

DRUMMING AT THE EDGE OF MAGIC

A JOURNEY INTO THE SPIRIT OF PERCUSSION

by Mickey Hart with Jay Stevens

PROLOGUE

The conventional wisdom maintains that fifteen or twenty billion years ago the blank page of the universe exploded and our story began. We call this fortunate event the big bang, which is a bit misleading as a name since the conditions for sound didn't arise until almost a billion years later, and the conditions for ears some time after that.

A better way of beginning might be to say that fifteen or twenty billion years ago the blank page of the universe exploded and the beat began, since what emerged from that thick soup of neutrinos and photons were rhythmic pulses vibrating through empty space, keying the formation of galaxies, solar systems, planets, us.

It is possible, however, that in the metaphorical and mathematical concept of the big bang we are unwittingly brushing against a larger truth. Hindus believe there is a seed sound at the heart of creation, the Nada; a passage in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* describes the essence of reality as "reverberating like a thousand distant thunders."

In the beginning was noise. And noise begat rhythm. And rhythm begat everything else.

This is the kind of cosmology a drummer can live with.

Strike a membrane with a stick, the ear fills with noise — unmelodious, inharmonic sound. Strike it a second time, a third, you've got rhythm.

Fifty thousand years ago noise and rhythm came together and we began to talk. Our brains, after some million and a half years of hominid evolution, were fully formed, with two of the three capacities that would enable our rapid evolution already in place — the ability to store long-term memory and the ability to create symbols. We were tool makers extraordinaire, with a significant repertoire of grunts, squeaks, barks, hums, rasps, growls — poised on the edge of a cultural explosion that would pitch us out of nature.

Everywhere we looked we saw rhythms, patterns moving through time — in the cycles of the stars and the migrations of animals, in the fruiting and withering of the plants we gathered and eventually domesticated. Rhythm was the heart of mystery. And probably nothing was more mysterious for the ancients than the fact that once a month, with the waxing of the moon, the women in the tribe began to bleed. And if they didn't bleed — that too was part of life's mysterious rhythm.

Imagine the soundscape fifty thousand years ago. Noise meant danger, possibly death, an understanding rooted in the oldest parts of the brain, in the fight-or-flight programs that activate the adrenals, preparing the organism for immediate action.

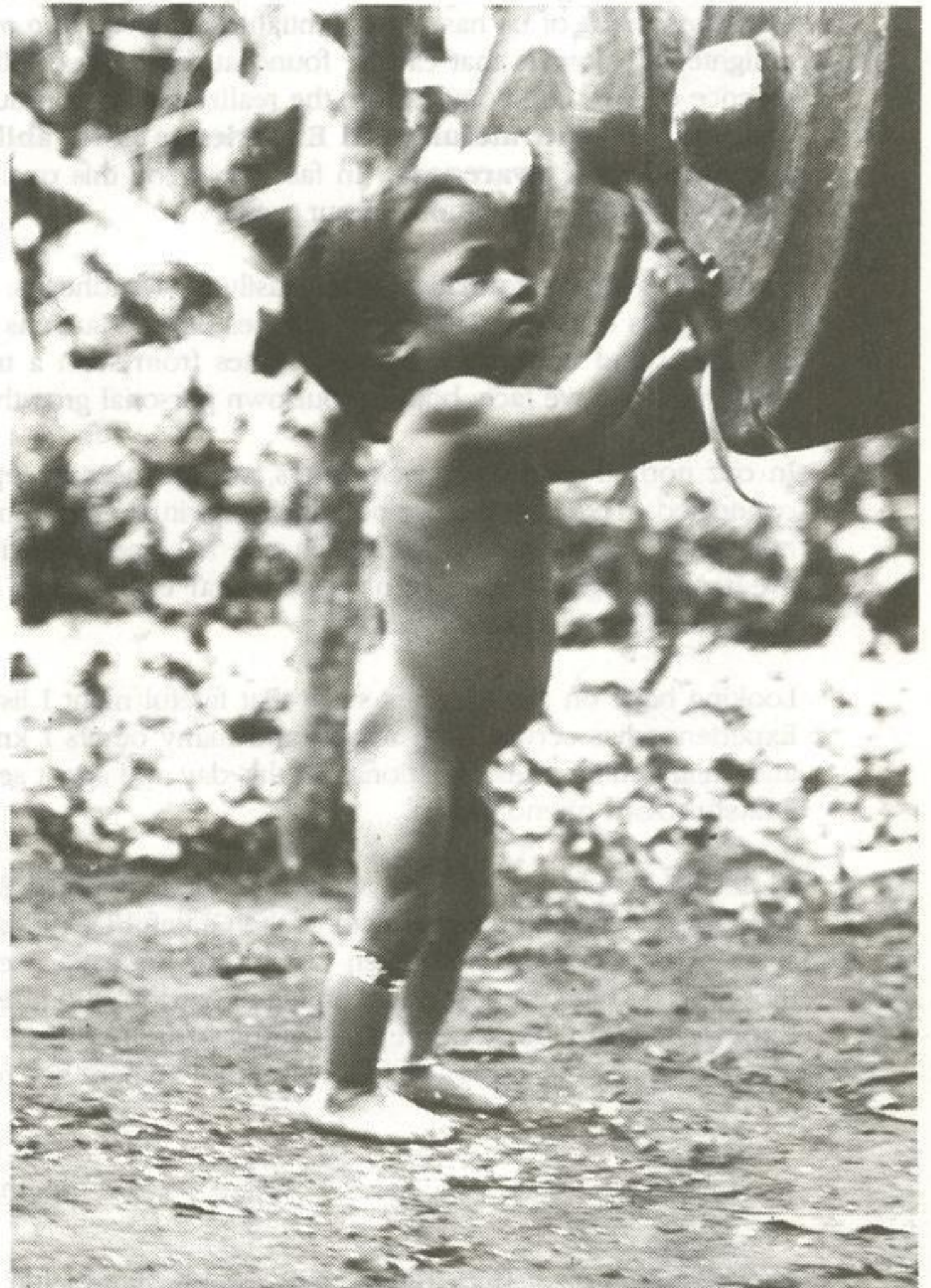
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This is what the Hindus knew on a cosmic scale: there is terror in noise.

And in that terror there is also power. In one of her books, Jane Goodall tells of a chimpanzee who discovers the powerful effect of two empty kerosene cans banged together. Within weeks he becomes the troupe's dominant male.

Rhythm and noise. That's where drummers come from.

THE BIG CLOCK

Here is the mystery: If the rhythm is right, if the translation between inner mood and drum membrane is perfect, then you know it instantly. *Abbbb*, you say, this goes with my body tempo, this relates to how I feel today, how fast my heart is beating, what my thoughts are, what my hands feel like.



Courtesy of the Field Museum of Natural History (Neg #35050), Chicago

When the rhythm is right you feel it with all your senses; it's in your mind, in you body, in both places. The head of the drum vibrates as the stick strikes it. The physical feedback is almost instantaneous, rushing along your arms, filling your ears. A feeling not unlike trust settles over you as you give yourself to the rhythm. You don't fight it, but instead allow yourself to be propelled by this insistent but friendly feeling. All sense of the present moment disappears, the normal categories of time become meaningless.

Your mind is turned off, your judgment wholly emotional. Your emotions seem to stream down your arms and legs and out the mouth of the drum; you feel light, gravityless, your arms feel like feathers. You fly like a bird. When the rhythm is right.

Here is the mystery and I don't think it can be solved, certainly not with words or numbers.

"Find out what rhythm is doing to the body," [John] Blacking [a major researcher in world musical studies] had said, and it was like a fog lifting. Rhythm's the key, not drumming, not noise. The man's right. Find out about rhythm! And I tried. I assembled the documents; I gathered the data; I spoke to as many learned men and women as I could find. I discovered that rhythm is a paradoxical, difficult thing to think about; as soon as you begin pursuing the mystery of rhythm, you are forced to confront the even deeper mystery of time.

You can't talk about rhythm without talking about time. Rhythm is what time does, whether it comes to us in the pattern of the seasons or in the pattern on the face of a Rolex watch. Or better still, it's what we do with time. We chop up time, impose patterns on it, tease regularities out of it, and then confuse them with time itself, although the regularities observed by a New Yorker will be vastly different from those of a Trobriand Islander.

Rhythm and time — as a drummer I make my living keeping time in a musical ensemble, and the way I do this is by turning noise into rhythm using percussion.

SHAMAN'S DRUM: SKELETON KEY TO THE OTHER WORLDS

If you had asked me a few years ago to define a shaman, I would have said that the word meant fake or sham. I thought shamans were like stage magicians, using all sorts of tricks and ventriloquism to fool people into believing they had special powers. Now I know better. As I discovered from my readings, the word shaman comes from the culture of the pastoral herding peoples of the Asian steppes, where it is used to describe individuals in the tribe who can enter into a trance in order to commune with the spirit world.

Joseph Campbell [one of the world's leading experts on myth and ritual] thought shamans were probably the first spiritual figures we had, the first mystics. He also thought it likely that they were the first artists, the first musicians, and the first storytellers, mainly because whenever you asked the contemporary shamans to describe what they experienced in the trance state, the stories they told had the same resonant mysterious quality as the myths Joe loved.

Were myths merely the stories the first shamans learned in that shadow realm, in that other world the mystics say surrounds and blends with this one? Joe thought it likely, and so do I, though to

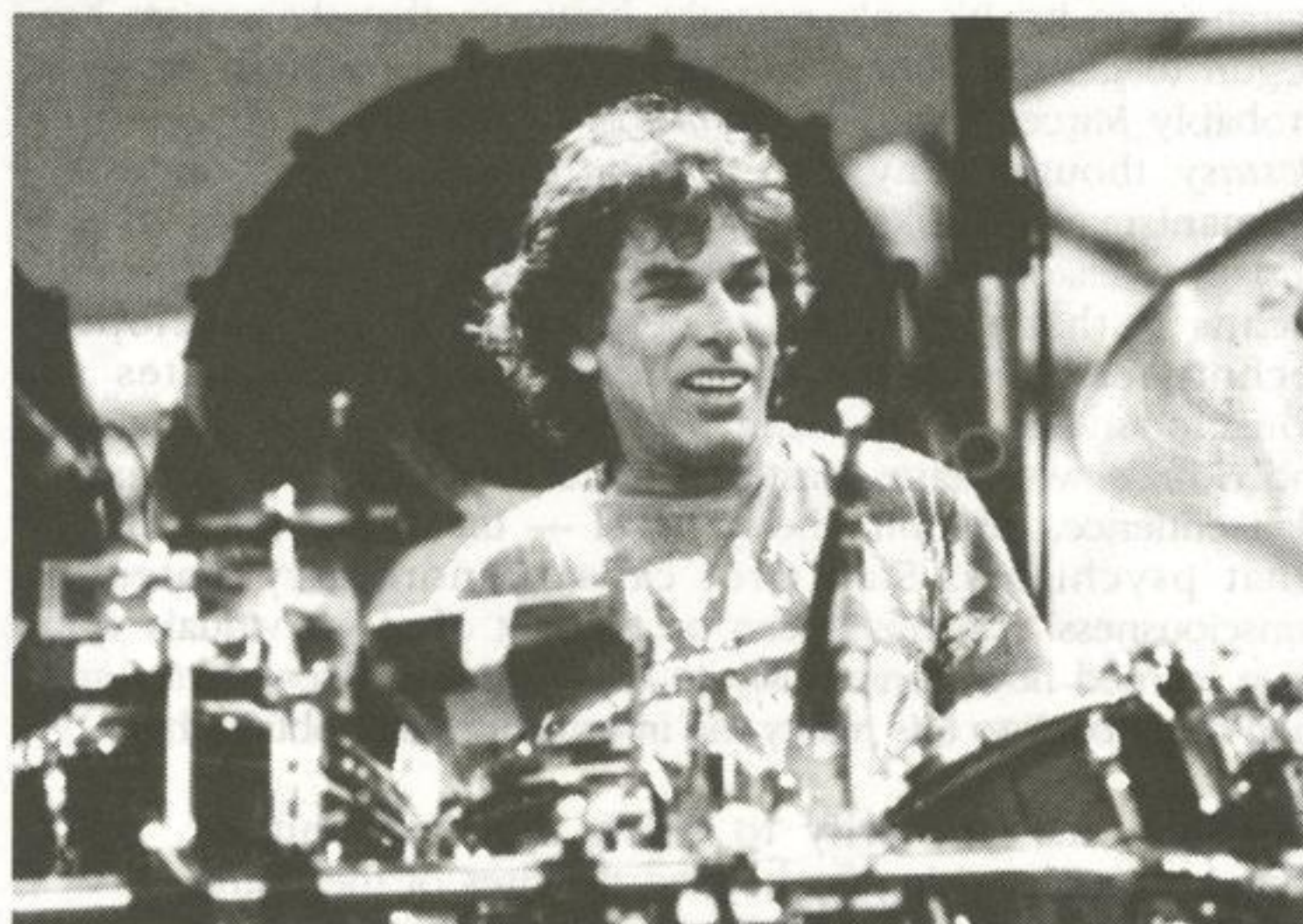


Photo by Brad Niederman

be perfectly honest, what first caught my attention with regard to shamans were their drums.

Shamans are drummers — they're rhythmists, they're trance masters who have understood something fundamental about the nature of the drum, something I badly wanted to learn.

I noticed, as I began to study the anthropological debate over percussion and transition, that most of the examples of percussive trance fell into two broad categories. In the first, drumming was used to summon the spirits or the gods down into the body of someone other than the drummer, usually a dancer. This is known as possession trance. The classic example is vodun, where the spirits — called the *loa* — are said to descend and mount the bodies of the dancers and ride them like horses.

The second type of trance is shamanic or "communion trance," the opposite of possession trance in almost every way. In a communion trance the spirit or soul of the drummer is said to ride his drumbeat like a horse up to the spirit world, where he (and it is usually a male) transacts his business in an active rather than a passive way.

Possession trance is usually found among agricultural peoples — people whose spiritual life is rooted in the earth — while the communion trace is strongly associated with hunters and gatherers, nomads, and herders — wandering people for whom the sky is the source of the sacred. Possession trance captivated the Western imagination early on, so there is considerable

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literature on it. It's only recently, however, that shamanism has begun to get the attention it deserves. The scholarly bible is probably Mircea Eliade's *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, though many more people have been introduced to shamanism via books like Michael Harner's *The Way of the Shaman*. Eliade calls shamans "technicians of ecstasy." What this means is that shamans are people who have developed techniques that allow them to enter esoteric states of consciousness. In modern psychological jargon, they are individuals who have mastered lucid dreaming, clairvoyance, clairsentience, out-of-the-body travel — the whole spectrum of what psychiatrist Stan Grof calls "nonordinary states of consciousness." Shamans can be thought of as individuals who have learned how consciously to enter some of these states and then bring back to this reality the information they obtain there.

They do this primarily to serve their community, their consciousness roaming far beyond the fires of the human body, keeping watch over those who cannot traffic in the spirit world. Shamans are healers and weatherworkers; they lobby the spirits to ensure a good hunt; they keep a watch on the future and are capable of tapping into the deep past. The Yahgan people, who live off the coast of Chile, tell of a time when food was scarce because of stormy weather. They asked their shaman for help. He went into a trance and when he emerged from it he told them to go west along the southern shore of the channel until they came to a place where two whales were beached on the sand. The whales were pregnant, he said, and had been driven ashore by a killer whale. And it was as he said.

In Australia the aboriginal shamans are weathermakers and healers, although there is a special class of supershaman known as a *munkumbole* whose speciality is clairvoyance. Once or twice a year, on the new moon, all the *munkumboles* meet to compare and discuss visions and work out the future path of their people.

Shamans rarely inherit their special place within these societies, although you do find families where the disposition carries through several generations; shamans are usually discovered, then refined. The role of shaman has often been thought to favor the flawed, the weak, the crippled, the outcast; it does, however, take a healthy, rather robust mind to go into trance, with ease, on a regular basis. People of different ethnic groups distinguish very well between those who are mentally ill and those who are shamans.

In Mexico a young boy is bitten by a snake and lies paralyzed for months. His grandfather, a shaman, predicts that if he lives he will become a great shaman. Among the Ainu of Japan, a woman falls ill with a traditional female nervous disease called *imi*, which manifests itself variously as eye trouble, arthritis, or functional paralysis. If she succeeds in curing herself — that is, drives the bad spirit from her body — then a good spirit will come to live near her. The spirit might be that of a snake, a fox, or a caterpillar. When the woman enters a trance state, this spirit will speak to her and tell her the nature of the illnesses of those who now come to her to be cured.


General rule number one: shamans are often those who have cured themselves, and in the process have discovered the knowledge that now allows them to cure others.

Among the Yahgan it often happens in the woods or at the shore. A man might be walking in the woods and suddenly a tree spirit will jump out and confront him. Or a woman might be loitering at the beach and a large fish will swim in close to shore and gaze at her. Or, most powerfully, she might be safely at home sleeping, when the giant whale that has visited her people for so many generations comes rising into her innocent dreams.

These are not casual visitations for the young Yahgan, since they result in a state of semitrance that draws the attention of the older shamans. The older shamans wait until there are enough potential shamans to warrant convening a school.

When enough potential shamans have appeared, the older shamans build a conical wooden hut. Teachers and students will live in this hut, not venturing out for several months, existing on starvation rations. Although women are allowed to attend the school, they are often regarded as lesser vessels in terms of shamanic power. Everyone must be chaste, and silence prevails until noon. One of the first rituals the students undertake is the rubbing off of their old skin, so a more sensitive skin can grow over their body. The older shamans warm their hands over the fire and then pour the warmth over the students, who are naked during their whole initiation. The warmth of the fire is said to burn away the fog from the novices' eyes, so they can see their spirit allies and learn the songs they are supposed to sing to them.

General rule number two: shamans are people who can see the spirits, both good and bad, and manipulate them accordingly.



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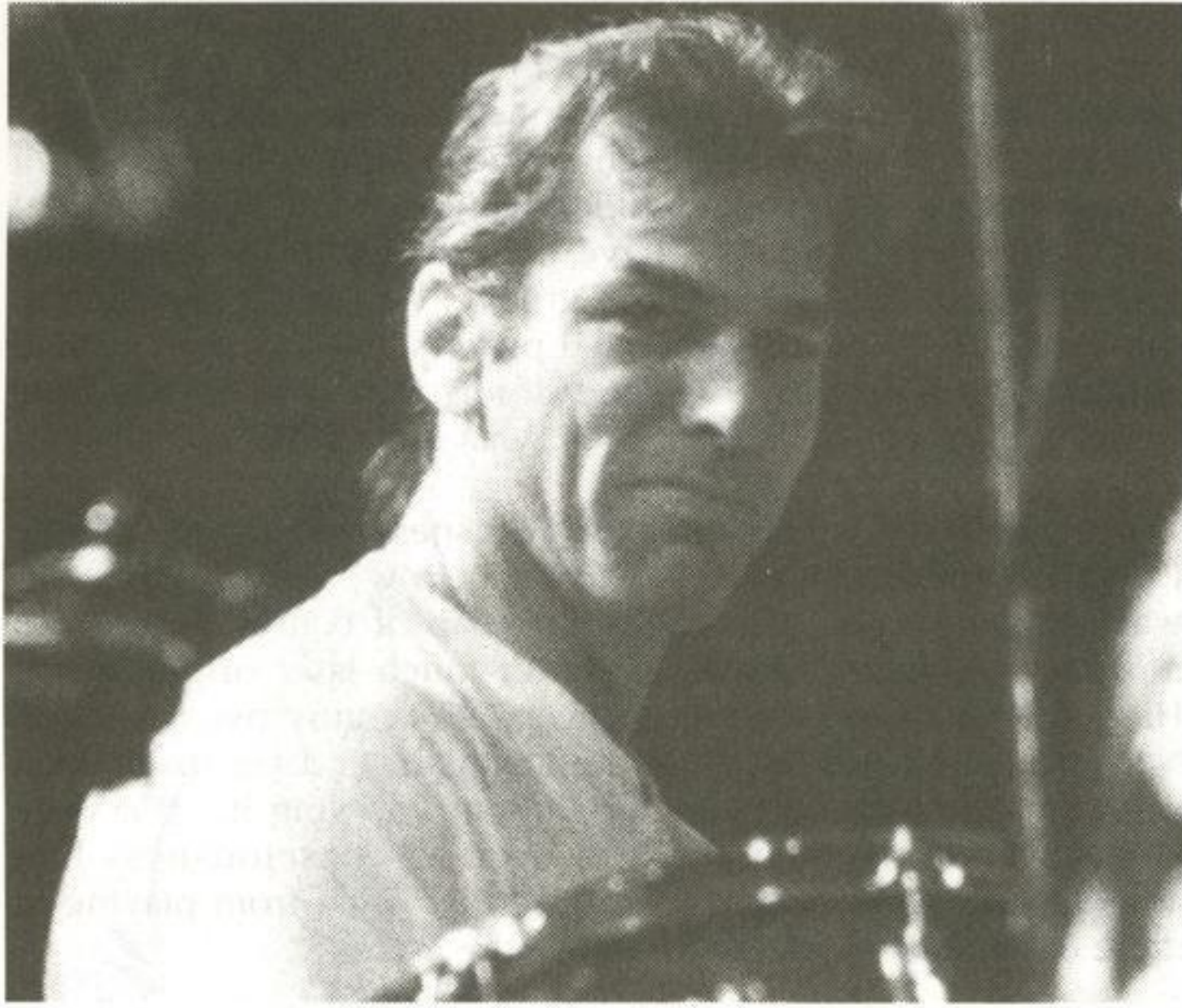


Photo by Michael Conway

The initiation of the young Yahgan shamans is benevolent and collegial compared to the ordeal that an Inuit must face. In the case of a boy named Igjugarjuk, it was a series of compelling dreams that alerted the tribe that the "mysterious divine force Sila" had chosen him to become shaman.

An older shaman was designated his instructor. He loaded Igjugarjuk onto a dogsled and took him out into the wintry vastness of the Canadian arctic. After traveling for some miles, the old shaman stopped and proceeded to build a tiny snow hut that was barely big enough for the boy to sit cross-legged in. On the floor of the hut the shaman placed an animal pelt. Then he lifted Igjugarjuk from the sled and carried him into the snow hut, careful that at no time did his feet touch the snow. He placed the boy on the animal skin and then left, telling Igjugarjuk to focus all his attention on the Great Spirit, who would hear his call and come to protect him.

For five days Igjugarjuk sat there without food or water. At the end of the fifth day his teacher arrived and gave him a small drink of water, then departed. He returned at the end of the fifteenth day and gave the boy a small piece of meat. At the end of the thirtieth day he took Igjugarjuk home. The Great Spirit had protected the boy; he had become a shaman. Describing his initiation years later, Igjugarjuk observed that the strain on his body had been so intense that it felt like "sometimes it died a little."

General rule number three: a shaman is someone who has undergone a symbolic death and been reborn into a higher integration. In order to accomplish this symbolic death it is often necessary to actually bring the body to a point approaching death, thus allowing the spirits to gain a foothold. Only after the body has been weakened and the spirit world contacted, does the shaman become able to leave the body and go adventuring up and down the World Tree.

For the shaman the other world is shaped like a tree, the World Tree. Beating a drum or shaking a rattle, a shaman sings the songs that alert his spirit allies that they are needed. His trance deepens until his soul slips out of his body and flies across the

world to the Tree that stands at the center of the universe. Then he begins to climb. If he goes up into the branches toward the leaves, his destination is the heavens, culminating in the Lord of the Universe. If he goes down into the roots of the World Tree, then his destination is the underworld.

* * *

Hunter. Gatherer. Toolmaker. Singer. Dancer. Storyteller. Shaman. Those are our oldest occupations.

It fascinated me that one of the first and most crucial gifts of the spirit world to the shaman is a song. A !Kung woman, describing this transmission, told anthropologist Lorna Marshall that God had stood next to her and repeated the song over and over again until she could sing it perfectly. Another woman shaman, an Alaskan, told the explorer Knud Rasmussen that "songs were born in the stillness while all endeavored to think of nothing but beautiful things. Then they take shape in the minds of men and rise up like bubbles from the depths of the sea, bubbles seeking the air in order the burst. This is how sacred songs are made."


I read in Eliade that the songs of shamans are supposed to be a lost language of the animals that everyone could speak a long time ago, while now only the shamans can contact the animal powers.

The shamanic dance is also imitative of the animal allies that the shaman commands, though the point of the dance is probably as much physical as aesthetic. The !Kung say that when the medicine within a medicine man becomes stimulated by a dance, "warmed by the fire and by the heat of the man's body, the man's spirit may leave him, causing his body to fall because there is nothing there to hold it up, and fly into the veld, where it seeks out the evil that is troubling people. Some medicine men in this way have seen the spirits of the dead, some have seen the great god. . . One man's spirit rushed out into the veld where it came upon a pride of lions that had been troubling the people by their deafening roar at night. The man's spirit spoke with the lions, defied them, and ordered them away, and the lions did go."

In the depths of the great Paleolithic cave at Lascaux, there is an image of a bird-headed shaman in a trance, lying next to a wounded bull. It is probably an image of hunting magic, the shaman's spirit perhaps rushing out onto the great plains in search of the wandering herds.

Not only do the shamans receive their songs from the spirit world, but most of the instruments they play as well. According to the

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Drumming on the Edge continued

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image of a bird-headed shaman in a trance, lying next to a wounded bull. It is probably an image of hunting magic, the shaman's spirit perhaps rushing out onto the great plains in search of the wandering herds.

Not only do the shamans receive their songs from the spirit world, but most of the instruments they play as well. According to the Warao of Venezuela, the gourd rattle they use in their rituals was obtained many years ago from the spirit of the South by an ancestral shaman: "During his visit he received the sacred fire rattle and was given instructions about the creation of channels of communication with the supernatural so that he and his kind might never lose contact with the gods of the cardinal directions."

The Warao shaman fills his gourd, which has been carefully prepared according to the ritual instructions of the spirit of the South, with quartz crystals that have been shamanically empowered and represent the shaman's spirit allies.

Our earliest image of a musician — the masked figure from the cave at Les Trois Freres — is also an image of a working shaman, playing what appears to be a musical bow. The musical bow is still in use in some central Asian communities as an instrument of trance, but in most places its function has been replaced by the frame drum. When this transformation happened is not known, but it is likely that it occurred sometime during the Mesolithic. Linguistically, you can read the progression in certain central Asian dialects as the musical bow was slowly replaced by the drum. Among some tribes, like the Yuraks, the drum is still referred to as a "bow" or a "singing bow."

For the shaman, the drum is not so much a musical instrument as a vehicle for transportation. Most frequently in Siberia, it is characterized as a horse that the shaman rides to the World Tree, though it can also be a boat (with the drumstick becoming an oar) or a bow (with the drumstick doubling as the arrow).

The shaman's drum is said to be constructed from a splinter of the World Tree that the Lord of the Universe made available for this purpose, thus ensuring the shaman a magical connection with the World Tree. When the shaman dies, his drum is hung on a tree in the woods not far from his grave.

I was aware, as I pursued my research into shamanism, that most of the scholars writing on this subject were not drummers. They had never ridden a drum anywhere, had never played one to the point of trance. Although they acknowledged the drum's centrality in shamanic performance, few were able to bring a performer's view to the role that percussive sound or percussive rhythm might be playing in the maintenance and elaboration of that performance.

These were questions right up my alley; in a sense I'd been thinking about them since childhood, when I first discovered that playing a drum pad in the closet stimulated a feeling of

lightness, happiness, timelessness. In another culture, my capacity to access these states might have resulted in my becoming a shaman. Instead of Jonesy [Arthur Jones, Mickey's band teacher at Lawrence High School], I might have drawn a teacher like Perqanaq, who guided Igjugarjuk through his ordeal in the snow hut. I might have been taught how to ride my drum not into the rock and roll groove, but out of my body to the World Tree, where the animal powers live. As it was, I had glimpses of these powers in the drums I'd collected, but until now I had never really understood what they were.

The World Tree was a map of consciousness that emerged in the Paleolithic, making it the oldest such map we have. When LSD was proliferating in the Haight, the map of consciousness that most people were following was of much later origin, either Hindu or Buddhist or occult or twentieth-century psychological. None of my friends talked about shamans, and yet that's what we were all trying to become, without knowing it. We were climbing around in the World Tree of consciousness like adolescents, intent only on the thrill that came from playing in these dangerous spaces so far above the ground.

