

RELIX

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Hot Tuna

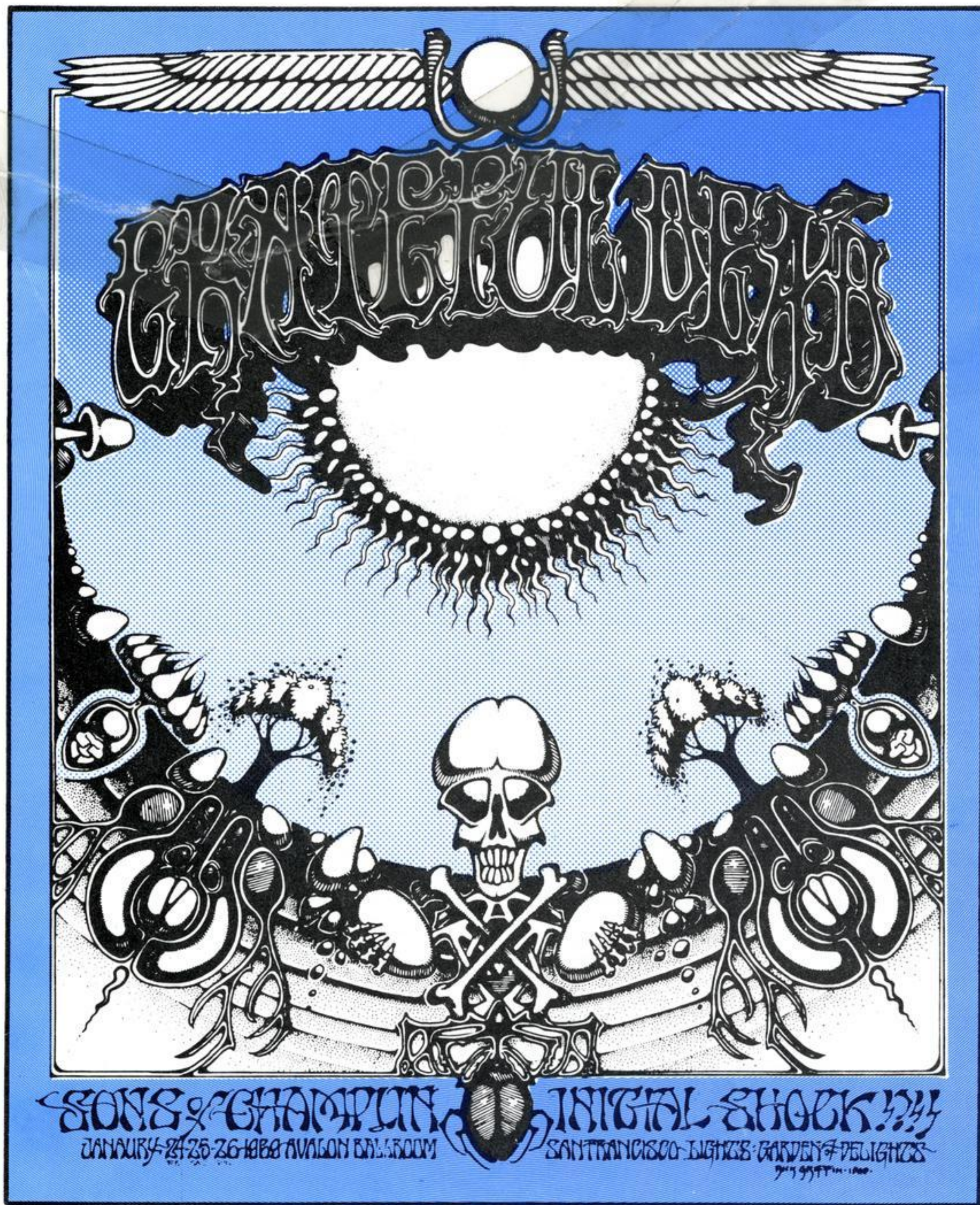
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**Papa John
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**Grateful Dead
Lyricist:**

**Robert
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Editorial:

These things are getting to be a habit.

Here we are in 1978, and Relix is into its fourth year and still going. I asked last issue for some comments on our direction. They came in, and you were so kind to us that I figure we must be doing something right. Whenever I figure exactly what it is I'll let you know. Thank you all. See the letter column for a few of the more glowing replies.

This is a rather strange issue of Relix in that it leans heavily toward interviews. We might have balanced it better, but all the interviews seemed worthwhile, and such items ought to be used while they're still relatively fresh. The Hunter interview is this issue's real feature, but we're holding the better half back till next issue. Just you wait.

Most of the usual reviews and such got squeezed out due to space limitations, but they'll be back next issue. The only real alternative to doing things this way was microfilm, and I don't think the world is quite ready for that yet.

I made it out to California for the Winterland shows in December, and had a high old time. A review seems called for, but space again wins out. A few quick points, though...

The China Cat Sunflower/I Know You Rider medley has returned to the Dead's repertoire. The new arrangement of Rider [and several other tunes] was breathtaking.

Trying to pass 12:30 off as the start of the new year was rather bogus. I realize that Graham had to be in two places at once, but New Year's Eve Dead shows are a tradition. Santana's fans should have been the ones to wait.

Aside from that, my mind was totally blown. Portents for the coming year are promising indeed.

Happy New Year, and enjoy this Relix, imbalanced or not.

Till next issue,

Jerry Moore

Rosetta Stoned

Dear Box 94

I was a bit lonely and decided to write you, I can not afford your product but do enjoy your musical tastes, when we get to heaven I will need help in organizing rock and roll concerts so, will you be able to help out? I just sit around stoned most of the time listening to the greatfull dead and starship, plus a hundred of other groups and will need help with the management part, or maybe we could have total musical anarchy, what do you think? I guess it dont matter as long as we have music!

What do you think of terapin station, the new dead album? I was thinking, since they are my favorite group that we could have them play first! them or Jethro tull. do you think those two musical groups go together? I certainly hope so cause I wouldnt want to make any concert people unhappy or else that would be a bad trip! but then we wouldnt make anybody do or listen to the type of music that they dont want to, would we now! No, I do not think so! that would be hell, not heaven! we could say, madame or sir, if you do not like the musical selections weve chosen for tonites entertainment, then you have the freedom to pack up and leave! a couple of sumo wrestlers would make sure there wouldnt be no trouble! We cant hire the hells angels unless they promuse not to hurt anybody. cause if they did, then that would be a bad sceen too!

Ya know, I think I do forgive them for altamont, and I forgive Charlie manson too, Ya know, when I was reading charlie manson stuff, I didnt realize I was god, so I enjoyed the gory stuff! now I know better and think it was gross! but at the time, well, any way, be thinking about what kind of musical entertainment ya want heaven to provise!

Love
God

Dear Rosetta,

Two days after Turkey Day, I attended a concert at the Capitol by the Jerry Garcia Band. Apparently Mr. Garcia did not have his turkey, because she was **CLAPPING** and running around stage that Saturday night. While the rest of the band was receiving that certain telepathy that Mr. Garcia is so well known for, those telepathic waves were bouncing right off Miss Muldouer's (s.i.c.) head.

A good part of the audience was clapping right along with Miss Muldouer. I never did get the full effect of Mr. Garcia, and his band's music.

I have tickets to see Mr. Garcia on Dec. 4 at Rutgers Gym. I hope someone will enlighten Miss Muldouer as to what is going on.

Thanks,
Dave Matos
East Brunswick, N.J.

Dearest Dead Relix,

This was a weekend of total confusion & sheer delight! I am speaking, or rather writing, about Hot Tuna and the Jerry Garcia band at the illustrious Palladium in good ole downtown NYC. As far as Hot Fuckin Tuna's concerned, I'm a little unsure of where they're off to. In other words, what's with all this noise??!! In my book, Jorma's the best and he doesn't **need** all that extra Wah-wahing to sound good. His acoustic sets were all excellent but then when he brings on the band and puts those damn whistles in (y' know the ones that sound like sirens coming & going?) All I can say is, "It's bullshit Jorma!!" After faithfully seeing Hot Tuna 10 or so times and then seeing these past 4 shows makes me ask myself, is it me? Could I be growing out of the good ole' Hot Tuna days? No fuckin way! It's them!! They're changing! I had never before seen Jorma play so mean & hard & strong before. Never before this week, had I ever seen **MEAN-LOOKING** Hot Tuna shirts! I speak of the one with that sour face with fangs! This seemed to me an assertion of Hot Tuna's changing image. No longer are they the wonderful, **mellow** but party-hardy rockin' band! It seems a shame. The good ole "Airplane" sound seems lost these days. Why? Jorma? Just being super electric isn't the only answer — it can't be! I hope that oh no — commercialism (dread the word) isn't the reason why. We'll see when the new album is released. I guess. Speaking of New, the party song is the one & only bright spot that's got that good ole Tuna sound. I dunno. I find it extremely difficult to say anything bad against the band so I'll say that I wish Hot Fuckin Tuna would get its shit together again.

Last minute Dates The New Bob Weir Band.	
Feb.	March
13 — San Diego, CA	2 — Warner Theater, Wash. D.C.
14-15 — Golden Bear	3 — Palladium, N.Y.C.
17-19 — Roxy, L.A.	4 — Franklin Pierce Coll, NH
23 — Civic Center, St. Paul	5 — Paradise, Boston
24 — Center Stage, Milwaukee	9 — Tower Theater, Philly
25 — Riviera, Chicago	11 — Capitol Theater, NJ
26 — Royal Oak, Detroit	12 — Yale Univ.
28 — Cleveland	15 — Atlanta
	17 — St. Louis

By the way, whatever happened to **SPONTANEOUS** jamming?

On to brighter subjects, the Jerry Garcia band shows were superb. Both the the early & late shows were **much too short**. After taking the usual — forever — to get ready to come out, Jerry et al cooked. Despite a Row C seat, I found myself along with so many others, in the back, standing. No, correction; no one was just standing — we were dancing. If our bodies weren't, our heads were and it was excellent. It was the good ole sound — no special effects — just great fuckin music! My only regret is that it didn't last till dawn. Well anyway, Jerry & friends and Jorma & friends & friends are still the greatest!!

Always a loyal fan,
Shari H.,

Greenwich Village, NYC

P.S. I hope at least even one person at **RELIX** really reads this.

Dear Shari,

I read it. I don't think Tuna was that bad or Garcia was that great. But thanks for the line, since despite appearances to the contrary, most of us can read. [JM]

In brief summary:

My first contact with Relix was at some theater in Philadelphia, at a Dead show in June '76. I picked up this wierd little flyer with a picture of a flying sub on it. There was also some writing, but I couldn't read it at the time, so I stuck it in my pocket. Well I found it with some papers of mine several months later, read the info and sent yall my subscription fee. I've been enjoying Relix ever since, with the exception of certain occasions when I think some of your writers get a little too sweet and sticky in showing their reverence and allegiance to the Dead in print. I may be a little old fashioned, but a love affair, especially the details, should be considered on somewhat of a personal basis. I mean, if you love the Dead nobody's gonna doubt your word. Some of yall's articles sound like the **persons** writing them are in a state of paranoia, scared that the readers of Relix might not believe **they're** in the top 10% of loyal Dead Freaks without **them** proving it.

On a different topic, speaking actually to Jerry Moore, I enjoyed your article (Spring Tour Again), I found your "kid gunpowder" analogy of a good Dead night very likable, however I wish you would omit stuff like, "Oh well . . . I got to see all five nights in the city." This phrase follows, "For one reason or another, I missed the shows in Passaic." Third paragraph, page 16. This is a very good phrase, honest and factual, I'm sure no one will discredit you for missing those shows, but why follow it up with that other line "Oh well . . . I

etc. etc." It sounds like something a jet-setter would say while sniffing coke. You're not a jet-setter are you? Heaven forbid!

Tim Shepherd
Troutville, VA.

Who, me? You gotta be thinking of somebody else, since I can't afford the good life. Hell no!

"Oh well. . ." meant more nearly "it pains me outrageously to have missed even three Dead shows out of a whole string, but I don't really want to talk about it . . . so on to the next topic." I'm no jet setter.

Besides, my flight to California isn't till tomorrow. [JM]

Relix—

I worked this past summer as director of one of the summer camps of Habonim, a socialist-zionist youth movement. Many of the staff and camp members are long standing Dead Heads. I thought you'd appreciate this photo of one of our campers.

Sandy Simon



Dear Jerry,

I read the double issue from cover to cover and decided it is the best yet. Really loved **Grace Slick at home** and **Confessions at Hartford** was long awaited (as is part 2 of Confessions).

Jefferson Glider was a goddamn riot! Thanks for the laughs, Clark.

And as for **Sound Advice**, we'll all appreciate the better quality recordings. If you're going to preserve a concert, fellow tape traders, go all the way and do it right!

Sure, side 1 of **Terrapin** is on the verge of the Discoid Disease. The Dead should bury it, especially *Crawling through the Sewers*.

I am happy that the Dead are getting some airplay (and much needed revenue) which could turn some hesitant skeptics their way. Who knows? I am tired of hearing "Grateful **WHAT?**" when the discussion turns to music. **Terrapin** is what the Dead need to get folks to listen to their finer stuff. As for side two, who couldn't love it? Jerome the bard whips me back a thousand years as his voice captures the quintessence of beauty on *Lady with a Fan*. Some melody, **WHEW!**

As a closing note, I would like to introduce an identifying sign for Dead

Heads. Hold up the right hand with the fingers pointing upwards together and crook the middle finger so it looks like Jerry's stub.

What's it mean?
MORE DEAD!

Blissfully,
Milton Friedman
Baltimore, Md.

Dear Les, Jerry, etc. & etc.

You asked for feedback on #6, so here goes:

Editorial: Glad to see some sentiments on Elvis!

Table of Contents: very professional.

Rosetta Stoned: Where do you find these weirdos? I suppose I do know the answer though; I ask the same question at all the concerts I go to — where do they come from?

Englishtown Review: This article shows how far **Relix** has come. Instead of a syrupy concert review, which have in the past been little more than souped up song lists, I have before me a well written piece of "new journalism." Great photos, fantastic Terrapin by Kroman, and very interesting. I can't say enough about this article.

Grace Slick: I was offended by this article. There was a lack of content, just the writer's feelings and complaints. What was out of place was the "bit-chier," "broad" comments. I expect better out of **Relix**.

Garcia Interview: Great; not long enough or detailed enough but I suppose each one of us would like to conduct our own interview. Rather than wondering where "The Eleven" went, how about "Blues for Allah" or "Stronger than dirt." But you can't always get what you want.

Matt Kelley: Even better than the Garcia interview; this is so much better than reading about favorite colors, etc.

T. Leary: Marginal; didn't have an interview or event to tie this article to reality.

28 Times; I enjoyed this article as a friend of mine saw the movie many times and came up with even more trivia (two different "Sugar Magnolias" spliced together etc.)

Cody: Good informative article; good pix.

W. Gravy: Good pix; marginal article.

Arlo: Good article and pix.

Bertrando: Good intro article; looking forward to future.

Hairpin Station: Kroman just keeps getting better; good record reviews too.

Pat Lee
Olympia, Washington.

We got many responses to our request for feedback on our last issue. The returns were mostly positive, so we'll continue to steer this particular ship of fools in the same direction. Thanks to Pat, Milton and all for the assistance. [JM]

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In this issue

KILLING TIME IN THE CRYSTAL CITY Page 6
Jerry takes on a Hot Tuna tour, and confesses himself beaten. He puts both feet in his mouth and swallows.
By Jerry Moore

**THE MAN BEHIND THE WORDS:
AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT HUNTER** Page 12
The issue's pride and joy. To be continued . . .
By Monte Dym and Bob Alson

TRUE CONFESSIONS CONCLUDED Page 18
Garcia and Weir finish talking
By John Hall

FULL MOON OVER NEW YORK Page 22
The Moonlighters come east at last. About time!
By Jerry Moore and Les Kippel

OF VICE AND MEN Page 27
Country Porn: a new concept in entertainment for the whole family.
By Clark Peterson

PAPA JOHN CREACH INTERVIEW Page 28
Papa John doesn't like Hot Tuna. The obvious question is whether Hot Tuna likes Papa John.
By David Koeff

GRAHAM PARKER & THE RUMOR Page 31
The shape of things to come?
By Michael Casey

SAY IT AIN'T SO JER Page 32
In which Monte discovers that Garcia isn't always everything he's cracked up to be.
By Monte Dym

GARCIA BAND REVIEW Page 33
Our resident jazz buff takes on a strange tribal music form. Irving can't quite figure out what it's all about.
By Irving Stone

FIVE NASTY THOUGHTS ON THE JERRY GARCIA BAND Page 33
Hate mail will be returned "addressee unknown." No letter bombs, please!
By Jerry Moore

THREE BYRDS FLY HIGH Page 34
Crosby, Clark, and McGuinn — almost like old times.
By Clark Peterson

CRAIG CHAQUICO Page 36
Close encounters on a skateboard — a talk with the youngest Starship member.
By Mark B. Halverson

DEPARTMENTS

EDITORIAL Page 2
The editor rambles on, once more hogging more than his fair share of space.
By Jerry Moore

ROSETTA STONED Page 2
Where do we find these people, you ask? They find us. One good letter makes a great week

FRAGMENTS Page 31
The usual odds and ends.
By Steve Krave

SOUND ADVICE Page 38
We're not quite Stereo Review, but we're getting closer
By Rob Bertrando and Gary Frankel

WANT PAGE Page 40
Our bi-monthly cavalcade of "Hey, I got . . . , willing to trade for . . ."

Cover: Robert Hunter with his son
Photo by Dave Patrick

Mr. Patrick is a longstanding member of the RELIX staff. His work has also appeared in such publications as CREEM, CRAWDADDY, CIRCUS and ROCK-N-ROLL NEWS.

KILLING TIME IN THE CRYSTAL CITY

a Hot Tuna November tour review

By Jerry Moore

Hot Tuna comes to New York almost as regularly as the sun rises, and I've seen them almost as regularly. For a long time I *thought* I hated them. Actually, the problem was that I was never able to figure out how to react to Tuna. They confused me. As a result I blew both hot and cold; I never knew what I thought. In print I have most often taken the safest course. I knocked their excesses. What emerged were a few articles so negative that I was afraid to sign my name to them. I now recant them all.

My problem with Tuna goes back a lot further than Tuna goes. It goes all the way back to 1966. Marty Balin had his own club, The Matrix. He set out with express intent to put together a band, and so he did, The Jefferson Airplane. The Dead grew more organically, falling together in Pizza parlors and such, and getting launched by the acid tests. The rest of the San Francisco music scene formed around these two bands. The Dead were essentially apolitical; the Airplane were almost as concerned with tearing down walls as playing music. The two bands represented two separate axes.

Maybe Richard Nixon would have been unable to see any difference between the Dead and the Plane, but I saw a yawning gap between the two. When, in the late sixties, I became

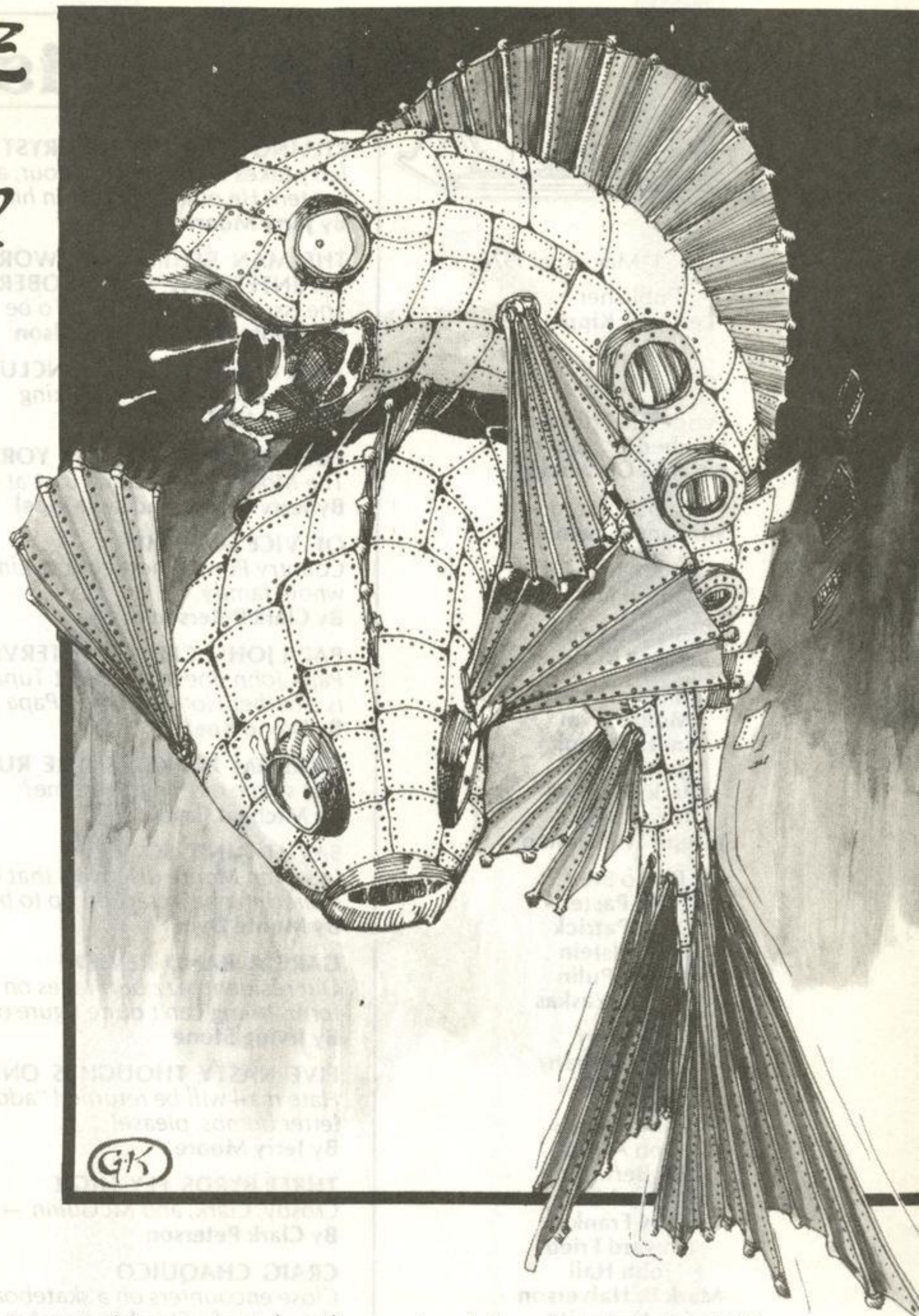
seriously interested in music, I found myself falling into the Dead camp. I never quite comprehended the other side. The Dead, for all their intensity, encouraged serenity. The Airplane had too many jagged edges to promote calm. They never really tried to.

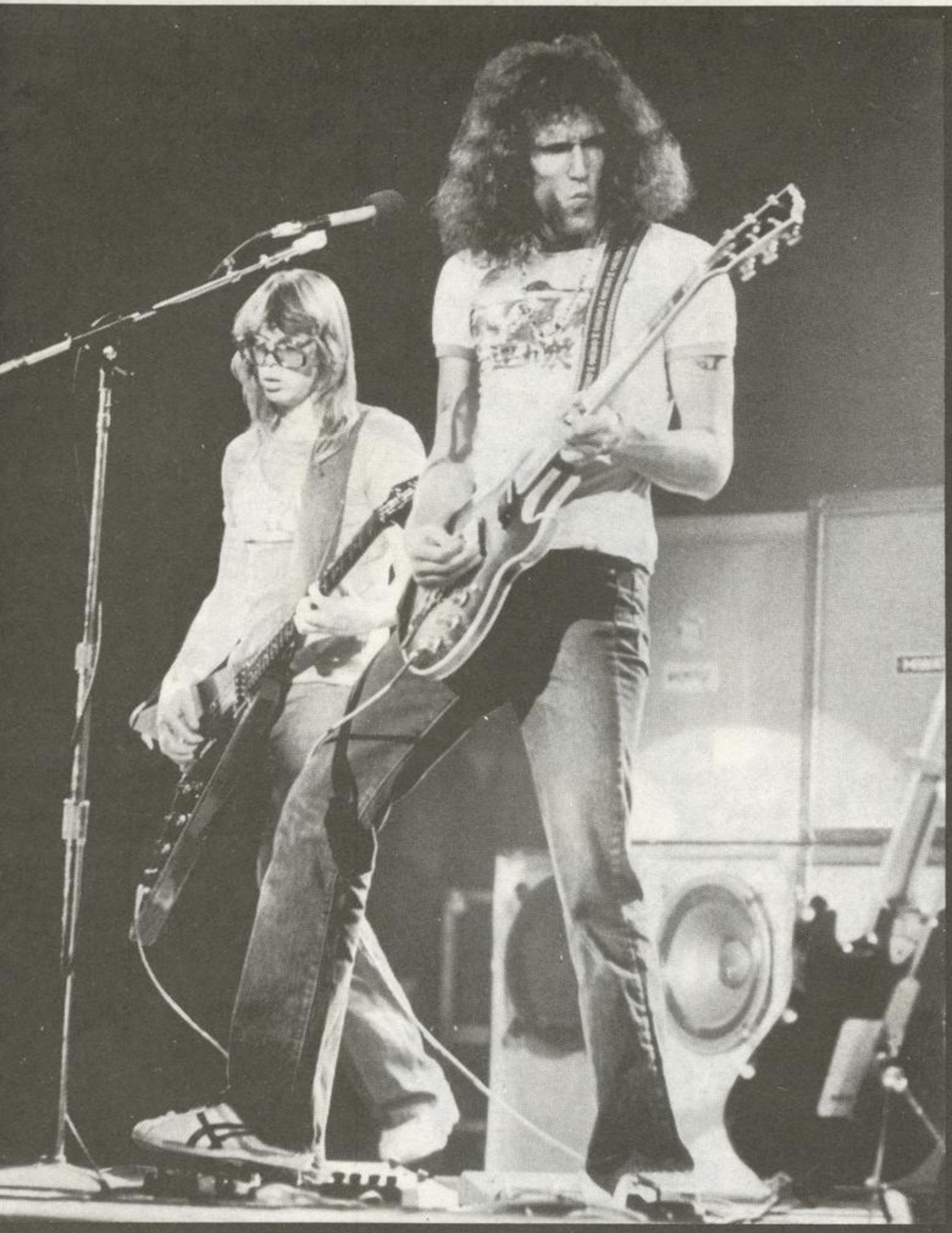
The Airplane, like the 60's, are gone. They are survived by the Starship and, of course, Hot Tuna. The Starship still carries the Airplane's political torch, but Hot Tuna carry on the Airplane's sound. That bone crushing, mind numbing combination of Jack Casady's bass and Jorma Kaukonen's lead is still as potent now as it was in 1967. Probably stronger, since the volume levels have crept up over the years.

