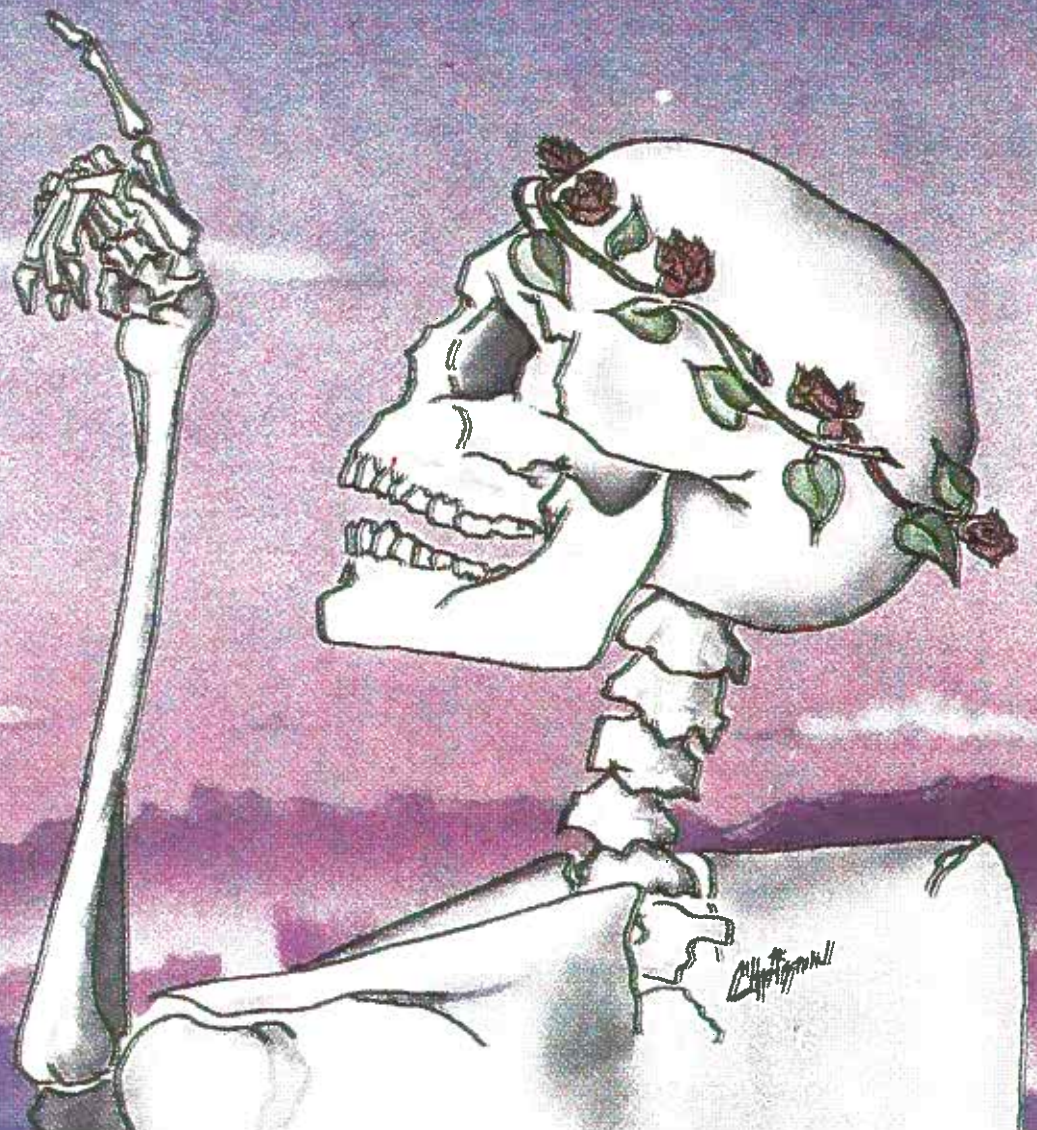


# The Golden Road

Issue 9  
Winter 1986



# Still gotta work that 8-hour day

Welcome to year three of *The Golden Road*! You know, when we first started toying with the idea of putting out this magazine, we had no idea how all-consuming the venture would become. Somewhere under the clutter of papers, magazines and debris that was once the guest room of our house, a normal life is waiting to be reclaimed. But since it would be hard to even find it, we'll just keep lurching from deadline to deadline with *The Golden Road* and look through the photo album to recall ancient memories of something called "leisure time." Cue the violins, please. But we're still having a good time with it, and judging from your comments, you are too. And your enthusiasm sure helps keep us going.

This might be an appropriate time to reintroduce ourselves for the benefit of those who haven't been with us since the first issue. Regan and I are both professional journalists who cut our teeth, so to speak, as editors of *BAM*, the West Coast's largest music magazine. Regan is currently an editor for the San Francisco *Chronicle's* "This World" Sunday magazine section; I am managing editor of *Mix*, the recording industry's leading trade journal. I've been seeing the band since March of 1970; Regan hopped on The Bus in 1980. For the past few years we've attended between 25 and 30 Dead shows a year, thanks in large part to the Dead's decision to play more California shows. Our jobs prevent us from doing much serious touring. We're in our early 30s and have been married for four and a half years.

Why do we put out this magazine? Because we're masochists, of course! No, no, that's not it. We do it because we feel there should be a magazine that reflects the intelligence and humor of the Grateful Dead scene, sheds light on areas of interest to Deadheads and articulates some of the issues that concern us all. Mostly, though, we're just trying to give a little something back to the scene that has enriched our lives so much. After two years, *The Golden Road* is essentially self-sustaining financially, though I can't see the day when it will actually support us. We possess neither the drive nor capitalistic acumen required to really make this a successful business. Think of us as merely the literary equivalent of a T-shirt vendor—with any luck we can brighten your lives a tad as we come up with a new "design" every three months or so.

Your input is always encouraged, of course. The magazine will continue to primarily reflect our own outlook on the Dead

and Deadheads (much to the chagrin of those who have complained that our view is "too West Coast" or "too opinionated"—right on both counts). But since our first issue, your suggestions, comments and criticisms have helped shape what we do, so by all means keep those cards and letters coming!

A few notes: We continue to get a lot of requests for information on how to obtain my book, *The Music Never Stopped*. The book is out of print and the publisher is now out of business, so finding it will be extremely difficult. I've elected not to reprint it on my own... If you'd like to hand out *Golden Road* leaflets at any of the upcoming East Coast shows, drop us a card and we'll try to zip a few out to you. (We could also use some help at West Coast shows!)... Hey, all you folks who are sending in checks for items listed in last issue's "Holiday Gift Guide": those products do not exist. It was a joke. As in "ha, ha, ha." There are no Phippen glasses, much as we wish there were.

Finally, our cover this time is by a longtime contributor to the magazine, Christin Adams. Her illustrations have graced several of our "Feedback" columns, and it was her graceful rose motif that decorated our "20 Years Dead" retrospective throughout '85. Christin is a graphic artist who lives in Salem, Massachusetts. Despite her address, to our knowledge, she is not a witch. Though a good dunking could give us a quick answer.

—BJ



By William Conte



**Published and Edited by:** Blair Jackson and Regan McMahon

**Written by:** Blair, except where noted

**Cover by:** Christin Adams

**Logo design:** Rich Kenny

**Design and Production by:** Blair and Regan, Pat Jones, Michael Zipkin

**Production Assistant:** Richard McCaffrey

**Photographers in this issue:** Jim Marshall, Richard McCaffrey, Ron Delany, Yoav Getzler, Robert Minkin, Steve Ringman, Mike Maloney, Herbie Greene

**Help on the Way:** Mary Eisenhart, John and Dave Leopold, Barbara Lewit, Bennett Falk, John Larmer, Robin and Stu Nixon, Steve Brown, Cynthia Johnston, Kelly Hise, Linda Johnson, Bobby and Peter Fiesel, Lou Tambakos, Lyle York, Bob Merrill and Totty

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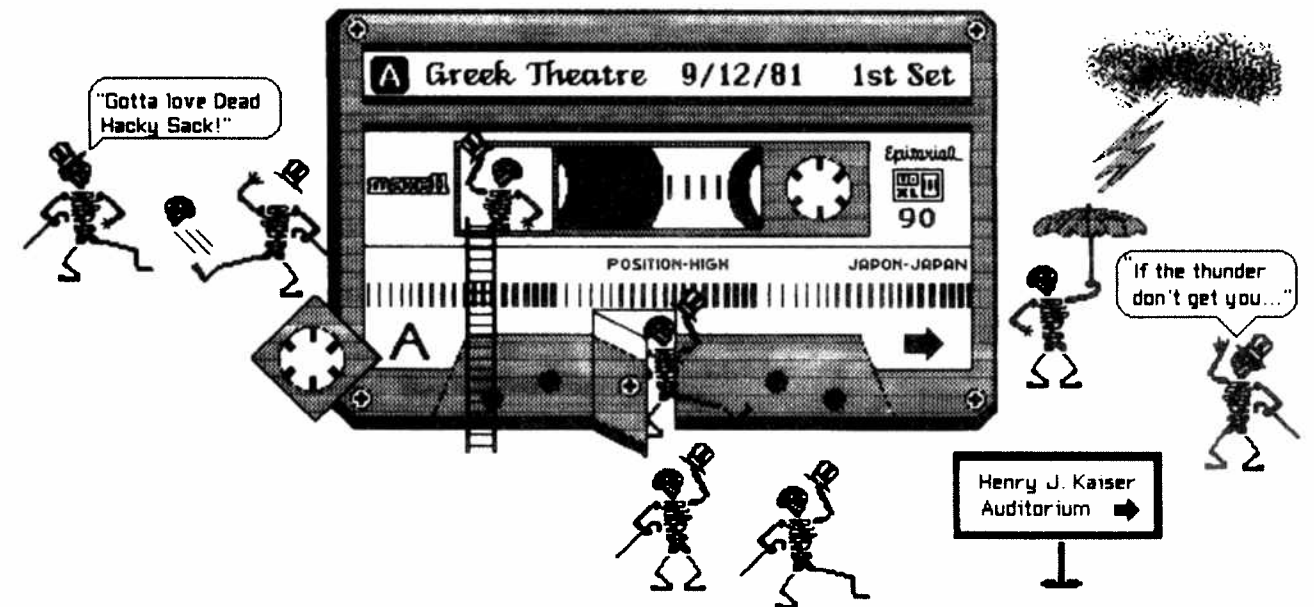
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## FEEDBACK



Macintosh art: Marty Takimoto, Oakland, CA

### High Voltage

My friend Mike is getting tired of me hijacking his copies of *Golden Road* all the time, so he said he'd be glad to loosen the spiked clamp from around my head and pull out the bamboo splints from under my toenails if I sent in my subscription order today. (He's a persuasive arguer.) So, here it is. I'm feeling better already!

Thanks for all the work, dedication and love you put into *The Golden Road*. It definitely recharges my batteries.

Marc Beskin  
Concord, CA

### Seekers Never Sleep

Understanding the basic cosmic nature of Grateful Deadism, we were immediately suspicious of the reason given in the last *Golden Road* for the 42-beat intro of "Beat It On Down the Line" (9-11-85). We simply cannot believe that the impetus for this opening outburst was the celebration of Mickey's 42nd birthday. Our scholars here have been working diligently, around the clock, trying to uncover a more significant explanation.

Perhaps the 42 trashings were to draw attention to the first use of either as an anesthetic in 1842, or were inspired by a bandmember's fascination with '42 Studebakers. Maybe someone enjoys Psalm 42: "... to the choir-master, the prayer of a man in exile." Or it could have served notice to the I Ching's 42nd hexagram: "Wind over thunder — mutual benefit." Of course we cannot disregard the importance of 1942, year of the first atomic chain reaction, as well as the Battle of Midway. And you'll recall that the number 42 proved to be the answer to the ultimate question, "What is life, the universe and everything?" in *A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Then again, maybe it was something Brent

said over lunch that day.

The possibilities are endless. We seekers may never know, but to try is to live. I'd hate to think we were paying these PhD's for nothing.

Scott Robertson & the  
Virginia Deadheads  
Williamsburg, VA

### Who Boo?

I especially liked last issue's Bill Graham interview. I've always respected Bill Graham, and it was refreshing to learn his thoughts and insights on the Dead and Deadheads. I only wish more people (including concertgoers) shared his understanding and appreciation of the Dead. Who are these people who boo him?

I agree with your idea of banning alcohol in hopes of quieting unruly behavior. However, the root of any of that kind of problem lies in the attitude of the adolescent who still thinks a concert is the scene to flex one's machismo — either by pushing and shoving or by screaming and hollering during the quietest passages of "Stella Blue" or the drums. To escape that, I head for the lobby. The chemistry is right, and there's a spirit among those dancing bears, with nothing left to do but smile, smile, smile.

Matt G. King  
Berkeley, CA

### I Second That Emotion

In last issue's "Set Lists," your comments about the Boreal Ridge show were right on (even though it took us only three hours to get out of the parking lot). But the worst part of the afternoon was the excessively hyped beer sale on both sides of the slope. All that beer, combined with the dusty heat, made for a

frightening atmosphere, which I think may have affected the Dead's performance.

I second that emotion on no beer sales at Dead shows. There is an anxious unease in the air at concerts where there is massive beer consumption. The atmosphere at Irvine, Boreal Ridge, even Ventura is so much tenser than at the Greek, the Frost or Chula Vista, where there is more real energy.

Come to think of it, these last three venues are all college campuses that generally don't sell alcoholic beverages. Maybe the Dead should consider playing more colleges, rather than arenas with established beer concessions. Most colleges have adequate facilities and would be eager for the added revenue.

Why not play more centers of "higher Deaducation"?

Jan Frankenberger  
Woodland Hills, CA

### Must've Been the Sprinkler

Re: Boreal. Not up to the level of Ventura for sure, but I had a great time. The secret was finding the water sprinkler way up the slope and dancing and hollering in it with the mud squishing between my toes. Didn't like it down in the pits, though. Too hot and too drunk.

Which brings me to the beer issue. I thought it was handled well at Ventura with the beer garden. The cold one between sets tasted so good. The answer I think is restricting the sale and consumption of suds to one area.

Dave Kettles  
Winnemucca, NV

### Party Till You Puke

I totally agree with you on the idea of banning the sale of alcohol at shows. Used to

# FEEDBACK

be that alcohol was the "Establishment's" drug—a giant desensitizer that certainly had no place at a Dead show. This year's Alpine Valley shows were an ugly, un-psychedelic mess due to the thousands of bottles and cans thrown all over. When we arrived we were greeted by a poor fool puking all over the beer-can mountain he'd created with his empties. Alcohol sucks!

Mike Duncanson  
Troy, MI

*Editor's note: We noticed a creative and ecological approach to the trash problem at Long Beach Arena: in addition to trash cans, recycling bins were provided in the parking lot for glass and aluminum. Maybe concerned Deadhead recyclers around the country could offer this service to their local promoters when the Dead come to town.*

## Bob Weir: Closet Percussionist

At the end of the "Sessions" article, you tagged on a note asking about any omissions. Well, on the 1984 LP *Peace on Earth*, by Country Joe McDonald (RAG 1019), Mickey Hart plays South American rain stick on "Let It Rain," and according to the credits, he plays gourd drum and big drum on "War Hero." Bob Weir is also credited for playing gourd drum on that track. I had no idea Bobby was a closet percussionist!

Ragbaby Records is a small label run by Country Joe and a friend. The address: Box 3316, San Francisco, CA 94119. I ordered the LP by mail, \$10 postpaid.

Barbara Wunder Black  
Ventura, CA

## Whether You Collect or Whether You Pay . . .

Aside from being a Deadhead, I'm a record collector (all kinds). So when I began reading last issue's "Sessions" article, I sensed a kind of challenge: I was sure I'd have all the records you would list, and some you didn't. Well, it didn't turn out that way, so I guess I'll have to go shopping!

But I can add one album to the list: Peter Rowan's self-produced *Texican Badman*, an Italian import on Appaloosa Records. It features Garcia, John Kahn, Billy Kreutzmann, David Grisman and Chris and Lorin Rowan. It was recorded in April 1974 at the Record Plant in Sausalito and in March 1979 in Austin, Texas. Musically, it is a mix of Rowan's styles over the years.

Also, a correction: There is a track-by-track listing for the 1973 *David Bromberg* album. It was on a lyric sheet. The Boys do not play on "Diamond Lil"; they play on "Shar-on" and "Demon in Disguise."

Cary R. Tenenbaum  
Mineola, NY

## Chocolate Boo Boo

A correction: In the September 1983 issue of *Goldmine*, the record collectors' magazine, Chocolate Watchband's rhythm guitarist, Sean Tolby, was asked if any other musicians had played on their albums. He replied: "Jerry Miller from Moby Grape played guitar on 'Devil's Motorcycle.' Jerry had a contract with Columbia, so we couldn't put his name

on the cover." A listen to the album seems to bear this out, as the track does sound more like Jerry Miller than Jerry Garcia.

Also, Billy Kreutzmann played drums on "Poppa Took the Bottle From the Shelf," on the album *James and the Good Brothers* (Columbia C30889), produced by Betty Cantor.

And Donna Thatcher is credited on the back cover of former Steve Miller Band drummer Tim Davis' 1972 *Pipe Dream* LP. His other album features John Kahn.

Jim McInnis  
Manteca, CA



By David Fairman for Jim Gardner

## You Just Gotta Poke Around

While reluctantly searching for someone to drill my teeth, I was pleasantly surprised to discover a Boulder dentist who combines nitrous oxide and headphones. Reclined in the chair and wired for sound, I slipped in 7-13-84. As he pumped me full of nitrous and good old Grateful Dead, I came upon an empty space. The doc trembled and exploded, left "Dark Star" in his place. The star came by and I got on, that's when it all began. It was doctor Dan astride the chair, on a trip to never ever land. And what a long strange trip it was . . . but not long enough: I was informed that I would have to return for a second session. Upon hearing the good news, I set an appointment for the soonest possible date.

It just goes to show, you don't ever know how entertaining a trip to the dentist can be. I advise all Heads to poke around their home town in search of a dentist with this magic combination.

Jim Gardner  
Boulder, CO

## Crash and Trash

We'd like to share a few unfortunate observations from the Fall Tour.

First, the gate crashers. Some crashing went on at least one night at Richmond and

one night at Brendan Byrne. At Brendan Byrne, we were up on the side, parallel with the tapers, when all of a sudden, people came rushing in through one of the floor entrances at the rear of the hall like a wild stampede. In their attempt to get lost in the crowd, a bunch of the gate crashers climbed onto the riser at the rear of the hall and madly flung themselves into the audience, right where a lot of the tapers were set up. From our vantage point, we could see them thrashing through the microphone stands and other equipment. It was pretty intense and scary for a few minutes there. Someone may have been badly hurt or some expensive taping equipment trashed. What really upsets us is that we're not used to seeing this type of trouble at Dead shows. Such behavior only adds fuel to the fire of those who are trying to ban the Dead from playing in their cities.

Second, the trash. What we saw at the Meadowlands parking area was disgusting! It literally looked as if folks had cleaned all of the trash out of their vehicles before splitting and left it in the lot. Our little group felt embarrassed by the great amounts of litter left by our brothers and sisters. Deadheads should be a little kinder to the environment during future tours. Packing along a plastic trash bag or two isn't that much trouble, and it sure helps keep the litter consolidated until it can be disposed of properly. Just a thought.

Showing a little responsibility is not a bad thing. I just hope that things don't get (or haven't gotten) so far out of hand that bad repercussions will be the result. That would only serve to circumvent the positive energy that the Dead stand for, and that we must cherish ourselves.

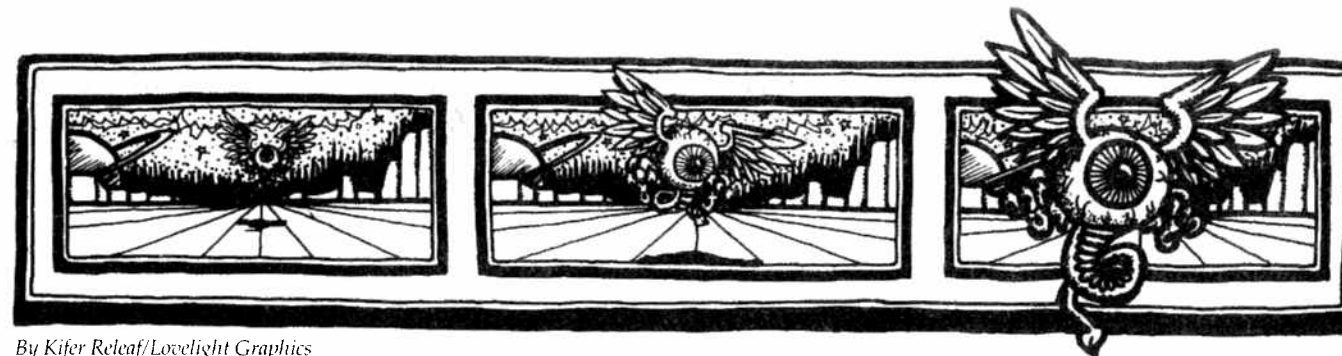
Dave Houde  
Rae Ann Houde  
Burke, VA

## Trouble With Tourheads

Hard to believe how time's fun when you're having a good fly! Can't describe how your efforts have improved things, brought people together, etc. And thanks to the GD for "legalizing" taping and devising a mail-order ticket system. Lately I've found the shows generally more relaxed and friendly—which for me is saying a lot, since I only get to the Northeast shows, which have a deservedly bad reputation. Most people have their shit together enough to mail in for tickets, and they come to the show to seriously enjoy the music; the rowdy yahoos who go only for the party are outside where they belong. Unfortunately, they all crashed the gates at the Meadowlands, so the security people were pissed off at everybody.

Last issue you mentioned that some vocal citizens in several cities the Dead played this year don't want the band to come back. Well, as a "respectable" citizen, I don't blame those people a bit, after having witnessed some tourheads in action on the Fall Tour. Here's one example:

My friends and I were hanging out in a hotel bar in Atlanta the night before the Fox shows, watching the seventh World Series



By Kifer Releaf/Lovelight Graphics

game, talking sports with the bartender and the other patrons. Meanwhile these tourheads—about five or six of them—were having a feast at a table. They came over and asked us for tickets (and everybody else at the bar, who obviously had none), and a second later they were gone—the old "dine and dash"—sticking the restaurant with a \$55 bill. All of a sudden everybody in the place looks at us and it's like, "Hey, you're one of them. We don't like your kind around here." We had to leave immediately; they were pissed at us, even though we left an extra-large tip and tried to explain that "it takes all kinds," etc. I think if I ever saw a Hartford security guard abusing one of them I could only think, "Maybe he'll knock some sense in."

Incidents like running checks and crashing gates hurt us all: next year, the place where the incident occurred will be a total police state and the locals will be hostile. So for the

good of all of us, something needs to be done.

Bob Messina  
Rocky Hill, CT

## Never Again . . . Please

My wife and I have seen the Dead at just about every U.S. venue they've played in the last eight years. Nowhere do you get the depersonalized treatment you get at the Meadowlands. Sunday night I was busted for having a shirt (with a clearly non-Dead design) in the bed of my truck, which I was offering to trade for a ticket to the next night's show (a sign explained this). After being processed in the Arena's basement, I was told to leave the premises and never return to the Meadowlands complex. Needless to say, we still enjoyed a very hot show.