And how could it have been otherwise? There was a community waiting to be healed, but there were no teachers — or very few — and there was no tradition of exploring these states. The traditions that we had inherited disavowed their existence, insisting that the tiny box of consciousness that we all inhabited was all there was. And yet 250 millionths of a gram of

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mushroom, and the fly agaric mushroom have long histories of shamanic use. And because we in the West have a tradition of altering brain metabolism with drugs, we are perhaps more sympathetic to the claims of shamans who use botanicals than we are to shamans who simply beat on a piece of horsehide stretched upon a willow frame.

But how does a drum alter consciousness? That was the question I'd started with and now I thought I could see an answer shimmering beneath the data. My first thought had been that there was something unique in the sound. Andrew Neher had seemed right in his theory that percussive noise played loudly over time eventually overwhelmed the hearing apparatus and this played a large part in inducing trance. The shamanic ritual, held in a small, enclosed space, seemed designed to enhance these percussive effects. In addition, the loudness of the drums would also activate the adrenals, flooding the body with adrenaline.

But Gilbert Rouget also seemed right when he argued that trance was culturally determined, that the cues that put a shaman into trance were not the same as those of a San tribesman, and that to generalize a cause-and-effect relationship between drums and trance was too simplistic, particularly if you took a global view of trance.

It occurred to me that drums did not play a part in the shaman's original crisis. When Igjugarjuk was left out there in the snow and told to contact the spirit world, he wasn't given a drum with which to do it. The assumption was — and it seems to pertain in all the shamanic initiations — that the initial connection with the animal powers, the ability to enter deep trance and contact certain spirits, precedes any involvement with percussion. Drumming

wasn't even the most important musical component of the shamanic performance, since the songs of the spirit allies were far more crucial.

So what was going on? The more I asked myself this question, the more I felt that I was chasing my shadow. How did the shamanic performance work? For myself, I know that it's possible to ride the rhythms of a drum until you fall into a state of receptivity that can be construed as the beginnings of trance. When I'm drumming, I like to get as close to this state as I can, yet I also know that I can't let myself go completely because if I do, my drumming will deteriorate and I will quickly lose the state. There have been many times when I've felt as if the drum has carried me to an open door into another world, yet if I let myself pass through that door I can no longer drum and that yanks me back. Perhaps this is why the shaman has an assistant who takes over drumming as the trance deepens.

When the shaman reaches that door, he sings his songs and the spirit allies come, often taking up abode in his drum, which is then transformed into a horse that carries the shaman to the World Tree. Statements like "the shaman rides his drum like a horse" seemed to me to be a way of saying that "the shaman entrains with the rhythm of the drum and it carries him deeper into trance." Percussive noise might be helpful in inducing trance, but it was rhythmic entrainment that enabled the shaman to actually move into this spirit world. It seemed significant to me that the assistant was there mainly to keep the drumbeat going while the shaman was entranced and to shout out warnings that the shaman must not "get lost in that dangerous land; listen to the drum so you can find your way back."

This, I think, is the drum's function. Its rhythms set up a ripple in time, ensuring that the shaman can find his way back from the timelessness that is mentioned in almost all accounts of the other world. The danger to the shaman who has ridden the drum out of his body is not so much being lost in space as being lost in time. In a sense the drum functions as an extension of the heart that is beating in the shaman's empty body, back here in human time.

An instrument of time travel. A beacon when he is out of his body.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE DRUM

There is a need to drum. I believe that. No drummer really knows why, you're just born with it, it's what makes you part of Remo Belli's one percent. You can acquire technique but not this need, it's a birthright. There have been times when I wished I'd been born without it. When I was younger, if I didn't play well, I'd feel like killing myself. I used to slip on stage before a show and pray — pray that I didn't screw up, that my energy and talent and will would be strong enough to carry me to the Edge one more time.

I often wonder what kind of drummer I might have become if I had been born into a culture with a tradition of the spirit side of the drum, instead of one with no road maps, no way of talking

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about those energies and powers you encounter when you play. I often regret that I never spoke of this with Sonny Payne or Jonesy or any of the other older men who should have been my teachers in this matter, if only they'd had something to teach. Did they know about the spirit side? Did they care? Did they feel any pain that we were born into a culture where music was entertainment first, a commodity of the marketplace, and you either accommodated to that or found another way of living?

I remember as a kid being afraid of what was going to happen to me. The image of the musician as a kind of human meteorite who blazed briefly across the sky before burning up was strong during my childhood. Charlie Parker and Billie Holiday — these were heroes and warnings. I used to wonder what it was about this need that had chosen me that it could make a grown man give up everything, even to the point of relinquishing life, to achieve what was usually the briefest of connections. Sometimes I felt that I was running as fast as I could with a blindfold on.

It is hard to pinpoint the exact moment when I awoke to the fact that my tradition — rock and roll — did have a spirit side, that there was a branch of the family that had maintained the ancient connection between the drum and the gods. I suppose it was a little like meeting some long lost cousins and realizing with a start that these are your relatives, that you are rhythmically related, and in drumming that's the same as blood. ♦

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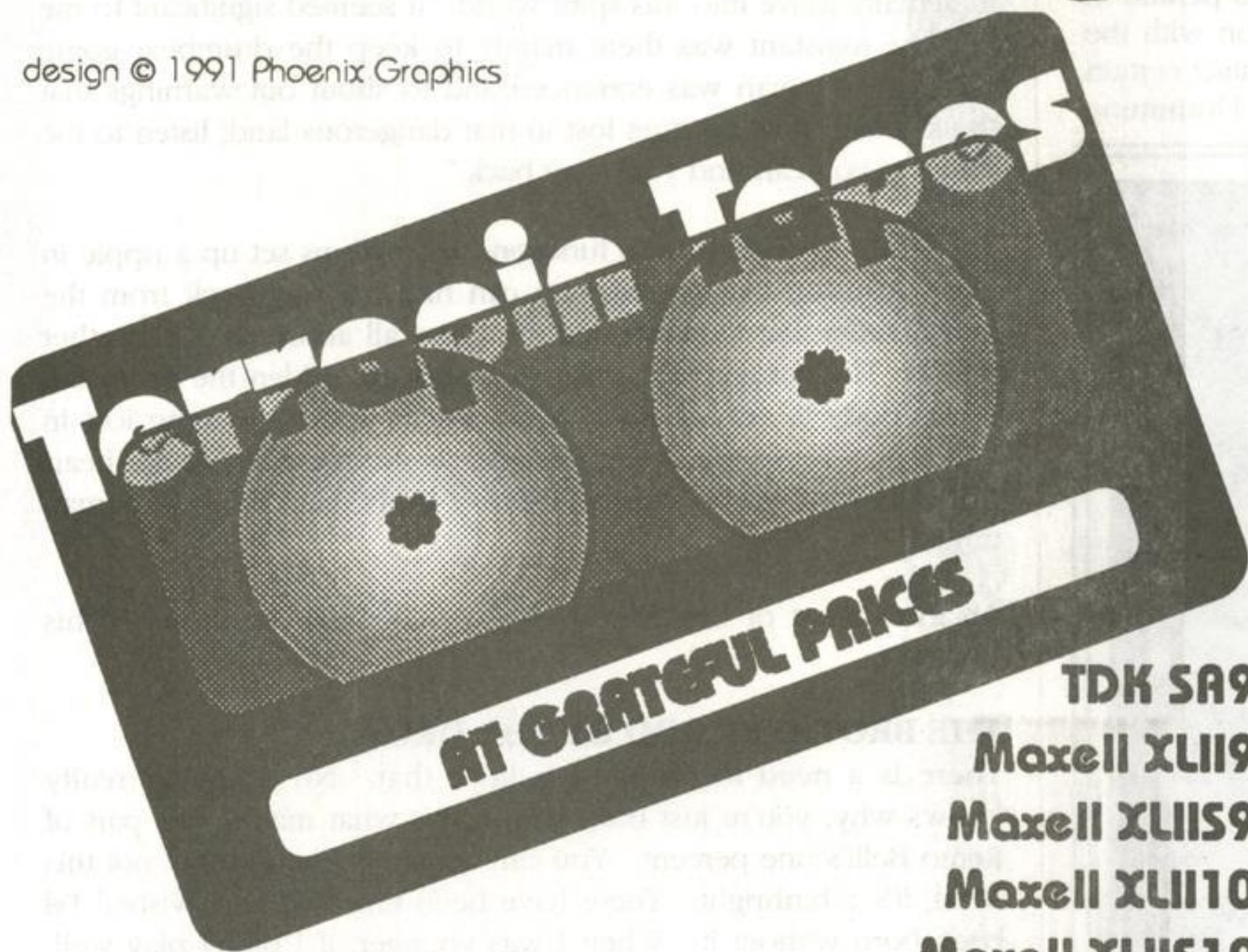
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SPRING TOUR 1991, Part One: IS THE HONEYMOON OVER?

by Fred Winnebago, Jr. and Les Synapse

1990 was undoubtedly the most significant year in the history of the Grateful Dead in a long time. Perhaps more memorable (in the long run) to Deadheads than Jerry's coma or the immense "success" of *IN THE DARK* was the death of Brent and the addition of Vince and (sometimes) Bruce. Musically speaking, the whole year was simply stellar, with awesome shows occurring on a regular basis. The triumphant return of the Dead to Madison Square Garden was, in a word, monumental! It was a honeymoon of sorts for the latest incarnation of the band. So it was with great anticipation that we ordered tickets for the Spring 1991 tour, hoping for a continuation of strong performances and high times to be had by all.

Maryland

It's no secret: security at the Cap Centre is a real hassle. Everyone I talk to offers this comment first whenever discussing shows in Landover, so it seems only appropriate to acknowledge people's frustrations right up front. Now, with that out of the way, these shows seemed to offer a few delightful nuggets spaced evenly throughout what was otherwise a pretty standard selection of musical offerings. Show one's first set offered the great triad of "Queen Jane," "Rubin and Cherise," and "Let It Grow." However, listening to the tape one notices Vince was "stuck" inside the same repetitive riff during "Rubin and Cherise" and was turned up way too loud. This will hopefully improve in time.

The second set yielded a much-hoped-for oldie, "New Speedway Boogie," played with all the gusto and fire we could hope for. A perfect song for these twisted times of political hypocrisy.

The second night's first-set yielded another average performance, with the exception of "Maggie's Farm," which was both unexpected and passionate. The second set was much better, featuring a simply tremendous "Uncle John's Band" and an intriguing jam following "Terrapin Station."

The first set of the third show offered an excellent selection of best-loved tunes. "Cold Rain And Snow," "Black-Throated Wind," "The Music Never Stopped," and "Might As Well" to finish should have pleased any veteran tour head. I'd like to know why "Might As Well" hasn't stayed in the rotation, as it's such a strong alternative to "Deal."

Night number three's second half was impressive. After a truly inspired "Foolish Heart," another great jam occurred at the end of "Estimated Prophet." "The Other One" was blisteringly hot and "The Weight" was, as always, a perfect encore.

The final Landover show was again average although it did feature two more fairly unusual occurrences. First was the somewhat odd pairing of "Mexicali" > "Big River" ("Mexicali" usually appears on the heels of "Mama Tried"). In the second set the band sort of "fell" into "Stir It Up," which neither Bobby nor Jerry seemed willing to sing or know the words for. Unfortunately, as an instrumental, this song dragged a bit and was somewhat awkward.

After a notable jam following the drums, the set concluded without major highlight. "Box of Rain" was, as always, a perfect ending for not only a show but for a three night stand. If this review seems, well...unremarkable...well, maybe that's because these shows were, for the most part, unremarkable. On to Albany.

Albany

Last year's shows at Albany's brand new Knickerbocker Arena were greeted by the city fathers with a cautious but open mind. Despite \$48,000 in police overtime salaries and a mountain of trash left at Corning Preserve park by folks camping, the city voted to invite the Dead back (we are, after all, a great booster for the local economy). Many

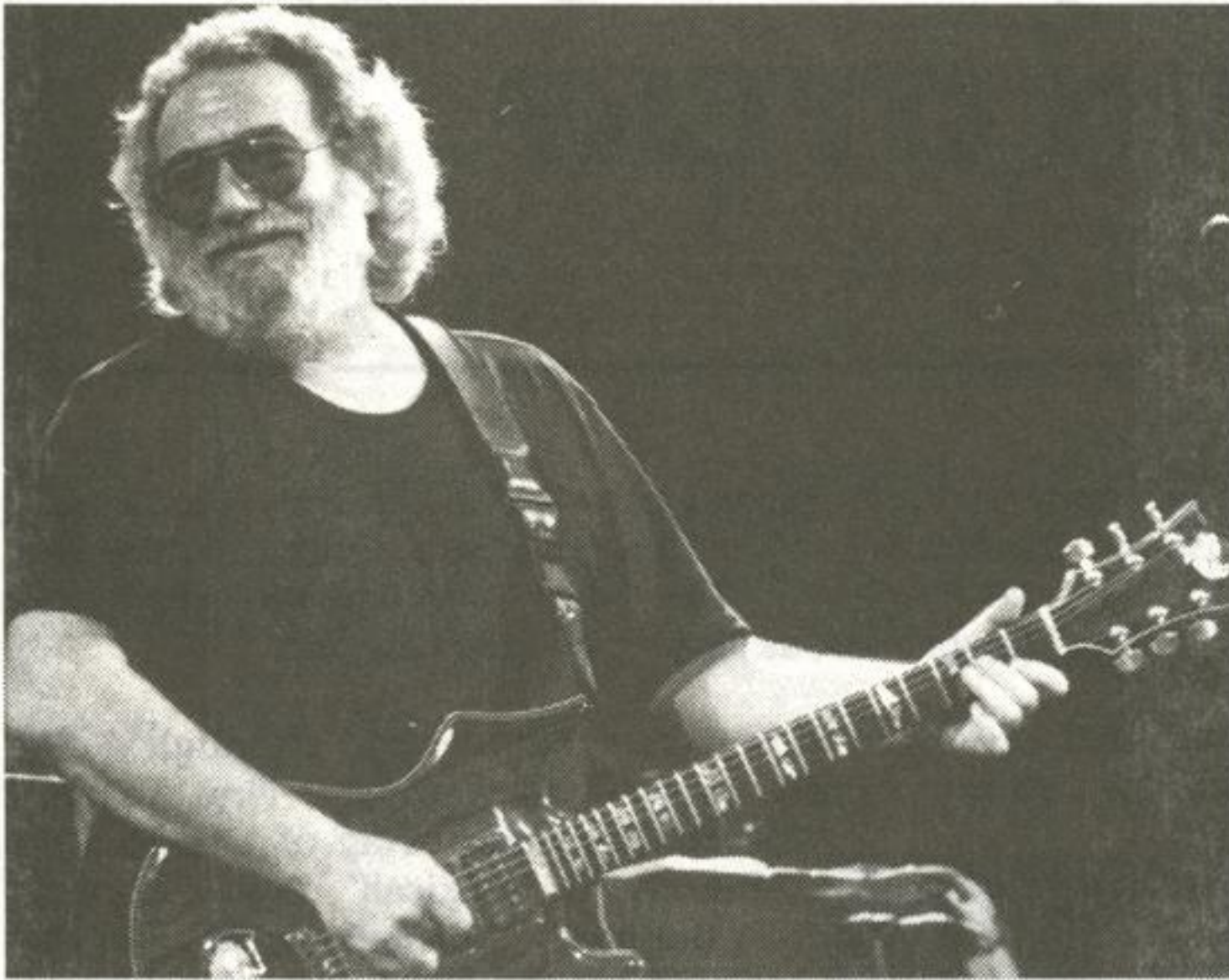
folks, including those at DDN, reached out to the Mayor (a real nice guy) to offer help in keeping the scene cool and clean. The Mayor responded by starting a recycling project for the shows and asking Deadheads (via the DDN flyer) to "remain mindful of our actions." Much to everyone's delight things worked out for the best.

Unlike last year's cold but clear weather, these shows were accompanied by almost constant rain. Fortunately, there are huge expanses of covered parking lots all around the "Knick," so the overflow of ticketless masses had somewhat dry surroundings in which to take refuge. Although ushers were expelling those who ignored the city's no public smoking rule (to the pleasure of many), the cops, both inside and out, were relaxed and polite.

To everyone's disappointment, Bruce Hornsby was not at any of



Photo by Phil Gerstheimer



the six New York shows. But Jerry's voice was remarkably clear and Candace's lights exceptionally beautiful, so we made ourselves happy with what we were given.

The first night's opening set was mellow. Apparently the band was saving its energy. "New Speedway Boogie" was tight, and for many, a pleasant notch to put in one's "yeah, I've heard them play that tune" belt.

Set number two started with a tight but controlled "Iko." "Saint of Circumstance," while relatively low on some people's wish list, is being blasted out with full force these days, and freed of "Lost Sailor" it is all the more appealing. While "Playing In The Band" was non-descript, the "Watchtower" > "Morning Dew" which followed was filled with passion, featuring ample portions of strumming and noodling by our favorite lead guitarist.

The first set of the second show at the Knick was two notches up in energy from the first show. All selections were good choices rendered with vigor (with the possible exception of "Slipknot!" which seemed to be meandering along).

Highlights of the second set included a very respectable "Samson And Delilah" and a soulful rendition of "Standing On The Moon." Midi-drums > midi-space proved more "obtuse" yet more impassioned than on the first night.

Depending upon who you spoke to, the final night was either the best or the worst of the three nights. Those that were critical seemed to cite a somewhat nondescript set list. But there were merits to this show, among them a strong "Crazy Fingers," a beautifully improvised melodic exploration after "Spoonful" that sounded very much like the Jerry band tune "Russian Lullaby," and a killer "Other One." While it was very short, the unexpected choice of "Lovelight" for an encore was much appreciated.

For most folks, the overall feeling was that these shows were what one could expect for a three night stand early on in the tour, good, but not great.

When the Deadheads (and the rain!) had gone, the Mayor visited the Corning Preserve and concluded that the visitors had behaved well within reason. While the recycling program fell

way short of its potential, the Dead and the Heads will most likely be invited back to Albany next year!

Nassau Coliseum

The vibe at last year's absolutely STELLAR performances at Nassau was "relatively" relaxed (compared to years past!), with busts occurring mostly after the shows were over for many hours, and a greatly reduced incidence of gate-crashing (once a chronic problem at Nassau). Once again, the band seemed to work really hard for New York Heads. The result included the first Branford Marsalis "Eyes" > "Dark Star" show, which these reviewers will remember for the rest of their lives. So off we went to brave the wilds of Nassau County in search of more GD Peak Experiences. To get to all three shows one had to first submit oneself to between one and three hours of bumper-to-bumper traffic from the city. To get from the parking lot into the coliseum you had to face an unusually rude and rough security frisk and shakedown. As opposed to last year's shows, daypacks were not allowed inside and they hassled people just for bringing in DDN flyers!

To our total delight, the Dead came out swinging and delivered a home-run show almost identical in spirit and energy to the first night's performance at Nassau last year (on the same date). "Cold Rain And Snow" was, once again, completely appropriate. "Loose Lucy," while not as hot as the version played on the same date last year, was tight and bouncy. "Rubin and Cherise" was noticeably longer and more relaxed than the stiff first version at Maryland, although I'm sure we'd all enjoy it even more if Vince would venture beyond the same repetitive riff he seems to have confined himself to playing.

The second set yielded a hauntingly beautiful Rhythm Devils jam with Mickey painting aural landscapes for the mind's-eye with flowing strokes of his midi-sized marimba pallet. What followed after the drums was easily the weakest part of the show, but a liltingly soft yet confident "Box Of Rain" capped things off perfectly. Most folks left expecting a repeat performance of last year's three night stand at Nassau, with a solid night-number-one tucked safely into their cassette boxes.

Traffic on the way out from Manhattan was worse on the second night but for some unexplained reason the security guards were

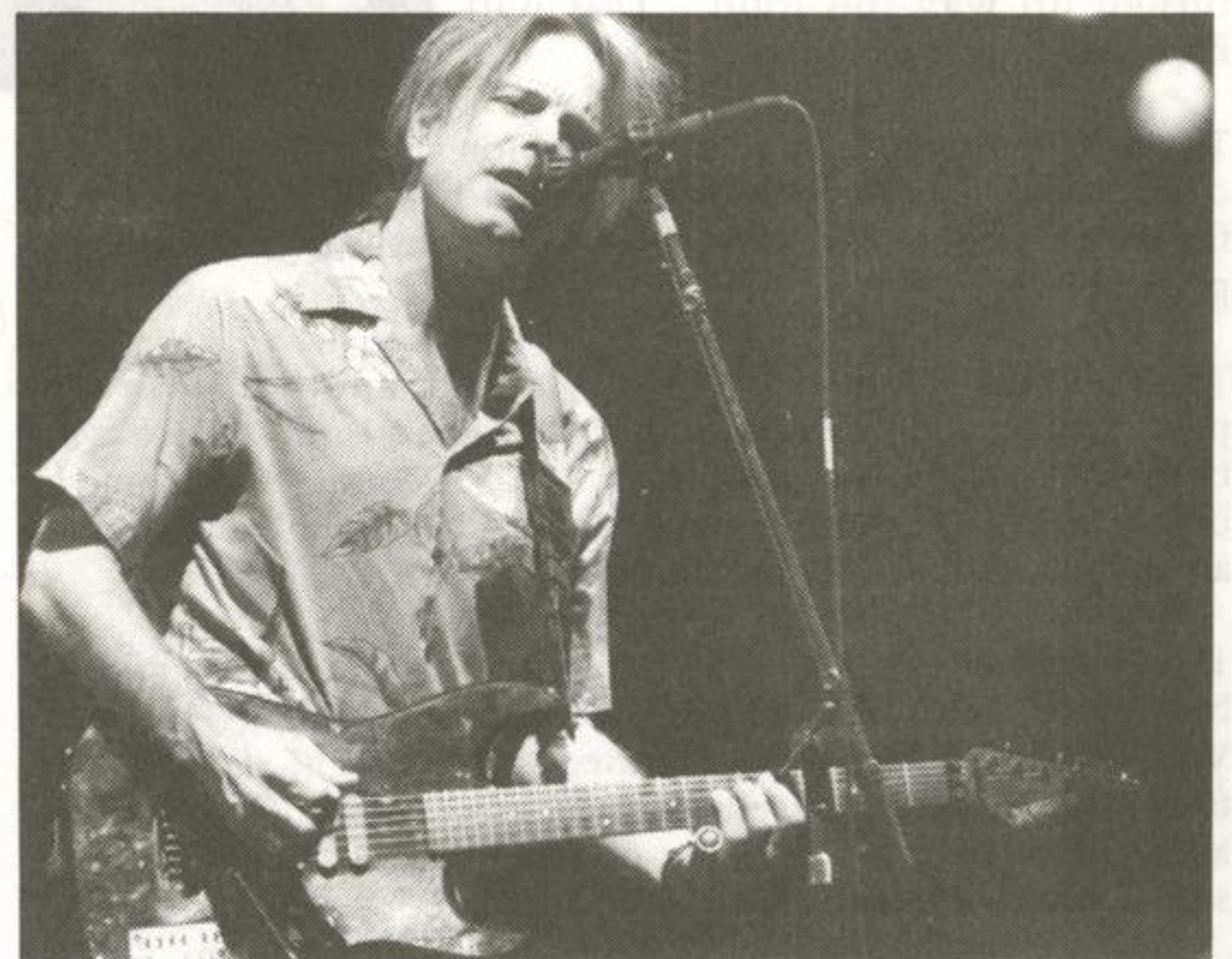


Photo by Michael Conway

The second show was, again, one of those nights that was either better or worse than the first, depending upon who you asked. Maybe it was wishful thinking, many Heads were more than secretly hoping for another appearance by Branford Marsalis and/or at least another "Dark Star" for New York. The opening set yielded not much more than the all-too-rare "Black-Throated Wind" (played only passably) and a strong "Let It Grow."

The second show belonged to Phil. I swear, the mean, nasty and LOUD sound that Phil lets loose on "Victim Or The Crime" these days is positively frightening! A lot of fans who were formerly critical of this tune have been changing their opinions as of late. "Foolish Heart" came as no surprise but "Man Smart Women Smarter" as the next choice left many who were expecting "Dark Star" disappointed. Drums were uneventful, but the space that followed was once again a fascinating exploration of digital weirdness. Phil's midi-ized bass sounded like anything but a four-string guitar.

Much to our surprise the band finished this set at 10:24PM! If not for a very tasty Terrapin encore (which had a powerful Gimme Some Lovin' tease at the end) it might have been the shortest show in ages.

Day three started strong, quickly weakened, and eventually turned into a **DISASTER!** After a boring string of first set song selections the PA started BARKING during "Masterpiece." Something was very sick inside the right stack of speakers and before Jerry got a chance to redeem the band's weak start with a "Bird Song" or a "Might As Well," Bobby called it quits.

The second set started off well enough with stronger performances of "Iko," "Saint of Circumstance" and "New Speedway" than those at Albany. But once again things went sour with a weak "Truckin'" (forgotten words again) and an uneventful Rhythm Devils journey. After a less than average "Other One" (which did, however, feature brilliant stroboscopic lighting) everything fell completely to pieces as both Jerry's and Bobby's guitars gave out during "Wharf Rat" (and Jerry forgot the words too). It took more than five minutes for Steve Parish (on his hands and knees) to get Bobby's guitar back. All-in-all, it was a real stinker of a show although it was the technical problems that seemed to initiate and exacerbate this show's complete unravelling.

In retrospect, these shows were the first New York area shows in two years that were *less* than amazing. The Dead have really put out for the metropolitan area and no one who has been lucky enough to catch a good number of these shows would have any justification in complaining.

Some things are better than ever, such as Candace's lights for example. Spectacular combinations of purple, yellow and white, and chartreuse with green are as gorgeous as can be. A huge improvement was the placement of two rows of fully programmable lights high above the soundboard. This allows her to sweep the audience with lights (which she is very fond of doing) without blinding them, as is the case when this is done using lights from the stage!

As for the band's performance...well, Jerry's voice, as of mid-tour, was remarkably well intact (a rare occurrence) but his playing was, as a whole, unusually flat. The midi-ization of the band has opened up vast new universes for the band to explore during spaces, jams and drums. But as far as passion and excitement are

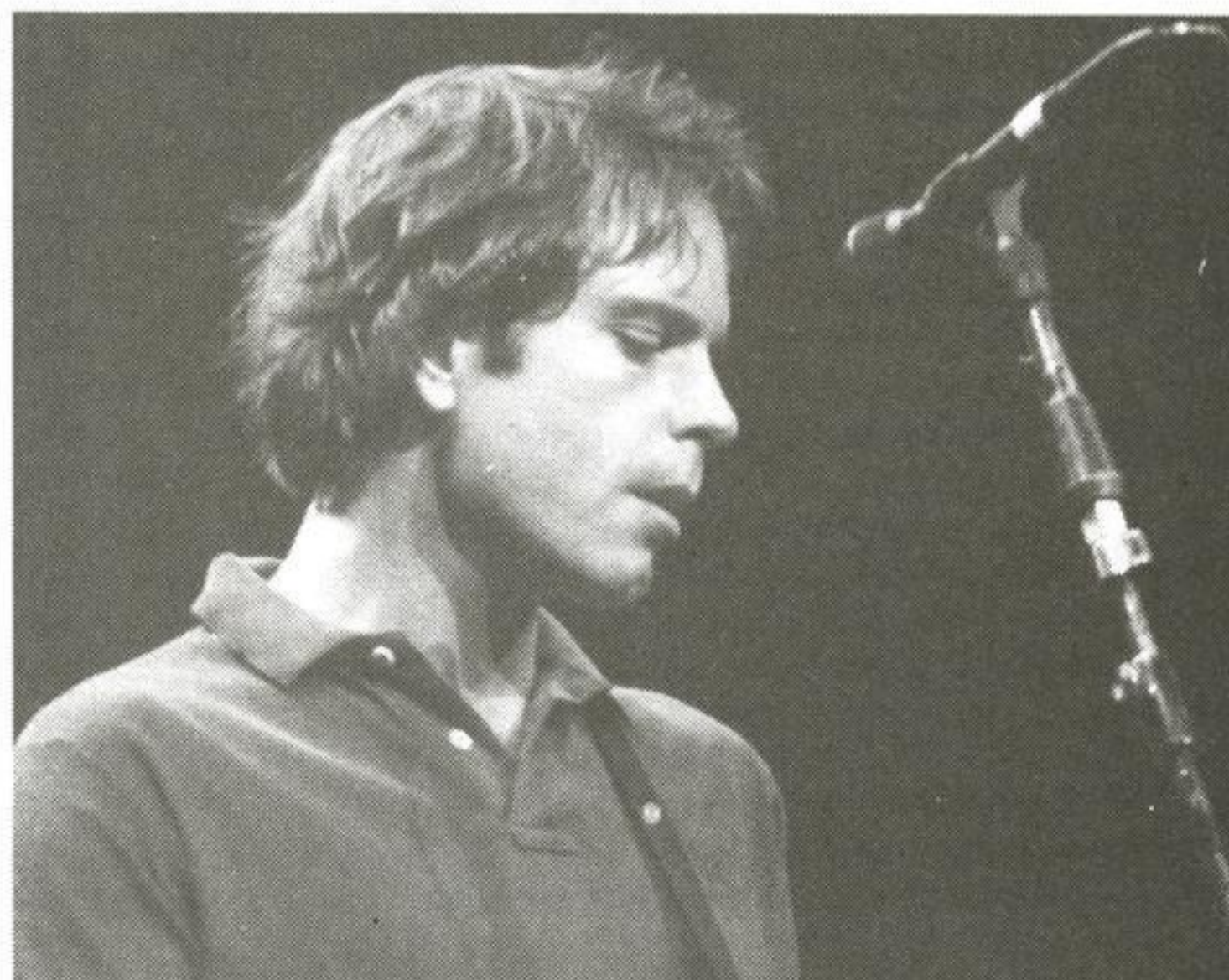


Photo by Michael Conway

concerned these shows were a big step down from any of the last five East Coast tours. Maryland through Nassau as, largely uneventful, average GD concerts, which isn't such a negative thing, considering that the average GD concert these days is extremely tight and polished. Does Spring tour 1991 mark the end of "the honeymoon" for the latest incarnation of the Dead? Let's hope not. Read part two of the Spring tour review to find out. ◊

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BUS TRIP

three books reviewed by Mark Koltko

On the Bus by Paul Perry and Ken Babbs
196 pages, heavily illustrated with b/w (and some color) photos;
New York, NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1990. Paperback, \$21.95.

