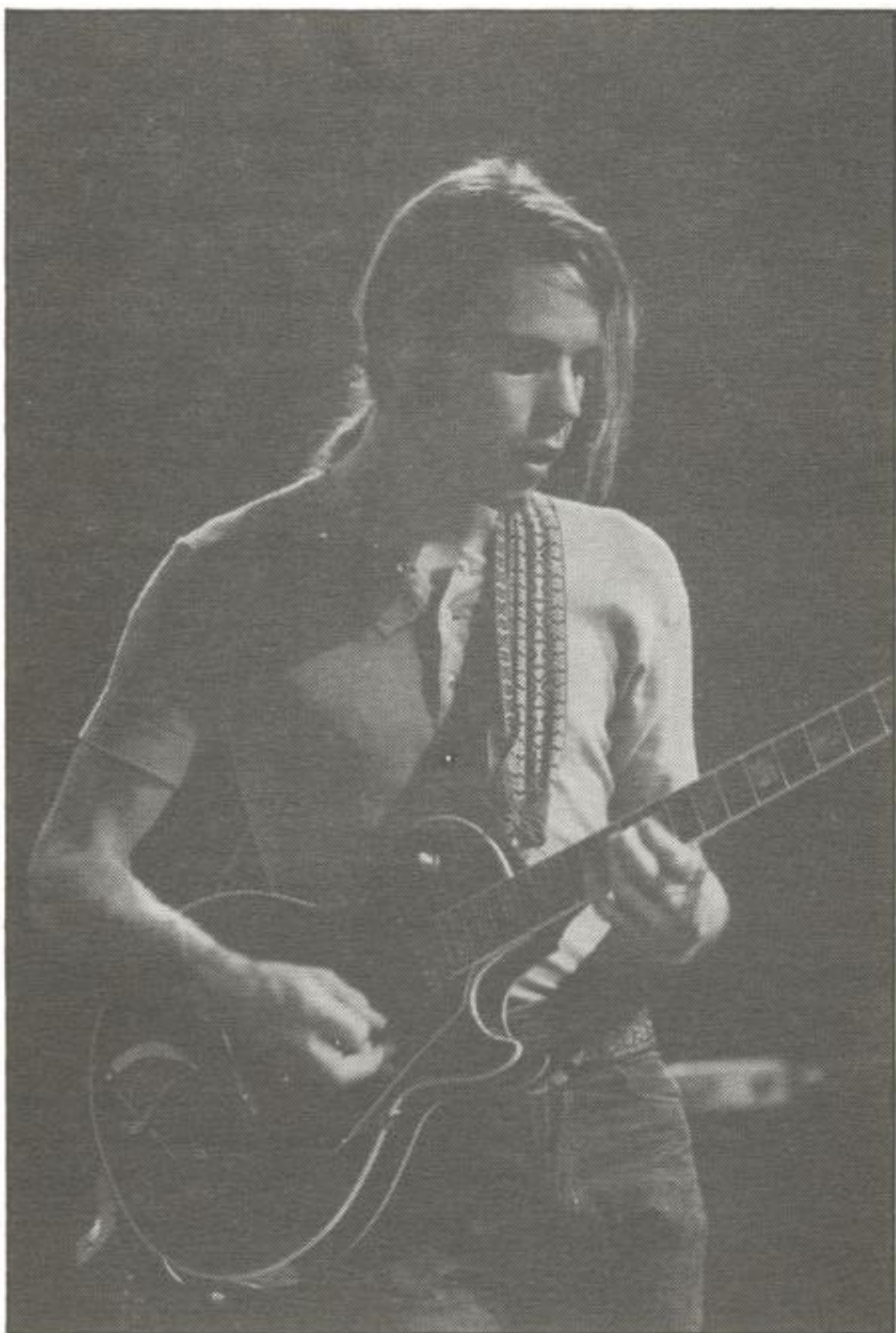
course, had a few tapes with me, and we decided that later we'd try to find something to play them on. I knew some locals in the area who had battery-operated tape players and I was sure I could borrow one.

We sat there for a few hours watching the wildlife, filling the pipe and talking Grateful Dead. Even faithful Deadheads like us are constantly amazed by the Deadhead network. You can find out what the Dead are doing from almost anywhere in the world. He had heard about the Telluride concert in Columbia. I had met Deadheads all over Mexico, Belize and Guatemala.

We did manage to get a tape player that evening and we spent most of the night lying in our hammocks, in the dark, listening to Dead tapes. It was so good! The drum solos, especially, seemed to fit perfectly with the jungle sounds in the background. It was a night I'll always remember.

There was to be a lot of weirdness up the road in the months before the show—the German girl with no pants; the tombs and 'shrooms of Palenque; sleeping in the ditch in New Mexico; and the unbelievable ordeal of scoring tickets. But I always knew I'd make it. And I did. □

FLASHBACK



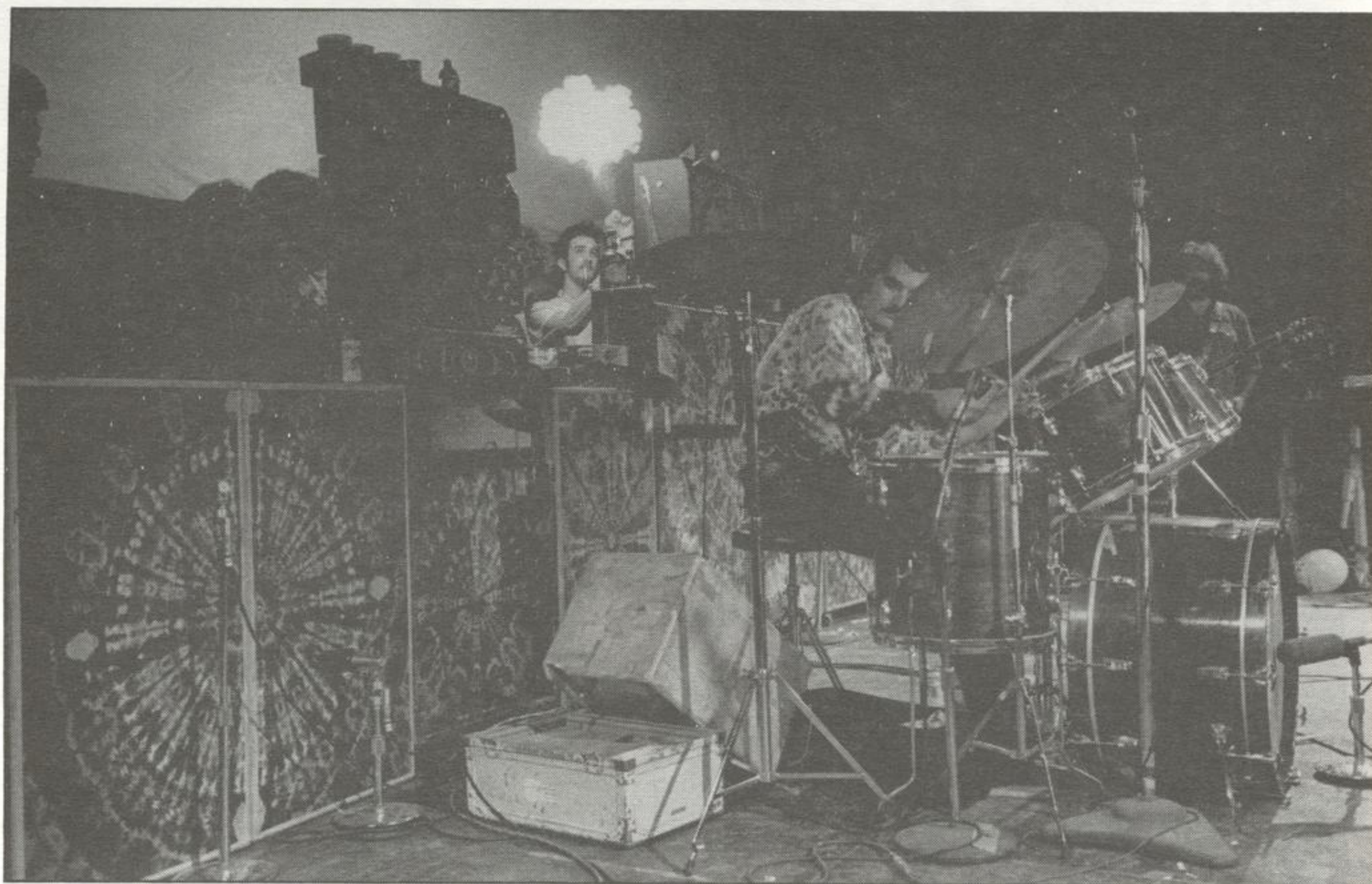
FILLMORE WEST FAREWELL

The Fillmore West, better known as the Carousel Ballroom, was one of several "homes" for the Grateful Dead in the late '60s and early '70s. In fact, the Dead played there more than any other venue—59 times between January 1968 and July 1971, when it closed. (If the band keeps up its current pace, the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center — formerly the Oakland Auditorium — will surpass that number in a couple of years. Winterland, with 51 shows, is in third place, the Fillmore Auditorium in fourth.)

Though I went there only once — for a Steve Miller/Bo Diddley show when my (NY-based) family vacationed in SF one summer — I could instantly tell that the Carousel had a special kind of energy. It was small enough that everyone could see and hear well, yet it had all these great nooks and crannies that were perfect for doin' the hang during breaks or if you wanted to get away from it all for a few minutes. More often than not, light shows filled the walls around the venerable ballroom. It was the perfect size for the emerging SF bands in the years before they really hit it big.

For a few months in 1968, the Dead even helped run the Carousel, in hopes of providing an alternative to what they saw as a growing monopoly of the scene by Bill Graham. But "hippie business" was an oxymoron and the hall was soon beset by financial woes. In an ironic twist, it was Graham who eventually took it over and renamed it the Fillmore West. In mid-'71, however, Graham started having serious doubts about the rock business and he abruptly closed the Fillmores East and West—though not before having big farewell bashes at each.

The Dead's last show at the Carousel, July 2, 1971, was a classic. It was broadcast on the radio in SF and has been widely circulated among tapers ever since. (It was also widely bootlegged as a double album.) Among the highlights were "That's It for the Other One" (dedicated by Phil to Owsley, who was in jail at the time), an explosive "Not Fade Away ♦ Goin Down the Road ♦ Not Fade Away," "China Cat ♦ Rider," "Good Lovin'" and lots, lots more. Though their entire performance was filmed for the movie *Fillmore*, only "Casey Jones" and "Johnny B. Goode" appeared in the finished work. On these pages are a few shots taken that historic night. After the Carousel closed (it was later demolished), more and more concerts were held at the much larger Winterland. Things were never quite the same.



PHOTOS BY JIM MARSHALL © 1988



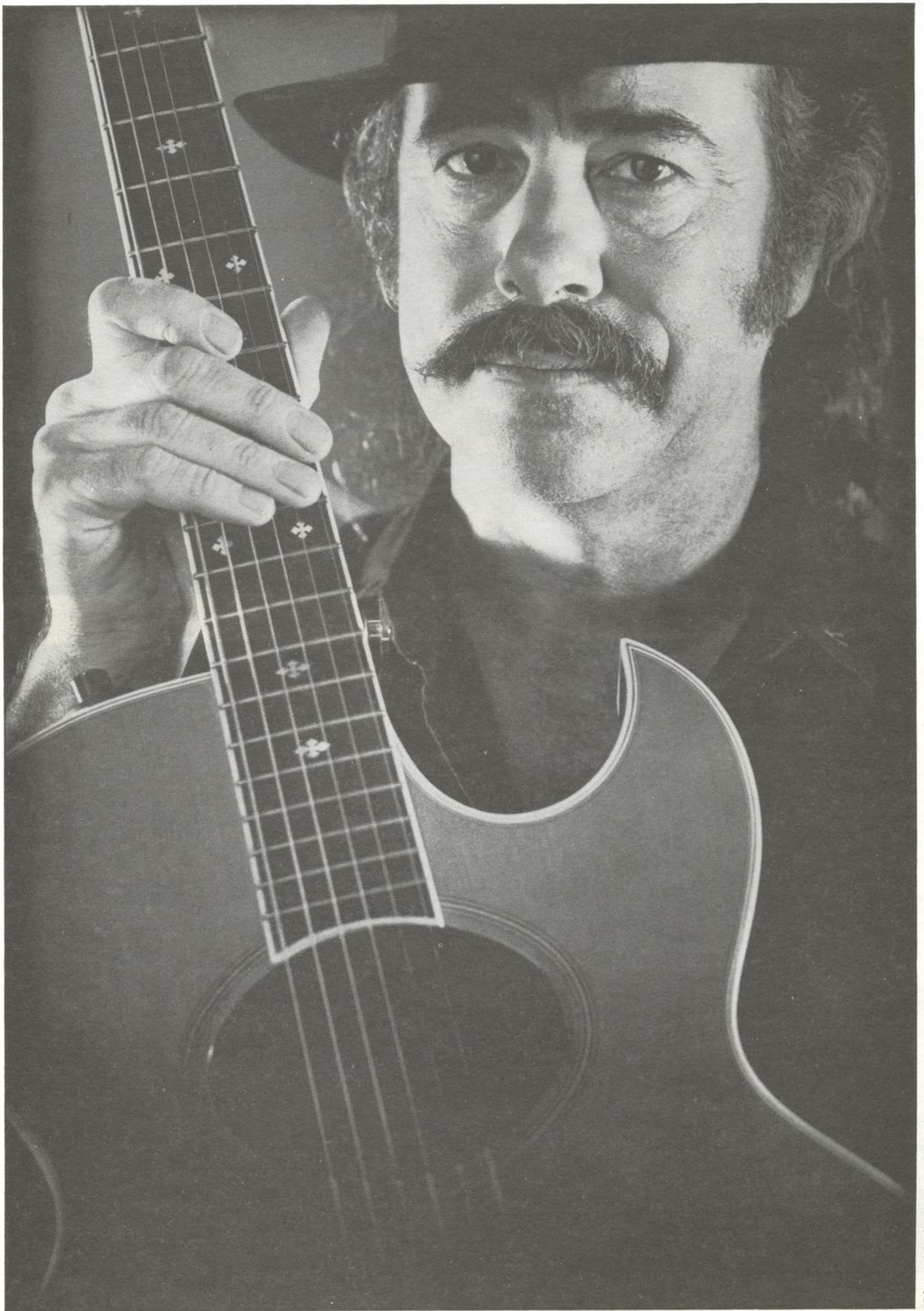


Photo: Mark Costantini/San Francisco Examiner

ROBERT HUNTER

The Song Goes On

At this point, Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter probably needs no introduction to most of you. Chances are his work is an indelible part of your consciousness. He literally (pun only semi-intended) writes words to live by: How many among our Deadhead ranks can say we have not been profoundly affected by the lyrics of this gentle sage? Who has not been uplifted by his stirring optimism, touched by his plaintive despair, felt true danger in his stern admonitions, empathized with his characters' soul-searching, confusion or wanderlust? If the Grateful Dead's music is the soundtrack of our lives, then Hunter's words are the touchstones. They are points of reference along the way that seem to explain to us what is happening, where we've been, and even help us chart a course for where we might go next.

My personal experience with Hunter's lyrics has been that he has created a vast sea of swirling images, ideas and connections of which I have a vague, surface understanding. Then, as if I've gotten a hearty whack of the zen master's stick (because I've asked yet another stupid question), I get flashes of true understanding when I least expect it, and the lyric fragment that once seemed dense and inaccessible suddenly becomes crystal clear. These bits

and pieces then start falling together — sort of like a slow-motion film of an explosion, except in reverse, where the shards and fragments move from chaos to cohesion. There are Hunter lyrics I've heard, memorized and sung along to literally thousands of times that are still completely baffling to me, but in general, living with the songs has been a process of seeing meaning constantly, if slowly, unfolding before me. Surely this is art's greatest function.

It is easy to take Hunter's work for granted, because at this point it feels so familiar, so comfortable, so emotionally right, that it's taken on some of the mystical glow of Ancient Wisdom — as if it's always been there to discover and we've just stumbled upon it. But take a moment and think about the incredible range of this man's work: the nearly Taoist simplicity of "Ripple" and "Attics of My Life"; the fractured psychedelia of "China Cat Sunflower" and "The Eleven"; the playful metaphors of "Deal" and "Run for the Roses"; the colorful portraits of working stiffs in "Cumberland Blues" and "Easy Wind"; the dreamy disconnectedness of "Row Jimmy"; mythological journeys through the psyche by way of "Terrapin Station" and "Franklin's Tower"; straightforward declarations of love like "To Lay Me Down" and "If I Had the World to Give"; the

cartoonish whimsy of "Tennessee Jed" and "When Push Comes to Shove"; the world-weary existentialism of "Stella Blue" and "Black Muddy River"; and the steadfast stoicism of "Playing in the Band" and "The Wheel." There are hundreds of songs in the Hunter canon, most of them wildly different from each other, but all of them shoot points of light into humanity's mirror to give us fleeting glances of our inner selves.

Hunter has opted for a life away from the glare of the public spotlight, though he has made a substantial number of albums under his own name and has toured from time to time, with and without bands. He usually is reluctant to give interviews, though he is candid and compelling when he does. And, frankly, he knows that interviews are a way to promote his work, such as his new solo album, *Liberty* (on Relix Records).

It is a continuing source of frustration to Hunter that his solo records don't sell very well. At the same time, he acknowledges that they have been uneven for the most part; he says even *he* can't listen to some of them. Hunter's voice, a slightly unsure baritone rooted in folk-troubadour stylings, is an acquired taste, I suppose. And at their worst, his melodies have a repetitive, sing-song feel that's more cloying than endearing. But the fact is, Hunter's albums have been getting better and better, as his self-confidence has increased and he's learned to make better use of the recording studio and the musicians he's working with.

Liberty is unquestionably the best-sounding record Hunter has made in years, and it is also probably the most instantly appealing and accessible. While some might be put off by the record's pop veneer, I find the songs and the instrumental performances wonderfully infectious. The key players this time out are keyboardist Rick Meyers, who has adroitly steered Hunter away from his folkish proclivities with some nice, modern arrangements, and Jerry Garcia, who plays splendidly on every cut — sparkly, buoyant melodies here, pedal steel there, a bit of slide; the whole nine yards. Hunter has tried very hard through the years to distance himself somewhat from Garcia on his solo records (a position I admire), but the simple truth is that Garcia is the perfect player for these songs. It's no accident these two have been partners in one form or another for a quarter century.

Like most of Hunter's records, the songs on *Liberty* are thematically and stylistically eclectic; but musically this time there is a unity that pulls the disparate elements together. So it doesn't seem at all odd that a funny little rocker called "Black Shamrock" (which even

includes leprechaun sound effects and a mock-serious synth-strings arrangement) can sit side by side comfortably with "The Song Goes On," a serious and rather cryptic poetic affirmation of the human spirit. (It'll probably take a few years for a lot of this material to sink in too.)