A lot of Heads did not get into the show, as extra tickets were going for \$50 to \$100—the prices set by the low-life slime scalpers

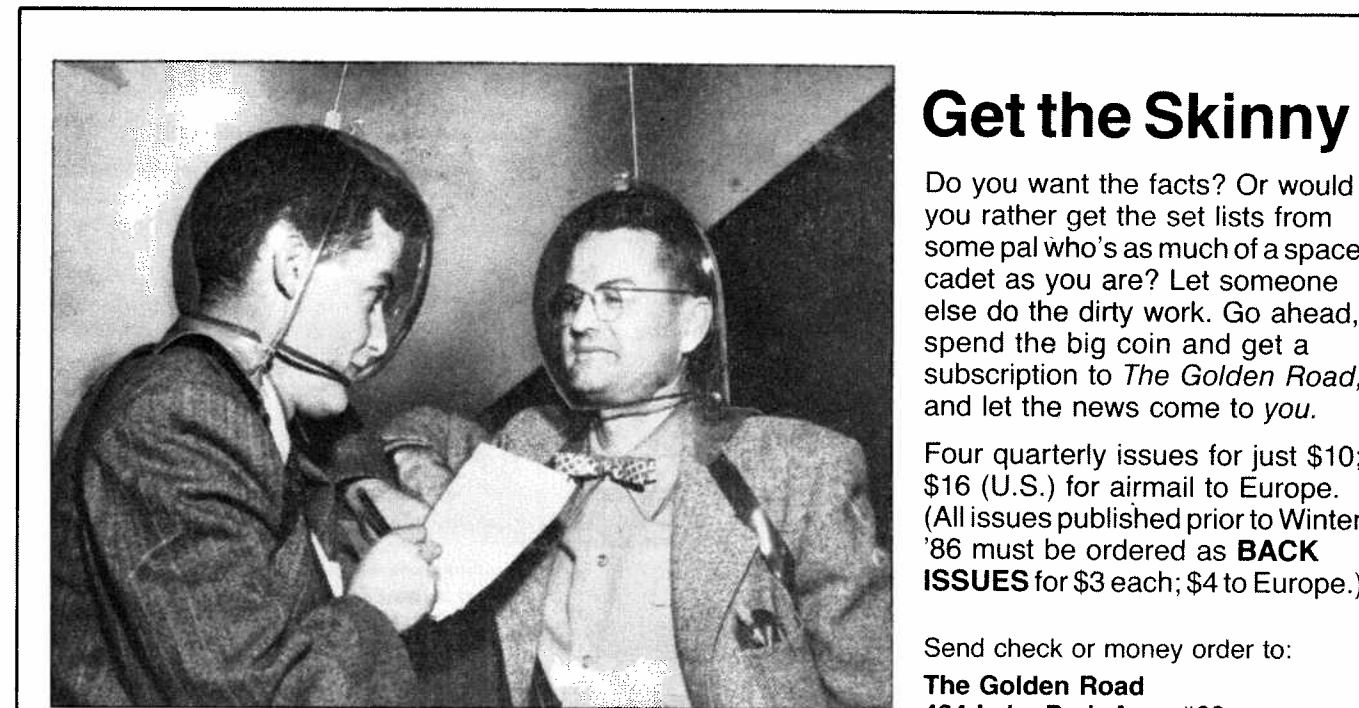
who lined the fence. New Jersey's anti-scalping law, which limits resale ticket prices to \$3 over face value, was never enforced. The security guards were more concerned with busting female Heads for displaying jewelry. When Springsteen played the Meadowlands scalpers were arrested and taken away. Why was there a different standard for the Dead shows? We think tickets should be handled through the Dead ticket office exclusively. Sell most of the tickets through the mail and leave 1000 or so for the day of the show.

This is a plea for the Boys to never play the Meadowlands again!

Vince and Sue Perrotti  
Babylon, NY

## Set It Straight

The following tunes were omitted from your set lists last issue: At Red Rocks 9-7-85, "Loser" came after "My Brother Esau"; at



"Was that 'Looks Like Rain' into 'Deal,' or was there a break?"

## Get the Skinny

Do you want the facts? Or would you rather get the set lists from some pal who's as much of a space cadet as you are? Let someone else do the dirty work. Go ahead, spend the big coin and get a subscription to *The Golden Road*, and let the news come to you.

Four quarterly issues for just \$10; \$16 (U.S.) for airmail to Europe. (All issues published prior to Winter '86 must be ordered as **BACK ISSUES** for \$3 each; \$4 to Europe.)

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# FEEDBACK

Henry J. 9-11-85, "Deal" closed the first set; and the next night there, 9-12-85, "It's All Over Now" followed "Bertha."

To quote yet another oft-spoken phrase: Thanks a lot; see ya later.

Linda Rose Flinkman  
Santa Monica, CA

## More Werewolves

My sources say the boys also did "Werewolves of London" 7-3-78 at the St. Paul Civic Center St. Paul, Minnesota and at Red Rocks 7-8-78 as the last of a three song encore — "Terrapin," "Saturday Night," "Werewolves" — the so-called third set at the Rocks.

Bruce Kent  
Arvada, CO

## Theory #423

I think Don Henley's song can be taken much more literally than many of your readers have taken it. The tune could simply be a love song for a girl who was a Deadhead and left him to follow the summer tour. That would make the "Boys of Summer" the Grateful Dead.

Bert Rawson  
Irvington, NY

## Have It Your Way...

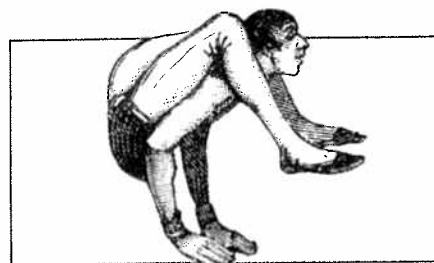
I find the attitude expressed in last issue's letter titled "If I Had My Way" extremely disheartening and downright selfish. Instead of complaining and criticizing, I think it is about time that we Deadheads thanked the Grateful Dead for doing what they do, and doing it the way that they do it! They don't have to play New Year's Eve, they don't have to give us a light show, they don't have to use the best sound and light equipment for shows, they don't have to play the Greek Theatre every year, etc., etc. They obviously get off trying to make the presentation of their work just a little bit nicer for all of us. No other band in music today puts more time, energy and money back into the organization in order to do this. And they are constantly creating and developing new ideas to accommodate the needs of different factions of Deadheads (e.g. the tapers' section, mail-order tour ticket sales).

It is this refining process that forced them to move the New Year's Eve shows to a larger venue; it was not a desire for extra money. I think the organization should be applauded for caring enough to try to make a good scene even better.

If you demand intimacy and good sound on New Year's Eve (as the letter writer last issue does), then listen to *American Beauty* in your

living room. The rest of us had a great time at the Oakland Coliseum.

Rick Sullivan  
Berkeley, CA



## Just a Few Words

I had planned on sending a long, witty, thought-provoking, ultra-cool, fascinating, purple, legible, queasy, spastic, Freudian, wonderful, Canadian, friendly, nylon, imposing, alphabetic, fried, male, helpful, resilient, mere, harmonious, grumpy, swollen, pouty, enigmatic, innocent, organic, woolly, aquamarine, circumstantial, stable letter, but my knee is itching, so maybe later.

Steve Murray  
Barry's Bay, Canada

P.S. When are the Boys going to play in this Bay Area?

# DEADLINE

What is the largest audience to ever view the Grateful Dead? Well, that would probably be the many millions who saw the band's two appearances on *Saturday Night Live* in the late '70s. But the most people to ever see an entire Dead set were unquestionably the viewers who caught this past New Year's Eve broadcast over the USA cable network — the first national telecast of a Dead show. (The band's Closing of Winterland show in 1978 was broadcast in the Bay Area, and their Halloween '80 show from Radio City was shown by closed-circuit in theatres in the East and Midwest.)

The Dead had been trying to set up a TV broadcast on New Year's for a couple of years, but only on their terms: that they produce the broadcast themselves and that the carrier run the show uninterrupted. That ruled out the major networks immediately, of course (they'd rather have Dick Clark and certifiable "stars" anyway). PBS has a strong national network, but most of the individual affiliates don't broadcast past 1 a.m., and the New Year's telecast began at 2:30 a.m. on the East Coast. At the USA network the Dead found personnel sympathetic to the band, who convinced the company's top brass that showing the Dead's concert would be more popular than their standard fare for the wee hours.

Once negotiations were completed, the logistics of the show were turned over entirely to the Dead. They hired director Len Dell' Amico (who directed their 1980 videos and telecasts and who is overseeing the long-form video the band has been working on for the past year), the hosts — Bill Walton and comedian Tom Davis, who got crazed help at midnight from Ken Kesey and Father Guido Sarducci — and One Pass Video, for state-of-the-art equipment and technicians.

The video end of the telecast went smoothly (despite some terrestrial interference that marred the video feed on SF's KQED). Having worked with the Dead on and off since 1978, Dell' Amico knows the band inside out and, more importantly, knows the music so well that the live editing (from five cameras) was always right in tune with the music on-screen. Rarely do any of us see such rich detail as Garcia's grimace when Weir tells him he wants to play "Man Smart Woman Smarter." John Cutler did a fine job with the audio, too; a difficult task, given the extreme limitations of television. By the middle of "Sugaree," his mix was just about perfectly balanced, though somewhat lacking in echo and



It's Edgar Allan Poe! It's Mr. Ed! It's George Bush! More New Year's photos are inside.  
Photo: Ron Delany

the hall's ambience. An added treat for the viewers was the inclusion of one number each by the Neville Brothers and Olatunji during the half-hour before the Dead came on.

And what a great moment in TV it was when the lights went down and Ken Kesey tried to describe the New Year's float! Screaming to the point of being hilariously incoherent, he first informed the no-doubt befuddled viewing audience that it was a replica of the Civil War battleship *Merrimac*, and then exclaimed that the huge heads that adorned the float were representations of everyone from FDR and Rasputin to Eric Clapton and Sam the Eagle from *The Muppet Show*! "This must have cost millions!" he shouted at the peak of his hyperbolic rantings, which will not, we hope, go unnoticed at the Emmy Awards next year.

How many people watched the extravaganza? Well, according to the Nielsen ratings, which are notoriously Middle American and obviously not reflective of Deadhead tastes, the show earned a .8 rating, representing about 250,000 households, or more than half a million viewers. A better guess is probably a little over a million viewers during the initial part of the telecast. One indication that a lot of people were watching is the phenomenal response the Dead got to a one-minute commercial, aired just once at 4:45 a.m. (EST), urging Heads to call an

800 number and leave their name and address so the Dead could communicate with them at a later date. As of mid-January, calls were still streaming in continuously day and night!

According to our sources, everyone involved with the telecast was happy with what went out over the airwaves. The USA network got good ratings, the Dead were satisfied with the video, the sound and their performance, and of course thousands of Deadheads were ecstatic to have been able to join the party in absentia. Might this become a new tradition? Don't bet against it.

Saints be praised! Here it is January and we haven't heard a single rumor that the band is breaking up and won't tour in '86! Actually, the Dead have plotted virtually their entire year. We're not at liberty to divulge too many dates, but we can give you at least the *shape* of the touring year. Before we get to that, though, let's put two rumors to rest. 1) The Dead will not be playing Europe in '86 ('87 is a slightly better bet); and 2) there will be no spring shows in Hawaii.

Here's what is confirmed so far: March 19, 20, 21 — Hampton, Virginia; March 23, 24, 25 — Philadelphia Spectrum; March 27, 28 — Portland, Maine; March 30, 31 and April 1 — Providence; April 3, 4 — Hartford; April 11 — Las Vegas; April 13, 14 — Irvine Meadows, Irvine, California; April 18, 19, 21, 22 — Berke-

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or So It Looks From Space



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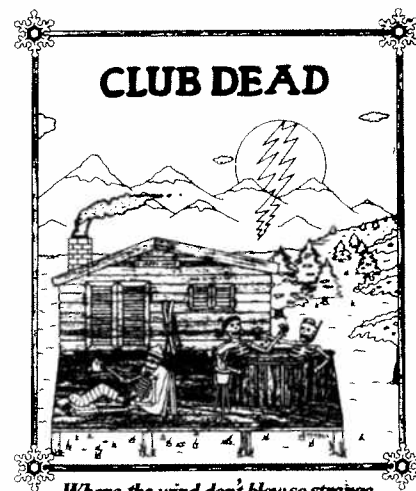
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# DEADLINE

ley Community Theatre (Rex Foundation benefits). The sight of Hartford back on the list may cause more than a few raised eyebrows, but we understand the police in that city have assured the Dead that they will be more tolerant than in the past. We'll see.

Now, very tentatively, here's how the rest of the year looks: Bay Area venues like Cal Expo (Sacramento) and Frost (Stanford) are a possibility in early May; the Greek will likely be in mid-June again; the northern Midwest tour (possibly hitting Minneapolis, too, this time) will come in late June and early July; the high altitude tour—including Red Rocks and perhaps Park West and Boreal—will happen during the first weeks of August (rumor has it Red Rocks will revert to night shows); late September and early October finds the band in the deep South (maybe with stops in New Orleans and Atlanta's Omni) and the East Coast, including three nights at Madison Square Garden (hallelujah!); the fall tour then ends with shows in Chula Vista in mid-October, a trio of Bay Area dates around Halloween, and two early November gigs at Long Beach. A few other shows will probably be sprinkled in there as well. Certainly every effort will be made to get up to the Pacific Northwest at some point, and we also hear that there may be a couple of *large*, stadium-type shows with other bands on the bill.

As always, we urge you to check the Grateful Dead Hotline periodically. Some of you Western Heads might not be aware that since the end of '85, the Dead have been using a more efficient Hotline system that allows many more calls to get through, so you shouldn't get that frustrating busy signal quite as often. The numbers, once again, are (415) 457-6388 (West) and (201) 777-8653 (East). Remember, none of the info above is etched in stone, but it should be substantially accurate.

The Grateful Dead were among the revelers who helped Bill Graham celebrate his 20th anniversary in the music business at a private party held at the original Fillmore Auditorium November 27. About 1000 invited guests—members of the original San Francisco bands, former Graham employees, friends and local media types—enjoyed a sumptuous buffet dinner and about five hours of fine music, complete with a spectacular light show that lit up the stage plus an entire wall of the ballroom (which has been completely restored and is being booked again by Graham).

First up on the bill was a quartet consisting of three original members of



Jamming at the Fillmore: (L-R) John Lee Hooker, Buddy Miles, Huey Lewis, Bob Weir. Photo: Steve Ringman/San Francisco Chronicle

Country Joe & the Fish (Joe, Barry Melton and David Cohen) and keyboardist Barry Flast. They ran through a very psychedelic set of tunes from the first two Fish LPs that succeeded in getting some of the well-dressed crowd of Fillmore veterans hopping on the dance floor. (The Family Dog's Chet Helms remarked from the stage at one point during the evening how *healthy* everyone looked, and he was right.) Next came a blistering set by the Kantner-Balin-Casady Band that powerfully mixed new original material with a few well-selected Jefferson Airplane and Starship tunes. In one of the most moving moments of the evening, Marty Balin called the Airplane's first female lead singer, Signe Anderson, up onstage to share a microphone with Paul Kantner on a great version of "It's No Secret." We're predicting you'll hear more from Kantner-Balin-Casady. They have a lot of the Airplane's fire, while managing to sound both commercial and contemporary. Certainly they are light-years more interesting than the disgraceful band billing itself as the Starship these days.

The best-received set of the evening (judging by the action on the dance floor) was turned in by a group featuring several members of the Sons of Champlin (including Bill Champlin and Terry Haggerty), a horn section and guest vocalist/

harmonica player Huey Lewis. It's easy to forget that a lot of the most popular SF club bands in the late '60s/early '70s played dance-oriented R&B, and that is precisely the sort of party music this group delivered. Hot stuff!

In the days before the party, and during the early part of the evening, it was widely rumored that the Grateful Dead had agreed to "headline"—a fitting notion, since they are the most popular band to have emerged from the Fillmore scene. All of the members of the band were in fact present at the party, at one time or another, and the Dead's sound and road crew had brought equipment for a set. But for reasons that have never been fully explained, the band ultimately declined to play. Instead, the closing set that evening was a meandering all-star jam session that included Weir, Kreutzmann, ex-Quicksilver members John Cipollina and Greg Elmore, Huey Lewis, John Lee Hooker, former Cold Blood belter Lydia Pense (who sounded phenomenal!), Jack Casady, Buddy Miles and a few others.

All in all, it was one of the best parties we've been to in ages—the sort of friendly, intimate gathering that could only happen in San Francisco. And if you're ever out in the Bay Area, by all means check out the Fillmore. It's unreal, in the best sense.

Bob Weir made a rare "solo" appearance at a benefit concert dubbed "Cowboys for Indians" held at the Berkeley Community Theatre October 14. Resplendent in a white cowboy hat, Weir fronted an acoustic band featuring David Nelson, Tom Stern, Sandy Rothman, Ed Neff and Steve Patier for zippy versions of "The Race Is On," "Mama Tried" and "Muleskinner Blues." Later, he joined Ramblin' Jack Elliott during his brief set, on "Whinin' Boy Blues." The concert, put on by the SEVA foundation, raised money for a number of American Indian-related concerns, ranging from a health clinic to bilingual education materials and reforestation of Indian reservations.



Weir and David Nelson at "Cowboys for Indians" benefit. Photo: Mariah Healy

We caught up with Mickey Hart a while back and asked The Busy One about his convalescence from back surgery before the fall East Coast tour. His problems, we learned, stemmed from an incident several years ago. "I fell off Bill Graham's stage at Long Beach," he related with a laugh. "There was a curtain at the back of the stage but no railing. It was during the break, and I was standing with Graham and Ram Rod drinking a glass of wine. I had to get something on the other side of this little area, and I had to step around these equipment cases that were against the curtain. So I stepped *through* the curtain and BOOM! I fell about eight feet down. At the time I didn't know how badly hurt I was, and actually it didn't give me trouble for a long time. But over the years it became aggravated more, so I had to do something." The "it" was a ruptured disc. Mickey's surgery involved cutting off the piece of the disc that protruded onto the nerves.

"From the operation to the first gig was five weeks and one day," Hart re-

members. "The first show at the Sportatorium [in Florida] was one of the most anticipated days of my life. We hadn't played in a long time, and I couldn't really train too hard because I was just getting out of bed a week and a half before the shows. They wanted to cancel the tour originally, but I didn't want to. Having that tour hanging out there in front of me like a carrot is exactly what I needed. I knew I could do it."

Hart admits that at the beginning of the tour, "my lateral movement was really cut down. I had to keep myself sort of straight and I couldn't reach too far to my right or left. At the beginning, Kreutzmann kept looking at me weird because he thought I was trying to play too hard too fast. He sort of walked me through the first few gigs and kept me

under control, because the passion of the music carries you away. I'd be at The Beast about to go wild and he'd say, 'Be cool. Relax!' I needed that.

"I'm glad it's over. That's a pretty scary thing for a drummer—especially a drummer—to go through."

In other Mickey news, his wonderful *Apocalypse Now Sessions* record of a few years back is being released on Compact Disc by Wilson Audio Records. "It's gorgeous, much better sounding than I remember it," Hart says of the CD. "It sounds like the heavens opening up."

Mickey also did some work with African master drummer Olatunji and his band at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley in early January. You can be sure that



# DEADLINE

Olatunji has never been captured on a 32-track digital recorder, so that eventual record should be special indeed.

Also coming out on CD, from New England-based Rykodisc: *Old & In the Way*.

By now, most of you have heard the sad news about the death last fall of Michael Linah—publisher of the *MIKEL* newsletter. I didn't know Michael well; I met him on only a few occasions, the last time being at New Year's in '84, when he was in the thick of his long, hard battle with cancer. He was a friendly, intense individual, whose selfless love of the Dead showed in the newsletter and stickers he produced and handed out free at shows for a couple of years. *MIKEL* was an important communications link in the Deadhead chain, not only because of its role in disseminating information, but because it gave Heads a forum to communicate with each other.

A few facts about him that you might not be aware of: coincidentally, he and Garcia shared the same birthday (August 1, 1942); since the early '60s, when he



The *MIKEL* memorial sticker handed out in Long Beach

was a student at MIT, he was heavily involved in competitive bridge; in fact, until his death he made his living as a bridge tournament director and was widely respected among bridge players for his encyclopedic knowledge of the Laws of Bridge.

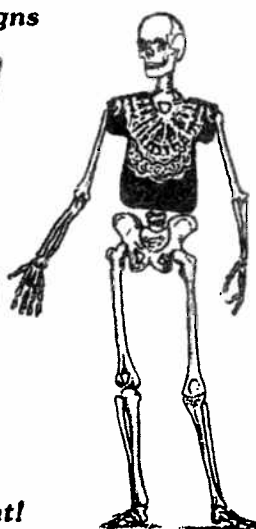
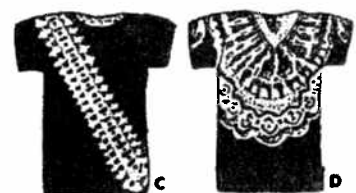
A number of Michael's friends in his home base of Southern California took

the occasion of the November Long Beach shows to distribute memorial stickers honoring him, even printing up a newsletter in his memory. Whether the newsletter can or should continue without his guiding hand (as has been suggested) is open to debate, but one thing is certain: he made a lot of people happy with his work, and his spirit will live on.

Did you ever wonder what the groups who receive money from the Rex foundation benefits do with the moolah? Well here's one example: in late November, the Rex Foundation approved a grant of \$10,000 to the San Francisco Unified School District's Music Programs to purchase new musical instruments for the schools. Ever since the infamous, fiscally conservative Proposition 13 was passed in California several years ago, schools have had to cut back on so-called "non-essential" programs, and students have been getting by with old, broken-down instruments. So the Rex money answered a pressing need. (Cheers for Deadhead attorney Joel Siegal, who helped facilitate the donation.)