The Further Inquiry by Ken Kesey
217 pages, very heavily illustrated with color photos; New York,
NY: Viking/Penguin, 1990. Hardcover, \$24.95.

The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test by Tom Wolfe
372 pages. New York, NY: Bantam, 1968. Paperback, \$5.95.

The Journey of Transformation. No mere metaphor, that. Almost every major movement in history, left or right, East or West, political or spiritual, has had at least one: the Exodus, the Forty Days in the Wilderness, the *Hejira*, Buddha's travels, the Search for the Holy Grail, shamanic vision quests, Zion's Camp, the Long March.

And the counterculture has the Bus Trip. Fourteen Pranksters in a 1939 International Harvester school bus repainted in psychedelic day-glo colors, traveling round-trip from San Francisco to the 1964 New York World's Fair. One bad turn in the mountains and they would all have been gone. As it is, over 25 years later, we still feel the reverberations of that trip, and the echoes grow louder, not fainter.

Very, very briefly, it goes like this. In the late 1950's, bright kid goes to Stanford University to participate in world-renowned creative writing program. Bright kid struggles with Great American Novel. He volunteers for "scientific research" which is really a government program investigating the effects of LSD-25. Decides to take a little acid home with him to set up informal research program with friends. Bright kid and friends come to startling expansion of mind and insight regarding the boundaries of cultural conditioning and what realms of perception and consciousness lie beyond those boundaries. Bright kid uses cosmic insight to write stellar first novel and instantly establishes hefty literary reputation. Bright kid: Ken Kesey. Brilliant novel: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962).

Kesey's home on Perry Lane, Stanford's Bohemia in Palo Alto (long since demolished), was the center of activity for a varied

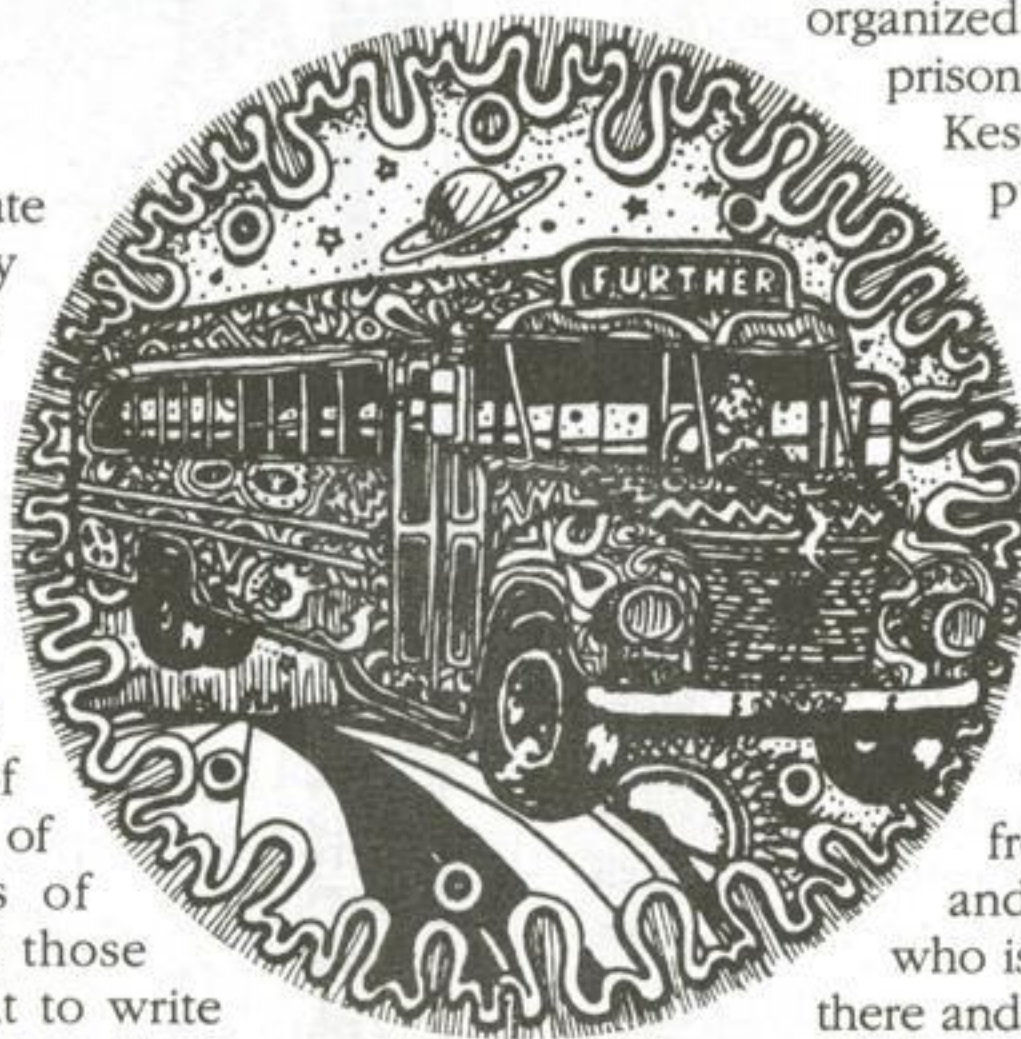
circle of writers, clowns, derelicts, outlaws and intellectuals (if these are really separate categories), bumbling frenetically, freakishly, joyfully, ecstatically, merrily, prankishly in search of consciousness expansion and the ultimate Experience. This is where the Hell's Angels discovered LSD, which should tell you something. Then Kesey wanted to take another kind of trip.

Kesey and a motley group, the Merry Pranksters (composed of some close friends and other people who just happened to be around that summer), decided to use the occasion of the publication of Kesey's second novel (*Sometimes a Great Notion*, 1964) to go to New York. But this would not be some everyday field trip. Although the different participants *on the bus* had different reasons to make the journey, Kesey wanted to make an Event of this, to take this opportunity to confront the inhabitants of The Great American Dream with the notion that they were, after all, asleep. By a series of happy accidents, they came to possess the great-grandparent of all RVs, an old bus outfitted with bunks and a kitchen; they decorated it as the first psychedelic road vehicle; they gained as pilot (this bus was not driven, it was flown) none other than Neal Cassady, the basis for the Dean Moriarty character in the ultimate Beat novel, Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*; they decorated themselves in paint and flags and costumes, packed a ton of audiovisual equipment and a large supply of mind-altering drugs, and hit the road. They had mishaps and adventures, happy encounters and disappointments, hospitalizations and ecstasy. They even survived.

Back in California, coming into increasing difficulty with the law for possession of marijuana, Kesey organized a series of events in 1965 called The Acid Tests where masses of people ingested LSD, usually with light shows and musical accompaniment. (LSD was legal until October 6, 1966.) Ultimately, Kesey came to feel that the time had come to go beyond the acid experience, and organized the Acid Test Graduation. After a six month prison term stemming from his earlier convictions, Kesey went to Oregon, where he has remained, publishing relatively little until recently, in particular *Demon Box* (1987) and now *The Further Inquiry*.

Tom Wolfe became involved with the Kesey scene not long before the Graduation. His book, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, is an early, now-classic New Journalistic account of the Bus Trip, the Acid Tests, and the Acid Test Graduation, drawn from interviews with many of the participants, and distilled through that sultan of subjectivity who is Tom Wolfe. He writes what it was like to *be* there and *feel* it all. It was and is a masterpiece.

Although *On the Bus* is nominally credited to Paul Perry and Ken Babbs, they really acted as editors in bringing together the first-hand reflections of dozens of people involved with Perry Lane, the Acid Tests, and especially the Bus Trip. Babbs, of course, was the Intrepid Traveller on the Bus Trip itself, and a



Artwork by Rifer Releif
© 1991



Ken Kesey with the new FURTHUR bus

Photo by Ed Rosenthal

prominent Prankster. Among others whose memories are picked at length, are such disparate figures as Hunter S. Thompson (who introduced Kesey to the Hell's Angels and expected riot and death to come of it all), Timothy Leary and Ram Dass (whom the Pranksters visited in a psychedelic retreat in Millbrook, NY), and Wavy Gravy and Jerry Garcia (the Dead performed at a number of the Acid Tests, along with the Jefferson Airplane and others). I was very pleased personally to read the reflections of a number of the literary figures who were around Kesey at the time: Gordon Lish, Robert Stone, and Malcolm Cowley, among many others. Among the lesser-known, I was fascinated by the story of Denise ("Mary Microgram") Kaufmann, later head of the band Ace of Cups, who had awesome experiences at one of the Acid Tests.

The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test and *On the Bus* complement each other very well. Wolfe's book is immersed in the details of the events, while *On the Bus* gives a greater perspective to the reader, both in terms of the background of the psychedelic movement (Hofmann, Huxley, and MK-ULTRA figure prominently in the early pages) and what followed the Acid Tests (although, oddly, the book is skimpy in its account of the "graduation" aspect of the final Keseyan events). Perry and Babbs let the participants speak for themselves, with their contradictory perspectives and the vantage point of "the years since," which I found a good counterpoint to Wolfe and his :::: you :::: are :::: really :::: there :::: approach.

Kesey's new book is a different sort entirely. Originally composed in 1978, *The Further Inquiry* is really a stage script based, one presumes, on the forty-plus hours of film taken during the original Bus Trip. But this is not *just* a reenactment of the Trip. It is a courtroom drama of sorts, a Hearing in Heaven for the soul of Neal Cassady, the witnesses being the Pranksters and their associates, and the judge being the Bus itself (its destination sign, as always, proclaiming "FURTHUR"). It is a tribute to Neal Cassady as a sort of Trickster, an ex-thieving heart-of-gold lustful manic motor-mouth rap Beat shaman, who died cold and lonely walking railroad tracks in Mexico in 1968, a victim of exhaustion, hypothermia and alcohol.

I won't spoil the surprise of the perfectly fitting ending. But I will say that I was grateful to finally get some exposure to the fabled movie made during the Bus Trip, through transcripts of dialogue

and hundreds of color stills. (*On the Bus* also features numerous black and white photographs.)

So much for the history lesson. What does it all matter now? It is easy to be dazzled by tales of now-legendary characters who somehow intertwined with the Bus Trip and Acid Tests. Mountain Girl (Carolyn Adams) hooked up with the Pranksters right after the Bus Trip and through them met Jerry Garcia, whom she later married. People like Owsley and Jack Kerouac himself show up in the story. However, it was not only individuals who intersected in crucial ways with the Bus, but institutions as well.

Most relevant for *DDN* readers, the Grateful Dead gained a lot of important early exposure and experience at The Acid Tests, where they had the opportunity to meet and interact with people like Wavy Gravy and Ram Dass, with whom they are still closely associated. The Acid Tests begat Stewart Brand's Trips Festival, featuring Kesey and the Pranksters, which led to the Fillmore Auditorium and a man by the name of Bill Graham. Some see the Bus as the inspiration for the Beatles' "Magical Mystery Tour" and the "Magic Bus" of The Who. The Bus was at Woodstock and later visited Esalen.

There is no question that the Bus Trip, the Acid Tests, and their surrounding publicity did a lot to raise public consciousness

continued on next page



Courtesy of the Psychedelic Solution, NYC

about not only psychedelics themselves, but the different vision of reality which psychedelics pointed to. This vision had a lasting impression on art, literature, philosophy, psychology, and lifestyle. One of my favorite new literary magazines is called *ONTHEBUS*.

Perhaps the major value in looking back at the Bus trip is not to learn history, but to learn *from* it. The Bus Trip was a microcosmic (and exceedingly well-documented) example of one type of Transformative Journey, warts and all, and as such it is worth studying for its lessons in what that kind of journey can entail.

The Pranksters learned that, like art, The Journey Is Not Nice. The bus was hot, traveling for the most part was exceedingly unpleasant, especially in the early stages, and people didn't eat well or get to the toilet as much as they would have liked. The Pranksters got on one another's nerves sometimes and it was difficult living in such cramped quarters. The journey could be a royal pain.

Another lesson was that The Journey Can Be Damned Dangerous. Certainly it was that way when one of the Bus passengers, Stark Naked, went — well, stark naked (or close to it) down the streets of Houston, Texas in the middle of the night, coming down from a foolishly large dose of acid. She was arrested and passed out of the Trip fairly early on. Microgram Mary broke her facial bones and was hospitalized as a result of her experience with acid at one of the Tests. The Journey may be for the innocent or the childlike, but it is not for the naive, who can get chewed up and have their bones spit back at them.

The Pranksters found out the hard way that Not Every Hero Is A Friend. They were profoundly disappointed in their meetings with Jack Kerouac, Timothy Leary, and Richard Alpert (as Ram Dass was known then), because these people were simply not in the same space as the Pranksters when the Bus showed up. As Ram Dass put it, "If they had come the night before, it would have been an entirely different story for all of us for the rest of our lives. But that's the way it is. I live in a world where there is no error, so that is what was meant to happen." (*On the Bus*, p. 102). On the Journey, don't expect to make friends with or influence anyone other than yourself.

Other lessons: Seeing the True Light, Sometimes, Doesn't Mean You Won't Be A Real Dope Other Times. We Are Not Gods Yet, So Expect Stupidity and Ego. Grimy Power Games And Other Garbage Creep In. And, finally, the first Prankster law, if there is any: Nothing Lasts.

Important notes for the Journey, worth studying for the individual journeys we take now, 25+ years later: The need for psychedelics in the contemporary journey is a debatable point; some, such as Ram Dass, feel that while psychedelics were useful to shake up the prevailing reality paradigm in the '60s, now they just get in the way. But even without psychedelics, the value of the transformative journey, the experience of a wider reality, is not in question. The importance of the Bus Trip in that journey, historically and symbolically, is also clear. It just remains for us to take the inquiry — *FURTHUR*. ♦

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THE MYTHIC 60'S ON VIDEOTAPE

Those of you interested in audiovisual evidence of the movers and shakers of the psychedelic 60's can now obtain several relatively recent video releases that help to both break and confirm the mythic qualities of that time. KEY-Z productions, a small company headed by Ken Kesey's son and step-daughter, have several unique offerings including *THE ACID TEST* and *NEAL CASSADY*. These videos are not of the best quality but they do offer fascinating views of The Merry Pranksters, the Grateful Dead and Neal Cassady. *THE ACID TEST* features particularly long sequences of the early Dead in concert. *THE ACID TEST* video may leave you in awe of just how primitive the scene was back then. But you must remember that these innerspace explorers were truly the first of a new tribe on a new shore. While the sound quality is quite decent it does not at any time sync up with what you're watching. The same can be said for *NEAL CASSADY* which offers a bizarre look at NEAL in all his speed-blitzed glory. I would recommend the *NEAL CASSADY* video *only* for those who are really interested in watching this beatific legend twitch, shake, and drive for hours on end. Both tapes are important acquisitions for the serious collector. For info write to KEZ-Z, 755 Polk St. Eugene OR, 97402.

Also of interest is *DOMINOES*, a video "album" featuring some of the most memorable television and film footage of the 60's set to the best music of that time. This fast-paced look at a turbulent and often violent period in our history should easily dispell the myth that the 60's was filled with peace and love. It was a time of great sadness, anger and destruction out of which was born the music that we still love. This enlightening video, which contains a segment of protest marches set to "DARK STAR," is generally available in numerous video rental stores nationwide and is even run in small movie theaters from time to time. Check it out. ♦

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Help Dupree's Diamond News in the Continuation of the

GARDEN OF THE GRATEFULLY DEADICATED

DDN and the Nature Conservancy recently joined forces to create a special DEADHEAD-Funded Rainforest Preserve in the Sierra de Las Minas Reserve in Guatemala. We purchased over 100 acres there — all we could from that region and are now onto our **SECOND GARDEN OF THE GRATEFULLY DEADICATED!!!**

Every \$30 we raise now will *permanently* protect one acre of endangered rainforest land in **The Rio Bravo Conservation Area in Belize, Central America!** Your contribution, no matter how small, will show the world we Deadheads *can and are* doing our share in helping to save the planet from destruction.

You'll have the satisfaction of knowing that when it mattered most, you/**we took action.**

Any donation will help! Those who donate \$30 or more will receive an honorary land deed from the Nature Conservancy and regular "reports from the field" about the management activities affecting the Garden of the Gratefully Deadicated. Those who make smaller donations will be kept informed through this publication.

Checks for *any* amount should be made out to: The Nature Conservancy — Adopt an Acre
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c/o DDN, P.O. Box 3603, New York, NY 10185

GARDEN OF THE GRATEFULLY DEADICATED — UPDATE

In our last issue, we told you how The Nature Conservancy, in conjunction with Dupree's Diamond News, created an opportunity for us to have a direct hand in saving one of the world's most valuable and endangered tracts of rainforest land. With the help of Deadheads, this project has already been so successful the Sierras de las Mines Preserve in Guatemala, has been bought up for permanent protection!! Now we are asking for your help in saving the second Garden of the Gratefully Deadicated in the Rio Bravo Conservation Area in Belize, Central America. The Nature Conservancy has assured us that 100 percent of the money will be used to purchase and preserve this land. If you haven't contributed to this amazing project, now is a great time to start! So far through DDN, we have collected over \$7,000!

The Rio Bravo Conservation Area

Rio Bravo is one of the few remaining sites in Central America undisturbed by modern development. Its lush tropical forest extends 152,000 acres in Northwest Belize. Some of Central America's most endangered species find refuge in here: populations of black howler monkeys, spider monkeys, tapirs, jaguars, margays, and more than 300 species of birds including millions of North American songbirds

The Rio Bravo was once occupied by the ancient Maya, and preliminary archeological surveys have located a number of Mayan ruins within its boundaries. The largest site contains up to 20 buildings and four plazas and may rival Guatemala's enormous Tikal site when fully excavated.

Fortunately, the Rio Bravo area can be saved. The Nature Conservancy is working with a local private conservation group, Programme For Belize, to protect the reserve and extend its many benefits to the people living around it. They have begun purchasing land in the area they will own and manage. The Nature Conservancy and Programme For Belize are now working together at the conservation area to purchase additional land holdings, hire and train local rangers to monitor and protect the reserve, provide necessary field equipment to these on-site land managers, and begin efforts to reach-out to local communities and involve them in the park's protection and management.

As part of its "adopt an acre" program, the Nature Conservancy has developed a specific budget to cover the cost of land acquisition, land management, community education, etc. They have calculated that the cost for land purchase and providing these services per acre is \$30. Each of you who donates \$30 or more will receive an honorary land deed specifying the location of your "adopted" acreage. You'll also get regular "Reports from the Field," letters from local land managers keeping you informed about the management activities affecting your adopted acreage — the very conservation activities made possible by you. Those of you who donate less than \$30 will be kept informed of progress in this project through DDN — all donations, no matter how small, are welcome and will be put to good use.

Although you won't personally own the rainforest land you've adopted, you will directly provide for its protection. Your commitment represents a critical investment in the health of the global environment — the future. Please join us in showing the world and ourselves that Deadheads care enough to make a difference. Thank you. ♡

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4-25-91

Hey Now,

The Mindstretch classes of Pownal School have been studying the environment all year. For a final project we put on a town-wide carnival called The Jungle Jamboree. Each group created its own activity for the Jamboree based on the environmental research we had done during the year. We then allocated our profits to the environmental or humane group (s) of our choice. The 7th grade Mindstretch group had a *Congey Safari* at the Jamboree. We have chosen to donate \$60.00 to your cause. We hope you will use it where it is most needed. Thank you for helping to make our world a better place.

Sincerely,
Jason Short
Ryan Lee
Eric White
Carissa Rowletton
Chris Stimpson
Adam J. Dinnell
Eliza Kinney
Lori Merrill
Heather Merrill
Thom Saly
Ryan Jordan

Spring Tour Heads South

by Theik Conkin and Doug Corkhill

GREENSBORO

Grey weather, grey places, greying music. As the tour hit Dixieland, fortunately, the weather improved and Spring arrived both botanically and musically. This Carolina resurgence did much to salvage an otherwise fair-to-middling tour.

Getting to Greensboro was great — the South was bursting in bloom, roads had little traffic, parking at the show was quick and convenient. Dogwoods flanked the Coliseum, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky as Deadheads celebrated Easter Sunday and the (second?) coming of the Dead. The parking lot scene was phenomenal compared to the weather and security problems up north. Vending of all types was rampant and only GD trademark violators were hassled. Easter is a big holiday in the South, and this holiday spirit definitely wore off on the facility's employees, inside and out. Pouches were let in without being opened and no one made an effort to keep anyone from smoking anything inside. North Carolina may be the tobacco state, but they don't seem to care what you smoke.

The only exception to this relatively hassle-free scene involved sheriff's deputies in tie-dyes, who were trading mail order tickets for drugs and then busting the ticket seekers. A satellite police station had been set up in the convention center adjacent to the coliseum to expedite processing.

As much of the crowd was taking it slow and enjoying the parking lot scene, the Easter show got off to a comfortably late start, allowing most of the Heads to get in by the time the band opened with a rousing "Mississippi Half-Step." Bruce was back for the rest of the tour, and immediately meshed into the web of sound on strong versions of "Friend Of The Devil" and "West LA Fade Away." Southern crowds crave real rock 'n roll, and "Might As Well" more than filled the bill. The rebirth of "Might As Well" as a regular first set friend is welcome news indeed.

The second set continued the rock 'n roll focus with a scorching "Samson And Delilah," a great bible-belt tale. Up next was Sunday's highlight, a 23-minute "Eyes Of The World." It was astonishing, as gorgeous as we've heard it played. First Jerry



Photo by Michael Conway

played a MIDI-ized flute solo reminiscent of Chris Wood's work with Traffic, then led Bruce Hornsby through another progression that took the song places it's never been before. The short jam after "Eyes" almost tumbled into "Dark Star" (a few Heads actually emitted anticipatory shrieks) but landed instead into a nicely spacey "Playing In The Band." After an otherwise standard second set, "Knockin' On Heaven's Door" calmly escorted us back out to a clear and calm Easter night in free-wheelin' "Dixie."

The good Southern spirits continued on April Fool's Day, a great holiday to party with the world's best party band. The self-deprecating goof that is April Fool's Day also enthuses and infuses the Dead and its entire family. When Spring tour was announced, this was a target for a lot of Heads. Monday's crowd was expectant, half wondering if there would be a practical joke by the band, the other half wondering if we'd get the "Dark Star." The band raced through the first set, ending suddenly after "Bird Song." Phil did sing "Tom Thumb's Blues" to the delight of all Philophiles present.

After a fairly typical "China" > "Rider" > "Looks Like Rain" opening, the boys noodled around for a bit, while those who had heard it the day before knew that if it was coming, now was the time. Then there was another tease, a "Dark Star" was in the air, and as they hesitated yet again someone behind me shouted, "Just do it!"

After several moments of hinting noodles, Jerry and Phil clicked into the opening riff of "Dark Star," and the show took off into the one area that hadn't yet been explored in Greensboro — awesome electronic space. With the mastering of the MIDI by Jerry, Vince, Bobby and Phil, the basic foursome is in wonderful control when the going gets weird. Their ability to conceptually and musically create meaningful aural mayhem is a true gift. Lots of bands can play Chuck Berry; no one but the Dead do "Dark Star." This version was pristine — its verses were surrounded and punctuated by long stretches of spectacular space and a short but intense Rhythm Devils interlude. The rest of the show fizzled, as if they'd run out of energy after "Dark Star" and coasted to the end. Coming back to earth, the band reprised the unfinished "Playing" from Sunday night before capping off the set with a decent version of "Lovelight."

While these two shows may be remembered for the April Fool's "Dark Star," it was the sparkling "Eyes" that shined the brightest.

ATLANTA

Good ol' time Southern hospitality continued in Atlanta — the weather stayed great and this city was a gracious host to the Heads. The big question going into this three-night stand was whether Greensboro had marked a turning point in the tour or just been an excellent exception. Unfortunately, the Atlanta shows would join the early stops on tour as examples of occasional brilliance amidst a backdrop of going through the motions. The first night's first set, similar to last year's first night in Atlanta, opened with a passable "Touch Of Grey," and then went nowhere fast. The possibly redemptive "Music Never Stopped" tumbled into a quick and brief "Don't Ease Me In" to

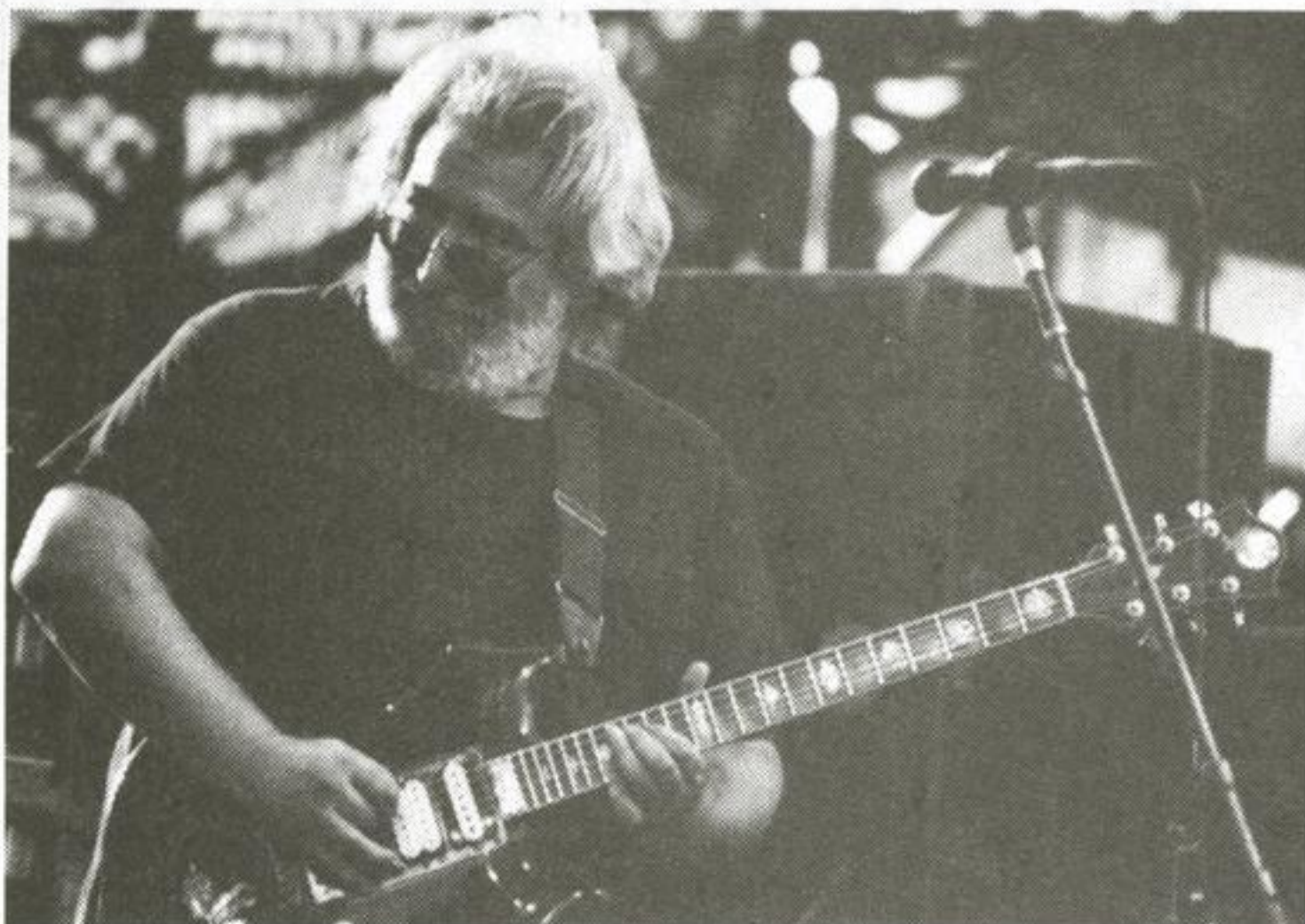


Photo by Phil Gerstheimer

conclude a very typical set — although "Victim Or The Crime" has become a sonic spectacular, the almost lockstep pairing with "Foolish Heart" is becoming way too predictable. The trend towards predictableness continued after the drums with versions of "Watchtower," "Stella Blue," and "Sugar Magnolia" that were competent but contained.