"When a Man Loves a Woman" is a gorgeous love song—really as pretty as any he's written—while "Bone Alley" is a jaunty little word game full of odd twists and clever word combinations. There is a deft mixture of rockabilly and folk, traditional and original elements in "Worried Song." And it's hard to resist the lilt of "Do Deny" and the title track, which veer into the same kind of musical territory as songs like "Touch of Grey" and "Run for the Roses." (Like "Touch of Grey," the song "Liberty" uses liberal doses of absurdist humor to put across a fairly serious message.) All in all, *Liberty* is an eminently likable album. It's been on my turntable a lot, and in my head even more.

Though Hunter and I have spoken on the phone several times over the past few years, mainly to get news for "Deadline," this was our first formal interview. We met at his house in Marin County on a beautiful sunny afternoon in late February. His living room was cluttered with books and musical instruments—about what you'd expect to find in the home of this supremely literate songwriter. Both articulate and engaging, he fielded questions on a wide variety of topics, like someone who actually enjoys doing interviews (though you and I know better). We began by chatting about *Liberty* and then ventured off into uncharted realms....

—BJ

Tell me a little bit about the recording of Liberty. It sounds as though Rick Meyers, your keyboard player, had a big hand in the arrangements of the songs.

You're right, he did. The way I constructed this album is: First I went into the studio with my guitar and played the songs, then I went in and sang a vocal over that. Then I turned that monster Rick Meyers loose on the songs with his samplers and synthesizers, and he worked more or less under my direction. I'd say, "I want a keyboard here, some weird noises over there," and then he'd go try to work something out. Sometimes I had a good idea of the sounds I wanted, but a lot of times he came up with things I never would have thought of, and that's the best kind of collaboration, really. We communicated very well.

He was on your last record, Rock Columbia, as well.

Yes, and I was very happy with what

he did on that record, too. But in that case, he came in near the end of the project. This time I decided to work with him from the beginning.

So after Rick had put down his parts and filled out the songs, then we put down the bass, and then the drums.

That's pretty unusual. Most people seem to do it the opposite way.

Well, each time I do an album I try something a little different, and this is the way I did *Liberty*. I'll probably do something different next time.

Then, after I had everything beautifully set up, I called in Garcia and said, "Here are the tracks, man—wail with them!" And he was able to find nice

"I'm as much a fan of Garcia's compositions as any Deadhead. I feel honored to supply the lyrics."

places to put things, fill the solo spaces.

Did you make suggestions to him about tone or where he might use his slide or pedal steel?

Sure. The more suggestions you can give Jerry, the better he likes it, because most of all he just wants to play. He loves to play his pedal steel; you don't have to ask him twice.

The last stage of the record was my final vocals, and then I turned it over to Tom Flye, who did what I think is the best mix I've ever had on one of my albums.

Do you enjoy working in the studio?

I do now, because it's a place where I'm creatively, rather than passively, involved. With the Grateful Dead I used to hate the studio because it was a passive involvement. Once in a while I'd have something to say about phrasing, or I'd be Johnny-on-the-spot with a lyric where one wasn't working or singing right. But basically it was passive and terribly boring and tedious.

Then I made my first couple of records and was a little more involved, but I was still basically passive because I didn't understand any of the technology. So I'd let Mickey Hart or Barry Melton or a half-dozen other people who Garcia said had no business with their hands on a board [mixing console]

do everything. Considering it was my presentation to the world, had I been a little more circumspect, I wouldn't have turned *Rum Runners* [his first album] out the way it was. In fact, I'm going to ask Tom Flye to remix *Rum Runners*. When I told Garcia that he said, "Good luck—you used every misrecording technique known to man on that. There's tape dropouts and all this other stuff. I know where it all is because I went through the hell of mixing it! This is going to be a long project!" [Laughs]

I feel like that record is very well regarded among Deadheads, crude though it may be.

I just want to give it a chance with automated mixing, which would allow me to do things like bring the bagpipes in and out differently and drop that sour note on it, too. I can do that now.

Aren't you afraid you're going to want to tinker with everything?

I do! I want to tinker with a couple of the early records.

Why not just rerecord the songs then?

That would be too hard. How am I going to get Garcia to come in and play the break that I love so much on "Tiger Rose," even though I hate my vocal on it? There are vocals I detest on *Rum Runners* and *Tiger Rose* and I just can't live with them, but I won't change those, either. I just want to shine it all up a little. *Tiger Rose* still sounds good. Garcia and Bob Matthews did a good job on that, but my vocals are terrible. I can't listen to that record because of it.

Do you feel better about your vocals these days? I think you sound much more self-assured.

I don't attempt so much. I think I know my limitations. I have the wisdom at this age to know that I'm not a singer in the true sense of the word. What I am and can be, I think, is a good phraser, and I think I can deliver all the meaning that's intended in one of my lyrics, though I can't make it sound as pretty as Garcia can.

Well, people have been saying that about Dylan for 25 years.

Yes sir, that's the alpha and the omega of that one.

In fact, Jimi Hendrix once said that hearing Dylan's "weak" vocals on that great material is what gave him the courage to write and sing at all.

When I first heard [Jimi's] "The Wind Cries Mary," I recognized the Dylan phrasing and this incredible voice at the same time that was as far from Dylan as you could possibly get and still be using that phrasing. And it hit me over the head that this was a song that Dylan would've been proud to write. Then, with the way Hendrix could play guitar... well, it looked like there might be a

conspiracy out there, and I wanted to be part of it. [Laughs]

You have so many songs to choose from when you do a solo concert. How do you decide what to sing and what to leave out?

Mainly I'm trying to sing things that I think the audience will like. When you're one man with a guitar up there, there may be certain things you're trying to prove, but one of them *isn't* how boring you can be. And I have gone on tours where I've just tried to satisfy myself and just sing what I wanted to sing, and I've bored the audience in the process.

I've come to realize that when they come to see Robert Hunter, they are paying money not to see me get up on-stage and be a prima donna. They're coming to hear a healthy number of my interpretations of Grateful Dead songs. It took me a long time to swallow that, but I think I accepted it with good grace, and now I give them at least half Dead songs. So I'll sing a bunch of my favorite Dead songs; they tend to remain the same favorites. Then I'll add in the solo material—things that were fun or worked particularly well from the last tour, and usually a couple of surprises. I try to mix it up.

A few of your solo records are currently out of print, including Jack O' Roses, which I think is pretty well regarded.

Well, if there's any kind of real demand for it, I would rerelease it. But in general my records don't sell well, so there isn't a lot of point in leaving a large catalog of a dozen records out, because they'll only get remaindered [drastically discounted]. So I select a few that I want in release, the ones I feel the best about.

I yanked the *Live '85* album because I just don't like it very much. It was all I had for a live record at that time. I yanked the *Marie Helena* album because people just were not interested in it; they didn't want to know about it. If people want it, they can tape it from each other. The main ones that are out there are *Liberty*, *Rock Columbia* and the *Promontory Rider* collection.

I still think Rum Runners has some great songs on it.

I have finally come to the point where I think that, yes, *Rum Runners* has some historical value; put it out for that. There are some good songs on it. *Tiger Rose*, too. But I'm not rushing it.

You seem to be incredibly prolific. Have you ever had a dry period?

Not really, no. Rather than having dry periods, I tend to lay fallow for brief stretches.

Were the songs on Liberty all written around the same time, or are they more

motley than that? Certainly they sound unified.

Some of them are from the collection of 17 lyrics that I got together for the Dead right before they made *In the Dark*. Of the songs on this record, I'd given the Dead "Liberty," "Bone Alley" and "Black Shamrock." From the collection of lyrics I gave them they took "Black Muddy River" and "When Push Comes to Shove," and Dylan took "Sylvio" and "Ugliest Girl in the World." So it was a fairly successful batch.

Have you ever been able to predict what Garcia will choose and what he'll pass over?

No, not really. He's avoided a great

"My stuff probably sounds very opaque to people looking for a literal, left-brainedness in lyrics."

deal of stuff which both he and I think is good. What he does is put it all in a briefcase and then he carries it around with him, in case I ever get run over by a dump truck or something. [Laughs] Maybe it's his insurance policy. But he's got some real good stuff tucked away from years ago.

When he got busted a couple of years back, that briefcase got impounded for evidence, and I realized that all this work was in it! So I got his lawyer onto it—"For chrissakes, this isn't evidence, it's years of work!"—and he managed to get it back for us. I was worried for a minute. [Laughs]

On a song like "Bone Alley," and to a lesser degree "Black Shamrock," I get the sense that the rhythm of the words is almost as important as the choice of words.

Yes, that's certainly the case in "Bone Alley." That was definitely influenced by that old Mills Brothers song, "Dry Bones." You know—"The head bone's connected to the neck bone." I felt as though that imagery wasn't exhausted, that there was another way it could be used. So I started working on it using that word "bone" here and there, repeating it, getting the words to socket as if they were joints—and at the same time saying a few things which are basically just comical. There's not a great

level of intended philosophy in that song. I think it's a good rock 'n' roll song.

"When a Man Loves a Woman" has a slightly different feel than the rest of the record, musically and lyrically. It seems very personal.

It might sound different because I think I may have done something that I have done very few times in my career—written a classic song. I think it stands head and shoulders above everything else on that album, and I think it's a song that will endure. I didn't know, by the way, that there was another song called "When a Man Loves a Woman." [That's Percy Sledge's '66 hit, folks.]

What happened on that song was that I decided to write a love song and really put my heart into it, really feel what I was writing. The first couple of run-throughs I thought, "Hey man, other people write this kind of song. You don't have to do it." I thought, "If I'm going to write a love song, I'm going to do something with it, give it some reason to be other than just a declaration of love," because there have been hundreds of thousands of songs that have done that and I can't do it better or worse than anyone else. It's the staple fare of American popular music; I will not do that sort of thing. I want to say the things that haven't been said. But I wanted to write a love song. I feel love. I wanted to write one for my wife, which is what that was. I didn't want it to be smarmy. I'm very cautious about that. So I put in some images that could connect, but which you normally wouldn't expect in a love song—union strikes and things like that.

I was somewhat surprised by the forthrightness of the chorus of "Liberty." It seems like you don't usually write so specifically.

The crowning jewel of that song is Rick's cloud of background vocals when I sing "If I were an eagle I'd dress like a duck/crawl like a lizard and walk like a truck," and he's got these angelic background vocals [he sings in a falsetto] "dress ... like ... a duck ..." [Laughs] It's a little touch of hilarity in there, although I suppose a lot of people will listen to it very seriously. With a few of these songs, if you viewed them from the point of view of comedy you'd be viewing them correctly.

Certainly, though, the overall message of "Liberty" is fairly serious.

Well shit, we all want liberty and we all want freedom and it's certainly a thing to sing about and a thing to declaim.

Why is it on your mind now?

I think the American mind is closing at a rate which is getting near critical

mass right now. I think a call has to be put out, however generalized. The song "Liberty" takes it in terms of personal liberties in the sense of: in order for *us* to be free *I* must be free, and I can only speak for myself. In the song, I speak in such a radical way of what I would do if I were free, that it becomes totally personalized, but it also gives the message — What would you do? Would you dress like a duck? Would you march with Cesar Chavez? Because your freedom is not what you *should* do; it's what you *would* do if you were the person you would want to be and were free.

It's an idea I toyed with for a long time — what is freedom? I'm not in line with B.F. Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* idea that freedom is just a red herring that we've drawn across our trail that distracts us from what we really should be doing. I think these ideals [freedom, liberty] are necessary. They call the best out of us.

They're so often used in an almost propagandistic way in this country these days. We've gone so far astray from the conceptual ideal of those words.

"Freedom" has been turned into a word, hasn't it? And that word has something to do with conservatism at this point. You can redefine words by political pressures, by the attitude of your police, by the submissive attitudes of your people to government. The schools are state-run so you're propagandized from day one. What does the word "freedom" mean to you? It means free to watch your damn television and maybe write a letter to the editor once in a while and drink your beer and beat your old lady and be left alone, thank you very much. But it can mean much more.

The call has to be put out, and I think that's one of the functions of rock 'n' roll, and always has been — the call to freedom. "I just want to be me" and "Just leave me alone." Those are the kinds of teenage rock 'n' roll mottos that ring across the '50s and '60s.

I was interested by the letter you wrote to the Deadheads that was sent out with the spring tour tickets. [See "Deadline"] That certainly seemed to be addressing the issues of freedom and responsibility. How did that come about and how did you end up being the person to write it?

It came out of the regular meetings we [the Dead] have. There have been a growing number of problems that had to be addressed. I was chosen as a spokesman because I'm fairly articulate, in print anyway. So I sat down and tried to take the things that are matters of concern and take our attitudes about those things, and make one coherent letter out of them. I didn't intend to

sign my name to it, but then I was asked by the office to put my name on it because people thought it would be better to send out a letter from a person rather than this faceless organization.

I'll admit that frightened me a little bit, because then I felt I would be perceived as a spokesman for Grateful Dead Productions — the commercial end, all that stuff I have eschewed most over the years in trying to keep my self-image as a writer intact, rather than being part of the Grateful Dead *business*. So I sacrificed a little bit of my equanimity to do that, but it seemed important enough to do. When I read it over care-

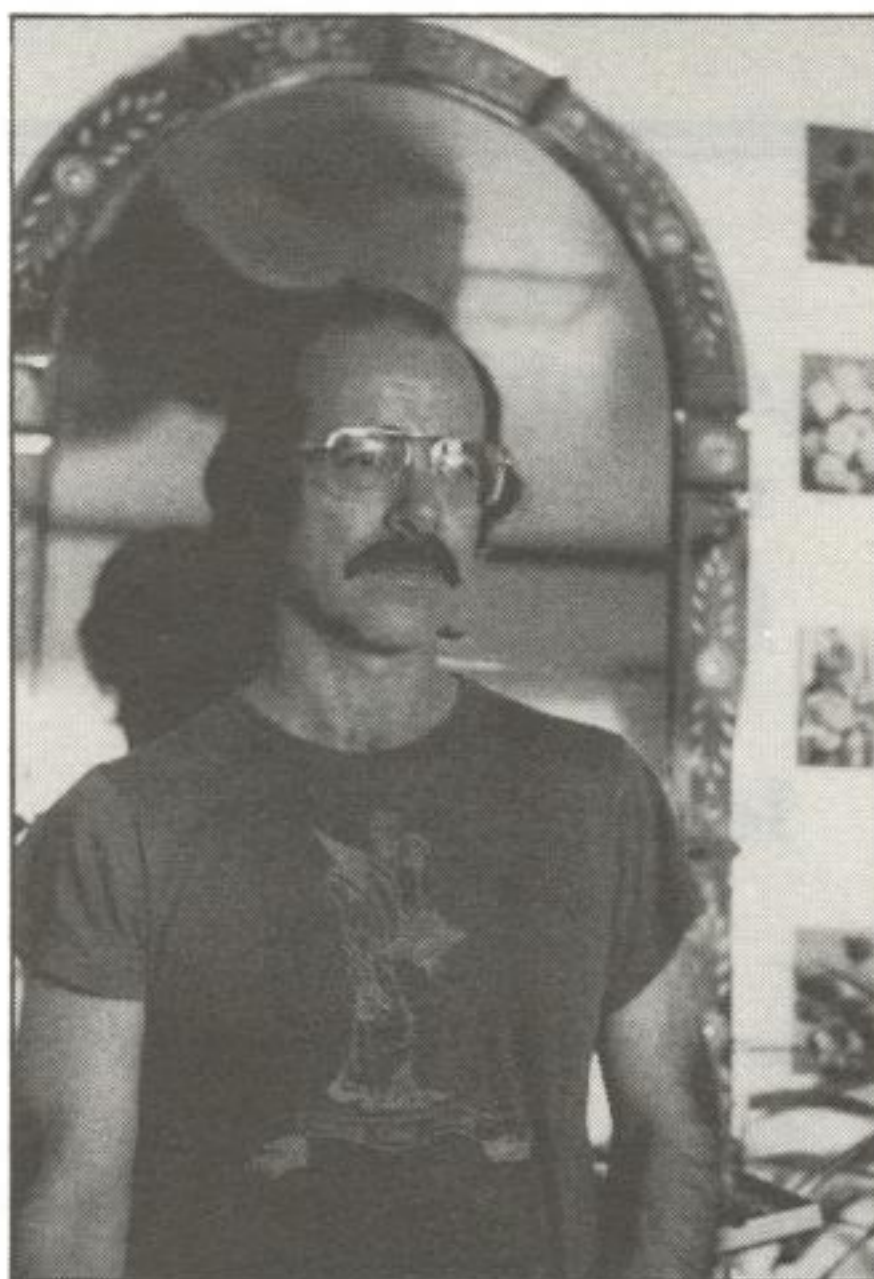


Photo: Maureen Hunter

fully I decided these are things I can stand behind.

All the feedback I've gotten about it has been extremely positive. I think there's a feeling out there that the band has been sort of lax over the past few years in addressing all these issues that we — the Deadheads — have had to deal with as the band has become more popular. I mean it's not like we're waiting for words from on high, but we'd like a sign once in a while from the band.

I'm glad to hear that people liked it, because I haven't heard anything outside of the band and the organization. It was very well received there; in fact I was amazed how well it was received. People said, "Yes, this is the statement we want to make," so I think it can be taken as a group statement.

You were a key part of the team that put out the Deadhead newsletter in the early '70s, which was communication on a fairly intimate scale. Could that sort of thing ever happen again?

Looking back on those old Deadhead newsletters . . . I'd just get stoned and draw that "Hypnocracy" stuff . . .

We got stoned and read them.

[Laughs] I knew there were a lot of stoned people out there. So I'd do that and then we'd add a little information in there about what was going on, most of which I wrote, and which Alan Trist would sometimes write. And Jerry would maybe add a drawing here or there, and then we'd send it out. It was fun to do and very low-key. Our fan club was at a fairly low ebb, probably just a few thousand people. And the Deadheads and the Dead were a rather close symbiotic unit at that point. But looking back on them — Whew! Those things are, like you said, *very* intimate, like the clippings you might paste up on your own refrigerator.

I don't think it was something that was marked to continue, and I'll tell you where I got off it. When we formed Round Records, Ron Rakow [company president] took the mailing list and sent out these horrible little promo postcards signed "Anton Round," and I thought it was the sleaziest looking Hollywood bullshit you'd ever want to see. I was outraged at this! "How dare you use this for commercial purposes?" I was told that the list was now to be used for this sort of thing and basically that the list had been taken over. So I said, "Count me out!" And I haven't written any kind of communication up until now.

Do you ever feel as though you're revealing too much in your songs? Or have you felt later that you obfuscated too much?

I think what looks like obfuscation in my work is a predilection to tinker with a good-sounding phrase, something that *fires*. I will sacrifice some meaning for the sound of something because that's a lot of what it's about for me — interesting turns of phrases and colorful ways of expressing things. So instead of saying "I went to the store," I might put a little spin on it—you know, "I rolled to the store and exploded from the cash register like a bomb" or something. [Laughs] I want color. I want variety.

I think that my stuff probably does sound very opaque to people who are looking for a literal, left-brainedness in lyrics. But shift over to the right brain and you might find a lot of stuff in there.

Of course you also have a partner in crime in Garcia. He's said that he'll deliberately cut out verses of songs if they seem to be explaining things too much.

Well . . . not very damned often. "One swallow doth not a summer make." [Laughs]

Can you think of instances when it has happened?