Coming as I did from a Dead orientation, and not comprehending the Airplane, I couldn't have been expected to grasp Hot Tuna. As stated, I thought I hated them. Untrue. A while ago I began to wonder about something. If I disliked the band as

much as I thought I did, why did I keep going to see them? The answer has been staring at me for a couple of years now, and I'm finally willing to admit it. Excesses and all, I like Hot Tuna.

They are, after all, a classic band, a living legend. Look around for another band that plays uninterrupted three to six hour sets. I doubt you'll find one. I have walked out of Hot Tuna late shows to be greeted by daylight. If you find the right flow, Tuna can cut you free of the world for indefinite stretches of time. The very length of their sets encourages inattention and free floating. They provide time: time for going with the flow. You can wander out into the lobby to socialize at a Tuna concert without worrying whether the show will be over before you get back to your seat. You can wander freely, far gone in your own haze, surrounded by that pulsing sea of high volume music. The right space for a Tuna show is a fog from which you can emerge whenever





the band plays something you really happen to like. The Tuna game **must** be played by the rules. The rules are that you ought to be stoned (*really* stoned); you ought to be able to feel the music from your toes all the way up to your eyebrows; and that you ought to live and listen for the passing moment. Have a high time and let tomorrow take care of itself.

Tuna shows, like Dead concerts, are a sociological phenomenon. They draw the same people to show after show. Tuna are most popular right here in New York, which is, by no coincidence, where they play most often. A San Francisco band which has a cult based in Brooklyn: a curious little phenomenon.

Whatever the demographics behind this, Hot Tuna take advantage of their New York audience. They always seem to be here, just gone, or soon expected. Their shows do quite well too, either selling out or coming close to it, a

record they haven't matched in California.

November once again was Tuna time. They passed through the northeast like lightning, playing about two dozen shows ranging from November 9th in Albany to the Palladium on the 25th and 26th, getting no further away from the city than Philadelphia. Even for Tuna, a schedule like that comes perilously close to total market saturation.

I caught several shows, the best of which was at the Long Island Arena on November 11th. The late show at the Palladium on the 26th was probably as good or better, but I only heard the tail end of that one, so I can't really judge. True to form, I opted out of going to the late show at the Palladium on the 25th, which I'm told was the best night on the tour.

These shows were the first time I've seen Tuna in a year, and there've been a few changes since my last time. For the

first time on this coast since 1975, when they were saddled with Gregg Douglas (a rhythm guitarist who seemed to think it his destiny to play lead), Hot Tuna appeared as a quartet instead of a trio. Jorma was, as ever, in command of a host of guitars (most of which seemed to see use in the course of an evening) and an impressive string of foot pedals for effects. He seemed to use all those too. As a lead vocalist and announcer he still displays a regrettable tendency to mumble, but as a guitarist he is a past master, peerless in speed, style and volume. This year hasn't brought any dramatic change in Jorma's technique, nor are changes likely in any future I can foresee.

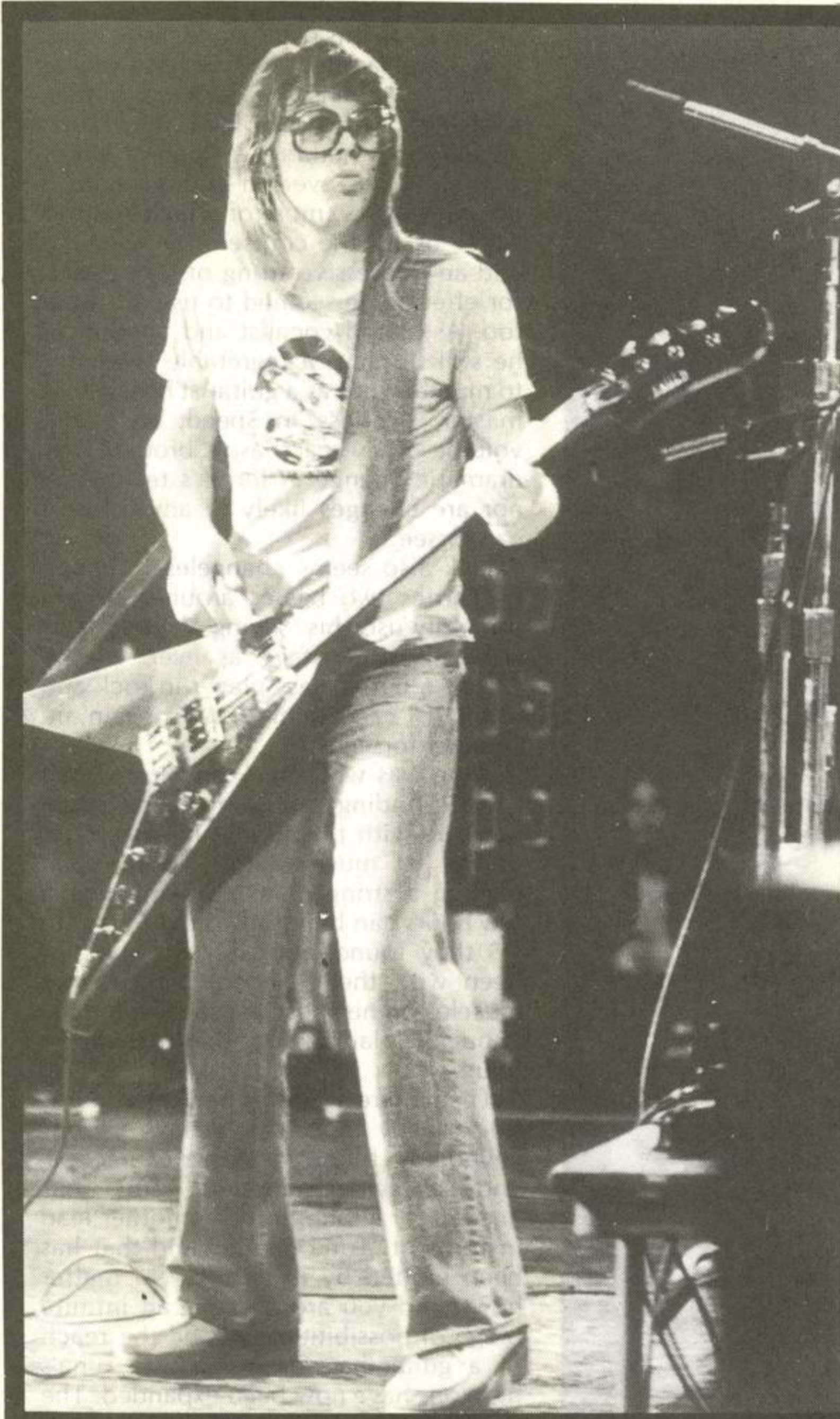
Jack also seems changeless. Though he carries two basses around, he still primarily uses his "Flying V," and is as tight lipped onstage as ever. Maybe there's a better bass player in rock and roll, but I can't think of one. Again, no changes foreseen.

Time was when Jack and Jorma had trouble finding a drummer who could keep up with them. Smashing away at drums is much harder work than playing a stringed instrument; even a few hours can be totally debilitating. In '75 they found Bob Steeler, who has been with them since. This guy has muscles on his muscles, and endurance enough to flail away at the traps for six hours.

Then there was the new man, Nick Buck. Baby faced Nick plays various keyboards, filling in wherever needed, and supplying something Tuna has needed for a long time — another lead instrument. Tuna is one band that has been limited by its lineup. No matter how good you are, there is an infinite range of possibilities beyond the reach of a guitar/bass/drums outfit. Tuna's horizons have now been expanded. The resulting sound is fuller and more free-ranging, with less of a tendency to plod along. The interplay between lead guitar and keyboards is at times ecstatic. Nick has also written, and Tuna are regularly playing, two lively instrumentals, "Snow Gorilla" and "Bright Eyes." Adopting a keyboard man is probably the best move Jack and Jorma have made in the last five years.

Where the shows weren't operating under a time limit, Jorma opened them by himself, on solo acoustic guitar, playing sets lasting between 20 and 45 minutes. These were followed after a short break by a full fledged electric Hot Tuna set, lasting at least two hours and often four or more. At some shows Jorma's solo set was dropped.

Through the miracle of amplification, Jorma can crank almost as much volume out of one acoustic guitar as his whole band can with all their electric instruments and gadgets. Still, his solo picking brought back to me a long forgotten thought: he really is a

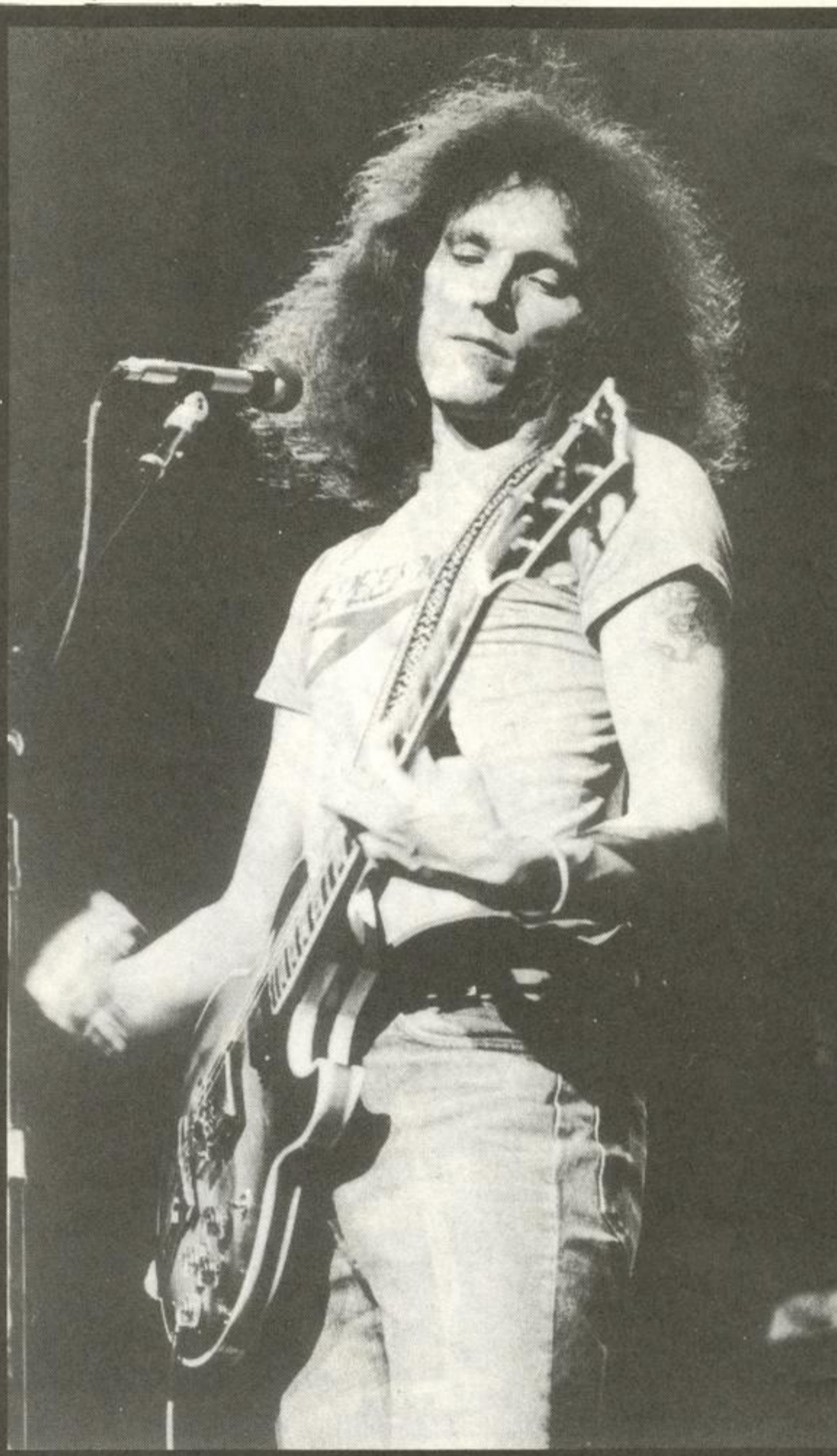


JACK CASADY

superlative craftsman on the guitar, capable of all sorts of complexities, subtleties, and added frills. His singing also sounds better when it isn't swept under by a roaring electric tide.

Jorma's acoustic repertoire consists almost entirely of the oldest Tuna staples: Reverend Gary Davis spirituals like "I am the light of this world" and "Death don't have no mercy;" country blues pieces such as "Hesitation Blues" and "How Long;" and special treats along the lines of "Embryonic Journey." The closing song and highlight of almost all his acoustic sets was the one new thing Jorma was doing alone: "Killing time in the crystal city." I admit to being fonder of acoustic Tuna than I am of the electrified variety, and the last mentioned tune I wouldn't mind listening to for hours.

Though partial to acoustic Tuna, I admit that the electric fish is really



JORMA KAUKONEN

where it's all at. An electric Tuna set is a total experience, bashing away uniformly at ears, body and brain cells. The volume gets so overpowering that you literally cannot hear yourself think. The solution to that problem is quite simple: give up thinking for a few hours. Melt away before the music.

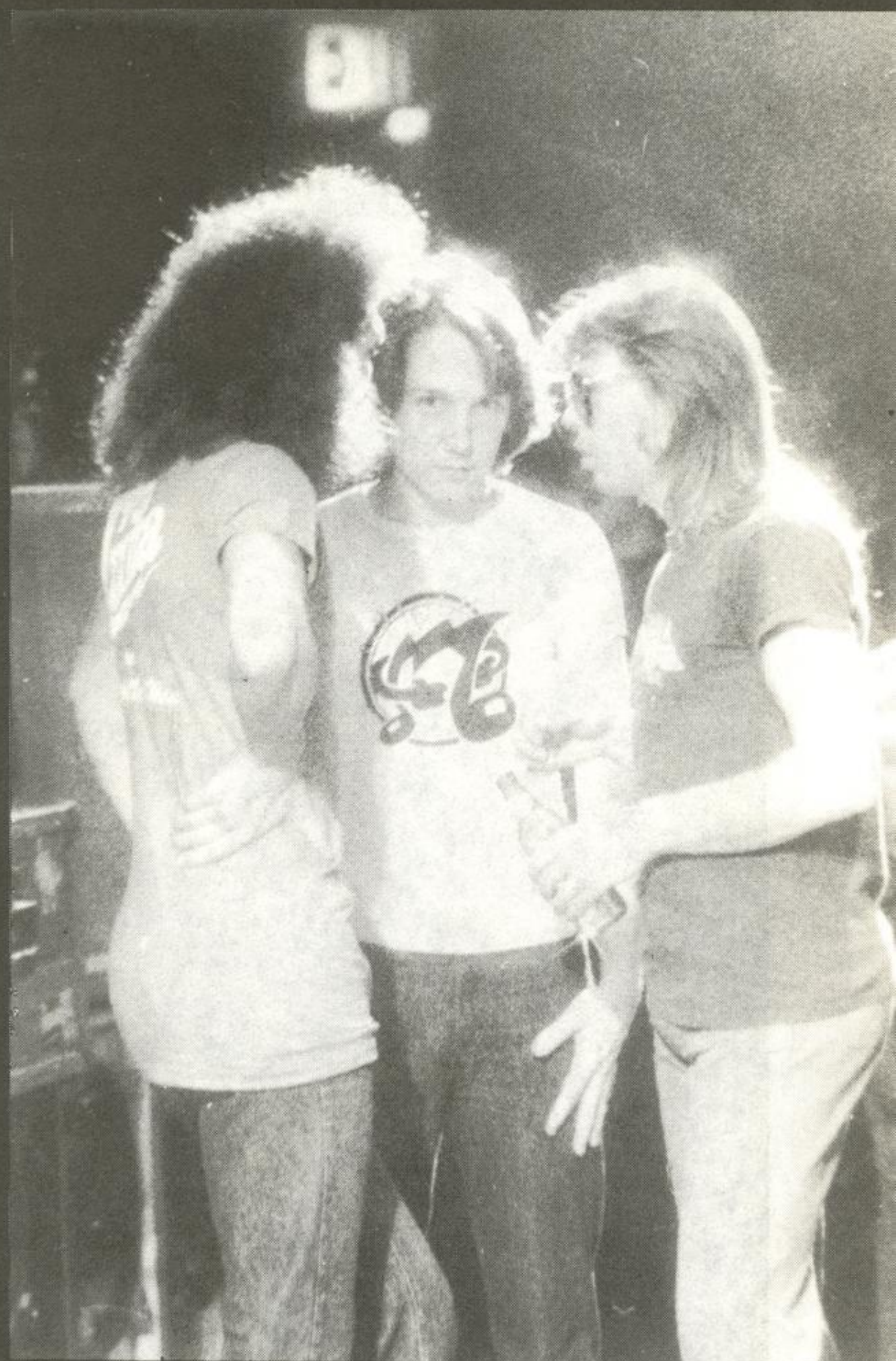
All the electric sets from the November tour have muddled themselves together inside my volume befuddled brain. I get my strongest flashes back on "Rock me baby" and "Ode to Billie Dean" from the Capitol, "Uncle Sam Blues" from the Long Island Arena, and (most powerfully) on "Feel So Good," which closed the final set at the Palladium in a half hour long exploration of space.

Time was when Jack Casady never sang anything . . . never even looked at a mike. For years an extra mike stand stood at the side of the stage for all

Tuna shows, a long standing joke, or just possibly a provision against the day Jack might feel the urge to sing. That day has arrived, and there goes a good joke . . .

On this tour Jack sang "The Party Song" at most shows. This ditty hasn't got many difficult lyrics or complex passages, but it's blessed with an extremely catchy hook. I find myself humming it at odd hours of the day and night. And Jack really **can** sing (I wasn't all that sure he could even talk).

There were two other unexpected bonuses on this tour: a pair of spare musicians. One was a gent named Al (whose last name I never did catch) who sang a couple of songs with Tuna at a couple of shows. The other extra was a friend of theirs from the coast, Buffalo Bob Roberts. He played sax with them on all encores from all four Palladium shows, and proved a most



BOB STEELER

photos: Les Kippel

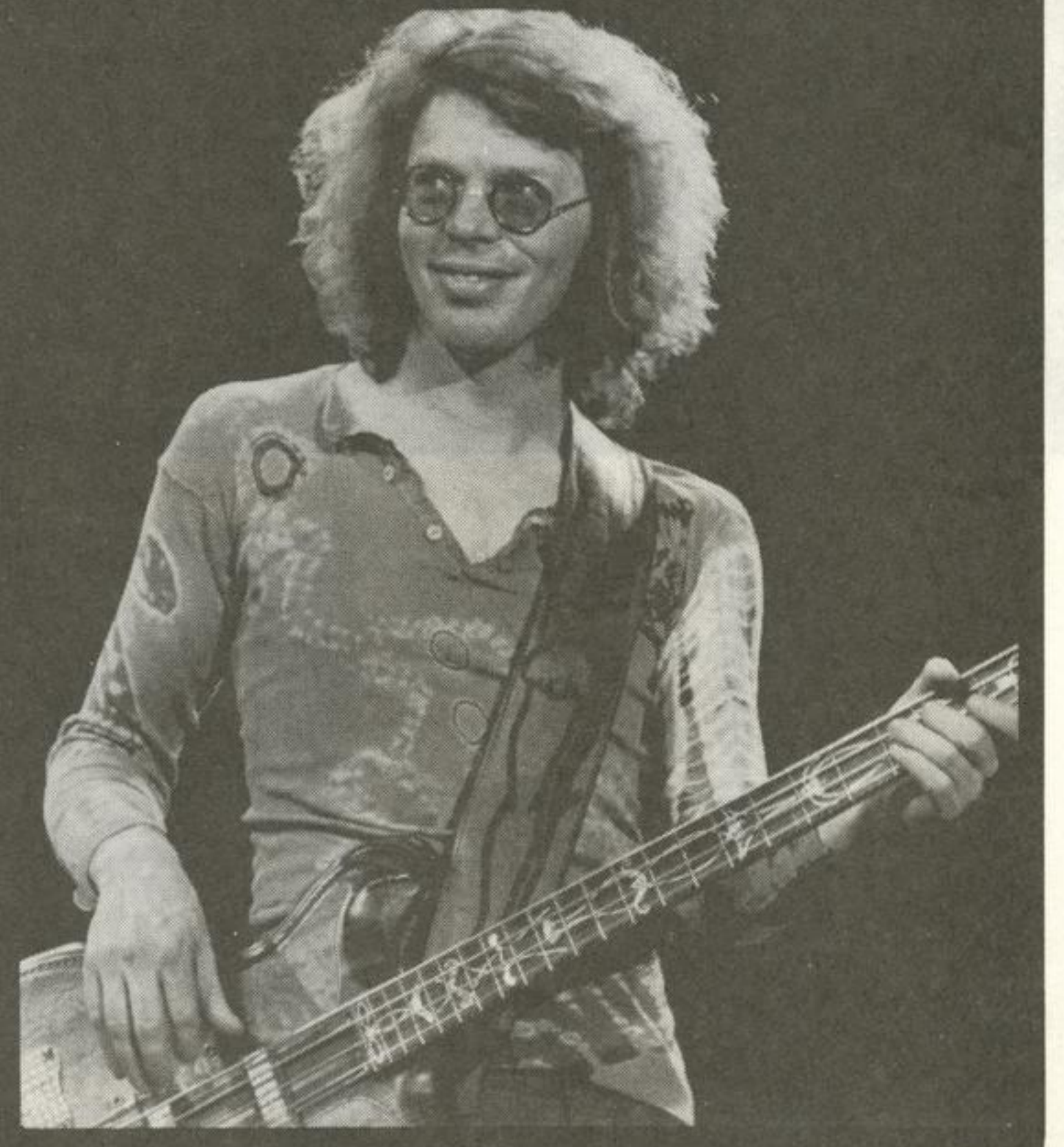
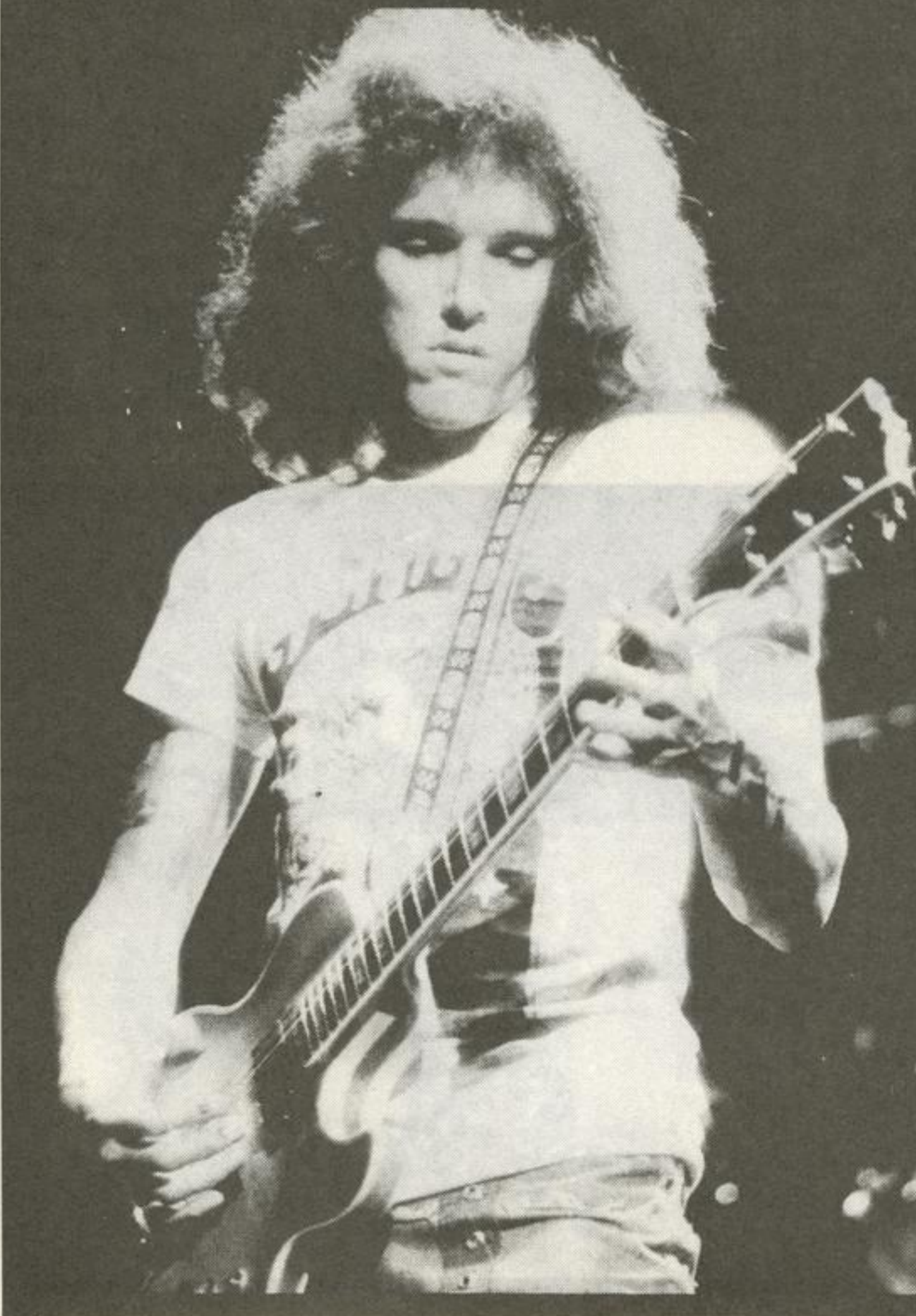
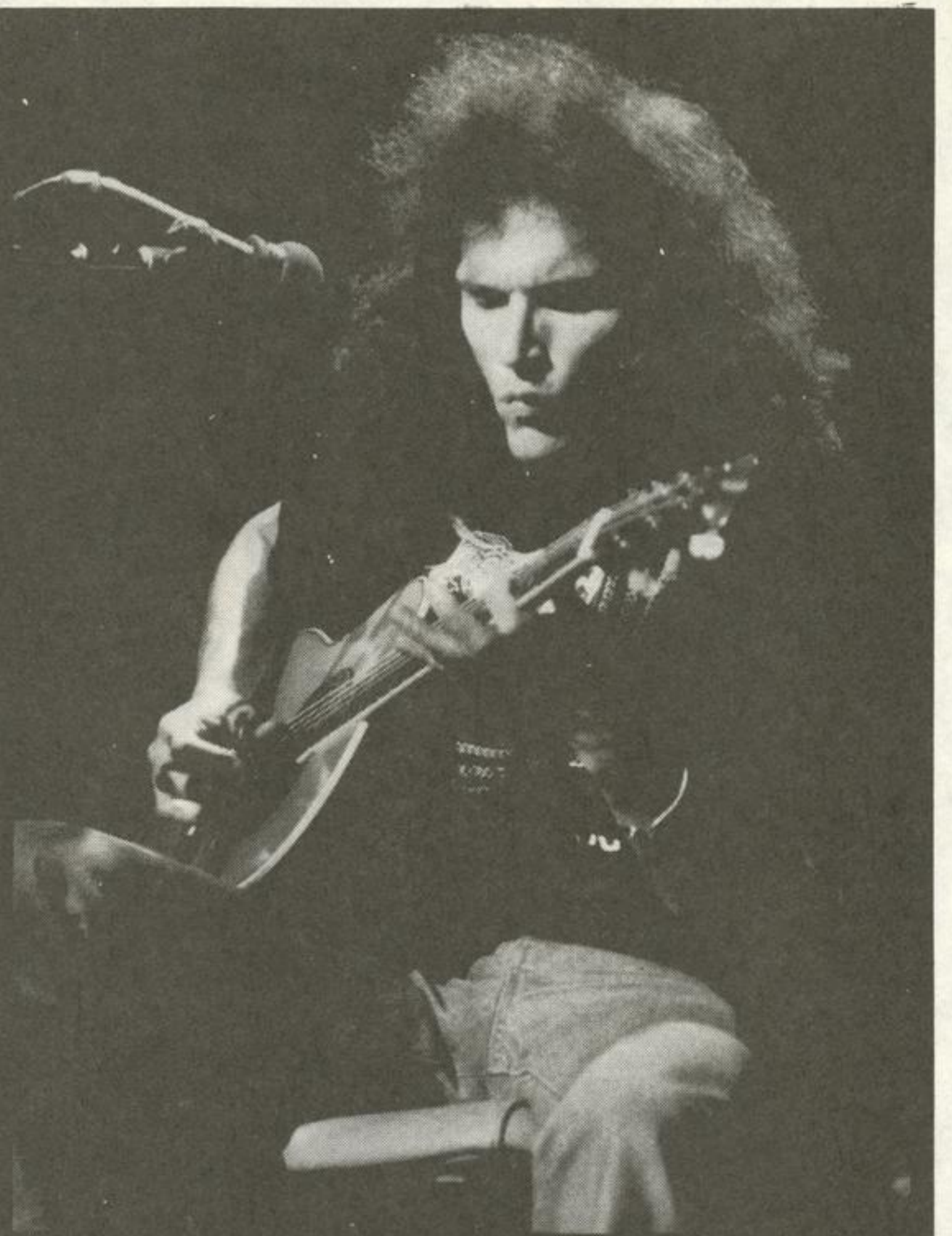
welcome surprise. The keyboards have added one new dimension to Tuna; the sax added quite another on top of that. For half an hour, on "Feel So Good," Tuna conveyed a richly textured hint of New Orleans. Jazz, no less.