Thursday night's show featured the most interesting song list of the three nights. First time on tour renditions of "Let The Good Times Roll" and "They Love Each Other" were appreciated and well-played. The first set closing segue of "High Time" > "Promised Land" brought the Omni to its highest energy level of the first three Atlanta sets, an energy that continued into the second set with a good workout on "Help On The Way" > "Slipknot!" > "Franklin's Tower." An average drums/space wound up in a kick-ass "I Need A Miracle" into a beautiful and ever-touching "Standing On The Moon." At the moment at which this show could have taken the step from good to great, though, Bobby led us into another very average "Good Lovin'," which when coupled with the "U.S. Blues" encore pointed the band back towards the safety of standard song choices.

The last night of three night runs at a venue can either reach a magnificent peak, or crash (a la Nassau). The Friday Atlanta show did neither, but then again, everyone remembers both the great and the abysmal shows — a year from now, tour Heads probably



Photo by Michael Conway

won't recall this show at all. The band's playing was tight, but not inspired — even the normally rousing set closer "Deal" was just a walk-through, not a rave up. Another "Iko" > "Saint of Circumstance" continued the evening's march through mediocrity — "The Other One" space after drums was almost memorable, but the segue that followed was both bland and predictable. At this point on tour, a few shows — Sunday Albany, Wednesday Nassau and April Fool's Day — were great, but the others were not that memorable. As the tour left Atlanta, Heads could only hope that Disney and Orlando might revive the flagging energy of a tepid tour. ♦

SEE PAGES 59-61 FOR SET LISTS

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Photo by Michael Conway

THE PHURST ritual in

by Alexis Muellner

Have you ever asked yourself where the Grateful Dead *really* came from? No...I'm not talking about home towns or gene splicing...I'm talking more in terms of the *catalyst*. What type of ingenious *force*, what setting, what attitude gave birth to such a high-powered psychic locomotive like the Dead?

In 1965 - 1966, a series of creative events evolved that would change the way in which much of the youth of America would think and act. Orchestrated by Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters, the **Acid Tests** and the **Trips Festival** elicited an exciting new form of improvisational, exploratory, ritualistic celebration of life. The essence of these events was a common desire to discover, create, and explore those new forms of order which emerge when one delves into the uncharted and often chaotic caverns of the creative mind.

As one will discover upon reading Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, Kesey and the Pranksters embarked on a visionary quest into the realms of Zen madness and controlled folly. They began to stretch and re-shape the boundaries of human perspective, thought, and creativity. Their influence molded and inspired many of the artists and thinkers that were to follow during the 60's and beyond. It was at these events, while acting as the "house band," that the Grateful Dead found their true calling while providing essential seasoning for that legendary soup. But while the Dead's legacy remains as vivid as we know it, has the energy that created them vanished from everywhere else, or is it still "out there" somewhere, to be accessed by new generations of intrepid travellers?

Where's a good ritual when you really need it?

We live in a time when perhaps our favorite rituals are dwindling toward extinction. They're disappearing just as surely as the meaning and importance of ritual escapes the popular imagination. In a recent National Public Radio documentary on performance art, Kimberly Camp, Director of the Smithsonian's Experimental Gallery in Washington DC, said that the link between performance and ritual is critical, because "our lives are so devoid of ritual — we've gotten rid of all of them, save the ones that happen in religious places and that's a dangerous thing because we've lost an important way to culturally code our behavior and to look at transformation and initiation, beginnings and endings..."

Somehow over the years, the unwritten understanding of the era, the "unspoken thing," as Tom Wolfe described it, has dissipated to a large degree amongst the masses. As generations fold into one another, the form and its potential are almost lost in the sea of McMedia, fast-food news bites, and sound entrees. There are

those who believe that what was experienced back then has become not much more than myth, that the synergy and vitality that made those times as meaningful as they were, has been lost — melted away. While the potential exists even at Dead concerts, we participate for the most part as observers more than creators.

The search for a more meaningful existence has inevitably brought many of us into direct contact with the great healing power of ritual, be it through Dead concerts, Rainbow gatherings, Native American sweats, any number of creative disciplines, or even sports. We have come to understand that partaking together in certain time-tested, powerful, archetypal rituals can result in the unleashing of tremendous creative and healing powers within all of us. In our particular case, as with our predecessors, the Merry

Pranksters, the process begins by becoming individually and collectively more sensitive. Once in this heightened state of consciousness, we can embark on a great journey: *a living dream*, or altered state of consciousness in the vein of those that have been reported by countless shamans, pranksters, alchemists, medicine men, musicians, and artists throughout history. Experiencing even a moment of that state of grace can change your priorities forever. Life may become a quest, and without ritual you will be unfulfilled.

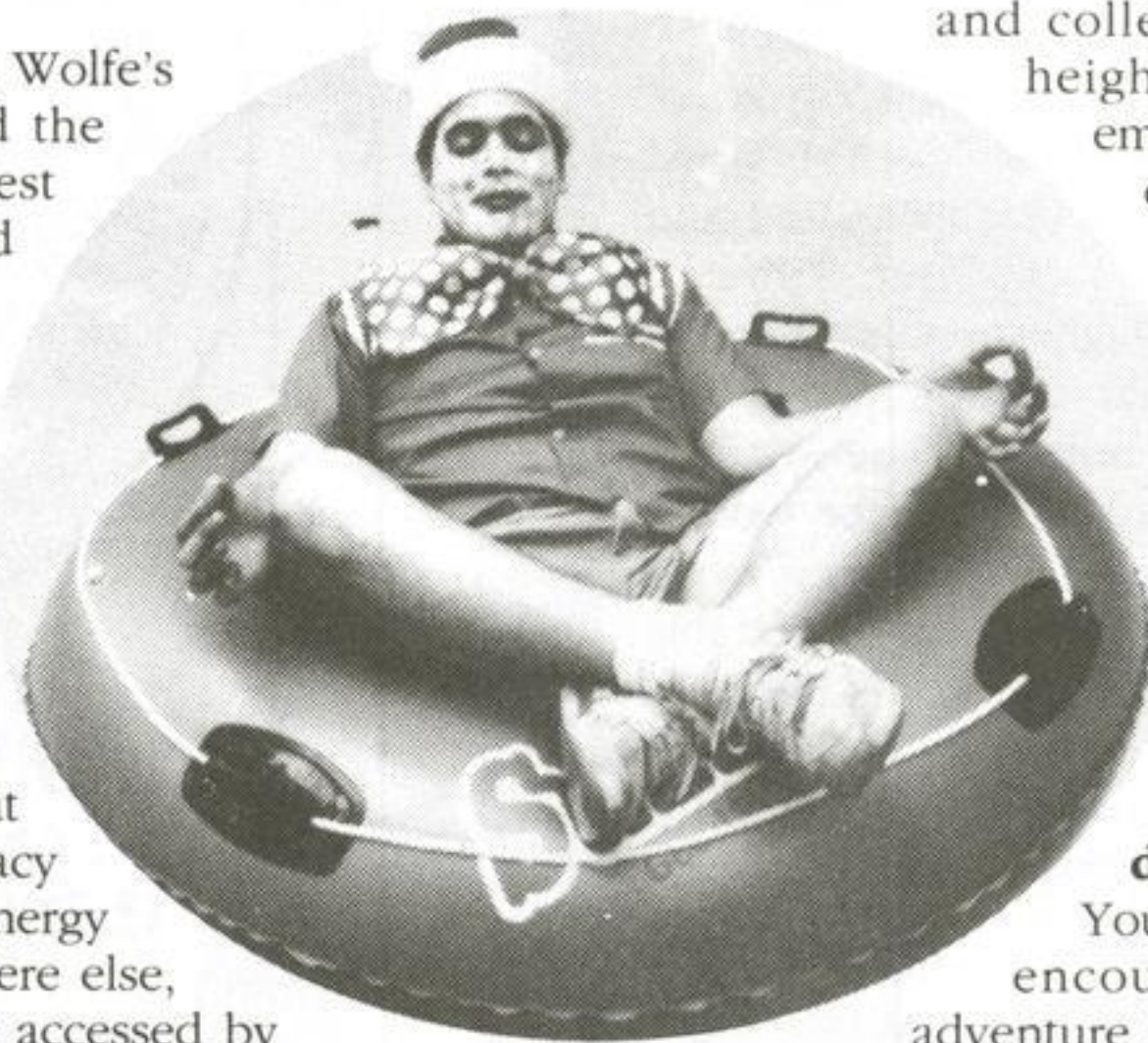
Just when you thought all ritual had disappeared...

You may not have known it, but a ritual that encourages the same type of creativity, adventure and intimate participation that the Trips Festival was known for is once again available for direct experience *now*. This "next step" is both the

continuation of a timeless rite, and the origination of a present day ritual. It is born of the energy and synergy found in some of our favorite time-tested traditions: Mardi Gras, Halloween, New Year's Eve, etc. It embodies the spirit of the Acid Tests and the entire Grateful Dead Experience. But unlike the Trips Festival or the Acid Tests, it is of *these* times. It's called **The Phurst Church of Phun**, and this is one place where you'll still find the doors of perception *wide open!*

The Phurst Church of Phun, part concert, part tribal stomp, part theater of the absurd, is a high energy rock 'n roll ritual. A fundamental objective of these events is to achieve a group peak experience through *the actions of the audience* as much as the actions of the featured performers. As with the Acid Tests, at the Phurst Church of Phun it's hard to tell where the stage leaves off and the observers begin.

While the Phurst Church of Phun strongly urges some form of participation, the option *not to* is also an accepted path. Feeling



The King of Phun

CHURCH OF PHUN

transfigured time

comfortable (and having fun) is paramount. Thus, there is only one Phurst Church of Phun *golden rule*:

Play hard but hurt no one.

The Phurst Church of Phun ritual consists of a series of micro-environments, all of which are designed to "get you off" in one way or another. At the core of Church is a room containing **The Incredible Psychedelic Sound and Light Experience**, featuring a high-energy live rock 'n roll 'n soul dance band accompanied by the mind-blowing visuals of **The Speed of Light Show**. For those who know how to reach altered states of consciousness through dancing and over-saturating the retina, it is a boogie to remember.

You, the event, and achieving "center stage"

As The Phurst Church of Phun convenes, every participant is first given an alternate identity via a nametag. After being sprinkled with magic dust by a "door shaman," the participant is properly introduced over loudspeakers: ...announcing, "Turf Hog," "Princess Diana's Electrician," "Neutered But Naughty," "Saint Stephen," "The Vital Spore," and so on. Participants are urged as well to adopt new voices as well as new personas, perhaps it'll be Napoleon with hiccups or Henry Kissinger playing Sylvester Stallone.

The action of wearing masks and/or costumes or ecstatic dress, donning personas, painting faces, getting in disguise — are critical elements to the Phurst Church of Phun ritual. Changing one's appearance is often the first step that allows us to spring-board from our everyday perspective on reality. It is a jumping off point, a chance to find the performer in all of us, to tap that which lies just beyond the mirror, to psychically throw the car keys in the ocean (after all, why should Halloween be the only socially acceptable occasion on which one can explore other identities?). For those who have not come prepared there are often master face painters and costumers on hand.

Delving further into the gathering one will inevitably find the **Holy Shrine of Phun** which is overseen by the **King of Phun**, who often totes a sacred mango and grandstands from his throne. The King is dressed in long red robes, his face awash with vibrant polk-a-dots and dangling blonde "Marilyn Monroe" curls falling across his cheeks. Participants are encouraged to make an offering to the Holy Shrine in the hope that The Divine Spirit of Folly will grace one and all with its presence.

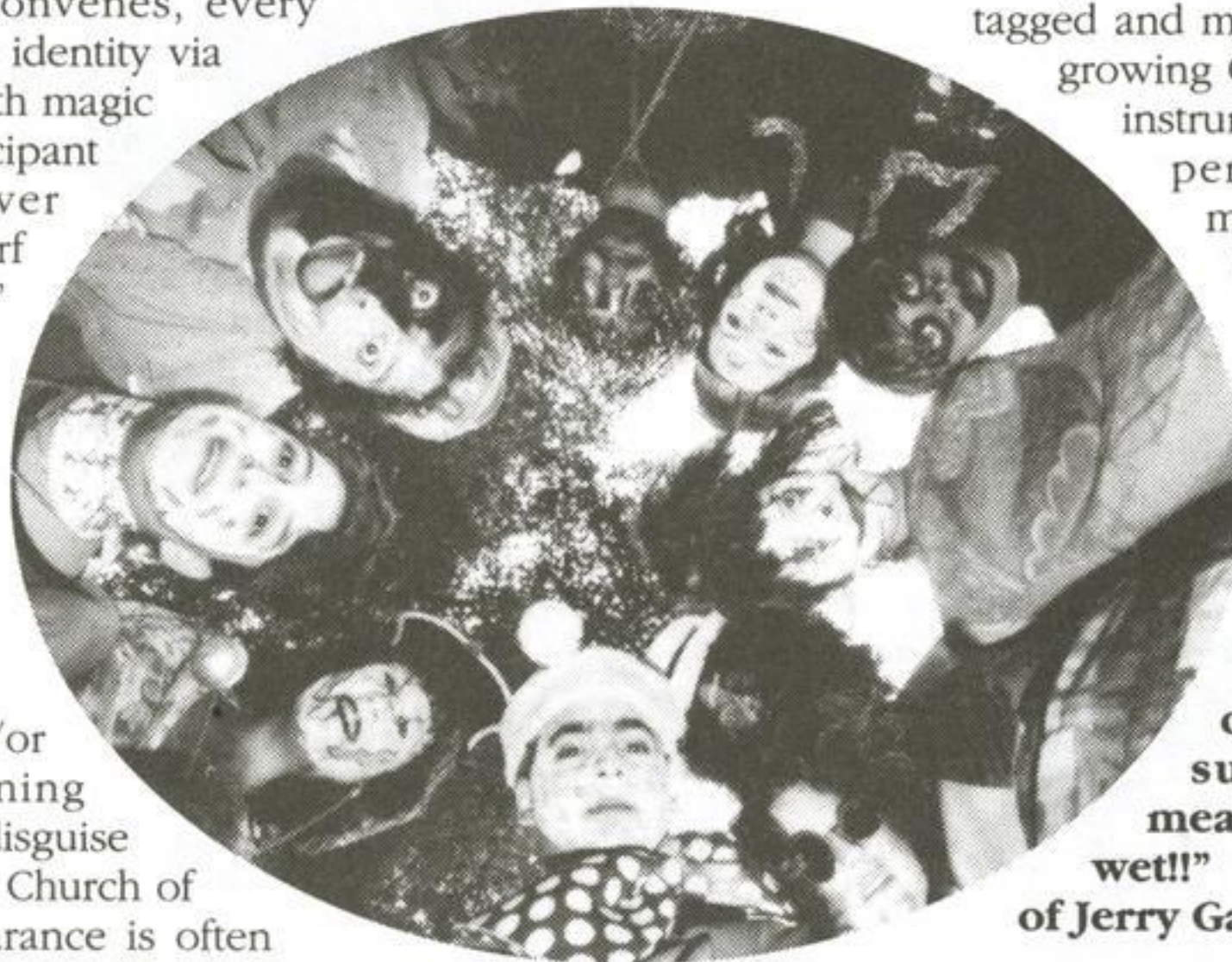
Once you've made an offering, you can tap into the music. You might find the band navigating through a searing rendition of

"Dark Star." On the light show screen above the band are shimmering images of ballerinas dancing on the rings of Saturn. **Pbunny Heaven** convenes behind a doorway in the next room. Throngs are lined up outside, awaiting an individualized initiation procedure, conducted by phunny angels.

Your hosts for this wild event are a wacky bunch of phunsters known as the **Badillions**. The Badillions can most often be found converging in the area called **The Sound Garden**. Here, set up on long tables in yet another room are a mixing console, a stack of digital delays and other assorted sound effects processors. They are surrounded by half a dozen microphones, several tape decks, synthesizers, basses, clarinets, turntables and an album collection from the annals of anarchy. Cryptic logs and

notes are taped beside a rack of a hundred cassettes, all tagged and marked, cued and poised — the ever growing Church archive of weird sounds and instruments. Open microphones dot the perimeter of the area. Audience members are encouraged to become contributors. Various musicians sit in — be it an "angular" saxophone, a novice kazoo, or a well-known guitarist.

You enter a room full of sounds such as a Hawaiian hula in the left ear and the lovely Vanna White in the other. A live participant suddenly shouts "redress the meatloaf Doris, my chin's sopping wet!!" From out of nowhere, the voice of Jerry Garcia recites poetry...



The Badillions

It is here in the sound garden that the Badillions initiate rolling textural "jam sessions in sound." There is a core ensemble in place to help direct the musical and creative interplay. Just as the Merry Pranksters did at the Acid Tests, the Badillions tend to manipulate ebb and flow. Here, you could hear anything from the spoken word, intricate sound loops, world rhythms, and electronic music, to wind chimes, tantric gongs or the best of the Grateful Dead. **The Sound Garden** is a forum for a "self-but-guided tour" in the uncharted territory of the collective unconscious. In one ear, there is a lesson in Thai language. Mae West belts out a sinful rendition of the Beatles' "Day Tripper." A Hawaiian hula in the left ear and the lovely Vanna White in the other. A live participant shouts "redress the meatloaf Doris, my chin's sopping wet!!" From out of nowhere, the voice of Jerry Garcia recites poetry. A graveyard bassline creeps to your left and tiptoes off stage right. Soon, the mystic howl of the sacred Aboriginal instrument: the didjeridu...a Sheba Cat Food commercial...a lesson in deep-frying...Mickey Hart playing the Tar...Ethel Merman...and the sound of the wind. With the lights

down low, losing ones' self into the moment becomes all-too-easy. Plasma generators glow in the corners of each room. Under a hallway lit with black lights, drawing paper becomes **The Wall of Words** as it is slowly decorated by participants in a swirling sea of poetic text, adventurous graffiti and mandalas, all in day-glo crayon. Be it through sound, image or motion, The Phurst Church of Phun provides the vehicles for a group trip to the collective unconscious.

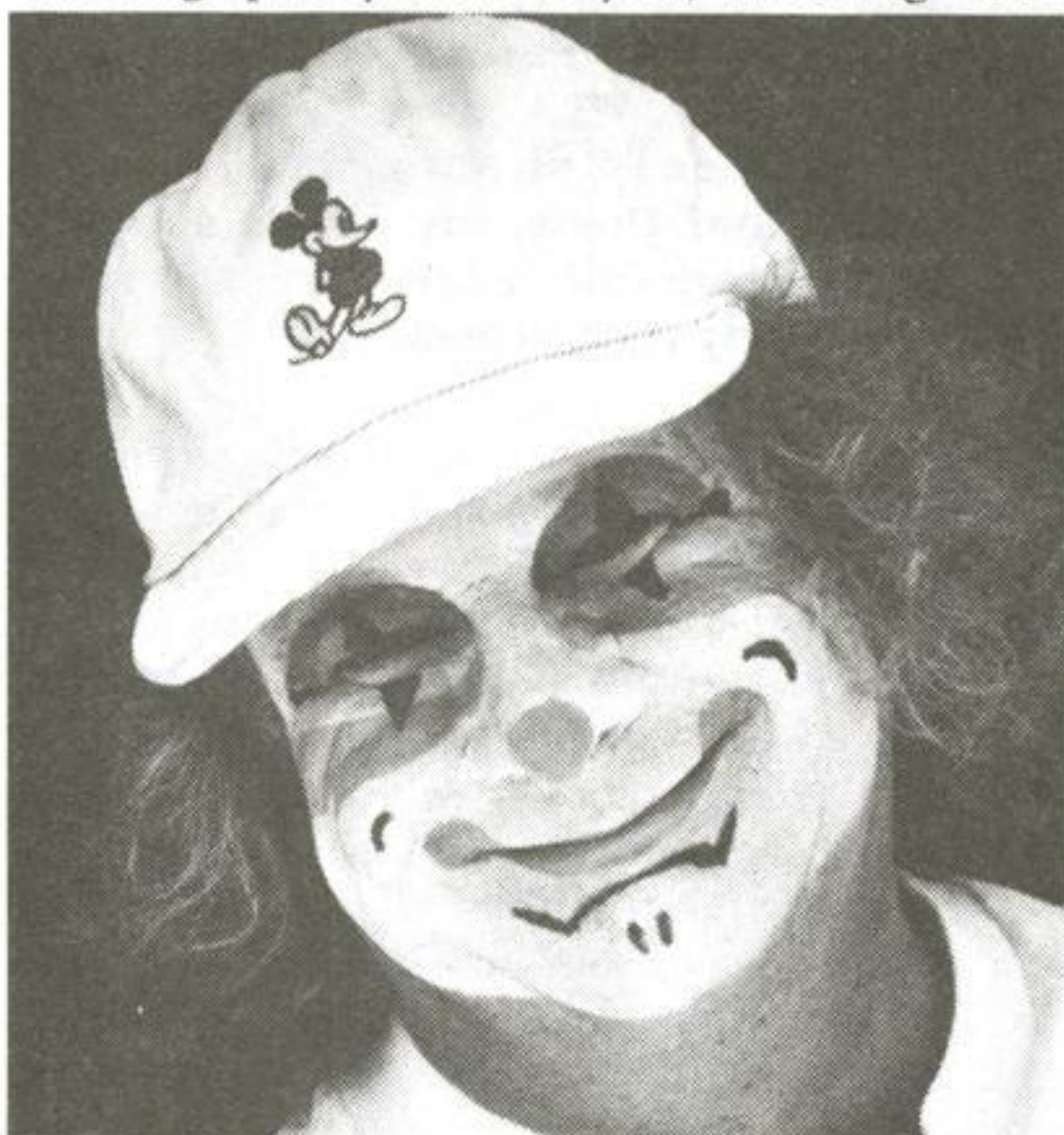


Tom Wolfe wrote that some of the Pranksters' early audio explorations "were pretty — well, freaking gibberish to normal human ears, most likely, or, to the receptive standard intellectual who has heard about the 1913

Armory show...and John Cage, it might sound sort of avant-garde. But in fact it grows out of...the experience...the whole other world that opened your mind to that which existed only in the moment itself — now."

The X-Factor

Undoubtedly one of the most important and rewarding elements of the whole experience is what the artists call the "X Factor." This is the element of synchronicity and synergy, that extra cosmic something that makes this the sort of event you'll remember for years. For example, it's the mild-mannered accountant who came to see what this event was *really* all about. After several hours of standing quietly next to you, watching **The Sound**



Wavy Gravy

ability to rapidly recite all the words to "China Cat Sunflower" backwards. Or it's seeing your first sweetheart for the first time in ten years as he/she stands in a doorway welcoming all who pass with a cryptic swirl of the hands. Or it's a member of the Navajo

Nation who arrives and begins telling creation stories in the Navajo language, the same ones you haven't heard since you were a child.



An evening at the Phurst Church of Phun leaves your mind overflowing with wild memories. You finally begin to understand *from within* what the Merry Pranksters were searching for

and how the Acid Tests changed the course of our culture. As Wolfe described, it was a natural progression for the Pranksters to have an almost divine urge to spread their dogma, to get others involved. He wrote that the Acid Tests turned out to be an art-form foreseen in the strange book *Childhood's End* as a method called "total identification." "The history of the cinema gave the



clue to their actions. First sound, then color, then stereoscopy, then Cinerama, had made the old moving pictures more and more like reality itself. Where was the end of the story? Surely, the final stage

would be reached when the audience forgot it was an audience, and became part of the action. To achieve this would involve stimulation of all the senses, and perhaps hypnosis as well... When the goal was attained, there would be an enormous enrichment of human experience. One could become — for a while, at least — any other person and could take part in any conceivable adventure, real or imaginary...And when the 'program' was over, one would have acquired a memory as vivid as any experience in their actual life — indeed indistinguishable from reality itself."

Chaos, Order, and all that Jazz

Another essential factor in the alchemy of such rituals is the notion of experimentation with chaos and order. In his famous 1972 *Rolling Stone* interview Jerry Garcia remembered, "We were all doing the Acid Test, which was our first exposure to formlessness. Formlessness and chaos lead to new forms. And new order. Closer to, probably, what the real order is. When you break down the old orders and the old forms and leave them broken and shattered, you suddenly find yourself a new space with new form and new order which are more like the way it is. More like the flow."

More modern musings on this perspective come from recent findings by computer scientists who observe that even in nature, there appears a fantastic sense of order behind what is chaotic on the surface. Fractal mathematician Douglas Hofstadter has written that "...an eerie type of chaos can lurk just behind a facade of order — and yet, deep inside the chaos lurks an even eerier type of order...*Chaos* is a science of the everyday world,

addressing questions every child has wondered about, how clouds form, how smoke rises, how water eddies in a stream." Searching for new order from within chaos is certainly an integral part of the Phurst Church Experience.

But the Phurst Church of Phun isn't about "getting stoned"

For the Pranksters this search for new order had inseparable ties to LSD and helped fuel 25 years of debate in Western culture over the "drug-dilemma." This culture has struggled to evaluate its relationship with and to drugs as a force for change, enlightenment or creativity. While it can be argued that drugs can, given the proper set and setting, be used without personal or social damage, the Phurst Church crew has learned from history that it's all but impossible, given the constraints of society and the inherent danger of using drugs, to count on them as truly safe catalysts. So the Badillions have concentrated on creating a series of events in which it is possible to "get really high" from within ourselves, through the acts of singing, dancing, clowning, and creatively interacting.



Clown, Tricksters, and Fools In Search of Crazy Wisdom

To arrive at an intimate understanding of the Phurst Church of Phun's

"Phundamental" ideology one needs to examine the notion of **Crazy Wisdom**. In his book *by the same name*, "Scoop" Nisker observes that crazy wisdom, "is the wisdom of saints, Zen masters, the

poet, the mad scientist and the fool. Crazy Wisdom flips the world upside down and backward until everything becomes perfectly clear." If it teaches us anything, it is that we don't really know much at all.

"Crazy Wisdom makes its appearance through four archetypal characters who arise in every culture to challenge convention. They are the clown, the jester, the trickster and the fool. The common message conveyed by the four archetypal characters is the crazy wisdom of doubt. They spread doubt about our beliefs, our abilities, our motives, our institutions, our sanity, our love, our laws, our leaders...(they) call



into question our entire understanding of ourselves and the universe."



The four archetypes force us to re-evaluate our belief systems. They constantly remind us that life is too important to be taken too seriously. Being an active participant in the Phurst Church of Phun means

attempting to learn from, or even to become one or more of these archetypal characters.

No Stranger to the Grandeur of Folly

Wavy Gravy, the patron saint of hallucinogenic mayhem (and Crazy Wisdom) and "Woodstock survivor," is part of the core ensemble. One of his many projects and collaborations, he helped create the original First Phurst Church of Phun at the elegant First Unitarian Universalist Church in San Francisco in the late 70's. It happened on the only date that made sense: April Fool's Day.