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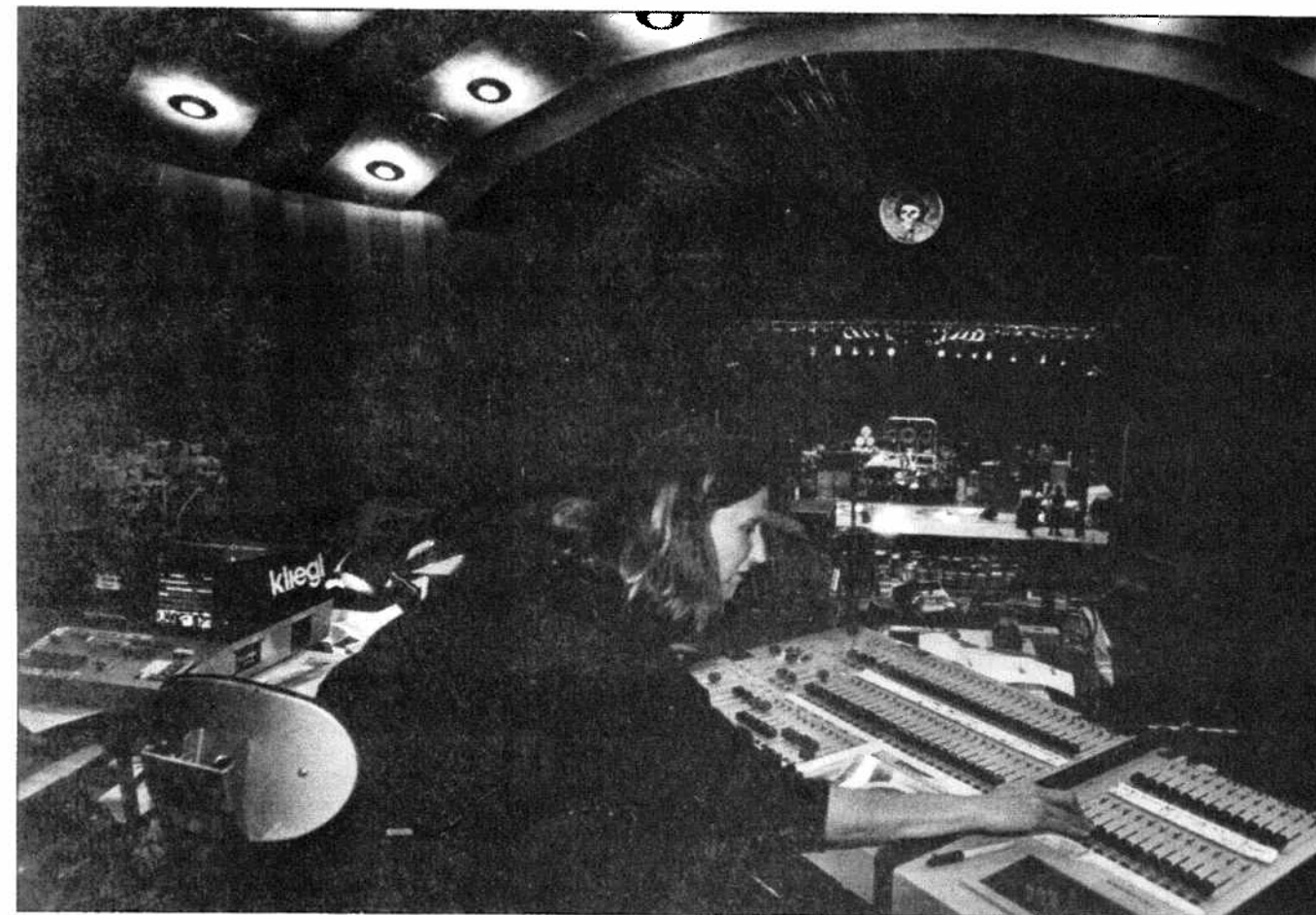
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# Candace



## If the thunder don't get you Then her lighting will

By Blair and Regan

To label Candace Brightman a lighting designer is a bit like calling the Grateful Dead a rock and roll band. It's true, but also hopelessly inadequate and incomplete. Rather, Candace is a sculptor whose medium is lights instead of clay or metal, an architect whose constructions are ephemeral beams of color that dance briefly through a darkened room and then disappear. Her lighting is unique in the same way that the Dead's music is: ever-changing and always ad-

Before a show at Berkeley Community Theatre.  
Photo: Bill Knowland/Oakland Tribune

venturous, yet with its own identifiable character. *No one* mixes unearthly oranges, greens, purples and reds the way Candace does during a good, spacey jam, and she has proven herself a master at using lights to animate what is, most would agree, a visually static group. Every tour reveals a new wrinkle in her art, whether it's figuring out new ways to bounce light off mirrors, or building new shapes with light that radically change our perception of the stage and the band.

Though she has worked with the Dead on and off (mainly *on*) for 15 years now, it is only in the past four—since the introduction of the computer-controlled mobile Panaspot lights operated by Dan English—that her lighting has begun to

truly reflect the scope of her imagination. She had to wait for technology to catch up with her creativity.

Her only limitations appear to be budgetary. "We're usually working with fewer than 100 lights," she says. "Big bands that do these marathon tours sometimes use 1000. But when you do a gigantic tour, the per-show expense for rental is much less. The way the Dead works, though, is we go out for three weeks, come back for a month, go out for a few days, come back, and that makes the rental very expensive. It would be prohibitive to take out many more lights than we do."

The Dead seem to recognize Candace's importance to the overall concert experi-



Berkeley Community Theatre, March '85. Photo: Ron Delany

ence and, the occasional money battle notwithstanding, give her free rein to implement her ideas. That includes her "gift" to the Dead and Deadheads on the occasion of the band's 20th Anniversary: the return of a full light show. Working with a number of skilled technicians, Candace put in long hours all summer to prepare the spectacular light show that accompanied the band's run at Oakland's Kaiser Convention Center in September, and then again at New Year's. It's unclear whether the light show has a future with the Dead — it is expensive and at New Year's it proved problematic — but Candace remains a firm believer that there are nearly limitless possibilities for visuals at Dead shows, from intricate abstract slide presentations to computer-generated special effects. "I'd love to see Jerry's guitar up on a screen and then have dragons coming out of it," she muses.

Candace was raised in affluent Winnetka, Illinois (a suburb of Chicago), and attended St. John's College, a school known for its rigid "Great Books" program "which prepared you to be an enlightened, well-educated member of the unemployed," she says with a laugh.

At St. John's she became interested in the technical side of theatre and worked on set designs for several school productions. Upon graduation in the mid-'60s, she moved to New York "to break the umbilical cord from my parents" and immersed herself in that city's vibrant "little theatre" scene. Her introduction to the world of rock lighting was literally a case of being in the right place at the right time. She gained her early experience at such hallowed New York venues as the

Anderson Theatre, the Fillmore East and the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester. As bands moved from small halls to places like Madison Square Garden, she went with them, adapting her craft to every kind of environment.

Though rock and roll lighting has been her bread and butter for most of her professional life, through the years she has taken little sabbaticals to explore other areas — working on theatrical productions and even on a few low-budget Roger Corman films.

We've wanted to talk to Candace since our first issue, but she was reticent; she thought it would be impossible to adequately articulate her ideas about lighting. In Issue Two (Spring '84) we ran an in-depth interview with Dan English in which he discussed some of the practical aspects of the Dead's lighting system. Here we offer the companion piece to that article, in which Candace breaks her silence and talks about her career and concepts. We found her to be warm, funny and as animated as her art as she bounced from subject to subject. She's one more reason the Dead are a "band beyond description."

*You moved to New York at a time when Greenwich Village was blossoming in the same way as Haight-Ashbury. Were you into the local rock scene?*

Not at all. I didn't know anything about rock and roll. The only things you construe as being rock and roll that I was into were The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, a few other big, popular bands, and also, for some reason, the 13th Floor Elevators.

I wasn't in San Francisco during that

period, but I think of New York's scene as being much less "flowery."

*The Village in the late '60s had a real edge to it, that urban energy that's unique to New York.*

There was just so much great stuff going on, particularly in theatre, which is what I was interested in. You could find all these neat jobs in local theatres doing different things. I'd make \$35 a day working two days a week, and that was fine. My apartment in the East Village, which was really nice, was \$57 a month. It was easy to not worry about money. If you wanted a job you could find one. It was very exciting. Kids don't have that opportunity today, though they're probably more practical than we were.

I had a lot of odd jobs. I worked for a while with the Manhattan Festival Dance Company doing things like stage managing or working as the lighting electrician. There was so much great theatre going on in these little out of the way places. I worked with a number of off-off-Broadway productions, and I also did non-theatre stuff, too. I was a cab driver for a period — I really liked that — and I was a cashier.

*How did you first get involved with rock and roll?*

I got extremely broke at one point and I applied for a cashier's job at the Yiddish American Theatre, which I didn't know at the time had become the Anderson Theatre and was booking rock bands. Chip Monck [a fixture on the "tech" end of music on the East Coast in the late '60s, as well as the stentorian "Voice of Woodstock"] was running it, and when I came in he asked me what I'd like to do there. I told him lighting, even though I didn't really know anything about it.

They had this weird old control console that was unlike anything I'd ever seen before. The handles that turned the circuit breakers on and off looked just like the dimmers below them. There were only six lights. So Chip showed it to me and then said, "C'mon down Friday night. I'll be there and show you what to do." I'd gone there for a cashiering job!

So Friday came and I showed up, and Chip wasn't there when the first band was ready to go on. I had no idea how to work the console, so when the band came out I just randomly hit a circuit breaker and the stage went RED, and everyone around me looked at me and sort of went, "Wow!" [Laughs] I thought, "OK, this is easy," and it became perfectly clear to me what I was supposed to do. I was happy as a clam. I had three colors to work with, and I figured out how to do cross-fades and bump cues. Even though I didn't know music at all, it was fairly easy to tell when to change the lights and when the songs were going to end. So the first rock show I ever went to I lit!

I worked there for a while — and then after Chip convinced Bill Graham to get into the old Village Theater [renamed the Fillmore East] across the street from the Anderson, I worked in lighting there. Chip would generally let me do the opening acts, and then he would do the headliner. It was a much more

sophisticated lighting system, of course, and the Fillmore also had the best light show — Joshua's, and later Joe's Lights. There was so much done in terms of creating stage magic at the Fillmore East. The shows there were very well produced.

*How did you coordinate what you did with the light show?*

We communicated on headsets. We were constantly chattering. Generally I'd follow their leads. They'd request the stage lights to go down so they could try something, or, "We're going to all blue and white," and I'd adjust to that.

*Did your background in theatre production help you?*

Well, I worked as an electrician for other lighting designers, and that was a wonderful experience, but my big regret is that I never studied lighting in school. I learned by doing. I always knew the kinds of things I wanted to do with lighting, and I just tried things until they worked.

The people I knew with strict theatre backgrounds did some really good work, but I always felt they lacked that ability to just *slam around* and be heavy-handed and do things that are strong and simple — black out a stage and just have all white specials on somebody; or light up the audience. Oddly, that sort of stuff came very easily to me.

*Did the bands in the late '60s know or care about lighting?*

It was all still so new then. I didn't hear from many bands, but occasionally I'd have managers with cigars coming into the booth and telling me, "Change the lighting on every beat! Every beat!" Things like that. One time a manager told me to try to create the mood of "a beautiful girl lying in a meadow at dawn." [Laughs] Well, at least he'd put some thought into it. That sort of thing is very tough to do, because lighting is actually quite limited — especially back then. It's sometimes very hard to translate a "feel" into something concrete.

*Why didn't you stay at the Fillmore East?*

It's complicated, but basically I was hustled out of the job by other people. It wasn't so bad. I did a lot of other things and I went to London for about six months and did some work there.

When I came back I worked at the Fillmore again, for a period as Bill Graham's secretary.

*That's a strange turn of events!*

What happened was I was there one day getting some paint to work on something and I happened to pass through the office on my way up with paint. While I was in the office, Bill comes in and he starts saying things to me like, "Get Fred Barcelona on the phone!" [Laughs] I had always been very interested in who everyone was and some of the back room sort of stuff, so I really got into it. I worked for Bill for a few months.

The Fillmore East was the hub of the whole rock scene, it seemed. It had a wonderful, exciting, magical quality. It wasn't relaxed. It wasn't "mellow." People used to come up and hang out in the lighting booth all the time. Jimi Hendrix used to come by. He was such a sweetheart, such a nice guy. I wish to God I'd kept a diary during that period.

*Do you remember the first time you saw the Dead?*

I remember that the first show I saw them, I sort of liked them. I had a so-so reaction. They didn't blow me away. Where I got into

***"The audience shouldn't be separated; they should be celebrated."***



At home a few years ago working on a new lighting plot

them was when I started working at the Capitol Theatre [in Port Chester, 50 miles north of Manhattan] for [promoter] Howard Stein. That was really the first place that seemed like *my* place. It was the first place I had a chance to design my own lighting installation, and that was nice. It's great to have a theater of your own. When I was at the Fillmore, I'd go in at odd hours and play with the lights — move them, re-focus them, re-gel them — but I felt even more freedom at the Capitol.

Getting back to the Dead, though, I could tell right away that they were different from other bands. There was a night when the show hadn't started and it was getting late, so I decided to go backstage and see what was going on. I saw the road manager and he said, like, "Oh yes! Start! That's right, we have to start!" [Laughs] They were oblivious.

Another time they came on *before* anyone was ready and just started playing. That's what I liked about them, even before I loved their music.

I do remember the night I fell in love with them. Except what I remember about it is that I don't remember anything. [Laughs] They played the Capitol fairly often, and when they came they'd just sort of move in for a few days. All I remember from this one night, though, is that the band had left the stage, everyone had left the theater — and that takes a long time — and I was still just standing in my light booth, still staring at the stage along with some other people who'd worked the show. I wasn't tripping or anything, but I literally couldn't move. I was still experiencing what I'd just experienced. That was the night I really "got it."

*How did your first tour with the Dead come about?*

I think how it happened is this, though Jerry might have a different version: At the end of '71 I was pretty well established, and I was going around the country doing lights for all these bands, mainly in the big cities. I'd do a band in Detroit one day, another group in Miami the next. I was really traveling a lot. In the middle of all this, I saw that there was going to be a show in Buffalo with Jerry Garcia & Howard Wales and the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Of course I already knew Jerry quite well, and I loved the record and tour he did with Howard Wales, but what I *really* wanted was to see the Mahavishnu Orchestra, so I called up the promoter and told him I'd do the show for expenses only — they wouldn't have to pay me. He accepted; in fact, he was very pleased. So that's how I got to see the Mahavishnu Orchestra.

*They were an incredible band in the beginning —*

Oh, God! They were so wonderful! In fact, when they started playing, I was so blown away that I didn't do *a thing* with the lights for the first three pieces! My jaw was just hanging open. Then I got it together.

The funny thing is that Jerry watched the show, and later he told me how much he loved the lighting. [Laughs] Then, in January of '72 he asked me to go out on the Dead's European tour, which was coming up. At first he tried to get me to work real cheap: "Y'know a lot of people work for us for free." I said, "That's interesting." [Laughs]

That was a pretty intense first tour, just from a technical standpoint — you'd run into different currents from country to country, and the halls over there were all so strange.

*It must have been odd suddenly jumping onto this wild caravan —*

I thought, "This is the oddest thing that could happen to a prissy little girl from Winnetka, Illinois," because I just *wasn't* the type. I'd always thought rock and roll was really weird.

At the same time, it was very right for me,

because the Dead was the right band to light. It's hard to put into words why. But the lighting that was required of me for other bands was really pretty gross. It varied between atrocious and tacky. I hated what I had to do for bands like Ten Years After, Grand Funk Railroad, Rod Stewart, Three Dog Night, people like that. I'd never go out on the road with bands I didn't like, but if they came through town, there you are; you've got to do it. The lighting cues were stupid, bombastic.

Two other bands that I did like working for, and who I'd go on the road for, were Traffic and the Allman Brothers. I loved their music. And their managers, though very different, were really nice. When either of those bands or the Dead came to the Capitol, I'd really go to town.

Just like a lot of people, when the Grateful Dead came into my life, things changed. There, finally, I was able to do lighting that wasn't gross and frenetic, and which wasn't meant to separate the band from the audience and make them look like superstars. They pretty much left it up to me. With the exception of lighting the blues — which I still love — there was nothing better or more challenging.

The most wonderful experience for me in my early days with the Dead was lighting a Pigpen tune, which was both the Dead and the blues. With that kind of music there were so many simple things you could do that were appropriate and that felt wonderful. You could light him and really make it look like he was sweating. Or you could have the lights really pull him out from the rest of the group — not in the superstar sense — and make the guys look like they were in a smoky club.

These days, of course, we can really pull Bobby out in the middle, like a jewel in a setting or something, and that's nice, but for me there's nothing quite like the blues situation. When you're lighting the blues right, it's almost like you're playing the right guitar line.

*Most people would probably agree that a lot of your lighting has a strangely psychedelic edge. Did drugs affect your lighting ideas?*

Well, acid was lousy for lighting, because I'd see so much stuff that it became hard to see the stage through it. At the Lyceum in London [in 1972] I could barely see the stage. At that same show, I sold the lighting system that we'd been using to a guy who I took to be a rat. [Laughs] I thought everyone onstage was wearing animal masks. To this day, I don't know if they were.

*You sold the lighting system?*

Well, I'd essentially bought it just for the tour — there was no such thing as a touring lighting system back then, really — and I needed to get rid of it before we went back, and this guy really did like it. Actually, I did pretty well with the guy, considering.

*Considering he looked like a rat.*

[Laughs] There was only one time that I can remember being so high that I had to ask



Kaiser Convention Center, September '85. Photo: Ron Delany

someone else to help because I couldn't see the stage. I've never really been into drugs, and I was usually very careful, but someone really did a number on me and I got dosed. So I asked this guy we'd worked with to help me and he said, "I don't think this is very professional." And I said, "I don't think it's very professional to light a stage I can't see." [Laughs] So he did it, and it was like [quoting "U. S. Blues"] "RED and WHITE, BLUE suede shoes." He blasted the stage with those colors. It was really quite funny. Even in my state, I sort of told him to cool it a little bit.

*You still use a lot of trippy color combinations in your lighting.*

I hope it's a little cleaner than it used to be. In 1979 I got real tired of my lighting. I thought it was hopelessly psychedelic, with the high-saturated colors and everyone looking purple and green. I wanted to clean it up, have a little more of an upbeat look that makes the performers look good.

*We like the saturated colors.*

Me, too! We still do them. "West L.A. Fade-away" is a tune where I still go through all those kinds of changes. It seems to lend itself to it. It has a kind of murky feel. It's not wholesome.

When you get into lighting, you're getting into a real emotional territory. It's hard to talk about it.

*Are there other songs that allow you to go for specific things with your lighting?*

Well, there are tunes that allow you to do dramatic lighting, in the classic sense of the word "drama." Like "Stella Blue" has always been a tune I've enjoyed because it allows you to make people seem larger than life, not in the "star" sense, but in the way the music feels. "China Doll" is another one that allows you the space, time-wise to do simple, elegant things with lighting. You can do some

very basic but beautiful things.

*Do certain tunes have specific color associations for you? Danny English told us, for example, that you often start "Friend of the Devil" in a wash of red.*

Red is overused, and I overuse it, too, but it's a wonderful color because it's so strong. It's the nature of the physics of the light that it reads real well. Blues don't show up real well. Yellow is strong, but not as subtle.

My color choices are pretty random. There are very few tunes that have specific colors in my mind. The way I use colors — and this is really an oversimplification — has to do with what's happened so far in the set; the colors we've used and the pre-sets [moves logged in the computer memory of the lighting system] we've used. Sometimes we come up with pre-sets that I want to save for a special song, and you wait and you wait and it's never the right tune. "Terrapin" is a tune I always try to save something dramatic for.

"Sugar Magnolia" seems to want to be very uptempo, with lots of yellows and sunny colors, though someone could do it differently and it wouldn't strike me as wrong.

To do something in all blue seems to make a nice statement about a tune: that it's got a calm, incredible strength of its own. By using blue, it's almost like a pulling back, like saying it doesn't need help from the lighting director. It doesn't need "lighting."

I've had an interesting response from the audience on the color green through the years. It's a hard color to use well. It's quite tricky. You need good separation with green because nothing blends with it very well. I go through phases when I have a little trouble with green. But you need green, because a show starts to look kind of limp and washed out without it. Green electrifies everything and makes all those reds and yellows you've gotten sick of come to life again.

I also like what the band and crew refer to as "desert light," which is sort of an off-white.

It's great for some of the low-key country-western tunes. See, I sometimes like lighting that doesn't look like lighting at all. That's what I wanted to do in Egypt. It seemed to me that we should do something different there. I wanted to light it with torches and use natural lighting colors. But the band didn't go for it.

*The extended jams seem to give you the opportunity to do some very interesting things. The lights change in the same subtle way as the music. They add to the motion of the music.*

Really? I'm so happy to hear you say that. That's something I'm concerned with. It seems to me that in those times the lighting should actually be doing more. And that's one of the wonderful things about the advent of the Panaspot. You can do things with those lights that we could never do before. They opened up so many possibilities.

*Sometimes, when you have those graceful sweeps and swirls of light, it almost adds a dance element to the show. It allows us to do a pirouette onto the stage.*

Exactly! That's exactly what it's supposed to do! Those really nice moves are Danny [English]. He's extraordinary. No one does the Panaspots like he does. He's so receptive and open to new ideas. We work really well together, and it's much more fun working with someone you like than working alone. We bounce ideas off each other well.

*Increasingly over the past few years, you've worked at integrating the audience into your lighting. The past two New Year's, you've even had a separate lighting truss to illuminate the crowd.*

I'm so happy to be able to light the audience, though I'm also concerned that some people are annoyed by having lights on them. Again, it's the Panaspots that have really opened up those possibilities of getting the lights away from the stage.

I think from the first time I heard "Playing in the Band" I got an idea of what the lights should do when the band goes into the instrumental part after the verses. At that juncture, the lights should move off the stage, through the room, and out the back door and be gone. Then you should be left with something new onstage, something you didn't see beforehand. Well, I always wanted to do that, but before Panaspots I couldn't do it smoothly.

I tried it once at Madison Square Garden before Panaspots by renting more lights and positioning them in a certain way in the ceiling and then creating movement by going from dimmer to dimmer down the line. It was nice, but I got in trouble for it because it cost \$5000.

I remember in a review of that show, one writer said about a tune, "The music was so wonderful that the whole house lit up," which is exactly the way you should feel about lights. It shouldn't be, "The lighting designer turned up the lights."

Traditionally, the job of the lighting designer is to illuminate the band. Well, when you illuminate them from the front, that means they can't see the audience, and I always hated that and felt guilty about it. That's one reason I like to get those front lights off the band, especially when they're doing vocals and you know they're looking out into the crowd. If you can light the audience without putting more light in the band's eyes, like with the center truss we had at New Year's, that's heaven for me. Another thing I like is when the audience is lit and the band is in the dark. Were you at Long Beach this year? We did this thing at the end of "Not Fade Away" we call The Tunnel, where you couldn't see the band through this curtain of light. It was amazing.

One of the main reasons I like to light the audience is to negate the separation of audience and performer. I hate the whole "superstar" trip. In a way, it's strange I do what I do for a living, because I really dislike the whole celebrity aspect of it. I think it's weird that people put other people up on pedestals. The band is there to play music. The audience shouldn't be separated; they should be celebrated, especially with a band like the Grateful Dead. Everyone should feel like they're in that room together. And that's part of what we're working on. We're really just starting to get into it. There's a lot more to be done. □

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# SET LISTS: HOLLYWOOD THROUGH OAKLAND

**H**o-hum. Another season has passed, and we have yet another blazingly hot tour to report on. What ever happened to the *bad* old days when every fourth or fifth show was a bona fide, unbearable turkey, dismissible in just a pithy line or two? Alas, there is no rest for the weary wordsmith, as he sits at the Kaypro searching for new ways to say the same old thing: that the Dead have been playing fabulously. But you know that already; it's details you need. So we flip through the dog-eared pages of *Roger's Good Vibes Thesaurus* one more time. Might as well, might as well...

As you may recall, the tour was originally scheduled to begin in the Pacific Northwest (Portland and Tacoma), but Mickey Hart's convalescence from back surgery forced those dates to be canceled. So instead of packing raincoats, Messrs. Hart, Weir, Garcia *et al* packed their Speedos and swim fins and jetted to sunny Florida for the band's first Deep South shows since 1982. You'll hear differing views on whether Hart's back troubles affected the fall swing — my evaluation, from hearing tapes, is that the rhythm section did drag a little most of the tour—but no one could deny that the band played with great spunk, imagination and enthusiasm.

With the first notes of the first show — at the Sportatorium in Miami (actually Hollywood) — the band revealed they

were in a frisky mood: in what seemed to be a humorous acknowledgement of the phenomenon, they opened up with "Deal" (for the first time since '78?). The band was surprisingly tight, considering the six-week layoff between shows, uncorking a stirring "Morning Dew" at the start of the second set and inspired versions of "Iko-Iko," "Eyes of the World" and "I Need a Miracle" over the course of the evening.