Well, he didn't choose to do the concluding songs to "Terrapin Station." There's a verse to "Friend of the Devil"

that I do and he doesn't do, which I feel kind of ties the bow on that song in a certain direction. He's loath to change something once he feels like it's done, while I'll tinker endlessly with things, for whatever good it does me.

I've written up the lyrics for most of our songs, compiling them, and I still can't overcome the need to change lines that I've never liked. So I changed them, and I have an asterisk on the line and then an appendix which has the line as it was recorded. For example, in "Mountains of the Moon" there's the line: "Twenty degrees of solitude, twenty degrees in all, all the dancing kings and wives assembled in the hall" —

I love that line!

Yeah, well — "Twenty degrees in all"? Hmmm. I don't think so. It doesn't mean much. So I've changed it to "Twenty degrees of solitude, a fiddler grim and tall, plays to dancing kings and wives assembled in the hall." I think that's much better. When I wrote it originally [for *Aoxomoxoa*, 1969] we were in a pressured recording situation, I knew it was weak, but I just didn't have the time to fix things I wasn't entirely happy with.

There are other lines I'd go back and change, though I can't remember them right now. There's a line or two in "Playing in the Band" I'd change, make

it hit home better, express what I wanted better.

A phenomenon I've noticed, as someone who's been listening to a lot of these songs, really on almost a daily basis, for nearly 20 years, is that they are open-ended enough that they change with me—the things I saw in a song ten years ago are different from what I see now; we seem to adapt to each other.

Me too! Absolutely. These songs talk to me. I'll put them on and they'll be addressing me at 46 years old in a way I never could have predicted when I wrote them.

Does that surprise you?

I've learned not to be surprised by it anymore. As a matter of fact, in ways that are absolutely prophetic, there's one song, which I will not name, that has detailed certain experiences I've had in the last couple of months in an uncanny manner — and even told me what to do about them! This is a song I wrote quite a few years ago, yet it almost seems to me now that I was prophesying to myself. Prophesying to others I can understand, but prophesying to myself? Gimme a break! [Laughs] I was in the same aghast state as a Deadhead who suddenly realizes that his instructions are contained in this song, and it even names him!

I think "Black Peter" is an example of a song that has taken on a new life in light of Garcia's illness. The song's the same, but we — the Deadheads and the band — have changed in relation to it. That was a pretty spooky coincidence.

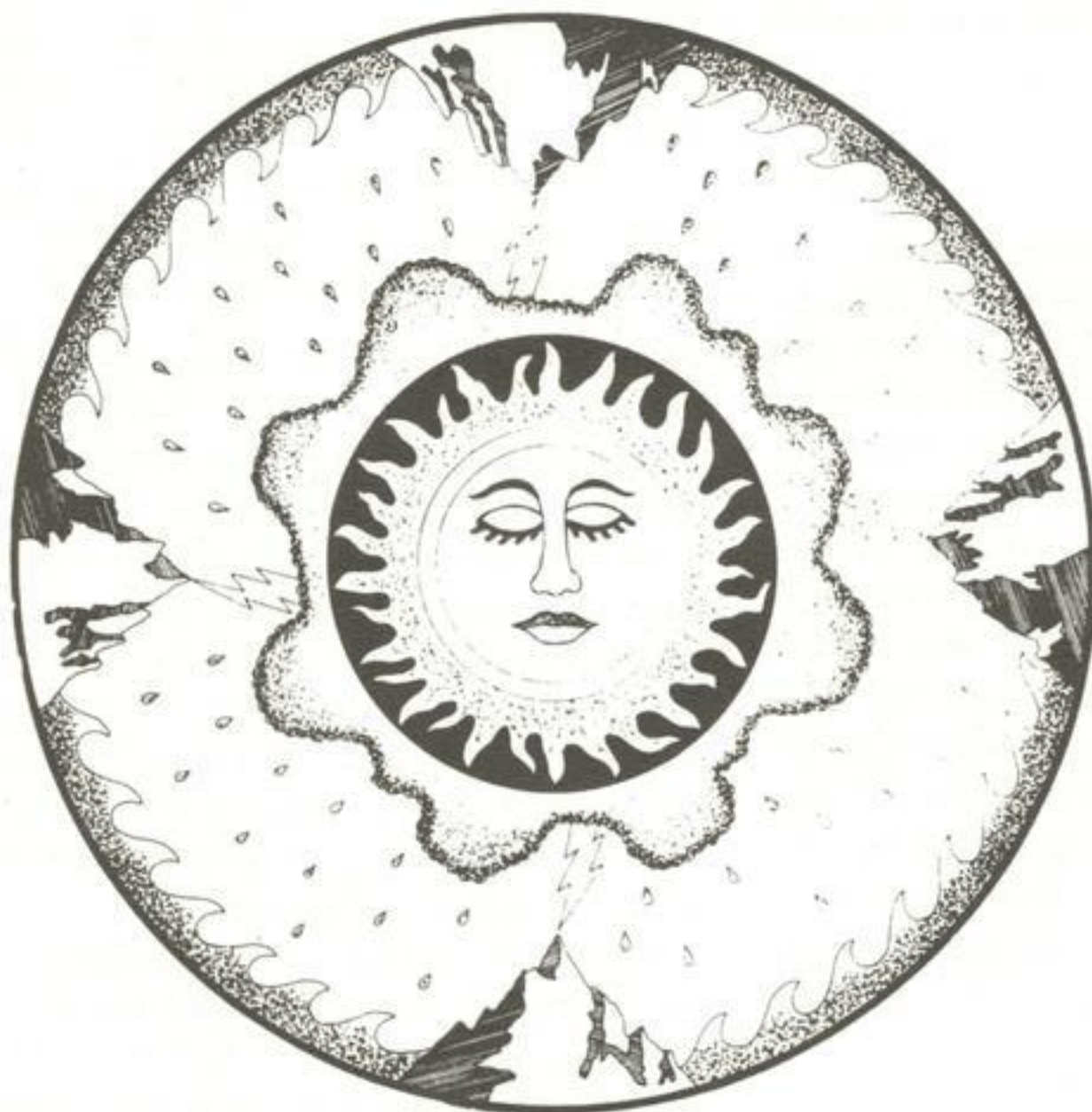
I feel that what we notice in this world is what is coincidental. When a thing happens twice, or when something is stated and then the event occurs, these are things we notice. What we don't notice are things that happen once. Coincidence seems to be the whole nature of what we find significant, and think about.

And I do believe that this sort of thing is just coincidence. I can't afford to believe that it's anything else or I would be afraid of everything that came out of my pen. I'd become a reader, not a writer. [Laughs]

I wonder if you could confirm or deny a bizarre story that's gone around about the writing of "Black Peter." The version I've heard a couple of different places is that one time at a Dead show you were so incapacitated on LSD that you more or less experienced in your brain what happens in the song.

[Long pause.] Let me see. I can't remember if "Black Peter" was written before or after the particular incident you described.

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So there's some basis for the story.

Yes, this is a remarkable incident. Once I got dosed backstage with what someone figured was like a quarter-million micrograms—that was the end of my LSD career, by the way—and I went through every assassination I knew of. I was shot with Kennedy, I was assassinated with Lincoln. The number of times I was killed that night! And each one was completely *real* to me.

I'm not certain whether "Black Peter" wasn't written before this incident. I remember "Stella Blue" was very present during these incidents. All the imagery in "Stella Blue" was very present in my mind at that time. "St. Stephen" was also very present.

I didn't realize "Stella Blue" and "St. Stephen" were contemporary.

This is around *Workingman's Dead* time that I'm talking about. I don't think "Stella Blue" had been performed yet, but it was written.

My time is still scrambled from that era. It took me a full two years after that to get back to where I felt creative or could feel any joy in life, or much of anything else.

Yet that was such a fruitful period for you and your partnership with Garcia.

That's true, but my experience of it was . . . This episode was very, *very* intense. I had a vision of a gold bar in the sky, this shining gold bar. But it wasn't shining on me—it was drawing my energy into it and there was nothing I could do to stop it. It's like it took two years of my energy. The amount of voltage going through my system . . . It really did flatten me for a couple of years and made me seriously consider what the wisdom of this drug-taking had been.

It was an accident, of course, that I got that high. I had taken a quarter tab, or half tab, of sunshine acid that night and washed it down with this bottle of apple juice that had been left on a table backstage. They found out later by asking around that four or five different acid assassins had hit that bottle with acid and mescaline! They found that out when they tried to piece together what had happened to Hunter! [Laughs]

That was the night Snooky Flowers got dosed, too, and Janis Joplin came in while I was starting to rush on it and starts screaming at Owsley—whose fault this was *not*, by the way—"You son of a bitch! You dosed my drummer and he's had to go to the hospital!" And all of a sudden I just saw blood pouring out of her mouth and going all over the room and oh, *the horror* of it all! I got up and went running through the crowd, down the stairs and out into the alleyway. And then the cops wouldn't let me back in because they thought I was

just some stoned hippie. So I was just out on the street and I spent the whole gig out there.

They finally picked me up out of a pile of broken glass after the gig was over. The guys were coming out to leave and there I was. They got me over to somebody's house and then Garcia came over and spent the night playing guitar to me. And that helped a lot, because I was just dying over and over and over again. *Whoo-ee* what a night! *Shake it!*

Do you find the types of images and archetypes that drove you initially when you started writing are powerful enough that they still are fueling you? Or have there

"I think the American mind is closing at a rate which is getting near critical mass right now."

been shifts in your archetypes?

I don't think so. I don't think that happens to people. At a certain point, what is significant to you is formed in you and I think the only way you're going to change that is to get a new mind and a new body. [Laughs]

Although life and experience can alter it, no?

It can change the perspective on your values and your image system. You can get cynical about it. Or you can get senile about it—get a second childhood about it—and see it in golden lights. If you keep yourself healthy and get a certain amount of exercise, you'll perhaps run your symbols through a more logical and positive approach. But when you're talking about your symbol system, you're talking about who you are that makes you different from somebody else. You're talking about heredity, environment and that *something else*. I think we're talking about what a being really is here; we're getting phenomenological.

What kinds of input from your environment do you find is stimulating you these days?

Well, Garcia has been coming over a lot and we've been writing some tunes toward a new album. Working with Jerry is very exciting. We each know

how the other works and we just flash back and forth, working out changes and possibilities for phrasing. I'll throw him a phrase and he'll say, "Wrong accent," so I throw him another one. "Yeah, that accent's right." And we do that until we have sort of a dummy lyric that will work. Then, once we have an agreed-upon model, I can get cracking on it and hone it.

I can write fast once I have my model. I can put my ideas into pretty much any form. It's an ability—something I can do easily—so by the time he's out of here, we might have run through four or five drafts of a song, or maybe even two songs. Then I have a pretty good idea of how it should go and I work by myself on it, getting it to be coherent.

Using his chord changes?

Yes, on what we've been working on now. I don't need his changes past the point where I have the dummy, and I have the scan and know where the accents go. Then I try to make a song out of it. It's not the way we generally have been working, but it's the way we want to work right now—close collaboration.

One of Garcia's greatest musical strengths is coming up with dynamic bridges—the music that accompanies things like "Goin' where the wind don't blow so strange . . ." or "I've stayed in every blue light cheap hotel . . ." or "See here how everything leads up to this day . . ." My question is, when you're working on the lyrics, do you generally know that this is going to be the pivotal part of the song?

Oh sure, when I write a set of lyrics I'll label it "verse one, chorus, verse two, chorus, bridge, refrain, verse." This is one of the things we've worked on a lot together. I know that's one of the things he likes to do—construct real fine bridges. It's a nice pivot in the song, something to work toward.

How has working with Garcia affected your own music and your sense of melody?

There's simply no way to tell. It's like asking, how does listening to the radio affect your sense of popular music? I don't know, because it's the sense I have. He said one of the songs on *Liberty* reminded him of "Run for the Roses," and I said, "Frankly it would be strange if *every* song doesn't remind you of something of yours. You're my major musical influence."

I'm not trying to consciously copy anything of his, but then we've been playing together since we were 18, 19, and he's always been one step ahead of me in musical hipness, and that's a flat fact. I'm as much a fan of his compositions as any Deadhead. I love his songs and I feel honored to be able to supply the lyrics.

You two started out as folkies, and that

music is still obviously important in your lives. What is it about folk music that it seems to have this sort of eternal verity?

It wouldn't be folk music if it didn't. It wouldn't have continued on in people's minds. That's the reason that it is folk music. There's a certain timelessness to the themes. Jerry favors a certain type of folk song. He loves the mournful death-connected ballad, the Child ballad stuff. This is a venerable source which has always spoken to him, and to me as well, which is one reason we got together writing songs — because of that haunting feel that certain traditional songs have. I just eat them up, and so does he. It's a point of absolute mutual agreement. "Terrapin" gets that in spades, and even names a few of the songs. "Terrapin" was an attempt to entirely surrender and go in that direction. That's our little temple of that. It's full of ghosts.

Is it at all odd that you were both so into that at an early age? Most 20-year-olds are busy feeling immortal.

[Laughs] Well, they can read that into this, too, if they wish. It's archetypal. It hearkens to something in us that is built into us partly genetically and partly by the culture we assimilate, the values built into popular songs. I try to go for something real basic when I write a song. It's got to have these resonances

to me or it's not right. Unless, maybe, I'm trying to write a rock 'n' roll song, and then I'm looking for rock 'n' rollish resonances. But I'm generally deep-sea diving in imagery and getting things that sometimes — as in folk music — you don't know quite what it means, but it's resonant. Like that line in that folk song: "ten thousand was drowned-ed that never was born." It makes the hair stand up on your arms. That's how I know I've hit in my own writing. You just know it. "Good line, Hunter."

Do you feel that any of your songs have been widely misinterpreted?

Well, I think that people have often believed that the character in "Jack Straw" who says "We can share the women, we can share the wine" is expressing my personal sentiments, which is certainly not the case. I heard a lot from feminist groups about that one when it first came out. If you really look at what happens in that song, you'll see it's a situation that ends in tragedy. It's a dialogue between two people, and here's the outcome of the various attitudes which Shannon is mouthing off in the song.

The other one that comes to mind is "Driving that train, high on cocaine, Casey Jones you better watch your

speed." I said the bad word — cocaine — and put it in a somewhat romanticized context and people look at that as being an advertisement for cocaine, rather than what a close inspection of the words will tell you.

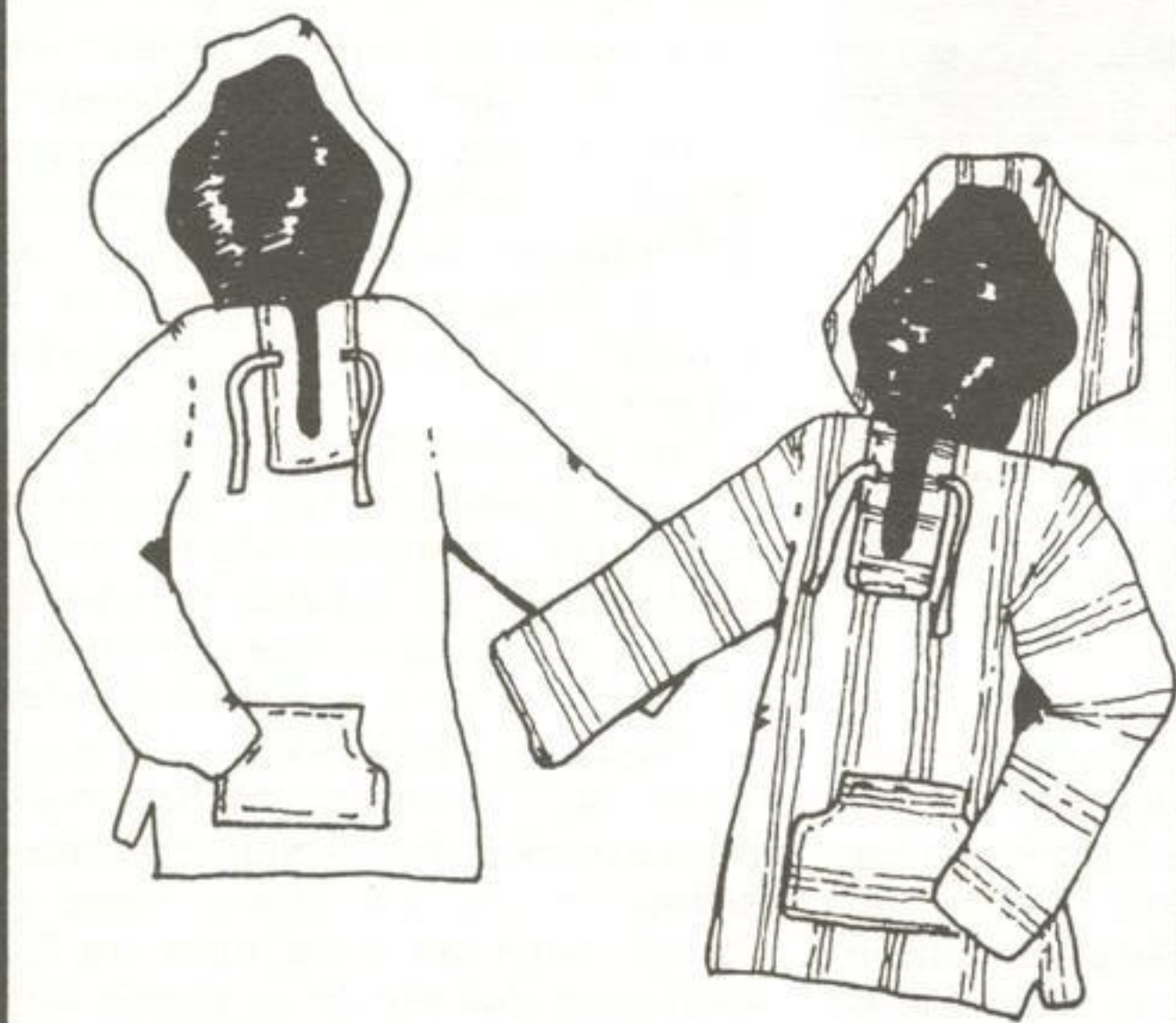
Then there's the line in "Candyman" that always gets the big cheers: "If I had a shotgun, I'd blow you straight to hell." The first time I ran into that phenomenon was when I went to the movie *Rollerball* and saw the people were cheering the violence that was happening. I couldn't believe it. I hope that people realize that the character in "Candyman" is a character, and not me.

Oh, I think they do. I think people are cheering the attitudinal bravado of the character more than the specifics of Mr. Benson's possible demise.

Maybe. I've gotten used to it. I expect it, but I'm never quite sure what it means.

Through the years you've had so much Western imagery in your songs. Is the West a subject you've always been interested in and read a lot about?

I don't think I know that much more than the average person. I did go through a period in the sixth or seventh grade where I got caught up with Wyatt Earp and read everything I could get



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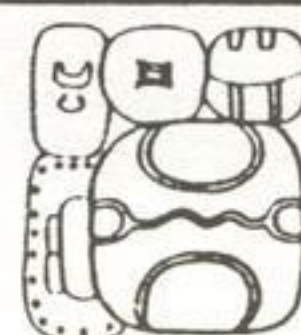
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my hands on about him. But not too much beyond that. I am definitely a Westerner. I've grown up in Oregon, Seattle and California, all up and down the West Coast. My grandfather was a cowboy. He could lasso me running across the yard.