The first event combined techniques of the older Acid Test ideas as well

as some of Wavy's "Hog Farm" experiences. Their original flyer promised "tap dancing penguins" and beckoned the masses to "come suck the light." Cartoonist Gilbert Shelton ("The Freak Brothers") showed his "Set My Chickens Free" movie featuring him in a chicken suit driving a Cadillac to Washington, DC.

But on the East Coast, in Amherst, Massachusetts, there was also a diverse group of young artists (the Badillions) who were developing similar rituals. During an East Coast tour, Wavy Gravy



happened upon them and observed, "Hey, out west we call what you're doing the Phurst Church of Phun." East met West and the rest is history.

The Badillions weren't trying to redo the Acid Tests. But as is often the case, history repeats itself often without knowing. A synthesis was created between the past and the cutting edge of the present.

The Phurst Church of Phun continues today as a living performance ritual and has been experienced by thousands in New York City, Amherst, and the Bay Area. The Phurst Church "services" have even raised thousands of dollars for Rainforest preservation groups and homeless shelters, proving that you can transform what could be seen as a hedonistic celebration into an act that benefits the greater whole.

and the lovely Vanna White in the other.

"What did the mirror say? It was done with people."

While the Phurst Church of Phun is in many ways the antithesis of "traditional" religion, it **is** a profoundly spiritual experience for all those who lose themselves, or find themselves, in it. Just like the Acid Tests, it is an opportunity for all who attend to break down the separation between self and all. It's a state of grace, a euphoria that Deadheads already know so much about (but one that occurs in a far more intimate setting than a concert arena).

As Church evolves, its participants begin to look back in perspective at the trail of psychic (and psychedelic) bread crumbs we have eaten all along the way. The grand adventures of our shaman-clown-prankster-multi-media-predecessors have truly inspired a whole new tribe of younger creators. The challenge with acquiring this knowledge comes in learning to create and adopt rituals of our own, rituals that serve as fertile ground for healing, laughter, dance, and inspiration.

It is safe to assume that eventually, the Grateful Dead will cease to function as a touring entity, leaving up to three generations of intrepid travelers in their wake. When they go, what will remain as a part of their living legacy? Evolving experiments like

the Phurst Church of Phun will serve to maintain the *group mind experience* in Western culture. ♦

Alexis Muellner is a Miami-based public radio producer, writer and media artist. He also handles mango selection for the Phurst Church of Phun.

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It you would like to find out more about the Phurst Church of Phun, or even better, to become a part or a participant in this magical process, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Phurst Church of Phun c/o DDN, Box 3603, New York, NY 10185. Those of you who want or have skills to share with the magical cast of characters — be sure to include a letter describing yourself. The Phurst Church of Phun is currently looking for face-painters, poets, stream-of-consciousness writers, players of unusual instruments, storytellers, jugglers, vaudevillians, thespians, contact-improv dancers, mimes, wizards, pagans, shamans, and regular folks with open minds and a sense of adventure. At the moment Phurst Church "services" are limited to the Northeast and to the Bay Area, but the Badillions are open to taking it wherever there is financial and organizational support to make it happen. Those who are interested in hosting a Church "service" should write about what affiliation they have with an appropriate college, nightclub, community theater, arts organization, or extended family of friends. ♦

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All photographs courtesy of the Badillion library.

Jerry's Kids Visit The Town That Walt Built

by Fred Winnebago, Jr. and Les Synapse

No review of the Dead in Orlando would be complete without paying homage to Walt Disney, the man who put this city on the map. There's two things we have to say about Walt: 1) Like the Grateful Dead, he gave the young at heart exciting ways in which to live out their dreams, and 2) he must be rolling in his grave.

Much like the Grateful Dead, dear Walt believed in the power of the imagination. But unlike the Dead, he had the ability to build *real* psychedelic palaces in which to live out his dreams. Together with the psychedelic movement, Walt's work succeeded in coloring a large corner of our minds and our world in blazing technicolor. On the other hand, we Deadheads are limited to transforming concrete coliseums into multi-colored temples of joyous fantasy within our mind's eye. Such is our challenge.

One must have seen Walt Disney talking about his dreams to appreciate how, in some ways, the Disney Corporation has deviated from Walt's intended path. When unveiling the grand plans for his Epcot Center (in Orlando), Walt envisioned a constantly evolving city of the future in which real artists lived and practiced their individual forms. Today, Epcot Center is an antiquated technological relic of the 70's which generates unspeakable amounts of styrofoam and plastic garbage every day. Surely the entertainment found at Disney's brand-new MGM theme park can't make up for this breach of karmic contract.

Deadheads do have one thing to be grateful for when the Dead play Orlando: this town is used to an incredible number of people visiting every year, and they put up with us more pleasantly than many other cities!

The most obvious effect these factors had on the Dead's three shows in Orlando was found in the parking lot scene. And boy oh boy...what a scene it was!!! You could buy almost anything imaginable — for instance: two hundred kinds of t-shirts, 24 types of imported beer, tattoos (!), egg rolls, bagels, falafel, Guatemalan clothing, sushi (!!), veggie burritos, margaritas, you name it. If not for the unbelievable variety of souvenir stands, (not so) miniature golf courses, food stands, and watering holes that line Orlando's boulevards like overgrown weeds, then this scene would have stood out like a sore thumb. Lucky for most of us, Orlando is an exercise in excess that has seen our kind before.

For those who had tickets to the show, getting into the hall was easier than at most concert venues. The security inside was relaxed for the most part, though as in Albany, they were quite insistent about enforcing the no-smoking laws (yeah!).

The first night's show was not only the best of the Orlando threesome, but perhaps the whole tour. Opening with a strong first set, it was obvious that this was to be yet another one of those "Phil" nights. The entire first set was chock full of tasty choices, including "Black-Throated Wind" and a "Rubin And Cherise" that had noticeably improved since the beginning of the tour.

Set two was a masterpiece. Absent was the feeling of hesitancy that one often senses as the band ends a song and searches for the next piece to the puzzle. As each song concluded there appeared a seamless segue, with particularly strong jams occurring at the end of "Crazy Fingers" and "Uncle John's Band." After the mere suggestion of a "Playing In The Band" Reprise, a fine drums > space journey led into one of the finest song



positionings ever, "Box of Rain." The crowd went justifiably nuts, and the set closed on an upswing with the great pairing of "Goin' Down The Road" with an exceptionally hot "Lovelight." Wow!

The second show in Orlando paled in comparison with the previous night's performance; Phil simply didn't exhibit the same commanding presence. The boys did manage to stoke the embers with a lengthy and vivid "Eyes Of The World" to open the second set. While the band has shown a consistent pattern over the years of going "nowhere" fast in the jams that follow those versions of "Truckin'" preceding the drums, they did on this night put out a well-directed post-"Truckin'" jam. "Morning Dew" was tight, not too short, and highly respectable.

The final night of the tour was a bit better than the second, though still not nearly as charged as the first. Good choices of "Cold Rain And Snow," "Loose Lucy," and "Let It Grow" were played with gusto.

Set two was fairly standard with a strong "China Cat" > "Rider" opener, an unusually weak "Saint of Circumstance" (which, on the whole, has been played really well lately) and a long "Foolish Heart," which, in terms of jamming, is getting better and better with age. The rest of the show coasted along on automatic pilot.

So ended the Spring 1991 East Coast Tour. In retrospect, it could be said that the "honeymoon" is indeed over; the period of simply PHENOMENAL music we experienced last year seems to have passed for the time being. The brilliant aura of rebirth emanating from the stage at Madison Square Garden and in Europe is nowhere to be found. In its place is a Grateful Dead that seems, for the moment, to be more erratic, unfocused, and at times, struggling to give people the peak experience they are so hungry for. Many Heads also noted that shows *without* Bruce Hornsby seemed, overall, to lack the same level of enthusiasm and focus, especially on Jerry's part. In the past, a good sign that the band was about to deliver a killer performance was when Phil was "on." But on this tour, Phil being on (which he really is these days) did not insure that the others would be on as well.

In all fairness, it must be noted that average shows these days are a helluva lot better than those in the period 1981 - 1989. With the addition of MIDI technology, the entire band has exciting new aural landscapes to explore, individually and collectively. While it may not be fair of us to expect the band to perform on the same high level of last Fall's peak performances, let us count our blessings, and hope that they can make the best of this latest "marriage" of some of the finest musical minds of our time. ♦

SEE PAGES 59-61 FOR SET LISTS

A Conversation with the Original Merry Prankster — Ken Babbs

with Johnny Dwork

In a recent interview, Jerry Garcia referred to Neal Cassady as a sort of father figure for the Grateful Dead. He went on to point out that if Deadheads are all members of an extended family, then Cassady is in some ways our grandfather. Believing this to be true, we set off on a search of our roots...an exploration of the formative events and characters who helped make the Dead what they are. Along the way we crossed paths with Ken Babbs, one of Neal's old companions and the original Merry Prankster. Twenty-five years after the Acid Tests, we found him to be vibrantly alive with the same quick wit, sense of adventure, and fearlessness that made the Pranksters the stuff of legend. Writer, farmer, husband, prankster, madman, saint, Ken Babbs is alive and well and gave us this interview from his farm in Oregon.

So where did your long strange trip all begin?

The real story starts in 1958, when I went to Stanford to graduate school in the writing program, and there I met all the guys in our gang: Kesey, Larry McMurtry, Earnie Gaines, Tillie Olson, Wendell Berry, Bob Stone. We would lie on the floor, experimenting with instant novelization.

Stream of thought consciousness.

Yes. Fresh from Stegner's writing program at Stanford and ready to expand, rapping stories into microphones all night long at Kesey's house, tape-recording the plots made up and the characters assumed, spouting the appropriate dialogue. From there, I had to go in the Marine Corps because I was in Naval ROTC. In those days they had universal military training and everyone had to go in, through the draft or something, so I took a commission.



Ken Babbs 1964

Photo by Ron Bevirt

You were in Vietnam?

Yes. I went to flight school, got my wings, flew helicopters, went to Vietnam.

When did you get back?

In 1964, just in time for the bus trip.

When you touched back down, Kesey was already an old friend of yours.

Yeah, because we had met at the writing class, and we stayed in close contact all the time I was in the Marine Corps. When I'd get leave I'd go visit him and we'd kept going together. Very

close.

At what point did you first expand psychedelically?

Well, it was happening right around '60, because that's when Kesey was working at the VA hospital in Menlo Park doing experiments for the government, being paid \$20 to take a tab. He brought a bottle of Sandoz acid back to his house and on weekends we would gather together and this was part of our same group.

This issue of DDN addresses the important role that myth, ritual, and transformation can serve in our lives. The Grateful Dead subculture has been an environment in which many young people are initially introduced to these important archetypes and experiences. Can you share with us your perspective on how the Acid Tests and the Grateful Dead's music served as transformational catalysts for both yourself and society at large?

We always called the Grateful Dead the Star Drive that drove the ship that was taking off into the realms of inner space while we did these trips called the Acid Tests. You had to be an astronaut, ready to take the whole trip, strong of mind, weak of bladder, full of juices and energy, ready to go for an all night trip, because that was the main thing. It had to last all night or else the transformation wouldn't happen, because if the trip got interrupted halfway and people were brought back down too quickly, that's when the hang-ups occurred.

We're talking about a new ritual here.

Very new. Actually, it's new and old. It's a ritual that people have been doing since time began, when they first

started gathering around the fires, in the dark of winter, and dancing around the fire and making lots of noises, banging on the bones and hitting on the rocks to bring the sun back again.

Your works have furthered the mythic qualities of Neal Cassady. Can you share some thoughts with us on his intriguing approach to life that makes him a character worth remembering and perhaps even in some ways emulating?

Cassady was the master of the come-on. He was an artist of the verbal rap. When we were doing this thing of lying on the



The old FUTHUR Bus 1972

Photo by Ron Bevirt

floor and starting to come on in a novelization way, when Neal Cassady drove into Kesey's yard in this old Jeep station wagon and the rear end fell out, and he began to talk for three days and three nights and putting that rear end together at the same time, we realized that this guy was a master of what we were just barely trying to do! When he was going with Kerouac, and you read in *Visions of Cody*, when they typed up a rap they did three nights in a row talking together, you realize that this guy knew how to complete the arc. It would have a beginning, it would have a middle, and it would have an ending, but within that it would roam psychodeliciously throughout any kind of thing that came into his mind. But he did complete the arc, if you stuck with him, that was the main thing. This guy was a master storyteller.

There's a great section in On the Road that elaborates beautifully on Neal's ability to be in the moment, to react to all that he came into contact with in a sort of controlled folly sort of way. Can you elaborate on that?

Kerouac called him the "Holy Goof." He was so worried about everything, and he was letting the worries wash over him and so he was totally in the worry. He always used to say, "Put your worry to work for you." And that means that whatever you were doing you just keep doing to its ultimate. He was on the line that goes all the way back to transcendentalism, which [means that] your source is beatific, so that's why you're beat, you're beatific, you follow that source and you will have a divine spark that comes out and it will shower others.

Can you tell us about Neal's perspective on the 1/30th of a second that it normally takes the average human to react to what's happening in our reality, unless one can get into a different state of consciousness where we can react to things as they happen?

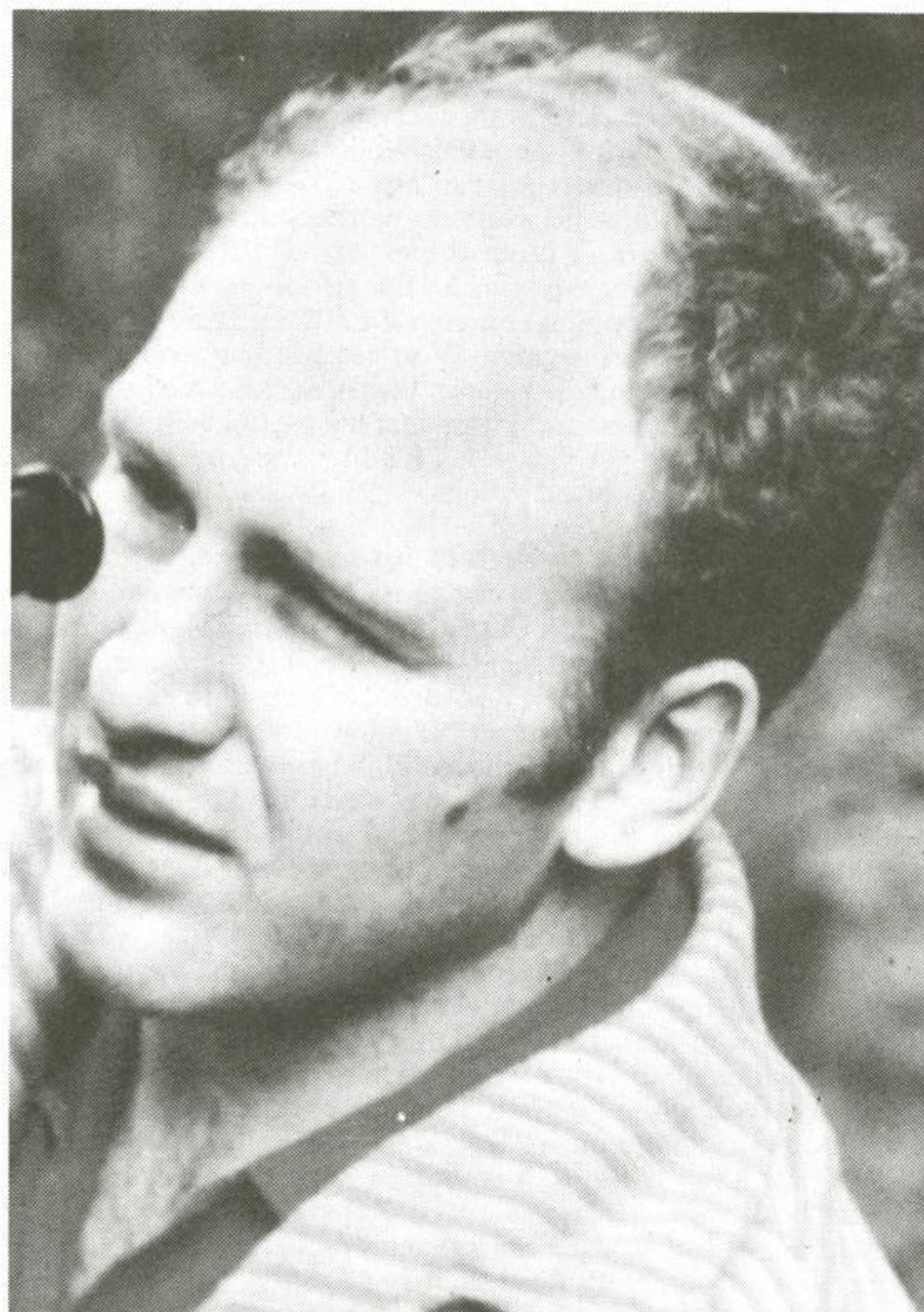
Well, the 1/30th is the gap that we're having to work with all the time, that it takes 1/30th of a second for things to be registered and then to react to them. It's like the speed of a shutter of a camera or something. But he found that with race cars, which he was really interested in, race car drivers could bring that 1/30th down to about 1/40th just because they're in such a fast time all the time. It's another psychedelic experience when you

can close that gap. Everything around you seems to be moving in slow motion, but you're moving through it at regular speed. It's like Bill Walton 21 out of 22 shots in the NBA Championship game — he was in what he called the zone, and that zone is when the gap is closed down.

It's very much what the Grateful Dead are all about, getting as close to being in the moment, through your discipline, through your form, as possible, and that's what we try to offer to our readers in terms of showing them that there is value in getting down as close as possible, to reacting to things in the moment, and that it's possible for any person to do it.

You're not kidding. And this is the beauty of it — when you do that you transcend the moment. I don't care how grim it is, how dull it is, how tedious it is, when you're in it totally, then the transformation takes place. You transcend into a higher realm and you see the beauty, the divinity, the spark of life that is going on in every tiny little atom and every big old rock and every dumb old dish that you're dealing with.

The Acid Tests have been referred to, I think by your buddy Kesey, as sort of a birth of a new tribe on a new shore. Here was a lifestyle being created that demanded an entirely new way of thinking, acting, and reacting. And yet now, new generations of young adults are not being provided with any such self-actualizing opportunities.



Ken Kesey 1964

Photo by Ron Bevirt

Interview with Ken Babbs

continued from previous page



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What is it that we can do or must do in life to give it that same sense of meaning and adventure and hopefulness that your experiences such as the Acid Tests and the Trips Festival and all that time gave to your generation?

You're right. The venues have been closed down of expressing this thing, very much deliberately, but thank God for the Grateful Dead and Grateful Dead concerts, which are an opportunity for these rituals to continue on and be spread around. So now all people, just like us when we first started on weekends, when our gang would get together, when we would perform or write and everybody would realize the holiness of each other and be in love with everything, that same attitude would spread out during the week when we'd go back to our regular jobs and do our regular things. You can't help but be beatific somewhat around your co-workers and around your other people that aren't quite there yet. It rubs off. When *meatball* hit, it hit everybody, it hit the people in the IRS, it hit the people in the shopping centers, it hit the people in the gas pumps, and it hit every segment of society, so that everybody is living now in a psychedelic world, like it or not. And those of us who are in the know and know that it's psychedelic can only encourage others to recognize it. It's like Cassady says, never knock the way the other cat swings.

Perhaps you'd care to reflect upon the recent Phurst Church of Phun that you went to as being a current, valid ritual for transformation in the same vein as the old tests.

It's very much like an old Acid Test. We did the same things that the Phurst Church of Phun does, which is to take those microphones and have them set out all around in the audience. The beautiful thing about the Acid Tests was that the line between performer and audience was demolished. At times the audience would be the performers and at times the performers would be audience. The Phurst Church of Phun does that, but at the Acid Tests there was never a moment when someone was directing the operation. I had a great opportunity to play devil's advocate at the Phurst Church of Phun. When Wavy Gravy would say all right now, let's everybody wail and rock to the tune of peace in Arabia and stop this war, I'd say, no, nobody's telling me to wail and rock when I don't want to wail and rock. I wail and rock when I want to wail and rock. This is what the war's being fought about on all sides. When the spirit moves, join in. It's a funny thing. I went to a Zappa concert one time in Portland, and I always liked Zappa — his work and everything — but when I got up there and he did this whole thing about "everybody raise their hands now" and he started directing the audience, I felt like I was in a room and Mussolini

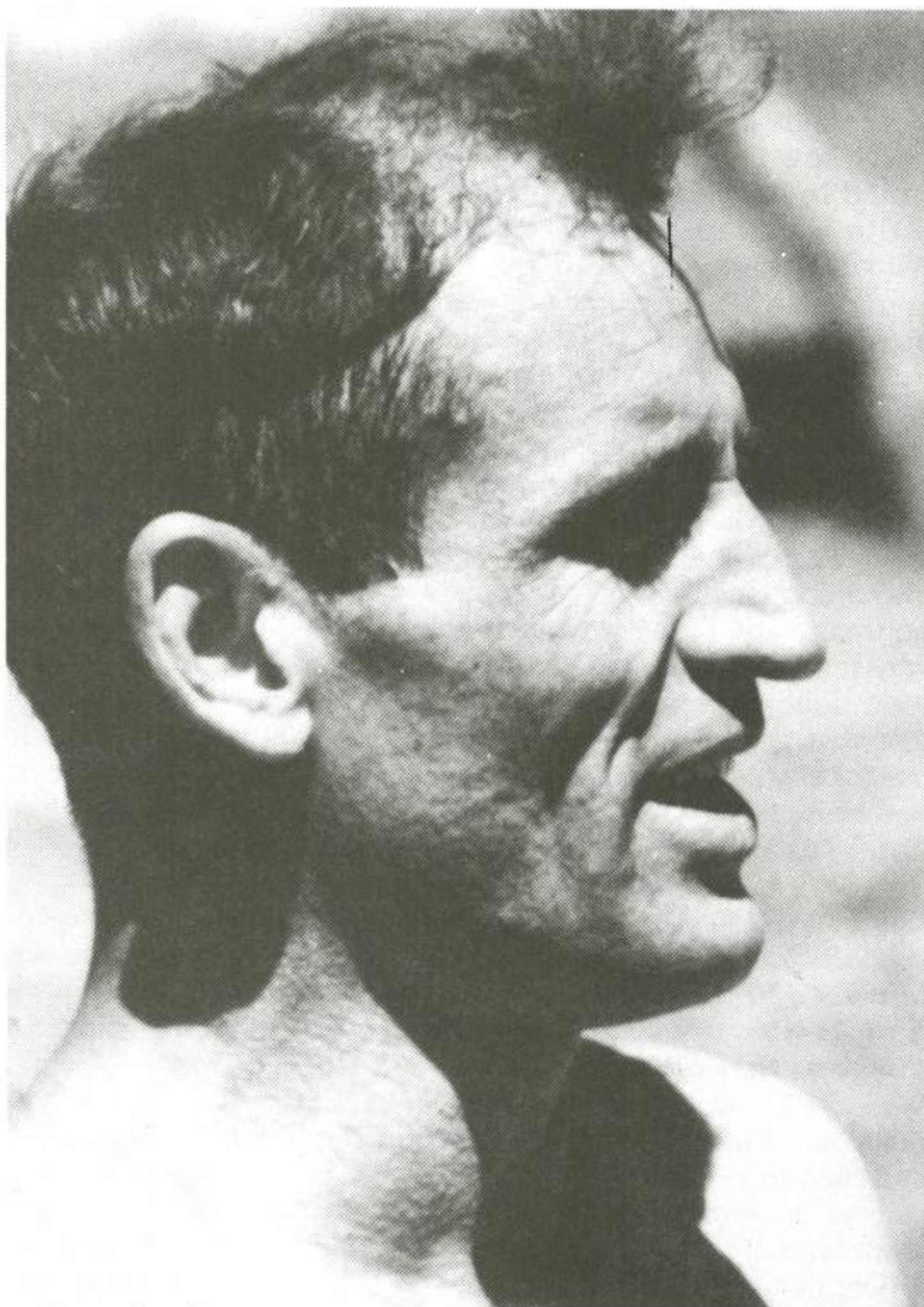
was trying to get us all to join his organization.

Would you qualify yourself as an anarchist at heart?

When you get down into chaos, you are at the basic root — it's more chaos than anarchy. Anarchy is kind of a willful thing in which you go against everything, but chaos is when everything happens as is.

I guess what you're saying is sort of the same thing that Garcia has echoed before, which is that new forms of order that perhaps are more like the way things really are, come out of uncontrolled, happenstance situations.

That's exactly right. The secret, as we used to see it, is that we would try to form an empty vessel, and we would call the spaceship of inner-space the empty vessel, and within that vessel something miraculous might happen. Sometimes it didn't, but that's the [reason] people go to Grateful Dead concerts, because at times their music, which is old recognizable love tunes, degenerates into total nothingness, and somethingness, and within that, chaos — everybody kind of works with and plays with it to see if something magical will happen. This is alchemy that we're dealing with, and wizardry, which is another facet of the human condition that when your life is deluged with debts and worries, and financial and marital problems, you cannot really put your mind open to this magic moment, but it's there, for all of us to deal with. And this is really the importance of the ritual, to get the myth and the transformation going, to



Neal Cassidy 1964

Photo by Ron Bevirt

open that vessel, create the moment, and see what happens. It comes from an unexpected source. In the Phurst Church of Phun, the more we turn the microphones over to those who are not the professional microphone workers the better chance we have for something magical to happen.

In reference to the chaos aspect, it's interesting to note that now, very much in the same way that quantum physics mirrored the wisdom of the East many, many years later, we're seeing that the science of fractals and what's known as the realm of chaos in science is mirroring or proving the validity of exploring the beautiful new orders that come out of the exploration of the unknown.

That's exactly right. It's the parallel universes that we're talking about here, the parallel universes between fractals and quantum physics and psychedelics, which is when you get down to the basics, everything's just happening all at once, there is no future, past, or present, but as time goes on you have to put things in a linear line just to understand them, and that's fine. We all know that, that's Aristotelian logic, Euclidian, everything works out according to scientific formula. But also, when you get down there into the realm of the chaos, and the atoms — even between the atoms — then you realize everything's happening all at once, and that's fun too.

What would you say are the essential lessons that we can learn, both pro and con, from the life of Neal Cassady and from the experience of the Trips Fest and the Acid Test?

On the pro side you have to remember that Cassady said that we are fourth-dimensional beings inhabiting a third-dimensional body living in a two-dimensional world. And that opens your soul to anything that you can get into while existing in this body while living with right, wrong, good, evil, black, white, computer yes-no logic. And at the same time we have to

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remember that Cassady as a human being needed a center, he needed guys to work with, he needed people of his own ilk so that he wasn't just adrift, washing in the sea of any opportunity that came along. I think the tragedy of Cassady is that he didn't have to die that young; he could be alive still, regaling us with his wisdom. If he'd had the opportunity to have a steady job during all this...

And some grounding perhaps.

We've talked many times in this work about the necessity to have benchmarks and touchstones that you can be secure upon, so that as you go off into the unknown, these are the things that you can come back to.

In a recent issue of our magazine I pointed out that Western civilization has yet to acknowledge that after the instinctual need for humans to eat, seek safe shelter, and preserve the species is an inherent and unavoidable drive to alter one's state of consciousness. Your path has obviously led you to this conclusion. Do you think that given the proper set and setting that psychedelic journeys or transcendental journeys still hold potential as vehicles for self-actualization and personal growth?

Oh, for sure. You've just got to, like I say, be grounded in the realities, the verities, so that as you leave the verities for the unexplored you don't go crazy and get scared, too scared, and think that this is the way life always is. I can think of many times being really loaded and the only thing that's really kept my feet firm to the ground is to know that the reason I'm like this is because I'm loaded. Not to be so far gone that you never know that you're not loaded. But this inner-space search, this search for inner-space, inner freedom is one that is constantly ongoing and one that is constantly valid because it allows us to explore the universe. There are universes out there of all

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dimensions and imaginations running parallel and intersecting with our own and there's nothing wrong with taking one of these rides. I think this is the whole point of this virtual reality, with the glasses and the gloves, is you get in and ride that reality for awhile, and then you take it off and then you ride this reality for awhile. I'm telling you, in this world today, just going into New York City, for me, coming from Oregon, to walk around NYC on a bright sunny day, I must have walked into at least 172 different realities within the space of three or four blocks — and all really valid, good, healthy friendly realities. There's nothing really frightening about it.