It was on to Tampa the next night for a show that was a party animal's delight — rockin' from beginning ("Gimme Some Lovin'") to end ("Midnight Hour"), and, for better or worse, largely without finesse or subtlety. Out of the sloppiness and occasional blown transitions came some great moments: at the end of "He's Gone," Garcia started the final coda ("Ooo-oo, nothin's gonna bring him back") too early, smoothly went through several passes at that line, but then masterfully returned to the "Like a steam locomotive..." refrain not once, but twice more, before launching into the coda in earnest; and after an unbelievably feeble segue from "Throwing Stones" into "Goin' Down the Road" near the show's end, the band recovered to unleash a version so incendiary that it singed the hair off every person in the Sun Dome and lit Don Johnson's cigarette hundreds of miles south. In general, we heard nothing but good reports about the mood at the Florida con-

certs. Shows there may not sell out as fast as concerts in the Northeast and Midwest, but the crowds are friendly and spirited, and that should count for something when the Dead make up their tour schedule.

The Dead's two nights at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta were probably the most anticipated shows of the tour, and with good reason: the Fox is one of the truly special places that the Dead play (all too infrequently). The recently renovated onetime movie palace (built in 1929) seats just 4500 and is an architectural masterpiece. Inside and out, the theatre is designed to simulate a Moorish city, with elaborate Arabic parapets and battlements forming the front and sides of the auditorium, which is illuminated by glowing lanterns and capped by an eerily realistic painted nighttime sky, complete with twinkling stars. So as you can imagine, when the band unfurled a huge *Blues for Allah* banner behind the stage during the opening "Sugaree" the first night, ol' Fiddler never looked so at home!

The next surprise came on the second tune, a Weir-led version of the old Lieber & Stoller chestnut "Kansas City," played in honor of the Kansas City Royals, who'd won the World Series the night before. From there it was a solid, if slightly standard, show with highlights including a powerful "Scarlet" — "Touch of Gray" to open the second set and a moving "Stella Blue."

The second set the following evening, the band really hit its stride for the first time on the tour. They revived the once-popular pairing of "Mississippi Half-Step" — "Franklin's Tower," delivered a fine "Lost Sailor-Saint," and then, following "Crazy Fingers," went into a long, wild jam that recalled some of the nearly out-of-control instrumental assaults the band specialized in during the mid-'70s. The post-drums was almost flawless, ending with an amazingly satisfying "Johnny B. Goode." A "Broke-down Palace" encore brought the two-night stand at the magical Fox to a sweet, sweet end.

Halloween night it poured in Columbia, South Carolina (just as it had in Atlanta two nights earlier), which may explain why relatively few concertgoers showed up in costume. Inside the hall, however, the crowd definitely seemed to be full-moon-mad. The Dead eschewed any sort of costumes this year, too, but they didn't forget what night it was: seconds after taking the stage, they abso-

lutely buried the crowd in a deafening cacaphony of noises and feedback like something out of the middle of "space," and then gleefully jumped into a bouncy "Werewolves of London." Garcia really got into the song's macabre lyrics — "Heard a little old lady got mutilated late last night..." — and led the crowd in lupine howls. The entire show possessed a strangely manic energy, and though the second set contained just five songs, the jamming that held it all together was intense, and you'd be hard-pressed to find a much better version of the underrated "Ship of Fools."

Torrential downpours continued as the band moved up the coast to Richmond, Virginia, site of several hot Dead shows through the years. The GD broke attendance records at the Richmond Coliseum; indeed, so many Heads in the area wanted to go to the shows that several hundred showed up without tickets. Security was very tight in the area around the Coliseum, and busts were common — in all, some 200 people were arrested, primarily for drug offenses. But real chaos occurred when a group of unruly fans tried to crash the gates. They were met by police on horseback and on foot, who literally beat back the crowd, many of whom were innocent bystanders. (The incident provoked considerable criticism of the Richmond police in the local newspapers.)

The fans who'd suffered through rain and police brutality were treated to one of the best shows of the tour for their troubles. The second set boasted a very unusual songlist, marked by sweet and lyrical ballads mixed with state-of-the-art trash rock. They opened with a bruising "Samson," followed by a slow, almost melancholy "High Time." A mellow "He's Gone" was next, and after a subdued "Spoonful," Garcia went into yet another aching ballad, "Comes a Time." Most of the crowd undoubtedly expected the Rhythm Devils jam to follow, but Weir effortlessly spun a segue into "Lost Sailor," which broke for drums before the anticipated "Saint of Circumstance." The "space" built majestically into "Saint" (maintaining the symmetry after all), and then they tore the place up with a sock-hop version of "Gimme Some Lovin'" before Garcia slowed it down one more time, with a lovely and articulate "She Belongs to Me."

An ordinary ending wouldn't have fit this extraordinary show, so Weir charged into a kick-out-the-jams version of "Gloria" that could've beaten back a battalion of Richmond mounties with its power. Weir threw in an interesting twist to the band's standard reading of the tune by teasing the crowd: he'd lead the spell-out chorus — "And her name is G-L-O-R" — and then stop abruptly to build the



Fox Theatre, 10/29. Photo: Valerie Shrader, Fairview, NC

word again and again, louder each time, until the building shook. Any guesses on what tune Garcia chose for the encore for this wondrous show? Of course — "Day Job"!

In many respects, the following night's Richmond concert was as power-

ful as the first, though the songlist was a bit more conventional — that is if you consider a second set of "Iko" — "Estimated" — "Uncle John's" — "China Doll" — "Morning Dew" — "Throwing Stones" — "Lovelight" conventional!

After a day's break, the band was back

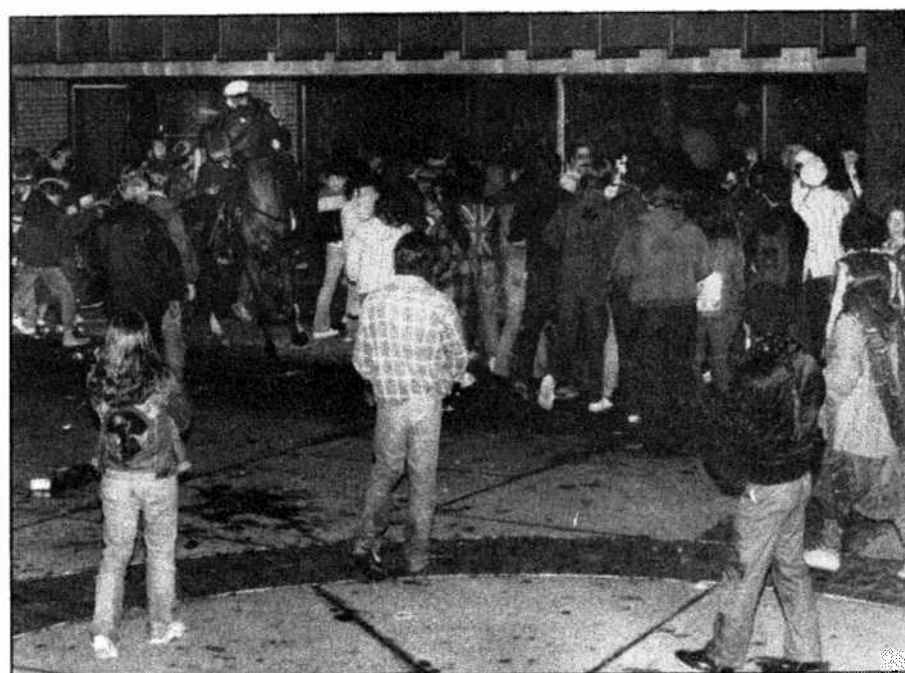


Interior of Atlanta's Fox Theatre

at the Centrum, outside Boston, for two more strong shows. The first night's songlist looks conservative by current standards, but the playing was outstanding throughout. (Check out Weir's vocal delivery on the great "Truckin'") Once again, the only problems connected with the show occurred outside, where hundreds of people crashed the gate. Many were successful, too, making it uncomfortably overcrowded inside.

The problem of gate-crashing on this tour should not be brushed aside, because it was both serious and epidemic for the first time in a long while. I'm afraid I have little sympathy for impatient Heads who show up at gigs without tickets and then try to force their way into shows. These fans just screw things up for legitimate ticket-holders by making shows too crowded, and by forcing halls to hire more security people. Is it any wonder that police occasionally resort to Gestapo violence when they see an anarchic mob assaulting a hall like crazed Frenchmen at the Bastille? Too often I hear people actually bragging about sneaking or breaking into shows, but I guarantee that if the juvenile behavior of this asshole element isn't curbed soon — hopefully through condemnation by more sensible Heads — we're going to see real ugliness and serious violence at a show. Scores of peace-loving Deadheads had their concert experiences marred when they were swept up in melees in Richmond, Worcester and the Meadowlands (see "Feedback"). Maybe it didn't touch you personally this time, but you might not be so lucky next time. "If the game is lost, then we're all to blame."

Back to more cheerful concerns,



Mounted police storm gate crashers in Richmond. Photo: Richmond Newspapers

namely the second Centrum show, which proved to be another Beantown blast. They love the Grateful Dead in Boston, a city that gives true meaning to the word "fanatic." If you want to see fan fervor that borders on the psychotic, try going to a Bruins, Red Sox or Celtics game. Bostonians had the best of both worlds this night, when some of the most popular sports figures in New England showed up to bop to the band: Celtics basketball stars Kevin McHale and Bill Walton were very much in evidence all evening; the Dead even led a birthday sing-along for Walton, who has been a staunch and highly visible supporter (and friend) of the Dead's since the early '70s. You really could hear Boston's heart beat out loud on the second set-opening "Shakedown Street," and that set offered a number of other memorable touches, as well, including an elaborate jam that wove together themes from "Supplication" and "Playin' in the Band," a space jam that broke into a stirring "Tom Thumb's Blues," and a particularly sharp "Good Lovin'" to close. (The first set also featured the second appearance of "Kansas City.")

The tour then cut across the autumn-gold hills of Massachusetts to Rochester, in upstate New York. This has always been a good area for the Dead; the shows attract an interesting mix of intense New York City tourhead types and more mellow countrified Upstaters. I've always felt that Upstate has much more in common with northern New England than the industrial, overcrowded mid-Atlantic Seaboard, and that the air of agrarian gentility that permeates much of the region must appeal to the Dead's rural sensibilities. Whatever the mood of the

area and the crowd, the Dead played spectacular shows at the Rochester War Memorial; certainly comparable to the Richmond concerts, and perhaps better executed.

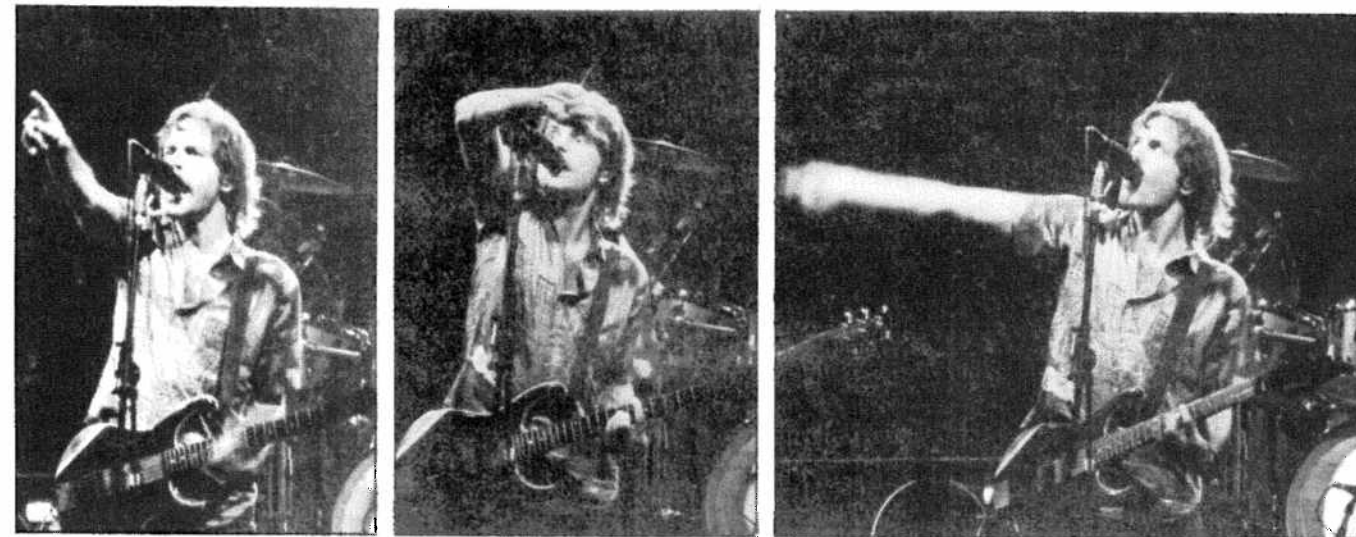
The band opened the first night with a festive "Dancin' in the Streets" ("Summer's gone and the time is right . . ." Weir sang), and cruised through a spiffy first set that included a galloping "Cumberland" and one of those blistering "Deal" jams that sounds like a runaway mine train. The second set offered an emotive "High Time," a "Let It Grow" filled with dynamic variations (before drums), and then a faultless post-"space" of "Gimme Some Lovin'" - "Stella Blue" - "Throwing Stones" - "Not Fade Away." The "Midnight Hour" encore gave the show a nice final twist.

The band came out smokin' the next night with "Iko" and didn't let up the whole show. Garcia surprised everyone by kicking off the second set with "Revolution" (what is it with that song and Upstate?), and the band hit peak after peak with "The Other One," "I Need a Miracle," a poignant "She Belongs to Me," "Sugar Magnolia" and a "Satisfaction" encore.

By the time the tour reached Brendan Byrne Arena, across the Hudson from New York City, many Heads were weary from traveling hundreds of miles over such a short period, in some of the foulest fall weather the East had seen in many years. You were in the minority if you didn't catch a cold (or worse) on this tour, so there were smiles all around when the morning of November 10 broke in a glow of warm sunshine. Thousands of Deadheads, eager to party in the afternoon sun, descended on the Meadowlands complex for the evening's show only to be turned away at the gates because the New York Giants were playing a game at the adjoining football stadium and local security forces feared massive traffic tie-ups. But their strategy backfired: keeping the Deadheads out did nothing to prevent congestion when the Giants game ended, plus literally thousands of Heads were forced to kill hours driving around the area, no doubt seething with rage.

Eventually, perilously close to showtime, the Brendan Byrne lots were opened and a mad crush ensued. Once again the gate crashers turned out in force, this time aided by rowdy Giant fans determined to continue their tailgate parties at the Dead show. Hundreds successfully broke through the security lines, triggering a predictable overreaction from the venue's zealous Goon Squad, who manhandled everyone in sight, whether provoked or not. But what's a trip to New York without a little trauma, eh?

The band seemed oblivious to all the



Bobby hams it up in Rochester, 11/8. Photos: Mitch Hochman, Bar Harbor, ME

commotion, of course, and turned in a fine performance, with one of the best first sets of the tour (including a double-shot opening of "Touch of Gray" - "Hell in Bucket," "Row Jimmy" and "Feel Like a Stranger" to wind it up) and something new to open the second set: "Mississippi Half-Step" into "I Know You Rider." "Playin'," "Uncle John's Band" and "Truckin'" also caused sparks. The next night there were none of the surrounding security hassles, but the show had a little less energy, despite a slam-bang "Walkin' the Dog" - "Deal" beginning, the only "Scarlet-Fire" of the tour (a surprising statistic), and fine versions of "Dear Mr. Fantasy," "Goin' Down the Road," "Throwing Stones" and "Lovelight" following "space."

I fully expected the Dead to let down somewhat when they returned to California a week later for a couple of shows at the Long Beach Arena, south of Los Angeles. Happily, however, this was not the case. The first night was festive all the way, the perfect show for the always loud and unruly L.A. fans. Luckily for the numerous drunks (beer flowed freely at the concession stands), it was a real ceiling-shaker, with tunes like "I Need a Miracle," "Gimme Some Lovin'," "Truckin'" and "Good Lovin'." There were other great turns as well, from the breakneck "Let It Grow" to the unusual combination that launched the second set: "Tennessee Jed" (!) into "Cumberland Blues."

The second show started off fine with a tight, well-played first set, but in my view it ran out of gas at different times during the second set. But so did the audience: the hall was only about two-thirds full for this Sunday show, and it looked like a lot of those who were there might have abused themselves a little too much the night before. Still, the "Throwing Stones-Not Fade Away" closer definitely packed a wallop, whether the

punch-drunk crowd could absorb it or not. Regan and I nicknamed the weekend "To Live and Die in L.A. — Tour '85" because of all the weird vibes (and destruction of property and disgusting mountains of garbage generated by L.A. Heads) we saw over the course of 48 hours.

As we winged back to the Bay Area, we prayed the band would still have enough left in them to make the season-ending shows at Oakland's Henry J. Kaiser Auditorium memorable.

And that's exactly the word I'd use to describe the series, which was billed as sort of a combination "Harvest Dance" and Thanksgiving celebration. The band was very relaxed and in good spirits all three nights. West Coast Heads unable to tour were understandably delighted when the first set opening night included an extremely rare west-of-the-Rockies "High Time." And the whole second set was splendid, with a percolating "Iko," a long, brilliant "Terrapin" and a heart-wrenching "Stella Blue." The "Sugar Magnolia" finale is also worth noting — during the extended break after the verses, Weir slung his guitar over his shoulder and climbed up on the scaffolding and nonchalantly strummed his part while perilously perched on a narrow metal bar. Only a supportive hand on his derrière, courtesy of stage sound mixer Harry Popick, saved Weir from certain death (or at the very least, embarrassment). When he casually returned to terra firma he was toasted by Phil and the other band members, and the crowd breathed a collective sigh of relief. Bruce Springsteen he ain't!

There were more than a few quizzical gazes in the hall when the first few notes of the second show echoed through the hall. What the hell? Is it really "Big Boy Pete"? Yes, indeed, it was the old Olympics tune, played for the first time since

1970, and with incredible conviction. (Garcia and Weir alternated lead vocals.) That foreshadowed interesting things ahead, and the Dead delivered in spades. A funky, funky "Shakedown" began the second set, followed by a flawed "Crazy Fingers," a long, intricate "Playin'" and then, to everyone's delight, "She Belongs to Me" before drums. (Parenthetically, wouldn't it be great if the Dead shifted more songs around in the set the way they have with "She Belongs to Me" this year? It's appeared in the first set, the second set before and after drums, and as an encore!)

The excitement reached a fever pitch late in the show, when a "Playin'" reprise that many people probably thought would give way to "Around & Around," or something of that nature, instead chugged into a wild, late-set "Gimme Some Lovin'," followed by "Midnight Hour" to close. For the encore they pulled out "Walkin' the Dog," a great nightcap for this gonzo evening.

Most people seemed to favor that show of the three for its spirit and unpredictability, but I was floored by the third. Again, the set list reveals nothing particularly spectacular, but everything they touched turned to gold. The "Morning Dew" out of "space" was everything a "Dew" should be — chilling, beautiful, overwhelming; the "Throwing Stones" was at once angry and uplifting; and they played a "Lovelight" with the kind of intensity the song demands — Weir didn't waste any time with a rap, and the band played with the kind of cocky assurance that made the song such a powerhouse in Phippen's day.

In all, the autumn shows were nearly on a par with the summer Midwest/Mid-East tour (surely one of the Dead's best road trips ever). With varied songlists and a consistently high level of energy from night to night, there wasn't a bad show in the batch, and most of them

would surely rate high in any Deadhead's estimation. This really has been a year for the record books, an anniversary worth celebrating in every respect.

— BJ

**10-25-85, The Sportatorium, Hollywood, FL**  
Deal, Red Rooster, Iko-Iko, El Paso, Dire Wolf, All Over Now, Loser, Let It Grow

Morning Dew ♦ Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Back Peter ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Baby Blue

**10-26-85, The Sun Dome, Tampa, FL**  
Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Greatest Story Ever Told, Dupree's Diamond Blues, C.C. Rider, Stagger Lee, Me & My Uncle ♦ Big River, Big Railroad Blues, Looks Like Rain ♦ Don't Ease Me In

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Man Smart Woman Smarter, He's Gone ♦ Don't Need Love ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Comes a Time ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Goin' Down the Road ♦ Saturday Night/Midnight Hour

**10-28-85, Fox Theatre, Atlanta**  
Sugaree, Kansas City, Peggy-O, My Brother Esau, Ramble On Rose, Cassidy, Row Jimmy, Promised Land

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Touch of Gray ♦ Man Smart Woman Smarter ♦ Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Truckin' ♦ Smokestack Lightning ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Around & Around ♦ Good Lovin'/Day Job

**10-29-85, Fox Theatre**  
Feel Like a Stranger, Friend of the Devil, New Minglewood Blues, Bird Song, Hell in a Bucket, Deal

Mississippi Half-Step ♦ Franklin's Tower ♦ Lost Sailor ♦ Saint of Circumstance ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ Other One jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ The Other One ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Johnny B. Goode/Brokedown Palace

**10-31-85, Columbia Coliseum, Columbia, SC (Halloween!)**  
Finculi Fincula ♦ space ♦ Werewolves of London ♦ The Music Never Stopped, West L.A. Fadeaway, Mama Tried ♦ Mexicali Blues, Tennessee Jed, Looks Like Rain ♦ Might As Well

Shakedown Street ♦ Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Ship of Fools ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Not Fade Away/U.S. Blues

**11-1-85, The Coliseum, Richmond, VA**  
Dancin' in the Streets ♦ Cold Rain & Snow, Red Rooster, Stagger Lee, Me & My Uncle ♦ Big River, Brown-Eyed Women, Jack Straw, Don't Ease Me In

Samson & Delilah, High Time, He's Gone ♦ Spoonful ♦ Comes a Time ♦ Lost Sailor ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Saint of Circumstance ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ She Belongs to Me ♦ Gloria/Day Job

**11-2-85, Richmond Coliseum**  
Bertha ♦ Greatest Story, Dupree's Diamond Blues, C.C. Rider, Althea, My Brother Esau, Candyman, Let It Grow

Iko-Iko, Estimated Prophet ♦ Uncle John's Band ♦ China Doll ♦ Playin' jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Morning Dew ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Baby Blue

**11-4-85, The Centrum, Worcester, MA**  
Alabama Getaway ♦ Promised Land, It Must've Been the Roses, El Paso, West L.A. Fadeaway, New Minglewood Blues, Big Railroad Blues, The Music Never Stopped ♦ Might As Well

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider ♦ Playin' in the Band ♦ jam ♦ Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Truckin' ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Sugar Magnolia/U.S. Blues

**11-5-85, The Centrum**  
Hell in a Bucket, They Love Each Other, Kansas City, Tennessee Jed, It's All Over Now, Bird Song, Looks Like Rain ♦ Don't Ease Me In

Shakedown Street, Man Smart Woman Smarter, Ship of Fools, Supplication jam ♦ Playin' jam ♦ Don't Need Love ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Tom Thumb's Blues ♦ Goin' Down the Road ♦ Black Peter ♦ Around & Around ♦ Good Lovin'/Brokedown Palace

**11-7-85, War Memorial, Rochester, NY**  
Dancin' in the Streets ♦ Dire Wolf, C.C. Rider ♦ Loser, Mama Tried ♦ Mexicali Blues ♦ Cumberland Blues ♦ Beat It Down the Line ♦ Deal

Touch of Gray ♦ Samson & Delilah, High Time, Let It Grow ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Not Fade Away/Midnight Hour

**11-8-85, Rochester**  
Iko-Iko ♦ Red Rooster ♦ Peggy-O ♦ Brown-Eyed Women, Baby What You Want Me To Do, Jack Straw ♦ Might As Well

Revolution, Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ She Belongs to Me ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Satisfaction