"West L.A. Fadeaway" has a different lyrical flavor than a lot of your songs. What can you tell me about how that song was written?

I think the initial hit on that was the old song — not the one I wrote — that goes "stop on the red and go on the green but get my candyman home/ salty dog, candy man/ salty dog, candy man." I liked that; it was catchy. Little

the characters, a real loving attitude toward them.

I could tell you what "China Doll" means but I really wouldn't want to get into it. "A pistol shot at five o'clock/ the bells of heaven ring." Do you understand what that song's about?

I've always assumed it was about a literal or metaphorical suicide.

Good, 'cause one of my original titles for it was "The Suicide Song." It's almost like a ghost voice: "Tell me what you done it for/ No I won't tell you a thing." It's a little dialogue like that. I don't know about love being in there. I think it's a terrifying song. And then it's also got some affirmation of how it

That's not it anymore." Because if it is that concrete, if I can really explain it, I might as well write books of philosophy. The poet is touching and questioning. It's open to interpretation. I know to some degree what I intended there [in "China Doll"], or I know what some of the resonances in there seem to be to me, even if I can't put too good a logical head on it. It seemed right. I trusted it. I had to.

Grace Slick once told me that her one regret as a songwriter was that she'd never written a great love song—

[Laughing] What about "seven inches of pleasure?" [A line from a risqué song called "Across the Band" that Grace wrote for the Airplane's *Long John Silver* LP.] That was a helluva tune!

Is there a type of song you've tackled but have never been satisfied with?

Protest music. Whenever I write a protest song I stand way, way back from it and it hits the garbage. I don't like the strident, protesting tone itself.

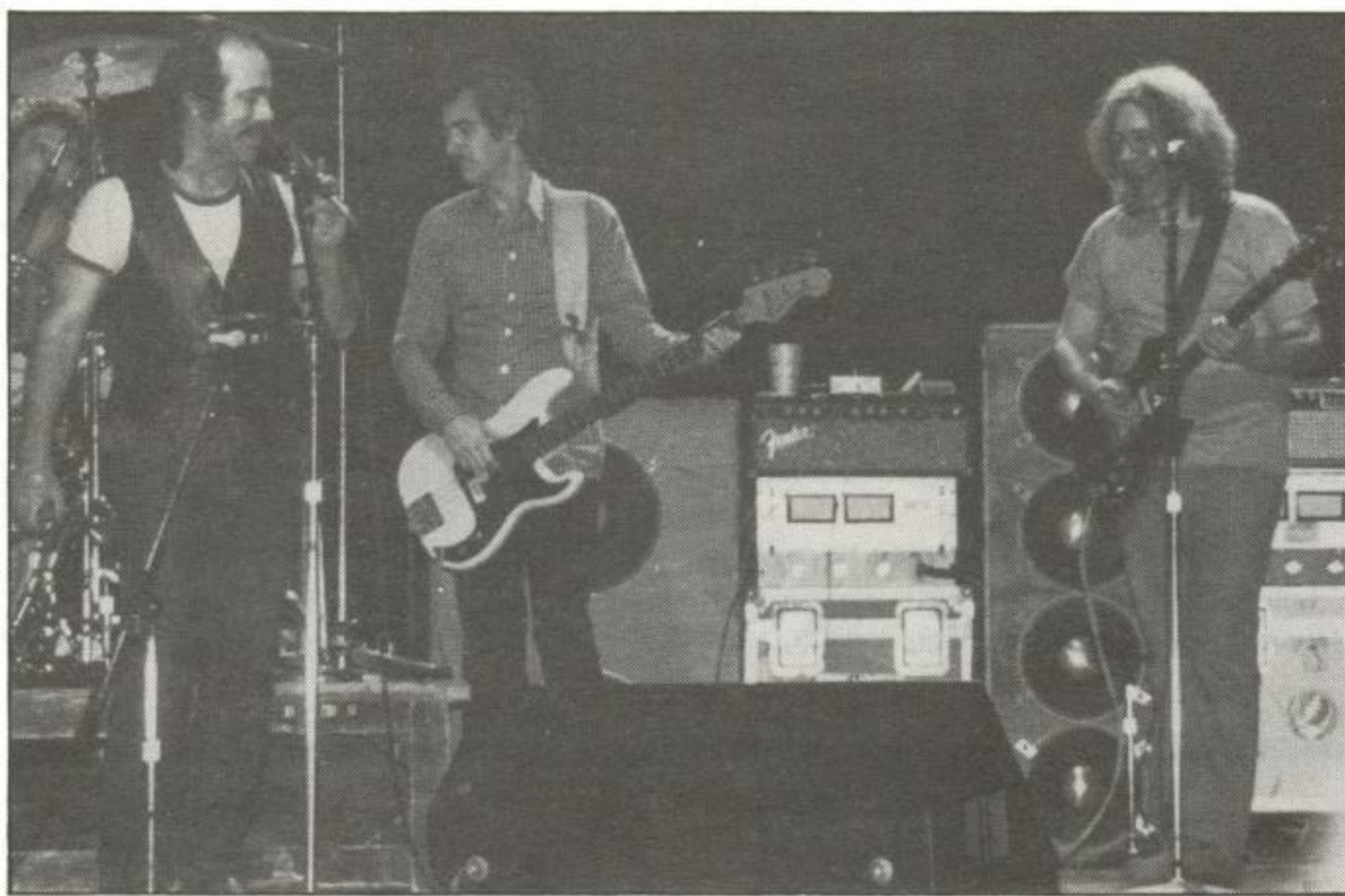
Yet you keep trying it?

Oh hell yes. In any given year I'll write a dozen or more. I just do people the favor of not laying them on 'em. [Laughs] I'm not a fan of the genre. I keep doing them, though, because I feel "protesty" about things. I'll read something in the paper, I'll feel righteous about it, and then I'll sit down and try to do what Phil Ochs would have done — I write a protest song about it. I don't record it, though. I throw it away. It's not my particular province. Perhaps it's the province of U2 or those who feel righteous enough about doing it and feel without sin enough themselves to be casting stones. Fine.

There's something I, specifically, can do, and it would be very wrong for me to say, OK, I will now take the world's causes upon myself and abandon the thing that I think is more important for me to do, which is . . . I have some little cracked pane into a little part of the subconscious. I've always felt that I'm conscious of the subconscious, and unconscious of the conscious. There are things that I can bring out of the subconscious that not many people can. I have feelings for the psychic waves, the psychological problems that people are going through, and it's those kinds of problems I want to address — more generalized things.

Do you have any thoughts on how the current younger generation of Deadheads is similar to or different from the first group that came up in the late '60s and early '70s?

I don't think you can generalize. They're all so different from each other. Once in a while I'll see kids who look like they just stepped out of 1969 —



Hunter onstage with the Garcia Band at Kean College (NJ) 2-28-80, one of their rare appearances together. Photo: Jay Blakesberg

bits of old folk songs have a way of getting into my songs. But then I put that one on an L.A. freeway.

The character in there — his eyes are tombstones. Those are L.A. attitudes in there. Whew! And Jerry soft-pedaled those lyrics a little. There were verses he didn't do. I was out to create a real bad character, which is kind of what I consider an L.A. way of looking at things. I'm not a great fan of L.A. [Laughs] We recorded *Terrapin* in West L.A. out in some warehouse district where you had to walk through some real Shakedown Street stuff.

Are there certain characters in your solo work or your Grateful Dead work that you particularly like or feel close to?

Gee, I don't know. [Long pause] I guess I don't really look at them that way. I don't have a thoughtful, reasonable answer to that. Maybe if you gave me an example.

Well, for instance, even though the circumstances of the characters' lives in tunes like "Wharf Rat" and "China Doll" are tragic, I sense a lot of empathy towards the plight of

can be mended somehow. There's a bit of metaphysical content in there which I kind of leave open, not that I subscribe or don't subscribe to it. At the time it resonated right. That song is eerie and very, very beautiful the way Jerry handles it.

I guess I've always sensed that there's another character there, literally or figuratively, who is empathizing with the main character and understanding why it's happening and saying, in effect, "It's all right."

Well, yeah, sort of like a guardian angel. Who knows who or what that is? This is a dangerous area for me to be talking about — the metaphysics of my lyrics. You don't want me to start passing judgements on this.

I'm sorry if this makes you uncomfortable.

It's fine up to this point, but I'd just as soon move away from the subject of lyric interpretation. All of a sudden my alarm started to go off because it's almost as if I'm starting to set something very delicate into concrete. And then, once I've set it in concrete I realize, "No, that's not what it means at all.

their heads seem to be in the right place, and they're interchangeable with that era. Or perhaps those are some of the Heads who have been tripping back and forth between 1969 and 1988, for all I know. Maybe some of them have found a tunnel through. You never know. Maybe it isn't a new generation at all. First Deadheads were trying to get tickets to every city they could, now they're trying to get in every time. And they still can't get in — they're still standing outside saying "I need a miracle." [Laughs]

It's gotten pretty respectable to be a young Deadhead at this point.

That's true, there are enough young people into it that there's no shame in liking the Dead.

Hey, the Dead even made United Press' list of "in" things for '88.

Oh no! Oh no! The lists, the awards ... that's scary stuff. We've set ourselves up to weather all kinds of seas. The sea of fame and large, general middle-of-the-road acceptance may be one of the roughest ones of all, and we could founder here. We could have foundered anywhere on the way to here. I have to believe we won't. I don't know where this one goes, though, except *down*. It's impossible to think it's going to get bigger, because it seems

like it would be impossible to be bigger. Where do you go from the stadium? To the point where you can no longer play gigs because it will be such a circus if we do? I hope not.

Who are some modern songwriters you admire?

There's this fellow Morrissey, who writes for The Smiths. I also like the guy in Love and Rockets. Then there's the writer in The Call [Michael Been]. He is just superb! I've played his records over and over. He's so literate! I also like Nina Hagen, because she's so weird. Some of what she writes I don't like, but some of it I like a lot. She's uneven insofar as pleasing me goes. I'm not sure who her target audience is at all. But some of her stuff is so remarkably weird it's almost shocking. She strews around belief systems like they were handfuls of Cheerios. I would recommend her to the severely weird.

Have you ever written anything to be deliberately contrary or controversial in the way that in the '70s punks wrote things deliberately to shock?

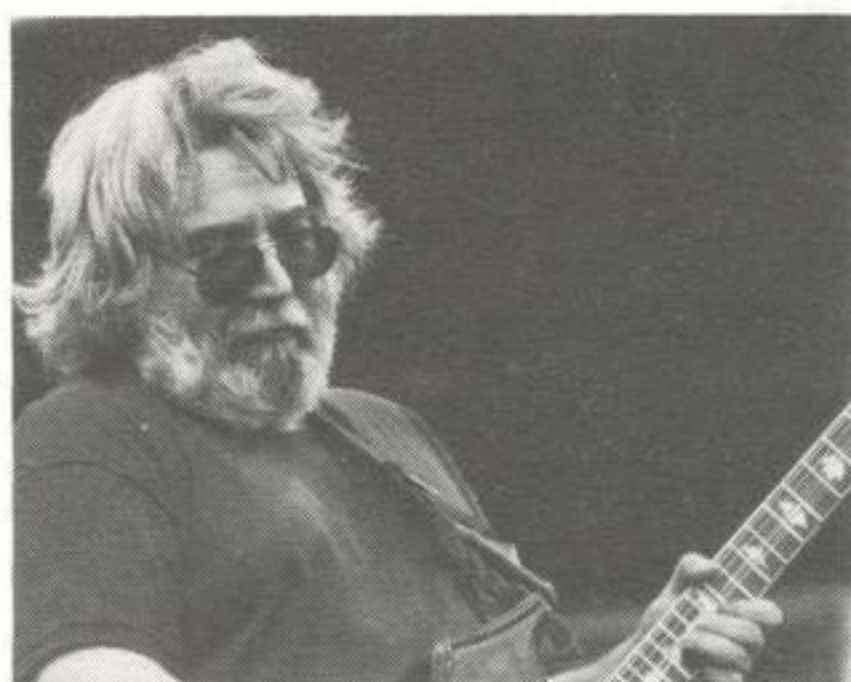
Well, I've thrown in a few forbidden words in my time. We got in "some other fucker's crime" in "Wharf Rat." The Jefferson Airplane said they used that word [in "We Can Be Together" from *Volunteers*], but did they really? I

challenge you to listen to that closely. You can't hear it. I think we were the first ones to say "fuck" on a rock record and get by with it.

You know, it was fairly risqué to use the word "cocaine" in a song when we did, unless you were a folk song on public radio. And though it seems mild today, "goddamn" was a heavy word to use when "Uncle John's Band" came out. I don't like too many strictures on language. At the same time, I don't like using these kinds of words in a sloppy fashion. Sloppy language is usually indicative of sloppy thinking. You want language to be liberated, and I love what Lenny Bruce did, of course, but that doesn't mean you have to go act and talk like that. But you should be able to. It's a basic liberty.

In a recent interview, Robbie Robertson said something to the effect that he felt that most of the great song ideas in pop had already been mined. How do you feel about that?

Oh my! I think there's an infinity of great ideas; they just have to be uncovered. And Robbie Robertson most certainly uncovered some germinally great ideas. The direction he went with The Band earlier was one of the things that made me think of conceiving *Workingman's Dead*. I was very much impressed with the area Robertson was



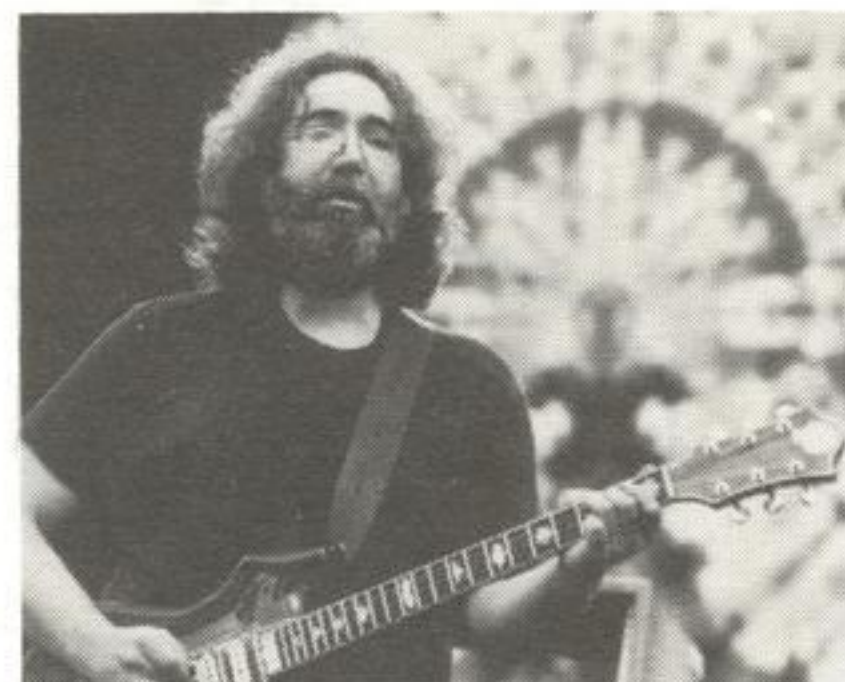
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working in. I took it and moved it to the West, which is the area I'm familiar with, and thought, "OK, how about modern ethnic?" Regional, but not the South, because *everyone* was going back to the South for inspiration at that time. I've done my share of back-to-the-South songs, too, of course.

I think knowingly or not people attach a certain autobiographical quality of your songs to Garcia, as if you're writing about his life and feelings. Do you detect that, too?

Oh yes. I think that's one reason I don't sell many records and why I've entirely escaped recognition. A lot of people do feel that Garcia has written these songs. I even had someone come up to me at a show years ago and tell me that he liked to believe that Garcia had written these songs and didn't really appreciate me singing them!

There are people out there who like to feel that [every Hunter-Garcia song] Garcia does is a unified being. Then they ascribe that unified being to Jerry Garcia himself and it makes him kind of uncomfortable because it isn't; that thing that's being sung is a mutual creation. I'm pretty much resigned to not receiving the credit for what I do, except among Deadheads who know. But even they don't think of it in those terms particularly, because it's a magic

"I've always felt that I'm conscious of the subconscious and unconscious of the conscious."

show and Garcia's the magician. You don't want to know who built the effects for [illusionist] David Copperfield. All you want to see is David Copperfield do his magic.

I've got a big ego, I'll admit that, and this has been a subject of unhappiness for me over the years. I like to get my little piece of recognition, and it doesn't seem to be offered me.

I'm really surprised you feel that way. Most people I know admire your writing tremendously. But you know, in a way you set yourself up for a life out of the spotlight by being somewhat reclusive.

I don't meet the public that well. I'm not inviting the audience back to my dressing room after the show, for sure. [Laughs] If I did, I'd just be answering a lot of questions I've answered before. Like, "How's Jer-eee?!" I live in a very Jerry-perceived universe, more than is pleasant for me really. We are, in fact, very different sorts of people.

Don't you think that your distance from the band is part of what's allowed you to write on some of the themes you have? So many rock and roll people fall into a rut in their writing when all they have in life is touring and recording, and all they turn out is bad on-the-road songs.

What was the major song I wrote while I was on the road with the band? "Truckin'." After that I knew it was time to get off the road or I would have been doing the same thing.

I guess what I'm saying is that one reason so much of your art is vital and people can relate to it is that unlike most rock and rollers, you've been able to live a life. A real life.