Perhaps for the benefit of our readers, you could close with some perspective on the importance of each of us finding our own valid myths, rituals, and positive transformations.

Even from here I can hear a big wailing going on down by the creek, somebody's got a trombone and he's blowing up a balloon and there he goes, he's disappearing up into the clouds up above. Ooo, aaaah, with that trombone, he's blowing through the trombone, hollering through a trombone. Can you imagine that? In my backyard? You know, when I get down and frazzled and wonder what I'm doing, I go to my equipment drawer and I root around in it until I feel better. It's like my worry beads. Our search for the bull has brought us up near the falls — we have some falls right here on the creek — and I run for my movie camera, breast-stroking my way through the water. Overexposed? Can't be. Perfectly straight, but it's a psychedelic adventure in time. And with black tape and chewing gum, you know, we set about to change the course of time. Wax didactic.

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I Was Re-Born in the Desert!

by Mike Sammett

The annual West Coast mini-tour arrived just in time. Late winter storms began around Chinese New Year's, and it seemed we were indoors all of March. Ah, but it was Spring now, and the Dead were playing eight outdoor shows on three consecutive weekends. Add in Carlos Santana as the Vegas opener and you had enough expected good times to hit the road with high spirits.

The Las Vegas Silver Bowl, as with most new venues, was a mixed blessing. It was nicely situated in the desert a long way out of town, but it was a traffic nightmare on Saturday. The show attracted thousands of out-of-town fans who, not knowing the back roads to the stadium, had to ditch their cars and walk a long way to the show. Fortunately, the weather was a kind and breezy 70 degrees, and with the desert in full bloom, it wasn't such a bad experience. By Sunday, everyone had shortcuts figured out, and things went much more smoothly. The stadium held 40,000 comfortably (but unfortunately had a concrete field), the police did not seem overly aggressive, and the show search was particularly lax. Overall, the Nevada desert was very welcoming.

Carlos' set on Saturday was fairly short and not one of his best performances. Perhaps he realized most of us were stuck in traffic. His Sunday show was better. As always, he had a new band, a mixture of old and new friends. It was the first time I had seen him without Armando Peraza. He wove his way in and out of songs beautifully, playing mostly new material. He dedicated one song to Stevie Ray Vaughn, and commented on his commitment to the Earth and to community. He jammed the title song of his new album *Spirits Dancing in the Flesh* as an encore at both shows. He received his biggest ovation upon encouraging the fans to wear their tie-dye colors on the inside of their souls, and not just on their backs. Carlos is an inspiring performer and a magical guitar player; luckily we would see him again later on Sunday.

On Saturday the Dead started slowly, but warmed up quickly in the hot desert sun. Technical problems and swirling winds wreaked havoc on the sound during "Touch Of Grey" and "Walkin' Blues," yet "Friend Of The Devil" was just perfect, seeing as I had lit out from Reno that very morning. Bruce Hornsby sat in for both shows, adding some accordion to "Friend Of The Devil" and vocals on "Maggie's Farm." The set closed with a rockin' "Loose Lucy" that delighted the crowd, a forceful "Cassidy," and a screamin' "Might As Well." In any case, the boys had found the groove.

The second set opened with a bang and never let up. The Dead let rip with five rockers in a row. They played hard and fast, jamming at every opportunity. The upbeat mood continued with "I Need A Miracle," mellowed during a sunset version of "Black Peter" and then exploded in delirium during "One More Saturday Night" (a turbo-charged segue into the evening activities.) Clearly by that time everyone was already thinking about the casinos. The Dead closed a wonderful afternoon with a powerful cover of "The Weight," with Hornsby joining in on the vocals and the crowd feeling just about half past dead. With Bill Graham exhorting us not to sleep in the parking lot, and instead to go off and party in the desert, we *dead*-headed into the beautiful Nevada evening.

Although the desert was truly beautiful, most Deadheads found their way into the casinos. I hung out in the Mirage's rainforest



Photo by Brad Niederman

bar watching the tourists, white tigers, Deadheads, and an occasional rollerblader. I heard stories of similar wild scenes at Caesar's, the Excalibur, and the Alladin. As a whole, the town rolled out the red carpet for the Dead and their Heads. Casino employees often asked about the shows, hinting at how they wished they had been there. Although the Dead made only a small dent in the packed Saturday night circus that is Las Vegas, it seems that this town, like so many now on the tour, believes that Deadheads give more than they take.

Sunday was the transcendent dreamlike Grateful Dead experience we all live for. The show logistics were easier and shorter, the weather perfect, and both bands clearly played from the heart. The Dead opened with a raging "Jack Straw," a clearly relevant "Candyman," and a "Wang Dang Doodle" that served notice this would be no mellow Sunday afternoon. Jerry executed a perfect "Althea," and after a few cowboy songs, Carlos joined the band for the "Bird Song" closer. He took his time feeling out the song, and then delighted the crowd with some hot leads blending seamlessly with the band's highly stylized jamming. The entire first set was crisp, strong, and well played. Weir's guitar work was distinct and bold; some said his voice never sounded better. We heard rumors of a new sound system, and I clearly noticed an improved outdoor sound.

The second set opened with a Cream Puff War (hundreds of high speed marshmallow projectiles) before the band ever took the stage. The set was a continuation of great musical craftsmanship and teamwork. "Foolish Heart" poured effortlessly from Jerry's soul and Weir's "Saint of Circumstance" emphatically urged the crowd to go for what I'm not sure. "Crazy Fingers" and "Truckin'" have become a perfect second set coupling, and the band surprised everyone with a wailing Vegas-style "Deal" that made even the losers happy. Mickey mixed some local sounds he'd recorded into a "Slot-Machine Space," and even dubbed in a little Frank Sinatra. They were clearly proud to be knocking them *dead* in Vegas. The Dead have never feared taking on the weirdest and strangest of America's cultural icons.

The show ended just as strongly as it had begun. We've all heard "The Other One," "Wharf Rat," "Around 'n Around" many times, but in the afternoon desert breeze and glowing sunset we danced heartily with no complaints. A full-on "Sunshine Daydream" closed the set with the force of a complete "Sugar Magnolia." Phil's clear and textured vocals supported a lively "Box Of Rain" encore that offered relief to the parched desert crowd. We filed out into the evening air, a Deadhead bazaar in full swing. I hadn't seen anything like it this side of Kathmandu; not a policeman in sight. Less than an hour later a full yellow moon rose over the shadowy desert hills and collective sighs could be heard for miles. It felt great to be a Deadhead, *my Number 1 occupation*, at least for the next couple of weeks. ♦

SEE PAGES 59-61 FOR SET LISTS

CULTURAL SURVIVAL

by Russ Weis, Wetlands Environmental Director
(Research assistance by Jean O'Brien)

"One of the first things people must do is to question technology and the mechanistic worldview...Technologies put themselves between us and life...to go back to the natural world is to return to the primary source." — Chellis Glendinning.

All over the earth ecosystems are disappearing at an alarming rate — and along with them go their non-industrial human inhabitants. This deplorable ravage and destruction also spells impending doom for the industrial culture responsible for the devastation, as non-industrialized populations tend to possess a stronger spiritual sense and a much greater connectedness with nature. While technology may be able to temporarily dominate nature, eventually the earth will be irreparably damaged and no amount of research, theory, and application will save us. Therefore, it makes good sense that salvation for all lies in the direction of listening better to what simpler cultures, which never depended on industrial technology in the first place, are saying.

Highly industrialized, technologically advanced cultures tend to strive for acquisition and control of resources, with no inherent respect for the earth. Other cultures are often perceived as threatening, unless they are in some way fit for use to enhance the power of the favored inhabitants of the industrial culture. Non-industrial cultures, on the other hand, view the earth as an entity to be cherished and preserved as the ultimate source and sustainer of life. They see themselves as respectful caretakers rather than all-knowing dominators. In Navajo tradition, for instance, the earth is seen as the "mother" and the sky, "father." Presently, coal mining and combustion are polluting Navajo land and air, rendering many places uninhabitable. In the words of one of their leaders: "We do not support defiling our mother's body or polluting our father's dwelling, for us the life experience is a sacred path to be walked in harmony with nature. We do not feel that we are the masters of the universe, but we are the children of creation."

As these moving words illustrate, inhabitants of native cultures have been incorporating ecology and spirituality into their everyday routine for thousands of years. Indigenous populations seem to know no one can be truly healthy if the environment is unhealthy, and members use myth and ritual to integrate this deeply-felt value into daily life. Many individuals in our culture now contend that ignoring the wisdom and respectful practices of indigenous peoples is threatening the very existence of our technologically-oriented, spiritually-bankrupt civilization and indeed, all life on this planet. While industrial civilization relies upon short-term "technofixes" — the use of technology in an often fruitless attempt to solve environmental problems — indigenous peoples rely upon their ability to become aware of potential problems more quickly (by being more closely attuned to the messages the earth is sending), and then adjusting their actions accordingly. In other words, transformation of our present sorry state may depend not on our cherished technology, but instead through solutions offered by simpler cultures.

One member of our culture addressing the problem is psychologist and Pulitzer nominee Chellis Glendinning, author of *When Technology Wounds: The Human Consequences of Progress*, a look at the impact industrialization has had on human and planetary health. As the statement quoted at the beginning of this article implies, Ms. Glendinning seriously questions society's belief that our advanced technology represents the peak of human existence thus far. She contends that due to our separation from nature, we are addicted to the mechanistic worldview that stands behind this technology. Her prescription: "Reunite with and learn from the natural world."

"The true Hopi people preserve the sacred knowledge about the way of the earth because the true Hopi people know that the earth is a living...growing person...and all things on it are her children." — from the Hopi Declaration of Peace.

"I got wheels that spin and wheels that walk, whispering grass and trees that talk..." — Robert Hunter.

Many native cultures practice "hearing" the earth, thus becoming more attuned and responsive to her needs. As Sun Bear, Ojibwa descendant and founder and medicine chief of the Bear Tribe Medicine Society, has said: "The earth is talking to us all of the time, but most people have become deaf to her voice." On this continent, American Indians live closer in tune with the environment and are much more open to the lessons it has to offer. Through rituals and ceremonies like those involving "medicine wheels" — ceremonial stone circles representing the interconnectedness of all life; they are places of intense healing, sharing and teaching — native peoples experience the power of the earth and the universe. This sort of ritual is available to us, to help us remember our connection with the earth and to bring our culture back in balance with it.

The "Hopi Declaration of Peace" continues: "The true Hopi people know how to show the Right Way of Life to all the world's

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people who have ears to listen...who have eyes to see...and who have hearts to understand these things..." They believe that an Armageddon brought about by industrialism is imminent and their elders feel the Hopi have a special role to play in halting this cataclysm. Hopi fears are partly based on the fact that at this very moment their water supplies are failing, due largely to a nearby coal mine's diversion of a huge amount of the available supply. This is a classic example of the clash of two cultures: the company that owns the mine (which also adversely affects thousands of neighboring Navajo), actually wants to expand its operations! So which culture is actually more advanced? The Hopi, who have made the desert bloom for thousands of years, through (non-industrial) "dry land farming," or so-called "modern" man, who continues to expand and consume ever-more diminishing resources in order to sustain his way of life?

John Trudell, prominent Santee Sioux poet and recording artist, eloquently expresses his feelings on the subject in a piece for Native Nations (magazine of the Solidarity Foundation, an educational foundation that supports the sovereignty of indigenous peoples). This essay, entitled "The Predator," (Trudell's image for the parasitical mindset that insidiously manipulates human beings in industrial cultures) is worth quoting at length: "At this point in history all religious attitudes are essentially based upon the idea of plundering the earth and turning it into material and forgetting what the whole spiritual reality is all about...We were all tribes once — in our genetic memory, our genetic background and past, we are all tribal people; that is the way it is with the children and the people of Earth. If there is to be industry and technology, it must be used tribally; to keep peace and harmony with the universe, it must be used in balance with life...The power and the reality of the tribal strength...comes from a spiritual relationship to the universe. Our power is with Earth, and what the predator has done is to find a way to take people and disconnect their relationship to Earth."

In Canada, the Peigan people of Alberta find their way of life threatened by a dam project slated for their revered "Old Man River." To the Peigans, this river is much more than just a source of food and water — it is "Napi," the "old man," the creator. It is a holy place for prayer and medicine; it provides life and spirit. The dam project, which is seen as a politically-motivated plan and wholly unnecessary by most of the farmers destined to receive the diverted waters, is another instance of Trudell's mythical "predator" rearing its ugly head. For no reason, the Peigan people face cultural genocide, and with them, their unique wisdom may be lost to the world forever.

Of course, North America does not hold a monopoly on threatened indigenous peoples. More than 1,000 tribes are known to exist in rainforests around the world, having lived in harmony with the forest for thousands of years. These include the Penan, inhabitants of the 150-million-year-old forests of Borneo, whose habitat has been all but destroyed by now due to

logging, and the Dani, Yali, Hupla, Moni and Amungme of Irian Jaya, the easternmost province of Indonesia (one of the largest rainforest areas on the planet), whose lands are threatened by gold and copper mining operations. The list only begins here; inhabitants of six continents are in grave danger, from the Baka Pygmies in Camaroon, Africa (where the forest is slated for logging thanks to World Bank), to the Quechua and Moretecocha of the South American Amazon (where life is being disrupted by oil drilling operations), to Aboriginal tribes like the Oenpelli, Yirrikala and Kungarakana of northwest Australia, who not only face poisoning from uranium mining on their lands, but also violent harassment by those doing the mining.

Of special interest to readers of this magazine are the Kaluli people of the Bosavi rainforest of Papua, New Guinea, whose lives and lands are currently threatened by mineral exploration. Mickey Hart has just released what Rykodisc aptly describes as "a rare aural glimpse into the rapidly changing culture of the Kaluli...which captures the unique interaction of a people with their environment." In "Voices of the Rainforest," ethnomusicologist Steven Feld uses Mickey's state-of-the-art field gear to capture the unique way the Kaluli beat out and sing along their own rhythms in conjunction with the noises of the forest around them. The result, which also captures the sounds of birds, animals, waterfalls, rain, and the songs, whistles, yodels and music of the Kaluli, is a recording that truly captures the way they "become one with the rainforest's musical ecology." *Special note:* The Bosavi People's Fund will receive a major portion of royalties from "Voices of the Rainforest."



Entnomusicologist Steven Feld with members of the Kaluli tribe in the Bosavi Forest of New Guinea
Photo courtesy of Rykodisc

Speaking of Mickey, the drums/space portion of a Grateful Dead concert offers us the perfect opportunity to tap into the genetic tribal memory that Trudell alludes to in his essay. Especially for those of us who live in cities and are thus separated from nature, it's often hard to access that primal realm of instinct wherein lies the innate knowledge of the interconnection of all life. Opportunities like drums/space and participation in drumming circles and the like can certainly be instrumental in helping us to reintegrate our inner beings with nature and reconnecting ourselves with the essential truths of the universe.

"We want to show that it is possible for the human race to achieve their adventure, their experience in the world, with nature alive."
— Ailton Krenak, founder, Union of Indian Nations of Brazil.

Like Mickey Hart, others in our culture can learn and transmit in their own way the lessons indigenous people teach us about nature. These people are invaluable sources of hope and inspiration in our struggle to avoid catastrophe as predicted by the Hopi, and are wonderfully empowered human beings able to enjoy the full range of experience offered by the natural world. One such person is Vin DiTizio, Jr., modern-day guide to the ancient ways of native Americans. His words provide an apt bridge to the important information which follows:

"In these times, man's blindness towards nature has created a sad state of affairs. Without thinking of the results, people destroy the land that feeds them. It's important to put aside hopelessness so we can take actions to help this earth. We have to understand that the actions, however small, of many of us could prevent disaster. We have to understand that our every move sends ripples miles out from us and we can use this power for good rather than waste it. When we do nothing, we give our power away to others who use it to keep making the same mistakes that nobody wants."

What You Can Do

This section is modeled after information printed by the Earth Care Paper, Inc., P.O. Box 3335, Madison, WI 53704.

1. Use your purchasing power and boycott companies selling and marketing products which cause destruction of vital habitats. These include (but are by no means limited to): tropical hardwoods such as teak and mahogany, and virgin paper products (many U.S. mills import tropical wood pulp). For a comprehensive list of wood and paper companies destroying the forests, contact the Wetlands Rainforest Action Group either by calling the Greenline at 212-966-5244, or by writing to WRAG, c/o Wetlands, 161 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10013. (Also, the Rainforest Action Network — see address below — has a great resource guide for wood users which suggests domestic and non-wood alternatives.) Specifically, Mitsubishi Corporation is right now contributing to the deforestation of Penan land in Sarawak, Malaysia. Their products include cars, trucks, TVs, stereos, VCRs, FAX machines, Kirin Beer and Nikon camera equipment.

Another product to avoid is imported beef (usually sold in fast food restaurants), since rainforests are cut down to provide grazing land for cattle. And while we're on the subject of food, how about changing some personal eating and drinking habits, like dispensing with disposable chopsticks and using a mug whenever possible to alleviate the need for paper and plastic cups.

2. Support organizations working to protect rainforests. Most of the following have educational materials available upon request:

- The Bosavi People's Fund, c/o Professor Steven Feld, Director, Center for Folklore and Ethnomusicology, The University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712. 512-471-1288.
- Rainforest Alliance, 270 Lafayette Street #512, New York, NY 10012. 212-941-1900.
- Rainforest Action Network, 301 Broadway, San Francisco, CA 94133. 415-398-4404.
- Rainforest Foundation, 1776 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. 212-581-9060.
- Rainforest Futures, 1700 Mission Street #118, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. 408-426-9251. This group works mainly to support the "People of the Forest" in Brazil.
- Cultural Survival, 11 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138. 617-495-2562. This organization sponsors direct assistance projects designed and run by indigenous peoples and reports on their problems.

3. Support groups working for the rights of native Americans. The following list is by no means comprehensive, but should give you an idea of who to contact:

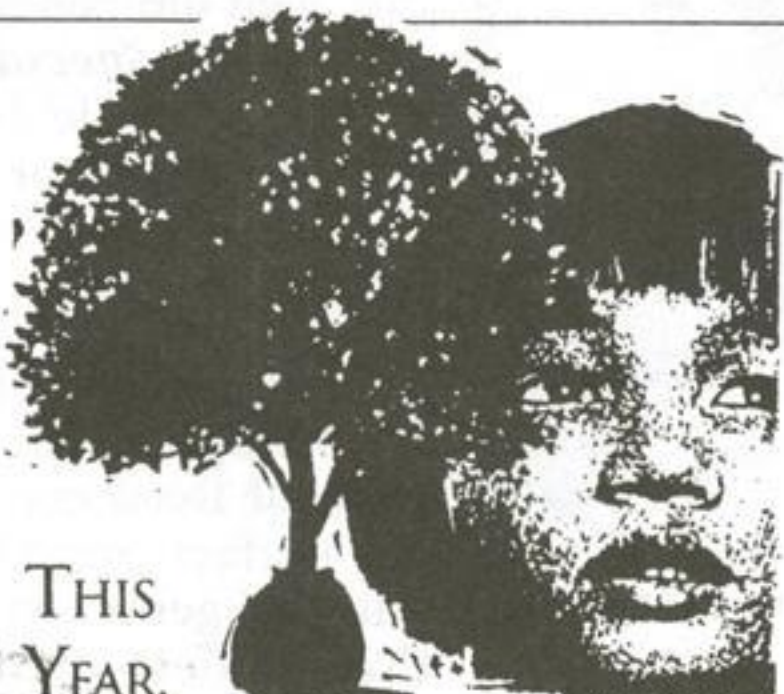
- Solidarity Foundation, 310 West 52nd Street — 2nd floor, New York, NY 10019. 212-765-9510.
- Native American Rights Fund, 1506 Broadway, Boulder, CO 80302. 303-447-8760. This is an Indian legal rights organization providing representation to over 75 U.S. tribal communities.
- American Indian Movement, University of Colorado at Denver, University Park, Denver, CO 80217.
- R.A.I.N. (Rights for All Indigenous Nations), Rensselaer Co., Route 1, Box 308A, Petersburg, NY 12138. 518-658-3055. An educational/action organization formed "to facilitate the continuance...of traditional Native culture and values."
- Big Mountain Legal Defense-Offense Committee, 2029 North Center Street #C, Flagstaff, AZ 86001. 602-774-5233. They work against the forced relocation of the Dineh (Navajo) people from their ancestral homelands in northeast Arizona.

4. Write your elected representatives, world development organizations like the World Bank, and corporations. The Rainforest Action Network will give you concise and timely information on where to write and when.

5. Become a shaman. Engage in affirming rituals when appropriate (full moon and solstice celebrations, for instance) and continually invent ceremonies to remind yourself and others of our integral connection to our beautiful earth!

6. Stay involved and try to spread interest among your friends, family, and colleagues in these issues. The fact that you've read this far proves that you care, so now's the time to go out and share!

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"The Grateful Dead Man"

by Alex Thompson

As examined in detail throughout this issue of *DDN*, myth and ritual provide us with a framework for understanding the "stuff" of our lives. The stories of myth identify our shared life transitions and common struggles while also providing us with guidelines for safe passage and time-tested solutions. Without myth we would be doomed to repeatedly search for answers to age-old human dilemmas through trial and error. Ultimately, myth reveals what we share in common as a race and chronicles our historical search for meaning and understanding.

In times past, the guidance of myth wove together the very fabric of society, strengthening the ties of family and community. Today, these connecting threads are less evident and such guidance less available to us. Unfortunately, the cultural revolution of the sixties succeeded better at questioning the relevance of then-current myths and rituals than at replacing them with more meaningful ones. While the challenge of the sixties was justified, it resulted in further isolating us from the roots of myth. A significant vacuum has existed and grown since that period.

Into this vacuum comes an enlightening little book — *The Water of Life: A Tale of the Grateful Dead*, a "regenerative" myth retold by Alan Trist and illustrated by Jim Carpenter. Through words and pictures this book weaves together aspects from different myths that share a common foundation and message. Apparently, the water of life tale is based on a myth that can be traced back to Babylonia, and the motif of the Grateful Dead Man appeared as far back as the second century. Trist combines both myths in his tale and Carpenter complements the story with illustrations that create an ancient and magical atmosphere around the telling of the tale.

The story unfolds with an ailing king sending forth his three sons to seek out the water of life, necessary to heal himself and his devastated kingdom. The two older sons conduct their search with selfish motives, but the youngest son acts with compassion and generosity to all he encounters — even a dead man for whom he arranges a proper burial. The selfishness of the elder sons results in their being cursed by a magician and failing in their quest. The youngest son is assisted through various challenges by a character who turns out to be the spirit of the man he buried earlier in his journey — the "Grateful Dead Man." With the help of this stranger and his own "purity of heart," the youngest son succeeds in his quest. Despite attempts by his jealous brothers to discredit him, he returns with the water of life for his father, healing both king and kingdom! Of course, in the end he wins the hand of the beautiful princess he rescues from the ogre who once guarded the water of life.

We can see how the message of this myth — the importance of compassion, generosity and altruism — has direct relevance to the community that has developed around the Grateful Dead. While it has taken years for the significance of the band's name to come to light, the message and guidance of this myth comes at an important time for both our community and society at large. At a time when our alienation from the guidance of myth has eroded the moral foundation of our society, and very possibly brought us



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'misfit power' aspect of it." — David Gans, *Whole Earth Review*

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to the brink of planetary disaster, the band has inadvertently provided a focal point for a community in search of meaningful myth and ritual. This is not surprising, as historically it has been artists, poets, writers and musicians who have been the primary medium for this expression of myth. The message of the water of life myth echoes through time, providing guidelines for our collective celebration and our growing community. Compassion, generosity and purity of heart can be ritualized in acts like respecting others' concert space, donating to the Rex Foundation, and contributing to the preservation of the rainforests. The practice of such rituals can link us together in the present and connect us directly with the historical myth of the water of life and the Grateful Dead Man! ♦



...AND SOMETIMES WE DON'T

(Or Why the Grateful Dead Didn't Play Eugene This Year)

by Jeff Harrison

As you may be aware, the Grateful Dead have been asking Deadheads for some time now to "get our act together" and take responsibility for our behavior at the shows. All of us here at DDN have put our energy into making this a reality. So when we heard from a group of Oregon Deadheads who convinced their University to reverse its ban on Dead concerts on the condition that they would work to improve the civil behavior of concert goers, we took notice. Following is their story. The final outcome of their efforts may raise more questions than it answers, but it shows a side of "the politics of rock 'n roll" you may never have known existed. — The Editors

Last summer, there was a flurry of activity by a few local malcontents to stop the planned late-August shows in Autzen Stadium at the University of Oregon. An article in the *Eugene Register-Guard* three days before the shows noted that "Several citizens, among them Eugene City Council member Deborah Ehrman, say they are uncomfortable with what they view as university sanction of a thinly disguised drug fest." But the shows happened, and they were great. Not only did fans love 'em, but the local media painted a really positive picture of the scene — and merchants and hoteliers did very well. After attending the shows, Ms. Ehrman herself said, "From the way the concerts went, I wouldn't have any problem with saying, 'The band should be invited to return'" (*R-G* 6/26/90). U of O assistant athletic director Sandy Walton said, "Everything went unbelievably well. It was more of a love fest than anything else" (*Oregon Daily Emerald* 10/24/90). The local police joined the chorus of supporters, too. On the morning of the second show (June 24), the paper quoted Captain Dick Loveall, who was in charge of all police at the stadium, as saying, "I didn't expect any tremendous task here for us, but it's by far even more low-key than I expected." The same article carried the now-famous line by Sergeant Tim McCarthy, "I'd rather work nine Grateful Dead concerts than one Oregon football game!"

So away we went with happy memories, a thick file of positive press, and expectations for more of the same "next year." Imagine our surprise, then, to see the *Register-Guard's* front-page headline on October 24: "UO outlaws Grateful Dead"! Dan Williams, a university vice president, "responding to critics who contend that the band's concerts legitimize illegal drug use," has decided not to allow the Dead back to Autzen. I first caught wind of this through university E-mail, as Williams had communicated earlier on this subject with the athletic department — but I never believed it would actually happen. You can imagine the outrage that ensued — this is *Eugene*, after all! Williams and UO President Myles Brand were taken by surprise. One reason given for the ban was that they didn't want "to spend [their] energies explaining" why the Dead are allowed to play on campus; after the ban, they spent a lot *more* energy explaining why the Dead weren't going to be allowed to play!

The first formal group response was a forum sponsored by the UO Policy and Public Planning department on November 5. Williams then revealed the real reason for the ban: his office received "a modest amount of criticism," "a little bit of flack," after the shows (in the newspaper he referred to "a dozen letters"); this led him to "modest consultation" and "rather non-systematic input" while he "sort of sat on it for about six weeks." Well people, that's all it takes — one high-ranking bureaucrat and "a modest amount of criticism" from the right folks directed at the "wrong folks" (us). And if the "letters and phone calls run ten to one in opposition to my decision" (Williams), well of course that doesn't matter, since those come from you know who.

After Williams left that meeting, several of us sat in disgust and decided something had to be done. We formed the Grateful for the Dead Committee and set about working to overturn the ban. Meeting weekly for the next couple of months, we pursued what we thought would be effective avenues for change: logic, the purpose of a university, public opinion (thousands of signatures on a petition), hypocrisy (since "the scene" is worse at football games, why aren't they banned?), money, etc. We held rallies, met with Williams and Brand, wrote position papers, presented a resolution to the University Senate, placed an ad and mail-in coupon in the alumnae magazine, and racked our brains in frustration as no progress was made. The drug issue and the pressure of "a dozen letters" was blinding the administration to any other ideas, however true or reasonable.

Right before Christmas a friend of ours, Lane County Commissioner Jerry Rust, sent a letter to President Brand offering "to assemble a small group of individuals representing business, education, medical," and other interests to "undertake a planning process to identify the problems and confront them directly." On January 15, Brand responded: "If you believe you can assemble a group which can address the drug and vagrancy issues and produce guidelines acceptable to the Eugene Police Department, Sheriff's office, and University administrators, we of course, will be most willing to consider and welcome such proposals." As a result, Rust formed the "Grateful Dead/Autzen Ad Hoc Task Force," which first met in the county office building on February 8. I was there as a representative of the Committee; other members came from White Bird Clinic, the Eugene Hilton, UO Alumnae Association, the police department, Springfield Creamery, Double T Productions, Dead Air radio, and elsewhere. We all shared the same determination to have the Dead back.