Tuna have gone home again, and once more I ask myself what it's all about. Tuna are a physical drain, and surely are affecting my hearing. For days after any Tuna show, I pick up my phone on imaginary rings. I find myself slowly groping my way toward an answer. Like the Dead, as previously stated, Tuna are a sociological phenomenon. Everyone at their shows stoned out together, as the band plays intensely loud music to far beyond the point of exhaustion, for their extended circle of friends. Music for Godzilla to devour Tokyo by; music for Armageddon.

But then, who needs answers? ■



JORMA'S TOOLS — ALL SIX AXES



A RARE JACK SMILE

photo: Dave Patrick

photo: Amanda Vaskas



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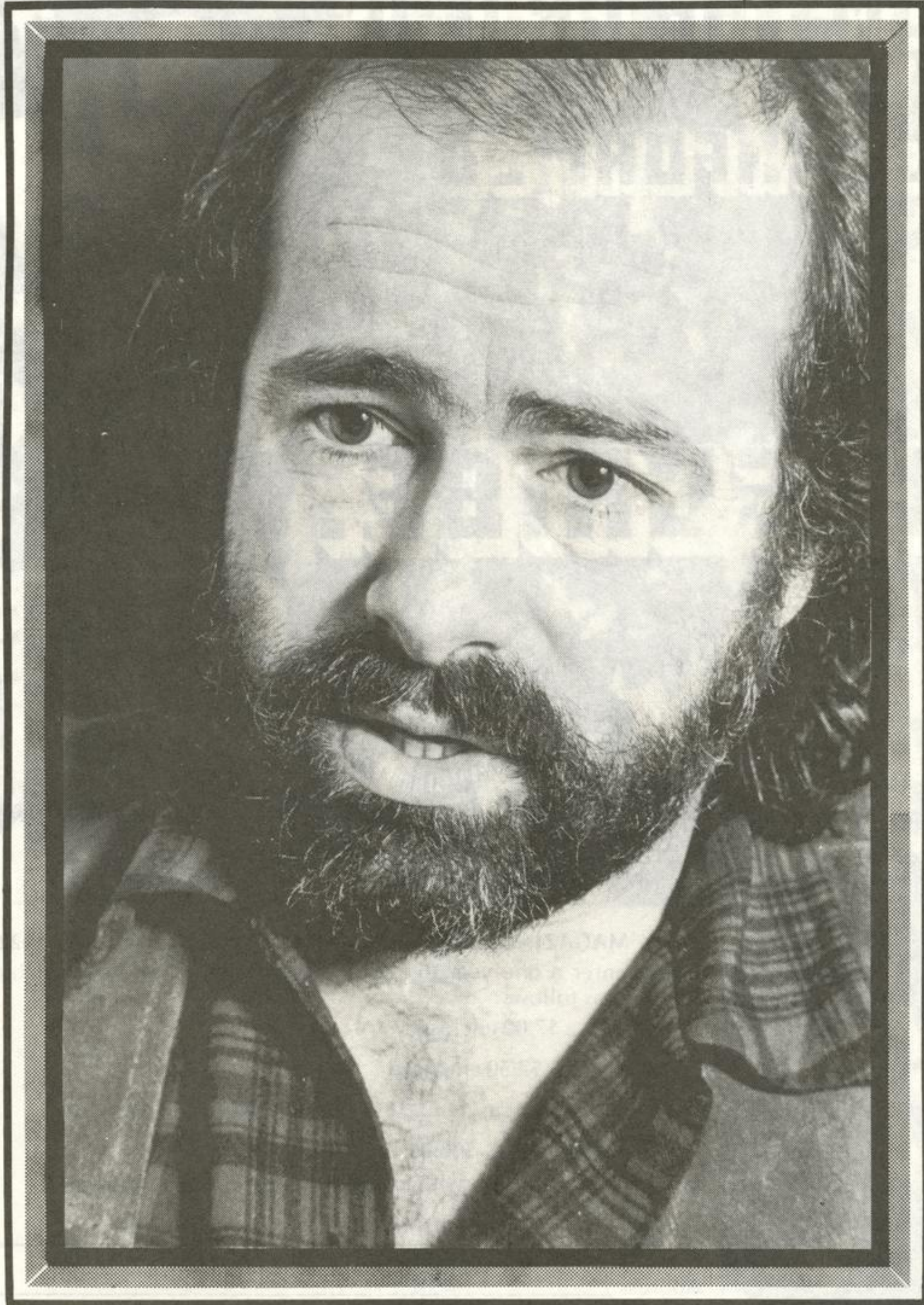
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THE MAN BEHIND THE WORDS

photo: Dave Patrick



an interview with Robert Hunter

By Monte Dym and Bob Alson

Bob Alson
Please get off your butt and call me as soon as possible

Les Kippel

It wasn't quite as difficult as calling a departed soul back from the grave.

By December 21st we had almost finalized arrangements for an interview with Hunter the following week. All other loose ends tied into place, we still came up short one connection: the right man to ask the questions.

Our unstrung west coast stringer, Bob (with freshly disconnected telephone), once again was numbered among the missing. Lost in the San Francisco rain.

We finally tracked him down by mailgram, and the interview fell into place. Monte flew west to play co-host. Dave Patrick was photographer for the day, asking the odd question himself.

Robert Hunter, of course, is lyricist of long standing to the Grateful Dead. More recently he has been a recording artist, with two albums under his belt, **Tales of the Great Rum Runners** and **Tiger Rose**. Lately he has become a performer in his own right, first with **Roadhog** and **Barry Melton's** band, and now with **Comfort**. He has in the past been shy of any publicity, so we feel honored and extremely grateful that he has chosen to unburden himself here.

Our interview will conclude in the next issue of Relix. Part one follows hereafter, but first we have a few words from Monte. **Jerry Moore**

Memory carries me back several years . . .

Speeding across Minnesota and the Dakotas, our car chases the setting sun into the west. Bob and I sit inside, locked into a discussion of the meaning of life and our purpose in it. In search of larger truths we find mostly contentment.

At the time our talk seemed significant enough to record, leaving hundreds of miles of road and hours of tape in its wake.

The threads which usually brought us back together were Robert Hunter's lyrics. Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead have been the visible communicators of what we've always agreed were among the finest writings ever set to music. If Hunter had been in the back seat of our car that day, his opinions would have weighed heavily, since both our lives had been so inspired by his writing. Who knows how much more he's written which has never reached the public?

Through the years Garcia and other members of the Dead have been interviewed multiple times. Books, stories and articles have been written about them; a full length motion picture has been completed; and this magazine is in its fourth year of existence. Despite it all, Robert Hunter, who plays as key a role in the Dead family as any band

member, remains almost an unknown factor.

The **Comfort-Hunter Band** might be just another of many local Bay area bands, were Robert Hunter not its leader. Instant significance: this is no casual bar band to keep Hunter amused in his spare time. This band is something he feels worth the effort of promoting himself. Doing this, he casts his low profile image to the winds. With an album and a tour in the works, gone are the days of anonymity. There is no doubt that Hunter believes in himself as a performer as well as the band, and we wish them the best. This movement from the background to center stage is what makes our interview possible.

Bob and I today find ourselves reunited in an upstairs room at the Grateful Dead office in San Rafael. The date is December 28, 1977. The room is bare and the day gloomy, but none of that seems to matter, for we are talking to Robert Hunter.

The tapes of our discussion that day on the road were long gone and replaced by Dead tapes. They never were listened to. Playback would have been torture. Now only a table separated us from Hunter. Through the years we had stored enough questions in our memories to talk for days. However, we had to remember one thing above all else: to let Hunter do the talking.

We now take you to our discussion.
Monte Dym

Relix: You have been known as a recluse. In fact, you once wrote a piece for Crawdaddy explaining that you didn't give interviews. What is compelling you at this moment to come out front and be more of a public figure than you have been?

Hunter: Having an eight piece band to support, and a road crew, engineers, management and everything. If you're going to do a number like this you have to do it. There's no holding back. I have to get out, get my face seen, and make up answers to questions. That's the sad but true tested method.

Relix: Where did the inspiration come from for this band; what made you decide you wanted to do it?

Hunter: Rodney Albin called and said "I've got a band that's just right for you," and I said that I didn't want to be in any more bands. It's more hassle than it's worth. But he said "At least come see them." So I went and saw them a couple of times and I liked them. I thought if I was going to join a band this would be the kind of band I would join. But still I didn't want to. Just being in a band has a tendency to drive me over the edge, basically. Snooky Flowers, the guitarist that used to play with Janis, was mumbling and complaining about it the other day, and he said "Yea, you could see why I'm not in a band anymore boy, I gave it up."

Melton feels the same way. He throws a band together every once in a while. Especially heading a band: everybody's problems become *your* problems. I don't have time to write; I don't have time to do *anything* but be in a band when I'm in one. So I'm hoping to be able to do this band for part of the year and then take a couple of months off in order to write. Just this Christmas vacation everybody's split and gone home and everything, so the band is in pieces right now and I don't have any pressing problems from day to day. Just having the week off, I found myself yesterday finally bored enough to write. But it's usually too exciting, you don't get any writing done. It's two different levels of energy. Writing is a subtle energy. Basically you can sit around, bored enough till you finally get to the typewriter. I do need a certain amount of time to do that. The kind of dynamic energy it takes to perform, it could take days and days of being away from, before I feel like writing at all. So what I've been doing instead of writing has been practicing the trumpet and bagpipes and what, and for some reason the energy goes into these little hobbies.

Ever since I've been a kid I wanted to be Harry James and there's still some of that in me. I still feel that I'll be a professional trumpet player someday. I got the bagpipes almost nailed down in about six years. Not bad. It's supposed to take seven years to make a piper. I got some instruction from Captain McClellan the year before last, who's the principal of the Army School of Piping at Edinburgh Castle. He told me I'd be a piper in another two years. One year and a half is done, so I guess another six months and I'll be legitimately one.

Relix: What's the connection that brought you to Wales?

Hunter: Wales? I've only been to Wales once and I was only passing through. I was on my way to Ireland. I decided to do some good in the world; I decided to go to Belfast and solve their problem. When I got to Dublin I was renting a car and the girl said "For Lord's sake, what would *anyone* want to be going to **Belfast** for?" I said "I'm an American writer" and she said "Oh alright . . ." I paid an extra ten pounds to take the car over the border because they tend to blow them up. I got there and I realized that Hunter did not have the solution to *this* problem at all. What a mess! Oh the Irish-God! I have an Irish manager now from Dublin and I'm beginning to understand the Irish makeup a little better than I did. If I had understood it that well before, I could have saved myself the trip.

Relix: A stranger in a strange land . . .

Hunter: It was funny, you know, the first time out of Watts that I'd ever been in an occupied area. Just walking down the street you look up and there's a

machine gun aimed at your head. As a matter of course they just parade the streets with the guns. You just look up and there's one pointed at you and it moves on by.

Relix: Since you didn't stop in Wales, where were you located over there? England?

Hunter: Yes. I lived over on Queen's Gate for a while, about a block from the Victoria and Albert Museum. That was a real nice time, cause I'd get up every morning and go over to the V&A for about an hour or two. It's not a museum of painting; it's a museum of everything the British have collected from their imperialistic ventures over the last couple hundred years. Strativarius under glass . . . anything you want to go and dig on is there. Then I lived over on Havenmoor Road across from the

Olympia Exposition Palace for a while. I used to spend almost half my time over there, but I can't afford that anymore, either in time or cash. I spent every cent I was earning in doing that, rather than getting myself some property or anything that would constitute a reasonable investment.

Relix: How much influence did that period of time have on what you have written? Did you find yourself writing more there or less?

Hunter: About the same. I wrote pretty continually while I was there; I wrote "Scarlet Begonias" there. It's a funny thing. Over in Bristol the original name of that was "Bristol Girls" and I heard a rumor back then that I stayed overnight at somebody's house over there, which I *didn't* do, which somehow relates to that song. It's a mysterious trip. I can't

explain it: it almost seems as though somehow or another I did, in some other body or something like that. I can't deny the rumor I heard back . . . it seems strangely true . . . and yet **I didn't**. I may have a double. There was a guy who drove a cab in New York. He used to bring ladies home saying he was me, and it was easy for him to do because nobody knew what I looked like.

Relix: Do you plan on taking Comfort out of the Bay area?

Hunter: Yes. There's some talk of going out with Jerry to the East coast, which might be a good way to handle it, because he can draw. From the gigs we did last week with Jerry's band, it looked to me like our combination draw is pretty large. People are interested in seeing us together, who may or may not come to see us individually, and Jerry also said that this is the first band that ever opened for him that the audience accepted. Nobody was yelling for Garcia while I played. That's one of the things that could have turned out to be a bummer. It didn't happen, so that was groovy.

Relix: I think the audience would have liked you to stay longer too. They were really into it.

Hunter: Well, the last night I was really aware of leaving them wanting a little more. Finally, I was going to do a few more tunes, and all of a sudden I looked around and everything was just **broiling**. The band was hot, the audience was with it, and I thought "This is the time to say goodnight." I do prefer doing several sets a night . . . packing it all into one set takes some designing. We did different sets all three nights, though.

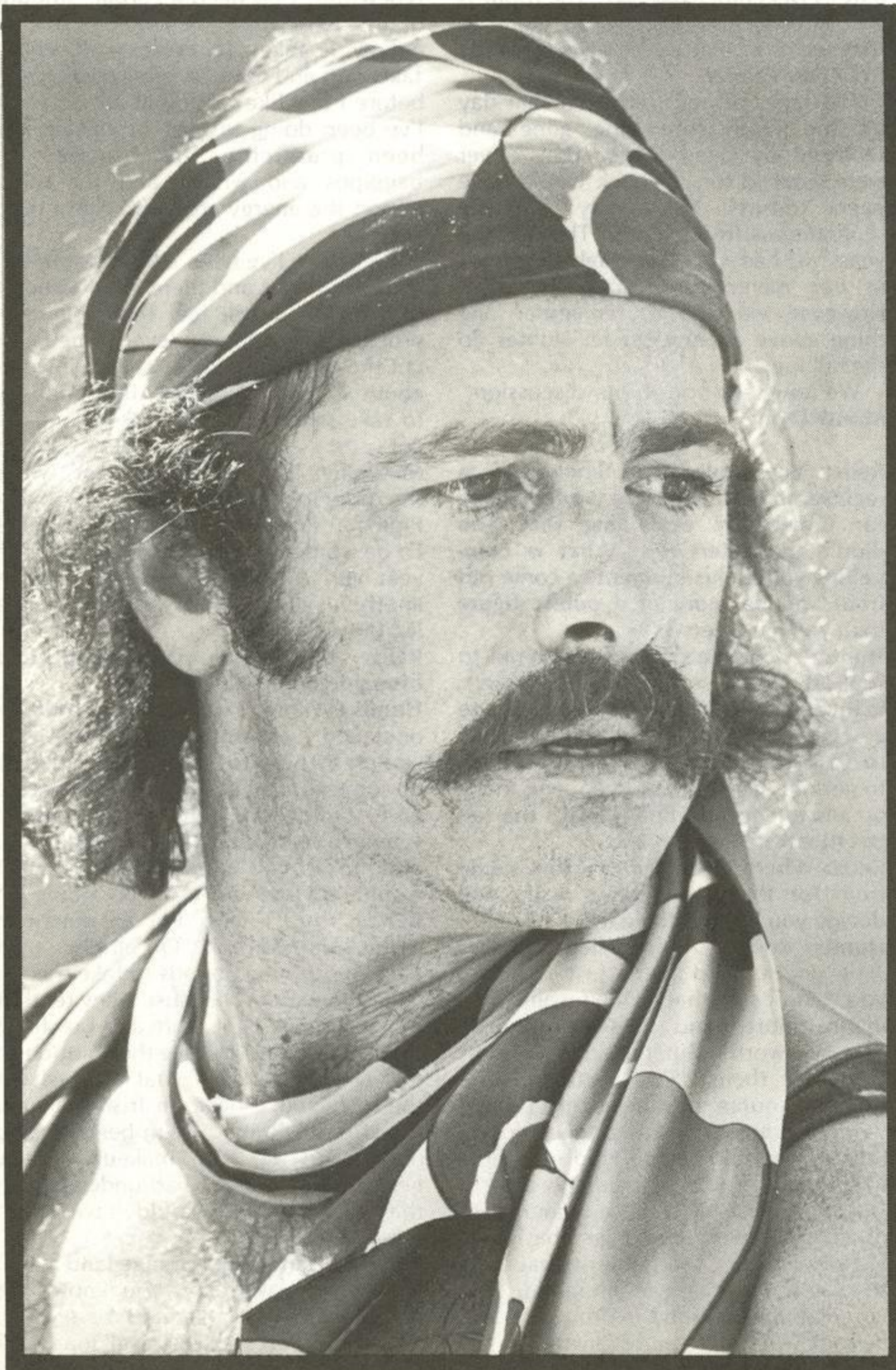
The first night, at Berkeley, Jerry's band was just not up to it. Subsequently I think the show got better and better. The next night they came on with the artillery: boy they were *incredible!* The first night was kind of strange. I was surprised to wait an hour and a half between sets. I thought "Gee, I could've been playing, I should've brought my pipes or something." The subsequent two nights they tromped us, they were so much better than we were.

Relix: You plan on being east in February. Where do you think you'll play in the New York area? The Bottom Line maybe?

Hunter: Could be, but if we go with Jerry's group I suppose we'll play theaters. If we go by ourselves then we'll play smaller places.

Relix: You'd blow out the Bottom Line.

Hunter: That's one of those fantasy places that everybody wants to play — every young man with a guitar under his arm. Like the Troubador for me last month. Every time I've gone down to L.A. . . . *boy!* The Troubador; maybe they don't pay: it doesn't make any difference, it's the *Troubador*. I remembered while I was onstage that this was something I **really** wanted to



photos: Dave Patrick

do and I just enjoyed it thoroughly. Doug liked it. He said the place was ours when we wanted it, so we did a good number.

Relix: Have you ever been down to The Golden Bear in Huntington? That's a really nice place.

Hunter: Oh, yea. I played there once. I gave the most preposterous show I've ever done . . . got an *amazing* review for it . . . I came in dead drunk is what I did, which is inexcusable. I don't do that any more. I got up and danced on the tables, and got a little bluegrass group together, impromptu like that, and led the audience out onto the street and marched around. *What a show!* You had to see me dancing on the tables . . . it was insane. I'd like to play The Golden Bear again someday. The only problem is that they make everybody sit down there. But that's reasonable (I suppose).

Relix: Would you like to be headlining your next tour?

Hunter: You bet I want to headline! The Garcia band is the first non-headline trip I've done. But, all things considered, I'll go for that with Garcia.

Relix: You haven't played in large places, you've basically played in clubs.

Hunter: Yea, but that Hooker's Ball gave me the taste for large places, though. I *liked* that — I *liked* having a big audience and watching everybody move back and forth to the music. I got bitten there; I want to play more big gigs.

Relix: I'd love to see you at Winterland. It would have been really hip to have you and Comfort out there before the Dead.

Hunter: My intuition was to not do it for New Year's. I was offered it, and my intuition said **no**. It didn't feel right to me; I don't know why not.

Relix: It could be that people would be too indifferent to you.

Hunter: Very possibly that. When it's right it will be easily right, like with the Garcia band. I wasn't about to do it with anybody at that point but then, all of a sudden, there was no reason not to anymore. When it's right it is right. Before that I had resistances, and I tend to follow my instincts that way. If it doesn't feel right, then I don't really want to do it, and I don't.

Relix: It's a rough gig to open for Garcia. Pierce Arrow lasted about three days in the east before they decided they wanted their music heard. They didn't want garbage thrown at them. The Persuasions are great, but they had the same problem with Garcia. It's unfortunate, but a lot of people are into what they're into, and don't want to hear anything else. I don't think you'll run into that problem because of your association with the Dead, and the respect you'll have in front of you. First bands do take effect under the right circumstances. I remember Commander Cody being the first band for

the New Riders and kickin' ass performance after performance. They turned on the crowds and made the Riders play better, because the Riders would have gone into the ground if they hadn't.

Hunter: Well, I think the Garcia band and the Comfort band might definitely reinforce one another. There's something happening there.

Relix: I think Jerry could use it too, on the road.

Hunter: Well, they were just playing as good as they could play the last two nights, and so it may be that. Of course, we were trying extra hard too. I think the level of performance for both of us is up a whole bunch of notches interacting like that. It creates a real nice environment. People want to see this combination.

Relix: What kind of music does Comfort play — would you categorize it at all?

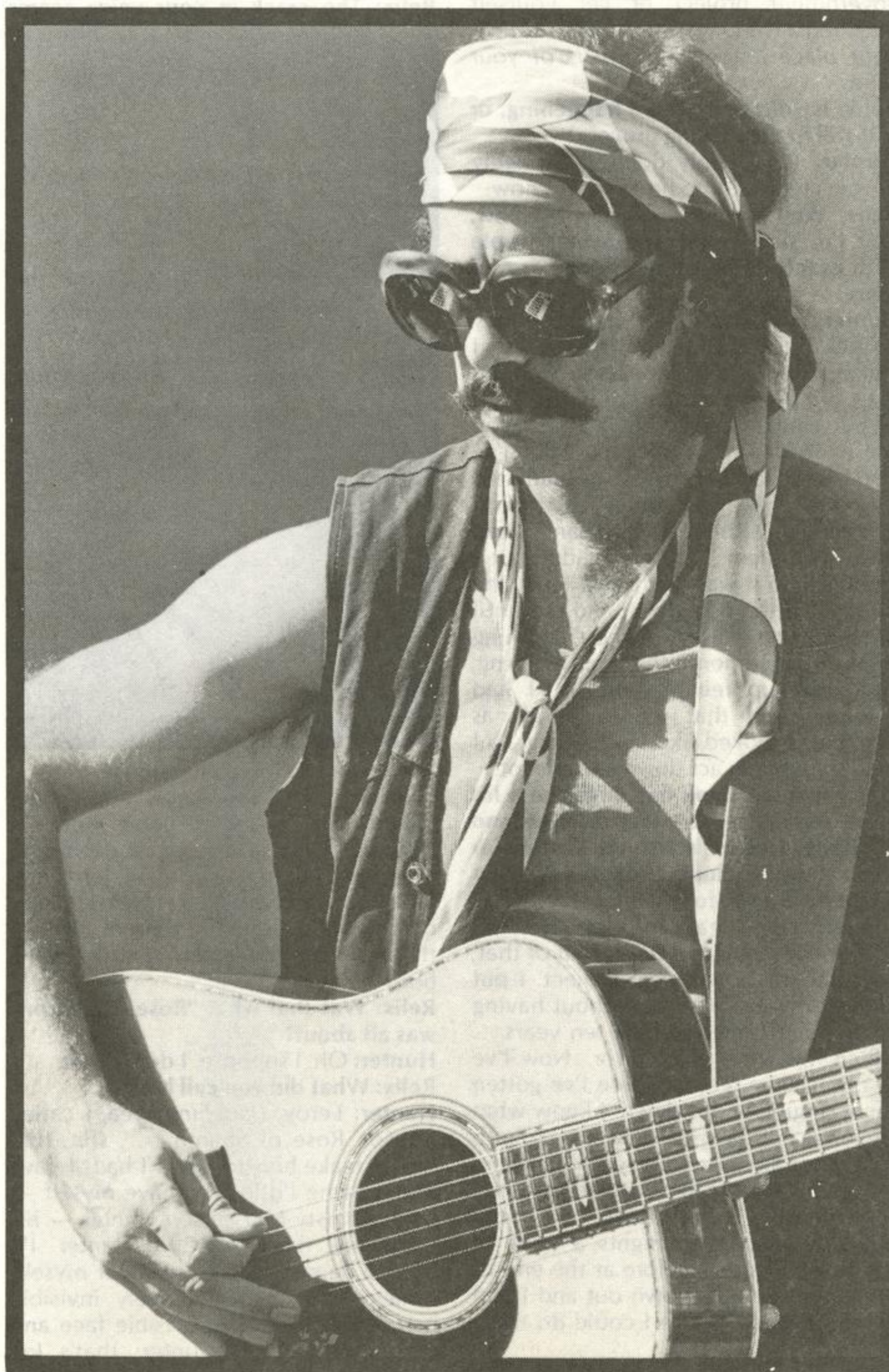
Hunter: Hunter music plus some of their own.