Yes sir. That's true. That's the trade-off. That's what I have got. So every time I go mealy-mouthing around about what I haven't got, I do look at the fact that I have had the blessing of living a life. And I have to ask myself, "Which is more valuable?" Well, *life*, of course! I guess. [Laughs]

The Deadhead Hour



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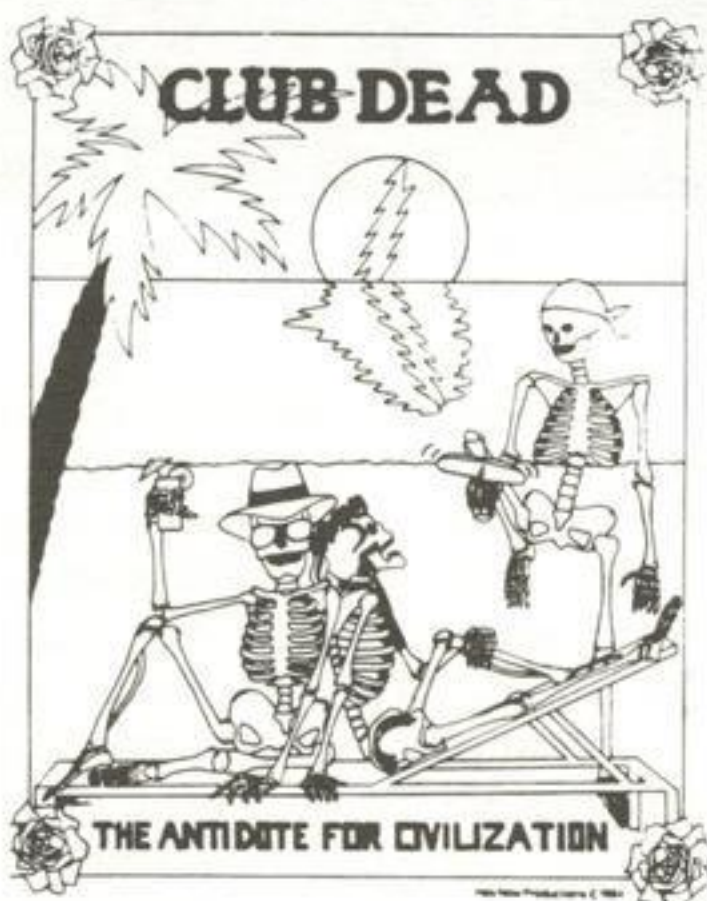
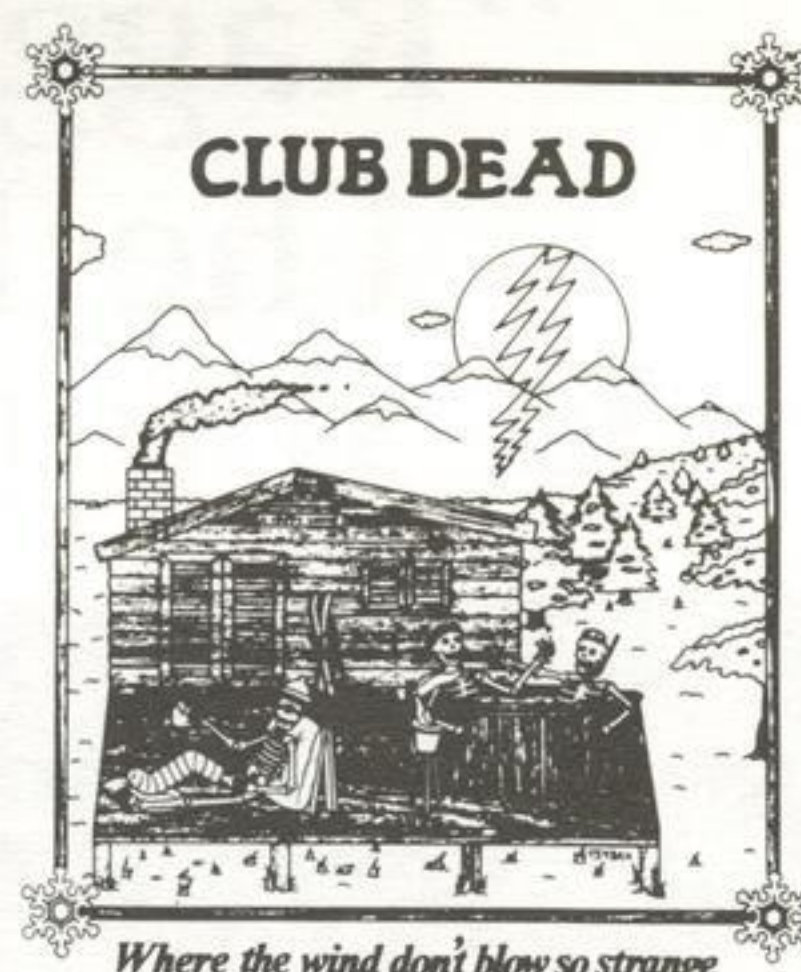
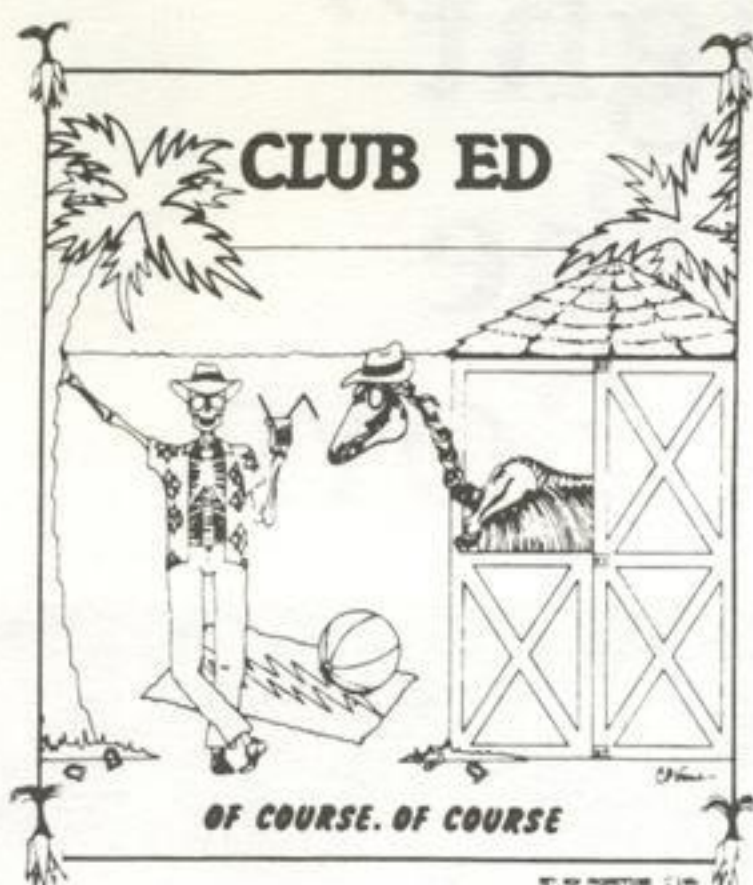
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"Ragged But Right" The Return of the BLACK MOUNTAIN BOYS



The Black Mountain Boys '87 (L to R): Kenny Kosek, Sandy Rothman, David Kemper, John Kahn, David Nelson, Jerry Garcia. Photo: Ken Friedman/BGP Archives

The "Roots" column of this magazine has taken me (and you, I hope) on some incredible journeys these past few years. We've explored jug band music, Delta blues, urban R&B, New Orleans funk and myriad other styles as we seek to unearth the origins of the cover tunes performed by the Grateful Dead and the members' solo groups. I know that I understand the band's music much better now that I have an appreciation of some of the people who inspired the Dead along the way. Beyond that, it's been a gas immersing myself in styles of music that were largely unfamiliar to me before.

This issue, in an expanded "Roots" feature, we dive into the world of old-time country and bluegrass to find the origins of songs performed by the reformed Black Mountain Boys during the "Garcia on Broadway" series, and in shorter runs in San Francisco and Los Angeles. I only saw the three SF shows and I was completely knocked out by what I heard (even though, ac-

cording to both Garcia and mandolin/dobro/banjo player Sandy Rothman, those shows were not up to either the New York or L.A. shows). The group delivered a fascinating cross-section of country, mountain gospel, folk and blues tunes, many featuring pretty three-part harmonies, and all showcasing a fine blend of acoustic instruments. Some of the songs were familiar parts of the Dead's 1970 and 1980 acoustic repertoire, but most were new to me.

Many of you are undoubtedly aware that the shows last fall represented the first public concerts by the Black Mountain Boys — Garcia, Rothman and David Nelson — since the spring of 1964. (The group was augmented for the occasion by bassist John Kahn and, for part of the Broadway run and all the West Coast dates, New York fiddler extraordinaire Kenny Kosek, possibly the best player in the bunch.) The '87 shows were not strictly a re-creation of the earlier group, however. That one

had Garcia on banjo primarily, Rothman on guitar and Nelson on mandolin. This time around, Garcia played guitar only, and Nelson stuck to rhythm guitar. And the earlier Black Mountain Boys played bluegrass for the most part, not the eclectic mix of old country styles favored by the '87 edition of the band. Still, the majority of the songs the new aggregation performed were tunes familiar to the players during the early '60s.

Rothman, Garcia and Nelson are all amateur musicologists who have taken the time through the years to learn as much as they can about the music they love. Thematically, the songs tackle an incredibly broad range of ideas — lost love, war, murder, salvation and redemption, corruption, spiritual tranquility, humility and the highway blues, to name just a few. In short, many of the same sorts of notions that pop up throughout the music of the Grateful Dead.

Though there are no immediate plans for the band to play again any

A Roots Extra

time soon, Garcia, Rothman and Nelson have all expressed a desire for it to happen again, and I'll gladly put in my vote, too — Let's do it, guys! Tapes of the acoustic sets seem to finally be circulating a bit among traders, so hopefully those of you who didn't get a chance to see the Black Mountain Boys live will get to hear what all the fuss was about.

Recently I interviewed Sandy Rothman about the history of the Black Mountain Boys and the tunes they played last fall:

How did you originally hook up with the Black Mountain Boys?

I used to work in this music store in Berkeley called the Campus Music Shop. It was quite popular in the early '60s; a lot of musicians hung out there, or in the alley outside. I worked there on and off for a few years during high school and after my supposed graduation. I was in there one winter day — I remember that because I was sitting on the heater — in 1963, I believe, and Jerry and David [Nelson] came in. I'd heard about them because there was always that confluence between the Palo Alto scene and the Berkeley scene. I believe I'd heard Jerry on the radio, too.

What had happened was that [guitarist] Eric Thompson had been playing with them and he went back East, or at any rate wasn't in the Bay Area anymore, so the Black Mountain Boys were looking for a guitar player. Nelson was the mandolin player and Garcia played banjo. I remember Jerry coming into the store, pointing his finger at me, and saying, "Are you Sandy Rothman? We want you to be our new guitar player." I said "Sure" and shortly after that I started taking the bus down to Palo Alto to play with them. We mainly played at the Tangent and a couple of other places down there.

Was most of the repertoire of bands like the Black Mountain Boys learned from other players on the scene, or did it come from early records, like the first Folkways albums?

Some of both. I think if you were in the South, you probably learned from other people almost exclusively because you couldn't get those Folkways albums in the South. That was a New York thing, and the transference came directly from Greenwich Village to Berkeley. I think most people around here learned from records. Not that many people went back to the mountains to look into the origins of this kind of music. I did later, and Jerry and I did one time — we really made some forays into that country and did some hanging out. But most people didn't do that so

Folkways was it. All their records were always available; still are for the most part. A lot of our material, then and now, came from those records.

In Jerry's case, he was much more into old-time music than I was, and he's a little older than I am and had been into music a little longer than I had. Bluegrass was something that was just coming into the urban awareness around the time we were all getting together, yet he got interested earlier. And what was out there earlier in the realm of alternative white music was predominantly old-time music. I was into that for about a year before I started playing bluegrass, but Jerry was listening to it longer.

Would people in the first local bluegrass bands play that style exclusively, or would they mix it up and play some old-time, some bluegrass, some pure folk?

The bands generally played one or the other. The heavier purists were the old-time musicians. A lot of old-time musicians felt that bluegrass had sort of ruined old-time music by bringing in a sort of rock 'n' roll beat, that backbeat that Bill Monroe played. The bluegrass musicians were more open to other styles. The Black Mountain Boys mainly played bluegrass.

Was it limiting having just the guitar, mandolin and banjo?

We used other instruments. Jerry played guitar — like even back then he played guitar on "Rosalie McFall" — fiddle, some mandolin, slide guitar, even autoharp.

How long did the Black Mountain Boys stay together?

I'm not exactly sure, because they were together for a while before I was in the group, when Eric Thompson was the guitarist. The time perception of all this is so weird. It all seems like it must've taken place over a long period of time because so much happened, but it was just packed into a short period. It feels like the Black Mountain Boys were together about five years, but I think it was closer to a year and five months. I was in the band solidly from the winter of '63 until the early spring of '64, when we took our trip back East.

So the trip broke up the band?

Well, we were there for a while and I decided I wanted to hang out there a little longer and Jerry wanted to get back to [his then-wife] Sarah.

You'd driven out there together, I assume?

Yeah, in Jerry's '61 Corvair, which we still think we're going to get back and go somewhere in one of these days. If we find it, we'll definitely drive across the country again.

On that trip a lot of what we were doing was collecting tapes, which everyone was doing back then. That's the other thing that goes back to your question of where people were getting their material — live tapes. Maybe this is the parent of the whole taping phenomenon. We were mad tapers, just like they are about the Grateful Dead now. We were after every bit of '50s bluegrass we could get.

We spent a lot of time in a small town near Bloomington, Indiana, because a friend of ours named Neil Rosenberg was managing Bill Monroe's country music park there, called Bean Blossom. Actually it's called the Brown County



Garcia and Rothman circa '63

Jamboree, but it's famous as Bean Blossom. There was a guy there who had this tremendous collection of live tapes that he'd made at the Jamboree barn throughout the '50s. To us, that was like finding the end of the rainbow, and we ended up staying there for a couple of weeks in his basement—you know, a couple of weirdos from the Bay Area copying all his tapes. A Jew and a half-Chicano traveling together in that area was a little weird, I guess.

Our fantasy was that we were going to end up playing with Bill Monroe in his band. That was the fantasy of country boys into bluegrass—get in the Bluegrass Boys [Monroe's band], and then play the Grand Ole Opry. Well, why couldn't that be a city boy's fantasy, too? I have this mental snapshot of this one day when Jerry and I were standing around at Bean Blossom, about ten feet from Bill Monroe, leaning on our instrument cases, trying to *vibe* this thing to happen. We wanted him to come over and invite us to play in his band. But we were too scared to even say a word.

Eventually, though, Jerry decided he needed to go back to California, and so he did—without stopping, except for gas, as I recall. I stayed in Indiana and I *did* end up playing with Bill Monroe for a few months that summer. I think by the time I got back to California—I also spent some time up in Boston after I got through with Bill—Jerry was playing in the jug band [Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions] with most of the folks who became The Warlocks and then the Grateful Dead. So sometime in that period of months, Jerry basically stopped playing acoustic music for a number of years. Of course Jerry—and Nelson, too—had always liked rhythm & blues and rock 'n' roll, so it wasn't that strange that they moved away from bluegrass. On the other hand, my interests stayed with bluegrass for the most part.

Why would the Black Mountain Boys reform more than two decades later?

For fun. We've all kept in touch through the years. The first reunion happened a couple of years ago [November '86] at the Grateful Dead's Thanksgiving party. Jerry had his banjo with him, which surprised the hell out of us, because he hadn't played banjo since *Old & in the Way* [1973]. We were pretty terrible. We tried to play all our old stuff and most of it just flopped miserably, of course. We couldn't remember the words; it was pretty funny. But we had a great time and we vowed that we'd do it again. We got together several more times at Jerry's house after that, and it seemed more natural to go

back to the real early stuff that he knew—old-timey stuff, songs from black and white traditions—instead of strictly playing bluegrass.

In terms of this tour [Broadway and the West Coast dates] I think Bill Graham was the instigator.

* * *

This bit of background out of the way, let's get to the nit and grit of the origins of many of the songs the new Black Mountain Boys played in '87. Songs common to the Dead and the Black Mountain Boys, such as "Deep Elem Blues," have already been discussed in past issues.

"The Ballad of Casey Jones"—The first popular recording of this song in the folk-blues tradition was by Mississippi John Hurt, who cut it back in 1927. It's available in the original and in more modern versions on a few Hurt albums.

"Spike Driver Blues"—This moody country blues tune has popped up on tapes called both "John Henry" and "The Hammer That Killed John Henry." It, too, is from Mississippi John Hurt's recording sessions in the late '20s, and is available on *The 1928 Sessions* on Yazoo Records.

"Bright Morning Stars"—This nearly *capella* white country gospel song, which opened several of the recent Black Mountain Boys sets, was popularized by Ralph Stanley. "You can't be into that kind of music and not be into Ralph Stanley," Rothman comments. "It would be like being into R&B and not liking Ray Charles or James Brown. Ralph started doing that song in the '60s, I believe, and actually he would open shows with it, too, which made me feel a little funny about it. We're not afraid to steal from the best. I mean, when you listen to us next to Ralph Stanley, we sound just terrible. It's like, 'Who are these guys?' We do have a quality of our own," he says with a chuckle. "We sound like guys who can't sing. The vocals on a bluegrass trio should have a real definition and a real clarity. We don't have that, though we get close to it."

A fine recent version of "Bright Morning Stars" (also identical to the Stanley arrangement), appears on Emmylou Harris' exceptional '87 acoustic gospel LP, *Angel Band*.

"Blue Yodel #9"—Also known as "Standing on the Corner" (to differentiate it from all the other "Blue Yodel" tunes), this was written and

originally recorded by Jimmy Rodgers, viewed by many as the father of country music. The Mississippi-born Rodgers was a major link between the black country blues and white hillbilly and old-timey traditions during his very



The original blue yodeler, Jimmie Rodgers

brief recording and performing career, which was cut short by tuberculosis in 1933.

"Trouble in Mind"—"We only did this one a couple of times because we didn't have the right instrumentation to bring it out," says Rothman. "That's a tune that a lot of people have recorded. Jerry's hit on it was probably from Big Bill Broonzy, but Leadbelly recorded it, and so did people like Leroy Carr and Bessie Smith. Leroy Carr's was probably the first. I think Jerry sounds a little like Bessie Smith on it."

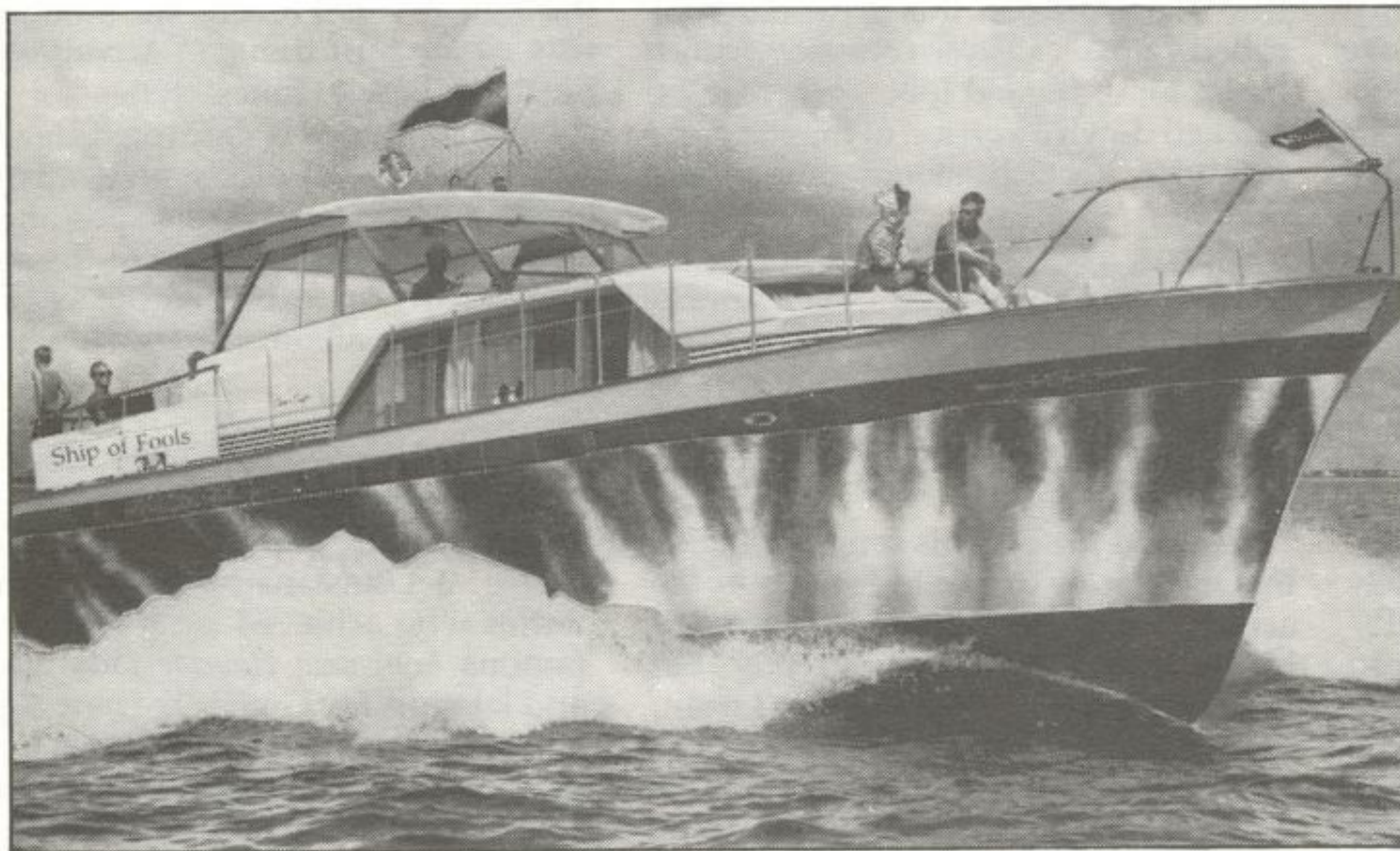
Born in Mississippi and raised in Arkansas, Broonzy was one of the most influential blues singers ever. He learned guitar from the legendary Papa Charlie Jackson in the late teens and had a long, illustrious career that attracted followings among both blues and folk fans. Muddy Waters even paid tribute to Broonzy by cutting an entire album of songs written or popularized by him. There are several versions of "Trouble in Mind" on different Broonzy compilations, and there's even a British album with that title, featuring live performances of that tune and others recorded in England in the '50s.