We immediately decided we had to address the drug issue directly. The Committee had already tried everything else, and Brand/Williams insisted that that was really the only issue. Two major recommendations came out of this meeting: "a special volunteer contingent of local Grateful Dead supporters should be created" to deal with drug use at the shows, and "the university

and the promoter should develop and implement a media campaign strategy to reinforce the goal of a relatively drug-free concert." I was put in charge of the first. Ken Kirby and I drafted a detailed plan for the "Grateful Volunteers," calling for 250 dedicated Heads to roam the Autzen area (stadium, parking lot, camping grounds, park, neighborhood, and shopping center) before, during, and after the shows. Shifts would vary in size, from 85 during show-time to eight in the wee hours of 2 - 6AM. Knowing the university's stipulation for any possible reversal, the intent of the crew had to be clear: to reduce drug use around the scene. As much as we hated the whole idea, we wanted a show even more. The volunteers would have no real authority; their methods would only be rational discussion and friendly persuasion — angles like, "this is very much a probationary situation — if you blow it, there won't be any more shows here," and "if you don't listen to us, you might get busted when the police come around." The crew would have t-shirts paid for by local hoteliers, designed by a popular local artist Judit Torn-Allen, and printed for free by Permagraphics, a local shop run by Deadheads.

When I presented this plan to Brand on February 21, he said, "this looks good, this might get you somewhere." The complete Task Force report was mailed to Brand on March 1. This 22-page document included a 1989 "Minglewood Town Council" flyer! From my meeting with Brand, I was confident that this was gonna work; a meeting with Williams, Rust, Debbie Trist, Double T, and the U of O Athletic Department in mid-march increased our confidence. We waited, though, and grew anxious; some wheels turn mighty slowly. Williams insisted on another meeting with the police to hear what they thought, even though they had been in on the plan from the beginning. Finally, we got our green light, Williams released a statement to us and the media on March 29.

The Grateful Volunteers plan (misleadingly labeled "Clean Scene Crew" in some articles) was at the center of the publicity — eliciting a variety of responses. Dead-haters called us "the blind leading the blind" (and worse); committed anarchists called us "tie-dyed snitches" (and worse). The Grateful for the Dead Committee developed the plan further, directed recruitment, and planned training and shift schedules. We held a Town Council meeting for people on both sides of the issue to share their opinions, which a local cable channel televised. By mid-April we had 150 volunteers, and everything looked really good. We hadn't heard from the band yet, but they were on tour, and we figured we'd hear from them when they got home. We knew June was booked and July was off, but thought there were a couple of weekends in August that might work out.

On Thursday, April 25, the band met to discuss the Eugene show. Of course we were anxious to hear the results and shift into full gear. We waited, heard nothing, and began to worry. On the following Tuesday, Gordon Roberts of local radio station KAVE got through to the Dead's publicist Denis McNally, and learned what none of us had ever anticipated — the band decided not to come!!! KAVE announced the bad news. Local papers ran small articles. The Dead office never contacted the task force or the committee, even though we had sent copies of every report, every proposal, and every bit of news about what had happened here. This is certainly not what we had expected.

Back in early March, when it looked like success was imminent, *DDN* and I planned a happy, triumphant article describing the process and clarifying the plan that was swaying the University. We thought we had a joyous tale of victory to tell: "You too can overcome a ban and bring the Dead back to your community!" Well, maybe not.

Though we don't expect any direct communication from the band, nor any justification for their decision, it would be nice to know why they decided not to come. All we have from McNally is some empty phrases: "It just didn't work out," "we couldn't work out the logistics," "a major stadium concert is a tricky proposition," "we want to accept the invitation properly." Left without answers, we're baffled. For years, the band has urged us to change our scene, to operate with more maturity and grace — both for the general good and for the sake of keeping venues open. We thought we were doing that here. We're pretty disappointed — not only won't we get to see the Dead in Eugene this year (and for many of us those would've been our only shows), but the band seems to neither understand what went on here nor the positive potential of following through with the plan. At the same time, the ban was wrong and the restrictions imposed with it unfair. We were willing to comply with the stipulations strictly because we wanted to see the band play here so much.

Next year, the same stipulations will hold. The plan is ready to be picked up where we left off. It'll be time for the Third Decadennial Field Trip (the 20th Anniversary of what may be the most important Dead show of all time) — Kesey's already having a contest for free tickets in the Pranksters' Calendar, but it looks as though the Country Fair site won't work out, so maybe we'll have the Autzen shows at long last. See you there!

Deaditor's Note: We thought it only fair to give the band an opportunity to respond, so we called Dennis McNally, publicist for the Grateful Dead. He gave us the following statement:

"The work of the committee was brilliant. They did a great job of organizing the community and engineering a positive responsible reaction. By the time it came to pass, it was difficult, in fact impossible to schedule a date for this summer. For summer stadium concerts, it takes many months of advance work (to build a stage from scratch, etc.). I have every expectation that the Grateful Dead will play Eugene in 1992, and we all look forward to being there." ♦

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with David Meltzer

TRANSFORMATION

It was almost dawn. A small group of my friends had made it through a night of intense, sometimes disturbing, psychedelic journeying. We had gone through a deep, dark psychic tunnel and come out on the other side. Now, just like the golden orb rising in the morning sky, our spirits were illuminated, and at peace. My friend Rick, from a space both joyous and poignant, asked, "Isn't there something we can do or say, that should we forget, will bring us back to the way we feel now?" At the time, none of us had any ideas.

Rick's question has stayed with me for years, serving as an ongoing stimulus in my search for wisdom. The years themselves have offered a few answers, and if Rick asked me that same question today, I would have the following suggestions: meditation, yoga, prayer, and a recommendation that some might find shocking: dancing to the Grateful Dead.

I hang out, sometimes, in some fairly conventional spiritual circles. In a number of these environments, the notion that the Grateful Dead Experience is comparable to more traditional forms of consciousness-raising would be considered blasphemous. In many temples, ashrams, and monasteries, as well as your local church and synagogue, being a Deadhead is not generally considered evidence of great enlightenment.

So be it. If they can't abide, they won't hear the hurdy gurdy play. Spiritual transformation doesn't always come in the packages expected by the orthodoxy. However, there are those who believe that the Grateful Dead Experience can have the same transformative power as many more traditional spiritual practices. Among these was the renowned mythologist Joseph Campbell, who called the Dead, "the antidote to the atomic bomb."

I agree with Dr. Campbell. Whether it be Zen Meditation, Yoga, Sufi dancing, vision quests, Balinese trance dancing, or "One More Saturday Night," the primary purpose of spiritual practice is, universally, to roll away the physical, emotional, and mental limitations that prevent our personal experience of heightened consciousness and its hallmark characteristics: joy, awareness, and peace. Like the old gospel song testifies, "There are many gates to the city." That is, there are many paths that lead to higher consciousness.

For many, Grateful Dead concerts serve as an opportune place to shake it out in a way that daily life doesn't allow. My experience is that when I shake it out deep enough, I come to a place very similar to where meditation and more formal spiritual techniques take me. I'd like to provide a framework from the yogic tradition to explain the transformation of consciousness, and discuss how the Dead Experience can produce the same transformation as other, more traditional practices.

Yogic texts describe a type of universal, primal energy that exists in all human beings. Sometimes referred to as "kundalini," this energy is like electricity in that it's neutral in character, manifesting in a variety of ways depending on how it is channeled. In the human body, it is channeled primarily through seven energy centers known as "chakras."

Chakras can be understood in a variety of ways. They have physical coordinates along the spine, psychological coordinates in the mind and emotions, and spiritual coordinates in, if you will, the soul. Kundalini is depicted as lying like a coiled snake at the base of the spine, the location of the lowest chakra. As it rises, passing through the chakras on its vertical ascension, powerful physical and psychic energies are released. Have you ever experienced a huge rush of energy racing up your back? What's rushing is kundalini, rising up the spine like liquid fire.

Our experience of the world, unique to our eyes alone, is based on the manifestation of consciousness that results from the energy



The Rocker ©1990 Jerry Garcia

that is pouring through our chakras. What this implies is that the world appears to us as it does based on our ability to handle energy. An individual who is "open" will have an even, balanced distribution of energy and stimulation throughout the chakras. Life will manifest as a generally interesting and pleasant experience. Someone who has trouble handling energy will have an unbalanced chakra system, resulting in fear, guilt, and other problems. Knowing that the stimulation of the chakras is an ongoing process, none of us is static in relationship to our energy level. Spiritual practices such as meditation or dance, or high-energy environments, such as a mountain retreat during the full moon, or front row seats for a "Dark Star," will stimulate, even agitate the chakras.

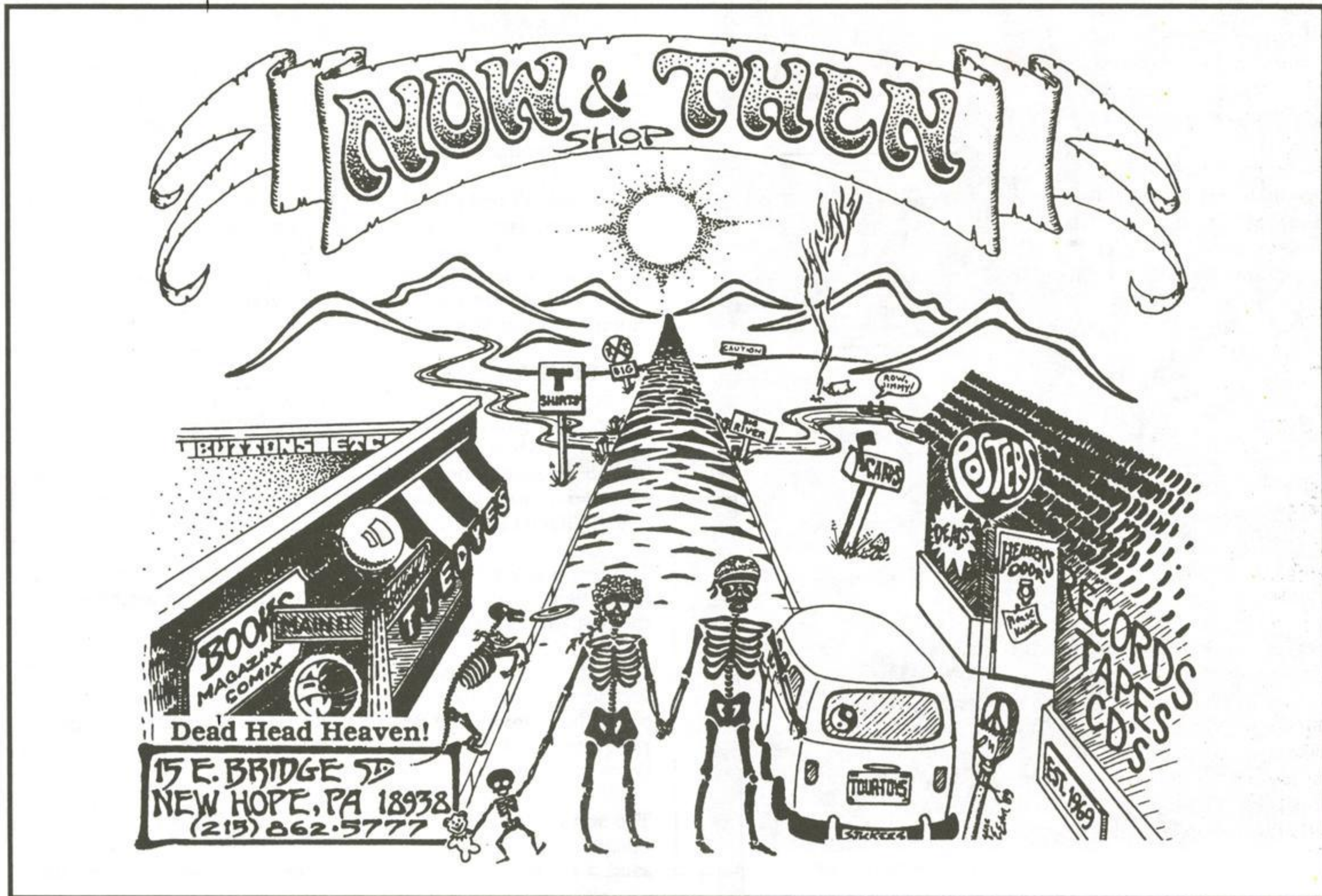
Transformation results from the ascendance of kundalini and the opening of the chakras. It doesn't matter if it happens on a pilgrimage or on a road trip, in India or in Kansas. Ram Dass once asked a Buddhist meditation master about a profound experience he had had. The teacher confirmed that it was a valid spiritual experience. Ram Dass objected, as he had, after all, been under the influence of LSD. The teacher said it did not matter.

This, however, does not imply that dropping a tab or merely attending a concert is an entrance to meaningful transformation. Ram Dass, for example, had years of disciplined meditation training behind him before he had the aforementioned experience. Many of us, lacking similar training — through good

karma, good luck or what-not — have stumbled upon similar experiences, attaining what William James called "gratuitous moments of grace." Opening to an experience is one thing; staying open and truly being transformed is another. Without a commitment to an ethical and compassionate lifestyle, these moments of grace quickly degenerate into spiritual masturbation, where we use peak experiences to please ourselves into believing that our self-serving actions are evidence of our selflessness. Experiencing love, harmony, and beauty at a show doesn't mean a whole lot if we trash the parking lot and scoff at the un-initiated ushers once the music stops.

Where I live, in Vermont, there is a popular mountain for hiking known as Camel's Hump. Camel's Hump has a number of trails leading to its peak. Regardless of the trail they choose, climbers eventually share the same peak. Whether it be the climb up Camel's Hump, or the ascent of consciousness, it is irrelevant which trail one follows. Whether it be yoga, meditation, dancing to the Dead, whatever, what is important is to follow the path of the heart. This path, for each of us, is for our steps alone, and it leads to joy, awareness, and peace found in the depths of one's own heart.

My spiritual teacher, Baba Hari Dass (who also taught Ram Dass, a/k/a Richard Alpert) has given me his okay to teach yoga. He also gave me the name "Prem Prakash," which in Sanscrit means "Light of Love," or as Deadheads have been quick to point out, "Lovelight." ♦



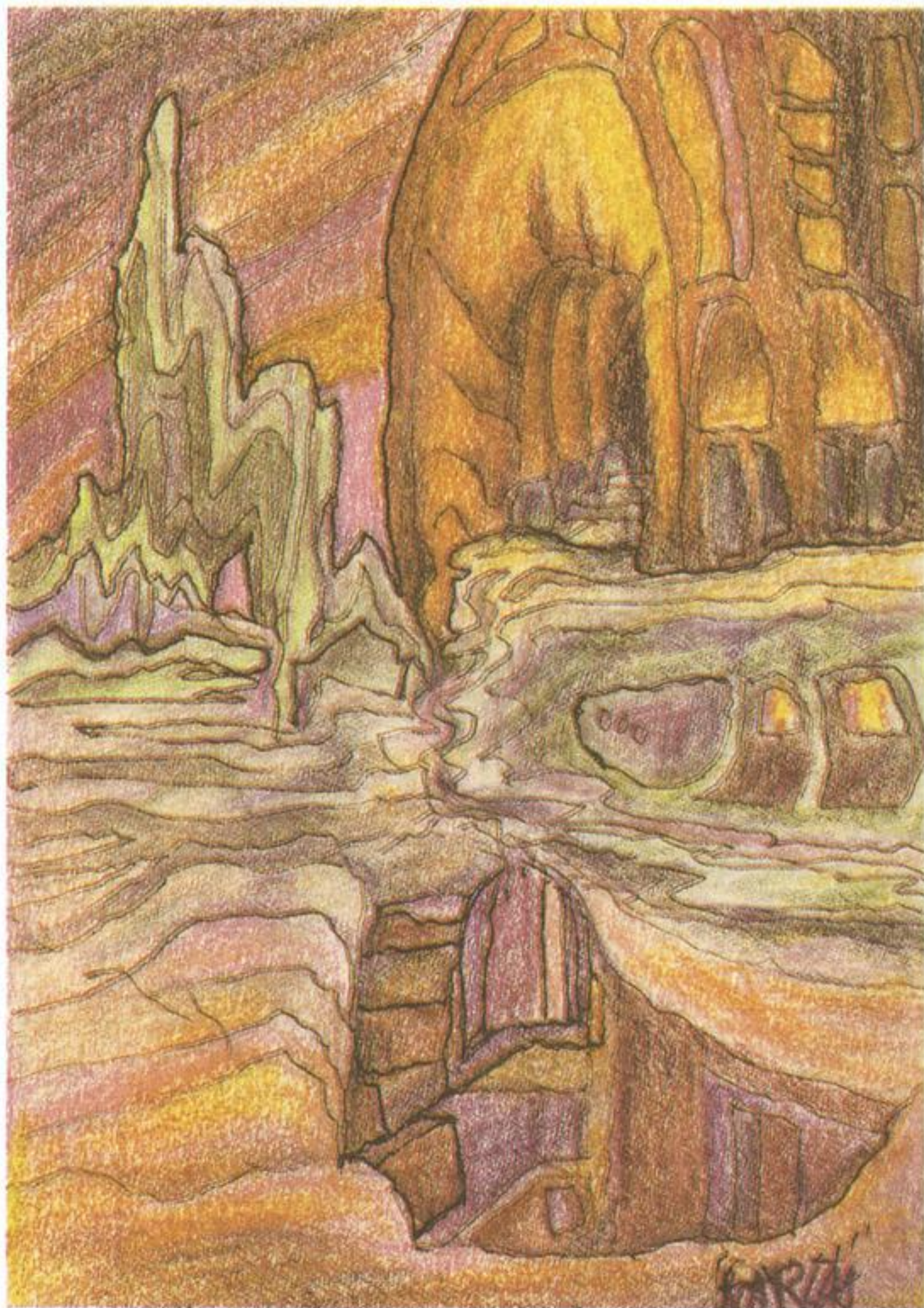
SUMMER TOUR 1991

by Heidrich Mueller with Alex Thomson, Scott Dobyys, Ken Schneidman, Theik Conkin, Nicky Spino, Scott Smith, J. Begonias and friends

DEER CREEK

After spring '91's lackluster tour no one knew what to expect for the summer. Fortunately, Deer Creek provided us with a delightful setting and great music, assuring those in doubt that the Dead are not through cranking out superbly high times for those in need. While last year's event at this location was fairly uptight (*arrests* for open beer cans), this year's scene proved noticeably more relaxed. The sight is flanked by two huge parking lots, one with vending, one without. Unfortunately, the flow of traffic was such that to get from one lot to the other involved a circuitous one-mile walk.

The operative word for the first set of summer tour music was FUN! An upbeat song selection featuring particularly tasty versions of "Big Railroad Blues" and "Cassidy" > "Might As Well" were framed by a simply stunning sunset. In fact, the weather was superb for both shows.



Northern Lights ©1990 Jerry Garcia



Banyon Trees ©1990 Jerry Garcia

The second set, while standard in song selection, was played well. The always perfect choice of "Box of Rain" capped this luscious evening off beautifully.

By the second night we'd heard that large video projections were once again planned for the summer tour, but no such set-up was present at Deer Creek. While this concert's music was not as intense as the previous night's, it featured a long, tasty "Scarlet" > "Fire" and strong renditions of "Miracle" > "Standing On the Moon" > "Sugar Magnolia."

BUCKEYE LAKE

Buckeye Lake is an enormous amphitheater surrounded by huge expanses of parking lots. Vending was for the most part frowned upon, but when and where it did pop up hassles were mostly limited to those whose products violated the Dead's copyrights. Most noticeably and pleasantly absent was the hiss of nitrous oxide (GOOD RIDDANCE).

The opening act was the Violent Femmes, many of whose songs had a hard edge and were about sex. This might not have been the best band to open for the Dead.

From the first note this was a Phil show. It was hot and sunny and so was the band. Jerry's voice was exceptionally strong...at points he roared! The first set boiled to a climax with the potent progression of "Masterpiece" > "Rubin and Cherise" > "Let It Grow."

The second set featured several gems, including a flowing "Crazy Fingers," one of the best versions of "He's Gone" in ages (Phil sang a soulful baritone backup), and a steaming "Other One."



Carousel ©1990 Jerry Garcia

This was arguably one of the better shows on tour.

One amusing note: As the Dead made their way beautifully through a mournful rendition of "Knockin' On Heaven's Door," we overheard several very young rock 'n rollers in Violent Femmes t-shirts remark in disbelief that "the Dead would actually play a Guns 'n Roses tune."

On the way out everyone was told firmly that no overnight camping would be permitted but the flow of traffic was *so* unbelievably dismal that many vehicles couldn't get out of the parking lot till 5AM!! One thing Buckeye Lake needs to do is get its crowd and traffic management scene together.

CHARLOTTE

These two performances turned out to be the only indoor shows on the tour. Considering they took place in Charlotte, it's fair to say that the cops weren't too intense. Vending was tolerated. There was no video set-up.

The first night proved to be the better of the two, though Bobby's voice seemed a bit raspy. Fortunately this problem went away. First show highlights included a delightful "Bird Song" featuring poignant embellishments by both keyboardists, a long rendition of "Terrapin Station," and a monstrous Space.

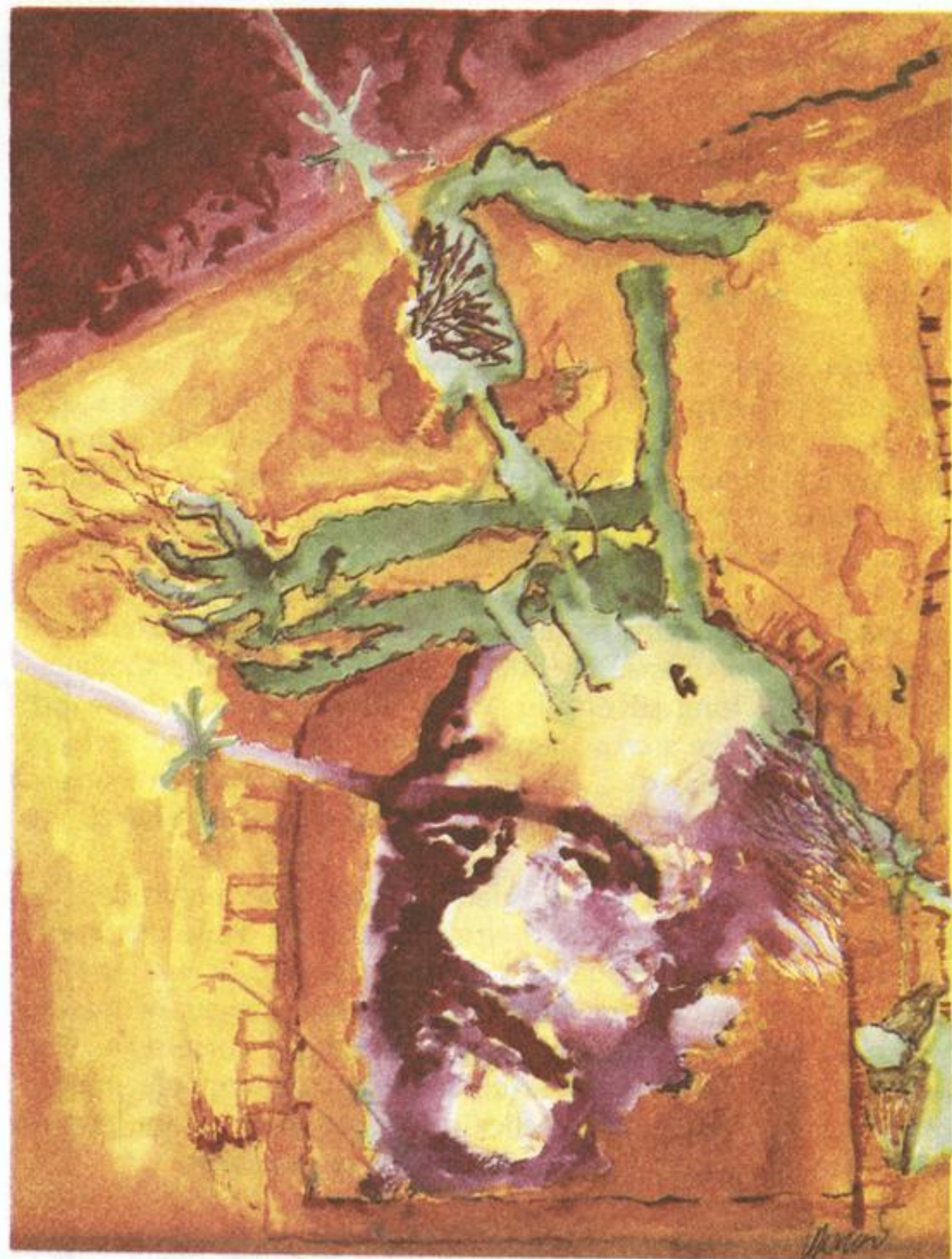
The second show was completely standard, perhaps the most obvious attempt on the part of the band all tour to pace themselves. On the whole, these shows were nothing more than run-of-the-mill.

RFK

Concert-goers were blessed with beautiful weather for this show. Much to our amazement, only 5,000 or so showed up in time to hear Dwight Yoakam, who opened for the Dead with one of the twangiest sets of country music we'd ever heard. His smooth version of "Truckin'" (admittedly his all-time favorite shuffle) got the sparse audience to their feet. It's a real shame more of us don't come down to see the diverse selection of quality opening acts on summer tour, but with all the hassle of concert crowds and security, who can blame us.

One thing very different about this year's large stadium shows was the elimination of general admission seating. Such was the case at RFK. With the well-publicized deaths of several concert goers earlier this year (not at Dead shows), it's not surprising that venues switched to all reserved seating. But alas, cheap three-pound seats tied together with thin plastic strips are even more dangerous than no seats at all.

The band announced their presence with a strong but typically controlled "Cold Rain and Snow." "Big River" > "Maggie's Farm," which followed three songs later, is our vote for the best pairing of cowboy/country tunes yet. Toward the end of the first set, Jerry blew the words to "Tennessee Jed" as he watched in obvious annoyance as hundreds of rowdy partiers in the first few rows started pushing and shoving any and everyone in sight. The band closed with a very rushed "Music Never Stopped" — it was very clear they were not pleased with the intense scene down front. John Sher came out and said the show wouldn't go on until things mellowed out, which to some degree, they did.



Poet Reflects The War ©1990 Jerry Garcia

Set two was a whole other story, a gem from beginning to end. "Help" > "Slipknot!" > "Franklin's" > "Estimated" led into a very short but sweet, one-verse "Dark Star," the only "real" one of the tour. To top it off, many people have said in retrospect that the "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" encore was one of the best they'd ever heard.

GIANTS STADIUM

The Meadowlands, UGH!! The site of the Adam Katz death, lousy food, and too much gate-crashing and fence-jumping. If not for the Dead's record of strong performances at this venue, surely many more of us would skip this gig. Nevertheless, there we went again.

Quite appropriate was the well-timed *New York Times* report just days before about new developments in the Adam Katz murder investigation. As it turns out, further inquiries into the matter revealed carpet fibers in Adam's hair that matched the carpet in the security van at Brendan Byrne Arena!!! The *Times* announced that in light of this evidence, the Katz family was bringing a civil suit against the Arena, the security company, two specific guards, John Sher, and the Grateful Dead.

Rain was forecast for both days but the first was spared. On the other hand, rain would at least have brought relief to the unbearable 95% humidity that hung over the stadium like a hot wet blanket. Those who went in on time were treated to a set of smoking boogie jams by the reborn Little Feat. Even Garcia came on stage to check them out, shuffling and clapping hands to the groove.

The first night's performance was strong, not fantastic, but head over heels better than the last metro area show. After a decent first set the band opened with a simply phenomenal combo of "Jack Straw" > "Crazy Fingers" > "China Cat" > "Rider." It was very clear this was not the same lethargic bunch of gents we saw last spring.

One odd note that must be mentioned was Jerry's peculiar "look" at this show. No offense intended, but the bright white spotlights shining on his long silver hair, which blew freely in the wind, made him look like a cross between Bozo the Clown and a flying nun!! Can you imagine a twenty foot tall video image of Garcia with a silver Bozo the Clown wig on? **Man, it was weeeird.**

It was at these shows that the video and new slide projections, for what they're all worth, really began to kick in. While this year's multi-media presentation left much to be desired, it was at least devoid of last year's completely inappropriate images of twisted and contorting baby heads (yes, you heard me correctly). The mere thought of seeing those completely inappropriate images while "peaking" is enough to elicit nasty flashbacks on the part of many Deadheads who had the displeasure to see them.