Relix: They've got a jazz feel; R&B it seemed; and there's got to be some country.

Hunter: A jazz feel sometimes. I think they have a lot of influences I don't know about. I think certain members of the band are influenced by Genesis, Yes, and bands that I'm not familiar with at all. I don't know their work. Sometimes I can't tell.

Relix: But there's a certain clique there, and that's what got you with them.

Hunter: I enjoyed them. They were nice people and they gave a lot of energy on stage, which is what I'm into. I want everybody rockin' and rollin'. I want people moving. I like that kinetic flash:



I think it's an important part of rock and roll to move around jumpin', for which reason I think we'll be good in larger places. When I get in big places, like at Hooker's Ball, I tend to cartoon my actions. I'll throw a Peter Townsend windmill in there once in a while and if I could lose another 10 or 15 pounds I could even take a good leap — but in wintertime I always slob out.

Relix: Do you feel that the next three or four months will tell the story of this band? By the spring will you either be going places or packin' it in?

Hunter: Yea. I think we'll be going places. I'm not lining myself up to fail. I'm taking a pretty heavy gamble on it.

Relix: I've never understood why all you guys shouldn't have a lot more money than you do. No subsidies.

Hunter: Subsidies would be great. Something like that should happen . . . government project or get yourself declared a National Monument . . . take your place among the fossils of your times.

Relix: Is your new record happening, or is it still in the dealing process?

Hunter: It's roughly done, it's roughly mixed, and it's off to be sold right now.

Relix: Well, you're onstage a lot now, and I'm sure you're surprising people with exactly how animated you are up there.

Hunter: When I get on stage, somebody pushes the button. It surprises me too. I can go into a gig like death warmed over, but put me on stage and I come to life. It amazes me to think that I can use it; it blows out my pipes. But I've also found out that I'm not as animated as I was the year before last with Roadhog or with the Melton Band when I was with them. . . where I didn't put a cap on it so it was as though I put the throttle all the way down and ran until the thing was out of oil and everything else. I'd come home the next morning, and wake up feeling horrible. I had actually used that much energy, as much as it looked like I was using, so I tried to tone my act down a whole lot.

Relix: I would think this might be a lot more serious to you than Melton and Roadhog. This looks like the first major step towards doing something that might be around for a while.

Hunter: Oh, I had to learn how to perform and how to sing and all of that, and that was a two year project. I put both of my records out without having sung or performed in over ten years . . . which was a *bit* of an error. Now I've just finished a record where I've gotten some singing chops down. I know what my range is at last, and I'm not trying to be a tenor anymore or even a baritone. I'm going for the bass range, which I can handle comfortably. I could probably sing seven nights a week in my range, whereas before at the end of three nights I was blown out and I had to wait a week before I could do three more.

It's just finding the right range and getting relaxed enough. "Last Flash of Rock and Roll" I only started doing in the last week or two. I kept it out of my repertoire because I knew it destroyed my voice. I waited till my voice got strong enough and I got enough control before adding it back to my repertoire.

Relix: It sounded pretty good. It really did. In fact, I love that album. Played it till I wore the needle out: I thought Tiger Rose was excellent! There's one song on it, the nice slow one . . . Love, love, love brings you up. There's a spot in it where your voice obviously cracked. It could so easily have been fixed in the studio, but when it dies a bit of you goes too.

Hunter: I'll admit to not having listened to that record in a couple of years and not remembering a whole lot about it. It's painful for me to listen to it.

Relix: The crack in your voice seems



like it was left there on purpose.

Hunter: Well, you know what happened. My son was being born in England. I got all my vocals down and split, and left the record in Jerry and Matthews and Mickey's hands. I got over to England just in time to get into the delivery room as my son was being born.

Relix: Was that what "Rose of Sharon" was all about?

Hunter: Oh, I suppose. I don't know.

Relix: What did you call him?

Hunter: Leroy. (*laughing*) Yea, I called my son Rose of Sharon . . . shit, that would make him tough if I had! I gave him a name I'd love to have myself — Leroy Christy McPherson Hunter — his name like that — L.C.M. Hunter. I'd love to be named Leroy Hunter myself. I have one of those lovely invisible names as well as an invisible face and reputation. Robert Hunter: that's Joe

Smith. Leroy would be a good name for a musician.

I have thought that I'd like to take a week with the **Tiger Rose** basics — go back in there and cut the vocals *right* on it. Maybe I should consider that water under the bridge, maybe not, but I love the songs on it. I think it's one of the best batches of songs I've ever gotten together, and I don't think I treated them right. I howled and spitted and cracked and everything.

Relix: Personally, I would suggest working them out with Comfort and cutting a live album.

Hunter: What would be wrong with going back and taking those basics and just throwing a good vocal on them?

Relix: You want to get it released?

Hunter: It's still in release. United Artists is still putting it out.

Relix: Would they change their pressings? Remix it?

Hunter: I think they would. If my new album clicks in any way then I suppose they would move my catalogue. If it doesn't, it would be beside the point. But, if it does, I would like to get decent vocals on those things.

Relix: Is there going to be more harmony on this album?

Hunter: Oh yea, I also made the mistake of not putting good background harmonies on that thing. I want more singers in Comfort. I'd like two more singers. Well, actually, I'd like a lot more girls. Why not have 'em, doggone it — they sure *do* make a number. They give a nice fat background to get you out of the desert.

Relix: They can bring you up too. I looked over at the one girl in the show Wednesday night. There was one point where you missed your thing for a split, and she brought you right back up. It was very effective. I was impressed with that. I liked the girl you had in Roadhog, Shelley Rolston. I thought she was really talented.

Hunter: She's working in Alaska right now. I had thought of getting her and also I'd like to have Marleen: she has just split up with her band. But I don't know. You have to set the ceiling on it somewhere. Here I want dancers, and I want a chorus, and I want horns, and I want this and I want that. I'm going to have to be able to afford them first.

Relix: You know, one thing I wanted to ask about from the show in Berkeley was "Alligator Moon." It was incredible . . . the changes. I had never seen that song performed before. I knew nothing about it, and you said: "We're going to have an 18 minute suite come in." The way it swept from one form to another was really tight.

Hunter: We've been performing it since the Troubadour, so we've been doing it fairly steadily for a couple of months now. It has really matured. Friday night at the Keystone in Palo Alto I finally felt that the song was no longer my master:

that I could play with it at last and relax. I could get to where I could even change the words a little bit, and now I'm working on my melodic line in it. It's a rigid structure. It lasts exactly so long, and bar for bar it's this way, but I feel a freedom within that structure.

Relix: Is that going to be the title track of the album?

Hunter: Hm Hm. It's going to be a whole side.

Relix: It should be. Will "Jesse James" also be on the album?

Hunter: Hm Hm. "Jesse James" "Promontory Rider," which we got a good take of, and a thing I wrote called "Drunkard's Carol."

*Another cup for heaven's sake
Before our waste in slumber lake
If one of us should fail to wake
His drunken soul may Jesus take*

[singing]

It's done in the style of plain chant.

Relix: Does God look down on the boys in the bar room . . .

Hunter: Yea. I like acapella stuff that major. I think it's a strong number for me. I would like, at some point, to put out a whole acapella album. Who needs musicians . . . [laughing]

This seems like a good place to conclude phase one of our Hunter interview. This part has dealt primarily with Hunter as he is today, as a performer and band member. Since they are never really mentioned in the in-



terview, this also seems to be the place to number the members of Comfort. They are:

Robert Hunter on rhythm guitar and vocals

Kevin Morgenstern on lead guitar and vocals

Richard McNees on keyboards

Pat Laurenzo on drums

Larry Klein on bass and baritone guitars

Rodney Albin on banjo, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, and vocals


Marleen Molle on vocals and

percussion

and *Kathleen McCarthy Klein* on vocals and percussion.

And that's Comfort. Look for them in the east in February or March. The rest of this interview deals mainly with Hunter in relation to the Grateful Dead, as a lyricist, and in historical perspective. God knows it's worth a two month wait. We've been waiting years. Look for it in our next issue. We promise you the Dead, Cassidy, lyrical insights, punk rock, acid, and more than a slight touch of magic. Till then. ■

Robert Hunter & Comfort



New Bay Area Wave

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Robert Hunter

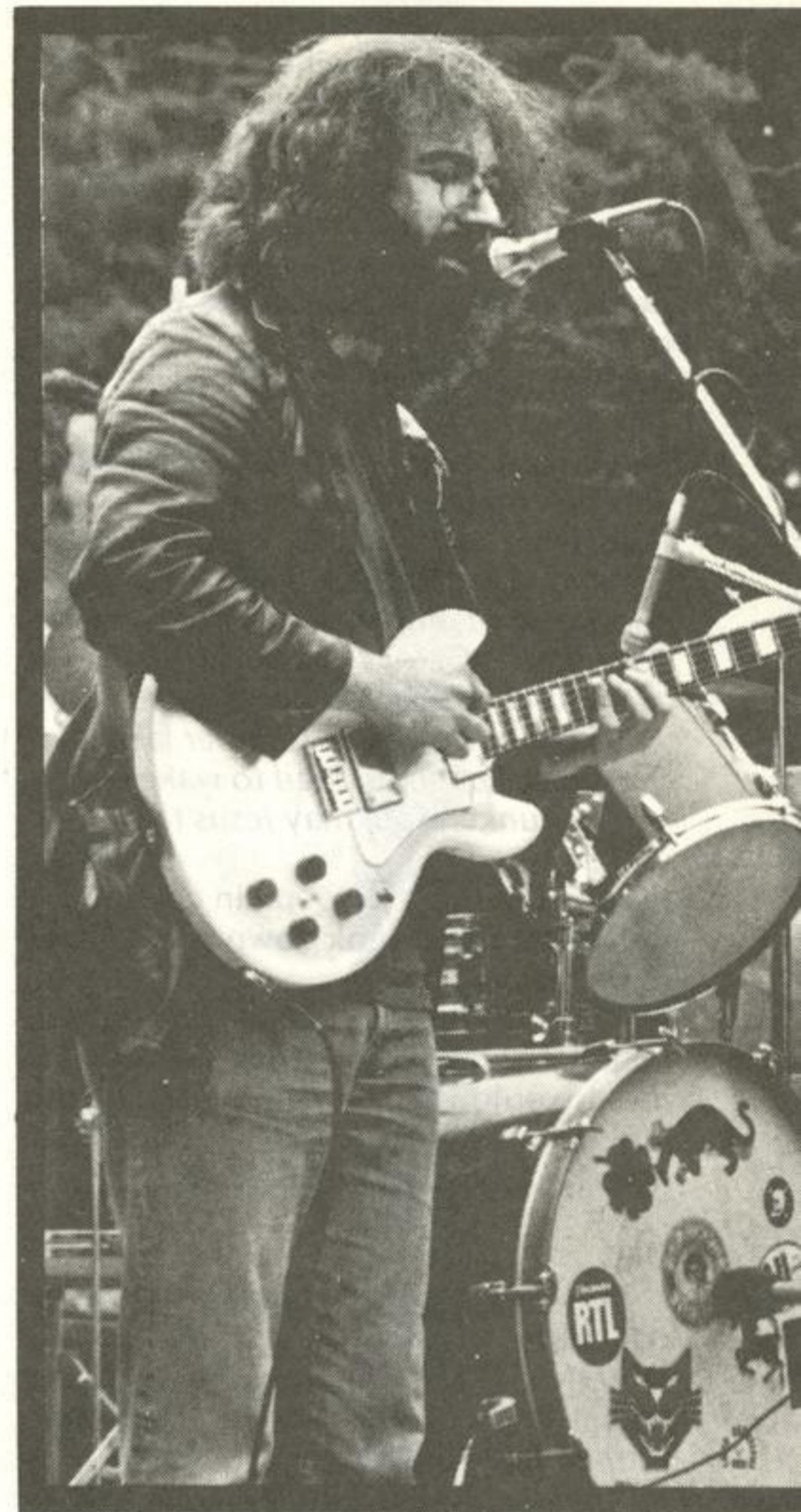
Rodney Albin · Larry Klein

Kevin Morgenstern · Kathleen Klein

Pat Laurenzano · Marleen Mollé · Richard McNees

TRUE CONFESSIONS CONCLUDED

By John Hall



GOLDEN GATE PARK — 1975

The following is the balance of an interview conducted with Jerry Garcia and Danny Rifkin in Hartford last may. Part one was in our last issue.

Once again, the participants are identified as follows:

JH — John Hall, the interviewer

JG — Jerry Garcia

DR — Danny Rifkin

BW — Bob Weir

In the concluding segment, Bob Weir finally shows up, and the age old question of how "What's become of the baby" wound up the way it did is finally answered. Enjoy.

JH: You were using a lot of pedals at the Richmond gig, and I was wondering what you're running through now.

JG: I've avoided using any kind of outboard gadgets on the live feed, because they change the response of the guitar so much. Also, they change depending on how much output you're feeding 'em. They're not very stable, so they've been too random for me to use and depend on. During the course of the last two years I came up with the idea of wiring out of the guitar after the pickups and tone controls, but before the volume pot. So what come out of the guitar is actually pure, full-on voltage that's generated by picking the string regardless of output volume. Then I go down and pick these things up. It's a stereo cord, but instead of being stereo, two out, it's stereo, one out, one in. It goes out, down to the

pedals, picks up the circle of effects, which I can click in or out, and comes back into the guitar. Because of the box in front, I can terminate the cord, so essentially it's just the guitar, normal. But they come back in before the volume pot, so I have a completely stable sound on the effects. I can control the output that you hear in the room, based on the volume pot, so I can use those things with dynamics. In other words, I can get the same sound real quiet or real loud, and it doesn't change the behavior of those things.

JH: What is the behavior? What are you looking for?

JG: They're all different. I use 'em very specifically. I have an octave divider which produces an octave below the fundamental, whatever note you're playing, very stable. Then I have a thing that's an envelope generator, or an envelope filter. In other words, how hard you pick a note causes it to go "whaa" or "whaap," or the same backwards. It's a real common device, but what it does is change the onset quality of any note you're playing. I use it on "Estimated Prophet." Then, I have some conventional shit. I have a thing which amounts to a fuzz-tone, one of those MXR distortion boxes. But I've stabilized all these things, they've got DC power supplies instead of batteries, and also, they're hard-wired through, so you don't pick up additional capacitance in the by-pass, you're not really by-passing, you're picking up

inactive circuits, and changing the capacitance of the whole line. So, I've had all that shit straightened out. They're all hard-wired on the by-pass, so when I stop 'em, they're out. Nothing there at all.

JH: Nothing residual from the switches.

JG: Exactly. When that capacitance is working against you, it's as though the values of the pots have changed. If your guitar is very bright at the top, then as you turn down it gradually gets duller. The capacitance has changed, and so the resistance, and so the touch is different. It's very weird. I've had all that straightened out because I'm very picky about it. I like the guitar to feel the same all the time.

JH: That's a Travis Bean guitar?

JG: Yeah. I have a phaser. I hardly ever use it, but I have it. Also a wah-wah pedal, and that's it. I'm using the old Twin Reverb top which I've been using for six or seven years at least, and a McIntosh power supply.

JH: What about strings?

JG: It's almost the standard "slinky" set, which are not the really light ones.

JH: How about Bobby's strings?

JG: He changes, but I think he mainly uses Gibson Sonomatic. They're a little bit heavier than what I play.

DR: I saw him using Vinci.

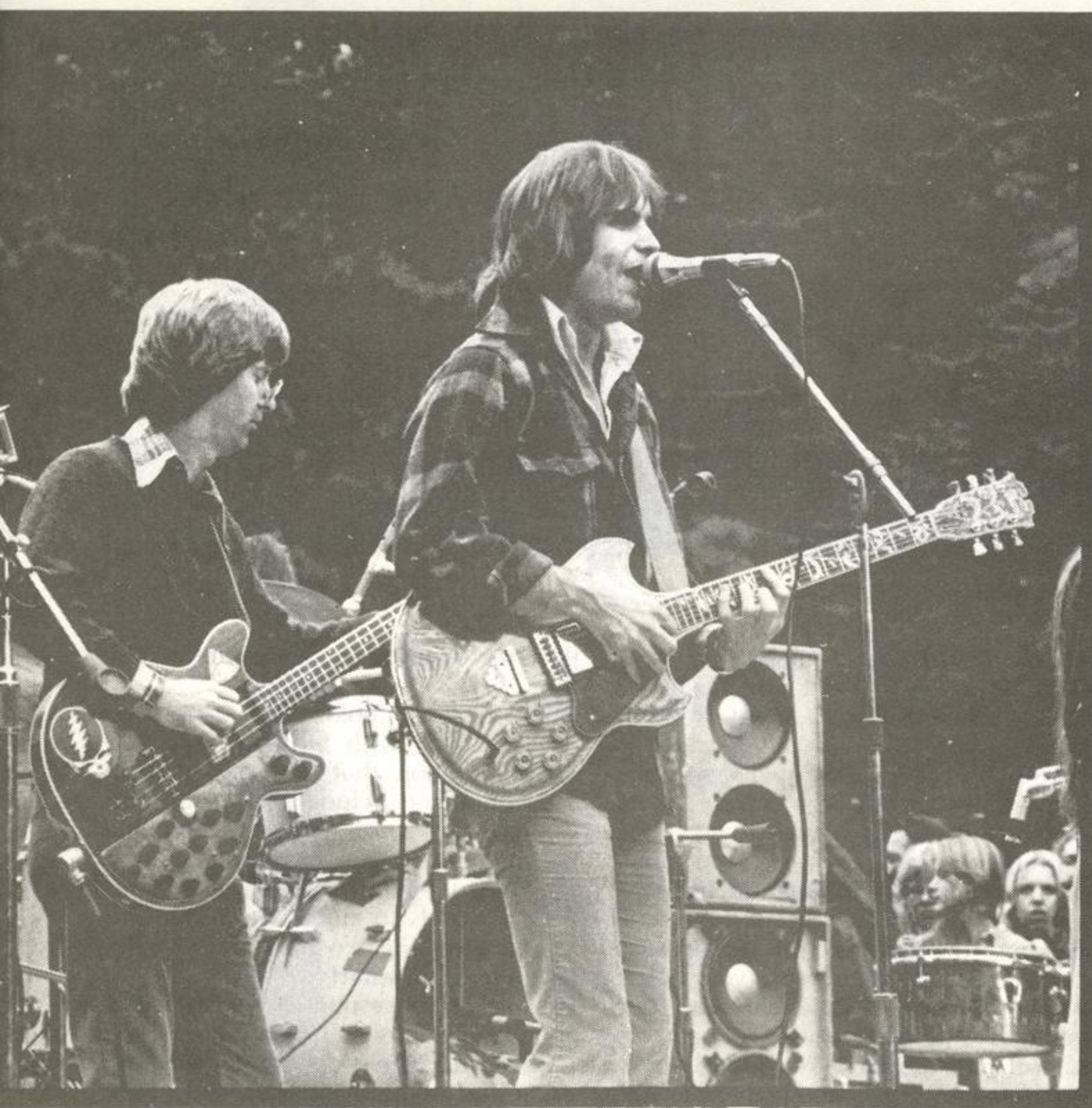


photo: Craig Trexler

JG: That's the same ones I use. He gets custom gauges, we both do. Mine are stiff for the normal rock and roll guitar player, but his are a little stiffer. I've got a high action, and I like the thing of being able to play really clean.

JH: I've been wondering what Bobby does to get that bright sound.

JG: His guitar right now, the Ibanez, is an interesting piece. They build those guitars for him, and the blonde one has a whole different philosophy in terms of the tone controls. It's got active circuits in it, a little like Phil's bass. Rather than passive treble cut things (which is what normal guitar pots are) he's got real active circuits, boost/cut potential. They're actually like three equalizers, one low range, one mid range, and one high range, but in reality they're all within the guitar range. That's why his new guitar has an incredible extended brilliant top. It sounds good for that clanky shit he likes. About twice a year, a squadron of Japanese guys comes over to Weir's house. They stay there a week, he raves at 'em, has big drawings, you know. He loves it. He says "lotta laughs, them little nips." He's funny with them. He's just crazed.

JH: I noticed about Workingman's Dead and American Beauty, that they

appealed to the most people who usually don't get off on the band.

JG: They fit right in. That's the *exoteric*. And there's the *esoteric*: *Aoxomoxoa*, that's the *esoteric*.

JH: Somebody into electronics had speakers halfway to the ceiling in a little apartment, in '69, when *Aoxomoxoa* came out. We got loaded and listened to the side with "What's become of the baby?" I'm tellin' ya, it was a wiggly experience. "Cosmic Charlie" was a relief.

JG: If you wanna make "What's become of the baby?" work, I'll tell ya what ya do. *You get a tank of Nitrous Oxide*. All of a sudden it works, you know. It's very specific, especially the old mix. When we were doing our mixing on that we had a tank. I swear to god, when we were mixing it in the studio we were all there with hoses. All kinds of weird shit was happening, it was totally mad, total lunacy. It was one of those things where I had a certain concept in my head, but I had no idea how to communicate it, how to do it technically, or how to approach it. So I could only approximate it with the inexactitude of language. What I hoped to do, and I could do now but you couldn't have done then, would require voltage control amplifiers and filter followers

and pitch followers. I wanted to contain the whole band just playing music inside the voice. It was a weird idea. I know how I could do it now, but it was impossible then. Technology was not available. You would use the voice to trigger and gate and modulate and pitch curve and everything. What you would hear wouldn't be voice print vocal chords. What you heard would be some kind of **Grateful Dead** randomness replacing the voice but containing the same modulation.

DR: I dig it. It's like a guy opening his mouth and the **Grateful Dead** coming out.

JG: Yea, exactly, but words, articulation. That's where it's at, and it makes a whole lot more sense in that space, too. It'll blow your mind, in fact. In spite of how totally fucking weird and inaccessible it is, there's something about it where every single word in it has total relevance, and somehow communicates very clearly into that *brannranroing*, that ringy nitrous oxide space.

JH: I have a tape fragment that somebody gave me, the tag end of a conversation between you and Hugh Hefner from *Playboy After Dark*, and it's good. Hefner is cogent.

JG: Pretty wooden, pretty wooden guy. That was one of our better psychedelic assassinations. There we were in Hollywood, at CBS, NBC, or wherever, the big studio where they shot that show. It's a sound stage, with millions of union guys, and then there's that **Playboy** apartment set, and all these people who are extras from central casting, who are the partygoers, the nice looking people. The whole thing is set up like a party in someone's apartment.

JH: The Dead at an apartment party!

JG: Right. So, there we are, and we all have our set-up, and everything like that. The whole thing took a long time, and it got weirder and weirder, until there were technicians staring up into the lights, and guys walking around the set, saying "I don't feel too good."

DR: I miss all the great ones.

JG: It was really crazy. It was really fuckin' weird, but it turned into an authentic party, finally. It actually made this transformation.

JH: I brought a Zap comic to ask you about, but I left it in the car I hitched up in. There's some Rick Griffin stuff I wanted to know about.

JG: Since the Zap stuff he's become a total Christian. He's a great artist, and a really fine guy.

JH: Is the Christian era Griffin represented by the Wake of the Flood cover?

JG: That's a good example. That's one of his post-Christian things. And also the cover he did for the reissue that's coming out on Warner Brothers, the one called **What A Long Strange Trip It's Been**. It's his newest. It's him now,

but it somehow incorporates all his stuff. Beautiful, beautiful cover. His work is really gorgeous. He also put out a big book called **A Man From Utopia**. Big format magazine, really nicely printed, all black and white. And his drawings, there's one that has a warlike mandala of the western world, with armored Mickey Mouses . . .

DR: Aaaaaannnnhhhhh!

JG: Mickey Mouse demons, you know, factories spewing out pollution . . .

DR: Anhanaaaaaahhhhhh perfect!

JG: Yeah, it's a combination of Krishna and America. It's a beautiful book.