"I'm Troubled"—Just to make matters more confusing, *this* old folk song has also been recorded as "I'm Troubled in Mind." It has the same sort of false-hearted lover theme as similar songs like "On Top of Old Smokey." "We got it from Doc Watson," Rothman notes, "but he probably got it from the Blue



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The Blue Sky Boys in '64: Earl (L) & Bill Bolick

Sky Boys. We and a lot of the older generation of folk music people all got a tremendous amount from the Blue Sky Boys, who were these sweet-singing brothers, Bill and Earl Bolick. They're a really seminal group — they started recording in the '30s and were still going strong at least in the '70s, though I'm not sure if they still are. They recorded so much great material. In fact, the Stanley Brothers and the Louvin Brothers both got a lot of songs from them.

"But Doc Watson's recording of that tune on this Folkways album called *The Watson Family Album* is the one that turned most of us on in the '60s. I love every song on that record. So we're just trying to do 'I'm Troubled' the way they do. We do a few other songs from that album that we haven't played live, but maybe we will."

"Sure Life of Trouble" — Another one recorded by the Blue Sky Boys, though the Black Mountain Boys came to it through Earl Taylor, who put it on another Folkways album that was important to '60s pickers, called *Mountain Music Bluegrass Style*. "That was literally the first bluegrass that was on LP," Rothman says. "That was a big record for all of us. Taylor was certainly aware of the Blue Sky Boys, so I imagine he got it directly from them." (Country music historian Bill Malone has termed Taylor's style "hyperbluegrass," for its frenetic energy.)

"It's a Long, Long Way to the Top of the World" — A relatively modern country song, it comes from a 1964 album by Jim and Jesse McReynolds, a Virginia duo who began recording in the '40s. The song was written by Don Wayne. The McReynolds' version is most accessible on the brothers' Rounder Records compilation LP called *The Epic Bluegrass Hits*. The song has

also been recorded by the Osborne Brothers.

"Two Soldiers" — Called "Blue-eyed Boston Boy" on some tapes, this war saga came to Garcia via David Nelson, who heard it on a record by the socially conscious duo of Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, known in folk circles as Hazel & Alice. "It was pretty strange," Nelson says, "because the song wasn't listed on the cover or the record label, yet there it was, and it was one of the best things on the album. You could find the words in this great old book called *Putnam's Golden Songster*, which had a lot of the old folk songs in it." (I tracked down a version of the song on a Rounder Records album called *Hazel & Alice*.)

"Jerry likes war songs for some reason," Rothman adds. "He knows all the great war sagas. It's amazing to me he can remember all nine verses or whatever, but he has a good head for that sort of thing."

"Diamond Joe" — This song, spotlighting the vocals of David Nelson in the acoustic sets, was originally recorded by the Georgia Crackers in 1927, but Nelson got it from fiddler Tex Logan, whom Nelson befriended in the '70s. Logan has worked with Bill Monroe and other greats in his career. The Manhattan-based New Lost City Ramblers, whose late '50s recordings of old-time songs from the '20s and '30s had a huge influence on the young urban pickers of the folk boom, cut a popular version of the song.

"Drifting Too Far from the Shore" — Rothman: "Jerry and David were both big fans of the Country Gentlemen, which was a Washington, D.C.-based semi-urban, semi-Southern bluegrass band. They introduced the concept of

what's now called 'newgrass' — they play very traditionally, but they broke some of the barriers in terms of the kind of material bluegrass bands would play. They incarnated into the Seldom Scene, who were also very influential.

"Anyway, the Country Gentlemen recorded *Drifting Too Far from the Shore* on a Folkways album in 1960, and that record was definitely one of the records that gave David and Jerry the hit on how the Black Mountain Boys could or should sound."

"Crossroads Bar" — Rothman learned this one from a young bluegrass singer named Larry Sparks, with whom he toured. "The feeling is sort of like an updated version of one of the Stanley Brothers' greatest songs, 'Little Glass of Wine,'" Rothman notes.

"Turtle Dove" — This song, which is on a lot of tapes as "Adam & Eve," was originally recorded by Bessie Jones & the Georgia Sea Island Singers in the '60s, though Rothman says that he swiped it from an album by Bay Area old-time music great Jody Stecher.

By the way, if you've had trouble deciphering the chorus of "Turtle Dove," you're not alone — the last lines are "Sa-su-la-do on sa-la-su-ree." "We tried to pick it apart without much luck," Rothman says with a laugh. "We thought it was French, we thought it was all kinds of things." According to Stecher, Bessie Jones' lyrics for the chorus combined a corrupted musical scale (do-re-mi-fa-etc.) with words she heard a friend utter while speaking in tongues. Stecher's version of the song appears on an excellent out-of-print Bay Records album, *Going Up on the Mountain*.

"I Ain't Never" — Back in '59, this song was a sizable crossover hit on both the country and pop charts for Webb Pierce, a Louisiana-born singer-songwriter who achieved fame first on the famous *Louisiana Hayride* radio show, and later on *The Grand Ole Opry*. A perennial favorite in country circles to this day, Pierce accomplished the remarkable feat of having his first 22 singles hit the Top Ten on the country charts (between 1952 and 1960). The song is available on several Pierce collections.

"Gone Home" — Rothman believes that this song might be another one that goes back to the Blue Sky Boys, though I couldn't confirm that. He says he got it from a Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs recording in the late '50s or early '60s. "It seems as though almost every bluegrass performer sings it at some point," Rothman says.

"Wind and Rain" — My personal favorite of all the tunes in the Black Mountain Boys' repertoire, this tragic tale (in which a beautiful young woman is killed, thrown into a river, fished out and has her bones turned into a fiddle) has a long lineage. According to Art Rosenbaum, writing in *Sing Out!* magazine, "This haunting ballad comes to us from Kilby Snow, a fine singer and autoharp virtuoso from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. He says the song has been in his family for generations, going back to Cherokee forebears. 'Wind and Rain' has its roots in the Old World rather than the New, however, being a variant of 'The Two Sisters'" [a balladic tradition dating back to the Middle Ages]. (I wonder, too, if some version of this song wasn't the inspiration for Dylan's "Percy's Song," with its chorus of "Turn, turn to the rain and the wind.")

A Kilby Snow version of the song appears on his *Country Songs and Tunes with Autoharp* album on the Folkways label. Rothman picked up the tune from Jody Stecher's *Going Up on the Mountain* album.

I'd like to go on record here as saying that of all the tunes performed by the Black Mountain Boys '87, "Wind and Rain" is the one that could most easily

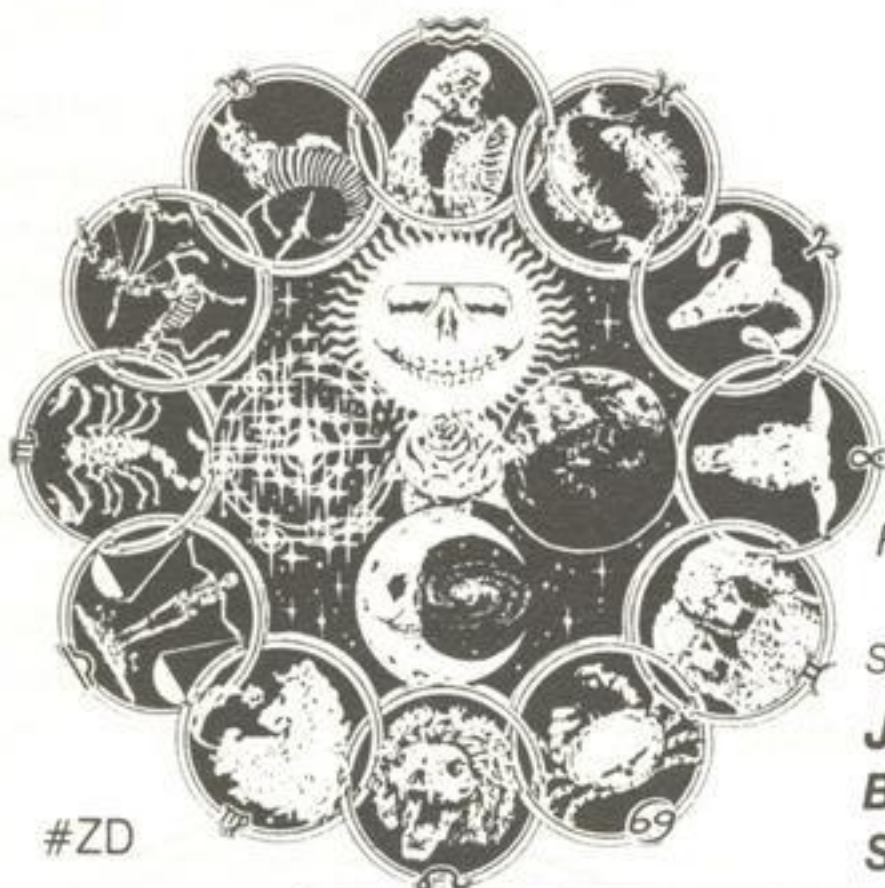
make the transition to an electric Grateful Dead version. It has some of the feeling of both "Peggy-O" and "Jack-aroe" but with a much more dramatic storyline and a relentless internal rhythm that lends itself to good ensemble playing. How 'bout it, Jer?

"I'm Ragged But I'm Right" — Another old one, dating back to Riley Puckett in the '20s, though it is better known through George Jones' 1960s version. "Jerry sort of sings it halfway between the two," Rothman says. Puckett was a blind singer and guitarist who performed in a Georgia-based group called Gid Tanner & His Skillet Lickers, known for their raucous style and wild shows, which combined string band tunes with Tin Pan Alley hits and humorous sketches. We should also note that Puckett yodeled on record a full three years before Jimmy Rodgers, so perhaps there's a bit of Riley in "Blue Yodel #9," too. His version of "I'm Ragged..." can be found on an LP called *Waitin' for the Evening Mail* on the tiny County label.

"If I Lose" — "That one we took directly from the Stanley Brothers," Rothman notes, "and it's one of the few

that survives intact from the first incarnation of the Black Mountain Boys. That song and 'Drifting Too Far from the Shore' are the main ones. It's one of those songs that really needs more of a bluegrass treatment, but we hit on it while we were in New York on Broadway because we were there right at the time of the stock market crash, Black Monday, and so we were looking for some appropriate Depression-era tune to do. I don't know for sure that that song originally came out of the Depression exactly, but it seemed to fit right. We played it either that night [October 29] or the next day, because it was a heavy-duty event in New York, as you can imagine. I'm sure nobody got it, but it seemed like the thing to do."

"I'm Just Here to Get My Baby Out of Jail" — This was popularized originally by the duo of Karl Davis and Harty (real name: Hartford Connecticut) Taylor, who were a fixture on WLS radio's widely heard *Barn Dance* program in the '30s. The Blue Sky Boys tackled the tune a little later, as did the Everly Brothers, but once again, the Black Mountain Boys version comes from an early '60s Folkways recording, this one called *Red Allen, Frank Wakefield & the Kentuckians*.



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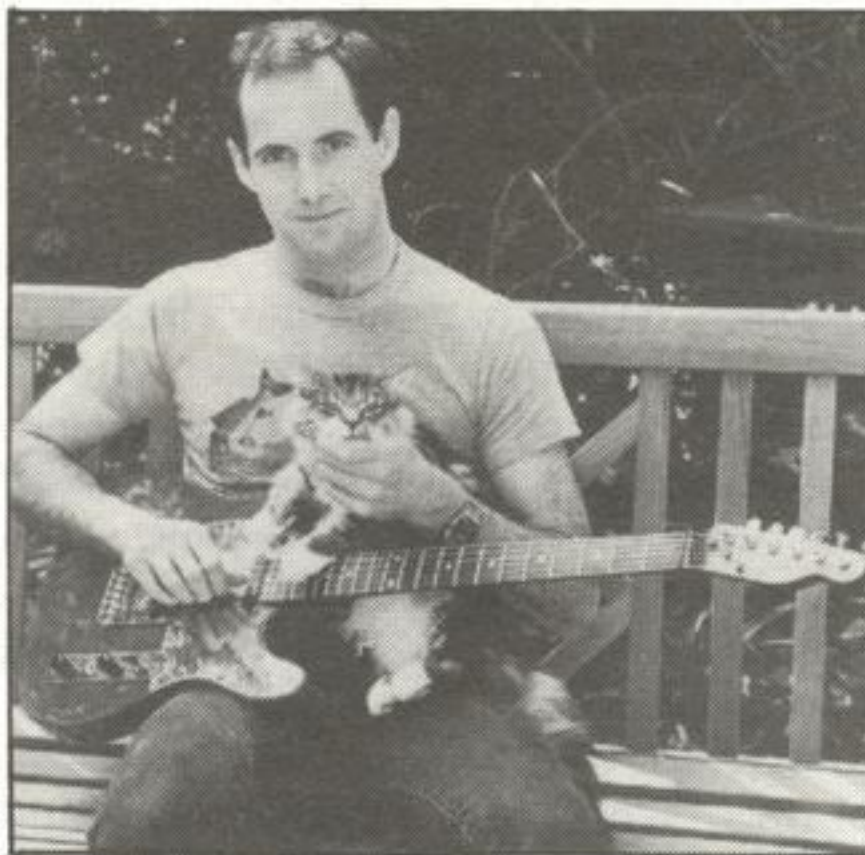
F U N S T U F F

Make Mine a Double Dose: Are you ready for the psychedelic record of the year? We're not bullshitting this time. Keep your eyes peeled for a record/cassette/CD by avant-guitarist Henry Kaiser called *Those Who Know History Are Doomed to Repeat It*, coming out on SST Records June 1. Some of you may already be familiar with the Oakland-based guitarist, who has made quite a name for himself through the years with his imaginative, always challenging style on a series of generally esoteric independent albums. His best-known recent work was a collaboration with Richard Thompson, Fred Frith and John French titled *Live, Love, Larf & Loaf* (on Rhino Records).

Those Who Know History... will be of particular interest to Deadheads, however. It opens with the first-ever recorded version of "Mason's Children," a GD original that was in the group's live repertoire for a few months in early 1970 but never came out on an album because the group was never satisfied with it. (It certainly did test the Dead's still-developing harmony skills!) This version opens with a sonic wash from Kaiser's axe and then bounces into the song, with unison vocals by *Deadhead Hour* host David Gans, Hilary Hanes and Cary Sheldon. Gans also has a fine guitar solo on the tune, but it's Henry's crazed playing after the final verse that really makes the track. (Ironically, another group, the Philadelphia-based Living Earth, are reportedly putting a version of "Mason's Children" on their Relix Records debut, due out in September.)

The remaining songs on side one are a pretty strange lot: "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance"; a totally twisted "Ode to Billy Joe," which really captures that song's sense of dread and foreboding; and "Fishing Hole," better known as the theme from *The Andy Griffith Show*, with lyrics to boot! I guess some of this straddles the fence between high art and high camp, but the arrangements are so weirdly compelling, and Kaiser's guitar playing so tripped out, that it *works*.

It's side two that will blow minds, however. Kaiser got together with a group of top New York players—guitarist Glenn Phillips, drummer Joey Baron, bassist Kermit Driscoll and cellist Hank Roberts—to record a new interpretation of "Dark Star," and it's truly amazing. While definitely retaining the spirit and some of the melodic figures from the Dead's '68-'70 versions, this "Dark Star" also goes a few places the Dead probably never im-



Henry Kaiser: Just twisted enough

agined. The blend of the cello with electric guitars is what gives this version its distinctive character, though Kaiser's typically unrestrained guitar pyrotechnics are also astounding. There's a musical passage that quotes from "The Other One" and also some very odd little tinklings of noise that are overtly humorous. More than just a Dead cover band playing "Dark Star" (it's *not* a Dead band, after all), these players have gone deep inside themselves and the structure of the song to uncover something new from the tune; and therein lies its integrity. The bonus treat: at the end of the song, Robert Hunter himself recites a starburst of space verse he wrote for the single version the Dead recorded in '68. Quite a coup, I'd say.

According to Kaiser, "Both Glenn [Phillips] and I appreciate the influence the Grateful Dead had on us, especially their earlier music from the late '60s. So we thought we'd record the Dead's primary vehicle for improvisation as a way of saying thank you to that particular muse that animated the Grateful Dead at that time."

The CD and cassette versions of *History* include a slightly different, even longer version of "Dark Star" (30-plus minutes), and the CD also has a number of Captain Beefheart cover tunes on it. You want weird? This is the place!