**11-10-85, Brendan Byrne Arena, E. Rutherford, NJ**  
Touch of Gray ♦ Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree, Cassidy, Stagger Lee, All Over Now ♦ Row Jimmy ♦ Feel Like a Stranger

Mississippi Half-Step ♦ I Know You Rider ♦ Playin' in the Band ♦ Uncle John's Band ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Truckin' ♦ Comes a Time ♦ Around & Around ♦ Good Lovin'/Baby Blue

**11-11-85, Brendan Byrne**  
Walkin' the Dog ♦ Deal, New Minglewood Blues, Althea, Me & My Uncle ♦ Big River, Bird Song ♦ Looks Like Rain ♦ Don't Ease Me In

Scarlet Begonias ♦ Fire on the Mountain ♦ Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Dear Mr. Fantasy ♦ Goin' Down the Road ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Brokedown Palace

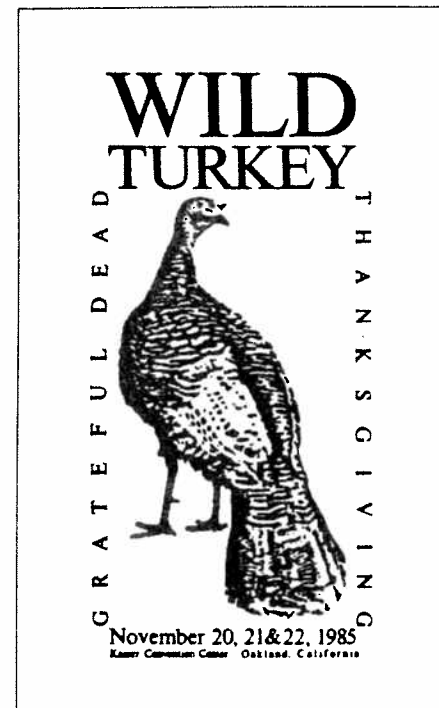
**11-16-85, Long Beach Arena, CA**  
Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree ♦ El Paso, Dupree's Diamond Blues, Red Rooster, West L.A. Fadeaway, Let It Grow

Tennessee Jed, Cumberland Blues, I Need a Miracle ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils

♦ space ♦ Comes a Time ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Truckin' ♦ Black Peter ♦ Good Lovin'/Day Job

**11-17-85, Long Beach Arena**  
Mississippi Half-Step, New Minglewood Blues, Stagger Lee, All Over Now ♦ Friend of the Devil, Cassidy, Big Railroad Blues, Looks Like Rain ♦ Might As Well

China Cat Sunflower ♦ I Know You Rider, Samson & Delilah ♦ He's Gone ♦ Spoonful ♦ Never Trust a Woman ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Wheel ♦ Not Fade Away/Baby Blue



T-shirt design from November Kaiser shows

**11-20-85, Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland, CA**  
Jack Straw, Peggy-O, C.C. Rider, Stagger Lee, My Brother Esau, High Time, Beat It Down the Line (no beats!) ♦ Promised Land ♦ Don't Ease Me In

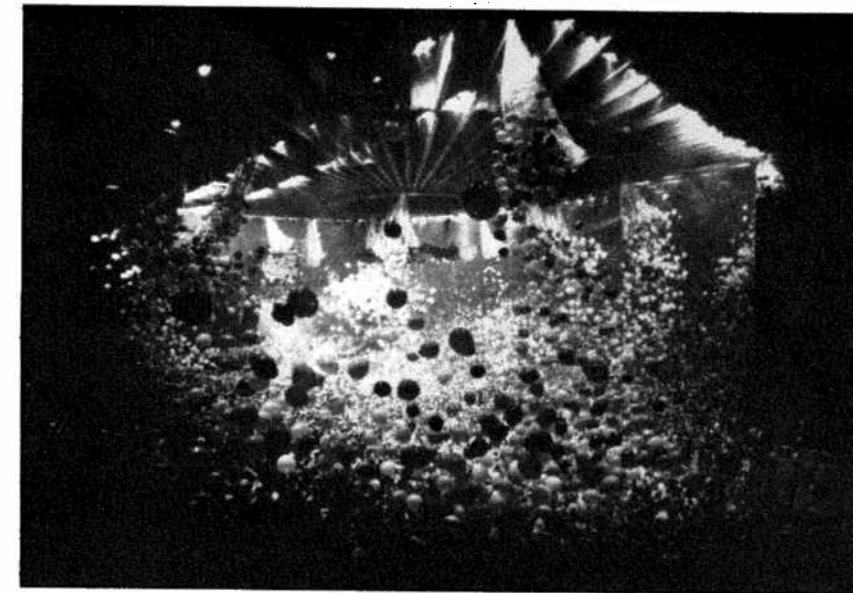
Iko-Iko ♦ Lost Sailor ♦ Saint of Circumstance ♦ Terrapin ♦ jam ♦ Don't Need Love ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Stella Blue ♦ Sugar Magnolia/U.S. Blues

**11-21-85, Henry J.**  
Big Boy Pete ♦ Dire Wolf, Red Rooster, Brown-Eyed Women, Me & My Uncle ♦ Mexicali Blues ♦ Ramble On Rose ♦ Looks Like Rain ♦ Might As Well

Shakedown Street ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ Playin' in the Band ♦ She Belongs to Me ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Playin' reprise ♦ Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Midnight Hour/Walkin' the Dog

**11-22-85, Henry J.**  
Hell in a Bucket ♦ Sugaree, New Minglewood Blues ♦ Althea, Cassidy, Dupree's Diamond Blues ♦ Let It Grow

Touch of Gray ♦ Estimated Prophet ♦ Eyes of the World ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Morning Dew ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Lovelight/Brokedown Palace



Photos by Ron Delany

Many Deadheads felt considerable apprehension when it was announced in early fall that the New Year's shows — just two this time around — would take place at the mammoth Oakland Coliseum, an impersonal sports arena that has none of the natural charm of either the Kaiser Convention Center or the San Francisco Civic. (Nevertheless, the shows sold-out instantly by mail-order, and in the weeks before the concerts, Bay Area newspapers were littered with classified ads offering New Year's tickets for upwards of \$250, definitely the most extreme cases of scalping I've heard of in this area.) Their anxiety was compounded by the news that the concert would be simulcast on radio and over the USA cable network nationwide. Would the Dead rise to the occasion, or choke in the face of such intense national scrutiny?

The Coliseum did prove to be too large for Bill Graham and his staff to add any of their customary homey touches. The cavernous hallways were illuminated by harsh white lights; the union concessionaires were forbidden to sell Graham's tastier, more organic foods; and red-uniformed security people ringed the inside seating area. Except for the Dead's banners and symbols hanging

from the rafters, the hall looked basically the same as it would for a Bob Seger concert. But when the band came out a little after 8 and tore into an incendiary version of "Gimme Some Lovin'" (the message of "so glad you made it" hit home with the thousands of out-of-towners), apprehensions about the venue seemed to evaporate.

Rehearsals had kept the band fresh, and the addition of a light show similar to the one that accompanied September's Kaiser Center run made the huge facility a little more intimate. The first set was well-played and peppy — Garcia in particular looked like he was having the time of his life, dancing and emoting even more than usual. It really seemed like New Year's a night early when the band returned from the break and went into a tight and spunky version of Dylan's "Quinn the Eskimo," a first for the Dead. A rockin' "Samson" came next, and then it was into a more meditative space with a lilting "He's Gone." The jam that followed seemed to be heading into "Smokestack," but the band miraculously shifted into a raucous "I Need a Miracle," which then segued effortlessly into a fine "Crazy Fingers," complete with a beautifully melodic jam at its close. The post-drums was virtually flawless, with

an understated "Other One," a "Wharf Rat" that was alternately trippy and explosive, and — to the surprise of most — "Sugar Magnolia" to close. When Weir started the song, Phil tried to cut it, as if to say, "Save it for tomorrow's show," but Weir wouldn't hear of it, and led the band through a dynamite version. Phil did get in a little good-natured slap at Weir for his "transgression," however: he cut the jam when Bobby wasn't looking, and then without missing a beat, leaped into "Sunshine Daydream" himself! This remarkable first show ended with the Coliseum bathed in a serene blue glow as Garcia sang an emotional "Baby Blue."

Usually, the wait for the Dead's first set on New Year's can seem agonizingly long, but this year the crowd was treated to two world-class openers. The surprise first act was New Orleans Neville Brothers, who later brought in the New Year across the Bay at San Francisco's lovely Great American Music Hall. Playing before a large, very sympathetic crowd, the Nevilles positively burned, uncorking a set that mixed dynamite New Orleans funk ("Hey Pocky Way," "Brother John-Iko," etc.) with solid soul and even a few ballads. By the time they'd completed their uplifting encore of "Down By the

Riverside" into "Amen," we felt like we'd already gotten our money's worth.

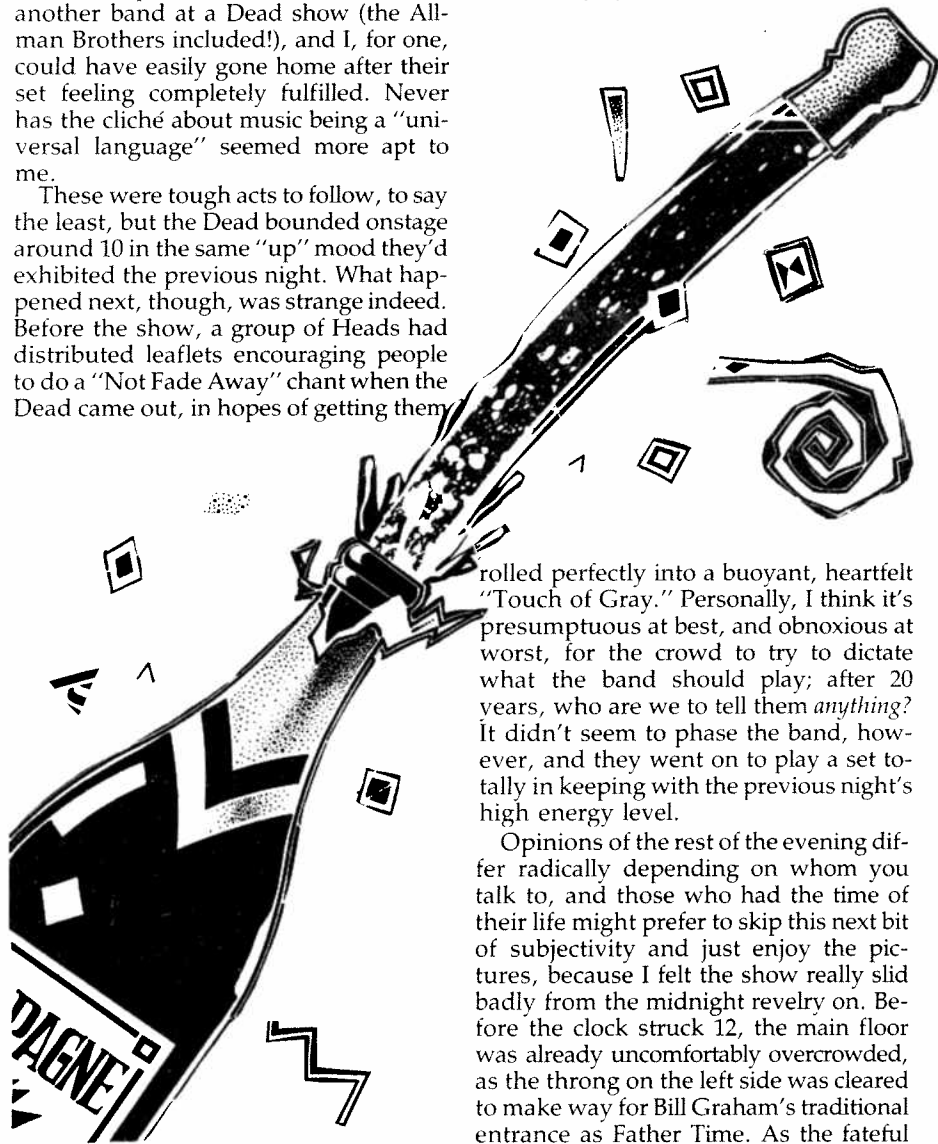
After a short break, the lights went down again and the air was punctuated by the sound of two 12-foot Philippine drums that stood ominously on either side of the stage. Next, from a platform to the right of the stage, a procession of African drummers came on, followed by a group of colorfully dressed dancers, all fluid in their motions. The legendary Yoruba drummer Olatunji took his place at a drum centerstage and proceeded to lead the huge aggregation of drummers, singers and dancers through one of the most indescribably inspiring performances I've ever witnessed—a mixture of prayers in English and Yoruba, some spoken and some chanted, traditional dances, all delivered with an optimism that was downright infectious. As the liquid projection light show created suns and shifting skies, Olatunji spoke simply, yet eloquently, of our common need to love and help each other. He and his troupe were accorded the most enthusiastic response I've ever seen for another band at a Dead show (the Allman Brothers included!), and I, for one, could have easily gone home after their set feeling completely fulfilled. Never has the cliché about music being a "universal language" seemed more apt to me.

These were tough acts to follow, to say the least, but the Dead bounded onstage around 10 in the same "up" mood they'd exhibited the previous night. What happened next, though, was strange indeed. Before the show, a group of Heads had distributed leaflets encouraging people to do a "Not Fade Away" chant when the Dead came out, in hopes of getting them



Phil during "Gimme Some Lovin'"

to open the show with that song for a change. Well, the ploy worked, and the band (who were unaware of the leaflet, I'm told) played an excellent version that



rolled perfectly into a buoyant, heartfelt "Touch of Gray." Personally, I think it's presumptuous at best, and obnoxious at worst, for the crowd to try to dictate what the band should play; after 20 years, who are we to tell them *anything*? It didn't seem to phase the band, however, and they went on to play a set totally in keeping with the previous night's high energy level.

Opinions of the rest of the evening differ radically depending on whom you talk to, and those who had the time of their life might prefer to skip this next bit of subjectivity and just enjoy the pictures, because I felt the show really slid badly from the midnight revelry on. Before the clock struck 12, the main floor was already uncomfortably overcrowded, as the throng on the left side was cleared to make way for Bill Graham's traditional entrance as Father Time. As the fateful

moment arrived, the hall went dark save for spotlights and exploding fireworks that revealed a gargantuan hot-pink birthday-cake float, ringed on one level by six hideous papier-mâché heads of the band members. As the cake slowly made its way through the crush, the truly grotesque proportions of this nightmare became clear. It took what seemed like an eternity for the float to reach the front of the hall. What humorous shock value it may have had initially wore off quickly, and nearly a quarter of the crowd had their view of the stage blocked during the band's tepid "Midnight Hour." It was so tacky compared with Graham's spectacular entrances of the past.

For me, the show never fully recovered from this, and although the Dead played very well, the song selection was tame and it seemed that few chances were taken. The band tried so hard all year to come up with imaginative, non-formulaic approaches to their material, and for it all to come down to what really seemed like just a good, standard '82 show, was disillusioning, to me anyway. I kept thinking as I watched the band move predictably through the set that they had stopped playing to the crowd in Oakland and were instead directing their energies to the unseen thousands watching on TV. With that essential, *immediate* connection in the Coliseum missing, the set lacked the celebratory spark the rest of the evening had possessed. It was disappointing, but at that point not too surprising, that the traditional third set never materialized.

For many of us, the *first* show was our true New Year's celebration. When I think of the 31st, though, I won't dwell on what could've been, but instead I'll think of the warm glow that lit up the crowd during Olatunji.

**12-30-85, Oakland Coliseum Arena, Oakland, CA**

Gimme Some Lovin' ♦ Greatest Story Ever Told, West L.A. Fadeaway, Little Red Rooster, Stagger Lee, My Brother Esau, Tennessee Jed, Looks Like Rain, Don't Ease Me In  
Quinn the Eskimo ♦ Samson & Delilah, He's Gone ♦ jam ♦ I Need a Miracle ♦ Crazy Fingers ♦ jam ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ The Other One ♦ Wharf Rat ♦ Sugar Magnolia/Baby Blue

**12-31-85, Oakland Coliseum (New Year's Eve!)**

Not Fade Away ♦ Touch of Gray, Tons of Steel, C.C. Rider, Dupree's Diamond Blues, Cassidy, Brown-Eyed Women, Let It Grow  
Midnight Hour ♦ Sugaree, Man Smart Woman Smarter, Ship of Fools, Playin' in the Band ♦ Terrapin ♦ rhythm devils ♦ space ♦ Truckin' ♦ Black Peter ♦ Throwing Stones ♦ Not Fade Away ♦ (clapping) ♦ Lovelight/Brokedown Palace



Olatunji (playing carved drums) and some of his troupe



Bill Graham as Father Time atop the giant birthday cake float

Karen Larsen (L) and Laura Wernick used this giant reproduction of the New Year's ticket to score some real ones. They bought at face value, or were given, 15 tickets—enough for all their friends.



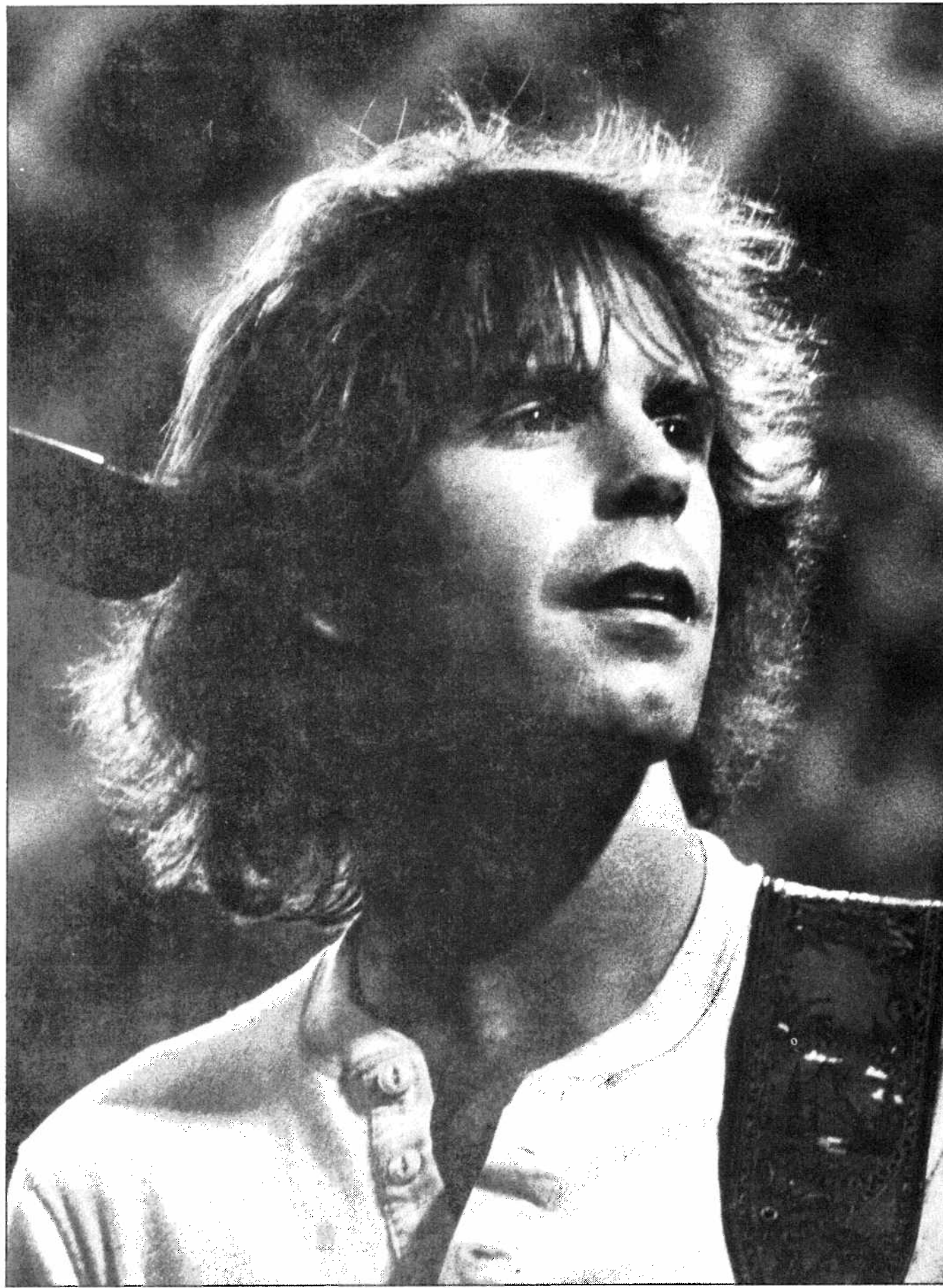


Photo: Yoru Getzler

# A Short Break With **BOB WEIR**

Despite many years on the periphery of the Grateful Dead scene in my capacity as a writer, fate and circumstance had conspired to keep me from meeting Bob Weir until mid-December. Of course I'd thought about what I'd ask when the fateful meeting finally arrived; what I didn't expect, though, was that the opportunity would come with no warning: "If you can get to the studio in the next half hour, you can interview Weir," the voice at the other end of the telephone said. I darted from my desk like Wile E. Coyote in pursuit of the elusive Roadrunner and managed to pull up to the Dead's Marin County studio in record time. Garcia was just leaving, all smiles and cheery salutations, as Weir, Hart and Kreutzmann waved from the front door like some frontier family saying goodbye to Pa as he goes off to hunt bear.

Inside, things were typically chaotic. Crew members clowned with the band members and each other. Mickey proudly showed off photos of his latest acquisition — huge Philippine drums that still lay in crates at the docks. A TV blared in a room adjoining the main studio, though no one seemed to be watching.

After a brief wait, I was ushered into a tiny utility closet that was cluttered with boxed reels of raw footage of the Dead movie. There, I finally met Weir, who was sitting on a metal folding chair waiting patiently for his inquisitor. I've seen prison interviews conducted in more appealing surroundings, but it *was* kind of cozy, and, predictably, I found Weir to be a friendly and cooperative subject. Not as verbose as some other band members, he is nonetheless very open and candid. Far from being "lost in space," as he is sometimes depicted, Weir struck me as a person with well-developed ideas and a crystal-clear vision of what he wants to get out of music and life. I had always imagined that I'd like him, and I did — very much.

*On the way over to the studio today, I was listening to the version of "Throwing Stones" from the recent Rochester shows and it struck me that the song is now fully mature. It's arrived. Could you talk a little about the genesis of the song and what motivated it?*

I don't know where all that stuff comes from. It rolls around in your head for years, maybe, and then finally there's a window and it finds its way out.

*You'd been involved with anti-nuclear activities for some time—*

But this is more or less just an anarchistic diatribe. It seems to me that the people who are running the show aren't doing such a great job of it on either side.

I was watching the news one night and I was struck by the absurd posturing that the big governments take over issues, and the fact that governments lie so readily and so blatantly and then stand by it and expect people to — not to believe it, but try to distill from their lies some notion of what their position actually is. It occurred to me that governments are acting in the most inhumane and ludicrous manner, that got me pissed, and that rattled around in the back of my head for a while and a few lines emerged. I bounced those off of Barlow and a song eventually came out of it. It started out of nothing. I don't remember which part came first.