(Enter Weir)

JH: Hi Bob, my name's John Hall

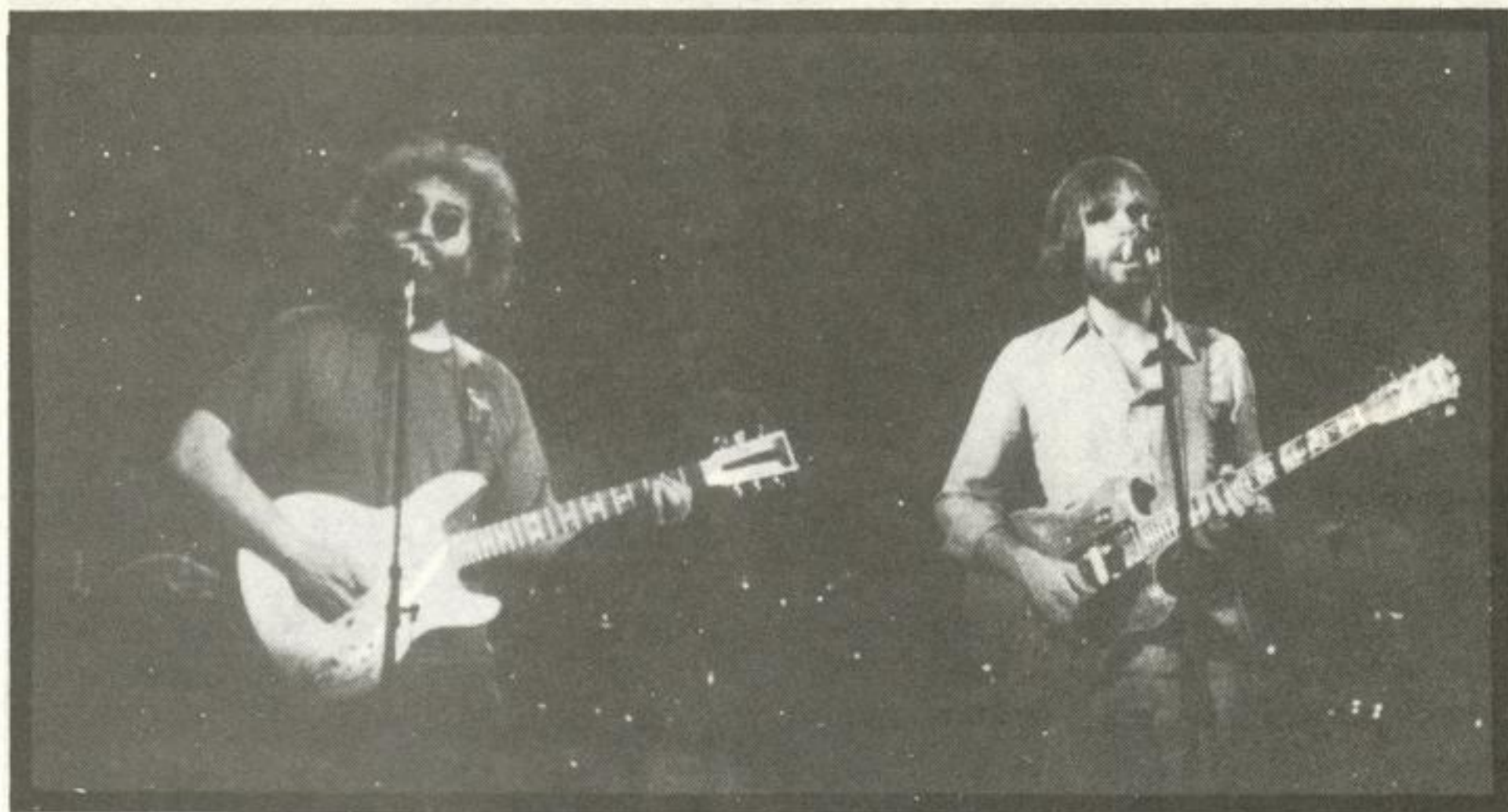
BW: Hiya. (sitting on the sofa next to Garcia) Got myself a new pair of shoes.

JH: Hey Bobby, before I pass out, let me ask you about your guitar. What have you got in it and for what purpose? How do you get that really bright, hard sound?

BW: Right now I have a guitar that I made in conjunction with Jeff Hassleburger, who's sort of the honcho for Elger corporation. Elger imports Ibanez. We cooked up a guitar that has a combination of different types of pickups on it, two different kinds of single coil pickup, and one standard double coil "humbucking" pickup cause there's only one way to make a double coil pickup. You can use 'em in various combinations. You can use any single one of 'em or any combination of all three of 'em. And the middle pickup, a single coil unit, also slides up and down on a rail. The rail is height adjustable, so you can adjust the height of the thing at either end of the throw.

JG: It's a good idea. *

BW: It makes a big difference. It makes an even bigger difference when I use it conjunct with the back pickup, the



PALLADIUM — 1977

photo: Bob Minkin

double coil one. If I adjust it so it's a little bit lower in front and higher in back, for instance, it's a blend situation between the two pickups. Because if the single coil is higher up it's got more voltage (it's a fairly high voltage single coil pickup to begin with), and if it's putting out more voltage then some sort of capacitance situation happens between the single and double coil pickups (the double coil pickup also being high voltage), and you get a whole bunch of subtle but real tone changes and colorations. You get big phase nulls and phase lumps in a progressively higher and higher register, as you get more and more out of the single coil pickup. So I can get some really bizzare sounds out of it. I really like it for that. Also, it's got some active circuitry, and that runs off a battery. There's about 800 hours life in the battery, so it doesn't really bug me.

JG: It's a pretty snazzy set up in all.

JH: Are you using foot hardware with it too?

BW: I've been looking for some. I've been working with Jeff on an analog delay situation that also has a cone filter phranger included. He made one of those, and it sounds awful good, but he wouldn't give me the prototype.

JG: Right, the fucker.

BW: It sounds so much better than the MXR or anything like that.

JH: In terms of what?

JG: Frequency response. See, the MXR analog delay I use in my line is neat, but it breaks up. The wider the delay is, the worse the frequency response because of the bucket brigade nature of the analog delay. The one that they're going to come out with, the Ibanez one, has better frequency response for sure. It also has a little more control over functions, and a closer short-delay. So you get that doubled guitar sound. That kind of stuff is a lot easier to get.

BW: And also, it's quieter. The one you didn't play, the one he brought the night you went directly back to the studio, was three times as good as the other Ibanez one.

JH: Well, Bob, you sound brighter and brighter. My complaint over the last two nights is that you weren't coming through enough relative to Jerry.

DR: Healy's sabotaging you.

JG: Where were you sitting?

JH: At Richmond and Baltimore, I was in the middle in the front.

BW: Really? 'Cause, particularly in Richmond, I remember cranking out a couple of chords that came back from the back wall so hard it hurt my ears.

JH: I was sitting in the front. Maybe it went over my head.

BW: It might have been because I'm playing fairly bright right now, real bright as a matter of fact, and that stuff's very directional. It might be that it was beamed directly at the back wall, because Healy's been runnin' me fairly hot.

JH: I'm glad I didn't have to go to the Capitol Center to see you guys again.



ROOSEVELT STADIUM — 1972

photo: Chuck Pulin



JG: It's a horrible place.

BW: Are you from Washington?

JH: Yeah.

BW: We'll be back at the **Capitol Center**. Any money says we'll be back there.

JG: The thing is that there aren't very many places to play in Washington D.C. Places like **Constitution Hall**. That's charming. The scene backstage there is really a suck trip. The Daughters of the American Revolution own that. Washington is very thin for good places to play.

JH: You played at American University on a rainy day, about '71 . . .

JG: That was the one with the cigarettes on the nipples.

JH: Who was that woman on stage left?

JG: She was some stripper.

JH: She was statuesque at a mile away.

BW: Kreutzman was schemin' on 'er. "Play a slow number." "What?" "Play a slow number so I can dance." "You're gonna dance?" "I'm gonna take my clothes off and dance."

JH: Kreutzman was gonna take his clothers off?

JG: No, no. This chick was.

BW: "You can't do that, they'll bust you." "That's what I want." She wanted to get busted so they'd have her picture in the newspaper.

JH: I thought she was a regular part of your revue at the time. I hadn't seen the act in over a year, and I said "Whoaa, what is this?"

JG: Yea, she comes on right after the trained seals.

BW: Right before the guy who breaks bricks with his nose.

JH: Right after your yellow dog joke.

DR: Okay, you got 15 minutes to be in the lobby.

JH: Well, thanks.

JG: Sure. You comin' to the show tonight?

JH: No, I gotta be in Washington early tomorrow. Gotta hitch back to Duckburg.

JG: (Chuckling and heading for the door) Duckburg . . . Duckburg, right on.

BW: Duckburg? I don't get that.

JG: (Coming back) That's where Donald Duck used to live. Still does.

JH: Santa Barbara is the closest we have to a real city like Duckburg. No bugs, Disneyland sidewalks and lawns.

JG: On the outskirts is where Uncle Scrooge had his money bin.

JH: And where all the mailmen were dogs.

JG: Duckburg is a happening community.

JH: Thanks, and good luck. See ya.

JG: Come around any old time. Let's see, ya ever read the **People's Almanac**?

BW: What's that?

JG: It's a great big book full of bullshit about everything. It's by these guys who are compilers of data. It includes all kinds of things: anectodes about presidents, famous murders, all kinds of shit. In one section of it they have a tremendously straight biography of Scrooge McDuck, in three 'or four

paragraphs. It's just as though they were talking about H.L. Hunt or one of those guys . . .

JH: John D. Rockefeller

JG: Right, it's wonderful (laughter). "Conservative estimates place his fortune at approximately fifty scarillion, 750 fantasticatrillion dollars."

JH: Impossibillion.

BW: If you look at some of those old Scrooge McDuck comics, it's really, really surreal.

JG: Carl Bangs, the guy that used to draw the Scrooge McDuck comics, is one of the finest narrative cartoonists ever.

JH: Are you talking about the long bill era?

JG: I'm talking about the long bill era, I'm talking about the long Scrooge McDuck stories. They reprint 'em still. The ones that are really nicely drawn, with the real fine lines, where Huey, Dewey and Louie are major characters, and Scrooge is incredible. The plots are amazing. Carl Bangs is one of my heroes. He lives in Florida, he's like 90 years old and retired. He does oils of the ducks. They're beautiful, done in such wonderful style, such tremendous light to it.

BW: I gotta get some.

JG: He's so good, and those comic books are precious. They are just wonderful to see. The stories are so great, great ideas, *Land of the Incas* and all those incredible *Beagle Boys* plots. All that shit is beautiful.

JH: Yeah, you never forget it.

JG: "No man is truly happy unless he can do what he likes to once in a while. I like to dive into my money bin, burrow around in it like a gopher, jump up and down in it like a porpoise, and throw it in the air and let it fall on my head." ■

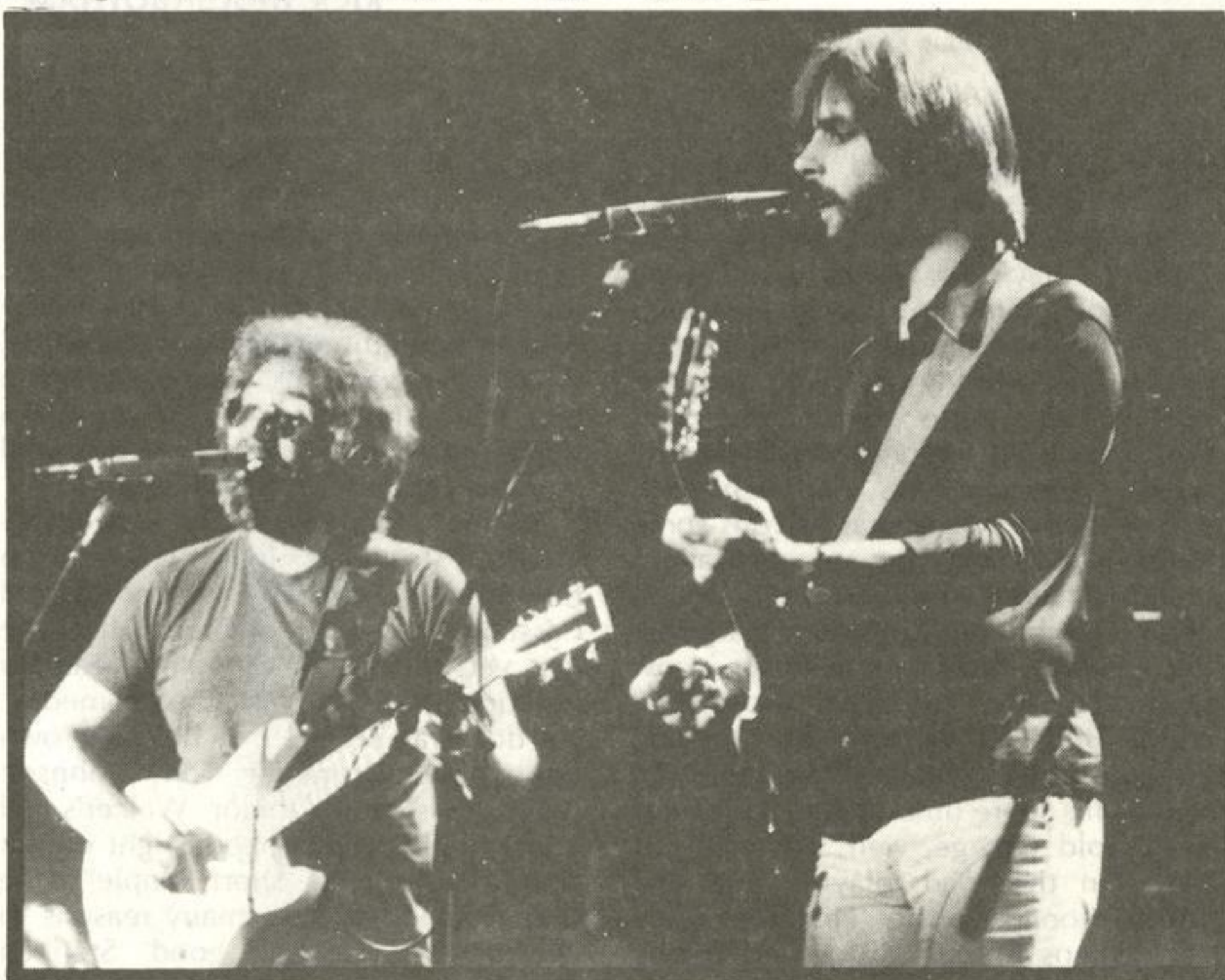
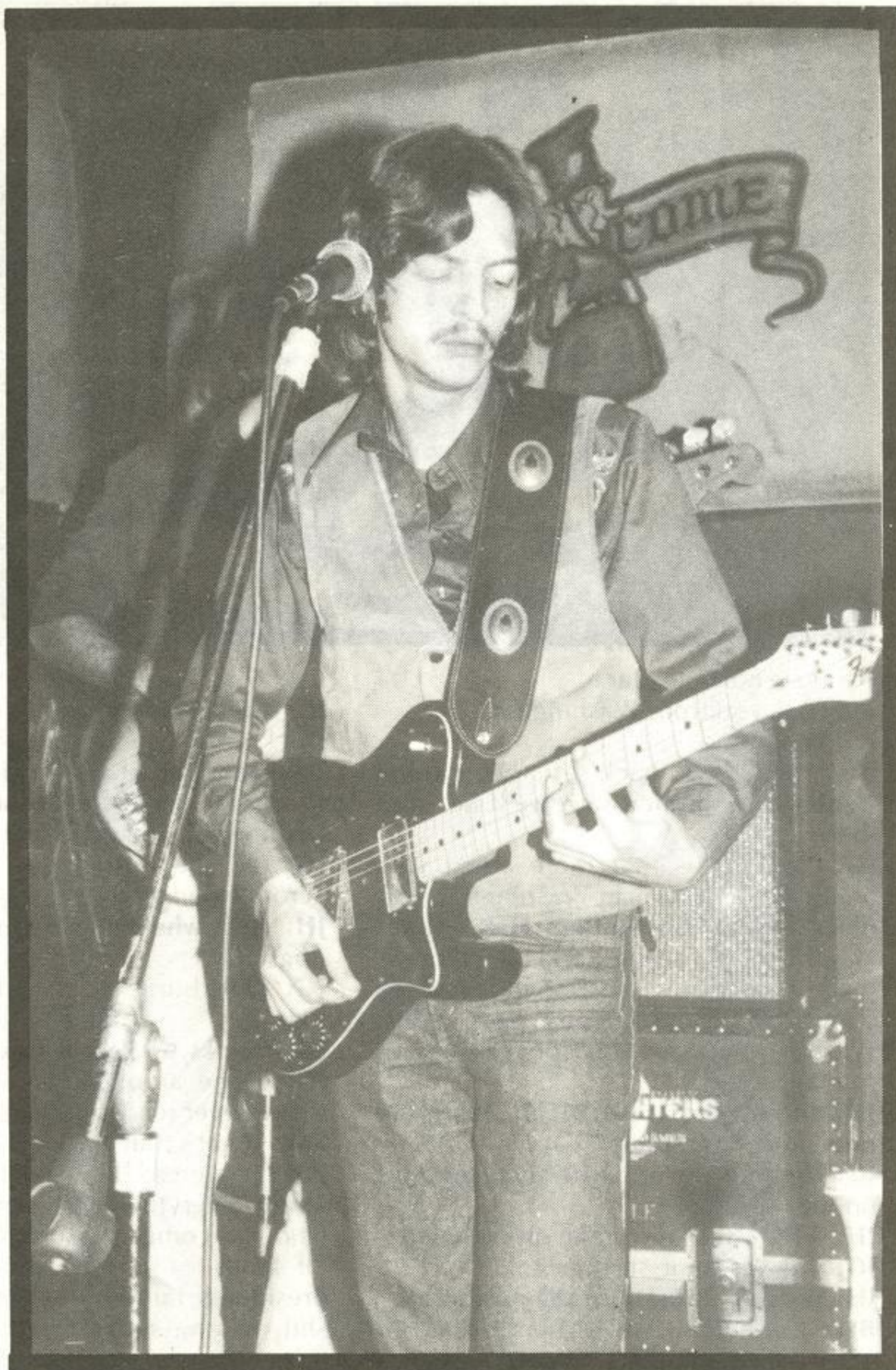


photo: Jim Shive

FULL MOON OVER NEW YORK

a Moonlighters performance and interview

By Jerry Moore
and Les Kippel



RICK HIGGINBOTHAM

Even the coldest of winds may blow somebody some good. Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen are over two years gone now, but I gave up wearing black for them some time back. For a bunch of college kids from Ann Arbor who thought starting a band might be a funny thing to do, the Airmen have done pretty damn well musically. They've spread far afield.

Andy Stein swings so often with Asleep at the Wheel that he runs some danger of becoming a permanent member. Jon Tichy has pretty much gone legit, but still toys with his guitar occasionally. Lance Dickerson now beats the skins in David Bromberg's band. Billy C. Farlow sings in and around the Bay area, and probably still spends his spare time fucking chickens. As for old George, well, he's still out there on the road, playing that evil boogie-woogie music. His new Cody band keeps Buffalo Bruce and Bobby Black in shape.

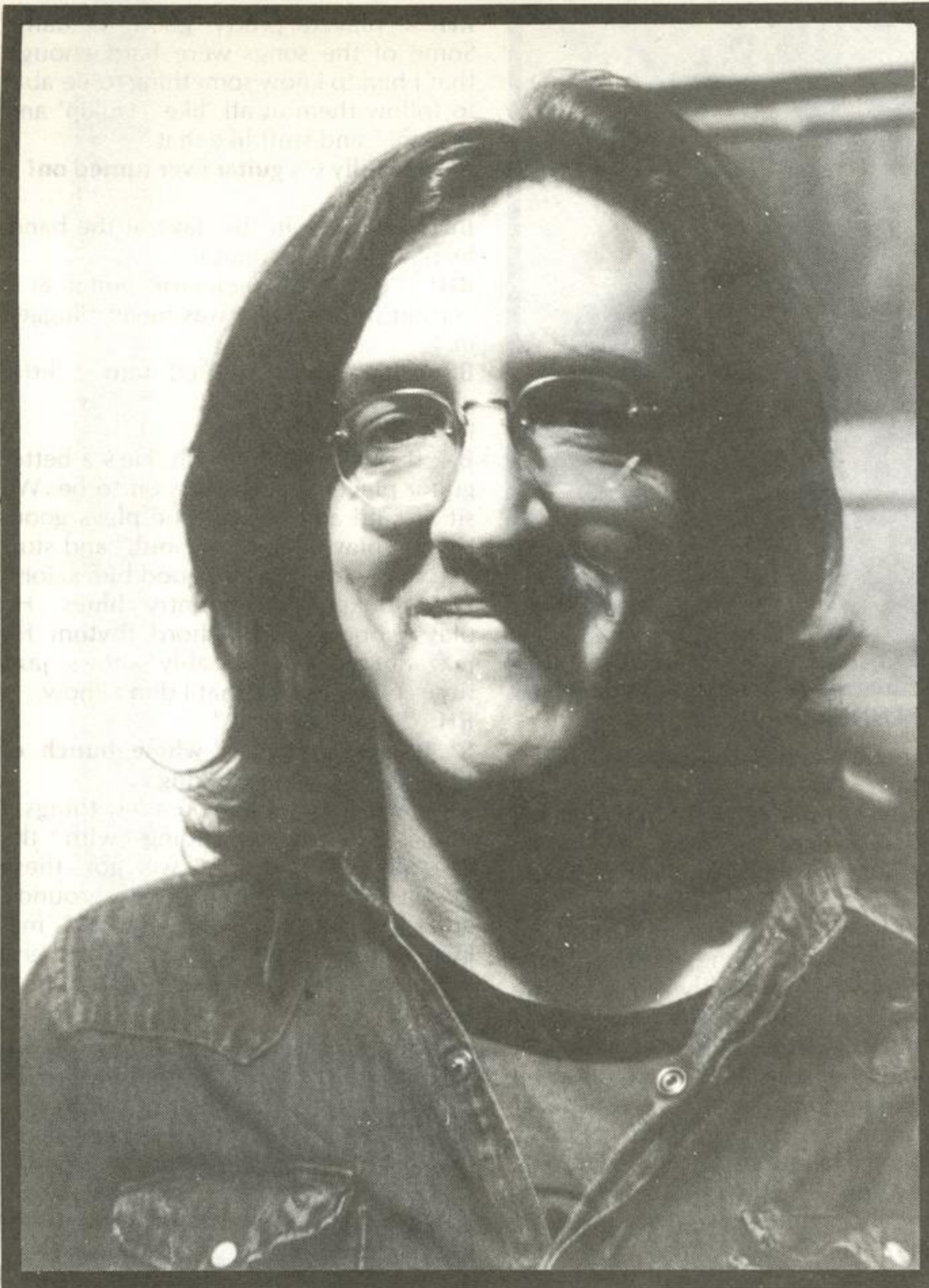
That's today. Two years ago, they were all done in, and pretty tired of the Ozone touring ritual. All done in, that is, but for Bill Kirchen, who wanted to keep a band going. He put one together too, the Moonlighters, even before the Airmen had quite given up the ghost. A co-founder was Rick Higginbotham, a long time member of the Airmen's flight crew, promoted to full band member for their final tour.

Bill plays lead guitar, and Rick rhythm. Their strongest support comes from their fiddler, ex-Wheel member Richard Cassanova. Vassar Clements he isn't just yet, but given as many years to practice he will be that good someday. He does far better than hold his own right now. Drummer Tony Johnson (who hails from Junior Walker's All Stars) might have stepped right out of Randy Newman's "Short People" if he didn't obviously have many reasons to live. He's good, real good. Stephen Fishell on steel guitar, Don Kennedy on

bass, and Steve Mackay on sax round out the Moonlighters lineup. Their blend of rock and roll, a fair share of rhythm and blues and soul, a faint tinge of jazz, and a lot of country is really quite striking.

It took the Moonlighters a hell of a long time to make their way from San Francisco to New York. **Two fucking years.** For that long they've only been a faint hint blowing in the breeze from the west. They finally got here, on a shoestring and a prayer.

Like the old Cody band, they came by bus. "Honeysuckle Rose," though, was a pretty modern vehicle. Greyhound would not have been ashamed to run it as a charter. The heap the Moonlighters coaxed into town was of roughly the same vintage as a DC-3. They took it four or five thousand winding miles to get it here. They also sleep on floors a lot. Some bands sing about the dues they've paid. The Moonlighters, bless their determined souls, are actually



BILL KIRCHEN

photos: Les Kippel

paying them. The road to New York was long and hard, and they say they thought about turning back a number of times.

New York City made their trip worthwhile. This town has always been one of the Cody Band's strongest territories; it treated the Moonlighters no worse. They played here at the Bottom Line on December 15th, opening for their long time friends Asleep at the Wheel. I enjoyed the first set, though it was a trifle sluggish, probably because I was predisposed to like the band. The crowd reaction to their mixture of original tunes, standards, and western swing, was excellent. A good set to warm up, but not a killer.

Things got better . . . much much better. After they opened the late show, Asleep at the Wheel, good as they were, might as well not have played. Much of the set was highlighted by old crony Andy Stein honking away on his sax along with Steve Mackay. Things got

better yet. When the Moonlighters left the stage, the demand for an encore was overwhelming. They came back, of course. Andy Stein came back too, and with him the Wheel's resident ragin' cajun, Link Davis Jr. John Tichy, who had been hanging out by the bar for most of both sets, also came along, and the whole crew assaulted rock and roll with "Ubangi Stomp." Once again a departure, and once again a roaring ovation. The whole bunch came back again, to do "Seven nights to rock." I've seen dozens of shows at the Bottom Line: I've **never** before seen an opening act there draw a second encore. A triumph indeed!

Two nights later, it was up to Nanuet for Les and I, to see their second night at the Red Rail. The Red Rail, by the by, is my favorite New York area club when I'm in an atmospheric mood. It's a tiny bar, all wooden, which might hold 200 people just before the walls burst. The very floor exudes funk.

While there, Les and I had a talk with Bill and Rick about their band. Some excerpts follow.

R: means me or Les.

BK: means Bill Kirchen.

RH: means Rick Higginbotham.

So now, to an upstairs room at the Red Rail [*this rambling discourse to conclude after the talk*):

R: When did you guys start playing together?

RH: The **Moonlighters** started before the end of **Cody** . . .

BK: Hence the name **Moonlighters**.

R: Was Cody off the road and were you gigging somewhere?

RH: At that point, Cody was off the road, the sentiment was different with different band members, and Bill was anxious to play.

BK: We were talking about taking a vacation, or doing this and that. All I knew, was that I wanted to play.

RH: He discussed the idea with me. I wasn't playing with the band at that time. It started out with Bill doing it with Bobby, Lance . . .

BK: Lance, and Bruce, and Bobby. We backed up Blackie Farrell. Norton Buffalo, too. Norton came a little later. But it started out with me, Bobby, Bruce, Lance and Blackie Farrell, the song-writer who wrote "Mama Hated Diesels", and a bunch of other things.

R: Richie Cassanova used to play with The Wheel. Did he ever play with you guys on your old albums?

BK: No, I knew him because he was from Sacramento and I had met him even before he joined. He was always one of my favorite fiddle players.

RH: Just had the touch. . .

BK: He's real quick, real fast, and only played the fiddle for five or six years. Two years into playing the fiddle, he was one of my all time favorite fiddle players. It's amazing. He's always had a great tone, and I've remembered his sound from the first time I've heard him.

R: About what year did you start? About '75, '76?

BK: December '75.

R: When was your first tour outside of California? And where did you find the other band members?

BK: A year ago, December '76. We went to Texas, Louisiana & Oklahoma. As a matter of fact, Blackie turned me on to Tony and Don, and I met them and loved their pickin'. I got together with Tony only thinking he drummed. I had no idea he sang and wrote real good. It was just a complete utter surprise to me. Now that's become a focal point of the original material.

R: Most of the stuff is his?

BK: Well, him and Rick, and Don. All three of them write. I do too, but I've forgotten how. . .

RH: Mackay does, too; he's got all kinds of songs. Mackay, the sax player, joined up so close to album time, we hardly

heard any by the time we rehearsed for the studio. He's got a backlog of songs and Don must have a million.

BK: This band was in a period of transition when we made the record. It started off being a lot more country and swing, but the most exciting thing to us has been the original material. As that developed, it dictated the direction of the band. That was more in the direction we were calling rhythm and western. It was to me country rock with a lot more punch.