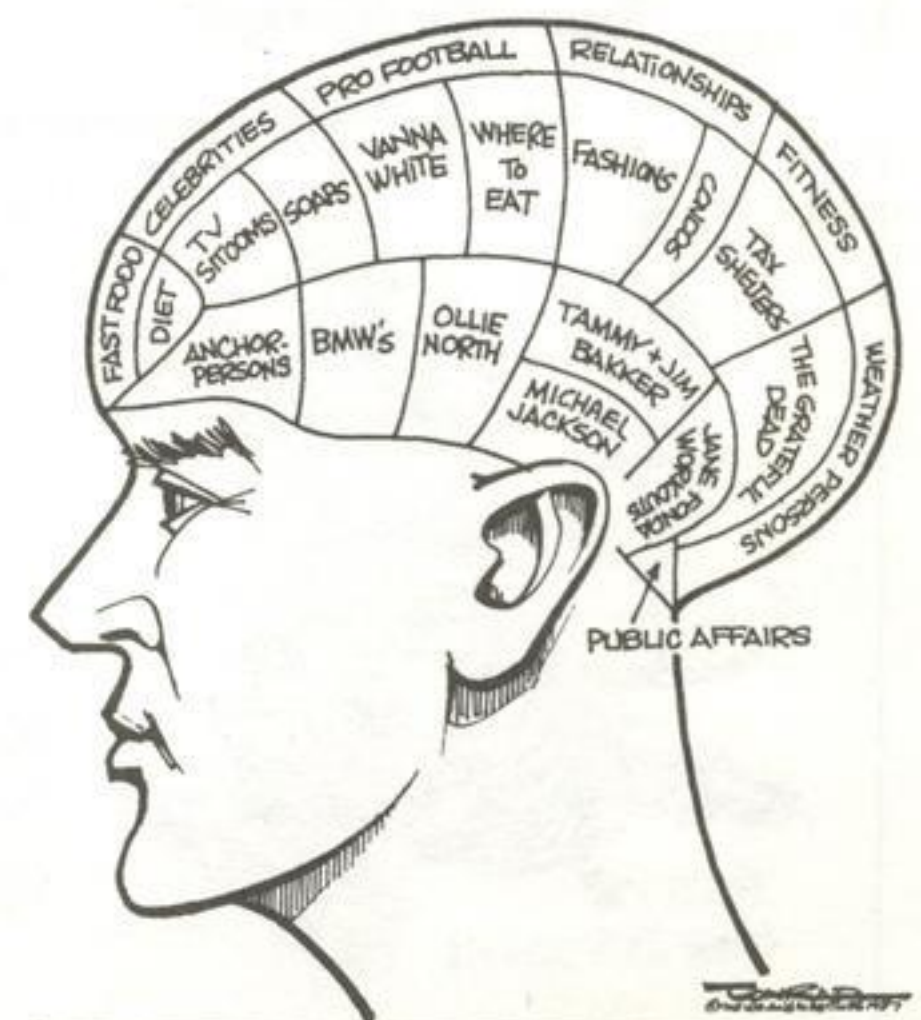
The Scoop on Singles: "Touch of Grey" was the Dead's first single to make *Billboard's* Top 40 (not to mention the Top 10), but through the years the band *has* managed to get a few songs onto the lower reaches of the Hot 100. In 1970, "Uncle John's Band" was on the chart for seven weeks and made it as high as #69. In '71, the edited version of "Truckin'" hit #64 and was on the chart for eight weeks. In '73, a Europe '72 version of "Sugar Magnolia"

made a two-week assault on the charts but died at #91. "The Music Never Stopped" hit #81 in 1975, and fell off the chart after five weeks. And finally, in 1980 "Alabama Getaway" was on for six weeks and peaked at #68. Now you know.

The Price of Fame: For what it's worth, Jerry Garcia was named one of "The 25 Most Intriguing People of 1987" by that ultimate arbiter of popular success, *People* magazine. Garcia was covered in a nice double-page spread dominated by one of Herbie Greene's shots for Garcia's Broadway run (Jerry as magician). Garcia's in pretty strange company in the issue—among the other "intriguing" folks are Oliver North, Baby Jessica, Donna Rice, Magic Johnson and Oprah Winfrey. Fits right in, doesn't he?

And in *Rolling Stone's* readers' poll in that mag's March 10 ish, the Dead came in second in the "Comeback of the Year" category (after George Harrison), and their "Touch of Grey" video placed fifth in the "Best Video" category. On the negative side, the Dead also placed second under "Most Unwelcome Comeback." In the *Rolling Stone* "Critics' Picks" in the same issue, the Dead won the "Comeback of the Year" category outright.

The critical honors continue: In the *Village Voice's* highly regarded year-end "Pazz & Jop" critics' poll—the most comprehensive national poll of its kind—"Touch of Grey" finished in the #6 position in the Best Singles category, and the video for that song came in at #5. Seems like it wasn't too many years ago that the musical tastes of yours truly were publicly mocked in the Pazz & Jop Poll. I was a contributing critic at that time, and I was branded a "biz-



The modern mind. Cartoon by Conrad/Los Angeles Times

sucking hippie." Now, evidently, I have some company.

Finally, the United Press news service declared that the Grateful Dead are right up there with *L.A. Law*, seamed stockings, Glenn Close and Mr. Potato Head among the things that are "in" for '88. Lord help us!

A Report from the Twilight Zone: In the February issue of *Q*, which is an excellent British music magazine, there's a lengthy article on the Grateful Dead and an accompanying interview with Garcia that has a few interesting nuggets. Here's our favorite—Garcia on coming out of the coma back in '86:

"For me it was painless. No pain or horror or anything, really, except a kind of science-fictiony, extremely speeded-up, wired kind of hallucination world that I was in while I was out of this one. I was off in this other universe struggling. The mind cooks up incredible shit. I had some really peculiar visions. When I came out of the coma I had this physical self-image where I felt like I was these chunks of protoplasm that were stuck together with perforations like a sheet of stamps, and running through the perforations was all this plastic tubing, and the tubing had these bugs like cockroaches or waterbugs crawling through it that represented a sort of intercellular communication device. And that's what I thought I was. Really. When I closed my eyes I saw myself like that, and I was trying to communicate to the nurses from this point of view and they just dismissed me as a howling lunatic—'This guy's really crazy!'"

And from the same interview, here's an interesting passage about Deadheads:

"For Deadheads, going to Grateful Dead shows is like a whole life experience. They talk about going to Grateful Dead shows in that kind of old soldier way—it's like their old war stories. And the Deadheads' war stories are like, 'One time we went to a Dead show and we drove from Ohio to Kansas and we got four flat tires and these weirdos tried to eat us...' [Laughs] Those are their adventures like our adventures were drug adventures; you know, when we tell stories we tell drug stories.

"We represent some part of the modern adventure in America—like Neal Cassady and Jack Kerouac and just hit the road. You need an excuse to be out there, and I guess the Grateful Dead is a pretty good excuse. It also provides a lot of support; there are always a lot of Deadheads out there traveling around, and they represent a kind of moving community. They've become more sophisticated through the years, with the older Deadheads hanging in there

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Fall '84: Interview with Robert Hunter, survey of professional Deadheads

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Spring '85: Interviews with Garcia about film and video, Donna Godchaux, *Tall Tales* 1970–75

Summer '85: The 20th Anniversary press conference, a never before published '67 interview with Garcia, tales of Egypt

Fall '85: Interviews with Bill Graham, animator Gary Gutierrez (*The Dead Movie*), a compendium of other artists' records that Dead members appear on, photo gallery 1980–85

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F U N S T U F F

and younger Deadheads coming in and discovering all this stuff. I guess in the '30s when people used to ride the trains, you'd have to learn from the old hobos how to do it, and the Deadhead traveling thing is sort of along those same lines. It's one of the remaining American adventures you can have—to follow the Grateful Dead on the road somewhere."

Incidentally, that issue of *Q* also has a review of a record by someone named Archie Brown called *Bring Me the Head of Jerry Garcia* (a play on the old Peckinpah film, *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia*). Don't have a clue why the LP has that title.

When the Smoke Had Cleared . . .

Officials at Stanford University, home of the Frost Amphitheater, a few miles south of San Francisco, have proposed a ban on smoking at all outdoor events on campus. This would be the toughest ban on outdoor smoking in the country, if enacted. In a San Francisco *Examiner* story about the possible ban, reporter John Flinn wrote:

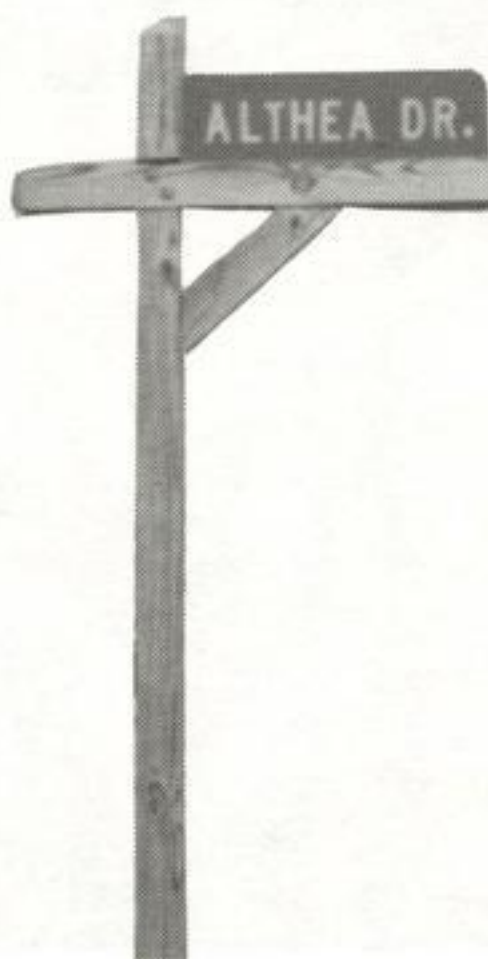
"Some Grateful Dead fans worry that a smoking ban would put a severe damper on the group's annual Frost Amphitheater concerts. But their concerns are probably outside the realm of the proposed policy. 'If they're talking about smoking things other than cigarettes,' said Raymond Bachetti of the University's ad hoc committee on smoking guidelines, 'that's between them and the district attorney.'"

The Wheel Is Frozen and You Can't Get It Down: When Staci Hession, a top young tennis player from Rochester, NY, went on a trip to Ohio recently on USAir, the captain announced that one of the plane's wheels had iced up and that he was unable to land the plane. The passengers were warned that an emergency landing might be necessary, and told to remain calm. Instead, Hession told a Rochester paper, "People were going nuts. They panicked. Everyone was screaming."

According to the paper, "Hession remained calm. She was listening to music on her headphones, and she turned up the volume so she wouldn't hear the passengers who were shouting. 'I was just trying to relax,' she said. After a few minutes, the captain got the wheel down and the plane landed without incident. What helped Hession relax was the music of the Grateful Dead. 'They're so mellow,' she said."

(Thanks to Foster Anderson of Oakland, CA, for the item.)

In the Strangest of Places...



Clockwise from top left: Street in Long Beach Island, NJ (submitted by Michael Weiss, Wallingford, PA); plane at Hamilton AFB in Novato, CA (Jim Halvorson, Healdsburg, CA); Deadhead-owned business in Oakland, CA (Danny Guaraglia, Oakland); store sign in Ault, CO (Doug Wakeman, Wheatridge, CO).

Great Interpretations: In his review of *In the Dark* in the *Boston Globe*, writer Steve Morse said, "[Weir] then turns serious for a rare Grateful Dead protest song, 'Throwing Stones,' a slap at bosses who have little regard for their employees." Maybe he means "Big Boss Man."

DJ of the Year: According to the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, when WMRY-FM disc jockey Angela Gabriel was barred by the station's management from playing the Dead's *In the Dark* album on her noon group/album spotlight program, and was ordered to play the Rolling Stones instead, the DJ became incensed, locked herself in the studio during her airshift and played nothing but the Stones until the station's management drilled through the lock and

re-took their station. "I just flip out over the Dead sometimes," she explained later. Amazingly, she wasn't fired for her transgression. No word on whether the station eventually let her air the Dead disc. (Thanks to Kevin Carroll of Godfrey, IL, for the item.)

Is That "Scarlet-Fire" Coming Out of the Lincoln Room? It's been a long time since a Deadhead has stayed at the White House. Jimmy Carter's son Chip was the last one, as far as we know. But the word is out that Massachusetts governor and presidential candidate Michael Dukakis has a daughter, Kara, who is an avid fan of the group. According to a *New York Times* story a while back: "Indeed, the governor of Massachusetts' reputation is so strait-laced that when his teenage

daughter, Kara, borrowed his American Express card and used his name to order tickets to a concert by the Grateful Dead in Boston, the clerk on the phone could not stop laughing."

Batting for Matty Alou . . . Phil Lesh:

Steve Ragan of Spencerport, NY, forwards a clipping from the Rochester *Democrat* in which Bob Goughan, the general manager of the local minor league baseball club, the Red Wings, tells a reporter his '88 wish list:

"At least 300,000 in attendance; for the Yankees to decide to send no more players to Columbus; and for the Grateful Dead to return to Silver Stadium—they're the best rock 'n' roll band of all time." Alas, the Dead show there last summer considerably outdrew the Red Wings' biggest games.

Hell on Wheels: There he is, all doe-eyed and glamorous, in the February issue of *Southwest Cycling* magazine in a big article on "Celebrity Cyclists." We're talking about Bob Weir, of course, who the magazine says rides about ten miles a day on his Fisher Mt. Tam mountain bike. "Doing it makes me real high," the magazine quotes Weir as saying. The magazine had the discretion not to mention that Weir broke his shoulder biking back in '86.

We've Come for Your Children! Eek, It's the Return of GD Film & TV Sightings!

Mike Hennessey of Durham, NC, tells us that on an episode of *St. Elsewhere*, a punk is dying and refusing treatment. Dr. Wayne Fiscus (Howie Mandel) warns that without treatment, she "could wind up dead." One of the punk's friends who is present snickers, "Gratefully," to which Fiscus blurts, "Her life is in the balance and you're making cheap rock 'n' roll jokes?!" The punk replies, deadpan, "What?" as if she really doesn't get that a joke was made . . . On another *St. Elsewhere* watched by Richard Poole of Wilmington, DE, a vice-president of a health maintenance organization declares that "there are several deadheads, but not Jerry Garcia, on the board of his organization" . . . Tony Saliba of Mobile, AL, writes that in the HBO movie *Homeland*, Powers Boothe plays a man looking for his missing daughter, who he suspects has been kidnapped by neo-Nazis. He tries to get information from a woman at a boarding house, but fails to get any until he hears strains of "Truckin'" in one of the rooms. He then tells the lady he has tickets to a Ventura Dead show and hasn't missed one for years. He also says he and the

Dead go back to "before Southern Comfort ate up Pig's liver," all the way back to the summer of '67. He wins her over and with a ceremonial handshake utters, "Deadheads rule!" What Tony didn't tell in his letter is that at the end of the film, the daughter's boyfriend gets blown away—wearing a Dead T-shirt, no less! . . . We caught an episode of the syndicated show *D.C. Follies*, featuring comedian Fred Willard interacting with huge caricatured puppets of political and entertainment figures, in which Willard has a flashback to when he and ABC newsman Sam Donaldson went to Woodstock together. The two are shown arriving at the lip of the stage, where various hippie-types are sacked out in a haze of reefer. "How'd you get such great seats?" Willard asks Donaldson, who replies, "Jack Nicholson scored them from Jerry Garcia!" . . . Denny Horn of Philadelphia spotted a giant skull & roses poster in the room of a character on *Amazing Stories*. Unfortunately, the character is one of two perpetrators of a horribly evil curse on a school teacher . . . Lastly, Rhys Sevier of South Bend, IN, notes that on an episode of the program *Loving*, "When Push Comes to Shove" was used as background music for a scene in which two young people are having romantic difficulties.

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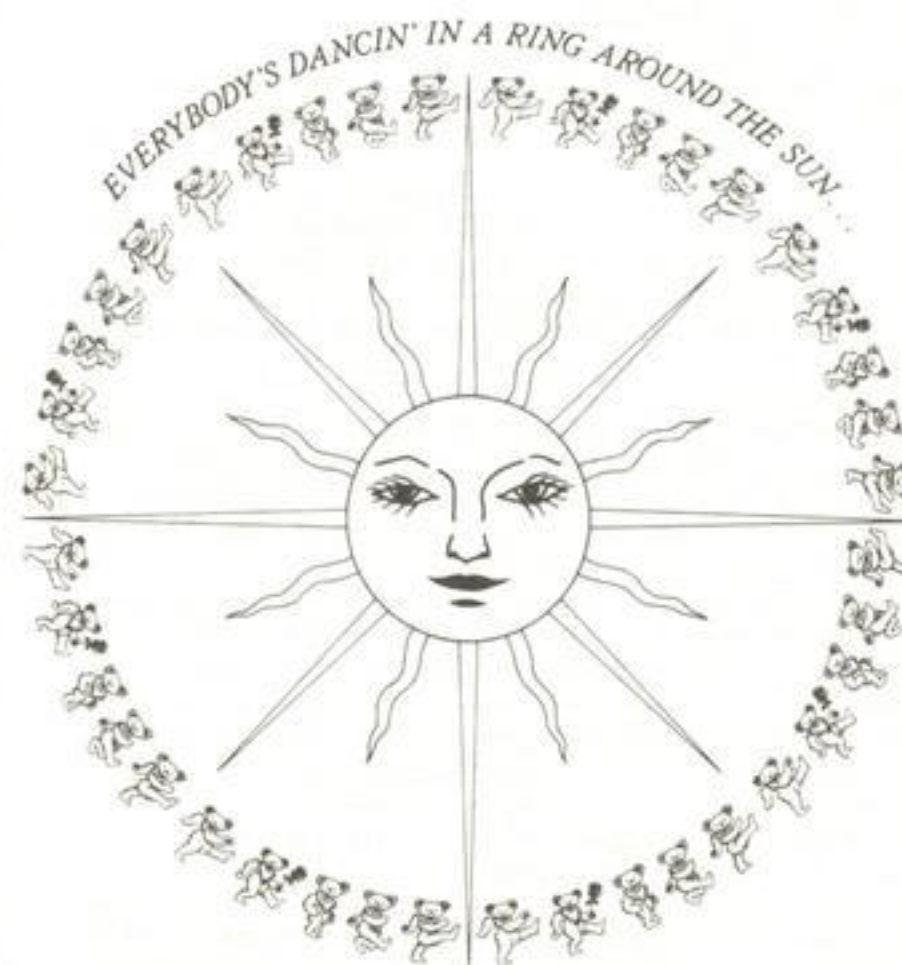
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T A P E T R A D E R S

This is a free service for Golden Road subscribers only. Ads may be no longer than 10 words plus your address—you edit them down or else we will! No phone numbers. Deadline for the next (Summer) issue is July 1. Note: The Golden Road is staunchly opposed to the sale of tapes.