*When you get the germ of an idea, how do you develop it? Do you then pick up a guitar and see what you can add with that?*

Yeah, well, I work in any number of different fashions. Sometimes I'll start with the guitar, or start with the words, or they'll both come along in pretty close proximity. "Throwing Stones" is kind of weird because it starts on the dominant. I don't know how I arrived at that. I think pretty obviously the diatribe part of the song came first because for a song to start on the dominant is sort of a weird portent to begin with. Then I remember that it

occurred to us that we were getting pretty thick pretty quick, and it was time to balance it a bit before the whole song became a full-blown diatribe and nothing but. The punks do that well enough. So it occurred to me that what I would do is temper all this by lifting a melody and a couple of words from an old Bahamian folk carol called "Bye and Bye" —

*Was that from the same Nonesuch record [The Real Bahamas] you got "And We Bid You Goodnight" from?*

Right. So the second half of the first verse uses those chord changes, and it's meant to counterbalance things. It had that softness I wanted. It has the punch from starting off in the dominant mode. When it finally resolved in the tonic mode, I wanted to cool it out for the second half of the verse.

*You cool it out lyrically, too, with some optimism.*

Yeah. The world isn't all bad. But we wanted to paint a picture of the world as we both saw it that night. It took longer than a night, of course, but we had the form of it down in a night.

*Were you physically together? I know you sometimes write by phone and exchange tapes and that sort of thing.*

On this one we were out at his ranch in Wyoming.

*I think the first time most people hear it they're struck by the "Ashes, ashes all fall down" refrain. It's something most of us grew up singing as children, though of course with a different context.*

It's just the image that sooner or later, whether they know it or not, that's what they're saying — sooner or later it's all going to collapse; the whole house of cards is going to collapse. I guess the thrust of the song is what we will or won't do in the face of that: "Will we leave this place an empty stone? Or that shiny ball of blue we call our home." Sooner or later we'll emerge triumphant as a race or we'll make our own graves.

*The first couple of years after the song was introduced, the big jam about two-thirds of the way through the song was very dissonant, sometimes even angry sounding. Then, at the Greek in '84, intentionally or not, the jam shifted to the bright progression of major chords that you still play. It seemed to change the tone of the entire piece from pessimism to optimism. Was that a conscious choice?*

Well, we basically just got tired of playing it the other way. We got tired of the tension of that jam, partly because we have that kind of feeling in some of our other songs. So this new harmonic pattern came about over a tour or two, actually, and just kind of developed.

*Does it still feel like a work-in-progress? I*



Photo: Ron Delany

know you're still fine-tuning some of the words.

Until it's recorded it won't seem like a finished work, and even after that I may change it.

You've described it as "anarchic." I initially thought of it as "political," but you obviously wouldn't agree with that word choice.

No, it's apolitical. It's anti-politics. I don't see politics as something that is doing much to serve humanity.

Was the song's connection to "Not Fade Away" something you discovered when you were writing it?

No, it just sort of happened that way, and as it developed it occurred to us that was one of the songs we could tie it to. There are others, of course, too.

What is it, from a musician's standpoint, that allows songs like "Playing in the Band" and "The Other One" to remain totally fresh year after year?

We play for the moment. A lot of it is

the structure of the band. None of us is playing by rote, and each of us is considering what we're doing afresh each time. If we were doing those songs every night, as opposed to once every three or four nights, I don't see how we could escape doing them by rote. The way we've got it arranged right now is in such a way that we do them often enough to keep the chord changes fresh in our minds so it doesn't just fall apart, but not often enough so we're doing it unimpassionedly.

Do certain songs have certain associations for you? When you play "The Other One," for example, is there any kind of flash of all the other versions of it, the lineage of it? I don't want to over-dramatize this—

Well, yeah, it's a place I go when I sing that that's the same timeless place — or at least it seems that way to me.

Do you think the musical relationships within the band have changed much through the years?

They've changed a lot, and I assume they'll continue to do so. For instance, when I first joined the band, I wasn't a journeyman musician and I was barely able to hold down my position in the group. I've evolved through the years to be able to make quite a bit of noise. My role keeps evolving, and that takes the heat off some of the others—like Garcia, who had to make all the noise after Pigpen checked out. That gives Garcia a chance to sit back a little.

It's not really like he's "sitting back" —

No, no. It's like he has a foil to work off of. As Brent has become more integrated into the band he's, in turn, become a foil for all the rest of us. As we get to know each other better each year, we get to interact musically in more interesting and meaningful manners. As I get older, too, playing and singing come a little more easily for me. I don't have to concentrate quite so hard at it, so I'm able to listen to more of what's going on around me, and I'm able to pay more attention to what's going on around me. But that's standard for any developing musician.

What are you listening for rhythmically in the band? Are you listening, say, to the drummers more than to Phil?

I'm listening to the whole. You have to, because it's all important. My position onstage these days is right in the middle, and I can hear discrepancies from stage left to stage right, so I have to listen to all of it and then try to come up with something that is more or less a common denominator.

Is it accurate to say that you're playing more pure rhythm today than in some years past? On a lot of old tapes, it sounds like you're playing more lead-like filigrees; that your style was more ornamental. Do you think that's accurate?

Yeah. Part of it's the material, and part of it is the fact that we've got Brent now and he plays a lot of the color and does it real well. Over the years, too, I've just sort of developed a style where I like to provide a little more punch or block motion, or however you'd describe it, than I used to. I can still go up and play lines. Like in "West L.A. Fadeaway" I play almost no rhythm guitar—it's all lines.

Are the musical relationships among you ever articulated in rehearsals?

Sure. We'll try to define what we're doing. "What is that figure you've been playing?" [Laughs] "Is that a major third or a minor third?" "Do you actually mean to play that that way, or is that a mistake?" Because it can go either way. Sometimes what might sound like a mistake isn't a mistake, or a mistake can lead to modes that we pursue — especially during the jams, but then sometimes

they also turn up later in songs.

You can see it clearly sometimes. It seems as though some of the ideas you tried in "Sage & Spirit," for example, were developed further in "Lost Sailor" a few years later.

That definitely is a case where that happened. There are other ones, too, but I can't think of them off the top of my head.

In certain ways, the Dead's music is less abstract now than it was in the past. Is it harder to get into the idea of playing "space music"?

In the early '70s, there were fewer of us in the band, and during the space jams we were a little more mobile just because there were fewer of us. Now that we have more people and Brent's a relatively new member, it's taken a while to get back that kind of mobility again. When Garcia and I go out and play together, for instance [after the Rhythm Devils], it goes completely different places every night. That stuff is actually more mobile — in terms of the harmonic directions it takes — than any of the stuff we used to do. But the more people you have, the more everyone has to listen. I think it's starting to open up to where the space jams are getting looser and looser.

Also, for instance, with two drummers, it's almost impossible to do what we could with one drummer in terms of turning one rhythm into another. You can't get two guys to turn the same corner at once — though we're trying it anyway. [Laughs]

Do you and Garcia ever discuss the nature of the space jam before you return to the stage? In an interview with Paul Krassner that was aired during the Toronto SEVA show in '84, Garcia said you sometimes agree on a theme. To be honest, I couldn't tell if he was serious or pulling our legs. Certainly Krassner is a prankster . . .

For a while there a couple of years back we would discuss current events or something before we went out, and every now and again we'll still do it — come up with a motif for the jam. It's almost never anything really serious, though once or twice we did take it seriously. I think the night Bob Marley checked out we tried to do a little musical eulogy. Usually, though, we're just amusing ourselves back there during the drum solo, coming up with joke motifs for the jam: "OK, you're the stewardess aboard this hijacked airliner," or something like that.

I want to ask you about your affinity for the blues. In the last year or so, it seems as though every show has a little blues spotlight in the first set, whether it's "Minglewood" or "C.C. Rider" or "Walkin' Blues" or what-

ever. What does that do for you as a player? You seem very comfortable with it at this point.

I like it a bunch. I've got a big collection of blues records and have always liked it. A few years ago, too, I took up playing slide guitar. It's just one of the bases I like. Hardly anybody plays the blues anymore. We don't render classical renditions of blues. We don't sound like a Chicago blues band when we do those tunes. Nonetheless, those songs are part of the greater vocabulary from which we draw, and I think it's important for us and our audiences to bear that in mind. We do blues tunes, we do country tunes, we do stuff that harkens back to old folk music. I listen to Charles Ives, and every now and again you hear some of that in there. Or strains of Stephen Foster. We play American music and we try to keep all those colors on the palette.

I've read in different places that you either knew Rev. Gary Davis or took lessons from him or something. What's the story?

I went and visited him a couple of times in New York in this basement apartment he had. I learned "Samson & Delilah" the way he used to play it, which is not the way we play it onstage now — you can't play that style of guitar in a band, really. It would take a lot of work. I learned a few other tunes, too.

Do you hear any blues today that seems relevant?

Los Lobos is a great band. That's R&B actually, I guess, but they've got a blues spirit. I heard Koko Taylor a couple of years ago with a real good black blues band that backed her real well.

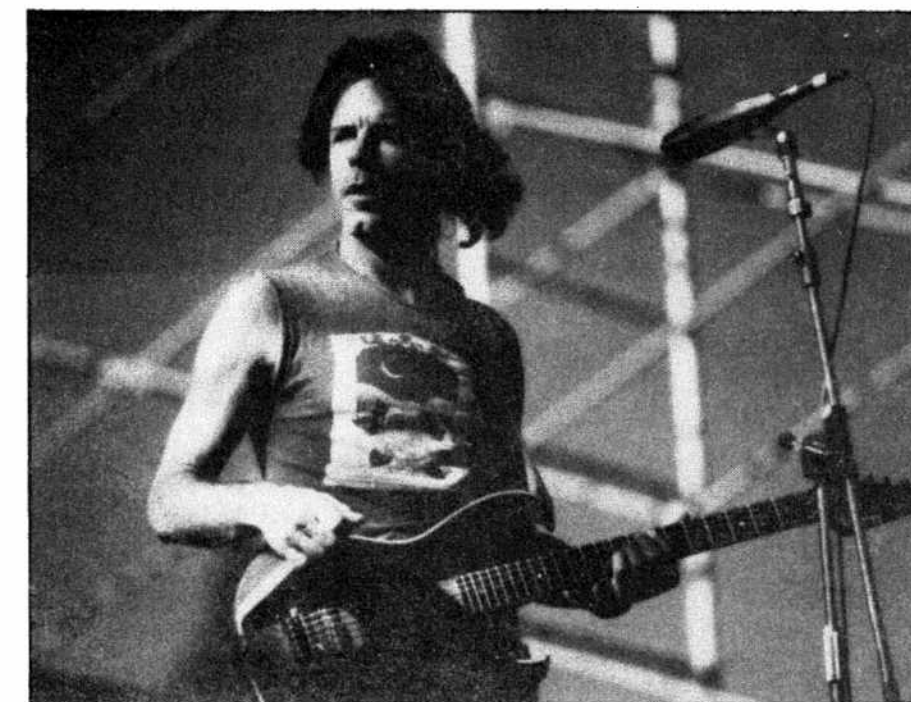


Photo: Ron Delany

A lot of Deadheads report that the life lessons they hear in Grateful Dead tunes are frequently adaptable to what they're personally going through at any given time — that different tunes speak to them at different times. As a singer of those songs, do you also get that sort of vicarious experience?

Well, inasmuch as the songs are little vignettes, or little pictures of life as it might be in someone else's life. When you write a song about somebody, and then you play the song, you're acting the part, you put on that mask and you're trying to speak from that person's point of view. I'm not thinking of myself as a performer performing that song. I'm thinking of myself as that guy telling a story.

Do you see yourself as a storyteller, in that tradition?

You mean as a balladeer? Yeah, that's part of it. Sometimes I feel like a balladeer, sometimes I feel like a crooner. Sometimes when I'm writing I'll just want to play with the melody, and what comes through my head in terms of lyrics isn't that important, and I don't put that much into it. Sometimes I really put a lot into developing the character in the story. It all depends. Sometimes I want to do both.

Barlow has said that what appeals to you lyrically are fairly specific ideas, as opposed to more general or open-ended themes.

That's not entirely true. [Laughs] He has his views. That's not entirely true in my estimation. It might have been more true a while back than it is now.

What sort of stuff are you working on now?

[Long pause] It would be very hard for me to describe. I have a song in the works about Trigger the Wonder Horse, for instance, as seen as a marvel of American mythos. I don't know — I have a lot of ideas. Having written "Throwing Stones," I don't think I'm going to get on a soap box about anything else right quickly. "Throwing Stones" and "Esau," which is an allegory about what happened to members of our generation, where one brother went off and fought a war and one brother stayed home and more or less minded the store, and then the subsequent events and developments of that. There's a real specific Biblical allegory in that story. I think Barlow and I might try to rework it so it's not quite so obscure. Without damaging the imagery, it might have a little more punch if it were a little bit easier to understand. I don't know—maybe it's better to let it roll around the subconscious and let it ring bells or not if people are open or not.

*Was there ever a threat that you'd have to go into the military?*

I got my induction notice twice, around the time I turned 18. I went down, but I refused to obey anything they told me. I'm not good soldiering material. [Laughs] They didn't want me. I'd show up — 'cause if you didn't show up you went to jail—but that's all I did. I answered their questions with questions, and stuff like that. I was not into their way of life, I had no use for it, and I'd thought I'd be real direct and tell them that.



Haight Street, 1968. Photo: Jim Marshall © 1986

## “When I first joined the band, I was barely able to hold down my position. I’ve evolved through the years to be able to make quite a bit of noise.”

*So you finally got off by being classified 4-S, “4-spaced”?*

[Laughs] Last I heard I was still 1-A, but I think my file is probably stamped that I'm not a good soldiering prospect. [Laughs]

*Has it been difficult at all for you to re-integrate Pigpen's material into the band? It's been a long, slow process.*

No, it's only come up as it's come up. It hasn't been forced. It's happened on the moment. For instance, with "Smokestack Lightning," of course I knew the song, but I really hadn't considered doing it, but then we were doing a jam and it fell right into that groove, so I sang it. That sort of broke the ice.

*There are certain musical transitions that have become familiar, like "He's Gone" going into a blues like "Smokestack" or "Spoonful" or whatever. There, the link is fairly obvious, but what of a pairing like "Estimated Prophet" and "Eyes of the World"? What is the musical link that allows that pair to exist so comfortably together when, on the surface, they seem so dissimilar?*

I don't know, really. There's a harmonic bridge between F-sharp minor and E major seventh mode, and there's also a rhythmic bridge between the two, which is one reason Garcia likes to do it.

*Are you generally predisposed to a certain direction during a song, or are you just listening intently to feel which way it might go?*

Both. Sometimes people drop hints in a jam to indicate what direction they might want to take it. After the jam's gone wherever it's going to go, someone will introduce something that will suggest a direction, and then someone else will take a melody or theme or something and work that into something that we already know. We'll either pick up on it or we won't.

*Or you'll battle over it. I've seen you drag a*

*reluctant Garcia into a "Spoonful" or two.*

[Laughs] It happens. It works both ways.

*Is it harder to assert yourself some nights than others?*

Yeah. Some nights you're hotter than others. When you're hot, it's not hard to assert yourself. On other nights, if I don't hear something coming, or if I have an idea that I think might work but I don't assert it with blazing authority, sometimes someone will pick up on it anyway, and sometimes it goes by unnoticed.

*You in the band have always talked about experiencing the shows in "real time." You play it and that's it, basically. Do you have any of the Deadhead-level appreciation of, "Oh, yeah, the Cincinatti show was good. The first Richmond show was that great one where we ended with 'Gloria,'" that sort of thing?*

Not really. If someone plays me a tape, I'll remember it. I'll remember everything about it. But having played literally thousands of shows, it takes quite a show to ... I liked this last run at Oakland [Nov. 20–22] quite a lot. There were moments when it sagged, but for the most part there was a lot of energy and we hung together pretty well.

*What are some of your favorite Hunter-Garcia songs?*

I like a lot of the ballads. "Stella Blue" I like a lot. I like "Wharf Rat" a lot, "Black Peter." What else? [Pause] "Brown-Eyed Women" is a neat tune. That hangs together well. There are a lot of them. It depends on my mood.

*From a player's perspective, which are the most interesting?*

It's hard to single any of them out because they all have different feelings. "Eyes of the World," if it's happening really right, is a lot of fun to play. The ballads are a lot of fun to play. Maybe not "fun," but all-involving. The ballads are very all-engrossing; I tend to get very in-



The Trips Festival, January 1966. Photo: Jim Marshall © 1986

*involved in those. Again, it totally depends on the night. Some tunes flat surprise me.*

*Do you find that with your own tunes as well — sometimes they're more involving than others?*

Sure, they go hot and cold. We retire tunes and bring back other ones. From night to night anything can be flat and anything can be hot. You just don't know usually until you're in it.

*Can you remember the last "bad" show you played?*

I think there was one off night on the last [fall] tour, but our percentage has been pretty good this year. We've had some clunkers, but I can't remember where they were. Actually, I do remember a gig in Portland, Maine, where I thought everyone should have gotten a refund.

*Aside from the band obviously being on a roll, you personally seem so much more relaxed than you did in 1984. Some of that must be because you gave all your energy to the Dead this year and weren't coming home one day and going out with Bobby & the Midnites the next.*

Right. I was killing myself. There was no sense in my putting out 150 percent all the time every day. I was exhausted all the time last year. I'll do another solo thing sometime, but what shape it'll take I don't know. It'll happen, though.

*You've been very involved with SEVA over the last few years, performing at benefits and all. How did your involvement with that organization come about?*

I was more or less brought into it by Wavy Gravy, who introduced me to a couple of [SEVA] people in Michigan when we were playing up there one time in '79 or '80. Then right after that, SEVA was having a conference — it used to be annual, now it's bi-annual — out here in Mill Valley [in Marin County]. Gravy had told me I should drop by and check it out, so I did, and I was most impressed by what I heard and saw, and so I attended the bulk of the conference, and I've been involved ever since on one level or another.

*You guys have been hit up to do benefits by nearly everybody at one time or another, from the Hell's Angels to various American Indian groups. What about SEVA, in particular, appealed to you?*

The collection of people involved with SEVA is a lot different than any other foundation I've run across. It's a public health organization, so to speak, or it has been, but they have a lot of emphasis on the philosophy of what they're doing and a lot of emphasis on having as pan-eclectic a view of things as could be digested by one outfit and still be of a workable and practical nature. It's not just doctors, or philosophers. They've got all kinds of different people involved, and in that forum, when issues come up they're discussed from so many different

directions. And that impressed me.

*Didn't the Dead once do a benefit for the Black Panthers? That strikes me as being more political than the group usually gets.*

That was another fiasco, I'm afraid. I wasn't real happy about doing that one, personally, but a couple of guys in the band got convinced by [Black Panther leader] Huey Newton, and I then went along with it. About halfway through it, though, I started getting the feeling that we were being ripped off, and I'm pretty sure that was, in fact, the case. We probably paid a lot of legal fees for people who were in jail for things they did. That's not where I like to put my efforts. We've all learned a lot since then.

*How does the Rex Foundation [the Dead's philanthropic wing] determine who gets money from the annual Dead benefit shows?*

It's done by committee. Each of the people in the organization gets to submit his or her ideas. It's the Grateful Dead crew and staff and a few others. [Weir is president of the Rex Foundation.]

*To what degree do you think a band has a responsibility to do benefits? Obviously, it's always been a significant part of the Dead's world-view.*

We've always operated under the assumption that if you get some, you give some back, because that's what keeps things turning. It's not pure altruism. There's a real sense of fulfillment if

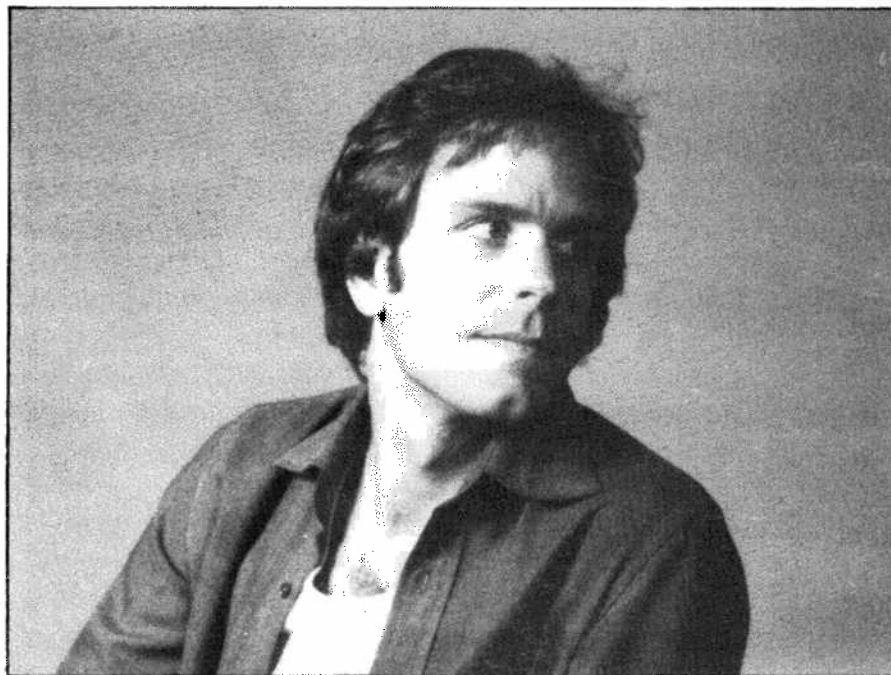


Photo: Herbie Greene

“It takes us a while to find the heart of a song.”

that we didn't have good, mature material when we recorded it. Some of it we'd never even played live. But at this point that's *not* the case, so it's not an impediment.

*Is there a danger that you've now played this material too much—that it's no longer fresh?*

I don't think so. All the songs we'd record are still fun to play onstage, so there's no reason it couldn't be fun in the studio, too.

*Has the idea of using another outside producer been rejected?*

I don't think that idea would get a very favorable response. I ramrodded through the last producer, and it worked for me—kind of—but again, I wish the material could have been in a better state of readiness. Our material isn't like a lot of popular groups' material. We develop our songs in different ways from most groups, and the kinds of music we play, the stuff we sing about and the whole aesthetic is a little different. It takes us a while to find the heart of a song, even after it's been written, whereas with most pop songs, it's a finished product by the time it leaves the pen, and it then becomes a matter of just getting a good rendition. With us, songs tend to evolve more, and it's a good idea for us to let our material evolve so we fully understand the heart of the song before we record it. We certainly have had that opportunity with the forthcoming record.

*You've had songs evolve in the studio, too. Both "Esau" and "Throwing Stones" underwent some revisions after you worked on them at Fantasy Studios last winter.*

Right. Anytime we take the time to really get next to a song, it undergoes that process. If we concentrate on it and do it several times in a row, something is going to emerge. That's also one problem we have in the studio, though—new ideas crop up all the time, and it makes it difficult to get the song recorded.

At this point, though, it would behoove us to get into the studio and start the task. I think we should get in there and just record them with as little belaboring as we can get away with. But the songs aren't going anywhere. We'll get to them. And sooner than later, I hope. □

you're able to effect positive change.

*In the early '70s, in particular, there were a lot of well-publicized benefits that didn't end up raising much money for the causes they were supposed to support. The Dead have been more careful in choosing benefits, it appears.*

That's not entirely always been true. We've been through a number of real fiascos. Most recently we went through that Vietnam Vets benefit [with Jefferson Starship at Moscone Center in SF in 1982] where almost all the money raised went to legal and administrative costs for the organization. I think we were hustled. But practice makes perfect, and you more or less learn how to separate the catfish from the trout, as they say, and we're still learning. We're getting better at it—getting better at getting the money to the right places, where it won't be squandered or pocketed.

*Can you speculate on whether the Dead would have gotten involved in something like Live Aid?*

My gut reaction would be, number one, we can't play a 20-minute set [Laughs], and number two, they had all the help they needed. There's a lot of food rotting on the docks in East Africa, and I was afraid that was going to be the case. I think people could have done a little more homework on how the money could be spent or on data gathering. Obviously they did a fine job at raising the money and getting food over there, but distribution has been a real problem, and it seems as though a little more thought could have been put into looking real hard at the political situation there to make it all more effective.