RH: More fun playing.

BK: Yeah. Our attitude was to go with how the material felt. Say, we had to do this kind of music and not that kind. One thing I really wanted to do with the band is let whatever would develop develop, rather than try to put it in a slot. I felt that for a while that happened when we set our own limits for the kind of songs we would do. It was pretty broad, but it had its parameters.

R: So this is the first national tour?

RH: Yeah.

R: How have the people been reacting?

BK: There were three people in Ohio, and they liked it. No, it's been real good! This time, we've concentrated on places where we've got a lot of old friends: Texas, Michigan, New York, Upstate New York, Long Island.

R: You found it really good in Texas?

BK: Real good. We had two dates at the Armadillo, we played Halloween and the Friday before that. We played by ourselves, and then opened for The Wheel, which was a great bash. Then, we added a date at once, and added another date in a later week at another club. It was real nice to play Texas.

R: Texas and New York. Where else did you go?

BK: Michigan, Richmond, Va., Albuquerque, El Paso.

R: Where was the weirdest location?

RH: Anthony's Gap Texas. The town sits on the New Mexico-Texas border. Half the town is in New Mexico, and the other half is in Texas.

R: And what happened?

BK: It's hard to describe it. It's right down in the cotton country by Mexico.

RH: Pretty odd characters. There's this tiny 7 ft. 3 or 4 inch drunk.

BK: He's the bouncer at the bar.

RH: He's the bouncer at the bar, and a pothead came walking in with a huge sack. He jokingly said "is that your bag of dope?" and he said, "yeah" and opened it up. It was full of dope of all different varieties.

R: It's been said by some editors of some magazines, that you're one of the three major clowns fronting the COMMANDER CODY act. What is your opinion of that?

BK: If I get my hands on that sonofabitch, I'm gonna rip off his head — rrragh!! No, that was the Cody band. I was just telling this to Steve Fishell, our steel player, about early Cody. We



DON KENNEDY

were really taken aback when we had a hit single.

It wasn't until that point that we even considered that we were an actual band, and listened to and taken seriously. It was fun, all for fun. We weren't following rules. We made them up as we went along, and I guess, unwittingly, we probably did set some trends. I can't think of what they could have been. Tuxedos swept the nation.

I remember when we got a phone call from Paramount Records. We were at Andy Stein's house in Peekskill, NY. We put out the album and they said, "ok, boys, we picked a single off it." It was the second single. The first one was, "Lost in the Ozone." They said "Hot Rod Lincoln," and we went, "Whaaat?! You've got to be kidding!" We thought that was the funniest thing we ever heard. Thought for sure the Paramount people's porchlights had burned out years ago, just from that one decision.

R: They were right.

BK: It was top ten. They gave it 85 on Dick Clark's Bandstand. You can drive to it!

R: Rick, you stood in for Tichy on the Cody Band's last European tour. Was that the first time you played with them?

RH: Well, I played with Cody on a couple of occasions as stand-in bass player.

BK: We were playing in San Diego, and Bruce went to Mexico and never came back. Another time, we were playing in Colorado.

RH: Jefferson Starship at a huge 10,000 seat place or something, and Bruce wasn't coming, so I just had to play bass.

BK: We told him which hand to hold on the neck and which hand to pick with, and said go for it, and he got it.

R: Were you plugged in?

BK: Sure, he played good.

RH: I played pretty good, actually. Some of the songs were hard enough that I had to know something to be able to follow them at all, like "Trukin' and Fuckin'" and stuff like that.

R: Was Billy C's guitar ever turned on?

RH: No.

BK: Very early in the days of the band, he played rhythm guitar.

RH: Well, he had electric guitar at a certain point, but it was never plugged in.

BK: That almost turned into a little gimmick.

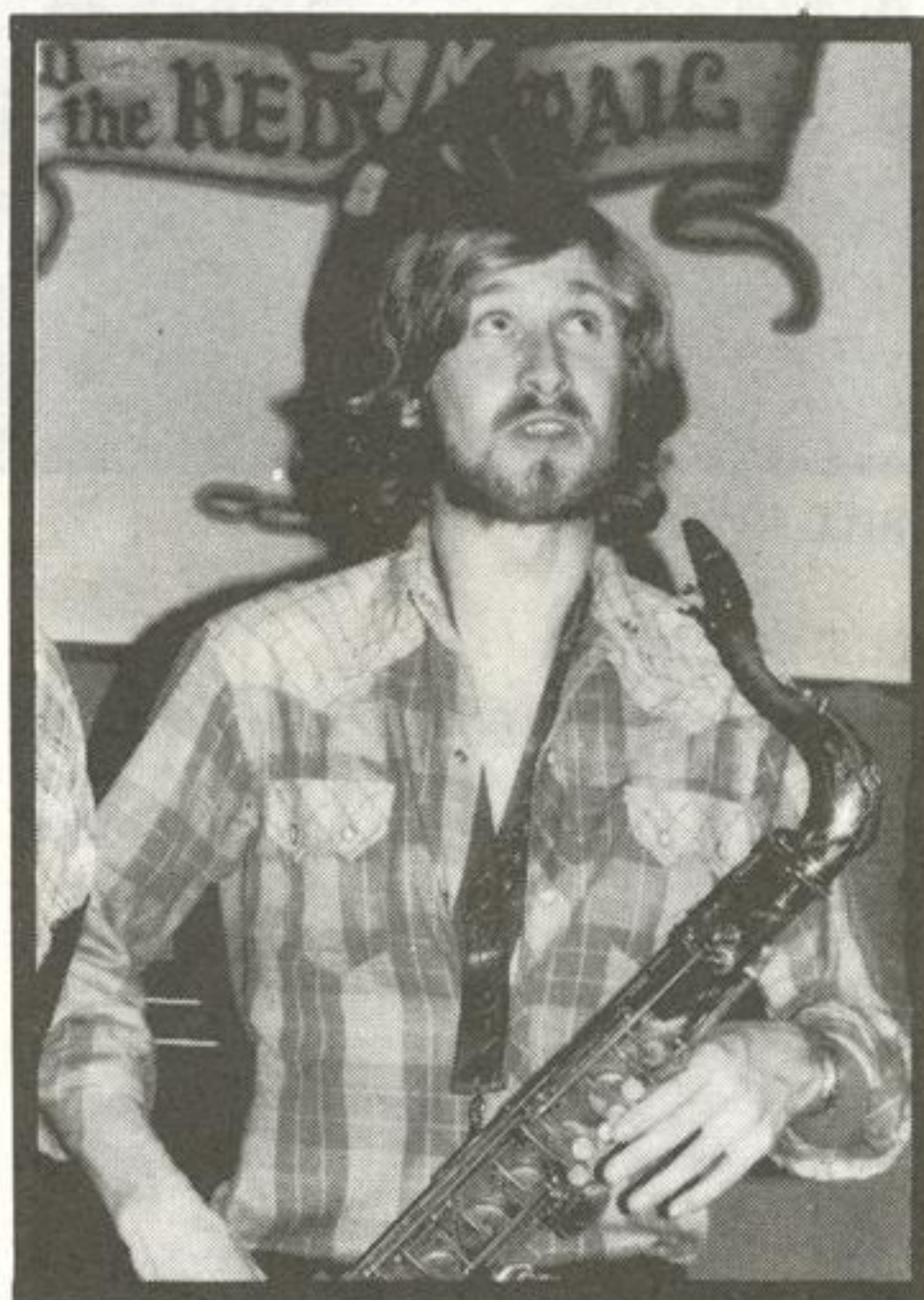
RH: It was his prop.

BK: It was his prop, yeah. He's a better guitar player than he lets on to be. We sit around and jam and he plays good. He can play "Body and Soul," and stuff like that. He plays real good blues, John Lee Hooker, and country blues. He plays good straight chord rhythm for jazz songs. He probably knows jazz tunes on the guitar that I don't know.

RH: "Sweet Lorraine."

R: I know there's a whole bunch of things we should be asking.

BK: Well, we can tell you a few things. I think what we're doing with the Moonlighters here is we got these people with real different backgrounds, and it's a real turn-on to me. Everybody's offering something and bringing with him a little direction of talent.



STEVE MACKAY

R: The whole bunch of you are a working combination?

BK: Yeah, and there's Tony coming from the soul background who played with Junior Walker, and Richard Casanova who's a real Bob Wills swing music lover. There's me and Rick. It's great, everybody's learning from everybody else. The steel guitar player came up through the L.A. country rock scene and he knows a lot more about that than I do. I think we're bringing it

together in a unique way. For instance, we're getting a section sound with a steel, the sax, and a fiddle, and to some extent, the lead guitar. That's different with modern harmonies, we're doing R&B charts, and horn charts, and then string charts. You can color it. If the fiddle has the top line, it sounds like a whole string section, if the sax is down, it sounds like a whole sax section. You



RICHIE CASSANOVA

can hear that on the album. We didn't bring any ringers or strings and horns in. We just used our own instruments the way we do it live, and it's a real new sound. That's what I love about it.

R: Out of all your new songs, which one do you like the best?

BK: That's real hard to say. Two of my favorite songs are "Shantytown Goodbye" and "Midnight in Memphis."

R: And yours? [to RH]

RH: "Midnight in Memphis" is one of my favorites. When Tony first showed us that, I loved the song, but "Music," I think, was one that recorded best. I love Tony's vocal on it, and also my favorite solo on the album is Steve's sax solo on "Music." He plays nothing weird, but just what the song is trying to say. Those three are my favorites, probably.

BK: Everybody's got a new style, Rick, and Don, and myself. But I've got to admit that my favorite lead vocalist is Tony.

RH: Yeah, I'd agree with that. His voice has a good quality to it.

R: What are the Moonlighters all about?

BK: You know, I really am in this for the fun. I'd love to make millions and millions of dollars, 'cause after all, that's the coin of the realm, and I think that's a form of energy. Money's just another visible energy, really. That's the thing. It's a real fun band to play in, and it sounds fun to be on stage. I get turned on constantly, and that's really what happened to Cody. It was no big deal; it

just stopped being fun for us. The reason was, we'd outgrown it. We'd done 7 years, a nice cycle, 7 year cycle. Once it was not fun, we all figured "let's not flog this thing." We could go out there with long gray beards and pot bellies and mimick our old vibe, but there would be no point in that. I don't subscribe to "the audience is a bunch of dummies" philosophy, either. I think that audiences, well, they're not musicians generally, not music critics, but one thing they know is how you feel. They can pick up on that in a hot second. Sometimes, if you blow your soul and play all weird notes, they won't even notice, but if you're up there not feeling it, they pick up that right away.

R: Have you set a timetable for the next album?

RH: Not yet, probably Bill and Don will figure that out once we get home, because they're going to release "Midnight in Memphis" as a single. It seems to me I can't see us recording in March, April, and May because those are such good touring months.

R: Now's the time, in January and February.

RH: To record? Yeah, those are the best times, but it's too soon for us. You have to book the producer long enough in advance. If you have him come in and do it disjointed, and in pieces, it's not going to happen.

BK: I know what I want to tell you about. Talk about new things that are happening! I want to tell you guys about a band. I don't know how far they're going to get, but it has some of the best talent I've seen in a long while. It's called the **Reptile Brothers**. They're from the Bay area, and the band is composed of Gregg Dewey on drums, who used to play with Country Joe, his brother, Nocho Dewey, on keyboards and harmonica. He wrote "Runaway" on the new Starship album. Tim, on

bass, and I don't know who else playing guitar. I haven't seen them since I left town. They have a few other people there.

R: What type of music?

BK: Well, listen to "Runaway." That's one of Nocho's original tunes. Him, and Duke and Tim all write. And that will give you an idea of what stuff they're doing.

RH: Plays real good country harp, Nocho does.

BK: And real good pop piano. They were in Marty Balin's band **Bodacious**, remember that one? Duke was also in a band called **Grootna**.

RH: And most recently in a band, **Roddy and the Rivets**. Louise Kirchen on vocals.

R: You guys sound more like Cody should have sounded.

BK: We're more like we are now than we ever have been.

BK: You want to hear a funny story? Tell him about the first band we ever started and how we got there. Me and Rick go way back.

RH: I was 16 and he was 17, and I was living in San Francisco, a high school dropout, and Bill came out, and we went to the Avalon Ballroom.

BK: Saw **Bo Diddley** and the **Sons of Adam**.

RH: Right, and wanted to start a band. So we wanted to get back to Michigan, only there were three of us, so we figured the odds on hitchhiking were bad with three. We decided to hop the freights. Took us about six days to get as far as Gaylesburg, Illinois, at which point Bill had his foot run over by a flat car and that ended the trip.

BK: You can see the bruise to this day it's still black and blue. No, it didn't cut my toes off. Broke three of my toes, twice each. I'm glad it wasn't my hand. So I was on crutches when we started the band. It was called the **Seventh Seal**. I always figured me and Rick



TONY JOHNSON

photos: Les Kippel

would be in a band someday, again, after that. By the way, that was the turning point in my career. I was in college then. At that point, I assumed I would be a mathematician, or something. It was so obvious to me that all I wanted was to be in a band or be a musician.

R: Was it really good here last night?

BK: Yeah, great crowd. We played til what, 3:30? Jesus Christ! I'm not used to that.

R: The music you put out at the Bottom Line was really fine. I think if your record company can really get you publicity you'll catch on. You're presenting new material, and they dig it.

BK: I want to mention Amherst records before we sign off, because I feel good about them. It's a new, small happening company, and a bunch of them came out to the Bottom Line. They believed in us from the first time. They distribute DJM records which had a great success with Johnny "Guitar" Watson. But we're really the band right now. I love the personal rapport we're getting with them. Right off the bat, they came up with a producer and a cover artist and both turned out to be fabulous.

RH: I'll tell you what I'm not used to. You get onto a record label. You play a showplace gig the first night, first show. That's when the company people come and they're gone — that's it. The



STEPHEN FISHELL

photo: Les Kippel

President of Amherst stayed for both sets at the Bottom Line, which was pretty unbelievable to me. Usually, with Cody, Warner Brothers had much lower echelon people come and see the first show, and then they'd split. As a general rule, you know that the first set, opening night at a showcase club is the worst set that any band will do because they go out there and they aren't warmed up to the club yet. That's when

all your people come to see you. Amherst is different.

— fin interview —

Meanwhile, back at the Red Rail...

The Moonlighters went on to play one of the wildest shows I've seen for a long while. Three sets. The first set ended rather abruptly after "Milk Cow Blues," due to their blowing out the p.a. Joe Santos, the club's genial proprietor, had to leave his birthday dreams and his bottle of Mescal down for an hour or so to hunt out and set up a new sound system. Find one he did, and the show went on. A most wasted and joyous night for all.

The best thing about the Moonlighters, as Bill points out at every available opportunity, is that they know how to have fun. Fun with a capital **Fu**. Rest easy folks, they ain't serious. At the Red Rail they did a tune from their album called "Wild Things," about Bigfoot. Halfway through the song their roadie, Murph, came stomping out onto the stage wearing nothing but a plastic nose and glasses. He **does** have big feet. Before their encore he repeated the feat, this time in company with Bill and Tony.

This is a pretty damn democratic band. Murph even got to play the guitar on one song, "The Cassanova Crawl," as Bill's stand-in. They even asked Les and I if we wanted to sing. Good folks, real nice people in fact, and always out for a laugh.

So buy their album, and see them play if you can. It's worth it, and they sure as shit need the bucks. This is a band that needs and deserves some support. They have something. It may not be polished, but, whatever it is, it's genuine. I hope they make it; I also hope their bus made it. When last we saw it, it was getting ready to clank off towards Ann Arbor. ■

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COUNTRY PORN: L. TO R.: LOTTA CASH, DONNA VALAY, CHINGA CHAVIN AND DIANE VALAY

photos: Dave Patrick

OF VICE & MEN

By Clark Peterson

Los Angeles: "The whole music business is made up of nothing but phonies," drawls Chinga Chavin, social satirist and self-avowed masculinist ringleader of California's Country Porn. "Buffy St. Marie isn't an Indian. Willie, Waylon and the Outhouses, they hate the country. And hell, I've seen John Denver toss beer cans out his window. He doesn't give a shit about the country."

"Ah, yer fulla shit," snarls Gregg Allman from the front row at the Troubadour. Such ingratitude. And to think that Chinga didn't even use any of his jokes about Cher and her quaaludes. He's in enough trouble already.

"Schmuck Owens and the Schmuckeroos are suing me for copyright infringement," admits Chinga, who takes his name after the Spanish verb for the ol' in-out which conjugates regularly (as does Chinga himself). "He claims I ripped off his song, 'Fetus from Milpitas,' which I wrote back in 1958." Chinga is actually referring to his take-off on "Okie from Muskogee," "Asshole from El Paso," which Dylan and Kinky Friedman performed with the Rolling Thunderers. It contains such lines as, "We don't burn our brains outs on tequila/We don't squeeze our zits out on the wall/We don't kiss our mommies in our wet dreams/ And a peyote enema is the biggest thrill of all."

As you've already guessed, Chinga's Country Porn is Whitey's answer to

Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts, headquartered at El Rancho Perverto in Marin County where the shepherds say love is just a four-legged word. But Chinga's roots are in Austin where he and crazed sniper Charles Whitman shared an English class and he worked on the University of Texas' humor magazine with cartoonist Gilbert

"Freak Bros." Shelton. As for Kinky, Chinga and he were pledge brothers in a Jewish frat (I Phelta Thi?). They even hung out with a homely coffee house singer who once joined them in a fraternity gig, and later they drove her to the bus station for her move to California. Her name: Janis Joplin.

Though he left the Armadillo state long ago, Chinga retains a weakness for its C&W music (cunt and weenie). It shows in Country Porn. "We're the foreskin on the thrust of the sexio-social barrier," he winks. He and his backing quintet (plus 2 singers and 2 hoofers from the genitaler sex) try to arouse prurient interest in reviewers with bad toilet training. Having tinkled between the sheets in my youth, I fell prey to his songs from south of the belt. Not all are one-hand-under-the-table types, however, and the same goes for his intros.

"Hitler, Napoleon and Alexander the Great all had one undescended testicle and they're out conquering the world," he says at one point in the show. "Teddy Roosevelt's physician wrote, 'Theodore has a diminished sex organ,' so they guy's out bagging rhino and saying 'Walk softly and carry a big stick.' We need our politicians examined by urologists, psychiatrists, and proctologists. You get people like Johnson and Nixon who are known for their sexlessness and they're out bombing Cambodia — it's all political aggression. So the next time Jimmy Carter's feeling lustful, offer your wife to him. Your sister. Your farm animals. Or do you want another flare-up in the Middle East?" In other words, do you want your leaders hung-up or well-hung? Put Harry Reems in the Oval Orifice and you'll find out. ■



CHINGA CHAVIN WITH THE JAIL BAIT TWINS, DONNA AND DIANE VALAY

The following piece is an interview recently conducted with Papa John Creach by a new contributor to Relix, David Koepp. Papa John, of course, is the elderly but ever young fiddler who came to fame as a member of the Jefferson Airplane in its declining years. He was also for several years a member of Hot Tuna, and was part of the first

ensemble to tour under the name Jefferson Starship. More recently he has had several bands of his own. This incredibly energetic grand old man of rock and roll will probably continue to tour until felled by the Reaper.

The subject matter of the interview is primarily his days with the Airplane and Tuna. It is quite clear that Papa John is

no longer in the Starship or Tuna camps. Please bear in mind that the opinions expressed are Papa John's, and not ours.

All questions were asked by David Koepp, who is here identified as "Relix," for convenience' sake.

The interview begins hereafter.

Jerry Moore, Editor.



photo: Dave Patrick

PAPA JOHN CREACH INTERVIEW

By David Koeff

Relix: How old were you when you played in your first group?

PAPA JOHN: How young was I? My first band was the Chocolate Music Bars, I guess I was around 19-20. Back then I didn't even have bus fare and I had to walk maybe 30, 40 blocks just to rehearse with my violin. We rehearsed every day until we got ourselves together with a program. On my last tour I ran into Emanuel Sales who used to play with the Chocolate Music Bars. Now he plays banjo with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Relix: Want to talk about some of your earlier groups? obviously the music you were playing back then influences your sound now.

PAPA JOHN: Both then and now I was playing commercial stuff. Even though I loved Blues and Jazz I played anything. I played waltzes . . . I even played with a German band.

Relix: Playing wherever you could, whatever you could was an economic matter?

PAPA JOHN: Yes. If you were qualified, you played wherever you could. One gig always seemed to lead to another. But it was still tough, especially when (Al) Capone was still in command. If you crossed somebody's line and played in a rival's bar you were (*runs finger against throat*) dead and they didn't think twice about it. I did my best to avoid that but I still played the kinds of places where the guy knocks on the door and says "Joe sent me." The money at these places was so good, people would be giving me and my partner on piano \$20-\$30 tips just for one song! Those were great times! Black people couldn't get into those clubs, but because I had my violin, I had my **KEY!** I could walk right in through those doors. I almost felt like the place was mine.

Relix: Were you ever interested in playing classical music?

PAPA JOHN: I had studied in the conservatory, but I could look into the future and could see many classical players that were far greater than I. I could be playing in a club and making good money and the classical players would be making about \$97 a month.

Relix: Would you rather be playing jazz?

PAPA JOHN: I love playing jazz, but I also love country music and rock and roll. Both my drummer and keyboard player play rock but were trained in jazz. The public is very independent and likes all kinds of different things. I want to appeal to a lot of people so I'm not going to limit myself to one style.

Relix: Would you like to talk about playing with the Airplane?

PAPA JOHN: I don't mind.

Relix: Are you still real close to Joey Covington?

PAPA JOHN: Yes. Joey just called me.

Relix: Does he have a band now?

PAPA JOHN: No. Joey didn't particularly care about playing drums, he wanted to write. He's a heck of a drummer, but he plays for a while and then quits, and naturally he doesn't keep his technique up.

Relix: He's a better drummer than he is a singer.

PAPA JOHN: (*Laughs*) You better believe it. Joey helped me put together "The Janitor Drives A Cadillac" and "Pretty As You Please (Feel)" is a nice song.

Relix: Are you in touch with the others?

PAPA JOHN: I talk to Marty. I haven't talked to Grace or Paul, but I did send a gift to Pete Sears for his new child.

Relix: I've always felt the Airplane had to be pretty hip to include you in their group. It must have been weird at first.

PAPA JOHN: Not really. I understood what they were doing and worked right into it. Some of my ideas wore off on them, and some of theirs wore off on



photo: Howard Fried

me. You have to think out these things, you can't just jump into them, but it wasn't hard to adapt to. See I'm the kind of person who listens to all kinds of music. I take it apart to figure it out, to see what makes the music tick.

Relix: Then you were familiar with the Airplane before you joined?

PAPA JOHN: I'd listened to their music.

Relix: Did you have any hesitation about joining?

PAPA JOHN: I thought about it because at the time I was playing real hardcore jazz, in front of 200 people in small clubs Then I was before 7,000 people. The biggest problem was adjusting to the sound. They were louder, especially Jack. There were concerts where just the sound from his bass amp would give me a massage. It would tickle my neck, and shake the whole stage. You had my equipment, my big Macintosh, and all these amps, and all theirs. It was just

TOO LOUD. I could hardly turn on my fiddle, it was so powerful. I used to tell them "cut it down!" They never listened. I fixed it myself by getting a volume pedal, but as I would turn down they'd be turning up. They used to get so loud I used to tell em: "we've got a volume contest here." There's no sense in starting at 10 because you can go no higher. You get no sense of dynamics.

Relix: I suppose Jack and Jorma were the villains in this case?

PAPA JOHN: Yes. But you see, Paul would have to compete with them. It kept going out of proportion, and they started getting more and more amps, and hookin' em' up. I said "you guys might as well be beatin' on tin tubs with a ball bat." We used to fill up one of those large semi-tractor trucks just with our equipment . . . it was really out of hand. Forty-fifty thousand pounds of amplifiers. If I blew one of my amps, they'd just grab another one. You could see vibrations going through the tubes. We blew out a recording studio. A guy down in Los Angeles put up all the equipment to record and everytime we'd start off to cut a number we'd get about half-way through and blow out the whole recording studio. The guy lost money; he had to go and repair the whole studio. You see my fiddle ran 650 watts. When you take everybody else's 650 and put all that together that's a lot of pull. It takes a cable about that size (*clenching his fist*). I can remember a time when we played the Hollywood Bowl, and had a misty rain, boy that thing heated my fiddle. I could feel the current goin through, and I wasn't even touching my bridge's wood. It was still coming through. The other guys were getting shocks all over. That cable got hot, and it burnt its way: across ~~tee~~ floor, just burnt. Boy, you should've seen us get outta that place and turn that thing off. It was shorting out 'cause of the water. We were almost fried like an egg.

Relix: Was it any harder for you when Covington left the group?

PAPA JOHN: No. Just as long as there's drums let em' roll.

Relix: Did you like playing with Sammy Piazza?

PAPA JOHN: Sure, Sammy was a real nice little drummer. Sammy was young and he had a problem with beat, but as he developed, he got better. Tuna play so long that he'd get tired. Instead of playing with his wrists, he was using his whole arms. That's hard and you get tired. Drummers are suppose to use their wrists. I can get volume by using a short part of my bow, or else I can use a full bow and work myself to death. When you're playing up with Tuna for 3-4 hours before you get off, you try to conserve your energy. And some nights we had two sets. Sammy couldn't keep up with it. He used to take his exercises, went to the gym, lifted weights. It still



didn't matter, those two (Jack & Jorma) worked him to death.

Relix: Those guys could play for eight hours straight.

PAPA JOHN: Yeah and that's too much. That's no good. But you see we (Hot Tuna) were moving so fast. Tuna got popular fast. The concerts got to be with thirty thousand people. We started off playing small places, like fifteen hundred. Around that time we were in the studio, and Jack says . . . and it was funny to hear, "You sound pretty good." They had a nice operation going there, until they went on an ego trip. That really ruined it . . . course I was pretty tired too when I left.

Relix: You also had your own group while playing with the Airplane?

PAPA JOHN: Right. I needed to do my own thing. The group got stagnant, due to Jack and Jorma. They had the group sitting around for nearly a year and a half. I was working with Tuna and my own band. Then I left Tuna to help get the Starship together. But boy, Jack and Jorma told me "we aren't going back no way," and look at them: they're still sitting on their wings.

Relix: Have you ever written any songs with Balin?

PAPA JOHN: No. I've never written anything with Balin. He's writing his own material, he's got a whole pile of stuff there. Some of the stuff he sent down to me wasn't very good, I'll tell ya. You can write a hundred songs and maybe one will be a hit. Ya understand what I mean?