Have 86/87 West Coast Nak masters. Seek SBDs all years. A.F. 2747 Green, San Francisco, CA 94123

New GD collector will trade blanks/postage. Send list to Mark Gonillo, 98 Ardsley Rd, Waterbury, CT 06708

Stuck in the swamplands lookin for Dead, Zappa, blues, reggae—audio & video. G. Cameron, 13805 Falcon Terr #38, Ft. Myers, FL 33919

Have 300+ hrs. Want Greek 87 & any 72-74 Dead. Also correspondence. Nikos Massouridis, 4 Praxitelous St, Maroussi 15126, Athens, Greece

Longtime Deadhead but beginning collector seeks trades, will send blanks. Ed Durand, 2364 Hollywood Dr, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Have 1600 hrs, many masters, & lo-gen 62-87, need same. Dave Dimartino, 11730 W Washington Bl #38, L.A., CA 90066

Have/want Crimson, Feat, Heads. Have 125 hrs GD. Arthur Cohen, 108 Central St #4, Somerville, MA 02143

Want 6/24/85 Cincinnati set I. Also Dead-related video. Lots to trade. Tim Noyes-Brown, 93 Roxborough St West, Toronto, Canada M5R 1T9

Will copy my VHS or Beta videos for concert tapes. Elliot Cohen, 4031 Airport Blvd #230, Mobile, AL 36608

Seeking my first show: Albuquerque 12/17/71. Todd, 3441 I Street #2, Sacramento, CA 95816

Longtime Oregon fan seeks 10/22/78. Roger Wainer, 3324 SW Kelly #1, Portland, OR 97201

Need 77, 85, and Red Rocks 87 boards. Ron, PO Box 2692, Evergreen, CO 80439

Need MSG 9/15, 16, 18-20/87, RFK 7/6/86. 100+ hrs to trade. Marty Klein, 73 Wellington Ave, Short Hills, NJ 07078

Beginner needs help. 50 hrs GD. Will send blanks/trade. Gary Dobson, 1045 NW End Blvd, Box 160, Quakertown, PA 18951

Desperately want Boulder 9/3/72 & all other Boulders. Have all Red Rox boards, all Telluride boards, & Carousel 1/1/69 featuring Pig & Janis (Lovelight), also extensive Dylan stuff. Also want any of Dylan & Dead. Am fast and dependable. Bill Freedman, 1908 E Lawn, Durango, CO 81301

Ain't that a shame. I got no tapes. Please help! Walter Ver-bick, 1600 Carlton Dr, Racine WI 53402

Desperate for Winterland 12/31/78 video. B. Walsh, 4B, Dover Rd, Eliot, ME 03903

Deep South Deadhead with long list seeks hot tapes, videos. Wright Sullivan, 120 Loretta Dr, Spartanburg, SC 29301

Please help. Trying to start GD collection. Will send blanks. Mike, 75 Lorna Ln, Suffern, NY 10901

Have/want Clapton, Helm/Danko; need Farmaid II & III. Fish, 4905 Niagara Rd, College Park, MD 20740

Help! Fire! Only 50 hrs unscathed. Will send blanks, trade. M. Hennessy, 3509 Westglen Rd, Durham, NC 27705

Looking for hi-qual audience tapes. Send lists. D.J., 14 Fawn Dr, Livingston, NJ 07030

Beginner seeks GD, Grape, Spirit, JGB, Band. Will send blanks. D. Wilcox, 22 Center Beach Ave, Old Lyme, CT

Want Hendrix, 87-88 GD, pre-73 GD. SBD only. Have 300+ hrs. mark, 54 N Third St, Indiana, PA 15701

Have/want rock, reggae, blues, Growing collection of masters. JG, PO Box 28, Buffalo, NY 14222

Fast reliable trader seeks same. 250+ hours, many SBDs. G. Stevens, 1044 Salem End Rd, Framingham, MA 01701

Want Rochester 7/2/87, MSG 9/18/87. Have 250 hrs trade bait. Dan Murphy, 2305 Bendelow Trail, Tampa, FL 33629

Have great appreciation but small collection. Help. Will send blanks. Ed Weed, PO Box 1283, Ridgewood, NJ 07451

Hey ya'll: Please help new taper start collection. Will send blanks. Jenny, 135 S Pickens St, Columbia, SC 29205

Young heads seeking first concert: Pittsburgh 7/6/87. Mark & Brian, 21 Spalding Circle, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Peals of fragile thunder keeping time—spring '88. Need that thunder, any year. Have 450 hi-qual hrs. Hans Voight, 232 Sawmill Rd, Litchfield, CT 06759

Want: Jerry on Broadway, Dead/Dylan esp JFK. Have 400 hrs. Ted Mahovich, 211 Strathallan Wood, Toronto, Ont M5N 1T5

Beginner needs help (on the way). Only 30 hrs. so far. Rob, 911 S. 22nd Ave #177, Minneapolis, MN 55404

Old Head, new to tapes, will send blanks. Mike V., 125 E. 15th St, Tempe, AZ 85281

New taper wants lists and esp. 8/18/87. Will send blanks. Spanky, Rt 5 Box 255, Gatesville, TX 76528

Beginner will send blanks. Any correspondence welcome. Phil Kuhn, 10171 Swinton Cr, Richmond, BC, Canada V7A 3S7

Have 400+ to trade. Need Jerry on Broadway. Randy Morrow, Box 319J, Coatsville, PA 19320

Seeking special shows: Louisville 6/18/74, Bloomington 10/30/77. Hi-qual to trade. Brenda Gillespie, 1708 Clare-moor, Louisville, KY 40223

Want: Hartford-Worcester, spring 88. Have 400 hrs to trade. Dana Farrell, 2 Dows Ln, Woburn, MA 01801

Want Dead 7/10/87 & 9/22/87. Have 40+ hrs GD. Jim, 230 E 5th St, Lansdale, PA 19446

Wanted: serious traders with 1000 hrs and more. Send lists. Steve Olson, 55 Stoneleigh Rd, Holden, MA 01520

Need fall 87, Garden, Spectrum. Will give them a good home. Danny Schwarz, PO Box 30, Zikron Ya'acov, 30900, Israel

Badly needed: 4/26/77, 1/7/79, 9/5/79, 11/24/79. Have 1000+ hrs. C. Maloney, #18A, 96-10 57th Ave, Rego Park, NY 11368

Veteran taper with 2 Naks seeks same. Exchange primo SBDs. Backstage Productions, Box 522, Stratford, CT 06497

Far From Me: European seeks Dylan/Dead videos. Can trade in kind. Also Neville/Dead pics from Pittsburgh. P. Lado, 58 Montague Rd, London E8 2HW, England

Trade with a real live Canadian Deadhead. 500+ Dead hrs & others. Steve Murray, RR#1 Shrine Hill, Wilno, Ontario K0J 2N0 Canada

Need: 9/28/76, 6/9/76, 3/19/77, 4/25/81, 11/17/78. Much to trade. Dan Rozek, 7725 Sipple Ave, Fayetteville, NC 28304

Want Telluride 87, Calaveras 8/22/87, NYC fall 87, Garcia Broadway, Worcester 88. Have mostly boards. Matt Ober-nesser, 400-22 Ivy Ridge Dr, Syracuse, NY 13210

Looking for JGB/Black Mountain Boys, Warfield 11/87. Have good early 70s stuff. John Rollo, 944 SE Lexington St, Portland, OR 97202

Need: Dead Duke 5/78, Van 86, and Bruce 88. Have 5000+ minutes to trade. Ben, 323 Laurens St SW #C-10, Aiken, SC 29801

Anyone tape Michael Hedges/Leo Kottke at Baltimore? Have 230+ hrs Dead/non-Dead. Philip Deardorff, McDon-ogh School, McDonogh, MD 21208

Want/have Dead, Hunter solo, Dead cover bands. Jon Erbst, 4818 Mary Ellen, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

250+ hrs, reliable, seeks others with varied and interesting quality lists. Mike R., PO Box 5557, Marlboro, MA 01752

350+ hrs, need 10/25/79, 5/12/81, 5/12/77, 8/6/74. Simon Friedman, PO Box 793, Lenox, MA 01240

Beginner needs donations. Dead or Dylan. Blanks sent. Send list. Alex McCracken, PO Box 356, Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, PA 18901

Need my 1st show 8/76 Colt Park, Hartford. Also 2/87 Peta-luma benefit & any Lunt-Fontanne. Rick Lane, 25 Neptune #1E, Long Beach, NY 11561

Anyone have JGB 12/11/83, Oswego, NY? Welcome all cor-respondence. Shannon Wilson, Rte 2 Box 184, Hud-dleston, VA 24104

Have 550 hrs. Want anything, esp pre-78, mtn tours, re-cent shows. Scott Armstrong, 44 Rockford Ave, Daly City, CA 94015

Wanted: 6/20/87, 9/13/83, 7/7, 8/87, 7/2/87, 2/13, 14/70. Have 150 hrs SBD/hi-qual. Melissa Josselyn, PO Box 297, Lanesboro, MA 01237

Want VHS videos of Hell in a Bucket, Throwing Stones, Dead on Letterman, others. Help your fellow Americans! Trimmer, 30 Blvd. Raymonde Poincare, 92380 Garches, France

Need Foxboro 7/4/87, Giants 7/12/87 (my birthday), any Jerry Broadway shows. Dave Novak, OCMR Box 2367, Oberlin, OH 44074

Need Scranton 4/13/71, JGB Rocky Glen 8/11/84. Have 1000+ hrs. Bruce Kaufer, PO Box 3456, Greensburg, PA 15601

Have 4000 hrs GD, Airplane audio, 700 hrs video. Want more. Netta Gilboa, 111 S Olive St #531, Media, PA 19063

Have 425 hrs, will trade 3 audio for 1 video. Jim Green, 2015 62nd St, Brooklyn, NY 11204

Want 4/28/80 Birmingham, AL bad. Plenty to trade. Swap lists. Jack Burn, 5709 Lyons View #2310, Knoxville, TN 37919

Wanted: any or all JGB Broadway shows. S.J. Martin, 1617 Kensington Blvd, Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Have 9/87 MSG, Iko/Santana, Angels Camp & others. Send lists. Peter R., 18D Bulger Ave, New Milford, NJ 07646

Beginner seeks help! Will gladly send blanks. Thanks! Michael Nolan, 75 Lorna Ln, Suffern, NY 10901

Seeking SBDs of Greek 6/87 shows. Patti, 581 W 10, #307, Kansas City, MO 64105

Wanted: FM broadcasts summer tour, JGB Greek, Kaiser 1/23/88, Dead/Dylan Oakland, Anaheim. E-Z Wind Tape Trades, PO Box 3, Bergenfield, NJ 07621

Tape head wants to trade with other heads. Send list! Kevin Apsley, 411 Prospect Ave, Wilmington, DE 19803

Have Hampton, Byrne 88. Want Neil, Airplane, GD, 4/6/87, 10/30/87 JGB. Steve, 10K Reher, Somerset, NJ 08873

Traders, send me your lists! I'll send mine. Karin Howland, 5514 Shipley Ct, Centerville, VA 22020

450 hrs of Dead, need more. Let's trade lists. Carter C. Gooding, The School of Theology, Sewanee, TN 37375-4001

Trade Buddhist/Taoist art for 87-88 Dead and Dylan/Dead. David Mason, PO Box 35, Chun Con City, Kang Won-Do 200, South Korea

300 hrs GD 67-87. Expect Spring 88 masters (Nak CM300). Reliable, prompt! Steve, PO Box 6264, North Brunswick, NJ 08902

'Eard any good boards lately? John Hearn, 137 Willa Ct, Chester, SC 29706

Need help starting tape collection. Many LPs, many ob-scure to tape/trade. Will send blanks. Highland, 1944 Ar-nold Dr, Charlotte, NC 28205

Need SBD of 9/12/87 & 7/7/87. Lots to trade. Mike Crossin, 8102 N. Sheldon #710, Tampa, FL 33615

Collector with 700 hrs seeks hi-qual to let it grow. Jan Opoliner, c/o Sheldon Electric, 42-14 Crescent St, Long Is-land City, NY 11101

Need Red Rocks 87. Have 350+ hrs. Send lists. Andy Hurley, 43 Ash Stoker Ln, Horohan, PA 19044

GD 1000 hrs, send lists for mine. Looking for anything crisp. Ed, 106 Montana Tech, Residence Hall, Butte, MT 59701

Need lists. Will send blanks, postage. Dead, Little Feat. Leeds Hurlburt, PO Box 3955, Plymouth, MA 02361

Beginner had 30 hrs, wants more, your list gets mine. David Ketterer, 4167 Larchview Dr, Cinti, OH 45236

Need Shoreline 10/3/87, JGB/Raitt 8/31/87, Cincinnati 10/30/71 & 10/26/72. John, 843 Washington, Albany, CA 94706

Wanted: hi-qual Alpine 87, New Year's 86. Buddy Wilborn, Box 7147, PAFB, NC 28308

Have blues, Ry Cooder, Van Morrison, Ray Charles, jazz, rock. Send list. R. Dugoni, 41 Big Tree Wy, Woodside, CA 94062

Want/have SBDs to trade, mostly 70s. Send list. Aileen Scalice, 1150 Bay Ridge Pkwy, Bklyn, NY 11228

Beginning collector. Help! Will send blanks, postage. Any correspondence appreciated. Frank Kremsk, 69 N Canal St, Shickshing, PA 18655

Wanted: BCT boards from fall 84. Lots to trade. Tom Duka, 6186 Greenwood Dr, #101, Falls Church, VA 22044

Need 5/11/78, 10/27, 28/79, 5/2/70, 11/4/77, 8/13/75, 10/10/68. Let's trade lists. Ed Osborn, 401 Garfield, Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Tapes to trade. John Midkiff, 628 Chapelview Dr, Oden-ton, MD 21113

Hi-qual Dead, JGB, Tuna, Bromberg. Send lists. Steve Dei-trick, 258 Penn St, Bloomsburg, PA 17815

Many SBD GD 66-87. Send list, get mine. 150+ hrs. Roy D, 675 Steiner St, #5 2nd Fl, Cinti, OH 45204

Let's trade. Have 200 hrs. GD and others. Fast & reliable. Steve Chase, P.O. Box 1562, APO, NY 09193

Desperately need 9/30/76 and 4/30/81. Have nice selection for trade. Graham, PO Box 68, Summit Station, OH 43073

Needed: 6/17/75, 2/9/73 + pre-72, will send blanks. S. Crawford, 171 Mt. Harmony, Bernardsville, NJ 07924

Fast, reliable trader seeks same. GD, etc. Exchange lists. Scott Erickson, Thunes vei 10 b, 0274 Oslo 2, Norway

Please help new GD/Dylan collector. Will send qual blanks. Frank Eirinberg, 3001 31 St, Rock Island, IL 61201

Trustworthy taper seeks cool cats to trade with. Don Wilkinson, OS Division, USS JFK, FPO New York, NY, 09538

Fast reliable trader seeks quality, not quantity. 350+ hrs. Zev, 150 S Monaco Pkwy #111, Denver, CO 80224

Desperately seeking 4/7/78, 6/30/87. 300 hrs, DAT mastered 86-87 to trade. 3145 Meadowbrook, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Chinahand Head starting collection, will send blanks. Il-luminate the East! Tom Mullen, PO Box 8-421, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC

Wanted: Dead at the Downs Santa Fe 9/10/83, 9/11/83. Will send blanks. Todd Ashman, 600 Hudis St, Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Craving GD. Have Fox 10/28/85. Will send blanks. Try Me! Frida Raley, 626 Williamson Dr, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Undergrad looking for Yale Bowl, 7/31/71, SBD. have 200+ hrs. Cameron Brooks, PO Box 1272 Yale Station, New Ha-ven, CT 06520

Lo-gen SBD/Nak trader wants connect with 87 audience taper. Mark Bires, 4724 Greenwood, Chicago, IL 60615

Fast, responsible traders seek same. Have 300 SBD hrs. Send lists. Henry and Nancy Klingeman, 624 Park Ave #3A, Hoboken, NJ 07030



CLASSIFIEDS

There are now two different types of Classifieds, with two different rates: Personal messages are \$3 for 25 words or less; 10 cents for each word more. Product advertisements are \$10 for 25 words or less; 25 cents for each word after that. Only taper ads are free.

Con-GRAD-ulations John Leopold. Forget about the banana slugs you left, they will not follow you. Lots of love & good luck. Your fellow UC alumni and onetime roommates.

Happy Birthday Z, the Wizard of Wah. Love, the M ski team.

Trips. M or F. A trip needs nice mail. If you live near me, drop by. Eddie, 2500 Doyle St, Greensboro, NC 27406

Yo! House-o-Drink/Deadbeat crew: Thank you for a real good time! Keep the mother rollin'! — The Wiseguys

Slender, subtly beautiful, young very intelligent blonde/redhead Deadhead...or best offer...sought for permanent relationship by slightly lame, usually broke and/or drunk, mostly Welsh/Irish 40-year-old retired ex-hippie anarchist technocrat with bad attitude, good references. If you're of the right mind, nobody else can adore you as I will! Drop a note to Chance, 833 Loring Ave, Crockett, CA 94525

To all the people who have had to wait for tapes during my recent 10-month incarceration, I extend my deepest apologies. By now you have your requests, plus some extras because of your wait. Let's keep trading, and thanx for bearing with me. Sincerely, Carter Gooding

Medicine Bag found in parking lot, Oakland Coliseum Jan 1. Description of bag and contents may accomplish recovery — interested persons respond. Dreamweaver, c/o Box 243, Cazadero, CA 95421. (I do massage bodywork.)

For sale: Rolling Stone magazine bound volumes 3 (April-Nov 69) and 4 (Nov 69-June 70) and Relix magazine (all issues vol 1 #1 through vol 7 #1). All offers will be answered. Jim Loneragan, 7525 York Dr, Clayton, MO 63105

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A Lost Sailor on a ship of fools is looking for a Sugar Magnolia or any correspondence somewhere within six hours of the tidewater area of Virginia. Don Wilkinson, OS division, USS JFK, FPO New York, NY, 09538

Sober/clean Deadheads unite! For people living a 12-step program of recovery and friends. Wharf Rat Group, 16 Co-ville Rd, Topsham, ME 04086

To the anonymous namecaller who found Steve's invitation unwelcome: I like to think that Deadheads are tolerant and compassionate, but I guess the axiom holds true: What we loathe in others we fear in ourselves. Let's loosen up with less fear please. Love, 10% of Everyone Everywhere.

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Peter & Francine: Hope you go down that road feelin' good for the rest of your life together. We love you!

GOULDOMANIA! Coming to a show near you.

Deadheads in Stuttgart, FRG: I'm interested in meeting you. Write to Jeff Gray, 5th General Hospital P&N, APO New York, NY 09154

Man of letters seeks inspired correspondence from cosmic lady of similar persuasion. RJS, 649 S Henderson Rd, D103, King of Prussia, PA 19406

To April, Bill, Coralee, The Citizen, Terry, Al, & Mel: George Eliot marked this truth: "Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but to pour them all out just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keeping what is worth keeping, and then, with a breath of kindness blow the rest away." Thanks. Love, John

The wheel is turnin' and we can't slow it down. We need more links for the Unbroken Chain. Send SASE for sample newsletter to PO Box 8726, Richmond, VA 23226

American Deadheads in Paris want to meet like-minded people, any nationality. Contact Trimmer, 30 Blvd. Raymond Poincare, 92380 Garches, France. Telephone (Paris) 47-41-57-23

Bumperstickers that say Deadhead and resemble state license plates; silkscreened on heavy-duty vinyl. Now available: MA, CT, RI, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, VA, Ontario, MI, IL, WI, MN, CO, UT, AZ, CA, OR. Send \$2.50/one, \$4.50/two, \$5.50/three, \$11.50/seven, \$22/all 19 (includes postage) to Joe McCullough, PO Box 583, Pinecliffe, CO 80471

Freddy Jones: Je t'aime beaucoup et bonne chance! ... It looks like rain, and it feels like rain. Love, Nancy

Soliciting articles, tape reviews, letters, art, anything. Please, for free newsletter, Taper. All the fits that print. 137 Willa Ct, Chester, SC, 29706

Wanted: 2 "Space is for deadheads, not warheads" bumper stickers: 1 for me, Lee Agnew, 801 N University, Norman, OK 73069, and 1 for Josh Alvarez, 127 Shadow Wood, East Amherst, NY 14051



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Deadline for the next issue: July 1



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