*I almost dare not bring it up, but do you think the fabled "next Dead album" will get made anytime soon?*

We were talking about it at the meeting today, as a matter of fact. There are a couple of plans that have arisen. It's not dead, I'll say that, and I intend to be working on it real soon.

*I'd heard that one possibility was that you'd record live but with no audience at a place like Marin Civic. I know that people were generally happy with the audio end of the video tapings you did there in the spring.*

We've done some more of that recently at Marin, and we'll be reviewing it pretty soon to see how usable some of that is for basics or whatever.

*I guess I don't understand what the problem is. Is it just inertia? We hear other things about the band not wanting to deliver an album to Arista because of dissatisfaction with the label.*

I think it's general studiophobia. The inability to come of accord in the studio is a real problem. It's so easy to do it onstage because it's demanded of us, but when we're in the studio, we're all so pathologically anti-authoritarian, to a man, that when someone makes a suggestion you generally get an instant six-way factionalization. Any agreement in the studio is more or less grudgingly conceded. Onstage that doesn't happen.

*Was the band's experience with Gary Lyons [on Go to Heaven] that unpleasant? I think of that as a very well-recorded album that played to all of your strengths.*

My major reservation with that record had nothing to do with him. I just felt

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# The Grateful Dead Sell Out!

When most of us think of the Grateful Dead organization, we conjure up a loose, anarchic aggregation who decide things by whim—when they decide anything at all. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, since 1969, the Grateful Dead has been controlled by a company called American BonesCo, a subsidiary of Ralston Purina, the pet food makers.

The trouble started in 1969, when the Dead went heavily into debt making *Aoxomoxoa*. They refused to sacrifice their artistic integrity and be budget-conscious, so by the time the record was released they owed their label, Warner Bros., nearly \$200,000. This was also at a time when the fabled Grateful Dead "Family" was still growing; to make their enormous payroll, they went even more into the red. The day of reckoning came in March of 1970, when it was discovered that, for all intents and purposes, they were flat broke.

Against their better judgement, the band hired a group of financial analysts (who became American BonesCo) to come up



with schemes to generate revenue so the Dead could pay their debts, keep the payroll obscenely large and carry on without musical compromise. And so, in the smoke-filled rooms, the financial gurus concocted one money-making scheme after another...

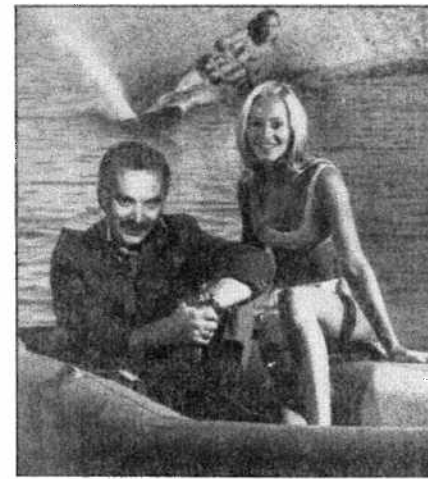
**1971: The "Phil Is Dead" Rumor.** In 1969, the whole world was abuzz with rumors that Beatle Paul McCartney had died in a car crash in 1966. Beatles albums were supposedly littered with "clues" about the death, and people spent endless hours playing Beatle records backwards, hoping to find answers to the mystery. By the time the rumor petered out, sales of Beatles records had nearly doubled. Not to be outdone, BonesCo "leaked" a story to a San Francisco radio station that Phil Lesh had died mysteriously in 1968 and had been replaced by a talented lookalike. The clues were everywhere: "What's Become of the Baby," played backwards at 16 rpm, revealed a "message from the beyond"; on the cover of *Workingman's Dead*, "Phil" was wearing a long gabardine coat, identical to the kind English plumbers are buried in; the photo on the back of *American Beauty* contained a telephone number for a tape that announced the true identity of the Phil impostor. The scheme ultimately failed because Deadheads decided that the "new" Phil was even better than the "old" one. For his part, an embarrassed Lesh told reporters, "People often mistake me for Paul McCartney. That must be what happened here."



Scientifically enlarged portion of *Workingman's Dead* cover reveals God-knows-what



**1973: The Great Ponytail Auction.** Bob Weir was the first band member forced to make a personal sacrifice to raise money. Knowing that much of the band's popularity could be traced directly to Weir's long ponytail, BonesCo theorized that some rich Deadhead would pay thousands to own Weir's famous locks. And so, with great fanfare, Weir went on local San Francisco TV and had his 'tail removed and auctioned off. As it turned out, the highest bid (\$217) came from the barber who'd turned the axe to Weir. "Hippies nearly put me out of business," said veteran clipper Vince D'Antonino. "Well here's one that didn't get away!"



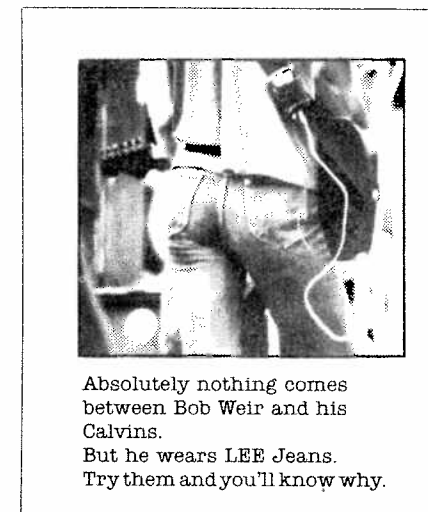
**1978: Billy Is Bond.** Following Bill Kreutzmann's triumphant appearance in the background of a skit on *Saturday Night Live*, BonesCo launched a campaign to have the drumming thespian replace aging Roger Moore in the James Bond film series. The reason? Moore received more than \$1 million per flick, a sum that would nearly wipe out the band's debt. They took out full-page ads in *Variety* and the *Hollywood Reporter*, touting Billy's skills, and Robert Hunter wrote a screenplay. In the end, though, longtime Bond producer Albert Broccoli could not be convinced that special effects wizards could make a flying, fully armed drum set, so Roger Moore got the nod once again.



**1979: The Disco Spin-Off.** The Dead steadfastly refused to make their music conform to popular trends, but the guys weren't above forming spin-off groups to go for the bucks. Jerry Frankenjive & the Electric Booty Bandits made three unlistenable disco records at the height of the craze. Those albums were later cited by two different rock historians as instrumental in the death of disco.



**1977-83: Madison Avenue Dead.** Ripple wine was the first, and most obvious, company that BonesCo approached to get the Dead some endorsement money. Other deals allowed Chevy to re-write "Truckin'" for its line of 4-wheel drive pick-ups, and AT&T to use "Operator" in a series of commercials. Magazine ads, like the ones above, also brought welcome relief.



**1984: The Synth-Pop Fiasco.** Upon scanning the *Billboard* Hot 100, BonesCo executives saw that a new wave of well-coiffed English groups—nicknamed "haircut bands"—had taken over many of the top slots. They persuaded Lesh and Garcia to join noted English drummer Nigel "Wanker" Smythe-Barton in a minimalist synth combo cryptically named Trees Become Light. They put out one critically acclaimed 12-inch, "The Dreary Life," but they blew their credibility when Garcia turned up in a magazine photo smiling and wearing a checked lumberjack shirt.

# My Favorite Year

By Stu Nixon

*Editor's note: There are probably only a handful of people outside the band and crew that have a chance to see every Grateful Dead show in a given year, but one of our friends, Stu Nixon, actually had that privilege in '85. Given his unique perspective, we asked him to look back on the year and share his impressions. He kindly obliged, and also compiled a couple of lists that note both the remarkable and dubious achievements of 1985.*

*Stu is a 33-year-old biostatistician who works as the manager of clinical data services at Genentech, a genetic engineering pharmaceutical manufacturer in San Francisco.*



Out in the cold rain and snow in Hershey, 6-28-85. Photo: Robert Minkin

It was in 1970, when I was but a weelad of 18, that I first began to really like the Grateful Dead. I had listened to their records in 1968 and seen my first Grateful Dead concert in Central Park in the summer of 1969, but I didn't quite figure out what it was all about until early 1970, when I saw several shows at Stony Brook (my alma mater), Port Chester and the Fillmore East, where they usually played two shows per night and alternated acoustic and electric sets.

For the next ten years I moved every two to three years, from New York to Seattle, to Phoenix, to Syracuse, and somehow the Grateful Dead always seemed to turn up. Sometimes when I found myself way out there, usually in one altered state of consciousness or another, I'd wonder if I was following the Grateful Dead or they were following me. It wasn't until 1980 that I stopped wondering and got serious about touring.

In the waning moments of 1985, I thought back over this 20th Anniversary year and wondered what life would be like if there were no such thing as the Grateful Dead. What would we do with all that free time?

Although regular attendance at Grateful Dead concerts is not a formal requirement for faithful Deadhead status (I know a few enthusiastic Deadheads who've been seeing shows for 10 to 15 years but go to less than a dozen shows each year), most of my friends see quite a few shows. For the last several years my wife, Robin, and I have seen between 40 and 50 of the possible 60 or so concerts each year. In '85 the number of concerts increased to 71 — perhaps a function of

the interest associated with the 20th Anniversary — and I was lucky enough to make it to all of them. (Robin, who also works at Genentech, could only get away for 62!) People ask me how it was possible to have seen that many concerts and still manage a regular 9 to 5 job. Well, thanks to accrued vacation time, scheduling of certain projects at work, and a lot of luck, major tours did not conflict with high-priority projects at work. If the schedules had been any different, I definitely would have missed some shows rather than jeopardize my day job.

Looking back over all the shows of 1985, I see the entire year falling into a pattern similar to that of a typical Grateful Dead concert. The three Oakland shows in February were a great way to open the year, with "Iko Iko" starting it all off. The third show had some very nice surprises, opening with "Cold Rain and Snow" and "Day Tripper." Closing that show with one of the year's best versions of "Lovelight" was like the last notes in a really hot opener. The Berkeley shows in March and the East Coast tour that followed form the body of this imaginary first set with the first two Nassau Coliseum and the last two Spectrum shows as my personal favorites. The two shows each at Irvine and Stanford were all superb shows, closing the first half of the year like a killer version of "Deal" after a great first set.

After the break in May, the second half of the year began at the Greek Theater in Berkeley with the Anniversary show. The first of three great concerts, the Friday show was truly astounding, with the premiere of "Keep On Growin'," the re-

turn of "Stagger Lee" and "Comes a Time," and a second-set opener of "Morning Dew." Our metaphoric second set continued with the Midwest tour that took us from Alpine Valley to Pittsburgh, but the most fun was probably in Hershey, once we all got used to being soaked by the rain. Boreal Ridge at the end of August was like an uneven transition between songs that started out a bit shaky but ended up OK in the end with a very appropriate "Day Tripper."

In Texas, Houston was miserably hot and humid, but we all enjoyed Austin, especially when they opened with "Mississippi Half-Step." The Southwest tour finished with a bang on the third day at Red Rocks with such surprises as the "Logger's Song," a wonderful version of "Uncle John's Band," and of course, "Hey Jude." The September Oakland shows were like an extended, intense drum solo, and Chula Vista like the space jam that follows, if for no other reason than because it was so unusual. Traveling to the East Coast again in October, the band came back with more surprises in Florida, opening the Hollywood show's first set with "Deal" and the second set with "Morning Dew." All 13 shows on the tour were consistently well played, with numerous tricks from their magic bag and many high points, especially Halloween in South Carolina, the first show in Richmond, and both Rochester shows. The concerts in Long Beach and Oakland later in November closed our imaginary second set like a hot "Sugar Magnolia" with plenty of energy and reckless abandon. The second night in Oakland was my favorite (also

Hamza El-Din at BCT. Photo: Ron Delany

my 300th show), bearing reminders of 1970 with songs such as "Big Boy Pete," "Midnight Hour" and "Walkin' the Dog." The two New Year's shows this year were quite amazing and formed the perfect encores to 1985, my favorite year.

For what it's worth, here are my top 20 favorite shows of 1985, based on a combination of criteria, including song selection and how well the band played:

1. Greek 6/14
2. Red Rocks 9/7
3. Richmond 11/1
4. Oakland 11/21
5. Spectrum 4/7
6. Saratoga 6/27
7. Nassau 3/28
8. Irvine 4/14
9. FPost 4/28
10. Pittsburgh 7/2
11. Springfield 3/25
12. Greek 6/15
13. Oakland 2/20
14. Oakland 11/22
15. Merriweather, MD 7/1
16. Columbia, SC 10/31
17. Austin 8/31
18. Rochester 11/8
19. Oklahoma City 9/2
20. Hershey 6/28



## 1985 Grateful Dead Concert Awards

- Most Scenic (Outdoors):** Red Rocks
- Most Scenic (Indoors):** Fox Theater, Atlanta
- Most Crowded:** Saratoga (40,000; new record for SPAC)
- Least Crowded:** Berkeley Community Theatre (3000, not sold out)
- Most "Beat It On Down the Line" Counts:** Oakland 9-11-85 (42)
- Fewest "Beat It On Down the Line" Counts:** Oakland 11-20-85 (0)
- Most Technical Difficulties:** Boreal Ridge
- Tallest Audience:** Worcester (included 4 members of the Boston Celtics)
- Wettest Audience:** Hershey
- Most Problems with Local Authorities:** Richmond
- Nicest Local Authorities:** Hollywood, FL (officers were buying GD stickers)

- Most Hassles Getting In:** Brendan Byrne Arena
- Fewest Hassles Getting In:** Houston (AstroWorld even provided a shuttle from the parking lot)
- Most Comfortable Climate:** Frost Amphitheater, Stanford
- Most Uncomfortable Climate:** Houston (99% humidity)
- Highest Concert (altitude):** Boreal Ridge (7500 feet)
- Most "Western" Environment:** Manor Downs, Austin
- Most Interesting Jam:** Columbia, SC (second set)
- Most Acrobatic:** Oakland 11-20-85 (Weir climbing scaffolding)
- Most Interesting Musical Guest:** Hamza El-Din (Berkeley 3-13-85)
- Most Songs First Set:** Cuyahoga Falls 6-25-85 (11)
- Fewest Songs First Set:** 6 shows tied (6)
- Most Songs Second Set (excluding encore):** Ventura 7-14-85 (11)
- Fewest Songs Second Set:** 3 shows tied (5)
- Most Songs Whole Show:** Spectrum 4-8-85 (21)
- Fewest Songs Whole Show:** 4 shows tied (14)
- Most Lesh Vocals:** Spectrum 4-7-85 (5)
- Most Frequently Played Song:** "Throwing Stones" (23)
- Best New Songs:** "She Belongs To Me" (Garcia); "Just Like Tom Thumbs's Blues" (Lesh); "Keep On Growin'" (Lesh/Mydland); "Kansas City" (Weir); "Mighty Quinn" (Garcia)

## BACK ISSUES



### Missed Any?

**Winter '84:** Interview with Mickey Hart, complete songlist of 1983

**Spring '84:** Interview with Phil Lesh, the Dead on video, an in-depth look at the Dead's stage lighting

**Summer '84:** Interviews with ex-Dead keyboardist Tom Constanten and artist Alton Kelley

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

**Winter '85:** Interviews with Dead soundman Dan Healy, the Garcia Band, a look at Dead cover bands, Tall Tales 1965-70

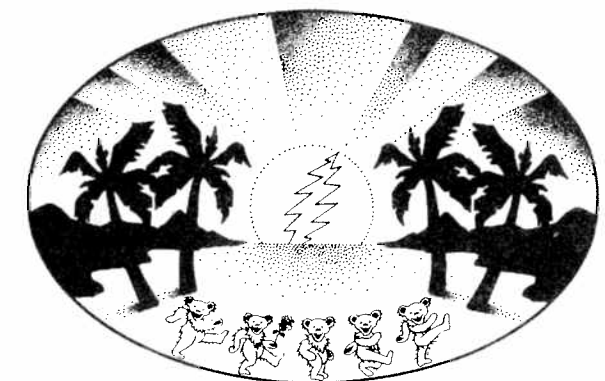
**Spring '85:** Interviews with Garcia about film and video, Donna Godchaux, Tall Tales 1970-75

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

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

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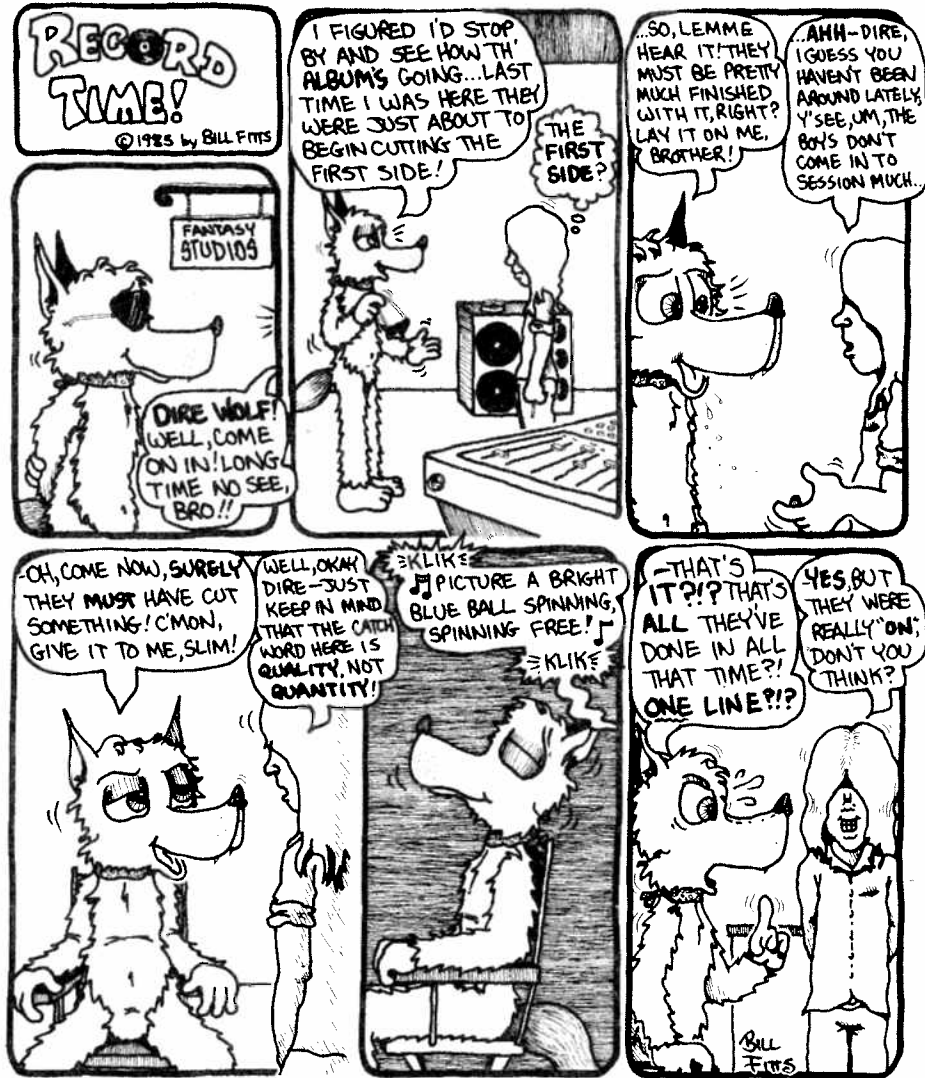
# History of Bill Fitts, Volume One (Blair's Choice)

I first encountered Bill Fitts outside the Greek Theatre in Berkeley after the third show of the Dead's 1983 run. He was selling something I'd always hoped would be made: a comic book about the Grateful Dead. I started to hand him money for one of his books when an unfriendly figure came up behind us. "If you make this sale you're under arrest!" It was a Berkeley cop, who'd evidently spent his Sunday making life miserable for the merchants congregating outside the Greek. I pulled back my money and split, cursing at my misfortune. In Ventura later that summer, I stumbled upon one of Bill Fitts' cartoon handouts crumpled in the dirt, and instantly realized that it was the style I'd seen on the cover of the comic.

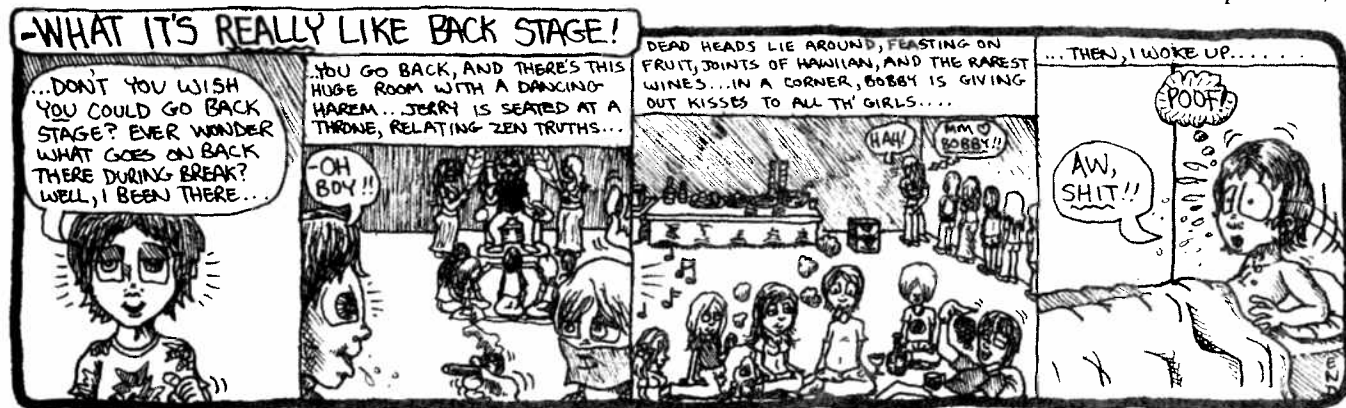
When we started *The Golden Road* that fall, I knew from the outset that I wanted Bill's work in the magazine. I liked his keen perceptions of Deadheads and his good natured cynicism about the band and the whole Dead scene. As fate would have it, he contacted me shortly after our first issue came out, and we've had *Sunshine Roses* in the magazine ever since.

What many *Golden Road* readers probably don't realize, though, is that in addition to his occasional comic book, he also produces two-sided single-sheet cartoons for nearly every West Coast date and hands them out for free before and after the show. Since relatively few people ever see these, we thought it would be fun to reproduce a few of our favorites here.

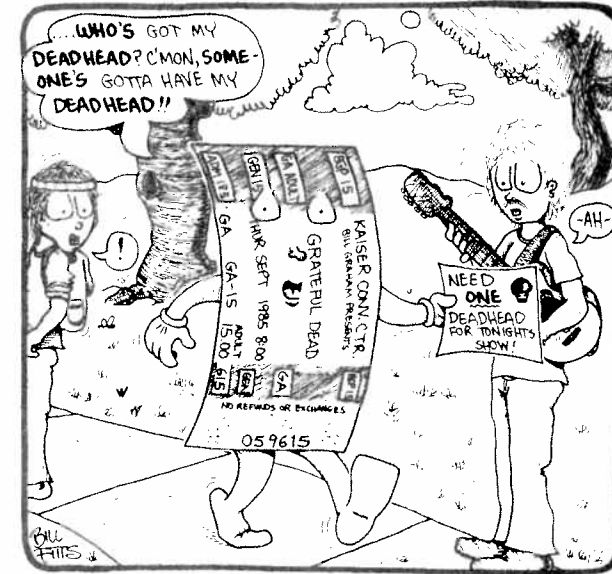
## SUNSHINE ROSES



Frost Amphitheatre, '85



Marin Civic, '83



Kaiser Center, (Sept.) '85



New Year's, '84-'85



New Year's, '83-'84



Marin Civic, '83



Marin Civic, '83



Chinese New Year's, '85

# Part 9 Roots



Memphis Slim (who credited Littlefield as the writer), The Beatles (on *Beatles VI*), Little Richard and Albert King.