Relix: Well he seems to have a great knack for writing songs.

PAPA JOHN: Well he came up with that "Miracles" song.

Relix: And "Caroline."

PAPA JOHN: Yeah, and "Caroline," but "Miracles" really made that operation, while "Caroline" was secondary.

Relix: Did you like playing that kind of

music?

PAPA JOHN: SURE. As long as it's good I can play any kind of music. If it's got a lot of meat and I can do something with it.

Relix: I loved the Airplane, and I love the Starship but there were times when I saw them perform and I felt "there's too much going on."

PAPA JOHN: It was so many weird changes. They weren't big changes, and it doesn't run on a cycle. We might play a chord here, and then we go over to a G-flat, or to an E-flat. In those days it was like taking a box of cards, turning them upside down and planning which one would fall out first. We never stayed in one place. If you listen to the stuff we were doing, they never stayed in one pattern, one melodic strain. They had a beat behind it, but you never knew where you were going. It was very difficult for anyone to play with them.

Relix: You played with John Cipollina. What was he like?

PAPA JOHN: He was fine, he played on my first record. I gave him plenty of chances to get together in the studio. See we used to play around in the studio, Carlos Santana might come in and jam right as I was recording but that's how we got it together. Everybody couldn't read charts, but we had skeleton charts, and we let everybody work their instrument as they normally would up to a point.

The whole music . . . business is so ad lib, the most ad lib business in the world. It changes all the time and if you don't know what you're doing, you can lose your shirt real fast 'cause its just one of those things. You gotta be thinking all the time. Many of musicians I was playing with back in the forties thought their style of music would always be popular. They were going to lock up the whole operation and the world was going to come to them. But they forgot that there are

many other styles, and so many different types of people.

Relix: I recently met Woody Herman and he believes the same thing. He calls the Glenn Miller Band a "ghost band" because they didn't change or evolve with the times.

PAPA JOHN: Right. I got interested in rock and roll in the fifties and my musician friends from the forties weren't interested in no way. Now those people are coming around and sayin' "Gee, can't you throw me some work?" They can't cut it, even if you give it to them on a silver platter. They didn't keep up with it. They come over to my house and try to play rock and roll and it's funny. It's like a circus. They can't get the beat, they find themselves drifting off into the old thing that they used to do. They see all my stuff on my walls, my pictures, my gold records, and all the different things I've gone through and they think "hey, keep up with it, keep an open mind." I'll try anything. Even if I live to be a hundred and twenty years old, I'm still gonna be diggin' it.

Relix: Any comparison to Hot Tuna there?

PAPA JOHN: They have that ego thing and couldn't come back. They're not really thinking. They're a bag within themselves and they don't want to accept anything else. But their thinking and their material is not that great. They're a lost cause. They don't have an adviser who's saying "listen, your material is just not that good," instead they've probably got somebody sayin' "yeah your stuff is great." And that keeps them from thinkin'. When I was with them I used to keep em' moving around and stuff, make em' do something, I'd try and fire em' up. I used to come up strong and they'd have to play hard to keep up. But I'll tell ya, unless they come off that ego trip Tuna will just be a dead end. ■



photo: Les Kippel

Review:

Graham Parker & The Rumour

By Michael Casey

The Bottom Line
October 24, 1977

Graham Parker must know where rock and roll is headed, because he's already there. He and the Rumour began making music together a couple of years ago in England, and the world hasn't caught fire yet. But it will. It has to. The sharper critics have been howling his praises for a year, and Elvis Costello has already stolen his image. If there aren't a dozen more bogus Parkers stalking the airwaves by this time next year, then music has lost its direction. Everything that makes stars the man has in spades. He blends a touch of Dylan's lyric genius with Jagger's stage presence, and more raw anger than the Sex Pistols. A century ago Graham Parker might have been another Napoleon; today he sings in a rock and roll band. He wears the stamp of inevitability plainly on his forehead.

Sharing his limelight are his backup band, the Rumour. Left alone, they are a perfectly competent but uninspired shadow of Booker T and the MGs. Imitation Memphis. Parker has inspiration to spare, and the sense of dynamics needed to spark them to brilliance. Together, like Dylan and the Band, the Who or the Stones, they form a perfect rock and roll band. The Rumour, the cream of the London pub circuit, and Parker, who sprang fully developed from nowhere, complement each other perfectly.

October 24th found me once more at the Bottom Line. I had heard ravings about how good Parker and the Rumour were, and had heard and appreciated them on record and tape. None of that prepared me for the reality. The Rumour opened the show without Parker and were, as noted above, competent. Fortunately they only played for half an hour or so. Rhythm and Blues is no longer where it's at.

After a break, I had my own vision of rock and roll's future. This jaded reviewer has never heard anything quite like Graham Parker and the Rumour as they were at this show. Outside the Bottom Line the wind was

photo: Fae Horowitz



bitter; inside Parker was setting the club on fire. In their hour and a half onstage, he and the Rumour burned their way through most of their repertoire, each song a new flash of energy. Even "The Heat in Harlem," which comes up a loser on Parker's current album, was spellbinding. A medley of "I'm gonna tear your playhouse down" and "Don't ask me questions" (aimed at the rock press) made that pale away. I could call the show amazing; I could call it breathtaking; I could heap so many praises on it you would think me bought off by Mercury Records. No matter what I said I couldn't do it justice.

Parker's total command of the stage made the show what it was. He looks to be about five foot three and ninety pounds, but the voice wailing from his throat is ten feet tall. He prowled the Bottom Line stage like a poorly domesticated tiger feeling hunger pains. His stage moves are so perfect they seem second nature; they convey no sense of pretence at all. When Parker reached out to shake hands with a number of audience members after the second encore, it was more a Bobby Kennedy move than Hubert Humphrey. After two encores those people did not want to let him leave.

Natural magnetism and a perfect sense of timing make Graham Parker a sure thing.

Set a scene: this scaled down human standing tensed in the spotlight at the Bottom Line, his restless energy momentarily held in check. The veins pop out like cables in his right arm as he points an accusing finger at the reserved tables in the rear of the club. Lips curling into a slight sneer he declaims: "This one's for all the critics here tonight." A brief dramatic pause, and he snarls out: "I'm gonna tear **your** playhouse down."

Graham Parker and the Rumour may yet bring rock and roll tumbling down. We'll see. But if I was more seriously involved in the music industry, I'd watch out for falling rocks. I would not get in this band's way, because they are dangerous. ■

Fragments

By Steve Kraye

After releasing one album and touring for about a month, **Sierra** is no more. Sneaky Pete Kleinow and Gib Gilbeau are getting together with Skip Battin to reform the **Flying Burrito Brothers**. They will tour from Texas to Ohio in February, and possibly open a bunch of **Bob Weir Band** shows along the east coast in March.

As noted above, A Bob Weir tour is scheduled. No word yet on band members.

Another **Garcia Band** east coast tour is due in February, probably with the **Comfort/Hunter** band as an opening act. On the chance that Garcia doesn't make it, Hunter will go it alone.

A new Bob Weir album, produced by Keith Olsen, is still due. The Garcia band album, **Cats Under The Stars**, is due about the same time. Projected release for the new Hunter album is further off.

There will be a new **Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks** album. The material was to be the soundtrack for a cartoon film by Ralph Bakshi called **Hey Good Lookin'**. The film was canned, but the record will be out, under the title **A Film Score In Search Of A Film**.

Brewer and Shipley are working on a disc, with sidemen John Kahn, Lee Michaels and Pete Sears.

Hot Tuna's Double Dose is still brewing, and likewise the new **Starship** album. Tentative east coast tours are lined up for Tuna in March, and the Starship in April.

Rick Danko played the Capitol Theater in Passaic in December, and turned in a hot set for the couple of hundred people who showed up at the 3,000-odd seat hall. Admission was only three bucks, and a toy for a needy child. What happened?

The **Dead**, **Marshall Tucker**, and the **NRPS** set a record for a single day's take for 1977. The gross receipts for the show September 3rd at Englishtown were \$1,091,790.

The **Dylan** tour is scheduled to begin with about 11 shows in Japan between February 20th and March 5th.

Another **New Riders** tour is due in March. And **George Frayne** will tour in February with his art show rather than his New Commander Cody Band.

The **Dead** will tour through mid-February in the midwest.

Graham Parker and the Rumour are touring west in February and east in March.

Roll away the stone again. **Leon Russell** is back on tour again. ■



THE MYSTERY CATS WITH THEIR NEW LOGO

photos: Les Kippel

SAY IT AIN'T SO, JER

By Monte Dym

Jerry Garcia is currently riding out a burst of live performing activity. After completing a month long tour of the Northeast with his band, he pushed on to four dates at the Keystones Berkely and Palo Alto. In the offing as this is written are four more to end the year with the Dead at Winterland, a genuine G.D. two week tour of California for January, and a projection of at least 100 bookings for 1978. Let's not mention album work or side trips. This would appear to be bliss. On the other hand, if Jerry's latest string of solo performances are any indication, it could be very heavy bad medicine.

The answer, if answer there is, lies in the guy's motivation. If Garcia's iron man touring schedule is due to inspiration gained from the interaction of stimulating music and positive audience feedback (resulting in "getting off"), he's been doing a great job of concealing it.

The Garcia Band's repertoire has been repetitive, their creative solos sparse, and the energy level . . . nil. If the pace got much slower, Garcia would be down to three songs a set. I see an image: an image of an aging fighter in the twilight of an amazing career, now content with close decisions and fat paychecks. Though a 35 year old fighter is a lot older than a guitarist of comparable years, it's still sad to watch money become more important than skill.

The Garcia Band tour which began on November 19th at SUNY Binghamton and ended December 11th at Penn State may not have been a total disaster, but it was close. This longest Garcia Band tour in history came at a curious time. Days after the end of an extensive tour with the Dead, he brought his own band east, despite severe limitations on the time needed

to practice and work out arrangements. Ominously, Ron Tutt's name was dropped from the advertisements for most shows a few days before the tour began. For reasons unknown, he's no longer with this band. His replacement, a kid named Buzz Buchanon, played his first gig with them at the Keystone in mid-November. Switching drummers a week before the tour began raised serious doubts about how together the whole thing was going to sound. For Buzz, this was on the job training. For everybody else, it was mass confusion. At times the band seemed held together by a thread, the bass and drums often out of synch. The switch was like replacing the Raiders' front line with a group of Boy Scouts. Heaven have mercy on the quarterback.

Maria Muldaur helped out on vocals for the first half of the tour. All that really did was tip the vocals off the high end. Tutt's bass voice was gone. With Keith attempting to fill the gap between Jerry and the girls, the harmonies were hurting. If that wasn't enough, the early part of the tour was plagued by sound problems. The late shows at the Tower Theater in Philadelphia struck the fatal blow. It seemed more time was spent trying to coax a semblance of music out of the p.a. than was actually spent playing. At one point, for lack of a time consuming routine, Garcia took it on himself to break an awkward stretch of silence by introducing the drummer. The small (and tinny) system they were using was given the heave-ho in New York, and replaced by a real p.a. The change was for the better. While this was still not Utopia as far as sound went, things started coming together at the Palladium. But that night, Garcia played to a less than full house in New York City. If that isn't a telltale sign of overexposure, then what is??

Enough of this gloomy stuff. There were some positive things. The Garcia Band were regularly doing some outstanding new songs. the lyrics and music I would guess to be original. First, there was "Commorah," which explores the biblical disaster. A Garcia/Hunter tune for sure, with Hunter's stamp heavy on the lyrics. There's a story there, to be picked up and learned from. The song takes the "though I could not caution all, I still might warn a few" line from "Ship of Fools" to its logical end. It is slow, but intense: the kind of music Jerry excels at. Next was "Love in the Afternoon," a flavorful tune with the ever present touch of reggae. The piece flows along pleasantly, taking one's mind from one beautiful place and image to the next. It sounds better with every hearing. Then there was this song with all kinds of musical potential, its name most probably "Cherise and Reuben" or some variation. It rocks. This song was consistently blowing life into otherwise wounded sets. The ending has a strong rhythm guitar break which, as the urge strikes, might contain a lead. If lucky, you might even be able to make out the words to this cosmic fairy tale, which zip by as quickly as the song's hot licks. The rating on this one is **ACES**, and one shudders to think what it might sound like if played by the mother group. Another song, "Cats down under the stars," was played hardly at all. However, if the striking stage backdrop used on the tour is any indication, that one might be the title track of the forthcoming album (supposedly not that far from release).

"Mission in the Rain," a revival from Garcia's **Reflections** album, sounded a bright note at many shows. A song from Eric Clapton's first solo album, "Lonesome and a long way from home," was used to end some sets, and sometimes as an encore. It definitely makes it.

Naturally, if you're like me and thousands of other Garcia loyalists, you'd rather see him play any and every night of the week to the exclusion of almost everything else. If you're going to hear him play about 20 sets within a month's time, repetition is to be expected. Often the shows seemed like an endless syndrome of "How sweet it is," "Catfish John," "That's what love will make you do," "Russian Lullaby," "They love each other," "I'll take a melody," "The harder they come" and "Mystery Train," with a few Dylan songs thrown in for leavening. Constant repetition just isn't Jerry's style, and it showed through his lack of spirit. The energy level is always more important than the song he's playing. Save for rare flashes, the old energy just wasn't there.

In retrospect, I say Garcia's lack of enthusiasm was most likely circumstantial. The Garcia Band will hopefully make some changes before

touring again. For the loyalists, there's always next time. One final opinion from this writer: Garcia is not burnt, just badly in need of a recharging. Wind him up New Year's Eve at Winterland, and watch and listen as he and his buddies the Grateful Dead kick ass.

EPILOG

Late word from the coast:

We wish there was something better to report, but the news from the Keystone the other night was not good. After an exceptional opening act, Robert Hunter's new band Comfort, the Garcia Band was supposed to close the show. They did, but just barely. The band took the stage sometime after midnight, played five songs, and called it a night.

We're sure there was some good reason for this seeming disregard for his adoring public, but who is gonna be the one with the balls to try to find it out?

No volunteers have come forth. Keep the faith; next stop Grateful Dead.

Part III

**San Francisco's Winterland . . .
December 27, 1977**

The Dead returned to this rock shrine and unleashed their energy in a performance that once again reaffirmed their excellence. The old contagious level of excitement was there, with the band catching fire on the first note and burning through to the end. Best of all, Garcia was playing with enthusiasm and power that had not shown itself for the past several weeks. Musician and guitar were functioning as a single seamless, well oiled machine.

It has also been reported that his shows in Palo Alto on the 22nd and 23rd were quite strong. In Jerry's case, there is no doubt that all the talent is still there. Let's just hope that the inspiration remains undiluted for many New Years to come. ■



AS THE ENERGY POURS FORTH FROM JERRY'S GUITAR . . .

FIVE RASTY THOUGHTS on

The Jerry Garcia Band

By Jerry Moore

- Thought one:** The drummer has to go.
- Thought two:** It also wouldn't hurt to replace Keith and Donna with Buddy Cage and Peter Rowan.
- Thought three:** The Garcia band plays too fucking slow. You can run to the bathroom to piss, buy a magazine, smoke a joint and drink a beer in the lobby, and get back to your seat, all between two notes in one of Garcia's livelier solos.
- Thought four:** I don't want to waste my time writing a review of the November-December tour.
- Thought five:** I'd rather see Hot Tuna. ■

Review: The Jerry Garcia Band

By Irving Stone

Palladium, New York City

Sunday, November 27, 1977 8:00 PM

Jerry Garcia is an affable singer. By "affable" I mean that he sings essentially in tune, with conviction, and sufficient taste not to be overdramatic. In a word, "pleasant." If his singing were unique in its tonal quality or range, or original in its melodic or rhythmic inventiveness, he would merit higher marks than "affable." But that's about the height of it as far as he and his two back-up ladies were concerned on this evening.

Instrumentally, things were much less interesting than they were vocally. Since about 75% of the proceedings were instrumental, this would appear to be crucial to the joy of the evening. Harmonically and rhythmically the music was simplistic. It was limited by the pop music already in existence in 1935 (which if mathematics and visual observation serve is before anybody in the Jerry Garcia Band had seen the light of day). The leader, who is also the principal soloist, strung his solos together fluently but without any real originality. Everything he played this evening had been played before by his progenitors, his peers, and more than likely by Jerry Garcia himself. Keith Godchaux, the pianist for this occasion, made Jerry Garcia look very good indeed. Talk about trite, unimaginative and uninteresting: it was all right there, both in solo and accompaniment. I doubt that, based on this evening's work, brother Godchaux could get a gig in your neighborhood piano bar. Bassist John Kahn's one solo showed considerable rhythmic invention and was the musical high spot of the evening.

All of the foregoing criticism could be considered musical nit-picking, if the resultant music swung. Except for about 10% of the time (particularly during the beginning of the 3rd piece of the evening, which owed much to Mister Beauregard Diddley, and parts of the 4th piece, a country blues) it didn't swing at all.

Since Mr. Garcia's band is essentially in good taste (they don't set fire to anything or wear drag or shout obscenities) and he is certainly not very macho, I fail to see what all the fuss is about. I do know it has to be sociological rather than musical. ■



1977 "BYRDS": GENE CLARK, DAVID CROSBY & ROGER McGUINN, BOARDING HOUSE, S.F.

photos: Dave Patrick

THREE BYRDS FLY HIGH

By Clark Peterson

When David Crosby climbed out of the crowd at the Boarding House in San Francisco to join Roger McGuinn and Gene Clark on stage, the people screamed like a bucketfull of loonies on the \$2,000 Pyramid. It was the 8th anniversary of Altamont and about 14 years since the Byrds were hatched in L.A., and 3/5 of the original group was only feet away. McGuinn and Clark had on their usual turtlenecks (sorry, no granny glasses for Rog) and Crosby looked just like he did on the cover of *People* magazine (sorry, no cape), that walrus fish scaler hanging over his upper lip. They grinned at each other with more white teeth than a wind-breaker zipper, and the crowd did just the same.

With Clark on acoustic guitar and McGuinn on his customary 12-string Rickenbacker, the trio harmonized through oldie after oldie. Though McGuinn often drowned out the few words Crosby could remember, the effect was magical. Just seeing them after so long apart was thrilling enough. One fan, who probably figured this was the Second Coming, rushed up front for all to see.

"I'm creamin' in my jeans, you guys!" she yowled, panting up a storm.

"Hey, that's not a song we wrote, is it?" Crosby shot back in amusement. "We're in room 413."

"Actually I'm doing even more than that," the young fan swooned again. Hyena laughs filled the air as McGuinn broke into song, putting her lyric to music. Then someone called out for "Mind Gardens," easily the most horrendous, ear jolting "song" Crosby ever wrote, but no one wanted to embarrass himself by acknowledging

the request. Instead they played "So You Want to be a Rock and Roll Star" (complete with the line, "Just get an eclectic guitar" which doubled Crosby over in glee) and an inspired version of "8 Miles High," the encore. The house lights went up as the three left for backstage.

Faithful Reporter was on the scene, not to be turned back by menacing security men. I snuck back and thrust my tape recorder into the chaos. "Does time heal all wounds?" I asked, brazen as a spare change hustler.

"I don't remember any wounds," Crosby replied. Considering that Chris Hillman and McGuinn fired him during the recording of *The Notorious Byrd Brothers* and put a horse on the cover in his place, I thought that was a funny answer (well, at least the horse's face was shown instead of its ass). "The only images I save up are real tasty ones like sexual overload. I had all that time to think up every nasty thought, every rotten shot, every low, cheesy motive. I'm all used up."

"If there was vengeance in our souls," McGuinn jumped into the center ring, "it would come out in other ways. You wouldn't get it right away. I think David's a fair guy and he's not going to hold anything against me."

Actually, Crosby has McGuinn and Clark to be grateful for. When the duo was singing in their scuffling days in L.A. 14 years ago, Crosby would hang around saying, "Can I play with you guys? Huh? Can I, huh?" Or so the story goes. Pretty soon the three were playing together and eventually hired on Hillman and Michael Clarke as their bassist and drummer. Now all these years later, they look back and see that

things have turned out for the better, even if Neil Sedaka was right when he sang "Breaking up is hard to do."

"We were all kids then," Crosby glanced back. "We all thought we did the right thing. We're all here — how could it have been wrong? Why rehash rehash? How much luggage can you carry? Fuck history."

"Well, not fuck history," McGuinn chips in his 2¢. "History is an interesting thing. I just don't want to be responsible for it. Like, do you know what you did wrong on March 3, 1968?"

"No, it was '69, a Thursday," Crosby immediately replies. "I sang four flat notes in a row. That's disgusting."

"I puked," pounced McGuinn. "Every time I thought about it since then I puked." After watching these two guys trade snappy comebacks for five minutes, I could easily see how Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper supposedly patterned themselves for their roles in "Easy Rider." When I asked them about plans for a reunion album by the five original Byrds, they started out seriously enough before lapsing into buffoonery.

"Jesus, it'd probably be fun," Crosby said positively. "Every time you try hard enough, man, if you care about the music you wind up with some music."

"Great," added McGuinn. "I'd like to do it too."

"It's all unplanned," Clark offered, breaking his silence. "Everything has to be spontaneous."

"One thing we've all agreed," began Crosby, hamming it up for the tape recorder, "is that we'll only get together if Chris will wear a bag over his head." As the laughter died down, Crosby called a halt to this impromptu in-

interview. "Enough," he said. "We can't talk with that tape going. I can't say half of my favorite words: dope, sex, lust..."

Earlier that day, yours truly interviewed McGuinn and Clark at their hotel room. McGuinn had much to say about reunion albums in general and where the Byrds are going.

"In most cases, groups do reunion albums just for the dough and it sounds like it," he waxed. "Our last one was done for the money. If we do another one, it will be done for the love of art and no other reason." And what about all the press on the Byrds making a comeback?

"It was a hype we were going to get together with the Byrds and use that name," he admitted. "It was a desperate move and I regret we entertained it for as long as we did. We're not doing that now. It's kinda like we're getting the nucleus of the Byrds back together just to see what that does. I'm just doing it (playing with Clark as a duet) on the grounds that it's good for me and good for Gene. We're having a good time."

"We're going from day to day, hour to hour. It's as free as it ever was back in the 60's. We're just doing it for that beautiful love of art and not for the money or hype. It might develop and it might not. If it does, it will be right on — it won't be mechanical; it will be organic. David might want to come and hang out with us or he might not. It's no big deal."

"Chris said that he might work with Gene and me playing acoustic guitar and mandolin. That's a new development. We've also been thinking about getting Bernie Leadon. George Harrison's not doing anything. Seriously. I jammed with him the other day and I said, 'George, what have you been doing lately?' and he looked at me with these big sad eyes like the world had beaten him over the head. It was the first night he'd played with anyone in a long time, and then the next night he went and hung around with Leon Russell. It was like I kicked him in the ass a bit."

If the Byrds do fly again, you can be sure it will be after taking cautious steps. They remember the bad feelings and pressures that did them in long ago.

"It got to the point where we fantasized being a group on the level of the Rolling Stones or Beatles, and all of a sudden it was reality," Clark said, analyzing their hard times. "The shock value was a bit much. We were overtravelled, too. Roger had been on the road with the Chad Mitchell Trio and Bobby Darin, and me with the Christy Minstrels. All at once it was like, hey, I've got to have a break." Clark promptly quit just before the group took off in a jet for a concert, using his fear of flying as his excuse (he had seen

a plane crash as a boy). Two years later, Michael Clarke was fired.

"We were being maniacs," McGuinn pointed out, regretting the latter incident.

"That whole period was insane for everyone," Clark agreed, "and it was real hip to be loaded and stoned out whenever you played. The paranoia creeps in."

On their recent tour, McGuinn and Clark played stone cold sober, even if McGuinn looked under the influence of something. When he sang "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" one night, he gazed wild-eyed into the spotlight and substituted some lyrics of his own: "Mama take this 12-string away from me/I can't play it anymore/Take it out in the forest/Plant it so it will turn into a tree." On other songs he was an animated bundle of energy, becoming a scurvy buccaneer in "Jolly Roger," and



EX BYRDS — GENE CLARK & ROGER MCGUINN

mocking the stupid poses a group like Aerosmith would take seriously in "So You Want to be a Rock and Roll Star."

"I approach these songs as an actor to get the point across," he explains. "So if I'm saying, 'Crazy lady, so hard to handle,' I'm thinking of the most beautiful, gorgeous woman you ever thought about in your life. You're just nuts you're so in love and she's got you doing anything." Not only is the approach different, but McGuinn and Clark are having the time of their lives together.

"It's a renaissance gig to me," McGuinn says excitedly. "It's a recycling of that energy that I haven't felt for 13, 14 years." The ecstatic feedback from fans has also helped sustain them. At one show, the people were still stomping 15 minutes after their third encore.

Where McGuinn and Clark go from here is anybody's guess, but Clark may have a clue. Over the years, several of his premonitions have come true. He knew that "Mr. Tambourine Man" would be a #1 hit and that the band would sign with Columbia (he drew the CBS logo and said "this is the one), and now he feels that he and McGuinn will end up recording or performing with Dylan.

"It's very likely since Dylan and I are on good terms and I'm in his new movie a lot," McGuinn says with assurance. What's this about a movie?