While this year's images were far more appropriate, there is still the overall feeling by many that whoever is directing/editing/creating the video projections really needs to

"check in," if you know what I mean. There are still far too few video segments that are *anywhere near* as visionary as the Dead's music and most of the switching between live camera shots seemed to miss the particular musician whose playing was "in the lead" at the moment. Furthermore, while this year's pre-produced animation sequences were better than last year's, most were still tacky and static. And an obvious shortcoming of the technology was the all too noticeable delay between the music and video signal — at times it looked like a dubbed Japanese horror movie.

The mostly textural slide projections, while new this year, were stagnant and repetitive. This effect didn't begin to approach available slide projection technology. All-in-all, the projections, as they are currently presented, are as distracting and inappropriate as they are useful (for those who sit far from the stage). It seems very odd that the Dead, who seem partial to state-of-the-art technology, wouldn't make a better attempt to insure that the other media forms they present are as much a potent catalyst as their music is.

For what it's worth, there *were* two excellent multi-media moments. The first, a segment of very psychedelic animation, peaked in perfect synchronization with "China Cat" > "Rider." The second was provided when a gorgeous pair of slides of a rainforest were projected during a primal segment of the Rhythm Devils' solo.

As expected, it started to pour a half-hour before the Dead were to take the stage for the second Giants' Stadium show. After a brief respite the band came on and, just as the rain started again, broke into "Eyes of the World." WOW!!! What a tremendous opener!

The boys came out screaming, steaming, and beaming ear to ear. Unfortunately, as great as things were on stage, this was the point in the evening when some people in the audience chose to jump through security lines and cause near stampedes, both by the stage and in the rear. Cheap plastic seats installed on the floor were literally flying through the air! Fortunately, people got out of the way quickly, and a state of calm, relatively speaking, was reached before the first song was over.

The band continued to tear things up when, several songs later, from out of nowhere, Phil started playing... "Dark Star"!! But after about two minutes, Jerry raised his hands in surrender to Phil and gestured as if to say: "You got me," and stopped playing! After just enough time to let us look around at each other in disbelief, Bobby launched into a triumphant rendition of "Masterpiece." The rest of the set got better and better with blistering performances of "Loose Lucy," "Cassidy," and a set-closing "Might As Well" that went on and on like "Deal" so often does on hot nights. PHEW! This band was smokin'!

A half-time trip to the bathroom for those with floor seats proved that the security fences installed on the floor's perimeter had been breached. The fence-jumping, inexcusably flimsy chairs on the floor, and incredible surge up front prove that all the security measures affordable won't stop a foolish crowd from taking risky chances. Giants Stadium shows are, by definition, a zoo.



Photo by Phil Gerstheimer

Further evidence of the band's recently resurrected state of confidence was their choice of opening the second set with SPACE > "Saint of Circumstance." Then, after a passable "Ship of Fools," the boys went into "Dark Star." Again! This time, after teasing it for five minutes, they played the whole last verse INSTRUMENTALLY! We were dyin'! What a delightfully cruel tease! From this they ventured into an unusually strong "Truckin'," which led into what may very well be the longest "New Speedway Boogie" played to date. After more *space* the boys went into a long, forceful "Uncle John's Band," which was followed by the sort of heavenly, melodic "Dark Star"-type instrumental that makes older Deadheads extremely happy.

After the drums we saw yet another strange song choice with "Playing Reprise." After an incredibly passionate, if somewhat sloppy "Sugar Mags," the band bid farewell to the tri-state area with a perfectly performed favorite: "The Weight." No doubt about it — these shows proved that the boys were back in town.

PINE KNOB

At only 16,000 seats, "the Knobber" is yet another preferred stop on summer tour. Consequently, there were no tickets to be found outside. Fortunately, the number of those in need of a miracle was also relatively low. There were cops everywhere but the scene was very mellow. Those who were selling were very aggressive and for some reason there were a lot of people asking for spare change...it seemed everyone wanted your money.

Breathtaking weather prevailed. Although the sun was astoundingly strong, the boys came out on stage with big red glaring directly in their eyes. After a standard first set and a delightful sunset, the band returned with a simply outrageous "Victim Or The Crime" > Jam > "Scarlet Begonias" > "Women are Smarter." Between the heat in the sky and the heat on the stage, it might have been too much to handle at one time had the sun not set by then!

The highlight of show number two was the *inverted* second set opening: "Throwin' Stones" > "Iko" > "Watchtower" > "Standing On the Moon" > "He's Gone." While the later part of this intriguing melange was a bit mellow, its unique composition was unexpected and therefore fascinating. Mixing things up like this breathes new life into standard song selections. Definitely a good trend for the band to stick with.

SOLDIER FIELD

This show might have been more of a hassle than Giants Stadium! Soldier Field is monstrously huge and has the infamously inhospitable Chicago police to protect it from the obviously dangerous band of savages that we are. Everyone was frisked beyond need and vending wasn't worth the harassment. It seemed like every white male aged 16 from the suburbs of Chicago was at this show.

The band continued in true prankster fashion to confuse and abuse our poor little minds by playing yet another instrumental rendition of "Dark Star." After a soulful encore of "The Weight,"

this otherwise average show was sparked up a bit by the fireworks that lit the sky, much to the delight of all.

SANDSTONE

Sandstone Amphitheater might well be one of the nicer venues visited by the Dead these days. With under 15,000 seats there isn't a bad sounding location in the place. The first of two days brought strict crackdowns on the vending scene, but day two was just short of a free-for-all with vending everywhere in sight.

Show number one started with a bang: "Help" > "Slipknot" > "Franklin's." After a slight dip into a somewhat unfocused "C.C. Rider," Jerry segued into the rare "Takes a Lot To Laugh, Takes a Train To Cry." The rest of set one was all downhill.

Set two started with a rip roarin' "China" > "Rider" but, as with the first set, the energy level on stage coasted downhill. Post-Drums brought us an incredibly short "Other One" > "Morning Dew."

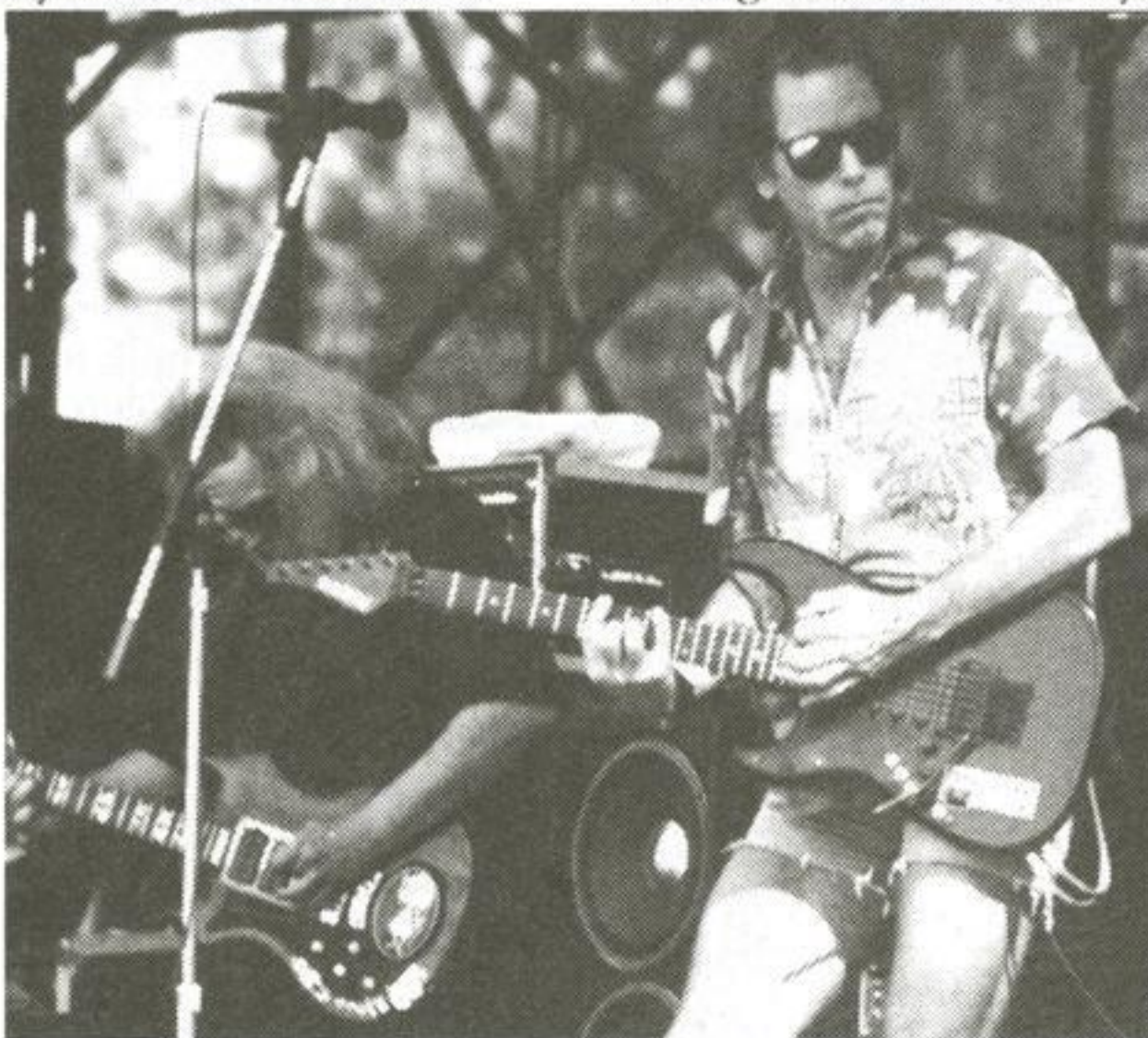


Photo by Phil Gerstheimer

The second show, while more unremarkable in song selection, was far more consistent in energy level. The only noteworthy selection was a brilliantly crisp "Comes a Time" that Jerry delivered out of the Space with bittersweet passion. We'll take this tune, along with "High Time," any ol' time he decides to break it out.

DENVER

The final destination on summer tour '91 was Mile High Stadium. With a good third of the seats unsold, this left plenty of room for the mellow crowd to boogie. Unfortunately, those who had floor tickets were subjected to intolerably long lines for the porta-johns (there were only 30!) and the equally inadequate soda stands.

Fortunately, water was easily accessible.

The opening act was Santana, who managed to play his usual solid set of new and old tunes after getting busted the day before in Texas for five grams of grass. There was considerable concern that he would have to cancel, so his presence was a pleasant surprise.

The Dead opened with a hot first set. "Wang Dang Doodle," "Black Throated Wind," "Iko" and "Cassidy" were all near perfect. It was the sort of set that had you turning to your friends saying, "Wow, I can't wait to hear what they do in the second set!"

Unfortunately, while the second set featured a long and appropriate "Eyes of the World," and the perfect encore choice of "Box of Rain," it was not much more than the boys "goin' through the motions." If I were them, I might have been anxious to get home by that point, too.

Summer tour '91 did restore our hopes that the Dead aren't *dead* yet. After a disconcerting spring tour it was most reassuring to see Garcia so animated...and his voice sounded the best in years. Vince appears infinitely more comfortable on stage and the video close-ups showed him jamming with great confidence. While these shows didn't nearly attain the phenomenal calibre of last

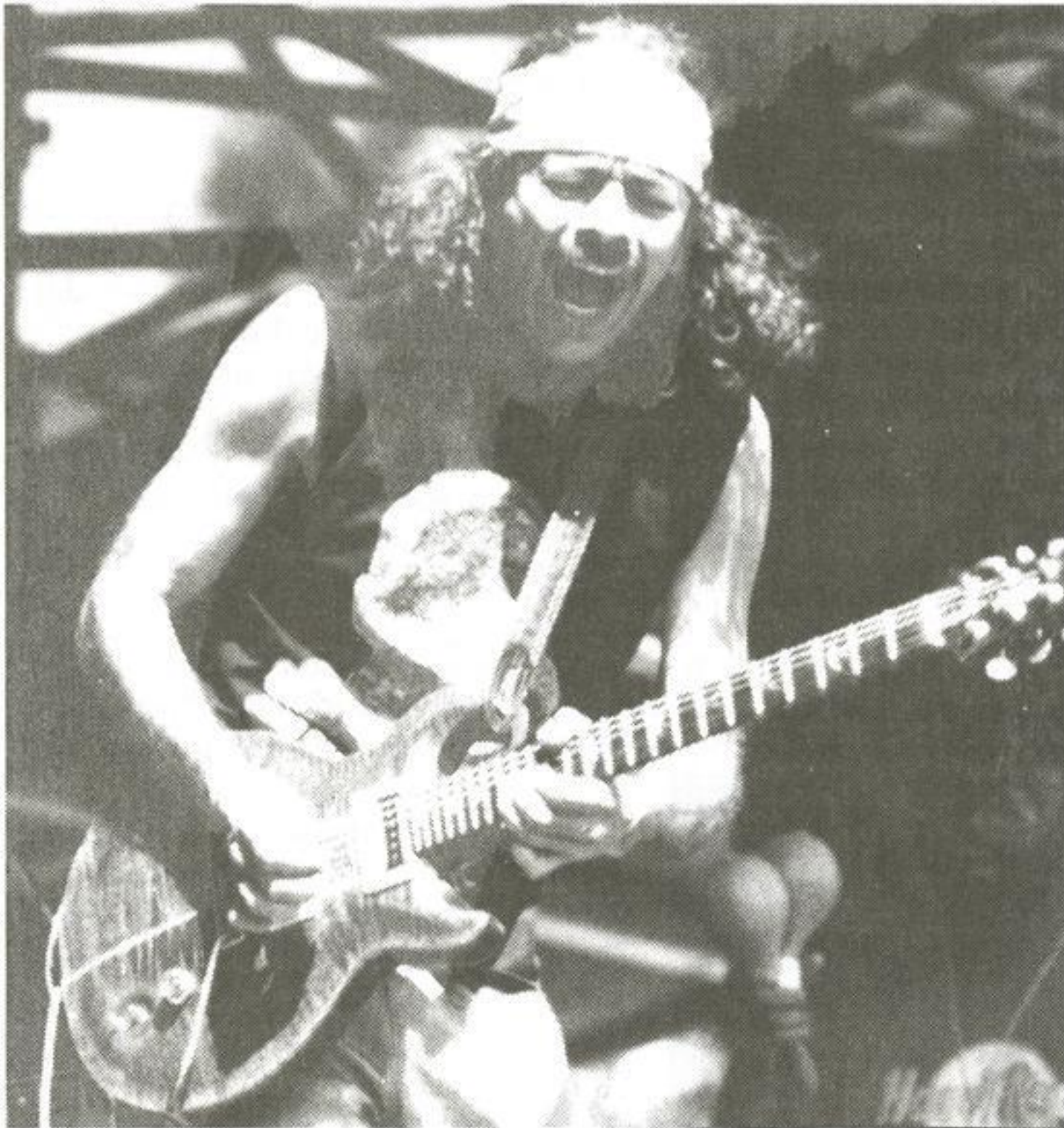


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fall's shows, there was a sparkle of "presence" on stage once again. We're happy to report that many of those who were bummed before this tour are now looking forward to a hot fall tour. See you there!! ♦

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The Gyuto Tantric Choir

by Johnny Dwork with Dr. Robert Thurman and Friends

As a veteran ethnomusicologist, Mickey Hart is familiar with all sorts of unusual music, from Mongolian throat singing to Arctic Circle hoop drumming. Ask Mickey and he'll tell you that nothing is rarer or more fascinating than a performance by the Gyuto Tantric Monks, who can each sing three notes at one time (!) and hit incredibly low registers. As part of the official Year of Tibet celebrations, The Gyuto Tantric Choir will, for only the third time in history, be performing on tour in America this October. This will be an incredibly special opportunity to witness one of the world's most unusual forms of music and spiritual practice.

A few words regarding Tibetan Buddhism are in order. Buddhism is a philosophy/religion based upon teachings given by the Buddha in 500 B.C. after he experienced enlightenment leading to a profound understanding of human evolution.

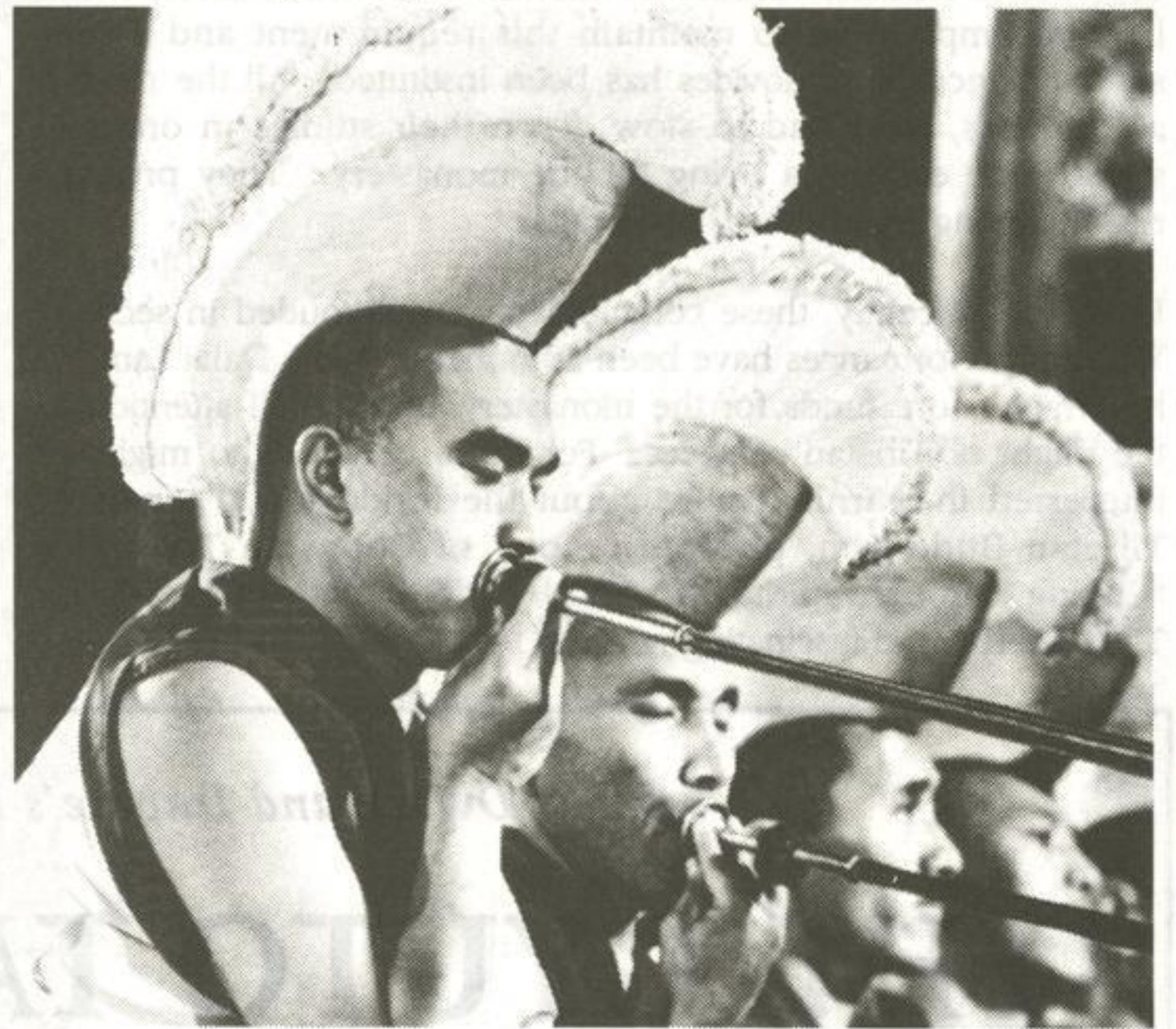
Buddhism served as a civilizing influence throughout Asia. Introduced into Tibet from the seventh to eleventh centuries, it transformed a rough and ready culture into a gentle, monastic, contemplative and creative nation. The tantras (teachings) studied by many Tibetan Buddhists are the most advanced, subtle, esoteric forms of all Buddhist teachings. They provide specific techniques for mastering all the energies of life, confronting death, and learning to transmute everything into benefit for all beings. In particular, these techniques employ the creative imagination necessary for the attainment of true and profound freedom and beauty in one's life.

The "multi-phonic" voice technique of the Gyuto Monks originated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the founder of the Gyuto University, Tsong Khapa. An artist, philosopher, scientist and religious reformer, he is said to have received revelations of the deep resonant voice used in this practice, which was then expanded by the members of the monastery in the ensuing centuries. Until 1959, when the Chinese occupation of Tibet forced His Holiness the Dalai Lama and many of his followers to flee for their lives, there were upwards of 900 practicing monks in the Gyuto Monastery. Now in exile in Northern India, there are fewer than one hundred monks practicing this ancient and mystical form of yoga and meditation.

The Gyuto Monks are celibate practitioners of Mahayana Buddhism, a socially- (as opposed to self-) oriented form, who practice what has been termed a "yoga of the imagination," a total revisioning of reality for all humans, away from fear and self-centeredness, to a personal connectedness with all that exists. It is their belief that through sound they can communicate and bring into being this more heavenly vision, that the sound of a chorus of expressions of the Buddha comes *through* them, not from them, and that the listener (consciously or not) is enfolded in the sound and inevitably uplifted and enlightened. These individuals have dedicated their lives to the realization of a better world; at the same time, they are living daily with some of our world's most extreme harshness.

Incredibly, these Lamas can each sing a three-note major chord. They have been trained to reshape the vocal cavity in such a way that overtones not normally audible can resonate intensely enough to be heard. Each singer's harmony joins with the slightly varying vibrations of the other monks' harmonies, creating endlessly shifting waves of unfathomable sounds.

"The overtones are intended to awaken luminous feelings," says MIT professor Huston Smith, the first westerner to hear and record the chants. "This is not art for art's sake. The sound has symbolic power. The monks are tapping into the Power of God and transmitting its very essence."



Dressed in burgundy and orange robes, golden silk capes and spectacular feathered headdresses, the monks assemble before an altar on which are placed great sacred objects, including blessed holy water. Above this altar, they hang "tankas," incredibly detailed, silk-framed paintings that depict the awesome deities whose presence they will attempt to invoke.

The monks sit before these divine objects and begin the ceremony with a ritual chant of self-creation, becoming channels for the spirit YAMANTAKA, "the divine Buddha-form," archangel of the adamantine wisdom of selflessness.

This is followed by an absolution of the new spirit, when the monks symbolically wash the Body, Speech and Mind with holy water and vow to do everything in their power to eliminate worldly suffering. Donning brilliant yellow hats, they chant for all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to remain permanently in this world until it is happy and peaceful.

The Tantric Choir then proceeds to invite MAHAKALA, "the most important Terrific Protector of Tibetan Buddhism," to make his presence felt and protect our world from evil and suffering. The MAHAKALA appears in a terrifying black, six-armed form. Fierce in his trampling upon the evil spirit of delusion and greed, he is actually considered to be the agent of AVALOKITESHVARA, the angelic Bodhisattva of great compassion.

After invoking these divine and angelic beings, the monks request entry into the hearts of all present, and that their merit be dedicated to the Buddhahood of each for the sake of all beings.

If this sounds intense, that's because it is. The monks must take great care with the pronunciation of their words, for they believe that the tones are so spiritually powerful that the uninitiated can be overwhelmed by visions brought forth by the chanting. At their monastery in Northern India, the monks will often chant like this for days on end, stopping only briefly for nourishment and to answer nature's call. Until the Chinese invaded Tibet and destroyed the original monastery housing 900 monks, initiation into this practice was allowed only after a 20-year contemplation of esoteric studies. Since the monks' exile from Tibet, it has become impossible to maintain this requirement and a new system of accepting novices has been instituted. All the monks, as refugees, have had to slow down their studies in order to spend time earning a living for the monastery. They produce rugs, paintings, and other handicrafts.

Until quite recently, these ceremonies were shrouded in secrecy. Western performances have been authorized by the Dalai Lama to help raise more funds for the monastery, and to call attention to the plight of Tibetan refugees. For those of you who might be interested in learning more about the fundamental tenets of Tibetan Buddhism, pick up a copy of Chogyam Trungpa's "Cutting Through Spiritualism" and/or "The Myth of Freedom." They are fun and fascinating reading.

A *spectacular* digital recording of the Gyuto Monks has been produced by Mickey Hart and is available on the Windham Hill label.

If you're interested in checking out the Monks in person, their tentative schedule is as follows:

The Gyuto Monks Tour Dates

- 9/6 Tucson, AZ
- 9/13 Albuquerque, NM
- 9/14 Sante Fe, NM
- 10/4 Civic Auditorium, Santa Cruz, CA
- 10/5 Luther Burbank Center, Santa Rosa, CA
- 10/9 Zellerbach Auditorium, Berkeley, CA
- 10/12 Berkeley School of Music, Boston, MA
- 10/13 Smith College, Northampton, MA
- 10/17 Tilles Center, Long Island University
- 10/25 Town Hall, New York, NY
- 10/26 University Museum, Philadelphia, PA
- 10/27 Kutztown, PA
- 10/27 Dickenson College, PA
- 11/1 Chicago, IL
- 11/3 Bloomington, IN
- 11/8 Vancouver, Canada
- 11/9 Fifth Avenue Theater, Seattle, WA
- 11/10 Hult Center, Eugene, OR
- 11/14 Royce Hall, Los Angeles, CA
- 11/15 Clairmont College, CA
- 11/16 U.C. Santa Barbara, CA
- 11/17 San Diego, CA
- 11/22 Marin Center, San Rafael, CA

Robert Thurman is a Professor of Eastern Religion and Philosophy at Columbia University and is one of the world's leading authorities on Tibetan Buddhism. ♦

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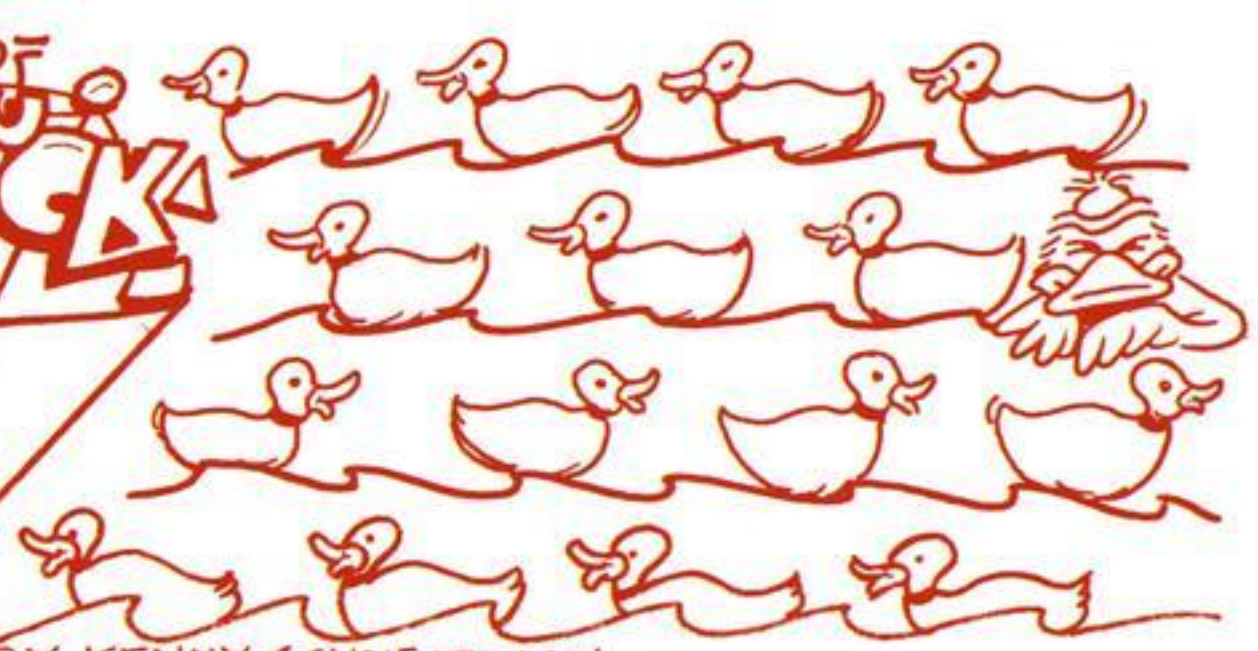
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WHILE WE CAN?

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