**"Quinn the Eskimo"** (also known as "The Mighty Quinn")—This is another nugget from the catalog of Garcia's favorite outside writer, Bob Dylan. Dylan wrote it in the late '60s and recorded it as part of the infamous "Basement Tapes" sessions with The Band in the summer of 1967. Although those recordings were heavily bootlegged, the world at large first heard "Quinn the Eskimo" through the British band Manfred Mann, whose spunky, melodic version hit #10 on the American pop charts in March of 1968. (Manfred Mann also covered "Million Dollar Bash" from the same Dylan-Band sessions.) Dylan's recording of the tune first came out on the generally dismal *Self-Portrait* (1970), though it wasn't until 1985's five-album retrospective/rarities LP, *Biograph*, that the original "Quinn" became readily available. It is considerably more subdued than either the Manfred Mann or Dead versions.

Dylanologists can't seem to agree on either the song's meaning or its significance in the Dylan canon. Michael Gray, author of *Song and Dance Man*, calls it "possibly Dylan's most trivial song"; while John Herdman writes in *Voice Without Restraint* that it is one of Dylan's most powerful songs, filled with messianic overtones. Dylan's own comment on the song: "'Quinn the Eskimo,' I don't know. I don't know what it was about. I guess it was some kind of nursery rhyme." See what you can get out of the lyrics, which are reprinted below:

*"Quinn the Eskimo (The Mighty Quinn)"*  
Everybody's building the big ships and the boats  
Some are building monuments  
Others, jotting notes  
Ev'rybody's in despair  
Ev'ry girl and boy  
But when Quinn the Eskimo gets here  
Ev'rybody's going to jump for joy  
Come all without, come all within  
You'll not see nothing like the Mighty Quinn

*I like to do just like the rest, I like my sugar sweet  
But guarding fumes and making haste  
It ain't my cup of meat  
Ev'rybody's 'neath the trees  
Feeding pigeons on the limb  
But when Quinn the Eskimo gets here  
All the pigeons gonna run to him  
Come all without . . .*

*A cat's meow and a cow's moo, I can recite 'em all  
Just tell me where it hurts yuh, honey  
And I'll tell you who to call  
Nobody can get no sleep  
There's someone on ev'ryone's toes  
But when Quinn the Eskimo gets here  
Everybody's gonna wanna doze  
Come all without . . .*

© 1967, 1985

tlefield recorded a few minor tunes for small Texas labels in the late '40s before relocating to Los Angeles (which enjoyed something of a post-War blues boom) at the behest of Modern Records' Saul Bihari. Littlefield recorded a tune he called "K.C. Loving" during his first session for Modern in August of 1952, and it became a moderate hit for him. Littlefield contends that he then sold the rights to the song to Lieber & Stoller, who made a small fortune from the many recordings of the song—retitled "Kansas City"—over the years. For what it's worth, Tom Mazzolini, the longtime producer of the San Francisco Blues Festival who is also an acquaintance of Littlefield's and widely regarded as a leading blues writer and producer, accepts Lieber & Stoller as the song's authors.



Little Willie Littlefield

It was Wilbert Harrison's 1959 recording of "Kansas City" for the Fury label that really put the song on the map, however. It hit #1 in the nation in late April of that year, and was in the Top 40 for a very impressive 12 weeks—quite a feat anytime, but even more noteworthy considering that Harrison's version had to compete with similar ones by both James Brown and Hank Ballard. (Harrison's other big hit was 1969's "Let's Work Together.")

The song has been recorded by many other artists through the years, including

Before we get into a couple of song origins, I'd like to take a moment to recommend a pair of films that deal in part with black country blues of the '20s and '30s, a style and era from which the Dead derive much of their cover material.

The first is a fairly obscure 1985 documentary called *Louie Bluie*, directed by San Francisco-based Terry Zwigoff. The film centers around bluesman Howard Armstrong, whose career in black string bands stretches from the early '30s to the present. Along with Ted Bogan and Yank Rachel (who played on Noah Lewis' original "New Minglewood Blues" in 1930), Armstrong was part of the early Memphis jug band scene; the film offers rare footage from that era along with the musicians' own, often hilarious stories about being a black player in a white man's world. The repartee between these now-elderly musicians is priceless. You'll definitely learn more about the blues spirit than you could reading a dozen scholarly tomes. The film has had only spotty distribution so far, but it is a good bet to turn up on the "art" repertory circuit, or on college campuses. Don't miss it.

The other film, surprisingly enough, is Steven Spielberg's *The Color Purple*. Now Spielberg is certainly no authority on black life, but his epic translation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer-prize-winning novel does contain a fascinating depiction of a rural Georgia juke joint in the late '20s and early '30s. In that era, black music was disseminated at exactly the sort of wild parties dramatized in the film, before "race recordings" appeared widely in record stores and on the radio.

**"Kansas City"**—The origin of this tune—introduced by Weir at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta last fall—is still shrouded in a bit of controversy. Authorship is popularly credited to the hit songwriting team of Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller (who also penned such classics as "Hound Dog," "Young Blood," "Yakety Yak" and "There Goes My Baby"), but it is also claimed by the first artist to record the song, blues pianist Little Willie Littlefield. Born in Houston in 1931, Lit-

## F U N S T U F F

**Deadspeak:** Here are a few gems from SF *Chronicle* writer Joel Selvin's late December story on the Dead's 20th Anniversary.

Garcia, on why the band plays every song differently each time: "It's the only way I know how to play. Everyone in the band is that way. I've never heard anyone repeat a thing in a song two nights in a row. But maybe it's our memories!"

"You have to go with what's there. You can't play something stock against an incredibly weird setting. I never know, for instance, what kind of voicing Bob is going to give his chords. He has fingers twice as long as any human being's. He comes up with these strange voicings and he does it on purpose. I understand that, but he still surprises me. I've been playing with him for 20 years and I couldn't predict what he's going to do. Same with Phil. They all continue to surprise me. That's who they are."

"We're up there playing for our lives, and even the simplest ballad can still sound plenty strange."

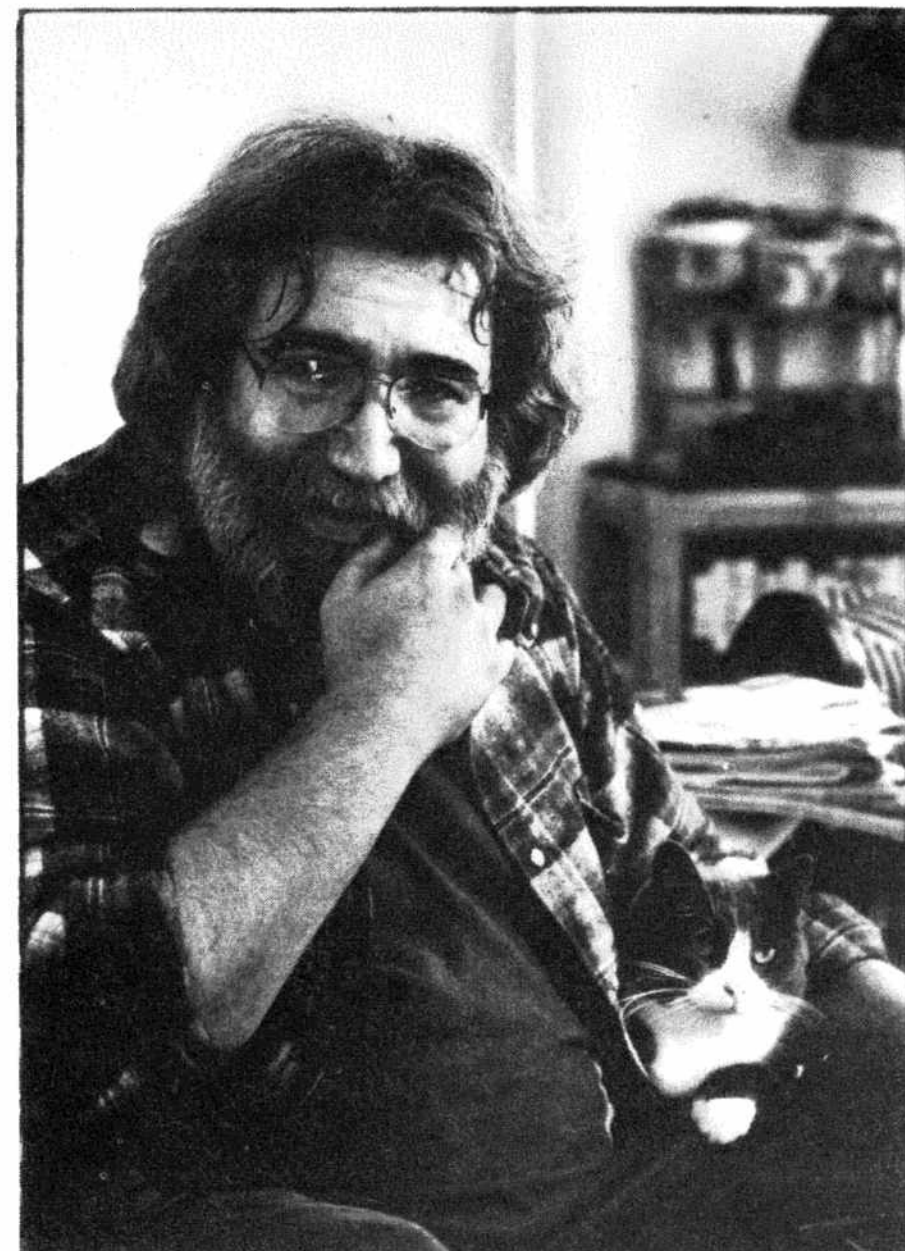
Mickey, joking about their longevity: "In this band the *new* guy is 6 or 7 years old. Sometimes I can't remember his name."

Garcia on the band's durability: "The years are starting to pay off. It's like the Budapest String Quartet or the Duke Ellington Orchestra, which had the same horn section for more than 20 years. It matters. Those horn blends are legendary."

"We're not family. We're far closer than family could ever be. No matter what we do, the Grateful Dead will always be something we're involved with. At this point, it's reflexive."

**See, We Do Have Some Good Qualities:** Sue Lyddan of Manquin, VA, passes on a piece from the *Richmond News Leader* a week after the two Dead shows there. After Mayor Roy West proposed that the Dead be banned from future shows in Richmond because of the numerous arrests and the usual complaints of some local businessmen, a number of local merchants actually sent around a petition encouraging the Dead to return to the city. "Business was as good as our grand opening," crowed Carman Hoffman, owner of a Richmond burger joint. "I've never seen a better behaved bunch of people."

Added a manager of a local Holiday Inn: "I've had women's clubs come in and cause more damage. There was not one thing done to the rooms—no towels missing, or anything." Who says 11 to a room causes problems?



Here's a nice outtake from a photo session with Garcia for the SF *Chronicle* in mid-December. The cat (which is not Jerry's) is named Yoda. Photo: Mike Maloney/SF *Chronicle*

**Nothin' Left To Do But Be Snide, Snide** Here's another recent put-down of the Dead scene, this from a Southern California magazine called *Preview*: "A Grateful Dead concert is the cultural equivalent of a dog whistle. You announce a Grateful Dead concert, and the only people who come are those who operate on a different frequency. It's a ritual: The Dead show up late, Jerry Garcia and everyone in the band is out of tune and out of synch, the band strikes up 'Sugar Magnolia' or 'Truckin'' and, a long time later, it's silent again. It's like *The Philadelphia Experiment*. Everybody in the audience disappeared at midnight

on Dec. 31, 1969, and miraculously reappears at a Grateful Dead concert. If you've never been to a real '60s Be-In (you were too old, you were too young, you were too smart), your chance is coming at the Long Beach Arena Nov. 16 and 17. The band has a huge fan club, whose members, in rock and roll terms, are approaching the ages of Spanish-American War vets, and none of whom should write to us, thanks." (That item submitted by Mary Schuyler of Black Hawk, CO.)

**You Can't Judge a Book . . .** Take it from me, folks—Deadheads were

# F U N S T U F F



One of our favorite moments of '85 captured on film: Mickey and Billy are overwhelmed by the crowd following "Not Fade Away" at Red Rocks, September 6. Photo: Missy Bowen

ridiculed mercilessly by New Wavers in the late '70s and early '80s; basically until neo-psychedelia came into fashion. We were the whipping boys of an entire subculture, symbols of everything that was antiquated and regressive. So when we saw the following letter to BAM magazine, written by the leader of L.A.'s infamous punk band Black Flag, we were more than a little surprised . . . and delighted:

Someone sent me a copy of your Grateful Dead review [of the first Irvine show last year, in which the writer wrote, "So-called adventuresome people who dig Black Flag probably wouldn't be caught alive at a Grateful Dead show"]. I saw that Grateful Dead show in Irvine! I've also seen them three times in Oakland and once in San Diego since the Irvine show. I've also seen them many times in years past. The Dead is my favorite band.

What we find is that there are Dead fans at our shows outside of California. California's music scene is remarkably segmented. Bands like Black Flag and the Dead drate all kinds of music fans to performances outside of Califor-

nia. But maybe things are changing. I saw some Black Flag shirts at the San Diego Dead show.

I feel that in terms of approach and music, the Dead have been a big influence on Black Flag from the beginning. We love the Dead. Glad you do too!

Greg Ginn  
Black Flag guitarist  
Torrance, CA

#### The Bus Came By, Entering Stage Left:

Tom Kurcab of Des Plaines, IL, has lukewarm praise for a "little theatre" adaptation of *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* that has been playing in Chicago for a while. "Dark Star" is heard during one scene in the second act, Tom reports, and he says that though it is hardly earthshaking, the play might be of interest to fans of the book, what with its characterizations of Kesey, Mountain Girl, Cassidy, Owsley and others.

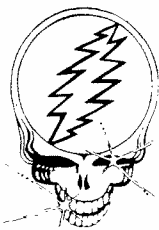
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#### Revenge of the Bride of GD TV & Film Sightings

In this season's *Twilight Zone* episode about a woman photographer who had to choose between her career and a family, in one scene, as she comes out of her darkroom, there is a black & white photo of Garcia on the wall (or so says Cary Tenenbaum of Mineola, NY) . . . Bruce Kent of Arvada, CO, is the latest of several to inform us that in a vintage episode of *The Andy Griffith Show*, the amiable Mayberry sheriff sits on his porch and sings a version of "Goin' Down the Road" . . . Larry Levy of New York wrote to tell us that in the first NFL exhibition game this past season, a fan displayed a banner that traced new ABC announcer Joe Namath's football career. It read "From Beaver Falls to Alabama to Broadway to Canton" (site of the football Hall of Fame). When the banner was shown, commentator Frank Gifford said to Namath: "It came, I think, from the Grateful Dead: 'Lately it occurs to me, what a long strange trip it's been'" . . . In early October, Barry Sless of Columbia, MD, was watching *Jeopardy* when one of the contestants hit an "Audio Daily Double" question. "Truckin'" was played, and the contestant was asked to supply "the name the loyal followers of this rock group give themselves."

The player's answer: "The Grateful Dead." Oh well, close . . . While watching a *Mork & Mindy* rerun instead of doing something productive with his time (just kidding) Steve Wojtak of Oceanside, CA, heard Mindy trying to convince her irascible dad to meet Mork. "C'mon Dad, you'll like him. Give him a chance," she pleaded, to which he replied, "Yeah, as much as I'd like to be tied to the speakers at a Grateful Dead concert." Mindy gets in the zinger, though: "That could be arranged!"

**The Hoop Scoop:** When basketball great/world's tallest Deadhead Bill Walton (shown here, alas, after a tough loss a few years ago) signed with the Boston Celtics after several injury-plagued years with the L.A. (and, before that, San Diego) Clippers, he sighed to a Boston sportswriter: "One of the few negatives about coming here is that the Dead was playing this weekend in San Diego [actually Chula Vista] and we're going to miss it. I'm sure the boys will be through here, though, and we'll get a chance to see them."

As fate would have it, the Celts were idle during the Dead's recent two-night stand at the Centrum, near Boston, so Walton and a few of his teammates came down to both shows, at the Dead's invitation. Walton reciprocated by inviting the Dead to a Celtics practice. Though he desperately needs help on his lay-ups and push-shots from the corner, Garcia declined, but Mickey Hart and several members of the Dead road crew did attend. They were met on the gym floor by a rocket-like pass from Celt Larry Bird that barely sailed over their heads. Further enlivening the practice was a visit from a stripper, who bared all in the middle of the court in celebration of Walton's birthday. The Dead's "Happy Birthday" serenade at the show that evening was rated G, however.

Incidentally, the Dead missed a golden opportunity to musically salute another member of the Celtics organization: their coach is named K.C. Jones.

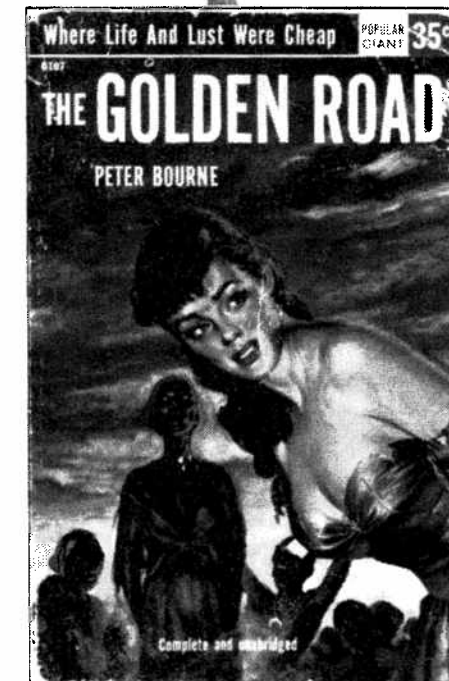
**Words of Wisdom:** Deadhead Philip Jones, quoted in the *Richmond News Leader*, after remarking upon the high number of arrests at the show there: "It's not that I'm too old to get high, but I'm too old to get busted."

**The Red Suits Were the Tip-Off:** When guru/comedian Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh split from his Oregon commune and tried to flee the country (he was busted in North Carolina), most of the followers he left behind were understandably devastated. But when an *SF Chronicle* writer quizzed cult members about the Bhagwan's departure, at least one found a very interesting reason to be optimistic: "Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead called us. He said he may come visit us when the band plays in Portland." Of course the Portland show was canceled (hmm . . . the plot thickens!) and, to our knowledge, "Bhagwan Bob" never did make that trip. It's amusing to note, too, that during one of the Rochester shows, Weir conducted a poll of the crowd to see how many people believed that Rajneesh is a "tragic hero." We'll know the Weir-Rajneesh connection is real when the Dead's spring tour makes a swing to Poona, India.

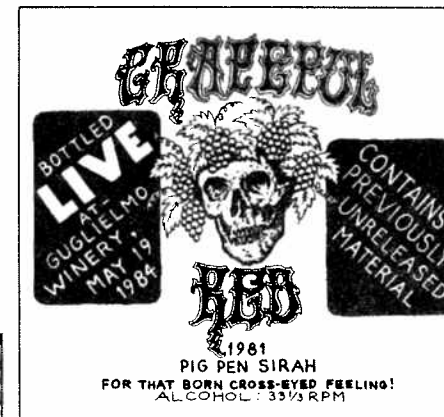
## In the Strangest of Places . . .



Trippy intersection.  
By Ben Hollin, Sunnyvale, CA



Classic literature. Submitted by David Dodd, Oakland, CA



Wine label design by John Johnson, Santa Cruz, CA



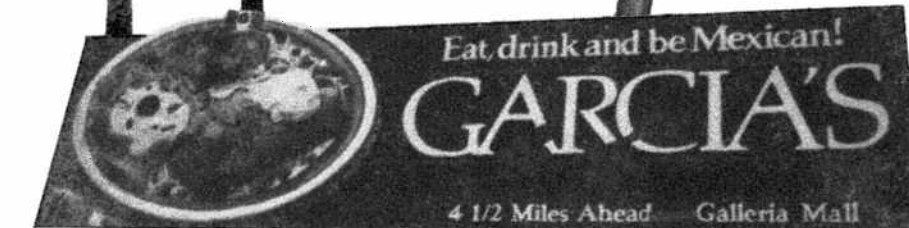
On the Oregon Coast. By Rick Sullivan, Berkeley, CA



Sign in Mt. Pocono, PA. By Vince and Sue Perrotti, Babylon, NY



Intersection in Dunn, N. C. By Steve Haughton, Durham, NC

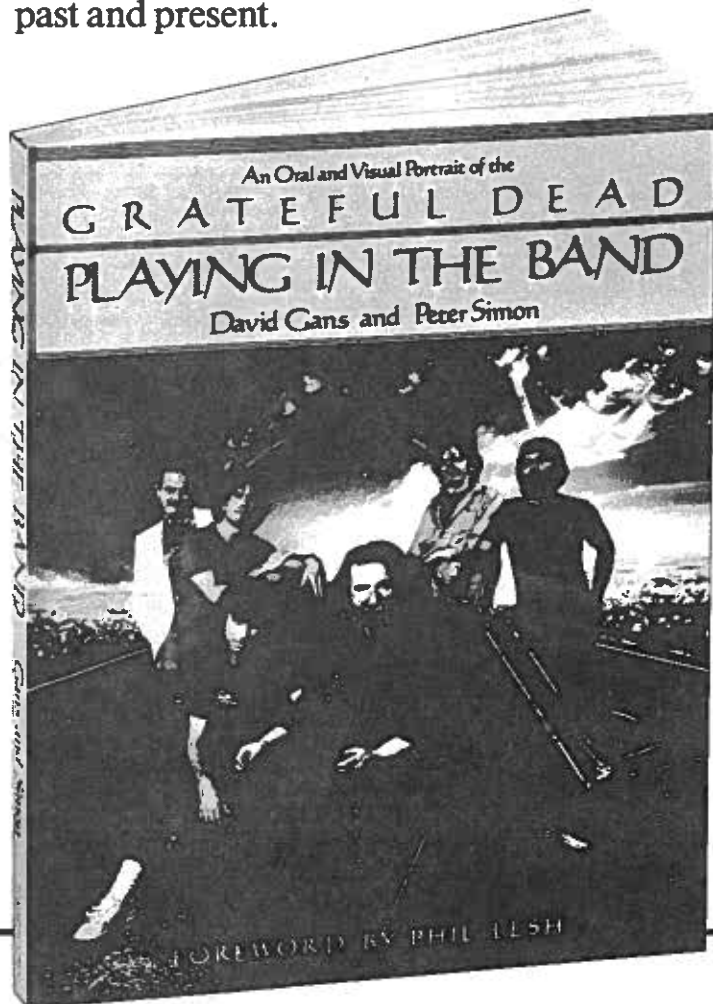


Restaurant billboard. By Jeff Cogen, West L.A., CA



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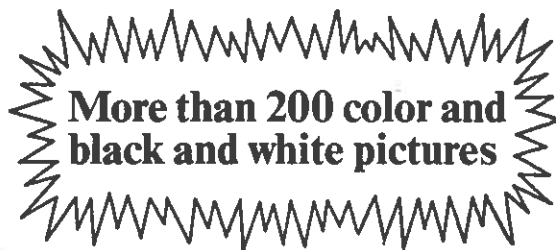
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