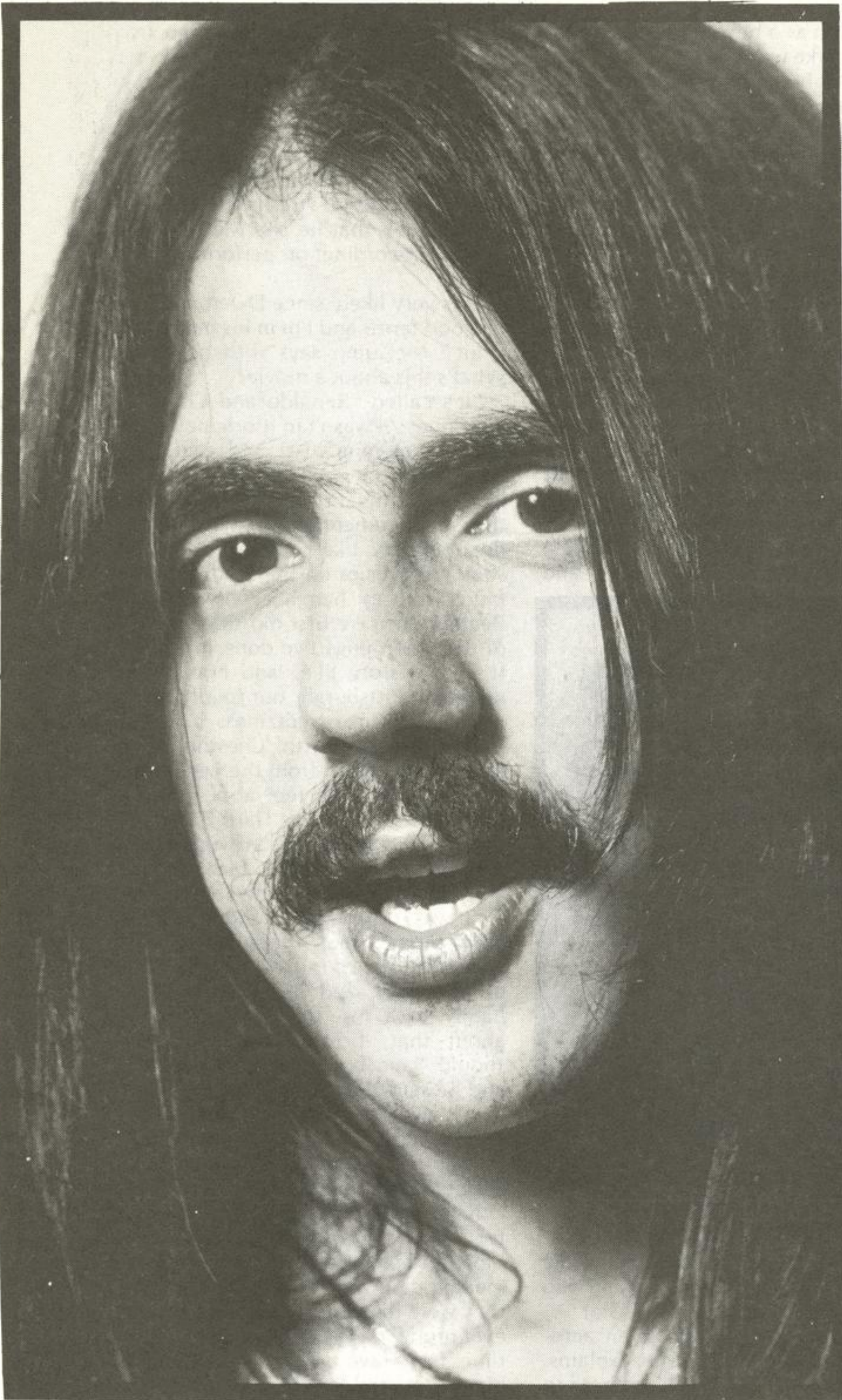
"It's called 'Renaldo and Clara,'" he continues. "I wasn't in it originally but I saw a screening of it and said, 'Hey, man, this is a great movie you've got here,' and I meant it sincerely. It's more than a documentary — it's a fantasy documentary, like Fellini went out and shot 130 gypsies on the road. It was as much fun as hanging out with the Beatles when we first did that, and one of the best things I've done in my life. It's not a story like, 'and now they're driving to Pittsburgh,' but totally off the wall, four hours of craziness. I open up the second half with 'Chestnut Mare' and am in and out from the beginning." And how does he feel about the last Dylan film he was in, "Hard Rain?" Did he like his segment where the closing credits rolled over his face and the announcer's voice drowned him out?

"I was upset that I didn't get any more time in that," he sighed. "Dylan wanted to get as much of himself in it as he could, and he did. He wasn't happy with me for confronting him about that. I said, 'Hey, man, you should have cut away to something,' and he said, 'But I didn't have anything to cut away to.'" If I had been holding up cue cards for McGuinn's comeback, to that line I would have written, "How about ME ME MEEEE????"

It looks as if things will all turn out for the best in spite of past stumbling blocks. The twosome is even discussing making their own film. With the Byrds, they were the closest thing America has ever produced to the Beatles and my all time fave rave group (as **Tiger Beat** magazine used to say). They've been to the top and they can soar up there again.

"I had that experience of being way up there with three Ferraris and maids and a huge mansion in the Hollywood hills," admits Clark. "I blew all my money and then all of a sudden had to pay taxes and was being ripped off by managers and so on."

"I had the same experience except no Ferraris," McGuinn concedes. "Just horses and a Mercedes." As Clark wrote in one song from his **No Other** album, a bit of truth that sums up the life of the Byrds, "What's been flying high must always touch the ground." ■



CRAIG CHAQUICO INTERVIEW

By Mark B. Halverson

Remember your sixteenth birthday? I certainly remember mine. I flunked my driver's test by rear-ending a city bus with my '58 Chevy Impala.

Craig Chaquico doesn't have any problem remembering his sixteenth birthday either. That's the day the budding flash guitarist was spirited to San Francisco to record a tune for Grace Slick and Paul Kantner's **Sunfighter** album.

That was in September of 1970. At that time Craig was working on some acoustic material in Sacramento with Jack Traylor, his high school English

instructor. Traylor had been an associate of Kantner's for ten years, and when his "Earth Mother" was included on **Sunfighter**, Chaquico was given the nod as the lead guitarist for the cut.

During the next few years Craig sharpened his chops with Traylor's folk/rock Steelwind entourage, played with Jerry Garcia on Paul and Grace's **Baron von Tollbooth** album and appeared on every cut but one of Grace's solo **Manhole** platter. By the age of twenty one the young rock novice had become a veteran of the contemporary music scene. He had appeared on a half

dozen albums (including Steelwind's **Child of Nature**) and hopped aboard four national Jefferson Starship tours. He had become every young rock guitarist's dream: a respected member of a nationally known band.

"When Steelwind disbanded," reported Craig, "I was asked to join a new, permanent group started by Grace, Paul and drummer John Barbata. I had appeared on some previous albums with them, more or less as a studio musician, as did our bassist/keyboardists David Freiberg (formerly with Quicksilver) and Pete

Sears (ex-Rod Stewart accompanist). Finally we all got together for **Dragonfly** and focused on the Starship rather than dividing our interests among other groups."

The centralization of musical endeavors worked very well indeed. **Dragonfly** went gold, followed by the double platinum **Red Octopus** (reportedly the most played album of 1976) and the platinum **Spitfire**.

"It all seemed to happen when we devoted our entire energies to just one project," commented Craig about the group's sudden resurgence into national prominence. "The recording techniques have been better for the Starship albums than in the past and our new producer, Larry Cox, has made a big difference in our sound. Not that the producers of those first Paul and Grace albums were bad, but for the new sound that we have today, Larry has really helped. And it's also pretty obvious that Marty Balin has a lot to do with the commercial appeal of the group."

"Since I first started with the group," he added, "I think my own style has changed, maybe gotten tastier. I like to play fast just to show that I can do it but there's a lot of songs now where I really slow down for contrast and versatility. I fell into overplaying at first but the more you musically mature, the more you realize what's right for each song. That's really important, especially in a group like ours, where a lot of the songs are keyed around the vocals. I like to play rowdy on the rowdy songs, sweet on the sweet songs and sensuous on the sensuous songs — but especially rowdy on the rowdy songs."

Along with the changes in Craig's music have come some changes in his lifestyle. Gone are the days of lugging around his own equipment and glueing on moustaches to play in clubs while still under age. Craig has picked up a small arsenal of guitars (including a '57 Les Paul), swapped his station wagon for a Porsche and moved into Marin County, north of San Francisco.

"I really like Marin," acknowledged Craig. "It's close to the City but it gives you the feeling, if not the fact, of being out in nature even though you can still hear the freeway at night. That serenity, as opposed to the fast life of a touring rock'n'roll band, makes a good balance, and for being able to create music that is really important."

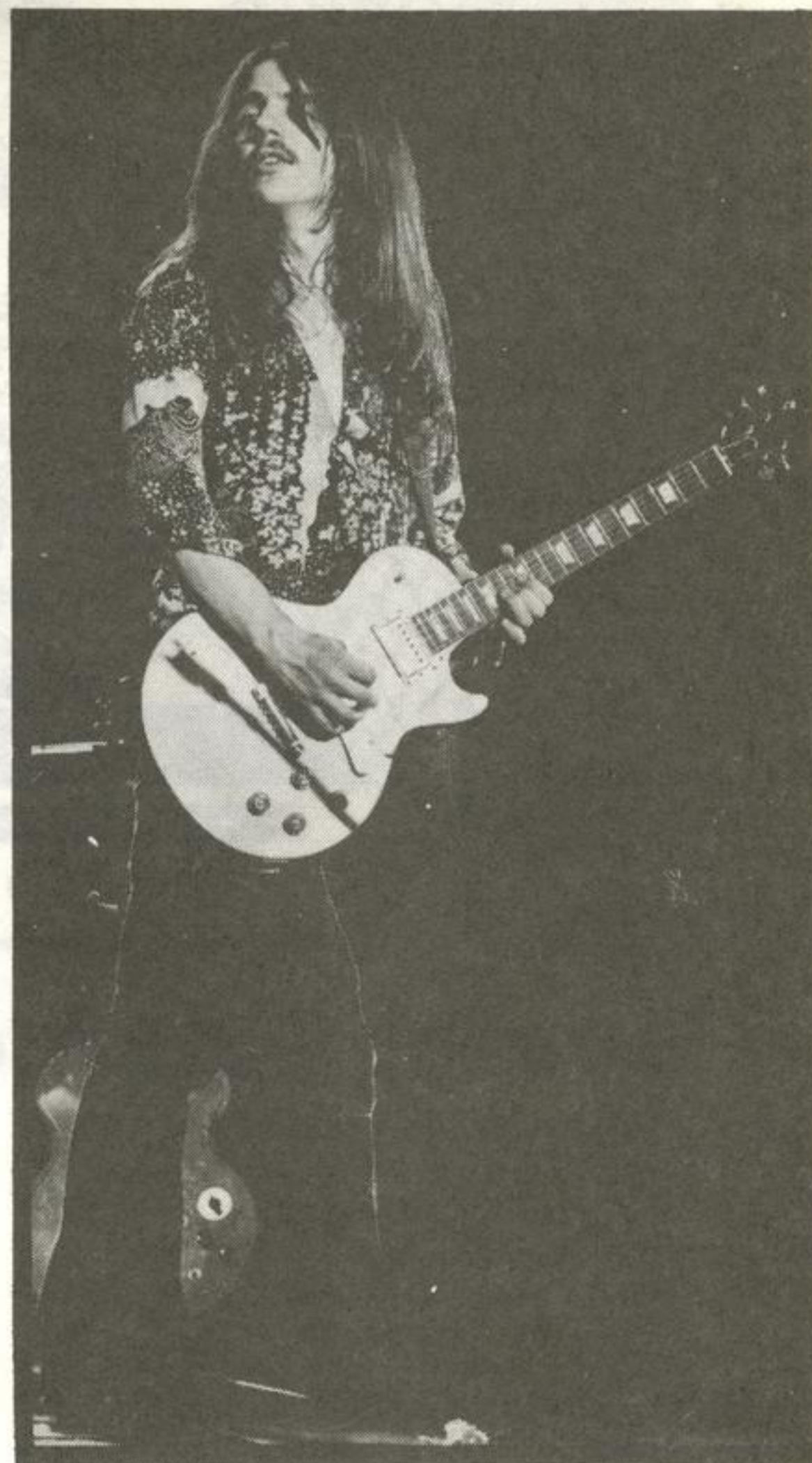
While reaping the rewards of his profession Craig has also had to come to terms with the loss of some personal privacy. "I can't say I've ever been misquoted," he admitted, "but there's one magazine interview I did where the guy asked me about what kind of guitars and speakers I use and stuff like that while a girl who was with him was more interested in the groupie side of the business. I answered her sort of candidly and said a couple of things I

never expected to see in print. All my musician friends said they couldn't believe all the shit I said, and neither could I. It turned out to be really embarrassing."

In addition to wrestling with their new album, the Starship is living up to the "peoples' band" reputation instigated by the Jefferson Airplane in the late sixties. Since a May 23rd free concert scheduled in Golden Gate Park was banned by the Park Commission, the group has pushed to receive the necessary permit for such an event.

"We've been trying to do it all year," lamented Craig, "but there's seven people on this park committee and they can't seem to agree that we should play. There've been some complaints from some of the park neighbors and maybe if I was a fifty year old guy living near the park I wouldn't want to hear rock'n'roll one day out of the year either. But they don't own the park, the park belongs to the people. It's really sad they don't let us do it, because there's never any trouble and we even have volunteers to clean up the park when we leave. Right now four of the committee members are voting against us and three are for us. If we can change just one more vote we'll be out in the park."

And what can we expect in the future from the Starship crew? "More albums and more tours," answered Craig. "As long as I can keep on playing I'll be happy." ■



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Sound Advice By Rob Bertrando & Gary Frankel

Since most of us read "Relix" for the music, an article (or articles) on the hardware side of stereo does not seem out of place. Over years of associating with music and stereos, I have noticed that the original purpose of "high fidelity," i.e. reproduction of the original as faithfully as possible, has been lost, to be replaced by an almost reverent regard for technology and its followers. Rather than talking about how a piece of equipment sounds, we tend to talk about how it measures; in time, one is listening only to the characteristic sounds of those parameters that are being measured, and the relation to the original sound of the music is ignored. These articles will hopefully have two main purposes: to correct the many inaccuracies and downright false information disseminated by so-called knowledgeable people (including manufacturers, magazines, and salespeople), and to improve everyone's ability to be a critical listener. In the long run, the most important factor in picking an enjoyable stereo system and not getting ripped-off is the "quality" of your own ears and your trust in them for making judgements.

First off, there is a common misconception that once the specs are good enough, or the price is high enough, the different amplifiers, preamplifiers, tape decks, turntables, tone arms, etc. will sound essentially the same. This is **absolutely false**, a point which cannot be overemphasized. Thus, knowing how to listen carefully is essential to choosing audio components. Unfortunately, except for a few select instances such as gross differences in frequency response or

distortion, specs are no help in describing how a piece of gear sounds, which is what it's all about.

The first step is to collect some recordings for reference. These should either be albums or high quality tapes that you are very familiar with, in terms of what the music sounds like "live." In general, acoustic music is a better reference, but electronically amplified can be a good reference in some situations. **Diga Rhythm Band** and **Old and in the Way** are two good references that many Dead heads may already have; this subject will be discussed further in a future article. It is important that you are using material you **know** to judge equipment, or comparisons are likely to be meaningless.

The best way to really listen to a component is to take it home for an extended time and preferably compare it directly against a similar component(s). If you can't do this, and most of us can't, then try to listen to a component for a period of time at a store, listening to various different reference recordings. Try if possible to compare only one type of component at one sitting — i.e. four different speakers or three different cartridges. Also, try to listen to all the possible candidates with the rest of the system (including the listening room) the same, as changes in one component can mask problems in another. Ideally, then, listen to the same speakers or cartridges you are comparing on a different set of electronics as a kind of control on the various interfaces. Obviously some of these steps aren't always possible, but try to follow them as closely as possible if you can't take the gear home for an extended comparison.

It is commonly stated that speakers

are the most important and variable part of an audio system; while this is almost certainly true, we would like to discuss another segment first for the benefit of record listeners. The phono cartridge and phono preamp make as much difference as the speakers in the sound that finally reaches your ears. It is a fairly accurate statement that no cartridge costing less than \$50 (and many which cost more) belongs in a stereo system which is listened to (as opposed to just being played). It is also an accurate statement that the phono input sections of most receivers and integrated amplifiers sound the same; this is because they **are** essentially the same — a single IC costing around \$1. In many ways it is because of this that on many systems live tapes sound so good compared to records. There really is a lot of information in that little groove, and the first steps are critical in extracting it. The first qualities to look for in cartridges are freedom from gross frequency response aberrations (e.g. a rising high frequency response found in some well-known cartridges), tracking ability, and low overall distortion. Other critical factors which are more obvious in high quality cartridges are the solidity of the spatial image, fine details in the instrument sounds, excellent transient response, and "air" around instruments and voices. All these qualities are dependent on the cartridge-tone arm matching as well, so beware. Phono preamps generally have the same problem areas, although here the so-called tube vs. transistor controversy arises as an additional complication. In general, in lower priced equipment, transistors have a harsh, hard sound which generally lacks accurate imaging but often has excellent detailing. Tubes usually have a smoother, sweeter sound with excellent depth and imaging but sometimes lacking in detail, especially in the bass. Of course, these are generalizations and the overall quality of the component is a more accurate indication of sound than whether it uses tubes or transistors. There are some quite good phono preamps in integrated components, the Advent receiver being a notable example, but in general good preamps are obtained only in separates (although some expensive big "names" have lousy phono sections). Price is a poor indicator of quality here.

Most turntables in common use come with their own tonearm, so pay some attention to that area when shopping for a table. Look for a low rumble figure as well, particularly in the subsonic area (unfortunately most turntable manufacturers do not specify rumble vs. frequency curves). Dual turntables generally do well in both these areas, and are well constructed as well. The more expensive tables are almost always manual, although some have end-of-record lift-off; the really excellent tables all require separate

tone arms. At present, the best tonearms for most high-quality cartridges are very lightweight (and **straight**, not S-shaped) with low bearing friction. Damped unipivot mounting is currently the most satisfactory mounting system. It must be remembered that the interaction of arm and cartridge is very important, so test your cartridge in different arms. One final note on turntables: all else being equal, belt drive generally is the best performing and the most reliable. Here as everywhere, though, overall quality of design and construction is more important.

Tape decks, and the tape medium in general, pose such complex problems that their discussion will be deferred until a later date, no sense getting too depressed right now.

Amplifiers are possibly the area with the most misleading advertising of all. All good amplifiers certainly do not sound the same; all measured specs may be the same, but they obviously are only a small part of the story. The amount of raw power an amplifier delivers is of importance in one aspect only — that it deliver enough power to the speakers to ensure adequate volume without clipping the amplifier.

Here again the tube vs. transistor battle emerges. Some older tube amplifiers with higher measured distortion than newer transistor designs sound significantly better than those newer designs. This is because the overall sound is dependent on imaging and depth-of-field (by these terms we mean the "space" and distinctiveness of the original sound), in which tubes do very well; on detail, where transistors are occasionally superior; and on previously unrecognized forms of distortion, such as transient intermodulation distortion (TIM), where the older tube designs were inherently superior to most transistor designs. In general, amplifier differences are less noticeable than difference in other areas (unless one amplifier is clipping where another is not).

Speakers: here may be the toughest area of all to choose. Warning — beware of speakers with a "flashy" sound; this is usually due to a boosted and/or distorted high and low frequency response. Stereo salespeople often do not know how to set up speakers optimally; this sometimes results in an invalid test as many speakers are very room sensitive. This is the most critical component to listen to

at home or in an extended listening session with another speaker whose sound you know well. Some of the important areas of speaker performance are: fine detail (electrostatics do a fine job here), a solid, well-defined, broad image field, smooth frequency response to maintain good harmonic balance, dynamic response, and distortion. All "state-of-the-art" speakers fail in some of these areas (i.e. there is no state-of-the-art in speakers), and there are tradeoffs involved in any price range. Remember, you will have to live with your choice, so try to avoid characteristics that will be aggravating and irritating in the long run.

Most of the audio magazines that accept manufacturers' advertisements cannot be too critical of any component; of all of them, only **Audio** seems to have redeeming features, in the form of its technical articles (this is avoiding the musical aspect of these publications). Of the underground mags, **The Absolute Sound** and **The Audio Critic** are the most dependable and comprehensive; **Sound Advice** is improving. It is a new and difficult area, but they can be helpful; it is *your ears*, though, which will be the best overall judge. ■



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- 4 prints entire band, Vol.4, #4 pges 16+17.
- 5 prints Pappa Jerry, Vol.4, #4 page 18, lower
- 2 prints Jerry Garcia, Vol.4, #4 pge 18 upper
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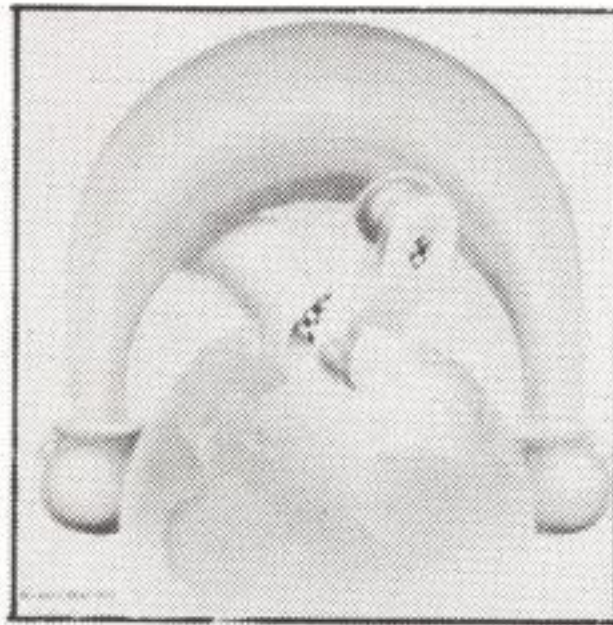


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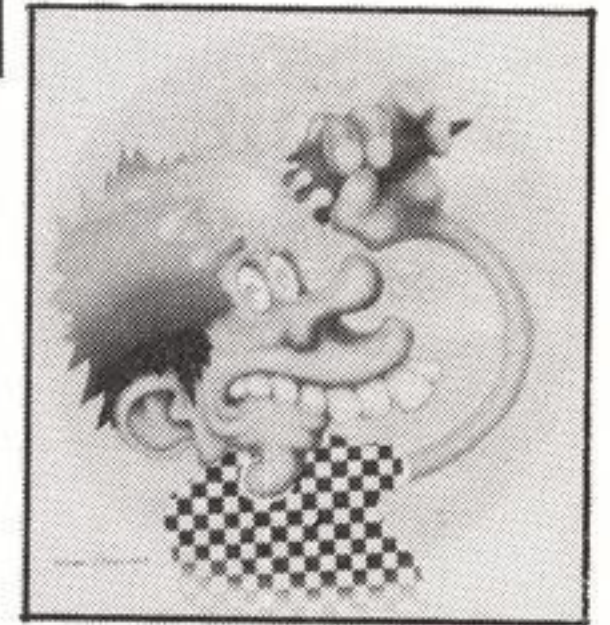


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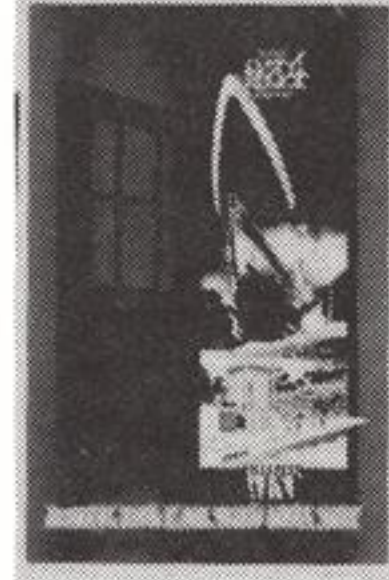
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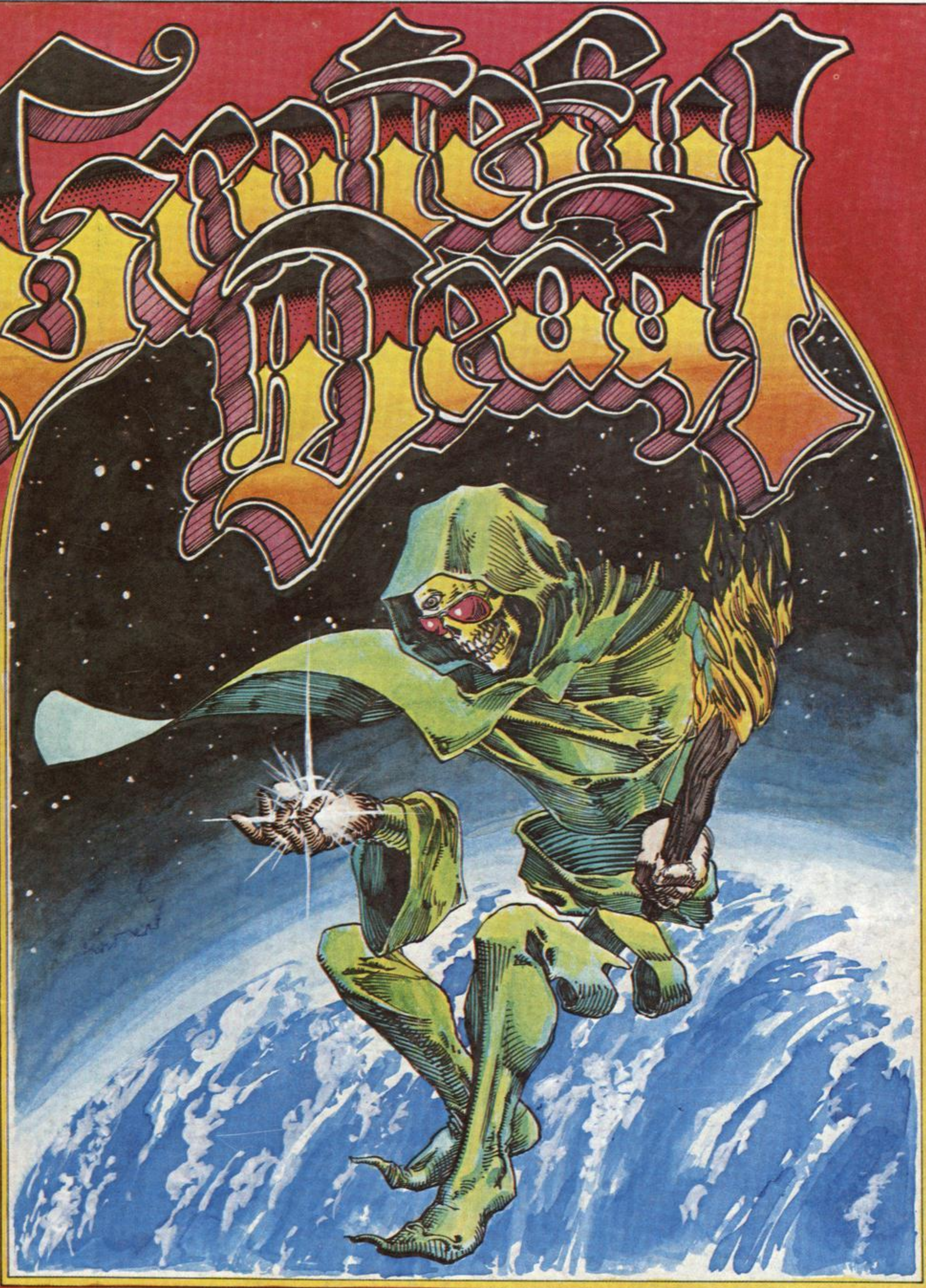


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